Maine Association of Conservation Districts
Working for Maine's Conservation Districts
PO Box 541 Portland, ME 04112

Wednesday 6/18/2025

Maine Association of Conservation Districts – Briefing:

Maine State Technical Advisory Committee Report

Good Morning, all ~

Thanks to Maine Natural Resources Conservation Service for the opportunity to update the State Technical Advisory Committee on Soil and Water Conservation District news.

First, as you are aware, this partnership working together to advance conservation efforts in Maine – and nationwide – has been in place for decades. This year NRCS – formerly the Soil Conservation Service – celebrates 90 years of helping landowners with conservation practices, improving, preserving, and protecting natural resources.

In addition, Soil and Water Conservation Districts are also celebrating anniversaries, again emphasizing the importance of this partnership and the shared mission and goals.

By providing technical assistance, education, resources, and conservation awareness, SWCDs work to provide local leadership for site specific, appropriate priorities for each service area.

Speaking of which, I want to congratulate the 2025 State of Maine Envirothon winners, the Maine Academy of Natural Sciences team on their success in the regional and State competition. The MeANS team is invited to compete at the international level at the competition in Calgary, Alberta, Canada.

Thanks to all the supporters who work to make Envirothon a successful natural resources competition in our state. This year, the competition saw an increase in registered teams. Maine Association of Conservation Districts and the Regional

Maine Association of Conservation Districts
Working for Maine's Conservation Districts
PO Box 541 Portland, ME 04112

Soil and Water Conservation Districts have noted how the high school aged student teams show a keen interest in natural resources and conservation.

The involvement of ME NRCS, State of Maine departments and agencies, experts, and volunteers demonstrates to the team members how natural resource conservation can broaden from interest to career opportunities.

At the national level, the National Association of Conservation Districts issued congratulations to the newly appointed Assistant Chief of the USDA NRCS, Jimmy Emmons. Mr. Emmons, a third generation famer in Oklahoma, has worked within USDA for many years, plus has served as a local SWCD board member and president the Oklahoma Association of Conservation Districts.

Additionally, the National Association of Conservation Districts President, Gary Blair, has provided testimony to the US Senate Agriculture Committee at a recent hearing. With the need for technical assistance and conservation programs expanding, Blair stressed the need for USDA/NRCS staffing at local service centers, emphasizing the importance of locally prioritized, voluntary natural resources assistance. The programs and technical assistance offered by NRCS are proven investments not only to farmers, ranchers, woodlot owners, and landowners, but also to our nation's goals in conservation.

In addition, the National Association of Conservation Districts, with offices in Washington, DC, provides up to date information and news from the Capitol to its board members. Recent updates highlighted Congressional and Executive Actions, which included USDA programs being worked on in the Senate Agriculture Committee concerning the budget reconciliation, future appropriations, agency staffing capacity decreases and workforce reductions, and program funding.

Maine Association of Conservation Districts is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

Maine Association of Conservation Districts
Working for Maine's Conservation Districts
PO Box 541 Portland, ME 04112

At the national, state, and local levels Soil and Water Conservation Districts input and communication in support of USDA agencies, our NRCS partners, and conservation agencies provided to our elected officials continues to highlight the importance of voluntary natural resources and locally prioritized technical assistance.

In closing, we offer sympathy and condolences to the family of Pam Harden, a longtime Franklin County SWCD supervisor and supporter. Pam passed away this past Saturday. A service will be held in Farmington on July 20.

Thank you so much, to Maine NRCS and all members of the State Technical Advisory Committee, for your time.

Carol Weymouth, Executive Director

Maine Association of Conservation Districts

Maine Association of Conservation Districts is an equal opportunity provider and employer.