



The locally-led conservation effort is the foundation of the United States Department of Agriculture's (USDA) conservation program delivery process. The local work group supports the locally-led conservation effort by coordinating USDA programs with other Federal, State, Tribal, and local conservation programs to provide an integrated solution to addressing natural resource concerns.

What is the Purpose of the Local Work Groups?

Local working groups provide recommendations on local natural resource priorities and criteria for USDA conservation activities and programs. Convened by the local conservation district, the local work group responsibilities include:

- Develop a conservation needs assessment identifying broad conservation goals to solve natural resource problems;
- Identify priority resource concerns that can be addressed by USDA programs;
- Recommend USDA conservation program application and funding criteria, eligible practices (including limits on practice payments or units), and payment rates;
- Assist NRCS and the conservation district with public outreach and information efforts;
- Identify educational and producers' training needs; and,
- Recommend program policy to the State Technical Advisory Committee based on resource data.

Who is eligible to participate?

Local working group membership should be diverse and focus on agricultural interests and natural resource issues existing in the local community. Membership should include agricultural producers representing the variety of crops, livestock, and poultry raised within the local area; owners of nonindustrial private forest land, as appropriate; representatives of agricultural and environmental organizations; and representatives of governmental agencies carrying out agricultural and natural resource conservation programs and activities.





What are the key principals?

The work groups involve the community in the assessment of natural resource needs, solutions, and priorities using a mix of federal, state, local, and private-sector programs as tools to solve natural resource concerns.

What kinds of issues does the Committee address?

- Provide input on the following federal conservation programs:
 - The Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP), including special projects, like Working Lands for Wildlife
 - Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP)
 - Regional Conservation Partnership Program (RCPP)
 - Agricultural Conservation Easement Program (ACEP)
- Provide information, analysis, and recommendations to USDA on conservation priorities and criteria for natural resources conservation activities and programs, including application and funding criteria, recommended practices, and program payment percentages
- Identify emerging natural resource concerns and program needs
- Recommend conservation practice standards and specifications
- Recommend State program policy based on resource data
- Make recommendations to the State Conservationist on requests from local working groups
- Assist NRCS with public outreach and information efforts and identify producers' educational or training needs



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The statute authorizing State Technical Committees is found in 7 CFR §610.24.

NRCS policy on State Technical Committees is found in 440 General Manual 501 Subpart C
<https://directives.sc.egov.usda.gov/viewerFS.aspx?hid=27719>