

Agency: Commerce, Community and Economic Development**Grants to Named Recipients (AS 37.05.316)****Grant Recipient: Alaska Association of Conservation****Federal Tax ID: 92-0161947****Districts****Project Title:****Project Type: Other**

Alaska Association of Conservation Districts - Statewide Soil and Water Conservation Program Development and Management

State Funding Requested: \$1,200,000**House District: Statewide (1-40)**

Future Funding May Be Requested

Brief Project Description:

Provide the technical guidance and assistance to carry out the measures for soil and water conservation and erosion control.

Funding Plan:

Total Project Cost:	\$5,200,000
Funding Already Secured:	(\$4,000,000)
FY2015 State Funding Request:	<u>(\$1,200,000)</u>
Project Deficit:	\$0

Funding Details:

FY 2008 - \$750,000

FY 2009 - \$350,000

FY 2010 - 0

FY 2011 - \$300,000

FY 2012 - \$500,000

FY 2013 - \$1,000,000

FY 2014 - \$1,000,000

Detailed Project Description and Justification:

Alaska Association for Conservation Districts formed after the Territory of Alaska enacted legislation in 1947 that allowed the formation of districts. Districts are legal subdivisions of the Alaska Department of Natural Resources, authorized under Alaska State Statute Chapter 41.10, Soil and Water Conservation Law. The Alaska Association of Conservation Districts was formally organized in 1965 to help all local soil and water districts function cooperatively and efficiently in conjunction with each other. By administering programs that encompass multiple districts and providing centralized administrative and grant management services, AACD provides centralized coordination services.

There are 12 state-formed SWCD's in Alaska: Anchorage, Fairbanks, Homer, Kenai, Kenny Lake, Kodiak, Mid-Yukon Kuskokwim, Palmer, Salcha-Delta, Upper Susitna, Southeast, and Wasilla. Soil and Water Conservation Districts (SWCD) serve an important role in our state by assisting private and public landowners with natural resource management.

Thousands of personal contacts with landowners are made each year in districts around the state in an effort to work with numerous agencies, organizations, local government, and private citizens. Across the state, SWCDs help landowners develop and improve their land responsibly, while taking into consideration such issues as air quality, soil degradation and erosion, water quality, and forestry management.

Key elements of SWCD efforts to assist landowners include technical assistance for invasive plant management, land capability surveys, technical and land management assistance to farmers, stream restoration and removal of fish migration barriers, forestry management plans, conservation planning, nutrient management, construction of rain gardens, schoolyard gardens, development of community gardens and farmers markets, and promotion of Alaska Grown products.

This request will provide funding for activities not directly related to projects funded by grants or contracts. In addition to enabling SWCDs to address their core mission--assisting property owners and managers in production of renewable resources using sustainable management principles--these funds can be used as "match" for many grants. The Alaska Association of Conservation Districts has leveraged thousands of dollars for natural resource projects from federal and local sources, but cannot deliver these projects statewide unless we have funding for base operations.

Here are some examples of services and projects:

- Districts deliver Youth Conservation Corps programs and resource education to local schools.
- Districts did significant mitigation work for salmon passage
- Districts worked this past summer to build recreational trails, restore fish habitat, and control invasive plant species. For many youth, this was their first job and helped them focus on positive work ethics, leadership, team skills, and community responsibility.
- Districts conducted land capability surveys and investigations of potential agricultural areas and soil conservation and erosion control.
- Districts worked to improve, and maintain soil erosion control and construct conservation structures.
- Districts provided an annual report to the Natural Resources Conservation Development Board, who advise the Governor and the Commissioner of DNR, and the Alaska State Legislature.

Work and efforts by the local districts is strongly supported by community leaders, local residents, village councils, and state & local government agencies.

Districts provide an annual report to the Natural Resources Conservation Development Board, who advise the Governor and the Commissioner of DNR, and the Alaska State Legislature. All reports are distributed by the 30th day of the legislative session.

For a copy of the latest Annual Report, please go to the following web site:

http://dnr.alaska.gov/commis/nrcdb/documents/FY13SWCDReports_Final%20v3.pdf

Project Timeline:

All projects and programs will be implemented over the course of FY2015.

Entity Responsible for the Ongoing Operation and Maintenance of this Project:

Alaska Association of Conservation Districts

Grant Recipient Contact Information:

Name:	Daleann Pond
Title:	Chief Administrative Officer
Address:	1700 E. Bogard Road Suite 203A Wasilla, Alaska 99654
Phone Number:	(907)373-7923
Email:	aacd@mtaonline.net

Has this project been through a public review process at the local level and is it a community priority? Yes No

<i>For use by Co-chair Staff Only:</i>
11:55 AM 5/13/2014



Alaska Association of Conservation Districts

CONSERVATION • DEVELOPMENT • SELF – GOVERNMENT

History of Soil and Water Conservation Districts

Alaska's soil and water conservation districts formed after the Territory of Alaska enacted legislation in 1947 that allowed the formation of districts. Districts are legal subdivisions of the Alaska Department of Natural Resources, authorized under Alaska State Statute Chapter 41.10, Soil and Water Conservation Law.

By the late 1940s, all states had adopted laws reflecting the Standard State Soil Conservation District Law, promoted by President Franklin D. Roosevelt. This was in response to the Dust Bowl Days, and was designed to be a grassroots complement to the Soil Conservation Service (now USDA's Natural Resources Conservation Service), which was begun in 1935.

The conservation district concept was developed to voluntarily enlist the cooperation of landowners and users of natural resources in carrying out the program authorized by the Soil Conservation Act of 1935.

Alaska's SWCDs

Alaska's Soil and Water Conservation Districts were established as groups of local farmers and landowners united to form SWCDs in their respective areas. There are 11 state-formed SWCDs in Alaska: Anchorage, Fairbanks, Homer, Kenai, Kenny Lake, Kodiak, Mid-Yukon Kuskokwim, Palmer, Salcha-Delta, Upper Susitna, and Wasilla. Currently, efforts are underway to establish a new SWCD in the Southeast. In 2005, the Tyonek Tribal District became the first Native Conservation District formed in Alaska under federal jurisdiction. More recently, three additional Native Conservation Districts have been formed.

AACD's origins

The Alaska Association of Conservation Districts was organized in 1965 to help the 12 state-formed SWCDs in Alaska do cooperatively what they could not do independently. In 1998, the AACD incorporated with 501c3 status. Its work includes administering programs that encompass multiple districts and seeking and administering grant funding. The AACD is also the statewide voice on conservation issues pertaining to and requiring federal, state and local legislative and agency support. AACD provides conferences, training, education, and outreach programs collectively for the districts.

SWCDs' work

District staffs work with landowners, land managers, local government agencies and other special interest groups in addressing a broad spectrum of resources concerns: erosion control, flood prevention, water conservation and use, wetlands, groundwater, water quality and quantity, non-point source pollution and community development. District activities and interaction with private landowners is voluntary, not regulatory. Districts work with government agencies to provide technical guidance and resource management assistance. The work of the SWCD staff aligns closely to that of our federal funding partner, the Natural Resources Conservation Service,

as well as with other agencies, such as the US Forest Service, US Fish and Wildlife, NOAA, and the Cooperative Extension Service.

SWCDs' structure

Soil & Water Conservation districts are comprised of cooperators within a geographical area and each is administered by a five-member board of supervisors elected from those cooperators by the cooperators. These are volunteer positions and they receive no compensation for their work with the local board. The chairperson of each district, or another designated supervisor, serves as that district's representative on the AACD board.

AACD's administration

Each district is represented on the AACD board, and that board elects its president, vice president and secretary/treasurer. AACD's day-to-day operations are handled by an executive director and other staff.

AACD's leadership

Contact information for AACD's staff and executive committee:

Staff

Steve Hicks, AACD Executive Director, 1700 E. Bogard Rd Ste 203A, Wasilla, AK 99654 907-373-7923; aacd@mtaonline.net

Dee Pond , AACD Admin Assistant, 1700 E. Bogard Rd. Ste. 203A, Wasilla, AK 99654
907-373-7923; aacdoa@mtaonline.net

Joan Hope, AACD Project Manager, 1700 E. Bogard Rd. Ste. 203A, Wasilla, AK 907-315-1795;
aacdjoan@yahoo.com

Officers

Ken Marsh, AACD president, 907-733-2557; trappercreekmuseum@yahoo.com

Todd Pettit, AACD vice president, 907-745-5610; trpettit@mtaonline.net

Charlie Dorman, AACD secretary/treasurer, 907-486-5396; kodiaksmoking@gci.net

Chris Rainwater, AACD past president, 907-235-6278; growingk@gmail.com

United States Department of Agriculture



Natural Resources Conservation Service
800 West Evergreen Avenue, Suite 100
Palmer, AK 99645
907-761-7760 907-761-7790 FAX
www.ak.nrcs.usda.gov

The Honorable Charlie Huggins
State Senator
Alaska State Legislature
120 4th Street, State Capitol, Room 3
Juneau, Alaska 99801-1182

Dear Senator Huggins:

I am writing this letter to show my support for the Alaska Association of Conservation Districts (AACD) and their request for funding from the State of Alaska. Over the years, the AACD has maintained an effective working relationship with the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) in Alaska, in our efforts to promote efficient use and management of renewable resources. Additionally, through previous earmarks, the twelve districts have been effectively providing assistance to landowners and land users.

The earmark under which we work with AACD is project oriented and does not allow for sufficient administration funding for the districts; continuing education for staff and supervisors; and, is capped on how much the association can use for public outreach activities. Those funds have to come from another source and, as you are aware, these are critical activities for successful project completion. Furthermore, I would like to point out that AACD is following accountability and compliance procedures in accordance with proper NRCS and OMB requirements.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Robert N. Jones".

ROBERT N. JONES
State Conservationist
USDA, Natural Resources Conservation Service
Palmer, Alaska

ALASKA STATE LEGISLATURE

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Wasilla AK 99654
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Senator_Charlie_Huggins@legis.state.ak.us



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Senator Charlie Huggins

November 19, 2012

Commissioner Dan Sullivan
Alaska Department of Natural Resources
550 W. 7th Avenue, Suite 1400
Anchorage, Alaska 99501

Dear Commissioner Sullivan:

I received a courtesy copy of an October 26, 2012, letter from Ken Marsh, President of the Alaska Association of Conservation Districts (AACD), to the Natural Resource Conservation and Development Board (NRCDB) requesting that Governor Parnell include \$1.2 million in DNR's budget for conservation district operations.

Not only have I worked with the AACD and the individual districts to secure capital funds in years past, but, as you can see from the attached correspondence, I have also long advocated for the Administration's financial support of the programs these districts provide.

I would like to go on record once again and respectfully encourage you to include this funding in your annual department budget. Thank you for considering my views.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Charlie Huggins".

Charlie Huggins
Senator

Att.

Cc: Representative Mark Neuman
Steve Hicks, Executive Director, AACD



Representative Alan Austerman

House Majority Leader

Alaska State Legislature

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State Capitol
Juneau, Alaska 99801
(907) 465-2487 | (800) 865-2487
(907) 465-4956 (fax)

Interim:

305 Center Ave, Suite 1
Kodiak, Alaska 99615
(907) 486-8872
(907) 486-5264 (fax)

January 30, 2013

The Honorable Sean Parnell
Governor of Alaska
Alaska State Capitol
Juneau, Alaska 99801

Dear Governor Parnell:

I would like to express my support for the Kodiak Soil and Water Conservation Districts' \$50,000.00 appropriation as part of the Alaska Association of Conservation District's compiled budget request of \$1,200,000.00. This application is a critical component to the continuation of KSWCD as basic operational funds. Due to their efforts, they are largely supported by Kodiak community members and businesses as well as state and federal agencies however this funding is insufficient.

KSWCD has worked hard since 1964 to ensure that the natural resources of the Kodiak Archipelago are sustained, conserved, and restored within a landscape of productive agriculture, growing communities, and wild lands. They are an absolute asset to the Kodiak Island area through various endeavors; they monitor the wetlands, treat invasive species, run the local Farm to School project, as well as promote sustainable agriculture. I am particularly proud of their participation in the Farm Bill program that has created a wide variety of crop production through private landowners; thus generating a local farmers market for the community members.

In conclusion, I would like to reiterate my support in funding KSWCD through AACD's request. Thank you for your consideration of this letter.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Alan".

Alan Austerman
House District 36

~ Representing Alaska State House District 36 ~

Akhiok | Igiugig | Iliamna | Karluk | Kodiak | Kokhanok | Larsen Bay | Levelock
Newhalen | Nondalton | Old Harbor | Ouzinkie | Pedro Bay | Port Alsworth | Port Lions