National Association of Conservation Districts
3,000 Conservation Districts in every state and territory

17,000 individuals governing local district boards

To be effective, conservation must be:

- Locally led
- Voluntary
- Incentive based
- Economically viable
COMMUNITY AG & FOOD SECURITY
SOIL HEALTH
WATER QUANTITY & QUALITY
~60% of US lands are privately owned\(^1\)

~39% of U.S. land is farmland\(^2\)

**Sources:**

**2022 Ag Census Farm Size vs. Production Value (% Total)**

- 88% Small
- 19% Midsize
- 19% Large
- 10% NonFamily

- **29.4%** of farmers are new and beginner
- **9%** of farmers are <35 years old
Environmental Quality Initiatives Program (EQIP)

2,812 producers received contracts on 762,698 acres

Nearly 8,000 applications received

$250

Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP)

2,406 producers received contracts on 3.3M+ acres

Over 3,300 applications received

$250

Agricultural Conservation Easement Program (ACEP)

69 producers received easements on 58,000+ acres

$230

$100

High producer demand for conservation programs. 45% of EQIP, CSP, and ACEP applications funded in FY23.

FY2023: https://publicdashboards.dl.usda.gov/t/FPAC_PUB/views/InflationReductionActDataVisualizationTool/IRAEndofYearReport?%3Aembed=y&%3AisGuestRedirectFromVizportal=y
NACD and the Soil Health Institute studied the economics of Soil Health Management Systems on 30 U.S. Farms

- Soil health practices increased net farm income by an average of $65/acre
- Reduced expenses:
  - $14/acre less to grow corn
  - $7/acre less to grow soybean
  - $16/acre less to grow other crops
- Yield Increases:
  - 42% of farms growing corn
  - 32% of farms growing soybean
  - 35% of farms growing other crops

**Conservation has additional economic benefits:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>State</th>
<th>Best Quality Land Characteristics</th>
<th>Low Quality Land Characteristics</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Indiana</td>
<td>221</td>
<td>$306</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Illinois</td>
<td>230</td>
<td>$412</td>
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<tr>
<td>Iowa</td>
<td>212</td>
<td>$328</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

3. [https://www.extension.iastate.edu/agdm/wholefarm/pdf/c2-10.pdf](https://www.extension.iastate.edu/agdm/wholefarm/pdf/c2-10.pdf)
Long-term, market demand for climate-smart commodities are needed in addition to Farm Bill programs.

Conservation is a journey and investment. It is not a transaction in return for ecosystem service credits.

Producers need technical assistance and ongoing education. There are no shortcuts.

Conservation is profitable. Producers need financial support and voluntary incentives to implement conservation systems of practices.
Next-Gen Development

- Working Lands Climate Corps
- National Conservation Foundation Envirothon
- Next Generation Leadership Institute