



Alaska Association of Conservation Districts

1700 E. Bogard Rd. Suite 203

Wasilla, AK 99654-6563

907-373-7923

fax 373-7928

aacd@mtaonline.net

About 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 12 state-formed SWCDs in Alaska, including the Alaska SWCD, which includes all of the land not within one of the other 11 Districts: Anchorage, Fairbanks, Homer, Kenai, Kenny Lake, Kodiak, Mid-Yukon Kuskokwim, Palmer, Salcha-Delta, Upper Susitna, Wasilla. In 2005, the Tyonek Tribal District became the first Native Conservation District formed in Alaska under federal jurisdiction.

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 staff 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 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. Their positions are volunteer 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

Al Poindexter, AACD executive director, 4014 Lake St. Ste 201, Homer, AK 99603
907-235-8177, ext. 4 or cell 399-1580; *ed.director@xyz.net*

Eric Wade, AACD deputy director, 1700 E. Bogard Rd. Ste. 203, Wasilla, AK 99654
907-373-7923; *aacd@mtaonline.net*

Victoria Naegele, AACD information specialist, 9788 N. Waldo Reed Rd., Palmer, AK 99645
907-746-2172; *info@alaskaswcds.org*

Gino Graziano, AACD invasive plants program coordinator, Plant Materials Center, Palmer, AK
907-745-4469 or cell 354-1227; *cwma@ak.net*

Officers

Chris Rainwater, AACD president, 907-235-6278; *snowshoe@xyz.net*

Omar Stratman, AACD vice president, 907-486-5578

Bruce Bush, AACD secretary/treasurer, 907-746-2874