

RC&D Council Member Update – May 24, 2007

Farm bill

The Conservation Subcommittee of the House Agriculture Committee marked up (reviewed and approved) the Conservation Title of the 2007 Farm bill this week. We are pleased to announce that the proposal approved by the Subcommittee includes the following RC&D priorities:

- 1) Calls for an area planning process, for the RC&D program, which is locally led;
- 2) Calls on the Secretary of Agriculture to designate a Coordinator for each Council to provide technical assistance;
- 3) Adds to the technical assistance definition - providing assistance for the implementation of area plans and projects; and
- 4) Adds to the technical assistance definition – providing services which bring to bear the resources of Department of Agriculture programs in a local community as defined in the locally led planning process.

This bill will be considered by the full House Agriculture Committee in late June and then by the full House of Representatives in July.

The Senate will markup their Farm Bill in late June.

Appropriations

Key message: We need \$56 million to move existing RC&D councils toward full funding.

The House Agriculture Appropriations Subcommittee will markup in early June, followed by Full Committee and floor action. The House leadership has stated that they want all appropriations bills completed by the end of June.

The Senate Agriculture Appropriations is not likely to move forward until late June or early July.

On Friday May 25, the Congress recesses for a ten day district work period. Congress will be back in session on June 4.

At-large board national board member – The application deadline has been extended to June 1. Please send in your nominations as soon as possible.

NRCS Memorandums of Agreement with councils –

We have gotten calls about MOAs between local councils and NRCS. NRCS has started this effort in some states as a way to improve communications and create a better understanding of the council member and NRCS responsibilities. Keep in mind that an MOA is a negotiated agreement of the partnership between NRCS and RC&D Councils.

Councils should feel free to insert provisions which they feel will benefit the partnership between local councils and the NRCS and seek clarification on issues which they do not understand. NARCDC can assist with any questions you may have. Feel free to call 202 434-4780 or e-mail narcdc@rcdnet.org

NARCDC National Board Meeting – June 9 and 10, Savannah Georgia

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