



LOWER PLATTE SOUTH natural resources district

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Agenda Item #7

Memorandum

Date: April 16, 2021
To: Each Director
From: Paul D. Zillig, General Manager
Subject: Executive Subcommittee Meeting Minutes

The Executive Subcommittee met at 5:30 pm on Wednesday, April 14, 2021 via video/teleconference. Directors participating were Deborah Eagan, Chelsea Johnson, David Landis, Bob Andersen, and Luke Peterson. Others participating included Kristin Buntemeyer, Nathan Kuhlman, David Potter and myself.

Chair Eagan called the meeting to order, welcomed those in attendance and moved to the first agenda item discussing any questions on the FY 21 Accomplishments and a review of the Budget Codes, Master Plan Goals & Objectives, and Measurable Goals.

The next agenda item was to consider salary adjustments for FY 2022, an organizational structure chart for the NRD was provided, which included employee job titles (attached). I reviewed my recommendation of a 2.0% salary increase and an additional \$19,000 for merit. I reported that NRD staff continues to do excellent professional work, the pandemic provided many new challenges to all facets of completing their assigned tasks and working with landowners and the public. The 2.0% salary increase is based on a regional Consumer Price Index increase of 1.7% for the past year (March-March) and an additional 0.3% for staff merit. Increases the past 5 years ranged from 1.9% to 3.0%. The proposed increase of \$19,000 for merit compares to a range of \$19,000 to \$24,500 over the past 5 years.

The Subcommittee discussed the recommendation and important work that staff does, additional discussion included concerns about impacts of the pandemic on other businesses and employees, and the need to review the NRD employee benefits. It was moved by Landis, seconded by Chelsea Johnson, and unanimously approved by the Subcommittee to **recommend that the Board of Directors approve for FY 2022 a 2.0% salary increase for all qualified employees and an additional \$19,000 for merit to be determined by the General Manager.**

The Subcommittee then reviewed the proposed FY 22 Actions & Budget Requests and FY 23-26 Actions for the Subcommittee's Program Area (Personnel/Policies/Legislation). Chelsea Johnson requested that the NRD work with NARD on building support for legislative efforts to prepare for changes in climate. The Subcommittee discussed this request, it was moved by Chelsea Johnson,

seconded by Landis, and unanimously approved by the Subcommittee to amend the FY 22 Action “Monitor and recommend positions on 2022 Legislation” to also include “and work with NARD on additional support of legislation supporting the preparation for changes in climate.” The Subcommittee then voted 5-0 to submit the FY 2022 Actions & Budget Requests to the Finance & Planning Subcommittee for inclusion in the 1st Draft of the FY 2022 Budget.

The next item was to consider a new Annual Operational Agreement with the United States Department of Agriculture, Natural Resources Conservation Service (USDA NRCS). Staff reviewed the attached proposed agreement (will need to be updated to include an increase in hourly wages if approved by the Board). It was moved by Peterson, seconded by Landis, and unanimously approved by the Subcommittee to **recommend the Board of Directors approve the FY 2022 Annual Operational Agreement with the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service.**

Potter then reported that the NRD has been selected to receive an additional grant from NACD (National Association of Conservation Districts). Potter reviewed the grant and reported that this grant would provide the NRD a total of \$59,600 to assist with Resource Technician funding. It was moved by Andersen, seconded by Peterson, and unanimously approved by the Subcommittee to **recommend the Board of Directors approve the Memorandum of Agreement with the National Association of Conservation Districts (NACD) for FY 2021 Technical Assistance Funds.**

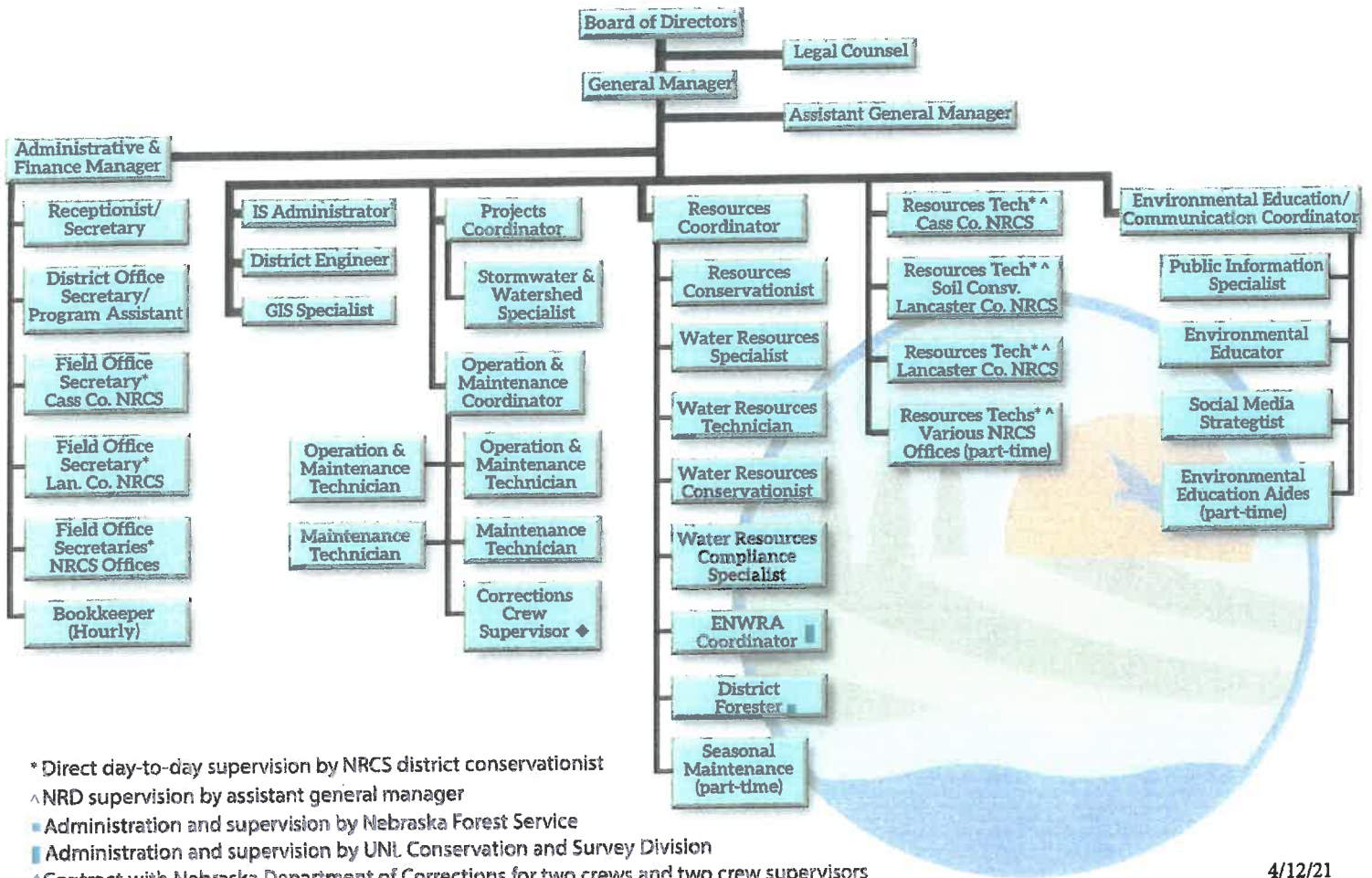
The Subcommittee then discussed Board Meeting options that will need to be determined after the Executive Order expires in May and/or LB 83 is potentially approved. Depending on those actions the NRD could be holding Board Meetings that would be virtual, in-person, or both. The Subcommittee expressed an interest in exploring options with a better audio-visual capability (downtown hotel conference room) with public parking arrangements provided. The Subcommittee also discussed the need to re-visit virtual subcommittee meeting authorization as we near the end of the pandemic. Buntmeyer reported that the Medicare Tax issue has been cleared up and is no longer a problem. The last report was that LB 406 has been completely revised and we need to review the changes on this bill that our position is to “monitor” (LB 406 was to create the Lower Platte River Infrastructure Task Force and provide funding).

There being no further business the meeting adjourned at 6:55 pm.

PDZ/pz

pc: Steve Seglin
Corey Wasserburger

ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE OF THE LOWER PLATTE SOUTH NRD



4/12/21

~~2021~~
2022
2021 OPERATIONAL AGREEMENT
between the
LOWER PLATTE SOUTH NATURAL RESOURCES DISTRICT
and the
NATURAL RESOURCES CONSERVATION SERVICE
UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

This Agreement covers the utilization of District funds to accelerate technical assistance and assist providing secretarial assistance to the county level Service (Natural Resources Conservation Service) offices in the District. The general intent for how these funds are to be utilized is outlined in the Memorandum of Agreement dated January 28, 2020.

The District will employ a secretary for both Lancaster and Cass County Service Field Offices. The District will coordinate the employment of secretaries in Butler, Otoe, Saunders, and Seward County Service Field Offices with neighboring Districts. The secretary will be employed for the purpose of receptionist, telephone operation, and clerical duties, including preparation of materials for mailing, filing, and record keeping.

The District will employ occasional technicians for each of the six county Service Field Offices. These technicians will assist with work that directly results in the design, layout, inspection, and certification of soil and water conservation practices in the District, and the paperwork directly related to the installation of these practices. Occasional technicians may also be hired for special natural resource projects at the direction of the General Manager.

The Service DC ^{they} will be responsible for planning when these occasional technicians are to be utilized and he/she will conduct all interviews and recommend hiring such personnel. Occasional technicians will be limited to less than 40 working hours/week, not be eligible for benefits, and will be paid monthly an hourly wage between \$13.00/hour to \$20.30/hour, depending on their capabilities, job duties, and experience.

will adjust the same as staff

The District budgeted funds for 1,000 hours of occasional technical assistance to the Service for FY 2021. These hours are allocated to each of the Service Field Offices in the following manner: ~~2021~~ 2022

Butler County	50 hours
Cass County	450 hours
Lancaster County	350 hours
Otoe County	50 hours
Saunders County	50 hours
Seward County	50 hours

2020 =
\$ 13.26
\$ 20.71

The District will employ one full-time technician to work out of the Cass County Service Offices and two full-time technicians to work out of the Lancaster County Service Office. The District will be solely responsible for the decisions concerning the employment status of these employees. The District will coordinate the employment of full-time technicians in the Butler, Otoe, Saunders, and Seward County Field Offices with neighboring Districts.

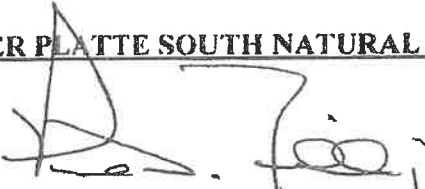
The full-time technicians will work out of the Cass and Lancaster County Service Offices. The NRD's policy concerning the prioritized jobs on which these employees are to work are as follows:

1. Design, layout, inspection, and certification of soil and water conservation practices in the District and the paperwork directly related to the installation of these practices. Promote non-structural conservation practices such as cover crops, buffer strips, reduced tillage, etc.
2. Special projects and programs of the District as directed by the NRD General Manager. These special projects and programs may require work District-wide.
3. General office support as needed at the NRCS Office.

All District employees will only be available to work on jobs that are consistent with District policy. District technical employees are to be available to assist with conservation practice design and layout without regard to whether cost-share assistance is to be provided.

This Agreement will remain in effect until July 1, 2021, or until succeeded by another Operational Agreement, and is subject to all the terms and conditions of the Memorandum of Agreement as identified above. This Agreement may be modified or terminated at any time by mutual consent of the parties hereto, or may be terminated by either party by giving thirty (30) days notice in writing to the other party.

LOWER PLATTE SOUTH NATURAL RESOURCES DISTRICT




General Manager

APRIL 17, 2020

Date

NATURAL RESOURCES CONSERVATION SERVICE, USDA



State Conservationist

April 27, 2020

Date

**Memorandum of Agreement
Between**

The National Association of Conservation Districts (NACD) and the Lower Platte South Natural Resources District

SUMMARY

This agreement (referred to as the "Agreement" or "MOA") is entered into by the National Association of Conservation Districts (referred to as "NACD"), located at 509 Capitol Court NE, Washington, DC 20002 and the: **Lower Platte South Natural Resources District** (referred to as "Grantee".)

Grantee Address:
**3125 Portia Street
Lincoln, NE 68521**

Grantee Contact Person **David Potter**
Email Address: **dpotter@lpsnrd.org**
Phone Numbers: **(402) 476-2729**

NACD shall provide the Grantee with a grant in the amounts of:

EQIP:	\$ 44,480.00
CSP:	\$ 4,000.00
COTA:	<u>\$ 11,120.00</u>
 Grant Total:	 \$ 59,600.00

The Grantee agrees to provide minimum match of the amount of **\$ 14,900.00**
The match must come from non-federal sources and should preferably be cash, but in-kind contributions or a combination of both is acceptable.

Number of positions **1**

Estimated Full Time Equivalent (FTE) in tenths of a year: **1.00**
(208 hours equals one tenth full time equivalent)

to carry out the initiatives which were outlined in the Grantee's proposal to the **NACD TA2021** Priority Request (PR) announced on January 8, 2021. That proposal as submitted and or as amended is hereby made a part of this Agreement as Exhibit I. These funds are made available by a Contribution Agreement between NACD and the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS). The requirements as specified in the RFP are also made a part of this Agreement as Exhibit II.

It is the intent of this Agreement and this project to increase the technical assistance available to the Grantee's community to improve the conditions of natural resources and the society that depend on them, while providing the maximum flexibility for the Grantee to carry out their responsibilities for these funds.

appropriate persons as necessary to assure understanding of the work and satisfactory completion thereof.

NACD agrees to cooperate with and provide assistance to the Grantee; which includes, designating a person or persons to whom the Grantee will contact and who will regularly review, discuss, and meet with (as possible and necessary) the Grantee regarding the services provided, the time for performance of the services and to assist in arranging meetings, conferences and other arrangements with NACD personnel to facilitate performance under this Agreement, and to ensure that all information and issues required for review by NACD are made available to the Grantee.

The Grantee shall consult with the personnel of NACD and other appropriate persons as necessary to assure understanding of the work and satisfactory completion thereof.

TERM OF AGREEMENT

This Agreement shall be in effect and binding for both parties for **13** months from the last signature date set forth below or 12 months from when a previous Agreement between NACD and the Grantee for similar work is closed, whichever is later but still within the terms of NACD agreement with NRCS, to carry out the work described in Exhibit 1 to the satisfaction of NACD, or until otherwise terminated. This Agreement may be extended for an additional period for reasons agreed upon by both parties including should additional funds become available.

This Agreement shall not obligate any participating parties to endorse, support, or otherwise influence any policy, legislation, or program activities.

TERMINATION

Either party to this agreement may terminate this agreement with a 60-day notice. In such a case any unused funds will be returned. This Agreement may also be terminated by NACD for noncompliance with its provisions.

RECORD KEEPING REQUIREMENTS

The Grantee shall keep all financial records in a manner consistent with generally accepted accounting procedures.

All disbursements made for this Agreement shall be only for obligations incurred in the performance of this Agreement and shall be supported by documentation and data, as appropriate to support such disbursements. All disbursements for this Agreement shall be for obligations incurred only after the effective date of this Agreement, unless specific authorization for prior disbursements has been given in writing by NACD.

PAYMENT TERMS AND CONDITIONS

Upon receipt of a signed copy of this Agreement, an initial check for twenty-five percent (three-month estimate of expenses for a one-year Agreement) of the Agreement amount will be issued to the Grantee. Assuming performance of the work continues on schedule, additional funds will be disbursed on a quarterly advanced basis until the grantee has received their entire grant.

CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

The Grantee expressly acknowledges that no officer or employee of NACD has been employed, retained, induced or directed by the Grantee to solicit or secure this Agreement with NACD upon an agreement,

minimize its impact, and make reasonable efforts to address the problem and carry out the obligations of this Agreement.

BINDING EFFECT

This Agreement shall ensure to the benefit and be binding upon the legal representatives of the parties hereto, subject to the grant of consent for assignment as provided in this Agreement.

SEVERABILITY

If any provision of this Agreement is held by a court of competent jurisdiction to be contrary to law, the remaining provisions of this Agreement shall remain in full force and effect.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, the parties have executed this Agreement as of the last signature date set forth below.

Chair or designated representative of the Grantee

(Please print name of signer)

Name of Grantee: **Lower Platte South Natural Resources District**

_____, 2021
(Month) (Day)



Jeremy Peters, CEO
National Association of Conservation Districts

April 2, 2021

Form Name: TA Grant Priority Funding Request
 Submission Started: February 12, 2021 4:55 pm
 Browser: unknown / unknown
 IP Address: 76.79.24.138
 Unique ID: 758448964
 Request ID: #66
 Submission Completed: February 18, 2021 4:04 pm
 Process Time: 5 day(s), 23 hour(s), 9 minute(s), 30 second(s)
 Participant(s):
 Location: 40.737400054932, -96.711196899414

NACD Technical Assistance Grant Priority Funding Request

Ready to begin? Yes

Please Identify Yourself

NACD Region Northern Plains
 State NE
 Organization Lower Platte South NRD
 Name of Contact David Potter
 Phone (402) 476-2729
 Address 3125 Portia Street
 Lincoln, NE 68521
 Email dpotter@lpsnrd.org

Funds that are Available

Do you want to request Funding? Yes

Your History with the TA Grants

Did you have a TA2018 grant? Yes
 Did you have a TA2019 grant? Yes
 Is your TA2019 grant closed? No
 Do you have a TA2020 grant? Yes
 Is your TA2020 grant closed? No

Your Most Recent Funding Agreement

How much was the grant for? 57600
 To date, how much has been spent? 0
 Number 57600

When do you expect to exhaust your current grant funds? Feb 2022

Ready to discuss your TA2021 Request? Yes

Your TA2021 Funding Request

Requested EQIP Funds 44480

Requested CSP Funds 4000

Requested COTA Funds 11120

Total Request 59600.00

Your minimum match required will be: 14900

TA Budget Worksheet Upload https://drive.google.com/uc?id=14wVWvqMpOzeh7iJVgkY6g3dJeNpwcpgv&export=download&display=/103032509_TABudgetWorksheet1.xlsxLowerPlatteSouthNRDNE_103032509_TABudgetWorksheet1.xlsx

Budgeted Match 14900

Total Proposed Budget 74500.00

Funding Explanatory Notes Cash match from NRD budget

Please confirm the Total Proposed Budget is correct Yes, we are ready to proceed

Your TA2021 Project Staffing

Number of districts where the funds will be used. 1

District(s) where the staff will be assigned Lower Platte South Natural Resources District

Total number of employees to be funded 1

Number of staff years to be worked, based on 2080 hours as 1 staff year 1.0

Number of Technical Specialists 0

Number of Resource Technicians 1

Number of Resource Conservationist/Planner 0

Number of Program Management Specialists	0
Number of Organization Management	0
Number of Other Staff	0
How many of these positions are for staff only employed for this project?	1
Have you accounted for all staff?	Yes

Your TA2021 Proposed Accomplishments

Expected Number of Contacts	150
Expected Number of Contracts	25
Expected Number of Practices Assisted	40
Expected Number of Presentations	2
Expected Number of Plans Assisted	50

Accomplishment Narrative

The extension of the current agreement will serve to maintain the current levels of conservation technical assistance to producers within the district. Technical assistance requests from producers continue to result in an increased workload within the district. This position will help to reduce workloads, maintain quality of work products, and increase access to conservation programs and staff technical assistance. The resources technician will be responsible for the following activities: 1) provide assistance with conservation plans and program contracts; 2) Survey, design, stake, and install vegetative and structural conservation practices; 3) Certify completed conservation practices; 4) Assist district staff with annual status reviews; 5) Provide general conservation technical assistance to producers; and 6) Assist with the obligation of federal contracts.

Is your proposal complete? Yes

Before you hit Submit

Signature Required Signature image not available.

Ready to Submit? Yes

NACD Region Rep Review

Is the NACD Region Correct? Yes

Funds Burn Rate checked? Explained in Notes

Budget Worksheet Check

Satisfies Requirements

Notes

They are just now closing 2019 grant and getting started on 2020 grant. Our burn estimate for 2019 is February 2021, and based on quarterly spending rates of \$13K, they should have the 2020 funds spent down by March 2021.

Ready for consideration?

Yes

Meg Leader

From: Meg Leader
Sent: Friday, January 8, 2021 10:19 AM
To: tagrantees2@email.nacdnet.org; tagrantees2020@email.nacdnet.org
Cc: 'Jill Demers'; 'Brad Smith'; state-contacts@email.nacdnet.org
Subject: NACD TA2021 Priority Requests are now OPEN!!

Today NACD is pleased to announce that the window for current TA Grantees to apply for continued funding is now open. There will be a total of \$15.03 million in technical assistance (TA) grant funding available once all documents are completed. These funds, provided in cooperation with the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS), will be administered by NACD to conservation districts in high-priority workload locations across the nation.

This round of funding will be referred to as TA2021 and current grantees are being given access to this Priority Funding Request (PR) ahead of a general Request for Proposals (RFP) that we anticipate having later this year.

The breakdown of available funding is as follows:

- \$9.0 million (60 percent of available funds) is to increase staff capacity to provide conservation operations technical assistance (COTA) planning
- \$4.2 million (28 percent of available funds) is to assist landowners in implementing EQIP contracts.
- \$1.8 million (12 percent of available funds) is to increase access to CSP

All funding requests require the total budget to include at least 20 percent local contribution as match. While cash is preferred, in-kind match will also be accepted, as well as a mix of the two. Your match type, source or amounts beyond the minimum will not affect your award chances.

The PR process begins with the current grantee completing and submitting an application.

- Once the PR application is submitted, it will go to your NACD Region Rep for review. If they have any questions, they will be in contact with you.
 - During the review window you can ask them to edit your information.
 - They will then complete the submission.
- All requests are then referred to the leadership of your state/territory conservation partnership to ensure we continue to direct funds to the highest priority areas as identified in each state/territory. The leaders will review and rank all applications.
- Funding requests will depend on:
 1. Availability of funds in each program area (EQIP, CSP, COTA)
 2. Guidance from the leadership of the state/territory conservation partnership

3. Your record of reporting, including compliance of all reporting deadlines and successful completion of grant activities
4. The date you indicate you will exhaust all current grant funds

The TA2021 PR applications are being collected at [TA Grant PR](#) and will need to be submitted no later than 11:59 PM ET, February 21, 2021, for full consideration. If you do not complete the application in time, you can apply through the RFP.

The application form's landing page has a downloadable PDF preview of the application. This application cannot be saved as a draft.

When you submit your application, you will need to complete and upload a [TA Budget Worksheet](#). There is a link to the worksheet within the application. You will not need Concurrence Forms at this time.

The application will ask for your best estimate of when you will exhaust your current funding. Please note that this is not when your current MOAs will close, but assuming we grant you any extensions, when will you have spent all your funds. Proposals do not need to match your current funding levels or proposed accomplishments. You may also include additional partners.

If you submit a proposal for the PR and are funded, the funds will be handled as a separate grant with its own MOA.

Please reach out to your NACD Region Rep, or me, if you have any questions.

Thank you.



Meg Leader (She/Her)
NACD Projects and Partnerships Coordinator
p: 812.512.1811
appointments: [TA Grant Support Scheduling](#)
w: www.nacdnet.org

