

# AZ NRCD STATE ASSOCIATION NEWSLETTER

Arizona Natural Resource Conservation Districts State Association  
P.O. Box 35625 Tucson, AZ 85740



## AZ NRCD Winter Legislative Day

### *Mark Your Calendars!!!*

**February 18<sup>th</sup>, 2014**

Please mark your calendars!!! The Winter Legislative Day has been scheduled for **February 18<sup>th</sup>, 2014!!** Please be sure to save the date, as we need all of your support!!! Speakers at our Winter Legislative Day include Karen Budd-Falen, Owner/Attorney, Budd-Falen Law Offices, L.L.C., Vanessa Hickman, Commissioner ASLD, and Steven Williams, Natural Resources Division Director ASLD.

It is very important that District Supervisors spend this day updating & informing our Legislators of their accomplishments & achievements in conserving & enhancing the natural resources of our State. District Supervisors are not only responsible stewards of the land, but also function as a local unit of government & we must demonstrate our accountability by reporting to those that approve our funding.

We are always grateful for the support of our Legislators, & always strive to help them better understand our role in supporting the needs of their constituents & our Cooperators.

## *Important Winter Legislative Announcements*

Article 37-1014 of Arizona's revised statutes states that the land commissioner may request on a biannual basis \$30,000 per District and \$60,000 per Education Center for funding from the legislature. That is for two years.

This year, your State Association is pursuing a change in that legislation that will allow the commissioner to request up to \$50,000 per year for each District, and the same for each Education Center. We need you help at the Winter

### INSIDE THIS ISSUE

NRCS Announcement	Cover
Winter Legislative Day	1
Important Winter Legislative Announcements	1
Professional Development- Open Meeting Law	2
President's Announcement	2
Arizona Cattle Growers' Association Winter Meeting	3
AZ NRCD Summer Conference 2013 Highlights	3
Due Notices to Go Out	5
NRCD Election Deadlines	5

This year we also have another very important message to stress to our Legislators. As Districts, we serve as the foundation in forming conservation partnerships with various stakeholders, including Federal Agencies. We form these partnerships to the benefit our Cooperators & to secure the conservation of our working lands & natural resources. We must stress the importance of a working partnership & relationship with our NRCS State Conservationist. As your State Association, we always encourage accountability & solution oriented communication among partners & stakeholders.

*Registration & other information regarding travel, speakers & appointments will soon be sent out to all Districts.*

Legislative Meeting to come and visit your Legislator, and ask him or her, to sponsor this legislation. We will have talking points available for you to take with you on your visit. But we can't do it without each District's participation.

Other legislation that is in line with our policy is a bill that requires the Legislature to consent to any purchase of private land by the federal government. The language requires the Legislature to seek the advice of the affected

## Winter Legislative Day- Professional Development Opportunity

### *Open Meeting Law Training*

Based on requests from many District Supervisors, Amber Morin, ASLD NRCD Manager, has scheduled an Open Meeting Law Training opportunity to be held on Tuesday, February 18, 2014, in the afternoon of the AZ NRCD Winter Legislative Day.

Natural Resource Conservation Districts (NRCDs) are organized under State and Tribal law. Governed by locally elected & appointed officials, districts evaluate the conservation needs of their respective areas, & create unique partnerships between federal, state &

local agencies to address natural resource concerns. Additionally, NRCDs are administered by the Arizona State Land Department, which is also responsible for ensuring that NRCDs are complying with state laws & regulations.

This is an extremely important educational opportunity for all Supervisors, staff, & volunteers regarding the requirements of adhering to the Open Meeting Law.

## President's Announcement

By Bill Schock, AZ NRCD President

With the hustle and bustle of the holiday season behind us, I hope everyone was able to enjoy it with good friends and family. We are off to a new year with renewed opportunities to make a positive influence in the condition of our state.

The upcoming Winter Legislative Meeting will give us an opportunity to showcase the achievements of our Districts to our respective Legislators and to show them that their continued support will yield even greater improvements to our states soil and water resources. Our commitment to sustainable agriculture is a cornerstone of our states prosperity and we need to remind our congressmen of our importance.

We are starting this year with Katie Reeves as our Executive Secretary of the State Association. She is already taking on some of the heavy responsibilities of

keeping us organized and looking after the many needs of our Districts.

We are very appreciative of the great job that Stefanie Smallhouse performed as Executive Director and we will miss her presence and advice very much. Stefanie provided a depth of skill and knowledge that will be greatly missed and we hope she stays available with her wise counsel.

One area that we intend to work on this year will be to develop closer ties with other government agencies like the Forest Service, Bureau of Land Management, US Fish and Wildlife and the AZ Game and Fish Department. Learning to work more closely with these agencies during their regulatory and planning efforts should provide benefits to the landowners that inhabit the rural areas of our state.

*"Our commitment to sustainable agriculture is a cornerstone of our states prosperity and we need to remind our congressmen of our importance."*



Bill Schock and Gary John, AZNRCD, presenting Jack Ladd, Hereford NRCD, the AZNRCD Conservation Heritage Award  
Photo Credits: Rachel Thomas, Hereford NRCD

## Arizona Cattle Growers' Association Winter Meeting February 19<sup>th</sup>, 2014

The Arizona Cattle Grower's Association will be hosting their Legislative Winter Meeting on **Wednesday, February 19<sup>th</sup>, 2014**. Speakers include William Perry Pendley, President, Mountain States Legal Foundation and author of "Sagebrush Rebel", Leatta McLaughlin, Director Animal Services Division & Perry Durham, DVM, Arizona State Vet.

As your State Association, we felt it imperative to emphasize to our Legislators the importance our Cooperators and Producer to Arizona's sustainability, and the magnitude of our concerns regarding the management of Natural Resource concerns in our State. It is our hope that by scheduling our Winter Legislative Event on **Tuesday, February 18<sup>th</sup>, 2014**, the day prior to the AGCA's, that we are able to

bolster our attendance to both events by reducing travel burdens. As your State Association, we need the presence of the Districts to really make an impact to our Legislators. If at all possible, please plan to attend both events.

We need your support!



## AZ NRCD Summer Conference 2013 Highlights

Sierra Vista, AZ August 25-27<sup>th</sup>, 2013

The AZ NRCD Summer Conference, hosted by Hereford NRCD in Sierra Vista, was held on August 26-27, 2013 and was a huge success! Pre-conference activities were kicked off Sunday evening with presentations from Stefanie Smallhouse, AZNRCD Executive Director & Amber Morin, ASLD NRCD Manager, updating District Supervisors on local planning & the 2014 elections.

Approximately 100 Supervisors, Cooperators, & Partners from all over the state attended the two day conference which included educational & informative presentations, as well as an exciting field tour of multiple resource management sites within the Hereford NRCD.

The field tour was the highlight of the conference & began at the Hayhursts' Brockline Ranch. Jack



AZ NRCD Summer Conference 2013 Hayhurst Ranch  
Photo Credits: Kathy Morris

Ladd from Hereford NRCD welcomed conference attendees and introduced ranch host Mike Hayhurst, who demonstrated & allowed participants to visually experience first-hand accounts of his success in the use of herbicide Spike 20 treatment in his invasive brush management plan.

Also included in the tour was Flume No. 6 on the

*Legislative Announcements from page 1*

County Board of Supervisors, *and the affected NRCD*, before it gives its consent. If the bill moves forward this will give real power to the Districts to be able to protect the tax base within its boundaries, as required by the legislature.

We need your help as leaders in your Districts to push these bills. Contact Katie now to RSVP so she can set up your appointments with your legislators.

*“But we can’t do it without  
each District’s participation.”*

*Summer Conference 2013 from page 3*

Walnut Gulch Experimental Watershed. At this stop, personnel provided information about the Walnut Gulch Experimental Watershed, including its operations & origin in 1951 by the Research Division of the Soil Conservation Service to study the role of watershed treatments on downstream water yield.

Charleston Bridge on the San Pedro River was the third stop on the tour, & everyone gathered to listen to presentations on Federal & Local Planning in the Upper San Pedro Valley from the Conservation Management Branch at Fort Huachuca & the Cochise County Board of Supervisors.



On Behalf of the AZ NRCDs State Association, Bill Schock & Gary John award Senator Gail Griffin the AZNRCD Good Hand Award.  
Photo Credits: Rachel Thomas, Hereford NRCD

The final stop of the tour concluded with music & a casual dinner at the Brown Canyon Ranch in the Coronado National Forest. This delicious dinner was catered by the Arizona Farm Bureau & served by the Tombstone High School FFA students. The evening culminated in an awards ceremony where Senator Gail Griffin received the AZNRCD Good Hand Award & Jack Ladd received the AZNRCD Conservation Heritage Award.

The final day of the conference included presentations from Rodney Held, Executive Director AZ Water Protection Fund, & Keisha Tatem, NRCS State Conservationist who spoke on Conservation Implementation Strategy, Local Work Groups, & District Planning. Educational sessions covered a variety of topics including ecosystem services, social media, & watersheds. The afternoon concluded with Committee Hearings & the AZNRCD Board of Directors meeting.

## Dues Notices to Go Out

As your State Association, we are striving to represent you at the state and national level, and raise awareness of what you do, while providing you with training, education, program partnership opportunities & capacity building.

Dues notices will go out this month for districts. These are the dues to be paid for the 2013-2014 calendar year. Your dues are a considerable amount of our operating budget. Please pay what you can so that the Association can continue to work hard for you. We have

experienced severe budget cuts due to the new funding restrictions of the Conservation Partnership with the NRCS, & as of yet, have been unable to secure a new contract.

In spite of these severe setbacks, your State Association continues to operate to our fullest capacity. We appreciate greatly all your support and dues contributions.

*“In spite of these severe setbacks, your State Association continues to operate to our fullest capacity.”*

## NRCD Election Deadlines

By Amber Morin, ASLD NRCD Manager

### Important Election Dates:

- Jan/Feb 2014 NRCD Formation of Election Board: One Inspector & Two Judges
- February 1, 2014 Election Board to receive ASLD Election Advisory Guide and Election Materials
- Weeks of Feb 23 and March 2 Notice of NRCD Election in Newspaper
- March 25, 2014 Deadline: Submit to ASLD Write-in Candidate Nomination Petition. No Signatures Required.
  - NOTE: copy of candidate's cooperator agreement, voter registration and driver's license should be provided to ASLD
- April 15, 2014 Deadline: for Election Board to Submit to ASLD the Ballot Request Form
- April 24, 2014 Deadline: Submit to ASLD Nominated Candidate Petition 25 Signatures Required
  - NOTE: copy of candidate's cooperator agreement, voter registration and driver's license should be provided to ASLD
- April 25, 2014 Official Ballots Mailed out by ASLD Email Notification of Uncontested Election – In This Case, No Election Will Need to be Held
- May 3, 2014 Election Day
- May/June 2014 Elected Supervisors meet to select temporary chair and submit nominees to the ASLD Commissioner for the two appointed



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**Motto**

Conservation Districts seek  
to promote responsible  
management and use of  
natural resources

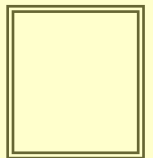
## NRCS Announcement

Keisha Tatem, NRCS State Conservationist, announced that all Districts had been sent information regarding the Conservation Implementation Strategy for 2014. Please review this packet. If you have not received this information, please contact the State Association and your DC.

If you are interested in formulating your Conservation Implementation Strategy, please inform your DC and the State Association by ***February 15<sup>th</sup>, 2014***. It is very important that you also notify the State Association of your District's interest. This is a new process for Arizona, and we want to be sure that each District receives the support it needs. The results of a Technical Writer could be crucial in guaranteeing and sustaining the long term ability of the Districts to protect the resource concerns of our Cooperators.

Be note that the next STC meeting will be held on ***Tuesday, February 11<sup>th</sup>, 2014***. Please contact your local NRCS Field Office if you are interested in participating in this meeting via video teleconferencing.

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