



# Climate Change Mitigation

National Association of Conservation District (NACD) members, individual conservation districts, are local technical resources that assist landowners, communities, and others with natural resource protection. Conservation districts across the country have worked with landowners to adopt conservation practices for over 70 years. Practices we know as the cornerstones of good conservation and land stewardship are also practices that increase soil organic content and sequester carbon.

Climate change has the potential to have serious impacts on American agriculture. Maintaining domestic production and food supply is critical to the security of our country. A recent US Department of Agriculture study showed that climate change will have a significant impact on agriculture.

Impacts could include:

- Shifts in crop patterns
- Severe weather fluctuations
- Changes in the growing seasons
- Flooding
- Drought
- Increased risk of forest fire

Climate change policies, correctly crafted, will boost activities to reduce greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions by rewarding landowners not only for their environmental and conservation benefits, but also for GHG emissions reductions achieved on behalf of society. We recommend that climate change legislation recognize the contributions of agriculture, forestry and community conservation efforts to reduce GHG emissions via market-based payments for emissions offsets.

Today several of NACD's members are working with the Chicago Climate Exchange (CCX) and other partners, participating in carbon sequestration efforts to mitigate GHG emissions. In this case, Conservation districts are a known and trusted resource to work with landowners to ensure that they understand their climate mitigation contracts and are fulfilling their contractual obligations. Many districts have or are seeking to become aggregators of offsets or third-party verifiers of contracted practices.

The GHG emissions reductions that agriculture and forestry can provide on behalf of society cannot be understated. Building upon our foundation of natural resource protection, we believe that additional gains can be made to sequester carbon and reduce GHG emissions. However, we must also recognize those landowners that have already taken appropriate conservation activities on their land, in order to protect existing valuable carbon stocks. We cannot risk losing the conservation efforts, sequestered carbon, and natural resource protections we have in place today.

***Land and resource management practices that can help combat climate change:***

- Proper forest and grassland management
- Restoration of wetlands
- Use of no-till and conservation tillage
- Manure management
- Use of buffer and filter strips
- Soil carbon sequestration

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