



NJACD Overview

The **New Jersey Association of Conservation Districts (NJACD)** is a 50-year institution providing professional development and leadership programs primarily to the 15 Soil Conservation Districts covering 21 counties in the State as well as public outreach. The Soil Conservation Districts are locally-led, government agencies that implement conservation programs in consultation and cooperation with the New Jersey Department of Agriculture and other State and Federal agencies and/or organizations.

The genesis of Soil Conservation programs in the United States began with an Act of Congress in 1937 to remedy the environmental devastations wrought by the Dust Bowl era to peoples and agricultural lands throughout the country and beyond our borders. For over 75 years, Soil Conservation Districts and their partners have been working to address soil and water challenges and natural resource needs.

As a **qualified nonprofit 501c(3) organization**, NJACD plays an important role in statewide and national conservation programs for the Districts, as well as the general public. NJACD provides support and service in the development of statewide conservation education, leadership and professional programs. It is an important link to national organizations like the National Association of Conservation Districts (NACD), the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA), the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS), the U.S. Forest Service (USFS) and the Fish & Wildlife Service (USFWS), just to name a few.

NJACD is dedicated to fostering leadership in educating and informing the public about conservation issues. In serving as the principle force of professional development and training of District Supervisors and Staff, NJACD continues to evaluate Conservation District roles and operations to improve program delivery.

An informed public is central to the formulation and implementation of public policy decisions. Further, the Association promotes and implements programs that conserve soil, water and related natural resources in New Jersey.

An Important Place to be - New Jersey!

New Jersey lies within the strategic crossroads of the Boston-Washington megalopolis and contributes substantially to the New York and Philadelphia metropolitan areas in terms of an educated and skilled populace, extensive roadways, air and rail transportation, as well as major international seaports on the Hudson and Delaware Rivers.

New Jersey is one of the smallest and yet most densely populated States in the nation, with almost 9 million people residing within a land area of 8,729 square miles. The State's population density is currently reported

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to be more than 1,210 residents per square mile. Counties vary greatly with major population densities found in Essex, Union, and Hudson in the East, as well as Camden in the West, to fairly rural communities found in Salem, Cumberland, Cape May, Sussex, Warren and Hunterdon, with Burlington and Atlantic located roughly in between stretching from the Delaware to the Atlantic Ocean.

Fondly and historically known as the Garden State, it is blessed with a unique and profitable Agriculture industry and possesses extensive wild areas found in the Pinelands, Highlands and Ridge & Valley region. The State contains an abundance of National Wildlife Refuges, State Forests, Parks and local preserves, plus our acclaimed Seashore.

Soil and water conservation is critical for residents and visitors, commerce and industry. Progressive plans and programs to sustain our natural resources have resulted in a diverse habitat for a myriad of plants, fish and wildlife. The disparities in terrain as well as human and natural populations have added to the rich tapestry that is New Jersey. NJACD has an established positive track record of serving the 15 Districts well by providing networking, training and public outreach for the benefit of many different stakeholders.

NJACD Strengths:

- ✓ Expertise of 75 local District Supervisors – State appointed local officials
- ✓ The expertise and experience of District Employees in identifying and addressing conservation needs within their District
- ✓ NJACD has been a Statewide conservation institution for more than 50 years
- ✓ Diverse and talented membership and Board of Directors
- ✓ Institutional Stability
- ✓ Independently funded as a 501(c)(3), the Association is non-profit organization dedicated to education, research and public service
- ✓ Able to leverage resources - both manpower and financial
- ✓ Statewide view of conservation issues – facilitating implementation of conservation practices and programs across District boundaries
- ✓ We are the local and Statewide presence of a conservation partnership that goes beyond the State to regional and national levels
- ✓ The Association is the liaison and linkage to the National Conservation Program and Partnership
- ✓ The Association interfaces national trends and issues via NACD, NASCA, NCDEA and other organizations
- ✓ Our members are committed to the science-based wise use of natural resources
- ✓ Commitment to promoting conservation for the citizens of New Jersey
- ✓ Promotes the conservation ethic that results in the long term wise use of natural resources
- ✓ The membership works effectively with traditional and new partners of the conservation network in order to extend the reach and impact of its programs
- ✓ Ability to leverage public and private funding
- ✓ Serve as facilitator providing assistance to landowners/users, Conservation Districts, State Government and other conservation organizations to improve communication and allocation of resources.
- ✓ Active working Relationships with Federal, State and Local Governments

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