



Natural Resources Conservation Service  
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

# State Technical Committee Basics

NRCS Nevada STAC Meeting  
June 11, 2024



USDA is an equal opportunity provider, employer and lender.

**FARM PRODUCTION AND CONSERVATION**  
FSA | NRCS | RMA | Business Center

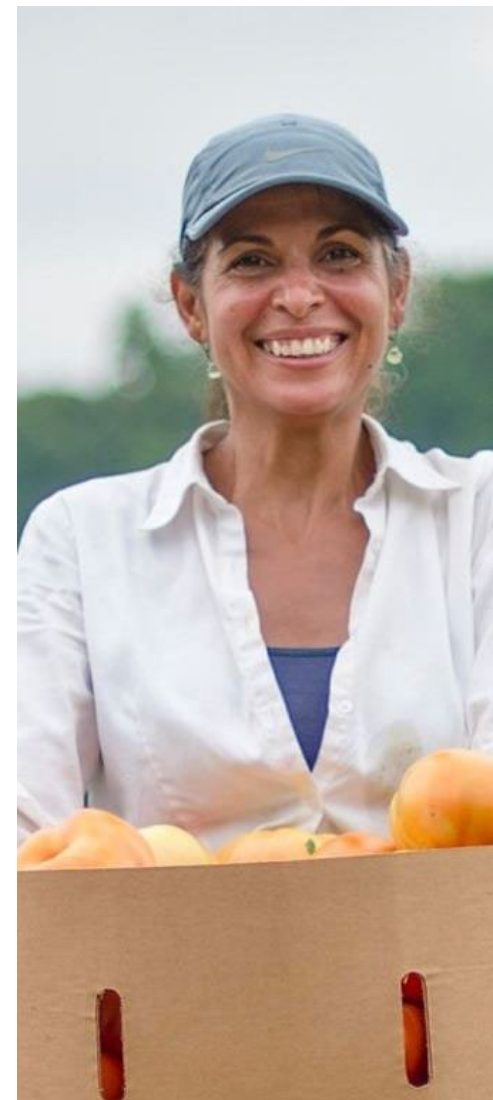
# Locally Led Conservation, Local Work Groups and the State Technical Committee

- Purpose: To provide background on how the STAC is supposed to function based on NRCS policy



# What is locally led conservation?

- Title 440 Programs Manual, Part 500
- Steps involving community stakeholders in natural resource planning, solution development, and evaluation of results.
- Begins with the local conservation district
- Driven by natural resource conservation needs and concerns, not programs.





# Steps in locally led conservation

- Conservation needs assessment
- Conservation Action Plan
- Action Plan Implementation
- Evaluation of Results



# NRCS role in locally led conservation

- Provide assistance in identifying resource conservation needs
- Provide technical and program advice to stakeholders
- Assist in developing and implementing strategies to include socially and economically disadvantaged groups in the locally led effort



# Conservation Program Delivery

- The products of the locally led process provide USDA with conservation needs, resource concerns, priorities and recommendations regarding program administration and implementation.
- State Technical Committees and Local Working Groups provide input on State and local conservation program delivery.



# Items LWGs and the STAC provide input on

- Conservation Innovation Grants (CIG)
- Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP)
- Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP)
- Grazing Lands Conservation Initiative
- Conservation of private grazing land
- Conservation Reserve Program (CRP)

# Local Working Groups

- Title 440 Programs Manual, Part 501, Subpart B
- Responsible for:
  - Identifying primary resource concerns and high priority areas needing assistance
  - Recommending USDA conservation program application and funding criteria, eligible practices, and payment rates
  - Assisting NRCS and CDs with outreach to identify educational and producer training needs

# LWG membership

- Information about how subcommittees can be used by the STAC
- May include but is not limited to Federal, State, County, Tribal, or local government representatives. Examples include:
  - NRCS district conservationist
  - Members of conservation district boards and county FSA committees
  - FSA county executive director or designee
  - Cooperative extension board members
  - Tribal members

# CD responsibilities for LWGs

- Develop conservation needs assessment
- Assemble the local working group
  - Set the agenda
  - Conduct the LWG meetings
- Transmit the LWG's priority areas and funding requests to the NRCS designated conservationist or State Technical Committee

# NRCS responsibilities for LWGs

- Participate in LWG meetings
- Encourage other USDA agencies to participate
- Identify available program priorities and available resources
- Advise the LWG on technical issues, program policies, procedures, and other matters related to program delivery

# State Technical Committees

- Title 440 Programs Manual, Subpart C
- Responsibilities of STACs include:
  - Provide information and recommendations to USDA on conservation priorities and criteria for programs including application and funding criteria, practices and payment percentages
  - Identify emerging resource concerns and program needs
  - Recommend conservation practice standards and specifications

# STAC membership

- The STAC is composed of ag producers, private forest land owners, and other professionals from a variety of interests and disciplines in soil, water, air, plant, and wildlife sciences.
- Individuals or groups wishing to become members of the STAC may submit a request explaining their interest and outlining their credentials for becoming a member to the State Conservationist.

# STAC Membership

- There are 13 categories that must be represented on the STAC
  - NRCS
  - FSA
  - FSA State Committee
  - US Forest Service
  - National Institute of Food and Agriculture
  - Federally recognized tribes encompassing more than 100,000 acres within the state
  - Association of Soil and Water Conservation Districts
  - State Departments or Agencies including:
    - Agricultural Agency
    - Fish and Wildlife Agency
    - Forestry Agency
    - Soil and Water Conservation Agency
    - Water Resources Agency
  - Ag producers representing crops and livestock raised in the state
  - Non-profit organizations with conservation expertise and experience working with ag producers
  - Agribusiness
  - Other Federal agencies or persons knowledgeable about economic or environmental impacts of conservation techniques

# Becoming a STAC member

- Requests to become a STAC member need to be submitted in writing to the State Conservationist.
- Requests should include an expression of interest or reasons for wanting to join the STAC and an outline of the applicant's credentials.

# STAC Subcommittees

- Can be used to analyze and refine specific issues
- Are open to the public and may seek public participation
- Recommendations are presented to the STAC



# STAC Subcommittee Examples

- EQIP Ranking Criteria Subcommittee
- Payment Schedule Subcommittee
- Urban Ag
- Tribal (more on this in the next segment)



# Tribal Advisory Committee

- To introduce the idea of a separate body, whether an advisory committee or subcommittee, dedicated specifically to addressing tribal concerns and issues.



# Local Work Group Update

- To review the information from FY24 Local Work Group meetings regarding priorities and resource concerns and talk about how the information is used by the STAC and NRCS.





# What have the LWGs been up to?

- Update from Melany Aten, Conservation District Program Manager, about recent efforts to get LWGs reengaged.

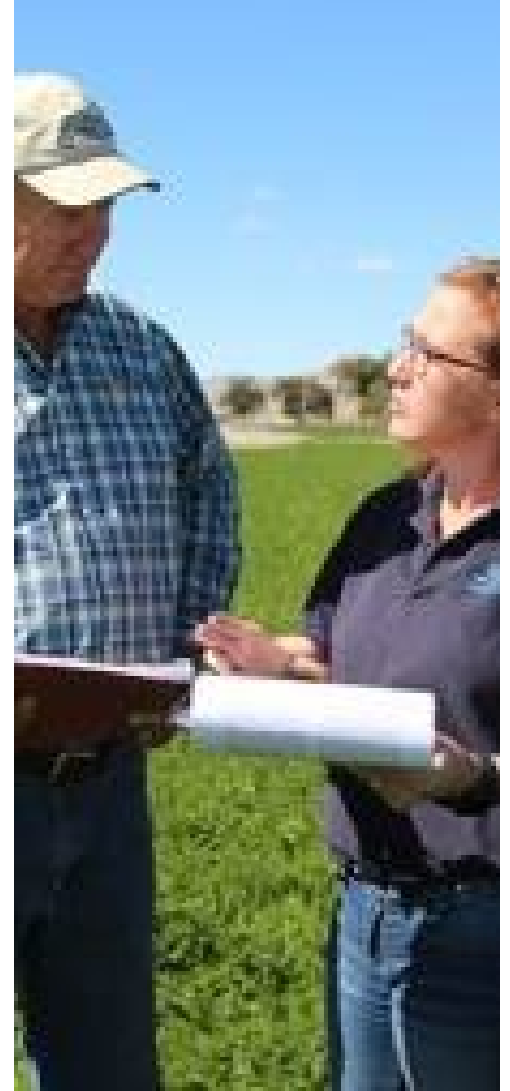


# LWG Input

- We received reports from three Local Work Groups and two conservation districts.
- LWGs: Elko-Eureka, Southern Nevada, Winnemucca
- CDs: Lincoln County, Tonopah

# STAC Recommendations

- To review the process for submitting recommendations to NRCS through the STAC and tasking for recommendations from this meeting.



# Local Recommendations

- Recommendations for local program delivery should be submitted to the local District Conservationist.
- The local DC considers the recommendations from the local working group, along with technical expertise and national and State program policies, to develop the local NRCS conservation program available in their assigned area.

# State Recommendations

- Recommendations for State program delivery should be submitted to the State Technical Committee
- The State Technical Committee considers the recommendations from the local working group to develop State conservation priorities and program delivery recommendations to the State Conservationist.

# Request for Recommendations

- STAC members are asked to submit recommendations on the following items by **Friday, July 12**
  - Priorities and Resource Concerns
  - Payment Schedules
  - Subcommittee formation
  - Fall meeting dates and topics
- Recommendations can be sent to Chris Rose at [Christopher.rose@usda.gov](mailto:Christopher.rose@usda.gov)