



Our nation's private and public lands are a major source of biodiversity, carbon storage, clean water, clean air, wildlife habitat, recreational opportunities, and other benefits and services for all Americans. Farmers, ranchers and forest landowners help ensure the continuous production of these ecosystem services, in addition to the production of more traditional products. Often, the stewardship benefits they provide are with little to no compensation for their investments in conservation practices.

Conservation districts can play a strategic role in providing solutions to global climate change and national energy security by promoting ecosystem services, carbon sequestration, bioenergy and biobased products. As a trusted point of contact for landowners, conservation districts play an essential role by providing technical assistance, conservation planning and monitoring performance to ensure sustainability.

NACD believes it is premature for the government to promote or move forward with a carbon reduction plan in the U.S. In the event that a carbon reduction program becomes law, we should recognize that agricultural and forestry operations may reduce greenhouse gas emissions and offset other emissions. Methods for sequestering carbon include: no-till farming, use of cover crops, mulching of crop residue and crop rotations. Carbon can also be sequestered through sustainable forestry practices, in which carbon is stored by a combination of sustainable harvesting yields, reforestation and natural processes. Once carbon is sequestered, credits can be generated that have market value and can be sold to industries needing to offset carbon emissions.

- **Energy and climate change policy and legislation should not increase the costs of agricultural and forestry productivity.**
- **NACD opposes any federal, state or local government emissions tax that would increase energy costs for agriculture and forestry.**
- **NACD supports robust offset markets that provide economic opportunities for agriculture and forestry.**
- **NACD also supports an incentive-based program for landowners that may be unable to participate in an offset program.**
- **NACD supports bioenergy for the benefits it provides to the environment, national security and renewable domestic energy supplies, while at the same time addressing the ongoing needs of job growth, rural economic development and local investment.**