

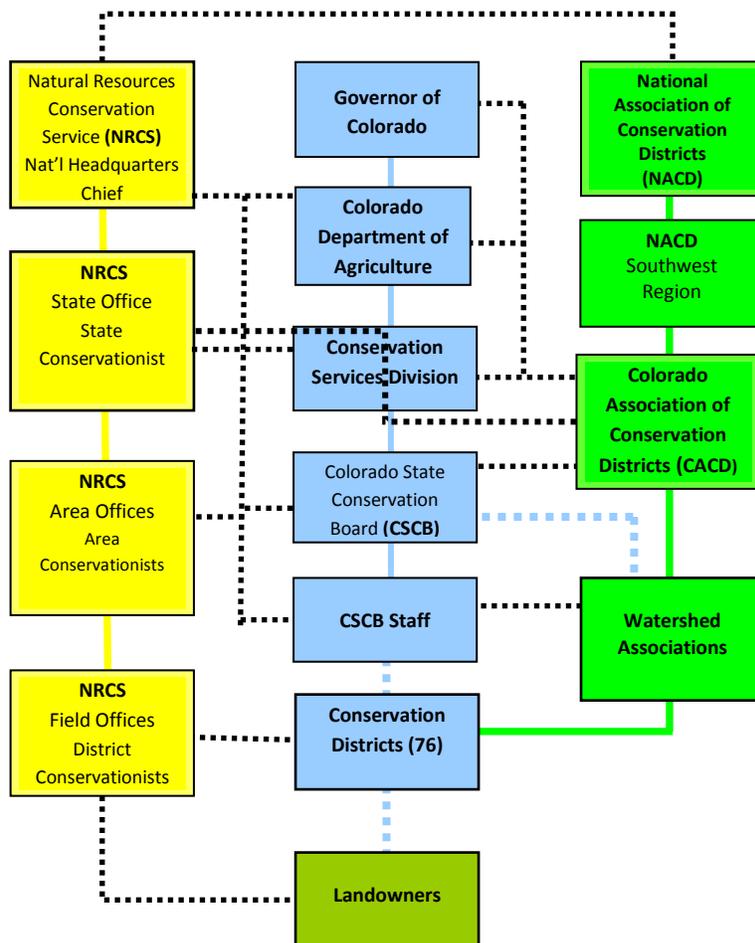
Partnerships



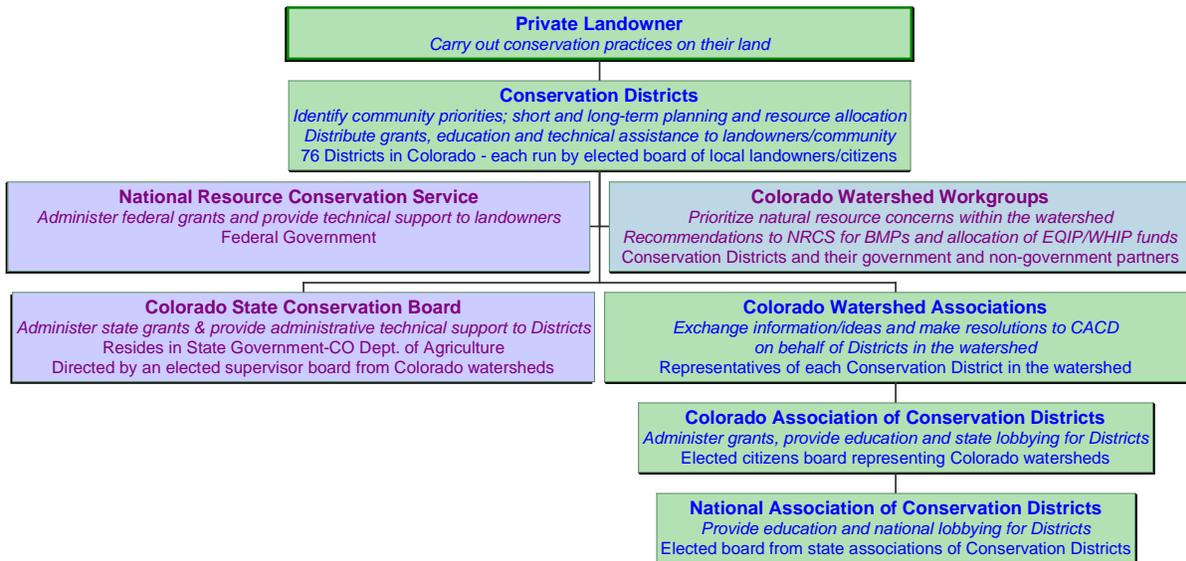
As Conservation Districts establish priorities and direct action on local natural resource concerns, they often work together on multi-district conservation activities, such as watershed projects. Districts rely on cooperative assistance and funding from federal, state and local governments; district associations; and private organizations and businesses. Many agencies and organizations have a strong interest in the same natural resources that districts are working with. Assistance can be set up formally through a Cooperative Agreement or a Memorandum of Understanding. Districts can also involve groups more informally by appointing their representatives as advisors or committee members.

Conservation districts work primarily with several close partnerships as illustrated by the chart below. These relationships are important as districts work addressing natural resource concerns of local landowners.

Conservation Organizations Partnership Flow Chart (Federal, State, Nonprofit/Private)



The following chart explains the structure of conservation districts beginning with the local landowners and the organizations that work in concert to provide effective conservation and protection of Colorado's natural resources.



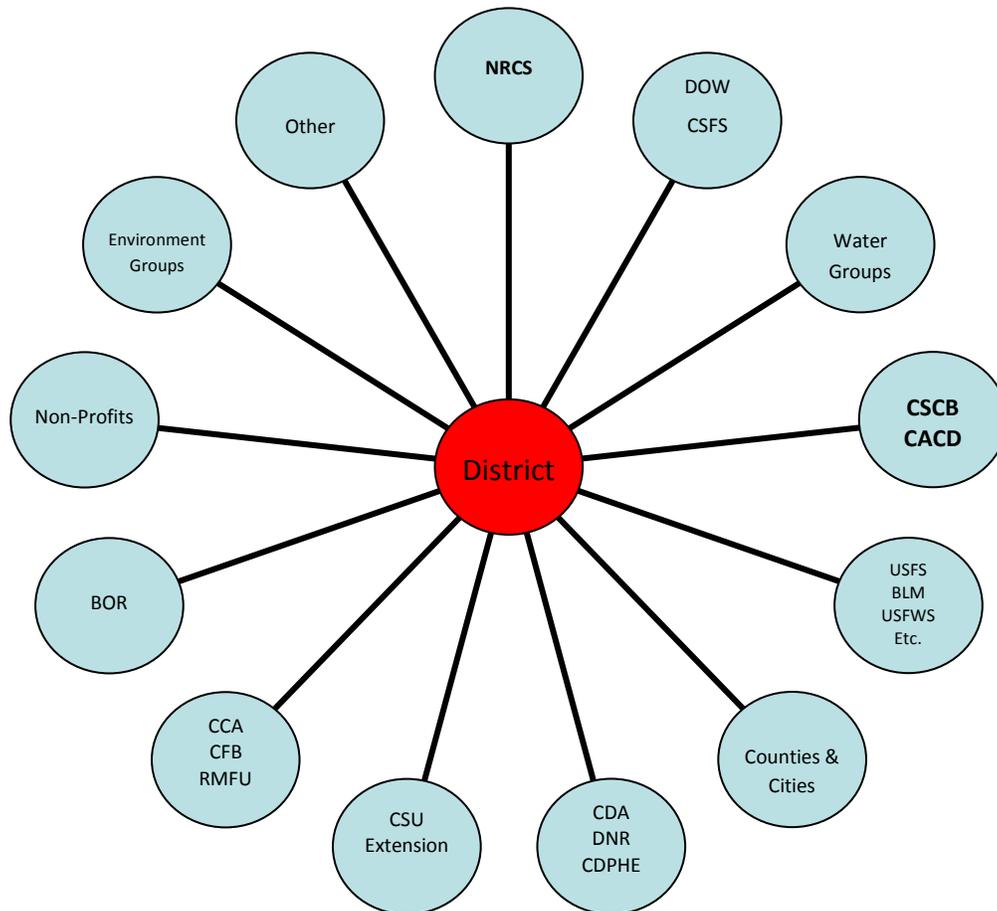
Conservation Partnership Hub

The American Heritage® Dictionary defines **hub** as a center of activity or interest; a focal point.



The center of a wheel illustrates that the local conservation district in Colorado is recognized as the local **hub**, connecting land owners to educational, financial, and technical assistance for implementing conservation practices to address a wide range of conservation issues in Colorado. Districts aspire to be recognized and respected for putting people with questions and concerns about soil, water, and other natural resource issues in touch with people with answers and solutions. Ideally, citizens recognize the district as a key leader in addressing natural resource issues locally and statewide.

Conservation District (CD) Partnership Diagram



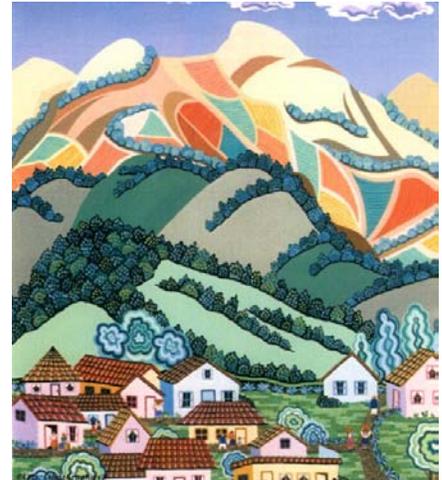
BLM – Bureau of Reclamation
BOR - Bureau of Reclamation
CACD – Colorado Association of Conservation Districts
CCA – Colorado Cattlemen’s Association
CDA – Colorado Department of Agriculture
CDPHE – Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment
CFB – Colorado Farm Bureau
CSCB – Colorado State Conservation Board
CSFS - Colorado State Forest Service

CSU Extension – Colorado State University Extension
DNR – Colorado Department of Natural Resources
DOW- Division of Wildlife
NRCS - Natural Resources Conservation Service
RMFU – Rocky Mountain Farm Bureau
USFS – US Forest Service
USFWS – US Fish and Wildlife Service
Water - Water Conservation & Conservancy Districts, Counties & Cities Environmental Organizations

Defining “Locally-Led” Conservation

Locally-led conservation is based on the principle that local people make the best decisions for their own communities. Locally-led conservation involves taking steps so that the entire community is involved in both planning and implementation of natural resource projects. To be effective, the following steps must be included in locally-led conservation.

1. Reaching out to the public and bringing local stakeholders together
2. Using a needs assessment to analyze local issues and concerns
3. Setting local priorities based on public input and needs assessment
4. Identifying the resources available to address local needs and priorities
5. Developing and implementing a plan for action
6. Reviewing and evaluating needs and actions for effective implementation of “locally-led” conservation
7. Building and maintain local shareholder involvement , delivery and evaluation of programs



Defining/Understanding Partners and Their Roles



Districts work with many partners. The following list with brief descriptions is not all inclusive. Private industries are also often interested in conservation as a matter of improving their business climate. Districts are becoming creative in the search for resources for quality programs and are interested in cooperating with non-traditional partners with common goals and visions for protecting and conserving natural resources.

 Federal

Bureau of Land Management (**BLM**)

The BLM provides technical assistance to districts and landowners on a one-on-one basis or through presentations to groups. Coordination is available on land use issues and recreation concerns on private and public lands. Riparian studies are completed to address grazing pressures on sensitive areas. The agency also works closely with the districts on issues such as noxious weed management.

Bureau of Reclamation (**BOR**)

The BOR provides financial and technical assistance for water conservation and water quality. The agency is also very involved in salinity control. Equipment such as flow meters may be available to districts. Assistance to districts in grant application preparation is potential service of this Agency.

Environmental Protection Agency (**EPA**)

The EPA provides funding to develop and install water quality projects, especially in the area of nonpoint source pollution. Water quality inventories are completed on watershed projects.

Farm Service Agency (**FSA**)

The FSA administers cost-sharing programs to landowners implementing conservation. It also provides aerial photos for conservation work, assistance for land treatment and development, and natural disaster relief.

Army Corps of Engineers (**CORPS**)

The CORPS provides financial and technical assistance to landowners and districts on activities in streams and rivers. This Agency also administers the 404 permit for these activities.

Forest Service (**USFS**)

The USFS sponsors cooperative programs through state forestry agencies, the Natural Resources Conservation Service and conservation districts to control fires, stabilize gullies, improve forest growth, plant trees, and control forest pests. Coordination is available on land use issues and recreation concerns to districts and landowners.

Natural Resources Conservation Service (**NRCS**)

The NRCS has a long and extensive tradition of work with conservation districts. The NRCS provides personnel, equipment, office space, and counsel to districts. It also provides technical assistance and financial assistance to the land users through the conservation districts.



State

Colorado State Conservation Board (**CSCB**)

The CSCB is responsible for coordinating the statutory activities of Colorado's 76 conservation districts. The Board provides administrative and technical assistance to the districts as well as financial assistance to address priority conservation needs identified by the districts. The Board is an agency located within the Colorado Department of Agriculture. State Board members serve voluntarily and are elected by the conservation districts within each of the ten major watersheds in Colorado.

Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment (**CDPH&E**)

The CDPH&E protects and enhances Colorado's environment with programs addressing air pollution, water quality, solid waste, hazardous waste, mine land reclamation, animal feeding operations and resource recovery. CDPH&E provides funding for nonpoint source water quality projects, and guidance on bio-solid issues. The Department is a data source for water quality information on water bodies throughout the state. Water samples are analyzed by the Department.

Colorado State Forest Service (**CSFS**)

The CSFS cooperates extensively with the districts in the tree and shrub distribution programs for tree plantings of all types. CSFS also administers sustainable forestry programs directly to landowners. District foresters at the local level assist with local education programs.

State Land Board (**SLB**)

The SLB manages state trust lands and cooperates with the districts on the installation of natural resource practices on their lands as well as adjoining private lands.

CSU Extension (**CSUE**)

Assistance from CSU Extension is commonly available from extension agents ("county agents") and specialists. Assistance with information and education activities listed in the annual plan of work is available. They are also available to counsel, educate and train conservation districts in economics, engineering, agronomy and soils, animal sciences, entomology, food science and technology, forestry and range management, home economics, horticulture, plant pathology, sociology, veterinary science, and many other areas. Most counties have an extension office that serves as the local contact for conservation districts to request extension assistance. The Soil

Conservation Act provides for the service of the local extension agent as an “ex-officio” member of each conservation district board to build a strong partnership with the agency.

Colorado Division of Wildlife (**CDOW**)

CDOW participates in long range planning with districts, federal agencies and private organizations for all wildlife resources. This includes water management, fish and wildlife habitat improvement programs, technical assistance in design of habitat improvement, the condition and preservation of all wildlife (game and nongame), and cooperating in habitat implement projects with conservation districts, sport groups, tribal organizations, educational facilities, and civic groups. Funds have been provided for the installation of living snow fence plantings and noxious weed management. CDOW works with NRCS to provide wildlife biologists in NRCS Field Offices.

Colorado Department of Transportation (**CDOT**)

CDOT constructs and maintains the state’s transportation system. CDOT provides funds, materials and labor for the installation of living snow fence plantings. Coordination is also provided for noxious weed management programs on their properties and adjoining private lands. Districts have traditionally worked with CDOT on roadside windbreaks.



Local

County Government

County governments may have similar goals as conservation districts in protecting land values and taking care of the natural resources. Counties can provide office space; funding; co-sponsorship for watershed projects and responsibility for operation and maintenance; assistance for living snow fence plantings, use of county earth moving equipment; cooperation on weed control; and funds for soil survey work. Districts by statute **must** review subdivision plans and provide comments on various natural resource issues. County contacts include commissioners, auditor, treasurer, recorder, engineer, assessor, highway superintendent, health officers, planning commission, parks and recreation department, weed and pest district and others. Counties and districts have developed partnerships to seek lottery funds as well as Great Outdoors Colorado (GOCO) funds. Counties have regulatory responsibilities for noxious weeds and dust-blowing concerns and cooperate with districts in these areas.

Municipal Government

Municipalities can provide funding, co-sponsorship of projects, technical and planning assistance. Urban conservation programs can include tree planting, flood run off prevention, fertilizer and pesticide management, recreation, cooperative educational activities, and improved water quantity and quality.



Private Organizations

Colorado Association of Conservation Districts (**CACD**)

CACD is a nonprofit, nongovernmental organization representing the 76 conservation districts in the State of Colorado. CACD was established in 1945 as the guiding force directed by the Conservation Districts of Colorado to educate, promote, help obtain funds, and provide information on issues and programs aimed at enhancing and protecting our natural resources. Conservation Districts are represented by the CACD at the state level and the National Association of Conservation Districts at the national level. CACD serves as a state voice for conservation districts on state policy, legislation, communication, and funding for conservation activities and has a strong lobbying component. Each of the ten major watersheds elects one supervisor to serve as director on the CACD board.

CACD also provides forums to inform, train and educate supervisors and also recognizes outstanding district individuals and programs. Camp Rocky, Teacher’s Workshop and the Conservator are a few of the organizations educational The CACD has program areas with committees including district outlook, education, urban conservation, water resources, land use,

rangeland, finance, forestry, and wildlife. The CACD and CSCB form a strong partnership to serve the best interests of the conservation districts and landowners to ultimately provide for the conservation and preservation of natural resources. Click on the following link to be directed to CACD's website for information on the CACD Board of Directors, staff and programs.
<http://www.cacd.us/>.

National Association of Conservation Districts (**NACD**)

The NACD is a nonprofit, nongovernmental organization representing over three thousand districts and their state associations in the fifty states, Puerto Rico, and the Virgin Islands. NACD represents the national interests of conservation districts in the areas of policy development and program delivery.

Colorado Association of Conservation District Employees (**CACDE**)

The CACDE was formed in 1990 to develop conservation district employees' abilities through continuing education and a network of professional support.

Watershed Associations of Conservation Districts

The ten watershed associations foster cooperation among conservation districts in each watershed as well as with various partners to address natural resource concerns and issues at the watershed level. They consist of watershed representatives from local district boards in each watershed.

The Auxiliary

The Auxiliary is a nonprofit, nonpartisan organization formed for the specific purposes of assisting CACD in its objectives. Membership is open to anyone interested in conservation and willing to assist with the goals of conservation districts. The Auxiliary traditionally plays an important role in fundraising at the CACD Annual Meeting.



OTHERS

Assistance may also be obtained from other sources. Examples of helpful organizations include:

- Business associations
- Agricultural organizations
- Commodity organizations
- Garden clubs
- 4H Clubs
- Boy and Girl Scouts
- Chambers of commerce
- Wildlife and recreation associations
- Future Farmers of America (FFA)
- Professional natural resource organizations
- Environmental organizations

Duties and Functions of CSCB, CACD, NACD and NRCS

CSCB - The Colorado State Conservation Board has many responsibilities:

- ✦ Dissemination of information concerning activities and programs of conservation districts.
- ✦ Promoting and assisting organizations of districts
- ✦ Allocation of state funds to districts
- ✦ Co-sponsors watershed protection and flood prevention projects
- ✦ Coordinating programs of 76 districts
- ✦ Liaison between districts and federal or state agencies
- ✦ Act as State Board of Appeals for districts and landowners
- ✦ Encourage and assist in consolidation of districts
- ✦ Provide training to supervisors and employees of each district
- ✦ Acts as advisory agency to local districts for elections

- ✦ Encourages compliance of Soil Conservation Act, other pertinent state and federal laws as well as good business practices

CACD - The Colorado Association of Conservation Districts carries out the following principle objectives:

- ✦ Distribute educational materials of Districts' programs to the general public.
- ✦ Promote cooperation between districts
- ✦ Cooperates with the CSCB and all other state and federal agencies charged with conservation of natural resources
- ✦ Promote the interest and activities of civic, business and industrial organizations in the conservation of Colorado's natural resources
- ✦ Assist in development of conservation education in schools
- ✦ Encourage youth to participate in conservation practices
- ✦ Assist in obtaining appropriations for required funds and adoption of legislation at the state and national level based on the policies approved by the 76 districts.
- ✦ Lobby at the state level concerning natural resource issues and funding for districts and natural resource conservation

NACD - The National Association of Conservation Districts works for effective conservation and orderly development of America's land and water resources through local self-government

- ✦ Strong lobbyist in Washington, D.C.
- ✦ Maintains relationships with organizations and government agencies
- ✦ Publishes information about conservation districts
- ✦ Works with leaders in religion, youth, agriculture, industry and other fields
- ✦ Provides specialized services to districts throughout the country
- ✦ Operates through a council composed of one representative from each state

NRCS - The Natural Resources Conservation Service, U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) develops and implements a national soil and water conservation program through local conservation districts. The agency provides many resources for local implementation of conservation practices.

- ✦ Provides technical assistance to districts through a Mutual Agreement with the USDA as well as a Cooperative Working Agreement with NRCS
- ✦ NRCS field offices are staffed with technical personnel headed by districts conservationist
- ✦ Activities at the field office level include:
 - Provide inventories, maps, and other data to the board of supervisors to assist them in development of District local Annual Plan of Work and Long Range Program
 - Based on the priorities set by the local district, NRCS develops an annual plan of NRCS operations for the field office and collectively for the entire State
 - Assists district cooperator and landowners in developing conservation plans. Technical assistance is provided to cooperators to implement these plans b the application of effective conservation practices
- ✦ NRCS carries out USDA responsibilities in the Farm Bill, watershed protection and flood prevention projects and river basin investigations; performs certain natural resource inventory functions; completes and coordinates snow surveys for water supply forecasts; provides technical and funding assistance through various Farm Bill programs

Local Operating Agreements

Each Conservation District and NRCS Field Office is also encouraged to consider developing their own local working agreement to identify the operating procedures that will be efficient and effective. Contact your local conservation specialist for assistance with development of these local operating agreements. [Link to Agreements Chapter for more details.](#)

