





# COMMONWEALTH CONSERVATION CORNER





## Area Spring Meetings

KACD is visiting the 9 areas across Ky with updates from New Division of Conservation Director-Jay Nelson, New State Conservationist- Eric Allness and presentations from representatives of Ky Fish & Wildlife, Ky Division of Forestry, & Ky Division of Water. Along with reports from KACD & KACDE followed by a business meeting where some areas are voting for KACD board directors & SWCC Nominations. Thank you to all that have attended and to our hosting districts!

## Envirothon Trainings

Trainings have been held at the Kentucky State University Farm to prepare teams for the upcoming state competitions. The Kentucky State Competition will be held in May 2024 in Carlisle, KY (Nicholas County) at the North Central 4-H Camp.



**July 28 - August 3, 2024**  
**Geneva, New York**

**Current Issue: Renewable Energy for a Sustainable Future**



# LEGISLATIVE UPDATES



## HB 27 -> HB 27/GA Conservation District & Watershed District Audits



### READ MORE

Bill initially introduced to increase conservation district audit threshold to \$750,000. Passed the House Floor 95-0 with 1 amendment to increase threshold to \$1 million.

Passed the Senate 33-0, with a Committee Substitute & Title Amendment. The title amendment would change this to “an ACT relating to natural resources”.

The committee substitute retained all original provisions, and added amendments to KRS 45A.095, 45A.630, & 45A.645 related to alternative transportation fuels. Bill has been received in the House.

### READ MORE



## HB 130 Watershed Conservancy District Boards

This Bill creates a new section of KRS 262.700 to 262.795 related to watershed conservancy district boards. Establishing procedures for the discontinuance of a watershed conservancy district board, allowing for the reestablishment of a watershed board, amending KRS 147A.029 to allow districts to use funds for the Local Match Program for flood-related projects with federal agencies, including NRCS; amend KRS 262.240 & 262.740 to provide immunity to a supervisor serving on a soil & water district board and a watershed conservancy district board; ETC. Passed the House 95-0, Passed the Senate 36-1. House Bill 130 has been enrolled, signed by the Speaker of the House, signed by the President of the Senate, and delivered to the Governor.

## HB 418 Agriculture Districts



### READ MORE

Amend KRS 262.850 to decrease the minimum number of acres of an ag district from 250 to 50 acres; add cities that are within one mile of the ag district to the list of entities to be notified of the proposal, approval, and withdrawal of property from, an ag district; allow a district board of supervisors to consider possible

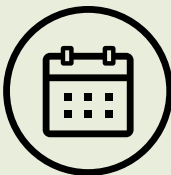
dissolution of an ag district if an owner's withdrawal of property results in the remaining land no longer qualifying as agricultural land. Passed House 95-0; Passed Senate 38-0. HB 418 was enrolled and signed by the Speaker of the House, the President of the Senate, and has been delivered to the Governor.

### READ MORE



## HB 6 Kentucky State Budget

Appropriations bill providing funding and establishing conditions for the operations, maintenance, support, and functioning of the government of the Commonwealth of Kentucky. On March 15th, a Conference Committee was appointed in House and Senate to reconcile the differences on the proposed appropriations for 2024-2026. On March 27th, the Conference Committee filed a report in the House and Senate. The report was adopted in the Senate and Passed 36-1. On March 28th, the report was adopted in the House and Passed 72-26. House Bill 6 has been enrolled, signed by the Speaker of the House, signed by the President of the Senate, and delivered to the Governor. Currently, Conservation Programs have been allocated \$2 million for the State Cost Share Program and \$1 million for Local Conservation Districts Direct Aid Program for each fiscal year.



### Legislative Dates of Interest

March 29 - April 9, 2024 - - Veto Period  
April 12, 2024 - - General Assembly Day 59  
April 15, 2024 - - General Assembly Day 60, Sine Die



[Click here to contact your Legislator!](#)



# 75/25 SUCCESS STORY



The Jefferson County Soil and Water Conservation District continues to address conservation concerns for urban and rural residents!



**Paul Borntraeger**

Jefferson County Soil & Water Conservation District

## Urban Conservation

The NRCS has high tunnel assistance through technical guidance and the EQIP program. The JCSWCD also provided a high tunnel grant and a high tunnel maintenance cost share program. These programs are all combined for Jefferson County residents, who qualify, to extend their growing season and conserve soil and water through better management. The use of high tunnels is allowing for more food production in the food deserts of Louisville as well as a smaller carbon footprint on those food items produced. Several new high tunnels were completed in 2023 in Jefferson County and five new high tunnels are being constructed this Spring through the JCSWCD program alone.



*Chango Gardens (above) hosts a high tunnel growing strawberries, squash, garlic, and Brussel sprouts, just off Garland Ave.*

## Habitat Development

In a modern landscape of mixed industrial, urban, suburban, and rural areas like Jefferson County; wildlife needs all the help on habitat retention and restoration possible. Locations like Chango Gardens, the University of Louisville Commons Garden, or the various community gardens around Louisville offer monarch butterflies and other species of migratory birds and insects welcome havens to rest, refuel, and inhabit.

One notable resident family doing their part were the Mulhals who devoted 8.6 acres of their land near Floyds Fork to be native pollinator habitat (seen to the right). Substantial plantings like the one done by the Mulhals are examples of tremendous generosity towards the survival of our native landscape.

However, the small garden plots put in throughout Louisville with a focus on native cultivars are essential to this progress as well, regardless of their size!



*Mulhals' native pollinator habitat near Floyds Fork.*

Paul hit the ground running with the Conservation District and NRCS programming in 2023; hosting 7 workshops in six months. These community engagement events have helped residents understand the importance of conservation efforts in an ever-changing world. As urban sprawl continues to threaten much of the remaining cropland & wildlife habitat around Jefferson Co., Paul prioritizes immediate action projects to abate this pressure.

The District hosted a rain barrel workshop with an accompanying native pollinator garden workshop. All participants learned how to install a rain barrel, the importance of native pollinators and went home with a kit designed to start their own native oasis. The program sold out in under 24 hours and Paul is planning to do two additional programs in the Spring of 2024!





# 2024 NACD ANNUAL MEETING - SAN DIEGO, CA

Kentucky was well represented at the 2024 NACD Annual Meeting in February in San Diego, California. KY NACD Director, David Rowlett and KY NACD Alternate, Ted Jessup participated in NACD Board Meetings on behalf of Kentucky conservation districts.

Kentucky received **GOLD** status in the National District Officials Training Program, which has been bestowed on only 8 states across the nation!

Kentucky was also recognized as one of the top ten NACD dues contributing states! We ranked 8th with \$39,822 paid in district dues. Thank you to all who contributed and for supporting our grassroots organization annually!

*Pictured to the right at Leadership Luncheon (left to right): Natalie Browning (KACDE President), Donna Coleman, Steve Coleman, Ted Jessup, David Rowlett. Back Row: Penny Warwick (KACDE Vice Pres.), Crystal Renfro, Kayleigh Evans (SECDEA President), & Vincent Thompson.*



## *Next Generation Leadership Institute*

KACD is proud to share that Mr. Vincent Thompson, Hardin County Conservation District Supervisor and KACD Area 3 Director has been chosen as one of the five participants in the year-long NGLI program through the NACD National Conservation Foundation.

Their first session was at the 2024 NACD Annual Meeting, and recently they met with Congress in Washington DC to advocate on behalf of conservation!



**SAVE THE DATE**

## 80<sup>th</sup> KACD ANNUAL MEETING CROWNE PLAZA LOUISVILLE AIRPORT LOUISVILLE, KY

**July 14 - 16, 2024**

This meeting will provide an opportunity to come together to share best practices, participate in educational classes, and most importantly network!  
Agenda & Registration Coming Soon!



Support Ky Conservation through Sponsorship of the KACD Annual Meeting and receive many benefits! Visit the website below to learn more information!



<https://www.kyconservation.com/annual-meeting>