

10 Minute Supervisor Trainings



June 2025

Kentucky's Conservation Partnership

Kentucky's conservation efforts are strengthened by a network of partners working together to protect the Commonwealth's natural resources. Each entity brings unique strengths to the conservation mission, and collective success is conditional upon cooperation. The following list showcases some of the key agencies and organizations involved, although it is essential to note that this list is not comprehensive.

The distinct environmental challenges, concerns, and interests of each district will impact the frequency and scope of collaboration with these partners, and may also require engagement with additional agencies, groups, or organizations to address resource management issues.

Kentucky Division of Conservation (DOC)

The Division of Conservation was created in 1946 under (KRS 146.080-146.110) to aid Kentucky's 121 conservation districts to develop, administer and implement sound conservation programs across the state.

DOC provides a staff of field representatives to aid and advise each county conservation district on policy, regulation and program compliance and administration. The DOC staff also works, advises and aids the Kentucky Soil and Water Commission and the Kentucky Agriculture Water Quality Authority in their administrative, regulatory, and policy making responsibilities and duties.

Soil and Water Conservation Commission (SWCC)

The SWCC was created by the 1946 General Assembly (Kentucky Revised Statutes 146.080-146.110) for the purpose of administering the organization of conservation districts in Kentucky and to assist them in carrying out their functions in accordance with the conservation district law. The policies under which the Division of Conservation operates are set by the Kentucky Soil and Water Conservation Commission. This commission is made up of nine district supervisors from across the state appointed to serve by the secretary of the Energy and Environment Cabinet, with approval from the governor.

Kentucky Association of Conservation Districts (KACD)

KACD is a grassroots non-profit organization that was created in 1951 to represent all 121 conservation districts and watershed conservancy districts. KACD cooperates with the state and federal legislatures concerning conservation promotion. They meet bi-monthly in Frankfort and primarily operate on annual KACD dues paid by the conservation districts. The makeup of the KACD consists of a director representing each of the nine areas across the state, a president, vice president and secretary/treasurer. Directors are elected during area meetings and can serve 3 consecutive 2-year terms.

KACD sponsors the annual state convention for supervisors, staff, and partner agencies. Their goal is to provide informative programs; share ideas, success stories, and honor awards; and make suggestions during the convention that will further conservation district goals locally and recognize districts and individuals on their conservation efforts. KACD also acts on behalf of the local districts regarding county district passed resolutions and legislative initiatives (both at the state and national levels).

The Kentucky Association of Conservation District Employees (KACDE)

KACDE was founded in July 1995 and is a non-profit organization whose primary function is to help develop, promote and strengthen conservation districts employees and their programs in the state of Kentucky. The Association's governing body is an Executive Committee and Board of Representatives consisting of elected officers and a representative from all nine areas. KACDE works to promote a means for personal development of the organizational members and district employees and to assist them in preparing to execute their duties. KACDE primarily operates on annual dues paid by district employees, conservation districts, and other entities.

Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS)

As a part of the United States Department of Agriculture, NRCS works with agriculture producers to help protect their natural resources. NRCS staff help conservation districts identify local natural resource concerns and promote programs that can address those concerns. NRCS personnel are able to work in each county through cooperative working agreements with local conservation districts. NRCS and KACD have an agreement to help provide technical assistance to districts through 80/20 employees.

While these are the traditional members of Kentucky's conservation partnership, all the members work with other groups and agencies for the benefit of the natural resources of the Commonwealth. Your district may also have local partners that you work with regularly. Partners on the state and national level include:

- Kentucky Division of Forestry (KDF)
- Kentucky Division of Water (DOW)
- Kentucky Department of Fish and Wildlife Resources (KDFWR)
- Kentucky Department of Agriculture (KDA)
- UK and KSU Cooperative Extension Service Programs
- Resources Conservation and Development Councils (RC&D)
- Farm Service Agency (FSA)
- U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
- National Association of Conservation Districts (NACD)