

*Local Work Groups*  
Introductory Packet  
2022



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# Preparing for your Local Working Group Meeting

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**When:** Select an appropriate time and date for the meeting between October 1 – November 30, 2022 (Please remember this meeting will be for fiscal year 2024). Consult local calendars and other organizations to ensure that other events will not interfere with attendance by the members and guests. Many Districts hold their Local Working Group Meeting concurrent with their monthly Board Meeting.

**Where:** While AFCD will still offer the Zoom option for participants who cannot attend in person, you should still offer an in-person option as well. Select a central, easily accessible location. The recommended meeting room setup would include the proper equipment to utilize the Zoom option.

**Who should be involved:** All Staff and Supervisors of your Soil & Water Conservation District, Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) District Conservationist, and the Association of Florida Conservation Districts (AFCD)- possible participants to include:

- State Natural Resource Agencies
- Federal Natural Resource Agencies
- Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Service- Office of Ag Water Policy
- Florida Fish and Wildlife
- Landowners
- Producers

**Invitations:** Prepare a mailing list or email list of appropriate participants. As far in advance of the meeting as possible, send an invitation describing the nature and importance of the task they are asked to help with. Follow-up phone calls should be made to individuals three to five days prior to the meeting. Consider sending a map to the meeting location, minutes from the last meeting, agenda, and background materials.

**Agenda:** When preparing the meeting agenda, think about how to motivate the participants to become involved and generate significant input. Example Agendas are included in this packet. A brief explanation of the USDA Local Work Group, responsibilities, conservation district, and the conservation needs assessment should be presented.

**Facilitation:** Determine from the start if your District will be facilitating the meeting or if your District Conservationist will need to facilitate.

**Materials:** Materials in the briefest form possible will help your local work group members with their decision making. Examples include agenda, note pages for PowerPoint presentations, hard copy of the Local Working Group Survey, data from previous year, and resource data.

**Equipment:** If the meeting room you are utilizing is not set up with equipment for Zoom, you will at minimum need a laptop computer with camera and sound. Suggested equipment: Projector, Large Screen, Laptop, Camera, Speaker, Internet access, Electrical cord.

**Publications:** AFCD will publicly notice your meeting in your local newspaper, as well as advertise on the AFCD website and NRCS website. It is suggested to advertise your meeting in as many places possible to help encourage attendance.

**Follow up:** Before participants leave the meeting, be sure to describe to them what the conservation district and NRCS will do with the input they have provided. Plan for the next meeting of the Local Working group including a date, location, and agenda.

## Local Work Group (LWG)

### Planning for FY 2024

#### AGENDA

- I. Welcome and Introductions
  - II. Overview of Locally Led Conservation and LWGs
  - III. Overview of the NRCS State Technical Committee
  - IV. Florida NRCS Funding Sources at the Local Levels
  - V. Resource Concerns and Associated NRCS Practices
  - VI. LWG Brainstorm Session and Recommendations
    - a. Recommended funding pools
    - b. Investment recommended for each funding pool selected
    - c. Select 8 Resource Concern Categories for FY24 as a priority
- \*Please complete ONE questionnaire per district. Individual responses will not be accepted\***
- VII. Summarize Recommendations
  - VIII. Questions & Answers
  - IX. Adjourn



Date: October 5, 2021

**Meeting Location:**  
1121 NW 90TH CT  
Chiefland, Florida 32626  
[www.afcd.us](http://www.afcd.us)

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Local Working Group  
Sample Meeting Minutes

- Call to order at \_\_\_\_\_
- Attendance:
  - NRCS-
  - SWCD-
  - FDACS-
  - IFAS-
  - AFCD-
  - Public-
- Reviewed purpose of meeting
- Discussed funding pools and survey results
- Discussed resource concerns
- Discussed prior year survey results
- Completed survey
- Additional comments
- Meeting adjourned at \_\_\_\_\_



# Conservation Local Work Group Meeting Announced

***ALL Farmers, Ranchers,  
Landowners, Partnership  
Organizations, and Agencies  
are Encouraged to Attend***

**NRCS and the Soil & Water  
Conservation District are looking for input on  
natural resource concerns and priorities**

**Date/Time:**

**County:**

**Location:**

**Contact/Phone:**

**Helping People Help the Land**

**[www.fl.nrcs.usda.gov](http://www.fl.nrcs.usda.gov)**

**NATURAL RESOURCES  
CONSERVATION SERVICE**



# LOCAL WORKING GROUPS



## What is a Local Working Group?

Local Working Groups are composed of agricultural producers, private landowners, professionals representing agricultural and natural resource interests, and individuals representing a variety of disciplines in the soil, water, wetland, plant, forestry, and wildlife sciences who are familiar with agricultural and natural resource issues in the local community.

## WHAT IS THE PURPOSE OF THE LOCAL WORKING GROUP?

To find out from local cooperators and other conservation interested parties, what natural resource problems exist at the local level.



**LWG's  
Meet  
Annually**

## HELP US

- Identify the biggest conservation needs in our counties
- Prioritize those conservation needs that can be addressed by USDA programs

## WHO SHOULD ATTEND?

- Agriculture producers with crops, livestock, equine or poultry
- Owners of nonindustrial private forest land
- Representatives of agricultural and environmental organizations
- Representatives of governmental agencies carrying out agricultural and natural resource conservation programs and activities



## HOW TO GET INVOLVED

Contact your Local Soil & Water Conservation District or the Association of Florida Conservation Districts for more information.

Find your Local District here:



For information regarding Local Working Groups, please contact Kaylee Pate, 352-221-8531, [kaylee.pate@afcdfl.com](mailto:kaylee.pate@afcdfl.com)

# Local Working Group Meeting Checklist

- Schedule your Local Working Group Meeting to include date, location, and time. (Remember the date must fall between October 1 – November 30)
  
- Public Notice the meeting at least 30 days in advance.
  - \_\_\_Publication requested
  - \_\_\_Publication sent
  - \_\_\_Publication complete
  
- Create and send out virtual link to all parties involved. (It helps to create a calendar invite through outlook when sending the invitation link out, as this puts the event on the attendee's calendar upon acceptance)
  
- Start sending out meeting reminders in advance and send them up until the week of the meeting. (This should include emails and/or mailings)
  
- Confirm with District Conservationist if they will be moderating the meeting or if your Board will need to plan to moderate. (This is something you want to know in advance, so that you have time to prepare to moderate if needed)
  
- Send out Local Working Group Survey in digital and PDF format. Inform the participants that they must complete the survey, as one entity. One survey submission per meeting.
  
- Determine if your meeting will need in-person attendance from AFCD vs. AFCD Zoom participation.

## Summarized checklist for Local Working Group Meetings:

\_Meeting Scheduled

\_Zoom Link Created

\_Meeting Noticed

\_Zoom Link, Meeting information and Survey sent out to all parties

\_Meeting reminder sent

\_Confirm if DC will be present or if a meeting chair is needed

\_Determine which meetings will need AFCD in-person attendance vs. Zoom attendance

## Local Working Groups (LWG) FAQ

### Why is the LWG important?

State and Federal Agencies need to hear about local conservation problems and where money should be spent. It is a place where Farmers, Landowners, NGOs, and other public stake holders sit together and provide feedback and recommendations.

### What is the purpose of the LWG?

To find out from local cooperators and other conservation partners what natural resource priorities and criteria are important at the local level.

### What are the LWG responsibilities?

- Ensure that a conservation needs assessment is developed using community stakeholder input.
- Identify priority resource concerns that can be addressed by and through USDA programs.
- Identify program funding needs and conservation practices.
- Identify high-priority areas needing assistance.
- Participate in multi-county coordination.
- Assist NRCS and the SWCD with public outreach and information efforts and identify educational and producers' training needs.
- Recommend state and national program policy to the State Technical Committee (STC) based on resource data.
- Forward recommendations of the local working group meeting to the NRCS District Conservationist or State Technical Committee (STC), as appropriate.
- Adhere to standard operating procedures identified in Title 440, Conservation Programs Manual (CPM), Part 501, Subpart B, Section 501.14. [NRCS eDirectives - Subpart B - Local Working Groups \(usda.gov\)](#)

### What is the authority for LWG's?

The Farm Bill established the State Technical Committee and LWGs (which are subcommittees to the State Technical Committee). Florida LWGs meeting annually between October through

November to seek recommendations. The input is submitted to the State Technical committee and NRCS State Conservationist for consideration.

### Who runs the LWG Meeting?

The Conservation District runs the meeting, usually with help from the NRCS District Conservationist.

### What if the district cannot afford or refuses to run the LWG?

If the District cannot lead the LWG, then by law the NRCS District Conservationist must take on the responsibility of the meeting.

### What is done with the information produced from the LWG?

It is reported back to the NRCS State Technical Committee and the State Conservationist. The LWG recommendations are posted to the NRCS website in January and NRCS makes final decisions on program priorities by June of each year.

Visit the NRCS and AFCD Local Working Group Webpages for additional information.

[Local Working Groups | NRCS Florida \(usda.gov\)](https://www.nrcs.usda.gov/locations/florida/local-working-groups)

[Local Working Groups | Association of Florida Conservation Districts \(afcd.us\)](https://www.afcd.us/)

