



September 20, 2024

RE: OACD Area I Meeting – Thursday, November 14, 2024

Dear Area I Conservation District Directors, Conservation District Employees, NRCS Employees, and Partners,

As President of the Oklahoma Association of Conservation Districts Board of Directors, I'd like to invite you to attend the OACD Area I meeting on Thursday, November 14, 2024 at the Alfalfa County Fairgrounds located at 602 W. 5th Street Cherokee, OK 73728.

As 2024 comes to a close and temperatures start to cool off we are looking forward to seeing everyone this fall. OACD Area Meetings are a chance for us to share opportunities, explore challenges, and fellowship with one another.

Our agenda this year focuses on many of the exciting new programs and projects that are available in conservation. Over the last few years, there has been a massive expansion in the investment in conservation in Oklahoma and across the country. We'll share new opportunities with districts to engage with their communities. As always, our partners at the Oklahoma Conservation Commission and NRCS will be sharing important programmatic updates. We will send out a complete agenda by October 1st.

Topics for the 2024 Area Meetings include:

- Updates about the Climate Smart Commodities projects in OK
- District Innovation Growth Program
- New Yard by Yard Ideas
- Understanding Urban Conservation and Ideas on how to engage this audience
- How to Improve the Locally Led Process in your district
- Producer Success Story Highlights

OACD is tremendously proud of the work all of you are doing so, we encourage you to extend an invitation to your locally elected officials, encouraging them to attend and witness firsthand the association proceedings. This is an excellent opportunity to strengthen our relationship with our legislators and local officials.

The Area I meeting will be hosted by the Alfalfa County Conservation District at the Alfalfa County Fairgrounds located at 602 W. 5th Street Cherokee, OK 73728. The in-person registration will open at 8:00 a.m. The meeting will begin at 9:00 a.m. and end by 3:00 p.m. If you have any questions regarding this location or the Alfalfa County Conservation District, please contact Kelly Fanning at 580-596-2883 or alfalfaccd@conservation.ok.gov.

Registration: The registration fee is \$45. This includes donuts & coffee, lunch, and printed materials. NRCS employees will register through the state office who will be billed directly for attendees. Guests, spouses, youth contest winner attendees wishing to attend the lunch must pay \$15.00. We must know in advance how many will be attending the luncheon. After November 1, 2024 no refunds will be made.

Outstanding Cooperator & Outstanding Director Contest: OACD is reviving this contest. You can submit applications for your Outstanding Cooperator & Outstanding Director online at www.okconservation.org/annualawards the state level winner receives \$1,000 and a plaque. Area I applications are due October 31, 2024. The Area winners will be recognized during the noon luncheon at the area meeting. Please contact Amanda Fitzgerald at 405-210-4837 or amandadfitzgerald@okconservation.org with any questions.

Youth Contests: The Youth Contests will be coordinated by the Employees Association. Send all posters, essays, along with entry forms for the speech contest to your OACDE Area Director, Katie Scheihing by October 14th. Do not send these entries to OACD or OCC. If you have questions concerning the youth contest, please contact Katie Scheihing from the Central North Canadian River Conservation District at 405-884-2383 or Patty Underhill at the Caney Valley Conservation District at 918-331-9800. **Please register each child attending the youth contest luncheon on your form. Your registration form is how we know what children are attending. We do not announce every winner, only the ones that are attending in person. If you do not communicate that a youth contest winner will be present, their name will not be called at the awards ceremony. If you have late registrations for youth contest winners, text or email the first and last name and award to Amanda Fitzgerald at 405-210-4837 or amandadfitzgerald@okconservation.org.**

Please contact Taylor Marshall at taylormarshall@okconservation.org or 918-729-4229 with any area meeting questions.

Sincerely,



Joe Caughlin
President