

STATE CAPITOL
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March 6, 2026

The Honorable Jesse Gabriel, Chair
Assembly Committee on Budget
1021 O Street, Suite 8230
Sacramento, CA 95814

The Honorable David Tangipa, Vice Chair
Assembly Committee on Budget
1021 O Street, Suite 8230
Sacramento, CA 95814

The Honorable Steve Bennett, Chair
Assembly Committee on Budget
Subcommittee No. 4
1021 O Street, Suite 8230
Sacramento, CA 95814

RE: FY 2026-27 Budget Request for Resource Conservation District Coordinators

Dear Chair Gabriel, Vice Chair Tangipa, and Chair Bennett,

I respectfully request \$5 million annually to provide \$50,000 per year for each of California's Resource Conservation Districts (RCDs) to provide stable funding for district coordinators.

Resource Conservation Districts are locally governed special districts that work with private landowners, farmers, ranchers, community groups, and public agencies to implement voluntary conservation projects that protect California's natural resources. RCDs play a key role in advancing state priorities including climate resilience, wildfire prevention, water conservation, healthy soils, and habitat restoration.

California is home to 97 Resource Conservation Districts, with 18 located within District 1. These districts serve as trusted local partners that connect state conservation programs with landowners and communities across rural and working landscapes.

Despite their critical role, many RCDs lack stable operational funding. Coordinator positions, the backbone of district operations, are often supported primarily through short-term competitive grants and ongoing fundraising. While grants are essential for

implementing specific projects, they are typically restricted to project activities and cannot reliably support core coordination and administrative functions. As a result, RCDs must spend substantial time pursuing funding rather than implementing conservation programs and assisting land stewards.

Dedicated annual funding for RCD coordinators would provide the operational stability necessary for districts to effectively serve their communities and deliver conservation outcomes aligned with state priorities.

We strongly urge you to support sustained and equitable funding for Resource Conservation Districts to ensure they can continue delivering vital conservation and wildfire resilience work across California. These locally driven partnerships play an essential role in protecting our natural resources, supporting rural communities, and advancing the state's climate and water goals. Investing in Resource Conservation Districts is not only a practical step toward safeguarding our landscapes—it is a necessary commitment to long-term resilience, stewardship, and the well-being of communities throughout the state.

Thank you for your consideration of my request.

Sincerely,



HEATHER HADWICK

Assemblymember, 1st District