



Texas State
Soil & Water
Conservation
Board



Texas State Soil and Water Conservation Board

NRCS/SWCD/TSSWCB

What is the Difference?





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NRCS

- NRCS, formerly the Soil Conservation Service (SCS) was most visible to the public because of having full-time staff assigned to a conservation district.
- NRCS was also more visible because of the presence of identifiable office locations, vehicles, etc.



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SWCD's & TSSWCB

- SWCD's, on the other hand often did not have their own office or building; they were often headquartered in association with a NRCS office. This further blurred the difference.
- The TSSWCB, for a long time, has had the presence of field staff acting as a facilitator between local and federal conservation agencies.
- In recent years the TSSWCB has added regional offices to further establish its public visibility.



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Funding Sources

- NRCS
 - Federally funded through the United States Department of Agriculture by Congress in Washington D.C.
- TSSWCB
 - Primarily funded by the Texas Legislature through the General Appropriation Act
 - Also receives federal funding through the United States Environmental Protection Agency (319 funding)
- SWCDs
 - Primarily funded by state appropriations from the TSSWCB



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SWCD's

- The State of Texas legislature has provided matching funds and Technical Assistance (TA) funds for SWCD's. These funds vary from district to district based on needs, programs and the district's ability to match funds.
- Several districts across the state have been able to secure their own buildings, office space, and also rent the facilities out to other government agencies.



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SWCD's

- Many districts receive funds or donations through foundations and their home counties.
- Individuals and businesses also contribute to districts. Some districts raise money through equipment rental, sale of seeds, fish, plants etc.
- Remember– SWCDS do not have taxing authority.



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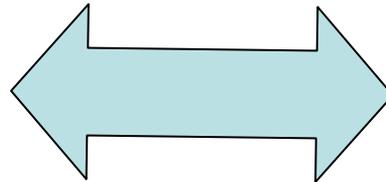
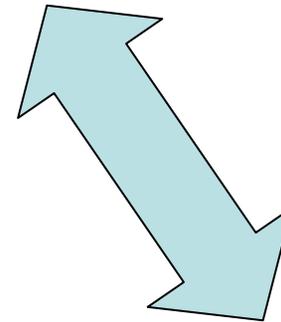
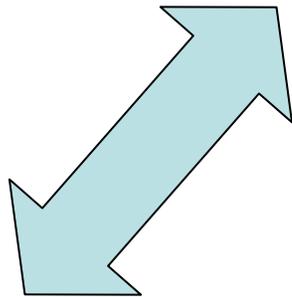
Agencies Working Together

SWCDs

Memorandum Of
Understanding

NRCS

TSSWCB





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Memorandum of Understanding Model Explained

- Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) is a formal collaboration between federal, state and local conservation entities who agree to cooperate in a project program or similar undertaking to utilize their resources to achieve soil, water and related natural resource conservation objectives.
- MOU's are written, approved, non-contractual, non-legally binding arrangements that may be developed at any level within the local, state and federal conservation hierarchy.
- The term MOU may also apply to amendments and annexes and other related documents, such as implementing arrangements, supplementary arrangements, technical arrangements or other similar documents whether they be stand-alone or based upon an existing MOU.



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Who's The Boss?

Differences in employment between

NRCS, TSSWCB and SWCD'S



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Who's The Boss? NRCS

- NRCS employees (District Conservationists, Soil Conservationists, Range Management Specialists, Biologists) are Federal employees, not SWCD employees.
- NRCS employees work with SWCD's, not for SWCD's.
- Hiring, firing, transfers and promotions of NRCS employees are taken care of within the agency.
- Because of the close work environment shared by NRCS and SWCD's, NRCS may sometimes supervise district employees.
- Always remember that the district has the final say with respect to scheduling and work priorities of their employees.



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Who's The Boss? SWCD's

- SWCD employees (bookkeepers, secretaries, district technicians, 319 employees) work for the SWCD board.
- SWCD employees work with the NRCS and TSSWCB, not for the NRCS and TSSWCB.
- Hiring and firing of SWCD employees is the responsibility of the SWCD board, not the NRCS or TSSWCB employees.
- Input from NRCS & TSSWCB employees should be considered, but the decisions are up to the SWCD.



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Who's The Boss? TSSWCB

- The TSSWCB does not have authority over district employees, nor over any NRCS personnel.
- However, there is an approval system that exists between local SWCD's, TSSWCB, and NRCS.



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Conclusion

- SWCD's, TSSWCB & NRCS work together through a Memorandum Of Understanding.
- Employees of each entity work together to carry out various federal, state, and local programs.
- Employee issues should be handled by the appropriate parties.