

## **II. Soil and Water Districts Commission**

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The Department of Natural Resources serves as the administrative agency of the state in all matters arising from the provisions of the Missouri Soil and Water Conservation District Law. The Commission provides guidance and direction to the Department and the Soil and Water Conservation Districts.

### ***A. Composition and Qualifications***

1. The composition and qualifications of Soil and Water District Commission (Commission) members are set forth in the district law, section 278.080. The Commission is composed of four ex officio members and six farmer members, the latter six are appointed by the Governor with the advice and consent of the Missouri Senate. Three of the farmer members must reside in the portion of the state north of the Missouri River, and three of the farmer members must reside in the portion of the state south of the Missouri River.
2. Each of these farmer members must hold legal title to a farm and earn, at least the principal part of, their livelihood from the farm at the time of appointment. Not more than one of the farmer members may be appointed from a state senatorial district. Not more than four of the farmer members may be from the same political party. Each farmer member is appointed for a three year term. There is no limitation on the number of terms a farmer member may serve. Each member of the Commission must continue to serve until the member successor has been appointed and qualified.
3. The four ex officio members are also established in the law and include the Director of the Missouri Department of Natural Resources, the Director of the Missouri Department of Agriculture, the Director of the Missouri Department of Conservation and the Dean of the College of Agriculture of the University of Missouri. The ex officio members are advisory members to the Commission, but do not have the authority to vote on motions.

### ***B. Duties and Responsibilities***

The Legislature has conferred upon the Commission certain specific duties and powers, which are enumerated in the Soil and Water District Law, Chapter 278.080-300. Among those duties are:

1. To formulate policies and general programs for the saving of Missouri soil and water by the soil and water conservation districts.
2. To receive and allocate or otherwise expend any funds appropriated by the Legislature for the use or benefit of the soil and water conservation districts.
3. To convey to the soil and water conservation districts any other form of aid extended to such districts by any other state or federal agency.
4. To encourage the formation of soil and water conservation districts.
5. To formulate rules and procedures for fair and impartial referendums on establishment and disestablishment of districts and the election of supervisors.
6. To advise soil and water conservation districts in developing their programs for saving soil and water.

7. To determine, within the limits of available funds or other resources, the amount or kind of state aid to be used for saving soil and water in any district, and to determine the withholding of state aid or kind from any established by the Commission.

### ***C. Administration of Commission Policy***

Administration of the Commission policies and programs is the responsibility of the Program Director, Soil and Water Conservation Program, Department of Natural Resources. Correspondence should be addressed to the Soil and Water Conservation Program, Department of Natural Resources, P.O. Box 176, Jefferson City, MO 65102-0176.

### ***D. Submitting Requests and Appeals to the Commission***

1. Districts may submit requests and appeals to the Commission. These requests or appeals may be for any worthwhile purpose or unusual circumstance that needs the special attention of the Commission. The request must be fully explained in a formal letter from the board. If the supervisors wish to be present to support their request or appeal at a Commission meeting, they must formally request time on the agenda. Districts must give staff adequate time to prepare these requests for Commission presentation. Generally, at least 15 days prior to the next Commission meeting is needed to ensure the information is available to the Commission.
2. Upon receipt of a district's request, program office staff will review the request/appeal, contact the district for more information if needed, and then present the district's request/appeal in a formal report at the Commission's meeting. The Commission will hear the report, and upon weighing the circumstances of the case, will either approve or deny the request/appeal.
3. District supervisors, staff, and/or cooperators may attend meetings and present personally. Those who wish to address the Commission with a brief, informal presentation that relates to an item being discussed and/or does not require a decision, may do so by filling out a presentation card at the meeting.