



DUPONT SUMMIT 2013

..... Pressing Issues, Economic Realities

December 6, 2013 * Historic Whittemore House, Washington, DC

The Policy Studies Organization

Speaker

John Larson - *National Association of Conservation Districts*

“ Sustainable Conservation and Soil Resiliency”

❖ Introduction

➤ NACD History & Conception

- Represent over 3,000 conservation districts who are represented by elected members – work closely with NRCS, other nonprofits and corporate sector
- Dust Bowl – Hundreds of thousands uprooted, by 1934 100 million acres no longer had enough topsoil for crops—had previously been productive land.
- Learned from this that soil health/resilience is crucial.
- Conservation districts were created in response

- ❖ Main idea – Extreme weather events and a rising global population are two real and pressing challenges in our world today; conservation districts are working at the local level to help implement sustainable conservation measures helping landowners reduce their carbon footprint and conserve the resource that is the foundation of sustainable agriculture – the soil.



DUPONT SUMMIT 2013

..... Pressing Issues, Economic Realities

December 6, 2013 * Historic Whittemore House, Washington, DC

The Policy Studies Organization

“ Sustainable Conservation and Soil Resiliency ”

❖ NACD Soil Resiliency Issues

➤ Natural Disasters & Climate Change

▪ Natural Resources

- Forestry (Urban, private & public lands)
 - ◆ Wildfire & Forestry Management
- Carbon Sequestration
- Endangered Species Act (ESA) issues
 - ◆ Examples include: Greater Prairie Chicken/Sage Grouse Initiative

▪ Soil Health

- Erosion and Sediment Control
- Cover crops
 - ◆ Using plant diversity to increase diversity in the soil
 - ◆ Managing soils more by disturbing them less
 - ◆ Growing a living root throughout the year
 - ◆ Keeping the soil covered as much as possible

▪ Water (Quantity & Quality)

- Irrigation efficiency
 - ◆ Examples of progress: Flint River Basin in Georgia, Texas Tech work



DUPONT SUMMIT 2013

..... Pressing Issues, Economic Realities

December 6, 2013 * Historic Whittemore House, Washington, DC

The Policy Studies Organization

“ Sustainable Conservation and Soil Resiliency”

❖ Market Benefits

- Not only is conservation the right thing to do for the land, it's also a smart economic investment.
 - Opportunities for water trading, specialty crop marketing, carbon trading etc.
 - Example includes Field to Market Initiative
 - It is important that landowners are educated about these programs and the various options that are available to them.

❖ Conclusion

The implementation of conservation practices on the land helps contribute to long-term economic stability. Policy decisions surrounding conservation should be based on sound science, taking into account the health and sustainability of the land and resources, as well as the economic impacts on producers, landowners and local communities. Long-term conservation benefits are best achieved when decisions are made by local people with technical and funding assistance from federal, state and local governments and the private sector.



DUPONT SUMMIT 2013

..... Pressing Issues, Economic Realities

December 6, 2013 * Historic Whittemore House, Washington, DC

The Policy Studies Organization

Biography

John Larson joined the National Association of Conservation Districts (NACD) as CEO in August, 2011. Having previously served as the Executive Director of the Washington Association of Conservation Districts (WACD) since 2004, Larson has worked directly with conservation districts for more than 18 years, including several years as President of the Washington Association of District Employees (WADE).

Prior to his role with WACD, Larson served as manager of the Conservation Districts Partnership—a consortium of four central Washington conservation districts—and district manager for the Othello Conservation District. Larson has a passion for natural resources and the outdoors, and is an avid fly fisherman and mountain biker. Before his interaction with conservation districts, Larson ran his family's irrigated farm in Royal City, Washington.

Before moving to the Washington, D.C. area, Larson was a lifetime resident of Washington State. He is an alumnus of Washington State University, where he studied Agricultural Economics. He and his wife, Shanon, have two teenaged children, Tyler and Cassie.