

# **Guidelines for Educating Nominating Committees**

To implement Conservation District Law, a conservation district needs a board that understands its roles and responsibilities. Recruiting qualified candidates for conservation district supervisor positions is the first step in securing a board that will carry out its fiduciary responsibility. It is not only important that potential supervisor candidates have an understanding of what is expected of them to be a conservation district supervisor, it is just as vital that nominating committees understand what is needed and expected in a candidate for the elected position of conservation district supervisor.

Orientation of a candidate is recommended so that the candidate will have an understanding of what the job requires and what is expected of him or her.

Orientation of the nominating committee, so they will understand what is expected of them as committee members and what the job of conservation district supervisor requires, is recommended. This will aid them in recruiting nominees that have an understanding of what the job of conservation district supervisor is.

## **Nominating Committees**

The conservation district board of supervisors appoints a committee to nominate qualified electors from the conservation district to serve on the board of supervisors. After selecting the nominating committee and appointing its chair, the district board should then present an orientation program to the nominating committee. This program should include:

- ✓ The purpose of the nominating committee.
- ✓ What is a qualified elector?
- ✓ What is the purpose of a conservation district board?
- ✓ What is expected from a conservation district supervisor to implement District Law in the conservation district?

## **The purpose of the nominating committee.**

A nominating committee is a group of qualified electors of the conservation district appointed by the conservation district board of supervisors that nominate supervisor candidates are qualified electors of the conservation district to stand for election as supervisor at the conservation district's annual meeting. The conservation district board appoints a chairperson of the nominating committee to see that the committee fulfills its duties. The committee must nominate candidates who are willing to serve as conservation district supervisors. They must make an effort to recruit candidates that understand the roles and responsibilities that will be expected of them as elected public officials charged with implementing District Law within their district.

### **What is a qualified elector?**

Kansas Conservation District Act, K.S.A. 2-1907, states: “The governing body of the district shall consist of five supervisors who are qualified electors residing in the district.”

A qualified elector of the conservation district is defined in Article 5, Section 1 of the Kansas Constitution: “Every citizen of the United States who has attained the age of eighteen years and resides in the voting area in which he or she seeks to vote shall be deemed a qualified elector.”

This means that anyone can serve as a conservation district supervisor as long as they meet the legal age and residency requirements. Nominating committees need to understand that a qualified elector is anyone, regardless of whether they are involved in agriculture or not. To ignore all qualified electors is to limit the candidate pool.

### **What is the purpose of a conservation district board?**

The purpose of a conservation district board, which is made up of five supervisors elected by the qualified electors of the conservation district, is to implement the Kansas Conservation District Act, or District Law, and related programs in the board’s respective district.

### **What is expected from a conservation district supervisor to implement District Law in the conservation district?**

The fiduciary responsibility of a conservation district supervisor is to do the things necessary to implement District Law. To perform the fiduciary duty of a conservation district supervisor, that supervisor must make an effort to:

- ✓ be informed of the issues that affect the conservation district,
- ✓ seek resources and advocate for policy to implement District Law in the conservation district, and
- ✓ educate others in the conservation district, including funding sources, of the importance of natural resource conservation.

A conservation district supervisor cannot serve the patrons of the conservation district by attending the monthly board meetings alone. A supervisor must participate outside of the board meetings to advocate for the district and educate oneself on the issues that affect his or her conservation district. It is a breach of that supervisor’s fiduciary responsibility not to make any effort to serve his or her respective district.