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July 10, 2009

Congressman Rob Bishop  
123 Cannon Office Building  
Washington D.C. 20505

Dear Congressman Bishop,

I am looking forward to meeting with you when in Washington D.C. this month for the National Association of Conservation Districts legislative conference. This confirms my appointment for Tuesday July 21, 2009 at 11 a.m. The Utah Association of Conservation Districts represents Utah's 38 conservation districts that are working at the local level to deliver state and federal conservation programs including assisting the NRCS deliver the 2008 Farm Bill programs. Below, briefly stated, are some of the issues important to Utah conservation districts I will discuss with you. Additional information is attached for your staff's review.

- **The Farm, Conservation and Energy Act of 2008:** Please work to maintain the mandatory levels of program funding as included in the 2008 Farm Bill and reject any efforts to reduce conservation program spending.
- **H.R. 2454, the America Clean Energy and Security Act of 2009:** Please support Chairman Collin Peterson's amendment that provides for the USDA to have a leadership role in structuring a carbon offset program. Conservation districts nationally are working as verifiers of carbon practices and will work with USDA and developers in this capacity as the program is established.
- **S.787, the Clean Water Restoration Act:** The original legislation and proposed substitutes are not good policy and if passed would negatively affect Utah farmers and ranchers. The legislation removes the term "navigable" from the definition of waters of the United States under the Clean Water Act. This would expand federal water jurisdiction including intermittent streams, drainage ditches, storm water management structures on our farms and ranches.
- **FY 2010 Appropriations:** Please support funding for conservation programs now being considered by the U.S. Congress. Following are the programs important to Utah landowners/managers and citizens and the funding levels requested:

**Conservation Technical Assistance (CTA)** in the USDA NRCS Conservation Operations account. CTA provides a funding base ensuring the best technical and

scientific knowledge in planning and design of conservation projects. Funding for CTA remains critically low as demand for this planning across the country increases. Please support **\$924.446 million** in the Agriculture Appropriations Bill.

**State and Private Forestry** programs under the USDA Forest Service are necessary to the continued maintenance of healthy and productive forest lands. Please support **\$300.582 million** in the Interior Appropriations Bill.

**Clean Water Act Section 319, Nonpoint Source Grants Program** administered by the EPA addresses water pollution from diffuse sources that impair water quality including nutrient runoff from agriculture, faulty septic systems from residential property, or urban runoff such as oil and toxic chemicals. Please support **\$218.957 million** in the Interior Appropriations Bill.

- **Great Basin Environmental Program:** Utah with Nevada, Idaho, Oregon, and California has proposed a regional authority to optimize the efforts and resources of all Great Basin programs, partners, and organizations. Please support new funding under this initiative for restoration projects and critical research related to invasive species in Great Basin.

Thank you in advance for your consideration of our requests. Please feel free to call if we can be of further assistance and support to you. I can be reached at 435-828-6656 or 435-789-2100 or contact our executive vice president Gordon Younker at 435-753-6029 extension 31.

Sincerely,



Bill Rasmussen  
President

Enclosure:

cc: Wayne Bradshaw