

Election Process and Procedures

I. Nominating Committee Responsibilities – The nominating committee should be composed of three members appointed by chairperson of the SWCD. One member will be appointed from among the remaining supervisors whose term is not expiring at the end of the year in which the election is being held. The two additional nominating committee members shall be appointed from the community at large and should be persons who are knowledgeable of SWCD operations. District employees and partnering agency employees, should not be part of the nominating committee. However, the office staff and partnership staff can assist the nominating committee by preparing a list of possible candidates for the committee to review and consider.

- A. Time Frame – The nominating committee shall be organized and functioning six (6) months prior to the annual meeting and election. The nominating committee should contact potential candidates in person (not by telephone), explain the roles and responsibilities and determine the person’s willingness to be nominated and ability to serve, if elected.
- B. The nominating committee will provide all willing candidates with a copy of the Statement of Candidacy Form – **SEL-4a** and have the candidate complete and sign the form. **RETAIN THE SEL-4a FORM(S) AT THE SWCD OFFICE.** Give them to the election official along with other election materials immediately prior to in person voting at the voting location.
- C. When the nominating committee meets and selects their slate of candidates they will prepare and sign individually the required District Board Member Candidate Submission and Ballot Request Form (**SEL-4**) certifying the slate of candidates. The DPA may assist the committee with the completion of the nomination portion of the form. The committee must submit the signed form to the SWCD office at least 45 days prior to the annual meeting date.

II. Petition Candidate Process - Any person that is 18 years or older and reside in the county can petition to be a supervisor candidate by obtaining at least 10 valid signatures on the SWCD Candidate Nomination Petition form (SEL-5). This form is available from the district office or from the Division web site and must be completed and returned to the SWCD office 35 days prior to the annual meeting date. All candidates nominated by the petition process must also complete the Statement of Candidacy Form (**SEL-4a**) in order to have their name placed on the ballot.

III. Filing the District Board Member Candidate and Ballot Request Form – SEL-4 The SWCD administrator on the 34th day preceding the election will check and see if any petitions for supervisor have been received by the district. The administrator shall list the name(s) of all seeking to be placed on the ballot in section B on the SEL-4. The district staff person completing the SEL-4 shall include their name and title in section B. Once the SEL-4 is completed, the form should be mailed immediately to Ohio Soil and Water Conservation Commission; 8995 E. Main Street; Reynoldsburg, Ohio 43068

IV. Legal Requirements for Election – The District shall cause notice to be given of the proposed election. Due notice is given and shall have been achieved when such notice has been published once not more than three weeks and not less than one week prior to conduct of official election by one or more newspapers of general circulation within the boundaries of the District in which the election is being conducted. SWCDs may use the Election Legal Notice Form (**SEL-1**) and Sample Legal Notice Letter (**SEL-1a**) as templates.

V. Voter Eligibility and Requirements

Resident:

- May cast one vote and be 18 years of age or older and legal resident of the county
- Is a landowner or land occupier (lives in county) and may vote only once as a landowner/land occupier regardless of the number of parcels owned, leased or rented

- Must register to vote either through absentee voting process or at time and place of election using the **SEL-6** form.

Non-resident landowner:

- May cast one vote in each county land is owned and be 18 years of age or older;
- File notarized affidavit (**SEL-8**) certifying land ownership prior to registering to vote;
- Name must be listed on deed at County Recorder's Office;
- May vote only once as a non-resident landowner regardless of number of parcels owned; and
- Must register to vote either through absentee voting process or at time and place of election using the **SEL-7** form.

Non-resident land occupier:

- May cast one vote in each county voter leases, rents or is a tenant and be 18 years of age or older;
- File a notarized affidavit (**SEL-8**) certifying land occupier status prior to registering to vote - example: verbal farm lease, should have canceled rent check or FSA document;
- May vote only once as a land occupier regardless of the number of leases or properties rented; and
- Must register to vote either through absentee voting process or at time and place of election using the SEL-7 form.

Corporation or Firm:

- May cast one vote as a land owner or land occupier regardless of number of parcels owned or leases held;
- File a notarized affidavit (**SEL-9**) verifying status of land ownership or land occupier status prior to registering to vote;
- Affidavit must identify a specific individual who will cast the corporations vote and signed by appropriate corporate officer;
- Voter must 18 years of age or older; and
- Must register to vote either through absentee voting process or at time and place of election using the SEL-7 form.

Limited Liability Companies (LLC):

- May cast one vote as landowner or land occupier;
- LLC Officer or LLC designee may vote, but not members;
- File a notarized affidavit (**SEL-9**) certifying landownership or land occupier status prior to registering to vote;
- Affidavit must identify a specific individual to cast the LLC's vote and be signed the appropriate LLC Officer; and
- Voter must be 18 years of age or older and must register either through absentee voting process or at time and place of election.

Trusts:

- May cast one vote as landowner or land occupier;
- Trustee or trustee designee may vote but not beneficiary;
- Must file a notarized affidavit (SEL-9) certifying landownership or land occupier status prior to registering to vote;
- Affidavit must identify a specific individual to cast the Trusts Vote and be signed by the Trustee; and
- Voter must be 18 years of age or older and must register to vote either through absentee voting process or at time and place of election.

Situations where an individual might cast more than one vote in a SWCD Election:

- Is a qualified** Resident
Corporation designee – requires separate affidavit
LLC designee – requires separate affidavit
Trust designee – requires separate affidavit

- Is a qualified** Non-resident landowner – affidavit required.
Non-resident land occupier – separate affidavit required
Corporation designee – separate affidavit required
LLC Trustee – separate affidavit required
LLC Trustee designee – affidavit (s) required

- Is a qualified** Non-resident land occupier – affidavit required
Non-resident landowner – additional affidavit required
Corporation designee – additional affidavit required
LLC designee – additional affidavit required
LLC designee – additional affidavit required
LLC trust designee – affidavit(s) required

IV. Absentee Ballot Process – Residents- **SEL-2** or Non-Residents/FIRM/Corporation - **SEL-3** who cannot attend the annual meeting and election can obtain an official application for absentee ballot and registration envelope by requesting it from the District either by:

- A. In writing at (SWCD address), no earlier than 21 days prior and no later than 5 days prior to the annual meeting date. The request must be mailed back to (SWCD address) in order to receive a ballot and registration envelope. The ballot and registration envelope are to be mailed back to the person making the request.

- B. In person at the SWCD office between the hours of ___ a.m. and ___ p.m. Monday through Friday to the District, no earlier than 21 days prior and no later than ___ p.m. the day of the annual meeting.

- C. A person shall limit their request for their own personal ballot, except that written requests signed from all other qualified electors in the same household can be submitted in the same envelope, which is to be mailed to SWCD address. (Note that request forms for absentee ballots must have original signature to be valid. Faxes will not be accepted)

- D. In the event that the designated election staff person is out of the office, a person may fill out the official application for absentee ballot, and leave for action to be processed when the designated staff person returns.

VI. Election process and ballot oversight – The designated SWCD election staff person is solely responsible for distributing official application request forms, ballots, and registration envelopes. **Registration envelopes must have the return address on front of the envelope, if not the ballot will considered non-valid.** Ballots will be maintained on a daily basis by the designated SWCD election staff person. Any irregularities and discrepancies will be reported to the Area Program Specialist by the designated SWCD election staff person.

**** All Elections Forms are available on the ODA-DSWC website:**

<http://www.agri.ohio.gov/apps/odaforms/odaforms.aspx?div=Soil%20and%20Water%20Conservation>