



Walk a Mile in My Boots

News release provided by the National Cattlemen's Beef Association.

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— Stacey Katseanes***

DENVER, CO (Feb. 3, 2006) — Making it official with the signing of a memorandum of understanding, the “Walk a Mile in My Boots” work-exchange program is now expanding to include partnerships with the National Association of Conservation Districts (NACD) and the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS).

The award-winning program was originally launched by the National Cattlemen's Beef Association (NCBA) and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) in summer 2003. For more than two years it has provided government employees and cattle producers with on-the-ground work experiences in each other's respective professions.

“We are very excited about this new partnership and the expanded opportunities it will bring for both cattle producers and government employees,” says Stacey Katseanes, NCBA program representative.

“Past exchanges between NCBA members and FWS employees were rewarding experiences for everyone involved,” he continues, “and these new partnerships mean NCBA and NACD members can now swap

jobs with NRCS or FWS employees — and vice versa!”

“In years gone by, various cattle producers from across the country brought up concerns during membership meetings that local or even national government officials sometimes did not understand the true priorities and challenges for cattle producers,” explains Jim McAdams, Texas cattle producer and outgoing NCBA president. “This program is a prime opportunity for cattle producers to cultivate positive relationships with government employees through friendly work exchanges.”

Any cattle producer, NACD member, FWS employee, or NRCS employee can apply for the exchange program. The average length of an actual exchange runs anywhere from two to 10 days.

“The ‘Walk a Mile in My Boots’ program increases appreciation among government employees for rural lifestyles, agricultural production and the economic pressures of agriculture through firsthand experiences,” Katseanes says. “At the same time, the program enhances cattle producers’ understanding of the challenges and rewards of working together on conservation efforts.”

During the exchange, cattle ranchers can visit government offices, work on refuges or labs, or even travel to national headquarters in Washington, D.C. Government employees have the opportunity to visit cattle operations and get hands-on experience working the ranch.

“This program is an innovative

opportunity for agricultural producers and government employees to voluntarily develop and implement effective conservation solutions that are viable alternatives to regulatory process by promoting idea exchanges among participants,” Katseanes says. “We encourage NCBA members to sign up!”



Editor's Note This release is adapted from a news release distributed by the National Cattlemen's Beef Association. For the original release or more information about the organization, go to www.beefusa.org.