

House Concurrent Resolution

Whereas, the “dirty thirties” were epitomized by rolling dust storms, dirt-clogged fence lines and hardship caused in part by inadequate conservation practices; and,

Whereas, the 1937 legislature recognized the urgent need for local leadership to conserve our natural resources and introduced HB 206 allowing South Dakotans to organize conservation districts through petition and referendum; and,

Whereas, on February 23, 1937, the House passed HB 206, followed by Senate passage on February 27, 1937, and Governor Leslie Jensen’s signature on March 7, 1937; and,

Whereas, all of South Dakota’s lands became part of conservation districts in 1972 when the city of Freeman elected to be included; and,

Whereas, the conservation district mission is to take all available technical, financial and educational resources and focus or coordinate them so they meet the needs of the local land manager with conservation of soil, water and related natural resources; and,

Whereas, South Dakota’s conservation districts have provided 75 years of vital local leadership encouraging stewardship of the natural resources which are our State’s economic base; and,

Whereas, every South Dakotan, urban and rural, benefits from efforts to improve soil health, water quality, air quality, plant diversity, and habitat for wild and domestic animals; and,

Whereas, conservation involves personal and social responsibility, including a duty to learn about and improve natural resources as we use them wisely, leaving a rich legacy for future generations;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, by the House of Representatives of the Eighty-seventh Legislature of the State of South Dakota, the Senate concurring therein, that the week of April 29 through May 6, 2012, be recognized as Natural Resources Conservation Week in South Dakota to encourage public awareness, appreciation, and support for conservation district leadership, and to recognize the economic, social, and recreational importance of natural resources conservation to the entire state.

Dr. Hugh Hammond Bennett
Director of the Soil Erosion Service
September 19, 1933 – April 26, 1935

Chief of the Soil Conservation Service
April 27, 1935 – November 12, 1951



SOIL AND SOUL

The earth a bit of star-dust is,
And all of us but smaller bits
Of that celestial stuff.
In each of us, a bit of Soil
That makes us kin
To all that breathes;
In each of us, a bit of Soul
That makes us kin to God.

Forget not, O my Soul,
The sacred Soil!

The Creator through
An eon's toil
Combined these two,
And said, "It is enough.
My work is good;
In my own image—Man!
And in his mortal time,
In his own hand,
He holds his fate:
To build or ruin,
To plunder or create."

By Joseph Gladden Hutton, 1873-1939
Former Head of the Department of Soils, South Dakota State College,
who dedicated his life to developing an awareness
of the necessity for conserving and preserving the soil.