

Three Rivers Soil & Water Conservation District

Strategic Plan
2009-2012

DRAFT

Three Rivers Soil & Water Conservation District

P.O. Box 815

Tappahannock, VA 22560

804-443-2327 ext. 101

804-443-1707 fax

Threeriversswcd.org

Table of Contents

Introduction.....1

Directors and Staff2

Planning Process3

Strategic Issues:

Conservation.....4

Education/Public Awareness.....6

Financial/Leadership.....8

Closing9

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Three Rivers Soil & Water Conservation District Strategic Plan January 1, 2009 – December 31, 2012

Introduction

This Strategic Plan is intended to guide the Three Rivers Soil and Water Conservation District through the next four years, from 2009-2012. Its purpose is to direct the District toward an effective program in soil and water conservation within its boundaries.

As stated in the Soil and Water Conservation District Law of Virginia:

“A soil and water conservation district...shall constitute a governmental subdivision of this State, a public body corporate and politic, exercising public powers...”

“They (a district and its’ directors) shall have power to develop comprehensive programs and plans for the conservation of soil resources and for the control and prevention of soil erosion and for flood prevention or agricultural and nonagricultural phases of the conservation development, utilization and disposal of water within the district...”

District Description

The Three Rivers Soil and Water Conservation District encompasses the counties of Essex, King William and King & Queen and falls within both the York and Rappahannock River Watersheds.

The District is governed by a duly elected Board of Directors comprised of two representatives from each county, one appointed member and one County Extension Agent. Day to day operations is managed by an effective staff which consists of a District Manager, two full-time Conservation Specialists and one Administrative Coordinator and one Administrative Assistant.

The Three Rivers Soil & Water Conservation District strives to lead and motivate local communities to maintain a clean environment and a productive economy. By working through partnerships formed with federal, state and local governments; public servants and private landowners; volunteers and staff members, effective soil and water conservation programs are offered to landowners, homeowners and operators.

Directors

J. Franklin Townsend Jr., III Chairman, King William County, Elected
W. Todd Henley, III, Vice Chairman, King & Queen County, Elected
Keith Balderson, Secretary, Essex VA Cooperative Extension, Appointed
Roland B. Geddes, Treasurer, Essex County, Appointed
Robert Payne Longest, King & Queen County, Elected
Lloyd B. Mundie, Essex County, Elected
Raymond S. Thomas, Essex County, Elected
Troy Johnson, King William County, Elected

Associate Directors

James Cox, Essex County
Margaret “Prue” Davis, Essex County
Dawn Shank, King & Queen County

Staff

Michelle Carter, District Manager
Anne Davis, Administrative Coordinator
L. Wayne Pierson, Conservation Specialist
Meaghann Terrien, Conservation Specialist
Marlene Shelor, Administrative Assistant (PT)

Mission

It is our intent to safeguard soil and water within Three Rivers District by making significant strides within the next four years toward achieving the water quality goals of the State of Virginia and the Chesapeake Bay Act through putting conservation on the ground and working with the Tributary Strategies of the York and Rappahannock Watersheds.

Vision

To achieve soil and water conservation within the District through leadership, education and technical assistance.

Strategic Planning Process

In December 2008, the Three Rivers Soil and Water Conservation District publicly announced in accordance with the Code of Virginia Section 2.2-3707. (c) a public meeting on December 15, 2008 from 10:00 am to 12:00 pm in the Rappahannock Office Building Conference Room. The purpose of this meeting was to review the Draft Strategic Plan for fiscal years 2009 through 2012.

The Three Rivers Soil and Water Conservation District strategic planning process involved partners, clients and stakeholders. The group identified resource needs, solutions and recommended strategic priorities the district should address if it is to achieve its' mission for locally led conservation and remain effective in the coming years.

This plan will be used by our Board of Directors and staff to develop and manage District programs. There are three major goals and listed objectives presented that will assist the District in meeting the challenging future of natural resource conservation.

The Three Rivers District Board of Directors and staff consider this input to be of paramount importance and will use it as a guide in developing their annual plan of work and in conducting their day-to-day operations.

Partners

York River and Small Coastal Basin Roundtable
Natural Resources Conservation Service
Farm Service Agency
VA Cooperative Extension
Essex County Farm Bureau
Colonial Farm Credit
Resource Conservation & Development
Department of Conservation & Recreation
Department of Forestry
VA Department of Agriculture & Consumer Services
Mattaponi and Pamunkey Rivers Association
Department of Game & Inland Fisheries
US Fish & Wildlife Service
Department of Environmental Quality
Essex County
King & Queen County
King William County
National Association of Soil and Water Conservation Districts
Virginia Association of Soil and Water Conservation Districts
Middle Peninsula Land Trust
Middle Peninsula Planning District Commission
Dragon Run Steering Committee
Rappahannock River Basin Commission

1. Conservation

Goal: To advocate education and implementation of Best Management Practices.

Strategies: Identify and target problem areas and aid in the promotion and installation of Best Management Practices within the District per the annually approved Secondary Considerations guidelines.

Seek ample funding for the VA Best Management Cost Share program.

Secondary considerations will be developed to effectively distribute a targeted 100% of the annual cost share funding allocation in areas which will receive the greatest water quality benefit on an environmentally biased basis.

Promote and conduct a cost share sign-up period in which applications will be taken.

Rank and approve cost share applications in accordance with the Virginia Agricultural Best Management Practices Cost Share Program manual and the District's secondary considerations.

Direct producers/landowners to the most appropriate state or federal program for water quality improvement.

Partner with Natural Resources Conservation Service in all phases of the implementation of Farm Bill programs.

Educate the public on the value and importance of effective conservation and natural resource management.

Work cooperatively with agri-business, partnering agencies and educational institutions for technological advancements to identify problems not being addressed and better solutions in current management techniques for the advancement of best management innovation.

Participate in local extension field days and crop conferences to keep farmers informed on conservation issues and programs.

Support programs that enhance the profitability and viability of farming and forestry.

Promote shoreline management to landowners on alternatives for controlling shoreline erosion problems.

Provide local government with technical support where appropriate on soil and water management.

Continue promoting Agricultural Best Management Practice implementation through signage.

Support efforts to create a VA Urban Best Management Practices Program to address non-point source pollution from non-agricultural land such as sound lawn care practices and urban nutrient management.

Work in cooperation with stakeholders and councils of the York and Rappahannock Watershed towards achieving goals of the Tributary Strategies.

Identify counties' land use planning impact on the Districts natural resources.

Support planned development that does not fragment larger parcels of farms and forest land and leave it impractical and unprofitable to manage.

Act as co-holder of conservation easements, where appropriate.

Promote programs, services and technical assistance through presentations and event opportunities as requested.

Stress the identification of non-traditional participants through publicly visible media and increased one-on-one visits.

Encourage professional development to enhance deliverance and effectiveness of programs, services and assistance provided.

Conduct investigations based on District guidelines to resolve environmental complaints in accordance to the Agricultural Stewardship Act and Virginia Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services regulations.

2. Education/Public Awareness

Goal: To effectively communicate with partners, local government, learning institutions and citizens of the community the goals and mission of the District and purpose of its existence.

Strategies: Work with the community and other agencies to promote awareness of District Services.

Conduct seminars and workshops relating to District Programs.

Maintain a current brochure listing of all available programs, services and technical assistance.

Update local government and stakeholders on District activities and accomplishments through an annual report.

Utilize local media *and the District newsletter* to publicize District activities by submitting articles or public service announcements *regarding programs and issues for education.*

Work with local schools, churches, and libraries to promote conservation awareness through educational contests, media, field days and celebrations.

Utilize local realtors as a conduit of providing educational conservation materials.

Recognize citizen stewardship of natural resources through District awards program.

Provide environmental educational opportunities or activities for area students through district sponsored contests and camps.

Develop middle school level natural resources based programs.

Attend professional development training to enhance deliverance and effectiveness of programs and services.

Promote John F. Townsend Sr., Larkin Hundley, Anna K. Longest, and VASWCD scholarship programs when funding allows.

Provide conservation equipment for rental that demonstrates and helps to implement innovative conservation practices with producers and landowners.

Educate the public on prevention of other types of pollution and the relationship of these to soil and water health and conservation by conducting forums and outreach programs for pollution prevention such as litter, recycling, hazardous waste and energy consumption.

Continue to update the District's website with upcoming events and important educational tools.

Support and assist the York River & Small Coastal Basin Roundtable and Rappahannock River Basin Commission with basin wide forums, educational events and watershed projects.

3. Financial/Leadership

Goal: To develop expanded and stable funding sources for current and future district programs.

Strategies: Encourage all Board members to participate in director leadership training.

Work with other Districts throughout the State and with the Virginia Association of Soil and Water Conservation Districts to promote increased and more reliable funding by the State Legislature.

Educate State elected officials and encourage increased public funding of District staff and programs.

Support efforts for a new data and financial management system.

Work closely with County governments to increase funding support from the local level.

Provide annual reports to local governments which indicate the type and value of services provided to each county.

Identify and pursue additional sources of financial support for District services from public and private conservation groups.

Obtain grants for special District programs, seminars and workshops as innovative ideas and opportunities are presented.

Finance committee will meet as necessary to discuss District audit findings and recommendations.

Treasurer and Finance committee will provide guidance and leadership for the effective management of District finances to comply with regulations and directives.

Follow DCR's Desktop guide as a reference for all acceptable financial procedures.

Closing

In conclusion, the Three Rivers Soil and Water Conservation District extends appreciation to all who supported and participated with us in this important planning process. The concern and sincerity of the citizens of Essex, King William and King & Queen counties for protecting their natural resources are reflected in this plan and the District will do its utmost to fully implement the plan.

This Strategic Plan for fiscal years 2009-2012 was adopted by the Board of Directors on January 20, 2009.

J. Franklin Townsend, Jr.

W. Todd Henley, III

Raymond S. Thomas

Roland Geddes

Lloyd B. Mundie

Troy Johnson

Keith Balderson

Robert P. Longest

Three Rivers Soil and Water Conservation District programs, activities and employment opportunities are available to all people regardless of race, color, religion, sex, age, disability, national origin or political affiliation. An equal opportunity/affirmative action employer.