

Placer County Resource Conservation District
Long Range Strategic Plan
2011-2016
Adopted July 26, 2011

Section 1 – Internal Analysis:

A. Structure (The “Organization”)

Placer County Resource Conservation District (RCD) is a public body or unit of government (Special District) of the State of California organized under Public Resources Code Division 9. The Placer County RCD is self-governed by a seven member Board of Directors who are appointed by the Placer County Board of Supervisors. The Directors guide programs and set policies consistent with local conservation goals and priorities. The day to day operations are carried out under the leadership and supervision of the District Manager.

B. Organizational Function (The “Purpose”)

To make available technical, financial and educational resources, whatever their source, and focus or coordinate them so that they meet the needs of the local land manager with conservation of soil, water and related natural resources.

C. Mission, Vision and Values

Through the development of the 2011-2016 Long Range Plan, Placer County RCD Board and Staff adopted the following mission, vision and values for the organization:

1. The “Mission”

The mission of the Placer County RCD is to promote the wise and sustainable stewardship of natural resources by inspiring responsible conservation practices.

2. The “Vision”

Our District will develop, plan and implement programs, services and activities utilizing a Business Enterprise model to build capacity of the organization to effectively address current and emerging conservation and natural resource priorities

3. The “Values”

We share and support a commitment to:

- Working landscapes
- Viable local agriculture
- Clean and available water
- Productive soils
- Healthy urban environments
- Functioning watersheds
- Firesafe landscapes
- Partnerships
- Education
- Healthy forests
- Biological resources (plants, animals, humans, other)
- Recreational and cultural resources

D. Management Scoping Process (The “Work”)

In order for the organization to be effective, internally and externally, a management scoping system will be utilized to filter, develop, plan, budget, administer, monitor, evaluate and communicate the work of Placer County RCD. The following “Goals Grid” will form the basis for the District’s scoping system:

1. Goals Grid

<p>Achieve</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Educational programs focusing on service providers and contractors ▪ Programs that provide assistance including those to small acreage land owners ▪ Notoriety ▪ More visibility ▪ Financial sustainability ▪ Increase capacity to deliver technical assistance ▪ More on the ground implementation ▪ Building that can house RCD and partners ▪ Develop / achieve technical assistance for urban communities ▪ RCD growth as a conservation partner ▪ Programs development ▪ Complement NRCS programs with RCD programs (financial, educational, technical) ▪ Bring in funding that leads to on-the-ground implementation ▪ Do more grant writing 	<p>Preserve</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Cultural resources ▪ Forestry chipper program and working relations ▪ Programs that result in effective implementation ▪ Traditional core services ▪ Integrity ▪ Property confidentiality agreements with land owners ▪ Independence – not being manipulated and or controlled ▪ Good will ▪ Separation between regulation and conservation ▪ Agricultural working lands ▪ County partnership ▪ Urban parks
<p>Avoid</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Funding gaps ▪ Agreements that cannot be fulfilled ▪ Duplication of programs and/or opposing programs ▪ Conflict of interest ▪ Tunnel vision or group think ▪ Excessive regulatory processes ▪ Being a regulator ▪ Being caught unprepared ▪ Conflict with other partners 	<p>Eliminate</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Inefficient work space ▪ Just doing studies ▪ Hasty contract signing ▪ Waste and inefficiency ▪ Off-site storage ▪ Redundant paper work ▪ Unrealistic expectations

(as adapted from the work Fred Nickols and Ray Ledgerwood)

2. Use of the Goals Grid:

- As a scorecard or project filter (project proposals, initiatives and conservation concepts are evaluated using the goals grid matrix and scoping process – See Appendix 1
- Prioritize and set goals
- Established operational parameters
- Incorporate into decision making process on funding decisions
- Grant proposals

3. Criteria for Selecting a High Priority:

Does it....

- Meet achievable goal(s) of RCD (passes the grid test – achieve, preserve, eliminate, avoid)
- Pass and evaluation through research, scope, discovery determines derive conservation benefits
- Meet community based need(s)

- Fall within our mission
- Include ability of staff and directors (govern and assist/volunteer with skill sets) to provide service
- Have available funding

E. Business Enterprises (The “Programs”)

Placer County RCD is committed to providing leadership and support to its core programs:

- Rural Conservation
- Urban & Community Conservation
- Forest and Fuels
- Bioregion (Watershed)
- Outreach & Education
- District Operations

Program services and activities include technical assistance, project development/management, enterprise, research/development, funding, administration, etc.

F. Conservation and Natural Resource Priorities for 2011-2016

- On the ground technical assistance
- Water resources (quality and quantity)
- Forest health
- Urban/rural interface
- Soil erosion
- Agriculture lands and viability

Section 2 – Long Range Planning Goals:

A. Overview of Business Enterprise (Program) Goals for FYs 2011-2016:

Program	Measures	Goal
Rural Conservation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ # of people served ▪ # of plans developed ▪ # practices installed 	By April 2016 a demonstrated increase in the number of people served, the number of plans developed and number of practices installed
Urban & Community Conservation Program	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ # of groups, students served ▪ # of workshops ▪ # of home owners assisted ▪ Tons of soil saved ▪ Acre feet of water saved 	By April 2016 a demonstrated increase in the number of groups and students served; in the number of workshops; the number of home owners assisted; the tons of soil saved; and the acre feet of water saved
Forest and Fuels Program	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ # Tons chipped ▪ # Acres enhanced ▪ # Clients served 	By April 2016 a demonstrated increase in tons chipped; number of acres enhanced; and number of clients served
Watershed / Bioregional Program	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ # of grants received and amount ▪ # acres benefited (easement or other) ▪ Successful project implementation ▪ # of partners collaborated with 	By April 2016 a demonstrated increase in the number of grants received and amount; the number of acres benefited (easement or other); successful project implementation; and the number of partners collaborated with
Outreach & Education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ # of people reached ▪ # of events / workshops ▪ % of increase people requesting service 	By April 2016 a demonstrated increase in the number of people reached; the number of events / workshops; and the % of increase people requesting service
District Operations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Budget management & variance ▪ Audit results – fiscal & performance ▪ Grant performance & results ▪ Policies and procedures in place ▪ Overall products & service value ▪ Success stories ▪ District owned property 	By April 2016 a demonstrated increase in budget management & reductions in variance; have positive audit results – fiscal & performance; have high grant performance & results; have policies and procedures in place; and an increase in overall products & service and related value; and an increase in success stories; and have district owned property

B. Benchmarks, Timeline, & Actions:

• **Rural Conservation Program (Measurable Goal):**

By April 2016 a demonstrated increase in the number of people served, the number of plans developed and number of practices installed

Benchmark	Timeline	12 month actions
Conservation planner education / certificates	FY2011	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Attend classes and obtain certificates as available ▪ Provide complete databases
Respond to 40 requests	FY2012	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Develop landowner agreement ▪ Attend agricultural related events ▪ Respond to requests ▪ Determine individual needs
20 landowners services	By FY2013	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Work with landowners ▪ Develop plans as necessary
Showcase event of installed practices	By FY2014	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Continue with landowners (possible agriculture tour as venue)
Small farm cost share program that mirrors EQIP	By FY2016	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Research funding for seed money ▪ Write grants

• **Urban & Community Conservation Program (Measurable Goal):**

By April 2016 a demonstrated increase in the number of groups and students served; in the number of workshops; the number of home owners assisted; the tons of soil saved; and the acre feet of water saved.

Benchmark	Timeline	12 month actions
Develop framework for program	FY 2012	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Research existing plans, contact cities and RCDs to determine extent and need ▪ Begin to develop draft plan
Develop plan	FY 2012	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Complete plan ▪ Develop funding sources
Implement plan	FY 2013	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Hiring or obtain required assistance ▪ Begin plan ▪ Define measurable goals
Track plan	FY 2014	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Analyze plan and revise ▪ Enhance as needed
Measure goals	ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Continue to track plan

• **Forest and Fuels Program (Measurable Goal):**

By April 2016 a demonstrated increase in tons chipped; number of acres enhanced; and number of clients served.

Benchmark	Timeline	12 month actions
Requests for assistance	annually	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Public outreach
Conservation plans	annually	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Public outreach ▪ Development of plans
Services provided	FY 2015	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Increase number of days
Funding sources	annually	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ NRCS, district, others
Financial review	annually	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Organize and evaluate data
Acres treated	annually	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Compile report
Annual report	annually	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Compile data (biomass use) ▪ Develop report

• **Bioregion/Watershed Program (Measurable Goal):**

By April 2016 a demonstrated increase in the number of grants received and amount; the number of acres benefited (easement or other); successful project implementation; and the number of partners collaborated with.

Benchmark	Timeline	12 month actions
Identify project	By FY2012	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Run through filter to identify needs of resource and priority
Maintain partnership	Ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Identify new partners ▪ RCD attend meetings ▪ Support grant applications
Secure grant	By FY2013	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Collaborate on grant writing submitted ▪ Prepare budget ▪ Win award
Grant implemented	By FY2015	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Treat acres / acquire acreage
Obtain suitable expertise	By FY2014	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Recruit expert biologist, archeologist ▪ Review subcontractors, experts consultants ▪ Evaluate staffing level (internal)
Report and public relations	By FY2016	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Promote success ▪ Report progress

• **Outreach & Education (Measurable Goal):**

By April 2016 a demonstrated increase in the number of people reached; the number of events / workshops; and the % of increase people requesting service

Benchmark	Timeline	12 month actions
RCD workshop series development and implementation	FY 2012	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ One workshop per quarter ▪ Review partner workshops and fill in gaps
Attend agriculture related events	FY2012	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Provide RCD programs information at events (3 events)

• **District Operations (Measurable Goal):**

By April 2016 a demonstrated increase in budget management & reductions in variance; have positive audit results – fiscal & performance; have high grant performance & results; have policies and procedures in place; and an increase in overall products & service and related value; and an increase in success stories; and have district owned property

a. Fiscal Policy Compliance

Benchmark	Timeline	12 month actions
Quick books reporting and monitoring	FY 2012	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Tweak QB and Excel reporting to meet management needs consistent with fiscal policy
Establish RCD standalone checking / investment account	FY 2014	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Set up appropriate bank accounts ▪ Monitor and track activity and rate of return
Re-evaluate fiscal policy	FY 2014	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Three year evaluation of policy or as circumstances deem appropriate

b. Maintain personnel policy compliance

Benchmark	Timeline	12 month actions
Conduct personnel evaluations	On-going	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪
Maintain compliances with state & federal law	On-going	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪
Maintain staffing needs	On-going	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪

c. Building Acquisition

Benchmark	Timeline	12 month actions
Set up exploration committee	FY 2012	▪

Appendix 1 – Placer County RCD Management Scoping System

The work (projects, services, activities) of the Placer County RCD are considered through a series of lenses or filters:

- Filter 1: Goals Grid – Make initial assessment and determination on the basis of...Achieve, Preserve, Avoid and/or Eliminate
- Filter 2: Annual Budget - Is this work consistent with the current Annual Budget
- Filter 3: Annual Work Plan (AWP) Project Matrix – is the work identified within current AWP
- Filter 4: Management Scoping Filter (the process):
 - Step 1 - Proposals/Initiatives/Concepts (PIC) brought forward to District staff
 - Step 2 - Is PIC consistent with PCRCD mission, vision, values and guiding principles?
 - Step 3 – Identify PIC within relevant programmatic framework – i.e. practice, project, R&D, enterprise
 - Step 4 – Provide briefing report to the PCRCD Board and/or appropriate Board Committee
 - Step 5 – Develop SOW to include the following components:
 - Concept
 - Background, Issue and Expected Outcome(s)
 - Leveragable/Repeatable
 - Timeline
 - Budget
 - Partners
 - Funding Source
 - Agreements (MOU, MOA, IGA, etc.)
 - Request for Bid (if needed)
 - Step 6 – Administration Requirements:
 - Accounting
 - AWP Update/Amendment
 - Contracts
 - Financial Reporting
 - Budget Reconciliation
 - Step 7 – Monitoring Requirements
 - Progress Reporting
 - Adaptive Management/Feedback
 - In-house Evaluation
 - External Reporting/Communication

Appendix 2- Parking Lot (desired and potential accomplishments and outcomes by 2016)

The following list was inspired through a 2011 Stakeholder Survey and the Placer County RCD/NRCS Long Range Planning Retreat facilitated by Ray Ledgerwood:

1. Natural Resource Conservation:

- Providing assistance to small and large land owners in our district for conservation planning and implementation
- A percentage increase in the small farms in the county
- Land owners seeing conservation plans working for them – daily
- Our district natural resources are protected through resident participation
- Reduction in forest fuels in Placer County
- Completion of an effective fuel break for one rural community
- More active presence in education regarding natural resources especially in younger grades...more outreach to public regarding services
- More working agricultural landscapes that also provide benefit to biological resources
- Water quality standards are achieved for one watershed
- Implementing district led cost share program
- Recognized as the go-to conservation organization in the district by land owners and partners
- Establishment of an urban conservation education program
- Workshops that have outreach to the public
- RCD and NRCS are so active in conservation planning and assistance that people will come to our offices for assistance – no question about it – see more encouragement of implementation of conservation even without financial assistance
- Support more effective government regulation benefitting working landscapes
- Identify and treat erosion sources in one particular watershed
- A percentage increase in the number of salmon or steelhead entering the watersheds that would accommodate salmon and steelhead

2. Organizational:

- Fully develop programs in place
- Improve the intellectual capacity of our staff
- Adequately staffed and funded district – sustainable funding
- Expanded capacity to support program coordinators in all core program clusters
- Increased interplay with and between NRCS and RCD
- Improve the effectiveness of committees to filter projects
- Compliment NRCS with financial assistance projects by the RCD
- Relocate to a new, well designed, positive office space and location that the office space would be focused on natural resources – district owned space with partners including demonstration model area
- Having a tight “ship” on policy, procedures, employee benefits, transitional plans
- RCD is seen as alive and the go-to place for all the above and directors and staff are visible and known
- Grants available for more implementation work instead of studies
- Our website should contain information...everything that is going on...policies, benefits, programs

