

Bradford County Conservation District



2016 Strategic Plan

INTRODUCTION

The Bradford County Conservation District is a local unit of State government that was created for the purpose of providing the people of Bradford County the maximum flexibility and capability to identify the natural resource needs of the community, develop strategies to meet those needs and then to implement those strategies. The Conservation District accomplishes this through the coordination of Community resources with those of the local, state and federal governments, private industry and the organizations that share similar direction.

THE VISION of the Bradford County Conservation District is *a vibrant and healthy environment supported by an educated, connected, and involved community.*

THE MISSION of the Bradford County Conservation District is *to lead, educate, and empower people to manage resources wisely.*

PLANNING PROCESS

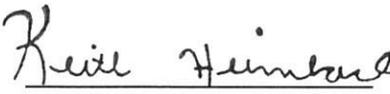
The Bradford County Conservation District started meeting in the spring of 2015 to develop a survey of questions to assess the needs of our community and partners. This meeting included partners, staff and board members. The survey ran for approximately 6 months. Cards were distributed with the link to the survey and paper surveys were distributed to local businesses in the area for those who do not have internet access. In addition, the survey was linked to our website and social media.

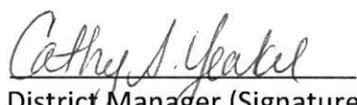
Team retreats were conducted in January 2016 to identify areas where our programs could address issues that have been overlooked since the last strategic plan was developed.

A retreat was held in April 2016 consisting of directors and staff to prioritize the critical natural resource issues in the County. In addition, aesthetic concerns with our building and efforts of educational outreach were included.

The plan will be available on our website and copies will be printed and available at our office and any outreach events we attend. The plan will be updated on a regular basis.

This Strategic Plan was approved by the Bradford County Board of Directors at the June 6th, 2016 Board Meeting.


Date: 6/14/16
Board Chair (Signature)


Date: 6/14/16
District Manager (Signature)

KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

Success of the mission and progress toward the vision will be measured by these Key Performance Indicators (KPIs).

1. Water Quality

The desired end of all our efforts is improved Water Quality. With a watershed approach to conservation, the desired outcome should be delisting of impaired streams and / or stream segments throughout the County. We aim to see 1 segment removed from the impaired streams list annually.

2. Conservation Practices Implemented

The main strategy to achieve water quality is conservation on the ground. The chief measurement of our effectiveness will be conservation practices installed by BCCD or cooperators. We aim to see this number increase by 10% each year.

- 2016 - 190 BMPs
- 2017 - 210 BMPs
- 2018 - 235 BMPs

3. People Reached

Education is part of every interaction with the conservation district. When done well this education will result in better resource management. Number of people reached indicates our effectiveness in connecting with the community and we will work to increase this number by at least 2% annually.

- 2016 - 6,500 people
- 2017 - 6,630 people
- 2018 - 6,770 people

BRADFORD COUNTY CRITICAL NATURAL RESOURCE ISSUES

CRITICAL ISSUE – *Streams, Watersheds, Lakes, Ponds, and Wetlands*

Streams in Bradford County are severely unstable resulting in literally millions of dollars worth of damage over the past decades. Property loss, buildings, roadways and bridges are affected annually. Streams channels are affected by hydrology and geology as well as man's influence through past and current management, development, lack of consideration in planning, livestock access, ATVs and regulation. Streams, lakes, ponds, wetlands and entire watersheds offer unique and important environmental and recreational functions and values that are worthy of our protection.

STATEMENT OF INTENT:

- *BCCD will continue to assist Watershed Groups in project implementation and work to revive watershed organizations throughout the County.*
- *BCCD will develop and provide a training program for municipal officials, practitioners and contractors.*
- *BCCD staff will continue lake/pond monitoring efforts and will offer regulatory advice to individuals who wish to construct new ponds or have vegetation management issues.*
- *BCCD staff will continue to promote the health, safety and welfare of our county residents and environment through the effective, efficient and exemplary performance of the various administrative and technical duties related to our delegated Chapter 102 and 105 programs. As part of this effort, we will endeavor to successfully partner with fellow natural resource agencies to advance our mutual goals and also to be the best possible resource for our community by educating, serving, and forming great relationships with landowners, developers, engineers, municipalities, contractors and others needing or requesting assistance.*

PRIORITY ACTIONS:

- Provide an avenue to strengthen our watershed organizations in the County.
- Develop and provide a training program for municipalities focusing on Emergency Stream Intervention.

KEY INDIVIDUALS:

- | | |
|--------------------------------|-------------------------|
| - USDA NRCS | - NFWF |
| - PA Fish and Boat Commission | - DEP |
| - Watershed Groups | - Businesses / Industry |
| - U.S. Army Corps of Engineers | - Municipalities |

CRITICAL ISSUE – *Education*

Education needs in the county vary greatly. There is a need for increased education highlighting district programs and general natural resource issues throughout the County.

STATEMENT OF INTENT:

Short Term: By 2016 BCCD will increase educational outreach to our community partners, municipalities, schools groups and others requesting our assistance.

Long Term: Secure enough funding to expand our education staff.

PRIORITY ACTIONS:

- Seek out educational funding to support the education initiative.
- Provide more opportunities for education in all of our programming.
- Re-introduce Education Newsletter

KEY INDIVIDUALS:

- | | |
|------------------------------|----------------------|
| - BCCD Education Coordinator | - General Public |
| - BCCD Staff | - News Media |
| - Schools | - PA Dept. Education |

CRITICAL ISSUE – *Dirt, Gravel, & Low Volume Roads*

Stormwater runoff from rural roads carries significant sediment to our local waterways. BCCD works with local municipalities by implementing best management practices to encourage sound environmental maintenance of their local dirt and gravel and low volume roads.

STATEMENT OF INTENT:

Long Term: BCCD will work on getting all municipalities to send staff to a 2-Day ESM Training and explore more viable BMP options to treat sediment and nutrients in urban settings.

Short Term: By 2016 BCCD will increase participation in the Dirt, Gravel, & Low Volume Roads program.

PRIORITY ACTIONS:

- Maintain presence on statewide policy and planning committee
- More informative Newsletters
- Provide better demonstrations and advertising for events
- Continue with Annual Update Meetings
- Continue to provide leadership throughout the state through implementation of innovative conservation practices and policies

KEY INDIVIDUALS:

- | | |
|--|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - BCCD Dirt, Gravel, & Low Volume Roads Staff - BCCD QAB - SCC | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Municipalities - Center for Dirt and Gravel Road Studies |
|--|---|

CRITICAL ISSUE – Agriculture

Sediment and nutrients from agricultural operations impact water quality in Bradford County. Tillage management impacts soil health in Bradford County. The Bradford County Conservation District offers a full suite of services to farm operators to help improve livestock, crop, soil, and water resource management. Conservation planning and nutrient management planning are the key tools used in these management decisions. Engineering evaluation, design, bidding, contracting, and construction oversight aid implementation. Interest in Farmland Preservation opportunities is significant.

STATEMENT OF INTENT:

Long Term: BCCD will grow and maintain a highly competent, professional agricultural team addressing requests for assistance in a timely manner. Current manure management plans and conservation plans will be the norm for farms in Bradford County. BCCD will be recognized as “go-to” people for livestock, crop, soil, and water resource management assistance.

Short Term: BCCD will increase outreach and education activities to realize more farms developing manure management and conservation plans. BCCD will work closely with key individuals and partners to lead in innovative water quality and soil health improvements.

PRIORITY ACTIONS:

- Increase education and outreach activities for conservation plan and manure management plan development
- Improve public relations and marketing, including success stories following project implementation
- Strengthen crop management assistance services
- Put beta crop management record keeping tool online to a select group of farmers for a trial period
- Continue support of ag viability efforts
- Explore addition of no-till equipment as a way to connect with more farm operators and resource managers

KEY INDIVIDUALS:

- | | |
|---------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| - BCCD Ag Staff | - PA DEP |
| - Farmers | - PA Farm Bureau |
| - USDA FSA and NRCS field staff | - Chesapeake Bay Foundation |
| - PA Dept. of Agriculture | - Ag Committee |
| - Penn State Extension | |

CRITICAL ISSUE – *Forestry*

Forest is the predominant land use in Bradford County. The majority of this is managed by private individuals. Forest management assistance has become increasingly limited. Forest landowners and the forest resources of Bradford County could benefit greatly from increased education and technical assistance.

STATEMENT OF INTENT:

Long Term: Forest landowners in Bradford County will have access to necessary education and technical assistance to manage their forest resources with excellence.

Short Term: BCCD will evaluate our role in facilitating the availability of forestry education and technical assistance resources.

PRIORITY ACTIONS:

- Evaluate the feasibility of adding a staff forester.

KEY INDIVIDUALS:

- Board of Directors
- Manager
- Team Leaders
- Penn State Extension
- PA DCNR
- USDA NRCS
- Bradford/Sullivan Forest Landowner's Association
- NTHA

CRITICAL ISSUE – *Public Relations and Outreach*

The Bradford County Conservation District serves our community and the community needs to know where and who we are. Attention to this will increase our connection with those we are here to serve.

STATEMENT OF INTENT:

BCCD will continue its public relations and outreach efforts by attending more community events which highlight our projects, programs and opportunities.

PRIORITY ACTIONS:

- Identify events suitable for the conservation district to be present at
- Coordinate with partners to be included in outreach opportunities
- Develop informational brochures for every program offered at the district
- Provide interactive displays to attract the public
- Promote the Conservation District's 60th anniversary in 2016
- Hold a 2017 Earth Day Event for the County

KEY INDIVIDUALS:

- BCCD Manager
- BCCD Staff
- BCCD Board
- Partners
- Chamber of Commerce

CRITICAL ISSUE – *Staff and Board Development*

BCCD remains committed to leading in competence and professionalism. Growing a highly skilled, professional staff and engaged board of directors requires constant personal and team development.

Statement of Intent:

Long Term: BCCD will be a close-knit, effective team and a place where people want to be. Staff and Board of Director interactions are encouraged. Directors will be engaged in the issues and operate with leadership in mind. Staff will intentionally grow as individuals and professionals. BCCD is increasing capacity with existing and future staff to engage more Bradford County residents in implementing conservation

Short Term: BCCD uses existing staff resources to their full effectiveness. Staff maintain individual development plans. Individual evaluations are completed annually. Staffing needs are evaluated annually. Board development is ongoing.

Priority Actions:

- Individual assessment and goals annually
- Team assessment and goals annually
- Evaluate staffing needs annually

Key Individuals:

- Board of Directors
- Manager
- Team Leaders
- Staff

CRITICAL ISSUE – *Building and Grounds*

The Bradford County Conservation District is the sole owner of the building and grounds. We are the landlord for USDA/NRCS and Endless Mountains RC&D. Our facilities are a key function of our day to day performance and service to the community. It is important that the public know where we are located and who we are to carry out the rest of the goals and objectives of our organization.

Statement of Intent:

Long Term: BCCD will take pride in its building and grounds with continual improvement, good maintenance and landscaping.

Short Term: Top priorities include a new sign at building entrance, restroom renovations, HVAC systems, fire alarm systems, and repaving of parking area and drive way.

Priority Actions:

- Assess building needs
- Put projects out to bid
- Increase building budget

Key Individuals:

- BCCD Building Committee
- District Manager
- Contractors