

Conservation Districts

Planning for Success...

WACD Employee/Supervisor Training

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The Purpose of a Long Range Plan

- Serves as a foundation and guide for the district's long range goals and objectives
- Guides activities for district and informs other local, state and federal agencies
- Creates common vision and direction for staff and supervisors
- Should be reviewed and discussed – not put on a shelf and forgotten!



The Long Range Plan

- Nearly all WY conservation district long range plans are developed for five year time frames.
- Plans are typically reviewed on an annual basis to develop the plan of work.
- Current long range plans are a requirement to obtain state funding as per Wyoming Dept. of Ag. policy



The Long Range Plan

- Long Range Plans should include the following components:
 - Introduction describing the district resource base and history (should be brief)
 - Defines and lists goals and objectives for the conservation district's priority resource conservation areas and activities, i.e conservation forestry, water quality, education, etc.



The Long Range Plan

- components continued:
 - “Policy” or goals to coordinate with state and federal land management agencies, i.e. district policy on timber harvesting practices, grazing practices supported, etc.
 - May recognize existing plans, such as watershed plans, national forest plans, BLM RMPs, or county comprehensive plans



Inclusion of Watershed Plans

- Long range plans may contain language or a goal setting forth the district's intent to develop a comprehensive watershed plan(s)
- How the watershed plan is incorporated is a decision of individual districts
- Once a watershed plan is completed it is recommended the district amends their long range plan
- May also want to include county or city comprehensive plans



Making the Long Range Plan a recognized document

- District should adopt the plan pursuant to the Wyoming Administrative Procedures Act by formal resolution and filing with the county clerk
- Long range plan should be sent via certified return receipt to all applicable state and/or federal agencies (this ensures that the plan has been received)
- If one of your district's priorities is to coordinate with federal land management agencies and influence their decisions, WACD recommends you title the plan "Land Use and Natural Resource Management Plan," to be consistent with the National Environmental Policy Act



Wyoming Administrative Procedures Act (APA)

Statute:16-3-101

A few main points...

- Give at least forty-five (45) days notice of intended action (publish notice)
- Afford all interested persons reasonable opportunity to submit data, views or arguments, orally or in writing
- Incorporate or address all public comments in document
- Adopt by vote (see sample resolution), sign, and file with county clerk



Getting Started

- Each district varies:
 - examples: start with map to brainstorm resource issues in district, or look at what the district is doing that is working well
 - create timeline of tasks
 - update old version
 - gather examples of other districts' for template



Timeline Suggestions

- Start early! If your LRP expires at the end of the year, start early in the year.
- Have board and staff look at old LRP and brainstorm whether there are new issues or priorities – incorporate changes in a new draft
- Send public survey in spring or winter newsletter – give survey to local officials, look for new ideas or priorities that rise to the top (see handout)
- Hold an open house to showcase your current activities and ask for feedback on what you should be doing
- Have a draft ready for public comment no later than October 15 since you need to put it out for a 45 day public comment period



Gathering Public Input

- Talk to your legislators, public, and other local officials
- Open Houses
- Surveys
- Advertisements
- Invites to Board/Planning Meetings
- Meals
- Other?



What could we include in our Plan?

- Table of Contents
- Resolution of Adoption & signatures
- Introduction
- District Information
- District Description
- Maps
- Goals and Objectives
- Action items
- Public Input



Goal: a broad intention

Example: promote range quality and soil conservation

Objective: observable and measurable behavior

Example: work with cooperators to create and implement grazing plans



Long Range Plan as a dynamic document

- The Long Range Plan may include methods for measuring and monitoring successful implementation (POW)
- The Long Range Plan should be reviewed by the district supervisors, staff and partner agencies once a year. Spring is common time due to development of annual plan of work, which should be consistent with the long range plan.



Amending a Long Range Plan

- Long range plans are “living documents” that should be reviewed annually and amended as needed
- For “recognized documents” the same APA procedures should be followed to adopt amendments



How many copies should we print?

- Provide copies to individuals interested in being a candidate for district supervisor
- Provide copies to local commissioners, town councils, and state legislators
- Provide a copy to both Wyoming Department of Agriculture and the Wyoming Association of Conservation Districts



How many copies should we print?

- Have two original copies signed and stamped by county clerk. a.) one for county clerk file. b.) one for district use.
- Provide a copy with cover letter by certified return receipt to federal agencies if districts want their APA vetted plans recognized by these agencies.
- Provide a copy for Board of Agriculture district representatives
- Other examples?





The Annual Plan of Work and Annual Report

*Conservation Districts in
Action....*



Annual Plans of Work should...

- Complete the goals and objectives identified in the long range plan by implementing specific action items
- Include action items which contain definable, measurable objectives, i.e. present Enviroscape to 200 children, plant 40 living snow fences, establish 20 water quality monitoring sites, etc.
- Assign specific tasks to specific job descriptions (optional)



Annual Plans of Work

- Plans can serve as effective public information tools.
Keep them brief and formatted
- Job descriptions can and should reflect the contents of annual plans and vice versa



Annual Reports

- Report on district progress utilizing hard measurable means, i.e. the number of school children Enviroscene presented to, number of trees planted, water quality monitoring activities
- It is very beneficial to develop cost/benefit analysis of district activities. Example: a living snow fence saves \$X in snow plowing



Annual Reports

- Watershed plans may be referenced in these reports as a part of the district's scope of work for the year
- Annual reports can be one of your district's most important and effective outreach tools for legislators, other community leaders and the public you serve



Current Annual Plans and Reports

- Are required to obtain and maintain qualification for state funding through the Department of Agriculture!



Showcase your Annual Plans and Annual Reports

- Outstanding annual plans and annual reports are recognized through the WACD award program each fall
- Deadline for submission for awards consideration is October 1



Questions

