**LONG TERM (STRATEGIC) PLAN**

**2019-2020**



*The Commonwealth of Virginia supports the Holston River Soil & Water Conservation District through financial and administrative assistance provided by the Virginia Soil & Water Conservation Board and the Department of Conservation and Recreation.*

*Washington County supports Holston River Soil & Water Conservation District through financial assistance.*

**INTRODUCTION**

 The Holston River Soil and Water Conservation District (SWCD), founded September 4, 1951 is a political subdivision of the Commonwealth of Virginia with a prime objective to serve the farmers of Washington County, VA. Soil and Water Districts were established to develop comprehensive programs and plans to conserve soil resources, control and prevent soil erosion, prevent floods and conserve, develop, utilize and dispose water.

 The District is governed by a five-member Board of Directors. Each director serves a four-year term. Three of these members are elected in the November general election, while two directors are appointed. One of the appointed directors, by state mandate, is a Virginia Cooperative Extension Service Agent. Associate Directors are appointed for one-year terms. Associate Directors are typically area citizens who have an interest in the SWCD’s mission as well as valuable expertise and experience to offer. The District has three full time employees, an Administrative Secretary, Conservation Specialist and a Conservation Specialist/Education Specialist.

 All Washington County citizens can have a voice in resource and conservation planning by attending monthly board meetings, communicating their concerns and participating in District programs. Washington County SWCD is involved in a wide range of programs encouraging community participation in concerning and protecting soil, water, and other related natural resources. These programs are supported by Department Conservation & Recreation, Washington County Board of Supervisors, Department of Environmental Quality, and technical support from the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service and other partners.

 Our purpose is to give local citizens the ability to work on conservation problems at a local level. We want to help provide the necessary technical expertise to assist the community in identifying, discussing and solving local conservation issues. Our community constituents are farmers, homeowners, developers, teachers, youths, local businesses, agencies and other residents interested in conservation. We hope to serve all citizens of Washington County.

**MISSION STATEMENT**

To promote the wise use and protection of natural resources and conservation work within the District boundaries through education, informational programs, technical assistance and the development of conservation programs addressing local conservation needs.

**VISION STATEMENT**

For Holston River Soil & Water Conservation District to become more visible as an organization dedicated to the protection of all natural resources.

 For the principle concern to be the conservation and wise use of prime farmland, surface and ground water, air, forests, and urban areas through communication and cooperation with other conservation organizations, local government, land owners, schools, civic groups and businesses.

 For the Board of Directors as an elected and appointed body, to keep ourselves informed of current environmental concerns and to respond to those concerns in a balanced approach to the protection of the natural resources in the area designated as Holston River Soil & Water Conservation District.

**Directors**

David DeBusk, Chairman

Aaron Scyphers, Vice Chairman

Phil Blevins, Secretary

Henry Snodgrass, Treasurer

Michael Countiss

**Associate Directors**

Wayne Campbell

Martha Chapman

Dave Johnson

Tony Pane

Adam Wilson

**District Staff**

Lorie Stevens, Administrative Secretary

Wayne Turley, Conservation Specialist

**NRCS Staff**

Bill Moss, District Conservationist

Jason Haynes, Conservation Technician

The Holston River Soil and Water Conservation District Directors and Staff wish to express their appreciation to the many individuals who have helped develop this plan by participating in a stakeholder survey that was distributed throughout the county.

**Category #1: Agriculture**

**Goal: Work to Improve Water Quality within the Holston River SWCD**

Strategy 1: Administer the Virginia Agricultural Best Management Practices Cost Share Program (VACS).

Strategy 2: Provide technical assistance and support for projects that support the

 District’s mission.

Strategy 3: Perform site visits for producers and landowners to make recommendations for improving soil and water quality.

Strategy 4: Recommend state or federal programs available to improve soil and water quality

Strategy 5: Utilize appropriate state and federal agencies to compliment the work of the district.

Strategy 6: Provide existing clients with materials to promote programs to the public. (Ex: Brochures, Farm signs, etc.)

Strategy 7: Continue support of agriculture education through school programs.

**Category #2: Residential / Urban**

**Goal: Implement urban/residential non-point source pollution reduction programs.**

Strategy 1: Promote voluntary, incentive-based programs through the DEQ 319(h) residential septic grant program.

Strategy 2: Identify & utilize best avenues to promote different messages to different audiences (Website, Facebook, and You Tube, newsletters, exhibits, press releases, radio spots and others) and develop an outreach/marketing calendar for various media and messages.

Strategy 3: Produce appropriate and timely public presentation materials.

Strategy 4: Provide stormwater management education opportunities to residential homeowners, businesses and localities

Strategy 5: Continue education efforts in conjunction with residential septic program.

Strategy 6: Promote the benefits of the program to local elected officials and partner agencies.

**Category #3: Education**

**Goal: Creating Environmental Educational Opportunities**

**Public Outreach**

Strategy 1: Maintain and improve the usability of HRSWCD’s website

Strategy 2: Provide presentations to homeowners, civic, watershed, governmental and other groups about HRSWCD and its programs, with special emphasis on identified priority areas.

Strategy 3: Design exhibits and develop materials that can be used in a variety of venues to promote HRSWCD programs.

**Youth Education**

Strategy 1: Continue to develop and provide hands-on SOL correlated activities for all ages to be used on the school campus upon teacher request.

Strategy 2: Administer and promote District Envirothon, Youth Conservation Camp, conservation poster contest, agricultural awareness days, and classroom presentations.

Strategy 3: On an annual basis, publicize the Virginia Association of Soil and Water Conservation District scholarship program.

Strategy 4: Work cooperatively with partners to host an annual 6th Grade Farm Field for all Washington County 6th graders.

Strategy 5: Utilize new partners in natural resource education.

**Adult Education**

Strategy 1: On an annual basis, sponsor a farm field day. Identify practices / Farms for Tour; New Technology / Equipment Demonstrations; Invasive Weed Control Demonstrations

Strategy 2: On an annual basis, sponsor and promote Tree Day/Seed Day.

Strategy 3: Develop and maintain relationships with diverse civic groups in order to provide customized presentations focused on the conservation of our natural resources.

**Category #4: Government and Administrative**

**Goal: Better local government interaction.**

Strategy 1: Compile yearly report.

Strategy 2: Identify opportunities for mutually beneficial partnerships for technical, outreach, financial and administrative efforts between HRSWCD and appropriate county agencies, including Board of Supervisor members and the County Executive’s Office.

Strategy 3: On an annual basis, in December develop county budget request.

**Goal: Keep Directors and Staff informed, engaged and connected.**

Strategy 1: Support networking of Directors and Staff. Encourage attendance and

 Participation at VASWCD, VACDE and other partner agency/organization workshops,

 events, committees and meetings.

Strategy 2: Research and submit grant funding opportunities.

Strategy 3: Identify and contact new potential partners that share the natural resource conservation mission.

Strategy 4: Maintain and expand stakeholder and partnership alliances to support District’s mission and goals

Strategy 5: Recruit new Associate Directors.

Strategy 6: Ensure staff is well-informed about all programs and projects to provide a team approach and program continuity.

Strategy 7: Meet DCR grant deliverables.

Strategy 8: Encourage VASWCD to support adequate state funding for all workloads.

Strategy 9: Ensure opportunities for professional development.

Strategy 10: Publish and distribute annual, semi-annual and monthly reports, newsletters and meeting minutes.

**2019 – 2020 LONG TERM PLAN**

**APPROVAL DOCUMENTATION SHEET**

The Holston River Soil and Water Conservation District’s 2019-2020 Long Term Plan was reviewed and approved at the \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, board meeting. This plan will be in effect until December 31, 2020.

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David DeBusk

Holston River SWCD Chairman

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Date

*Holston River Soil & Water Conservation District prohibits discrimination in its programs on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, religion, age, disability, political beliefs, and marital or familial status.*

*Holston River Soil and Water Conservation District is an equal opportunity employer and provider.*