

Colusa County



RESOURCE
CONSERVATION DISTRICT

2014-2018 Long Range Plan

DIRECTORS

*Bob Alvernaz
Ben Felt
Kimberly Gallagher
Jay Dee Garr
Tom Hickok
Beth Nall
Gil Ramos*

ASSOCIATE DIRECTORS

Jim LaGrande

STAFF

*Patti Turner- Executive Director
Mary Fahey-Project Manager
Elizabeth Harper-Conservation Technician*

The purpose of the Colusa County Resource Conservation District's (CCRCD) Long Range Plan is to provide a foundation whereby natural resource concerns within Colusa County may be identified, studied, and addressed. The Long Range Plan will be reviewed annually and remain effective for a period of 5 years.

Adopted September 16, 2014

CCRCD 2014-2018 LONG RANGE PLAN

MISSION STATEMENT OF THE CCRCD:

The mission of the CCRCD is to protect, conserve, and restore natural resources through locally led education and implementation activities that supports a healthy environment and provides economic sustainability through wise land use.

HISTORY

Soil Conservation Districts, now known as Resource Conservation Districts or RCD's, were formed in the 1930's after the unparalleled ecological disaster known as the Dust Bowl. At the present time almost every county in the United States has a conservation district.

Originally Colusa County had two Districts, voluntarily organized by landowners, under the provisions of Division 9 of the Public Resource Code of the State of California. The Stonyford Resource Conservation District (Western portion of Colusa County) was formed in 1956 and the Colusa County Resource Conservation District (Eastern Colusa County) was organized in 1959. In 1996 the two separate districts merged to better serve the needs of Colusa County in its entirety. This united district became known as the "Colusa County Resource Conservation District."

NATURAL RESOURCE PRIORITIES:

The Long Range Plan identifies the following natural resources priorities in the District and defines the goals, objectives and actions necessary to address these priorities. The completion of all stated work is conditioned upon securing and maintaining adequate funding sources to support staff and the implementation of conservation practices.

NATURAL RESOURCE PRIORITIES

- ❖ WATER QUALITY AND QUANTITY
- ❖ VEGETATION QUALITY
- ❖ SOIL QUALITY
- ❖ AIR QUALITY
- ❖ SUSTAINABLE AGRICULTURE
- ❖ NATURAL RESOURCE EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS
- ❖ LOCALLY LED NATURAL RESOURCES MANAGEMENT

PRIORITY: WATER QUALITY AND QUANTITY

GOAL: Clean and Abundant Surface water and Groundwater for all Beneficial Uses in Colusa County

Objective 1: Reduce sediment, nutrient and pesticide runoff into waterways

Actions:

- *Promote and identify landowner incentives to implement best management practices to reduce sediment and nutrient runoff including buffer strips, filter strips, grassed waterways, crop*

residue, conservation tillage practices, nutrient management, irrigation water management and cover crops.

- *Encourage best management practices to reduce pesticide runoff including scouting for weeds, disease, or pests and match the management plan to the weed, disease, or pest*
- *Collaborate with and assist the Colusa Glenn Subwatershed Program when possible*

Objective 2: Implement practices that address drought conditions and promote practices that increase irrigation efficiency

Actions:

- *Promote sub-surface drip irrigation*
- *Encourage Producers to utilize mobile Irrigation labs as available*
- *Lobby for irrigation efficiency practices to remain a top priority for local Farm Bill projects*
- *Plant non-irrigated native permanent vegetation*
- *Promote water conservation in website and publications*
- *Provide workshops on water conservation practices*

Objective 3: Encourage practices that protect groundwater supplies and groundwater quality

- *Support the Colusa County Groundwater Management Plan*
- *Work with the Colusa Glenn Subwatershed Program to assist landowners with new groundwater quality monitoring*
- *Support groundwater recharge enhancement programs*

Objective 4: Promote Off-Stream Storage

Actions:

- *Encourage community discussions regarding off-stream storage*

Objective 5: Encourage practices that slow flows and detain water in the upper watershed

Actions:

- *Investigate opportunities to assist foothill landowners implement conservation practices*

PRIORITY: VEGETATION QUALITY

GOAL: Healthy Forest, Grazing, Farm Border, and Riparian Vegetation

Objective 1: Reduce Invasive Species

Actions:

- *Seek grant funding for projects to reduce invasive species*
- *Provide educational materials to help landowners identify and eradicate invasive weeds*

Objective 2: Focus wildlife habitat restoration on marginal agricultural lands

Actions:

- *Gauge landowner interest in ideal locations*
- *Participate with the Sacramento Conservation Area Forum to ensure projects are implemented on marginal Ag lands, Safe Harbor Agreements are considered and neighboring Ag is protected.*

Objective 3: Promote the implementation of hedgerows and cover crops

Actions:

- *Provide field day opportunities for establishment and maintenance of hedgerows*
- *Partner with agencies such as Audubon and Cooperative Extension to assist landowners with hedgerow implementation*
- *Promote utilizing vegetation that supports native pollinators and other beneficial insects*

Objective 4: Implement fuel reduction practices in the forest lands

Actions:

- *Complete the Upper Little Stony Creek Inholder's Alliance Fuel Treatment Project*
- *Seek grant funding as available to reduce dangerous fuel loads*

Objective 5: Encourage conservation grazing practices

Actions:

- *Encourage off-stream water development, and fencing for improved livestock distribution*
- *Consider Drought Management plans and other contingency planning*

Objective 6: Encourage the utilization of native plants whenever possible

Actions:

- *Promote native vegetation in publications and social media*
- *Encourage planting of non-irrigated vegetation*
- *Promote water-wise landscaping*

PRIORITY: SOIL QUALITY

GOAL: Healthy Productive Soil that Sustains Agriculture

Objective 1: Increase residual plant matter in the soil

Actions:

- *Promote Conservation Tillage; no till and reduced tillage practices*
- *Encourage crop rotations when possible including grass or legume crops*

Objective 2: Protect soil by reducing erosion

Actions:

- *Utilize Colusa Basin Watershed Limited Streambank Analysis to encourage projects in key areas of concern (Highly Erodible Lands)*
- *Promote cover crops*
- *Promote winter plantings*
- *Promote vegetated streambanks*

PRIORITY: AIR QUALITY

GOAL: Meet California Clean Air Standards

Objective 1: Promote renewable energy

Actions:

- *Encourage solar, wind, and other forms of renewable energy*

Objective 2: Reduce CO2 and pollutants

Actions:

- *Implement practices and projects to reduce dust and/or pollutant emissions (cover crops, windbreaks, diesel engine replacement, road treatment, etc.).*

PRIORITY: SUSTAINABLE AGRICULTURE

GOAL: Keep Agriculture Sustainable in Colusa County

Objective 1: Assist landowners with regulations

Actions:

- *Keep abreast of current and pending regulations*
- *Identify areas to provide pro-active or reactive assistance to landowners*

Objective 2: Promote the environmental benefits provided by agriculture

Actions:

- *Utilize Colusa County Grown to promote farmers as "Stewards of the Land"*
- *Utilize the CCRCD website*
- *Participate in the Development of the Colusa County Grown Agriculture Learning and Commodity Center.*
- *Promote Ag Tourism*

Objective 3: Promote Ag/Conservation Easements

Actions:

- *Gauge Landowner interest in Easements*
- *Gain knowledge in creation of easements and monitoring*

Objective 4: Protect prime agricultural lands

Actions:

- *Keep abreast of local government zoning and use regulations*
- *Lobby for renewal of Williamson Act contracts*
- *Assist farmers with issues relating to climate change*

Objective 5: Explore and promote use of agricultural by-products

Actions:

- *Collect and distribute innovative ways of dealing with agriculture by-products*

PRIORITY: NATURAL RESOURCE EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS

GOAL: Well Rounded Natural Resource Educational Programs and Outreach throughout the District

Objective 1: Provide Farmer/Landowner/Stakeholder Educational Outreach

Actions:

- *Facilitate timely and efficient workshops that promote conservation practices*
- *Expand and enhance the Colusa County Grown Program*
- *Assist with the creation of the Colusa County Grown Center*
- *Participate in the NRCS Regional Workgroup Meetings*
- *Install exhibits at Colusa County Farm Show*
- *Attend meetings and make presentations*

Objective 2: Provide Youth Educational Outreach

Actions:

- *Participate in SLEWS and other existing youth programs as funding allows*
- *Participate in CARCD programs such as the annual Speak-Off Contest*
- *Assist with the development of new educational venues and programs*

Objective 3: Provide Community Outreach

Actions:

- *Continue CCRCDD Newsletter*
- *Seek funding to create publications to promote conservation as needed*

PRIORITY: LOCALLY LED NATURAL RESOURCES MANAGEMENT

GOAL: Natural Resource Management Driven by Local Needs Facilitated by a strong and viable Resource Conservation District

Objective 1: CCRCDD maintains good business practices that exceed the minimum requirements of California Resource Conservation Districts

Actions:

- *Adopt Annual Budget and modify as needed*
- *Complete Annual Audits*
- *Review Monthly Financial Reports*
- *Review and Update Long Range Plan as needed*
- *Complete Annual Plans*
- *Develop Fee for Service Opportunities*
- *Obtain overhead fees from all projects (if allowed)*
- *Assist CARCD and Conservation Strategy Group with efforts to obtain state funding for RCDs*
- *Fulfill all meeting requirements required by the Brown Act*
- *Keep All CCRCDD Policies/Protocols up to date*
- *Maintain staff to run the day to day affairs of the District*

Objective 2: Secure and retain knowledgeable staff to address the natural resource priorities in the District

Actions:

- *Provide ongoing training*
- *Share staff with other RCD's when necessary*

Objective 3: Promote the good work of the CCRC

Actions:

- *Newspaper articles and other publications*
- *Participation in community events*
- *Regular presentations to Board of Supervisors (annual or 2X/year)*

Objective 4: Maintain an active and engaged Board of Directors and encourage associate directors

Actions:

- *Keep current, Form 700 and Ethics Training*
- *All areas of District and all land uses are represented on the Board*
- *Encourage new associate directors*

Objective 5: Maintain strong partnerships

Actions:

- *Participate in other entities meetings and events*

ADOPTION

AMENDING THE LONG RANGE PLAN:

The CCRC will review the Long Range Plan at least annually and incorporate changes as needed.

ADOPTION OF THE LONG RANGE PLAN:

ADOPTED BY THE COLUSA COUNTY RESOURCE CONSERVATION DISTRICT ON THE _____ DAY OF _____ IN THE YEAR 2014.

ORIGINAL SIGNED BY THE FOLLOWING DIRECTORS:

Robert Alvernaz _____

Ben Felt _____

Jay Dee Garr _____

Tom Hickok _____

Gilbert Ramos _____

Elizabeth Nall _____

Kim Gallagher _____