



10-Minute Supervisor Trainings

Kentucky Soil and Water Conservation Commission

September 2013

Creating a Long Range Plan

A long range plan isn't something that a district should do just because it's required by the Districts in Good Standing program. Rather, it's an important tool for districts to use to make sure that they are moving toward a defined goal of improving the soil and water in their community. Having a well developed long range plan helps a district create shorter term plans (such as the annual plan of work) and assists with making sure that the district has the resources it needs when a problem arises. This is not the time to bring up the last long range plan at a single meeting, glance over it, and just change the dates. The role of conservation districts across the state is evolving, and it is important for the districts' plans to change as well.

It's important for each member of the board of supervisors to consider where they, individually, want the district to go over time. Each member should spend some time each year before working on the annual plan of work and ask themselves these questions:

- What am I personally doing to help the soil and water of my county?
- What can this district do to help an individual landowner with his or her resource concerns?
- What programs would I like to see this conservation district complete?
- How can the district increase its influence in our community?
- What do I think the major concerns for the natural resources of this community are?
- What can the board do to ensure that my children or grandchildren do not have to deal with these concerns?
- How do the other groups that I'm involved with view the community's resources concerns?

Once each of the supervisors has given these questions serious consideration, the supervisors should come together to discuss their concerns. From the answers to these questions, the supervisors will be able to identify a few resource concerns that you all want to work on for the next 5 years. Prioritize these concerns so that each supervisor can attempt to come up with possible solutions for the most important concerns.



Organizing and Formatting a Long Range Plan

Each long range plan should, at a minimum, include the following:

- A mission statement (who we are and what we're trying to do)
- The goals of the district (the resource concerns identified in the discussion above)
- Objectives (what you're going to do, in general, to address your goals – these could be education, providing equipment, increasing awareness, etc.)
- Strategies (what you're going to do, specifically, to address the objectives – sponsor workshops on these topics, save X% of the down payment for equipment per year, provide these educational opportunities for students in the school system, etc.)

These plans can be worked on by board committees, but should be discussed and approved by the entire board at least every 5 years.

What should be done with the Long Range Plan

Copies of the Long Range Plan should be distributed to the Soil and Water Conservation Commission, the local fiscal court, each member of the board of supervisors, and partners and other interested parties. The board should review this long range plan at least annually as the board works on their annual plan of work for the next year. The board's annual plan of work should provide specific activities and timelines for working toward the goals identified in the Long Range Plan.

The Long Range Plan is not a static document. If new resource concerns present themselves during the 5 year span of a standing Long Range Plan, it is absolutely okay to alter the plan to take these new concerns into account.

Why would a district want to plan 5 years in advance?

Planning ahead helps a district prioritize the usage of their time and money. If a concern is important enough for the district to have it in their Long Range Plan, then it's important enough to devote resources to it. Once a district has planned for the future, decision making about participating in and spending money on specific events is easier. Above all, if the local conservation district board of supervisors isn't planning to solve these resource concerns – who will?