



2015 Committee Reports

Kentucky Soil and Water Conservation Commission

SEPTEMBER 2015

DISTRICT OUTLOOK & LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT

This committee encourages conservation districts to explore leadership opportunities throughout the state.

The committee recommends conservation districts carry out the following actions:

- Districts should actively support and pursue all possible means of maintaining and increasing funds, technical assistance, and support for conservation programs.
- Districts are also encouraged to involve local, state, and nationally elected officials in the year-round activities and programs of the district.
- Districts should hosting meetings in November or December with their local legislators to detail the successfulness of conservation promotion and education and to justify the need for and continued funding support to maintain conservation programs and a presence in every county.
- Districts should continue their efforts to keep the federal conservation program at a level that fully supports base level funding and technical assistance needed to carry out the state conservation district program at the local level.
- Districts should keep current with the potential financial sources, assistance, and the procedures in requesting and accepting conservation grants at the district level. Districts are encouraged:
 - To work with their RC&D Councils on assistance in grant application efforts.
 - To utilize funding possibilities offered through the Kentucky Agriculture Development Board.
 - To seek PRIDE grants, if the district is located in the PRIDE area.
 - To seek coal severance grants, if the district is located in a coal producing county.
- Districts should utilize volunteers, summer employees, NRCS Earth team volunteers, etc.
- Districts should personally present their fiscal court with a budget request at a regularly scheduled court meeting. Further, the district should maintain open lines of communication with fiscal court members.



- District supervisors should obtain a copy of the Conservation District Supervisor's Responsibilities Handbook and study its contents to become more effective supervisors.
- Districts should set aside one board meeting each year to cover supervisors' responsibilities in more detail.
- Districts should strongly encourage their employees to attend all training opportunities.
- Districts are encouraged to develop job descriptions and perform yearly evaluations on all their district employees.
- Supervisors are encouraged to become familiar with and implement the Accounting and Administrative Procedures Manual.
- Districts supervisors and employees should take advantage of every opportunity to increase their understanding of water quality issues in order to better assist landowners in dealing with these programs, incorporating this issue into district programs and communicating the importance that resource conservation plays in good water quality.
- Districts should continue to solicit the help of other agricultural agencies to promote and assist landowners in the implementation of Agriculture Water Quality Plans.
- Districts should actively promote the development of agriculture water quality plans with landowners that have not complied with the laws, and continue to encourage those with plans to revise based on their current active operations.
- Districts are encouraged to appoint a district committee to review standing committee reports and provide a report to the entire board to better educate conservation district board members about the reports' goals and objectives.
- Districts should stay informed on issues that affect agricultural production so that they are better able to assist landowners.
- Districts are encouraged to work on their public image within their local community through the use of signs, newspapers, newsletters, news media articles, slide shows, videos, radio, cable TV, websites and Facebook pages. Extra effort by districts should be made to inform the public and to promote the use of GIS capabilities.
- Districts are encouraged to hold an official swearing-in ceremony for new supervisors in the local county judge's office.
- Support, education and action should be committed to the watershed dam rehabilitation as many of these dams continue to deteriorate and demand attention to remove their hazardous classification.



- Districts are strongly encouraged to develop or to have available a current long-range plan. Districts should review their plan each year to note progress and identify action items remaining to be completed.
- Districts whose long-range plans are 3 years old or older should revise those plans to take into consideration the rapidly changing natural resources and environmental concerns of their county. Long range plans should include an appraisal of resource conditions and needs, determination of long-term objectives, establishment of priorities, and development of a program for addressing the needs and the impact these programs have on staff needs.
- Districts should utilize other agencies, organizations and individuals; such as NRCS, FSA, 4-H, FFA, Planning and Zoning, Agriculture Development Boards, Farm Bureau, schools, universities, cooperative extension, real estate associations, Chamber of Commerce, local agriculture commodity groups, local governments, etc.
- Districts should review the make-up of their boards and consider the diversity of their counties in planning and implementing their local programs.
- Districts should require at least one board member to participate in standing committee report development and review.