



*CAPITAL RESOURCE CONSERVATION AND
DEVELOPMENT (RC&D)
AREA COUNCIL, INC.*

*AREA PLAN
FOR
FISCAL YEARS 2011 – 2015
(OCTOBER 1, 2011 – SEPTEMBER 30, 2015)*

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Table of Contents

- I. Introduction
 - A. Organizational Overview.....P.
 - B. Background
 - C. Location
 - D. Population Demographics
 - E. Current Economic Conditions
 - F. Other Key Regional Attributes
- II. Resource Needs and Opportunities
- II. Goals and Objectives
- III. Linkages to NRCS Strategic Plan
- IV. Agreement and Compliance Statements
- V. County Statements of Support
- VI. Signature Page
- VII. Appendices
 - A. Capital RC&D Location Map
 - B- E. Capital RC&D Regional Maps
 - F. 2010 Capital RC&D Council List
 - A. PARC&D Councils List
 - B. Pennsylvania Unemployment by County
 - C. SC Regional Action Plan- County Comprehensive Plan Comparison
 - J. Data Gathering Findings and Observations
 - K. Survey Monkey Questionnaire
 - L. Online Survey Results Chart

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I. Introduction

The Capital Resource Conservation and Development (RC&D) Area Council is a locally led non-profit that creates partnerships of citizens, businesses, agencies, and organizations in its seven county area to enhance the quality of life for those who live and work here. The Capital RC&D region covers Adams, Cumberland, Dauphin, Franklin, Lancaster, Lebanon and York counties in South Central Pennsylvania (see *Appendix A for location map*). We work closely with our partners to bring resources and expertise into projects addressing natural resource issues and promotion of community/economic development. The organization is relatively young (established in 2002) and motivated, and the planning process serves to assess and strengthen the Council during this key time in its growth and development. The Capital RC&D embarked on the planning process with the realization that all stakeholders desire a key role in ensuring a strong sustainable organization that directly serves the communities in our area.

The 2011-2015 Area Plan describes a responsible and deliberate approach of transitioning to a stronger organizational level. It respects the need to maintain existing partnerships while building new relationships. It accepts Capital RC&D's responsibility to honor past commitments while seeking new opportunities. It acknowledges that new, expanded roles must address pressing needs and be informed by key stakeholders. It understands that the "transition work" needs to be phased so that it aligns with available resources.

The Capital RC&D Area Plan also emphasizes the importance of natural resource conservation, combined with a focus on building healthy regional communities. This focus is expressed within the Mission, Vision and Value Statements listed below. Responsible use and conservation of water/land resources, agricultural and forestry areas, and the health of our local communities are all interrelated and are subject to effectiveness of, and commitment to, local municipal planning. This aspect of local decision making can both pose a benefit as well as a risk for resources and communities, therefore it is vital that the Capital RC&D continues to educate, conduct outreach and explore opportunities for collaboration.

Capital RC&D Vision Statement: "Healthy Communities in Harmony with the Natural Environment."

Capital RC&D Mission Statement: "The Capital Resource Conservation and Development (RC&D) Area Council is a seven county non-profit organization that networks people, resources and projects to promote responsible use and conservation of our region's natural, community, and economic resources."

Capital RC&D Value Statement: The Capital RC&D Area Council is committed to improving local conservation leadership through partnerships and ideas from diverse backgrounds and life experiences; we strive to foster educational and economic opportunities while improving the quality of life within the regional communities we serve; we have a responsibility to conduct our projects and activities in a fair, equitable and respectful manner.

A. Organizational Overview

The Capital RC&D Council is comprised of three voting representatives from each sponsoring county: a Conservation District representative, a County Commissioner or designated representative, and member-at-large as well as multiple alternates. Member-at-large positions are selected from a number of interests such as local planning and economic development agencies, Cooperative Extension offices, park and recreation interests, as well as business and industry within each county. The Council's Board has term limits. These limits create an opportunity to engage new stakeholders regularly, while also creating a challenge with leadership changes over time and the need to adapt to an ever-changing internal dynamic structure. Advisory members are also created through partnerships at the county and state level (*See Appendix B for 2010 Council List*). The Capital RC&D benefits from strong partnership support. Activities and projects are facilitated by proposal either through county members or at the regional level and are given thoughtful consideration by the Board of Directors prior to acceptance and approval.

Capital RC&D program activities are initiated and directed by the RC&D Council. The Council sets goals and objectives designed to strengthen communities, establish needed infrastructures, and improve economies of the region. The Council also evaluates project ideas provided by community members and provides the necessary tools to carry out selected projects. Those tools may include locating technical expertise and partners (including volunteers) as well as assisting with financing through funding searches and grant applications. Because the Capital RC&D Council has a unique structure and leadership that focuses on achieving area goals through a locally led process, our program and projects strive to accurately reflect the environmental, social and cultural values of our region.

B. Background

Congress passed the Food and Agricultural Act of 1962, which authorizes "Resource Conservation and Development areas." The purpose of the act was to expand opportunities for conservation districts, local units of governments, and individuals to improve their communities in multi-county areas. This included assistance in enhancing the economic, environmental and social well being of the RC&D areas. Currently, the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), under the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) administers the federal RC&D Program. The Capital RC&D Council filed its initial application to the US Department of Agriculture (USDA) in September 1993, with revision and reapplication taking place in November 2000 and September 2001. The Council itself had been formed for almost a decade, yet did not receive formal "designation" by the USDA Secretary, Ann Veneman, until January 2002. County sponsors and partners had been actively participating in regional and statewide projects with other RC&D Councils in Pennsylvania. With its designation, the entire state now receives assistance through the RC&D program, which is one of the programs funded through the 2008 USDA Farm Bill.

RC&D projects can focus on land conservation, water management, community improvements, alternative energy applications, recreation and tourism, forestry, resource

recovery/recycling, rural economic development, as well as public information and education. There are nine operating Councils in Pennsylvania, which means that the entire state is receiving assistance through the RC&D program. The Penn Soil RC&D, established in the 1960's, was one of the first Councils designated nationwide. Pennsylvania also has one of the last Councils formed, with the Capital RC&D Council (*see Appendix C for statewide list of RC&D Councils*). Pennsylvania has a statewide non-profit association that supports the individual Councils and conducts training, capacity-building workshops and quarterly meetings to provide Council delegates with a forum for communication.

In the eight years since the USDA designation for the Capital RC&D region, the following organizational development activities have taken place:

- October, 2002- A Coordinator was hired by the Council, in cooperation with NRCS;
- March, 2003- Council received state incorporation and IRS 501(c) 3 non-profit status;
- June, 2003- Registration with the PA Bureau of Charitable Organizations completed;
- The organization's structure was "formalized" early on, through the development of bylaws, a policy manual, and a Board of Directors manual;
- Staff positions created since 2002 are: Program Manager, Program Administrator, and most recently an Agricultural Outreach Specialist.
- The RC&D office normally has one or two interns working through local colleges and universities and is an authorized Federal Off-Campus Community Service employer through the Federal Work-study Program.

The Capital RC&D has also developed a substantial Plan of Work in previous years, both annually and on a five-year basis, through strategic planning sessions held for stakeholders in April 2003 and March 2005. Some preliminary regional issues identified for program development by the Council in 2005 were: Land use and regional planning; intergovernmental partnerships and cooperation; water supply and conservation efforts; stormwater management and groundwater recharge issues; hazard planning and mitigation; agricultural best management practices and sustainability; and open space preservation, including passive recreation.

This document serves as an agreement between the USDA/NRCS and the Capital RC&D. Although the RC&D Program is permanently authorized, all Councils are subject to review and scrutiny within the federal government system and legislature, in terms of performance. USDA/NRCS has instituted a national online data reporting system, termed Program Operations Information Tracking System (POINTS), which both USDA Leadership and RC&D Council members can access to produce reports on projects and accomplishments at the local Council, statewide or national level. The National Association of RC&D Councils (NARC&DC) has also taken a proactive approach to performance measurement needs by revising evaluation criteria recently and creating a "Circle of Diamonds" Excellence Program to highlight RC&D Council accomplishments at a national level.

C. Location

The Capital Resource Conservation and Development (RC&D) Area Council encompasses a 4,583 square miles in Pennsylvania. There are 286 municipalities in the region, with 158 classified as urban and 128 as rural (*Data Source: Center for Rural PA*). Population centers include the county seats of Carlisle, Chambersburg, Gettysburg, Lancaster, Lebanon, York and the state capital of Harrisburg as well as small towns and boroughs dotting the countryside. One of the unique features of this area is the dichotomy caused by the urban/rural interface. Please see Appendices D – G for additional maps with location attributes.

Land Area per County:

<u>County</u>	<u>Square Miles</u>
Adams	520
Cumberland	550
Dauphin	525
Franklin	772
Lancaster	949
Lebanon	362
York	905

D. Population Demographics

As of 2009, the population within the RC&D seven-county region was 1.8 million, which constitutes an 8.9% increase from 2000 (6% higher than PA as a whole). Average population density in the region is 362 per sq mile. Twenty-three percent of inhabitants are under 18 (413,000), 62% are 18-64 (1.2 million) and less than 15% are older than 64. Less than 22% of households in the region have children, with almost 33% being childless. Home ownership has increased by 9% since 2000, with the average housing value being approximately \$205,000, and 75% of those paying less than 30% of their monthly income for a home mortgage. The per capita income for the region in 2007 was just above \$35,000(*source: Center for Rural PA*).

Key demographics for the region are: a growing diversity among the population, although just over 90% of the people living in the area listed themselves as Caucasian. Race origin other than white was 10% as of 2008, and we have a rising Hispanic community in the region. Percent change in other races between 2000 and 2008 was more than 70%. The region is considered to have an educated population; of those 25 and older between 2006-08, 40% had at least a high school diploma, with 24% reported having a bachelor's degree or higher (*Data source: Center for Rural PA*). We enjoy a moderate cost of living, low taxes, low crime rate and a generally good quality of life. Unemployment for the region (average of all seven counties) was 8.5% in May 2010, which is less than the state and national averages of 9.2% and 9.3%, respectively (*Taken from www.bls.gov; see Appendix D for map and table by county*). The economy in South Central Pennsylvania has been quite strong in recent years, with the exception of last year, 2009-10.

E. Current Economic Conditions

The 2009-2010 Pennsylvania state budget was adopted after a 101-day legislative impasse, and included significant cuts in many line items due to projected revenue shortfalls. The budgets for 2010-2011 and 2011-2012 are expected to continue this downward trend for several reasons, among them the current economic recession, that has impacted sales and personal income tax revenues; an unfunded state pension liability will come due in 2011; a strategy to toll Interstate 80 has been rejected by the federal government; and federal American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) 'stimulus' funds will no longer be available.

The budget cuts have already had a severe impact on agriculture and the environment. State funding for storm water management planning and implementation was eliminated, and conservation districts were cut by 15%. Funding for environmental programs such as black fly and West Nile virus control were reduced 25%, and gypsy moth control was reduced by 29%. Funding for nutrient management programs was reduced by 15%. Major agricultural programs such as the state food purchase, farmland protection, farmers markets and senior's farmers markets coupons were all flat funded from last year. Crop insurance was reduced by 17%.

Community vitality has also been heavily impacted. Local governments struggling with revenue shortfalls of their own, due to declining collections of property and income taxes and collapse of the housing market, have also seen funding reductions. Land use planning assistance was virtually eliminated with a 90% cut. Housing and redevelopment funds were cut 37%, customized job training by 50%, and counties struggled to provide state pass-through funding for community non-profits providing human services. Tourism promotion took a net loss through the elimination of the regional marketing partnership, and county fair funding was reduced by 45%.

The severity of the budget cuts thus far, coupled with anticipated reductions in the next two years' budgets, means that communities in the capital region will have less resources to focus on land use planning, storm water management, and community revitalization activities such as farmer's markets and local food entrepreneurship. Farmers will also have less help to address nutrient management, implement best management practices, or preserve their farms. The 'hunker down' mentality that generally prevails during an economic recession, coupled with the lack of resources, could result in short-sighted planning for capital region communities.

F. Other Key Regional Attributes

Regional Planning: In 2009, the South Central Pennsylvania "Regional Action Plan" was developed to serve as a process to identify and support projects that would offer regional benefits to the attention of leaders in an eight-county region (Capital RC&D region plus Perry County). The South Central PA Caucus of County Commissioners launched the planning effort "to facilitate inter-county communication on common development trends and investment needs and to solicit multijurisdictional support and coordination for such projects" (Source: South Central PA Regional Action Plan). The group was led by an Executive Committee made up of each of the County Planning Directors, with input from

100 key stakeholders. The study assimilated strategies from plans that currently exist within in the region, such as County Comprehensive Plans, Long Range Transportation Plans (LRTP), Comprehensive Economic Development Strategies (CEDs), and Tourism marketing plans. Findings from the study were also used to reference common characteristics and opportunities for the Capital RC&D Area Plan. A comparison of County Comprehensive Plans is included in *Appendix E* to demonstrate various commonalities and differences within the region.

Transportation: The Capital RC&D region is strategically located within key transportation routes as part of the Northeast Corridor for goods movement throughout the Mid-Atlantic States. The area is also convenient for citizens, travelers and businesses who wish to vacation or relocate in close proximity to several metropolitan cities, including Pittsburgh, Philadelphia, Baltimore, Washington DC, and New York. See Appendix E. for a map of cities and roads in the region.

Agricultural Statistics and Trends: Agriculture in the region is big business, with three of the seven counties ranked first or second in ten of the twelve major crops produced in Pennsylvania. According to the most recent data (2008) from the Pennsylvania Agricultural Statistics Service, the total cash receipts for the sale of agricultural commodities (livestock and crops) in our region came to over \$2.3 billion. That represents a 7% increase over the last five years. Seventy-five percent, or close to \$1.8 billion, of the region's total agricultural cash receipts came from the sale of livestock and dairy products (Includes poultry, meat animals, dairy and miscellaneous livestock- alpacas, rabbits, mink, etc.). Field crops, vegetables & potatoes, fruits, horticulture & mushrooms accounted for one-fourth of total receipts, or \$586 million.

According to the Farmland Preservation Director for the PA Department of Agriculture (PDA), our region is the most significant agricultural region in the state. He states that 51% of the land area in acres is being used for farming. Average farm size in the region is just over 100 acres and 1,476 farms have now been preserved in perpetuity, so that indicates a desire in residents to preserve their agricultural heritage.

Agritourism, which includes most any activity conducted on a working farm for the enjoyment of visitors that generates income for the owner, is growing nationwide and in Pennsylvania. Agriculture and Tourism are leading industries in the state and rising in the Capital RC&D region. A study conducted by researchers from California University of Pennsylvania looked at the agritourism industry in 2004-2006. The researchers surveyed agritourism operators, farmers and agritourists to understand the types of activities being offered and enjoyed, and they identified considerations on how the industry may benefit from various policies, programs and funding (<http://www.rural.palegislature.us/agritourism2006.pdf>).

There is also increasing evidence of a focus in the region and statewide on consumer promotion for "buying locally" in terms of farm products and value-added goods; interest in local farm markets and community supported agriculture (CSA) operations as well as demand for more organic and naturally-raised livestock and crop operations.

Chesapeake Bay and 2010 Executive Order: Over the past decade, efforts to meet Chesapeake Bay water quality goals have generated media coverage and public interest

in agriculture's impact on the Bay. Agriculture is frequently referenced as the primary source of nutrient and sediment pollution in the Bay. However, there are many contributing sources and agriculture alone cannot manufacture the reductions needed to meet necessary water quality goals. Residents, stakeholders and decision makers need to understand that it will take everyone working together to clean up the bay.

The "Strategy for Protecting and Restoring the Chesapeake Bay Watershed" was developed under the executive order issued by President Obama in May 2009. The strategy deepens the federal commitment to the Chesapeake region, with agencies dedicating unprecedented resources, targeting actions where they can have the most impact, ensuring that federal lands and facilities lead by example in environmental stewardship and taking a comprehensive, ecosystem-wide approach to restoration. Many of the federal actions will directly support restoration efforts of local governments, nonprofit groups and citizens and provide economic benefits across the Chesapeake Bay region (Source: www.Chesapeakebay.net).

Overarching approaches stated in the Bay strategy are:

Short-term action: To accelerate the pace of restoration and protection, many actions occur in the next few years, and many of the actions are "on-the-ground" and "in-the-water" all around the Chesapeake watershed.

Supporting local efforts: The strategy is designed to directly support the restoration activities of local governments, watershed groups, county conservation districts, landowners and citizens.

Benefiting economies and jobs: Actions will provide economic benefits, including conservation of working farms, support for conservation programs and green jobs, and development of a marketplace for selling, buying and trading credits for pollution reductions.

Targeting of resources: Federal agencies will be aggressively targeting resources where they can have the most impact – areas with the most pollution and potential for runoff, with the highest potential for restoring fish and wildlife, and with habitats and lands most in need of protection (Source: www.Chesapeakebay.net).

The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) will also implement the Chesapeake Bay total maximum daily load (TMDL), which is a regulatory term used to define the maximum amount of pollutants allowable under the Federal Clean Water Act. The Bay TMDL may be used by EPA to expand point source regulation of urban and suburban stormwater, non-point source regulation of nutrient management on farms as well as increase enforcement activities and funding for state regulatory programs.

Watershed Implementation Plans (also referred to as "WIPs") provide the details for TMDL implementation locally and consider ecological restoration while intending to create greater transparency and accountability resulting in improved performance. Each of the seven Bay watershed jurisdictions will create a WIP documenting actions and partnerships to achieve and maintain water quality standards. Around the time these WIPs are to be developed, a federal TMDL will require reductions of nitrogen, phosphorus and sediment (from www.epa.gov/tmdl).

To protect priority lands, the Department of the Interior will also launch a collaborative *Chesapeake Treasured Landscape Initiative* and expand land conservation by

coordinating federal funding and providing community assistance. The Department will also develop a plan for increasing public access to the bay and its rivers.

Legislative Representation:

U.S. Senators: Robert P. Casey (D-PA); Arlen Specter (D-PA).

U.S. House of Representatives: Tim Holden (D-PA-17th), Todd Platts (R-PA-19th), Bill Shuster (R-PA-9th); Joseph Pitts (R-PA-16th).

PA Senators: Richard L. Alloway II (R-33); Patricia H. Vance (R-31); John R. Gordner (R-27); Mike Folmer (R-48); Jeffrey E. Piccola (R-15); Mike Brubaker (R-36); Lloyd K. Smucker (R-13); Michael Waugh (R-28).

PA Representatives (by county): *Adams County-* Will Tallman (R-193), Dan Moul (R-91); *Cumberland-* Glen Grell (R-87), Will Gabig (R-199), Sheryl M. Delozier (R-88), Scott Perry (R-92), Rob W. Kauffman (R-89); *Dauphin-* Susan C. Helm (R-104), Ron Marsico (R-105), John D. Payne (R-106), Ron Buxton (D-103), David C. Hinckernell (R-98); *Franklin-* Todd Rock (R-90), Rob W. Kauffman (R-89), Mark K. Keller (R-96), Dan Moul (R-91); *Lancaster-* Tom C. Creighton (R-37), Scott W. Boyd (R-43), Bryan Cutler (R-100), Gordon Denlinger (R-99), David C. Hinckernell (R-98), Katie True (R-41), Scott W. Boyd (R-43), John C. Bear (R-97), P. Michael Sturla (D-96); *Lebanon-* Mauree Gingrich (R-101), Rosemarie Swanger (R-102); *York-* Scott Perry (R-92), Stan Saylor (R-94), Ron Miller (R-93), Keith Gillespie (R-47), Seth M. Grove (R-196), Will Tallman (R-193), Eugene DePasquale (R-95).

II. Resource Needs and Opportunities

This document serves as the long-range plan for the Capital RC&D. It was developed through a process of over 40 key stakeholder interviews (phone and in-person) as well as by soliciting public input through an online survey of close to 200 people in the seven counties served by Capital RC&D. In addition to the stakeholder survey results (phone and online), local Council members and the Program Committee (Council members Bicky Redman, Stephanie Williams, Judy Chambers, Larry Martick, Chuck Wertz and Mark Kimmel; Program Manager Susan Richards, RC&D Coordinator Susan Parry) were provided guidance and facilitation on the plan's development by Jan Herrold, Director of the York College Non-Profit Management Development Center.

From the interviews conducted with Council members and stakeholders, a list of data findings and observations was developed (*see Appendix J for complete listing*) and some general observations were made regarding the Capital RC&D current assets and liabilities. Examples of stated assets were: strong capable staff, productive partnerships and relationships, evidence of successful projects and ability to secure funding. Potential liabilities suggested were: Board and constituents not optimally engaged, weak messaging and branding, confusing organizational structure, and ambiguous organizational direction, goals and objectives.

Of the online surveys conducted, the Program Committee was able to pinpoint the top 8 needs and concerns to regional constituents' communities (*see Appendix K for online questionnaire and Appendix L for results chart*). The list of issues below (and corresponding regional opportunities) represents a synthesis of responses regarding local natural resource and community development needs, which became the premise for the

resulting Goals, Objectives and Strategies. We also tied the plan to state and federal priorities, as presented by key stakeholder representatives and agency officials.

1. **Water Quality:** The Capital RC&D region is almost completely within the Chesapeake Bay Watershed, which is the focus of current agency and private Bay interests in this region of the state. Many of the watersheds within our area are listed as high priority for both targeted programs and funding.
2. **Agriculture's role in Water Quality:** The state budget cuts to conservation programs may result in farmers having less help to address nutrient management, implement best management practices, or even preserve their farms. Alternately, resources and focus on assisting agriculture at the federal level seems to be on the increase. Indicators also suggest that more importance will be placed on agricultural compliance and nutrient management for our local farmers in upcoming years, in order to meet Bay reduction goals. The EPA states that agriculture, in general, has achieved up to 70% of its goals for nutrient and sediment reduction, so there is also a need to highlight the successes that farms in the region have experienced with both the public and decision makers.
3. **Open Space:** Local indicators, such as the successful 2009 bond referendum in Adams and county-supported open space funding in Cumberland and other counties in the region indicates that the public assigns high value to open space and quality of life issues. Landscape-based projects such as the Lower Susquehanna Center for Land and Water, the Conewago Watershed Initiative and the South Mountain Conservation Landscape Initiative hold promise for more focused efforts on an integrated approach to managing greenways, and in general, connecting our natural areas to our communities.
4. **Sustainable Economic Development:** The severity of the budget cuts thus far in 2009-2010, coupled with anticipated reductions in the next two years' budgets, means that communities in the Capital region will have less resources to focus on revitalization projects and supporting new local businesses. With that said, unique opportunities exist for communities to be more entrepreneurial, with economic development activities such as direct-to-consumer marketing, farmer's markets and other natural resource-based business ventures.
5. **Energy:** Increased interest and action have taken place recently in promoting and implementing energy conservation, efficiency and development projects. Part of this is due to the tough economic conditions and the focus on alternative sources of energy for the nation. Local agriculture has also been finding ways to reduce energy consumption/waste outputs through energy assessments and on-farm digestion of manure. The need for an economic development focus on energy projects has spurred regional interest in partnerships between the public and private sector.

III. Goals and Objectives

This five-year Area Plan provides a comprehensive set of goals and strategies on which to base Capital RC&D's annual Plan of Work. Beginning in August of 2010, the Program Committee will work with staff and Coordinator to develop a 2011 Plan of Work, mapping the steps required for the coming year to support the achievement of time-based strategies drawn from the Area Plan. This process may also lead to the reevaluation of the goals, objectives and strategies of the Area Plan, which is designed to be a "living document."

The work within the Area Plan and resulting annual plans is dependent upon the decisions and actions of the Council Board of Directors and the level of staff resources available. We also need to rely upon our cumulative ability to recruit partners and volunteers as well as to secure the funding needed to implement the activities and projects outlined herein.

This plan responds to the findings of stakeholder interviews and surveys. It sets forth goals and objectives that challenge the organization to move to a higher level of performance and accountability, but are realistic given the Capital RC&D's capacity. It envisions an organization that is more integral to natural resource conservation and development work across its 7-county region.

The goals, objectives and strategies that follow reflect a deliberate transition point in the Capital RC&D's organizational development. This transition builds upon the Capital RC&D's strong record of performance during the first eight years of operation, and the overarching intent is three-fold:

1. Move the Capital RC&D to a higher level of organizational sustainability and performance excellence;
2. Expand the Capital RC&D emphasis beyond Conservation District and agriculturally-focused projects;
3. Increase the Capital RC&D's regional presence/role with initiatives related to water quality and quantity, natural lands, sustainable economic development, and alternative energy/ energy efficiency that address high priority regional needs.

ELEMENT: Community Development

GOAL 1. Organizational Excellence: Build Capital RC&D organizational capacity and excellence by 2015, as demonstrated by a sustainable financial model, a sound organizational structure, and a network of robust and productive working relationships with mission-related entities.

Objective 1: Operate under a financially sustainable business model, reflecting positive economic growth and a five-percent increase in unrestricted funding, by September 2015, as approved and recommended by the Council Finance Committee.

Strategies:

1. Annually assess Council contribution levels from county sponsors, based on Council expenditures and budgets, with a goal of 100% county support throughout the region.

2. Annually seek, sponsor, and manage four grants or funding agreements that support the resource conservation and development goals contained within the Area Plan.
3. By March 2011, design a 5-year business model that reflects staffing levels, financial support, technology and communication resources, etc., required to successfully advance the goals and objectives of this plan.
4. By July 2014, identify, cultivate, and secure ongoing sources of funding (in-kind and direct) to fully support Capital RC&D administrative and back-office expenses, as defined in the 5-year business model.
5. By September 2015, fund a 3-month operating reserve based upon approved annual Council budgets.

Objective 2: By June 2011, plan and implement an integrated and coordinated operating structure that clearly defines individual, committee, and organizational responsibilities with measures of accountability, through approved changes to Council policies and guidelines.

Strategies:

1. Beginning September 2010, engage the Council Board of Directors in a facilitated, 6-session organizational assessment/development program that addresses input from key stakeholders gained during the survey process.
2. By January 2011, develop and implement a board orientation/training program (1/2 day session) to be conducted annually with new members prior to the annual meeting in March, with 100% of new members participating.
3. By July 2011, implement revised job descriptions, committee structure and assignments, and compliance protocols that remedy gaps and inconsistencies identified during the 2010 planning process.
4. By January 2012, submit application for Enhanced Level Circle of Diamonds recognition.

Objective 3: By September 2015, Implement a set of communication strategies designed to raise the visibility of Capital RC&D, in order to set the stage for a growing network of working relationships with mission-related entities across the 7-county region.

Strategies:

1. Each year, conduct a board member-hosted constituent briefing in each of Capital RC&D's 7 counties.
2. On a quarterly basis, review all web pages and make necessary updates on the Capital RC&D website. In addition, launch web-based resource database by December 2011.
3. By December of each calendar year, publish and distribute an annual report in paper and electronic versions to all Council representatives, county commissioner offices, local, state and federal legislators and key RC&D partners. By December 2010, design and implement an annual calendar of strategic communication releases and community education/advocacy events with special focus on community foundations, county planning commissions, city/county economic development entities, elected officials, and other key stakeholders whose work can help advance Capital RC&D's mission.

4. Increase Capital RC&D's constituent data base by 20% in 2011; 20% in 2012; 10% in 2013; 10% in 2014; and by 10% in 2015, to reach 500 total constituents in communications database by September 2015.
5. By September 2015, increase Capital RC&D's name-recognition by 50% (as measured by comparison of 2010 stakeholder survey results to a current survey).

ELEMENT: Water Management

GOAL 2. Water Quality/Quantity: Partner with local governments, conservation districts, community and nonprofit organizations, farmers and citizens in each of Capital RC&D's seven counties over the next five years to restore and protect our region's water resources, with at least 10 streams being positively impacted by activities and projects.

Objective 1: *Promote Agricultural Best Management Practices (BMP) and provide education, technical assistance, and/or funding assistance to at least 14 additional agricultural enterprises annually throughout the 2011 – 2015 planning cycle.*

Strategies:

1. By June 2011, the "Grass Roots: Prescribed Grazing for the 21st Century" program will provide technical support through Grazing Advisor visits or distribution of cost share funding for prescribed grazing practices on at least 2,500 acres of pasture land. By June 2012, an additional 2,500 acres will have been impacted.
2. By September 2011, work with the PA No-Till Alliance to identify and implement strategies to decrease their need for state or federal funding by 75%.
3. By July 2011, conduct one pilot program focusing on Plain Sect outreach, to further demonstrate success of the peer-to-peer model.
4. By September 2011, work with local partners to create one press release and one outreach flyer publicizing the success of the initiative in promoting riparian restoration within the Mill Creek watershed in Lancaster county. By 2014, complete and close out project work under the present grant.
5. By June 2012, at least one new grazer group will be formed in the Grass Roots project region, with at least 10 group members implementing conservation practices associated with grazing.
6. By December 2012, present at least three workshops for agricultural producers to promote greater understanding of federal, state and local programs that support conservation practices.

Objective 2: *By December 2012, work in a leadership capacity with 5 or more entities* across the region on efforts related to the Chesapeake Bay Executive Order, including storm water management projects. (*including, but not limited to, Conservation Districts, county commissioners, educational institutions, conservation interests, watershed groups, municipalities, river basin commissions, DEP State Water Plan, etc.)*

Strategies:

1. By December 2010, coordinate with the statewide Consortium for Scientific Assistance to Watersheds (CSAW) Program to survey all county watershed specialists, local watershed associations and municipalities regarding types of organizational assistance needed. By September 2012, identify and assist up to 10 local watershed associations through the CSAW Program.

2. By March 2011, complete a survey with key regional stakeholders to identify high potential initiatives for which Capital RC&D could play a productive, value-added role for implementation of the Chesapeake Bay Executive Order.
3. By July 2011, present a briefing on survey findings to key regional stakeholders for targeted Chesapeake Bay Executive Order initiatives; secure support and endorsement from each Council sponsor and at least and 3 regional/state agencies for Capital RC&D's proposed role(s) by September 2011.
4. By September 2011, work with PennVest and partners to facilitate nutrient trading and/or market-based incentive education and exchange between municipal and agricultural interests.
5. By January 2012, begin serving in at least one role for the Chesapeake Bay Executive Order initiative.
6. By July 2012, host at least one field day or workshop focused on the conservation value of riparian buffers and buffer maintenance.
7. By December 2012, add a section on the website devoted to green infrastructure resources, e.g. permeable paving materials, water conservation measures, green roofs, and other effective stormwater practices. Utilize the PA Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) Water Plan as a resource to educate constituents through the website.
8. By September 2013, develop a project with local partners to address the need for focus on water conservation, stormwater management, wetlands and water budgeting.

ELEMENT: Land Management

GOAL 3. Natural Lands: Provide outreach and technical support to at least 5 open space* conservation/management projects over the next five years, giving priority to those that help create an interconnected network of natural areas within our region. (*includes farm land, natural areas, greenways, game lands, flood plains, etc.)

Objective 1: Continue, strengthen and enhance Capital RC&D's current involvement with strategic, open space conservation/management efforts by assisting with at least 3 related projects throughout the 2011-2015 planning cycle.

Strategies:

1. Annually, hold at least one Capital RC&D sponsored/facilitated conservancy roundtable that consistently attracts 10-15 regional conservation leaders from across the 7-county region.
2. Annually, participate in at least 75% of the South Mountain Conservation Landscape Initiative activities and provide technical resources, potential funding sources and project implementation.
3. By October 2010, finalize and promote the South Mountain Geotrail, resulting in at least 500 additional visits to the area's cultural and natural sites by September 2011. Capital RC&D and tourism partners will also identify businesses that benefit from the South Mountain Geotrail and work to develop promotional packages to increase overnight stays in the region.
4. By September 2011, inventory existing/pending regional projects (e.g. Conewago Initiative, Middle Creek Initiative, etc.) and assess the strength and potential of each, identifying the 1 or 2 projects that are most strategically important to the region and most compelling to Capital RC&D, based on expertise and capacity.

5. By June 2012, identify and begin implementation of the targeted project(s).
6. By December 2011, conduct a meeting between agency forestry professionals to outline the issues for non-industrial private forestland conservation programs.

Objective 2: *By December 2012, develop a regional strategy to support on the ground technical assistance to at least 100 individuals interested in developing or restoring important native fish and wildlife habitats.*

Strategies:

1. By September 2011, sponsor three field days with 20 attendees each, focusing on the wildlife/conservation value of land-based buffers and the importance of invasive plant species control, through the Weed/Wildlife project.
2. By December 2011, sponsor individual technical assistance visits for at least 30 landowners within the region related to the Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP).
3. By September 2012, identify and convene the regional technical service providers (TSP's) to develop an ongoing strategy for landowner assistance and education.

ELEMENT: Community Development

GOAL 4. Sustainable Economic Development: Assist at least 25 agricultural and/or natural resource-based enterprises to gain access to technical assistance, financing or other resources that can help them succeed and grow.

Objective 1: *By September 2012, establish a common understanding among Council Board members, through a statement of support, of the current "state of affairs" in sustainable community and economic development activities/initiatives across our region.*

Strategies:

1. By December 2011, survey the scope and scale of existing technical assistance and financing programs in the 7-county region, addressing their accessibility, relevance, and impact based on Council member input.
2. By March 2012, convene a group of regional economic development leaders, representing all sectors (business, industry, tourism, agriculture, etc.) to present findings of the survey, discuss needs and opportunities, and seek input regarding compelling function(s) for Capital RC&D.
3. By July 2012, identify and document the needs and opportunities within the region for sustainable community and economic development.

Objective 2: *By September 2015, identify/define a compelling way for Capital RC&D to help promote and facilitate two economic development programs and initiatives across the region.*

Strategies:

1. By September 2012, identify a role for Capital RC&D in economic development initiatives based upon input from regional leaders.
2. By January 2013, clearly define and begin to implement Capital RC&D role in economic development initiatives. Internally assess Capital RC&D performance and impact in the role by December 2014.

3. Meet with regional leaders by March 2015 to share results of the self-assessment and seek input on a more long-term role for Capital RC&D.
4. Reconsider/redefine Capital RC&D role during the 2016-2021 Area planning cycle, through key stakeholder and constituent surveying.

Objective 3: *Continue existing support to various community garden and local food initiatives throughout the region; increase Capital RC&D impact by providing assistance to at least 10 community-based, agricultural and/or value-added enterprises annually.*

Strategies:

1. By March 2011, assist in the development and promotion of a Local Wood Products Guide for south central PA. This activity includes Coordinator and intern support for planning and design work.
2. By July 2011, develop specific long-range project plans for both Buy Fresh Buy Local and Taste the Gifts of our Region.
3. By December 2011, implement two activities from the Buy Fresh Buy Local or Taste the Gifts of our Region long-range plans.
4. By December 2011, convene at least three meetings of the South Central Local Food Network (SCLFN), with participation from at least ten associated organizations. Develop an ongoing networking schedule for future years.
5. By September 2012, provide technical and marketing assistance to at least ten farmers markets in the Capital RC&D region through Buy Fresh Buy Local and Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) projects.
6. By December 2012, facilitate the installation of up to 14 Electronic Benefit Transfer (EBT) machines in order to increase SNAP card usage at all farmers markets participating in this RC&D project by 15%.
7. Annually, provide technical assistance and coordination to the Claremont Community Gardens Program. Using this project as a model, translate the work accomplished to benefit three additional community garden projects that address quality of life issues.

ELEMENT: Community Development

GOAL 5. Energy: By March 2015, create a collaborative environment that recognizes, encourages, and facilitates five promising alternative energy/energy efficiency programs/projects in our region.

Objective 1: *By December 2013, develop an energy strategy based on the range of activity, key players, and resources available to support alternative energy and energy projects.*

Strategies:

1. On an ongoing basis, work to build expertise and regional credibility in the alternative energy and energy efficiency fields, identifying at least two leaders in each county to help connect Capital RC&D to at least 5 key groups and resources.
2. Work with agency partners on an ongoing basis to gather and collate information about energy programs that provide assistance to homeowners and landowners. By September 2010, the collected information will be available in the web-based resource database and will be updated on a quarterly basis.

3. By December 2010, distribute information about the Fuels for Schools program to at least 25 school districts and/or municipalities in the Capital RC&D region and provide follow-up to any interested parties.
4. By December 2011, continue process of linking alternative energy producers with processing facilities by convening two workshops with at least 20 participants at each.
5. Participate in the state-wide energy working group on an ongoing basis and report back to the Capital RC&D board quarterly.
6. By March 2011, partner with county and statewide municipal interests to assist and identify information needs related to land use regulations that affect alternative energy development, whether residential, industrial and/or commercial ventures.
7. By December 2011, facilitate one regional collaborative project addressing one or more energy gaps/needs.
8. By January 2012, create a section on Capital RC&D's website devoted to alternative energy and energy efficiency, regional activity and news, links to funding sources, technical assistance and other resources.
9. By January 2013, develop 2 targeted outreach pieces (electronic through listserv or newsletter) per year to highlight alternative energy and energy efficiency matters.
10. By January 2014, at least 3 Capital RC&D board members will be serving in a liaison or board capacity with energy-related organizations in his or her local area.

Objective 2: *Beginning in 2014, sponsor, organize, and facilitate an annual "Alternative Energy and Energy Efficiency Summit."*

Strategies:

1. By January 2013, convene and facilitate a "task force," whose members (at least one from each county) represent key leaders from across the region, to develop, plan, and oversee the summit concept.
2. By March 2013, research and assess the feasibility of conducting a regional awards or recognition program in association with the summit.
3. By September 2013, secure at least 5 sponsorships for the summit.
4. Conduct the summit by March 2014; summarize results by July 2014.
5. By January 2015, assess summit impact and success through participant survey of up to 50% of attendees, to be used for the 2016-2020 planning process.

IV. Linkages to NRCS Strategic Plan:

The Goals, Objectives and Strategies listed in the previous section are linked to the NRCS Strategic Plan (2005-2010) in the following ways:

Page 14 - GOAL 2: Water Management.

Overarching Strategies: Cooperative Conservation, Watershed Approach, and Market-based Approach.

Mission Goals: High Quality, Productive Soils; Clean and Abundant Water; Healthy Plant and Animal Communities; Air Quality; Working Farm and Ranchlands.

Outcomes:

1. **Soil Quality:** The quality of intensively used soils is maintained or enhanced to enable sustained production of a safe, healthy and abundant food supply.
2. **Water Quality/Water Management:** The quality of surface waters and groundwater is improved and maintained to protect human health, support a healthy environment, and encourage a productive landscape. Water is conserved and protected to ensure an abundant and reliable supply for the region.
3. **Grassland and Forest Ecosystems:** Grassland and Forest Ecosystems are productive, diverse and resilient. **Fish and Wildlife Habitat:** Working lands and waters provide habitat for diverse and healthy wildlife, aquatic species, and plant communities.
4. **Clean Air:** Agriculture makes a positive contribution to local air quality and the Nation's efforts to sequester carbon.
5. **Working Farm and Ranchlands:** Connected landscapes sustain a viable agriculture and natural resource quality.

Page 15 - GOAL 3: Land Management/Land Conservation.

Overarching Strategies: Cooperative Conservation, Watershed Approach and Market-based Approach.

Mission Goals: High Quality, Productive Soils; Clean and Abundant Water; Healthy Plant and Animal Communities; Air Quality, Working Farm and Ranchlands.

Outcomes:

1. **Soil Quality:** The quality of intensively used soils is maintained or enhanced to enable sustained production of a safe, healthy and abundant food supply.
2. **Water Quality/Water Management:** The quality of surface waters and groundwater is improved and maintained to protect human health, support a healthy environment, and encourage a productive landscape. Water is conserved and protected to ensure an abundant and reliable supply for the region.
3. **Fish and Wildlife Habitat:** Working lands and waters provide habitat for diverse and healthy wildlife, aquatic species, and plant communities. **Wetlands:** Wetlands provide quality habitat for migratory birds and other wildlife, protect water quality, and reduce flood damages.
4. **Clean Air:** Agriculture makes a positive contribution to local air quality and the Nation's efforts to sequester carbon.

5. Working Farm and Ranchlands: Connected landscapes sustain a viable agriculture and natural resource quality.

Page 16 - GOAL 4: Community Development.

Overarching Strategies: Cooperative Conservation and Market-based Approach.

Mission Goals: High Quality, Productive Soils; Clean and Abundant Water; Air Quality; Working Farm and Ranchlands.

- Outcomes:*
1. Soil Quality: The quality of intensively used soils is maintained or enhanced to enable sustained production of a safe, healthy and abundant food supply.
 2. Water Quality/Water Management: The quality of surface waters and groundwater is improved and maintained to protect human health, support a healthy environment, and encourage a productive landscape. Water is conserved and protected to ensure an abundant and reliable supply for the region.
 3. Clean Air: Agriculture makes a positive contribution to local air quality and the Nation's efforts to sequester carbon.
 4. Working Farm and Ranchlands: Connected landscapes sustain a viable agriculture and natural resource quality.

Page 17 – Goal 5: Community Development

Overarching Strategies: Cooperative Conservation and Market-based Approach.

Mission Goals: High Quality, Productive Soils; Clean and Abundant Water; Clean Air; An Adequate Energy Supply; Working Farm and Ranchlands.

- Outcomes:*
1. Soil Quality: The quality of intensively used soils is maintained or enhanced to enable sustained production of a safe, healthy and abundant food supply.
 2. Water Quality: The quality of surface waters and groundwater is improved and maintained to protect human health, support a healthy environment, and encourage a productive landscape.
 3. Clean Air: Agriculture makes a positive contribution to local air quality and the Nation's efforts to sequester carbon.
 4. An Adequate Energy Supply: Agricultural activities conserve energy and agricultural lands are a source of environmentally sustainable biofuels and renewable energy.
 5. Working Farm and Ranchlands: Connected landscapes sustain a viable agriculture and natural resource quality.

V. Agreement and Compliance Statement:

The Capital RC&D Council agrees that the RC&D Program will be conducted in compliance with the nondiscrimination provisions as contained in Title VI and VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 as amended, the Civil Rights Restoration Act of 1987 (Public Law 100-259) and other nondiscrimination statutes; namely, Section 504, of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, the Age Discrimination Act of 1975 and in accordance with the regulations of the Secretary of Agriculture (7CFR-15, Sub parts A and B) that provide that no person in the United States shall, on the ground of race, color, national origin, age, sex, religion, marital status, or handicap/disability be excluded from participation in, or be denied the benefits of, or be otherwise subjected to discrimination under any program or activity receiving Federal financial (or technical) assistance from the U.S. Department of Agriculture or any agency thereof.

The Capital RC&D Council agrees that the signing of this document constitutes agreement to comply with Federal laws concerning restrictions on lobbying, a drug-free workplace, and responsibilities for nonprocurement, suspension, and debarment, and State review.

The Capital RC&D Council hereby adopts this RC&D Area Plan and agrees to use effectively the assistance provided by the U. S. Department of Agriculture to realize the goals and objectives outlined herein.

Capital RC&D Council, Carlisle, Pennsylvania

By: _____
Bicky Redman, Council Chairperson

Date: _____

Attest: _____
Laurence Martick, Council Secretary

This action was authorized at an official meeting of the Capital RC&D Area Council, Inc. on September 17, 2010.

U. S. Department of Agriculture - Natural Resources Conservation Service

The Pennsylvania State Conservationist hereby acknowledges the attached Area Plan of the Capital RC&D Council as meeting the requirements under Public Law 97-98 to receive assistance from USDA.

Acknowledged By: _____
Denise Coleman, State Conservationist

Date: _____

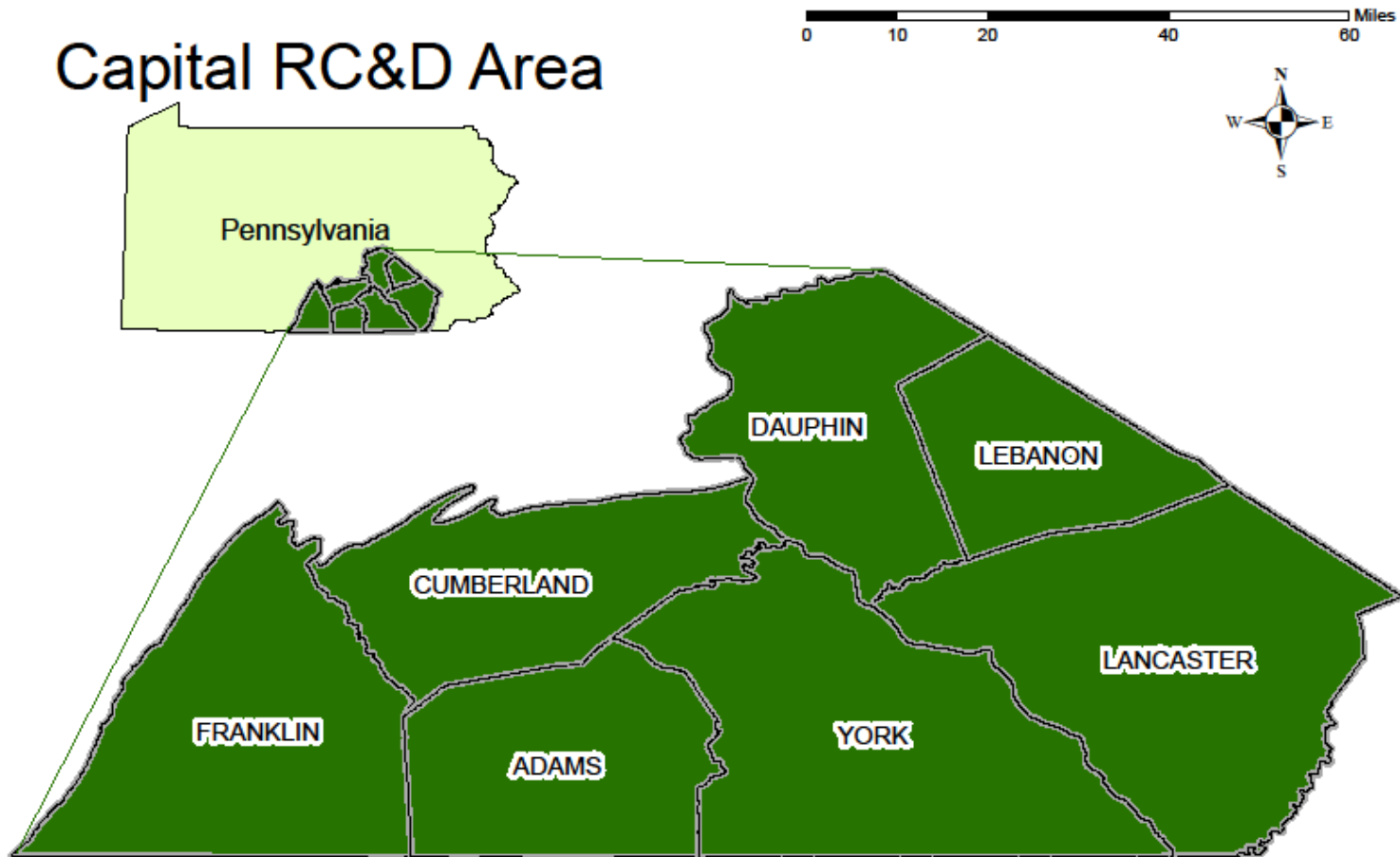
VI. County Statements of Support

The Capital Resource Conservation and Development (RC&D) Area Council presents this 2011-2015 Area Plan for the region we serve, and respectfully requests review and support of the plan from each of the sponsor counties represented on the Council. We look forward to working with county sponsors, stakeholders and constituents to implement the activities and projects contained herein, with a goal of improving the quality of life for all citizens in the region.

We, as undersigned, support the Capital RC&D Area Plan and will further provide input and support for the Plan's implementation through representation on the Council Board of Directors.

List of Counties, with Commissioner Signatures

APPENDIX A. Capital RC&D Location Map

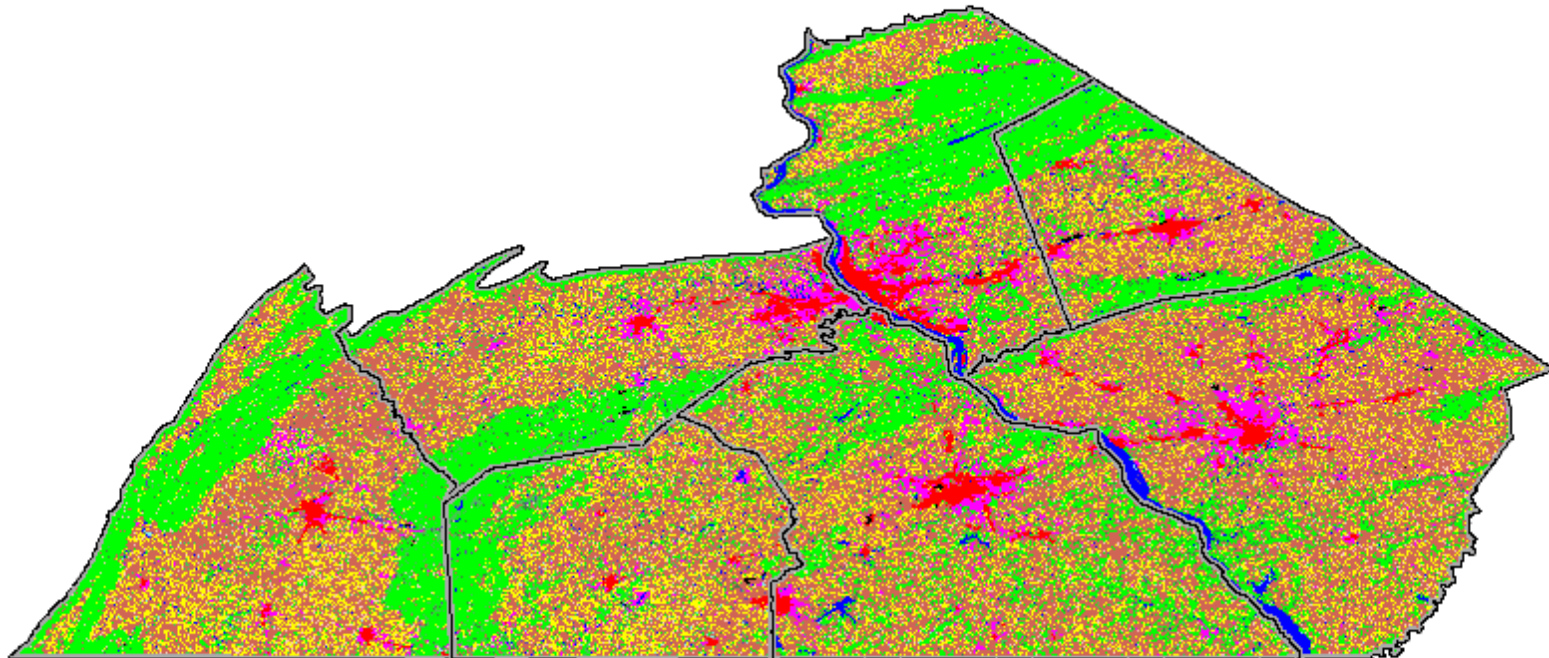


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 Counties

Appendix B.

Capital RC&D Area Land Cover

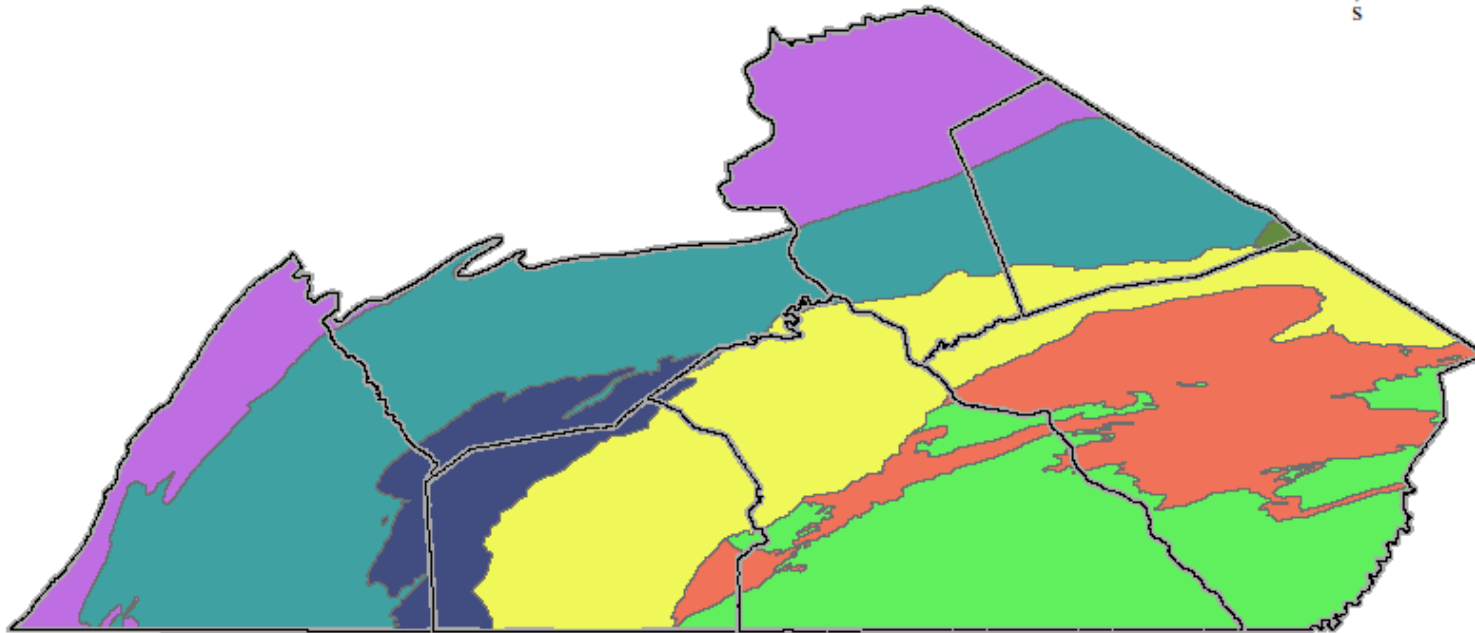


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Appendix C.

Capital RC&D Area Physiographic Provinces

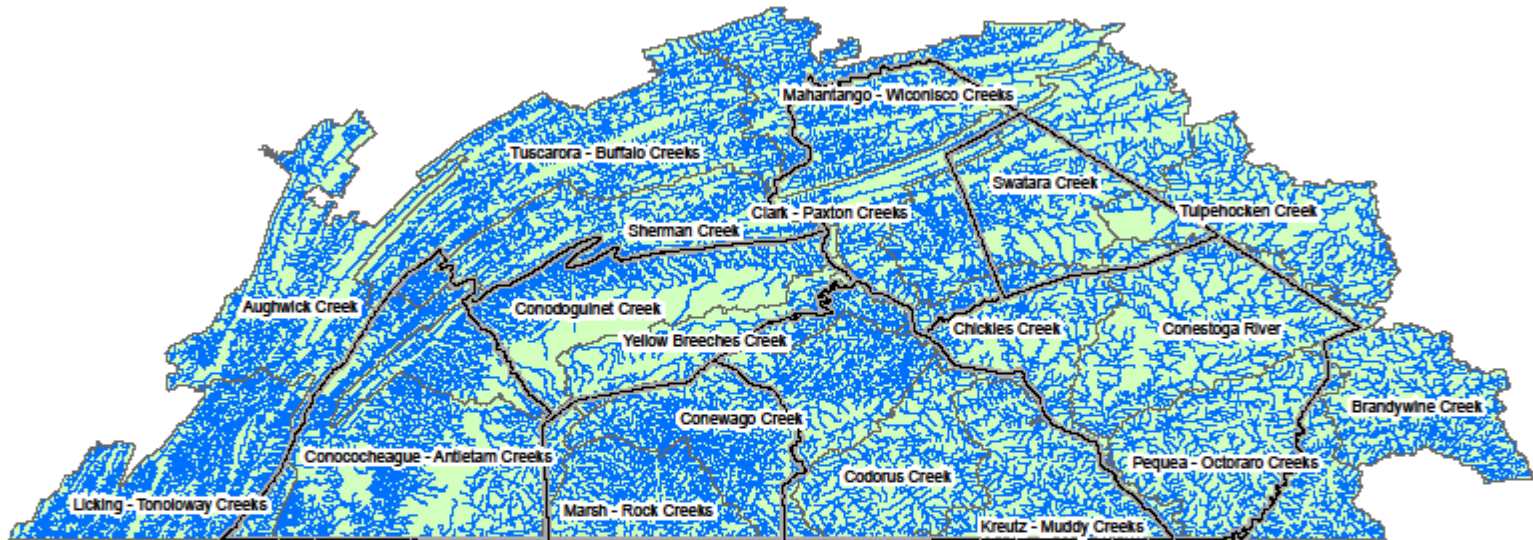


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
- Appalachian Mountains
- Gettysburg-Newark Lowlands
- Great Valley
- Piedmont Lowlands
- Piedmont Uplands
- Reading Prong Sections
- South Mountain

Appendix D.

Capital RC&D Area Watersheds & Streams



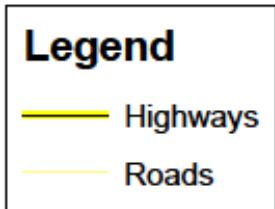
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-  Counties
-  Streams
-  Major Watersheds

Appendix E.

Capital RC&D Area

Cities and Roads



Appendix F. 2010 Capital RC&D Council List

Adams County

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corinnerebinski@bssf.com

Appendix G. 2010 PA RC&D Councils

PA Resource Conservation and Development Councils Office locations/Contacts/Counties served

Capital Area RC&D (*Adams, Cumberland, Dauphin, Franklin, Lancaster, Lebanon, York*)

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(Susan Richards, Program Mgr.)
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Fax 717-233-4826

susan.parry@pa.usda.gov
susan.richards@rcdnet.net

Endless Mountains RC&D (*Bradford, Lycoming, Sullivan, Susquehanna, Tioga, Wyoming*)

Stacy Koch, Coordinator (Diane White, P.A.)
Natural Resources Conservation Service

Stoll Natural Resource Center
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Towanda, PA 18848-9345
Phone 570-265-5288 (ext 5)
Fax 570-265-7435

Stacy.koch@pa.usda.gov
Diane.white@rcdnet.net

Headwaters RC&D (*Cameron, Centre, Clearfield, Clinton, Elk, Jefferson, McKean, Potter*)

Beth Rider, Coordinator (Terry Marsh, P.A.)
Natural Resources Conservation Service

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Fax 814-375-2453

Beth.rider@pa.usda.gov
Terry.Marsh@pa.usda.gov

Community Partnerships RC&D (*Juniata, Mifflin, Perry, Snyder, Union*)

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(Sam Price, Program Spec.)

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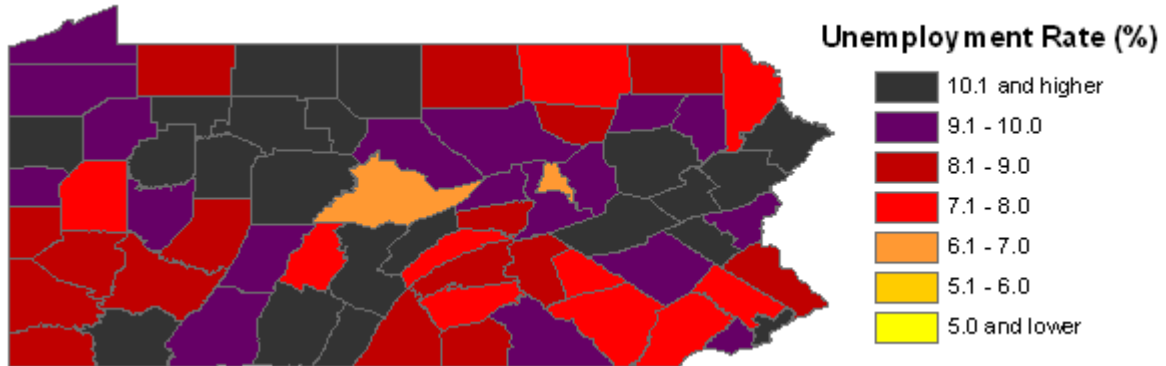
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Appendix H.

Unemployment Rates by County in Pennsylvania May 2010



Unemployment Rates by County in Pennsylvania, Not Seasonally Adjusted			
Area	May 2009	May 2010	Net Change
United States	9.1	9.3	0.2
Pennsylvania	7.9	9.2	1.3
Adams County, PA	7.5	8.5	1.0
Cumberland County, PA	6.4	7.7	1.3
Dauphin County, PA	7.2	8.8	1.6
Franklin County, PA	8.1	9.0	0.9
Lancaster County, PA	7.0	8.0	1.0
Lebanon County, PA	6.5	7.8	1.3
York County, PA	8.1	9.4	1.3

NOTE: Rates shown are a percentage of the labor force. Data refer to place of residence. State and county data for both current and prior year are subject to revision early in the following calendar year.

Last Modified Date: July 1, 2010

Appendix I.

County Comprehensive Plan Comparisons

Plan Element	Adams	Cumberland	Dauphin	Franklin	Lancaster	Lebanon	York	
Land Use	Develop responsibly, preserve and enhance physical and environmental distinctive characteristics; ensure minimized degradation of nature and culture. Develop sewer and water in already developed area and be mindful of overdraw and contamination.	Develop responsibly and consistently, with sensitivity to natural and man-made environments. Encourage municipal planning consistent with county planning.	Develop where there are already public facilities, preserve agriculture, and integrate land use and transportation.	Strengthen older neighborhoods; encourage consistent planning across municipalities, use minimal land for maximum development, brownfields, and preservation.	Develop new communities to reflect scale of existing. New communities will integrate housing, shops, schools, parks, aesthetically appealing pedestrian and non motor trails. Discourage high speed. Keep character of existing communities. Ensure arts and culture.	Leadership in planning and development to existing communities and utilities. Conserve land and natural resources. Expand cooperation among public and private partners		
Economy	Diversify economic base. Enhance tourism. Locate business near transportation corridors. Attract business to keep people in county. Attract recession-proof, environmental-benign businesses with full time jobs. Identify regions to develop. Maintain existing viability.	Broaden, stabilize tax base. Attract business that is environmentally benign. Create high wage jobs. Provide educational facilities for training.	Target development where there is already infrastructure. Encourage public/private partnerships. Retain and attract high quality workforce.	Attract business to broaden tax base. Emphasize redevelopment of older business areas. Diversity.	Direct development where there are people and infrastructure. Retain and expand existing businesses. Support microenterprises. Strengthen agriculture through diversification. Develop tourism. Improve transportation to service employers and employees.	Retain, expand, and attract business that is environmentally neutral, provides stable jobs, family sustaining wages, contributors to tax base and poses minimal impact to transportation system. Focus development in central areas where there is already transportation in		
Housing	Diversify housing within historical and natural environments	Mixed housing within financial reach of all citizens.	Develop housing where there is infrastructure. Ensure that mix of affordable housing available.	Land use compatible between borders. Emphasize existing neighborhoods. Minimize land consumption. Discourage "strip" commercial development.	Invigorate older neighborhoods. Special attention to moderate and below market housing.	80% new growth where there is already public infrastructure. Affordable housing in dense areas with easy access to shopping and other resources.		

Source: South Central Regional Action Plan

Appendix J.

Area Plan Stakeholder Interviews: Data Gathering - Findings and Observations

SECTION I: Expert Interview Findings

- A. High performing RC&D Councils – Characteristics and dynamics
- B. How is Capital RC&D doing?

A. High Performing RC&D Councils (As defined by experts in the field)

Dynamics and characteristics:

1. Strong connections, partnerships & collaborations
2. A discernable organizational focus
3. Evidence of successful projects
4. Effective communications
5. Financial sustainability

1. Strong connections and partnerships with...

- Ag community
- Local, county and state officials
- Peer organizations
- Brought together, coordinated and facilitated by Capital RC&D

2. Discernable organizational focus

- Reflective of local/regional needs
- Informed by stakeholders
- Mutually agreed upon
- Not exclusive to ag issues

3. Evidence of successful projects

- Addressing *priority* concerns and issues
- Aimed at broad regional issues
- Structured, coordinated, facilitated, monitored and measured by Capital RC&D
- Implemented by partners
- Sustainable post-spinoff

4. Effective Communications

- Stakeholders and community
- Two-way
- Internal and external

5. Well managed & financially sustainable

- Not dependent on a single funding source
- Efficient, thrifty, “home-style”
- Accountable for meeting defined goals and objectives
- A recognized source of knowledge and expertise
- Well aligned with partners

B. How is Capital RC&D Doing? (In the view of experts in the field)

- Capital RC&D is a high performing RC&D. At this point in Capital RC&D's life-cycle, it is appropriate to give attention to the following issues.
 - ✓ Strengthen communication and PR efforts
 - ✓ Begin to reduce emphasis on Conservation District-related projects
 - ✓ More clearly demonstrate that Capital RC&D is not duplicating efforts of existing entities; that it is not a funding competitor

SECTION II: Stakeholder Interview Findings

- A. Capital RC&D Competitive Assets
- B. Capital RC&D Competitive Liabilities
- C. View of future success

A. Capital RC&D Competitive Assets (Identified via stakeholder interviews)

- Strong, capable staff
- Access to, and ability to secure/administer grants
- Productive partnerships & relationships

B. Capital RC&D Competitive Liabilities (Identified via stakeholder interviews)

- Board and constituents not optimally engaged
- Weak messaging and branding
- Confusing organizational structure and system of accountability
- Ambiguous organizational direction, goals and objectives

C. Success over the next 3-5 years (per stakeholder interviews)

- Fulfill implementation of projects "on the books"
- Build a shared understanding of what Capital RC&D is and what it is trying to accomplish
- Transition project approach from funding-driven to need-driven
- Increase attention to non-ag related issues
- Clearly define organizational direction, goals and objectives – and assign accountability

SECTION III: Internal Document Review Findings

- A. Organizational Structure
- B. Organizational/governance execution
- C. Financial Sustainability

A. Organizational Structure (Facilitator observations)

- Lack of shared understanding
- Gaps in assignment of "essential responsibilities"
- Confusing system of accountability
- Structure seems out of synch with stage of organizational maturity

B. Organizational/Governance Execution (Facilitator Observations)

- Program/project maturity is running ahead of admin systems, financing, governance, marketing, etc.
- Committee structure ignores some critical organizational functions, functions that were identified as weaknesses by interviewees (financial development, communications and PR/GR),

- Rules, regulations, routine transactions and normal operations seem to take up a disproportionate amount of the board agenda (keeping the board from more substantial issues, which are sometimes subordinated to email discussion & vote).
 - Individual, committee and board roles are not clear; some position and committee descriptions are contradictory and/or overlap each other.
 - There seems to be a bit of an ad hoc nature to board meetings. From agendas and minutes it's difficult to discern what matters most to the organization's well-being in the short and long run.
 - Focus seems to be on "what we've just done" and "what we're doing" rather than "where we're going" and "how we're doing."
- C. Financial Sustainability (Facilitator Observations)
- Financial statements hide true cost of administering Capital RC&D (coordinator salary). Loss of NRCS support would be devastating.
 - Capital RC&D lacks a fund development plan.
 - Capital RC&D lacks an operational reserve.

Appendix K. Area Plan Online Survey

Capital Resource Conservation and Development (RC&D) is currently seeking input from our stakeholders to help inform development of a long-range plan for the seven-county area we serve. Capital RC&D, operating as a non-profit 501(c)3 organization, links and builds coalitions between local units of government, community organizations, groups and individuals to coordinate technical and financial assistance in meeting natural resource conservation and development needs of the local area. Through these partnership opportunities, Capital RC&D strives to meet needs not currently being met by other programs. The RC&D program concentrates on the areas of *land management, land conservation, water management and community development*. We would appreciate you taking a few minutes to let us know your opinion by completing the following survey. *Thank you in advance for your help in providing valuable input!*

1. Stakeholder Affiliation (please check all that apply)

- Business (for profit)
- Not for profit organization
- Government
 - Local
 - State
 - Regional
 - Federal
- Land Use Planning
- Natural Resources
- Conservation
- Agriculture
- Economic Development
- Community Development
- Other (please specify)

2. County of Residence

- Adams
- Cumberland
- Dauphin
- Lancaster
- Lebanon
- Franklin
- York
- Other (please specify) _____

3. What concerns do you have for your local community over the next five years, *in relation to Land Issues?* (please check no more than *two items*)

Land Conservation and Management:

- Agricultural Best Management Practices (BMP)
- Alternative and Value-added Agriculture Opportunities
- Alternative Energy Production/Use

- Fish and Wildlife Habitat Protection
- Improved Forestland Management
- Open Space Management
- Properly Functioning Natural Ecosystems
- Soil Quality/Protection from Soil Erosion
- Other (please specify) _____

4. **What concerns do you have for your local community over the next five years, in relation to *Community Development Issues*?** (please check no more than *two items*)

Community Development:

- Agriculture & Environmental Education
- Grant Research and Technical Assistance
- Intergovernmental Agency Cooperation
- Local Food Systems and Farmers Market(s) Promotion
- Municipal Outreach/Technical Assistance
- Sustainable Economic Development
- Rural Fire Protection
- Park and Trail Development
- Watershed-based Outreach/Education
- Other (please specify) _____

5. **What concerns do you have for your local community over the next five years, in relation to *Water Issues*?** (please check no more than *two items*)

Watershed Management and Planning:

- Chesapeake Bay Issues (regulatory)
- Flood Mitigation
- Stream Corridor Protection/Restoration
- Storm Water Management
- Water Quantity Issues
- Water Quality Issues
- Water Conservation
- Wetland Conservation
- Other (please specify) _____

6. Of all items checked in the above categories, what are the top two needs or concerns in your community?

a. _____

b. _____

7. Please list and describe any specific projects of interest to you:

8. Which of the following services would your community/organization need that you are currently unable to obtain (please check all that apply)?

- Grant Administration/Management
- Grant Research/Writing Assistance
- Convener
- Meeting Facilitation
- Seminar/Workshop Planning
- Organization Capacity-Building
- Project Coordination/Referrals
- Natural Resource Technical Assistance
- Conservation Education
- Other (please specify)_____

9. How do you prefer to receive information from Capital RC&D? (please check all that apply)

- E-mail
- Website
- E-Newsletter
- US Mail
- Social networking tools – Twitter, LinkedIn, etc.
- Other (please specify)_____

10. What should Capital RC&D do to improve its communication with you? (please check all that apply)

- I don't receive Capital RC&D communications
- No improvement needed
- More frequent updates
- More frequent e-mail updates
- Alerts
- More local outreach
- Other (please specify)_____

11. What is your relationship to Capital RC&D (check all that apply)

- Capital RC&D council member
- A stakeholder who holds some opposing views
- A financial supporter
- A resource and/or advisor
- Support/stakeholder
- Other (please specify)_____

12. What else should Capital RC&D consider in developing priorities for the next 5 years?

13. Other comments or suggestions: _____

Appendix L.

Of all items checked (pertaining to land conservation, community development, watershed management) what are the top 2 needs or concerns in your community? (This chart depicts the top 8 responses as if they were the only choices)

