

CAPITAL RESOURCE CONSERVATION AND DEVELOPMENT (RC&D) AREA COUNCIL, INC.
FISCAL YEAR 2015

PLAN OF WORK

Approved September 19, 2014



Prepared by: Capital RC&D Area Council, Inc., 401 East Louther Street, Suite 307, Carlisle, PA 17013
Phone: (717) 241-4361 Fax: (717) 240-0548 Email: info@capitalrcd.org Web: www.capitalrcd.org

Capital Resource Conservation and Development verifies that this FY 2015 Plan of Work addresses the Council's priorities.

Council Chair (signature)

Council Secretary (signature)

DATE

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

The five-year Area Plan (2011-2015) provides a comprehensive set of goals and strategies on which to base Capital RC&D's Annual Plan of Work (POW). Beginning in August 2014, the Capital RC&D Resource Conservation and Development Committee worked with staff to develop a 2015 POW, mapping the steps required for the coming year to support the achievement of time-based strategies drawn from the Area Plan.

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.

The goals, objectives and strategies that are included in the 2011-2015 Area Plan and 2015 Plan of Work 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 eleven 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.

Notes: This Annual Plan of Work represents Goals, Objectives and Strategies assigned to the fiscal year 2015 (October 1 – Sept. 30), as taken from the 2011-2015 Capital RC&D Area Plan and are determined to fall within the capacity of the staff and board. The Annual Plan of Work is the guiding document for staff and Board activities throughout the upcoming fiscal year. In April 2011 Capital RC&D funding and technical assistance from USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service was reduced due to a Congressional decision to defund the program and reassign the RC&D's federal Coordinator. Because of these changes, many of the strategies named in the Area Plan for 2015 were deferred. The deferred strategies have been placed in a separate document. They will be reevaluated annually by the Resource Conservation and Development Committee to prioritize strategies for funding development or implementation using board resources.

Capital Resource Conservation and Development – 2015 Plan of Work

ELEMENT: Community Development			
Goal	Objective	Strategy	Target Date
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.	1. Operate under a financially sustainable business model, reflecting increasing revenues and a five-percent increase in unrestricted funding, by September 2015, as approved and recommended by the Council Business Affairs Committee	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.	1/15/15
		2. Annually seek, sponsor, and manage four grants or funding agreements that support the resource conservation and development goals contained within the Area Plan.	9/30/15
		3. By September 2015, 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.	9/1/15
		4. 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.	Ongoing
		5. Fund a 3-month operating reserve based upon approved annual Council budgets.	9/1/15
GOAL 1.	Objective 2: Implement and refine on an ongoing basis 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.	1. By December of each year conduct a new board member orientation/training program with 100% of new members participating.	12/1/14
		2. Beginning January, 2014, consider all organizational policies for revision on a regular interval of five years	11/30/14

Capital Resource Conservation and Development – 2015 Plan of Work

ELEMENT: Community Development			
Goal	Objective	Strategy	Target Date
GOAL 1.	<i>Objective 3: 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</i>	1. Conduct a board member-hosted constituent briefing in each of Capital RC&D's 7 counties. (Requires board member involvement.)	9/30/15
		2. On a quarterly basis, review selected web pages and make necessary updates on the Capital RC&D website	Ongoing
		3. Work with the Council and partners to enhance the long term use and distribution of Capital RC&D's Resource Database.	1/30/15
		4. By December of each calendar year, publish and distribute an annual report.	12/31/14
		5. On a quarterly basis evaluate progress on the organization's Communications Plan	11/21/14
GOAL 2. 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.	<i>Objective 1: 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. (by September 2015)</i>	1. Beginning at the January 2015 Council meeting, invite the host county's Economic Development Corporation to present on county programs pertinent to Capital RC&D, during the Council meeting.	1/16/15
		2. Identify and compile information about the importance of agriculture as an economic driver in the Capital RC&D region and communicate that information to the Council and partners, as time and staffing resources permit.	3/2015

Capital Resource Conservation and Development – 2015 Plan of Work

ELEMENT: Community Development			
GOAL 2.	Objective 2: 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	1. Continue bi-monthly meetings of the South Central Food System Alliance (FSA), with participation from at least ten associated organizations and seek funding to support Capital RC&D leadership of the group.	Next meeting October 2014
		2. Support ongoing awareness of SNAP acceptance at area farmers markets through press releases and other outreach and continue to provide limited technical assistance for farmers markets that have the service or are interested in initiating the service.	Ongoing
		3. By December 2014 provide marketing support to at least ten farms in the region focusing on highlighting the ecosystem benefits of farm land	12/31/14
ELEMENT: Water Management			
Goal	Objective	Strategy	Target Date
GOAL 1. 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: <i>Promote Agricultural Best Management Practices (BMP) and provide education, technical assistance, and/or funding assistance to at least 14 additional agricultural enterprises each year throughout the 2011 – 2015 planning cycle.</i>	1. During 2015 "Grass Roots: Prescribed Grazing for the 21st Century" program will provide technical support through Grazing Advisor visits, formation of grazing groups and distribution of cost share for prescribed grazing practices to producers impacting at least 1,000 acres of pasture land.	9/30/15
		2. Develop a strategy to support the grant writing and grant /fiscal management needs of interested watershed organizations, in our seven county region.	1/1/16
		3. By December 2014 develop a marketing strategy/materials for farms to promote their conservation practices to customers and provide the materials and explain their use to all NRCS county offices, at minimum two producer groups (PA No-till Alliance, GLCI, others) and at least six individual producers working with Capital RC&D programs during 2015	9/30/15
		4. During 2015 support BMP implementation in the region by supporting the employment of term employees in NRCS offices.	Ongoing

Capital Resource Conservation and Development – 2015 Plan of Work

GOAL 1.	Objective 2: Work in a leadership capacity with 5 or more entities* across the region on efforts related to the Chesapeake Bay Executive Order. (*including, but not limited to, Conservation Districts, county commissioners, educational institutions, conservation interests, watershed groups, municipalities, river basin commissions, PA DEP State Water Plan, etc.)	1. On an annual basis, outreach to the Council and partners about the availability of resources from the Consortium for Scientific Assistance to Watersheds (CSAW) Program and provide updated information to the Council and stakeholders.	12/31/15
		2. By December 2015 work with at least 20 landowners to improve their understanding of the conservation value of riparian buffers and buffer maintenance.	12/31/15
ELEMENT: Land Management			
Goal	Objective	Strategy	Target Date
GOAL 1. 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.	1. Each year, participate in the South Mountain Conservation Landscape Initiative activities, staff time permitting, and provide technical resources, potential funding sources and project implementation.	Ongoing
		2. Continue to monitor 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 and provide support.	Ongoing
		3. Support the Farm and Ranchland Protection Program (FRPP) and Wetland Reserve Program (WRP) by providing ongoing support for quality assurance visits in the region.	Ongoing
		4. In 2015 support the maintenance and hand-off of the South Mountain GeoTrail to the South Mountain Partnership.	3/1/15

Capital Resource Conservation and Development – 2015 Plan of Work

ELEMENT: Land Management			
Goal	Objective	Strategy	Target Date
GOAL 1	Objective 2: Provide technical assistance to at least 100 individuals interested in developing or restoring important native fish and wildlife habitats.	1. Continue to sponsor individual technical assistance visits for at least 90 landowners within the region related to the Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP).	9/30/15
		2. During 2015, develop and distribute CREP project monitoring materials in the Capital RC&D region for CREP landowners and hold three field events for CREP landowners.	9/30/15