



# Tioga County Conservation District

# Strategic Plan

Approved June 15, 2006

*I find the great thing in this world is not so much where we stand as in what direction we are moving  
– Oliver Wendell Holmes Sr.*

**Organization:** Tioga County Conservation District; A political subdivision of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, was organized November 4, 1946, by the Tioga County Commissioners, with the primary mission to prevent soil erosion.

**Function:** To take available technical, financial and educational resources, whatever their source, and focus or coordinate them so that they meet the needs of the local land manager with conservation of soil, water and related natural resources.

**We serve:** All land users of Tioga County

**Why:** To provide technical assistance, education and opportunities for all citizens of Tioga County to conserve natural resources, including soil, air, water, biodiversity, and cultural resources.

**Mission Statement:** Provide for the Conservation of Natural Resources of Tioga County through Leadership, Education and Technical Assistance.

Quality of Life- We value...

The Tioga County Conservation District is committed to enhancing and supporting a healthy environment, sense of place, good social framework and stable economy in our local and global community. We understand the importance of empowerment, awareness, and living in peace with yourself and your neighbors. Our quality of life includes a long-term perspective, time to reflect, and noble employment. Our guiding values include:

- Trust
- Integrity
- Honesty
- Relationships
- Tranquility
- Family
- GREEN forests and landscapes

- Dedication and a job well done
- Conscientiousness and awareness
- Service
- Balance
- Freedom and flexibility

Future Resource Base:

**We will endeavor to develop, protect and provide the following far into the future:**

- Clean Air & Water
- Healthy Food
- Sustainable Energy
- Productive and Protected Soils

We will need an efficient transportation system in order to sustain and improve our networks of commerce and trade. We must develop and invest in systems of appropriate conservation and preservation that maintain the balance and diversity of our landscapes, including clean air, healthy streams, forests and farmland. The District must lead by example in promoting, modeling and defending the importance of stewardship toward the land and care toward our communities. We will persevere to perfect our holistic goal and understand that the treatment of symptoms and crisis management are counterproductive behaviors. Realizing that the

nature of our cooperative efforts is paramount to who we are and how we will be perceived, we will seek clarity and transparency in all of our engagements, and strive always with the greater good of our communities in mind. Our efforts to promote and practice sustainable development and resource management must seek to balance the need for timely leadership with that of consideration and humility. To that end we will design, construct and operate a “green building,” to support District functions and to symbolize our commitment to the nature and future of Tioga County.

**Priority Process:** The Conservation District Directors, staff, and cooperating agencies gathered for a 1-day work session. Jim Weaver, Associate Director, and a certified educator in the Holistic Management™ facilitated this work session. The Bob Chadwick Consensus Process was used with the group to develop statements on *Quality of Life (our values)*, *Forms of Production (what we will do)*, and *Future Resource Base (what it must look like.)* These are components of a strategic plan that provide a road map and paint a picture of where the Tioga County Conservation District wants to go – a Holistic Goal. Without a plan and vision of the landscape ahead we would be wandering in the wilderness.

The planning committee then took the “raw” input from the session and developed a one pager for daily use to monitor our progress and keep on track. Without implementation (always difficult) and simple guidelines strategic planning is rarely successful. We will use this document to test decisions and reflect on direction.

The unique process and perspective developed a clear picture of where the District wants to be in the future. By exploring our feelings about where we are now and where we want to be, the participants had the opportunity to get to the big picture and reach agreement on our mutual understanding of conservation and what is important in a long range plan. We now have the direction we need to make successful decisions based on those values we hold as important and necessary for improving the quality of life and the landscape of Tioga County.

Critical Natural Resource Issues:

- 1: Soil Erosion**
- 2: Land Use**
- 3: Water Quality**
- 4: Storm Water Management**
- 5: Riparian Buffers**

Critical Geographic areas; see attached map.

Statements of Intent (Outcome) for each of the natural resource issues.

- 1: By 2012 every high school junior will be educated to the cause and effect and abatement of soil erosion.
- 2: By 2010 All Municipal Officials will be educated to the use of BMP's and existing laws and regulations pertaining to land use issues and comprehensive planning.
- 3: By 2008, compile all data available on all bodies of water in Tioga County
- 4: By 2008 the District will cooperate with other groups and agencies to hold educational meeting on storm water management.
- 5: By 2012 have 50 % of impaired riparian areas restored.

Priority Actions for the next 12 months:

- Explore feasibility of new office space with Cooperative Extension and USDA.
- Support watershed associations through watershed specialist position.
- Education of the public through newspaper and radio.
- Establish staff position of Educator/Public Relations Specialist.
- Establish Biologist/Technician to assess watersheds and assist the District.

Staffing Needs:

- 1: Technician for Erosion and Sedimentation / NPDES, and Dirt and Gravel Roads.
- 2: Biologist / Technician to assist with 105, wetlands and watersheds.
- 3: Education / Public Relations Specialist.
- 4: Resource Conservation Technician for land use and water quality.

Annual Budget Needs:

Salaries & Benefits:	<u>\$332,000.00</u>
Equipment:	<u>\$10,000.00</u>
Office Supplies:	<u>\$5,000.00</u>
Programs & Cost Share:	<u>\$575,000.00</u>
Rent & Utilities:	<u>\$18,000.00</u>
<b>Total Annual Budget:</b>	<b><u>\$940,000.00</u></b>

The Tioga County Conservation District will distribute the Strategic Plan to all Directors, Staff, Cooperating agencies and key individuals identified in the plan. The plan will be made available to the general public through events and displays presented by the District.

Key Individuals to Reach for Program Success:

County Commissioners	DEP North Central & Harrisburg
School District Superintendents	Watershed Associations
Township Supervisors	District Cooperators
County Cooperative Extension Director	NRCS – District Conservationist
Manager of Army Corps Tioga Hammond	Farm Service Agency
Tioga County Planner	District Forester

# Tioga County Geographic Priorities



