

**Tioga County Conservation District
Strategic Plan
2021-2026**



Tioga County Conservation District Strategic Plan 2021-2026

Plan development began in July 2021 and concluded on November 15, 2021. The following persons were involved in development of the plan:

Name	Affiliation
Marianne Bishop	Board Member-Agricultural Sector
Andrea Boyce	Ag Tech, Conservation District
Courtney Congdon	Secretary, Conservation District
Mark Hamilton	Board Member-Tioga County Commissioner
Lee Hoar	Board Member-
Morgan Jones	Resource Conservationist-Conservation District
Carolyn Kilburn	Conservation Stewardship Tech-Conservation District
Carl Koch	Board Chair-Community Sector
Scott Moore	E&S Technician-Conservation District
Earle Robbins	Board Member-
Sue Sticklin	Facilitator/Nominating Org.-TC Partnership for Comm. Health
Erica Tomlinson	District Director-Conservation District
Tyler Upham	Watershed Specialist-Conservation District
Jim Weaver	Board Member-Agricultural Sector

Step I. Revisit Who We Are, What We Believe, And Why We Exist: The strategic planning committee began its endeavor by reviewing, editing, and approving the Conservation District’s statements regarding structure, mission, values, and function. It was agreed upon that the plan would encompass five fiscal years, 2021-2026, reviewed at least annually to allow for updates and for course correction, if needed. An organizational assessment for the Tioga County Conservation District was conducted reviewing the previous annual 5-year strategic plan and reviewing current and previous annual plans and reports. Staff members and Board members were surveyed periodically to assess where the organization is today and identify the critical areas that need to be addressed for success in the future.

Six sessions, held either in-person or virtually, were used to gain ideas on critical issues to be addressed, trends, analysis of strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats and potential goal strategies. Following a series of meetings, The Facilitator and District Manager compiled the information into a draft strategic plan for the steering committee and board consideration and approval. The steering committee considered internal and external input in the development of the goals, objectives and action plans.

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: Identify the needs of the local land manager regarding conservation of soil, water, and related natural resources through coordination of available technical, financial, and educational resources to conserve Tioga County’s natural resources.

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Mission Statement: To 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 communities. We understand the importance of empowerment, awareness, and living in peace with yourself and your neighbors. Our quality of life includes a longer-term perspective, time to reflect, and noble employment.

Our Guiding Values:

Trust	Service	Dedication and a job well done
Integrity	Balance	Conscientiousness and awareness
Honesty	Relationships	Tranquility
Family	Freedom and Flexibility	Green forests and landscapes

Step II: The Current Landscape: SWOT Analysis:

Strengths

Education to students
Strong partnerships with other agencies
Advanced Technology
Dirt and Gravel Program (income)
Adaptability
Team concept
Communication
Variety of interests and skill sets among staff and board
Availability of natural resources in area
Good network of funding sources

Weaknesses

Lack staff to do education and public relations for Conservation District
Funding opportunities are unpredictable
Legacy/Succession planning for Board
Staff retention
Undesignated impaired Natural Resource issues (streams)
Bound by certain delegations (DEP)

Opportunities

Use of local media sources to promote the Conservation District (print, radio, Homepage)
Use of social media (FB, IG, Twitter)
75th Anniversary celebration
Hometown Science Event promotion
Succession planning for Board (cultivate new members)

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Increased in outdoor activities provides opportunity to educate residents/visitors
 Tioga Action Plan for Chesapeake Bay

Threats

- Unpredictable funding
- Bound by certain delegations (DEP)
- Legislation that erodes confidence in local Conservation Districts
- Misinformation/misunderstanding by public of natural processes
- State budget is a yearly concern
- Increase in outdoor activities by residents and visitors

Step III. Identify Potential Areas to Address in Plan:

1. Education (all ages)
2. Public Relations/Marketing
3. Funding Stabilization
4. Succession Planning for Board Members
5. Staff Retention

Step IV. Develop the plan using SMART (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, and Time-Bound) goals:

Goal Area One: Education

Objective: Develop and implement high quality conservation education programs for persons of all ages.

Activity	Population Served	Success Measure	Person(s) Responsible	By When
1.1 Hire Educator				
1.1a Hire part-time educator to promote and implement programs in cooperation with CD staff.	General Public	Qualified PT Educator is hired.	BOD-funding DM-Hiring	Spring 2022
1.2 School Outreach/Education				
1.2a Field trips 1.2b In-school programs 1.2c Youth Clubs	a1) High School/College a2) K-12 a3) 4H, FFA	HS/College-50 K-12-800 4H, FFA-200	CD Staff CD Educator	End of school year.
1.3) Community/General Public				
1.3a Public events to provide fact-based conservation information	General Public	3 events 100 attendees	CD Staff CD Educator	Fiscal year end

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1.3b Provide a monthly educational segment on Homepage 1.3c Hometown Science Fair 1.3d Workshops for loggers, consultants		10% increase in Homepage viewers from first airing 100 training participants 25% knowledge gain (pre and post surveys)		
Activity 1.4 Outreach to Farmers	Population Served	Success Measure	Person(s) Responsible	By When
1.4a Cover Crop Field Days 1.4b Survey farmer educational needs 1.4c Offer workshops based on needs 1.4d CD staff attends Farm Bureau mtgs.	Open field farmers	3 programs offered, 100 farmers attending, 100 farmers doing survey CD staff assigned to mtgs.	Andrea Boyce	Summer/Fall '22
Activity 1.5 Legislative Outreach	Population Served	Success Measure	Person(s) Responsible	By When
1.5a TCCD update meetings with Commissioners	TC Board of Commissioners	Meet every quarter	District Manager	Immediately and ongoing

Goal Area Two: Public Relations/Outreach

Objective: Enhance public awareness and perception of the Tioga County Conservation District and its mission.

Activity 2.1 Targeted Outreach to promote TCCD by designated Outreach staff (CD Educator)	Population Served	Success Measure	Person(s) Responsible	By When
2.1a Facebook posts 2.1b Newspaper articles 2.1c Radio ads 2.1d Homepage Segments	General Public	FB-advertise events Newspaper-Quarterly Radio-Events	CD Educator CD Staff	Ongoing
Activity 2.2 Plan and implement activities to celebrate the Conservation District's 75th Anniversary	Population Served	Success Measure	Person(s) Responsible	By When
2.2a Newspaper articles 2.2b Tioga County Fair 2.2c Radio ads 2.2d Homepage Segment	General Public	CD Appreciation Day attendees=150	All CD staff CD Board	Late spring '22

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Activity	Population Served	Success Measure	Person(s) Responsible	By When
2.3 Develop and maintain a CD website to include educational links, upcoming events, etc.				
2.3a Work with County IT staff to develop website; train CD staff to maintain site.	General Public	Website is user-friendly and contains current information	County IT	Mid-year 2022

Goal Area Three: Diversification of Funding Sources

Objective: Increase awareness of and access to diverse funding sources to support Conservation District Projects.

Activity	Population Served	Success Measure	Person(s) Responsible	By When
3.1 Increase financial resources to sustain and enhance District programs				
3.1a Apply for State and Federal grants for equipment 3.1b Solicit donations from local businesses for specific programs/projects. 3.1c Collaborate with other agencies to promote their available funding and recruit applicants for those agencies. 3.1d Explore alternative funding options used by other Districts and/or funders such as 1% for the Planet funders. 3.1e Explore option of using a fiscal sponsor in order to apply for funding restricted to non-profit 501c3 organizations.	General Public School Students Youth-serving groups	2 applications per year, or as needed. Hometown Science Fair-every 2 years.	CD Staff	Ongoing and as needed.
Activity 3.2 Connect with legislators and other elected officials at all levels to promote the work of the Conservation District	Population Served	Success Measure	Person(s) Responsible	By When
3.2a Organize Legislative Luncheon to inform audience of current work and resource needs of the District. 3.2b Host local leadership events to keep Township and	Legislators Township Supervisors	Annual event-20 attendees Events held as needed	CD Staff CD Board	Annually As needed

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Boro officials apprised of the District's work and funding needs.				
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Goal Area Four: Board Member Succession Planning

Objective: Strengthen Conservation District Board

Activity	Population Served	Success Measure	Person(s) Responsible	By When
4.1 Board Engagement in District Activities				
4.1a Board members remain knowledgeable of District activities in order to act as ambassadors/ spokespersons for District and its work. 4.1b Board members visit projects on-site to show support and gain knowledge of District projects/activities	CD Board Members CD DM and Staff	Board members maintain 85% meeting attendance; Board members visit/participate in at least 2 projects/yr.	CD DM CD Board	Annually and ongoing.
4.2 Board Training				
4.2a Board members will receive new board member training to include Conservation Ed. Laws. 4.2b Board members attend relevant continuing education as available	CD Board Members	Each new Board member receives required training. Each Board Member will complete at least 4 PACD trainings per year.	CD DM CD Board	Within 2 months after joining CD Board. Annually
4.3 Board Succession Planning				
4.3a Increase number of Associate Directors to Conservation Board 4.3b Increase number of nominating organizations	CD Board CD DM CD Staff General Public	Add 3 Associate Directors to Board Add 3 new nominating organizations	CD Board CD Staff Commissioners	June 30, 2022

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Goal Area Five: Staff Recruitment and Retention

Objective: Enhance the District’s ability to attract and retain qualified staff.

Activity	Population Served	Success Measure	Person(s) Responsible	By When
5.1 Evaluate current total compensation for District employees				
5.1a . Work with County Human Resources Department to explore ways to incentivize staff and promote retention.	All CD employees	Staff are satisfied with total compensation package.	CD DM	Annually
5.1b Explore options for staff bonuses or other financial rewards for performance.		Bonuses are provided to staff	CD Board	Annually
5.2 Explore flexible work options for employees				
5.2a Explore telework options for staff.	CD Staff	Telework options are made available to staff using established policy and procedures and with staff having adequate IT to do so.	CD Board CD DM	By June 2022
5.2b Develop policies and procedures for remote work.				
5.2c Determine and implement IT needs for equipment and software for staff to effectively work remotely, if needed.				
5.3 Staff Performance Feedback Opportunities				
5.3a Restart discussions between Board and staff regarding work performance, possible improvements to individual or organizational performance, etc.	CD Staff CD DM	Personnel Committee of Board will meet with each CD staff at least 1x yearly. Committee reports back to Board on these meetings.	CD Board Personnel Committee	ASAP and ongoing

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Step V. Approval and Distribution Plan:

This plan will be presented to the District Board for review and final approval. The plan document will be signed by the Board Chair and Secretary/Treasurer.

Board members and staff will distribute the approved plan in both paper and electronic formats via the County website, social media, and through its customers. Review and updates to the plan will occur quarterly, but no less than yearly. The Board is ultimately responsible for the contents of the plan and for providing the support to TCCD staff in achieving its goals.

This Tioga County Conservation District Strategic Plan was approved by the Board of Directors

on _____

Carl Koch, Board Chair

Board Secretary