

# Thurston Conservation District 5-Year Plan

**Organization:**

Political subdivision of the State of Washington – authorities, powers and structure contained in RCW 89.08.

**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:**

The people and natural resources of Thurston County

**Why:**

To conserve the natural resources of our geographic area for the beneficial and sustainable use by all.

**Mission Statement: (revised)**

To conserve and sustain the beneficial use and protection of natural resources for, and with the Thurston County community, through partnerships, rural and urban connections, volunteerism, cooperation, leadership, education, and technical & financial assistance .

**Values: (add to listing)**

- Learning and applied education
- Sustainable use of natural resources
- Support for agriculture activity that uses sustainable, economically feasible practices
- Commitment to healthy, viable natural resource systems
- Value and show respect for each staff, board member, and clients

**Trends:**

- Population growth and urbanization and sub urbanization – sprawl
- Water quality degradation
- Focus on water quality as contrasted to other environmental issues
- Prioritization of water quantity – who gets the water for what
- Demand on CD services by other agencies
- Funding resources not keeping up with demands
- Lack of preparedness – i.e. recycling – not knowing what to do – needing logical conclusion
- Towards 5 acre overcrowded small farms – diverse animals species and the products they are producing
- Increasing bureaucracy for getting the job done
- Electrons – more computers, CDs and how we manage information
- Increased interest in sustainable everything

**Strategies**

- More education but not the usual – more outreach instead of publications
- Raising awareness through education and outreach with state legislature and elected officials – help decision makers be better informed
- We should be more informed for current issues – information from agencies, new research, be seen as a key player for information exchange with land owners, pre-planning
- To effectively deliver our services to large numbers of people – education and services – helping people change things – permitting assistance, cultural resources, services, training

*"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.*

Worksheet adapted from NACD publication

sessions on how to develop their own conservation plan, how to reach 20 land owners per month for each technician - more focus on one-to-one technical assistance

- Look at ways to coordinate with Cooperative Extension on services, seminars, etc
- Word of mouth, economic situations and circumstances taken into account for services, promotion, and marketing, grass roots education, reaching different audiences in a different way
- Offer well testing – protect the clients information – relate BMPs to water quality
- Get the cities, county and other natural resource groups involved to talk about the resource issues we want to address – do some overall coordination.
- Have an integrated program where we focus land owner assistance on riparian area protection – run throughout district and community areas.
- Have a working relationship with the assessors office to track property transactions.
- Reestablish relationship with the county weed agency
- FSA tracks farmland changes – ask to share
- Establish key sites for water quality monitoring – or if sites are established then establish the relationship to receive the data.
- Partner with the shellfish protection groups that are already in place
- Create GIS data that characterizes riparian habitat conditions.
- Need to work with other partners in the critical areas to evaluate and target the sources of the water quality problems
- Build on or establish our own databases to track resource condition monitoring and assessors information
- Identify the information methods and media to communicate to the small land owners
- Enter into a partnership relationship with American Farmland Trust
- Open house in the fall to make public aware of goals and give input.
- Once we determine from the monitoring studies on pollution of shellfish beds we will design the methods to remove the pollution.
- Have the outreach component in each, feedback system, and adaptive management.
- Finances – need to develop the strategy for funding including looking outside the normal sources - do the research and budgeting for the projects.
- Sponsor group project proposals with other districts.
- Take a proactive approach to funding – seek funding from state, federal and private sources
- Produce a strategy to get 100% assessment within the next two years, and establish the actual need for funding.
- Identify the major land owners in the priority geographic areas to discuss and develop strategy for funding the project activities
- Training for district staff
- Research funding available from Department of Transportation
- Hire a program

**Critical Natural Resource Issues: (in priority order)**

1. Surface water quality
2. Riparian protection & restoration - streambank erosion
3. Shellfish areas - reduce pollution & reopen areas
4. Land use conversion
5. Small acreages management
6. Invasive/exotic species

**Critical Geographic Areas: (attached map)**

1. Totten/Eld
2. Skookumchuck Watershed
2. Henderson Bay

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**Statements of Intent: (for each natural resource issue – Format “By {date} the {natural resource} will {outcome})**

- By 2008, data from a key monitoring station in each of the critical geographic areas which meets or exceeds water quality standards.
- By 2006 the TCD staff can readily access any historical and current water quality data for surface water
- By Feb 2006, will create a list of owners with functioning habitat and solicit funding sources for fee simple or conservation easements
- By June 30, 2007 restore 5 miles of riparian buffers.
- By 2008 the Nisqually shellfish area will be harvestable and we will use the information gathered from the Nisqually project to guide/demonstrate the restoration in Henderson Inlet.
- By 2009, the rate of open space land conversion (loss) will be reduced by 50%.
- By 2008 every owner of 5 acres or more will be contacted by TCD and at least 50% will have implemented a BMP on nutrient management or livestock husbandry.
- Beginning in 2006, every purchaser of 5 acres or more will receive a personal contact by TCD offering assistance with identifying conservation issues and implementing BMPs to address the issues.
- By December 31, 2005 invasive and exotic species will be listed by location and degree of problem in each critical geographic area
- By December 31, 2006 a status report and work plan will be developed with our partners leading to a 25% reduction by the end of 2008.

**Staffing & Organizational Needs: (Action plans developed, process, then develop the list of skills sets still needed in the District – identified by)**

- ❖ More people in the field
- ❖ Program Planner (grant writing, data bases, marketing, researching funding sources, contacting funders)
- Conservation Planners
- Habitat Specialists
- Information – Education

**Annual Budget Need: (develop action plans for each statement of intent - identify annual budget needs by 9/30/04.**

Salary  
Equipment  
Office Supplies  
Programs & Cost Share  
Rent & Utilities  
Transportation  
Training  
Other \_\_\_\_\_  
Other \_\_\_\_\_

**Total Annual Budget Need**

**Key Decision Makers:**

- Citizens of Thurston County
- District administrators
- Supervisors of Board
- Mark Swartout

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- County Commissioners / staff – Bob Mcloud,
- Key contacts for each city, regional planning council
- Conservation Commission
- State legislators and staffers
- Totten/Eld shoreline land owners
- Jeff Dickison, Bobby Whitner, and David Troutt
- Watershed planning groups
- Taylor shellfish, Pacific shellfish growers
- Governor
- Agriculture leaders
- Directors of NOAA, NRCS, Fish & Wildlife, state fish and wildlife, DOD,
- Nature Conservancy
- Ralph Munro
- Schools

### Priority Actions – 12 Months

Action	Begin Date	End Date
Each issue team to develop an action plan for the priority resource issue, statements of intent – identify budget and staff needs.	6/3/04	7/27/04
Notes from meeting back to Supervisors and staff	6/3/04	6/7/04
Action plans reviewed by Board and staff	7/27/04	7/27/04
Include actions into the draft plan and identify budget and staff needs – identify key decision makers to assist with planning input	8/1/04	9/30/04
Public and partner review of plan and input	10/1/04	11/1/04
Open House with public	11/1/04	
Board review of public comments and consideration for approval	11/23/04	
Adoption of plan and budget	12/21/04	
Align monthly staff reports with work plan	ASAP	