

March, 2017

BOONE COUNTY CONSERVATION DISTRICT

ANNUAL PLAN OF WORK

July 1, 2017 – June 30, 2018

The Boone County Conservation District is one of 121 Conservation Districts in Kentucky. Kentucky Conservation Districts are political subdivisions of state government but are not state agencies. Conservation Districts are local units of government that work within county boundaries and are charged with carrying out programs for the conservation, use and development of soil, water, and other natural resources.

Conservation Districts are the primary entities to provide assistance to private landowners and land users in the conservation, sustainment, improvement and enhancement of Kentucky's natural resources. They are catalysts for coordinating and implementing conservation programs, channeling expertise from all levels of government and the community into action at the local level. Programs are non-regulatory, science based technical assistance, incentive based financial programs and informational and education programs.

This Annual Plan of Work was developed not only to guide the Conservation District, but also to encourage cooperation among landowners, government agencies, private organizations, and elected officials. Through knowledge and cooperation, all concerned can ensure a sustainable natural resource base for present and future generations in the Boone County Conservation District.

Mission Statement: The mission of the Boone County Conservation District is to promote the protection and wise use of natural resources through education and service to the citizens of Boone County.

Board of Supervisors:

Debra Messer, Chairman
Kristin Scott, Vice Chairman
Loren Hand, Secretary/Treasurer
Christopher Benton
Jason Roberts
Rebecca Ortwein
(*Vacancy*)

District Staff:

Sheryl VonBokern, Office Manager
Mark Jacobs, Watershed Project Manager

Major Goals for fiscal year: July 1, 2017- June 30, 2018

Operations:

1. Maintain a budget committee to pursue equitable and sustainable funding for the Conservation District.
 - a. Ensure that the budget supports the annual plan of work activities and the Long Range Plan.
 - b. The budget committee will meet quarterly and meet with the accountants.
 - c. The budget committee will establish a one-year and three-year budget plan.
 - d. The budget committee will meet with the County Judge Executive and County Administrator, at least twice a year; and with the County Commissioners at least once a year.
 - e. The budget committee will present the budget to the Fiscal Court annually.
2. Meet or exceed the statutory requirements that are listed in the Boone County Conservation District Long Range Plan of Work, revised March 2016.
3. Provide funding for District board member(s) to represent the District at the KACD convention and other functions during the year.

Conservation Programs:

1. Water Resources:
 - a. Continue efforts for improved stream health through development and implementation of watershed based plans for Gunpowder Creek and Woolper Creek.
 - b. Execute the requirements of 319(h) non-point source pollution grants.
 - c. Continue to seek partnerships to implement Best Management Practices identified in approved watershed plans.
 - d. Continue close working relationship with SD1 to monitor the water resources in Boone County.
 - e. Utilize 319 (h) Clean Water Act grants awarded by the Kentucky Division of Water and other sources of funding to implement BMPs identified in watershed plans.
 - f. Continue monitoring and data collection at established test sites in Gunpowder and Woolper Creek Watersheds.
 - g. Maintain and strengthen partnerships developed through watershed initiatives.
 - h. Begin to identify and prioritize efforts in other watersheds in Boone County.

2. Forest and Wildlife Resources:

- a. Identify forest and wildlife management issues of concern in Boone County and develop a long-term strategy to address the issues. Focus should be on ecological function of forest lands. Priority issues include: forest health, invasive species, biodiversity, habitat fragmentation, threatened and endangered wildlife and species of special concern, and land management.
- b. Use results from the Joint Agency Meetings to help direct District programs.
- c. Work with local universities to encourage research on local forest and wildlife issues.
- d. Collaborate closely with other local, state and federal agencies where appropriate.
- e. Develop educational opportunities for management of forest and wildlife resources (*i.e.* field day, lectures etc.)
- f. Develop a forest conservation committee.

3. Agricultural Resources

Technical/Planning

- a. Provide technical assistance and planning services to local landowners/producers.
- b. Facilitate assistance from other resource agencies when needed.
- c. Facilitate landowner compliance with the Kentucky Agriculture Water Quality Act (KAWQA).
- d. Continue to promote and facilitate landowner participation in Kentucky Soil Erosion and Water Quality Cost Share Program and federal cost share programs to improve water quality and decrease soil loss.
- e. Provide financial assistance for producers/landowners for dead animal removal and farm dump cleanup.
- f. Promote the Kentucky State University Small Farm Conference and Women's Conference on Agriculture and provide a scholarship for a county farmer to attend. Provide funding for a board member or staff member to attend.

Farmland Initiative:

- g. Begin planning for the future Boone County Rural Treasures Farm Tour and ways to improve.

Education and Outreach:

1. Hire a Conservation Education Specialist.
2. Continue organizing and running the Conservation Kids Camp to bring awareness of soils, water quality, forest ecology and wildlife conservation to the school age children of Boone County.
3. Begin to develop our ability to engage and inform the citizens of Boone County about natural resource issues through efficient use of social media outlets.
4. Continue direct involvement with the Boone County Fiscal Court, Boone County Parks, Boone County Planning Commission and other local agencies to inform them of local natural resource issues and promote the best uses and protection of our natural resources.
5. Engage and communicate with local legislators more effectively.
6. Review and update publicity materials including web site, pamphlets, brochures and other educational materials.
7. Develop a Conservation Education Program:
 - a. Develop a comprehensive conservation education program(s) for Boone County students (K-12).
 - b. Increase interaction with FFA, 4-H and other youth-oriented groups.
 - c. Continue to support and collaborate with the Thomas More Environmental Academy and Northern Kentucky University, and other local colleges and universities to address local natural resource concerns and provide unique hands-on work experience with multiple agencies.
 - d. Continue participation in the Boone County Fair, Community Education Fair, Big Bone Lick State Park Salt Festival, and other opportunities as they arise.
 - e. Enhance partnership with Boone County Parks Department, the Boone Conservancy and Boone County Cooperative Extension to deliver exceptional conservation education programs to Boone County citizens.
 - f. Provide presentations to community and civic groups.
 - g. Develop a scholarship program to encourage and assist post-secondary students interested in natural resource careers.
 - h. Develop a school grant program to assist teachers and schools in engaging students through hands on conservation projects.

Committee members as of January 23, 2017:

Education Committee: Kristin Scott, Chair; Rebecca Ortwein

Land Use Committee: (open), Chair: Debra Messer, Christopher Benton

Budget Committee: Loren Hand, Chair; Kristin Scott, Rebecca Ortwein

Boone County Farm Tour Committee: Sheryl Vonbokern

County Agriculture Development Council: Kristin Scott,
Tony Coulter (former Board Supervisor)

Forestry Committee: Rebecca Ortwein, Chair; Jason Roberts, Loren Hand

Boone County Urban Forestry Commission Representative: Mark Jacobs

Northern Kentucky Urban and Community Forestry Council: Jason Roberts,
Mark Jacobs

Kentucky Hellbender Working Group: Mark Jacobs

Northern Kentucky Stream Restoration Program Advisory Committee:
Mark Jacobs

SD1 Storm Water Action Committee: Mark Jacobs

KACD - Kentucky Association of Conservation Districts, Area 5
Alternate Director: Debra Messer

HR Policy Committee: Loren Hand, Chair; Rebecca Ortwein

Boone County Solid Waste Technical Advisory Committee: (open)