



# ANNUAL PLAN OF WORK

2020-2021

262.020 Purpose of soil and water conservation district -- Methods of achieving purpose. The purpose of a soil and water conservation district is to conserve and develop all renewable natural resources within the district. In so doing, the district is authorized to undertake, sponsor, or participate in projects and activities which promote the conservation, development, maintenance and use of the land, water, trees and other renewable natural resources of the district. Such projects and activities shall include but not be limited to conservation practices on agricultural lands, the control of soil erosion, retardation of water runoff, the construction of flood prevention and control reservoirs, the maintenance of flood plains, the promotion of projects to assure an adequate municipal, industrial and agricultural supply of water, watershed stabilization, the avoidance and abatement of sedimentation and pollution in streams and other bodies of water, forestation and reforestation, the establishment of parks and outdoor recreation areas, the protection of open space, greenbelt areas and scenery, the preservation of wilderness areas, the protection of fish and wildlife, working for the location of highways, industries, housing developments, airports and other structures as are consistent with the district's objectives and will offer the least possible interference with the conservation and best multiple use of the renewable natural resources, and all other activities consistent with the total natural resources development of the district. History: Amended 1968 Ky. Acts Ch. 64, sec. 1. -- Recodified 1942 Ky. Acts Ch. 208, sec. 1, effective November 1, 1942, from Ky. Stat. sec. 42i-2.

**Boone County Conservation District**

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**Introduction**

The Mission of the Boone County Conservation District (BCCDKY) is to promote the protection and wise use of natural resources through education and service to the citizens of Boone County, Kentucky. As a Conservation District, we provide technical assistance, conservation planning, and access to cost share programs to the community.

BCCDKY has determined that the most pressing natural resource concerns in Boone County include the protection of water resources (e.g. stream health), soil health and stabilization, and the health and ecological integrity of our forest and wildlife resources. These priorities have been determined through day-to-day interactions and interfaces with the community, as well as productive collaboration and partnerships with local, state, and federal resource agencies. Education and awareness of these identified resource concerns is perhaps BCCDKY's most pressing priority. The District's mandate to address these issues is solely in the interest of the public health, safety, and welfare of every Boone County citizen and has driven the development of our Annual Plan of Work.

Enormous changes in Boone County's land use, population growth, and development in the last 30 years has led to the degradation of our natural resources, and this continues to be a focus of BCCDKY. These changes have been documented by the EPA-approved and completed Woolper Creek and Gunpowder Creek Watershed Plans. The immense developments (e.g. Cincinnati/Northern Kentucky International Airport), occurring in the headwaters of Boone County's watersheds, pose a continued threat to our natural and built infrastructure downstream. Other direct impacts of this development include forest fragmentation and wildlife displacement.

Despite urbanization, 44% of the county is forest canopy which harbors a rich diversity of native wildlife, including several species of endangered plants and animals. Among other threats, invasive species, such as the emerald ash borer and Amur bush honeysuckle, have already completely changed the composition of our forests, as many other threats remain on the horizon. BCCDKY recognizes these threats to our natural resources and local economy and are committed to addressing these serious issues.

In the last few years, progress has been made in the BCCDKY budget to address some of the identified issues, however much work remains. Therefore, our priority and effort over the next year is to continue to work toward the development of an equitable and efficient budget that supports robust conservation programs to address these issues.

The BCCDKY Board of Supervisors and Staff is determined to meet these challenges and has developed the following Annual Plan of Work.

**Board of Supervisors**

Rebecca Ortwein, *Chairman*  
Matt Wooten, *Vice Chairman*  
Mike Wilson, *Treasurer*  
Jason Roberts  
Debra Waller

*Rebecca S. Ortwein*

**Board Supervisor**

**Office Staff**

Mark Jacobs, *Director of Conservation Projects*  
Pavla Link, *District Administrative Secretary*  
Susan Brown, *Conservation Education Specialist*

*4/4/20*

**Date**

## Operations

Maintain a Budget Committee to pursue equitable and sustainable funding for BCCDKY.  
Ensure that the budget supports the Annual Plan of Work and Long Range Plan activities.

- The Budget Committee will meet quarterly for updates and with the Accountant(s).
- The Budget Committee will establish a three- or five-year budget plan, in addition to the required one-year budget.
- The Budget Committee will meet with the County Judge Executive and County Administrator at least once a year.
- The Budget Committee will meet with the County Commissioners at least once a year.

Meet and exceed the statutory requirements that are listed in the BCCDKY Long Range Plan, revised March 2018.

Provide conservation services through technical, financial and/or educational support to the citizens of Boone County and foster partnerships with local non-government conservation groups such as the National Wild Turkey Federation, Ducks Unlimited, Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation, Northern Kentucky Fly Fishers, League of Kentucky Sportsmen and Quail Forever.

Pursue Grant opportunities to help support Conservation and Education Programs.

Evaluate and update staff salaries, job descriptions and benefits.

## Conservation Programs



1

### Forest & Wildlife Resources

- Hire a full-time Forest Conservation Specialist.
- Identify forest and wildlife management issues of concern in Boone County to develop a long-term strategy to address such issues. Focus should be on healthy ecological function of forest lands. Priority issues include: forest health, invasive species, biodiversity, habitat fragmentation, threatened/endangered wildlife and species of concern, and land management.
- Work with local universities to encourage student research on local forest and wildlife issues
- Pursue mitigation and other funding resources to protect forest and wildlife.
- Collaborate closely with other local, state, and federal agencies where appropriate in support of mitigation efforts of public forest and land.
- Continue to develop educational opportunities for management of forest and wildlife resources (i.e. field days, lectures, etc.)
- Continue to develop Forest Education Programs for K-12 audience.



2

### Water Resources

- Continue to work closely with NKU Center for Environmental Restoration and Kentucky Department of Fish and Wildlife Stream Mitigation Group and other organizations and agencies to identify stream, wetland and forest mitigation projects in Boone County.
- Continue efforts for improved stream health through implementation of Watershed Plans for Gunpowder Creek and Woolper Creek.
- Continue to seek partnerships to implement Best Management Practices (BMPs) identified in the approved Watershed Plans.
- Continue close working relationship with Sanitation District No. 1 to monitor the water resources in Boone County.
- Utilize 319(h) Clean Water Act grants awarded by Kentucky Division of Water and stream mitigation funds to implement BMPs identified in Watershed Plans when available.
- Continue monitoring and collecting data at established test sites in Gunpowder Creek and Woolper Creek Watersheds.
- Maintain and strengthen partnerships developed through prior watershed initiatives.
- Identify management priorities and other watersheds in Boone County, i.e. Middle Creek and Big Bone Creek.



3

## Agricultural Resources

- Provide technical assistance and planning services to Boone County landowners and producers.
- Facilitate assistance from NRCS and other resource agencies when necessary.
- Facilitate landowner compliance with the Kentucky Agriculture Water Quality Act (KAWQA).
- Continue to promote and facilitate landowner participation in Kentucky Soil Erosion and Water Quality Cost Share Program and Federal Cost Share Programs, when available, to decrease soil loss and improve water quality.
- Provide financial assistance for landowners and producers for the Heavy Material / Farm Dump Removal.
- Provide financial assistance for landowners and producers for Dead Farm Animal Removal pending fund availability.
- Hire NRCS/KACD 75/25 Soil Conservation Technician to assist with Farm Bill Programs and State Cost Share Programs.
- Continue recertifying Agriculture District program participants.
- Begin planning for the future Boone County Farm Tour and ways to improve.
- Promote Ag literacy and safety K-12.

### Education & Outreach

Develop internship program for college students.

Continue organizing and implementing Youth Conservation Leadership programs to encourage environmental literacy and stewardship for youth of all ages.

Engage with general public through printed materials, social media, and participation in community outreach events.

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 concerns to promote BMPs and the protection of them.

Engage and effectively communicate with local legislators.

Explore opportunities to spearhead the initiative of creating Ohio River Recreation Trail covering Boone County section of the Ohio river, highlighting local landmarks and community events along the trail in efforts to promote safety, respect for private and public lands, bird watching and nature appreciation.

Develop a Conservation Education Program.

- Develop a comprehensive Conservation Education Program(s) for K-12.
- Increase interaction with FFA, 4-H, and other youth-oriented groups.
- Work with local, state, and national agencies and universities to support scientific research and communicate scientific knowledge with the general public.
- Enhance partnership with Boone County Parks, Boone Conservancy, and Boone County Cooperative Extension to deliver exceptional Conservation Education Programs to Boone County citizens.
- Provide presentations to community and civic groups.
- Continue providing scholarships to encourage and assist students interested in natural resources careers.
- Continue offering school grants to assist teachers and schools in engaging students through hand-on conservation projects.



## **BCCDKY Committees as of February 2020**

### **EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE**

*Chair:* Rebecca Ortwein

*Vice Chair:* Matt Wooten

*Treasurer:* Mike Wilson

### **EDUCATION COMMITTEE**

*Chair:* Debra Waller

Susan Brown

Pavla Link

Megan Clere

### **BUDGET COMMITTEE**

*Chair:* Mike Wilson

Matt Wooten

Mark Jacobs

Pavla Link

### **HR POLICY COMMITTEE**

*Chair:* Debra Waller

Rebecca Ortwein

Susan Brown

Matt Wooten

### **LAND USE COMMITTEE**

*Chair:* Mike Wilson

Jason Roberts

Rebecca Ortwein

Mark Jacobs