

# Three Rivers Soil & Water Conservation District

## Strategic Plan 2014-2019

DRAFT



*Three Rivers Soil & Water Conservation District*

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# **Three Rivers Soil & Water Conservation District Strategic Plan July 1, 2014 – June 30, 2019**

## **Introduction**

This Strategic Plan is intended to guide the Three Rivers Soil and Water Conservation District through the next five years, from 2014-2019. Its purpose is to direct the District toward an effective program in soil and water conservation within its boundaries.

As stated in the Soil and Water Conservation District Law of Virginia:

*“A soil and water conservation district...shall constitute a governmental subdivision of this State, a public body corporate and politic, exercising public powers...”*

*“They (a district and its’ directors) shall have power to develop comprehensive programs and plans for the conservation of soil resources and for the control and prevention of soil erosion and for flood prevention or agricultural and nonagricultural phases of the conservation development, utilization and disposal of water within the district...”*

## **District Description**

The Three Rivers Soil and Water Conservation District encompasses the counties of Essex, King William and King & Queen and falls within both the York and Rappahannock River Watersheds.

The District is governed by a duly elected Board of Directors comprised of two representatives from each county, one appointed member and one County Extension Agent. Day to day operations is managed by an effective staff which consists of a District Manager, one Conservation Specialist, one Administrative Coordinator and one Administrative Assistant.

The Three Rivers Soil & Water Conservation District strives to lead and motivate local communities to maintain a clean environment and a productive economy. By working through partnerships formed with federal, state and local governments; public servants and private landowners; volunteers and staff members; effective soil and water conservation programs are offered to landowners, homeowners and operators.

**Three Rivers Soil & Water Conservation District  
Strategic Plan  
July 1, 2014 – June 30, 2019**

**Directors**

J. Franklin Townsend Jr., Chairman, King William County, Elected  
W. Todd Henley, III, Vice Chairman, King & Queen County, Elected  
Keith Balderson, Secretary, Essex VA Cooperative Extension, Appointed  
Roland B. Geddes, Treasurer, Essex County, Appointed  
Robert Payne Longest, King & Queen County, Elected  
Lloyd B. Mundie, Essex County, Elected  
Raymond S. Thomas, Essex County, Elected  
Troy Johnson, King William County, Elected

**Associate Directors**

Margaret “Prue” Davis, Essex County  
Jim Cox, Essex County

**Staff**

Michelle Carter, District Manager  
Anne Davis, Administrative Coordinator  
Leslie Anne Hinton, Conservation Specialist  
Marlene Shelor, Administrative Assistant (PT)

**Mission**

It is our intent to safeguard soil and water within Three Rivers District by making significant strides within the next five years toward achieving the water quality goals of the State of Virginia and the Chesapeake Bay Act through putting conservation on the ground.

**Vision**

To achieve soil and water conservation within the District through leadership, education and technical assistance.

# Strategic Planning Process

On March 17, 2014, the Three Rivers Soil & Water Conservation District (TRSWCD) Directors and Staff drafted a Strategic Plan for the period of July 1, 2014 through June 30, 2019. The Draft Strategic Plan will be posted on the TRSWCD web site: [www.trswcd.org](http://www.trswcd.org) for public review; written comments were accepted through May 12, 2014. The written comments received during the public comment period were considered in developing the final Strategic Plan. The final plan was adopted by the TRSWCD at the meeting held on \_\_\_\_\_.

## Cooperating Partners

York River and Small Coastal Basin Roundtable  
Natural Resources Conservation Service  
Farm Service Agency  
VA Cooperative Extension – Essex, King William and King & Queen Counties  
Essex County Farm Bureau  
King William/King & Queen Farm Bureau  
Virginia Farm Bureau  
Colonial Farm Credit  
Department of Conservation & Recreation  
VA Department of Agriculture & Consumer Services  
Mattaponi and Pamunkey Rivers Association  
Department of Game & Inland Fisheries  
US Fish & Wildlife Service  
Department of Environmental Quality  
Essex County  
King & Queen County  
King William County  
National Association of Soil and Water Conservation Districts  
Virginia Association of Soil and Water Conservation Districts  
Middle Peninsula Land Trust  
Middle Peninsula Planning District Commission  
Virginia Department of Forestry  
Town of Tappahannock  
Town of West Point  
Chesapeake Bay Foundation  
Area III Districts

## **Goal I: Technical Assistance/Implementation**

**The TRSWCD will work with partner agencies and local governments to enhance water quality through improved management of soil and water resources. The District will:**

Seek ample funding for the VA Best Management Cost Share program.

Secondary considerations will be developed to effectively distribute a targeted 100% of the annual cost share funding allocation in areas which will receive the greatest water quality benefit on an environmentally biased basis.

Promote and conduct a cost share sign-up period in which applications will be taken.

Rank and approve cost share applications in accordance with the Virginia Agricultural Best Management Practices Cost Share Program manual and the District's secondary considerations.

Direct producers/landowners to the most appropriate state or federal program for water quality improvement.

Partner with Natural Resources Conservation Service in all phases of the implementation of Farm Bill programs.

Educate the public on the value and importance of effective conservation and natural resource management.

Work cooperatively with agri-businesses, partnering agencies and educational institutions for technological advancements to identify problems not being addressed and better solutions in current management techniques for the advancement of best management innovation.

Participate in local and extension field days and crop conferences to keep farmers informed on conservation issues and programs.

Support programs that enhance the profitability and viability of farming and forestry.

Promote shoreline management to landowners on alternatives for controlling shoreline erosion problems.

## **Goal I: Technical Assistance/Implementation (Continued)**

Provide local governments with technical support where appropriate on soil and water management.

Continue promoting Agricultural Best Management Practice implementation through signage.

Support efforts to create a VA Urban Best Management Practices Program to address non-point source pollution from non-agricultural land such as sound lawn care practices and urban nutrient management.

Work in cooperation with stakeholders, local governments and councils of the York and Rappahannock Watersheds towards achieving goals of the Chesapeake Bay TMDL.

Implementing other state conservation programs which support the Chesapeake Bay TMDL Implementation Plan (e.g. voluntary data collection, Resource Management Plans, etc.)

Identify counties' land use planning impact on the Districts natural resources.

Support planned development that does not fragment larger parcels of farms and forest land and leave it impractical and unprofitable to manage.

Act as co-holder of conservation easements, where appropriate.

Promote programs, services and technical assistance through presentations and event opportunities as requested.

Stress the identification of non-traditional participants through publicly visible media and increased one-on-one visits.

Encourage professional development to enhance deliverance and effectiveness of programs, services and assistance provided.

Conduct investigations based on District guidelines to resolve environmental complaints in accordance to the Agricultural Stewardship Act and Virginia Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services regulations.

## **Goal II: Education/Public Awareness**

**The TRSWCD will work to effectively communicate with partners, local governments, learning institutions and citizens of the community the goals and mission of the District and purpose of its existence through education and outreach. The District will:**

Conduct seminars and workshops relating to District Programs.

Maintain a current brochure listing of all available programs, services and technical assistance.

Update local government and stakeholders on District activities and accomplishments through an annual report.

Utilize local media and the District newsletter to publicize District activities by submitting articles or public service announcements regarding programs and issues for education.

Work with local schools, churches, and libraries to promote conservation awareness through educational contests, media, field days and celebrations.

Utilize local realtors as a conduit of providing educational conservation materials.

Promote groundwater protection education.

Provide stormwater runoff awareness in urban areas.

Recognize citizen stewardship of natural resources through District awards program.

Provide environmental educational opportunities or activities for area students through district sponsored contests and camps.

Attend professional development training to enhance deliverance and effectiveness of programs and services.

Promote John F. Townsend Sr., Larkin Hundley, Anna K. Longest, and VASWCD scholarship programs when funding allows.

## **Goal II: Education/Public Awareness (Continued)**

Provide conservation equipment for rental that demonstrates and helps to implement innovative conservation practices with producers and landowners.

Educate the public on prevention of other types of pollution and the relationship of these to soil and water health and conservation by conducting forums and outreach programs for pollution prevention such as litter, recycling, hazardous waste and energy consumption.

Continue to update the District's website with upcoming events and important educational tools.

Support and assist the York River & Small Coastal Basin Roundtable and Rappahannock River Basin Commission with basin wide forums, educational events and watershed projects.

### **Goal III: Financial/Leadership**

**The TRSWCD will continue to seek adequate funding and resources to carry out District Operations and current/future Conservation Programs throughout the District.**

Goal: To develop expanded and stable funding sources for current and future district programs.

Work with other Districts throughout the State and with the Virginia Association of Soil and Water Conservation Districts to promote increased and more reliable funding by the State Legislature.

Educate State elected officials and encourage increased public funding of District staff and programs.

Work closely with County governments to increase funding support from the local level.

Provide annual reports to local governments which indicate the type and value of services provided to each county.

Identify and pursue additional sources of financial support for District services from public and private conservation groups.

Obtain grants for special District programs, seminars and workshops as innovative ideas and opportunities are presented.

Finance committee will meet as necessary to discuss District audit findings and recommendations.

Treasurer and Finance committee will provide guidance and leadership for the effective management of District finances to comply with regulations and directives.

Follow DCR's Desktop guide as a reference for all acceptable financial procedures.

## Closing

In conclusion, the Three Rivers Soil and Water Conservation District extends appreciation to all who supported and participated with us in this important planning process. The concern and sincerity of the citizens of Essex, King William and King & Queen counties for protecting their natural resources are reflected in this plan and the District will do its utmost to fully implement the plan.

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This Strategic Plan for fiscal years 2014-2019 was adopted by the Board of Directors on \_\_\_\_\_.

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J. Franklin Townsend, Jr.

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W. Todd Henley, III

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Raymond S. Thomas

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Roland Geddes

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Lloyd B. Mundie

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Troy Johnson

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Keith Balderson

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Robert P. Longest

The Commonwealth of Virginia supports the Three Rivers Soil & Water Conservation District through financial and administrative assistance provided by the Department of Conservation and Recreation.

Three Rivers Soil and Water Conservation District programs, activities and employment opportunities are available to all people regardless of race, color, religion, sex, age, disability, national origin or political affiliation. An equal opportunity employer.