



Connecticut Resource Conservation and Development (CTRC&D) is a unique program led by a volunteer council that helps people protect and develop their economic, natural, and social resources in ways that improve their area's economy, environment, and quality of life. The CTRC&D Council members represent sponsoring organizations that include Connecticut's Conservation Districts, Connecticut's Councils of Government, environmental, agriculture, economic organizations and other non-profit groups.



CTRC&D generates local support for community improvement activities and locally-led boards and councils. The RC&D concept is based on the fact that local people are best able to determine and create solutions for their communities. The Resource Conservation and Development Program was established under the authority of the Food and Agriculture Act of 1962 to assist town and regional areas in enhancing conservation, water quality, wildlife habitat, and rural development.

Originally, responsibility for the administration of this nation-wide program of RC&D's resided within the USDA's Natural Resource Conservation Service. In 2011, budget cuts led to loss of direct NRCS staffing for RC&D Councils nationwide. Currently, CTRC&D relies on programmatic grants provided by federal, state and non-profit organizations. Valued partners who fund CTRC&D programs include: USDA, NRCS, CTDEEP, CTDOAG, and FSA.

CT RC&D continues to help CT towns and cities, farms, local groups and partners realize their goals by providing support and sponsorship, including administrative support and fiscal management for those who do not have the capacity to pursue their own non-profit status, navigate bureaucratic paperwork, grant research, proposal writing and review, grant administration, and even sometimes, website design. Our Council members form partnerships with communities and organizations to foster water conservation, land conservation, water management, energy program, agriculture conservation, and rural resource based economic growth.

CT RC&D looks back on a proud history of successful projects and anticipates an evolving future of new partnerships and continued collaboration with our old partners. Program is directly related to the interest and dedication of the appointed council members as outline in the Annual Strategic Work Plan.



2016/2017 CTRC&D Project



CTRC&D Partner Organizations

- USDA - Rural Development
- USDA - Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS)
- USDA - Farm Service Agency (FSA)
- US Department of Energy
- US National Fish and Wildlife
- CT Dept. of Agriculture
- CT Dept. of Energy & Environmental Protection
- CT Dept. of Emergency Services & Public Protection
- CT Dept. of Public Health
- CT Dept. of Economic and Community Development
- CT NOFA
- CT Dept. of Transportation
- University of Connecticut (UConn)
- UConn Extension
- AGvocate Towns
- Center for Latino Progress
- Center of Eco-Technology
- City Seed
- Connecticut Association of Conservation & Inland Wetlands Commissions
- Connecticut Land Trust Collaborative (CLCC)
- Connecticut Conservation Districts
- CT Association of Councils of Governments
- CT Farm Bureau
- CT Farmland Trust
- CT Forest and Park Association
- CT Green Bank
- CT Nursery and Landscape Association (CNLA)
- Eight Mile River Wild and Scenic Watershed
- Energize CT
- Eversource
- Hartford Food Systems
- Institute for Sustainable Energy
- Last Green Valley
- NAACP (Middlesex County)
- Salmon River Watershed
- United Illuminating
- Working Lands Alliance

CTRC&D OFFICE INFORMATION

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Connecticut Resource Conservation & Development Area, Inc 2016-2017 Annual Strategic Work Plan



Council Membership - Representation

President: John Guskowski - Working Lands Alliance

Vice-President: John S. Weedon - Connecticut Farmland Trust

Treasurer: Barbara Kelly - North Central Conservation District

Secretary: Margot Burns - Lower CT River Valley Council of Governments

Lois Bruinooge - Last Green Valley, Inc.

Aaron Budris— Naugatuck Valley Council of Governments (Alternate)

Jim Costello — CT River Coastal Conservation District

Sal DeCarli — Town of Canterbury/Citizen Representative

Lynne Pike DiSanto — Capitol Region Council of Governments

Matt Fulda — CT Metro Council of Governments (Alternate)

Mark Goetz — CT Metro Council of Governments

Mary Ellen Kowalewski—Capitol Region Council of Governments (Alternate)

Mark Nielsen— Naugatuck Valley Council of Governments

Francis Pickering — Citizen member at large

Jim Sipperly - CT Forests & Parks Association

Judy Rondeau— Eastern CT Conservation District



GOAL 1: Encourage and Inform Better Land Use Decision Making

Objective 1.1: Provide Environmental & Conservation Planning Services

Strategy 1.1.1: Work with State and Federal partners on identifying key gaps in municipal, regional, state, federal, utility organizations and non-profit resources and work toward improved coordination between all partners.

Strategy 1.1.2: Cultivate opportunities to provide outreach and education to municipal and nonprofit groups on key issues, including Resilience & Sustainability, Storm Water Management, Soil Health, Land Acquisition & Stewardship, Energy, Watershed Health, and Green Infrastructure.

Strategy 1.1.3: Continue active participation in governmental, municipal, and nonprofit conservation organizations and coalitions.

Strategy 1.1.4: Engage cooperative land use partnerships and support best management practices for rural land conservation; supporting organizations such as the Connecticut Association of Conservation and Inland Wetland Commissions (CACIWC), the Eightmile River Wild and Scenic Watershed, the Salmon River Watershed Partnership, the Long Island Sound Watershed Regional Conservation Partnership Program, and the Last Green Valley .

Strategy 1.1.5: Seek out and support a cooperative venture with CACIWC and/or CTDEEP to provide support for technical and land use training for municipal commission members.

Strategy 1.1.6: Provide “pass through” support for partnering federal, state, regional and education agencies in effective use of their resources and projects, including but not limited to grant applications, personnel management, marketing, and education.

Objective 1.2: Conduct Environmental Review Studies and Offer Follow-up Support

Strategy 1.2.1: Coordinate multidisciplinary environmental study teams to review proposed conservation or development projects for municipalities and land trusts.

Strategy 1.2.2: Conduct outreach to partners and communities to determine ongoing needs, available expertise, and priority program focus areas.

Strategy 1.2.3: Develop options for financial sustainability of Environmental Review Program service provision.

Objective 1.3: Facilitate the Partnership between Land Use Education & Agriculture

Strategy 1.3.1: Increase partnership and facilitate opportunities to provide education and outreach for land use non regulatory best management practices for conservation, agriculture and municipal land use.



GOAL 2: Promote Sustainable Agricultural Productivity, Viability & a Healthy Food System

Objective 2.1: Continue & Expand the Connecticut Farm Energy Program.

Strategy 2.1.1: Continue to provide outreach, education, and grant-writing support to farmers and rural businesses seeking to reduce energy use and increase the use of renewable energy sources.

Strategy 2.1.2: Pursue diverse and stable funding mechanism for the Program.

Strategy 2.1.3: Seek programmatic and organizational support from key partners and stakeholders to ensure program growth and continuity for farm support for REAP grants.

Strategy 2.1.4: Continue to provide technical support to farms and rural small businesses in applying for USDA REAP grants.

Strategy 2.1.5: Continue to increase profile of Program through participation in State-wide and regional committees and conferences.

Strategy 2.1.6: Continue to participate, provide leadership, and seek opportunities to expand the New England Farm Energy Collaborative, membership in the Connecticut Energy Efficiency Board, including the joint Green Bank Committee, and the Commercial Industrial Committee.

Strategy 2.1.7: Continue to promote the Digester Initiative Project and begin work with Compost Heat Recovery, Geothermal and Fuel Cell Systems for renewable farm energy support, and cost efficiency for farmers.

Objective 2.2: Educate Local Officials and Farmers on Supporting the Economic and Cultural Viability of Local Agriculture in Connecticut

Strategy 2.2.1: Continue support to the AGvocate Program through Steering Committee coordination and email newsletters.

Strategy 2.2.2: Support outreach efforts of The Last Green Valley's Regional Conservation Partnership Program (RCPP).

Strategy 2.2.3: Seek grant funding for further AGvocate work.

Strategy 2.2.4: Continue to explore opportunities to fund and initiate the Farm StartUp Express Program by providing technical assistance through a farm “case worker” model.

Strategy 2.2.5: Initiate and promote outreach to minorities in agriculture, including cooperative ventures with other minorities support groups to help increase business development.

Strategy 2.2.6: Seek grant funding and facilitate the formation of a Statewide Farmers' Market Association in cooperation with partners and stakeholders.

Objective 2.3: Foster Understanding of Environmental and Agricultural Best Practices

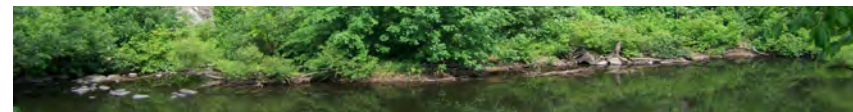
Strategy 2.3.1: Partner with USDA, NRCS, UConn, State Agencies and non-profits to deliver statewide Soil Health workshops and educational outreach.

Strategy 2.3.2: Seek opportunities to re-start and fund the Horse Environmental Awareness Program (HEAP).

Strategy 2.3.3: Seek funding opportunities for purchase, research, education, and outreach for no-till cover crop equipment.

Strategy 2.3.4: Participate as a partner in emergency support planning through Department of Emergency Services and Public Protection, DEMHS Region 2 Emergency Support Planning Team, and Emergency Support Function Committee #11 – Agriculture and Natural Resources.

Strategy 2.3.7: Support and partner with current and future Regional Agriculture Commissions in the development of best practices for land owners.



GOAL 3: Coordinate and Champion Statewide Conservation & Sustainable Economic Growth Initiatives

Objective 3.1: Facilitate Watershed-Based and Inter-Municipal Conservation Initiatives

Strategy 3.1.1: Provide organizational and fiscal support to Salmon River Watershed Partnership.

Strategy 3.1.2: Provide technical support and seek additional resources for statewide land trust conservation efforts, including but not limited to organizations such as the RiverCOG Land Trust Exchange, Long Island Sound Watershed Regional Conservation Partnership Program Initiative, and Connecticut Land Conservation Council. (CLCC)

Strategy 3.1.3: Seek ways to support and provide coordination and outreach services as part of the Long Island Sound Watershed Regional Conservation Partnership Program (RCPP) and Last Green Valley RCPP initiatives

Strategy 3.1.4: Maintain availability of GPS units for conservation mapping usage, and promote the integration of data into State and regional geospatial databases.

Strategy 3.1.5: Continued outreach to help support existing conservation and land use education organizations such as Friends of Connecticut State Parks, Connecticut Forest and Park Association, Trout Unlimited, Eightmile River Watershed, etc.

Strategy 3.1.6: Promote and work with CTOPM, Councils of Government, and the Connecticut GIS User to User Network within future funded programs to include datasets which enable consistency with standards and centralization of statewide GIS/Geospatial dataset.

Objective 3.2: Provide Educational and Technical Resources to Communities and Coalitions for Conservation and Economic Development Projects

Strategy 3.2.1: Partner with State and Federal Government agencies to provide outreach and educational coordination to grassroots organizations and communities about existing conservation and development initiatives and opportunities.

Strategy 3.2.2: Provide grant research, writing, and implementation assistance to grassroots organizations and communities to promote sustainable economic growth projects, business development, and project funding.

Strategy 3.2.3: Continue to promote and support the creation of Food Hubs in both rural and urban areas, as well as associated business development for agriculture producers.

Strategy 3.2.4: Seek out opportunities for climate change adaptation and resiliency for rural business, agriculture, and rural tourism based organizations and municipalities.

Strategy 3.2.5: Seek opportunities to partner & support conservation and development organizations with similar mission.



GOAL 4: Sustain and Grow an Active CTC&D Organization

Objective 4.1: Increase Commitment to Board Participation and Development

Strategy 4.1.1: Conduct outreach to current and targeted partnering organizations, including Councils of Government and Conservation Districts, to encourage full Board participation.

Strategy 4.1.2: Seek opportunities to cultivate new Board Member partnerships and organizational participation with RC&D programs.

Strategy 4.1.3: Seek opportunities to train Board Members in nonprofit management, financial oversight, and fiduciary responsibilities.

Strategy 4.1.4: Remain an active member and participant in New England and National Associations of RC&D Councils.

Strategy 4.1.5: Seek out opportunities for partnerships with neighboring state RC&Ds' for regional initiatives and funding opportunities.

Objective 4.2: Continue and Improve Organizational Management

Strategy 4.2.1: Maintain commitment to organizational transparency through use of website, email, and open meetings.

Strategy 4.2.2: Empower staff with more organizational and program management authority .

Strategy 4.2.3: Develop clear program and Council oversight and understanding of responsibility between Board and staff.

Strategy 4.2.4: Seek renewal of NARC&DC Circle of Diamonds membership status.