

Sustainable Funding Committee
Final Report to KACD Membership
November 25, 2014

RESOLUTION: SUSTAINABLE FUNDING FOR DISTRICT OPERATIONS

WHEREAS, Kansas conservation districts need sustainable funding for district operations to meet the responsibilities charged to them by the Kansas Conservation District Act; and

WHEREAS, projected state budgets show decreased funding for Kansas conservation districts' operations;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Kansas Association of Conservation Districts seek to develop a sub-committee/working group to revisit current and future funding mechanisms for conservation district operations, program funding for voluntary incentive-based efforts, and to outline/define the five greatest conservation priorities for the next 50 years and for this committee to report back at the 2014 KACD Convention to insure a long term funding source for Kansas conservation districts' operations.

Committee Report

The Sustainable Funding Committee of the Kansas Association of Conservation Districts met by teleconference early in the spring of 2014, then met as a body in April at the KACD meeting in Salina, Kansas, and finally at the KACD board meeting at Hutchinson, Kansas, in September.

The committee was charged with determining funding for district operations and conservation programs and listing five conservation priorities for the next 50 years in Kansas.

The committee addressed these issues in three parts:

- funding of conservation district operations
- funding of voluntary incentive-based conservation programs
- outline and define the five greatest conservation priorities for the next 50 years

The reason for this was that the committee may not find solutions for addressing one or more of these issues, but may have agreement on another.

The committee came up with eight items considered as important to conservation districts in Kansas:

1. Local Delivery
2. Water Quality
3. Sustainable Water Use in Kansas
4. Sediment and Erosion Control
5. Soil Health
6. Air Quality
7. Rangeland Health
8. Bottom Up (referring to the grass roots nature of conservation districts and its importance to support of conservation efforts in Kansas)

These eight items were combined to meet the directive of the original resolution dictating that five priorities be named. The five conservation priorities are these:

1. Local Delivery
2. Sediment and Erosion Control
3. Rangeland Health
4. Water Quality and Sustainable Water Use in Kansas
5. Soil Health

These five priorities are addressed in an attachment to this report.

No consensus was reached on funding of conservation district operations or conservation programs.

In lieu of no consensus on funding, Kansas conservation districts are urged to continue their efforts to secure funding for operations through existing sources.

There are resources available through the Kansas Association of Conservation Districts to assist its member districts in this effort.

They include:

“Field Office of the Future” Initiative

Go to: www.kacdnet.org

Under “Resources” on the “Home” page click: Field Office of the Future

This page lists concerns of Kansas conservation districts and ways to address these concerns. This document was put together based on Kansas conservation districts’ input during sessions at the 2012 KACD convention.

“Resource Planning” and “Report on 2012 Resource Planning Process”

Go to: www.kacdnet.org

Click “Resources” on the home page. Then click “Resource Planning”

This page lists the “Report on 2012 Resource Planning Process” as well as workbook, worksheets, and guides to resource planning.

“Conservation Information”

Go to: www.kacdnet.org

Click “Resources” on the home page. Then click “Conservation Information”

“Conservation in Kansas: An Overview” is a reformatted, letter-sized version of the booklet that was printed by KACD and provided to districts in January 2012.

“Supervisor Training”

Go to: www.kacdnet.org

Click “Resources” on the home page. Then click “Supervisor Training”

This page provides links to training modules for conservation district supervisors and staff through the Division of Conservation. There are also two additional training modules on this page, “Legislative Advocacy” and “Creating a Long-Range Resource Plan.”

“Legislative Issues”

Go to: www.kacdnet.org

Click “Resources” on the home page. Then click “Legislative Issues”

This page has links to a “Legislative Advocacy 101” crash course, how to find your legislator and “How a Bill Becomes Law.” There is also a printable brochure, “Kansas Conservation: Preserving a Historic Commitment.”

“KACD Strategic Plan”

Go to: www.kacdnet.org

Click “Resources” on the home page. Then click “KACD Strategic Plan”

This page links to the association’s “Operational Plan” and “Strategic Plan” with ways the association can assist its member districts in resource planning, education and advocacy.

“Links”

Go to: www.kacdnet.org

Click “Resources” on the home page. Then click “Links”

These are links to agencies, organizations and conservation districts that can assist districts.

“The Funding Source Inventory”

Go to: www.kacdnet.org

Click: Committees

Click: District Operations and Resolutions

Click: The Funding Source Inventory

“The Funding Source Inventory” is a compilation of resources available to Kansas Conservation Districts.

“Educating Funding Sources”

Go to: www.kacdnet.org

Click: Committees

Click: District Operations and Resolutions

Click: Educating Funding Sources

“Educating Funding Sources” is a general guide on ways to educate funding sources of conservation district needs.

Both the “Funding Source Inventory” and “Educating Funding Sources” were compiled based on input from KACD member districts and other sources.

Other sources for local conservation districts for action items are local strategic plans and individual county conservation district resource plans.