

2012 - 2017



# Strategic Plan

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## Trinity County Resource Conservation District

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# Introduction

Trinity County Resource Conservation District (RCD) has come a long way in its 55 years of existence and has accomplished a wide array of projects to assist landowners and land managers in this county.

The RCD was formed in 1956 under Division 9 of the State Resources Code. It is a non-regulatory special district self-governed by volunteer directors appointed by the County Board of Supervisors.

The RCD serves all of Trinity County, and receives funding from local, state, federal agencies and non-governmental organizations. The board of directors is guided by landowners and the community in their decisions and actions. Employees of the District carry out the day-to-day operations, guided by priorities and policies set by the board.



The purpose of the District is similar to that of the 3,000 conservation districts across the nation. Districts focus on land, water and related resource problems, develop programs to solve them, and enlist and coordinate help from public and private sources that can contribute to accomplishing the district's goals. Districts work to advance conservation education in the community, coordinating educational programs and

serving as a community-clearing house for information and services.

This document is an adaptable 5-year strategic plan for 2012-2017 that will assist in guiding Trinity County Resource Conservation District operations. This Plan defines our organization's goals and how it can best achieve its mission. The District has taken a look at its purpose, where we have been, where we are now, where we want to be in the future, and how to arrive at our destination.

In the process we have examined our strengths, weaknesses, and resource opportunities.

We felt it imperative that our resource conservation delivery system be strengthened to work with landowners and partners in our community, who help ensure the health of our watersheds, forests, and economy.

## Resource Areas

Resource Areas addressed in this 5-year Strategic Plan include Organization, Education/Outreach, Forest Health, Watersheds, Agriculture, Recreation, and a listing of Accomplishments for the period 2006-2011. Under each Resource Area we have established Goals, Objectives and Desired Outcomes.

This is a living document and the Board of Directors will guide and adapt the District's operations to meet emerging needs in Trinity County.

## Geography

Trinity County is 3,222 square miles located in the rugged terrain of the northwestern mountains of California. Elevation ranges from 600 to 9,025 feet. Several deep river canyons traverse the County and the resulting dissected relief has steep slopes. The mild climate has four distinct seasons, although none is extreme. The majority of the County is under some form of public ownership, including the Trinity Alps, Chancelulla and Yolla Bolly Wilderness areas, the Shasta-Trinity and Six Rivers National Forests, Bureau of Land Management, Bureau of Reclamation, and various state and county entities.

Land uses in the County have generally centered around natural resource development. Recreation, logging, mining, fisheries, and agriculture are the predominant uses. The communities are small and rural. Weaverville, the county seat, is the largest with 3,500 residents. As a result of the extent of public land ownership, relative inaccessibility, combined with a limited job market, Trinity County is only sparsely settled, with a population of less than 15,000 residents.

## Mission Statement

To assist people in protecting, managing, conserving and restoring the natural resources of Trinity County through information, education, technical assistance and project implementation.

## Vision Statement

*Trinity County Resource Conservation District envisions a balance between utilization and conservation of our natural resources. Through economic diversity and ecosystem management, our communities will achieve and sustain a quality environment and healthy economy.*



# Strategic Area: ORGANIZATION

## Goal

Identify and Obtain Adequate Funding to Support Delivery of Conservation Efforts.

Identify and Pursue Independent Funding.

Develop and Maintain Partnerships to Promote Delivery of District Programs and Services.

## Objectives

- Maintain grant funding from federal, state, and local sources.
- Provide fee-for-services work.
- Pursue funding from foundations and corporate and individual donations.
- Investigate a variety of tools for independent funding.
- Assist private landowners to secure funding to implement conservation projects.

## Desired Outcome

Maintenance and improvement of an effective organization capable of delivering services throughout the county.

Financial independence.

Enhanced relationships between the District and its partners.

## Goal

Develop Capital Program.

Develop Materials Acquisition and Replacement Program.

Acquire Improved Facilities.

## Objectives

- Develop sustainable and reliable sources of operational funding.
- Pursue funding and donations from foundations, agencies and corporations.

## Desired Outcome

Improved working conditions for all staff.

Provide necessary equipment to perform jobs.

Facilities that meet our operational needs.



## Goal

Implement the District Safety Program.

## Objectives

- Implement the District Injury and Illness Prevention Plan and Safety Manual.
- Maintain a steady flow of safety & health information and training.

## Desired Outcome

Higher productivity.

A safe working environment.

Prevent injuries and accidents.

Decreased Workers Compensation premiums.

## Goal

Develop and Maintain Skilled and Motivated Staff.

Encourage a motivated and involved Board of Directors.

## Objectives

- Provide training, professional development and educational opportunities for staff.
- Strengthen internal communication.
- Conduct regular assessments of District salary and benefits structure and make appropriate changes to maintain competitiveness.
- Conduct regular review of District policies.

## Desired Outcome

Enhanced staff skills and expertise.

Improved working conditions and communication for all staff.

Board Policies that support and sustain District programs.

# Strategic Area: EDUCATION/OUTREACH

## Goal

Increase the Community's Awareness of the District and it's Programs.

## Objectives

- Improve landowner awareness of resource issues through District newsletter, web site, informational brochures, press releases and participation in community forums.
- Sponsor forums and tours that address common resource concerns.
- Speak to community service organizations, and local government forums.
- Develop social networking capability.

## Desired Outcome

Enhanced role of District in the community.  
Increased awareness of District's ability to deliver technical assistance.

## Goal

Promote Conservation Legacy Program.

## Objective

- Schools and teachers to adopt restoration projects for student participation in implementation and monitoring.

Instill a life-long sense of

## Desired Outcome

resource stewardship.

Increase hands-on learning opportunities.

Provide career role-models for students.

## Goal

Facilitate Environmental Education.

## Objectives

- Participate with local schools by providing resource specialists and coordination with other educational youth programs.
- Incorporate curriculum to fully address resource management issues.
- Participate in local, state and national environmental education events.



## Desired Outcome

Increase awareness of resource issues and solutions.

Provide environmental education opportunities.

Nurture commitment to natural resources stewardship.

*Sixth grade students from Weaverville Elementary School in Hayfork Creek at Environmental Camp at Bar 717 Ranch, Hyampom*



## Strategic Area:

# NATIVE HABITAT RESTORATION

Goal	Objectives	Desired Outcome
<p>Restore disturbed areas located on private, state and federal lands using site-adapted vegetation.</p> <p>Promote countywide use of native plants.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Identify potential restoration sites by coordinating with private landowners and public agencies.</li> <li>Develop a plan for the propagation of native plants utilizing different vegetation types.</li> <li>Provide native plants for the District's restoration sites, as well as, provide vegetation to agencies and private landowners.</li> </ul>	<p>Increase revegetated land acreages of native species.</p> <p>Provide local, state, federal and private landowners with site-adapted plant stock.</p>
<p>Implement projects addressing Integrated Pest Management (IPM) for invasive weed control.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Identify funding for IPM projects with partners in the Trinity County Weed Management Cooperative.</li> </ul>	<p>Reduce populations of invasive weeds.</p>

## Strategic Area: FOREST HEALTH

Goal	Objectives	Desired Outcome
<p>Implement Trinity County Community Wildfire Protection Plan and Firewise Communities Program.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop and implement specific community wildfire protection plans with volunteer fire departments.</li> <li>Participate in Trinity County Fire Safe Council to coordinate management of fire safety/forest policy on public and private lands.</li> </ul>	<p>Improved forest health.</p> <p>Reduced risk of catastrophic fire by implementation of fuels reduction projects.</p> <p>Improved fire resiliency of communities.</p>
<p>Manage the operations of the Weaverville Community Forest.</p>	<p>Provide leadership for management of the Weaverville Community Forest.</p>	<p>Increased economic and recreational opportunities.</p> <p>Established model community forest.</p>
<p>Promote expansion of stewardship contracting to engage Forest Management.</p>	<p>Provide leadership in Trinity County for use of federal stewardship authorities for Forest Health.</p>	<p>More acres of Federal Forest lands actively managed.</p>
<p>Provide technical assistance to private landowners to improve forest health.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Utilize registered professional forester to assist private timber owners to develop long term timberlands management plans including PTEIR.</li> </ul>	<p>Enhanced wildland/urban interface awareness.</p>

# Strategic Area: **INFORMATION TECHNOLOGIES**

## Goal

Provide Geographic Information Systems (GIS) services to acquire, plan, implement, and document projects.

## Objectives

- Acquire, develop, and maintain a comprehensive GIS database to provide up-to-date resource related analytical data.
- Integration of up-to-date data, especially Global Positioning System (GPS) data, into the existing GIS to assist the resource inventory process, site prioritization, implementation of, and monitoring of projects.

## Desired Outcome

Uphold the District's reputation as a repository and source of current spatial data.

## Goal

Provide technical capability and product uniformity on projects requiring a graphic element or printed materials.

## Objectives

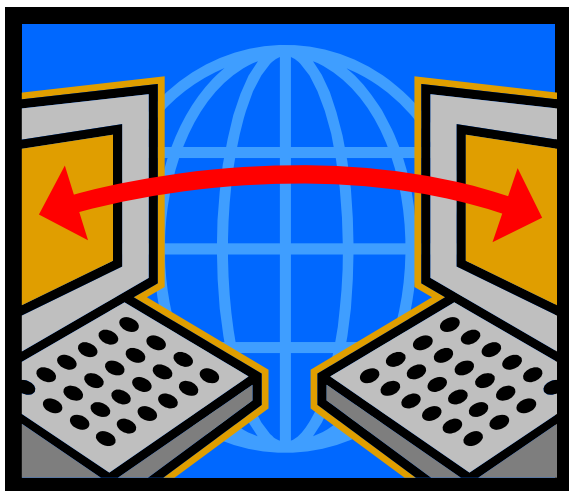
- Maintain and expand the District website.
- Assist in layout and design of newsletters and publications.
- Produce professional imagery for presentations and educational/informational displays.

## Desired Outcome

Provide skilled GIS, GPS, web-based, and computer graphics services.

Provide high quality graphic and printed materials.

Increased awareness of the District's ability to provide skilled GIS, web-based, and computer graphics services to its partners.



## Goal

Communicate and share data efficiently, both internally and with the District's external partners.

## Objectives

- Improve and maintain District computer and network systems.
- Develop social networking capabilities to reach larger and more diverse audiences.

## Desired Outcome

Improved capability, productivity, and quality in all efforts undertaken by the District.



# *Strategic Area:* **WATERSHEDS**

## **Goals**

Participate in the development and implementation of watershed plans and assessments.

Implement restoration projects to improve fisheries, wildlife habitat and conserve soil and water resources on private and public lands.

## **Objectives**

- Implement projects to address sediment TMDL goals.
- Conduct road inventories on private and public lands.
- Implement road upgrades and decommissioning on private and public lands.
- Participate in the implementation of the Five Counties Salmonid Conservation Program with Trinity County.
- Participate in, and support, the planning and implementation of the Trinity River Record of Decision.



Road decommissioning/culvert removal



During project

## **Desired Outcome**

Improve natural functions of watersheds.

Enhanced watershed health and improved wildlife and aquatic habitat.

Meet TMDL targets and have watersheds removed from CWA 303(d) list as impaired.



Project complete

# Strategic Area: **AGRICULTURE**

## Goal

Assist landowners to improve or sustain agricultural resources.

## Objectives

- Provide technical assistance to landowners to participate in state or federal cost-share programs.
- Participate with commodity groups, such as cattlemen's association, farm bureau, ag forum, etc.

## Desired Outcome

Increased agricultural productivity and with minimal detrimental environmental effects.

## Goal

Promote voluntary application of site-specific Best Management Practices.

## Objectives

- Provide technical assistance on the application of conservation practices on issues such as pasture vegetation, irrigation and livestock exclusionary fencing.
- Promote use of District's No-till Drill.
- Support Sustainable Agriculture and Eat Local challenge efforts.

## Desired Outcome

Improved water quality and soil conservation.

# Strategic Area: **RECREATION**

## Goal

Sponsor and support programs that create and enhance natural resource based recreation in Trinity County.

## Objectives

- Participate in the development of recreational trails and facilities countywide.
- Coordinate local trail committees.
- Review and update Weaverville Basin Trail master plan.
- Foster a strong working relationship with recreation staff of partner organizations to implement recreation projects countywide.

## Desired Outcome

Establish and maintain a network of trails for multiple uses.

Enhanced recreational trails and facilities.





# ACCOMPLISHMENTS 2006-2011

## Overview

The District met many of the goals established in the current S2006-2011 Strategic Plan, especially with regards to serving adequate funding to implement the key resource areas. This overview of accomplishments is underscored by a) the District's commitment to supporting the local economy and b) the District channeled substantial funds from the federal stimulus program into local employment and contractors.

## Watersheds

- Implemented significant road-related sediment reducing projects on public and private lands to assist landowners in meeting sediment TMDL targets:
  - Upgraded 72 miles of road on USFS lands, 11.5 miles on BLM lands, and 1.5 miles on private lands.
  - Implemented 63.2 miles of road decommission to reduce sediment on USFS land (involving removing all drainage structures from road prism) and 2.8 miles on BLM lands.

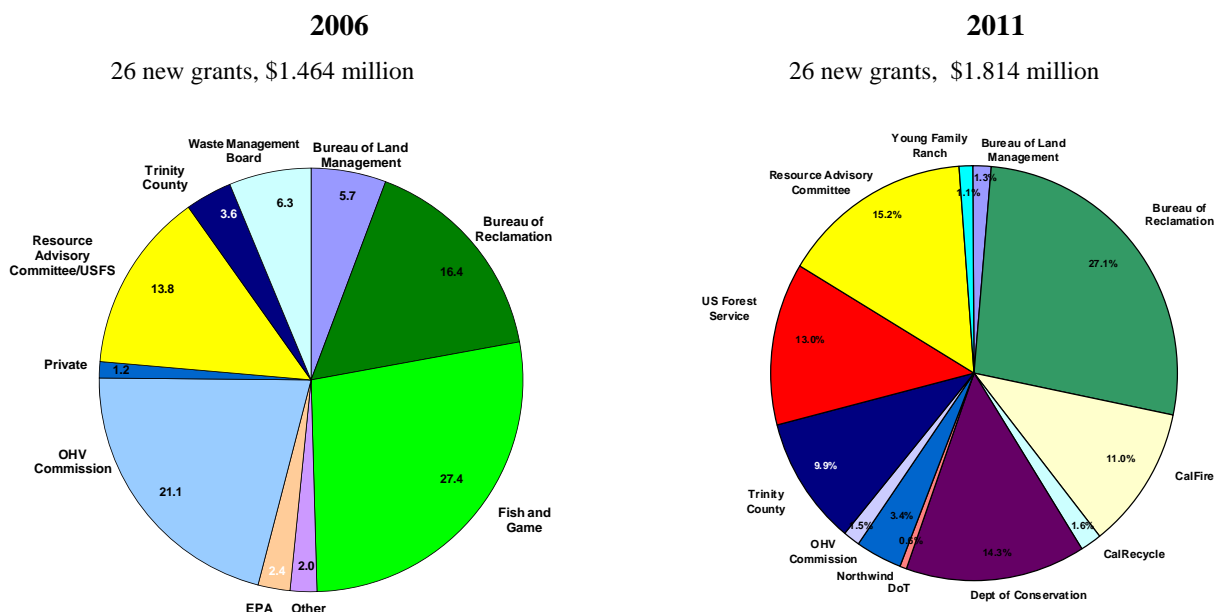
## Native Habitat Restoration

- Participated in the Trinity County Weed Management Cooperative and implemented invasive weed management projects. Treat 557 acres and 120 miles of noxious weed removal annually.
- Developed a native seed bank and continued operating a native plant nursery containing over 40 different species propagated from site-adapted seed. Assisted landowners in acquiring native plant materials.
- Worked with Trinity River Restoration Program to develop and implement the revegetation portion of their stream restoration projects. Promote and use locally harvested plant materials and adapt strategy annually to incorporate new techniques.

## Agriculture

- No-till Drill used by ranchers in Hayfork, Hyampom, Douglas City, and in Shasta County through UCCE.
- Facilitated cost share and EQIP projects with the Natural Resources Conservation Service.
- Participated in numerous workshops on BMPs and conservation technical assistance.
- Hosted several workshops with UC Cooperative Extension on Sustainable Agriculture.

## New Grants by Funder



District budget in FY 2006 was \$1.9 million and \$3.4 million in FY 2011

- Actively participated as a member of Federal Advisory Committees such as the Trinity Adaptive Management

# ACCOMPLISHMENTS 2006-2011 CONT....

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Working Group and the Trinity County Resource Advisory Committee.

## Organization

- Continued to diversify funding sources between 2006 and 2011.
- Partnered with SMART to provide job training skills to local young adults. A total of 17 people were trained.
- Began receiving donations of money and land into the TCRCD Conservation Fund.
- Over half of the District's budget is spent in Trinity County (nearly \$2 million in FY 2011). The number of employees hired by the District more than doubled from a staff of 15 in August 2006 to 35 by August 2011.

## Education and Outreach

- Sponsored workshops and tours addressing resource management issues.
- Developed curriculum for, and led, annual Environmental Education Camp for Weaverville Elementary since 1999 using local resource specialists.
- Hosted the annual Weaverville Summer Day Camp since 2005.
- Facilitated annual Trinity County Salmon Festival since its inception in 1999.
- Hosted annual Day at the Wetlands for environmental education for 4<sup>th</sup> grade students from Weaverville Elementary School. Adult volunteers and community support from NRCS, USFS and TRRP.
- Visited Trinity County Schools approximately 15 times per year for environmental education outreach.
- Quarterly newsletter, the *Conservation Almanac*, distributed to all residents of Trinity County.
- Began actively managing the Young Family Ranch in 2008 for the benefit of the community.
- AmeriCorps/WSP Individual Service Projects included: Weaver Creek Watershed Day, Weaver Basin Trail Restoration Day, Weaverville Community Forest Watershed Restoration, Weaverville Wetlands Weed Wallop, and Douglas City Campground Clean-up with over 250 volunteers participating in all combined events.

## Forest Health

- Facilitated the update to the Trinity County Community Wildfire Protection Plan for fuels reduction and forest health.
- Facilitated the active Trinity County Fire Safe Council from its inception in 1998.
- Implemented fuels reduction projects on public and private lands throughout the county, including defensible space, shaded fuel breaks and community chipping projects.
- Completed Fire Management Plans for the Down River Communities and began facilitating the PEIR for the state of California.
- Signed a 10-year stewardship agreement with US Forest Service for the Weaverville Community Forest to add 12,000 acres to the 984 acres of BLM lands.
- Three stewardship projects were implemented in the Weaverville Community Forest (two on BLM land and one on USFS land) with a total of 580 acres treated amounting to 2.22 million board feet.

## Information Technology

- Continued adding to and enhancing the District website including new Weaverville Community Forest and Trinity County Fire Safe Council web pages.
- Provided extensive GIS mapping services to Trinity County for plan development, transportation, redistricting, and ordinances.

## Recreation

- Expanded the Weaverville Basin Trail System with the development of new trails in several locations.
- Worked with BLM to enhance boat launch access locations and campground facilities.





**Weed Warrior**

***Trinity County Resource  
Conservation District***

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