

**Penn Soil RC&D
Resource Conservation and Development**

2007-2012

Area Plan

**Prepared by the Penn Soil RC&D Council
Acting for the following sponsors:
County Commissioners and Conservation Districts from
Clarion, Crawford, Erie, Forest, Lawrence, Mercer, Venango, and Warren Counties**

**Assisted by:
United States Department of Agriculture
And cooperating federal, state and local agencies**

**Prepared under the authority of the
Agriculture and Food Act of 1981 (Pub. L. 97-98)**

**United States Department of Agriculture Natural Resource Conservation Service
Harrisburg, Pennsylvania**

August, 2007

Table of Contents

Subject	Page Number
Introduction	1
Organizational Overview	1
Vision for the RC&D Area	1
Mission of the RC&D Council	1
Background and Council Structure	2
Overview of the Area	3
Population Demographics	3
Natural Resources	3
Agriculture	4
Socio-Economic Information	5
Resource Needs and Opportunities	6
Public Participation Activities in the Development of the plan	6
Summary of Findings by RC&D Program Elements	6
Land Conservation	6
Land Management	7
Water Management	8
Community Development	8
Goals, Objectives, and Strategies	9
Current and Potential Partnerships with USDA and Others	15
Linkages to the USDA NRCS Strategic Plan	15
Signature Page with Compliance Statements and Signatures	16
Appendix:	17

Introduction

This document is the long-range plan for Penn Soil Resource Conservation and Development (RC&D) Council Inc. It was developed by soliciting public input through a survey of stakeholders in the eight county area served by Penn Soil RC&D. In addition to the survey results, public comments and suggestions were solicited through our internet website, and local Council members were provided guidance on the development of this plan. This Area Plan serves the following northwestern Pennsylvania counties: Clarion, Crawford, Erie, Forest, Lawrence, Mercer, Venango, & Warren.

The purpose of this plan is to provide a strategic direction for the organization. The organization is stronger than ever before, yet more efforts are needed to ensure a strong sustainable organization that serves the communities in our area.

Congress passed the Food and Agricultural Act of 1962, which authorized Resource Conservation and Development areas. The purpose of the act was to expand opportunities for conservation districts, local units of governments, and individuals to improve their communities in multi-county areas. This included assistance in enhancing the economic, environmental and social well being of the RC&D Areas. Currently, the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service administers the Federal RC&D Program. This document serves as an agreement between NRCS and the Penn Soil Resource Conservation and Development Council Inc.

Organization Overview.

Vision – The vision of the organization.

Our Vision Statement, reviewed in 2007, is: **The Penn Soil Resource Conservation and Development Council will serve as a facilitator for sustaining the resources of our region.**

Mission – This is the mission statement for the organization.

The mission statement, revised in the fall of 2007 is: **The mission of this organization is to provide the local leadership necessary to develop and implement a plan that will improve the economy, environmental and social well-being of the people through accelerated planning and development of the natural resources in the project area consisting of Clarion, Crawford, Erie, Forest, Lawrence, Mercer, Venango and Warren Counties.**

Background and Structure of the Council.

The original sponsors of Penn Soil RC&D were the County Commissioners and Soil and Water Conservation Districts in Mercer, Crawford, and Venango Counties. In 1963, they asked for help from the U.S. Department of Agriculture to improve the economy through orderly development and conservation of resources through the Resource Conservation and Development Program (RC&D). After USDA approved this request in February 15, 1964, the Penn Soil Resource Conservation and Development Area was established. The RC&D Council was established to represent the sponsors and carry out an Area Plan of action. The original authorization included 3 counties-Mercer, Crawford and Venango in Northwestern Pennsylvania. In 1970, the boundaries were extended to include Erie County. Then, in 1975, 4 more counties, Warren, Forest, Clarion, and Lawrence were added so that the area became coterminous with the 8 county Northwest Uniform Region Nine.

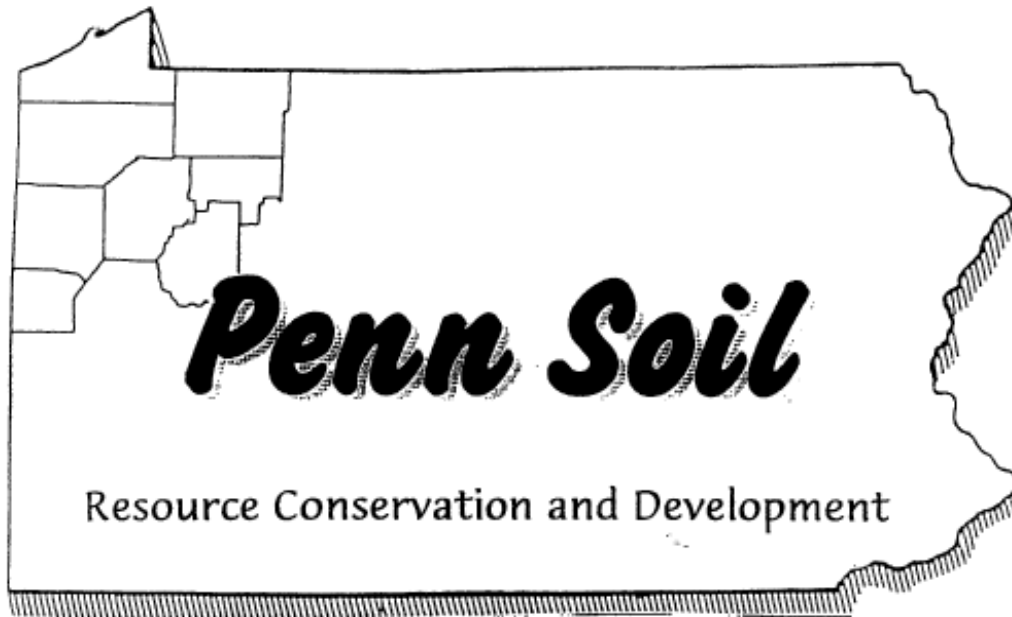
The sponsors of the Penn Soil RC&D recognized the opportunities available to not-for-profit organizations and filed for an official determination letter from the Internal Revenue Service (IRS). In April of 1988, The Penn Soil Conservancy Charitable Trust was incorporated in the State of PA as a Charitable Trust. The Penn Soil Conservancy Charitable Trust served as the primary financial agent for the Penn Soil RC&D Council for the period 1988 to 2003.

In September of 2003, Penn Soil RC&D Council filed separate Articles of Incorporation with the state of Pennsylvania and sought approval of its own status as a stand alone 501(c) (3) organization. In August of 2004, the IRS issued a letter of determination recognizing Penn Soil RC&D Council as a 501(c) (3) organization. Since that time, The Penn Soil RC&D Council has been the eligible 501(c) (3) applicant for new grants. The Penn Soil Conservancy Charitable Trust is expected to continue to serve the Penn Soil RC&D Council until all existing grant contracts are concluded, at which point it may be dissolved or evolve to some other purpose.

The governing body of Penn Soil RC&D is the voting membership consisting of four voting members from each of the eight member counties. Each year the members elect a four member Executive Board to carry on the day to day operations of the Council. Penn Soil RC&D provides an open forum for individuals, agencies, organizations, and students to participate in RC&D planning process and all activities.

Overview of the Area.

The Penn Soil RC&D Area is located in northwest Pennsylvania and includes eight Counties. The area is bordered on the west by the state of Ohio and Lake Erie and New York State on the North.



Population Demographics

Racial & Ethnic Composition

Race/Ethnic Origin	2003 Population	% Distribution	2009 Population	% Distribution
American Indian	1,122	0.15	1105	0.15
Asian	3,326	0.45	3,469	.48
Black	29,528	3.97	30,735	4.22
Hispanic	8,676	1.17	9,373	1.29
Multirace	6,951	0.94	6,863	.94
Pacific Islander	141	0.02	0	0
White	690,097	92.88	673,246	92.49
Other	3119	0.42	3,109	.43

Source & Date: DemographicsNow.com 01/2005

Natural Resources

The Penn Soil RC&D area includes the eight counties of Clarion, Crawford, Erie, Forest, Lawrence, Mercer, Venango and Warren -- an area of 3,536,640 acres or approximately 5,526 square miles. The area has an abundant network of creeks, rivers, natural lakes, and manmade

reservoirs. These bodies of surface water not only provide a readily available source of water for domestic and industrial use, but also add a special dimension to the scenery and recreational potential.

The region has an abundance of natural resources which have contributed greatly to the regional growth and prosperity. Some, such as coal and oil, are nonrenewable. A large portion of the area's land and water resources has a primary or a secondary use for recreational activities. A wide variety of wildlife abounds – bear, deer, turkey, geese, ducks, grouse, pheasants, woodcock, squirrel, rabbits, and woodchucks. Migratory waterfowl including wood ducks are the most abundant species present. The area is heavily forested providing a large base for forest industries as well as recreational activities, and wildlife habitat. Approximately one half of the Allegheny National Forest is within the Penn Soil RC&D Area.

Agriculture

The area is still relatively strong in agricultural crop and livestock production:

County	Total # of Farms	Total Acreage of Land	Total Annual Value Livestock Sales	Total Annual Value of Crop Sales
Clarion	591	108,860	12,745,000	4,892,000
Crawford	1,416	221,774	45,656,000	12,436,000
Erie	1,283	166,130	22,397,000	41,994,000
Forest	59	5,679	447,000	219,000
Lawrence	703	86,987	16,872,000	5,489,000
Mercer	1,239	164,306	29,675,000	13,972,000
Venango	473	64,528	5,201,000	2,586,000
Warren	499	78,088	13,010,000	2,133,000
Area Totals	6,263	896,352	146,003,000	83,721,000

Principal Farm Operator Characteristics

Male	Female	White	Black	Hispanic	Native Am.	Haw/Asian
531	60	804	0	13	0	0
1278	138	2,078	3	15	3	0
1139	144	1,878	1	10	4	0
46	13	87	0	0	0	0
639	64	1,023	3	9	0	6
1122	117	1,844	0	12	0	1
435	38	687	0	7	1	1
438	61	748	0	0	0	0
5,628	635	9,149	7	66	8	8

Data Source: NASS 2002 Census of Agriculture

Socioeconomic Information.

Industry Sectors

Industry Sectors	Total Establishments (2004)	Total Employees (2004)
Agriculture/Forestry/Fishing (NAICS 11)	156	1239
Mining (NAICS 21)	117	942
Utilities (NAICS 22)	86	1540
Construction (NAICS 23)	1691	10783
Manufacturing (NAICS 31-33)	1543	56671
Wholesale (NAICS 42)	894	7915
Retail (NAICS 44-45)	2774	39678
Transportation & Warehousing (NAICS 48-49)	643	8475
Information (NAICS 51)	271	5021
Finance, Insurance & Real Estate (NAICS 52-53)	1348	12920
Business & Professional Services (NAICS 54-56)	1775	18795
Education & Health Care Services (NAICS 61-62)	2242	70873
All Other Services (NAICS 71, 72, 81)	3990	38874
Government (NAICS 92)	471	11674

Source & Date: Penn State University-08/04

Income

Household Income Distribution	2004	% Distribution	2009	% Distribution
Under \$35,000	135,893	47.08	127,245	43.18
\$35,001 - \$50,000	51,459	17.83	46,805	15.87
\$50,001 - \$75,000	55,544	19.24	58,608	19.89
Over \$75,000	45,744	15.85	62,052	21.06

Source & Date: DemographicsNow.com 12/2004

Age Distribution

Age Group	2004	% Distribution	2009 (Projection)	% Distribution
Under 18 years old	186,855	25.7	172,138	23.96
18 - 24 years old	53,157	7.31	52,399	7.29
25 - 34 years old	84,925	11.68	94,451	13.15
35 - 54 years old	206,139	28.36	191,846	26.70
55 - 74 years old	134,366	18.48	148,372	20.64
75 years and older	61,596	8.47	59,321	8.26
Median Age	40.5			

Source & Date: DemographicsNow.com 1/2005

Resource Needs and Opportunities

Public Participation Activities.

Penn Soil RC&D conducted a multifaceted solicitation of public input to identify resource needs and opportunities for consideration in revising this area plan. The Council sent letters to each of the local sponsors advising them that the Council was undertaking the revision of the Area Plan and seeking input from the sponsors. In addition, notices of a public meeting to solicit public input were sent out to a mailing list of seventy two partners providing details on upcoming opportunities to contribute ideas on needs and opportunities. In addition to three RC&D meetings held in Venango, Crawford, and Lawrence Counties where discussion of the area plan was a major part of the meeting, a separate public meeting was held in February in Venango County to solicit public input on resource needs and opportunities for improvements. The group attending the public meeting and went through a group brainstorming activity to suggest resource needs and opportunities for improving resource conditions. All needs and opportunities were collected and summarized for review at the Council's May meeting where the first draft of the Area Plan was presented for discussion. The draft plan was placed on the Penn Soil RC&D internet website in May which offered an easy way to review and comment on the draft plan through the end of July, 2007. A review of the draft plan occurred at the Council's August 2007 meeting. The plan was submitted and approved by the PA NRCS State Conservationist in August and forwarded to the NRCS National office for approval. The plan was returned to the Council by the NRCS national office for additional work on the Goals and Objectives in order to align the Penn Soil RC&D goals and objectives with the new SMART (Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Results oriented, & Timely) goal format criteria. The plan was reviewed, discussed, & modified at subsequent Penn Soil RC&D Council meeting in November, 2007, and February, 2008. The revised Area Plan was posted on the Penn Soil RC&D Website www.pennsoilrcd.org offering the public additional time to review and provide comments until April 11, 2008. Two additional suggestions for input were incorporated into the draft plan, and the plan was signed by the officers on April 16th, 2008 for resubmission to the state and national office for approval.

Summary of Findings by RC&D Program Elements.

A raw summary of the issues and opportunities identified by stakeholders is presented here:

LAND CONSERVATION ELEMENT

Control erosion & sediment

- Reduce erosion & sedimentation from cropland
- Reduce erosion & sedimentation from urban land
- Reduce erosion & sedimentation from pastureland
- Reduce erosion & sedimentation from forestland
- Reduce stream bank erosion
- Install Best Management practices
- Focus conservation efforts to address issues of critical concern, ie streambank improvements, wetlands, greenways
- Preserve key historic sites, locations, project sites

- Restore abandoned mine land
- Promote open space for kids & recreation
- Repair sites damaged by ATV travel; trespassers causing damage could be apprehended and forced to provide community service

LAND MANAGEMENT ELEMENT

Bio fuels

- Provide education to consumers & elected officials
- Create demand for the fuels
- Create economic opportunities for producers
- Create demand for waste by products
- Promote carbon sequestration through reforestation & natural regeneration

Sustainability of Forest Resources

- Lack of sustainable harvest practices on private lands
- Provide educational opportunities for private landowners
- Partner with DCNR, PSU, PSATS, Woodland Owners associations, PFB, Forestry Education Center, HRCDA, Woodcock Creek Nature Center, Mayberry & West Park, Two Mile Run, McKeever Center, Munnell Run Farm, Headwaters Park
- Maintain Sustainable saw timber industry
- Encourage stewardship & adoption of conservation practices in timber management, resource extraction, oil & gas development, & transportation
- Reduce transformation of forest land to other uses
- Utilization of trees in common areas

Revitalization of community & recreational needs

Recycling, Reuse & disposal of tires

Sewage issues

- Education of municipalities & landowners
- Find options for treatment of sewage other than centralized treatment systems
- Find resources to handle sludge from septic tanks

Sustainable Agriculture

- Provide education to consumers, landowners, & elected officials about farmland preservation
- Promote value added agriculture & local products
- Assist in the distribution of locally produced products to farm markets, wholesale markets, distribution centers
- Assist in the development of Marketing Cooperatives
- Assist in the development of value added incubator facilities
- Assist local producers by developing additional resources for agricultural infrastructure; ie farmstead creameries, grain dryers, processing centers

- Identify resources to help those administering Ag Security Areas
- Provide educational opportunities to landowners & members of Ag Security Areas
- Continue to promote pasture management & support Project Grass
- Find additional resources to help producers adopt best management practices & expand utilization of pasture resources on farms
- Provide educational opportunities & resources for whole farm management
- Foster better communication of agencies dealing with producers & the community
- Increase educational opportunities & interaction between farmers & consumers

WATER MANAGEMENT ELEMENT

Reduce degradation of our water resources

- Promote regionalization of water & sewer systems across municipal boundaries
- Address the lack of engineering to assist with urban & rural water quality improvement projects
- Target assistance to dewatered dams in facilitating input from adjacent landowners that will be used in land use planning
- Stormwater management education
- Identify resources for inter-agency, inter-county, inter-municipality regional planning or watershed based planning
- Promote adoption of BMP's
- Provide educational opportunities to the public
- Educate landowners, elected officials, & timber industry about the effects & impact of timber harvest on stormwater management, water quality, & water quantity
- Promote education & use of Dirt & Gravel Roads Program
- Develop additional resources for Dirt & Gravel Road Program
- Reduce & remediate impacts of acid mine drainage

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT ELEMENT

Promote the family farm as an important segment of the local community

- Create partnerships for recycling newspapers into animal bedding

Work with townships, boroughs, to facilitate improved recreational opportunities

- Provide resources for development & improvement of picnic areas, beaches, trails, etc.

Promote recycling & education

Continue to assist local sponsors find resources to help carry out projects

- Provide support to local sponsors via Grantstation Database
- Conduct grantwriting seminars
- Assist local sponsors develop grant proposals
- Provide grant administration services

Promote work force training & skills development

- Utilize PCCC, Americorps, Workforce Investment Board to provide assistance on projects

Develop partnerships & resources to assist in community beautification

Assist in Tourism & economic development projects which improve the local economy

Goals, Objectives, and Strategies.

Goals: Goals are overarching end statements that, when attained collectively, will result in the achievement of the vision for the planning period. Goals are larger than objectives.

Objectives: Objectives are specific, measurable achievements that when obtained result in the accomplishment of a goal. Or in other words, objectives are the increments that take the RC&D partnership to the goals.

Strategies: Strategies are the kinds of activities and individual projects that the RC&D Council envisions pursuing in order to accomplish objectives.

Area Plan Element: Land Conservation

Goal 1. Control or reduce erosion & sedimentation on 5000 acres of land within the Penn Soil RC&D Area by 2012.

Objectives:

1. Reduce erosion & sedimentation from 3500 acres of cropland by 2012.
2. Reduce erosion & sedimentation from 1000 acres of pasture land by 2012.
3. Reduce erosion & sedimentation from 500 acres of forestland by 2012.
4. Reduce erosion & sedimentation from two miles of stream bank by 2012.

Strategies:

1. Promote adoption of best management practices on the land by holding four educational workshops for producers annually.
2. Provide education to stakeholders by creating a regular published newsletter by 2010.
3. Identify and seek technical and financial resources to carry out ten Best Management Practice (BMP) adoption projects by 2012.

4. Partner with cooperating agencies & organizations to host the annual Tri-State Tillage Conference to promote conservation tillage to 1000 agricultural producers by 2012.

Area Plan Element: Land Management

Goal 2: Promote Sustainable Forest Land Management on 5000 acres of private land within the Penn Soil RC&D Area by 2012.

Objectives:

1. Increase the adoption of sustainable timber harvest practices on 5000 acres of private land within the Penn Soil RC&D Area by 2012.
2. Promote utilization of trees in common areas by including tree planting as a component of three new RC&D projects by 2012.
3. Facilitate carbon sequestration through 1000 acres of tree planting within the Penn Soil RC&D Area by 2012.
4. Develop at least one new marketing opportunity for low value wood within the Penn Soil RC&D Area by 2012.

Strategies:

1. Provide three educational opportunities for private landowners, timber industry, and elected officials within the Penn Soil RC&D Area by 2012.
2. Partner with other agencies, organizations, Conservation Districts, and educational institutions to hold ten educational workshops for school students by 2012.
3. Identify and seek technical and financial resources to carry out five forestry educational projects by 2012.
4. Promote adoption of best management practices by working with three local sponsors to establish sustainable forest management demonstration areas.

Goal 3: Promote adoption of Sustainable Agriculture in a minimum of three targeted watersheds by 2012.

Objectives:

1. Assist 50 agricultural producers to adopt best management practices on Agricultural land within the Penn Soil Area by 2012.
2. Assist with the preservation of 500 acres of prime farmland within the Penn Soil Area by 2012.
3. Save or create 25 agricultural jobs within the Penn Soil RC&D Area by 2012.

Strategies:

1. Provide education to consumers, landowners, agricultural producers, & elected officials by co-sponsoring ten educational workshops by 2012.
2. Promote value added agriculture & local products by holding five cheese making classes by 2012.

3. Assist with development or improvement of communications & relationships between producers & consumers by working to establish three new farmers markets within the Penn Soil RC&D Area by 2012.
4. Provide administrative and technical support for the activities of Northwest Chapter of Project Grass & GLCI to co-sponsor at least five educational field days by 2012.
5. Identify and seek technical and financial resources to implement five value added agricultural projects with individual producers by 2012.
6. Create value added processing and marketing infrastructure by creating one shared kitchen incubator facility within the Penn Soil RC&D Area by 2012.
7. Provide scholarships to a minimum of 25 producers or agricultural entrepreneurs to help them further their education on value added agriculture by 2012.

Goal 4: Promote improvements & solutions for resolving sewage management issues for two targeted watersheds within the Penn Soil RC&D Area by 2012.

Objectives:

1. Facilitate the utilization of new technology to treat wastewater & sewage in at least two different watersheds within the Penn Soil RC&D Area by 2012.
2. Promote adoption of best management practices for on-lot sewage systems by 200 landowners within the Penn Soil RC&D Area by 2012.

Strategies:

1. Provide education to landowners and municipal officials by co-sponsoring three educational meetings within the Penn Soil RC&D Area by 2012.
2. Identify and seek technical and financial resources to carry out a minimum of two educational demonstration projects within the Penn Soil RC&D Area.
3. Work cooperatively with other stakeholders to implement one new research and demonstration project to treat grey water from Amish farms within the Penn Soil RC&D Area by 2010.

Goal 5: Increase recycling, reuse, & proper disposal of tires on 500 farms within the Penn Soil RC&D Area by 2012.

Objectives:

1. Improve the environment and reduce health hazards by facilitating proper disposal or recycling of 5000 tires from agricultural operations within the Penn Soil RC&D Area by 2012.

Strategies:

1. Provide education to landowners and municipal officials by hosting a minimum of two educational workshops within the Penn Soil RC&D Area by 2012.
2. Identify and seek technical and financial resources to carry out tire recycling projects in four counties within the Penn Soil RC&D Area by 2012.

Goal 6: Work cooperatively with other stakeholders to implement research and demonstration projects and/or in creating production facilities to produce alternative energy equivalent to 1000 barrels of oil by 2012.

Objectives:

1. Increase the acreage devoted to energy crops by 500 acres within the Penn Soil RC&D Area by 2012.
2. Increase the use of waste by-products as fuel by matching up two waste production sources with processors who can convert the waste to fuel or become end users of the fuel produced from waste by 2012.
3. Create or retain 25 jobs for agricultural producers by stimulating a demand for biomass within the Penn Soil RC&D area by 2012.

Strategies:

1. Co-sponsor a minimum of five educational Bio-fuels workshops to provide education to landowners and elected officials by 2012.
2. Identify and seek technical and financial resources to carry out two Bio-Mass or Bio-fuels projects.
3. Increase the use of bio-fuels by 25,000 gallons by 2012 to reduce our dependence on fossil fuels.

Area Plan Element: Water Management

Goal 7: Reduce degradation of our water resources in at least three targeted watersheds by 2012.

Objectives:

1. Reduce & remediate impacts of acid mine drainage by developing two passive treatment system projects within Penn Soil RC&D Area by 2012.
2. Reduce erosion & sediment pollution to surface water caused by land disturbance on 5000 acres of land within the Penn Soil RC&D by 2012.
3. Reduce impact of non-point source pollution from agricultural operations to receiving waters by implementing Best Management Practices on a minimum of 150 farms within Penn Soil RC&D Area by 2012.
4. Protect groundwater and surface water from pollution by developing projects to plug 5 abandoned oil & gas wells within the Penn Soil RC&D Area by 2012.

Strategies:

1. Provide education to landowners and municipal officials by co-sponsoring a minimum of three educational meetings within Penn Soil RC&D Area by 2012.
2. Promote regionalization of water and sewer systems across municipal boundaries by assisting one new group develop a multi-municipality shared infrastructure system by 2012.
3. Provide technical assistance and/or financial assistance to develop five water quality improvement projects within the Penn Soil RC&D Area by 2012.

4. Promote adoption of best management practices on 150 farms within the Penn Soil RC&D Area by 2012.

Area Plan Element: Community Development

Goal 8: Improve local and regional economies of the eight member counties of Penn Soil RC&D by 2012.

Objectives:

1. Develop projects which create or retain 100 jobs in our communities by 2012.
2. Promote the family farm as an important segment of the local community by creating or retaining 25 agricultural jobs by 2012.
3. Promote Tourism as an important segment of the local community by creating at least two new tourist destinations or recreation assets within the Penn Soil RC&D Area by 2012.
4. Assist in the creation of five new businesses within the Penn Soil RC&D Area by 2012.

Strategies:

1. Partner with other stakeholders to develop five economic development projects which benefit the local or regional economy by 2012.
2. Promote workforce training and skills development by developing one shared kitchen incubator facility to assist entrepreneurs starting businesses by 2012.
3. Utilize PCCC, Americorps, and/or Workforce Investment Board to provide assistance on two projects within the Penn Soil RC&D Area by 2012.

Goal 9: Improve or Develop community facilities in fifteen selected municipalities by 2012.

Objectives:

1. Facilitate five improved recreational opportunities and facilities projects within the Penn Soil Area by 2012.
2. Assist in two community beautification projects within the Penn Soil RC&D Area by 2012.
3. Improve capability of rural volunteer fire departments to serve and protect their communities by installing 25 new dry fire hydrants within the Penn Soil RC&D Area by 2012.

Strategies:

1. Provide technical assistance and/or financial assistance to develop 25 new community improvement projects within the Penn Soil RC&D Area by 2012.
2. Partner with other stakeholders to develop or improve three community facilities within the Penn Soil RC&D Area by 2012.
3. Provide grant administration services to five concerned citizens groups within the Penn Soil RC&D Area by 2012.

4. Maintain an annual dry hydrant assistance program throughout the RC&D Area by working cooperatively with the Central Electric, Warren Electric, and Northwest Rural Electric Cooperatives.

Goal 10: Encourage historic preservation as a means of protecting our cultural heritage.

Objective:

1. Preserve two key historic sites in the communities of Penn Soil RC&D by 2012.

Strategies:

1. Provide technical assistance and/or financial assistance to develop two historic preservation projects within the Penn Soil RC&D Area by 2012.
2. Partner with other stakeholders to preserve two historic community facilities by 2012.
3. Provide grant administration services to assist two stakeholder groups undertake community historic preservation projects by 2012.

Goal 11: Develop Penn Soil RC&D into a sustainable not for profit organization to serve as the catalyst for community improvement throughout the RC&D area.

Objectives:

1. Develop Penn Soil Resources to provide sustainable funding source(s) that will ensure the future success of this organization by 2012.
2. Conduct an Outreach program reaching 10,000 participants within the Penn Soil RC&D Area to create public awareness and broaden participation in RC&D activities across the Area by 2012.
3. Provide grant administration services to a minimum of ten community action groups seeking to develop community improvement projects within the Penn Soil RC&D Area by 2012.

Strategies:

1. Create an endowment fund to begin building a sustainable base of funding to support the RC&D into the future by 2008.
2. Maintain an active internet website to communicate with the public, RC&D staff, sponsors, and council members by providing regular monthly updates at a minimum to keep the website current.
3. Identify, investigate, and pursue five new ideas for service income to the RC&D Council by 2010.
4. Create and publish a quarterly RC&D newsletter by 2012 to promote RC&D Awareness within the Penn Soil RC&D Area.

Current and Potential Partnerships with USDA and Others.

Penn Soil RC&D could not accomplish its goals and objectives without the many partnerships with other agencies and organizations including USDA agencies such as the Natural Resources Conservation Service, Farm Service Agency, Forest Service, Rural Development, Agriculture Research Service, Cooperative Research and Extension Service, and Agriculture Marketing Service. Other Federal agencies, such as the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, U.S. Geologic Survey, USDI Office of Surface Mining, U.S. Small Business Administration, and U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development may also be considered partners in various projects. State and local government agencies such as The PA Department of Environmental Protection, Department of Conservation & Natural Resources, PA Department of Agriculture, PA Fish and Boat Commission, PA Game Commission, PA Department of Transportation, , and nongovernmental organizations, such as PA Project Grass, Pennsylvania Association of Sustainable Agriculture, The Northwest Commission , and a variety of other non-profit groups are also Penn Soil RC&D partners.

Linkages to the NRCS Strategic Plan.

The eleven goals established in this new Area Plan will assist the NRCS in reaching the objectives stated in the NRCS Strategic Plan. The strategies Penn Soil RC&D will employ in reaching our objectives will provide benefits and improvements to soil quality, water quality, water management, grassland & forest ecosystems, fish & wildlife habitat, wetlands, air quality, energy conservation, renewable energy, connected landscapes, and community development. The strategies Penn Soil RC&D will employ in reaching our goals and objectives directly support the NRCS strategies of cooperative conservation, watershed based approach, and market based approach.

Signature Page

“The Penn Soil RC&D Council agrees that the RC&D Program will be in compliance with the non-discrimination provisions as contained in Title VI and VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 as amended, the Civil Rights Restoration Act of 1987 (Public Law (100-259) and other nondiscrimination statutes; namely, Section 504, of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, the Age of Discrimination Act of 1975 and in accordance with the regulations of the Secretary of Agriculture (7CFR-15, Subparts A and B) that provide that no person in the United States shall, on the ground of race, color, national origin, age, sex, religion, marital status, or handicap/disability be excluded from participation in, or be denied the benefits of, or be otherwise subjected to discrimination under any program or activity receiving Federal financial (or technical) assistance from the U.S. Department of Agriculture or any agency there of”.

The Penn Soil RC&D Council agrees that the signing of this document constitutes agreement to comply with the Federal laws concerning restrictions on lobbying, a drug-free work place, and responsibilities for nonprocurement, suspicion, and debarment, and state review.

The Penn Soil RC&D Council hereby adopts this RC&D Area Plan and agrees to use effectively the assistance provided by the U.S. Department of Agriculture to realize the goals and objectives outlined herein.

Penn Soil RC&D Council, Pennsylvania

By: _____
Chair

Date: _____

Attest: _____
Council Secretary

This action authorized at an official meeting of the Penn Soil RC&D Council on _____

U.S. Department of Agriculture- Natural Resources Conservation Service

The State hereby acknowledges the attached Area Plan of Penn Soil RC&D Council as meeting the requirements under Public Law 107-171, Section 1530 to receive assistance from USDA.

Acknowledged by: _____
State Conservationist

Date: _____

Appendix

Penn Soil RC&D Area MAP

