



Union County Soil and Water Conservation District

**LONG RANGE PLAN
2013 – 2023**

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I. INTRODUCTION

The Soil and Water Conservation Law, Chapter 582 of the Florida statutes, established Soil and Water Conservation Districts as a subdivision of state government in 1937.

It is the mission of the Union County Soil and Water Conservation District (UCSWCD) to promote natural resources conservation, technology, and education to local residents and promote the best land use and management practices that will conserve, improve, and sustain the natural environment of Union County.

The UCSWCD is composed of five locally elected supervisors who hold office for four-year terms.

Our District Board meets monthly, on the fourth Tuesday of each month at the IFAS (Institute of Food and Agricultural Services) Extension office in Lake Butler, Florida. The public is invited to all meetings; announcements are published in the Florida Administrative Weekly and Union County Times.

II. NATURAL RESOURCES MANAGEMENT

Objective #1: Protect natural resources in the district by promoting sensible development and management of those resources.

Strategies:

1. Identify resource concerns within the district.
2. Implement a conservation education program.
3. Secure technical and financial assistance through the conservation partnership to address identified resource concerns.
4. Assist with the development programs with Union County that address natural resource concerns, through sustainability (i.e. water conservation, recycling, composting, etc.) and conservation easements.
5. Assist with the development of the Union County Comprehensive Plan. Check Comprehensive Plan for conflicts.
6. Monitor property rights issues and develop and promote a position appropriate to UCSWCD.

Objective #2: Position the UCSWCD as a means to monitor both point and non-point source releases to the environment within Union County.

Strategies:

1. Take a lead role in a TMDL (Total Maximum Daily Load) program in Union County, verifying and identifying point and non-point source pollution issues within Union County and promoting further understanding of the TMDL program.
2. Identify sites and personnel to demonstrate point and non-point source BMPs (Best Management Practices).
3. Seek supporting funds and increase participation in non-point source projects.

III. CONSERVATION EDUCATION

Objective #1: Maintain and improve conservation and environmental education programs.

Strategies:

1. Increase community involvement in volunteer organizations (i.e. 4-H and FFA) and contests in Union County (Land Judging, Public Speaking and Best Poster).
2. Coordinate and/or participate in Tri-County Envirothon.
3. Coordinate BMP implementation workshops.
4. Recognize stewards of the land and resources through the Conservation Farmer of the Year Award.

Objective #2: Develop and implement new educational programs.

Strategies:

1. Establish and award an annual scholarship to a Union County student.
2. Recognize excellence in environmental education programs through the Conservation Educator of the Year Award.

IV. ADMINISTRATION

Objective #1: Prioritize and schedule UCSWCD activities.

Strategies:

1. Develop and maintain a list of stakeholders. Develop and implement an Annual Plan of Operation in accordance with the Long Range Plan each fiscal year.
2. Prepare and distribute an annual report at the end of each fiscal year.
3. Review and update the Long Range Plan a minimum of every five years or as needed.

Objective#2: Maintain appropriate staffing and equipment to meet the UCSWCD goals.

Strategies:

1. Recruit and retain well-trained, motivated, qualified, and compensated staff.
2. Recruit and retain well-trained, motivated, and qualified volunteers.
3. Maintain state-of-the-art automation equipment and support, administrative and field equipment and supplies, and training in order for staff to produce quality products for the citizens of Union County.
4. Participate in annual training that facilitates the mission of the UCSWCB.

V FUNDING AND FINANCE

Objective: Ensure the continued existence of UCSWCD and expansion of its programs to meet future needs.

Strategies:

1. Develop and monitor an annual budget to accomplish the UCSWCD Annual Plan of Operation.
2. Ensure continued funding from Union County as well as other stakeholders.
3. Develop and implement a marketing plan as required.
4. Increase UCSWCD program funding from grants and other governmental sources.
5. Establish an environmental education fund as funding allows.

VI. PUBLIC RELATIONS AND OUTREACH

Objective #1: Promote all UCSWCD programs and services.

Strategies:

1. Design and implement a means for the public to contact the UCSWCD electronically (i.e. internet, ftp sites, etc.). Prepare articles and press releases before and after all major projects and distribute to local media.
2. Distribute copies of the Long Range Plan and Annual Report for review by cooperators, agency representatives, and other partners.
3. Maintain personal contact with Union County commissioners, state representatives, state senators, and congressional representatives and senators to keep them informed about UCSWCD activities and issues.

Objective #2: Promote programs and services offered by conservation partners.

Strategies:

1. Provide public notification and announcements regarding program deadlines and eligibility requirements.
2. Include information about programs and partnerships through the use of public multimedia.

The UCSWCD will maintain active affiliation with the National Association of Conservation Districts and the Association of Florida Conservation Districts.