



# 2018 ANNUAL PLAN OF OPERATIONS

**Androscoggin Valley Soil and Water Conservation District**

Prepared on December 13, 2017

**TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE-** Androscoggin Valley SWCD will provide technical assistance to land users to promote conservation and address priority natural resource issues and concerns.

*Objective 1: To provide direct technical assistance to land owners and users.*

*TASKS FOR OBJECTIVE 1:*

- Identify natural resource concerns that the program with target.
- Identify services that will be provided. Examples:
  - Contractor site evaluations
  - Erosion and sediment control plans
  - Stormwater control plans
  - Lakesmart award evaluations
  - Soil surveys for site evaluators and landowners
  - Assistance with forming road associations
  - Gravel road design, maintenance, and long-range gravel road maintenance plans
  - Assist with permit applications (Maine DEP Permit by Rule)
  - Phase 1 Site Assessments
  - Surveying- erosion sites, outfalls, illicit discharges
  - Inspections- stormwater treatment, catch basins, ditches, detention basins
  - Planning- ordinance reviews and recommendations
  - Site plan reviews
  - Permit compliance review
  - Project reviews
  - Design- stream and shoreline restoration, culvert sizing, basic stormwater runoff
  - Nutrient management plans
- Identify training needed to fulfil these services in house. If services cannot be completed in house, yet the District still wants to offer them, identify entities who can perform these services and initiate contact.
- Expand the technical assistance program by developing strategies to inform the public of the service.

- Create and distribute a brochure or flyer that describes the technical assistance program to land users and interested resource groups

***Objective 2: To improve the ability of land users to implement conservation practices on the land by using programs and grants to assist with funding.***

***TASKS FOR OBJECTIVE 2:***

- Continue to implement the Lake Auburn 319 grant.
- Continue to implement the Eastern Brook Trout Joint Venture/Martin Stream grant.
- Using information obtained in a USGS Water Use Survey and a Contribution Agreement with NRCS, reach out to potentially interested land users about improving their irrigation practices through the USDA Farm Bill and Environmental Quality Incentives Program
- Research funding opportunities that can utilize Bates College students' projects from 2016 and 2017
- Identify new funding opportunities

***Objective 3: To identify the natural resource needs of the community to ensure that the technical assistance delivered is appropriate and beneficial.***

***TASKS FOR OBJECTIVE 3:***

- Use Natural Resource Assessment information to ensure that District goals are in line with the concerns of the local communities.
- Ask participants of District programs what natural resource issues they are facing.
- Identify resource needs of urban communities and try to target these as well as the suburban and rural needs that we typically target.

***PUBLIC RELATIONS- To enhance its tradition of service to the citizens of Androscoggin and Sagadahoc Counties, the District will pursue an effective public relations policy***

***Objective 1: To provide opportunities for public input***

*TASKS FOR OBJECTIVE 1:*

- Host the Annual Local Working Group meeting with NRCS
- Host an annual District event to bring in a variety of interested participants. Offer a short survey to identify local resources issues. Have a guest speaker to provide an entertaining, yet informative, talk on a natural resource topic.
- At every event provide a comment card for participants to offer suggestions to the District about programming opportunities, how the District can better serve the public, and a place for the participant to sign-up for emails about District events

***Objective 2: To increase the District's visibility by timely and effective communications***

*TASKS FOR OBJECTIVE 2:*

- Keep outreach plan up to date.
- Continue to improve our media presence by evaluating the outreach plan.
- Develop a way to evaluate outreach plan.

***Objective 3: To market ourselves more effectively***

*TASKS FOR OBJECTIVE 3:*

- Enlist new clients
- Recruit new associate supervisors
- Website maintenance and educational development
- Press releases for all events and educational topics
- Implementation plan for publication and distribution of an online newsletter

**INFORMATION AND EDUCATION ASSISTANCE- To educate all land users of Androscoggin and Sagadahoc Counties to encourage conservation of natural resources**

***Objective 1: Continue to provide quality educational opportunities and programs with a focus on conservation***

*TASKS FOR OBJECTIVE 1:*

- Implement stormwater drain stenciling event through the Androscoggin Valley Stormwater Group agreement
- Host a “Bring Your Own Kayak” invasive plants workshop
- Conservation calendar/photo contest
- Participate in Maine Ag in the Classroom reading program
- Host a forestry workshop in Androscoggin and Sagadahoc
- Host a tick and mosquito disease and protection workshop
- Host an invasive plant management workshop
- Host a DEP Erosion and Sediment Control training
- Bring a focus to the marine issues in our area with educational opportunities

***Objective 2: Expand educational programs and opportunities***

*TASKS FOR OBJECTIVE 2:*

- With the help from a NRCS Contribution Agreement, provide two irrigation workshops in Sagadahoc County
- Work with Bates College to support a 200 hour internship where the student can develop programming, gather resource information and create outreach material, and perform some office tasks
- Research the requirements, and funding opportunities, for starting a trout program for elementary school kids where the objectives would be to learn about water quality, invertebrates, the life cycle of trout, and how to protect this, and other, aquatic species

***Objective 3: To expand the District’s ability to provide information and education by increasing financial support***

*TASKS FOR OBJECTIVE 3:*

- Southwestern Maine Regional Envirothon- assist with planning, coordinating, and promoting Envirothon event with outreach to non-participating schools and groups
- Develop opportunities for Ag in the classroom readings, conservation careers, and assistance with classroom conservation projects.

- Provide links to financial resources, assist with recruiting skilled professionals, and provide educational/technical training opportunities.
- Staffing Ag Trade Show booth
- Host Local Work Group Meeting
- Assist with display and staffing booth at District Ag Day with legislators
- Assist with display and staffing at Fryeburg Fair
- Assist with display and staffing at Maine Municipal Association Convention booth

**FUNDING- To strengthen our ability to provide programming and services to the citizens and municipalities of Androscoggin and Sagadahoc Counties, Androscoggin Valley SWCD will diversify our sources of funding**

***Objective 1: To expand our funding from traditional providers***

***TASKS FOR OBJECTIVE 1:***

- Continue to attend County Commissioner meetings with updates about District activities and successes with County specific details
- Continue to keep open communication with state and federal partners about District programs and services that support both District objectives and the objectives of the resource agencies

***Objective 2: To broaden sponsorships***

***TASKS FOR OBJECTIVE 2:***

- Offer an annual raffle or 50/50. This will increase District visibility as well as provide incentive to donate to the District cause. Include with prize information about the District and conservation activities in Androscoggin and Sagadahoc Counties.
- Network at public events to increase District visibility
- Create a donation account with links on both the website and the Facebook account for visitors to donate

***Objective 3: To provide income to enable us to increase our level of service***

*TASKS FOR OBJECTIVE 3:*

- Work with MACD to expand state wide grant projects and district capacity building funding
- Recruit funding from Androscoggin and Sagadahoc Counties Find sponsorships for workshops and public forum meetings Explore grant funding opportunities
- Cost/benefit analysis of offering District products such as shirts, calendars, bags, etc.
- Develop and hold a pre-order plant sale
- Investigate MACD/District participation with Green Drinks or other fundraising event

**PARTNERSHIPS-** To improve District effectiveness and capacity, Androscoggin Valley SWCD will strengthen and expand our conservation partnerships.

*Objective 1: To communicate better and more frequently leading to the better understanding the diverse conservation needs of the District's constituency*

*TASKS FOR OBJECTIVE 1:*

- Increase online presence through website and Facebook updates
- Increase press release frequency to keep local news readers informed of District activities
- Create a newsletter that will be available online and through mailings that states the
- District's purpose, events, volunteer opportunities, successes, and contains at least one educational article

*Objective 2: To strengthen partnerships with local people and groups*

*TASKS FOR OBJECTIVE 2:*

Cultivate relationships with;

- Watershed groups
- Interested residents
- Municipal officials

- Private road association members
- Private camping organizations
- County Commissioners and Budget Committee
- Farmers
- Farm service partners
- Foresters/ loggers/ woodlot owners
- Marine/ coastal groups
- Land trust members
- Federal/ State government agencies
- Educators
- Fish/wildlife groups
- Recreational clubs
- Conservation/environmental groups
- University of Maine Cooperative Extension Service
- Maine Audubon
- The Nature Conservancy
- Maine Rural Partners
- Maine Colleges and Universities

***Objective 3: To expand the District's service capacity by implementing the volunteer service program***

***TASKS FOR OBJECTIVE 3:***

- Develop a volunteer recruitment plan
- Develop a volunteer enrollment form
- Use the volunteer recruitment plan to enlist volunteers for events

BOARD AND STAFF DEVELOPMENT- To effectively serve the natural resource conservation needs of the Androscoggin and Sagadahoc Counties, the Androscoggin Valley SWCD will seek to maintain a skilled and diverse board and staff.

***Objective 1: To develop and maintained a skill and diverse board***



*TASKS FOR OBJECTIVE 1:*

- Publish a press release describing District activities, inviting the public to the next meeting, and the need for dedicated Associate Supervisors
- Identify and contact partners who may be interested in participating on the Board in an Associate or Supervisory role
- Semi-annually offer a training opportunity at a regularly scheduled Board Meeting, use suggestions from Board and staff about what the topic should be

***Objective 2: To invest in our management infrastructure***

*TASKS FOR OBJECTIVE 2:*

- Develop and Board and staff development and training plan
- Increase awareness of training opportunities to Board members
- Set aside thirty minutes semi-annually to check the progress of the District staff and Board and identify places that may need improvement
- Conduct assessment reviews; personnel performance, programs and projects, annual work plan
- Review personnel and operational policy

***Objective 3: To expand and support staff to meet customer needs***

*TASKS FOR OBJECTIVE 3:*

- Provide staff training to build strengths of new employees Skills in financial stewardship planning
- Knowledge in legal employment practices and policies
- Experience in internal and external transparency and accountability
- Ability to articulate the District mission, accomplishments, and future programs Proficient in building District identity
- Expand board and staff awareness about work of other groups/partners
- Entertain discussions about potential collaboration with other groups/partners and conservation work