

Locally Led Conservation & The Local Work Group

Mark Habiger NRCS

What Is “Locally Led Conservation”?

- Community Stakeholders
 - 1. Assessing their natural resource conservation needs
 - 2. Setting community conservation goals
 - 3. Developing an action plan
 - 4. Obtaining resources to carry out the plan
 - 5. Implementing solutions
 - 6. Measuring their success

The Locally Led Principle

Locally led conservation is based on the principle that community stakeholders are best suited to identify and resolve local natural resource problems. Thus, community stakeholders are keys to successfully managing and protecting their natural resources. It challenges neighbors, both urban and rural, to work together and take responsibility for addressing local resource needs.

What Does Local Mean?

“Local” can be:

1. County
2. A Portion of a County
3. A Watershed
4. Multi-County Region
5. Other identified subdivision that has interested stakeholders.

Local Work Group Primary Focus

- Natural Resource Concerns
- Associated Socio-Economic Concerns
- Program Identification
- Stakeholder Commitment

Who Leads the Locally Led Effort?

- Local Soil and Water Conservation Districts are charged with this task
- NRCS officials facilitate the meeting
 - Provide assistance in identifying conservation needs
 - Provide technical and program advice
 - Assist in developing implementation strategies

Public Involvement

- Anyone can participate
- Local, State and Federal Agencies
- Agricultural Organizations
- Local Agri-businesses
- Impacted Stakeholders

Local Work Group Meeting Objectives

- Identification of Priority Resource Concerns
- Methods and Programs Identified to address Resource Concerns
- Conservation Needs Assessment Developed

Local Work Group Meeting Outcomes

- NRCS Evaluates Stakeholder Input
- Adapts Priority Resource Concerns into Program Ranking Tools
- Publicizes Programs
- Implements Programs to Address Mutually Identified Resource Concerns

Local Work Group/Locally Led Process

- Questions??

State Technical Advisory Committee

- Background
 - Required by the 1985 Food Security Act (1985 Farm Bill) Title XII
 - The Secretary of Agriculture delegated implementation of the Committee to NRCS
 - Chaired by NRCS STC, but used by other USDA Agencies when needed

State Technical Advisory Committee

- Committee Role
 - Provide information, analysis, and recommendations regarding USDA programs
 - Are an advisory group
 - NRCS is charged to give strong consideration to recommendations of group

State Technical Advisory Committee

- Membership
 - USDA Agencies and Committees
 - Indian Tribes
 - Association of Soil & Water Conservation Districts
 - State Government Entities
 - State Agricultural Organizations
 - Agricultural Non-Profit Organizations
 - Agribusinesses

State Technical Advisory Committee

- Texas Programs
 - Agricultural Water Enhancement Program
 - Conservation Innovation Grants
 - Conservation Stewardship Program
 - Environmental Quality Incentive Program
 - Farm & Ranch Lands Protection Program

State Technical Advisory Committee

- Texas Programs (cont.)
 - Grassland Reserve Program
 - Wetlands Reserve Program
 - Wildlife Habitat Incentive Program
 - Cooperative Conservation Partnership Program

State Technical Advisory Committee

- Meeting Mechanics
 - Chaired by the NRCS State Conservationist
 - Held Annually – usually in the Fall
 - Involves oral discussions – written comments appreciated
 - Usually a full day meeting
 - All comments are considered and implemented when and where appropriate

STAC/LWG Interface

- How Do These Meeting Fit Together?
 - LWG sets the local priorities
 - STAC helps determine state priorities
 - LWG and STAC share the same members
 - Both identify resource concerns
 - Both determine resource concern priorities

Local Work Group State Technical Advisory Group

Questions??

- "The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) prohibits discrimination in all its programs and activities on the basis of race, color, national origin, age, disability, and where applicable, sex, marital status, familial status, parental status, religion, sexual orientation, genetic information, political beliefs, reprisal, or because all or a part of an individual's income is derived from any public assistance program. (Not all prohibited bases apply to all programs.) Persons with disabilities who require alternative means for communication of program information (Braille, large print, audiotape, etc.) should contact USDA's TARGET Center at (202) 720-2600 (voice and TDD). To file a complaint of discrimination write to USDA, Director, Office of Civil Rights, 1400 Independence Avenue, S.W., Washington, D.C. 20250-9410 or call (800) 795-3272 (voice) or (202) 720-6382 (TDD). USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer."