CHOCTAWHATCHEE RIVER SOIL & WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT

2024-2029 Strategic Plan

MISSION STATEMENT

- The mission of Choctawhatchee River Soil and Water Conservation District is to provide the administration of programs to conserve soil and improve water quality and quantity on private lands.

WHO WE ARE

- Due to the Dust Bowl in the 1930's U.S. Congress declared soil and water conservation a national policy and priority in 1935. To ensure the support of landowners on a local level, soil and water conservation districts serving conservation needs at a county level were created to work in partnership with the federal government.

- The Choctawhatchee River Soil and Water Conservation District is entirely within the boundaries of Walton County, Florida and was created in March of 1940. The governing body of the soil and water conservation district consists of 5 elected supervisors. The office of a soil and water conservation district supervisor is nonpartisan and district wide. Candidates are elected in a general election for a 4-year term. Vacancies are filled by appointment by the remaining supervisors until the next general election. Supervisors receive no monetary compensation for their services.

WHAT WE DO

- The district is committed to preserving and enhancing the quality of life in Choctawhatchee River SWCD area through conservation of natural resources and implementation of programs and cost share assistance provided by partnership with Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS).

Goals for Resource Conservation

1. Enlarge audience for NRCS cost-share contracts with landowners and operators.

   Resources: Agency partner NRCS and staff

   Performance measure: Increased number of applications for NRCS programs, Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) and Conservation Reserve Program (CSP).

2. Seek new contracts with various conservation and natural resource partners: NRCS, FDACS, FWC.

   Resources: Agency Partners (NRCS, FDACS, FWC) and staff

   Performance measure: New contracts for funding conservation projects managed by

CRSWCD.

3. Identify special projects focused on conservation of natural resources in CRSWCD service area for potential funding.

   Resources: Supervisors and staff

   Performance measure: Report stating the selected projects from planning to completion. News article posted on website of completed project.

4. Create and implement a producer survey for completion as a tool for evaluating CRSWCD performance.

   Resources: Supervisors and staff

   Performance measure: Gather and compile survey results to be used for future planning.

Goals for Education and Outreach

1. Increased involvement and participation in conservation and agricultural events.

   Resources: Agency partners (IFAS, Cattlemen's Association, Choctawhatchee Basin Alliance, Florida State Parks, Walton County Fair Association) Supervisors and staff

   Performance measure: Supervisors attending 1 event annually and CRSWCD staff attending 3 events annually, with reports given on events at district meetings.

2. Funding educational conservation programs for youth: Land Judging, FFA, 4-H.

   Resources: Supervisors, staff and budgeted funds

   Performance measure: Funding approved and provided by CRSWCD, then report of program completion and success at CRSWCD meeting and posted to website.

3. Focus on leadership and continued education of board supervisors.

   Resources: Conferences, Meetings and registration fees budgeted

   Performance measure: Attendance by supervisors of area and state meetings, as well as attendance/participation in supervisor training for ethics, Sunshine Law, records retention, financial disclosure.

4. Prepare feature articles of success stories on local producers and projects.

   Resources: Staff

   Performance measure: Articles posted to CRSWCD website