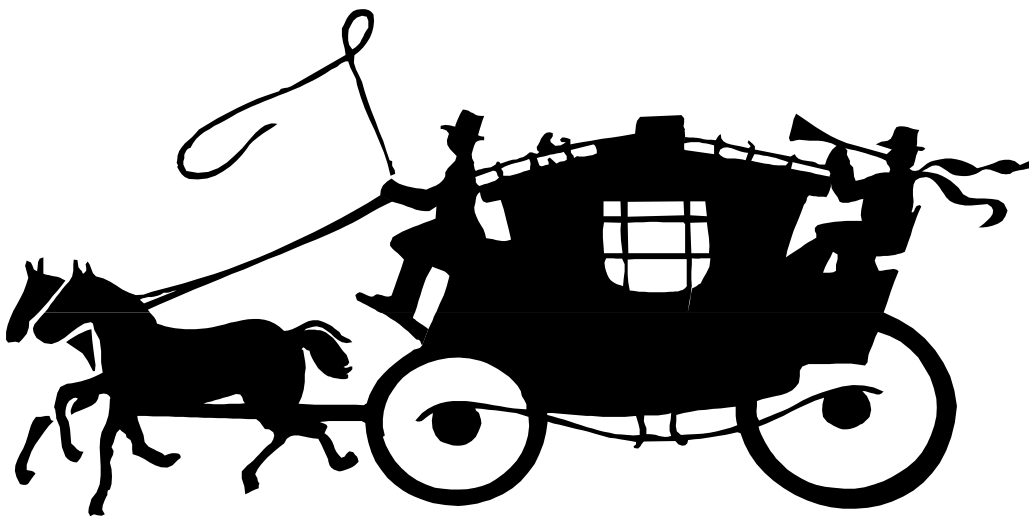


**SOUTHERN NEW HAMPSHIRE  
RESOURCE  
CONSERVATION  
& DEVELOPMENT AREA**



Reaching Out &  
Reaching Up

**AREA PLAN  
FOR 2006-2010**

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## **RC&D: THE ORGANIZATION AND ITS PROCESS**

New Hampshire's RC&D Area Councils are independent, non-governmental, not for profit corporations, with their own 501 (c) (3) status. In 1968 the Secretary of the U.S. Department of Agriculture authorized North Country RC&D to utilize program services of USDA. Southern NH RC&D was authorized in 1998.

RC&D Councils, through their partnerships with federal, state and local organizations, help communities, groups and individuals develop strategic approaches to natural resource conservation, sustainable community and economic growth, and human resource capital investment issues. RC&D Councils can provide access to a wide range of technical resources, as well as assist local groups in the development of funding strategies and location of funding sources.

Councils are created from sponsoring organizations and other interested local people who govern RC&D activities as a Board of Directors. Each Board of Directors establishes goals and objectives, determines policy, sets priorities for assistance and facilitates actions. While administratively linked to the USDA and the U.S. Natural Resources Conservation Service, RC&D councils by their nature and mission, are organizations designed to collaborate with multiple entities and agencies.

RC&D councils proactively assess natural and human resource issues facing NH communities and create collaborative task teams to solve problems and create new opportunities. Communities, groups and individuals are urged to bring issues to the attention of the RC&D Councils.

Resource committees are intended to function as the heart of the RC&D process. Natural Resources, Community Development, Economic Development, and Information and Education Committees facilitate an inclusive issue, problem and opportunity identification process affecting each resource area. RC&D council members serve as liaisons on these resource committees and with various other partner organizations. Issues, needs, and concerns are identified, and specific actions to address them are then developed and endorsed by the RC&D Council. Volunteers from local communities or interested groups carry out these specific actions or projects as directed by each resource committee and the Board of Directors. Participants on committees or project teams may constitute a wide variety of agencies, organizations, and individuals. The utilization of cooperative networks to identify issues, locally led project development and implementation, and quality of life improvement through positive community impact, are the keys to a successful RC&D program.

## **RESOURCE ASSESSMENT AND PROJECT IDENTIFICATION PROCESS**

RC&D Councils believe that the sustainable development of natural and human resources benefits the economic and social well being of citizens, as it maintains or improves the quality of the natural resource base.

To achieve this goal, Councils manage a pro-active planning and project implementation process. This process consists of a biannual review and redefinition of the needs within the basic resource categories. Each category (Natural Resources, Community Development, Economic Development, and Information and Education) is addressed by a Resource Committee, which strives to include individuals, organizations, and RC&D board members with interest in that resource.

The issue and needs identification process for this period (2006-2010) consists of:

- An annual review of the current program, including the status of concerns, issues, and needs of each resource area.
- An annual review of national RC&D policy guidance
- Continuous efforts to recruit and maintain a diverse and active RC&D council.
- Continuous outreach efforts to obtain critical needs information and market the opportunities and benefits of RC&D.

RC&D Councils encourage broad participation in planning activities and encourage interested citizens to contact them, because the process of issue identification and programmatic direction is ever-changing.

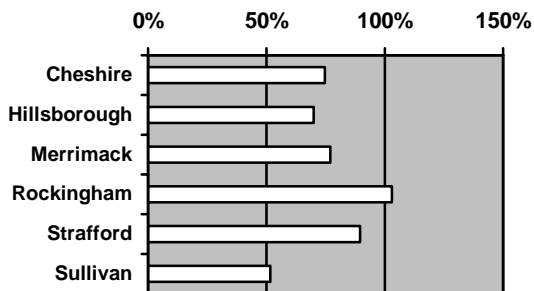
## OVERVIEW OF AREA RESOURCES AND ISSUES

The Southern NH RC&D Area includes the six southern counties of New Hampshire - Cheshire, Hillsborough, Merrimack, Rockingham, Strafford and Sullivan, and is comprised of 2.7 million acres, of which 2.1 are forested. Approximately 92,000 acres are devoted to the production of apples, general truck crops, hay, and pasture. 421,000 acres are in urban and other uses. Surface water, totaling 65,000 acres, is distributed between 490 lakes, ponds, streams and estuaries. Rural and municipal water supplies and recreational opportunities make water quality maintenance and improvement important resource issues in the project area.

There are three major watersheds draining the Southern NH area: the Connecticut forms New Hampshire's western boundary; the Merrimack River flows through the central part of the state; and the Piscataqua River drains the state's eastern boundary. This drainage divides the area into three distinct regions: The Connecticut River Valley; the New England uplands; and the New England Seaboard.

The NH Office of State Planning (2004) estimates the population of the six-county area to be 1,078,853, or 83% of the state's population. This constitutes an increase of 164,853 (18%) over the 1990 census count of 914,000. Southern New Hampshire contained four of the five counties displaying the largest increase in acres of development from 1982 to 1997: Rockingham (60,600 acres), Hillsborough (54,400 acres), Merrimack (32,000 acres), and Strafford (22,600 acres).

**Percent Change in Urban Land  
by County: 1982-1997**



According to the USDA's 1997 Natural Resources Inventory, New Hampshire ranked 12th among all states in the percent of land base developed between 1982 and 1997 showing a 4.3% increase overall. The largest land use change was the conversion of forest land, cropland, and pastureland to urban land. Urban land increased by 245,700 acres, or 81 percent, since 1982. This is an average

increase of 16,380 acres per year.

Urban land increased by 87,100 acres from 1982-1987, 54,700 acres from 1987-1992, with the largest increase of 103,900 acres between 1992-1997. 84 percent or 206,800 acres came from the conversion of New Hampshire forests. An additional 7,100 acres or 2.8 percent came from pasture, and 21,500 acres or 8.7 percent came from cropland. 10,400 acres of additional forest land loss is the result of a growing transportation network.

New Hampshire's people and communities face the challenge of meeting the escalating needs of education, maintenance and improvement of community services, and the continued loss of manufacturing jobs. One of New Hampshire's proudest traditions is the strength and vitality of countless volunteer boards, commissions and organizations. Their timeless dedication helps us meet environmental, economic and social needs. Truly, our people are our most valuable resource.

## **TYPES OF ISSUES**

The scoping process utilized by the Southern New Hampshire RC&D Council identified four main types of issues that were indicated to be of importance by the session's participants.

### **Natural Resource Issues**

- Improving or maintaining the quality and quantity of surface and ground water supplies.
- Opportunities to raise awareness of the potential for local forest product development.
- Sustainable land use and sustainable development.
- The importance of preserving the family farms in southern New Hampshire.
- Food safety and risk assessment.
- Explore the potential for ecological restoration projects.

### **Community Development**

- Fire protection in rapidly developing rural areas.
- The planning and implementation of recreational opportunities for people with varying abilities.
- Develop a network with the agencies and advocates for people with disabilities.
- Develop strategies and partnerships to improve outreach to traditionally underserved clients.

### **Economic Development**

- Specialty or niche markets for crafts and farm products.
- A need for organized agritourism opportunities for visitors.
- Working with rural communities to revitalize them through tourism.
- Explore opportunities for small business development and support.

### **Information and Education**

- An educational effort about the RC&D Program, its benefits, and opportunities.
- Making information and education materials accessible to children and adults with learning disabilities and/or language barriers.

- The development and implementation of outdoor/ topical workshops for teachers.
- The development and implementation of teaching guides/workbooks for classroom use.
- Providing assistance to develop interpretive trails for people with varied abilities.

## **GOALS AND OBJECTIVES**

### **Natural Resources**

**Goal – To encourage and support the sustainable use of the natural resources of southern New Hampshire.**

**Objective 1:** Improve or maintain the quality and quantity of surface and ground water supplies.

**Objective 2:** Raise awareness of the benefits of local farm and forest product development.

**Objective 3:** Preserve family farms and the rural character of southern New Hampshire.

**Objective 4:** Conserve and improve the quality of natural communities through ecological restoration.

### **Community Development**

**Goal – To address the resource issues facing southern New Hampshire’s changing communities.**

**Objective 1:** Establish a network with groups, agencies, and individuals providing assistance to people with varying physical, mental and cultural needs.

**Objective 2:** Develop and implement a variety of recreational opportunities for residents of southern New Hampshire, including those with varying needs.

**Objective 3:** Promote and expand the rural fire protection initiative in southern New Hampshire.

**Objective 4:** Promote opportunities to improve public access to community natural areas.

### **Economic Development**

**Goal – Identify and develop economic alternatives to the traditional manufacturing economies of southern New Hampshire.**

**Objective :** Develop a strategy to identify tourism opportunities within southern New Hampshire communities.

**Objective 2:** Examine the feasibility of specialty or niche markets for local crafts, farm, and forest products.

**Objective 3:** Examine the feasibility of agritourism and value added business opportunities for local producers.

## **Information and Education**

**Goal – Identify and develop opportunities for informational and educational materials that are accessible to all.**

**Objective 1:** Develop and implement a strategy to market the RC&D Program, its benefits, and opportunities.

**Objective 2:** Alter or modify educational materials so they are useable by people with varying abilities.

**Objective 3:** Develop and promote natural resource workshops for teachers.

**Objective 4:** Develop and promote youth educational activities.

In addition to the 5 year Area Plan, a yearly Annual Plan of Work is prepared. Action items for each goal and objective can be found in the Annual Plan.

## **MAJOR POLICIES**

1. The programs conducted by the Southern NH RC&D Area comply with all requirements of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and regulations of the Secretary of Agriculture (7 CFR Sec. 15.1-15.12) which provide that no person in the United States shall, on the basis of race, color, national origin, religion, sex, age, marital status or disability, be excluded from participating in, be denied benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any activity. Additionally, as a “recipient” of federal financial and technical assistance, the Council will conform with all other applicable rules, regulations, and laws.
2. The Area Plan and Annual Plan of Work guide the activities of both the Board and RC&D Area staff. The Board will revise these as necessary to meet the area's needs. The Board may undertake any activity in association with any other entity to facilitate implementing this Area Plan and Annual Plan of Work.
3. RC&D project proposals shall be developed and adopted by the appropriate resource committees before the Board of Directors adopts them.
4. Requests for assistance will be reviewed and approved by an appropriate RC&D sponsor prior to adoption by the Board of Directors.
5. When adopting a proposal, the Board of Directors will consider the following:
  - A. The project's contribution toward meeting established Goals.
  - B. The sponsors' interest and ability to provide local support for the project.
  - C. Estimated demand on RC&D resources.
  - D. Recommendations of all RC&D sponsors.
  - E. Urgency in relation to need.
6. RC&D will help groups working for resource conservation and economic development and will seek their support in carrying out appropriate RC&D projects.

## **COMPLIANCE STATEMENT**

“The Southern NH RC&D Council agrees that the RC&D Program will be conducted 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 non-discrimination statutes; namely, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1973, the Age Discrimination Act of 1975, and in accordance with the regulations of the Secretary of Agriculture (7CFR-15, Subparts A and B), which provide that no person in the United States shall, on the grounds 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 thereof.”

The Southern NH RC&D Council agrees that the signing of this document constitutes agreement to comply with Federal laws concerning restrictions on lobbying, a drug-free workplace, and responsibilities for non-procurement, debarment and State review. Lobbying restrictions state that no more than 25% of the non-federal funds available to the Council, be used for expenses related to lobbying efforts.

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

**Southern NH RC&D Council, State of New Hampshire**

By \_\_\_\_\_  
Chairman, Southern NH RC&D \_\_\_\_\_ Date

Attest: \_\_\_\_\_  
Secretary/Treasurer

This action authorized at an official meeting of the Southern NH Resource Conservation and Development Area Board of Directors on April 18, 2006.

**U.S. Department of Agriculture – Natural Resources Conservation Service**

The State Conservationist hereby acknowledges the attached Area Plan of the Southern NH RC&D Council as meeting the requirements under Public Law 97-98 to receive assistance from the USDA.

Acknowledged by:

\_\_\_\_\_  
State Conservationist

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

**PROCEDURE FOR REQUESTING ASSISTANCE FROM  
THE SOUTHERN NEW HAMPSHIRE  
RESOURCE CONSERVATION AND DEVELOPMENT (RC&D) AREA COUNCIL**

1. Requests for assistance will be accepted from communities, non-profit organizations and/or coalitions of landowners or landowner associations.
2. Requests for assistance should relate to the RC&D goals.
3. Requests for assistance will be reviewed and approved by an appropriate sponsor and resource committee of the RC&D Council prior to action by the entire Council (Board of Directors).
4. When evaluating requests for assistance, the Board of Directors will consider the following:
  - A. The project's contribution toward meeting established goals.
  - B. The sponsors' interest and ability to provide local support for the project.
  - C. Estimated demand on RC&D resources.
  - D. Recommendations of all RC&D sponsors.
  - E. Urgency in relation to need.
5. Requests for assistance can be directed to:
  - A. The County Conservation District in your county.
  - B. Natural Resources Conservation Service personnel in your county.
  - C. Any sponsoring organization of the RC&D Council (call office for contact and address).
  - D. The administrative offices of the Southern NH RC&D, located at:

**Southern NH RC&D Council**  
The Concord Center  
10 Ferry Street, Box 4, Suite 422  
Concord, NH 03301-5019  
Phone: 603-228-0083  
Fax: 603-228-0084  
susan.hoey@nh.usda.gov

Appendix A

Southern New Hampshire RC&D  
**REQUEST FOR ASSISTANCE/PROJECT PROPOSAL FORM**

**DATE:** \_\_\_\_\_

Project Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Project Location (Town, County): \_\_\_\_\_

Proposing Organization/Community: \_\_\_\_\_

Contact (Name, Address & Phone): \_\_\_\_\_

Description of Problem, Issue or Opportunity (Indicate whether scope is local, regional or statewide):

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Actions Taken to Date: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Description of Project (What would you want to be done): \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Expected Benefits of Project: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Assistance Needed (Type & Extent): \_\_\_\_\_

Preferred Completion Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Names, addresses & phone numbers of people who currently are or should be part of the project:

\_\_\_\_\_

Project Sponsors Signature & Title, (for communities) Selectmen's Signature & Title:

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Appendix B



**COUNTY CONSERVATION DISTRICT OFFICES AND USDA/NRCS TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE LEADERS**

**SOUTHERN NH RC&D AREA COUNTIES**

<b>Conservation District Contact</b>		<b>NRCS Contact</b>
<b><u>Cheshire County</u></b> Tel: 756-2988 Fax: 756-2978	vacant, District Manager Walpole Industrial Park 11 Industrial Park Drive Walpole, NH 03608-9744	Scott Heckman, District Conservationist Tel: 756-2988/Fax: 756-2978
<b><u>Hillsborough County</u></b> Tel: 673-2409 Fax: 673-0597	Kerry Rickrode, District Manager Chappell Professional Center #468, Route 13, South Milford, NH 03055-3476	Deborah Weymouth, District Conservationist Tel: 223-6021/Fax: 223-6030
<b><u>Merrimack County</u></b> Tel: 223-6023 Fax: 223-6030	Lisa Morin, District Manager The Concord Center 10 Ferry Street, Box 312, Suite 211 Concord, NH 03301-5081	Michael Lynch, District Conservationist Tel: 223-6021/Fax: 223-6030
<b><u>Rockingham County</u></b> Tel: 679-2790 Fax: 679-2860	Mary Currier, Executive Director 110 North Road Brentwood, NH 03833-6614	Rachael Phillips-Tibbets, District Conservationist Tel: 679-1587/Fax: 679-4658
<b><u>Strafford County</u></b> Tel: 749-3037 Fax: 743-3667	Bambi Miller, District Manager USDA Agriculture Service Center 259 County Farm Road - Unit #3 Dover, NH 03820-6015	Rachael Phillips-Tibbets, Resource Conservationist Tel: 679-1587/Fax: 679-4658
<b><u>Sullivan County</u></b> Tel: 863-4297 Fax: 863-4730	Janice Heighes, District Manager 24 Main Street Newport, NH 03773-1515	Scott Heckman, District Conservationist Tel: 756-2988/Fax: 756-2978

**SOUTHERN NEW HAMPSHIRE RC&D COUNCIL**  
2006 Board of Directors

Richard D. Babcock  
*Strafford County*

Donald G. Ferren  
*Director at Large*

James H. Moore, **Secretary**  
*Director at Large*

Edwin Robinson  
*Concord Conservation Commission,  
NHACC, SPACE, R2C2, UMLAC*

Bud Winsor, **Treasurer**  
*Cheshire County*

Karen P. Bennett  
*Hillsborough County*

Terrence Frost, **Vice Chairman**  
*Merrimack County Conservation  
District and The Society for  
Protection of NH Forests*

Wilbur Palmer, **Chairman**  
*Director at Large*

Robert Spoerl, **First Vice  
Chairman**  
*NH Department of Resources and  
Economic Development*

Appendix E

## **SOUTHERN NH RC&D 2006-2010 STAFF**

Susan Hoey, NRCS RC&D Coordinator  
Bob Scheirer, SNH RC&D Program Manager

For additional copies of this document,  
the Plan of Work, or more information  
on **RC&D**, please contact:

Southern NH RC&D  
10 Ferry Street, Box 4, Suite 422  
Concord, NH 03301-5019  
TEL: (603) 223-0083  
FAX: (603) 223-0084  
susan.hoey@nh.usda.gov

Prepared for the Board of Directors for their partners, sponsors, supporters, cooperators and the people of the Area. Assisted by the U.S. Department of Agriculture and cooperating federal, state and local agencies and organizations.

Prepared under the authority of the Agriculture and Food Act of 1981 (Public Law 97-98).

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) prohibits discrimination in all its programs and activities on the basis of race, color, religion, gender, age, national origin, disability, political beliefs, sexual orientation and marital or familial status. (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 USDA, Director, Office of Civil Rights, Room 326W, Whitten Building, 14<sup>th</sup> and Independence Avenue, SW, Washington, DC 20250-9410 or call (202) 720-5964 (voice and TDD). USDA is an equal employment opportunity employer.