

# HUMBOLDT COUNTY RESOURCE CONSERVATION DISTRICT LONG RANGE PLAN

2016-2020

Humboldt  
County



RESOURCE  
CONSERVATION DISTRICT

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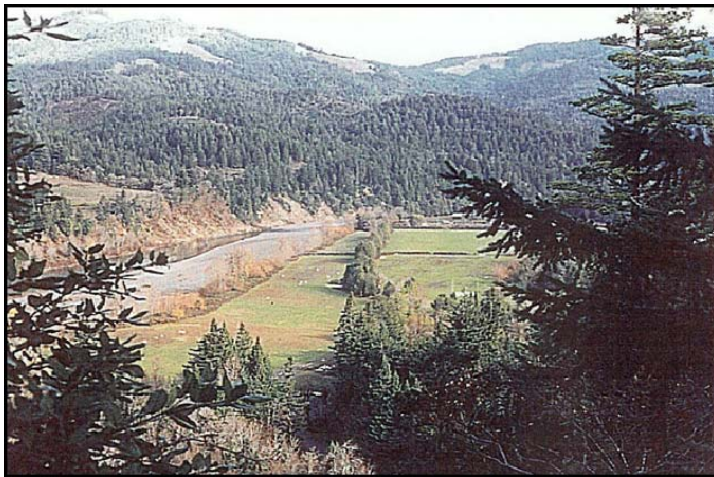
## ABOUT HUMBOLDT COUNTY RCD

The Humboldt County Resource Conservation District is a non-regulatory organization that works in voluntary cooperation with landowners, residents, and community groups. The district is governed by a Board of Directors made up of volunteer community leaders appointed by the Humboldt County Board of Supervisors. The district's primary technical services are provided through a cooperative partnership with the United States Department of Agriculture's Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS), as well as technical staff specifically hired by the district through grant funds.

## ORGANIZATION

Humboldt County Resource Conservation District (HCRCD) was originally formed by popular vote in March of 1987 as the Eel River Resource Conservation District. In June of 1993 the District was expanded to be a county-wide Special District. Resource Conservation Districts (RCDs) are legal subdivisions of state government. Division 9 of the California Public Resources Code authorizes the formation of Resource Conservation Districts, defines the State of California's framework for conducting the business of resource conservation within the State, and details the general powers and operations of RCDs.

HCRCD is governed by a seven-member Board of Directors appointed by the County Board of Supervisors. Directors are landowners, or their agents, who understand local resource conservation issues and who volunteer their time. The Board of Directors establishes priorities and sets policy for the District; guided by input from landowners, Technical Advisory Committees, and community stakeholders.



## VISION

The Humboldt County RCD will be economically viable, serving as a trusted partner for the community; successful at assisting with funding, education, implementation and maintenance of resource based projects.

## MISSION

To enhance and improve the sustainability of natural resources in an economically viable manner, to assist through outreach, education and implementation to the community, private and public land managers and land users.

## PURPOSE

The primary purpose of the HCRCDC is to assist private landowners in voluntary planning, design, and installation of soil and water conservation practices in Humboldt County. We provide information, technical assistance and funding to implement practices that improve and protect natural resources and wildlife habitat on private lands.

## TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE & PARTNERSHIPS

Over the years HCRCDC has worked to develop strong cooperative partnerships with local, state and federal entities to provide technical and professional assistance to landowners and watershed groups in assessing, planning, and partnering to secure grant funding to develop and implement a range of restoration and enhancement projects. The Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS), University of California Cooperative Education (UCCE) and the County of Humboldt are all long-standing, strong partners that assist HCRCDC accomplish watershed management activities throughout Humboldt County.

## ACCOMPLISHMENTS

HCRCDC has a strong reputation as a leader in promoting locally led, voluntary conservation and has a history of success in working with partners and private landowners. HCRCDC has successfully completed multiple implementation projects to restore ecosystems, remove fish barriers, reduce sediment delivery to local tributaries, and improve grazing management. The District has also maintained a successful dairy program on behalf of producers needing assistance with structural improvements, nutrient management and regulation compliance.

The success of HCRCDC is based on the excellent collaboration with partners to accomplish common goals while serving private land managers. The District also places high priority on outreach within the community regarding project development and implementation. This effort to maintain communication and connection will continue to be a priority.

## PRIORITIES

HCRCDC recognizes the dynamics of agriculture are changing rapidly. The District must stay informed of resource conservation needs and trends in Humboldt County, and expand existing programs, as well as, establish new programs to meet those needs. It is a priority to address private land manager issues countywide. To effectively address those issues, and maintain progress on existing project work, the board and staff must balance available time and resources. The goals and strategies within this long range plan serves as the joint understanding between the Board and Staff on priorities to broaden the scope of District activities.

## GOALS AND STRATEGIES

### VIABLE AGRICULTURE

GOAL STATEMENT: Keeping agricultural land in production to ensure agriculture operations and natural resources are sustainable

Strategies:

- Outreach to producers on changing regulations, elk, wolf, sea levels, geese, water use monitoring
- Engage with Water Board on new water use permit conditions
- Secure more funding for dairy program implementation
- Work with CA F&W and other agencies to address wildlife issues relevant to agriculture
- Connect educators to producers to support economic and natural resource sustainability education
- Renew and expand Streamlined permitting process

### SEDIMENT REDUCTION AND DRAINAGE

GOAL STATEMENT Maintain and improve diverse working landscapes and soil health to minimize erosion for the benefit of agricultural production, wildlife and aquatic habitat

Strategies:

- Support NRCS in Conservation Planning
- Conduct education and outreach on sediment deposition, management and the permitting process
- Complete Salt River Ecosystem Restoration Project construction implementation phase
- Prepare to implement Adaptive Management Plan following Salt River Ecosystem Restoration Project construction implementation
- Expand project activities throughout the greater Salt River Watershed

### WATER QUALITY & QUANTITY

GOAL STATEMENT: Achieve improvements in water quality and quantity through comprehensive assistance to land managers in addressing resource concerns.

Strategies:

- Continue collaboration with Eel River Groundwater Working Group
- Development of Irrigation Water and Fertigation Management Plan
- Engage in education and outreach regarding Soil Health
- Acquire funding for groundwater monitoring

## FOREST HEALTH

GOAL STATEMENT: Maintaining healthy forests, biodiversity and economic sustainability

Strategies:

- Gain funding to support Education Program staff
- Educate RCD staff on current issues
- Engage in education and outreach in biomass, carbon sequestration and oak woodland restoration

## DISTRICT OPERATIONS & FINANCIAL VIABILITY

GOAL STATEMENT: Ensure sufficient funding and staff capacity to achieve RCD mission and goals

Strategies:

- Request advances on grant/agreements
- Begin Fee for Service options for producers seeking funding
- Obtain larger office space
- Explore acquiring and managing Riverside Ranch
- Ensure staffing capacity is sufficient to meet project needs