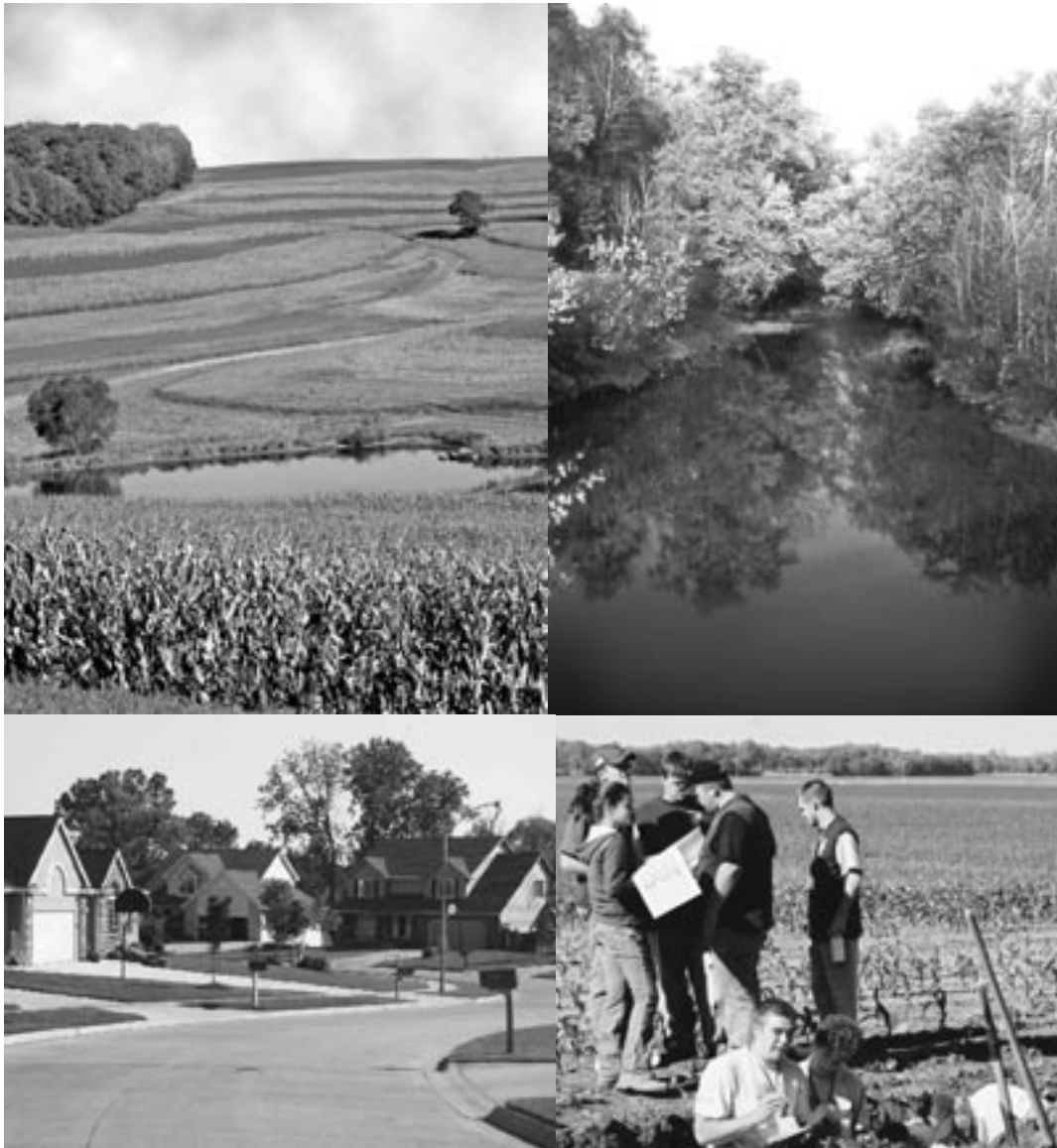


# STRATEGIES FOR STEWARDSHIP of Ohio's Soil, Water and Land Resources for 2004...and Beyond



To view specific objectives that will guide implementation of the division's strategic themes, log on to our website.

**ohio**[dnr.com/soilandwater/](http://dnr.com/soilandwater/)

## OUR MISSION

To provide leadership and services that enable Ohioans to conserve, protect and enhance soil, water and land resources.

## OUR VISION

To be an innovative team, recognized and valued for providing the most effective soil and water conservation services through diverse partnerships to enhance Ohioans' quality of life.

## Keeping our land productive and water clean!

The Division of Soil and Water Conservation has broad, statewide responsibilities to protect, manage and restore our soil, water and land resources. Even as a division within the Natural Resources Department, however, we recognize that we cannot accomplish this mission alone. Fortunately, the division is in a unique position to provide leadership and services that empower Ohio's conservation districts, local communities, government agencies, and organizations to develop locally led conservation programs and initiatives. We will continue to develop and maintain strong partnerships, both urban and rural, across Ohio that can help us achieve our goals and objectives. We greatly appreciate and value the role that Ohio's 88 Soil and Water Conservation Districts, their 440 elected supervisors, and their nearly 500 employees play in leading conservation efforts on the local level, and their ability to form valuable partnerships with USDA and other organizations. Without their strong local leadership and dedication, our statewide priorities and initiatives cannot be achieved. We thank SWCD supervisors, and SWCD and NRCS staff and others who provided input that helped guide the development of this strategic plan.

The Division of Soil and Water Conservation is one of twelve statutory divisions of the Ohio Department of Natural Resources. It has been part of ODNR since 1969, although the Division's soil inventory and evaluation program was one of the initial divisions of ODNR when it was created in 1949 – the Division of Lands and Soils. Our division has 50 employees, organized into six sections:

- Soil and Water Conservation Districts
- Soil Inventory and Evaluation
- Resource Management
- Watershed and Stream Management
- Conservation Engineering
- Environmental Education

Our Division of Soil and Water Conservation faces tremendous opportunity and challenge – to coordinate our efforts with those of the state's SWCDs so they are best positioned to meet important local natural resource needs – and also form partnerships between SWCDs and all ODNR divisions to collectively meet broader regional and statewide natural resources needs. This strategic plan has been developed to meet those opportunities and challenges, and in the process of its implementation, enhance Ohioans' quality of life.

David Hanselmann, Chief

## OUR GUIDING PRINCIPLES

### **Leadership**

- We will foster a strong conservation and stewardship ethic in Ohio's citizens and land users--agricultural and rural, and urban and suburban.
- We will support and maintain strong partnerships with SWCDs and USDA-NRCS, and others and build new partnerships to assist in meeting our natural resource protection and restoration goals.

### **Excellence**

- We will strive to maintain visionary foresight, excellent customer service, and high ethical standards.
- We will provide timely, accurate, science-based resource information, services and technical assistance.

### **Innovation**

- We will lead initiatives to help communities, organizations, local and state governments, and private citizens implement innovative natural resources services.
- We will continually challenge staff to use visionary and creative thinking to seek and promote new leading edge technology, programs, and services.

## OUR ORGANIZATIONAL VALUES

### **Employees**

- We value the professionalism, commitment and institutional knowledge our employees bring to assisting SWCDs and other customers.
- We will provide opportunities for personal and professional employee development for SWCD and DSWC employees.
- We will encourage and recognize outstanding employee performance.

### **Commitment**

- We are ever mindful of our mission.
- We realize that what we do is important to the health of our environment, the stewardship of our natural resources, and the sustainability of our food and fiber production.
- We strive to deliver quality service, resource information and technical assistance that is timely, accurate, consistent and in a manner that exceeds customer expectations.

### **Teamwork**

- We recognize that teamwork is essential to our success.
- We function with trust and mutual respect for each other's responsibilities, skills, and experience.

### **Communication, Education and Marketing**

- We encourage open, candid communication.
- We invite customer participation and input in the development of our programs.
- We value the role of education in our conservation programs in creating public awareness and eliciting behavioral changes in individuals and communities that ultimately have positive impacts on the environment.

# STRATEGIC THEMES

## Strategic Theme 1

### **Building SWCD and DSWC Capacity**

- SWCD and DSWC Capacity
- Professional Development
- Technology
- Program Development
- Communication, Education and Marketing
- Diversity

## Strategic Theme 2

### **Managing Land Resources**

- Watershed Management
- Soil Resource Information
- Land Use Management
- Core 4
- Forest Stewardship

## Strategic Theme 3

### **Protecting and Restoring Water Resources**

- Stream Protection and Restoration
- Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP)
- Livestock Environmental Stewardship
- Nonpoint Source Pollution Control

## Strategic Theme 4

### **Promoting Urban Conservation and Managing Growth**

- Urban Erosion Control and Storm Water Management
- Stream Morphology
- Land Use Planning

## Strategic Theme 1

### Building SWCD and DSWC Capacity



**SWCD and DSWC Capacity**—Provide Ohio’s SWCDs and DSWC employees with the tools necessary to plan for and carryout programs that meet statewide and local natural resource needs of Ohio’s landowners and land users.

**Professional Development**—Create and/or enhance position specific professional development opportunities for SWCD supervisors and staff and DSWC staff.

**Technology**—Obtain and utilize technology necessary to maximize the Division, SWCD and other partners’ abilities to advance statewide and local conservation efforts.

**Program Development**—Enhance local and state capacity to develop, implement, and assess the success of programs that address Ohio’s natural resource needs.

**Communication, Education and Marketing**—Improve internal and external communication, education and marketing for the advancement of soil and water conservation.

**Diversity**—Assist SWCDs with outreach opportunities to work with a broad range of local natural resource needs and with people from all backgrounds and cultures.

## Strategic Theme 2

### Managing Land Resources



**Watershed Management** – Focus DSWC programs and service delivery wherever possible and appropriate, on a watershed basis. Assist local officials and private citizens with development and implementation of watershed plans that protect and restore water resources.

**Soil Resource Information** – Provide leadership to SWCDs and other local units of government on up-to-date soils information and technology that encourages land users and local decision makers to “look at the soils first” when making important land use decisions.

**Land Use Management** – Provide local communities and units of government with the tools necessary to make wise land use decisions affecting, for example, farmland preservation, open space, and development in urban and unincorporated areas.

**Core 4** – Provide awareness, information and research to encourage the use of conservation tillage, buffer strips, and nutrient and pesticide management to provide agricultural producers the opportunity to achieve environmental stewardship and economic viability.

**Forest Stewardship** – Encourage stewardship and management of forest resources in partnership with SWCDs, the Division of Forestry, and others.

**Stream Protection and Restoration** – Help SWCDs and others develop capacity to assist local communities to protect and restore stream, lake, and ground water resources.

### Strategic Theme 3

## Protecting and Restoring Water Resources



**Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP)** – Support the development and implementation of CREP programs that restore water quality, improve wildlife habitat and develop riparian corridors.

**Livestock Environmental Stewardship** – In partnership with SWCDs, state agencies, and the livestock and poultry industry, utilize proactive, voluntary information/education, technical assistance, cost sharing, relying on enforcement when necessary, to ensure a high level of environmental stewardship and to promote a “good neighbor” ethic on all livestock and poultry operations.

**Nonpoint Source Pollution Control** – Work with local, state, federal, and non-governmental partners to deliver a coordinated, effective statewide nonpoint source control program, including the Lake Erie coastal nonpoint program, to help meet 80% attainment of water quality standards for aquatic life use designation in monitored watersheds by 2010 and protect Ohio’s aquifers.

### Strategic Theme 4

## Promoting Urban Conservation and Managing Growth



**Urban Erosion Control and Storm Water Management** – Reduce construction site sediment pollution from entering Ohio’s surface waters and reduce impacts of storm water runoff.

**Stream Morphology** – Prevent loss of essential physical requirements for streams and floodplains for water resource integrity and restore degraded streams.

**Land Use Planning** – Assist local communities, units of government and landowners to use a holistic approach and better tools to land use planning and apply principles that allow for balanced growth.

