

# STRATEGIC PLANNING

## WHY BE STRATEGIC?

Many organizations don't have a strategic plan. Some do but don't look at it since completing it. So why is it important for a CD to be strategic?

CDs face many recurring and new natural resource issues (see other ten-minute training), so determining and prioritizing what they work on is important. In addition to this, funding and human resources are limited. By going through the process of strategic planning, CDs can become more effective. Furthermore, it ensures that everyone, including employees, is informed about future direction.

## WHAT IS STRATEGIC PLANNING?

Strategic planning is the process by which an organization engages in planning for the next 3-5 years. The process can be facilitated by someone outside of the organization. Essentially, the process goes like this:

1. Determine current state.
2. Identify future goals.
3. Develop the plan (i.e. strategic plan).
4. Use your plan (i.e. annual work-plan).
5. Revise and restructure your plan.

## YOUR CD'S STRATEGIC PLAN

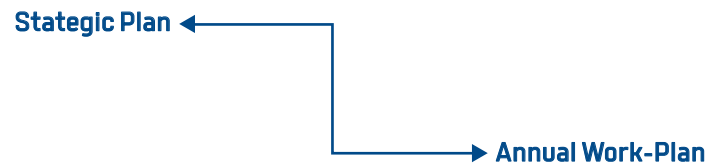
The result of strategic planning is a strategic plan. This is a living document that can be used as a framework for the work that the CD will do. Strategic plan documents can vary. However, in general the components include:

- Mission Statement
- Vision Statement
- Values Statement
- Goals and Objectives
- Actions
- Performance

## NEXT STEP: ANNUAL WORK-PLAN

Although a CD's strategic plan can be the guiding framework for the work that the CD wants to do over the next several years, it does not consist of the nuts and bolts of how to get there. Instead, that is the annual work-plan, which is developed annually.

Essentially, this work-plan comes from the strategic plan. If something is not in the latter, then it either needs to be revised or the former needs to be reevaluated to ensure that the CD is working towards its goals and objectives.



## AFTER STRATEGIC PLANNING

Once you have completed your CD's strategic planning, you are done, right? The answer is no.

Strategic planning is an ongoing, never-ending process. The reason that strategic plans are only good for 3-5 years is simply because things change. This is especially true in the CD world, where past natural resource issues may no longer be a priority and where new issues arise frequently. This is why an old strategic plan is essentially obsolete.

Another good reason to engage in strategic planning every several years is because of turnover at the CDs. New supervisors and employees can benefit immensely from the process itself, and this can result in greater engagement, performance and effectiveness.

*Exercise: Take at least 3 10-minute sessions to complete the template on the next page.*



# STRATEGIC PLANNING

Conservation District: \_\_\_\_\_ Length of Plan: \_\_\_\_\_

Date Prepared: \_\_\_\_\_ Prepared by: \_\_\_\_\_

**Vision:**

*Why your CD exists? What is its impact?*

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**Mission:**

*How will you CD make its vision a reality? What will you be doing?*

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**Values:**

*How will you CD operate? What are your core beliefs of how you will act within your organization and in your community?*

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**Strategic Vision:**

*Where do you see your CD in the next 3-5 years?*

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**Priorities:**

*To achieve this vision, what are the key areas you need to discuss and outline actions?*

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**Strategies:**

*What will you do to meet each of the priorities you outline above?*

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**Goals:**

*For each strategy outline corresponding goals/actions to meet that strategy.*

*Goals should be specific, realistic based on resources, and measurable.*

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