

RC&D Program

1. Introduction to Program: Purpose, Goals and Objectives:

The intent of USDA is to develop a cost-effective Federal Government delivery system that builds local working relationships for conserving and developing natural resources and that enhances the social, economic, and environmental conditions in the United States.

The RC&D vision is as follows:

- People helping people help themselves to develop an enhanced quality of life through the RC&D Program by providing social, environmental and economic benefits to communities and surrounding areas.
- Serving communities of the United States, its territories, and tribal nations by providing local benefits vital to the health and well being of the community. Communities rely on USDA as one of many valuable partners to build productive working relationships and to conserve and develop natural resources.
- Having every RC&D Council develop productive working relationships to balance natural resource conservation and development. These Councils analyze community needs, develop plans to meet these needs, and coordinate the resources required to accomplish these plans. They also share their knowledge and experience with tribal nations, others in the same geographic area, in the State, and across the United States.

The mission of the RC&D program is to make available the total resources of USDA and other public and private partnerships to build relationships, create financial leverage, and increase the ability of communities to meet their regionally identified resource conservation and development needs.

For additional information go to the NRCS National web site at <http://www.nrcs.usda.gov/programs/rcd> Additional information on RC&D can be found in the Conservation Programs Manual First Edition, Part 513

2. Fact sheets:

The following documents are attached:
Resource Conservation & Development Fact Sheet
RC&D Partnerships Serving America's Communities

3. Application process: Step-by-step with timeframes for actions

A. Establishment of the RC&D Area

The size and configuration of an area must be based on the sponsors' assessment of rural development needs, institutional arrangements, and the natural resources of the region. Eligible sponsors may include public and private agencies and organizations, such as counties, parishes, towns, boroughs, conservation districts, other special districts, Councils of government, regional planning bodies, municipalities, local nonprofit

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organizations, and Indian tribal bodies. Sponsors must assess local interest and prepare and submit an application for assistance.

B. Constitution or Articles of Incorporation

The RC&D Council is required to follow all relevant laws and regulations when it becomes incorporated. This may mean it is required to have a constitution or articles of incorporation.

C. Application for RC&D Program Assistance

NRCS and other USDA agency personnel will assist the sponsors in preparing their application for program assistance. The application may be considered as the Area Plan after the designation of the RC&D Area.

D. Area Designation

Designation by the Secretary of Agriculture allows Federal RC&D funds in the form of technical and/or financial assistance to be spent in the area. These funds provide for establishing and staffing an RC&D office, developing the RC&D Area Plan and ongoing technical assistance to carry out the Council's work plan.

4. Forms Required:

There are no NRCS forms required, however, in order for the Secretary of Agriculture to provide assistance to the designated area, the RC&D Council, as the governing body, must be incorporated as a nonprofit.

5. Indiana contact information:

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