



Strategic Plan April 2018 to September 30, 2021

INTRODUCTION

The Leadership Team of the Kalkaska Conservation District (KCD) is pleased to present this strategic plan designed with careful attention to meeting the needs of our County and serving as a strong community partner. We recognize that our County has both opportunities and challenges related to conservation and that KCD plays a unique role in working with property owners, land users and community leaders to address the needs of our beautiful and vibrant region.

Our 3-year plan focuses on leveraging our strengths to grow programs, services and initiatives that address both conservation opportunities and challenges. We will strive to be a strong community partner in creating a County that is a showcase of recreational, economic, and sustainable living opportunities. We hope you will be excited by the possibilities and invite you to join us in working toward a shared vision.

OUR MISSION

Our mission is to provide leadership in the natural resource management of Kalkaska County, deliver conservation assistance and information to residents and visitors, and ensure quality implementation of conservation practices.

LONG-TERM VISION (5 TO 10 YEARS)

Agriculture, forests, and waterways are among Kalkaska County's greatest assets. We provide leadership to protect these natural resources and play an active role to position Kalkaska as a place to experience nature and live more sustainably.

AREAS OF FOCUS, 2018 to 2021

- Continue to promote and implement effective conservation practices.
- Expand education programming to new audiences.
- Strengthen marketing and outreach.
- Increase advocacy.
- Support the farm-to-table (local) foods movement.
- Strengthen our internal organizational performance.

TARGET FUNDING MODEL

Revenue Source	2018 Budget	2019 Target	2020 Target	2021 Target
Public Support				
Millage	\$186,000	\$186,000	\$186,000	\$186,000
Grants	\$ 5,000	\$ 10,000	\$ 15,000	\$ 20,000
Donations				
Earned Income	\$ 10,000	\$ 15,000	\$ 20,000	\$ 20,000
Sales				
Contracts				
Fees				
TOTAL REVENUE	\$201,000	\$211,000	\$221,000	\$226,000

Notes:

- Assume millage remains constant and is renewed in 2020.
- Tree sales currently at \$10,000; opportunities to grow tree sales plus other merchandise sales to \$20,000 annually.

MEASURES OF SUCCESS

- Increased number of program/service users.
- Land user satisfaction with services/programs.
- Increased number of active volunteers.
- Increase public awareness and knowledge about KCD as measured by website visitors, Facebook followers, and general inquiries.
- Renewal of millage in 2020.
- Maintain financial stability.
- Increased public awareness and utilization of healthy, locally-produced foods.

STRATEGIC PLAN IMPLEMENTATION

Area of Focus: Continue to promote and implement effective conservation practices.			
Strategy	Timing	Lead	Measure of Success
Continue work with land owners on managing invasive species, land/ forest stewardship, water quality, and erosion.	Ongoing	District Manager and staff	Increased number of program/service users.
Continue hazardous waste collection and disposal.	Ongoing	District Manager and staff	
Promote and manage the use of the Rugg Pond Natural Area and other public properties.	Ongoing	District Manager and staff	Land user satisfaction with services/programs.
Rebuild relationships with Upper Manistee River Association initiatives.	By September 30, 2019	District Manager and staff	
Conduct research field trials to ensure effective conservation practices.	By September 30, 2020	District Manager and staff	Renewal of millage in 2020.
Collaborate with other partners to further develop trails.	By September 30, 2021	District Manager and staff	
Evaluate new service ideas using an evaluation matrix.	Ongoing	Board and District Manager	
Area of Focus: Expand education programming to new audiences.			
Strategy	Timing	Lead	Measure of Success
Continue to participate & collaborate in Field Days with Antrim Conservation District.	Summer 2018; Ongoing	District Manager and staff	Increased number of program/service users.
Work with the Kalkaska Environmental Education Network (KEEN) to develop new approaches for public education that include all age groups, new venues, and emphasize from education to action; add additional members as needed	Begin by September 30, 2018; conduct quarterly meetings	District Manager and staff	
Re-introduce conservation tours and expand beyond public schools to include adults and home schooled children.	Begin by September 30, 2019	District Manager and staff	
Increase staff and volunteers as needed to support expanded education programs.	Ongoing	District Manager and staff	
Assure that align school education programs with state curriculum requirements.	Plan by May 2019; Launch by September 30, 2019	District Manager and staff	
Collaborate with Kiwanis on expanding programs in schools.	Begin by September 30, 2019	District Manager and staff	
Assess the feasibility of establishing a school greenhouse for hands-on training with students.	Complete by Sept. 30, 2021	District Manager and staff	

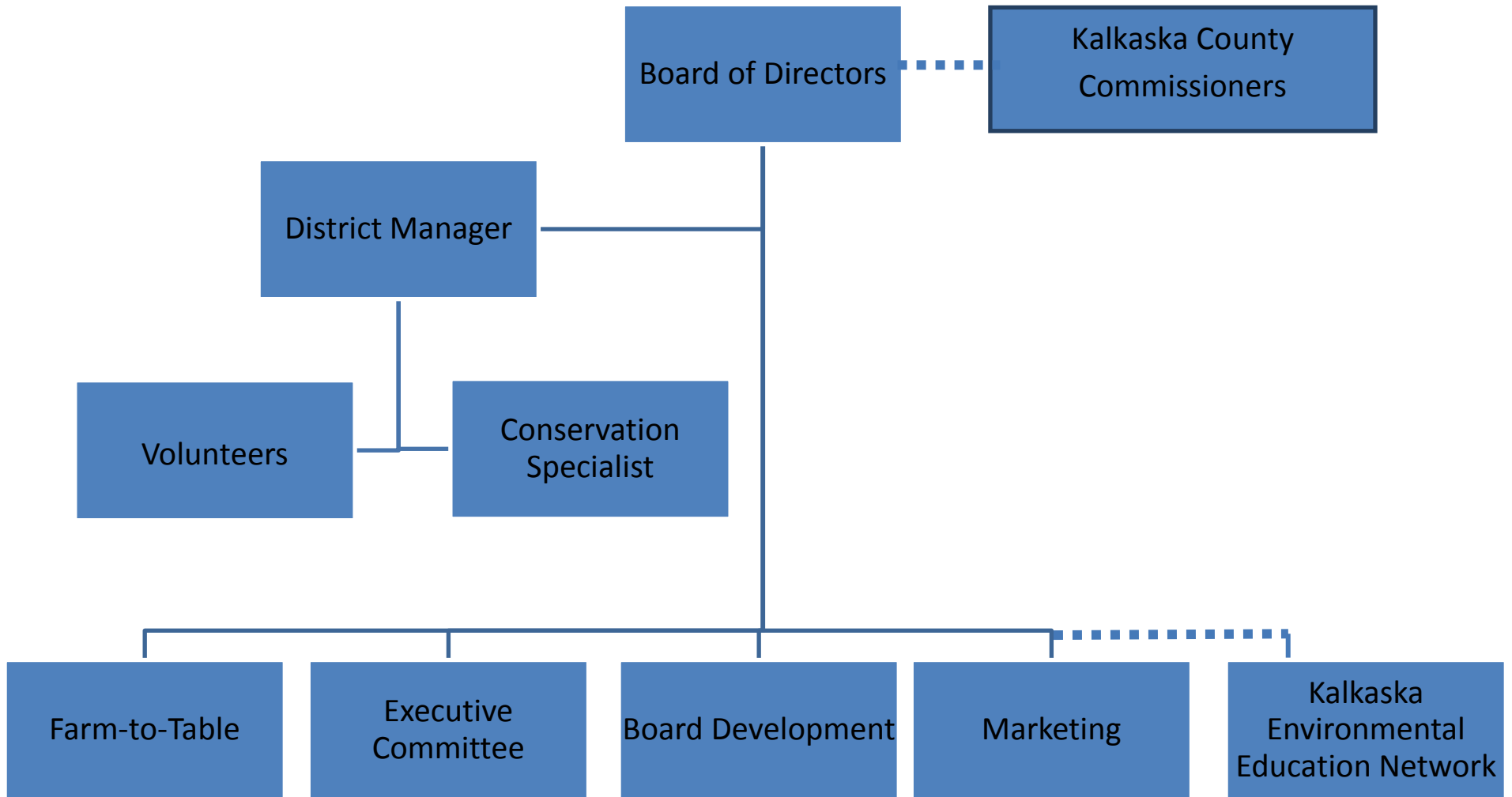
Area of Focus: Strengthen marketing and outreach.			
Strategy	Timing	Lead	Measure of Success
Systematically tell the story of what KCD is doing and how it contributes to the environmental health, quality of life and economy of Kalkaska County.	Ongoing	Marketing Committee	Increase public awareness and knowledge about KCD as measured by website visitors, Facebook followers, and general inquiries.
Develop a marketing plan with targeted audiences, messages and strategies; include a focus on newcomers with information about KCD.	Complete by August 1, 2018	Marketing Committee	
Develop annual marketing budget.	Complete by August 1, 2018	Marketing Committee	Increased number of program/service users.
Establish nontraditional working relationships to broaden KCD's reach and community engagement including with families, Great Start, seniors, library, etc.	Ongoing	Marketing Committee	Increased number of active volunteers.
Renewal of millage in 2020.			
Area of Focus: Increase advocacy.			
Strategy	Timing	Lead	Measure of Success
Prepare Board members with talking points regarding the importance of the Conservation District and the impact we have.	Spring 2018	Board and District Manager	Renewal of millage in 2020.
Develop an annual update for the County.	By November 2018	Marketing Committee	Increase public awareness and knowledge about KCD as measured by website visitors, Facebook followers, and general inquiries.
Develop a talking point post card for use in presentations.	By January 2019	Marketing Committee	
Board and Manager to meet with County Commissioners to provide regular updates.	Ongoing	Board and District Manager	
Board and Manager to meet with legislators during local coffees to provide updates and education on key issues.	Ongoing	Board and District Manager	
Deliver presentations with annual update to area service organizations, churches, etc.	Begin January 2019	Marketing Committee	

Adopted April, 2018

Area of Focus: Support the farm-to-table (local) foods movement.			
Strategy	Timing	Lead	Measure of Success
Promote farmers' markets & community gardens in the County.	By September 30, 2018	Farm-to-Table Taskforce	Increased public awareness and utilization of healthy, locally-produced foods.
Assess the feasibility of farmer to community fundraisers in local schools.	By September 30, 2018	Farm- to-Table Taskforce	
Establish a taskforce to explore the role that KCD could play in bringing local foods to institutions; connect with Groundworks first	By September 30, 2018	Board	
Taskforce to develop a plan and recommendations regarding bringing local foods to schools, institutions, and community.	By September 30, 2019	Farm-to-Table Taskforce	
Area of Focus: Strengthen our performance.			
Strategy	Timing	Lead	Measure of Success
Establish a Board Development committee to focus on succession planning.	By June 2018	Board	Renewal of millage in 2020.
Track implementation of the strategic plan and work of committees.	Ongoing	Board Executive Committee	Maintain financial stability.
Increase data collection and reporting.	By September 30, 2018	Managing Director and staff	
Develop a Board recruitment and succession plan.	Complete by June 30, 2019	Board Development Committee	
Develop an evaluation tool to systematically collect data regarding the effectiveness of and satisfaction with services and programs.	Complete by Sept. 30, 2019	Marketing Committee	

Adopted April, 2018

ORGANIZATIONAL CHART TO SUPPORT THIS PLAN



APPENDICES

APPENDIX 1:

Big changes in the KCD region

- Millennials
- Population/county leadership aging
- Aging population
- Increased population of retirees
- 85% of school kids on free or reduced lunch [61% per school data -mr]
- Expanding Traverse City needs- housing, recreation
- Bedroom community of Traverse City
- Forest health decline
- Smaller land parcels
- Forestry damage- due to recent wind shear damage
- Forest pests
- Loss of species diversity- pollinator habitat
- GTRLC preserve by Manistee Lake
- Library improvements campaign
- Opioid epidemic
- More and more internet, social media use
- Awareness of local agriculture and related health
- Changing agri-farm business models/practices
- Political chaos
- Business environment struggling
- Kalkaska downtown development
- Possible expansion of marijuana industry
- Increasing economic/social inequality

Needs in the KCD region

- Forest management
- Recreational spots- preserve them- helps the economy
- Personal assistance for landowners
- Education in general- all audiences, all media
- Water quality
- Promoting local food- supporting farmers- partnering and connecting people/institutions (senior center, hospital, meals on wheels, schools)
- Invasive species
- Collaboration is the way we do business
- A beautiful place to live that attracts younger people back/families back
- 90% of students on free or reduced lunch [61% per school data -mr]