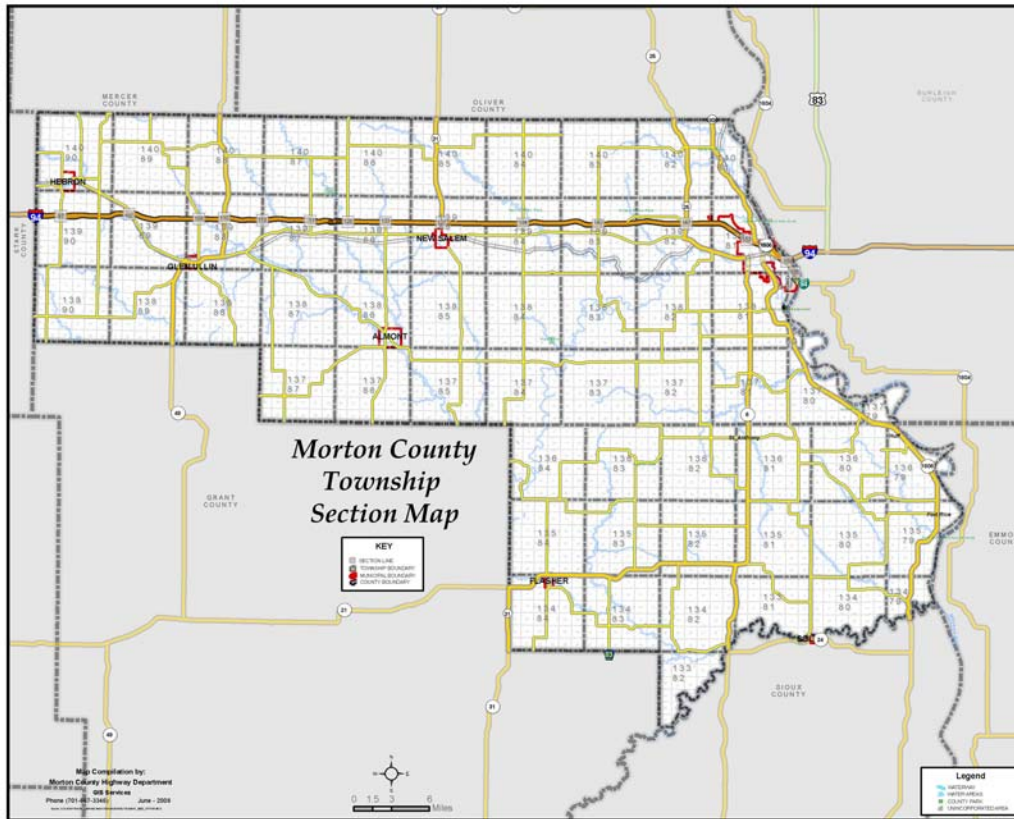


LONG RANGE PLAN OF OPERATIONS



MORTON COUNTY SOIL CONSERVATION DISTRICT AND MANDAN NRCS FIELD OFFICE 2011 --- 2020

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INTRODUCTION:

The Morton County Soil Conservation District Board of Supervisors, recognizing the need and value of a long range plan, held several meetings to develop this plan. The results of the meetings have been incorporated into this long range plan designed to provide guidance for the next ten years.

Population growth, increased emphasis on environmental issues, CRP conversion, water quality, and in general more attention directed toward our natural resources are some examples of the factors which are requiring Soil Conservation Districts across the State and Nation to re-evaluate their mission, activities, goals, and plans.

The Morton County Soil Conservation District Board of Supervisors have chosen to respond to these changing public values and expectations by preparing this long range plan of operations – a document that will be reviewed annually and revised as goals are either attained or modified and as new challenges present themselves to the County. This plan is intended as a management guide, reflecting the current areas of concern.

AUTHORITY:

The Morton County Soil Conservation District was officially organized on the 21st day of September, 1976, as a result of Morton County voters, voting to consolidate the East and West Morton County Soil Conservation District's into a single, county-wide district.

The District is organized under the Authority conferred by Chapter 9, Sessions Laws of the 1937 Legislative Assembly, as amended by Chapter 6, Sessions Laws of the 1939 Legislative Assembly of the State of North Dakota.

BOARD OF SUPERVISORS:

The Morton County Soil Conservation District is made up of five supervisors. Any land occupier physically living in the soil conservation district and is a qualified elector is eligible to run for the office of a soil conservation district supervisor. The regular election of soil conservation district supervisors shall be held at the same time, and at the same place, as the general election is held. Three of these Supervisors are elected for a term of six years.

Any soil conservation district, upon resolution of the three elected supervisors, may appoint two additional supervisors who shall serve for a term of one year from and after the date of their appointment. Such supervisors shall be appointed by a majority of the three elected supervisors and shall have all the powers, voting privileges, duties, and responsibilities of elected supervisors.

LOCATION, TOPOGRAPHY, SOILS, CLIMATE:

Morton County is in the south-central and southwestern parts of North Dakota. The county has a total area of 1,228,928 acres, or 1,920.2 square miles. It has 15,232 acres of water in bodies of more than 40 acres in size. The county is bounded on the east by the Missouri River. The county seat is Mandan.

The first recorded settlements in the area were established in the 1880's.

The county is in the rolling Soft Shale Plain within the Northern Great Plains Spring Wheat Region. The county lies within the Missouri Plateau Physiographic District of the Great Plains Province.

Elevation in the county ranges from 2,460 feet in the western part to less than 1,600 feet in the southeastern part. Four rivers drain the area including the Missouri River, Heart River, Cannonball River, and the Knife River. Those river valleys are entrenched an average 200 to 400 feet below the surrounding dissected plains.

Farming and ranching are the main economic enterprises. The county has a large amount of livestock operations. The principal crops are spring wheat, barley, corn, sunflowers, oats, peas, alfalfa, and grass-legume hay. There are a number of small manufacturing industries in cities in Morton County. Mandan is a large railroad center with a switchyard capable of handling several trains and hundreds of cars per day. Hebron, in the western end of the county, is located near deposits of kaolinic clays which are used in the manufacture of bricks.

The soils in the county range widely in texture, depth, and other characteristics. The loamy or clayey, moderately deep to deep soils are well suited to cropland. The sandy, alkaline, or shallow soils are best suited to rangeland or pastureland. Most of the soil parent material is residual or of residual origin. Some soil parent material located in the eastern part of the county is of glacial origin. Many of the soils are susceptible to wind or water erosion.

The first soil survey of Morton County was published in the 1908 Soil Survey of Western North Dakota. In 1951, a Soil Survey of Morton County was published by the U. S. Department of Agriculture at a scale of 1 inch = 1 mile. A general soil map of the county was published in 1968. The present survey, which was updated in 2002, provides additional information and larger scale maps and shows the soil in more detail.

About 37 percent of the county is cropland and 63 percent is rangeland, hayland, or other land. Irrigation is limited to areas along the Heart River and the Missouri River.

The climate of Morton County is semi-arid. The area is usually quite warm in summer with frequent spells of hot weather and occasional cool days. It is very cold in winter, when arctic air frequently surges over the area. Most precipitation falls in late spring and early summer. The average annual precipitation is 17.4 inches of which 69% comes during the spring and summer months. The growing season runs about 133 days from May 7 to September 28. Occasional summer thunderstorms bring cloudbursts and locally severe hailstorms, which cause soil erosion on growing crops.

MISSION STATEMENT:

“To help the residents of Morton County protect its natural resources by education, financial and technical assistance”

VISION STATEMENT:

The Morton County Soil Conservation District and Mandan Natural Resources Conservation Services are recognized as the high quality provider of conservation services.

PARTNERS:

We recognize the following agencies and organizations as our partners to help up carry out goals and objectives:

**Natural Resources Conservation Service
NDSU – Extension Service
Dakota Prairies Resource Conservation & Development
North Dakota State Soil Conservation Committee
North Dakota Association of Soil Conservation Districts
Northern Great Plains Research Laboratory
North Dakota Department of Health
Morton County Water Resource District
Morton County Commission
Morton County Parks & Recreation
North Dakota Stockmen’s Association
North Dakota Agriculture Department
Environmental Protection Agency
North Dakota Game & Fish Department
Morton County Planning & Zoning Commission
County Equipment Dealers
County producers and contractors
Pheasants Forever
Ducks Unlimited
ND Grazing Lands Coalition**

RESOURCE CONCERNS:

Soil Health
Range Health
Water & Air Quality
Manure Management
Urban Conservation
Wildlife Habitat Management

GOALS:

Soil Health: (Rocky Bateman) To help all landowners promote soil health and to eliminate soil erosion. Soil is a living organism that requires care and nurturing.

1. Benefits of No-Till farming through workshops & presentations
2. Economics of CRP Conversion – CRP Demonstration plots using No-Till
3. Promote cover crops to sequester carbon and improve soil health
4. Crop Rotation Program –Alternative crops
5. Soil Testing – promote, evaluate, and help set goals
6. Machinery – planters and drills - demos, workshops, testimonials
7. On-Site “Soils 101” Workshop
8. Right crops for right soils

Range Health: (Lance Gartner) To provide a healthy environment for all animals (domestic and wild) by educating the public on the important balance between animals and the environment. To promote a diverse, healthy plant community through public awareness of plant characteristics that are compatible with Morton County land uses.

1. Plant ID tours/Pasture Walks
2. Winter Range Health Workshops
3. Grazing land distribution practices
4. Forage suitabilities
5. Native Grass Seedings
6. Adoption of grazing plans

Water & Air Quality: (Jim Hopfauf) We will not take water quality and clean air for granted. We will use our best management practices to create a good water cycle for the whole environment. We will promote carbon sequestration and clean air practices by educating and demonstrating to clientele the importance of livestock waste management and reduced fuel consumption.

1. Evaluate existing water quality by monitoring water quality in each watershed
2. Develop a plan to correct problems identified by TMDL's in each watershed
3. Riparian buffers for rivers and streams
4. Demonstrations for good use of water
5. Recreation areas – Harmon Lake, Danzig Dam, Fish Creek, Hailstone Creek, Sweet Briar Dam & Creek, Crown Butte Dam, Missouri River, Heart River, and the Cannonball River
6. Water Festival for 5th graders
7. Tree planting – act as screens and odor absorption
8. Odor containment – tours, demonstrations, chopped straw, foam, composting

Manure Management: (Duane Olsen) Emphasize water quality throughout the County. Morton County has a large amount of livestock operations and we need to demonstrate the need for manure management and Ag Waste Systems.

1. One-on-One contacts with producers
2. Managing runoff with clean water diversions and riparian buffers
3. Demonstrations on different Ag Waste Systems
4. Demonstrations on different manure spreading systems
5. Provide manure spreading equipment and nutrient management plans to producers on a county-wide basis
6. Demonstrations on Composting
7. Managing odors
8. Contact small tract landowners

Urban Conservation: (Ted Becker) The Morton County SCD recognizes the need for increased emphasis on conservation in the urban areas of Morton County.

1. Establish a working relationship with cities located in Morton County.
2. Establish a working relationship with Morton County Planning and Zoning Board for areas surrounding the urban areas.
3. Assess the urban conservation status and needs and develop a conservation plan to address these needs.

Wildlife Habitat: (Travis Wolf) Provide a healthy environment for all animals (domestic and wild) by educating the public on the important balance between animals and the environment

1. Food plots
2. Wildlife Tree plantings
3. Wildlife depredation on trees
4. Planting options for animal control
5. Education:
 - a. Wildlife speaker at Women's Ag Day
 - b. Create educational wildlife-domestic message for producers co-existence
 - c. Build relationship with wildlife groups – speak at their conferences
 - d. Create demo projects to show benefits of balance

Marketing:

Educating producers, landowners, and the general public of the importance of conservation will be a major effort of the Morton County Soil Conservation District.

Major emphasis will be focused on:

- Newsletters
- News articles in local papers
- TV features on local stations
- Booths set up at local events
- Workshops
- Demonstrations and Tours
- Power Point Presentations
- Talking Points
- Bulletin Boards
- Displays
- Cliff Notes
- Testimonials
- Build current partnerships and form new ones
- Write grants to help fund demonstration sites
- Develop grants to help purchase equipment for
Demonstration use throughout the county

Best Management Practices will be emphasized to help us obtain our conservation goals. The Morton County SCD would also like to include provisions of the current Farm Bill as an important part of this work plan.

The job ahead is a big one ----- cooperation, assistance, education, and application are the keys to success.

We, the undersigned, being the Chairman and Secretary of the District Governing Body for the Morton County Soil Conservation District, do hereby certify that the above is a true and exact copy of the resolution adopted by the Governing Body of the District at a meeting held on the _____ day of _____, 2011.

Dated this _____ day of _____ . 2011.

Chairman

Secretary

Nondiscrimination – Equal Opportunity:

The Morton County Soil Conservation District does not discriminate against any person on the basis of race, religion, color, gender, sexual orientation, national origin, ancestry, age, marital status, veteran status or disability. This policy covers all programs, services, and procedures of the District, including employment.

The District will aggressively pursue equal opportunity for all qualifiable employees and applicants for employment. Positive action will continue to be taken to ensure conformance to the policies set forth herein. The objective of this policy is to obtain individuals qualified and trainable for positions by virtue of education, training, experience and personal qualifications without regard to race, religion, color, gender, sexual orientation, national origin, ancestry, age, marital status, veteran status or disability. Its further objective is to maintain a workplace free from discrimination or harassment in any form.

HARASSMENT:

General

Harassment in any form is an unacceptable behavior and will not be tolerated by the District. In general, harassment is any conduct that has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with an individual's work performance or creating an intimidating, hostile or offensive working environment. Harassment is defined to include: participating in coercive or repeated, unsolicited and unwelcome verbal comments or gestures, or using implicit or explicit coercive behavior in the process of business, or to control, influence or affect the career, salary or job of an employee.

Harassment includes such unwelcome behavior as: verbal abuse, insults, suggestive, demeaning or degrading comments, jokes, notes or picture displays alluding to race, religion, color, gender, sexual orientation, national origin, ancestry, age, marital status, veteran status or disability. Harassment may also take the form of physical aggressiveness, threats or other intimidating behaviors.

Sexual Harassment

Sexual harassment is a specific type of discrimination based on sex, and is prohibited by Section 703 of Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, as amended. Any unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature constitutes sexual harassment when:

- Submission to such conduct is made wither explicitly or implicitly a term or condition of an individual's employment;
- Submission to, or rejection of, such conduct by an individual is used as the basis for employment decisions affecting such individuals; or
- Such conduct has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with an individual's work performance or creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive working environment.

Sexual harassment, like other forms of harassment, includes: coercive or repeated, unsolicited and unwelcome verbal comments, gestures or physical contacts of a sexual nature; or using implicit or explicit coercive sexual behavior in the process of conducting business, or to control, influence or affect the career, salary or job of an employee. It can also include: verbal abuse, insults, whistles, or suggestive comments; jokes; notes or pictures; touching and physical aggressiveness; pressure for dates; or threats or sexual assault.

The rules and guidelines concerning sexual harassment are not confined just to the office, but also apply to business trips, meetings and conferences away from the regular workplace, and off-the-clock, work-related social activities.

Policy

Supervisors, employees and others affiliated with the District must maintain high standards of conduct at all times. Any such individual engaging in harassing behavior or activities is subject to disciplinary action, which may include removal from office or employment. Managers and supervisors who tolerate such behavior, who fail to take appropriate action on reports of harassment, or who retaliate against individuals who report incidents or file complaints of harassment are also subject to disciplinary action for failure to perform their supervisory or managerial duties.

This District policy applies to supervisors, employees and others affiliated with the District. It also applies in their working relationships with non-District employees, contractors and cooperators.

Complaint Procedures

Persons who believe that they are being, or have been, subjected to harassing or discriminatory behavior should report the incident(s) to their immediate supervisor or to the District Chairman. If a complainant's supervisor cannot satisfactorily resolve a complaint, it should be brought to the attention of the District Chair who will work with them to attempt a resolution. Throughout any harassment resolution process, the confidentiality of the complainant(s) and witness(es) will be maintained.

Every attempt will be made to satisfactorily resolve matters internally at the initial stage of a complaint. However, other alternatives are available to a complainant if he or she is not satisfied with District-proposed resolution. An individual may file a formal complaint through the appropriate state human rights commission within 300 days of an incident, or with the U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission within 300 days of an incident, or with the U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission with 300 days of an incident.

Sanctions and Disciplines

Any District supervisor or employee who violates this policy either by engaging in such previously defined inappropriate conduct, or by allowing such conduct to go unaddressed, will be subject to disciplinary actions. Such actions include, but are not limited to, counseling, reprimands, suspensions without pay and/or removal from office or termination of employment.

Contacts

District Chairman

James Hopfauf
2540 Overlook Lane NW
Mandan, ND 58554

701-667-1163 Ext. 3

NRCS Equal Employment Opportunity:

Phone: 301-504-2181 or 1-866-NRCS395
301-504-2439 (voice or TTY)

Federal Relay Service: 1-800-877-8339 (voice or TTY)