

~~Programs & Services~~
~~Employees~~
~~(Districts)~~

Group:

~~David Brown, Heather Lake, Scott
Harris, Keith Campbell, Steve
Pearl Johnson, Bob Anderson, Shob
Carr, Jeffery P. Acunsky
Jim Kuhn, Jeffery P. Acunsky, Shob
Carr, Keith Campbell, Steve~~

3.10.17
New Lenox Forum

Programs &
Employees

Programs & Services

- should be developed by Board & staff; Each district has own needs.

- Flexibility in state organization to allow districts to establish priorities.

• ex - IDDA: focus on NLRs Watersheds but C/S should be available to all districts. Shouldn't be penalized for not being a priority watershed.

→ Universal Priorities / Focus

find our
main
priorities

- Watershed Planning

- Water Quantity

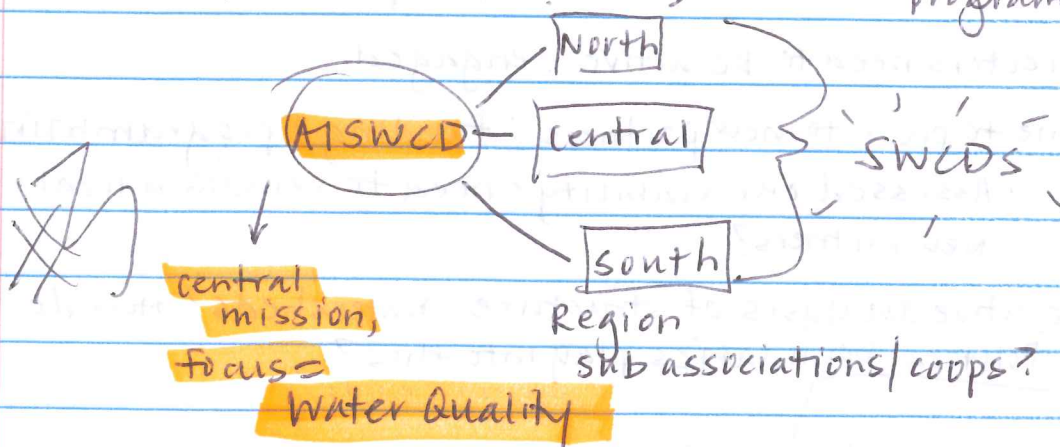
- Water Quality *

- Surface & GW



new structure?

allow for regional programming / focuses



- Need to come together

- too much workload for one person (ex. 1 RC 4 counties how be effective?)

- can't dilute offices to maintain productivity

- Ask partners what they want/need from us; engage these people in our discussions/planning.
- c/s programming - is it duplicative? Does it fill a niche? Does it get overshadowed by USDA programs? Do we need a new program? Is there another need?
- boards determine focus of funds
- limitation - IDOA program rules & structure.
- have a need and have a program; don't get money and then have to go find.
- Water Quality - ^{central} focus and develop programming from there.

- Employees - Training : Certification opportunities

↓
 - need to ensure
 Employees
 provide services
 based on skills.
 Quality control.

what type?

who does it benefit?

what opportunities does it bring in?

who's in charge of it?

- NE IL Districts - adapting w/ changing landscape & audience/customers. Needs to be done in Central & Southern IL - allows district to remain viable & be a resource. Need to adapt.

- Directors need to be active & engaged.

- Time to pivot to new partners : funding : programming.

• Assessed our viability : need to remain a local resource.
 New partners?

- Objective analysis of structure. Watersheds? How do Political boundaries play into this?

Focus = Water

* Pursue

New Partners - Chicago Water Reclamation District

- Chicago Wilderness

- brainstorm new partners
 statewide

3.10.17

New Lenox Forum

Brand Image

- Need to have an identity
- Incorporate technology
- Trainings to learn how to market ourselves
- Website - face to public it should be engaging, interactive, tell our story, pictures. Don't want it to look sterile/impersonal, or like "government" or "regulatory"
- Dekalb Change Name: Soil & Water Conservation District of Dekalb County (put focus first)
- Need to Brand ourselves.
- Do people know what AISWCD stands for? Can they state what it stands for or does? ~~Any~~ Too many abbreviations: long words.
- can't go away from local standbys - local FB paper, local papers, local tours.
- Branding is needed. water Quality.
- website should reflect name not acronym
- Do need a strong structure w/ strong leadership w/ right leader - ~~strong~~
- Groups need to recognize us
- ID who we are, what we do well, partners will then pursue us.
- need to give perception on same page across 97 SWCDs. Discussion of FB structure.

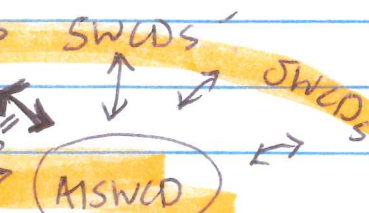
inclusive
& not
divisive.

↓
Can we establish a main mission/ entity w/ AISWCD
Who supports SWCDs: SWCDs support in turn

* must be grassroots/
bottom up.

- Would a regional in between be helpful? south/central/north

communication & support



- Focus/Mission = water quality
- central logo
- central contact for partners

(see comments on programs! employees)

- Perception has deteriorated over years, need to work onto regain (How other groups view us)
- AISWCD needs to have central mission, priorities; this will ensure leadership has focus and continues a course of action that is focused on SWCDs and not one leader's perception or agenda that can negatively impact our structure & support from partners.
- Need more leaders like Steve - a functioning state structure that listens to members. Members need to feel voices are heard - this encourages participation & desire to serve in state leadership positions.

Governance

Partnership

- see other category comments for Governance specifically brand & image sheet comments

- Partnerships / Relationships - important to Establish, ID their needs & Address
 - ⊗ Survey to identify community concerns, use funds
 - develop programming to address (stormwater, as example). McHenry Wetland specialist
 - IEPA Const. Inspecc Program
 - USACE Wetland Program
 - Establish this not only locally but w/ AISWCD. need unified governance w/ AISWCD that functions like above ⊗

- One staff covering too many districts like in past is inefficient.
- Don't reduce staff, need level staff to address workload.
- Find new partners to support staff to address workload.
- Districts decide where funding goes instead of x for ops and x for programs. local programming, partner focus tells where \$ goes. (Local Work Group USDA)
- NREC - positioned themselves to be ready to ~~the~~ address current resource needs. Jean Payne is everywhere these days; at meetings not invited to previously or even anticipated 10 yrs ago.

- Give \$1 to NREC but most farmers wonder where it goes But if had SWCD water Quality Tax would know where it goes

Implementation

Ready to tell story / make more visible

then be ready with quantitative benefits: ROI

return on investment.

#2

- Boundaries are efficient of SWCDs as staff are present. Staff is Key. (Boundaries don't matter, must be adequately staffed). local boards are

Potential local programming - important

- Structure still needs to be Board of Directors + Staff.

- Consensus is still county based structure - in part because political jurisdictions matter - impact programming, projects, knowledge of local regs/jurisdictions vs. watershed based. Watersheds can be too big - ^{encompass} too many political jurisdictions, population, diverse needs.

Strengths:
Challenges

Strengths

- Staff
 - people & relationships they have
- Asset
 - local people dealing w/ local concerns
- Direction of office
 - Set by SWCD (challenge also)
- Directors-need to participate & be active (challenge also)
 - ex. legislative contacts

Challenges

- Identity
 - people think we are interchangeable w/ NRCS
- Need to Market ourselves
 - tell our story, be visible, be our own group
 - Website - Focus on SWCD, be friendly (looks too govt & regulatory)
 - ↳ want to look like a partner, resource
- Isolate ourselves w/ focusing only on 1-2 issues or doing what has always been done. Need to adapt, connect, grow & change to address local needs.
- Need to define and focus on our audience

→ (Question - Who is our audience?
Ag: Suburban/Urban)

- How do you make SWCD appealing: a prevalent focus?

→ Comments - be "water & soil conservation service"

- work together, don't be territorial amongst partners.

TOVER

(cont.)

Strengths

- People - staff & Board Members
- Envir organizations want & value SWCD local presence but voices like FB & IDOA say "change". Is it time to pivot & pursue new partners? Partner w/ those who see our structure as a strength and not a weakness.
- Local presence / structure
 - other envir groups other than IDOA & FB are drawn to our local structure & find it as our most appealing quality.

Challenges

- available time to do all activities / needs - Staff limitations
- sustainable funding
- What is focus of each district? needs? Water quality? Quantity?
- Do we serve too many "masters" - do we get enough benefit for where we put our focus (IDOA, NRCS)? Should we look to other partners?
- Need to show ROI (return on investment)

Comments - Need a central focus - mission & identity.

- Need to tell our story. Get busy working, forget to tell what we do.
- Partner w/ groups but need to still tell our story, and be ready to pivot to next program/topic/opportunity.
- NRCS won't be a primary focus forever; but territorial concerns come in vs. coming together to work on NRCS (corn growers, Soybean Assoc, FB, etc.)