

# **Guidelines for Director Participation Tri-County/City Soil & Water Conservation District**

## **Mission:**

Our agency goal is to develop healthy watersheds through sustainable, on-the-ground natural resource conservation.

## **Purpose of the Position:**

A District director is a non-partisan local official from the City of Fredericksburg, King George County, Spotsylvania County, or Stafford County. Eight directors are elected every four years in the general election process and two, including a Virginia Cooperative Extension Agent serving one of the District's locales, are appointed by the Virginia Soil and Water Conservation Board. The directors assess local conservation needs and develop conservation programs to address these needs.

## **Legal Authority:**

10.1.537 of the Code of Virginia defines a soil and water conservation district as a political subdivision of the Commonwealth of Virginia. The conservation district is not a part of state government. It is an independent entity.

## **Minimum Requirements:**

- Be well versed in the field of conservation and interested in local conservation issues.
- Attend monthly Board of Director meetings.
- Actively participate in District activities and special events.
- Be willing to stay informed and inform others about the work of the District and about conservation issues.
- Be willing to work with many agencies and approach the resolution of problems through teamwork.
- Be an ambassador for the District
- Be willing to learn.

## **Duties and Responsibilities:**

1. Recognize natural resource management needs that can be met through District programs.
2. Participate in District policy and program development, which includes:
  - Strategic and annual plans of work.
  - District policies regarding natural resource conservation issues as well as personnel and office matters.
  - Technical and educational conservation programs to meet the needs of the District.
3. Provide financial direction, which includes:
  - The proper expenditure and management of public funds.
  - Approval of an annual budget.
  - Approval of monthly and quarterly financial reports.
  - A working knowledge of the budgetary process and keeping local and state officials informed about SWCD programs.
4. Participate in public and community relations activities and programs, which include:
  - An active public information and education program so that citizens and local officials will be informed about conservation issues and district programs.
  - Presentations and testimony at public meetings about conservation issues as approved by the Board.
  - Representing the District on special local, state, and federal committees as needed.
  - Coordinating efforts with cooperating agencies especially the Natural Resources Conservation Service, the Department of Conservation & Recreation, the Virginia Cooperative Extension Service, and the Virginia Department of Forestry.
5. Participate in personnel management, which includes:

- Fair and equitable personnel policies.
- An open working relationship with the District Manager and other employees.
- Assisting in personnel matters, including guidance, reviews, and hiring.

**Desirable Qualifications:**

- Understand the need for conserving soil, water, and other natural resources
- Other qualifications that may be helpful:
  - Environmental awareness.
  - Background in local, state, and national legislative processes.
  - Skills in conduct of meetings and parliamentary procedure.
  - Knowledge of urban, suburban, and agricultural conservation issues and related fields, including conventional and innovative approaches to solving natural resource problems.

**Training Expectations & Policies:**

- Be knowledgeable of District policies and procedures.
- Attend area and state meetings and participate in workshops and seminars related to soil and water conservation.
- Keep informed on current conservation issues by reviewing district correspondence, documents and technical literature and manuals.
- Attend a Director orientation program presented by DCR-DSWC and other capacity building training.

**Time Commitment:**

Approximately 15 hours/month, which includes monthly board meetings, reviewing materials ahead of time, committee work, attending meetings and activities.

**Term of Office:**

Four years, unless filling a vacated term.

**Reimbursement:**

Directors are volunteers and receive no compensation; they are reimbursed for travel to meetings, registrations, meals, and other associated expenses when conducting work of the District.