

# NEW MEXICO RC&D COUNCIL TRAINING GUIDE

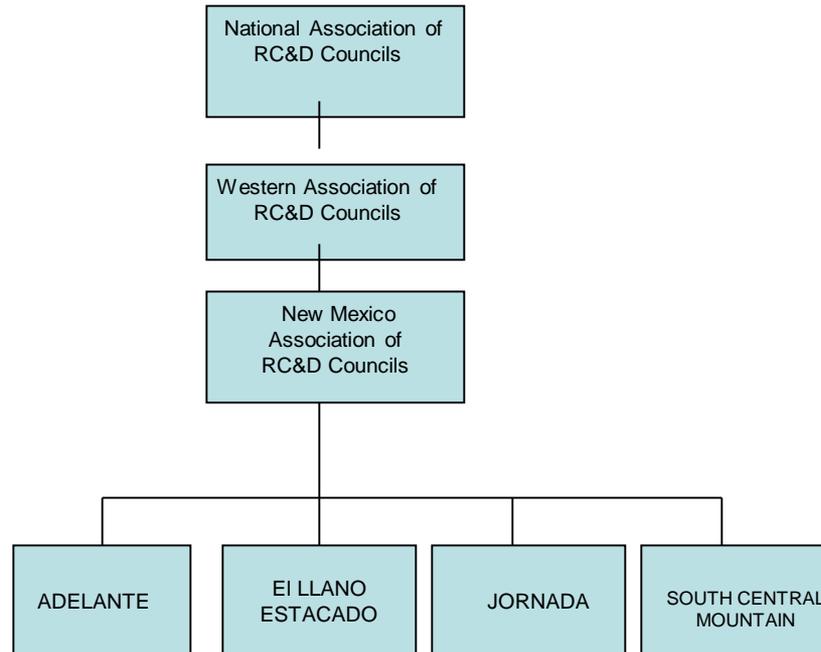
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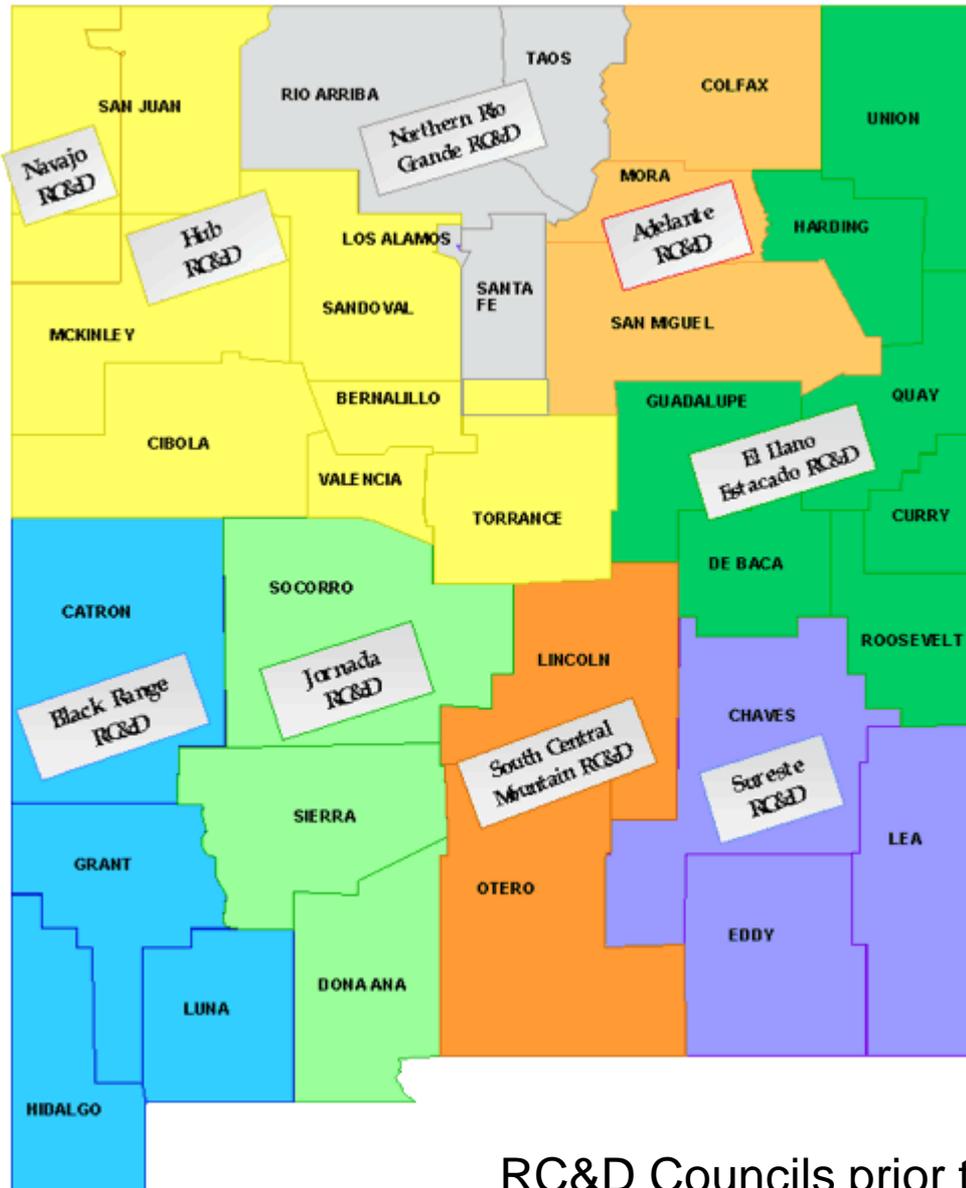
# RC&D ORGANIZATIONAL CHART



# SECTION 2

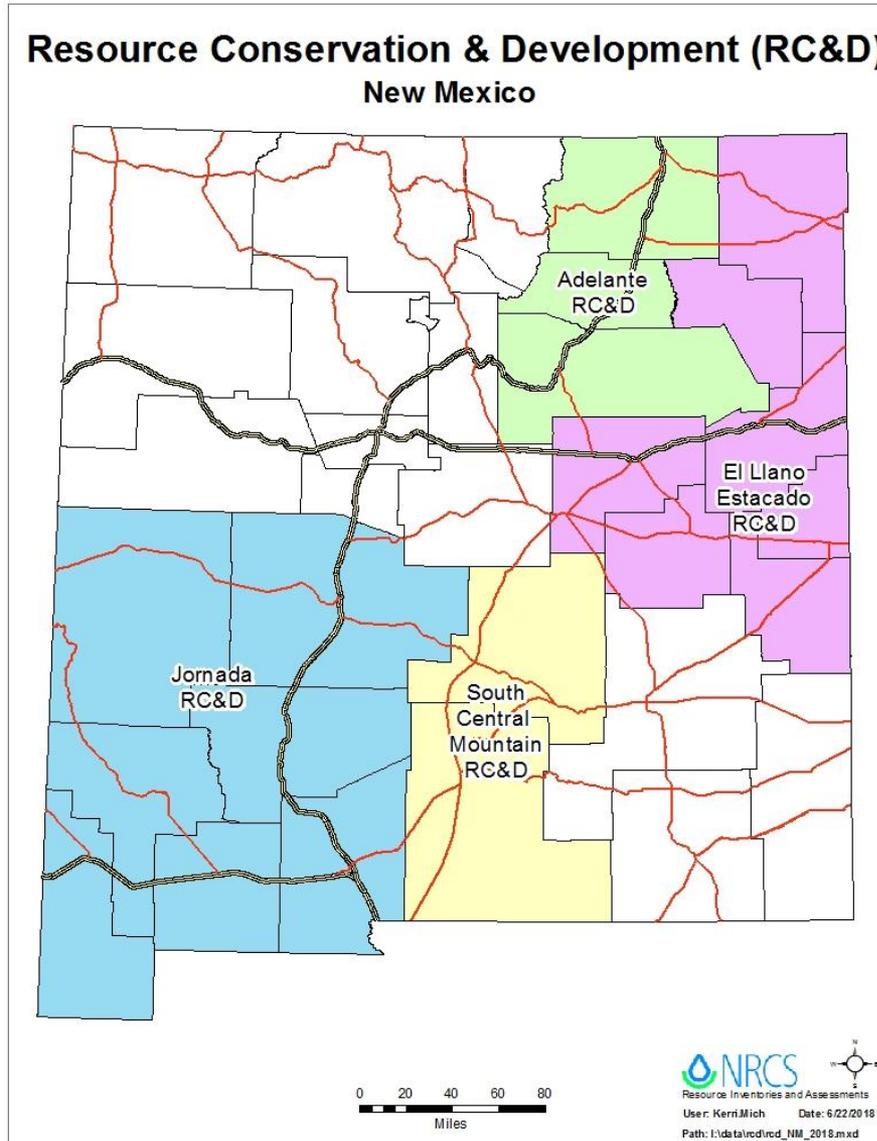
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## **MAPS**



RC&D Councils prior to 2011

# Current RC&Ds in NM



# SECTION 3

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**RC&D**

**PROGRAM**

**OVERVIEW**

# HISTORY

1962

The RC&D Program

Was first authorized by the

Food & Agriculture Act

Public Law 87-703

# 1966

❖ Local councils began forming in New Mexico

# 1981

- Congressional Authority – Agriculture & Food Act
- NRCS appointed lead agency
- Expanded program objectives
- Authorized up to 450 councils
- Provided training & career opportunities to coordinators
- Simplified funding procedures
- Encouraged councils to seek outside funding (501(c)3)

2002

RC&D Program is permanently  
authorized through the Farm Bill  
Passage

# PURPOSE OF PL 97-98

RC&D's were established to encourage and improve the capability of state and local units of government and local non-profits in rural areas to plan, develop, and carry out rural development programs.

# PROGRAM EMPHASIS

- Community & Economic Development
- Water Management
- Land Conservation
- Education
- Other

# ORGANIZATIONAL STATUS

## Local

### Council-Sponsors

Includes state agencies, local communities, Tribes, SWCD's and others

# ROLE OF THE COUNCIL

Provide leadership at local level

Set Priorities

Plan projects

Implement projects



A council is a rural development vehicle to  
“Make Things Happen”

# Types of Planning Activities

- Area
- Annual
- Project

# ASSOCIATED ORGANIZATIONS

- **State RC&D Council**
- **Western RC&D Association**
- **National Association of RC&D Councils**
- **National Association of Conservation Districts.**

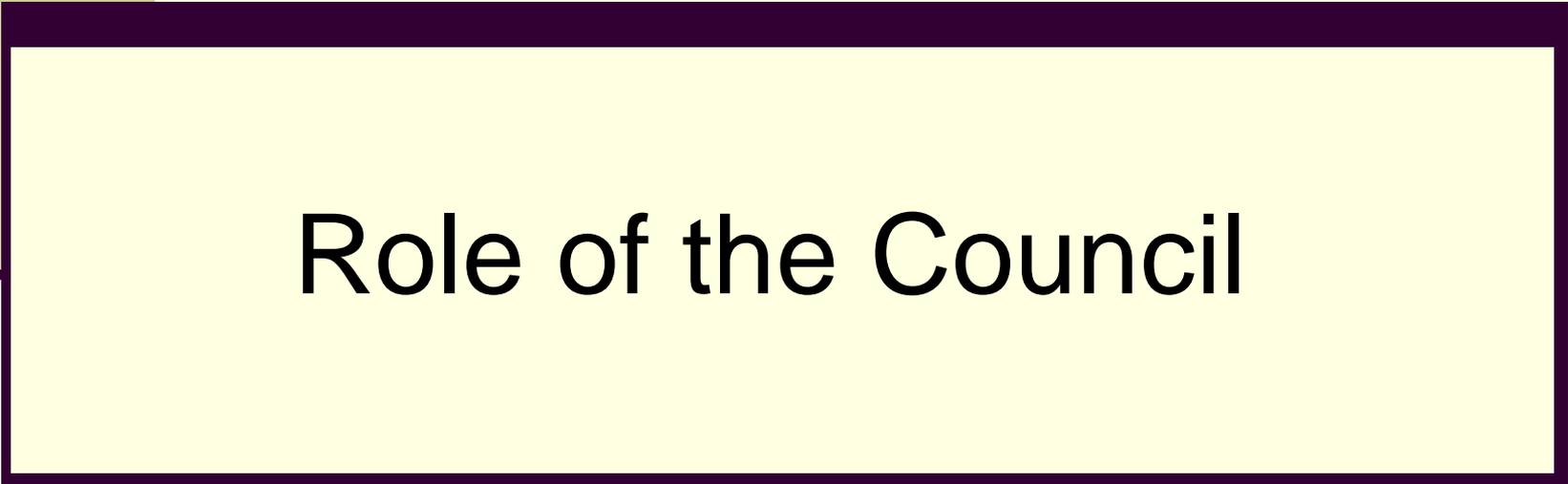


## RC&D STAFF

Coordinators/Executive Directors provide direct assistance to the RC&D councils, and respond to local goals and objectives. They assist councils in “*Making Things Happen.*” Volunteers also may serve as RC&D staff members.



# Section 5



## Role of the Council

# INTRODUCTION

- The membership of the council is made up of officially recognized sponsors of the local RC&D plus additional non-voting members or organizations
- The council is the recognized vehicle through which the RC&D Program is implemented.

# COUNCIL'S RESPONSIBILITIES

- Developing, adopting and operating by a constitution or articles of incorporation and by-laws
- Providing opportunities for the public to participate in RC&D planning - including setting of objectives, goals and strategies
- Developing and area plan and working diligently toward achieving the stated objectives and goals

- Setting priorities, developing an annual plan of work, and following it throughout the year
- Establishing resource or action committees to accomplish work identified in the Annual Plan of Work
- Meeting all requirements of a non-for-profit organization including and financial records of all transactions

- Coordinating planning activities with regional planning agencies and related groups having similar resource concerns
- Ensuring that representation adequately reflects the area's cultural, ethnic, and social backgrounds
- Conducting regular public meetings

# SECTION 6

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## **COORDINATOR/EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR RESPONSIBILITIES**

The RC&D Coordinator/Executive Director  
is a Council or Contract  
Employee  
And the principal staff  
Person of the RC&D  
Council

# The Coordinator/Executive Director Assists the Council In:

- Developing/Modifying the Area Plan and Plan of Work
- Planning and conducting meetings, workshops, etc.
- Preparing news releases, articles or conducting public hearings or meetings
- Writing & implementing project plans
- Preparing reports to council, and sponsors and funders

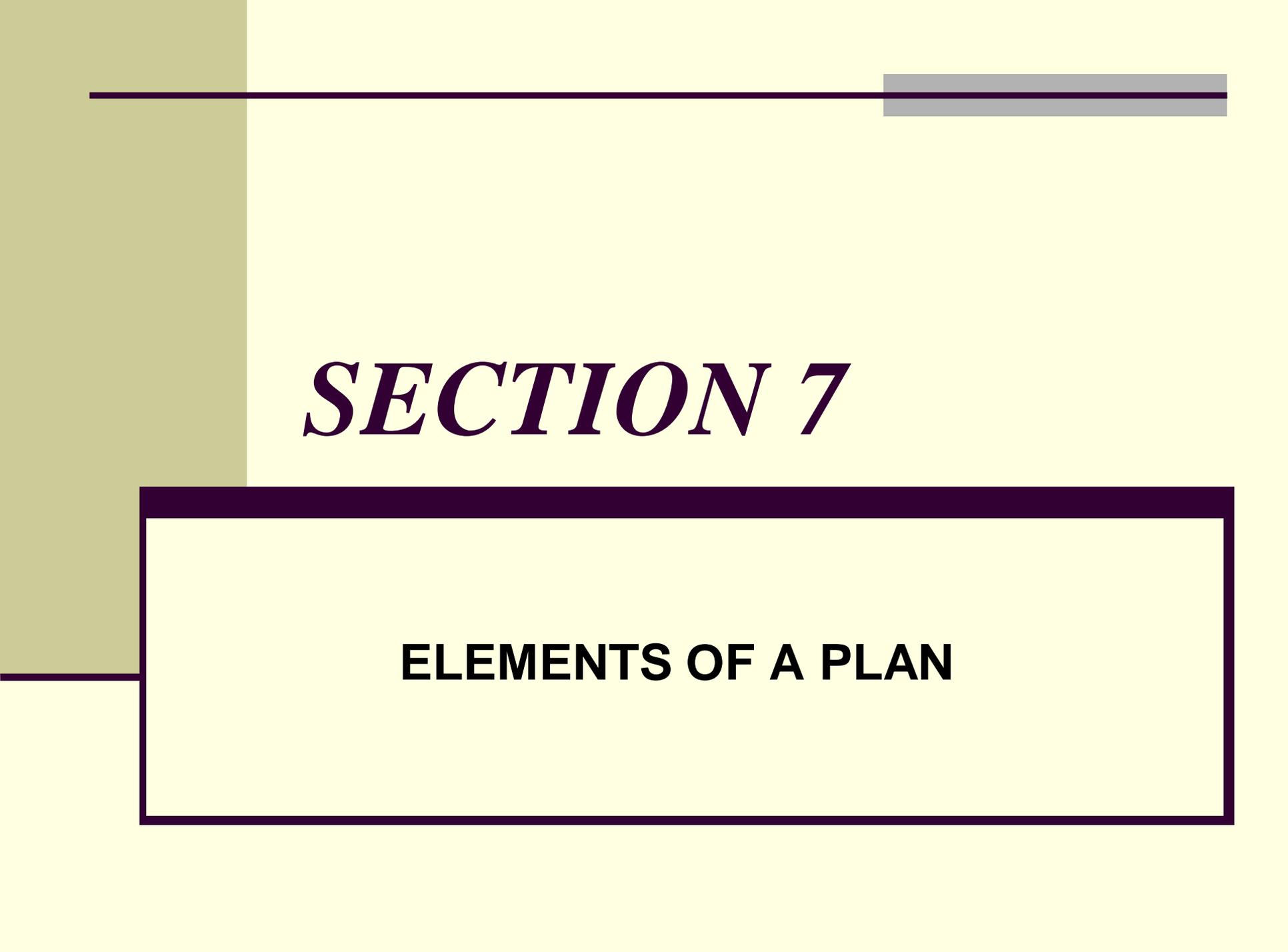
- Utilizing grantsmanship skills to secure funding for projects
- Identifying priorities and determining how RC&D fits in
- Administering grants
- Reporting on status of projects
- Assisting council officers (Executive Committee) on council related matters

- Networking with others to ensure good coordination and cooperation
- Maintaining project files on projects
- Working with ad hoc committees on specific projects
- Attending meetings with RC&D Council members, and be the technical back up.
- Representing RC&D Council when duly authorized.

# The Coordinator/Executive Director Also Serves As:

- Motivator - Encouraging and improving the capability of council members to plan, develop, and carry out their RC&D program
- Innovator - Developing feasible and practical ideas and methods to achieve council goals and objectives

- Expediter - Assessing sponsors of RC&D projects to organize for successful implementation
- Communicator - Informing sponsors of progress, problems, and opportunities associated with all aspects of the RC&D program management within the area.



# *SECTION 7*

**ELEMENTS OF A PLAN**

# *Introduction*

- The RC&D Program is based on the premise that local people working together, can identify and solve problems and realize opportunities that will enhance the quality of life in their area.
- Each Council develops a strong Area Plan (Strategic Plan) to provide a basis and direction for themselves.

# Area Plan & Plan of Work

- Every Council should develop an Area Plan and a Plan of Work (POW) to guide the activities of the Council.
- The Area Plan is the long term plan for the Council's area and should include one or more of the following four elements:

# *1 - Land Conservation*

- The purpose of the Land Conservation element shall be to control erosion and sedimentation.

## ***2 - Water Management***

- The Water Management element will be for conservation, utilization and quality of water.
- It can include water for irrigation, mitigation of floods, construction of dams, and improvement of water quality through control of non-point sources of pollution.

# 3 -Community Development

- The Community Development element is for the development of natural resource based industries, protection of rural industries from natural resource hazards, adequate rural water supply and waste disposal system, improve recreation facilities and to help improve the quality of rural housing. Education, transportation and communication are also a part of it.

# 4 – LAND MANAGEMENT

- The purpose of which is energy conservation, including the production of energy crops; the protection of agricultural land from conversion of other uses; and the protection of fish and wildlife habitat areas.

# *Summary*

- Each plan is open ended, dynamic and outlines tasks the Council desires to accomplish.
- It identifies needs and opportunities; and outlines goals, objectives and strategies that will be used to address the problems and opportunities

# Contents of the Plan should include the following:

- Vision Statement
- Mission Statement
- Description of Problems & Opportunities
- Goals
- Objectives
- Action Items
- Agreements

# Plan of Work

- The Plan of Work is developed from the Area Plan.
- It is the tool the Council uses to implement the Area Plan.
- It is developed by the Council, sponsors, coordinator, and other agencies.
- It should be a multi-year plan.

# Project Plan

- Project plans are developed to document the planning and implementation process for actions the Council desires to take in carrying out its Area Plan.
- It results in a definite product or service that provides public benefits.
- It can be multi-year, but will be completed in a short period.

# Elements of a Project Plan

- Can be in the form of a grant proposal/application.
- Describes and quantifies the problem.
- Addresses alternatives.
- Describes what is proposed.
- Shows the effects of the project.
- Describes the implementation strategy.

# SECTION 8

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## AREA PLAN

# AREA PLAN

Business Plan

Marketing Plan

Strategic Plan

# Why Have A Plan?

The Area Plan is considered the most important tool or document of an RC&D Council. An Area Plan could also be called a Business Plan, a Marketing Plan, or a Strategic Plan. Aside from the fact that it is a required document, there are several reasons why it is needed and must be kept current.

# AREA PLAN

- Provides a proposed road map towards achieving the Council's vision for the next five years.
- Assists a Council in developing its niche among the groups providing assistance to rural areas.
- Becomes a Marketing Plan which allows groups to know what the Council is doing

- Makes it easier to recruit volunteers since they can see what the Council is all about.
- Helps a Council become proactive, rather than reactive, so that it can get at those things which are the most important first

- Funding sources are more willing to support a group that has a *Strategic Plan*
- Can be used as support for funding from a variety of sources
- Is an evaluation tool to measure progress

# ***CONCLUSION***

- Research shows that more than 50% of all businesses fail as a result of lack of proper planning.
- An RC&D Council is a business, and must have a strong plan guiding its activities if it is to survive.

# SECTION 9

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## COUNCIL FINANCES

# ***COUNCIL FINANCES***

RC&D Councils in New Mexico are dependent on a variety of financial and technical resources to carry out their programs.

As public non-profits, outside funding is needed to pay expenses to operate the local council

All New Mexico councils have their 501(c) (3) status issued by IRS for Charitable Organizations

The council expenses can include travel, supplies, meetings, dues, personnel, and other related expenses

# Sources of income for councils can include:

- Sponsor dues
- Grant administration fees
- Fund raising activities
- Corporate and individual donations

# Councils Financial Responsibilities

- Maintain their 501(c)(3) status with IRS
- File 990 tax forms with IRS and NM State Attorney General
- Keep By -Laws updated with NM Corporation Commission and IRS
- Maintain accurate financial records
- Conduct periodic financial audits
- Keep appropriate financial records for grants
- follow state or federal procurement guidelines

# ***Key Points on 501 (c)(3) Status***

- Every council should file a the correct 990 IRS form
- All should have a periodic audit
- Meet all State non-profit requirements
- File changes in Articles of Incorporation

# SECTION 10

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## **CODE OF ETHICS**

# ***Council Members Should Be:***

- Independent
- Impartial
- Responsible
- Representative of the interests of the entire RC&D Area

# Council Members Will

1. Act morally and honestly in discharging their responsibilities and not use their position for personal gain.
2. Respect the council members right to privacy and their personal confidence except in matters involving ethical standards, violations of the law, health, safety, and welfare of the public

3. Devote the time and effort necessary to ensure the successful functioning of the council, as well as participate in and encourage others to participate in, activities of local and state councils, regional and national associations.
4. Advocate the highest standards of conduct and competence for all who serve in or participate in the RC&D program.
5. Strive for self improvement by learning more about RC&D program through attendance at council, state, and regional association training sessions, full participation in RC&D activities, and accepting positions of leadership.

# SECTION 11

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## ***CONSTITUTION AND BYLAWS***

# ***Constitution or Articles of Incorporation***

The constitution or articles of incorporation is the document that officially states the purpose of the RC&D area and gives the legal organizational structure.

Together with the bylaws it provides the method by which the council operates.

# Included in the constitution or articles of incorporation are:

- Name
- Purpose
- Duration of organization
- Registered office and agent
- Names of initial board of directors
- Membership requirements
- Surplus funds and dissolution
- Allowable activities

# Bylaws

This is the working document by which a council operates

# Bylaws should contain the following

- Name of the RC&D
- Method of election or appointment and length of term for council members
- Method of election or appointment of officers and powers, duties, and terms of each office
- Frequency of meetings
- Definition of a quorum