



# HANDBOOK

## PREFACE

This handbook explains the workings of the Regional Conservation Council (RCC) and its cooperative relationship with the Ohio-Kentucky-Indiana Regional Council of Governments (OKI). It is designed to orient RCC newcomers to their mission and acquaint the public with the RCC

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February 1990  
(updated March 2001)

## INTRODUCTION

In May 1971, the supervisors of nine Soil and Water Conservation Districts came together to discuss their shared concerns for promoting conservation in the Tri-State area. From that meeting evolved the Ohio-Kentucky-Indiana Regional Conservation Council (RCC.)\*

Today, the RCC provides a unique opportunity for its members to encourage better protection and management of this-area's natural resources. It is a voluntary organization created through the initiative of individuals who understand the benefits of cooperation. The group's membership consists of representatives from the Soil and Water Conservation Districts (SWCDs) serving Butler, Clermont, Hamilton and Warren Counties in Ohio; Boone, Campbell and Kenton Counties in Kentucky; and Dearborn and Ohio Counties in Indiana. All nine counties are equals in the RCC with the group's offices of Chair, Vice-Chair and Secretary-Treasurer rotating annually among the member SWCDs.

During the 1970s, the RCC defined its mission clearly by adopting **Comprehensive Goals** (see page 6) and approving a **Land Use Policy Statement** (see page 9). In pursuing these objectives, the RCC works closely with the Ohio-Kentucky-Indiana Regional Council of Governments (OKI).

As the agency responsible for coordinating local review of federally funded projects and developing areawide plans, OKI often deals with issues related to the protection and management of natural resources. RCC members have often assisted on projects involving these issues by providing information culled from years of practical experience. Since the mid-1970s the RCC has played a significant role in OKI's water quality management program.

\* The group originally called itself the OKI Soil and Water Conservation District Council, but soon changed its name to the OKI Regional Conservation Council

The RCC's relationship with OKI is one of mutual support. OKI knows the RCC can supply sound advice and technical expertise. The RCC, in turn, relies on OKI for staff assistance, meeting rooms and publicity.

While the RCC has been effective in expanding awareness of conservation needs, much remains to be done. The group is accomplishing this in three ways:

- **Serving as a forum for information exchange among conservation agencies**
- **Coordinating with OKI**
- **Providing public education**

These functions are described more fully in the pages that follow.

RCC members already have a proven track record in dealing with nonpoint sources of surface water pollution. As new conservation needs emerge, the RCC can bring its strengths to bear on other important environmental issues.

OKI looks to the RCC for a wisdom born of experience as well as education. We hope new members of the RCC will make the most of their opportunity to encourage stewardship of the region's natural resources.

## RCC AS A FORUM

Because they encompass nine counties in three states, the RCC's member districts need to keep track of each other, share ideas and learn from common experiences. The RCC is an ideal forum for keeping the flow of information free and the interagency contacts frequent.

Much of the RCC's strength is through diversity. It maintains a friendly atmosphere and encourages participation by SWCD supervisors and staff, SCS field personnel and OKI staff. The Agricultural Stabilization and Conservation Service, the Cooperative Extension Service and the Division of Forestry also participate in RCC activities at times.

Early each year, the RCC sponsors an **Annual Meeting** to bring many conservation-minded people together at the OKI offices. The occasion is mainly social, but a carefully planned agenda assures a genuine exchange of information. Time is set aside for progress reports by the member SWCDs so each district can hear what its neighbors are doing. Such events are arranged during Planning Meetings, which allow for more communication throughout the year.

Summer Field Tours offer RCC members a firsthand look at measures for controlling erosion and other problems. Some tours have featured visits to places of regional importance to conservationists, including the Caesars Creek Reservoir in Warren County, the Dinsmore Farm in Boone County and the banks of the Ohio River in Ohio County.

The RCC Directory is another means of information exchange. It is revised periodically to keep member districts up to date on SCS and SWCD personnel throughout the region.

## RCC'S RELATIONSHIP WITH OKI

From its birth, the RCC has given local conservation districts a role in regional planning. In 1971, supervisors of the area's nine SWCDs expressed an interest in OKI's work on a Comprehensive Development Plan because they wanted to be more than spectators to regional growth. Formation of the RCC allowed OKI and the SCS to formalize an agreement assigning a resource conservationist to OKI's staff through the mid-1970s.

Other formal means of coordination include:

- **The RCC's Bylaws (see page 12)**
- **The SWCDs' identification as Designated Management Agencies for control of nonpoint source pollution in OKI's Regional Water Quality Management Plan**
- **The RCC's and SWCDs' Resolution of Intent to Support and Utilize the Regional Water Quality Management Plan (see page 17)**

On a less formal level, the RCC and OKI jointly sponsor special events and exchange newsletters. SWCD newsletters and occasional consultations help OKI develop proposals for water quality management projects for state or federal funding. The project publications most useful to local conservation agencies are listed on page 19. SCS and SWCD personnel generously provided information for these and other OKI publications.

Now that the federal government is placing more emphasis on the control of nonpoint source pollution, the RCC and OKI have an added incentive to jointly identify high-priority watersheds eligible for funding.

## RCC'S EDUCATIONAL ROLE

The RCC's interest in educating the public about conservation has grown through the years. This is a challenging job because erosion, sedimentation, urban sprawl and other forms of environmental degradation rarely happen in spectacular ways that command widespread attention.

The RCC sponsored its first Public Seminar on a specific conservation issue in 1980. Since then, there have been six other seminars.

SEMINAR TOPICS	
1980	"Controlling Urban Erosion"
1982	"Farmland: Is There a Tomorrow?"
1983	"Living Waters"
1984	"Before You Build or Buy"
1985	"Managing Your Woods for Fun and Profit"
1986	"Attracting Wildlife to Your Property"
1987	"Making a Green Thumb Pay Off on Your Property"

More recently, the RCC has targeted a larger audience by working with OKI in the development of the Homeowner's Conservation Guide for wide distribution. The booklet educates homeowners about sound conservation practices and emphasizes their important role in protecting, preserving and, in some cases, restoring the quality of the environment.

The RCC fulfills an essential role in public education. By example, it illustrates that natural resource conservation goes beyond aesthetics. Even though conservation measures may appear costly in the short term, they are vital in the long term to the continuing economic development of the OKI region. In short, conservation pays off.

## **COMPREHENSIVE GOALS OF REGIONAL CONSERVATION COUNCIL**

**GOAL I: Proper Land Use** - The Council endorses the concept of land capability, whether the land is to be used for agriculture, recreation, woodland, pasture or for urban development. The inherent physical and chemical properties of our land resource base and underlying geological formation must be a consideration in all our land use planning and decision making.

**OBJECTIVES:** The Council, through its member Districts, will work with County Commissioners, Planning Commissions and other units of government to encourage the formulation of a land use policy. This policy is to be based on soil survey information to determine the land capability for varied land uses. This policy is to take into consideration aesthetics as well as economic development.

**GOAL II: Prevention of Erosion and Sedimentation** - The Council, through its member Districts, is mandated to bring to the attention of all of the citizens of the region the economic impact of accelerated soil erosion and resulting sedimentation. It pledges its knowledge and assistance to those who voluntarily, or through legislation, wish to work toward reduction of soil losses from all lands.

**OBJECTIVES:** The Council will continue to the use of erosion control measures on farmland, in urban areas and on urban and rural construction sites. In addition, the Council will encourage the adoption of amendments to the development (subdivision and building) codes requiring the use of erosion and sediment control practices on all developments.

**GOAL III: Environmental Protection** - The Council recognizes that woodland, productive croplands, clear streams, wildlife habitat and other unique natural areas are a concern and a responsibility of all the people, whether they live in the cities of the region, or in the rural areas. Destruction of the environment in our cities adversely affects the rural citizens, just as carelessly used resources in the rural areas affects the city dweller.

**OBJECTIVES:** The Council, through its information and educational activities, will continue to emphasize the importance of maintaining and developing wildlife habitat, green belts and clean streams in and around urban areas. It pledges its continuing efforts in the development of conservation plans for all of the lands in the region.

**GOAL IV: Surface Water Management** - The Council believes that controlled runoff from all the lands in the region is a realizable goal. While it is true that many of the soils of the region are naturally wet and require artificial subsurface drainage, it is within the realm of reality that stormwater flow, either from subsurface drains or surface runoff, can and should be removed slowly from the land for maximum infiltration, to reduce the velocities, maintain stable channels and thereby reduce flood potentials.

**OBJECTIVES:** The Council will continue to promote programs of surface water management by recommending the proper conservation practices, such as water retention structures, waterways and diversions. The Council will facilitate the formulation of water management groups under appropriate state and federal laws. It will assist planners, land owners and units of government in identification of flood plains and alternative uses and management.

Adopted by the OKI Regional Conservation Council at its regular meeting.

November 9, 1973

Date

H. David Diebel  
Chair

Attested

Paul Kruse  
Secretary-Treasurer

# **LAND USE POLICY STATEMENT OF OKI REGIONAL CONSERVATION COUNCIL**

## **ORGANIZATION**

The OKI Regional Conservation Council represents the Soil and Water Conservation Districts of Hamilton, Clermont, Butler and Warren Counties in Ohio; Boone, Campbell and Kenton Counties in Kentucky; and Dearborn and Ohio Counties in Indiana. Each district banded together as the Regional Conservation Council in 1971 in order to form an effective working arrangement with the OKI Regional Council of Governments.

## **PURPOSE**

The Council recognizes that much of the land use in the nine-county area is rapidly changing from rural to urban. As growth occurs, agricultural land gives way to housing projects, industrial sites, recreation areas, highways, etc. Growth can be beneficial or detrimental. We believe that growth can and should be beneficial to the OKI community.

## **THE POLICY OF THE RCC IS:**

(1) The Council endorses the concept of regional planning to guide the development of the OKI community. Regional planning should guide and complement local planning at the village, city and county level.

(2) The Council recommends that all land use decisions be based on adequate consideration of soil, water and other natural resource data. The Council supports the use of soil surveys, soil interpretations and ratings of limitations, suitability or potential based on procedures developed by the U.S. Soil Conservation Service.

(3) The Council recommends that all proposed changes of land use be accompanied by a plan for water management and erosion control both during and after construction. The Council's Member District, wherein the land use change is proposed, should have the opportunity to review and comment on the plans before approval is given and construction started.

(4) The Council recommends that all subdivisions be on a sanitary sewer system under the operation or regulatory control of a unit of government.

(5) The Council recommends that agricultural land be preserved and protected from other uses to the extent feasible by all appropriate means. Tax considerations may be needed to protect the agricultural landowner from high taxes in developing areas.

(6) The Council recommends no construction in flood plains unless proper precautions are taken to prevent damage from floodwater, both on the site developed and on sites downstream.

(7) The Council recommends that ample amounts of land should be dedicated as "open space" or recreation land to assure a quality environment in the OKI community. Unique areas, such as wetlands, historical areas, etc. should be inventoried and made a part of the "open space" plan.

(8) The Council recommends a geologic survey be made to identify areas of sand and gravel, stone, etc. so these areas can be protected for future use or properly considered in future Development plans.

(9) The Council recommends that areas of high "slip potential" be identified and that Development plans for buildings, roads, etc. in these areas include provisions for eliminating or reducing damage from this hazard before, during and after construction.

(10) The Council recommends the adoption of erosion control and sediment control regulations within the OKI area 10 conserve soil, protect water quality and reduce other damages caused by erosion and sedimentation.

(11) The Council recommends that ordinances be adopted by each county or community to control the amount of runoff in new developments to that amount occurring under the existing land use. Construction of sediment traps and water retarding structures would be installed to control the stormwater runoff. A complete sediment and erosion control plan should be developed and approved before construction begins.

(12) The Council recommends that each member SWCD adopt its own policy statement on land use and distribute it throughout the district.

The land use policy statement was approved by the OKI Regional Conservation Council by a resolution adopted January 21, 1977. The statement will be reviewed at least annually and changes made as needed.

W. Robert Ellis  
Chair

Norman Cutter  
Vice Chair

Paul Spangler  
Secretary-Treasurer

**BYLAWS OF THE  
OHIO-KENTUCKY-INDIANA  
REGIONAL CONSERVATION COUNCIL**

**ARTICLE I. NAME**

The name of this organization shall be the **Ohio-Kentucky-Indiana Regional Conservation Council**, hereinafter referred to as the **RCC**.

**ARTICLE II. OBJECTIVES**

The primary objectives of the RCC shall be the following:

- 1) **To coordinate with the Ohio-Kentucky-Indiana Regional Council of Governments**, hereinafter referred to as OKI, with respect to its planning activities that address the conservation of natural resources. Activities for achieving this objective shall include, but not be limited to: facilitating the implementation of nonpoint source control as presented in OKI's Regional Water Quality Management Plan, hereinafter referred to as the Plan, and as revised thereafter, and providing information and advice with respect to land use, prevention of erosion and sedimentation, surface and ground water protection and management, nonpoint source control, and other issues relevant to the conservation of natural resources.
- 2) **To provide a forum for the exchange of ideas and information among its members**, as well as OKI and the Soil Conservation Service and other conservation agencies and organizations. Activities for achieving this objective shall include, but not be limited to: sharing information to strengthen member agencies' capabilities to carry out their individual responsibilities related to the conservation of natural resources, providing for a central- repository for the storing and dissemination of information of common- interest to the members, promoting joint problem solving and

coordination among agencies and organizations with responsibilities and interest for implementing nonpoint source control recommendations of the Plan.

3) To provide public education that promotes the conservation of natural resources. Activities for achieving this objective shall include, but not be limited to: the conduct of a regional education project or event to promote the awareness and implementation of preventative measures to reduce soil loss and the degradation of water quality, to achieve the goals of the Plan, and to otherwise conserve natural resources.

### **ARTICLE III. MEMBERS**

Members shall be the Conservation Districts in Dearborn and Ohio Counties in Indiana; Boone, Campbell and Kenton Counties in Kentucky; and Butler, Clermont, Hamilton and Warren Counties in Ohio.

Each member District of the RCC shall select from its body a representative to serve as a Director of the RCC. The Directors shall the duties prescribed in these bylaws.

Each Director or his/her authorized representative shall have one vote. Decisions shall be determined by the majority vote of the membership.

SCS field personnel, Supervisors and staff of Conservation Districts, and OKI staff shall be invited and encouraged to attend meetings of the RCC.

### **ARTICLE IV. OFFICERS**

The officers of the RCC shall be a Chair, a Vice-Chair and Secretary-Treasurer.

The officers of the RCC shall be selected by the Directors from among its body. The Directors shall rotate the selection of officers as follows so that not more than two officers are from the same state in any one year:

Boone County, Butler County, Campbell County, Clermont County, Dearborn County, Hamilton County, Kenton County, Ohio County and Warren County.

The duties of each officer shall be as follows:

Chair - to call and preside at all meetings of the RCC, to prepare an agenda for all meetings, to represent the RCC at OKI functions as appropriate, to arrange for the Summer Field Tour within his/her county and to carry out other duties as appropriate;

Vice-Chair - to perform the duties of the Chair in his/her absence;

Secretary-Treasurer - to assist the Chair in the preparation of the agenda for all meetings, notify members of all meetings, maintain a record of attendance and votes taken at all meetings, maintain the archives and past records of the RCC, provide copies of all records of the RCC to OKI (all permanent records shall be maintained at OKI), collect the dues and be responsible for the accounting thereof, process the RCC's correspondence and perform other duties as appropriate and directed by the RCC.

## **ARTICLE V. MEETINGS**

The RCC shall meet as follows:

- 1) Annual Meeting;
- 2) Summer Field Tour - rotating annually to the county of the Chair;
- 3) Regional education project or event; and
- 4) such other planning meetings, seminars, etc. as needed.

Notice of all meetings shall be given by mail at least ten (10) days prior to the meeting.

Five Directors or their representatives shall constitute a quorum at any meeting of the RCC.

All meetings of the RCC shall be conducted in conformity with the Bylaws of the RCC and *Robert's Rules of Order Revised*.

## **ARTICLE VI. DUES**

Each member district shall be assessed equal membership dues. The Directors of the RCC shall review the dues at least annually to determine an amount consistent with needs.

## **ARTICLE VII. RATIFICATION**

The Bylaws shall become effective upon their ratification by a vote of the RCC membership at a scheduled meeting.

## **ARTICLE VIII. AMENDMENT TO BYLAWS**

These Bylaws may be amended at any regular meeting of the RCC by an affirmative vote of five Districts, provided a ten (10) day notice was given.

**DATE OF RATIFICATION:**

Jan. 23, 1990

**SIGNATURES OF OFFICERS**

William Beiersdorfer  
Chair

Wayne Dittmer  
Vice-Chair

Thomas J. Steins  
Secretary-Treasurer

**RESOLUTION OF INTENT TO SUPPORT AND  
UTILIZE THE REGIONAL WATER QUALITY  
MANAGEMENT PLAN DEVELOPED BY THE OKI  
REGIONAL COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS**

WHEREAS, pursuant to Section 208 of the Federal Water Pollution Control Act Amendments of 1972, PL 92-500 (hereinafter called "the Act"), the Administrator of the United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has promulgated guidelines for designation of those areas which as the result of urban industrial concentration or other factors have substantial water quality control problems. The OKI region was designated as the 208 Planning Area (hereinafter called the "Planning Area"). The Planning Area encompasses Butler, Clermont, Hamilton and Warren Counties in Ohio; Boone, Campbell and Kenton Counties in Kentucky; and Dearborn and Ohio Counties in Indiana; and

WHEREAS, OKI satisfied criteria contained in the Act and guidelines and was designated as the 208 Areawide Waste Treatment Management Agency by the governors of the states of Ohio, Kentucky, and Indiana for the purpose of developing an Areawide Waste Treatment Management Plan; and

WHEREAS, the Plan for the designated Planning Area identifies and recommends the Soil and Water Conservation Districts within the said Planning Area as a component of the Areawide Waste Treatment Management structure; and

WHEREAS, in the certification process it was deemed appropriate that Soil and Water Conservation Districts, along with affected general and special purpose units of local governments within the Planning Area, to show their intent through formally adopted resolutions to join together in the planning process to support and utilize the Plan, which will result in a coordinated Areawide Treatment Management System for the area; and

WHEREAS, the planning process and resulting Areawide Waste Treatment Management System is necessary to control present point and nonpoint water pollution and to guide and regulate future development which may affect water quality,

BE IT THEREFORE RESOLVED THAT, inasmuch as Ohio-Kentucky-Indiana Regional Conservation Council is a representative organization and is capable of implementing pans of the Plan, that the Ohio-Kentucky-Indiana Regional Conservation Council supports the Plan and will utilize its resources and authorities to the extent available and feasible to implement appropriate nonpoint source of the Plan, and that the Ohio-Kentucky-Indiana Regional Conservation Council encourages the various federal, state, and local units of government to make available to Soil and Water Conservation Districts the financial resources and personnel for technical assistance necessary to accomplish the objectives of the Plan.

Passed this 25th day of October, 1977.

Attest:

Paul Spangler  
Secretary-Treasurer

W. Robert Ellis  
Chair

## CONSERVATION DISTRICTS

### OHIO

Butler SWCD  
1802 Princeton Road  
Hamilton, OH 45011  
Phone: (513) 887-3720  
Fax: (513) 737-0365  
<http://www.butlerswcd.org>

Clermont SWCD  
1000 Locust Street  
Owensville, OH 45160  
Phone: (513) 732-7075  
Fax: (513) 732-7077  
<http://www.clermontswcd.org>

Hamilton County SWCD  
22 Triangle Park Drive  
Cincinnati, OH 45246  
Phone: (513) 772-7645  
Fax: (513) 772-7656  
[www.hcswcd.org](http://www.hcswcd.org)

Warren County SWCD  
320 East Silver Street, Suite 300  
Lebanon, OH 45036  
Phone: (513) 695-1337  
Fax: (513) 695-2923  
[www.warrenswcd.com](http://www.warrenswcd.com)

### KENTUCKY

Boone County Conservation District  
6028 Camp Ernst Road  
Burlington, KY 41005  
Phone: (859) 586-7903, option 3  
Fax: (859) 586-7683  
<http://www.nkcd.org>; [boone@nkcd.org](mailto:boone@nkcd.org)

Campbell County Conservation District  
8350 East Main Street  
Alexandria, KY 41001  
Phone: (859) 635-9587 or (859) 635-5666  
Fax: (859)635-0496  
[www.nkcd.org/campbellconservation](http://www.nkcd.org/campbellconservation)

Kenton County Conservation District  
5272 Madison Pike, Second Floor  
P.O. Box 647  
Independence KY 41071  
Phone: (859) 356-1019  
[www.kentoncounty.org/agencies/conservation\\_district/](http://www.kentoncounty.org/agencies/conservation_district/)

### INDIANA

Dearborn County SWCD  
10729 Randall Avenue, Suite 2  
Aurora, IN 47001  
Phone: (812) 926-2406, Ext. 3  
Fax: (855) 391-1912  
[www.dearbornswcd.org](http://www.dearbornswcd.org)

Ohio County SWCD  
P.O. Box 14  
Rising Sun, IN 47040  
Phone: (812) 667-5662  
Fax: (812) 438-1241

Note: Each conservation district is governed by a board of supervisors. The supervisors are elected countywide and serve without pay. All supervisors and associate supervisors are listed in the *Ohio-Kentucky-Indiana Regional Conservation Council Directory*