



MONTANA ASSOCIATION of  
**CONSERVATION DISTRICTS**

*We're growing Montana's future.*

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***Five-Year Strategic Plan***  
**2018-2022**  
*and 2018-2019 Operational Plan*

**UPDATED JUNE 2019**

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## *Executive Summary*

For more than 75 years, the Montana Association of Conservation Districts has been contributing to the success of districts across Montana. Created in 1942, MACD is a private, nonprofit association, governed by a statewide Board of Directors, who simultaneously serve as district supervisors in their own districts. In order to carry out the specific directives of the Board, MACD maintains an office and small staff in Helena. Nationally, MACD works with the National Association of Conservation Districts (NACD) to advocate for sound conservation policies and actions by federal agencies and Congress.

MACD membership is open to the 58 conservation districts in Montana. The MACD Board of Directors is composed of 18 elected members, with three directors representing each of the six geographical areas of Montana.

The MACD Five-Year Strategic Plan 2018-2022 is the result of a collaborative effort to continue to support the success of Montana's locally-led conservation districts and provide leadership and advocacy for the conservation of Montana's natural resources through partnerships, education, and cooperation. In addition, the mission, vision, and values of MACD are presented foremost as guidance for strategic plan implementation.

This plan encompasses five overarching goals:

- I. Advocacy
- II. Revenue Development
- III. Understanding Through Communication
- IV. District Relations, Support, and Unity
- V. Leadership Development and Training

Under each goal, several strategies have been identified and prioritized for immediate implementation. Necessary actions for the top two strategies are listed along with resource needs. These actions were developed with the goal of fulfilling MACD's mission and should remain flexible to serve in the best interest of MACD and Montana's conservation districts.

Implementation of this plan will rely on accountability, resource efficiency, clear communication, and active engagement and participation by MACD Board Members, conservation district supervisors and staff, MACD staff, and key partners.

## MACD Mission Statement

To support Montana’s conservation districts in promoting and maintaining a landscape where soil, water, and other natural resources are conserved and utilized for the benefit of all Montanans in cooperation with landowners, state, and federal agencies, and other partners.

## MACD Organization Vision

MACD, with its members and partners, establishes conservation districts as the lead voice for locally-led natural resource conservation in Montana.

## MACD Organization Values

**Teamwork:** Promote an environment where we work together and support one another in a solution-oriented manner incorporating flexible and innovative approaches.

**Transparency:** Conduct activities with integrity and honesty through open communication and accountability.

**Respect:** Forge mutual respect among MACD, districts, partners, and public officials.

**Excellence in Stewardship:** Foster responsible, efficient, and thoughtful use of all resources – financial, human, and natural.

# *MACD Organization Goals and Strategies*

## **I. ADVOCACY**

*Provide for a full understanding of conservation districts and MACD to policy makers, partners, and the public to effectively influence conservation efforts through education, providing a clear path for district input.*

<b>STRATEGY</b>	<b>ACTION</b>	<b>RESOURCES</b>	<b>YEAR</b>
Input from Districts	Call CDs with an update of current political issues and develop a survey process to ascertain additional local, political issues from CDs	Executive Director, Committees, and MACD Board	2018
	Call CDs weekly, attend CD meetings (specifically those with political issues), and follow-up with CDs (chairman, board members, and administrators in that order)	Executive Director	2018
Lobbying Guidance	Form an ad hoc committee to provide Executive Director with lobbying guidance and communicate legislative updates and information with appropriate CDs. Committee will coordinate with DNRC/CARDD to stay informed.	Executive Director, MACD Board, DNRC CARDD	2018
	Encourage CD Supervisors to be more engaged and involved with lobbying	CD Supervisors	2018
Guidance	Review policy for determining resolution status and disposition	MACD Board, Executive Director	

	Develop and maintain a comprehensive catalogue of past, current, and proposed resolutions and their status	MACD Committees, staff	
Education	Develop detailed materials describing CDs and MACD for general distribution		
	Develop a statewide public campaign about CDs, who they are and what they do. Target newspapers and other media.		

## II. REVENUE DEVELOPMENT

*Proactively improve existing and develop new sources of funding for conservation districts and MACD.*

STRATEGY	ACTION	RESOURCES	YEAR
Dues	Revisit dues structure	District Operations Committee	2018
Mill Levy Accuracy	Provide education for interested district administrators to address mill levy accuracy	District Operations Committee	2018
Legislative Funding	Develop process for gaining legislative support for appropriating funds to MACD for distribution to CDs	Executive Committee	2019
Operational Efficiency	Develop a list of CD operational efficiencies and distribute to CDs		

Funding Alternatives	Develop list of CD funding mechanisms and distribute to CDs		
	Develop 3 new funding sources and investigate feasibility		
	Develop strategy for implementing new funding methods		
Grants	Assist CDs in identifying and applying for grants		

### III. UNDERSTANDING THROUGH COMMUNICATION

*Provide process clarification, building strong communication pathways.*

STRATEGY	ACTION	RESOURCES	YEAR
Build Strong Communication Pathways	Need biweekly MACD bullet point updates for MACD Board and CDs to ensure statewide message continuity	MACD Board and Staff	2018
	Need CDs and MACD Board to identify what MACD documents are needed for transparency and make these readily available to members	MACD Board and Staff	2018
Process Clarification	Set expectations for process document updates and district involvement	MACD Board will develop, Staff will distribute	2018
	Develop district complaint process	District Operations and MACD Board	2018

#### IV. DISTRICT RELATIONS, SUPPORT, AND UNITY

*Invite engagement through activities that build relationships and support.*

STRATEGY	ACTION	RESOURCES	YEAR
Build Unity	Find out what CDs need from MACD by developing a survey	MACD Board, DNRC CARDD	2018
	Send biweekly MACD updates including meetings attended, a list of activities, and what's coming up next so interested supervisors have the opportunity to become involved	Executive Director and Staff	2018
Website	Maintain recently updated website	MACD/SWCDM Staff	2018
	Continue support and maintenance of CD websites	SWCDM	2018
Facilitate Grant Writing	Seek opportunities on effective grant writing and begin grant development		
Develop MACD Complaint Process	Develop complaint process and identify a chain of command		



## V. LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT AND TRAINING

*Provide educational opportunities to MACD Board, district supervisors, and staff so they may become more informed and competent in their roles.*

<b>STRATEGY</b>	<b>ACTION</b>	<b>RESOURCES</b>	<b>YEAR</b>
Role and Responsibility of MACD Standing Committees	Review and update the job description for MACD Board	Committee Chairman, MACD Board, Supervisors, and MACD/SWCDM Staff	2018
	Develop and implement a process for recruiting Standing Committee Members	MACD Board, MACD/SWCDM Staff	2018
Coordinated Training	Provide training for MACD Board and local supervisors	DNRC CARDD, NRCS, Standing Committees	2018
	Provide formal leadership training to MACD Board	DNRC CARDD, NRCS, NACD, Extension Offices	2018
Role and Responsibilities of MACD Board	Develop an orientation packet for new Board members		
	Review roles and responsibilities of Board members		
Public Speaking	Provide public speaking training		

## *2018-2019 Operational Plan*

<b>GOAL 1: ADVOCACY</b>				
<b>STRATEGY</b>	<b>ACTION</b>	<b>RESOURCES</b>	<b>TIMELINE</b>	<b>Status June 2019</b>
Input from Districts	Call CDs with an update of current political issues and develop a survey process to ascertain additional local, political issues from CDs	Executive Director, Committees, and MACD Board	1-6 month	
	Call CDs weekly, attend CD meetings (specifically those with political issues), and follow-up with CDs (chairman, board members, and administrators in that order)	Executive Director	1-6 month	
Lobbying Guidance	Form an ad hoc committee to provide Executive Director with lobbying guidance and communicate legislative updates and information with appropriate CDs. Committee will coordinate with DNRC/CARDD to stay informed.	Executive Director, MACD Board, DNRC CARDD	1-6 month	Legislative Committee active during 2019 session; weekly updates posted to <a href="http://policy.macdnet.org">policy.macdnet.org</a> blog.
	Encourage CD Supervisors to be more engaged and involved with lobbying	CD Supervisors	1-6 month	Districts kept up to date on legislative issues in District Dispatch; encouraged to testify

<b>GOAL 2: REVENUE DEVELOPMENT</b>				
<b>STRATEGY</b>	<b>ACTION</b>	<b>RESOURCES</b>	<b>TIMELINE</b>	<b>Status June 2019</b>
Dues	Revisit dues structure	District Operations Committee	6-12 month	District Operations Committee given task June 2019, with anticipated finish fall 2019.
Mill Levy Accuracy	Provide education for interested district administrators to address mill levy accuracy	District Operations Committee	Ongoing	
Legislative Funding	Develop process for gaining legislative support for appropriating funds to MACD for distribution to CDs	Executive Committee	1-6 month	
Operational Efficiency	Develop a list of CD operational efficiencies and distribute to CDs		Ongoing	

<b>GOAL 3: UNDERSTANDING THROUGH COMMUNICATION</b>				
<b>STRATEGY</b>	<b>ACTION</b>	<b>RESOURCES</b>	<b>TIMELINE</b>	<b>Status June 2019</b>
Build Strong Communication Pathways	Need biweekly MACD bullet point updates for MACD Board and CDs to ensure statewide message continuity	MACD Board and Staff	1-6 month	Implemented August 2018, in the form of District Dispatch
	Need CDs and MACD Board to identify what MACD documents are needed for transparency and make these readily available to members	MACD Board and Staff	1-6 month	Meeting minutes & agendas, resolutions, 990s currently posted to website

Process Clarification	Set expectations for process document updates and district involvement	MACD Board will develop, Staff will distribute	6-12 month	
	Develop district complaint process	District Operations and MACD Board	6-12 month	

<b>GOAL 4: DISTRICT RELATIONS, SUPPORT, AND UNITY</b>				
<b>STRATEGY</b>	<b>ACTION</b>	<b>RESOURCES</b>	<b>TIMELINE</b>	<b>Status June 2019</b>
Build Unity	Find out what CDs need from MACD by developing a survey	MACD Board, DNRC CARDD	6-12 month	
	Send biweekly MACD updates including meetings attended, a list of activities, and what's coming up next so interested supervisors have the opportunity to become involved	Executive Director and Staff	1-6 month	Implemented August 2018 in the form of the District Dispatch
Website	Maintain recently updated website	MACD/SWCDM Staff	Ongoing	Website continues to be maintained with updated documents, meeting minutes, etc
	Continue support and maintenance of CD websites	SWCDM	1-6 month	Ongoing - over 30 websites currently maintained.

<b>GOAL 5: LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT AND TRAINING</b>				
<b>STRATEGY</b>	<b>ACTION</b>	<b>RESOURCES</b>	<b>TIMELINE</b>	<b>Status June 2019</b>
Role and Responsibility of MACD Standing Committees	Review and update the job description for MACD Board	Committee Chairman, MACD Board, Supervisors, and MACD Staff	1-6 month	
	Develop and implement a process for recruiting Standing Committee Members	MACD Board, MACD/SWCDM Staff	6-12 month	
Coordinated Training	Provide training for MACD Board and local supervisors	DNRC CARDD, NRCS, Standing Committees	6-12 month	
	Provide formal leadership training to MACD Board	DNRC CARDD, NRCS, NACD, Extension Offices	6-12 month	Training planned for fall 2019, with new ED