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LONG RANGE PLAN

For the

MONTANA CHAPTER SWCS

I. MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of the Soil and Water Conservation Society (SWCS) is to foster the science and the art of soil, water, and related natural resource management through advocacy, professional development, and educational activities to achieve sustainability. The Montana members stand for a stewardship ethic that recognizes the interdependence of people and the environment.

II. VISION STATEMENT

The Montana Chapter SWCS members are committed, informed, effective conservation leaders. Our members use the Chapter's multi-disciplinary structure to create and convey a land and water ethic to the people in Montana. Chapter leadership positions provide the opportunity to enhance professional development. SWCS is a sought-after source of knowledge and objective information by researchers, practitioners, policy makers, and analysts. Milestones in conservation policy and practice reflect SWCS' continuing contribution and leadership as an advocate for soil and water conservation.

III. MONTANA SWCS GUIDING PRINCIPLES:

- We promote a sound conservation ethic demonstrating the wise and responsible use of Montana's natural resources.
- We believe in the value of partnerships for providing educational information on sustaining Montana's natural resources.
- We welcome a diverse group of individuals to comprise our membership to help build a strong chapter.
- We seek out and facilitate the involvement of members and potential members who work to support the SWCS mission and vision and who can lead the Society into the next decade.
- We develop an annual budget, work plan, and calendar of activities which supports the objectives within the long range plan and provides members with critical information in a timely manner.
- We stay focused on the mission, vision, and objectives in the long range plan.

IV. OBJECTIVES

OBJECTIVE 1: Maintain and promote a strong, multidisciplinary organization with membership that comes from both the public and private sectors.

OBJECTIVE 2: Stimulate communication among conservation enthusiasts for the mutual exchange of knowledge, facts, experience, and technical expertise.

OBJECTIVE 3: Assist public and local officials in making informed decisions regarding the impact of urban growth on Montana's natural resources.

OBJECTIVE 4: Provide training opportunities for conservation professionals in technical, leadership, and communication skills. Encourage self-development.

OBJECTIVE 5: Support natural resource research, demonstration, and application efforts in Montana.

OBJECTIVE 6: Provide forums for the presentation and discussion of natural resource issues. Join with other conservation groups and agencies in sponsoring field days, workshops, symposiums, and other events that address current issues facing Montana's natural resources.

OBJECTIVE 7: Advocate sound natural resource laws and policy with governmental agencies, the Montana Legislature, and US Congress within the dictates of a nonprofit organization.

OBJECTIVE 8: Foster natural resource education for Chapter members, land users, schools, and the general public.

V. CURRENT NATURAL RESOURCE ISSUES

- Watershed Health – Further the public's understanding of the direct interrelationship of the impact of human and animal activity on Montana's water supply.
- Surface and ground water quality – Provide education on solutions to high priority water quality issues in Montana.
- Water Quantity – Provide education on urban competition with rural uses, in-stream flows needs for fish, water use efficiency, and new irrigation technology.
- Sustainable Agriculture – Encourage economically viable and environmentally sensitive agriculture.
- Education – Enhance the public awareness and understanding of natural resource issues facing Montana.
- Urban Growth – Promote sound open space education to offset the increasing pressure on Montana's natural resources by a growing population. Provide education to small landowners and Montana's urban population on sound conservation practices to protect and preserve Montana's natural resources.

VI. FIVE-YEAR LONG RANGE PLAN

- Promote an active Chapter membership by promoting a diverse membership that represents the cross-section of professional disciplines within the membership. Involve members in chapter activities, committee assignments and educational and technical forums.

- Chapter committees will continue to carry out their assigned tasks. Chapter committees consist of: 1) Awards, 2) Scholarship and 3) Membership. The duties of the committees are: 1) **Awards** - to encourage participation in the Montana Chapter of the Soil and Water Conservation Society by awarding special recognition to Montana Conservationists in sustaining Montana's natural resources. 2) **Scholarship** - Provide two \$500 scholarships per year to outstanding students within the conservation field. 3) **Membership** – Solicit members from a diverse natural resource background to encourage new and innovative technical and financial means in supporting the Montana Chapter of the Soil and Water Conservation Society.
- Remain a self-sustaining chapter by hosting technical workshops on current natural resource issues.
- Establish and follow an investment strategy to optimize the return on Chapter monetary reserves.
- Sponsor the Envirothon, the Earthwise bracelets and other youth activities to promote sound conservation practices applied in Montana. Sponsorship of these events provides education to Montana's youth on current issues facing Montana's agriculture and further promotes the future generation of agriculturalists in Montana.
- Develop and promote training or workshops that address the needs of the membership of the Montana Chapter of the Soil and Water Conservation Society.
- Publish a quarterly newsletter to inform chapter members of Chapter activities. Publish and maintain a Montana chapter of the Soil and Water Conservation Society webpage for instant access to chapter activities.
- Solicit active student participation in the Chapter at Universities, 4-year colleges, Tribal colleges, and junior colleges that have natural resource curriculums. Continue to provide scholarships to outstanding students within the conservation field.
- Advocate workshops, publications and agriculture organizations that address issues appropriate to Montana's natural resources.