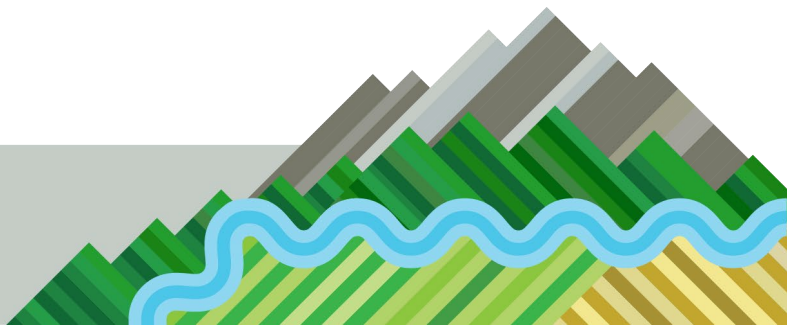




## Soil Health Program Strategic Plan 2020/2025

Prepared By:  
Brian Pimentel  
Conservation Program Coordinator



# INTRODUCTION AND ORGANIZATION INFORMATION

## Who We Are

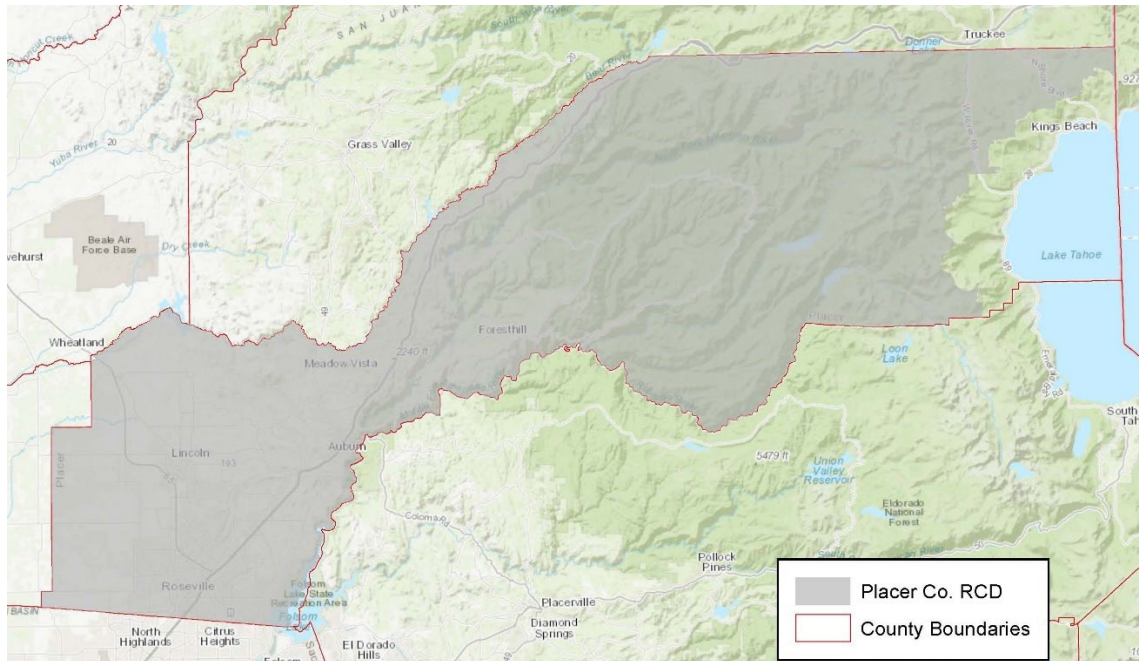
For the last 74 years, Placer County Resource Conservation District (Placer RCD, District) has provided technical assistance to private landowners, collaborated with state and local agencies, and implemented projects that promote sustainable land management. Placer County boasts a wide range of natural resources, from working rangelands to oak woodlands and alpine forests. District programs reflect the diversity of needs in the community from wildfire resilience to pollinator preservation, and priorities are rooted in the best available science to generate positive change.

As an independent, self-governing district, we rely on a Board of Directors to guide decision-making and program development. The Board is comprised of local community members, invested in developing a suite of programs that serve the community's changing needs and promote the enduring health of our beautiful lands.

## Board of Directors

- Claudia Smith, Chair
- Christine Johnson, Vice Chair
- Stephen Jones, Secretary Treasurer
- Thomas Wehri, Director
- Patricia Beard, Director
- Cathy Johnson, Director
- Kristin Lantz, Director

## District Map



## **Our Mission**

Advance the sustainable management of natural resources in Placer County among private landowners, local organizations, and public agencies through action, education, and outreach.

## **Our Vision**

Create a legacy of conservation in Placer County by engaging with the community to support and inspire environmental stewardship.

## **Soil Health Through a Carbon Lens**

Placer RCD has the distinct opportunity to serve as a liaison for private land managers and institutions providing scientific information and best management practices (BMPs) for soil health. By nature, farmers are conservationists, and due to the county's dry climate and steep topography, many producers inherently integrate soil health practices into their operations. However, many producers cite a lack of basic tools like education, equipment, and funding needed to integrate BMPs into their operations. By partnering with CCI the District will:

- Better understand current land management practices
- Determine on-the-ground potential for carbon farming practices
- Identify barriers to implementing those practices.

Placer RCD and CCI can help establish the groundwork necessary for carbon farming activities to be more successful in the foothill region.

## **Priorities and Goals**

The following priorities and goals have been established by Placer RCD staff to provide focus and guidance to develop a Soil Health Program. The timeframe for implementation is 5 years. This is a living document and will be adjusted when necessary.

*Strategic Priority 1 - Placer RCD will identify areas of highest priority areas, suitable practices, and barriers for soil health practices.*

Goal 1 - Provide analysis of farmland and land use in Placer County.

Objective 1 - Utilize GIS layers from Placer County Agriculture Commissioner and other sources to determine type and acreage.

Goal 2 - Identify soil health practices well suited for Placer County.

Objective 1 - Based on GIS analysis and stakeholder group input, evaluate soil health practices that could be implemented on agricultural land in Placer County.

Objective 2 - Distribute producer survey and synthesize results.

Goal 3 - Determine barriers experienced by producers when implementing soil health

practices.

Objective 1 - Use stakeholder group input & staff knowledge to identify potential barriers and incorporate information into the producer survey.

Objective 2 - Distribute producer survey and synthesize results.

*Strategic Priority 2 - Develop partnerships with local, state, and federal agencies, as well as private landowners, to initiate a soil health program in Placer County.*

Goal 1 - Identify stakeholders willing to partner with Placer RCD to bolster carbon capture and healthy soils.

Objective 1 - Conduct outreach to various agencies, landowners, and farm groups to solicit interest in a soil health program.

Goal 2 - Develop a list of technical and physical resources from partnering organizations that can increase the potential of carbon farming and healthy soils.

Objective 1 - Compile a workbook of carbon farming documents gathered from workshops and partner organizations. Catalog by Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) practices for ease of access.

Objective 2 - Compile a list of available local resources and equipment for use by carbon farmers on a shared or rental basis.

Goal 3 - Identify diverse funding opportunities to develop and sustain soil health initiatives.

Objective 1 - Placer RCD will apply for funding sources to continue support to producers with staff time and training.

Objective 2 - Maintain a relationship with the CCI to be kept apprised of funding opportunities made available.

*Strategic Priority 3 - The District will offer producers tools to increase the adoption of soil health practices.*

Goal 1 - Find producers alternate funding sources to offset implementation costs.

Objective 1 - Maintain California Department of Food and Agriculture (CDFA) Technical Assistance grant allowing Placer RCD staff to assist in Health Soil Program Grants.

Goal 2 - Work with local partnering agencies and landowners to create an agricultural learning hub.

Objective 1 - The District will work with the Lincoln High School Student Farm to create a demonstration farm.

Objective 2 - Find additional sources of funding and partnerships to expand the learning hub.

Goal 3 - Provide producers access to equipment for practices implementation.

Objective 1 - Evaluate the potential for an equipment rental program.

Objective 2 - Find funding sources for producers to purchase new farm equipment.

**Reviews and updates:**

Strategic Priorities within this plan will be evaluated bi-annually to ensure the Strategic Priorities are being implemented and/or in alignment with the goals of the District. Placer RCD staff will discuss any potential obstacles, shortfalls, or areas of focus limiting the successful development and implementation of priorities and associated goals to the Soil Health Program. Furthermore, opportunities, collaborations, and partnerships will be reviewed to determine how they best facilitate the incorporation of a Soil Health program in Placer County. Any updates or amendments made during the review process shall be incorporated into subsequent strategic plans.