

**Highlands Soil Water Conservation District**  
**2023-2028 Work Plan**  
**Goals, Resources, Success Measures**  
*Update to the Plan October 29, 2024*

**Target Area: Conservation of Natural Resources & Agricultural Sustainability**

Goal	Time Line	Partners	Resources Needed	Success Measures	Performance Evaluation 10/29/2024
Education and outreach of FL SWCDs Value in an effort to remain relevant and to continue to exist through legislative actions.	Oct. 2023-Sept. 2025	Legislators Lobbyist Active SWCDs in State Producers	HSWCD staff hours Funding for Lobbyist Data /Annual Report	SWCD still existing in Florida Statute	Partners are engaged and resources being used appropriately to achieve this goal by deadline. Staff and one supervisor provide feedback and updates on status of proposed legislation for changes in SWCDs.
Dependent on adopted Legislation, assist in development of Regional SWCDs work plan with FDACS-OAWP	Oct. 2023-Sept. 2025	General Counsel FDACS-OAWP leadership AFCD & SWCD leaders	HSWCD staff hours Funding for staff travel	Have at least one staff member or supervisor provide feedback on the status of the future of SWCDs. Provide staff support of implementation of changes.	Staff and Board are monitoring legislation developments & providing leadership in organizing grass roots effort to prioritize options for future of SWCDs in Florida.
Pursue Administrative contracts with various conservation & natural resource entities	Oct. 2023-Sept. 2028	Leaders of other organizations and entities Established network	HSWCD staff hours Supervisor involvement with potential entities	Secure at least 1 new contract every two years	FY 2023-2024: drafted and secured USDA-NRCS Contribution Agreement to implement FY 2024-2029
Expand on data systems of the Mobile Irrigation Lab	Oct. 2023 - Sept. 2028	Producers Statewide MIL staff FDACS-OAWP	IT knowledge & funding HSWCD MIL staff hours Statewide MIL staff hours FDACS-OAWP	Have at least one staff member participate in FDACS-OAWP trainings and assist with SOP for Data Systems	MIL staff completion of trainings offered in 2023-2024 and working to complete development of SOP
Grower education of alternative practices promoting conservation	Oct. 2023-Sept. 2028	IFAS USDA-NRCS FDACS-OAWP	Vendor/Supplier participation Budgeted funding for supplies and refreshments HSWCD staff hours	Partner on at least one producer education/outreach event per Fiscal Year	Complete for FY 2023-2024: Partnered with CFRPC for the Landowner Assistance Expo. Partnered with IFAS on Soil Testing Program

# Highlands Soil Water Conservation District 2023-2028 Work Plan

## Goals, Resources, Success Measures

~~Update to the Plan October 29, 2024~~  
Target Area: Special Projects

Goal	Time Line	Partners Needed	Resources Needed	Success Measures	Performance Evaluation 10/29/2024
Continue support & facilitation of the Landowners Expo	Oct. 2023 - Sept. 2028	Central Florida Regional Planning Council, Natural Resource & Conservation Entities	HSWCD staff hours CFRPC staff hours Budgeted Funding - Sponsorship	Increase attendance by at least 1 attendee year over year	Increase of attendance in 2023 of 78 to 128 in 2024.
Funding of educational programs ( ex. ROTC, Ag-Venture, Ag-Angels, Scholarships)	Oct. 2023 - Sept. 2025	Organizations Applicants	HSWCD staff hours Budgeted funding	Funding awarded to at least three educational programs each year	Funding awarded to Ag Venture, Ag Angels, Scholarships, TNC Project at Archbold, Taste of Florida at Regional Meeting
Explore special projects focused on conservation of natural resources in Highlands County for potential funding	Oct. 2023 - Sept. 2028	Work with County staff, WMD, DEP, Div. of Forestry, FDACS to identify areas of concern. Determine funds needed and if HSWCD can provide funds for locally identified projects	Budgeted funding Highlands County Commissioners & staff hours HSWCD staff hours	Continued involvement in events and meetings of affiliate organizations focusing on Conservation and protection of natural resources	Continued management of a DEP Project Study. Identification of concern of run off from City of Sebring Downtown into Lake Jackson. Educated City of opportunities for funding to work on improvements to runoff issues.
Work with FDACS-OAWP to increase salaries awarded to high performing staff in effort to be competitive	Oct. 2023-Oct. 2024	FDACS-OAWP	Timely negotiations with OAWP leadership HSWCD staff hours	Increases awarded or alternatives approved.	Goal Complete - Salaries were increased as well as Cost of Living Adjustments granted
Re-evaluate staffing of the District succession plan. Prepare for potential Regional Leadership at Highlands SWCD.	Oct. 2023-Oct. 2024	Legislators Lobbyists FDACS - OAWP	HSWCD Board of Supervisors HSWCD Executive Director Leadership in Tallahassee Other SWCDs in State	New Administrative Specialist Position filled as part of adopted Succession Plan. Monitor Legislation to determine if Regional Leadership will be needed	Partial Goal Complete - Succession plan adopted, new position filled and training has begun.
Cross training of staff	Oct. 2023-Oct. 2024	HSWCD FDACS-OAWP USDA-NRCS UF-IFAS County & State Government	Staff from each partner to conduct trainings HSWCD staff for internal cross-training	2+ observation days with other fellow employees and/or entities with similar program/services.	Goal Complete for FY 2023-2024: MIL staff participated in FDACS Field Staff meetings/trainings. BMP techs rode along with MIL staff during evaluations

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<b>Target Area: Board of Supervisors &amp; Public Outreach/Education</b>					
<b>Goal</b>	<b>Time Line</b>	<b>Partners Needed</b>	<b>Resources Needed</b>	<b>Success Measures</b>	<b>Performance Evaluation 10/29/2024</b>
Continue success of Community Garden. Incorporate technology as learning tools.	Oct. 2023-Sept. 2025	Gardeners UF-IFAS Vendors	Budgeted Funding HSWCD staff hours to manage Donations of technology	Full Capacity of available plots. Implementation of one new farming technology.	Goal achieved for FY 2023-2024: All plots sold out. Technology yet to be implemented, but planned for 2025.
Create and implement producer survey to be completed as an evaluation of SWCD performance	Oct. 2023-Sept. 2028	Producers	HSWCD staff hours FDACS-OAWP field staff input Website & e-mail	Development of survey with at least 10 responses received	Goal Achieved in FY 2023-2024: Survey was developed and distributed. Received 17 responses.
Solicit testimonials from producers to share their experience with HSWCD for BMP Enrollment, Cost-Share Projects, Implementation Verification	Oct. 2023-Sept. 2028	Producers FDACS-OAWP field staff USDA-NRCS Staff	HSWCD staff hours FDACS-OAWP field staff hours USDA-NRCS staff hours	Five or more positive testimonials to be used as validity/value of the District and the services provided	Goal anticipated to be achieved in late 2024, early 2025 for 2025 Legislatiev Session
Maintain and increase involvement in conservation & agriculture events	Oct. 2023-Sept. 2025	Conservation & agriculture organizations	Budgeted funding for travel HSWCD staff hours HSWCD Supervisor hours	3 events attended per HSWCD employee, 1 per Board Supervisor annually	Goal achieved for FY 2023-2024: Staff attended the Highlands Co. Ag Venture, FL Citrus & Specialty Crop Expo, FL Citrus Growers Institute, Landowner Assistance Expo. Supervisors attended the Local Working Group Meeting, Highlands County Farm Bureau Meetings, Highlands County Cattlemen's Meetings.