NASCA Meeting

September 25, 2006

San Antonio, Texas

Implementing Annual Operations Reviews with Oregon's SWCDs

Building strong districts through good business practices, risk management and partner collaboration…

Background

n Capacity Building - Ongoing Collaborative Effort

  ¨ Soil and Water Conservation Commission (SWCC)

  ¨ Oregon Association of Conservation Districts (OACD)

  ¨ Oregon Conservation Employees Association Network (OCEAN)
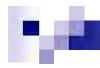
  ¨ Oregon Department of Agriculture (ODA)

Background

n Capacity Building Efforts

  ¨ Director Training

  ¨ SWCD Guidebook

  ¨ Personnel Management Guidebook

  ¨ Consultations, Trouble-Shooting, and Crises
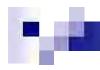   Management

  ¨ Conferences and Workshops

Background

- Additional Needs
  - Risk Management
  - Follow-up Assistance
  - Tools, Templates and "How-to" Guides
  - Dedicated Staff to Assist Districts
  - Structure and Consistency

Objectives

n   Minimize risk and potential liability to individual directors, employees, district boards, and the department.

n   Ensure high standards of accountability by helping districts comply with applicable laws and rules.

n   Strengthen district capacity by reinforcing sound operation procedures and improving district operations through training, mentoring and consultation from ODA and partners.

Objectives

n Identify training needs and necessary tools to enhance performance.

n Recognize exceptional district work and accomplishments.

n Gather information to serve as the foundation for future recommendations for SWCD program enhancement.

Proposal

n Develop structure and components of Operations Reviews.

n Support creation of a new SWCD Program Specialist position.

n Hold regional informational and listening sessions.

- Deliver message from SWCC, OACD, OCEAN and ODA.

- Evaluate SWCD interest and support of proposal.

- Seek input and suggestions.

- Determine other areas of need. (What did we miss?)

- Solicit volunteers.

Moving Concepts Into Actions

n ODA hired new Program Specialist in January 2006.

n Drafted elements and process for Operations Reviews.

n Held eight regional meetings in February and March 2006.

n Received extremely positive feedback and encouragement.

n Developed SWCD web page with tools, templates and examples (ongoing effort).

n Developed Self-Assessment Worksheet.

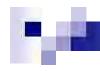n Started implementing Operations Reviews in May 2006.

ODA Commitments

n Provide necessary follow-up with districts.

n Make applicable tools, templates & other resources available to districts.

n Share successful district models across the state.

n Coordinate training with partners.

Operations Reviews Elements

1. Board Operations

2. Financial Management

3. Personnel Management

4. Insurance and Bonding

5. Public Meetings and Records

6. Public Contracting

7. Records Management

8. Planning

9. Customer service

1. Board Operations

- Officers

- Job Descriptions and Responsibilities

- Delegation of Authority

- Individual Action vs. Board Action

- Minutes

- Oaths of Office/Election Filings

- New Director Orientation

- Rules For Doing Business

- Annual Meeting

2. Financial Management

n Internal Controls

n Audits

n Payroll Liability

n Workers Comp Coverage

n Credit Checks

n Budgeting

n Cash – flow Management

n Board Reports

n FDIC Insurance

n Grant Reporting

n Credit Cards & Loans

n Receivables & Payables

n Year-end Reporting

3. Personnel Management

- Job Descriptions & Evaluations

- Personnel Policies & Hiring

- Supervision

- Compliance: Wage & Hour Law, Civil Rights, Other

- Confidentiality

- Forms, Documentation, & Legal Postings

- Employee & Volunteer Safety

4. Insurance and Bonding

- Certificates on File

- Minimum Requirements

- Risk Assessment & Asset Inventory

- Identifying Coverage Needs

- Registered Agent

5. Public Meetings and Records

- Attorney General's Manual
- Structure & Public Participation
- Location & Access
- Motions & Resolutions
- Conflict of Interest

- Public Notices
- Agenda
- Voting Record
- Executive Session
- Public Hearings

6. Public Contracting

n Resolutions - Public Contracting Rules

n Review of Local Rules

7. Records Management

n File Management: Categories, Location, Security

n Public Records Requests

n Records Retention & Archiving

n Computer Security & Data Storage

8. Planning

- n Annual Work Plans

- n Long-Range Business Plans

- n Decision-making Criteria or Models

9. Customer Service

n District Policy, Philosophy, and Culture

n Roles Within the Service Center

Results and Next Steps

n Good reception and interest from districts.

n Helping districts implement recommendations.

n Identifying individual, regional and state training
   needs. (training, tools, templates, etc.)

n Developing annual training program for directors,
   staff, and volunteers. (January - March each year)

Results and Next Steps

n Identifying risks and exposure - taking actions to mitigate.

n Building stronger relationships with districts.

n Sharing successes among districts - encouraging partnering among districts.

n Adding additional information to SWCD web site.

n Working with SWCC, OACD, and OCEAN to determine priorities for coming year.

SWCD OPERATIONAL REVIEW TASK	ODA	SWCD Board	SWCD Admin Staff	OACD	OCEAN

1	Schedule visit with district
	  1. Negotiate date (by region if possible)
	  2. Provide self assessment worksheet
	  3. Provide list of records and information to review
	  4. Identify participants
		X	X	X	X	

2	Complete self-assessment worksheet.		X	X		
3	Gather records on ODA list.		X	X		
4	Review documentation on file at ODA	X				
5	Conduct the visit, review self-assessment worksheet and identify additional district concerns.	X	X	X		
6	Draft summary report including highlight of strengths, identified areas of risk, recommendations, and suggestions for follow-up.	X				
7	Discuss summary report with board.	X	X	X		
8	Provide follow-up assistance to the district as requested	X			X	X
9	Board identifies practices and steps to minimize risk and improve operations and begins implementation.		X	X		
10	Develop tools and templates for statewide distribution; provide training at OACD conventions, regional meetings, etc., based on identified district needs.	X			X	X