



**CAWACO RESOURCE CONSERVATION &  
DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL, INC.**

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ALABAMA



AREA PLAN January 2009- 2013

# Area Plan January 2009-2013

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© Cawaco Resource Conservation & Development Council, Inc.  
1731 1<sup>st</sup> Avenue, North  
Suite 200  
Birmingham, AL. 35203  
Serving Blount, Chilton, Jefferson, Shelby and Walker Counties in Central Alabama.

With Assistance From:  
UNITED STATE DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE  
Natural Resources Conservation Service

And cooperating federal, state and local governments and entities.  
Prepared under the authority of the secretary of the Department of Agriculture under the Agriculture and Food Act of 1981,  
Public Law 97-98, 16 U.S.C. 3451-3461 as amended by Public Law 101-624, section 1452

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## INTRODUCTION

This document is the long-range plan of the Cawaco Resource Conservation and Development (RC&D) Council, Inc., of Central Alabama. It was developed by soliciting public input through a survey of citizens, organizations and stakeholders in the five county area served by Cawaco RC&D. In addition to the survey results, a web poll was conducted, and Council members provided guidance in the development of this plan. The counties served by this area plan include the following: Blount, Chilton, Jefferson, Shelby and Walker.

The Resource Conservation and Development Program was developed based on the premise that local people, working together, can identify and solve problems and realize opportunities that will enhance the quality of life in their area. Plans are designed to direct Federal, State, and local resources toward accomplishing the purpose of the RC&D Program and are consistent with needs identified in the RC&D planning process.

The purpose of this plan is to provide strategic direction for the organization. The organization is stronger than ever before, yet more efforts are needed to ensure a strong sustainable organization that serves the communities in our area.

## RC&D BACKGROUND

In 1962, Congress passed the Food and Agricultural Act, which authorized Resource Conservation and Development areas. The purpose of the act was to expand opportunities for conservation districts, local units of governments, and individuals to improve their communities in multi-county areas. This included assistance in enhancing the economic, environmental and social well being of the RC&D Areas. Currently, the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) in conjunction with the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) administers the Federal RC&D Program. This document serves as an agreement between NRCS and the Cawaco RC&D Council, Inc.

The purpose, as stated in the Farm Security and Rural Investment Act of 2002 - Subtitle H, of the RC&D Program is:

- ◆ To develop and carry out area plans and projects in designated areas in order to conserve, develop, and improve the use of land.
- ◆ To develop natural resources.
  - ◆ To improve and enhance the social, economic, and environmental conditions in primarily rural areas of the United States.
  - ◆ To encourage and improve the capability of State and local units of government, Indian tribes, nonprofit organizations, and councils.



## Vision:

*“To empower people to help themselves”*

Part

1

## Mission:

*The Mission Statement, revised on August 5, 2008, is: “Leading Central Alabama in the wise use of natural and human resources.”*

### CAWACO RC&D BACKGROUND

Cawaco RC&D takes its name from the first two letters of the three major rivers within its area. The Cahaba, Warrior and Coosa rivers are valuable assets, with the Black Warrior River being navigable as a 426-mile transportation route from Birmingham to the Gulf of Mexico.

The original sponsors of Cawaco RC&D were County Commissioners and members of Soil & Water Conservation Districts. On March 3, 1972, they asked for help from the US Department of Agriculture to improve the economy through orderly development and conservation of resources by establishing an RC&D area. After the USDA approved the request in July of 1972, the Cawaco RC&D service area was established in February 1974. Cawaco RC&D Council, Inc. entered into a cooperative agreement on August 1, 1975 with the Regional Planning Commission of Greater Birmingham. The purpose of the Memorandum of Agreement was to work in cooperation with the regional planning commission and to provide assistance to, and gain resources from the planning commission.

#### Cawaco RC&D:

- ◆ Received its Certificate of Incorporation on July 21, 1988.
- ◆ Received its 501(c) (3) non-profit status in 1992.

The goals and objectives at the time of incorporation were to “provide local leadership needed for developing, making necessary amendments to and carrying out a plan for the orderly development, conservation improvement, and wise use of the area’s natural resources, and to educate, collect, coordinate and disseminate information for development of human resources, thereby improving the economic opportunities for

the people within the Cawaco Resource Conservation and Development Area.” Cawaco RC&D was organized exclusively for charitable, educational, or scientific purposes.

Today, Cawaco RC&D plans and implements activities that increase conservation of natural resources, supports economic development, enhances the environment, and improves the standard of living in its Council area. Many of these projects develop into partnerships between local businesses, governmental agencies and citizen volunteers. Aggressive grant management has enabled the Council to do a wide array of projects, including:

- ~ Watershed Management
- ~ Education
- ~ Quality of Life Enhancements
- ~ Historical Preservation
- ~ Environmental Protection
- ~ Economic Development

#### C A W A C O R C & D C O U N C I L S T R U C T U R E

A 20 member citizen Board of Directors serves as trustees representing the diversity of interest in communities. No less than one half of the Board represents At-Large Members from the communities served and no more than one-quarter may be public officials. Board members govern the policy, direction and activities of the RC&D Council.

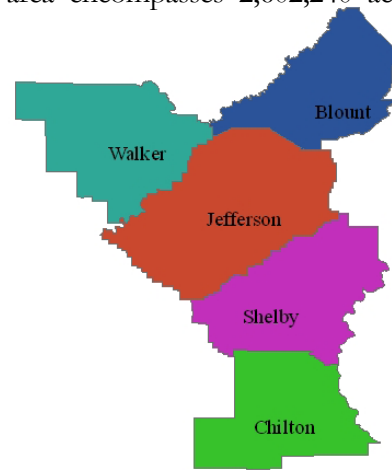
To provide optimal input to the Staff regarding direction and goals of the Council, members of the Board of Directors serve on working committees, which include Grants, Finance, Personnel, and Executive Committee. Working Committees meet as necessary to conduct business. The Council meets quarterly to discuss the status of projects and programs and identify opportunities for cooperative projects.

Cawaco is part of the Alabama Association of Resource Conservation and Development Councils. Cawaco Council members and staff attend mid-year and annual meetings of the Alabama Association of RC&D Councils, as well meetings of the Southeastern Association of RC&D Councils/National RC&D. Cawaco attends Special Meetings, Resource Committee meetings and County Rural Development Committee Meetings—as called.

OVERVIEW OF THE CAWACO FIVE-COUNTY AREA

The Cawaco Area is located in central Alabama. It includes Blount, Chilton, Jefferson, Shelby, and Walker Counties. The area encompasses 2,602,240 acres, as indicated:

- ~ Blount County- 409,600 acres
- ~ Chilton County- 447,360 acres
- ~ Jefferson County- 715,520 acres
- ~ Shelby County- 512,000 acres
- ~ Walker County- 517,760 acres



DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION

The current census bureau data states that the estimated population in Alabama as of July 1, 2006, was 4,599,030, with 966,670 – or 21% of the state population living within the Cawaco RC&D service area. Jefferson County and the other four above named counties have been recognized as areas within the reach of metropolitan Birmingham. All of these counties are covered by the Regional Planning Commission of Greater Birmingham.

**Table 1:** Population Data of the Counties within the Cawaco RC&D Area for the six year period between 2000-2006.

County	Population 2000	Population 2006	Percent Change
Blount	51,024	56,436	10.6
Chilton	39,593	41,953	6
Jefferson	662,047	656,700	-.08
Shelby	143,293	178,182	24.3
Walker	70,713	70,034	-1.0

Remarkably, the population shift in Shelby County is staggering, but growth population projections for 2000-2025 indicate that the population for Blount County will increase 60.1%, Chilton will see an increase of 49.1%, Jefferson County population will increase by 6%, Shelby County an additional 85%, and Walker County population is projected to increase 4.6%.

\* Source: US Census Bureau and the Center for Business and Economic Research, University of Alabama, 2001

NATURAL RESOURCE AND LAND USE INFORMATION

The ratio of urban to rural land use varies dramatically depending upon the demographic area and county. Alabama, one of the largest timber producing states in the US, has experienced tremendous change in land use in the past 30 years due to population increases, urbanization, and economic development. Between 1972 and 2000, timberland increased by 7.5% in Alabama but agricultural land decreased by 27%. For the same period, urban area increased by 7.1%. (Nagubadi and Zhang 2005).

Concurrent with expanding populations are shifting demographics and increasing urbanization. Rapid land use change is usually at the expense of forest and agricultural lands. Throughout the Cawaco service area, metropolitan and suburban communities are being confronted with the challenge of urban sprawl. Residential and commercial developments are consuming primordial land at an unprecedented rate. Unplanned urban expansion contributes to the degradation and loss of natural vegetation and open spaces. This results in a general decline in the spatial extent and connectivity of wetlands, wildlife habitat, and agricultural lands.

The Cawaco RC&D service area has a wealth of natural resources, including the abundant surface waters of the Black Warrior, Coosa, and Cahaba River Basins. Limestone and coal are abundant in the area, as well as prime agricultural and timberland.

AGRICULTURE

**Table 2:** Farm Acres and number of farms and top crops in the Cawaco area.

	<b>Blount</b>	<b>Chilton</b>	<b>Jefferson</b>	<b>Shelby</b>	<b>Walker</b>
<b>Farmland Acres</b>	143,232	98,294	42,018	64,197	75,180
<b>Number of Farms</b>	1,248	667	463	486	543
<b>Ave. Farm Size (acres)</b>	115	147	91	132	138
<b>Cash Receipts (Thou Dol)</b>	170,186	26,416	10,050	23,734	59,479
<b>Top Crop(s)</b>	Corn, hay	Hay	Hay	Cotton	Hay
<b>Livestock</b>	Eggs, broilers	Cattle	Cattle	Cattle	Eggs, Broilers
<b>State Ranking</b>	4 (Broilers)	37 (Cattle)	66 (Cattle)	23 (Cotton)	19 (Eggs)

\*Data provided by 2006 Alabama Agricultural Statistics Bulletin 48.

Timber is an abundant natural resource in the Cawaco RC&D service area. Forested acres in each county, as well as percentage land-use data are indicated in Table 3. Most timber land is privately owned.

COUNTY LAND USE DATA

**Table 3:** Urban and rural percentage land use in the Cawaco Service Area.

	<b>Blount</b>	<b>Chilton</b>	<b>Jefferson</b>	<b>Shelby</b>	<b>Walker</b>
<b>Urban</b>	10%	30%	92%	98%	1%
<b>Rural</b>	90%	70%	8%	2%	99%
<b>Forested (acres)</b>	236,321	324,929	439,409	351,234	354,001
<b>National Forest Acres</b>	0	23,031 (Talladega NF)	0	0	0

\*Urban lands include urban clusters. Data provided by 2000 U.S. Census Bureau, USDA, and the National Forest Service.

Note the discrepancy of rural/urban use. The US Census Bureau now counts urban clusters as urban areas, as indicated in the Shelby County table.

SOCIO-ECONOMIC INFORMATION

**Table 4:** The 2003-2005 Alabama State average median household income was \$38,180.00. Accordingly, the Cawaco five-county area income and race divisions are reflected below:

	<b>Blount</b>	<b>Chilton</b>	<b>Jefferson</b>	<b>Shelby</b>	<b>Walker</b>
<b>White</b>	97%	88%	56%	88%	92%
<b>Black</b>	1.5%	10%	41%	9%	6%
<b>Hispanic</b>	< 1%	2%	2%	1%	1%
<b>Other</b>	0	0	1%	2%	1%
<b>Median Household Income</b>	\$41,573.00 (1999)	\$39,505.00 (1999)	\$54,359.00 (2006)	\$76,211.00 (2006)	\$44,026.00 (2006)

\*Data provided by U.S. Census Bureau.

#### C L I M A T E

Central Alabama has a humid subtropical climate, characterized by hot summers, mild to chilly winters, and abundant rainfall. January sees average daily high temperatures of 53.0 °F and lows of 31.8 °F. In July the average daily high is 90.6 °F and the low is 69.7 °F. The average annual temperature in Birmingham is 62 °F. The average yearly rainfall in the Central Alabama area is about 52 inches, with March being the wettest month and October the driest.

The spring and fall months are pleasant but variable, with cold fronts frequently producing strong to severe thunderstorms and occasional tornadoes to the region. The fall season features less rainfall and fewer storms, as well as lower humidity than spring, but it is also a secondary severe weather season. Historically, in the late summer and fall months, the area experiences occasional tropical storms and hurricanes due to its proximity to the Central Gulf Coast.

#### S O I L S , T O P O G R A P H Y , A N D W A T E R R E S O U R C E S

Located amid the southern end of the Appalachian mountains- this region is defined by mountains and beautiful rivers, and is famed worldwide for its unprecedented biodiversity. It is a region rich in tradition, natural heritage, history and a spirit of independence. Hardy settlers farmed the narrow, fertile bottom lands, logged the vast timber supplies, and mined the hidden resources.

#### **Blount County**

The general slope of Blount County is northwestward. Slopes range from level to more than 45 percent. According to the USDA/SCS report of 1980, out of the 409,600 total acres in Blount County, 86,069 are prime farmland. Much of this prime farmland has likely since been developed for other uses. The remaining lands in Blount County are comprised of highly erodable soils or floodplains. Floodplains in Blount County are limited to the Brown Creek Watershed in the northern part of the county, and the Big Creek watershed. The Mulberry Fork, Locust Fork, Blackburn Fork and Calvert Prong of the Black Warrior River are the major streams in the county.

While the water supply has been adequate for most of the county in previous years, with the county population increase of over 10% in less than six years, and extreme drought conditions, how the county plans its population and water service areas will be a challenge. Most incorporated areas of Blount County have water systems and some of these systems have been extended to serve nearby rural areas. Inland Lake is located in the southeastern part of the county serves as a water supply for the city of Birmingham.

Source: USDA Soil Survey of Blount County Alabama

### **Chilton County**

Clanton is the county seat and largest City in Chilton County, and is located slightly southeast of the center of the state. Many soils in Chilton County are so steep and so erodable that they are not suited to crops, pasture, or development. These areas are better suited for trees. Nearly all the soils are acid and are low in natural fertility and content of organic matter.

The eastern half of the county is drained by the Coosa River and its tributaries: the Waxahatchee, Yellowleaf, Walnut, Chestnut and Mountain Creeks. The western half is drained by the Big Mulberry, Little Mulberry, Swift, and Oakmulgee Creeks, all of which flow into the Alabama River. The Coosa River provides drinking water to the town of Clanton and wells provide water for Thorsby, Jemison, Maplesville and Verbena.

Chilton County is prone to drought conditions. However, much of the land in the low lying areas around the prominent creeks in the county are floodplain areas and low stream terraces unsuitable for development. These areas are: Watson Creek watershed near Minooka, Dry Creek in the northwestern portion of the county, Sandy Creek, which flows through the town of Cooper, Walnut Creek near Clanton, Swift Creek, which borders Autauga County, the Little Mulberry, Oakmulgee Creek bordering Bibb and Perry Counties, and finally, the various forks of the Mulberry Creek watershed which include Bear Creek, Boyles Creek, the Western Mulberry Fork, the Middle Mulberry Fork, and Benson Creek.

Source: USDA Soil survey of Chilton County Alabama

### **Jefferson County**

Soil scientists have determined that there are about 21 different kinds of soils in Jefferson County. Consequently, there is a wide variation in soil suitability for most types of land use. The contrasting land uses in Jefferson County are urban, woodland, surface mining for coal, and some agriculture.

Jefferson County is in the Appalachian Highlands, which is a major division of the United States. The southeastern part of the county is in the Tennessee section of the valley and ridge province, and the northwestern part is in the Cumberland Plateaus province.

The large metropolitan area of Birmingham and the surrounding cities in the southeastern third of the county have been developed for industrial, commercial, residential and recreational uses. Most of the well suited soils for building in the area have already been developed. The most recently developed lands are located mainly within areas that require special planning and engineering for urban uses. There are floodplains throughout the county, though mainly located in the southwestern part of Shades Valley. These soils generally have a seasonal high water table and are prone to flooding. The Cahaba River, Shades Creek, Little Shade Creek, Valley Creek, Village

Creek, Turkey Creek, Black Creek, Five Mile Creek , and the Locust Fork Branch of the Warrior River are all major streams in Jefferson County.

Jefferson County receives the majority of drinking water from the Cahaba and Warrior River watersheds. Increasing burdens have been put upon the water resources of the area in recent years, since the largely urban areas of the County pump water in from surrounding areas. Extreme drought conditions and urban sprawl are creating a challenge for land use planners and water managers.

According to the Jefferson County Soil Survey, published in 1982, only three percent of Jefferson County soils are considered prime farmland. The original number was closer to six percent but the county has lost over half of its farmland to urban development. The remaining prime farmland is located mainly in the northwestern part of the county on a sandstone plateau near Corner.

Source: USDA Soil Survey of Jefferson County Alabama, and Encyclopedia Britannica

### **Shelby County**

Shelby County is the most geologically diverse area in Alabama, if not the southeastern United States. Four major geologic provinces occur in Shelby County. These are the Tennessee section of the Valley and Ridge province, the Cumberland Plateau section of the Appalachian Plateaus province, the Ashland plateau section of the Piedmont province and the Coastal Plain province.

Shelby County has an abundant supply of water both above and below ground. Two major rivers, the Coosa and Cahaba, and their many tributaries, provide water for domestic, industrial, and agricultural use.

Of all the counties in the Cawaco service area, Shelby County has experienced the majority of the population growth and urban sprawl, resulting in a loss of prime farmland and a 24 percent increase in population within a span of only six years.

Soil erosion is a problem on about 60 percent of cropland and 20 percent of pastureland in Shelby County, according to the USDA Shelby County Soil Survey of 1983.

### **Walker County**

Walker County is highly dissected and the landscape ranges from narrow valleys and broad plateaus.

Coal has historically been the main natural resource and economic base of Walker County, and is located in the Warrior coal seam. Extensive open-pit mining constantly changes the landscape and soils. Residential areas must be landscaped properly to prevent excessive erosion. Natural fertility is low in most soils in Walker County and most of the soils are strongly acidic to very strongly acidic. Most soils in the residential areas of Walker County have been disturbed to some degree during the construction of

houses, streets, driveways and utility services. Therefore, soil properties are more varied and less predictable than before the area was disturbed.

The soils in Walker County are generally unsuitable for urban development. In some areas they are suitable but in most areas the slope, depth of bedrock, and slow permeability are limitations. Most of the soils in the county have good or fair potential for woodland, but the slope is the main management concern throughout the county. Approximately thirteen percent of Walker County is in agriculture.

Water supplies are adequate for domestic uses in most areas. There are several public water systems throughout the county, and many rural residents have wells as a source of water. Smith Dam, located on the Sipsey Fork of the Black Warrior River creates more than 8,000 acres of surface water for habitat and recreation. The Sipsey and Mulberry Forks of the Black Warrior River flow through the county, as do several other large streams, including Blackwater, Lost, and Wolf Creeks.

Source: USDA Soil Survey of Walker County, and the Walker County Chamber of Commerce



PUBLIC PARTICIPATION ACTIVITIES CONDUCTED IN THE  
DEVELOPMENT OF THIS PLAN:

The Cawaco RC&D Council and staff began an outreach program in September 2007, which included public meetings, mail surveys, and a web survey located on the Cawaco website. ([www.cawaco.org](http://www.cawaco.org)). The survey was emailed to various agencies, as well as stakeholders within the Cawaco five-county area. Also considered in the evaluation process were the 100+ grant applications that were submitted to the Council, which reflected the needs and concerns of the five-county area.

The staff and RC&D Coordinator met within each county to present and promote the Cawaco RC&D Council Area Plan, and requested community feedback. A total of (19) nineteen public involvement meetings were held. More than (350) three hundred fifty people were solicited for input. Varying ages and ethnicities were involved in the planning process.

The survey was conducted and priorities ranked according to responses in regard to the following RC&D Program Element Categories: Land Conservation, Community development, Land Management, and Water Management.

IDENTIFIED PROBLEMS & OPPORTUNITIES

With open spaced areas declining due to rapid development, land conservation and management issues demand thoughtful attention. Both water quality and quantity have become concerns, due in part by ongoing drought conditions throughout the state. The Birmingham Water Works currently serves more than 600,000 customers, and can reliably produce 176 million gallons of water per day. The average daily water demand in the metro Birmingham area is 134 million gallons. The Birmingham Water Works Board estimates that it will reach its capacity in the existing service area by 2040. However, without conservation planning and careful management, it may reach capacity by 2025.

Education also ranked as a concern to Cawaco-area citizens. The Alabama Policy Institute, a conservative think tank, says independent surveys by reputable organizations have ranked the dropout rate for the state of Alabama at between 38 and 41 percent. Consequently, environmental education, job skills training and adult education ranked as high priorities to the Council.

Other problems identified included urban sprawl, agricultural decline, population explosion, insufficient public services/utilities, lack of and/or insufficient recreational areas, lack of technical skill training, traffic congestion, blight, litter, and leadership weakness.

Cawaco RC&D continues to develop and support partnerships that promote land and water conservation, community development and educational opportunities. Cawaco RC&D encourages new affiliates to attend meetings and advocates working on the five-county area's community issues collaboratively.

This section will provide insight into the environmental, ecological, and social conditions of the Cawaco RC&D area. The information contained below focuses on the results of the community identified concerns, with the 1 ranked as highest concern.

#### SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

##### **Land Conservation:**

1. Agricultural and environmental education
2. Preservation of open spaces
3. Stream bank stabilization
4. Protection of land from erosion
5. Recreational areas

##### **Community Development:**

1. Job and trade skills development
2. Education
3. Local business support
4. Historic/Heritage/Cultural preservation
5. Infrastructure upgrades
6. Recreation (Trails, Parks, etc.)

##### **Land Management:**

1. Agricultural sustainability
2. Farmland protection
3. Alternative energy
4. Land management/zoning education
5. Recycling
6. Green Infrastructure

##### **Water Management:**

1. Conservation
2. Education
3. Watershed protection
4. Creation of alternative irrigation sources

## GOALS & STRATEGIES

Based on information received during public participation meetings, combined with Elements set forth by the USDA/NRCS, the following goals and strategies have been developed:

Part

3

### **Element 1- Land Conservation**

*(Identified Issues/Needs: Education; Conservation, Preservation)*

#### **Goal 1: Assist/develop (5) five projects that preserve, enhance, and/or expand heritage and/or recreational/natural assets by the year 2013.**

**Objective 1:** Beginning in 2009, assist a minimum of (1) one community per year in the preservation of open space and/or natural/historical assets.

**Strategy 1:** By the year 2013, preserve a minimum of (150) one hundred fifty acres of connected open spaces through affiliations with partners such as the Five Mile Creek Greenway Partnership.

**Strategy 2:** Participate in (3) three local initiatives that preserve, protect and/or enhance natural areas by the year 2010.

**Strategy 3:** Participate in a minimum of (2) two initiatives that protect and/or enhance historically significant objects/ locations by 2011.

**Strategy 3:** Beginning in 2009, through 2013, facilitate a minimum of (12) twelve educational meetings per year that promote preservation of open space, farmland and/or heritage.

**Strategy 4:** Assist in the promotion of (5) five innovative stormwater harvesting systems by 2010.

**Objective 2:** Beginning in 2009, develop (20) twenty educational initiatives that provide awareness to the general public in regard to natural resource conservation.

**Strategy 1:** Organize and or assist in the organization of (4) four Program Milestone celebrations or receptions per year .

**Strategy2:** Through monthly website data updates, provide documents, information and linkages to local resources.

**Strategy 3:** Beginning in 2009, develop educational brochures and print and distribute a minimum of (500) five hundred per year, through 2013.

**Strategy 4:** Utilize (1) one volunteer and/or intern to produce a finished product of historic or natural resource significance by the year 2012.

**Element 2- Community Development**

*(Identified Needs: Workforce Development, Trade Skills Education, Infrastructure Upgrades)*

**Goal 2: Assist with development/improvement of public services and/or facilities in (5) five areas by the year 2013.**

**Objective 1:** Beginning in 2009, support and/or assist in improving public facilities in each of the five council counties in the next (5) five years.

**Strategy 1:** Attain necessary funding to help equip (2) two under-funded Volunteer Fire Departments with training and/or equipment to better serve the needs in their communities by the year 2011.

**Strategy 2:** Work in a minimum of (3) three area communities to preserve and upgrade existing public facilities by the year 2013.

**Strategy 3:** Work with the US Forestry Service and other organizations to expand or develop Bio-mass and other under-utilized alternative fuel materials by the year 2010.

**Strategy 4:** Establish trail projects in (3) three communities to promote community connectivity by the year 2011.

**Strategy 5:** Assist the Regional Planning Commission of Greater Birmingham, or other agencies in the development and/or improvement of (2) two recreational facilities by the year 2012.

**Strategy 6:** Host a minimum of (2) two grant- writing workshops by the year 2011.

**Goal 3: Provide educational and /or workforce development opportunities to 2500 participants by the year 2013.**

**Objective 1:** Participate in (3) three workshops in the next (5) five years designed to educate youth and/or unskilled labor workers in the areas of agriculture, economics, or trade skills development.

**Strategy 1:** Work with (1) one educational facility to administer a minimum of (1) one community development or job skills training programs per year.

**Strategy 2:** Provide technical assistance to (2) two communities to develop, expand, or support local farmers markets by the year 2013.

**Strategy 3:** Support (1) one program (through funding or technical assistance) that targets trade skills training by the year 2010.

**Strategy 4:** Design, fund, and/or install educational areas in a minimum of (1) one public space by end of year 2009.

**Strategy 5:** Beginning in 2009, conduct and facilitate (1) one sustainable development concept per year through workshops, publications and other media venues such as the Your Town Alabama program.

**Strategy 6:** Beginning in 2009 provide (1) one college intern per year with educational opportunities while implementing Area Plan goals.

### ***Element 3- Land Management***

*(Identified Needs: Development of green infrastructure, alternative energy sources, energy independence, expanded recycling programs)*

#### **Goal 4: Assist (5) five communities in the development, protection and management of the area's natural resources by 2013.**

**Objective 1:** 2009-2013 participate in (1) one consistent initiative that educates/assists in building local capacity for alternative energy sources and/or conserves natural resources.

**Strategy 1:** Assist (1) one area community per year to preserve open space.

**Strategy 2:** Participate in the facilitation/implementation of (2) two innovative storm water treatment systems by the year 2010.

**Strategy 3:** Beginning in 2009, attend/host (1) one educational event per year that encourages and promotes the production and use of alternative fuels, biomass, and other alternative energy sources.

**Strategy 4:** Assist in providing (5) five educational opportunities to participants through programs such as NEMO, Water Festivals, and Earth Day events by 2013.

**Objective 2:** Establish and/or improve (50) fifty acres of habitat for fish and wildlife by 2011.

**Strategy 1:** Participate in (1) one local initiative that links open spaces for the benefit of wildlife connectivity by 2011.

**Strategy 2:** Assist (1) one governmental entity in solving a soil erosion/flooding issue by the year 2010.

**Strategy 3:** Conduct a minimum of (1) one hands on educational opportunity for (50) participants regarding habitat and stream health.

**Strategy 4:** Create wildlife habitat by installing a minimum of (2000) two thousand native Alabama plants on (1) one project site by the year 2010.

#### ***Element 4- Water Management***

*(Identified Needs: Conservation, education, and wise management)*

#### **Goal 5: Participate in (2) two initiatives that protect and improve the area's air and water quality.**

**Objective 1:** Assist in development of (1) one watershed management plan and/or implementation of (1) one water quality project per year.

**Strategy 2:** Develop water management plan for (1) one targeted impaired stream by 2012.

**Strategy 3:** Conduct a minimum of (1) one workshop/meeting per year to address water conservation innovation, and/or educational opportunities to landowners/municipalities.

**Strategy 4:** Assist the Black Warrior River and Cahaba River Clean Water Partnership in identifying (4) four impaired streams by the year 2013.

**Strategy 5:** Support (through financial or other means) (1) one volunteer water monitoring kit to groups/ educators by end of year 2009.

**Strategy 6:** Seek funds for stream restoration projects and/or monitoring of (1) one impaired stream per year.

**Objective 2:** By the year 2012, educate a minimum of (250) two hundred fifty participants regarding water quality issues.

**Strategy 1:** Assist the Jefferson County Department of Health in promoting a litter reduction strategy media campaign by the year 2009.

**Strategy 2:** Assist with organizing (2) two workshops or program milestone celebrations by the year 2010.

**Strategy 3:** Promote water conservation through the production of (1500) fifteen hundred educational brochures by 2011.

**Strategy 4:** Implement a minimum of (1) one water harvesting system on a community garden or school by 2012.



## CURRENT AND POTENTIAL PARTNERSHIPS :

Cawaco RC&D has worked in cooperation with the following federal, state, and local agencies in both planning and implementing its programs:

Alabama Association of Conservation Districts	Greater Birmingham Homebuilders Association
Alabama Association of RC&D Councils	Goodwyn, Mills & Cawood
Alabama Cooperative Extension System	Hands On Birmingham
Alabama Department of Agriculture & Industries	Cultural Arts Alliance
Alabama Dept. of Conservation & Natural Resources	Daily Mountain Eagle
Alabama Department of Environmental Management	Earth Team Volunteers
Alabama Dept. of Economic and Community Affairs	Forestry Planning Committees in each county
Alabama Dept. of Industrial Relations	Jefferson County Board Of Education
Alabama Department of Public Health	Jefferson County Commission
Alabama Farmers Federation	Jefferson County Health Department
Alabama Forestry Commission	Jefferson County SWCD
Alabama Historical Commission	Jefferson State Community College
Alabama Power Company	Malcolm Pirnie, Inc.
Alabama Power Foundation	McWane Industries
Alabama Power Service Organization	McWane Science Center
Alabama Soft Drink Association	Miles College
Alabama Soil & Water Conservation Committee	National Association of RC&D Councils
Alabama Urban Forestry Association	Natural Resources Conservation Service
Alabama Water Watch Association	North Carolina State University
Aldridge Gardens	North State Environmental
Auburn University	Office of Surface Mining, DOI
AU Center for Architecture and Urban Studies	Patton Geologics
Bevill State Community College	Regional Planning Commission of Greater Birmingham
Birmingham Botanical Gardens	Rumsey Environmental
Birmingham Southern College	Samford University
Blount County Commission	Santek Environmental
Blount County SWCD	Sewage Equipment Sales and Service, Inc.
Boy Scouts of America	Shelby County Commission
Cahaba Girl Scouts Council	Shelby County SWCD
Cahaba River Society	Soil & Water Conservation Society of America
Cahaba River Basin Clean Water Partnership	Southeastern Association of RC&D Councils
Camp McDowell	Town of Thorsby
City of Alabaster	University of Alabama School of Law
City of Birmingham	UA Center for Economic Development
City of Jasper	University of Alabama at Birmingham
City of Fultondale	USDA- Farm Service Agency
City of Graysville	USDA-Forest Service
City of Tarrant	U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
Chilton County Commission	U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
Chilton County Econ. & Industrial Development Board	U.S. Geological Survey
Chilton County SWCD	Wallace State Community College
Clarus Group	Walker Area Community Foundation
Geological Survey of Alabama	Walker County Commission
	Walker County SWCD
	Warrior River Clean Water Partnership
	WBRC- Fox 6



LINKAGES TO THE NRCS STRATEGIC PLAN:

The goals, objectives and strategies included in this Area Plan address the mission goals of the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service’s Strategic Plan “Productive Lands- Healthy Environments”.

**High Quality Productive Soils:**

- Erosion and Sediment Control Program
- Conservation Education Programs
- Organic Gardening Programs

**Clean and Abundant Water**

- Alabama Clean Water Partnership
- Alabama Water Watch Association
- Town Creek Revitalization
- Black Creek Park Stream Restoration
- Streamside Education for Landowners

**Healthy Plant and Animal Communities**

- Five Mile Creek Greenway Partnership
- Conservation Education Programs
- Town Creek Revitalization Project
- Endangered Species Habitat Monitoring Programs

**Clean Air**

- Green Resource Center
- Commute Smart
- Alternative Energy Development
- On Farm Energy Audit

**An Adequate Energy Supply**

- Conservation Education Programs
- Native Landscaping
- Water Harvesting
- Alternative Energy Development
- On Farm Energy Audit

**Working Farm and Ranchlands**

- Locally Grown Food Initiatives
- Community Gardens
- Nutrition Education Programs

REQUIRED CLAUSES AND SIGNATURES

The Cawaco RC&D Council's program will be conducted in compliance with the nondiscrimination provisions as contained in Title VI and VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 as amended, the Civil Rights Restoration Act of 1987 (P. L. 100-259) and other nondiscrimination statutes; namely, Section 504, of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, the Age Discrimination Act of 1975 and in accordance with regulations of the Secretary of Agriculture (7CFR-15, Subparts A&B) which provide that no person in the United States shall, on the grounds of race, color, national origin, age, sex, religion, marital status, or handicap/disability be excluded from participation in, or be denied the benefits of, or be otherwise subject to discrimination under any program or activity receiving federal financial (or technical) assistance from the Department of Agriculture or any agency thereof.

The Cawaco RC&D Council agrees that the signing of this document constitutes agreement to comply with federal laws concerning restrictions on lobbying, a drug-free workplace, and responsibilities for procurement, suspension, and disbarment.

The Cawaco RC&D Council has had this application reviewed by the state. Comments made through the state single point of contact have been considered prior to submission of the application and that all applicable procedures have been followed. An environmental impact statement will not be prepared during the development of the area plan, but an environmental assessment or environmental impact statement will be prepared concurrently with the development of each project, when applicable, in accordance with federal procedures.

**Cawaco RC&D Council, Inc.**

By: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_  
Chairman

Attest: \_\_\_\_\_  
Secretary/Treasurer

This action was authorized at an official meeting of the **Cawaco RC&D Council, Inc.** on \_\_\_\_\_.  
Date

US Department of Agriculture- Natural Resources Conservation Service

The State Conservationist hereby acknowledges the attached Area Plan of the Cawaco RC&D Council, Inc., as meeting the requirements under Public Law 97-98 to receive assistance from the USDA.

**Acknowledged By:**

\_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_  
State Conservationist

