COMMUNITY FUNDRAISING
Grassroots fundraising often begins with a simple request for funds from those who know your RCD. This session will outline the steps to developing an annual fundraising cycle.
## REVENUE PLANNING

<p>| | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Set strategy &amp; work plan</strong></td>
<td>What is your RCD working on this year?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Plan operational details</strong></td>
<td>What staff, outside contractors, equipment, materials, supplies, technology, etc. are needed to deliver your programs / services?</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Develop budget</strong></td>
<td>What will all that cost?</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Identify guaranteed income</strong></td>
<td>What funding can you expect from contracts, grants, tax-based revenues?</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Identify likely income</strong></td>
<td>What revenue can you anticipate from fee for service or sales?</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Identify gaps</strong></td>
<td>How much more is needed? This is what you need to raise through community fundraising.</td>
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## Revenue Planning

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Uses/Sources</th>
<th>EXPENSES</th>
<th>INCOME</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Salaries, equipment / vehicles, supplies, materials, etc.</td>
<td>$380,000</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tax-based revenue</td>
<td></td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agency contracts</td>
<td></td>
<td>$260,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grants</td>
<td></td>
<td>$55,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fee for service income</td>
<td></td>
<td>$35,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td></td>
<td>$350,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fundraising goal (expenses minus income)</td>
<td>$380k-$350k=</td>
<td>$30,000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
SET FUNDRAISING GOALS

• Dollar goal to raise ($30,000)
• # donors to raise it from
  ✓ 300 people giving $100 each
  ✓ 200 people giving $100 each and 200 people giving $50 each
  ✓ 1,000 people giving $30 each
SET FUNDRAISING STRATEGIES

• “Donate” button on website
• Social media push
• Events to raise your visibility and let people “meet” you
• Direct mail solicitation
ANNUAL FUNDRAISING CYCLE

• Planning the campaign
• Identifying donors
• Cultivating their interest
• Asking for donations
• Thanking them
• Planning your fundraising goals and strategies for next year

Photo credit: CARCD
PLANNING THE CAMPAIGN

• Steps in the process
  ✓ Develop case
  ✓ Develop or secure a donor list for (e)mail solicitation
  ✓ Organize events
  ✓ Solicitation content development / design / production / (e)mail
  ✓ Thank you’s

• Timeline and roles
PLANNING THE CAMPAIGN

• How many staff can devote their time to fundraising? How much time can they devote each week?

• Do you have a volunteer base to help with fundraising tasks? If so, how many hours per week total for all volunteers?

• Are your board members required to fundraise for your RCD? If so, how many hours / week can you expect them to engage?

• What is your annual fundraising budget, including marketing costs?
DEVELOP YOUR CASE

• Stop talking about what you do
• Start talking about what difference you make
• What are you fundraising FOR?
• Projects and programs are sexier than operations and administration

Photo credit: RCD of San Diego County
IDENTIFY DONORS

Think about targeted constituencies
• Who is most likely to give your RCD money?
• ABC’s of fundraising:
  ✓ Ability to give
  ✓ Belief in your work
  ✓ Contact with your RCD
IDENTIFY DONORS

• Ability
• Belief
• Contact

• Who comes to mind?
IDENTIFY DONORS

• Prospecting: look at other groups’ annual reports
• Partner records (Farm Bureau list, NRCS list, etc.)
• Buying donor lists
CULTIVATE INTEREST

• Be visible: people give to groups they know
• Displays and materials that make your case
• Plan and hold “friend-raising” events / tours – give people an opportunity to see your work firsthand

Photo credit: Richard M. Murphy
ASKING FOR DONATIONS

Social media is good for small individual gifts

Mailings: common times of year
• Mid-February (“RCD Valentines”)
• Early May (tax refunds?)
• Mid-November for year-end gifts

How big should my mailer be?
• 4-page vs. 2-page

Digital is fine! make it easy!
THANKING DONORS

• Written or emailed receipt for tax purposes
• Handwritten thank-you notes mean a lot
• Gifts of a certain size: phone call!
• Thanking is fun
METRICS TO TRACK

• Total number of donors
• Donor retention rates
• Average gift size
• Increase donor gifts
Do you want to set a new fundraising goal? For example:

- Retain donors who gave last year
- Increase # donors by 5%
- Increase total donated revenue by 10%
- Increase average gift size by 2%
Goal: Increase total number of donors by 5%

• **Strategy:** Organize one spring and one fall direct-mail and one e-newsletter / month

• **Strategy:** Plan a peer-to-peer fundraising campaign to acquire new donors online

• **Strategy:** Use Facebook and Instagram ads to direct a targeted online audience to RCD website with “donate” button.
PRACTICAL MATTERS

• Start small: set a modest goal
• Be strategic: plan various approaches you think could work
• Track results: see what works best for you
• Try again: “Fail fast and keep moving”
• Remember: Fundraising is friend-raising
California Association of Resource Conservation Districts (CARCD)
Your Partner in Local Conservation & Agriculture

Find other tools and programs to support RCDs at www.carcd.org