



Systems Thinking and The Power of One

Biography

John Norwood, Elected 2018, Polk County Soil and Water Commission

Three-Pronged Platform: 1) Green Infrastructure,
2) Soil Health, 3) Ag Land Use Diversification

20 YR Business Transformation, TBL Ventures, to
Goldman Sachs 10KSB Iowa, Ca. Ag Land Trust

20 Years Board Service, Ag Coop, Real Estate
Condemnation Valuation to NFPs

Yale MBA and Yale Forestry School MEM



Tesla

Mission and Vision Statement:



Tesla, Inc Mission and Vision Statement Analysis:

Tesla Mission Statement: "To accelerate the world's transition to sustainable transport."

Tesla Vision Statement: "to create the most compelling car company of the 21st century by driving the world's transition to electric vehicles."



 **VISIONARY
BUSINESSPERSON**



1

Systems Thinking

Example: Polk County SWCDs Targeted Approach to Saturated Buffers...start by asking questions. Lots of questions.





... seek out the most thoughtful people I could find who disagreed with me. I didn't care about their conclusions, I just wanted to see things through their eyes and to have them see things through my eyes so that together we could hash things out to discover what's true..."

-Ray Dalio, Bridgewater





2

Power of One

Start Small, Think Big, Build a Diverse
Team of Thinkers, Don't Give Up

“

**“The man who moves a mountain
begins by carrying away small
stones”**

-Confucius

”



Vision: 100 SWCDs are Locally Led, Learning Organizations

- Sales & Marketing / Laboratories / Relationship Driven
- Conceive & Validate Team-Based Solutions that are:
 - 1) targeted, 2) landowner/farm operator aligned,
 - 3) repeatable, 4) efficient and deliver
 - 5) material impact to the system 6) at scale
- Catalysts for Regen Ag Vision built on Community Resiliency, Farm Sustainability & Profitability



Market vs. Regulation?

Iowa's 23 Million Acres of Corn & Bean Ground is SO big, we'll need billions of investment in green ag infrastructure & soil health to move the needle => Carrots with Strings





Two Examples of Aligning Carrots

Public

The largest source of farm bill money after nutrition is crop insurance. LET'S shift 40% public match crop insurance in sensitive areas to expand CRP and H2O zone easement dollars instead.

Private

The emerging \$4T CO2 market offers one of the greatest revenue streams of \$ for soil health. We have a billion dollar RFS-proposal to export CO2. LET'S package using systems approaches to stack, scale & sequester here in Iowa soil.



Foundation of A Balanced System

Fix Ag Plumbing

Tighten and Modernize the Ag Plumbing 14 MM acres including 1600 CREP Wetlands which provide multiple services. Manage H2O for P/P uses

Prioritize Soil Health

Rebuild Soil Health from current levels of 2% OM to 5%+ levels using aligned cropping/ animal systems; align soil health with sensible fertilizer loads

Diversify Acres

Stop Using Public Dollars to subsidize insurance growing corn and bean on 2yr flood and HEL, some 2.5 MM acres (10%) that has "higher and better" use



Soil Health is Distributed Storage

A 1% increase in soil organic matter across 10 million acres, achievable in 5-10 years, will deliver 1.3 Saylorville Lakes of distributed flood storage at the field level!





Really?

And in a decade with
systems thinking and
alignment of financial
signals



Polk SWCD 5yr Scalable Strategy

Goal 1

Priority Goal: Integrate GIS Mapping into Systems Approaches

Goal 2

Priority Goal: Turnkey, systems-based water quality infrastructure (e.g., constructed wetlands, saturated buffers)

Goal 3

Priority Goal 3: Develop Turnkey Systems-Based, County-Wide Soil Health Program

Goal 4

Priority Goal 4: Develop Real-Time, River Level Water Quality Monitoring and Management System (WQM2S)

Goal 5

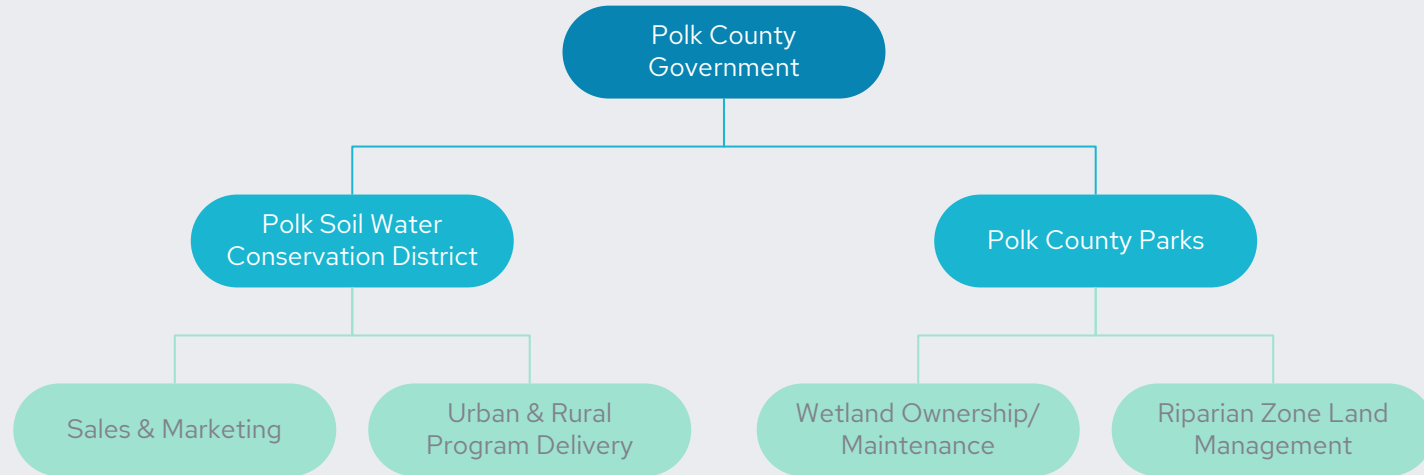
Priority Goal 5: Urban, beginning and DEI* agriculture

Goal 6

Priority Goal 6: Evaluate Market Diversification (land use) Using System Approaches



Each of Iowa's 99 Counties Has Organizational Structure: What is the role for each institution within a Community Led Sustainable ag system?



Thank you



**Questions, ideas, suggestions,
points of debate?**

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