



Michigan Conservation Districts

www.macd.org

Michigan Conservation Districts are the local providers of natural resource management services that help our citizens conserve their land and our environment for a cleaner, healthier, economically stronger Michigan.

Conservation Districts are local, special purpose units of government, governed by a locally elected, five member board. The guiding philosophy of Michigan Conservation Districts is that local people should make decisions on conservation issues at the local level, with financial and technical assistance provided by government.

Michigan Land Base Statistics:

Michigan has 37 million acres of land, with over 60% (22.2 million acres) held by private landowners.

18.6 million acres of the non-industrial private land base is considered forested timberland, equaling 65% of all forest resources in the state.

Michigan Conservation District Statistics:

Conservation Districts are local, special purpose units of State Government

- Leverage state, federal and private sector resources to address natural resource issues at the local level.
- Liaison between state and federal government resources and programs and Michigan's private landowners.
- Provide technical and financial assistance to private landowners.
- 78 offices, covering all 83 counties in the state.
- Over 300 publicly elected board members.
- Trusted, locally lead.

Michigan's 78 Conservation Districts provide quality and cost effective conservation technical assistance and information to landowners and citizens to provide conservation improvement to the land and to foster understanding and wise management of our natural resources.

- Michigan Conservation Districts are governmental subdivisions of the State of Michigan. Districts are not non-profit organizations, etc.
- Michigan Conservation Districts were organized by the people under provisions of the Soil Conservation District Law, Public Act 297 of 1937. As such they are locally controlled resource management agencies of the State of Michigan. In 1994, the Conservation District Law was made part of the Compiled Environmental Code, Part 93, Public Act 451, as amended. The most recent amendment to Conservation District Law was Public Act 114 of 2013.
- The Michigan Department of Agriculture and Rural Development is charged with the oversight of Michigan's Conservation Districts.
- Michigan Conservation Districts are recognized for their expertise in areas dealing with soil, water, and natural resource management and have been written into various State laws and given a role to play in the operation of those laws.
- Michigan Conservation Districts are the local partner for the USDA Natural Resource Conservation Service and are responsible for the successful delivery of \$27.7 Million in financial assistance in 2013 to Michigan farmers and land owners.

For further information please visit www.macd.org or contact the Michigan Association of Conservation Districts at 517-324-5274 and www.macd.org.

Michigan Conservation Districts provide assistance in the following areas: Water resources, Non-point source pollution, Agriculture, Forestry, Wildlife habitat, Soil health, Tree and shrub planting for conservation, Native plant material, Farmland protection, Urban conservation, Conservation education, and Targeted programs for local natural resource management issues. Michigan Conservation Districts are proud to offer the following State and Federal programs to Michigan citizens.

Federal Programs:

Michigan's Conservation Districts are the delivery point for the Federal Farm Bill with Conservation District staff providing landowners with administrative and technical assistance for Federal Farm Bill programs. In FY2013, \$27.7 Million was brought into the state through Farm Bill programs delivered through Michigan Conservation Districts in partnership with the USDA Natural Resource Conservation Service.

Farm Bill Conservation Programs: These programs bring financial assistance for conservation to farmers and non-industrial private land owners, which in turn boost local economies. These programs included Environmental Quality Incentives Program, Wildlife Habitat Improvement Program, Conservation Reserve Program, Continuous Conservation Reserve Program, Conservation Stewardship Program, State Acres for Wildlife, and Wetland Reserve Program.

Conservation Technical Assistance Initiative (CTAI): Through a partners contribution agreement between the MDARD and the USDA-Natural Resource Conservation Service, the CTAI program was initiated in 2005. This program provides technicians and engineers in key locations throughout the state to provide much needed technical assistance to design and implement practices funded through the federal conservation programs.

State Programs:

Michigan Agriculture Environmental Assurance Program (MAEAP): MAEAP is an innovative, proactive program that helps farms of all sizes and all commodities voluntarily prevent or minimize agricultural pollution risks. is a holistic approach to environmental protection. It helps farmers evaluate their entire operation and make decisions balancing society's needs, the environment and economics. Michigan Conservation Districts deliver MAEAP at the local level, providing education, on-farm risk assessments and assisting with the development and implementation of action plans to address potential environmental risks.

Forestry Assistance Program (FAP): Provides education and technical assistance to private land owners and to communities to help Michigan citizens better understand, plan, manage, protect and utilize their forest resources. The goal of the program is to provide and increase the active management of non-industrial private forest landowner outreach and technical assistance through collaboration and cooperation.

Michigan Clean Sweep: Helping to protect the state's natural resources and prevent agriculture pollution by ensuring the safe and proper disposal of outdated, unused or unwanted pesticides in Michigan. Clean Sweep is made possible by a strong and unique state, federal, local, and industry partnership, with Conservation Districts taking the local lead on Clean Sweep collections which include pesticide product and mercury, free of charge from any Michigan resident.

MI Bovine TB Wildlife Risk Mitigation Project: Conservation Districts work closely with MDARD and other partners including the USDA, to deliver a comprehensive program that utilizes the Wildlife Risk Mitigation assessment tools and Farm Bill program cost share to address high risk management practices on farms.

Michigan Pheasant Restoration Initiative: Encourages active management of upland sites for the restoration of Michigan's pheasant population. Conservation Districts lead at the local level, providing landowners with information and assistance to create large blocks of grassland habitat and encourage ongoing management of the habitat, through the use of Federal Farm Bill programs.

Regional Programs:

Critical Dunes Partnership Program: Michigan Conservation Districts have formed a Critical Dune Partnership to better protect Michigan's Critical Dunes. The partnership program is providing landowners with non-regulatory guidance in the form of site reviews and site specific recommendations. The partnership provides a common, single voice for Michigan's Conservation Districts having Critical Dunes along their shorelines.

Cooperative Weed Management Areas (CWMA): Michigan Conservation Districts are leading and involved in CWMA programs throughout the state. CSMA's facilitate cooperation and coordination of networking across jurisdictional boundaries to share invasive plant management resources. They build community awareness and participation, reduce the risk through implementation of best management practices (BMPs) and provide an early detection and rapid response network and help secure funding.

Local Programs:

Michigan citizens seek Conservation Districts for the many services they beyond the programs noted above. A significant number of Conservation Districts manage county Soil Erosion and Sedimentation Control, Household Hazardous Waste, and county Recycling programs. Districts also provide a host of services including technical assistance: for forestry, wetlands, lakeshore, stream restoration, etc.; environmental education; farmland preservation; soil health programming, including no-till drill rentals.