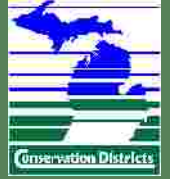


Training Module 3



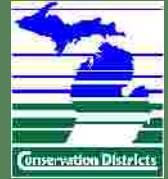
Partners in
Conservation

The image shows three individuals in an outdoor setting. On the left, a man in a dark blue polo shirt and cap with 'USDA NRCS' on it is holding a long, thin tool. In the center, a man in a colorful striped shirt and blue cap looks on. On the right, a woman in a light blue shirt and glasses looks towards the man with the tool. The background consists of green trees and a clear sky. The text 'Partners in Conservation' is overlaid in the bottom right corner in a stylized font.



What You'll Learn In This Module

- | Conservation Districts' State and Federal partners
- | Districts' non-profit partners
- | Other organizations Districts work with



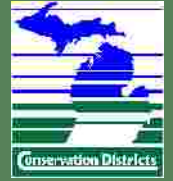
Discussion Questions

- | How do the following groups assist Conservation Districts:
 - Michigan Department of Agriculture
 - USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service
 - Michigan Association of Conservation Districts
 - National Association of Conservation Districts

- | Who are some of the other organizations Districts traditionally partner with?

- | In what MACD Region is your District located?

- | Who is your MACD Chairperson representing your District at the state level?



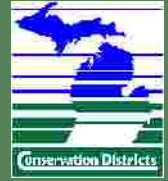
State and Federal Partners

Conservation Districts partner with many local and statewide agencies, groups and organizations. Two of the main agencies that assist Districts are:

Michigan Department of Agriculture

and the

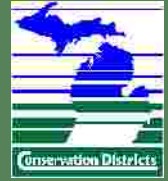
USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service



Michigan Department of Agriculture

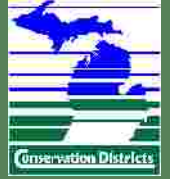
The Conservation District Law (Public Act 297) states that the Michigan Department of Agriculture (MDA) is responsible to assist Districts in the following areas:

- Offer assistance to the directors in implementing any of their responsibilities as District directors.
- To keep the directors informed of the activities of all other Districts, and to facilitate an interchange of advice and experience between the Districts.



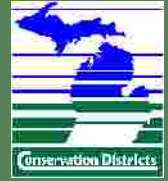
Michigan Department of Agriculture (continued)

- Approve and coordinate the programs of all Conservation Districts.
- Secure the cooperation and assistance of the United States and any of its agencies, and the state and any of its agencies, in the work of the Districts, and to formulate policies and procedures as MDA considers necessary for the extension of aid in any form from federal or state agencies to the Districts.



Michigan Department of Agriculture (continued)

- To disseminate information throughout the state concerning the activities and programs of Conservation Districts and to encourage the formation of Districts in areas where their organization is desirable.



Michigan Department of Agriculture

Under this arrangement, Conservation Districts will:

- Submit to MDA an annual audit report, a copy of the annual report, and the regular and special meeting minutes
- Notify MDA of the time and place of the annual meeting and method of election; submit director election certificate and oaths of office
- Upon request, submit other documents and information necessary to maintain the District as an entity of government



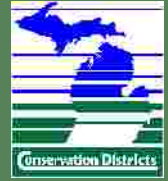
USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service

The USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) is a federal agency with the goal of conserving natural resources on private land. NRCS primarily works through a voluntarily incentive based program for privately owned lands, and also with other private and public resources and units of government.

Many Districts have an NRCS employee housed in local USDA Service Centers.



Photo courtesy of USDA NRCS

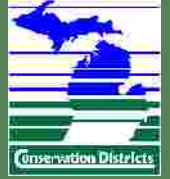


USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service

A memorandum of understanding was executed between USDA and Conservation Districts at the time of its organization. This Mutual Agreement and the Cooperative Working Agreement allows the District to utilize the technical service of NRCS.

In general, the agreement says that NRCS will:

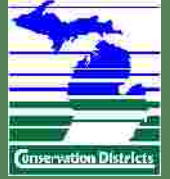
- Assign technical personnel to the District
- Provide assistance in accordance with the Districts annual plan
- Consult with the District in advance when personnel and/or assistance changes are to be made
- May provide office facilities



USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service

According to these agreements, Conservation Districts will:

- Conduct resources assessments
- Set conservation priorities for the District
- Carry out local conservation programs
- Prepare:
 - | Long range plan
 - | Annual plan of work
 - | Annual report



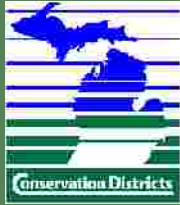
Non-Profit Partners

Conservation Districts also receive assistance from two partners that are non-profit organizations. They are:

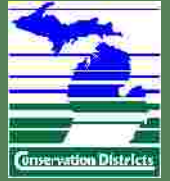
Michigan Association of Conservation Districts

and the

National Association of Conservation Districts

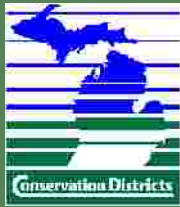
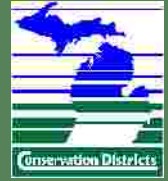


Michigan Association of Conservation Districts



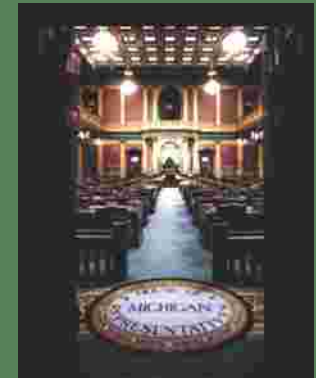
The Michigan Association of Conservation Districts (MACD) is a non-governmental, non-profit organization established to represent and provide services to Michigan's 80 Conservation Districts.

MACD was organized in 1940 as Michigan Soil Conservation Districts Incorporated which became the Michigan Association of Conservation Districts in 1978.

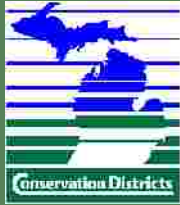


Michigan Association of Conservation Districts

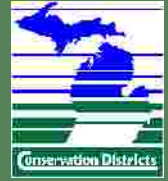
MACD works with legislators, cooperating agencies, and special interest groups whose programs affect the care and management of Michigan's natural resources.



MACD also coordinates its activities with the National Association of Conservation Districts to keep the public, Congress, U.S. Department of Agriculture, and environmental interest groups aware of the nation's natural resource needs.

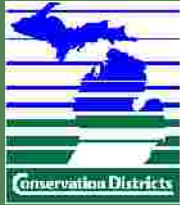


Michigan Association of Conservation Districts

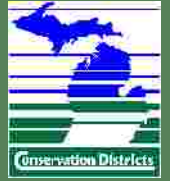


MACD serves its members by providing timely communications and information, educational and training leadership programs, and forums where issues of mutual concern can be discussed.





Michigan Association of Conservation Districts



For the purpose of the Association, the Districts are organized into ten geographic regions. MACD is governed by ten council members each representing one of the ten regions, plus three officers, for a total of thirteen members.

The MACD State Council members are District directors who have accepted the added responsibility of representing their regions.

MACD Regions

Region 1

Region 2

Region 5

Region 6

Region 3

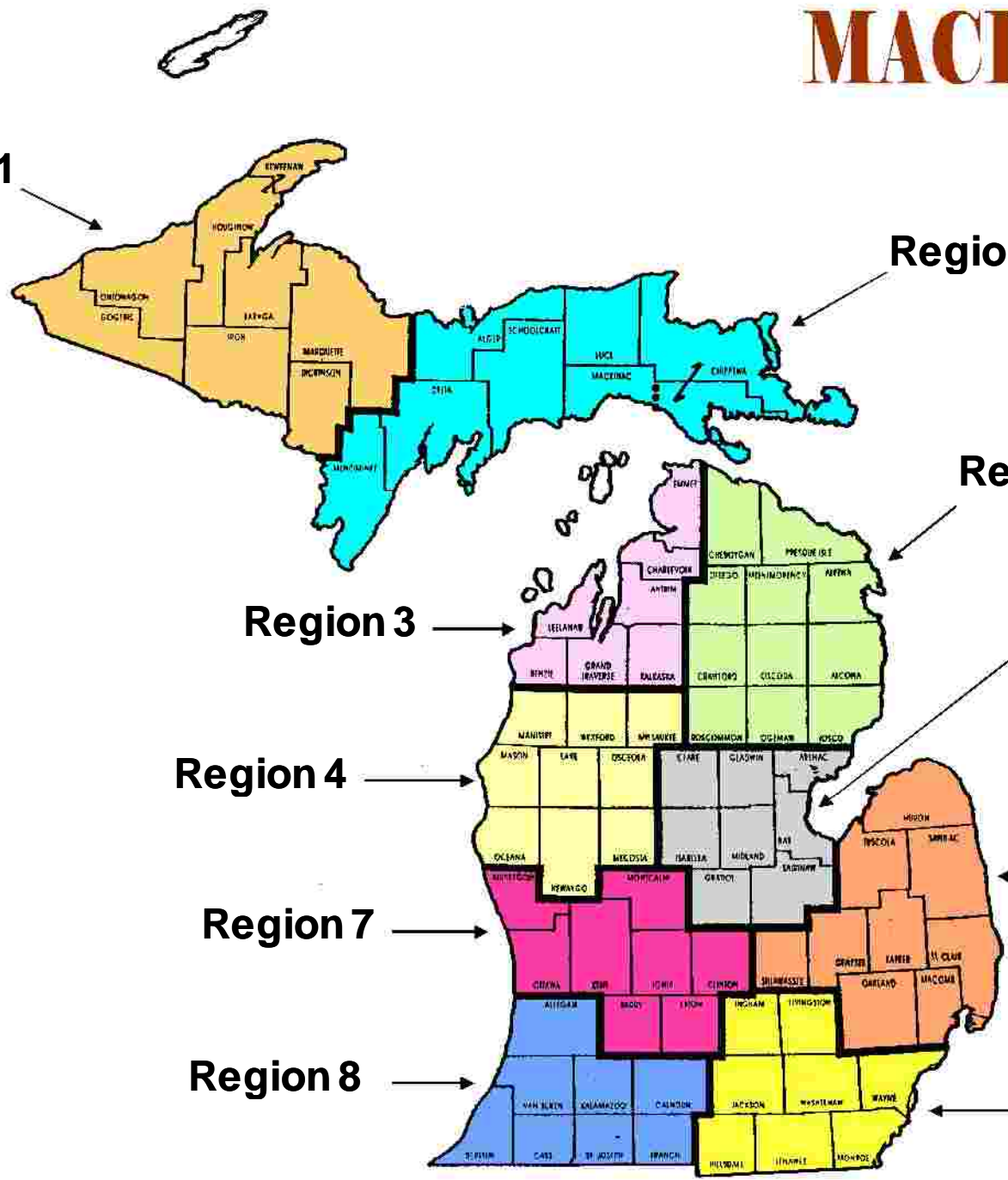
Region 4

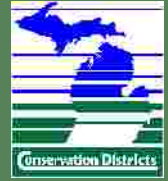
Region 9

Region 7

Region 8

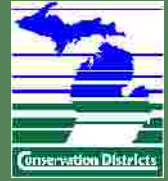
Region 10





National Association of Conservation Districts

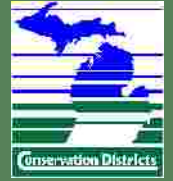
- The National Association of Conservation Districts (NACD) formed in 1946, is a non-governmental, non-profit organization which represents nearly 3000 Conservation Districts nationally.
- NACD maintains offices in Washington D.C. and has regional representatives throughout the country.
- NACD has established a strong voice on soil, water and other natural resource concerns at the national level.



Other Partners in Conservation

Conservation Districts partner with many other federal, state, local and private organizations. The list below highlights the more traditional District partners.

Michigan Assoc. of Conservation District Employees	Michigan Dept. of Natural Resources
USDA Farm Services Agency	Michigan Dept. of Environmental Quality
Michigan State University Extension	County Drain Commissioner
Resource Conservation & Development	Other Organizations



Michigan Assoc. of Conservation District Employees

The Michigan Assoc. of Conservation District Employees (MACDE) is a private organization formed by the District employees across the state

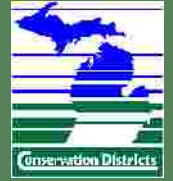
MACDE represents the needs of some 230 District employees. It is governed by a Board of Directors made up of one District employee from each of the ten MACD Regions.



USDA Farm Services Agency

Stabilizing farm income, helping farmers conserve land and water resources, providing credit to new or disadvantaged farmers and ranchers, and helping farm operations recover from the effects of disaster are the missions of the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Farm Service Agency (FSA).

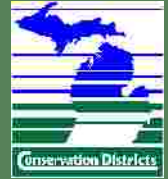
Many Conservation Districts are located in buildings with an FSA office (a.k.a. USDA Service Center).



Michigan State University Extension

Michigan State University Extension (MSUE) provides local experts in agronomy, horticulture, home economics, etc. Even though extension agents are not located in every county, they do try to cover all of Michigan.

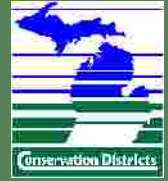
MSUE staff serve as another source of information and assist Districts in demonstrations and education programs.



Resource Conservation and Development

Currently in Michigan there are seven Resource Conservation and Development (RC&D) areas which cover most Districts.

RC&Ds provide a multi-purpose approach to resource management. In Michigan, the RC&Ds have organized themselves into non-profit organizations. They administer grant projects for and through Conservation Districts and other groups.

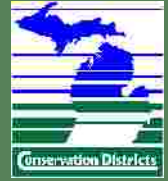


Michigan Department of Natural Resources

The Michigan Dept. of Natural Resources (MDNR) is responsible for the management of the state's natural resources, especially as it relates to state owned land.

The divisions that Districts have the most contact with are:

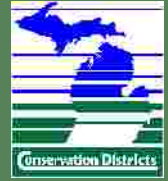
- **Forestry, Minerals and Fire Management Division:** May assist and provide grants to Districts for forestry programs.
- **Wildlife Division:** May provide grants to Districts to for technical assistance in establishing improved wildlife habitat on private lands.



Michigan Department of Environmental Quality

The Michigan Dept. of Environmental Quality (MDEQ) is responsible for the enforcement of many natural resource and environmental regulations including protecting wetlands, surface water quality, and soil erosion and sedimentation control.

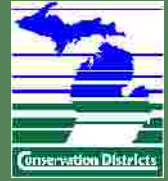
MDEQ also provides grants to Districts to conduct non-point source pollution control programs on a watershed basis under the 319 watershed program and the Clean Michigan Initiative (CMI).



County Drain Commissioner

County Drain Commissioners are locally elected officials charged with providing for local water management. All counties with a population of over 12,000 should have an elected county drain commissioner. In smaller counties, the county road commission is often the responsible authority.

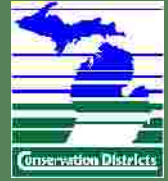
Some Conservation Districts have entered into agreements with their county drain commissioner relative to drain maintenance activities and inspections.



Other Organizations

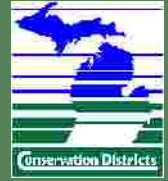
There are many more organizations that Districts can and will interact with. Pheasants Forever, Ducks Unlimited, land conservancies, wildlife groups, foundations, local and state government officials, businesses, and the list goes on.

These organizations can be a source of funding, resources, and other program support.



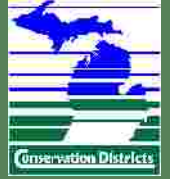
Summary

1. The two main state and federal agencies that assist Conservation Districts are the *Michigan Department of Agriculture* and the *USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service*.
 - MDA assists with program support and basic operations funding
 - NRCS provides technical support for District programs



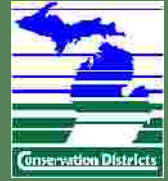
Summary

2. The two main non-profit agencies assisting Districts are the *Michigan Association of Conservation Districts* and the *National Association of Conservation Districts*
 - MACD represents Districts legislatively and provides educational programs, communications, and information
 - NACD provides services to and represents nearly 3000 Conservation Districts at the national level



Summary

3. Conservation Districts form partnerships with a wide variety of local and statewide groups.
4. Forming partnerships is an essential and effective way to broaden the Districts' network and extend their power to get conservation on the land.



Review Questions

- | How do the following groups assist Conservation Districts:
 - Michigan Department of Agriculture
 - USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service
 - Michigan Association of Conservation Districts
 - National Association of Conservation Districts

- | Who are some of the other organizations Districts traditionally partner with?

- | In what MACD Region is your District located?

- | Who is your MACD Chairperson representing your District at the state level?



Resources Available

Additional information on the various District partners can be found on the following web sites:

Farm Service Agency	www.fsa.usda.gov
Michigan Association of Conservation Districts	www.macd.org
Michigan Assoc. of Conservation District Employees	www.macde.org
Michigan Department of Agriculture	www.michigan.gov/mda
Michigan Department of Environmental Quality	www.michigan.gov/deq
Michigan Department of Natural Resources	www.michigan.gov/dnr
Michigan State University Extension	www.msue.msu.edu
National Association of Conservation Districts	www.nacdnet.org
Natural Resources Conservation Service	www.nrcs.usda.gov
Resource Conservation & Development	www.rcdnet.org