



OTTAWA CONSERVATION DISTRICT

2026 Conservation Needs Assessment

1. What is the 5 digit zip code of your residence, property, or business?

2. What is your age? (Circle your answer).
 - a. Under 18
 - b. 18- 25
 - c. 26 - 35
 - d. 36 - 45
 - e. 46 - 55
 - f. 56 - 65
 - g. 66 - 75
 - h. 75+

3. How would you describe the setting in which you live? (Check all that apply).
 - a. ☐ City, town, or village
 - b. ☐ Residential / Suburban
 - c. ☐ Rural - Farm
 - d. ☐ Rural - Residential
 - e. ☐ Forested
 - f. ☐ Lakeshore / Waterfront
 - g. ☐ I am a Visitor and / or Work in Ottawa County only

4. Which of the following describes your connection to Ottawa County? (Circle all that apply).
 - a. Farmer
 - b. Renter
 - c. Homeowner
 - d. Student
 - e. Builder/Developer
 - f. Government Official
 - g. Business Owner/Operator
 - h. Resource Professional
 - i. Environmental Volunteer
 - j. Recreationist / Tourist
 - k. Other: _____

5. Which natural resources do you utilize in Ottawa County? (Check all that apply).
- a. ☐ Agricultural Lands
 - b. ☐ Beaches
 - c. ☐ Dunes
 - d. ☐ Forests
 - e. ☐ Hiking / biking trails
 - f. ☐ Lakes (inland / Great Lakes)
 - g. ☐ Parks
 - h. ☐ Public hunting areas
 - i. ☐ Rivers / streams
 - j. ☐ Your own backyard / property
 - k. ☐ Do not use natural areas in the county
 - l. ☐ Other (please explain):
6. Are you aware that OCD is governed by a publicly elected Board of Directors and hosts monthly public meetings? (Circle your answer).
- a. Yes
 - b. No
7. Please choose what you think are Ottawa County's **top 3** natural resource priorities (please **only select 3**).
- ☐ Water Quality & Quantity - (drinking water, ground/surface water contamination, ground water availability, septic system management, wells)
 - ☐ Aquatic Habitat Health - (surface runoff with excess E. coli, sediment, nutrients, and chlorides that could cause habitat loss)
 - ☐ Coastal Dune Ecosystem - (protecting dune habitats, maintaining plant diversity, reducing erosion)
 - ☐ Agricultural/Farm Preservation - (development, succession planning, conservation easements and programs)
 - ☐ Agricultural Practices - (nutrient and manure management, use of chemicals, soil health, animal health, access to cost-share for these practices, farmer networks, etc.)
 - ☐ Soil Health - (erosion, sediment loss/deposits, nutrient loss/management, pollution)
 - ☐ Expanding Recreational Access - (hunting, hiking, biking, boating, birdwatching, foraging, etc.)
 - ☐ Invasive Species Management - (aquatic & terrestrial)
 - ☐ Wildlife and Habitat Preservation - (forest health, plant diseases, animal protections, pollinators & connectivity)
 - ☐ Backyard Conservation at Home (attracting wildlife, urban forestry, water runoff, composting, native/rain gardening)
 - ☐ Solid Waste, Recycling, Composting (microplastics, landfill management, chemical & hazmat disposal)
 - ☐ Using Alternative Energy Sources (solar, wind, geothermal, hydro - not farmland preservation)
 - ☐ Community Outreach & Education (covering any of the above topics)
 - ☐ Other - Please Describe:

8. Of the following OCD programs, events, and services, which are you aware of? (Circle all that apply).

- a. Watershed Restoration Programs
- b. Water Quality Monitoring Initiative
- c. Farmland and Water Quality Conservation Initiative
- d. Produce Safety
- e. Conservation Technical Assistance Program / MI Agricultural Environmental Assurance Program (MAEAP)
- f. Invasive Species Management Programs
- g. Hemlock Woolly Adelgid Program
- h. Forestry Assistance Program
- i. Educational Workshops & Field Days
- j. Native Plant & Tree Seedling Sales
- k. Cultivating Resilience Winter Conference
- l. Conservation on Tap
- m. Board of Directors Elections
- n. Monthly Board Meetings & Annual Meetings

9. How interested would you be in attending a field day, workshop, or presentation on the following topics? (Check all that apply).

- a. _____ Invasive Species
- b. _____ Agricultural best management practices
- c. _____ Native plants, trees, and pollinators
- d. _____ Sustainable forest management
- e. _____ Water quality
- f. _____ Water quantity and conservation
- g. _____ Soil health
- h. _____ Septic systems
- i. _____ Other: (please explain)

10. What barriers cause you to not engage with or adopt conservation practices? (Circle all that apply).

- a. Financial constraints
- b. Lack of information
- c. Lack of other farm examples actively doing such practices
- d. Lack of time
- e. Lack of infrastructure or equipment
- f. Lack of access to property (rental or ownership)

11. How would you prefer to receive information on programs and services available through the Ottawa Conservation District? (Check all that apply).

- a. _____ Electronic newsletter
- b. _____ Email
- c. _____ Facebook
- d. _____ Instagram
- e. _____ Newspapers
- f. _____ Postal mail
- g. _____ Website
- h. _____ YouTube
- i. _____ Other (please explain) _____

12. How do you feel about ag land being acquired for non-ag purposes? I.e. data centers, solar, wind, etc.(Circle your answer).
- I strongly do not support ag land being used for these purposes
 - I do not support ag land being used for these purposes
 - I feel indifferent about ag land being used for these purposes
 - I support ag land being used for these purposes
 - I strongly support ag land being used for these purposes
13. Each conservation district receives \$40,000 in annual operation funds from the state of MI, which is **5%** of OCD's annual operating budget. Do you think the state of MI should provide more funding to support local, boots-on-the-ground conservation resources in Ottawa County? (Circle your answer).
- Yes
 - Maybe, I would like to learn more
 - Unsure, I feel indifferently
 - No
 - Other:
14. How supportive would you be of the Ottawa Conservation District pursuing a county wide millage to consistently fund conservation programs and services? (Check your answer).
- ☐ Very supportive
 - ☐ Somewhat supportive
 - ☐ Somewhat Opposed
 - ☐ Very Opposed
 - ☐ Unsure
15. Would you like to receive emails from the Ottawa Conservation District about the results of this survey, events, and programs? (Circle your answer).
- Yes
 - No
16. **If you would like further correspondence**, please clearly print your name and email address:

Name: _____ Email: _____

Thank you for your time and wisdom! If you would like to contact us to discuss more, please call us 616-842-5852 x 5 or email us at ottawacd@macd.org. If you would like to financially support the Ottawa Conservation District, please visit www.ottawacd.org/donate.

Please use the space below for any additional comments about this survey, OCD, or Ottawa County's natural resources.

