

2026 Conservation Needs Assessment



OTTAWA
CONSERVATION
DISTRICT

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).
- Yes
 - 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).
- Watershed Restoration Programs
 - Water Quality Monitoring Initiative
 - Farmland and Water Quality Conservation Initiative
 - Produce Safety
 - Conservation Technical Assistance Program / MI Agricultural Environmental Assurance Program (MAEAP)
 - Invasive Species Management Programs
 - Hemlock Woolly Adelgid Program
 - Forestry Assistance Program
 - Educational Workshops & Field Days
 - Native Plant & Tree Seedling Sales
 - Cultivating Resilience Winter Conference
 - Conservation on Tap
 - Board of Directors Elections
 - 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 agricultural land being acquired for non-ag purposes such as data centers? (Circle your answer).

- a. I strongly do not support ag land being used for these purposes
- b. I do not support ag land being used for these purposes
- c. I feel indifferent about ag land being used for these purposes
- d. I support ag land being used for these purposes
- e. I strongly support ag land being used for these purposes

13. How do you feel about agricultural land being acquired for non-ag purposes such as large-scale solar or wind power?

- a. I strongly do not support ag land being used for these purposes
- b. I do not support ag land being used for these purposes
- c. I feel indifferent about ag land being used for these purposes
- d. I support ag land being used for these purposes
- e. I strongly support ag land being used for these purposes

14. 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).

- a. Yes
- b. Maybe, I would like to learn more
- c. Unsure, I feel indifferently
- d. No
- e. Other:

15. 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).

- a. ☐ Very supportive
- b. ☐ Somewhat supportive
- c. ☐ Somewhat Opposed
- d. ☐ Very Opposed
- e. ☐ Unsure

16. Would you like to receive emails from the Ottawa Conservation District about the results of this survey, events, and programs? (Circle your answer).

- a. Yes
- b. No

17. **If you would like further correspondence about this survey**, please clearly print your name and email address:

Name: _____ Email: _____



OTTAWA
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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 return this survey to the Ottawa Conservation District via mail or in-person drop off at 16731 Ferris St, Grand Haven, MI 49417 or email a scanned copy to ottawacd@macd.org.

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