



Conservation Matters Newsletter

5/17/2017

Support our Conservation Projects

We Have Rain Barrels, (6 left) from the Tree Sale for \$65.00 each

Plantskydd Varmit Repellent 2 sizes available. 1# concentrate \$30.00 or Quart Spray Bottle \$22.00

Wild Flower Seeds. Help the Pollinators. Contains 34 different varieties of flowers

¼ pound bag just \$15.00

Conservation Matters T-Shirts \$15.00 each

Plat Books, 2014 edition currently \$20.00. New edition available this Fall will be \$35.00.

Woodworking for Wildlife \$18.00 and Landscaping for Wildlife Books \$12.00.

Lots of good information.

Annual Meeting January 16, 2018, Public invited.

Annual Tree Sale begins February 1, 2018 and we will be taking orders through March 31, 2018

Conservation District Seeking Board Members

The Midland Conservation District is seeking individuals who are interested in helping lead conservation efforts in the central Michigan area as either a Board member or Associate Board member.

You don't have to be an expert at conservation to be on the Board; you just need a desire to serve your community and make a positive difference for the future of Midland County's important natural resources. If you are interested in being considered for the position of Director or Associate Director, please let us know. Appointments to the Board will be conducted as needed, and elections are held each January at our Annual meeting.

Midland Conservation District is here to provide information and technical assistance to private landowners, local units of government, educational institutions and other citizens to better understand, plan, manage, protect and utilize the resources of Midland County.

Some of our current projects include a Sturgeon Creek Watershed Management Plan, wildlife habitat improvements, invasive species survey and treatment, conservation farming techniques, sales of conservation-related trees, shrubs & seeds at our Annual Tree Sale, the Midland County Plat Book, the Hunting Access Program (HAP), and the Michigan Agriculture Environmental Assurance Program (MAEAP).

We also need volunteers for different activities.

Call us to see how you can help and get on our list.

What Is HAP?

HAP provides access to quality hunting lands close to urban properties is a key component to offering additional hunting opportunities, as well as attracting new and retaining current hunters.

HAP provides financial incentives to landowners in southern Michigan who allow hunters access to their lands. Using funds from a new federal grant, the DNR plans to significantly expand HAP.

To view what HAP land is available to hunt in Midland and surrounding Counties, check out the interactive map from the DNR. Visit www.michigan.gov/mihunt webpage for more details.

Contact Midland Conservation District to sign up.

What is the NRCS? (Natural Resource Conservation Service)

NRCS offers voluntary programs to eligible landowners and agricultural producers to provide financial and technical assistance to help manage natural resources in a sustainable manner. Through these programs the agency approves contracts to provide financial assistance to help plan and implement conservation practices that address natural resource concerns or opportunities to help save energy, improve soil, water, plant, air, animal and related resources on agricultural lands and non-industrial private forest land.

Conservation Matters from NRCS District Conservationist, Boyd Byelich

A conservation plan is a record of management options for your property. It is specific to your land and designed to find a balance between the environment, profits, and productivity. Developing a conservation plan is the first step to managing your land's natural resources.

The Midland Conservation District and Natural Resources Conservation Service work one-on-one with landowners to develop conservation plans. Each plan is tailored to meet the landowners' needs and describes a step-by-step roadmap for achieving your natural resource goals. The plan defines conservation practices to help address problems such as erosion, water quality, poor wildlife habitat, or invasive species. It describes specific information, including placement, timing, instructions, and maintenance for each practice. The District provides this free conservation planning assistance to help landowners like you make well-informed conservation decisions.

Conservation planning is confidential and begins by identifying land issues and objectives. The planner will tour the property with you to examine concerns and point out areas for possible improvement. Your current land use, future plans, and economic goals are important to deciding what goes in the plan. How the area will be used in the short and long term and family considerations may affect the objectives of your plan.

The planner will analyze the information gathered and a prepare scenario to meet your goals. Together, you will evaluate the scenario, taking a close look at effects to natural resources, maintenance needs, and financial considerations.

Each conservation plan is unique, It is a 'living document' meaning that it changes as needs change. Remember, the final decisions in your plan are yours. It is a record of your objectives and management decisions.”

Healthy land is important for agriculture, environmental quality, and a healthy community.

What is MAEAP?

MAEAP is a confidential, helpful process of working with the Michigan Department of Agriculture and Rural Development to meet environmental laws. It is a comprehensive, voluntary, proactive program designed to reduce farmers' legal and environmental risks through a three-phase process.

Three-phase Process:

Education, Farm-specific Risk Assessment and On-farm Verification that ensures the farmer has implemented environmentally sound practices.

The program's four systems each examine different aspects of the farm.

The four systems are:

- Farmstead
- Cropping
- Livestock
- Forest, Wetlands and Habitats

Reasons to be MAEAP Verified:

- Confirm, improve and be proud of your natural resource stewardship and help your neighbors and community understand your respect for the environment.
- Avoid civil fines and penalties if your farm is faced with an unintentional, accidental discharge to the water or an “Act of God Weather Event.”
- Use the MAEAP logo and MAEAP sign to market your farm and farm products.
- Be recognized by peers, member organizations, and local government as a leader who is setting the bar in farm management and environmental stewardship.
- Boost your access to cost-share funds.
- Receive up to a 20% discount on the Liability Portion of your Farm Bureau Insurance Farm owner's Policy premium.
- Confidence that you are in conformance with applicable Right to Farm Generally Accepted Agricultural and Management Practices.
- If a farm is MAEAP verified in all applicable “systems” and is in a Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) Watershed, the farm will be considered as implementing the practices needed to meet a TMDL.

Financial Assistance Programs

Our financial assistance programs include the following:

The Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP) helps agricultural producers maintain and improve their existing conservation systems and adopt additional conservation activities to address priority resources concerns. Participants earn CSP payments for conservation performance—the higher the performance, the higher the payment.

The Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) provides financial and technical assistance to agricultural producers in order to address natural resource concerns and deliver environmental benefits such as improved water and air quality, conserved ground and surface water, reduced soil erosion and sedimentation or improved or created wildlife habitat.

Client Gateway - Apply for services and access documents online
Five Steps to Assistance - How to get assistance from NRCS for farms and forests.

What is Conservation Technical Assistance?

Conservation technical assistance is the help NRCS and its partners provide to land users to address opportunities, concerns, and problems related to the use of natural resources and to help land users make sound natural resource management decisions on private, tribal, and other non-federal lands.

This assistance can help land users:

- Maintain and improve private lands and their management
- Implement better land management technologies
- Protect and improve water quality and quantity
- Maintain and improve wildlife and fish habitat
- Enhance recreational opportunities on their land
- Maintain and improve the aesthetic character of private land
- Explore opportunities to diversify agricultural operations and
- Develop and apply sustainable agricultural systems

This assistance may be in the form of resource assessment, practice design, resource monitoring, or follow-up of installed practices.

Although the CTA program does not include financial or cost-share assistance, clients may develop conservation plans, which may serve as a springboard for those interested in participating in USDA financial assistance programs. CTA planning can also serve as a door to financial assistance and easement conservation programs provided by other Federal, State, and local programs.

Who Needs Conservation Technical Assistance?

NRCS and its partners use the CTA program to provide technical assistance to:

Farmers, ranchers, local units of government, citizen groups, recreation groups, Tribal governments

Professional consultants, State and Federal agencies and others interested in conserving natural resources

This voluntary program is delivered to private individuals, groups of decision-makers, tribes, units of governments, and non-governmental organizations in all 50 States, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, U.S. Virgin Islands, Guam, American Samoa, the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, the Federated States of Micronesia, the Republic of Palau, and the Marshall Islands.

All owners, managers, and others who have a stake and interest in natural resource management are eligible to receive technical assistance from NRCS. To receive technical assistance, the individual may contact their local NRCS office or the local conservation district. The working relationships that landowners and communities have with their local NRCS staff are unique. One-on-one help through flexible, voluntary programs occurs every day in local NRCS offices across the country. It is the way NRCS does business, and it works. To obtain conservation technical assistance, contact your local NRCS office.

Opportunities for Advertising and Support with the Conservation District in 2016

- Silent Auction and Table Sponsorship at our Annual Meeting & Banquet January 17, 2017.
- Provide a donation or small item/coupon/promotional information/brochure to go in our goodie bags to be given away to Kids in the 30th Annual 4th Grade Farm Tour
- Sponsor a Field Day or Special Event hosted by the Conservation District
- Partnerships/Grants/Allocations for specific projects we're working on

For more information, stop into the office in the USDA Service Center at 954 E Isabella Rd Midland, MI. You can also call the office at 989-486-232 leave a message or email us at midlandconservation@gmail.com

Like us on Face Book and visit our web page www.midlandcd.org

Thank You for your support. Hope you have a great Summer!



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