

Gratiot Conservation District Survey of Resource Concerns

We are here to help the community and need your input to focus limited resources on the concerns you view as highest importance. Rank the following natural resource concerns in order with one (1) being Most Important through twelve (12) as Least Important.

- Conservation Education
- Conservation Farming / Soil Erosion / Sedimentation Prevention
- Farming Best Management Practices / Right to Farm Act
- Groundwater / Surface Water Protection
- Invasive Species Control
- Land Use Planning / Sprawl Prevention / Farmland Preservation
- Manure Management
- Non-point Source Pollution
- Point-source Pollution
- Septic System Failures
- Soil & Wind Erosion
- Wetland Protection and Restoration
- Wildlife Habitat Restoration and Protection

Breakdown of Resource Concerns

Select the **top three concerns** Re: **Conservation Farming / Soil Erosion / Sedimentation Prevention:**

- **Conservation Farming**
 - Utilization of filter strips, cover crops, grassed waterways, fencerows, wetlands, prairies & forests to filter out sediment, fertilizers, and nutrients before entering waterway
- **Conservation Planning**
 - Encourage development of Conservation Plans
- **Sedimentation Prevention**
 - Encourage programs that reduce the likelihood of soil erosion and sedimentation in our water bodies (streams, rivers, lakes, drainage ditches)
- **No-till Farming**
 - Lease of No-till drill
- **Purchase a Tree Planter**
 - Lease of Tree Planter
- **Tree Sale/Seed Sales**
 - Affordable source to purchase plants/trees/native grasses

Farming Best Management Practices / Right to Farm Act: Select the **top three concerns**:

- How the Right to Farm Act provides protection for both farmers and the community
- Manure management & utilization
- Pesticide storage & utilization, and pest control
- Nutrient management & utilization
- Care of Farm Animals
- Site selection and Odor control for new and expanding livestock facilities
- Understanding regulations for small producers, and CAFO's.

Invasive Species Control: Select the **top three concerns**:

- Evasiveness of invasive species
- Types of invasive species in our area (ex: Autumn Olive, Amaranth, Phragmites, etc.)
- Ways to chemically treat invasive species
- Ways to mechanically treat invasive species (ex.: deep plowing, yank up invasive species)
- Preventative measures to avoid establishment
- How to report invasive species when found
- Pest / insect problems
- Weed resistance
- Plant diseases

Conservation Education: Select the top three concerns:

- **Wildlife Habitat**
 - Educate community on wetland, forests, native prairies & grasslands
- **Urban Conservation**
 - Yard waste clippings
 - Burning of leaves/vegetation/garbage
 - Do workshop or education about backyard conservation
 - Backyard wildlife habitat enhancements on smaller tracts of land
- **Recycling & Disposal**
 - Hazardous waste disposal and recycling program (farming/used oil & antifreeze/pesticides/industrial/commercial/industrial/household hazardous waste/empty containers)
 - County recycling drop-off center and/or curbside pickup
- **Schools**
 - Envirothon competition
 - Forest Hill Nature Area (field trips, workshops, outdoor classrooms)
 - Educating kids about Conservation Issues
 - Tree Assemblies at elementary schools
 - Watershed Enviroscope model at middle/high schools
- **Community Education**
 - Educating the community about defining and sustaining our natural resources
 - Provide articles in newspapers to disseminate information
 - Provide information on website and social media
- **Forestry**
 - Workshops on forest management, timber, cutting/harvesting & referrals to woodlot owners
- **Invasive Species Education**
 - Identification, treatment, prevention
- **Conservation Farming**
 - Educate farmers on the benefits of filter strips including reducing sediment loading, cost savings on fertilizer & chemicals & wildlife habitat
 - Disseminate Best Management Practices (BMP's) about yard waste clippings, filter strips, clean water diversion, silage storage, manure management, no-till farming, wetlands, etc.
 - Rotational grazing, crop rotation, cover crops, organic farming
 - Partner with MSU Extension to do field days, workshops that highlight cost effective & efficient methods of farming that protect natural resources

Septic System Failures: Select the top three concerns:

- Community Education about proper septic maintenance
- Countywide Partnership / Collaboration to update all septic records at the Mid-Michigan District Health Department
- Provide funding for lower-income land owners to get septic systems cleaned, repaired and replaced
- Petition for a Point-of-sale ordinance to get septic systems inspected and brought into compliance

Wetland Protection and Restoration: Select the top three concerns:

- Drainage ditches to assist with water drainage of cropland
- Appreciation and understanding the value and benefits of wetlands
- Drainage tiles to farm through prior wetlands
- Removing drainage tiles to restore prior wetlands
- Programs to assist landowners wishing to restore prior wetlands
- Wetland determination incidents where they are unjustly determined
- Wetland mitigation

Groundwater / Surface Water Protection: Select the top three concerns:

- **Conservation Farming**
 - Utilization of filter strips, cover crops, grassed waterways, fencerows, wetlands, prairies & forests to filter out sediment, fertilizers, and nutrients before entering waterway
 - Recharge of groundwater through rotational grazing & wetlands
- **Partnership with Drain Commissioner**
 - Partner with Gratiot County Drain Commission Office to promote partnerships and conservation practices in County drainage ditches to improve water quality
- **Chemical Pollution**
 - Partner with remediation efforts in response to leaching of contaminants from polluted soil and former industrial sites
- **Well Closing**
 - Urban / Rural well closing program promoting the decommissioning of abandoned wells
- **Wellhead Protection Programs**
 - Partner with cities and townships developing and implementing wellhead protection programs
- **Partnership with Health Department**
 - Partner with Mid-Michigan Health Department regarding the promotion of water quality programs
- **Irrigation Planning**
 - Encourage Irrigation Plans and a monitoring system
 - Encourage irrigation well management plans and a monitoring system
 - Water rights & management because of irrigation & drawdown
 - Educating farmers about cost effective & efficient methods of farming that protect groundwater, including sprayer calibration workshops and irrigation scheduling
- **Septic System Failures**

Manure Management: IF YOU ARE A FARMER: Select the top three training topics the Gratiot Conservation District should assist with:

- Training topic: Basic understanding of Manure Management 101
- Training topic: Manure runoff prevention
- Training topic: Developing a Comprehensive Nutrient Management Plan
- Training topic: Soil testing of fields where manure has been applied
- Training topic: Record keeping of manure produced on farms, application records of when, where, how
- Training topic: Information about cost-sharing programs such as USDA's Environmental Quality Incentive Program (EQIP) that assist farming operators in the implementation of practices to address manure management concerns
- Training topic: Manure management laws and regulations
- Training topic: Basic understanding of Manure Management 101
- Training topic: Manure is applied as well as follow-up to keep records readily available

Wildlife Habitat Restoration and Protection: Select the top three concerns:

- Planting trees and shrubs,
- Planting grassland, filter strips, native prairies, wildflowers
- Encourage the use of native plants that are appropriate to owner goals
- Offer a source to purchase plants/trees/native grasses/seeds
- Purchase a Tree Planter to be leased for habitat restoration projects
- Lease of Native Grass Drill and No-till Drill
- Assist with Forest management plans
- Wetland restoration and adjacent upland buffer
- Improving habitat for migratory birds, endangered or threatened species, and fish
- Stream restoration
- Work with private landowners to restore and enhance fish and wildlife habitat
- Educate citizens about conservation improvement to the land and foster understanding and wise management of our natural resources
- Educational presentations and workshops on wildlife habitat restoration
- Improve quality hunting access on public and private land

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Demographics: In the past five years, which of the following services provided by the Gratiot Conservation District have you used? Check all that apply.

- Bought a plat book or Ad in a plat book
- Attended our annual meeting and banquet
- Bought trees/shrubs/seeds from us
- Received free technical assistance
- Received some form of payment from our office
- Volunteered at one of our events
- Attended one of our educational programs
- Participated in MAEAP
- Participated in the Bad River Watershed program
- Participated in the Upper Pine River Watershed program
- Participated in the Septic Assistance program
- Rented the No-till Drill or Native Grass Drill
- Read our newsletter or annual report
- Used our website or blog for information and/or purchase
- Misc. / Other _____
- I've never heard of the Gratiot Conservation District

How much property do you own in Gratiot County?

- None/Rent
- 1 acre or less
- 2-10 acres
- 11-40 acres
- 41-100 acres
- 100+ acres

How would you describe the setting in which you live?

- Farm
- Rural Residential
- Suburban
- Urban/City or Village

What ONE category best applies to you?

- Government Employee or Official
- Business Owner or Employee
- Farmer / Agriculture
- Educator
- Builder / Developer
- Conservation / Environmental Organization

Do you have any additional comments or concerns you would like to share with us?

Would you like to be part of a future Strategic Planning Team?

Name:

Address:

Phone number:

Email address:

Please return this survey to:

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