



## Five-Year, Long-Range Plan Newaygo Conservation District (10/01/2023 – 09/30/2028)

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### Organization of the Newaygo Conservation District:

A governmental subdivision of the State of Michigan and a public body corporate and politic, exercising public powers, as outlined in Conservation District Law, Act 463 of 1998.

- *The Newaygo Conservation District was organized in 1949 with the purpose of improving and maintaining soil productivity and for the purpose of obtaining efficient, appropriate and economical use of the land. We are funded through grants, donations, fee for service work, rents and sales.*

### Function of the Newaygo Conservation District:

Newaygo Conservation District provides technical, financial, and educational resources, whatever their source, and focus or coordinate them so that they meet the needs of local residents with conservation of soil, water, and related natural resources.

### Mission of the Newaygo Conservation District:

- *To be the primary contact for natural resource information, support, and leadership.*

### Vision of the Newaygo Conservation District:

- *The NCD will be partners with not only other regional conservation districts, but also with local municipalities, watershed organizations, ag related businesses, and like-minded organizations and citizens. There will be a 'grant focus' on wildlife habitat, renewable energy and research, invasive species management, and environmental education.*

### Values of the Newaygo Conservation District:

- **Stewardship** - *We care for this land by making decisions that will benefit ecosystems while being resilient to climate change and hope we can inspire others to be stewards of their land and provide assistance to help them do so.*
- **Community** - *All our decisions are made with our community stakeholders in mind. We strive to do and teach what is best for both the ecosystems and residents of Newaygo County.*
- **Collaboration** - *We collaborate with local mission related groups, schools, citizens and businesses in order to maximize the impact we have on the community.*
- **Service** - *We strive to provide excellent technical assistance to the residents of Newaygo County and to benefit the community with grant projects and programs to serve them.*
- **Inclusiveness** - *We aim to create programming that is inclusive to all county residents and are committed to hosting a workplace of respect and equality.*

### Operations Priorities:

- *To offer effective, mission-based programming to our community.*
- *To provide staff with the necessary training and support to effectively accomplish organizational goals in the area.*
- *To increase partnerships within the community to help guide decisions about grants and programs.*

### Natural Resource Priorities:

1. *Invasive Species*
2. *Wildlife Habitat*
3. *Recreation/Hunting Access*
4. *Sustainable Forest Management*

## 5. Farm Pollution

### Measurement Tools of Success:

- *Level of community engagement*
- *Number of partnership projects completed*
- *Number of staff and/or office hours as compared with need*
- *Adequate service to address the top priority resource needs in the community*
- *Sufficient funding to do quality work and compensate staff appropriately*

### Staffing Needs:

- *Full time: Executive Director, Administrative Assistant, Invasive species Coordinator, Conservation Technician/Watershed Coordinator, Nursery Manager, Nursery Field Foreman, MAEAP Technician, Produce Safety Technician, Education Coordinator*
- *Part time: Marketing/media specialist, Seasonal nursery/field staff, Grant writer*

### Budget Needs: Totals for 5 years

- *Annual operations funding to address staffing retention, including health benefits and additional positions.*
  1. *Employee benefits - \$140,000*
  2. *Staffing needs - \$1.6 mil (5 full time district employees for 5 years @ ~\$65k/ea)*
- *Annual funding to address operational needs such as office space and equipment, and field season vehicle*
  1. *District vehicle + upkeep, insurance (one time)- \$100,000*
  2. *Outreach + Educational programming funds - \$50,000*
  3. *Conservation Project funding (to complete community projects and use as match) - \$250,000*
- *Total budget needs: 3.3 million*

### Strategic Partnerships:

- *County commissioners, Fremont Area Community Foundation, Gerber Foundation, NRCS, DNR, MAEAP, Farm Bureau, CISMA, Muskegon River Watershed Assembly, White River Watershed Assembly, Trout Unlimited, USFS, MACD, Drain Commissioner, local governments, Camp Newaygo, True North, Magna Mirrors, Great Lakes Bee Company, Savannah Institute, Chiwara Permaculture, Newaygo County Public Schools, Pheasants Forever, Whitetails Unlimited, etc.*

### Benchmarks, Actions, and Timelines:

#### **Natural Resource Priority: Invasive Species Management**

#### **Measures of Success:**

1. *Reduction in presence of invasive species in Newaygo County*
2. *NCD is actively involved in management of invasive species in the Newaygo County.*

<b>Benchmark</b>	<b>Annual Action Plan</b>	<b>Timeline</b>
Support for Invasive Species management	Seek Partnerships and Funding for NCD invasive species work in Newaygo County	10/1/23-9/30/24
Assemble and equip invasive species team	Procure appropriate insurance, tools and knowledge to equip new Invasive Species team	10/1/23-9/30/24
Grant funded invasive species education efforts	Public outreach events through website, social media and in person events	10/1/23-9/30/28

Grant funded invasive species control efforts	On site management of invasive species in Newaygo County	10/1/23-9/30/28
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**Natural Resource Priority: Wildlife Habitat**

**Measures of Success:**

1. Citizen partnerships in active management of private lands for wildlife habitat
2. Appropriate staff to work with landowners on wildlife management

Benchmark	Annual Action Plan	Timeline
Support for Wildlife Management	Seek Partnerships and Funding for NCD wildlife management work in Newaygo County	10/1/23-9/30/25
Add new Conservation Technician/Watershed Coordinator position	Obtain and utilize additional operations funding and other grants to hire a new full-time position	10/1/24-9/30/26
Public Outreach and Education	Promote wildlife habitat management through website, social media and in person workshops	10/1/24-9/30/28
Partner collaboration	Collaborate with all appropriate partners, including MDNR and NRCS	10/1/23-9/30/28

**Natural Resource Priority: Recreation/Hunting Access**

**Measures of Success:**

1. Increase in private lands with public access
2. Increase in participation of Newaygo County landowners

Benchmark	Annual Action Plan	Timeline
Programs	Administer Hunter Access Program (HAP) in Newaygo County	10/1/23-9/30/28
Public outreach	Promote HAP through website, social media, newspaper, and workshops	10/1/23-9/30/28
Program Integration	Integrate HAP, Forest Assistance Program and Wildlife Habitat Management Program	10/1/24-9/30/28
Partner collaboration	Collaborate with all appropriate partners, including MDNR and NRCS	10/1/23-9/30/28

**Natural Resource Priority: Sustainable Forest Management**

**Measures of Success:**

1. Increase in Forest Assistance Program (FAP) participation
2. Increase in acreage of forests being actively managed

Benchmark	Annual Action Plan	Timeline
Programs	Support shared FAP forester, including office space, printing, and referrals	10/1/23-9/30/28
Public outreach	Promote FAP through website, social media, newspaper, and workshops	10/1/23-9/30/28
Program Integration	Integrate FAP, HAP and Wildlife Habitat Management Program	10/1/24-9/30/28

Partner collaboration	Collaborate with all appropriate partners, including but not limited to NRCS	10/1/23-9/30/28
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**Natural Resource Priority: Farm Pollution**

**Measures of Success:**

1. Reduction of nutrient levels in surface water entering public water bodies
2. Increased participation in the Michigan Agriculture Environmental Assurance Program (MAEAP)

<b>Benchmark</b>	<b>Annual Action Plan</b>	<b>Timeline</b>
Program	Conduct on farm risk assessments to identify areas of potential pollution reduction	10/1/23-9/30/28
Public Education and Outreach	Conduct annual MAEAP phase one meeting that includes ag pollution information	10/1/23-9/30/28
Safe Agricultural Water Use	Promote best management practices in water use on the farm	10/1/23-9/30/28
Financial Assistance for producers to make operational improvements	Promote the MAEAP cost-share program to help landowners implement safe water management on the farm	10/1/23-9/30/28
Partner collaboration	Collaborate with all appropriate partners, including but not limited to NRCS	10/1/23-9/30/28