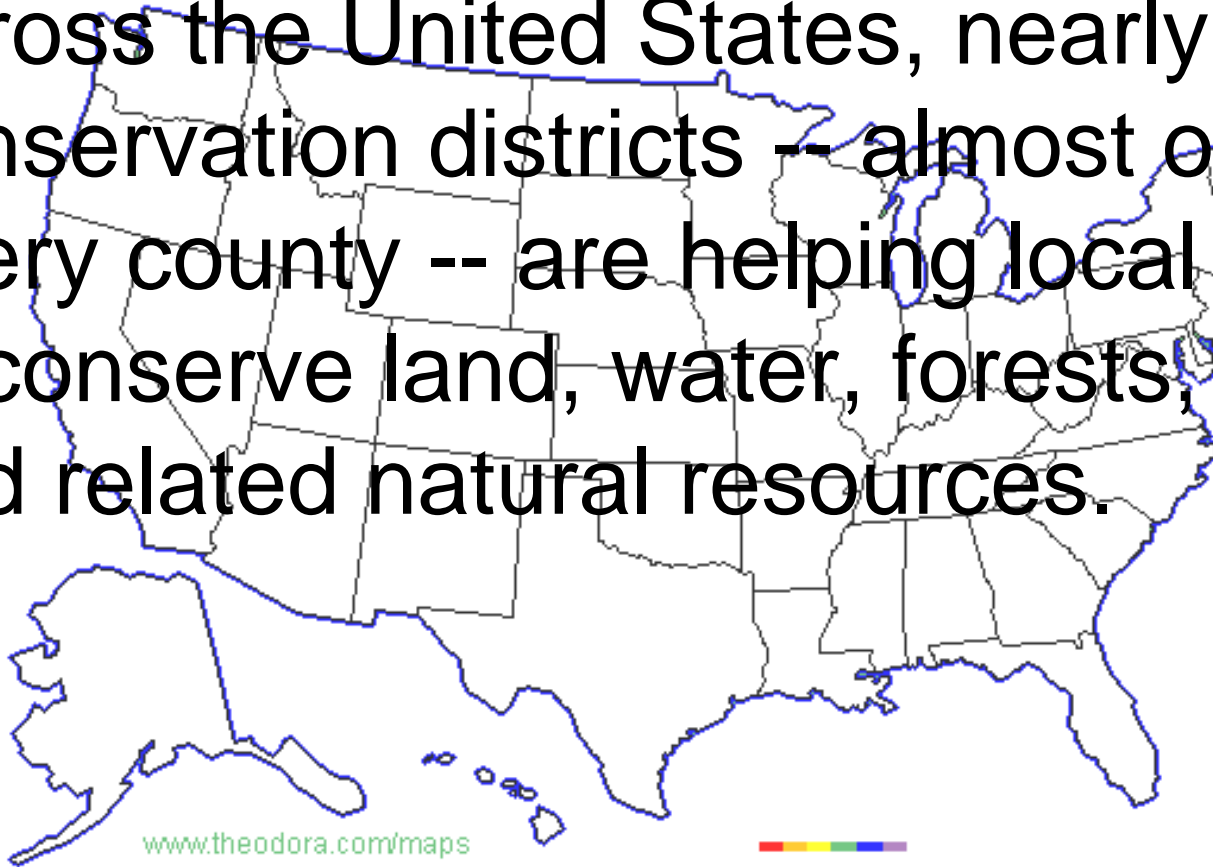


# York County Conservation District



# What is a Conservation District?

- Across the United States, nearly 3000 conservation districts -- almost one in every county -- are helping local people to conserve land, water, forests, wildlife and related natural resources.



# What is a Conservation District?

- We share a single mission: to coordinate assistance from all available sources - - public and private, local, state and federal -- in an effort to develop locally driven solutions to natural resource concerns.



# What is a Conservation District?

- More than 15,000 volunteers serve in elected or appointed positions on conservation districts' governing boards.
- They work directly with more than 2.3 million cooperating land managers nationwide, and their efforts touch more than 778 million acres of private land.

# What is a Conservation District?

Among other things, conservation districts help:

- implement farm conservation practices to keep soil in the fields and out of waterways;



# What is a Conservation District?



Among other things, conservation districts help:

- conserve and restore wetlands, which purify water and provide habitat for birds, fish and numerous other animals.

# What is a Conservation District?

Among other things, conservation districts help:

- protect groundwater resources;



# What is a Conservation District?

Among other things, conservation districts help:

- plant trees and other land cover to hold soil in place, clean the air, provide cover for wildlife and beautify neighborhoods;



# What is a Conservation District?

Among other things, conservation districts help:

- help developers and homeowners manage the land in an environmentally sensitive manner; and



# What is a Conservation District?

Among other things, conservation districts help:

- reach out to communities and schools to teach the value of natural resources and encourage conservation efforts.



# Conservation Districts' History and Origins

- In the early 1930s, along with the greatest depression this nation ever experienced, came an equally unparalleled ecological disaster known as the Dust Bowl.



# Conservation Districts' History and Origins

- Following a severe and sustained drought in the Great Plains, the region's soil began to erode and blow away, creating huge black dust storms that blotted out the sun and swallowed the countryside.



# Conservation Districts' History and Origins

- Thousands of “dust refugees” left the black fog to seek better lives.



# Conservation Districts' History and Origins



- But the storms stretched across the nation. They reached south to Texas and east to New York. Dust even sifted into the White House and onto the desk of President Franklin D. Roosevelt.

# Conservation Districts' History and Origins

- On Capitol Hill, while testifying about the erosion problem, soil scientist Hugh Hammond Bennett threw back the curtains to reveal a sky blackened by dust.



# Conservation Districts' History and Origins

- Congress unanimously passed legislation declaring soil and water conservation a national policy and priority.



# Conservation Districts' History and Origins

- Since about three-fourths of the United States is privately owned, Congress realized that only active, voluntary support from landowners would guarantee the success of conservation work on private land.



# Conservation Districts' History and Origins

- In 1937, President Roosevelt wrote the governors of all the states recommending legislation that would allow local land-owners to form soil conservation districts.



# Current Challenges

- Sixty years have dramatically changed the American landscape. In rural America, farmers use new technology to improve crop and livestock productivity while practicing environmental stewardship.



# Current Challenges

- Widespread conservation practices like planting trees and leaving crop residue on fields prevent soil from blowing and washing away.



# Current Challenges

- Land managers have altered their practices -- from the way they till their land to the crops they plant and how much fertilizer they use -- to protect the natural resources we all depend upon.



# Current Challenges

- Although weather still acts as both friend and foe to the farmer, the Dust Bowl has taught everyone a distant but valuable history lesson. Today, conservation districts continually adapt to newly emerging challenges.



# Current Challenges

- Farmers and ranchers are still challenged to properly manage manure and fertilizer so they do not contaminate water resources.



# Current Challenges

- Conservation efforts also focus on wetlands restoration, efficient irrigation and flood protection.



# Current Challenges

- Urban expansion poses a variety of problems, from threatening plant and animal habitat to compromising water quality.



# Current Challenges

- Sprawling suburbia pushes forward other issues. Common construction practices often accelerate erosion, allowing sediment to wash into waterways.



# Current Challenges

- Homeowners often use too much fertilizer and pesticide in their yards, and that also ends up in the waterways.



# Getting Involved

People are the key to conservation district success. Volunteers, whether serving on district boards or participating in a river cleanup, are important because:

- Local people offer extensive expertise and personal interest regarding the best ways to take care of their own natural resources.

# Getting Involved

Volunteers are important because:

- Effective management of natural resources at the local level reduces the need for outside intervention and regulation.



# Getting Involved (cont)

Volunteers are important because:

- Districts often have minimal budgets, and may not be able to meet their conservation goals without volunteer help.



# Getting Involved (cont)

Volunteers are important because:

- Volunteers in education can help youths learn to be responsible stewards of the land.



# Getting Involved

Among the things you can do are:

- **Become a member.** Your dollars will help conserve the natural resources in your community. Your membership can improve the water quality of the river that provides your family drinking water and a place to swim and fish.

*Contact your district for more information about memberships.*

# Getting Involved

Among the things you can do are:

- **Volunteer**. Districts need help with everything from planting seedlings in wetland restoration projects to filing in the office.

*Contact your district to let them know you are willing to help.*

# Getting Involved

Among the things you can do are:

- **Practice good stewardship at home.**

You can improve your corner of the world by composting food scraps and lawn clippings in your backyard, conserving green areas in your urban neighborhood or implementing best management practices on your farm.

*Ask your district for assistance.*

# What We Offer

- Agricultural Conservation Planning
- Chesapeake Bay Program
- Dirt & Gravel Roads Program
- Environmental Education
- Erosion & Sediment Control
- Nutrient Management
- Watershed Protection & Environmental Stewardship

# Contacting Your Local Conservation District

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E-mail: [yorkccd.org](mailto:yorkccd.org)

Web: [www.yorkccd.org](http://www.yorkccd.org)