

Chippewa Luce Mackinac Conservation District

Resource Assessment

2016-2021

Conservation District History

In 1935 the Dust Bowl, one of the nation's greatest ecological disasters of all time, prompted Congress to unanimously pass legislation declaring soil and water conservation a national policy and priority thus the Soil Conservation Act was created. The Soil Conservation Act created the Soil Conservation Service (originally the Soil Erosion Service) which is now called the Natural Resources Conservation Service. The Act charged the Soil Conservation Service to deliver assistance to farmers, ranchers, and other private landowners to prevent their land from eroding away. Because such a large percentage of the continental United States was privately owned, Congress realized that only active, voluntary support from landowners would guarantee success of conservation work on private land and from the outset of Federal involvement it was recognized that local involvement and support was missing. In 1937, President Roosevelt wrote the governors of all the states recommending legislation that would allow local landowners to form Conservation Districts. He urged states to pass laws based on a national model, stating that "to supplement the Federal programs, and safeguard their results, state legislation is needed." Local referendums were passed by popular vote to create each District and the Chippewa/East Mackinac Conservation District was established in May of 1949 and the Luce/West Mackinac Conservation District was established in June of 1954 after adoption of the Michigan Soil Conservation District law (Act 297) of 1937 and amended in Part 93 if Act 451 of 1944. On July 10th, 2012, the Chippewa/East Mackinac Conservation District and the Luce/West Mackinac Conservation District were merged to form the current Chippewa Luce Mackinac Conservation District after it was decided by the Michigan Department of Agriculture and Rural Development that the Luce/West Mackinac District could no longer support their District independently. Today, the Chippewa Luce Mackinac Conservation District is a unique local unit of State government that utilizes local, state, Federal, and private sector resources to solve today's conservation problems. The Chippewa Luce Mackinac Conservation District provides technical assistance for all natural resource related concerns and opportunities when able.

The Chippewa Luce Mackinac Conservation District covers most of the Eastern Upper Peninsula of Michigan which now includes all of Chippewa, Luce, and Mackinac counties, with a total land area of about 3,478 square miles or 2,225,920 acres making the Chippewa Luce Mackinac Conservation District the largest Conservation District by land area in Michigan. CLMCD covers 34 townships throughout all three counties and is home to nearly 53,000 residents. The Conservation District is uniquely surrounded by three of the five Great Lakes (Superior, Huron, Michigan and the St. Mary's River) which represents roughly 300 miles of Great Lakes Shoreline within the Conservation District's boundaries.

Purpose

The purpose the Resource Assessment is to determine what the current natural resources issues are throughout Chippewa, Luce, and Mackinac County and how the Conservation District is going to address those concerns. This Resource Assessment will also be used to plan for District activities over the next five years including meeting outlined goals and objectives so future conservation work can be achieved by CLMCD and their partners.

CLMCD Organization

The Chippewa Luce Mackinac Conservation District was created as an entity of state government and is lead by a locally elected five-member Board of Directors and that make all decisions regarding the District's programs and activities. The Directors hire qualified staff to conduct and carry out the programs and activities approved by them. District programs and activities provide technical assistance, education, outreach, and awareness to assist landowners in the District the needed tools to properly manage their natural resources.

Chippewa Luce Mackinac Conservation District Organizational Chart

**Michigan Department of Agriculture and Rural Development
Environmental Stewardship Division**

Michigan Soil Conservation District law (Act 297) of 1937 and amended in Part 93 of Act 451 of 1944



Board of Directors
5 Voting Members
2 Associate Members (non-voting)



Executive Director



All District Activities, Technical Staff, and Programs

CLMCD Mission

The mission of the Chippewa Luce Mackinac Conservation District is to assist with land use and management through education, community projects, and services.

CLMCD Vision

The Chippewa Luce Mackinac Conservation District strives to be recognized as a conservation leader and partner for all landowners/natural resources organizations in Chippewa, Luce, and Mackinac County. It is the Conservation Districts vision to be actively involved in all conservation matters and meet the demands of all natural resource management needs.

Methods and Results of Assessment

Methods

The 2016 – 2021 Resource Assessment Survey was distributed to over 2000 landowners as well as handed out to many others in the fall of 2016. An online survey was also generated. The survey generated 52 completed surveys representing all three counties covered by CLMCD. The survey asked 17 questions with the 18th question reserved for additional comments.

The survey was split into three general parts: Demographic, Resource Issues, and other.

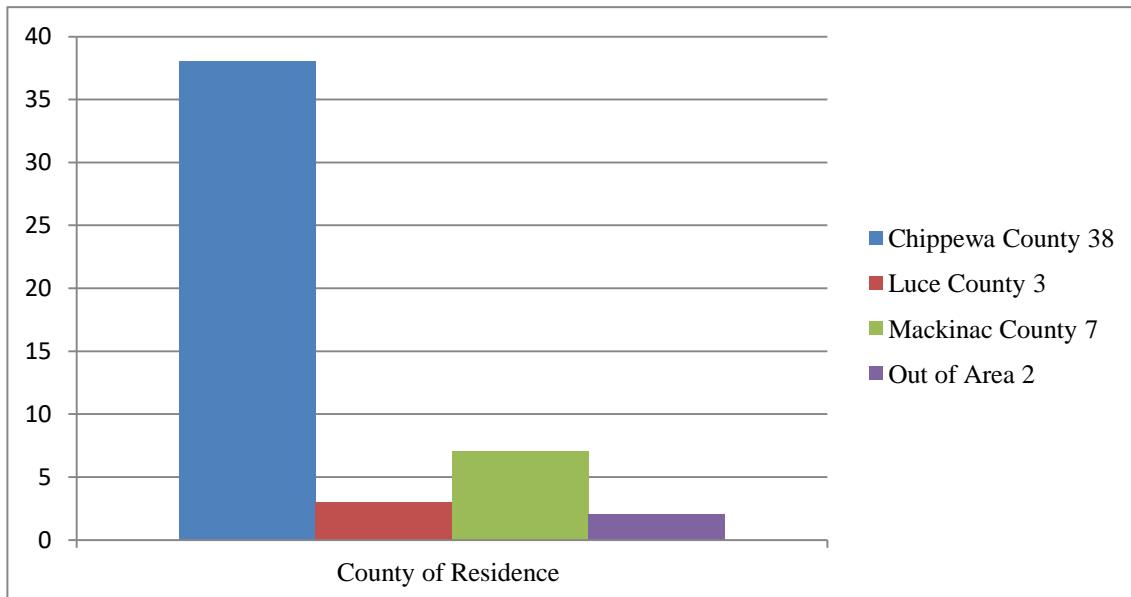
- Demographic questions included: zip code, years of residence or ownership in the District, number of acres owned, property description, landowner category (ie. Farmer, student, professional etc.), involvement in natural resources, and feeling towards natural resources issues.
- Resource Issues were ranked (top three) by respondents in the following areas: land use issues, water quality issues, and wildlife/habitat issues.
- Other questions asked included: what sources of media do you use to keep informed of natural resource issues in the District, would you support a millage by CLMCD, What conservation practices do you use on your property, what ways do you use natural resources, what CLMCD services are you aware of, what program of CLMCD have you participated in, what services do you think CLMCD should focus on over the next five years, and what additional programs should CLMCD offer.

Results

Highlighted Demographic Information

- Average Years of Residence in District: 32
- Average Number of Acres owned in District: 52
- Top Three Property types by respondents: Rural, Lake Front, Forested
- Top Three landowner categories: Homeowner, Farm owner, Business owner

Figure 1: Respondents County of Residence



Resource Issues

Figure 2: Respondents Top 3 Water Quality Concerns

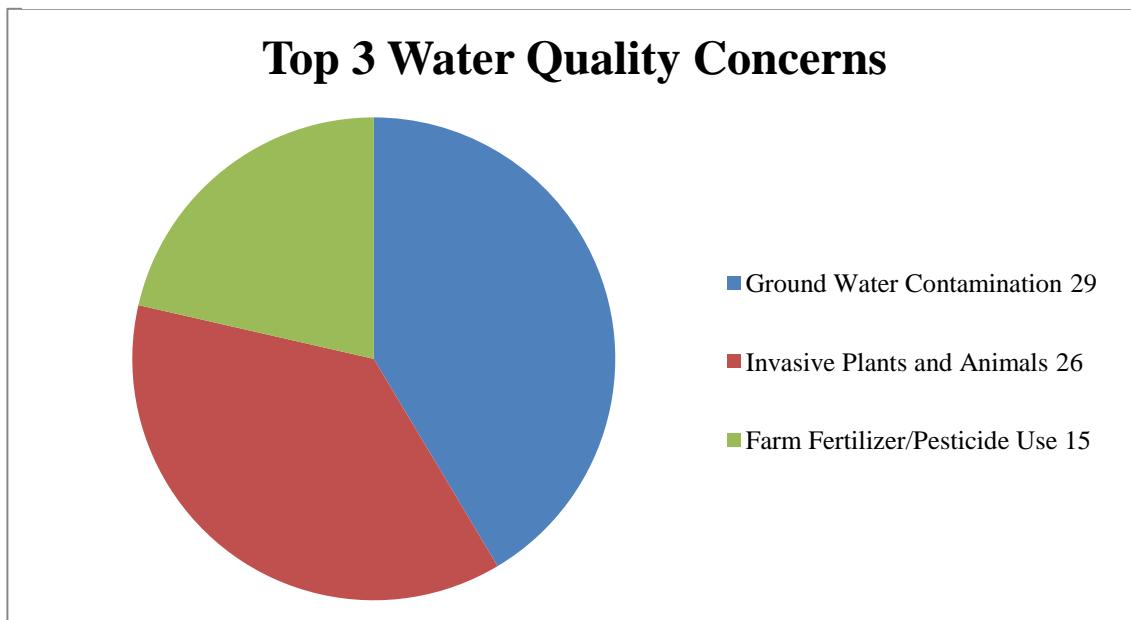


Figure 3: Respondents Top 3 Land Use Concerns

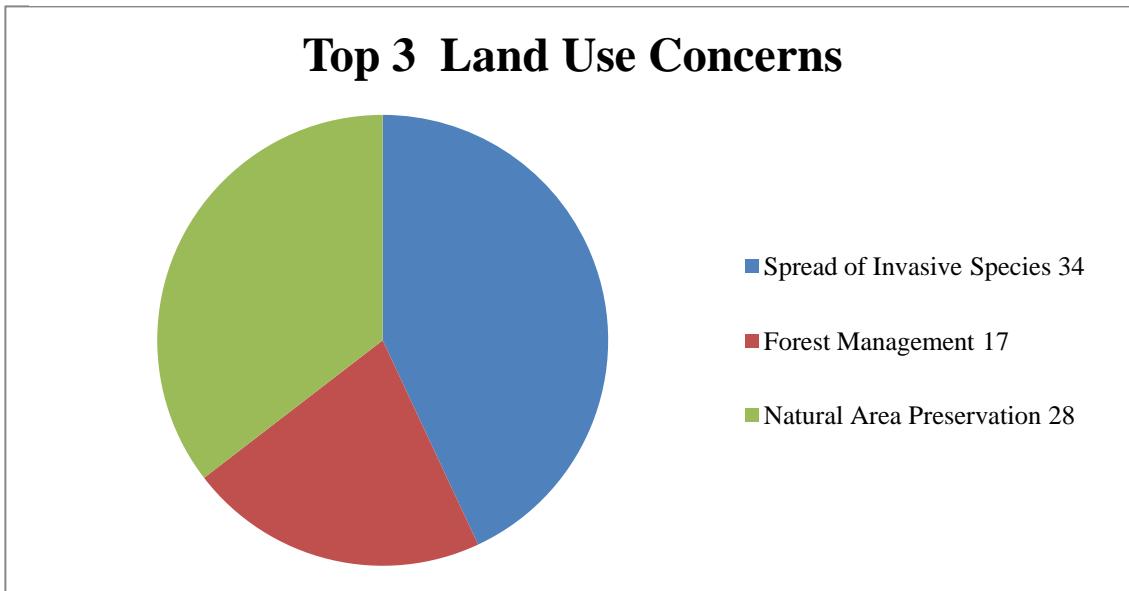
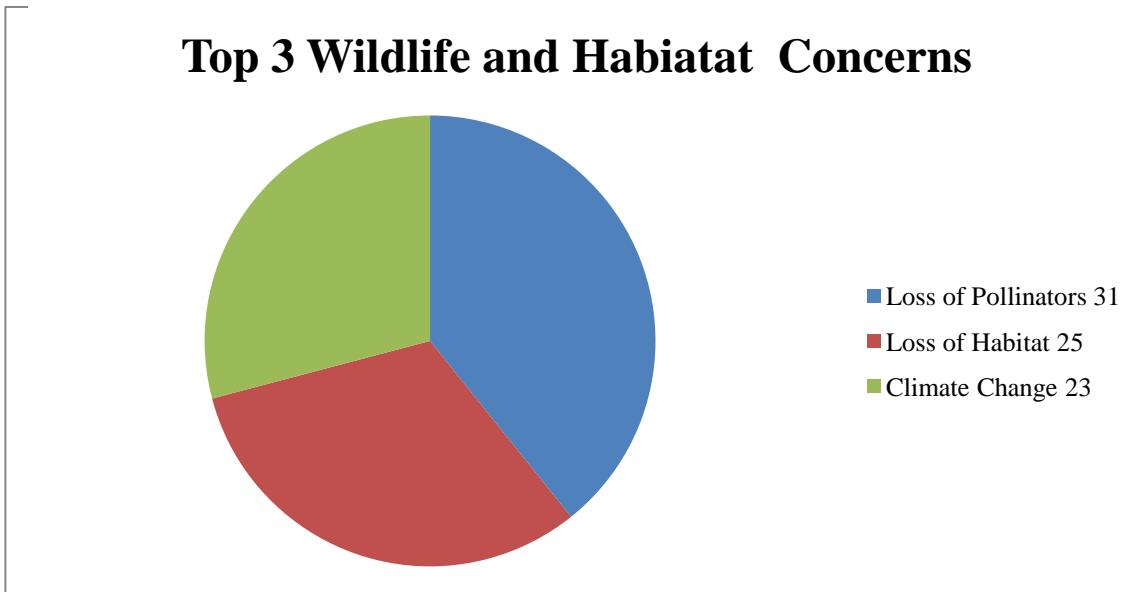


Figure 4: Respondents Top 3 Wildlife and Habitat Concerns



Highlighted Additional Results

Figure 5: Millage Support

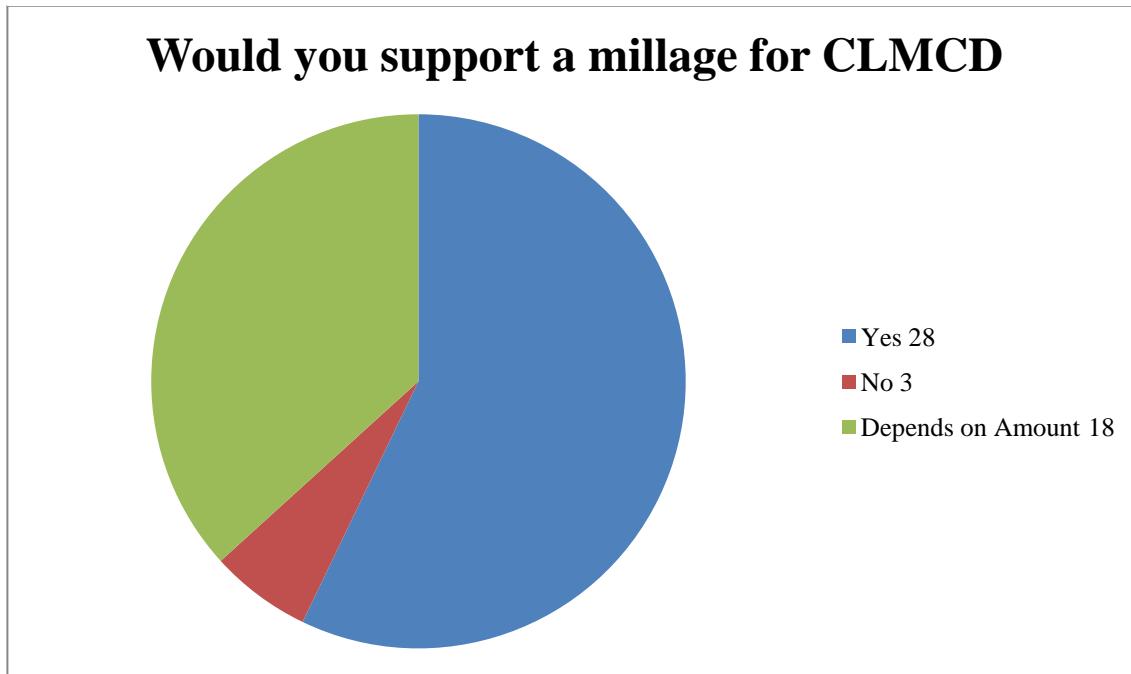


Figure 6: Respondents participation in District Activities

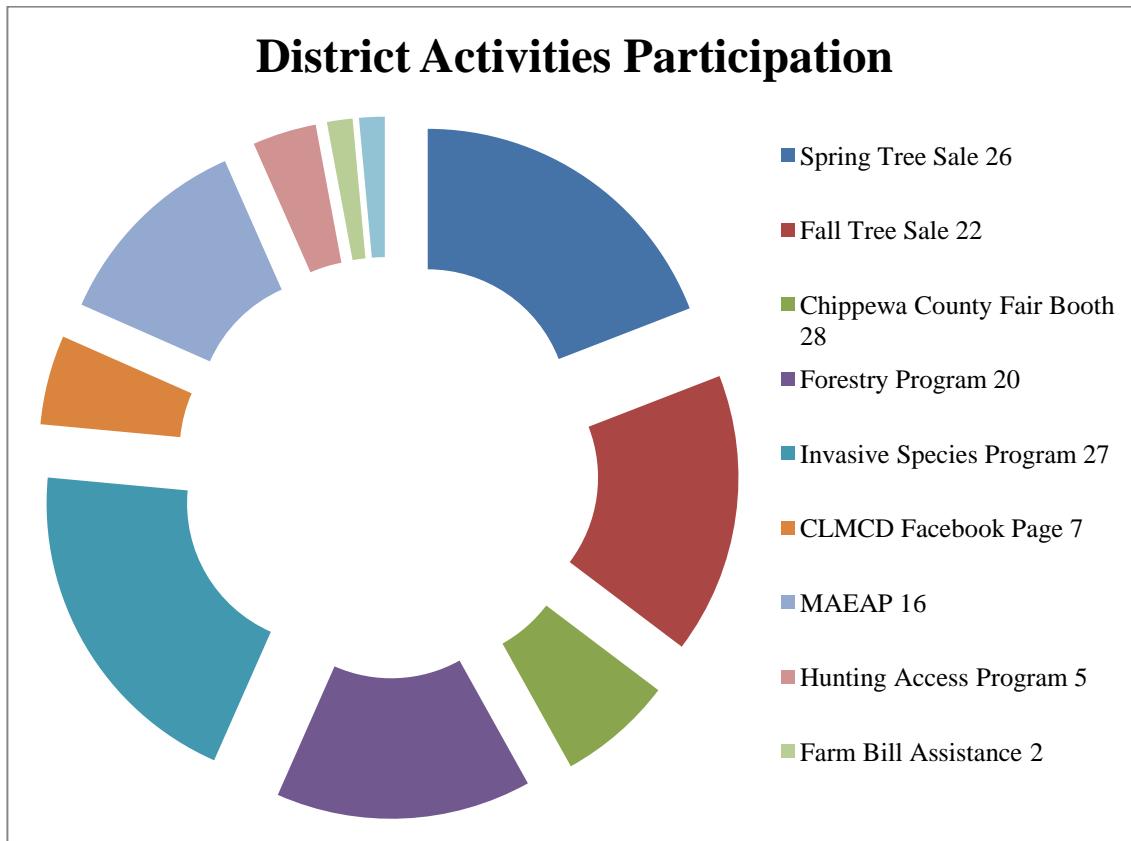


Figure 7: Respondents Awareness of District Activities

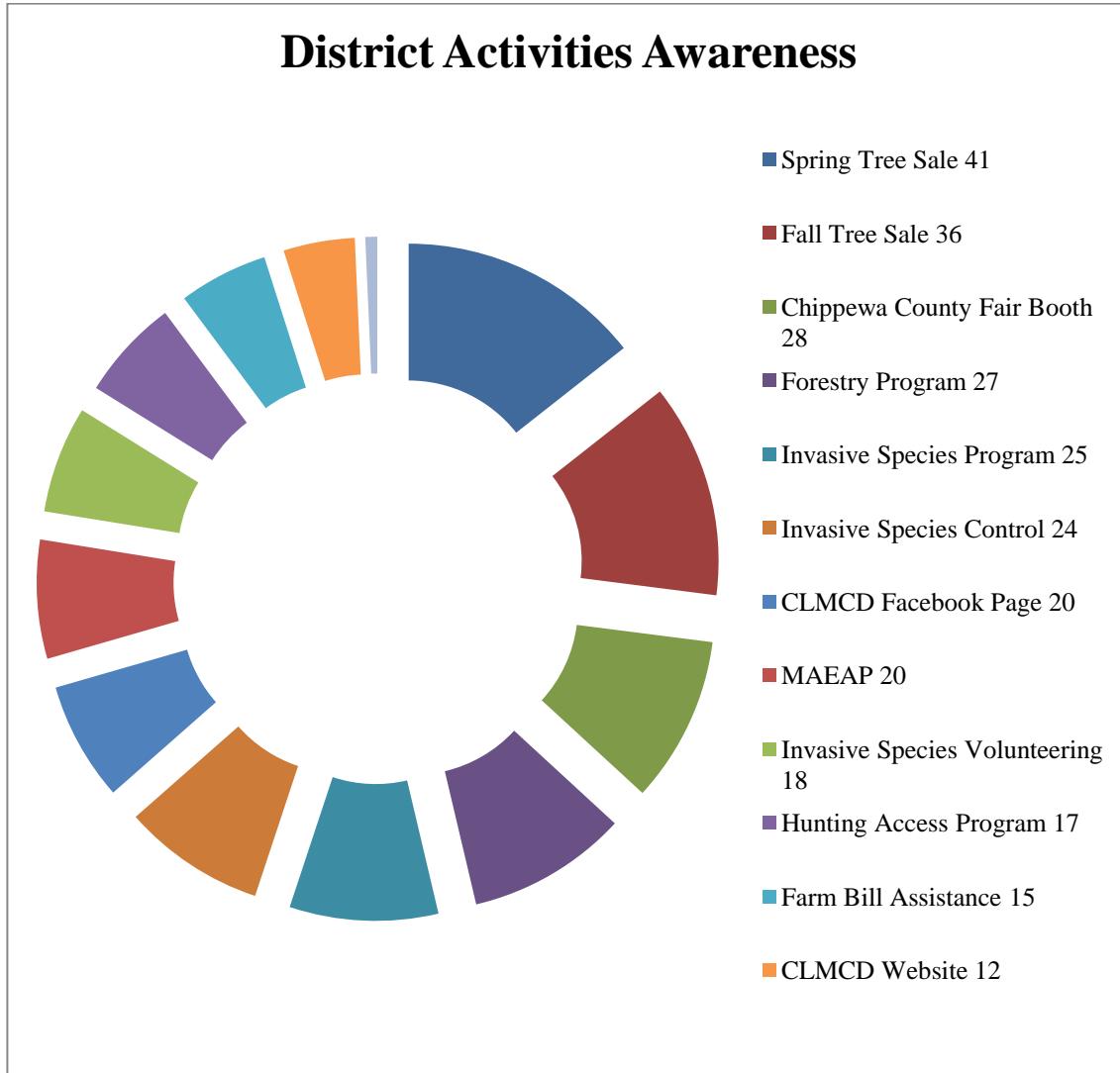
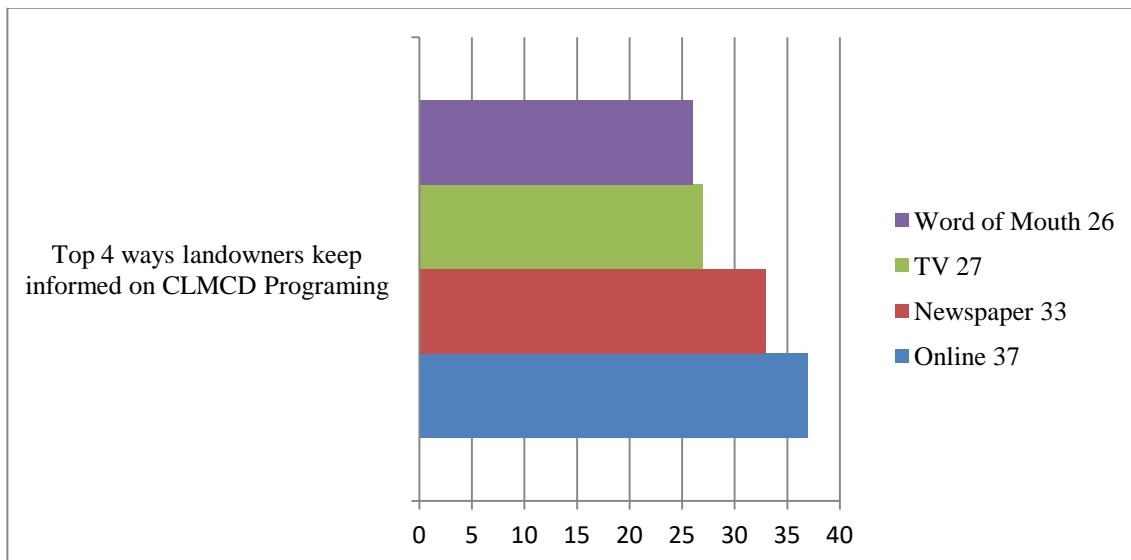


Figure 8: Respondents top 4 ways of keeping informed with District Activities



2016-2021 Goals and Objectives

- **Goal 1:** Increase promotion and participation in District Activities/Programs
 - **Objective 1:** Increase District participation in community fair/events in all of Chippewa, Luce, and Mackinac Counties. Priority should be focused on larger annual events
 - **Objective 2:** Attend township meetings to speak about the benefits the Conservation District can provide private landowners. Priority townships should include all of Luce and Mackinac County. All District townships should be visited once per year as time allows
 - **Objective 3:** Attend county commission meetings at least once per year and provide an annual update on District activities
 - **Objective 4:** Maintain a District partner list and supply an annual update on District activities at least once per year. A personal letter should be provided to each partner encouraging the use of District programs and to collaborate with the District on their organizations programs
 - **Objective 5:** Increase the use of news updates via email from the District. Email updates should be provided at least three times per year
 - **Objective 6:** Implement summer programming for youth and adults. Content can vary greatly, but focus should be on Natural Resources. Focus locations should include Sault Ste Marie, St. Ignace, Newberry, Cedarville, and Curtis
 - **Objective 7:** Utilize promotion objectives to increase participation in all District activities and programs
 - **Objective 8:** Implement an annual staff training and development day to educate all staff on all activities/programs so all staff can be educated to help increase participation in all District activities and programs
 - **Objective 9:** Utilize MAEAP and FAP Advisory Committees and Three Shores Cooperative Invasive Species Management Area Steering Committee to increase participation in those programs. Increasing participation should be priority in all programs at annual planning meetings
- **Goal 2:** Explore and pursue funding options for District operations
 - **Objective 1:** Explore millage opportunity in Chippewa, Luce, and Mackinac County. Timeframe should be explored

- **Objective 3:** Create a summer fundraising event. Explore opportunities and work with community organizations to help plan and organize the event
- **Goal 3:** Update and refresh CLMCD website.
 - **Objective 1:** Work with Les Cheneaux Watershed Council and Munuscong Watershed Group to explore new website options. Requirements must include user friendliness, page appearance, adaptability, and cost
 - **Objective 2:** Set aside funding to update website
- **Goal 4:** Explore benefit options for District staff
 - **Objective 1:** Explore health coverage benefit for all full time District staff
 - **Objective 2:** Explore retirement/investment opportunities for all full time District staff
- **Goal 5:** Explore new office space for District Staff
 - **Objective 1:** investigate open buildings/yearly costs to maintain/total costs to District operations. Report to board and utilize information for operations funding Goal 2
- **Goal 6:** Pursue funding opportunities when able for watershed management plan creation/updates/implementation projects
 - **Objective 1:** Pursue Goals 2 and 5. space requirements for additional staff, as well as operational funding will need to be met before hosting of additional watershed work can take place
- **Goal 7:** Continue to build and grow the Three Shores Cooperative Invasive Species Management Area to help slow and eradicate spreading invasive species, preserve natural areas, and keep our waters drinkable, swimmable, and boat-able
 - **Objective 1:** Pursue goals, 2,4, and 5 so the program has the means to continue to grow and protect the District from invasive species threats
- **Goal 8:** Continue to host and promote the Michigan Agriculture Environmental Assurance Program (MAEAP) Grant and Forestry Assistance Program (FAP) Grant for the Michigan Department of Agriculture and Rural Development to help protect our

waters from farm fertilizers/pesticides, nutrients, and to encourage the use of wise forest management practices

- **Objective 1:** Pursue Goal 2,4, and 5 so the District can recruit and maintain the best possible staff for these programs and continue to grow the capacity of the Conservation District
- **Goal 9:** Implement native plant sales as part of the spring tree sale to promote the establishment of native plants to help protect pollinators, habitat loss and reduce the spread of invasive species
 - **Objective 1:** Implementation in spring 2018

Conclusion

The Chippewa Luce Mackinac Conservation District is dedicated to the sound conservation of our natural resources and hope to provide District residents with services to implement conservation practices on their properties. The 2016 – 2021 resource assessment set goals and objectives to move the Conservation District into a position to provide additional services and expand upon the services already offered.

The goals and objectives in this assessment are to be used for planning purposes to measure District success over the next five years. Due to the unknown nature of District funding and grant requirements, goals and objectives may need to be changed or altered at any given time. Goals and objectives may need to be added at any given time as well. Changes and alterations as well as successes and failures of these objectives will be noted in the next Resource Assessment, dated 2022 – 2027.

Approved by CLMCD Board of Directors at a regular board meeting on August 8th 2017