



Ohio Department of Natural Resources  
**Division of Soil and Water Resources**  
Fact Sheet

Fact Sheet 93-25

## Ohio's Conservancy Districts

Conservancy districts are political subdivisions of the State of Ohio, provided for in the Ohio Revised Code (ORC) under Chapter 6101. They are formed at the initiative of local landowners or political subdivisions to solve water management problems, most frequently flooding. Each conservancy district operates under the jurisdiction of a conservancy court, consisting of one common pleas judge from each county that is within the district. Pursuant to implementing its court-approved work plan, a conservancy district has the right of eminent domain, and may charge user fees, levy special assessments, and issue bonds. In addition to controlling floods, other authorized purposes include: conserving and developing water supply, improving drainage, collecting and disposing of waste, providing for irrigation, and arresting erosion on the Lake Erie shoreline. Many conservancy districts also provide recreational opportunities in connection with their water management facilities.

Conservancy district authority was frequently used during the 1950s, 1960s, and 1970s for administering local obligations under the USDA's Small Watershed Protection and Flood Prevention program (P.L.85-566). When sponsoring projects under this authority, conservancy districts have worked with county soil and water conservation districts to promote watershed protection through accelerated land treatment measures. Several conservancy districts have served as local sponsors for US Army Corps of Engineers projects entailing reservoir construction, channel work, and Lake Erie shoreline protection.

The conservancy act was enacted less than a year after the devastating 1913 flood as a mechanism for flood prevention and control. It was the first such statute enacted in the United States, and has served as a model for other states. It has been amended several times over the years to meet changing needs. The Upper Scioto Drainage and Conservancy District was established on February 27, 1915 and is still operating today. The Miami Conservancy District was created

four months later, and has been one of the most effective and successful conservancy districts created. Both of their flood control programs have been financed entirely with local funding. The Muskingum Watershed Conservancy District is the largest in Ohio and has, in cooperation with the US Army Corps of Engineers, provided flood control and recreation since the 1930s with ten lakes and four dry dams. The next largest is the Maumee Watershed Conservancy District, which has, in cooperation with the USDA Natural Resource Conservation Service, provided flood control and improved drainage for the Auglaize River Basin. There are many other conservancy districts that have also been successful in formulating and implementing water management projects in Ohio. Of the 57 conservancy districts or subdistricts created, 20 are currently active, 22 are inactive, 5 have merged with another, and 10 have been dissolved.

Staff from many of the conservancy districts meet regularly as the Ohio Conservancy District Conference to exchange information, discuss issues, and work toward commonly-held goals. The Ohio Department of Natural Resources, Division of Soil & Water Resources (ODNR-SWR) assists conservancy districts in an advisory capacity, and serves as a point of contact for conservancy districts seeking state and federal assistance.

Ohio Department of Natural Resources  
Division of Soil and Water Resources  
Water Planning Program  
2045 Morse Road  
Columbus, Ohio 43229-6693  
Voice: (614) 265-6758 Fax: (614) 447-9503  
Website: <http://www.ohiodnr.com/soilandwater>

*List of conservancy districts on back!*

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## ACTIVE CONSERVANCY DISTRICTS

Black Brook Conservancy District  
11968 Mantua Center Road  
Mantua, Ohio 44255-9303  
phone: 330-562-9010

Celeryville Conservancy District  
111 Myrtle Avenue  
Willard, Ohio 44890  
phone: 419-935-0171

Chickamauga Watershed Conservancy District  
111 Jackson Pike  
Gallipolis, Ohio 45631-1569  
phone: 740-446-6173

East Fork Buck Creek Conservancy District  
6874 State Route 54  
Mechanicsburg, Ohio 43044  
phone: 937-828-1004

Hocking Conservancy District  
560 West Union Street  
Athens, Ohio 45701-2331  
phone: 740-592-1792

Hunter's Run Conservancy District  
P.O. Box 1139  
Lancaster, Ohio 43130  
phone: 740-409-0312

Leading Creek Conservancy District  
34481 Corn Hollow Road  
Rutland, Ohio 45775  
phone: 740-742-2411

Maumee Watershed Conservancy District  
1464 Pinehurst Drive  
Defiance, Ohio 43512  
phone: 419-782-8746

Miami Conservancy District  
38 East Monument Avenue  
Dayton, Ohio 45402-1265  
phone: 937-223-1271

Millcreek Valley Conservancy District  
c/o MCWCoC, 1 North Commerce Park Dr, Ste 124  
Cincinnati, Ohio 45215  
phone: 513-563-0198

Muskingum Watershed Conservancy District  
PO Box 349  
New Philadelphia, Ohio 44663-0349  
phone: 330-343-6647

Reno Beach-Howard Farms Conservancy District  
643 Donovan Road  
Curtice, Ohio 43412  
phone: 419-836-5031

Rush Creek Conservancy District  
P.O. Box 56  
Bremen, Ohio 43107  
phone: 740-569-4500

Sand Beach Conservancy District  
6292 Fifth Street  
Oak Harbor, Ohio 43449  
phone: 419-898-6906

Scioto Conservancy District  
P.O. Box 325  
LaRue, Ohio 43332  
phone: 740-499-2565

South Licking Watershed Conservancy District  
771 East Main Street  
Newark, Ohio 43055  
phone: 740-587-1177

Springfield Conservancy District  
515 North Fountain Avenue  
Springfield, Ohio 45504  
phone: 937-323-0488

Upper Scioto Drainage and Conservancy District  
One Courthouse Square  
Kenton, Ohio 43326  
phone: 419-674-2259

Wabash River Conservancy District  
871 Meiring Road  
Fort Recovery, Ohio 45846  
phone: 419-375-2588

Wightman's Grove Conservancy District  
2102 County Road 259  
Fremont, Ohio 43420  
phone: 419-332-0147

Information contained in this fact sheet was obtained from ODNR, Division of Soil and Water Resources files, the publication entitled Ohio Conservancy Districts, (ODNR-DW, 1975), ORC Chapter 6101, the Ohio Conservancy District Conference, and the directors or staff of Ohio's conservancy districts. For more information, contact the ODNR-SWR by phone at 614-265-6717, by fax at 614-265-6767, by e-mail at [water@dnr.state.oh.us](mailto:water@dnr.state.oh.us), or through via its website at <http://www.dnr.state.oh.us/soilandwater/>.

