

## Conservation District Official Training Program Assessment



### Overall Objective:

The overall objective is to improve each state's district official training program by offering an evaluation tool, plus assistance and materials from states that have outstanding district official training programs.

State: Ohio

Organization: ORNR Division of Soil and Water Resources

Name & Email of Individual Completing the Evaluation: Fred Hammon - fred.hammon@dnr.state.oh.us

Name & Email of Individual Responsible for District Official Training: Fred Hammon

Willingness to Assist Other States: yes

Email the Completed State Assessment to [rayledgerwood@msn.com](mailto:rayledgerwood@msn.com)

Overall Assessment Score (Average of all elements)	6.52	
Conservation District Official Training Elements & Topics	Numerical Assessment 10 to 0 10 - Exceeds Training Need, 5 - Meets Training Need, 0 - Does Not Meet Training Need	Planned Actions
<b>Basic Knowledge</b>		
*** History of the Conservation Movement – Local, State, and National		
• Dust Bowl Era	8	
• Hugh Hammond Bennett	3	
• Soil Erosion Service formation	5	
• Conservation District origins - need for local input for conservation work	7	
• Standard Conservation District Law	4	
• Overview of State Conservation District Law formation	4	
• Local conservation district formation & history	5	
• Conservation District values	2	
• Current information about districts (in state)	8	
** What is a Conservation District?		
• Conservation district purpose & function	9	
• Legal definition in district law	9	
• District as government entity	9	
• Board member qualifications	5	
• Overview of board member responsibilities & duties in policy development, planning, governance, district operations, officers & responsibilities, personnel management	8	
** Fiduciary Responsibilities		
• Fiduciary duties of district board members	8	
• Available funding mechanisms	8	
• Financial policies and procedures	7	
• Budgeting & allocating resources	7	
• Audit requirements	9	
• Importance of financial planning	7	
• Internal controls	8	
• (see financial training below)		
** Legal Responsibilities		
• Powers & authorities of conservation districts	8	
• Powers & authorities of board members	8	
• Legal responsibilities of a public official	6	
• Assessing resource needs	4	
• Developing long range and annual plans	7	
• Policy development & recommended policies	5	
• District liability	6	
• Comply with local, state & federal laws, rules, and regulations	5	
** Roles and Responsibilities of Local, State and National Associations and Partners		
• Importance of forming partnerships for district program delivery	6	
• Partnership development & group dynamics	6	
• State association history and structure	7	
• Area & regional associations history & structure	2	
• National association history and structure	4	
• Functions of an association	5	
• Specific programs offered by local, state and national associations	4	
• NRCS history, structure & responsibilities	5	
• State conservation agency history, structure, position, and responsibilities	5	
• Mutual Agreement between district, USDA and Governor	5	
• Cooperative Agreements	4	
• Other State Agencies structure & potential partner opportunities	4	
• Other Federal agencies structure & potential partner opportunities	3	
• Local agencies structure & potential partner opportunities	5	
• Other partner organizations history, structure & responsibilities (non-government)	3	
• Memorandums of understanding and other agreements with specifics about roles and responsibilities	3	
• Acronym listing of existing partnerships	8	
• Examples of successful partnerships	8	
** Ethics		
• Oath of Office	10	
• Abuse of position	9	

Conservation District Official Training Elements & Topics	Numerical Assessment 10 to 0 10 - Exceeds Training Need, 5 - Meets Training Need, 0 - Does Not Meet Training Need	Planned Actions
• Employee/supervisor relationships	8	
• Acceptance of gifts	10	
• Conflict of interest	10	
• Diversity	6	
• Nepotism	8	
• Confidentiality	6	
<b>Basic Responsibilities</b>		
• Understand Local, State and Federal Laws, Rules and Regulations Related to CD	5.85	
• Overview of local, state and federal laws, rules & regulations related to the district	6	
• State Conservation District Law	7	
• State & Federal Freedom of Information Acts (FOIA) & compliance procedure	6	
• Other state public records acts & compliance procedure	8	
• State open public meetings act	8	
• State & Federal ethics acts	4	
• USDA requirements for shared office space	2	
• Employee Training	6.20	
• Implement policies and activities as approved by board	7	
• District personnel policies	8	
• District organizational structure including who reports to whom	7	
• Role of district board members, manager, staff	7	
• Advise board on issues, projects, budgets and other matters	6	
• Reporting to the board, residents, and partners about district activities & programs	4	
• Development of training plans	3	
• Training, certification and mentoring opportunities for district employees	9	
• Working with partner agencies & organizations	8	
• USDA requirements (if shared office location)	3	
• Financial Training	7.81	
• Available funding mechanisms	8	
• Budgeting & allocating resources	8	
• Importance of financial planning	8	
• Fund raising	4	
• Financial policies & procedures	7	
• Financial statements & accounting methods	8	
• Fiduciary duties of district board members	8	
• State audit & reporting requirements	9	
• Internal controls	9	
• Grant contracts & agreements	8	
• Personnel records and reporting requirements	9	
• Understanding State and National Resolutions Process	3.33	
• Developing a district policy positions & resolutions	4	
• Flowchart of resolution approval – district to area, to state and national	3	
• Determining the appropriate level of influence for the proposed resolution	3	
• Awareness of All Available Conservation Programs	5.60	
• Awareness of natural resource needs	4	
• Example of conservation management	4	
• Promoting the ethic of resource stewardship	4	
• Coordination with federal, state and local entities for program delivery	6	
• Education activities	8	
• Review of available federal, state, local and private conservation programs	4	
• Examples of successful programs	6	
• Acronym listing	8	
• Cooperator agreement	6	
• Conservation planning	6	
• Legislative Process Training	4.60	
• Effective legislative relations	5	
• Techniques for communicating effectively, credibly & building trust with elected officials	5	
• State & federal bills & budget passage flow chart	4	
• Lobbying restrictions for board members & staff	4	
• Role of associations in legislative relations & lobbying	5	
• Awareness of Proper Protocol in Conducting Public Meetings	7.00	
• State open public meetings act requirements & compliance	8	
• Conducting effective board meetings	6	
• Decision making	5	
• Executive and/or closed session rules & regulations	8	
• Public hearings	7	
• Basic Operations	5.61	
• Assessment of local natural resource conservation needs & issues	5	
• Techniques for evaluating district program effectiveness	5	
• Stakeholder input to planning	5	
• Importance of long range & annual planning, budgeting money & workload	6	
• Establish goals through strategic, long-range, and annual planning	5	

Conservation District Official Training Elements & Topics	Numerical Assessment 10 to 0 10 - Exceeds Training Need, 5 - Meets Training Need, 0 - Does Not Meet Training Need	Planned Actions
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Establish operations policies and procedures</li> </ul>	7	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Implement a personnel management system</li> </ul>	7	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Development of reports</li> </ul>	5	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Contracting &amp; bidding</li> </ul>	5	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Agreements with other entities</li> </ul>	5	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Overall district operations</li> </ul>	6	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Leadership skills</li> </ul>	6	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Media relations &amp; public outreach</li> </ul>	5	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Election Process and Board Member Recruitment</li> </ul>	4.71	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Characteristics of a successful district board members</li> </ul>	5	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Analyzing the needs in district and desirable qualities and needed skills for board member recruitment</li> </ul>	5	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Board member recruitment techniques</li> </ul>	4	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Creating a more diverse board representative of those served</li> </ul>	4	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Board member election and/or appointment process, procedures, forms, &amp; deadlines</li> </ul>	5	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Orientation systems for new board members</li> </ul>	8	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Board member removal</li> </ul>	2	