Thank you for your interest in the Michigan Conservation Stewards Program (CSP). This program is designed for anyone interested in current conservation issues, outdoor recreation, nature study, natural area management, and a variety of other topics such as lake/stream monitoring and habitat restoration. Through participation in this program, you will learn essential strategies to help restore and conserve ecosystems in Oakland County and throughout Michigan.

CSP consists of two parts: 1. Basic classroom and field-based training led by experts in various fields of conservation and natural resources, including lectures, interactive learning and field experiences; and 2. Completion of an in-class Capstone Project related to an area of interest as well as additional community volunteer service related to restoring and conserving ecosystems. Capstone Projects and volunteer service may involve habitat restoration, frog and toad surveys, educational presentations, invasive species management, or a project in an area of interest you design yourself.

To become a certified Michigan Conservation Steward, participants must fulfill the following requirements:

- Attend all classes, including indoor and outdoor field experiences (Approximately 40 total hours).
- Complete a minimum of 40 hours of volunteer conservation service within one year (including hours spent on in-class Capstone Project).

To maintain their certification, Michigan Conservation Stewards must complete the following annually:

- 40 hours of volunteer conservation service on approved projects
- 8 hours of advanced training

Since this is a volunteer program and we work with various audiences, we have a specific application process to protect our clientele as well as other volunteers. All individuals must complete the attached application. We will perform a criminal history background check and check all participants against the Michigan Public Sexual Offender Registry. Applicants are also interviewed by current Conservation Steward Volunteers and/or MSU Extension staff and must also review and sign the “Volunteer Agreement and Code of Conduct Form” before volunteering. All of these requirements apply to every applicant. Again, this is to protect our clientele and other volunteers.

**Early Registration:** $275 if application materials received on or before Friday, February 1, 2013.  
**Late Registration:** $300 if application materials received on or after February 2, 2013.

**Registration Deadline:** Last day to register is February 15, 2013.
Scholarship Policy:
Limited scholarship funds may be available, and are awarded based on need. Participants who wish to request a scholarship should contact Linda Smith (smithlin@oakgov.com or 248-858-0887) for application details.

Complete the application packet and mail with the appropriate registration fee to: MSU Extension Oakland County, NOB, 26 East, 1200 N. Telegraph Rd., Pontiac, MI 48341. Please make checks payable “MSU Extension.”

If you have any questions about CSP or the application process, please contact Linda Smith at (248) 858-0887 or smithlin@oakgov.com.

We look forward to working with you. Thank you in advance for your cooperation!

Bindu Bhakta
Oakland County CSP Coordinator
bhaktabi@anr.msu.edu

Carol Lenchek
Oakland County CSP Coordinator
lenchekc@oakgov.com

Conservation Stewards Program Attendance Policy:
Participants are strongly encouraged to attend all sessions. The sessions provide a total of 40 instructional hours.

Participants may miss up to 6 hours (two evening sessions or one weekend session) and still receive their Provisional Certificate of Completion for the Michigan Conservation Stewards Training Program.

If you know there are certain sessions you will not be able to attend, it may be possible for you to make up these sessions through a program offered at another MSUE office.

Participants missing more than 6 hours of instructional time will not be eligible to become a Michigan Conservation Steward.

Before submitting your application materials, please check your schedule to be sure you are able to adhere to this attendance policy. Call (248) 858-5198 if you have questions about this policy.

Rev. December 2012
MSU Extension Volunteer Application Form

Legal Name:

____________________________________________________________________________________________

(Last)   (First)     (Middle Initial)

Mailing address:

____________________________________________________________________________________________

(Street)   (City)     (Zip Code)

Email Address:

_____________________@_____________________________________________________________________

Telephone:   Day (_____)_____________ Evening (_____)___________ Cell (_____)_________________________

Briefly describe your volunteer experience(s), listing all organizations with whom you currently volunteer.

________________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________________

List any special training you have received related to natural resources conservation. Also list any leadership training you 
have received.

________________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________________

Please list your interests and skills (for example: cooking, woodworking, hiking, computers, photography, horticulture, 
leadership, natural resources, water resources, trail development, community service, career development, etc.). Feel 
free to list any others.

________________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________________

Rev. December 2012
Have you ever been turned down as a volunteer with an organization?  
_____ Yes  _____ No
If yes, please explain.
________________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________________

Do you plan to volunteer to work with children in the future?  
_____ Yes  _____ No  _____ Not sure

What is your interest in taking the Conservation Stewards Program? Professional development related to your line of work? Personal enrichment? Opportunity to participate in or lead conservation efforts in your local community? Build your capacity to help manage/lead Michigan natural resources efforts?
________________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________________

How did you hear about the Conservation Stewards Program?
________________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________________

I understand that my enrollment as a volunteer is contingent upon successful completion of the application process. I give my permission for my criminal history to be verified.

I understand that MSU Extension does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, gender, gender identity, religion, age, height, weight, political belief, sexual orientation, marital status, family status or veteran status and that this application will be handled in a confidential manner.

I agree to serve as a volunteer for Michigan State University Extension Michigan Conservation Stewards Program. I understand that either party may cancel this relationship at any time.

I certify that the above information is correct. I agree to inform MSUE of any changes.

_______________________________________________  _____________________
Signature         Date

Thank you for your willingness to share your talents!

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Rev. December 2012
# MSU Extension Criminal History Check Permission Form

*(To protect your privacy, this form will be seen only by Michigan State University Extension staff.)*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Last Name</th>
<th>First Name</th>
<th>Middle Initial</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

Race:  
- [ ] White  
- [ ] Black  
- [ ] Asian or Pacific Islander  
- [ ] Unknown/Other  
- [ ] American Indian or Alaskan Native  
- [ ] Middle Eastern

Gender:  
- [ ] Male  
- [ ] Female

Date of Birth:  

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Month</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Year</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

Michigan Driver’s License Number: ____________________________

Other Last Name | Other First Name | Other Middle Initial
---|---|---

Other Last Name | Other First Name | Other Middle Initial
---|---|---

Other Last Name | Other First Name | Other Middle Initial
---|---|---

Have you ever been convicted of a felony or a misdemeanor?  
- [ ] No  
- [ ] Yes

If yes, please explain:  

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

I give Michigan State University Extension permission to check my criminal history with state and local police as well as with any jurisdictions in other states in which I have lived.

Signature  ____________________________  Date  ____________________________

**NOTE:** A criminal record will not necessarily disqualify an applicant. A criminal record is one piece of information that will be considered in determining the appropriateness of an individual to be an MSU Extension volunteer.

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Rev. December 2012
MSU EXTENSION VOLUNTEER AGREEMENT AND CODE OF CONDUCT FORM

Michigan Conservation Stewards Program
Oakland County

Name: _______________________________________________________________

Address: ______________________________________________________________
Street      City   Zip

Telephone:   _______________ _______________  Email: ____________________
Daytime      Evening

MSU Extension Staff Agree to:
• Provide the volunteer with appropriate policies and procedures.
• Provide orientation about volunteer’s roles and the organization.
• Set education tone and direction in conjunction with the MSU Extension Michigan Conservation Stewards Program.
• Offer volunteer training.
• Provide job descriptions.
• Provide assistance, program support and encouragement.
• Give recognition for time and energy devoted to MSU Extension.
• Implement ongoing affirmative action policies and assist volunteers in doing the same.

Volunteer Agrees to:
• Meet training and volunteer requirements and enroll as a volunteer.
• Follow the policies, philosophy and procedures defined by the staff and the Michigan State University Extension Michigan Conservation Stewards Program.
• Fulfill outlined job requirements without expectation of monetary compensation.
• Be supportive of the MSU Extension program and its activities at all levels.
• Abide by the MSU Extension Volunteer Code of Conduct (see back of this form).
• Affirm that the MSU Extension program activity seeks members from every race, ethnic, religious and socioeconomic group.
• Supply MSU Extension office with all information about changes in status as a volunteer, and volunteer stewardship activities at least annually.

I have reviewed the agreement and am willing to serve in this capacity until either party cancels this agreement. If I am unable to continue as an MSU Extension volunteer, I will notify Extension staff at least one month in advance.

I have read the Michigan Conservation Stewards Code of Conduct on the back of this form and agree to comply with it.

SIGNATURES

________________________________________          _________________________
MSU Extension Volunteer      Date

________________________________________  _________________________
MSU Extension Staff Person     Date

OC Staff only: Distribute the original to the MSUE office and provide a copy to the volunteer.
Michigan Conservation Stewards Program: CODE OF CONDUCT

The Michigan Conservation Stewards Program, as part of MSU Extension, prides itself on providing quality educational and volunteer experiences. The primary purpose of this Code of Conduct is to ensure the safety and well-being of all participants.

MSU Extension volunteers will:

- Accept responsibility to represent Oakland County and MSU Extension programs with dignity and pride by being positive role models.
- Conduct myself in a courteous and respectful manner when in dealing with other program participants, the public, and those involved in the volunteer work I perform.
- Respect, adhere to and enforce the rules, policies and guidelines established by Oakland County and MSU Extension programs.
- Abstain from, and not tolerate physical or verbal abuse.
- Comply with equal opportunity and anti-discrimination laws.
- Avoid criminal activities.
- Refrain from using alcohol and other drugs in an illegal or inappropriate manner.
- Accept the responsibility to promote and support MSU Extension.
- Operate machinery, vehicles and other equipment in a responsible manner.
- Report a violation of the Code of Conduct of which I am aware.

It is important that all Michigan State University Extension volunteers comply with the Code of Conduct. Failure to comply with any component of the code or participation in other inappropriate conduct as determined by MSU Extension representatives may lead to dismissal as a volunteer from the MSU Extension program.

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Michigan Conservation Stewards Program

Photo/Audio/Video Release

I authorize Michigan State University Extension to record my image and/or voice (or that of my minor child named below) and give Michigan State University Extension and all persons or entities acting pursuant to MSUE’s permission or authority, all rights to use the recorded images. I understand that said images will be used for educational, advertising, and promotional purposes in all conventional and electronic media, and any future media. I also authorize the use of any printed material in connection therewith. I understand and agree that these images and recordings may be duplicated, distribute with or without charge, and/or altered in any form or manner without future/further compensation or liability, in perpetuity.

Name of Subject:__________________________________  Date:________________________
(Please Print)

Signature______________________________________________________________________
(Parent or guardian must sign here if subject is under 18 years old)

Address:______________________________________________________________________

Phone:________________________________________________________________________

Email:_______________________________________@_______________________________

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Michigan State University Extension Oakland County  
Michigan Conservation Stewards Volunteer Program  
Policy Statement

Introduction

Every Conservation Stewards Volunteer trainee is asked to read and adhere to the Conservation Stewards Volunteer Program Policy Statement. Signature on the Conservation Stewards Application indicates these policies have been read and that the participant agrees to adhere to these policies.

This policy statement describes the two requirements necessary for achieving Conservation Stewards Volunteer status: the educational training course and the volunteer commitment. It also explains the requirements for annual recertification. Additional important information in this Policy Statement is the Conservation Stewards Volunteer liability coverage and the MSU Extension policy regarding criminal history background checks for all volunteers. Finally, this statement contains a Standards of Behavior section that every Conservation Stewards Volunteer trainee must agree to follow.

Mission

The Mission of the Conservation Stewards Program is to deliver high quality, locally-based training opportunities to create an informed Michigan citizenry who will practice community-based volunteer conservation management activities.

Vision

The Conservation Stewards Program is a collaborative effort among community-based volunteers and partners, leading conservation organizations and agencies, and educational institutions throughout Michigan. This collaboration contributes to a statewide network of dedicated, well-prepared and well-organized volunteer Conservation Stewards who understand, promote, support, actively contribute to and/or lead significant conservation management activities on public and private lands.

Conservation Stewards will provide a strong, informed constituency for the state’s natural resources and biodiversity. These volunteers will engage in informed, scientifically-based conservation stewardship activities to enhance resource management and sustain healthy ecosystems across Michigan, including land and water management, ecological monitoring, restoration, and public education. The network will be supported by an “academy” of statewide and local learning communities and colleagues from across Michigan who has expertise in the science of conservation stewardship.

Volunteer activities include:
- Ecological monitoring
- Ecological management/restoration
- Ecological planning and decision making
- Conservation education and outreach
- Conservation-based youth activities

Qualifications

Individuals interested in becoming a Michigan Conservation Stewards Volunteer must possess the following qualifications:
- Strong interest in natural resources and conservation management activities
- Willingness and availability to complete the core ecosystem and resource management curriculum and field-based outdoor learning experiences (totaling approximately 40 hours)
- Willingness and availability to provide 40 hours of local, science-based conservation service
- Ability to communicate and share ecosystem knowledge effectively and diplomatically with others
- Willingness to support the Conservation Stewards Program and its partners
Educational Training Course

Conservation Stewards Volunteer Program, MSUE Oakland County, will offer the following core training classes:

- Introduction to Conservation Stewards Volunteer Program and Conservation Heritage
- Ecological Foundations
- Making Choices to Manage Our Natural Resources
- Forestland Ecosystems and Management
- Grassland Ecosystems and Management
- Terrestrial Field Experience
- Wetlands Ecosystems and Management
- Lake and Stream Ecosystems and Management
- Aquatic Field Experience

MSU Extension provides the formal training program. Instructors include staff from MSU and MSUE, the Michigan Department of Natural Resources (MDNR), experienced Conservation Stewards Volunteers and other local experts.

The Michigan Conservation Stewards Program seeks to bring together local conservation and stewardship communities through a **40-hour ecosystem-based training experience** combined with **40 hours of required service**. An in-class **Capstone Project** must also be completed, and counts toward the initial 40-hour service requirement. The training program provides a balanced, integrated, practical course in ecosystems, conservation and land management. Additional topics or follow-up sessions may be provided during the year according to local needs and resources. The Michigan Conservation Stewards Program will:

1. Provide baseline ecological and natural resource conservation knowledge and skills that many small, local organizations are unable to provide to volunteers before they complete stewardship workdays.
2. Coordinate, support and recognize volunteers who take part in stewardship service on partner lands and projects.
3. Complement ongoing restoration, ecological monitoring, and resource management projects throughout Michigan.

**Attendance:** Participants are strongly encouraged to attend all sessions. The sessions provide a total of 40 instructional hours.

Participants may miss up to 6 hours (two evening sessions or one weekend session). Before submitting your application materials and payment, please check your calendar to be sure you are able to adhere to this attendance policy.

Participants missing more than 6 hours of instructional time will not be eligible to become a Michigan Conservation Steward.

If you know there are sessions you will not be able to attend, it might be possible for you to make up those sessions through a program in another county.

**Examination and quizzes:** Instead of weekly quizzes and a final exam, participation in weekly hands-on learning opportunities and evaluations will be required for Conservation Stewards trainees. These opportunities are intended to enrich the Conservation Stewards trainee knowledge base.

**Training, Service Requirements, Certification & Recertification**

Conservation Stewards must complete initial requirements (40 hours of training and 40 hours of service) within one year in order to receive their **Conservation Stewards Certificate of Completion and name badge**, and then participate in eight hours of advanced training and an additional forty hours of conservation service each subsequent year in order to receive their recertification. Conservation Stewards are encouraged to consider getting involved with the conservation community in new and innovative ways to share their knowledge and interest in ecosystem management.
The Conservation Stewards Program requirements consist of:

- **40 hours of basic ecological training** (including workshop attendance, and completion of required assignments, workshop activities, learning reflections, and program evaluations).

- **40 hours of conservation service annually** (opportunities will be shared by the local office of MSU Extension and local partners as they become available). An in-class **Capstone Project** must also be completed, and counts toward your initial 40-hour service requirement.

- **8 hours of advanced training in each year after your initial training, plus 40 hours of volunteer service for annual recertification**, (as selected by the individual Conservation Steward). Examples of types of training that could be selected by a Conservation Steward include: training for certification as a licensed herbicide applicator; prescribed fire certification; marine vessel operator’s license; CPR and first aid; chain saw operation/safety; MSUE’s Master Woodland Manager Program, Lake and Stream Leaders’ Institute, or Citizen Planner Program; GIS training; invasive species control techniques; monitoring of conservation easements training; Projects WILD, FISH, WET, WOW, Learning Tree, or the Leopold Education Project.

**Volunteer Commitment**

The Conservation Stewards Volunteer training course consists of a minimum of 40 hours of core instruction and 40 hours of volunteer work, in ecosystem and land management related activities. The purpose of the volunteer requirement is to extend MSU Extension’s educational programs in these areas.

Activities that count toward Conservation Stewards Volunteer certification must have educational value for others and be nonpaying for the Conservation Stewards Volunteer. The volunteer must always provide reliable and accurate information.

Approval by the county Conservation Stewards Volunteer Coordinator is encouraged before engaging in any volunteer activity. Through volunteering, trainees enrich their knowledge of natural resources, help others through education and launch exciting ideas.

**Documentation:** It is the responsibility of the Conservation Stewards Volunteer trainee to document his/her time and report that time in writing to the county Conservation Stewards Volunteer Coordinator for tabulation.

**Time limits:** An individual has one year from the end of the Conservation Stewards Volunteer training course to complete the required 40 volunteer hours.

**Criminal History Background Check**

As a policy of MSU Extension, a criminal history background check will be run for all Conservation Stewards Volunteers.

**Guidelines**

The title, MSUE Conservation Stewards Volunteer, is to be used only and exclusively by individuals trained and certified by MSUE. The title is valid only when the volunteer is participating in the Michigan Conservation Stewards Volunteer Program.

Training and experience gained by participating in the Michigan Conservation Stewards Volunteer Program are valuable, and may rightfully be listed as qualifications when seeking employment. Employed Conservation Stewards Volunteers are allowed to display credentials at their place of business.

On Conservation Stewards Volunteer speaking engagements, it is appropriate to receive payment for expenses only, such as supplies and mileage. If an honorarium is offered, it may be accepted and given to the county Conservation Stewards Volunteer Program.

Conservation Stewards Volunteers do not give specific recommendations for use of fertilizers and pesticides unless otherwise trained and certified by the Michigan Department of Agriculture and Rural Development. Conservation Stewards Volunteers must encourage others to follow label recommendations included with all products.
Standards of Behavior

The standards of behavior are a contractual agreement accepted by volunteers who commit to the MSU Extension Conservation Stewards Program. These standards guide the volunteers' behavior during their involvement with the Conservation Stewards Volunteer Program. Just as it is a privilege for MSU Extension to work with those who volunteer their time and talents to the Conservation Stewards Program, a volunteer's involvement in the program is a privilege and a responsibility, not a right.

The MSU Extension Conservation Stewards Volunteer Program provides unbiased, research-based educational programs accessible to all Michigan residents. The primary purpose of the standards of behavior is to ensure the safety and well-being of all Conservation Stewards Volunteer Program participants (i.e., target audiences, professionals and volunteers.)

Conservation Stewards Volunteers are expected to function within the guidelines of Michigan State University, MSU Extension and the MSU Extension Conservation Stewards Volunteer Program.

The MSU Extension Conservation Stewards Volunteer will:

- Uphold volunteerism as an effective way to educate and train Michigan consumers as it relates to natural resources, land management and ecosystems.
- Uphold an individual's right to dignity, self-development, and self-direction.
- Accept supervision and support from professional Extension staff while involved in the program.
- Accept the responsibility to represent their individual county Conservation Stewards Volunteer Program and the Michigan Conservation Stewards Volunteer Program with dignity and pride by being positive mentors for others.
- Conduct themselves in a courteous and respectful manner, with fairness, honesty and integrity.
- Respect, adhere to, and enforce the rules, policies and guidelines established by their county Conservation Stewards Volunteer Program, the MSU Extension Conservation Stewards Volunteer Program and Michigan State University Extension.
- Not commit a felonious criminal act.
- Comply with equal opportunity and anti-discrimination laws.
- Perform duties in a responsible and timely manner.
- Report immediately any threats to the volunteer’s emotional or physical well-being to the Conservation Stewards Volunteer Coordinator.
- Accept the responsibility to promote and support Conservation Stewards Volunteer activities in order to develop an effective county, state and national program.
- Operate machinery, vehicles and other equipment in a responsible manner.

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