

Incorporating Natural Resource Information into Land Use Planning & Zoning

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EXTENSION

Land Use Planning in MI

- ◆ “Home rule” governance
 - Municipalities and townships mainly
 - Counties if townships opt out
 - Regional planning commissions may provide technical services, guidance, broad perspective
- ◆ Total of **1,857** local units of gov’t that may plan and/or zone

Research Questions

- ◆ What types of NR information are used / not used?
 - ◆ How important are different types of NR information?
 - ◆ How is NR information being incorporated into land use decisions?
 - ◆ What needs or services could improve NR information integration?
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Methods

- ◆ Part I (this presentation)

- Mailed survey to all townships (1,242), counties (83) and regional planning commissions (14) N=1,339

- ◆ Part II

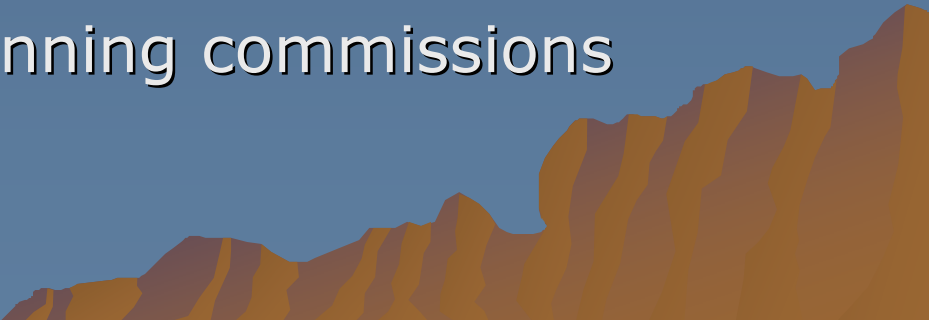
- Conducted 30 face-to-face interviews with local government officials

- ◆ 10 in UP (1 regional p.c., 2 counties, 7 twps)
- ◆ 10 in NLP (1 regional p.c., 2 counties, 7 twps)
- ◆ 10 in SLP (1 regional p.c., 2 counties, 7 twps)

Survey Results

- ◆ 70% response rate

940 surveys with at least one relevant question answered

- ◆ 70% of townships responded (n=865)
 - ◆ 72% of counties responded (n=60)
 - ◆ 93% of regional planning commissions responded (n=13)
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Master Plan & Zoning

◆ Townships

- 72% have a basic land use plan
- 76% have a zoning ordinance


◆ Counties

- 76% have a basic land use plan
 - 37% have a zoning ordinance
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Most commonly used NR info


1. Surface water
2. Land cover / land use
3. Soils
4. Wetland vegetation

Least commonly used NR info

1. Invasive animal
 2. Invasive plant
 3. Wildlife species
 4. Endangered / threatened species
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How important are different types of NR info?

- ◆ “Very Important”
 1. Surface water
 2. Ground water
 3. Land cover / land use
 4. Wetland vegetation

 - ◆ “Not Important” and “Don’t Know”
 1. Invasive plant
 2. Invasive animal
 3. Endangered / threatened species
 4. Wildlife species
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Overall importance

- ◆ Top three most important overall with index applied
 1. Surface water
 2. Ground water
 3. Agricultural
- ◆ Index provides more accurate interpretation of overall importance instead of frequency alone (Ag, surface, soils)

NR Information in Land Use

- ◆ NR information most frequently used in Master Plans, zoning ordinances and site development reviews, although only ~30% “always” use
- ◆ NR information least frequently used in transportation and utility planning


“Greatest Need”

- ◆ Where to access NR information (59%)
 - Regional p.c., townships, counties
- ◆ Funding to acquire NR information (47%)
 - Regional p.c., counties, townships

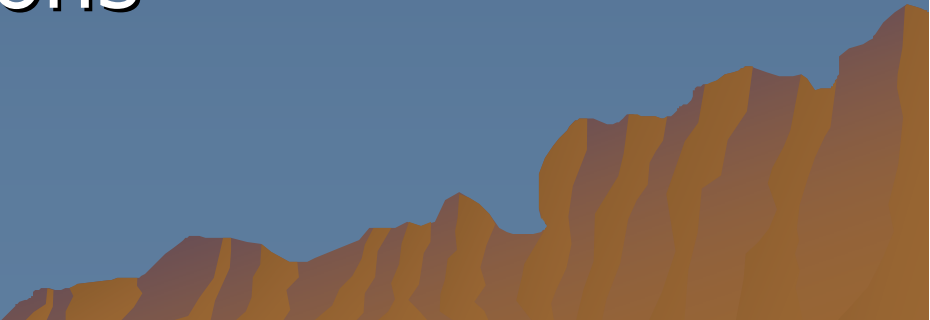
Information Delivery

- ◆ 60% of all respondents prefer NR information in hard copy format
 - Townships especially (63%)
- ◆ NR information in electronic format
 - Regional planning commissions (92%)
 - Counties (76%)

Take Home Message

- ◆ Use and importance are similar
 - ◆ Lack of understanding of how land use planning impacts biological diversity & ecological viability
 - ◆ Lack of understanding of how NR information could improve land use decisions
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Take Home Message

- ◆ Educational programs
 - ◆ NR information warehouse – one location to start from!
 - ◆ Most effective to target regional planning commissions
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- A decorative graphic of a mountain range in shades of brown and tan, located at the bottom right of the slide.

Thank You!

◆ Funding Provided By:

- MDNR, Wildlife Division, Private Lands Program
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