Critical Conversations
How to talk to farmers about conservation
WHY THE NATURE CONSERVANCY?
History and expanded purpose of TNC

Our Priorities

- Protect Land and Water
- Tackle Climate Change
- Build Healthy Cities
- Provide Food and Water Sustainability
We developed this workshop with the American Society of Agronomy (ASA) and the CCA program office.

CCAs sign in to earn 2 CEUs in Soil and Water + 2 CEUs in Personal Development.
NITROGEN AND PHOSPHORUS LOSSES
LOSSES CAN BE CATASTROPHIC OR HARDLY NOTICEABLE
“But our ground is flat, we aren’t losing that much.”
The public demands more from agriculture … produce food but do it right…and prove it!
WE ARE ALL IN THIS TOGETHER

We can promote practices that build soil health and reduce nutrient losses

We Need Your Help
5 ton/acre/year = thickness of 1 dime
40 years, 40 dimes = ~ 2” of topsoil gone
FOR A 2,000 ACRE FARM, A LOSS OF 5 TONS/ACRE PER YEAR

2,000 ACRES X 5 TONS/ACRE = 10,000 TONS/YEAR
IF YOU FARM FOR 40 YEARS, THAT IS

400,000 tons of topsoil!

2,000 acre farm

• 80,000 truckloads of a 5-ton truck

You’re going to need a bigger truck!

taking action on things we can control
WE ARE LOSING SOIL AND NUTRIENTS
I'M ALREADY USING GOOD CONSERVATION PRACTICES!
SO WHY ISN’T THIS CONVERSATION HAPPENING?

- Training?
- Reward Structure?
- Could get sensitive?
- Not sure how it could go.
WHY WOULD A PRODUCER WANT TO CHANGE?

WHY NOT?
WHY WOULD A PRODUCER WANT TO CHANGE?

• Keep from losing topsoil
• Keep from losing nutrients
• Maximize productivity and profitability
• Leave a legacy — improve the farm for future generations
OUR GREATEST ASSETS

Soil

Water

Farmers don’t know what they are losing
MAKING THE MOST OF YOUR MOST VALUABLE ASSET

Your best asset is right under your feet.
And keeping it healthy is more important than ever.
BENEFITS OF HEALTHY SOILS

• Improved crop yields
• More resilient crop yields
• Improve water infiltration and storage
• Higher soil carbon and SOM
• Increased soil biological activity
• Faster nutrient cycling with larger pool of available nutrients
• Less compaction, crusting and erosion
• Better soil aggregate stability
• Better weed control