

REPORT FOR FY2020
OCT19 - SEP20

20
20

ANNUAL REPORT
Kalkaska Conservation District





our mission

Our mission is to provide leadership in the natural resource management of Kalkaska County, deliver conservation assistance and information to residents and visitors, and ensure quality implementation of conservation practices.

our team

All our work is made possible by a dedicated team of staff and volunteers. Our office boasts 2 full-time staff, (Mark Randolph and Renee Penny), 3 regional staff (Jodi DeHate, Monica Caster and Larry Czelusta), and 5 elected Board of Directors (Dawn M Moses, John Roberts, Carol Hart, Sam Fahl, and Denny Iott). There are many other volunteers behind the scenes that help enhance our mission and contribute to our success. Thank you to everyone who gives their time and experience!

our history

Kalkaska residents voted to create the Kalkaska Conservation District in 1950 to protect and conserve Kalkaska's water, soil, and natural resources. For 70 years the District has partnered with State and Federal agencies to provide technical and financial assistance for Kalkaska residents to address a broad range of environmental concerns.

our vision

We recognize that our County has both opportunities and challenges related to conservation and that the Kalkaska Conservation District plays a unique role in working with property owners, land users and community leaders to address the needs of our beautiful and vibrant region.

Our 3-year plan focuses on leveraging our strengths to grow programs, services, and initiatives that address both conservation opportunities and challenges. We strive to be a strong community partner in creating a County that is a showcase of recreational, economic, and sustainable living opportunities.

OUR IMPACT

17,195

#'s of household Hazardous Waste collected from 150 county residents!

16,920

of trees sold

38,131

Dollars spent locally for conservation projects

4

River Miles Cleaned on the Upper Manistee River

600

Feet of Manistee River tributaries monitored

426

of acres visited

9

Events hosted and co-hosted

226

of event participants

OUR WORK



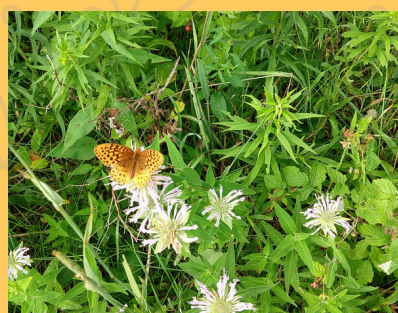
Farming

- We completed a 13 acre cover crop and soil health study with Iott Seed Potato Farm. Results suggest that cover crops can positively impact potato yields!
- Renee became the Market Host for the 2020 Kalkaska Farmers' Market!



Forestry

- Completed free site visits for best land (and wildlife) management advice.
- Larry assisted 8 landowners to enroll 1674 acres in the Qualified Forest Program
- Free timber marking workshop hosted in September 2020



Water Quality

- Healthy Lake Landscaping with Manistee Lake Association and Bear Lake Association. Helped protect shoreline from erosion.
- MiCorp Stream Sampling with partners and volunteers, sampled 600 feet of Manistee River tributaries.

OUR COMMUNITY

Community Events & Fun Projects

- Virtual Annual River Cleanup, 4 miles of the Upper Manistee River cleaned.
- Annual Household Hazardous Waste Collection served 150 residents and collected over 17,000 pounds of chemicals.
- Annual Tire Collection event redirected 2 semi-trailers full of tires to recycling facilities.
- Rugg Pond Sediment Surveys completed and being analyzed.
- Held 2 Adopt-a-Highway clean-ups on M-72.
- Planted 8 large trees with Rapid City Elementary school staff near playground.
- Butterfly Day with Barker Creek Nursery and Grand Traverse Butterfly Zoo.
- Hosted 20 Market days for the Kalkaska Farmers' Market.



MAJOR NEWS

Millage Renewal

August 4, 2020 was a landmark day for us. Our 4 year millage to support District operations and events like the annual Household Hazardous Waste Collection event were up for renewal.

With a margin of nearly 2 to 1, it PASSED! We are so grateful to the residents of Kalkaska County for supporting us and allowing us to continue protecting the woods and waters of Kalkaska County.



Growth of KCD Friends Group

A successful millage renewal was made possible through the support of an active Friends of the Kalkaska Conservation District group. This "Friends" group will continue to blossom over the next year by filling for a 501(c)3 status. They'll then keep supporting the District's mission to protect and advocate for the natural resources of the county.

Contact Marilyn Shy, Friends Chair, to get involved today!

marilyn_shy@yahoo.com

MAJOR NEWS

Rugg Pond Sediment Survey

Rugg Pond will soon see some much needed maintenance. In July 2020, the District contracted engineers to sample sediment that has been filling the pond for the past 115 years. The sediment study will determine the contents of materials that have settled at the bottom of the pond, and whether they are safe to dredge or not.

Removing the build-up of sediment will allow the pond to capture sediment and nutrients from upstream for decades to come, helping to keep the Rapid River clean and healthy, and restore the cold-water fishery in the pond.



Donations and Gifts

The Rugg Pond sediment survey would not have been made possible without a generous \$20,000 donation. This donation is the first of it's kind at the office. And it was immensely helpful as many grant opportunities will only cover actual dredging or restoration costs that will come down the line.



OUR PARTNERS

Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS)

United State Department of Agriculture Natural Resources Conservation Service (USDA-NRCS) was created in 1933 in response to the Dust Bowl at that time it was created under the Department of Interior and was known as the Soil Erosion Service. In 1935 it was moved to the United States Department of Agriculture and in 1994 the name changed to Natural Resources Conservation Service.

NRCS provides technical and financial conservation assistance, which includes but not limited to: Brush management, invasive species control, seasonal high tunnels, tree, shrub planting, grazing management, forest management plans, and forest management practices.

Technical assistance is available at no cost to landowners. This is a great place to start with any project that you're looking to protect the environment. Conservation programs are also available to provide assistance with implementing new conservation activities. Financial assistance is only provided after an approved contract is funded.

Contact District Conservationist, Monica Caster at monica.caster@usda.gov to learn more about how NRCS can help you.



OUR PARTNERS

Forestry Assistance Program (FAP)

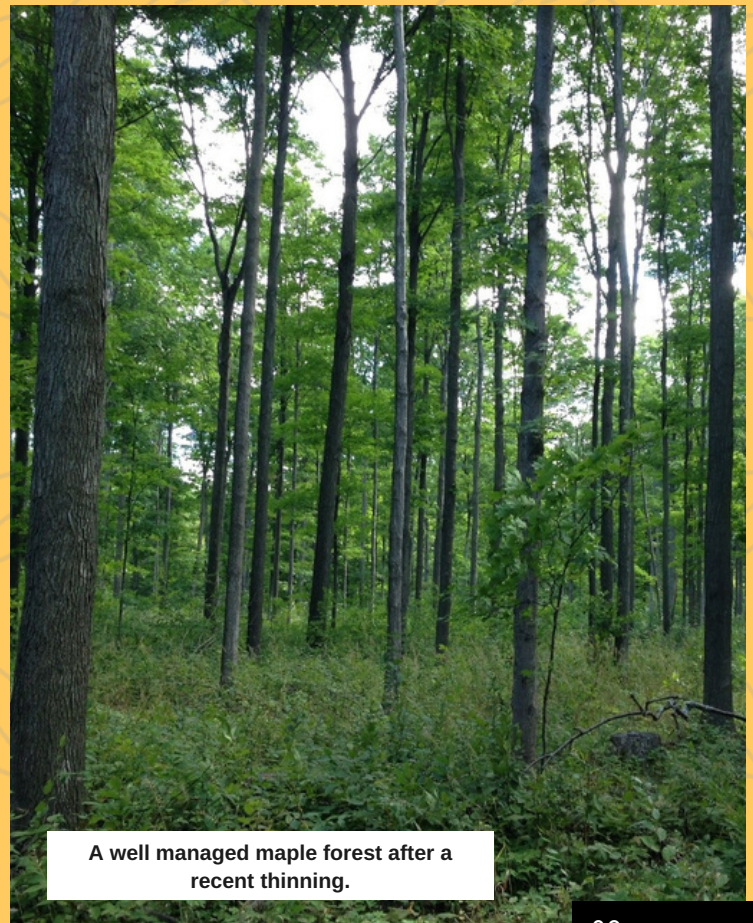
The Forestry Assistance Program is a state grant-funded program that makes a professional forester available, at no cost, for any forest landowner in Kalkaska County. The Conservation District Forester can inspect your woodlot and advise you concerning the health of your woodlot, how to improve your woodlot, or even if there is the possibility of mature trees ready for harvest.

Last year 37 landowners in Kalkaska County took advantage of this no-cost site visit. A FAP forester will always give advice based on the landowner's interest. If a harvest is recommended, Kalkaska County's forester, Larry Czelusta, says he cares more about the part of the woodlot that is left, than the part of the forest that is harvested.

Contact Larry today larry.czelusta@macd.org or (231)775-7681 x3



A poorly managed maple forest.



A well managed maple forest after a recent thinning.

OUR PARTNERS

Michigan Agriculture Environmental Assurance Program (MAEAP)

Started in 1998, MAEAP is a voluntary program that recognizes farmers who are top stewards of their land. MAEAP helps farmers adopt cost-effective practices that reduce erosion and runoff into ponds, streams, and rivers. This, in turn, helps farmers comply with state and federal laws. The program includes four steps:

- Attend an education workshop
- Invite a local MAEAP technician to tour your farm
- Implement practices recommended by the technician
- Earn recognition for your work

MAEAP recognition can be earned in one or more of four areas: Farmstead; Cropping; Livestock; and Forest, Wetlands, & Habitat. Farmers who earn MAEAP recognition will receive a sign to place on their farm.

MAEAP is open to all Michigan farmers. You can start MAEAP at any time. Farmers who start or receive recognition by certain dates will be at an advantage for cost share, grants, and other assistance programs.

Contact Jodi DeHate today to learn more on how to level up your farm! Jodi can be reached at jodi.dehate@macd.org or (231) 839-7193.



THANK YOU to all of our GRACIOUS volunteers!

- Au Sable Institute
- Bear Lake Association
- Boardman River Clean Sweep
- Bob and Sara Crosby
- CAKE CISMA
- Cameron Penny
- Carol and Alan Hart
- Darin Cummings
- Dave and Patty Warner
- Dawn and Tony Moses
- Dee and Ron Crawford
- Denny and Dawn Iott
- Emma Fitzgerald
- Grand Traverse Hiking Club
- Grand Traverse Regional Land Conservancy
- Grass River Natural Area
- Huron Pines AmeriCorp Members
- Jenn Wright
- Jodi and Pat Prestine
- John and Cari Jo Roberts
- Kalkaska County 4H
- Kalkaska County Library
- Kalkaska County Recycling Center
- Kalkaska Downtown Development Authority
- Ken Miller
- Kurt and Lisa Heinimen
- Lauren Clark
- Manistee Lake Association
- Marilyn Shy
- Mark and Linda Gilson
- Michealine Crawford
- Michigan Trout Unlimited
- Mike Moran and Marsha Hannah
- Monica Webb
- Northern Michigan Environmental Action Council
- Primavera of Dunamis Peace Institute
- Quality Thyme Garden Club
- Sam Fahl and Danielle Ames
- Seth and Carol Phillips
- Shug and Bill Brandell
- Sierra Club, Clearwater Chapter
- Traverse Area Paddle Club
- Upper Manistee River Association
- Village of Kalkaska



Rugg Pond grate maintenance.



Blue bird nest observed during a spring time site visit.



Tree planting and pollinator habitat establishment in progress at Garfield Township property.



Proud stewards of your land, your water, your Michigan.

Learn more about Kalkaska Conservation District at:

www.kalkaskaconservation.org

Facebook: @kalkaskaconservation

Phone: (231) 258-3307

In person: 406 S Cedar St, Ste A, Kalkaska, MI 49646