



KALAMAZOO  
CONSERVATION  
DISTRICT  
**MONTHLY  
MEETING OF THE  
BOARD**

***Our Mission: “Working  
with our community to  
protect, conserve, and  
restore the natural resources  
of Kalamazoo County”***

April 10<sup>th</sup>, 2026



# Call To Order!

2. Roll Call! (State Name and Association(s))
3. Consider Approval of April 10<sup>th</sup>, 2026 KCD Meeting Agenda
4. Consider Approval of March 20<sup>th</sup>, 2026 KCD Board Meeting Minutes
5. *Public Comments:*



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# Treasurer Reports

Review and Approve all February 2026, March 2026 & Q2 Financials:

- Reconciliations - Signature Needed
- Bank Statement
- Balance Sheet
  - QBD compared to QBO
- Profit & Loss Summary
  - QBD compared to QBO
  - YTD
- Bills & Deposits Summary
- Payroll Detailed Report
- Budget Vs Actual
- Treasurer Check List



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Any Questions?



# Technical Reports:

1. Kalamazoo CD DM Report - Chandra Kinney; District Manager
2. MDARD Partner Report - Jack Knorek; MDARD Regional Coordinator
3. Natural Resources Conservation Service Programs - Di'Shun Melbert; District Conservationist
4. CTAP Report - James Benjamin; MAEAP & Regenerative Agriculture Technician
5. USDA-NRCS Soil Con Report - Celina Robertson; Soil Conservationist
6. CTAI Report - Allison Marshall. CTAI Technician (BCD/KCD/NRCS)
7. BCK-CISMA - Sara Hutteman; Invasive Species Coordinator
8. Produce Safety - Patrick Gordon; Produce Safety Technician
9. Forestry Assistance Program - Ben Savoie; Regional Forester (Housed in Barry)



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# **Kalamazoo CD DM Report - Chandra Kinney; District Manager**

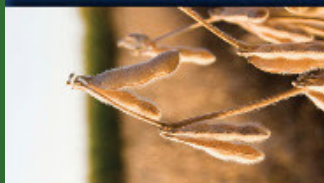
## **\*Highlights\***

- Hosted our Annual Meeting & Election of the Board
- Worked on deep diving into what it means for KCD to obtain a millage. Including put together a presentation to form a ‘Friends of Group’
- Tree Sale! From sales outreach, to formulating order forms and working to gather volunteers.
- Legislative Action Day - CAK out sick w/ flu, Michael Marinez and Katie Schneider represented KCD.
- Strategic planning for our Incubator Farmer Intern and the start up program.

# MDARD Partner Report - Jack Knorek; MDARD Regional Coordinator

## \*Highlights\*

- Q2 Reporting Reminder for all MDARD grants! (Details are provided on Q1 Reports stats, templates and instructions.)
  - CTAP
  - RAP
  - Operations
- A train-the-trainer workshop will be held for conservation and watershed professionals who want to increase farmer participation in conservation-related networks and initiatives: **Build Farmer Networks for Conservation: Train-the-Trainer Workshop for Conservation Professionals Mondays on May 4th, 11th, and 18th – 12:00 - 2:00 EST (virtual and free)**
- MSU is also offering a new monthly series on Local Government Policy and Practices throughout 2026. This series will offer insights, tools, and research to help public sector leaders strengthen their communities.
- MDARD has announced the Conservation Technical Assistance Program (CTAP) grant RFP process for competitive grants designed to support both the Regenerative Agriculture Program and the Michigan Agriculture Environmental Assurance Program. Information and updates can be found [here](#). The RFP release date is April 3rd. A webinar will be held April 7th at 3:00 EST. Applications are due June 5th.



MICHIGAN DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE & RURAL DEVELOPMENT

# Natural Resources Conservation Service

## Programs - Di'Shun Melbert; District Conservationist

### \*Highlights\*



#### EQIP

- 9 Site Visits for Kalamazoo clients FY26 EQIP
- 21 Applications Ranked and Submitted

#### CSP

- 5 Practices Certified for payment
- 3 Site visits with Kalamazoo Clients for FY26
- 2 Applications assessed and prepared for submission

#### CRP

- 1 Site visit complete and practice certified installed
- 1 Suitability and Feasibility completed for a new applicant.

I will create a plan for Celina and my “acting” that will detail any outstanding clients. Currently still acting between Berrien and Kalamazoo, I have not been told who will act for me during my leave at the time of this report.

# Conservation Technical Assurance Program Report - James Benjamin; MAEAP & Regenerative Agriculture Technician

## \*Highlights\*

March saw a continued uptick in farm visits and there is a lot of work in progress on many farms. Well on the way to surpassing CTAP Grant objectives for this year with Verifications scheduled for April. Got Corn and Soybean Production Practices survey for RAP Education & Outreach Grant mailed to 96 farms and received 13 responses by end of March.

- March 11<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup>, attended Cover Crop Boot Camp hosted by Michigan Corn Growers in Lansing.

	Oct	Q1 Nov	Dec	Jan	Q2 Feb	Mar	Apr	Q3 May	Jun	Jul	Q4 Aug	Sep	Sum	Goal
Completed Risk Assessments (New & Repeat By System)	8	10	3	2	3	15							41	30
Implemented Risk Reductions	22	34	4	4	9	74							147	100
New Verifications (by System)	0	2	0	0	0	0	6						8	10
Reverifications (by System)	5	4	0	0	0	0	4						13	15
Soil Health Assessments	0	0	0	0	0	0							0	18
Soil Health Tests	0	0	0	0	0	0							0	18
Soil Health Management Plans	0	0	0	0	0	0							0	18
Farm or Site Visits	14	11	0	1	18	13							57	100
Field Days	0	0	0	0	0	0							0	1



# USDA-NRCS Soil Con Report - Celina

## Robertson; Soil Conservationist

### **\*Highlights\***



- Focused on completing all remaining EQIP applications for the FY 2026 funding cycle.
- Began early planning work for contracts that will follow in the next program year.
- Increased time spent in the field as conditions improved to meet with clients and evaluate sites ahead of spring conservation work.
- Hosted the district forester for a day to visit several properties and provide forestry-related guidance for interested clients.
- Provided information to clients about the Regenerative Pilot Program and encouraged producers who may benefit from it to consider applying.



# Conservation Technical Assurance Initiative - Allison Marshall; CTAI Technician (BCD/KCD/NRCS)

## **\*Highlights\***

### NRCS Kalamazoo:

- Led site visit with prospective producer and wrote post-visit documentation (MM).
- Made a conservation plan and two job sheets for 1 client's prescribed burn site (AW).
- Created a practice schedule in CD for 1 client and wrote a conservation plan for them. (MM)
- Attended Kalamazoo annual meeting.
- Wrote 11 conservation plants for forest management plan applications.
- Sent in 1 CSP payment for processing (TB).
- Assessed 5 forest management plans for EQIP applicants in CART (JM, JJ,GS,MS,MW)

# BCK-Cooperative Invasive Species Management Area - Sarah Huetteman; Invasive Species Coordinator **\*Highlights\***



- No Submitted Board Report This Month!
- Upcoming **Events/Outreach**: Kalamazoo River & River Trail Clean Up - Organizer: Michigan Waterways Stewards - March 28, 2026 Table at Barry Roubaix April 18, 2026 – Bike Decon and Plants to look out for.



# Produce Safety - Patrick Gordon; Produce Safety Technician

## \*Highlights\*

- Kalamazoo CD Annual Meeting (3/5)
- Michigan On-Farm Produce Safety (MIOFPS) Huddle (3/13)
- NCPP Training Follow Up Meeting (3/16)
- MIOFPS Newsletter Planning Meeting (3/17)
- Produce Safety Drop-in Hours at KVCC (3/27)
- Farm Visit Kalamazoo (3/27)
- Work on newsletter article



County	Berrien	Calhoun	Kalamazoo	Van Buren
Farm consults	3	5	3	4



# Forestry Assistance Program - Ben Savoie; Regional Forester (Housed in Barry)

## \*Highlights\*

- Of the 15 visits we completed this month, about a dozen of them were in the new expanded service area. It is so satisfying to see the work in promoting this program come to fruition and getting into these new communities.

Deliverable Item	February 2026	March 2026
Total Individual Consultations (Site Visits, etc.)	4	15
QFP Enrollment in Acres	0	188
Total Referrals to Public (MAEAP, etc.) or Private Sector	6	20
Media Occurrences	3	4
Outreach Events Conducted/Presented	5	1

Total Outreach Event Attendance	315	30
Any Narratives (Highlights, Impacts, Successes, or Details you'd like to share.)	<p>Cultivating Resilience to reach farmers with forested land</p> <p>Burning Issues to connect with landowners interested in Rx Fire and get more familiar with resources available</p> <p>Presentation for Laketown Township on Oak Wilt Management</p> <p>QFP + Conservation Easement presentation w/ Allegan landowners and neighboring land conservancies</p> <p>Faces of Conservation &amp; BCD Annual Meeting</p>	<p>Exceptionally busy month now that the word is out about our expanded area.</p> <p>More QFP acres to come, event planning with ECD &amp; Hastings Public Library</p> <p>NRCS assistance in Kalamazoo has been a boon for new clients.</p> <p>Preparing for the rush of tree sale and spring weather bringing in even more new folks into the office.</p>
What do you need increased support with?	I have had so much support from every county I work in, as long as we keep this pace we will be in for a great year!	Thank you for all the hard work in promoting the FAP program. All I ask for is patience as some visits will be planned out weeks in advance.



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# Old Business:

- KCD Millage Information Next Steps:
  - Board Member must go to the County Gov. Board Meeting and make an official request to be on the ballot.
  - Build a 'Friends of the Kalamazoo Conservation District' Group
  - Refine our ballot language
  - Friends of Group & Board Advocate for a 'yes' on the upcoming ballot
- BIG Question? Since CD's have to host a millage ballot on an even year (with the general or primary ballot).  
What is our next step? August? November? 2.5 years...?



# Old Business:

- We are further building collaborative partnerships with MSU E, Farmstead Flats and the Kalamazoo County Government to further our Incubator Farmer Program. Currently waiting on approval to move forward with funds through the County, then we will be launching our Internship.
  - Projecting to have someone onboarded in May!
- TREE SALE~
  - Still need a few more volunteers, if you or anyone in your network are available to join us on bundling or sale days - please let us know!



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# New Business:

- Call for Associate Directors!
  - Lead Millage Campaign
  - Expanding Urban Conservation
  - Expanding Rural Conservation
- First Mushroom Class with Great Lakes Mushroom Company this Sunday
  - April 12<sup>th</sup> from 3PM-5PM
- Conservation Needs Assessment
  - Strategic Planning:
    - Apply to Irving S. Gilmore Foundation for small project grant to launch survey
  - Partner with municipalities to host events, launch website access, share on social media and newsletter.

# Public Acts & Notices:

1. Don Poppe of the Michigan Department of Natural Resources: 39-Gourdneck State Game Area-Portage
  - a. Place approximately 18 cubic yards of crushed stone fill in 0.01 acres of wetland, to create a footpath.
  - b. Dredge approximately 17.5 cubic yards in wetland and install two (2) concrete abutment structures, totaling approximately 2.5 cubic yards. Backfill with existing soil.
  - c. Place approximately 6 cubic yards of stone riprap in approximately 100 square feet of wetland, associated with the dock and gangway.
  - d. Install a seasonal dock on 0.02 acres of Hampton Lake bottomland

- Any Comments or Concerns?



## DIRECTORS TIME!

- How do you see us aligning to better growth strategies?
- What connections do you have?
- What's going on in your world - environmental related?
- How can you better contribute to the growth of KCD?



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**NEXT MEETING - 8 AM on  
May 15th, 2026  
at the KCD office, Thank you!**

**MEETING ADJOURNED!**