



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”***

June 12<sup>th</sup>, 2026



# Call To Order!

2. Roll Call! (State Name and Association(s))
3. Consider Approval of June 12th, 2026 KCD Meeting Agenda
4. Consider Approval of May 15th, 2026 KCD Board Meeting Minutes
5. *Public Comments:*



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# Treasurer Reports

Review and Approve all May 2026 Reports:

- Balance Sheet
  - QBD compared to QBO
- Profit & Loss Summary
  - QBD compared to QBO
- Bills & Deposits Summary
- Payroll Detailed Report
- Reconciliations - Signature Needed
- Treasurer Check List

Any Questions?



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# Technical Reports:

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



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

- Tabled at Kalamazoo's World Migratory Bird Day Celebration at Upjohn Park on May 16th
- Graduated from Purdue Universities IWLA with a Profession Certification in Watershed Management
- Worked on planning on coordinating the Third Annual Kalamazoo River Cleanup
- Interviewed for the Incubator Farmer Internship
- Worked on getting some of the administrative work done for HuntMICollaborative



# MACD Report - Rivka Hodgkinson, Executive Director MACD

## \*Highlights\*

- Starting to send monthly Board Reports to every District to ensure information is being properly relayed to all of our elected officials.
- June 23<sup>rd</sup> - ‘Getting the most out of your MACD Membership’ virtual webinar
- Scholarships for NACD - closes today (June 12th)! So hurry!
- MACD Annual Conference - October 20-22 in Lansing.
- Region 8 Meetings this summer - Board Members are encouraged to attend!!!
- 2026 MACD State Council Information Provided



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# MDARD Partner Report - Jack Knorek; MDARD Regional Coordinator

## \*Highlights\*

- Q3 Reporting Due July 15<sup>th</sup> - Templates already available
- CD Websites are required to be entirely ADA compliant under Title II - MUST be fully compliant by April 27<sup>th</sup>, 2027
- MI Dept. of Treasury has issued a significant number of incorrect tax related notices due to a system error
- Annual Business Plans - Reminder: ABP are due October 5<sup>th</sup> and should list goals, activities, funding sources, partners and timelines,
- Funding Sources: NFWF Conservation Partners Grant - Due July 22<sup>nd</sup>  
Key objectives for Great Lakes Region - Improve soil health on crop lands, pastures and other grazing lands. Reduce nitrogen, phosphorus, and sediment runoff to local waterways. Engage landowners in conservation and regenerative agriculture planning and peer-to-peer learning. Reduce Farm Bill practice contracting and implementing backlog.
- Also Included: CTAP Newsletter !! Where James is their Spotlight Technician !!
- Included a sheet on Operations Grant Overview and creating great Accomplishment Narratives



MICHIGAN DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE & RURAL DEVELOPMENT

# Natural Resources Conservation Service Programs - Di'Shun Melbert; District Conservationist **\*Highlights\***



- ON PATERNITY LEAVE!
- THANK YOU SHEILA FOR STEPPING IN!

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



Completed online coursework in “Agroforestry Training Academy”, 5-week online course hosted by Missouri University Center for Agroforestry and attended 3-day in-person session at the campus (May 26<sup>th</sup>-29<sup>th</sup>).  
May 20<sup>th</sup> attended CTAP Soil Health Management Plan training at KBS.

## CTAP Monthly Goals vs. Actual

Fiscal Year: 2026

Conservation District: Kalamazoo Conservation District

Technician Name: James W. Benjamin

Service Area: Kalamazoo County

|   | Q1  |     |     | Q2  |     |     | Q3  |     |     | Q4  |     |     | Sum | Goal |
|---|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|------|
|   | Oct | Nov | Dec | Jan | Feb | Mar | Apr | May | Jun | Jul | Aug | Sep |     |      |
| Completed Risk Assessments (New & Repeat By System) | 8   | 10  | 3   | 2   | 5   | 15  | 9   | 1   |     |     |     |     | 53  | 30   |
| Implemented Risk Reductions                         | 22  | 34  | 4   | 4   | 9   | 74  | 69  | 3   |     |     |     |     | 219 | 100  |
| New Verifications (by System)                       | 0   | 2   | 0   | 0   | 0   | 0   | 6   | 3   |     |     |     |     | 11  | 10   |
| Reverifications (by System)                         | 5   | 4   | 0   | 0   | 0   | 0   | 2   | 6   |     |     |     |     | 17  | 15   |
| Soil Health Assessments                             | 0   | 0   | 0   | 0   | 0   | 0   | 0   | 0   |     |     |     |     | 0   | 18   |
| Soil Health Tests                                   | 0   | 0   | 0   | 0   | 0   | 0   | 0   | 0   |     |     |     |     | 0   | 18   |
| Soil Health Management Plans                        | 0   | 0   | 0   | 0   | 0   | 0   | 0   | 0   |     |     |     |     | 0   | 18   |
| Farm or Site Visits                                 | 14  | 11  | 0   | 1   | 18  | 13  | 17  | 8   |     |     |     |     | 82  | 100  |
| Field Days  | 0   | 0   | 0   | 0   | 0   | 0   | 0   | 0   |     |     |     |     | 0   | 1    |

May saw completion of 2 farm re-verifications and 1 new farm verification in 3 systems (Farmstead, Livestock, Cropping). All primary MAEAP annual goals have been met or will be easily surpassed in remaining 4 months. RAP Soil Health Management plan was released in May, and training was held May 20th. Completed writing and submitted application for the 3-year CTAP Grant.

# USDA-NRCS Soil Con Report - Celina

## Robertson; Soil Conservationist

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



#### Site Visits

- o Site visit completed for one new 2027 applicant in May
- o Among local trend of homesteaders looking to improve property
- o Common issues we see, invasive species, high density woodlots, low plant productivity

#### Current Focus

- o Pre-obligation checklists
- o CPA 52's
  - Environmental impacts assessment
  - Required for all clients implementing practices

#### Agency Updates

- National HQ intending to simplify workload of field offices
- Expanding Technical Service Provider (TSP) program
- Increases resources field office will be able to utilize in conservation planning: “grazing specialists”, “agronomy specialists”.



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

## \*Highlights\*

### NRCS Kalamazoo:

- Assessed and troubleshot one CSP application.
- Worked on two CSP contracts that are behind schedule (gathered information/evidence of practice completion, approved practices, filed all paperwork).
- Ordered seed for 1 CSP client behind schedule.
- Completed 1 payment checklist and updated their vendor in Protracts.
- Sent out a new 1199 for client to sign.
- Updated 2 NRCS contracts in MAEAP database.
- Worked on CSP applications.
- Went on 1 site visit to certify a client's brush management completion.

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

## **\*Highlights\***



- Lesser Celandine treatment wrapped up in early May. Finding days treatment would be safe and effective was rather difficult – future strategy will be to empower landowners to take advantage of nice weather days, likely conduct outreach to lawn care businesses and we'll focus on public areas that need help.
- Stiltgrass has been detected in Calhoun County while the crew was out treating mile-a-minute weed. Further surveying to be conducted for this landowner which owns multiple parcels in Calhoun and Kalamazoo Counties.
- The team attended European Frog-bit training before Memorial Weekend and we'll be selecting 20 sites to check out focusing on lakes with boat launches and duck hunting sites.
- June 24 1:30 PM Forest health workshop
- at Kellogg Experimental Forest, What we (CISMA/CD) do, resources available to people, IS in the area (common and new), add Ben Savoie to cover his programs, Celine - NRCS Programs, in-field portion to show IS and demo cut stump on Buckthorn. James Benjamin attending/available for questions.

# Produce Safety - Patrick Gordon; Produce Safety Technician

## **\*Highlights\***

- Farm Visit/ Water Testing Scotts (5/6)
- Newsletter Planning Meeting (5/12)
- Continued Producer Correspondence
- Work on Materials for Growers
- Work on Newsletter article for June – Buffer and Pollinator Strips – Regenerative Agriculture and Produce Safety

Upcoming:

- Kalamazoo All Teams Meeting (6/17)





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

## \*Highlights\*

This is personally my favorite time of year, and it just so happens to be about the latest someone can reach out to a consulting forester to get a management plan done before the QFP application deadline. Not that it's impossible now, it's just going to be hard to find someone with free time, and you don't necessarily want a rush job on a 20-year document. While we have had a typical number of site visits for the month, the quality has been high both in timber quality and ecological value of the forests. It is always a pleasure to work with new folks that care about their land, and I have had the privilege to meet with many such people this month.

Hello everyone,

I am so grateful for how supportive you all have been as the Forestry Assistance Program grant has expanded! With that, I regret to inform you that I have accepted a job offer with Eaton County Parks. I will be taking on the position as Naturalist, which will allow me to focus on connecting local folks to their natural resources. My official last day of employment by the district is Sunday, June 28th. I am hoping to meet with you all personally before that day, to help make things go smoothly for whoever is up next.

Thank you for making me feel my work is valued, I will truly miss working with you all.

All the best,  
-Ben

P.S. Rachel, I am still planning to do Conservation Carnival, I will be in touch with you soon to coordinate things.

# Old Business:



- Welcome Our New Regen. Ag. Incubator Farmer Intern: Grant P. Reinhart



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# Old Business:

- Scrap Tire Event - 1<sup>st</sup> event went GREAT!  
We filled up two trailers to the brim.
- Third Annual Kalamazoo River Cleanup coming soon... June 20th!
- Funding Opportunity - The county has put me on the schedule to present to the County Government Board on August 18<sup>th</sup> - this will be the first step in building a fiscal relationship with them.
  - Pitch: Resource HUB



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Kalamazoo River  
Cleanup

JUNE 20 | 10 AM - 12 PM  
CELEBRATION @12:00 PM -2:00 PM



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# New Business:

- NEW Internship Opportunities, interns can help us achieve goals we wouldn't otherwise achieve without their assistance:
  - Kalamazoo College - FREE to us (College Student) PAID
  - WMU - costs us \$4k to host for 1 year (College Student) PAID
  - AmeriCorp - costs us \$12k to host for 1 year (Entry Career) PAID
  - KRESA - FREE to us (High School Student) UNPAID



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# New Business:

- HuntMICollaborative
  - Travis McCormick and Benjamin Geiger are our Hunt Leaders for Cagney Farms
    - Set-up Summer Hunt Dates w/ Leaders  
Chandra, Ed and Travis need to coordinate dates and send out to hunt leader team
  - Discussion: Trailers - We have them for the weekends of Sept. 12-13, Dec. 5-6, and Dec. 12-13. How can we utilize that Sunday - AFTER the organized Hunt to promote more hunt leaders joining the program and more farmers signing up for next years programming?



# New Business:

- Building out Local Campaigns
  - General Operations
  - Incubator Farmers Program Start Up
  - Resource HUB
  - HuntMICollaborative
  - Internships

This idea has come from looking at how large corporations perform corporate giving.

Benevity is a HUGE resource for organizations like Stryker, Pfizer, Zoetis and more, to perform charitable giving.

# Public Acts & Notices:

The City of Portage, 7719 South Westnedge Avenue, Portage, MI 49002, has applied to this office for a permit under authority of Part 303, Wetlands Protection, of the Natural Resources and Environmental Protection Act, 1994 PA 451, as amended (NREPA). The applicant proposed to place a screened intake pipe in wetlands and pump surface water at up to 500 gallons per minute to lower surface water levels in upland and wetland. Pumping is proposed when surface water elevations in the adjacent wetland exceed an elevation of 872.5-feet NAVD 88. All pumped water shall be discharged to existing sanitary sewer under agreement with the City of Kalamazoo. The project is located at 7877 and 7900 Moorsbridge Road, T3S, R11W, Section 18, City of Portage, Kalamazoo County, Michigan, in accordance with plans attached to this notice.



- 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  
July 17th, 2026 (FY26 Q3 Meeting)  
at the KCD office, Thank you!**

**MEETING ADJOURNED!**