



Website:
www.alpenamontcd.org

Phone Number
989.785.4083



2021 Annual Report

Alpena-Montmorency Conservation District

Who We Are

The Alpena-Montmorency Conservation District is a local unit of government that has been operating for more than a half century. We are geared at the protection of our natural resources and have technical staff that can assist our landowners with these needs. We provide several services to the people of Alpena and Montmorency Counties with the help of grant funding from Michigan Department of Agriculture and Rural Development, Michigan Department of Natural Resources, and the Natural Resources Conservation Service-USDA. Our technicians work with many programs and assist surrounding counties including Alcona and Presque Isle with natural resource concerns.

Our Mission

Through an ecosystem approach, we will encourage stewardship and sustainable use of local natural resources by providing leadership, information, and technical assistance for the people of Alpena and Montmorency Counties.

Staff & Board of Directors

Aprille Williamson, Executive Director
Kenny Parsons, Environmental Geologist
Alleigh Pagels, Resource Conservationist
Greg Corace, Forest & Wildlife Ecologist

Nathan Skibbe, Chairman
James Chapman, Vice Chairman
Nico Tucker, Secretary/Treasurer
Collin Beyer, Director
Jeremy Werth, Director

Programs and Services

- Aerial Maps
- Conservation Field Day
- Conservation Information and Assistance for Landowners
- Deer Habitat Improvement Program (DHIP)
- Enhanced Wildlife Risk Mitigation (EWRM) Cost Share Assistance
- Equipment Rentals:
 - Great Plains Grain Drill
 - Tree Planter
 - Augers & Tools
- Food Plot Consultation
- Forestry Assistance Program (FAP)
- Forest & Wildlife Ecology
- Hunting Access Program (HAP)
- Invasive Species Identification
- Invasive Species Treatment Demonstrations
- Michigan Agriculture Environmental Assurance Program (MAEAP)
- MAEAP Cost Share
- Montmorency Plat Book Production
- Montmorency & Alpena Plat Book Sales
- Native Plant, Tree, & Food Plot Seed Sales
- Pesticide Applicator Certified Staff
- Qualified Forest Program Assistance
- Site and Soil Assessment to Aid in the Planting of Properly Suited Native Species
- Soil Surveys
- Soil & Water Testing
- Soil Recommendations
- Topography Maps

DISTRICT ACTIVITIES

Alpena-Montmorency Conservation District staff is still working remotely assisting our landowners, meeting with landowners on site visits and outside of the office as much as possible offering our services. The Alpena CD office is in a federal building and doors are unable to be opened to the public due to the COVID-19 pandemic. A drop box has been placed behind the building and is checked daily to assist with soil tests, payments, and paperwork. The Atlanta CD office is open and we can meet landowners there when needed along with all staff being available by phone and email. Remote work has given us the opportunity to spend more time in the field working with our valued landowners with all their conservation needs.

GRAIN DRILL RENTAL

The Conservation District's Great Plains No-Till Grain Drill is available for rent to landowners in our counties and surrounding counties. It was rented out this year to approximately 16 landowners in Alpena, Antrim, Cheboygan, Montmorency, and Presque Isle Counties. Over 375 acres were planted using our drill this year.

PLAT BOOKS

Our 2018 Montmorency County Plat Books were for sale in area businesses again this year. Approximately 200 plat books were sold this year and are still available. You can get your copy at the AMCD office, the Montmorency County Treasurer's office, Alpena and Atlanta AAACU, Montmorency Abstract Office, A-1 Woods in Water in Hillman, Montmorency County Tribune, Alpena MSU Extension and the Hillman Chamber of Commerce. We hope to see even more books sold this year.

TREE SALE

This was a record year for our sale and we thank all of our customers for that! Below shows the native tree seedlings, shrubs, and supplies that we have at our annual tree sales.

33,250	Conifer Seedlings
2,767	Hardwoods
2,965	Wildlife Shrubs & Plants
29,675	Containerized Seedlings
1,114	Fruit Trees
572	Berries
640	Tree Marking Flags
259	Garlic Sticks
338	Tree Stakes
1,350	Tree Tubes
249	Root Dip Packets
13	Tree Planted Signs
268	Bark Protectors
198	Vinyl Tree Guards
50	Fencing Kits
156	Food Plot Seed Mixes

1,521 Pounds of Seed Planted



SOIL TESTS

We are happy to offer our landowners with an option for soil testing. We offer soil testing to our landowners through A&L Great Lakes Laboratories. You can bring in a soil sample from your lawn, garden, food plot, or agricultural field and have that sample sent in for analysis. Our staff will assess your test levels and provide you the proper recommendations based on your requested management goals for your property and/or project.

When samples are received they will be mailed out in bulk to the lab on a weekly basis. If you need immediate results, accommodations can be made. Once we send the tests out we will receive results within 5 to 7 days and then we will contact the landowner. This year we did 168 soil tests for our counties.



HUNTING ACCESS PROGRAM

The DNR's Hunting Access Program, or HAP, gives access to private land in Northern Michigan for Hunters to use. HAP is an effort to help assist with deer and disease management in the Bovine TB area. Our regular season HAP program offers 29 properties in Alpena and Montmorency Counties. All these properties have a diverse habitat and are nestled in an agriculture or forest landscape offering great potential for hunting. These properties offer either Youth & Apprentice Hunting, All Hunting, or Deer Only. You can see a listing of these properties available to hunt on our website at www.alpenamontcd.org/hunting-access-program.html.

If you're interested in signing up your property for HAP please contact us at 989.785.4083 or email our staff. We can evaluate your property and discuss the various hunting options available. An annual lease payment is available based on habitat and hunting options offered.

No matter where you are in Michigan, you can find public hunting land. There is an interactive map application called MI-HUNT that now works on mobile devices, contains the most up-to-date information to help you plan your next hunting trip, and includes both public hunting land, as well as private land open to the public for hunting. MI-HUNT is available at www.mcgi.state.mi.us/mi-hunt.



Conservation Technical Assistance Initiative—CTAI

Serving Northern Michigan Counties

The CTAI Program provides benefits to Michigan landowners by offering technicians who give conservation and engineering assistance to landowners, allowing them to receive federal cost share dollars for implementation of engineered conservation practices. The program splits the cost between the USDA-NRCS and the MDARD and employs 9 conservationists, 5 engineers, and 10 program assistants in conservation district offices state-wide. The environmental benefits gained through this program provide benefits to all of Michigan's citizens. The Program resulted in over \$16 million in federal cost share coming to Michigan as a result of their work and provided over 50 different types of conservation practices, with 960 conservation practices being installed in 2013. Prior to implementation of this program, a backlog of engineering technical assistance through the USDA-NRCS resulted in Michigan landowners being unable to receive the federal cost share dollars for installation of conservation practices. The positive result is less dollars going back to Washington for distribution to other states. This effort is funded via a 50/50 agreement between USDA NRCS and Fresh Water/Groundwater restricted funds.

The 9 CTAI Conservationists assist NRCS and Conservation Districts in implementing farm bill programs and practices that enable farmers to reduce identified environmental risks on their farms and become MAEAP verified. In addition, a portion of the Soil Cons time is dedicated to direct MAEAP assistance such as providing Risk Assessments to farmers.

The 5 CTAI Engineers and 10 CTAI Program Assistants work under the direction of the NRCS Area Engineer on Farm Bill practices that require engineering to be completed and provide programmatic support. Implementing these engineered practices can enable a farmer to become MAEAP verified. The positions are funded about 50/50 from USDA NRCS agreements and Fresh Water/Groundwater restricted funds.

The CTAI Conservationist, Kenny Parsons, has worked on a variety of projects during 2021. His involvement in the practices has included design, inventory and evaluation, surveying, pre-construction meetings, construction inspections, plan review, and conservation planning. Contributions were made to approximately 28 landowners with multiple projects, covering several practices standards within 22 counties. Constructed projects consisted of agri-chemical containment facilities, waste storage facilities, livestock watering systems, and various other conservation practices. Due to material prices, construction this FY was limited. In the next FY, current contracts will be constructed according to all NRCS specifications.



Funding is available to landowners for multiple conservation programs through USDA/NRCS, for more questions please contact your local NRCS office.

Forestry Assistance Program—FAP

Serving Alpena & Montmorency Counties

The mission of the Forestry Assistance Program (FAP) is to, "Support family forest owners in realizing the economic, social, and ecological sustainability of their forests." To enhance the missions of FAP and the Alpena-Montmorency Conservation District, Dr. Greg Corace:

- 1) Works with landowners to help them assess their land and assist in formulating their land ownership goals to make informed forest management decisions with those goals in mind;
- 2) Promotes the Qualified Forest Program;
- 3) Facilitates the interaction between consulting foresters and landowners;
- 4) Conducts outreach with an emphasis on contemporary principles of forest ecology and management as they relate to ecological sustainability.

During 2021, over 120 site visits were made to more than 30,000 acres of private land in Alpena and Montmorency Counties. Forms of outreach included an apple tree pruning workshop, an invasive plant management workshop, and the forwarding of various forest and wildlife-related webinars. Of special note in 2021 was the effort to provide outreach to address the disinformation surrounding the exotic, invasive gypsy moth. While gypsy moths do have relatively short-term impacts on some forests, especially oak and aspen-dominated forests, moth populations cycle from high to low abundances at different times in different areas. In many areas that did not receive any types of pesticide treatments this year, the forests were visually unimpacted, suggesting that pesticide treatments are not a major driver of populations. Rather than spray pesticides that potentially kill native butterflies and moths, recommendations centered around promoting forest diversity and complexity in these and other forests via ecologically based forest management, with considerations of landowners' goals, biodiversity, climate change, and other site-specific factors included. Outreach related to this and other issues of regional interest were included in monthly articles in the Alpena News and the Montmorency County Tribune.

Forestry Assistance Program Metrics for FY21:

120	Landowner Site Visits (29,453 acres)
24	Qualified Forest Program Enrollment Verifications (3,501 acres)
74	Private Sector Referrals (23,354 acres)
75	Public Sector Referrals (52,825 acres)
32	Management Plan Referrals (5,071 acres)
12	Timber Harvests (1,389 acres)
38	Forestry Outreach Events Conducted/Presented (2,161 attendees)
26	Media Occurrences



For more information feel free to contact Dr. Greg Corace at greg.corace@macd.org

Michigan Agriculture Environmental Assurance Program

Serving Alcona, Alpena, Montmorency & Presque Isle Counties

The Michigan agriculture Environmental Assurance Program (MAEAP) is an innovative, proactive program that helps farms of all sizes and all commodities voluntarily prevent or minimize agricultural pollution risks. MAEAP works with farmers to help identify and prevent environmental risks and comply with state and federal environmental regulations. Farmers who successfully complete the three phases of MAEAP system are rewarded by becoming verified in that system. MAEAP was developed by a coalition of agriculture producers, commodity groups, state and federal agencies, and conservation and environmental groups. MAEAP is not a government or regulatory program but rather a partnership effort. We are here to help and recognize farmers who reduce erosion and runoff from private land into public waters. MAEAP is 100% CONFIDENTIAL!

Northeast Michigan MAEAP Program for FY21:

Risk*A*Syst	61
Technical Assistance	84
Risk Reduction Practices	238
Verifications	12
Phase 1 Educational Events	1



Cost Share of \$3,000 was used to help farmers attain their MAEAP verification status. These cost share funds help with soil testing, spill kits, water sampling, backflow preventers, well closures, and MAEAP verification sign hanging kits. Other assistance is available for helping with the verification process.

For more information, feel free to contact Alleigh Pagels at alleigh.pagels@macd.org



DEER HABITAT IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM—DHIP

This year's program had 72 applicants and 40 of them received funding. The grant this year was increased and we were able to put \$90,000 of cost share into habitat projects in Alcona, Alpena, Montmorency, and Presque Isle Counties. Our participants this year had some extremely successful projects. We are working with these landowners to assist them in managing their properties to help mitigate agricultural and forest regeneration damage caused by Northern Michigan white-tailed deer. Our focus is native species and ecological sustainability. Funds are offered through the Michigan Department of Natural Resources (DNR) with Deer Range Improvement Program (DRIP) funds that are collected from every deer hunting license sold. This collaboration with our CD and the DNR helps manage deer habitat on private lands. In total, 1,383 project acres were worked on. The following was planted this year:

- 398 acres of annual and perennial food plots,
- 1,142 hard mast trees,
- 808 soft mast trees,
- 4,983 conifers.



As a requirement of the grant, hunters agree to fill out surveys of deer viewed and harvested while hunting, test all deer harvested for TB, and harvest more does than bucks during their hunting season. DHIP will be available in FY22. Applications and handbooks can be downloaded from our website www.alpenamontcd.org. Please contact our CD staff to discuss wildlife, conservation, or ecology questions that you may have.

ENHANCED WILDLIFE BIOSECURITY

The Enhanced Wildlife Biosecurity (EWB) zone currently has 104 verified active commercial herds. The Wildlife Risk Mitigation (WRM) grant through the Michigan Department of Agriculture and Rural Development (MDARD) allows for cost share for these farms to protect against Bovine TB with 8 foot fencing structures. In FY21, winter and summer verifications on these farms were completed to assure compliance with risk mitigation plans. Risk mitigation plans are required for these producers to protect their cattle from being exposed to deer and cattle interaction on their farms.

Cost share funds of \$74,695 were implemented for fencing in FY21 for a total of 10 producers. The fencing structures varied from complete parameter pasture fencing, smaller confined pasture fencing, or feed security fencing. Each producer was able to design their own projects with MDARD and AMCD to ensure that proper WRM standards were met.

The WRM grant has been amended with additional funding of \$300,000 for continued enactment of the program in Northern Michigan, and to extend the end date until September 30th, 2024. This will allow for more of the cattle and dairy industries to be protected in Northern Michigan from transmission of bovine TB between cattle and free ranging white-tailed deer.





Alpena-Montmorency Conservation District FY22 Upcoming Programs & Events

Deer Habitat Improvement Program Grants for
Landowners, Applications Available Early November
Webinars: Picking the right species for your property

2022 Spring Tree Sale Brochures Available in January
Order Deadline: March 25, 2022

Pickups: Friday, May 6, 2022 and Saturday, May 7, 2022

NEW—Native Plant Sale: May and June 2022

Food Plot Consultation
Soil Testing Recommendations
Grain Drill Rental
Hunting Access Program
Plat Book Sales

www.alpenamontcd.org

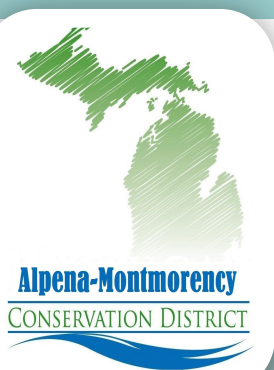
FY 2020-21 Alpena-Montmorency CD
Receipts and Disbursements

Receipts:	
Federal Grants	\$80,000
State Grants	\$399,189
Tree Sales	\$88,354
Charges for Services	\$74,428
Interest & Rents	\$6,715
Other Revenue	\$8,520
Total Receipts	\$657,206
Disbursements:	
District Operations	\$112,063
WRM	\$149,189
MAEAP	\$73,500
DHIP	\$100,000
HAP	\$6,000
Forestry	\$70,500
Tree Sales	\$58,851
CTAI	\$80,000
Total Disbursements	\$650,103

**These figures have not been audited*



All photos used in this publication are of areas in Alpena county and were taken and provided by Kristen Kroll, do not reproduce.



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Alpena, MI 49707

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A Big Thank You!!

Our CD works with many landowners, businesses, and individuals throughout all the programs that we offer. Our staff forges working relationships with some of these people and they quickly become adversaries for other projects that we take on. We would like to acknowledge these individuals that have gone above and beyond to be partners with our CD. **Dave & Iva Fletcher and Trent & Anne Sherman** are outstanding individuals that we would like to thank for being our Conservation Partners. The amount of time, effort, and donations they supply to us during all of our natural resource efforts show that they are a beacon of conservation. We acknowledge and truly appreciate their willingness to selflessly support the CD and their community!