Alpena-Montmorency Conservation District

ALPENA-MONTMORENCY CONSERVATION DISTRICT

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Meeting Minutes

Thursday, June 04, 2026 Monthly Meeting
(Alpena-Montmorency Conservation District Office)

Attendance: Board Members: Skarbek, Estlack, Lewis, Lizon, Brown (by phone); Associate Director Bill Houston; Staff: Dr. Greg Corace (FAP), Charlie Doan (CTAP), John Schmitz (DM), Emily Frechette (CA). Meeting was called to order at 5:02 PM, by Estlack, Vice Chair. Not present: Bryan Zabel (NRCS), Christine Roman (MDARD)

Additions to agenda:

Approval of Consent Agenda:
Meeting minutes (May, 2026)
Financial Report, Payment of AMCD bills

- Motion made by Lewis to approve the minutes and consent agenda; supported Lizon.

Roll Call vote: Ayes: Estlack, Skarbek, Lewis, Lizon. Nays: None. Motion carried.

- Motion made by Skarbek to approve the financial report; supported Lewis.

Roll Call vote: Ayes: Estlack, Skarbek, Lewis, Lizon. Nays: None. Motion carried.

Reports:

The Reports were handed out and reviewed by the Board prior to the meeting. There was no conversation on the MDARD partner report, the NRCS report or the Communications report.

Schmitz presents his report. We are almost all set with getting directors' MACD emails set up. The Five-Year Strategic Plan subcommittee has met. Budget info is in packet. Work with the DNR and MDARD for deer harvest program qualifications is pretty much finished. Schmitz will meet with Calvin next week re: certification needed & MDARD contacts. Once that is done, we can start promoting. DNR's Emily Sewell is now asking if we can help them get people into the program. Calvin needs to be certified and inspected. DNR will provide a freezer. Calvin will be compensated for the extra cost to run his generator. Pursuing a waiver can be a later discussion. Promoting non-lead bullets is discussed. Calvin will be able to get extra for collecting the deer heads for testing. He may hold the deer heads until TB testing is performed.

John presented to Patrick, the Executive Director of the Community Foundation of Northeast Michigan (CFNEM). Up to 5K from them for admin costs of this program. Over the 8-month period of time, it will be a fairly decent time commitment to keep all elements running. John will sit down with Amber and Shelby to become a part of the CISMA run by Huron Pines. Full FAP review for first 6 months is completed. John is helping Otsego CD's new manager plan the Region 5 meeting. Still working with Besser Museum, coming up with concepts for the lower level. Ordered the fall conifers a couple weeks ago. Also ordered spring conifers from Evergreen. Working with city on urban tree concerns. CTAP grant was finalized. Working directly with Ben Schram – FAP was going to online reporting system, but flaws necessitate going back to developers for a different solution. Regen Ag grant has been frozen at MDARD, and though we do not yet have a contract,

MDARD still continues to encourage farmers to participate. Schmitz is not paying out any money to the farmers until we have a contract.

Re: the MDARD partner report. ADA compliance is discussed. No discussion on NRCS report, Communications Report, or the FAP Report – which includes the draft for Qualified Foresters List Qualifications.

CTAP report – numbers are going up due to more site visits and getting backlogged. Worked 4 days straight on the now-competitive CTAP grant. Our farms in NE Michigan are a lot smaller; many farms downstate are over 1000 acres. There is a panel that makes the award decisions. They use a rubric to make their decision. We have one of the highest-risk areas. Watershed management plan is expected to pass within the next month. Discussion regarding past experiences of farmers in northeast Michigan with the cost-sharing programs.

District Business:

OLD:
Five-Year Strategic plan with Brown and Estlack. Business plan not due until 10/1.
Clean Sweep is suggested.

Woody plant sale final numbers are available – see report in packet. Discussion about incentive for large volume tree purchases by offering tree planter at no additional cost. Our FAP webpage contains info on team tree planters.

NEW

Two key pieces vital to increase to Communications Associate hours are not yet in place. Current hours are 15 per week. As deer harvest program starts taking shape, as regen ag grant hopefully unfreezes, and the Wildlife Risk Mitigation grant, we'll have more money moving forward. In budget the hours are brought up to 25 per week; with those two key pieces in place, CA hours could go up to 30 per week. These items fall outside the work agreement. We may have more information by the July meeting. Position title could change for FY2027 to reflect the duties of this role more accurately. Discussion regarding future 30 hours of work per week. For July meeting we will have an updated work agreement.

Budget isn't due until September; subcommittee should wait until after we get answers in July to meet re: FY2027 budget.

TASKS TO BE COMPLETED:

- Meet with Tree Sale Sub-Committee to set final fall 2026 and spring 2027 lists
- Quarterly Reports for MDARD/DNR Grants
- Meet with Deer Harvest Sub-Committee to discuss next steps
- Meet with Budget Sub-Committee to work on preliminary FY27 Budget
- Meet with Five Year Plan Sub-Committee to Develop FY27 Business Plan
- Grant Submission to Community Foundation of NE Michigan- Deer Harvesting/Processing Admin (July)
- Assist with final plans for Region 5 Summer Conference- The Date is not set at this point

Next Board Meeting is **Thursday, July 9th at 5:00 p.m. at Brush Creek Mill.**

Motion to adjourn was made by Estlack at 6:35 p.m. seconded Lewis.

John Schmitz, District Manager

Doug Brown, Board Chair
Approved / Amended / Disapproved