

ANTRIM
CONSERVATION DISTRICT

ANNUAL
REPORT

2019 ISSUE



MISSION-BASED IMPACT

in Antrim County



32,000 TREES PLANTED
through the annual
Tree Sale



64,777 LBS OF
HAZARDOUS WASTE
properly disposed



5 FARMS ASSISTED in
produce safety



20 GUIDED HIKES on
county owned trails



236 SOIL EROSION
PERMITS issued and
inspected



48 ACRES treated for
invasive plant species



12 PUBLIC
PRESENTATIONS with
183 ADULT ATTENDEES



15 MAEAP VERIFICATIONS
completed



\$112,158 TOTAL REVENUES
generated through forest
management on county
forests



2 MILLION LBS. of
waste recycled

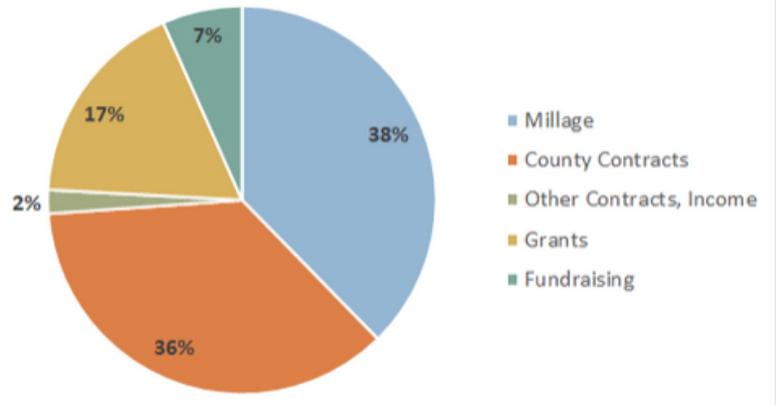
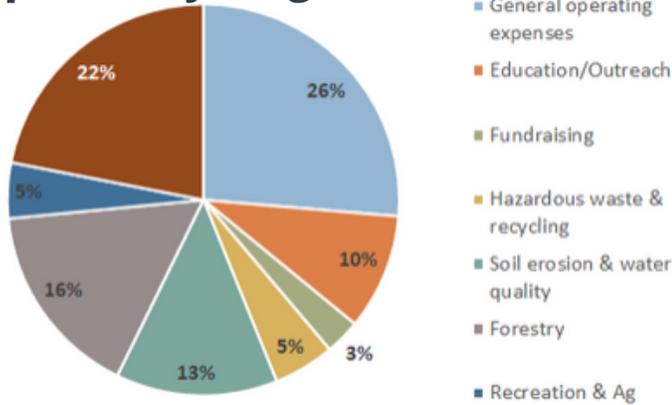
The mission of Antrim Conservation District is to *promote the exploration and conservation of Antrim County's natural resources.*

For more information, visit antrimcd.com, call (231)533-8363, or visit our office at 4820 Stover Rd. in Bellaire.

OUR DOLLARS AT WORK

2019 FINANCIAL REPORT

Expenses by Program



Revenue Sources

Millage

In 2016, residents of Antrim County passed a millage of one-tenth (1/10) of one (1) mill for a period of four years to support the work of Antrim Conservation District. The millage has been used by the District to cover the cost of administering and furthering conservation programs within the county, including forestry, soil erosion and water quality, outreach and education, and special projects. In 2020, ACD intends to use millage money on a variety of special projects including the Healthy Lakes Landscaping Initiative, K-12 education programs, agriculture programs, AmeriCorps, Wetzel Lake improvements, and trail maintenance.

Wetzel Lake

In 2007, the State of Michigan granted a surface use lease on 77 acres to Antrim County for the development of a day use park at Wetzel Lake. Wetzel Lake is a small inland lake located in Mancelona Township and has been a heavily used as a swimming and picnic area. Upgrades are proposed for the park in 2020. These upgrades include; new picnic area, improving the parking and beach access, and the design and installation of walking trails. The total project cost of the upgrades is estimated at \$ 30,000. Millage funding has been dedicated, and public donations and grant monies are currently being sought to offset the project costs.

Healthy Lakes Landscaping

The Antrim Conservation District has formalized an initiative to protect Antrim County's tax base by addressing the damaging effects of stormwater runoff. Stormwater is precipitation and snow melt that flows across the land, picking up dirt, petroleum products, fertilizers and other pollutants that drain into and contaminate our rivers, lakes, streams and wetlands. ACD will implement a three-pronged approach: education of landowners on the impacts of polluted stormwater on the Chain of Lakes, installation of landscaping features that capture, filter, and clean stormwater and promotion of effective landscapes through a county-wide tour. We are committing \$5000 of the ACD's tree sale revenue as cost-share-seed money, \$5000 of the millage for advertising and promotion, and \$6000 of millage money for an AmeriCorps member dedicated to promoting the program.

How to Give

ACD uses donor funding for a variety of projects, including those outlined above. To give, call us at (231)533-8363 or email antrimcd@macd.org, and let us know if you would like to give to a special project. You can also donate online at antrimcd.com.



FORESTRY

COUNTY FOREST LAND ACTIVITIES

It was a lucrative year for selling timber. **Total revenues of \$112,159** to the County were generated through forest management activities taking place on County Forest Lands. Activities included: inventories, property line maintenance, tree marking, marketing through a competitive bid process or negotiated sales, harvest monitoring, contract administration and enforcement. Some of these **5 timber harvest projects** included:

Alba Road Hardwood Sale

- Harvested **\$31,200** of mixed hardwood products
- **150 trees - 33,318 board feet** of lumber products

A select hardwood thinning was conducted on the 40 acres of County owned property at the corner of M66 and the Alba Highway. Here trees were individually selected for harvest by the forester. The selected trees were then sold through a competitive bidding process. Silverleaf Sawmill was the successful bidder.

Simpson Road Pine Sale - Cedar River - Completed

- Harvested **\$23,240** of red pine products
- **400 cords** mixed products

The thinning of several pine plantations owned by the county occurred in 2019. Individual trees were selected for harvest by the forester then sold through a competitive bidding process. Biewer Lumber Inc. was the successful bidder.

Other Activities

Activities on County Forest Lands are not limited to selling standing trees. Property maintenance in 2019 included: hazard tree removals at Antrim Creek, Glacial Hills, Willow Day park, Mohrmann Natural Area, and Cedar River; bridge and trail maintenance at Cedar River and Mohrmann Natural Area; parking lot construction at Cedar River; road repair, gates and access at Pete Wilks Memorial Forest, Dickerson Road Forest Area, and Lakes of the North.

PRIVATE LAND ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

The Antrim Conservation District Forester provides technical assistance to private landowners, schools, local units of government and other organizations. Assistance offered through the private lands assistance program include: forest management, tree planting, wildlife habitat, hazard tree and back yard tree evaluations, rules and regulatory review, and referrals to the private sector.

- This year **490 private landowners, governmental, groups or organizations** received conservation advice and or on-the-ground assistance through the Forestry Assistance Program (FAP).

TREE SALE

32,000 trees were sold and planted during the Annual Tree Sale. Three new varieties of apple trees were offered for sale and were quickly bought up. 2020 spring tree sale ordering will be available in early January.



WATER QUALITY

Soil Erosion Control

The State of Michigan has delegated the responsibility of soil erosion control and permitting to county government. Antrim County has delegated that responsibility to the Antrim Conservation District (ACD). Anyone disturbing over 225sqft of soil within 500' of a river, lake or stream or if they are disturbing more than an acre of soil is required to obtain a soil erosion control permit.

There were **123 open permits** carried over from 2018, **236 new permits** in 2019 and there will be about 150 permits (open construction projects) that will be carried over into 2020. Permits are monitored over the course of construction. The frequency at which sites are inspected is determined by their impact to the environment; they are given a low, medium or high priority and are inspected as defined.



Healthy Lakes Landscaping and Water Quality

Water quality and natural resource protection is critical to protecting Antrim County's residents, the recreational tourism industry, agriculture, and the county's tax base. ACD has formalized a new water quality initiative, Healthy Lakes Landscaping, to help riparian landowners understand their responsibility in protecting waterways and see how easy protection can be done. The Healthy Lakes Landscaping Initiative focuses on capturing stormwater runoff in residential landscaping so it can be filtered before being released into the lake. Cleaning stormwater before it reaches the water prevents algae growth, keeps lakes cleaner for water recreation, protects fish and fish habitat, protects water quality and ultimately, protects property values.

ACD will be bringing on an AmeriCorps member to focus on the Healthy Lakes Landscaping Initiative with a strong emphasis on marketing the program. The AmeriCorps member and soil erosion officer will calculate stormwater runoff and discuss different landscaping measures to capture and clean stormwater runoff to protect the lakes. We will be working with soil erosion permit holders and any interested party to implement Healthy Lakes Landscaping.

EDUCATION

Lancer Leap

ACD Staff assisted Mr. Favior's Lancer Leap Class at the Ellsworth Community School during May and June. The District taught **20 students** about conservation districts, invasive species, forestry, soil erosion, water quality, and the group constructed a rain garden in the elementary school parking lot.

Conservation Kids Camp

The **FREE 4-day long camp** at the ACD office hosted **14 children** ages 6-11. Each day focused on one of the unique program areas of the Conservation District including invasive species, water quality and soil erosion, forestry, and recycling. Children made homemade paper, explored macroinvertebrates in Craven Pond, participated in an invasive species simulation, created a bleach leaf shirt, and went hiking every day, even in the rain!

Essay Contest

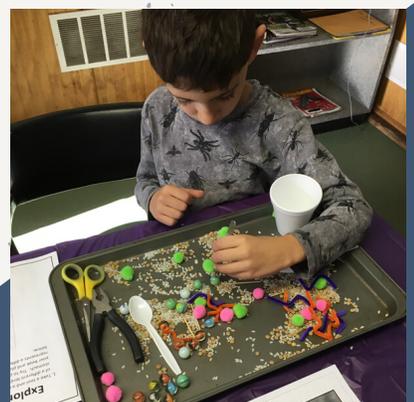
Nearly **150 Antrim County students in grades 7-12** received presentations in their classroom this fall about conservation issues facing Antrim County. Students were then invited to write about solutions to these problems in the Annual Essay contest. Around **40 students wrote essays** about solutions to invasive species, flooding, and dumping of trash at recycling sites. The students of the winning essays will be awarded a monetary prize due to the generous donation of a District supporter matching District dollars.

AmeriCorps

ACD continues to host a Huron Pines AmeriCorps member, and are incredibly grateful for all the good work they do. AmeriCorps member, Emma, helped with much of the education programming this year, led the effort on volunteer recruitment, and created a county trails and recycling guide. Thank you, Emma!

Other Education Projects and Events

Public Presentations (at libraries, garden clubs, etc.), Conservation Conversations, Winter Family Fun Day, Petoskey Stone Festival 5k, Garlic Mustard Pulls, Cedar River Run/Hike + Yoga, Farmer's Markets, Guided Hikes, Food Plot Workshops, and Soil Health Field Day.



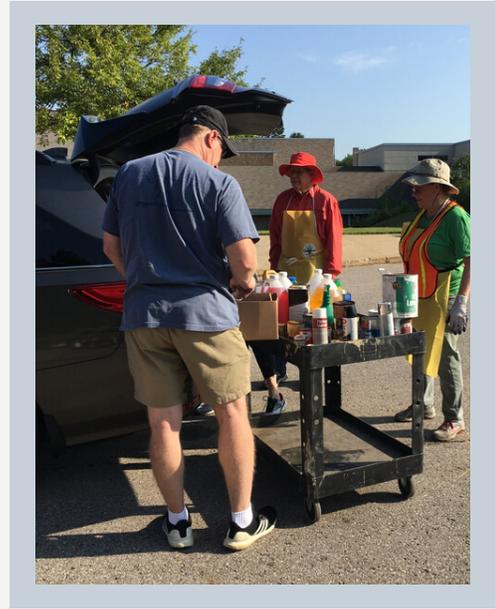
RECYCLING & HAZARDOUS WASTE

Household Hazardous Waste

The number of HOUSEHOLDS DOUBLED that participated in the three Household Hazardous Waste Drop-off events. A total of **636 households participated** - an increase of 314 households.

- Collected **64,777 lbs.** or 32.4 tons of household hazardous waste (doubling the weight collected)
- **\$13,156** was generated through grants and participant fees to offset the cost of the events to Antrim County taxpayers
- The net cost of the event was **\$55,000**
- Volunteers gave **85 hours** to help staff the events

Antrim Conservation District has also received a \$10,000 grant to provide Antrim County residents a place to recycle electronics year-round! This program will begin in 2020 with details available on our website.



Recycling Drop-off Services

There are **eight recycling drop-off sites** available throughout Antrim County. All sites are monitored for trash, vandalism and overflows by Conservation District staff twice or more per week.

- Over **1000 tons of material** were recycled
- Sites include: Alden, Bellaire, Central Lake, Elk Rapids, Ellsworth, Kewadin, Mancelona, and Star Township.
- A user-friendly Recycling Guide was developed that explains what can and cannot be recycled at the drop-off sites and where items that are not recyclable can be taken
- June – August were the busiest months
- Bellaire and Elk Rapids were the busiest sites
- ACD raised awareness about contamination and littering issues



AGRICULTURE

Winter Farmer & Artisan Market

The Bellaire Winter Farmer & Artisan Market began after Antrim Conservation District asked area farmers what they needed. Their response was an indoor place to sell their wares after the summer market closed. ACD now hosts local farmers and artisans in its community room at 4820 Stover Rd. in Bellaire, on Fridays from 9 a.m. to noon. **Twelve farmers and artisans** are signed up to offer products such as baked goods, chicken and duck eggs, frozen beef, chicken, fish, shrimp, pork, microgreens, tinctures, salves, syrups, soaps, and hand-crafted items such as baskets, wood crafts, wool mittens, greeting cards and more! The market will be closed on November 29 and December 27, 2019 and will run through May 22, 2020 as long as there is sufficient interest from vendors and customers.



Produce Safety

The Michigan On-Farm Produce Safety Program for Northwest Michigan provides assistance to fresh produce growers who have to be compliant with the Food Safety Modernization Act (FSMA) Produce Safety Rule or are working to optimize produce safety practices and procedures on their farm. Produce Safety Technicians are located throughout the state to provide technical and educational assistance to growers to raise awareness and offer resources to all things produce safety.



The Food Safety Modernization Act (FSMA) Produce Safety Rule regulatory inspections started in the State this summer. Regulatory inspections for this year are focusing on ‘Large Farms’ as defined by the rule. Following Large farms, respectively ‘Small’, and ‘Very Small’ inspections will follow. Technicians spread the word of assistance in 2019, determined to reach growers prior to their inspections to review practices and prepare for any questions they may have. It is important to note that the Michigan On-Farm Produce Safety Program serves not only covered growers but growers of all sizes to reach high produce safety standards on the farm across the board in the state.

Assessments & Consultations

In 2019, the Michigan On-Farm Produce Safety Program in Northwest Michigan reached over 260 growers in Manistee, Benzie, Grand Traverse, Leelanau and Antrim counties with information and resources regarding Produce Safety. **Antrim County had 5 farms that underwent an assessment and/or made changes to their processes and procedures on their farms.** In the five-county region, 12 farms participated in a Produce Safety Risk Assessment, and two were awarded Certificates from the State for completing all necessary requirements of the assessment and developing Produce Safety Plans. Additionally, two farms completed an On-Farm Readiness Review.

The 2019 season included 33 farms in the region that inquired about improving produce safety practices in their operation and multiple visits to discuss produce safety on the farm. Cheers to continued proactive approaches towards safe food in Antrim County and the Northwest growing region. A special thanks to all farms that provide fresh, nutritious, local produce that is safe for the eating!

To stay up-to date with Produce Safety in the area visit <https://www.manisteed2.org/produce-safety.html> or contact Michelle Jacokes, Produce Safety Technician at michelle.jacokes@macd.org or (231)889-9666.

MAEAP (Michigan Agriculture Environmental Assurance Program)

2019 was a successful year for the Michigan Agriculture Environmental Assurance Program (MAEAP) in Antrim County. MAEAP Technician for Antrim and Grand Traverse Counties, Lauren Silver, worked with over 40 farms in these counties to assist them with environmental risk prevention and implementing conservation practices. In Antrim County, **15 MAEAP verifications** were completed, **18 risk assessments** conducted, and **36 farm visits completed**. Over **\$2,000 in cost-share money** was distributed to Antrim County growers to assist in implementing on-farm conservation practices and projects such as new secondary containment pads, replacing old fuel tanks, water and soil testing, backflow prevention, compost management, and other practices. A grand total of 37 verifications were achieved for Lauren's service area exceed the FY19 goal of 29. This year the Antrim/Grand Traverse County MAEAP Grant was the 10th highest performing grant out of 42 in the state.

Education & Outreach

In partnership with the Benzie/Leelanau MAEAP technician, Lauren participated in several conferences and field days throughout the year and hosted Phase 1 Educational Sessions at these events. These included the NWTMI Orchard and Vineyard Show, Great Lakes Fruit, Vegetable, & Farm Market Expo, Great Lakes Hop & Barley Conference, Christmas Tree Conference, Northern Michigan Small Farms Conference, Tree Fruit Management School, the Forest, Wetland, and Habitat Field Day, and local Integrated Pest Management meetings, among others, which provided pertinent information to hundreds of farmers about best management practices and compliance with environmental standards.

Several other presentations were held to inform various audiences from around the state about water resource protections and innovative practices implemented on farms to protect natural resources. These included presenting to attendees of the Freshwater Summit, the Michigan Farm Bureau Natural and Environmental Resources Advisory Committee, and science educators of the Inland Seas Field Course. Lauren has continued to serve on the Freshwater Roundtable as the District representative as well as on the Food and Farming Network this past year and looks forward to continuing to do so in the coming year to help engage with partners on addressing issues within both the natural resource sector as well as food and farming systems. Lauren is looking forward to a successful next year with continual improvements to the program's implementation in Antrim and Grand Traverse Counties.





INVASIVE SPECIES

CAKE CISMA (Charlevoix, Antrim, Kalkaska and Emmet Cooperative Invasive Species Management Area)

The CAKE CISMA is the Charlevoix, Antrim, Kalkaska and Emmet Cooperative Invasive Species Management Area. Formed in 2015 by local organizations, agencies and conservancies, its mission is to protect the natural resources, economy, and human health in Northern Lower Michigan through collaborative outreach and management of invasive species. The CAKE CISMA meets its mission by providing public education and outreach, cost-shared control efforts through its strike team, and working to preserve high quality natural areas throughout its service area. The CISMA obtains funding through private, federal, and state grants, such as the Michigan Invasive Species Grant Program. CAKE CISMA partners include Antrim Conservation District, Emmet Conservation District, Grand Traverse Regional Land Conservancy, Kalkaska Conservation District, Little Traverse Conservancy, Little Traverse Bay Band of Odawa Indians, Tip of the Mitt Watershed Council, and the Walloon Lake Association and Conservancy.

Outreach and Education

The CAKE CISMA hosted and participated in over **15 education and outreach events** in its service area over the past year. The program coordinator presented and led activities for both the public and special groups on invasive species identification and management, including Grass River Natural Area, Paddle Stewards and Ellsworth Public School. The program coordinator hosted a mobile boat-washing unit for the annual Paddle Antrim Festival, assisted Antrim Conservation District with two garlic mustard pulls at Glacial Hills Natural Area, and led an invasive species field trip to Antrim Creek Natural area for participants in the Michigan Association of Conservation Districts Fall Convention.

Treatments and Cost-Sharing

The CAKE CISMA offers affordable, cost-shared treatment to private landowners, land conservancies and local municipalities. Highly targeted species include invasive knotweed, black-swallow wort, and phragmites. Within the entire CAKE CISMA service area, the strike team has **surveyed over 400 acres in 2019**, and treated over **100 acres for invasive plant species**. Of those acres treated in 2019, **48 acres** were in Antrim County.



Hemlock Woolly Adelgid

During winter, the CAKE CISMA is actively surveying public and private properties for hemlock woolly adelgid (HWA), a small invasive insect that can cause hemlock mortality in just 4 to 10 years. This pest is believed to be spreading primarily along the lakeshore. In answer to this threat, the CAKE CISMA is joining the 500 mile long network along Lake Michigan to detect HWA before it becomes established in the region, thanks to a grant facilitated by The Nature Conservancy. To request a free survey, contact the CAKE CISMA at 231-533-8363 ext. 5, or cakeisst@gmail.com.

2019 DONORS & VOLUNTEERS

Donors

Thank you to our generous donors!

Abdeen Jabara
Josh & Krissa Wilson
Friends of Cedar River Watershed c/o Larry Rochon
Christine Lorenger
Kenneth & Kathy Masck

Volunteers

Thank you to all of our volunteers who helped us with garlic mustard pulls, our tree sale, education events, rain garden maintenance, and our household hazardous waste days!

Sue Thomas
Linda Atkins
John Gohlke
Abigail Boyd
Joel Fredette
Bob Holtzmann
Sue Haadsma-Svensson
Kjell Svenson
Ricky Pina
Kelly Ferguson
Dale DeKraker
Melissa Zelenak
Seth Gernot
Mary Potter
Joan Stine

Phil Drick
Maureen Frye
Cookie Carrick
Ernie Carrick
Anndy Whipple
Sarah Juntune
Dorothy Clore
Connie Garcia
Betty Sell
Neil Boyer
Jesse Dollaway
Joe Lange
Doug Bedell
Kegan Gill

ACD Board

We would like to give a special thank you to our district board, who volunteer their time to guide the Conservation District.

Joe Pomerville
Mary Schoenherr
Randy Johnson
Libby Hiser
Ray Ludwa

Antrim Conservation District
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SPOTLIGHT SUPPORTERS



Dale DeKraker

Dale DeKraker is Antrim Conservation District's **volunteer of the year** for all the time he has donated to the District to help with the annual household hazardous waste collection events. Dale retired from the Michigan Department of Environmental Quality after 32 years initially working as a water quality analyst then finishing out his career working in their hazardous waste management program until 2008. His experience with the State has been invaluable in assisting the District to manage and grow the HHW program for Antrim County. We have been able to count on Dale to work and monitor the hazardous waste events every year, almost every event, since the program started.

Dale and his wife Sue moved to the Upper Chain in 2011 and have always had an interest in conservation. They worked with Tip of the Mitt Watershed council to install and maintain a natural shoreline protection project, protecting their shoreline with native plants and small rock. Their shoreline is beautiful, functional and a fine example of how a low-medium energy shoreline should be protected to benefit the lake, their neighbors, and their property. Dale and Sue not only are great supporters of the Conservation District, but now they are also great friends.

Abdeen Jabara

Abdeen Jabara has been a long-time supporter of the Antrim Conservation District. Born and raised in Mancelona, Abdeen has always had a deep and abiding love for this area – especially the Cedar River. Abdeen was a founding member of the Friends of the Cedar River after a catastrophic construction project failure dumped tons of sediment into the Cedar River. He and the Friends were responsible for obtaining a financial settlement from the violator that was used to implement restoration practices along the river.



Abdeen has continued to work tirelessly to draw attention to and protect the Cedar River. He donated a beaver mount that we have in our office, and he has donated financially to Antrim Conservation District projects. With Abdeen's generous contributions, we have been able to host the Conservation Essay program with area schools for the last two years. This year students were presented information on various natural resource related topics and then were asked to write an essay describing the issue and offer creative solutions to solve the problem. The winning students were given a financial award for their efforts. Abdeen has also provided financial support to create trails and bridges in the newly donated Del Mason Cedar River parcel. He also donated a weekend stay at one of his cabins on the Cedar River for a fundraiser hosted by the District.

Abdeen, we thank you for your dedication to the Cedar River and Antrim County's natural resources. Oh, and thank you for the baklava at Christmas!



Art Curtis

Art is a new supporter of the Antrim Conservation District. His interest in the District began with participation in the guided hikes we started this year. He hiked with us at the Warner Creek Pathway hike and has come to trail Tuesday almost every week since. These hikes get Art out in the outdoors for exercise and fresh air every week, and we love having him with us. He's knowledgeable about the flora and fauna in the region and we learn as much from him as he does from us. Before he retired, Art worked in marketing and photography and has an extensive background working for NGOs and nonprofits. He shares his incredible knowledge and ideas on programming, marketing and promotion to help us expand the District's impact to the community. Not only has the Conservation District gained a strong supporter in Art, but we have developed a new friendship.