



Antrim Conservation District Annual Report

Submitted by:

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Executive Summary:

Antrim Conservation District, had a productive year in 2016. The District houses several programs that serve the county citizens and the environment. These programs include Soil Erosion, Forestry, CAKE CISMA, and Household Hazardous Waste. All programs saw an increase in use by county residents as well as grew in their protection of the County Ecosystems.

Highlights from 2016:

1. Millage proposal was approved by the County Commissioners and was passed by county voting.
2. Household Hazardous Waste days netted 21,341 pounds of waste.
3. CAKE CISMA cost shared invasive species treatment in Antrim County with 5+ private homes and 4+ municipalities (net savings to cost share partners of over \$3,000)
4. Forestry assessed 1801 acres of private and public lands, timbered over 200 acres of county land at a revenue of \$88,512.89 to the county
5. Soil Erosion officer issued 234 permits netting \$22,590 in revenue to the county.

Financial Position:

Antrim Conservation District had a GAAS audit (Generally Accepted Auditing Standards) conducted for fiscal year 2016 which ended September 30th 2016. The District had a net assets increase of just over \$32,000. The District brought in \$92,172 in grant funds which was created one job (CAKE CISMA Coordinator) and allowed for the treatment of invasive species in CAKEs four county service area. The district also increased revenue by \$9,969 by updating the 2012 Plat book to 2016 owner information and offering it for sale.

The county has increased its allocation to the Conservation District in 2017 to fill in the gap between when the millage tax will be collected and distributed to the district. The Conservation District will hopefully continue to receive county allocations for the running of the Forestry Program and Soil Erosion program. The funds generated from these two programs (timber sales and permit fees) go directly to the county.

**Antrim Conservation District Statement of Revenues, Expenditures and Changes in Fund
Balance Year ended September 30, 2016**

Revenues	
County Allocation	\$161,571
Local/State/Federal Grants	\$92,172
Timber and Reforestation	\$14,783
Plat Book Sales/Adv. Income	\$9,969
Fees for Service	\$2,655
Donations	\$1,906
Interest Income	\$132
Miscellaneous	\$4,093
Total Revenues	\$287,281
Expenditures	
Wages	\$124,438
Payroll Taxes and Fringe Benefits	\$41,525
CAKE – Operational Expenses	\$36,032
Trees/Reforestation Expense	\$12,141
Vehicle Expense/Mileage	\$8,085
Utilities	\$6,512
Plat Book Expense	\$2,751
Office Supplies/Postage	\$4,702
Business Insurance	\$3,061
Soil – Fee for Service	\$2,510
Project Costs	\$2,291
Household Hazardous Waste	\$1,256
Outreach	\$2,636
Annual Meeting	\$238
Building Supplies	\$156
Miscellaneous	\$2,126
Total Expenditures	\$250,460
Excess (Deficiency) of Revenues over Expenditures	\$36,821
Fund Balance - Beginning of Year	\$142,421
Fund Balance – End of Year	\$179,242

Programs:

The Antrim Conservation District houses several programs for the county. The Forestry Program, Soil Erosion Program, Household Hazardous Waste, and the Conservation Tree Sale have been mainstays of the Conservation District. In 2015 the District added the CAKE CISMA to programs housed at ACD.

ANTRIM COUNTY FORESTRY REPORT

YEAR END REVIEW - 2016

The forestry program in Antrim County continues to provide technical services to county parks, natural areas, public forest lands, private landowners, groups, schools and non-profit organizations. This year-end report summarizes the major activities taking place within the forestry program.

NATURAL AREAS

The County owns and is responsible for the management of five (5) designated natural areas, Antrim Creek, Grass River, the Cedar River, Glacial Hills, and the newly named Mohrmann Natural Area.

The Forester is called upon to direct forest management, assist with maintenance issues and provide general assistance to boards, committees and non- profits groups who are using county lands for recreation and or educational purposes.

GRASS RIVER

As part of the planning process the Grass River Board appointed a conservation committee to oversee the writing of and the implementation of a management plan for the natural resources within the Grass River Natural Area. The forester has been a participating member in the planning process through this committee.

CEDAR RIVER

The Antrim Conservation District is responsible for the management and maintenance of this natural area. The Cedar River Natural Area contains 226 acres of forest and recreational acres along the Cedar River. The Cedar River Natural Area is jointly owned by the Village of Bellaire and Antrim County.

The forester manages forest, wildlife, fisheries, trail activities and general public usage within the Natural Area.

The 10 K run held in conjunction with the Antrim County Fair is becoming more popular. The forester assists the Fair with trail preparation each year.

Cedar River Trails



Trail Maintenance is a constant in this Natural Area. There are 3 miles of educational trails within the natural area. The trails are used year round for hiking, cross-county skiing and snow shoeing opportunities.

This year bridge repair was a priority within the natural area. The Ritt Family donated funds to rebuild and replace several bridges within the natural area. This year a bridge was dedicated to Phillip Ritt a long time user and supporter of the Natural Area.



Fisheries

The Cedar River itself is a blue ribbon trout stream. This year the Conservation District conducted a fundraiser to stock trout in the river system. 1000 legal sized rainbow trout were stocked. Fisherman where asked to report their catch to the conservation district.



In addition to fish stocking, a fish habitat improvements project was conducted on the river corridor this year. This consisted of the maintenance of existing fish structures and adding and strategically moving woody debris aimed at providing additional fish habitat.



Forests and Wildlife

Forest and wildlife habitat restoration within the Cedar River Natural Area this year was aimed at improving deer yarding habitats, stream corridor restoration and invasive species control.

2000 white pine, spruce and white cedar seedlings were planted within the Natural Area.

Non-commercial aspen cutting was done to stimulate aspen regeneration throughout the Natural Area. This is done to improve wildlife habitat.



GLACIAL HILLS

The Glacial Hills Natural Area is part of a larger county owned forest area.

This year the forester continued the removal of trees impacted by the emerald ash borer and beech bark disease. A commercial salvage harvest was conducted on 100 acres of the natural area east of Vandermark road. The focus was on reducing tree liabilities for recreational users and utilizing infected trees for wood products.

Glacial Hills and the adjoining Kirkpatrick Forest area contains the Glacial Hills Pathway. Forestry and hazard tree management continues to be addressed within the natural area and other county forest lands.



MOHRMANN NATRUAL AREA

Formally known as Mohrmann Park, the Antrim County Commissioners formally renamed the park area as the Mohrmann Natural Area dedicated to the Mohrmann family.

This Natural Area contains several short loops used for walking and hiking. This year the forester repaired bridges within the Natural Area and maintained the existing walking trails.



ANTRIM CREEK

Antrim Creek is a 160 acre natural area along Lake Michigan in Banks Township. An appointed local board is responsible for oversight of the Natural Area.

Forestry activities at the Antrim Creek Natural Area are primarily tree maintenance issues. The forester routinely removed trees from the trails and boardwalk areas. This year dead ash trees were removed from the access road and trails.

PARKS

The forester is called upon to assist with the maintenance of park properties owned by the County. County Parks that receive treatments and recommendations from the forester included; Barnes Park, Elk Rapids Day Park, Willow Day Park and the Wetzel Lake Day Park.

In addition to County Owned Parks, the forester assists local units of government with tree issues within these local community parks. This year the forester assisted the Village of Bellaire with a tree removal and replacement project at Craven Park.

ANTRIM COUNTY FOREST LANDS

In addition to the Natural Areas and designated Parklands, the County owns 3,000 +/- acres of lands dedicated as forest land. These acres are managed for multiple use recreational activities, forest product production, wildlife habitats, as well as ecological and open space protection. County lands are also used for environmental educational activities administered by the Conservation District. An array of activities occurred on these parcels this year.

Forestry Revenues

One of the primary benefits of County owned forest land is its ability to generate revenues through sustainable forestry practices. Revenues generated from timber harvesting are used to maintain county forests. Forestry revenues are also used as grant matching funds, park and natural area projects and maintenance, legal reviews and opinions.

Revenues from timber harvesting in 2016 – 2017 are \$ 88,512.89.

Hawk Lake East of Mancelona

The Hawk Lake parcel is a 160 acre parcel of County owned forest land East of Mancelona. In 2016 a commercial harvest was prepared for the parcel. The harvest consisted of the removal of 25 acres of red pine and the thinning of selected hardwood.

Harvesting began on the property in March of 2017 and should be completed by the end of April. The harvest will be followed up with a tree planting scheduled for the spring of 2018.



Glacial Hills west of Bellaire

The Glacial Hills Parcel is part of a larger forest land area owned by Antrim County. The Glacial Hills Natural Area and the contiguous Walter Kirpatrick forest are actively managed County forest. Forest management is aimed at producing higher valued forest products, wildlife habitats and reducing tree liabilities for recreational users.

This year 2016 – 2017 a 100 acres received forestry treatments that focused on the removal of dead and declining ash and beech.



Prince Property near Central Lake

The prince property was donated to the County in 2015. It is a 20 acres parcel. Originally landlocked, the county purchased an easement to the property this year. A salvage cutting project was conducted on the parcel that focused on removing dead and declining beech and ash trees. The harvest was done in conjunction with adjoining property owners.

Private Land Assistance

Through the forestry program the conservation district is able to provide technical assistance to private landowners within Antrim County. Technical assistance includes wildlife habitat management, forest management, tree planting, insect and disease, management planning, referrals to private sector, referrals to governmental sectors and other conservation issues

Private Assists

Contacting the forester – 330

Onsite assistance – 71

On sight acreage – 1801

Non Profits assists

Three Lakes – Fisheries improvement project deploying fish structures.

Antrim County Fair – Tree cleanup tree removal

Bellaire Garden club – Insect and disease

Lyons Club – Seminar on forestry

Schools

Central Lake – Access and forest management planning.

Bellaire – School athletic trail design and construction.

Ellsworth – Management planning – parcel review.

State Government

HAP – Hunter Access Grant – administering the hunter access program in cooperation with the MDNR and The MDA

Providing technical assistance, sign up information and property maintenance.

BEAVER ISLAND - Radio spot, inspecting island forest conducted forestry seminar on the island.

Antrim County Soil Erosion Report

Year End Review - 2016

Permits Issued: **234**

Revenue generated: **\$22,590**

Fee Schedule increased for 2016: **\$4,043 achieved increase**

Permit issuance and follow-up procedures: Initial visit – take before picture, depending on magnitude of project: low priority permits minimum of 3 visits, medium priority permits minimum of 3 visits + after every major rain event, high priority permits minimum of monthly visits + after every major rain event; pictures taken at every site visit and final stabilization to go into file. Files are retained for five years unless it was a controversial permit – then saved indefinitely.

Community Outreach/Education



In-field contacts/education:	140
Phone contacts: (times)	1000 (spring and summer are the busiest phone times)
Website/Facebook posts:	5
Presentations:	
Soil Erosion Control Work Shop	2 Review of soil erosion control law and ordinance; 20 participants at each meeting: Torch Lake Township Hall and Forest Home Township Hall
Bellaire High School	1 Storm Water and Functional Landscaping
Petoskey Stone Festival	1 Hosted booth: invasive species, water quality, functional landscaping, overall District offerings
Rotary of Bellaire	1 Overview of Conservation District
AmeriCorps	Mentored AmeriCorps Member; reviewed program for 2017 Hosted elective event for Huron Pines' AmeriCorps Members-storm water/functional landscaping
Bellaire Outdoor Women	Wildflower walk – Glacial Hills
Lakes of the North	Connecting LON trails with North Country Trail

Antrim Conservation District	Open House, Annual Meeting, assistance with tree sale
Elk Rapids Garden Club	Invasives vs Natives
6 Mile Lake Association	Natural Shorelines/Soil Erosion Requirements
Barker Creek	Soil Erosion and Functional Landscaping
Paddle Antrim Fall Event	1 Hosted District Booth: soil erosion, invasives, functional landscaping, and District Offerings

Soil Erosion Program Work



Working with Pete Garwood to develop violation/fine policy
 Dealt with major storm events-only getting worse
 Natural Rivers Review Board
 234 permits
 Working to increase property owners' awareness of storm water management
 Met with Bryan Smith and Representative Cole for State Funding for counties' soil erosion control programs.

Committee Involvement



Elk River Chain of Lakes Watershed
 Lake Charlevoix Watershed Committee
 CAKE-CISMA Steering Committee
 MESCA – Soil erosion advisory
 Golden Brown Algae Advisory Committee

Grant Work



Michigan Invasive Species Grant Program Evaluation
 Received Grant for Kayak Launch – Helena Twp.

Partnerships



Tip of the Mitt Watershed Council
The Watershed Center Grand Traverse Bay
Friends of the Jordan
Paddle Antrim
Three Lakes
Torch Lake Protection Alliance
Torch Conservation Center
Township Work

Helena Township: Secured Paddle Antrim Grant – kayak launch, Ball Park enhancements; maintenance on Alden Rain Garden

Milton Township: Sutter Road End with Tip of the Mitt Watershed Council; Review of Township’s Storm Water Ordinance

Village of Central Lake: developed beach plan for Thurston Park; DEQ permit

Elk Rapids: Corner Stone Condo Project Review

Village of Bellaire: DDA/stormwater Road Stream Crossings-gravel roads on Torch Act as the District Supervisor for AmeriCorps

Torch Conservation Center
Huron Pines AmeriCorp
Member
Antrim County

Threatened and Endangered Species Evaluation-Antrim Creek Natural Area

Training



USACE
Engineered Soils

Program Training

Invasive Species



Worked with CAKE-CISMA coordinator; inventory sites when doing soil erosion permit work, work with contractors to identify invasives on their job sites.

Worked with AmeriCorps member to remove seed heads from invasive thistle and wild parsnip in Cedar River Natural Area.

Worked with the City of Petoskey and Antrim’s AmeriCorps member to cut swallow wort seed pods in Bear River City Park.

Participated in training on Beaver Island for Invasive Species.

Household Hazardous Waste:

The District held two Household Hazardous Waste (HHW) days for the County. The first collection day held in May at Elk Rapids DPW, we collected 8,270 pounds of waste. The second collection day held in Bellaire in August, we collected 13,071 pounds of waste. Some of the items we collected included oil based paints, batteries, electronics, and even over 800 pounds of corrosive liquids (acids/bases). This program is free to county residents unless they have over 30 pounds of waste to drop off. After 30 pounds we charge \$0.50 per pound.

Conservation Tree Sale:

During the conservation Tree Sale we sold 27,597 seedlings, this is down from 27,690 sold in 2015. In 2016 we added containerized trees to our sale. We sold 350 of the containerized trees. We opted to sell containerized trees because we had received requests for some larger trees to be available. Additionally left over trees from 2016 were used in conservation plantings throughout the county.

CAKE CISMA:

Charlevoix, Antrim, Kalkaska, Emmet Cooperative Invasive Species Management Area is a collation of conservation districts and nonprofits that manage invasive species. CAKE's mission statement is "To protect the natural resources, economy, and human health in Northern Lower Michigan through collaborative outreach and management of invasive species." The CISMA is housed at the Antrim Conservation District, and was formed and funded by a state grant. The grant is awarded by the State of Michigan's Quality of Life department (MDNR, MDEQ, MDARD). CAKE's original funding started in 2015 with a two year grant of \$130,500. This allowed for the Conservation District to hire a CISMA Coordinator as well as area leaders stationed out of Kalkaska and Emmet Conservation Districts.

In 2016 CAKE started its Invasive Species Treatment Cost Share program. This program is available to any land owner (municipality or private), and CAKE will pay for up to 80% of the cost of treatment. In Antrim County CAKE had a total of nine cost share participants (five private residence and four municipalities) who saved over \$3,000 in total. Those who do not wish to participate in the cost share program are provided with best management information for removing the invasive species from their property.

CAKE held several outreach and education events throughout Antrim County. At these events we had over 100 active impressions with attendees/visitors. CAKE CISMA and all of its program will continue to be offered for Antrim County residence for 2017 as their state funding was approved for another year at \$138,000. The 2017 funding will provide the Coordinator with a full time position as well as hiring a seasonal employee and increasing the cost share program funding to just under \$60,000.

Board Statement:

The Antrim Conservation District Board of Directors is happy to announce the hiring of new District Manager, Thomas Clement. After an extensive interview process, Thomas was chosen for his vision to continue and strengthen the work and services the district provides. The board gives their full support to Tom, as well as the excellent work in both forestry by Mike and soil erosion services from Heidi. We are excited and optimistic about the direction the ACD is heading.