

2022 ANNUAL REPORT



The mission of the Clinton Conservation District is to provide information and technical assistance for Clinton County citizens to better understand, plan, manage, protect, and use natural resources.

Introduction

2022 Annual Report

The Clinton Conservation District is a local unit of state government established in 1954 to carry out programs focused on the wise use of natural resources. The guiding philosophy is that decisions on conservation issues should be made for current and future generations at the local level, by local people.

Historically, the District focused on soil erosion from farmlands. With time, our scope has expanded. Today, the District works on a broad spectrum of conservation and natural resource concerns. Soil erosion and soil health remains a major component of our work, but we also provide services on watershed management, wildlife habitat improvement, stream restoration and woodland management. We offer information and technical assistance to all county residents from private landowners residing in rural, suburban and urban settings to schools, clubs and local government.

The formation of the Clinton Conservation District in 1954 enabled the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) to provide technical and financial assistance to private landowners in Clinton County with conservation needs. Today, these services are still provided through the conservation district office by the USDA's Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS) who continues to be the District's closest partner and supporter. USDA provides the District with office space, IT support and training.



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District Staff

Kurt Wolf, Executive Director

Eric Bak, MAEAP Technician

Rebekah Favior, Soil
Conservationist

Katie Hafner, CTAI Technician
(Clinton, Ionia)

Jessica Short, Conservation
Program Assistant (statewide)

Adelyn Geissel, Conservation
Program Assistant (statewide)

Cheyenne Bartholomew,
Conservation Technician (Eaton,
Clinton)

Samantha Strandmark, CISMA
Coordinator (Ingham, Ionia, Eaton,
Clinton)

Samantha Wood, Administrative
Assistant

Logan Banning, Farm Bill Biologist
(Gratiot, Clinton, Saginaw)

NRCS Staff

Joe Woodruff, District
Conservationist

Emily Malkin, Soil Conservationist

Juanita McCann, Agricultural
Engineer

Financial Report

Kurt Wolf, Executive Director

The Clinton Conservation District's 2022 fiscal year ran from October 1, 2021 to September 30, 2022. Four primary sources funded the District in 2022: 1. Grants through the State of Michigan and federal sources, 2. Clinton County, appropriated by the Clinton County Commissioners, 3. Tree and native plant sale fundraisers, and 4. In-kind support through NRCS.

The District Staff and Board was able to put together another successful tree sale and reach more landowners than anticipated now that our doors were open to the public once again. Also, in fiscal year 2022 all Conservation Districts in Michigan received appropriated funding from the state in the amount of \$40,000. This funding came in after the start of the year and was relatively unexpected. This resulted in a much higher fund balance than budgeted at the end of the year. The biggest challenge with unexpected funding is how to use it wisely with limited staff time available. Knowing in advance that funding like this was long term would allow Districts to hire permanent staff and reduce turnover from limited term grant employees.

Grants remain the primary source of funding for the District. In 2022, programs were funded through 11 grants with support provided through partnerships. The grants provided support to 5 field office employees, 2 state office employees, and 2 remote employees. Our staff help landowners with cost share programs, boots on the ground implementation, educational workshops, and outreach work on watersheds. Although grant funds can be beneficial in supporting specific conservation objectives, grant funds are inconsistent, which is a challenge for retaining qualified and experienced staff. The District continues to seek out ways to increase long-term sustainability and seeks additional funds with a focus on more permanent funding opportunities.

Fiscal Year 2022 Financial Report (October 1, 2021 to September 30, 2022)

Revenues		Expenditures	
Federal Grants & Contributions	\$ 390,144.32	Operations	\$ 38,325.17
State Grants & Contributions	\$ 115,389.49	MAEAP Program	\$ 72,708.52
Local Grants & Contributions	\$ 12,000	NFWF Maple River Program	\$ 49,585.30
Charges for Goods & Services	\$ 45,272.86	NFWF Middle Grand River Program	\$ 54,129.71
Other Revenue	\$ 13,936	Invasive Species Grant	\$ 1,865.01
		Stony Creek Watershed Project	\$ 13,370.67
		Upper Maple River 319 Grant	\$ 78,894.75
		Tree Sales/Reforestation	\$ 17,225.48
		CTAI Program	\$ 69,664.56
		NRCS NWQI Project	\$ 29,905.91
		Hunter Access Program	\$ 580.48
		CTAI Program Assistant I	\$ 54,021.89
		CTAI Program Assistant II	\$54,081.09
Total Revenues	\$ 576,742.67	Total Expenditures	\$ 534,358.54
Profit (Loss)			\$ 42,384.13
Fund Balance			\$ 114,168.13

2022 Spring and Fall Tree Sale

2022 Tree Sale Numbers	# of Plants
2022 Total Number of Plants Sold	14,209
Spring Sale—Total Plants Sold	11,105
Spring Pre-Orders	229
Spring Cash and Carry Orders	49
Fall Sale—Total Plants Sold	3107
Fall Pre-Orders	78
Fall Cash and Carry Orders	19
2022 Ornamental Trees & Shrubs	12930
2022 Fruit Trees and Plants	750
2022 Native Plants	529



MI Technical Assistance Initiative for the Maple River Watershed

Rebekah Faivor, NFWF Soil Conservationist



The MI Technical Assistance Initiative grant is administered as a partnership among the Natural Resource Conservation Service and the National Fish & Wildlife Foundation (NFWF). This grant ensures funding for three years to support technical assistance efforts benefitting producers in the Maple River watershed.

As the soil conservationist, Rebekah ensures local soil and water resources are protected by providing technical assistance to landowners through NRCS Farm Bill programs. Rebekah helps farmers plan and implement conservation practices on their farm, making their operations more profitable and sustainable while protecting shared natural resources.

“Conservation is a state of harmony between men and land.”

- Aldo Leopold

Conservation Technical Assistance Initiative (CTAI) Program

Katie Hafner, CTAI Soil Conservationist

The CTAI grant supplies Conservation Districts with MDARD dollars to help NRCS with program and contract management. Katie works with four NRCS programs in both Clinton and Ionia counties. She helps with conservation planning, both in the field and in the office. Katie completes technical site visits at requests of landowners to talk about resource concerns and the conservation practices that can be used to solve them.

Community outreach is an important way to connect with farmers and landowners within the county. With help from coworkers, Katie plans several workshops and outreach events every year that reaches 100's of people in Clinton Co.



MI Technical Assistance Initiative for the Middle Grand River Watershed

Cheyenne Bartholomew, Conservation Technician



The MI Technical Assistance Initiative grant is administered as a partnership among the Natural Resource Conservation Service and the National Fish & Wildlife Foundation (NFWF). This grant ensures funding for three years to support technical assistance efforts benefitting producers in the Middle Grand River watershed. As the conservation technician, Cheyenne ensures local soil and water resources are protected by providing technical assistance to landowners through NRCS Farm Bill programs. She specializes in the Wetland Reserve Program. She works with landowners to creating conservation plans, monitor easements, and provides technical support. She is also in charge of the district's social media presence. In 2022, Cheyenne has worked on updating our district website, adding in lots of educational resources for our Clinton County residents.

Our New Farm Bill Biologist

Logan Banning, Farm Bill Biologist

Logan joined the district in September 2022. He recently graduated from Oakland University with a B.S in Environmental Science with a specialization in Natural Resource Management. Before this position, he worked as a watershed protection intern for Tip of the Mitt Watershed Council protecting our precious fish and water resources. 2022 was mainly a year of learning for him. He spent his time studying programs, learning many new strategies to improve wildlife habitat, and observing other resource professionals. Going into 2023, he feels fully prepared to provide technical assistance for wildlife habitat improvements, as well as getting you funding to provide financial assistance in these projects.



No-Till Drill Report FY2022

Total of 105.25 acres planted.

Warm Season Grasses: 36.5 acres

Pollinator Planting: 46.2 acres

Food plots: 17.55 acres

The Conservation District offers equipment rentals year round!

Truax No-Till Drill

5.5' grass/forb drill for specialized seed. \$150/day for up to 10 acres, includes delivery and calibration. \$7 per acre for each additional acre .



Kaylor Tree Planter

Plant acres in a day! Kaylor planter available with a 32" coultter capable of planting seedlings up to 24" in height. \$75 per day.



Japanese Knotweed Injector

Inject stems of invasive Japanese knotweed or nonnative phragmites. \$50/rental; 100% refundable when returned clean.



USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS)

Joe Woodruff, District Conservationist

NRCS offers technical and financial assistance through conservation practices, activities and enhancements to help agricultural producers make and maintain improvements on their land.

In FY 2022, Joe Woodruff, Katie Hafner, Rebekah Faivor, Cheyanne Bartholomew, and Emily Malkin provided assistance on various conservation initiatives throughout Clinton County. Local NRCS efforts resulted in federal financial assistance going to local producers to implement conservation practices through the Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP), Wetland Restoration Program (WRP), Conservation Reserve Program (CRP), and Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP).

2022 Clinton County Major Achievements

184 Highly erodible land & converted wetland determinations processed

4,835 acres Enrolled in RCPP, CRP, CSP and EQIP Farm Bill programs

119 Certified and completed conservation practices

\$1.1 million in Farm Bill dollars to Clinton County farmers in 2022

Programs

The **Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP)** provides financial and technical assistance to agricultural producers to address natural resource concerns and deliver environmental benefits such as improved water and air quality, conserved ground and surface water, increased soil health and reduced soil erosion and sedimentation, and improved or created wildlife habitat.

The **Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP)** helps agricultural producers maintain and improve their existing conservation systems and adopt additional conservation activities to address priority resources concerns. Participants earn CSP payments for conservation performance

The **Conservation Reserve Program (CRP)** provides technical and financial assistance to eligible farmers and ranchers to address soil, water, and related natural resource concerns on their lands in an environmentally beneficial and cost-effective manner.

The **Wetlands Reserve Program (WRP)** is a voluntary program that provides technical and financial assistance to eligible landowners to address wetland, wildlife habitat, soil, water, and related natural resource concerns on private lands in an environmentally beneficial and cost-effective manner. The program provides an opportunity for landowners to receive financial incentives to enhance wetlands in exchange for retiring marginal land from agriculture.

The **Regional Conservation Partnership Program (RCPP)** promotes coordination of NRCS conservation activities with partners that offer value-added contributions to expand our collective ability to address on-farm, watershed, and regional natural resource concerns.

Interested in working toward a more sustainable farm? Conservation practices can benefit both your natural resources and your bottom line. Stop in or call the office to get started!

Conservation Program Assistance– MI NRCS State Office

Adelyn Geissel, CTAI Program Assistant

Throughout FY22, Adelyn continued supporting NRCS Farm Bill Programs through a multitude of activities. Her broad range of responsibilities involved a host of administrative support tasks, including but not limited to EQIP and CSP contract administration, delivering easement reports and reviews, and providing Advanced Payment reminders. Adelyn also assisted with various CCD projects and events: CCD's Annual Meeting, spring and fall tree sales, and attending CCD's No Till Drill training. She attended the MACD's Summer conference, AgroExpo, the Great Lakes Expo and a training on edible plants through MSU Extension. Adelyn completed two larger projects in 2022: creating and leading a Free-time session for MSU Extensions' 4-H Exploration Days in June 2022 focused on a combination of orienteering and a guided nature walk, and creating a one-page spread for a Clinton County Local Food Guide through Taste the Local Difference.



Outside of work, Adelyn had another eventful year with a 3rd place award for People in Nature for Michigan Nature Association's Photography Contest, 1st place Solo Female in a 3-hour orienteering event (Michigan Adventure Race, Winter Edition), 2nd place Solo Female in a 6-hour orienteering event, continued to create maps and host orienteering events, and started to get into birding after seeing a snowy owl for the first time.

Conservation Program Assistance– MI NRCS State Office

Jessica Short, CTAI Program Assistant



As a CTAI Program Assistant, my role is to provide support for document management, administrative tasks, and support for various projects. I also provided flex support for the NRCS State Office, assisting the state-level program staff with processing contract modifications and document management for the whole state. In this way, the ongoing stability of Clinton CD helps support conservation efforts by districts statewide!

Some of the major projects and events I worked on this year included compiling data and a summary report on the Resource Assessment Survey for Clinton County, presented to the board to analyze the needs of our service area, based on survey responses collected from the community. I created the 2021 and 2022 version of the EQIP Cost Estimator, which is an Excel calculator that estimates total contract costs for EQIP during the application phase, and which is widely used across the state. I developed an Excel template for adding administrative area or other custom data to database exports. I provide a monthly statewide report on approaching contract expiration deadlines, assist with quarterly reviews of open obligations (financial) for easement programs, assisted with a 10% review of contracts for CSP, calculated contracts eligible for price spike adjustments through EQIP Coronavirus Action Relief Payments (CARP), and assisted with data entry for easement monitoring.

Michigan Agriculture Environmental Assurance Program (MAEAP)

Eric Bak, MAEAP Technician



The Michigan Agriculture Environmental Assurance Program (MAEAP) is an innovative, proactive, and voluntary program that helps farms of all sizes and commodities prevent or minimize agricultural pollution risks.

With the help of Clinton County farmers, MAEAP continues to be a driving force in voluntary environmental sustainability initiatives in the state. MAEAP verifications often begin years before the sign goes up at the road. Farms that were MAEAP verified more than five years ago must go through reverification to retain their good standing. Farms can grow and change a lot in a short time, MAEAP can assist with any growth or adjustment.

Eric also helps rural landowners check drinking water quality through well water screening events. If you'd like more information on water testing, or on MAEAP, call our office and ask for Eric.

2022 Clinton County MAEAP Accomplishments

8 New Verifications

12 Reverifications

Clinton County MAEAP Farm Environmental Outcomes for 2022

Sediment Reduced: 3,671 tons

Phosphorus Reduced: 5,879 pounds

Nitrogen Reduced: 11,757 pounds



Farmstead System

The Farmstead System reviews potential risks at the farm site. This includes a review of chemical, fuel and pesticide storage, and wells. It may also include manure storage on livestock farms. This system is applicable to all farms.



Cropping System

The Cropping System reviews production practices that occur wherever crops are grown on the farm. It reviews risks associated with pesticide and nutrient application, erosion control, and record keeping.



Livestock System

The Livestock System reviews practices related to livestock production. This includes manure storage, transfer and land application, record keeping, feed storage, and lot management. It relates to all types of livestock produced on the farm.



Forest, Wetlands & Habitat System

The FWH System reviews management practices relating to areas on the farm with woodlands, wetlands, and other types of managed habitats. This review looks at the management plans created for all of these land uses to promote and ensure sustainable practices are being implemented.

Maple River, and Stony Creek Watersheds

Jill Detwiler, Water Resources Coordinator



In 2022, CCD continued carrying out its third EPA Clean Water Act 319 Implementation Grant for the Upper Maple River, which is focused on,

1. Providing technical assistance and cost-share funding for farmers to implement best management practices that protect water quality
2. Alerting landowners in the UMR watershed on the widespread issue of human-sourced E. coli contamination in the watershed, and providing septic system education in partnership with the Mid-Michigan District Health Department

Additionally, the District continued collecting water quality and land use data for the Stony Creek Watershed Management Plan with assistance from state and local partners. Supported by Clean Water Act 319 funds, the Stony Creek project will be completed in 2023 and will provide a detailed assessment of the Stony Creek watershed with measurable objectives for improving water quality in the watershed.

Data collection also occurred throughout the Hayworth Creek, South Fork-Hayworth Creek, and Doty Brook watersheds as part of the NRCS National Water Quality Initiative (NWQI). The data collected in 2022 is being used to draft a detailed assessment of these three sub-watersheds. The completed assessment will enable the CCD, in partnership with the local NRCS office, to offer technical assistance and special funding for farmers in the three Hayworth sub-watersheds.

2022 Accomplishments

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1,080 acres of Cover Crops. • 2 Drainage Water Management Plans. • 4 Tile Water Control Structures. 	<p>908.61 acres of terminated and 171.13 acres of non-terminated cover crops planted in the Maple River watershed through the UMR BMP Program.</p> <p>143 acres under drainage water management reducing 100lbs Nitrogen, 14lbs Phosphorus and 144 tons of sediment annually.</p>
<p>Septic system information distributed</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Written: 9,130 people * Mail: 1,397 households * Presentation: 70 people * Consultation: 10 people

Mid-Michigan Cooperative Invasive Species Management Area (CISMA)

Samantha Strandmark, CISMA Coordinator

The Mid-Michigan CISMA is a collaborative partnership between the Clinton, Eaton, Ionia and Ingham conservation districts and 30+ other local partners with the goal of invasive species early detection, management and outreach.



In 2022, the Mid-Michigan CISMA:

- * Surveyed nearly 1000 acres for priority invasive species
- * Trained over 90 municipal staffers in invasive species ID and management (Virtual Series)
- * Held an AIS webinar for community members
- * Held our 2022 Eco Expo. A job fair-style event featuring local conservation organizations and eco-friendly businesses.

In 2023, the Mid-Michigan CISMA looks forward to bringing on a Strike Team to help landowners handle an upcoming grant to combat European Frogbit.

To learn more, visit: inghamconservation.com/mm-cisma

Outreach & Education

Kurt Wolf, Executive Director

The Clinton Conservation District promotes conservation actively through workshops, presentations, events, and consultations, and passively through social media and web articles. The Conservation District put on multiple workshops including a cover crop workshop talking about the importance of using cover crops and carbon markets, and a new forestry workshop where we provided landowners with a free forestry consultation with a forester. The District had the opportunity to participate in the Dewitt Career Expo, and to sponsor a full page of Clinton County farms in the Taste the Local Difference Local Food Guide. Some of our outreach included partnering with MUCC and St Johns Elementary to plant 250 trees on the Maple River State Game Area.



Social Media Reach	
36,526	Facebook
131	Instagram
2,400	Newsletters

Thank you to our sponsors and partners!

Clinton Conservation Board of Directors & Staff

The Clinton Conservation District’s success depends on community support, so THANK YOU! Whether you attended meetings, workshops or field days, or purchased from our tree and native plant sales, you are contributing to the conservation of natural resources in Clinton County.

The District also attributes our successes to the local support we receive from event sponsors and partners. Please join us in thanking the following businesses and partners for their generous contributions!

2022 Partner and Business Contributors

Clinton County Parks & Greenspace Commission	
Michigan State University—Institute of Water Research	Clinton County Chapter– Pheasants Forever
AgroLiquid North Central Research Station	
Michigan State University Extension	Clinton Lakes Pheasant Co-op
Michigan Farm Bureau	Rose Lake State Game Area DNR Staff
Middle Grand River Organization of Watersheds	Friends of the Maple River
Michigan Dept Environment, Great Lakes & Energy	Woodland Acres Bird Hunting Preserve
Michigan Dept Agriculture & Rural Development	Favior Fresh Farm & Flowers
National Fish & Wildlife Foundation	Allaby & Brewbaker Insurance
Michigan DNR	Clinton County Drain Office

Clinton County Landowners– Most of all, Thank YOU!

