

# LAPEER CONSERVATION DISTRICT



## 2024 NRCS ANNUAL REPORT BY HALEY DUKES



I want to express my sincere appreciation for the Conservation District staff and board, farmers, and private forestland owners here in the community. I am sad to notify you all that I will be leaving the Lapeer Field Office mid-December. I have accepted a position with the Pennsylvania NRCS state office as their new Regional Conservation Partnership Program Coordinator. Though my time here has been relatively short, what we have accomplished has been great. In fiscal year 2024 alone, the Lapeer NRCS Field Office in partnership with the Lapeer Conservation District added 41 new contracts with landowners to put conservation on the ground. From small urban market gardens to large traditional row crop farmers, to private forestland owners, and livestock producers, we have grown our conservation community. We have supported the rich diversity of producers and agriculture in our area. My hope for the future of this office and community is continued growth with a focus on being great stewards of the natural resources. Thank you for welcoming me into the area, and I wish you all the best moving forward!

Lapeer Conservation District sincerely thanks Haley for her time here at the Lapeer Office as she moves on to her new position in

Pennsylvania!  
*Good Luck Haley!*

Welcome Anastasia as our temporary District Conservationist!

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### Board *Of Directors*

Steve Schaub	Chairman
Gary Nolan	Vice Chairman
Wade Decker	Treasurer
Jered Laur	Director
Vacant	Director

### District *Staff*

Katie Laur	District Manager
Mary Brown	Admin. Assistant
Mila Resetar	MAEAP Coordinator
Emily Veillette	Conservation Tech.
Tyler Wright	Conservation Tech.
Matt Smith	Farm Bill Biologist
Molly Wozniak	GiLLS CISMA
Micah Hutchinson	Produce Safety
Anastasia Williams	NRCS District Con.

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## MAEAP Report - Mila Resetar

2024 was a very busy year for the Michigan Agriculture Environmental Assurance Program (MAEAP) program in Lapeer and Macomb counties. 25 MAEAP systems were verified across 10 farms, leading to 128 environmental risk reduction practices across the two counties. MAEAP, an MDARD program administered by conservation districts across the entire state of Michigan, recognizes farms who are following environmental best management practices as outlined in the state of Michigan's Generally Accepted Agricultural Management Practices guidelines. The program is 100% free, voluntary, and confidential. Producers with farms of any scope and scale can sign up for a farm assessment with the MAEAP program in one or more of the following MAEAP systems: Cropping, Farmstead, Livestock, and/or Forest, Wetland & Habitat. Each system thoroughly evaluates aspects of the production of food & fiber that may have an impact on the environment, including ground and surface waters. One of the most valuable aspects of the MAEAP program is the opportunity for producers to receive technical assistance at no cost to them. Each farm is on their own unique timeline towards reaching MAEAP verification. In the time between assessment and verification, the producer works in partnership with the technician to address environmental risks and make appropriate adjustments in order to reduce the risk of agriculture pollution. If you are interested in becoming a MAEAP verified farm and receiving technical assistance, please reach out to the Lapeer Conservation District to get in touch!

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## Conservation Technician Report - Emily Veillette

Hi! I have been a Conservation Technician for the Lapeer Conservation District since February of 2024. My position is primarily to support the NRCS Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) and Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP) in Lapeer and Oakland Counties. Our mission is to help people help the land and get conservation on the ground! In 2024, Lapeer staff obligated 39 new EQIP contracts and 2 new CSP contracts. In total we managed 70 active EQIP contracts and 19 active CSP contracts. Our clients have been working hard to conserve natural resources through activities like forestland invasive species control, planting cover crops to improve soil health, planting pollinator and wildlife habitat, improving waste handling on agricultural operations, setting up rotational grazing systems for better land management, installing high tunnels to extend the local growing season, and more! In 2024 we had many new farmers and forestland owners reach out with interest in programs and conservation. We spent the field season identifying natural resource concerns and discussing conservation-based solutions with our clients. Moving forward, we have 58 EQIP and 14 CSP applications on file for fiscal year 2025. I am really enjoying my time in Lapeer and look forward to seeing more conservation on the ground in 2025!

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## Conservation Technician Report - Tyler Wright

I grew up right next door in Genesee County and got the opportunity to become a Conservation Technician at Lapeer Conservation District in July and I am very pleased to be here. My degree is in Ecology, Evolution, and Organismal Biology from Saginaw Valley State University. My position is provided through a NACD grant in partnership with the NRCS to help implement farm bill programs to Lapeer and Oakland County producers. Since July, I have assisted over 60 producers in their EQIP or CSP applications and contracts. In addition, I have also assisted in the fall tree sale and other LCD events. I look forward to continuing my work with the LCD and local producers in 2025.

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## GiLLS CISMA Report - Molly Wozniak

In June 2024, I became the new coordinator for the GiLLS CISMA. To reach out to the community, we collaborated with the Lapeer Conservation District and the Lapeer Chapter of the Flint River Watershed Coalition on an outreach table at the Lapeer Kiwanis Rubber Ducky Day, where we talked to hundreds of local residents about invasive species and aquatic macroinvertebrates. Additionally, I was able to present at a Lapeer Kiwanis luncheon about common invasive species and management strategies. The CISMA has had several interactions and site visits with landowners in the county, addressing concerns of Japanese Knotweed, buckthorn, and aquatic invasive species. An aquatic invasive species survey was conducted on a small pond where several native species and invasive Eurasian water milfoil were detected. No other invasive plants or watch list species were found in this survey, but we plan to follow up next year as well as continue to survey other areas. Outreach via social media has been consistent, with posts about invasive species identification, upcoming events, and funny memes related to invasive species gaining engagement. For management in your backyard, site visits with brief management plans can be scheduled and the tool crib is stocked with tools to aid in your removal efforts. Next year, the CISMA hopes to continue doing outreach within the community, presenting programs at local schools, and providing opportunities for invasive species management with our partners. We look forward to seeing you in 2025!

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## Spring Sale 2025 Update!!

It's almost time for the spring sale!! The online store will run from middle of January until the middle of March 14th! You can place your orders online or call our office during business hours. Any questions can be directed to the office staff.

## New for Fall 2025 Sale!!

Due to declining sales in previous years, **all orders for Fall 2025 will be PREORDER ONLY!!** Watch your emails & our website for more information in June 2025.

### **Farm Bill Stats for 2024 - By Haley Dukes**

FY2024 Farm Bill Statistics for Lapeer	
Farm Bill Total Acres Lapeer	6076.7 acres
Farm Bill Total Contracts	41
Farm Bill Programs Total Obligations	\$1,652,975.30

### **Financial Report October 1, 2023 - September 30, 2024**

Revenue	
State Funds	\$116,000.00
Federal Funds	\$62,839.00
Contributions from Local Units	\$28.00
Charges for Services (Items for Resale)	\$3,831.00
Interest & Rentals	\$1,295.00
Tree Sales	\$47,259.00
<b>Total Revenue</b>	<b>\$231,252.00</b>
Expenditures	
281 Operations	\$74,805.00
282 MAEAP	\$76,000.00
283 NACD TA	\$42,672.00
NRCS Cooperative Grant	\$20,167.00
Education Program	\$264.00
Tree Sales	\$22,964.00
<b>Total Expenditures</b>	<b>\$236,872.00</b>
Budget Balance	(5,620.00)
Beginning Fund Balance	\$33,142.00
Ending Fund Balance	\$27,522.00



**Between the Spring & Fall Sales we sold 12,040 trees in 2024!!**

As always, our heartfelt thanks go out to our amazing volunteers, especially for our tree sales. A total of 9 for the spring and a total of 9 for the fall volunteered. 5 volunteers from the DAR organization packed our white pine plugs for Lapeer County 5th Grade students that we gift each spring. Without the help of our volunteers, we would not be able to have successful sales!



#### **MISSION STATEMENT:**

The mission of the Lapeer Conservation District is to deliver information and technical assistance through educational programs and professional services in order to conserve and enhance the natural resources of Lapeer County now and for future generations.

# Outreach Report, submitted by Katie Laur

Life at the district is running smoothly as ever.

## Events:

LCD hosted or participated in many events in 2024! In July, we hosted a Pasture Walk in North Branch at Quarter Mile Good Farm and Orchard.

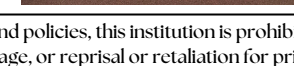
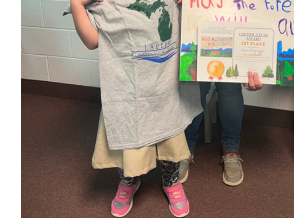
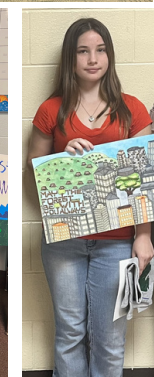
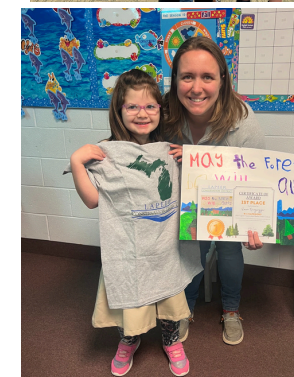
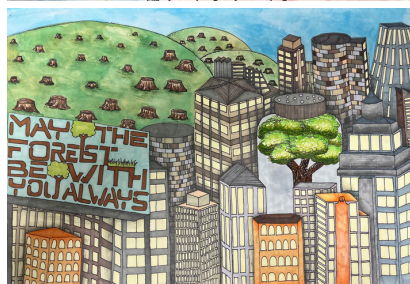
It was an opportunity for farmers, landowners & orchardists to gather and learn about NRCS woven wire fencing, rotational grazing with cows & pigs, different seed mixes and the pros & cons of planting them.

In August, LCD along with Michigan Forest Association and Oakland Conservation District, hosted a Forest Management Field Day at Tall Trees Sanctuary in White Lake. We were able to learn about NRCS' Forest Management Plans & other programs that NRCS offers forest owners, along with a walk through the property to see the programs in action firsthand!

## Education:

In September, LCD took part in Project RED at the Eastern Michigan Fairgrounds in Imlay City. Around 650 third graders from Lapeer County learned about the importance of trees for our environment and were gifted a White Pine Seedling to take home.

From the end of August to the beginning of October, many Lapeer County students were hard at work getting their posters ready to submit to the National Association of Conservation Districts Poster Contest. Over 260 posters were submitted to the local level contest with the first place winners going on to the State level! All 5 of our local submissions that went on to the State level placed in the top 5 with three of them placing first place and going on to the National Level! Winners of the National Level will be announced at the Annual NACD meeting in February 2025.



## Kindergarten & 1st Grade Category

- 1st Place Emma Ruegsegger - State Winner 2nd Place
- 2nd Place Garret Van Dyk
- 3rd Place Harley Trudo
- Honorable Mention Dalton Humphrey

## 2nd & 3rd Grade Category

- 1st Place Ava Shannon - State Winner 5th Place
- 2nd Place Caylee Humphrey
- 3rd Place Kaley Dewey
- Honorable Mention Daniel Galli
- Honorable Mention Grace Grask

## 4th - 6th Grade Category

- 1st Place Elayna Reed - State Winner 1st Place
- 2nd Place Natalie Galli
- 3rd Place Sophia McDonald
- Honorable Mention Tucker Reynolds
- Honorable Mention Brooklin Clark
- Honorable Mention Marissa Hendrix
- Honorable Mention Penelope Mellish
- Honorable Mention Jacob Laur
- Honorable Mention Brylie Tait
- Honorable Mention Eliana Zyrowski
- Honorable Mention Halle Budreau

## 7th - 9th Grade Category

- 1st Place Charity MacNeil - State Winner 1st Place
- 2nd Place Ashley Haus
- 3rd Place Christieanna Steinhebel
- Honorable Mention Jaccob Miller
- Honorable Mention Juliet Hearold

## 10th - 12th Grade Category

- 1st Place Rhianne Harwood - State Winner 1st Place
- 2nd Place Jenna Kline
- 3rd Place Gina Still
- Honorable Mention Lilly Grogan