

2017 marked our 55th year serving the people of Monroe County

This Year's Highlights:

- ⊗ We continue to partner with the River Raisin Institute and Western Lake Erie Cluster on various projects.
- ⊗ Assist Michigan Department of Agriculture & Rural Development to rectify Right to Farm complaints.
- ⊗ A Soil Health Strategies meeting held at Matthes Tree Farm relayed information about soil amendments and the importance of soil testing and how to read them.
- ⊗ Presentations given; the importance of bats combating nuisance insects, invasive species, macro invertebrates in regards to water health, and preventing groundwater pollution.
- ⊗ A display table at Earth Day is always a successful event. Not only do we provide a plethora of information but we are also able to make new contacts and bring useful information back to the office to share with others.
- ⊗ Girl Scouts of SE Michigan planted more than 300 native plants at Amstead Park, Temperance. This event was geared towards why we should plant native plants, how to plant, placement, and weed control.
- ⊗ Well water testing is an annual event held in September, hosted by the MAEAP program and is open to the public. 2018 event will be held in conjunction with the tree sale pickup.
- ⊗ Clean Boats, Clean Water; a program designed to educate boaters the importance of cleaning their boats and trailers. Spreading Invasive aquatic species from one body of water to another has become a real problem as invasive plants, fishes and other organisms disrupt these eco-systems, and interfere with recreation and damage watercraft. This year we washed 52 boats and spoke to 147 people about the importance of being aware and vigilant.

All of these events help educate the public of all ages on the importance of our natural resources.

Monroe Conservation District
1137 South Telegraph Road, Monroe, Michigan 48161
734.241.8540 Ext. 5



2017 Annual Report



Farewell....

Herb Smith, who has been with the district since 1984 when he was elected to fill a vacancy by Merrill Smith. Nine years later, in 1993, Herb was elected Chairman when Art Schmitt was no longer able to fulfill his duties due to illness.

Herb retired from Tecumseh Products in 1991 and has been a full time farmer ever since. He has been a member of Monroe County Farm Bureau, Michigan Soybean Growers of Michigan, Michigan Corn Growers, Monroe County Planning Commission, and Farm Service Agency County Committee. Herb's commitment to conservation, farming and stewardship to the land was a factor when he decided to run for election in 1984, and his commitment has not changed. In 2013 Herb became MAEAP verified and just recently had his operation re-verified. He has implemented many conservation practices throughout the years and many times has been at the forefront of new practices.

In 2015 Herb was awarded Director of the Year, presented by Michigan Association of Conservation District (MACD). The award was presented during the MACD Annual Convention held in Bellaire, Michigan.

Herb was honored for his outstanding support, advocacy and leadership in natural resource conservation at the local level. The Director of the Year is named annually by MACD to recognize the outstanding contributions of a Conservation District director. "MACD is pleased to honor Herb Smith with the 2015 Director of the Year Award," said Lori Phalen, Executive Director of the Michigan Association of Conservation Districts. "Herb strongly supports the Monroe Conservation District and the role of Conservation Districts state-wide. He is a conservation advocate, volunteering his time and talents and holding leadership positions at the local and state levels. Herb walks the talk, implementing the conservation practices he believes in by practicing no-till farming, maintaining buffer strips along the waterways on his farm, and achieving Michigan Agriculture Environmental Assurance Program (MAEAP) verification for his 729 acre operation in 2013. Herb is a true steward of our environment and an integral part of Michigan's conservation community."

The Monroe Conservation District and staff want to thank Herb for his many years of service and dedication.



The students will also be part of an exciting opportunity with an Urban Farm Grant that was awarded to MCCC, and the addition of agricultural test plots to be started next Spring. These undertakings will all be located in the approximate eleven acres north of main campus and will provide some great "drive-by" promotion of the agricultural program. So as you can see, it is an exciting time for the MCCC campus and the community! Being able to offer a renowned agricultural studies program to an area so rich with agricultural history will no doubt help the next generation experience the proud and rewarding careers in agriculture.

These are a few of the program requirements and benefits:

- 2.0 GPA for admissions
- 55 total credits required to receive MSU IAT Certificate
- 60 total credits required to receive Associate of Applied Science Degree from MCCC
- Dual Enrollment at MSU & MCCC
- Smaller classes
- Cost Savings! No room and board on campus
(Yes, you do pay MSU tuition for MSU courses)
- Students can live at home and keep local job
- All MSU courses delivered at MCCC campus using online, traditional classrooms and E-classrooms
- 100% placement after graduation

A Special Thank you to.....

Our customers for the great 2017 tree sale. We sold: 19,260 trees and shrubs (with an increase of almost 2,000 trees), 240 fruit trees and 1,500 berry bushes, 660 asparagus (which was new this year), 240 hostas, and lilies, 230 native plants and 1,230 specially ordered trees for specific conservation practices. Not only are the number of trees impressive, think of the conservation and the environmental impact! 50 Red oak and 50 cranberry were also donated to the National Battlefield.

Our volunteers, who without your help and dedication, the Annual Tree Sale would not be the success that it is.

Our County Commissioners, Monroe Farm Bureau, Townships and Villages for your financial assistance; Ash, Bedford, Berlin Charter, Dundee, Exeter, Frenchtown Charter, Ida, Maybee Village, Milan, Monroe Charter, Raisinville, and Summerfield Townships.

And finally to all of the customers we have the privilege and pleasure of servicing throughout the year.

As always our success is in part due to the wonderful cooperation received from our Monroe County farmers and landowners, our District directors, and partners; Ag.Council, FSA, Monroe County Farm Bureau, NRCS, Pheasants Forever, River Raisin Institute, and the Western Lake Erie Cluster.

2017 Conservation Highlights

By Tamarra Roseburg, NRCS District Conservationist

USDA-NRCS offers voluntary programs to eligible landowners and agricultural producers to provide financial and technical assistance to plan and implement conservation practices that addresses identified resource concerns through conservation planning. This fiscal year 2017, the Monroe Field Office contracted an estimated total of \$61,900.00 through various USDA Conservation Programs. Our FY18 goal is to get more conservation on the ground!! Some common practices include, but not limited to: High Tunnel System, Comprehensive Nutrient Management Plan, Forest Management Plan, Conservation Cover, Waste Storage Facility, On-Farm Secondary Containment, Cover Crops, Filter Strips, and Nutrient Management.

For additional information about USDA Conservation Programs, please visit the MI NRCS website at: <https://www.nrcs.usda.gov/wps/portal/nrcs/site/mi/home/> or contact the local service center at: 734-241-8540 x3.

Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) Voluntary conservation program administered and carried out through the USDA-Natural Resources Conservation Service. EQIP supports agricultural production and environmental quality as compatible goals. EQIP is intended to provide producers with financial assistance to help implement conservation practices that address identified resource concerns on their farm.

2017 EQIP Initiatives: Western Lake Erie Basin, On-Farm Energy Initiative, Organic Initiative, Honey Bee Initiative, Michigan Agriculture Environmental Assurance Program, and Edge of Field Monitoring.

Regional Conservation Partnership Program (RCPP) The Tri-State Western Lake Erie Basin Phosphorus Reduction Initiative will help to reduce sediment and nutrient loading into the western basin of Lake Erie, with an emphasis on reducing total and dissolved reactive phosphorus to decrease the threat of HABs. The specific resource concerns include water quality, water quantity, soil health, and fish and wildlife habitat.

Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP) CSP encourages land stewards to improve their conservation performance by installing and adopting additional activities, and maintaining and managing existing activities on agricultural land and non-industrial private forest land. CSP provides financial and technical assistance for eligible producers to conserve and enhance soil, water, air, and related natural resources on their land.

Agricultural Conservation Easement Program (ACEP) – Wetland Reserve Easements (WRE) Wetland Reserve Easements provide habitat for fish and wildlife, including threatened and endangered species, improve water quality by filtering sediments and chemicals, reduce flooding, recharge groundwater, protect biological diversity and provide opportunities for educational, scientific and limited recreational activities.

Please sign up for Conservation Client Gateway!! The Monroe Service Center currently has three participants signed up for Conservation Client Gateway! Conservation Client Gateway enables you to request assistance, sign documents and interact with NRCS field staff online. NRCS staff will still be available in field offices to work with you face-to-face – this online tool just provides another option. For step-by-step instructions on getting started, visit www.nrcs.usda.gov/clientgateway

Michigan Agricultural Environmental Assurance Program - MAEAP

Rob Bates, MAEAP Technician, Monroe & Wayne County



The MAEAP program is an innovative, proactive program that helps farms of all sizes and commodities, voluntarily minimize agricultural pollution risks. MAEAP was developed by a coalition of farmers, commodity

groups, state and federal agencies, and conservation and environmental groups

With Michigan being so agriculturally diverse, a one size fits all approach to environmental protection simply does not work. That is why MAEAP offers four customized systems to meet specific needs of farms of all sizes. These systems are Farmstead, Cropping, Livestock, and (FWH) Forest, Wetland, and Habitat.

The MAEAP process is a three-phase approach. The first step is to complete an educational (Phase 1) training, which can be completed in person at a field day or by watching approved online videos. Next, a MAEAP Technician will visit the farm to complete a site assessment that is operation specific. The technician will then work with the producer to address any environmental impacts. Finally, a third-party verification will be completed by Michigan Department of Agriculture and Rural Development to assure the farm is following the Generally Accepted Agricultural and Management Practices (GAAMPs). Upon completion of these three steps, your farm will be MAEAP

Verified and you can proudly display a MAEAP sign on your farm.

If you would like to have a MAEAP assessment or would like more information about how to become MAEAP verified, please contact Rob Bates rob.bates@macd.org or 734.265.9313

Congratulations to the following area farms on becoming a MAEAP Verified farm in 2017:

- B.P. Farms - Farmstead & Livestock
- Bob Zochowski - Farmstead & Cropping
- Buffalo Street Farm - Cropping
- Paul Cantiberry - Forest, Wetland, and Habitat
- Charlesworth Farm - Farmstead & Cropping
- Goetz Greenhouse and Farm - Cropping & Livestock
- IHM Sisters, St. Mary Organic Farm - Cropping
- Kevin Otter - Cropping
- Masserant Farm - Cropping
- McDowell Farm - Farmstead, Cropping & Livestock
- Recovery Park Farm - Farmstead & Cropping
- Johnny Rodriguez - Farmstead
- Smith Brothers Farm - Cropping
- Sunnyside Farms - Cropping
- Wahl Ranch - Farmstead & Livestock
- John Ziesmer - Forest, Wetland, and Habitat



Michigan Agricultural Environmental Assurance Program - MAEAP

Welcome the District's newest staff member, Adam Miller



Adam Miller of Blissfield, is the new Michigan Agriculture Environmental Assurance Program (MAEAP) technician for Monroe County through the Monroe Conservation District.

After graduating from St. Mary Catholic Central High School he received an undergraduate degree in political science and urban planning from Eastern Michigan University. He also received a Masters degree in public administration from Wayne State University.

Adam showed small animals and sheep over his career in the Monroe County 4-H program as well as being a member of Whiteford Workers, Teen Ambassadors and New Horizons 4-H clubs. He served as a representative to 4-H Council, was the 4-H king and served on both the small Animal and Junior Livestock Associations. Currently, he still volunteers as a superintendent at the fair as a member of the Technology Committee which oversees the small and large animals auctions.

The MAEAP program assist producers in minimizing their environmental risks on the farm such as fuel and chemical storage at the farmstead or manure storage/application at livestock operations. Other areas include nutrient application, record keeping and erosion

control. To contact Adam at the Monroe County Conservation District, call 734.265.9315 or email adam.miller@macd.org For more information about the MAEAP program, visit www.maeap.org

Andy McCain MSU Program Coordinator

Monroe County Community College
The new Agricultural Operations Certificate Program has finally arrived in Monroe County! The newly formed partnership has brought Michigan State University's Institute of Agricultural Technology together with Monroe County Community College. This partnership program allows students to receive a certificate from MSU in Agricultural Operations while working towards an Associate in Applied Science of Agriculture from MCCC, as all of the required MSU courses are offered at the MCCC campus. The mission is to provide intensive and practical skill enhancement and create career ready graduates. Many of the required MSU courses have hands on labs and in-the-field training, where each student is required to do a professional paid internship in their field of study. The program was able to start its first semester this Fall with seven enrolled students, and three more already set to join the program for the Winter semester. The students have been busy with classes in Entomology and farm management this Fall, and are looking forward to Crop Science and Water Resource Management next semester.

A new collegiate Ag Club was recently formed at MCCC, with two of its members recently taking part in the finals of the Farm Bureau Collegiate Discussion Meet in Grand Rapids. The club hopes to attract more members on campus with events and meetings, bringing more awareness and interest to Agriculture.

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Income/Expense Report

Monroe Conservation District

October 2016 through September 2017

INCOME

Contributions from Local Units \$24,050

MAEAP Grants \$ 118,508

Charges for Services: \$ 1,034

Other revenue: \$ 25,117

Tree Sale: \$37,791

Total Revenue : \$ 206,500

EXPENSES

Operations: \$ 79,904

MAEAP Grants: \$ 96,607

Tree Sales: \$ 18,772

Total Operating Expenses: \$ 195,283

Net Income: \$ 11,217

Services Provided

- * Customers receiving assistance 2,952
- * Education attendees 1,010
- * Elementary school presentations 11
- * Informational articles written 38
- * P.A. 116 applications; 15 reviewed protecting 404 acres
- * Public Notices reviewed 12
- * Tree Sale customers 367

Board of Directors

Mark Chapman, Chairman
Herbert Smith, Vice Chair
Connie Velliquette, Treasurer
Bob Potter, Secretary
Gene Brost, Member

Truax drill usage report

6 land owners

68.8 acres

Exeter, Frenchtown,
London, Milan and Raisinville Townships

Planting a variety of native grasses, wildflowers, Pheasants Forever grass mix, alfalfa, and clover were planted into prairie, filter strip, horse pasture, wildlife habitat, conservation reserve practice and enhancing idle ground.

Staff

734.241.8540

- ☎ Catherine Acerboni, Manager - Ext. 9311
- ☎ Rob Bates, MAEAP Tech. Ext. 9313
- ☎ Adam Miller MAEAP Tech. Ext. 9315
- ☎ Tamarra Roseburgh NRCS - Ext. 9314