



Van Buren Conservation District November 2021 Program Update

Submitted by Emily Hickmott, Deputy Administrator

- **Ag Conservation/Water Quality Projects** (*Erin Fuller, Colleen Forestieri, Hannah Hudson*) - Staff worked on coordinating engineering, permitting and construction for the installation of four water control structures on a large farm field adjacent to Mill Creek. These structures are part of a comprehensive drainage water management system and research project with the University of Notre Dame and Michigan State University. This research will allow us to share real-world data with local farmers to help them decide what conservation practices might fit their farm needs as well as help improve water quality.
- **SWxSW Corner Cisma (Cooperative Invasive Species Management Area)** (*Abbie Bristol, Alex Florian, Andrew Michalek*) - The team completed its application for the Michigan Invasive Species Grant program, which provides sustaining funding for Cismas in Michigan. We also completed reporting on two MISGP grants we already hold. Our Strike team was also able to spray Japanese knotweed and Phragmites in the right of way for the Van Buren Road Commission.
- **MAEAP** (*Kyle Mead*) - The technician has been making many contacts to reach farmers that are due for MAEAP re-verification as well as following up with farmers that are new to MAEAP. One grower is close to verification after 15 years of effort. Several verification appointments are scheduled for new and repeat farms in November.
- **National Association of Conservation Districts Technical Assistance** (*Lucas Hartman*) - The 2019 grant was completed, and the final report was submitted. Additional training and preparatory work was done to prepare for upcoming deadlines.
- **Outreach** (*Jacob Diljak*) - October saw a lot of coordination in a multitude of exciting projects for the VBCD. The coordinator is working with MDNR and local partnering organizations to plant tree seedlings in Van Buren State Park next Spring. Work continues on the 2022 VBCD calendar, 2021 Annual Report, and 2022 Food, Farm, Fun Guide.
- **Produce Safety** (*Patrick Gordon*) - Various training sessions and conferences were attended as a wrap up to the growing season for most Southwestern Michigan growers. Farm visits were completed in Allegan and Berrien Counties.
- **Resource Recovery Recycling** (*Emily Hickmott*) - Preparations were made for the 2022 resource recovery collection season, including date setting, partner and vendor commitments, and diagram creation. Most Van Buren County residents will receive a 1/3 sheet flyer with their Winter 2021 tax bill that will include collection season information along with information about year-round electronic recycling, tree seedling sale, and invasive species management.



For more information on any of our programs and projects,
please email us at info@vanburencd.org, call us at 269-657-4030x5 or visit the VBCD website at
www.VanBurenCD.org.

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