

Jackson County Conservation District 2008 Annual Report



Editorial inquiries regarding this report should be made to:
Jackson County Conservation District
211 W. Ganson St., Jackson, MI 49201 or call (517) 782-7404

James Pickett receives 2008 Farm of the Year Award

James Pickett purchased his farm in 1970 and built his home and barns there in 1974. Horses were Jim's species of choice for around the first 10 years of farming. During this time, he grew his own corn, hay and oats. He then bought 2 head of cattle and began to grow his herd to the current total of 45 brood cows. Mr. Pickett's cow/calf operation is primarily pasture-based and he rotationally grazes all of his property. As his herd expanded, Jim began renting neighboring farms for hay and corn production, and dedicated his entire owned acreage to grazing. James began working with the Conservation District through the Michigan Groundwater Stewardship Program in 2005 and since then has become MAEAP verified in farmstead, livestock and cropping systems. Some of the practices Jim has implemented include Use Exclusion, the Comprehensive Nutrient Management Plan, Heavy Use Area Protection, and watering facilities. James is genuinely concerned about natural resource issues on his farm and has been a pleasure to work with over the past few years.



Left to right, Andrew Gust USDA-NRCS District Conservationist, James Pickett receiving the award and Mike Rubley Michigan Groundwater Stewardship Technician



*Before picture
of the heavy
use area
protection.*



Manure was scraped off of site, #60 Geo cloth was laid and covered with 5" of compacted stone.

2008 JCCD ANNUAL REPORT CONTINUED

Watershed Project Ends, but it's Only the Beginning

By Cecilia Govrik, Watershed Coordinator

The three-year Upper Grand River Implementation Project (UGRIP), funded by a 319 Nonpoint Source grant from the MI Department of Environmental Quality, came to a close at the end of December. The Jackson County Conservation District and its 26 partner organizations on this project can be proud of what has been achieved throughout the course of UGRIP. The \$503,850 project consisted of \$281,160 of funding from DEQ and \$222,690 of in-kind services from the UGRIP partners. Some of the highlights from the project included:

- Delivering youth education programs to over 3000 students
- Installing 16 more watershed signs at road crossings
- Holding two volunteer cleanups on the Portage River
- Starting the Adopt-A-Stream volunteer monitoring program, and collecting three seasons of macroinvertebrate data
- Completing an inventory of riparian conditions in the Huntoon Creek subbasin
- Hosting 8 public workshops on water quality and land use topics
- Creating a project website and various informational handouts
- Completing Natural Resource Inventories/Planning & Zoning Reviews for Henrietta and Waterloo Townships
- Educating the public through displays at special events, such as the Earth Day Festival at Cascades Park.



In addition, local conservation agencies and nonprofits have focused their efforts in target areas of the watershed in order to implement Best Management Practices where they are needed most. Some of the conservation measures that have been implemented over the past three years include:

- 400 acres of wetland restoration
- 692 acres of conservation cover
- 195 acres in two conservation easements
- 33 acres of prescribed grazing
- 2 agricultural containment facilities
- 1 abandoned well closure; and many other miscellaneous conservation practices.

Despite the success of UGRIP, much more work is still needed in the watershed in order to see long-term improvements in water

quality of the Grand and Portage Rivers. A little over a year ago, the Conservation District and its partners applied for another grant from DEQ to continue UGRIP beyond the end of 2008. The grant was awarded and the Upper Grand River Implementation Project will continue for another three years! The new project will build on the success of the first phase by expanding the youth education programs, public outreach efforts, and volunteer opportunities. The new project will also target some issues within the urban areas of the watershed, such as sedimentation from dirt and gravel driveways and the lack of stormwater retention.

Watch for more information on the project in upcoming months, and check out www.theugrip.org for photos of past events. Thanks again to all of the UGRIP partner organizations and volunteers that have been working for the watershed! The Jackson County Conservation District is looking forward to another three years of "lending a hand to keep it GRAND!"

Lending a Hand to
Keep it GRAND!



SPRING 2009

Upper Grand River Watershed Adopt-A-Stream Program

SAVE THE DATES!

Volunteer Training

**New & Improved!*

Saturday, April 25th
1:30 - 4:30 p.m.
MacCready Reserve
9243 Skiff Lake Rd.
Liberty Township

Collection Day

Saturday, May 2nd
9:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.
Meet at the
Dahlem Center
7117 S. Jackson Rd.

Bug I.D. Night

Tuesday, May 5th
5:30 - 8:30 p.m.
Jackson Community
College
McDivitt Hall

Contact Cecilia Govrik at 517-784-2800, Ext. 208 or cecilia.govrik@macd.org to sign up as a volunteer.

Watch for the Adopt-A-Stream newsletter coming soon! Visit www.theugrip.org under "Upcoming Events" for more information as it becomes available.

2008 JCCD ANNUAL REPORT CONTINUED

Jackson County Conservation District Receives Award



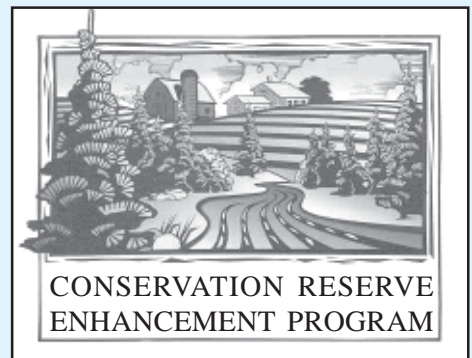
Jackson County Conservatin District is presented with a tribute from the Michigan Legislators for 60 years of service helping put conservation on the land. Left to right is Ron Parker, webmaster; John Manor, District Director from Senator Randy Richardville's office; Representative Mike Simpson; Sharon Parker, Executive Director of the Jackson County Conservation District; Zac Smith, Conservation Technical Assistance Initiative Technician; Cecilia Govrik, Upper Grand River Watershed Project Coordinator; and Mike Rubley, Michigan Groundwater Stewardship Program Technician.

2008 Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP) Annual Report

Submitted by Lauren Lindemann and Nathan McNett

Western Lake Erie Basin/River Raisin Watershed Acreage Report for Fiscal Year 2008:

Practice	Lenawee	Monroe	Washtenaw	Jackson
CP1	377.7		43.2	
CP2	118.2		2.2	
CP5A	5.4	1.6		
CP21	399.6	67.1		
CP22		9		
CP23A	71.3	29.3		
CP26	3			
TOTALS	975.2	107	45.4	0



The Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP) continues to attract a lot of interest this year. Our area is being called the Western Lake Erie Basin and includes parts of Branch, Hillsdale, Jackson, Washtenaw, and Monroe Counties, and all of Lenawee County.

With increased rental rates and 100% cost share for installing CREP practices, we hope to see more landowners lined up to sign up, especially for the most sensitive areas such as along ditches and highly erodible lands. We've started a new "Got Erosion?" advertising campaign through our local newspapers to help increase interest in the program.

Statewide CREP enrollment has reached around 70,000 acres with 15,000 remaining to attain the goal of 85,000 acres.

2008 JCCD ANNUAL REPORT CONTINUED

Michigan Groundwater Stewardship Program 2008 Final Report

By Mike Rubley



Overview:

The MGSP program for Calhoun and Jackson in 2008 has primarily focused on reaching a few producers, and working with them to achieve MAEAP verification. From October 2007 to September 2008, the program worked with 29 individuals / facilities. Out of the 29 producers, six MAEAP verifications were completed. Ten more of the producers are currently ready for, or projected to complete their MAEAP verification in one or more of the systems before the spring of 2009.

Deliverables:

The program has accumulated a total of 273 deliverables for the year. This sets the program at 182% of the required deliverables for year 2008. Due to a lack of experience and education, I was unable to meet the contribution agreement deliverables for the NRCS this year, but was able to take the required training and gain the knowledge to start working on achieving contribution agreement deliverables. A breakdown of the deliverables shows the completion of:

- Farm*A*Systs – 15

- Crop*A*Systs – 8
- MAEAP Farmstead Verification – 5
- MAEAP Cropping Verification – 1
- Drift Management Plans / Environmental sensitivity – 21
- Emergency Plans – 26
- Backflow Devices – 23
- Spill Kits/Spill Related – 15
- Fuel Storage Related – 14
- Water Testing – 3
- Well/Water Setbacks – 11
- Pesticide Related – 47
- Fertilizer/Manure Related – 21
- Livestock Related – 10
- Waste/Waste Disposal Related – 10
- Miscellaneous – 12

Problems or Successes within the program:

Abandoned well closures continue to be a high priority. This year, six abandoned wells were decommissioned. Five of the six wells were in pits, with the most impressive being a rock well four feet in diameter and 53 feet deep.

The sprayer clinic held on March 18, 2008 at Butch Lincolns farm in Jackson County was a success this year. There were 176

individuals in attendance at the clinic. RUP credits (3) were made available to attendees whom were interested.

I worked heavily with the Albion Equestrian Center, on accomplishing their MAEAP Verification, scheduled for October 2008. This facility was chosen for writing my Comprehensive Nutrient Management Plan. The plan is currently at the NRCS state office for certification.

A pest management plan was also completed, and has been sent to the state office for certification.

Conservation Technical Assistance Initiative Annual Report

In 2008 the CTAI Specialist assisted with approximately \$250,000 in federal cost share dollars coming into the County through programs such as: Environmental Quality Incentive Program, (EQIP), Wetlands Reserve Program (WRP) and Wildlife Habitat Incentive Program, (WHIP). The following practices were installed in accordance with USDA/NRCS Standards,

- Ag Chemical Containment Facility 4
- Wetland Reserve Program 320 Ac.
- Livestock Watering pipelines 4500 ft
- Well Closures 1
- Manure Storage Facility 3

- Heavy Use Area Protection 0.5 Ac.
- Roof water runoff structures 2

If you are interested in applying for, or need information on agricultural programs offered through USDA, please contact any of the following at (517) 784-2800.

Natural Resources Conservation Service, Ext. 3
Jackson Conservation District, Ext. 5
Farm Service Agency, Ext. 2

SAVE THE DATE

Native Plant Sale

SATURDAY
May 9, 2009
9-noon

In the Conservation District parking lot

Wildflowers, Native Grasses and
Woodland Plants

District Board Officers

Richard Ekins	Secretary
Lathe Clafin	Treasurer
Gaylord Lincoln	Member
Scott Maurer	Member
Jim Sprink	Member
Don Foster	Associate Member

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