

# EMMET CONSERVATION DISTRICT



## Annual Report Fiscal Year 2009

### Board of Directors:

Dr. Russell LaBeau—  
Chairman

Marcus Kurburski—  
Vice Chairman

John Casto—Treasurer

Jane Rye—Secretary

Jane Mooradian—  
Director

### Staff:

Nancy Salar—Administrator

Cydney Steeb—  
Program Coordinator

Chris Anderson—  
Groundwater Technician

### District Meetings

The District meets the first Monday of the month in the Emmet County building located at 3434 M-119 in the lower level conference room. All meetings are open to the public.

### First MAEAP Verified Farmstead

Last fall we had an exciting event in Emmet County for the Michigan Groundwater Stewardship Program. We had a farm verified in the Michigan Agriculture Environmental Assurance Program (MAEAP). This was the first in the county. The Michigan Agriculture Environmental Assurance Program (MAEAP) is an innovative, proactive program that helps farms of all sizes and all commodities voluntarily prevent or minimize agricultural pollution risks. MAEAP teaches farmers how to identify and prevent environmental risks and comply with state and federal environmental regulations. Farmers who successfully complete the three phases of a MAEAP system are rewarded by becoming verified in that system.

The farm is Mini's by the Creek owned by Michael and Betty Kerzka. They were verified in the farmstead system on October 15, 2008. As the name of the farm (Mini's by the Creek) implies, the Kerzkas raise miniature livestock. They currently have miniature horses and donkeys. They also raise pygmy and full size goats. Plus



they have the chickens for laying eggs.

Chris Anderson, Ground Water Technician for Emmet and Charlevoix counties, started working with Kerzkas in April of 2008. On his initial visit Chris could tell by talking to them that they were very conscious of the environment. They wanted to make sure none of their farming practices negatively impacted the quality of the environment in the area. After going through the Farm\*A\*Syst, Chris saw that there was a good chance with a few minor changes to get them verified in the MAEAP.

Once all the changes were made, they ran into a small snag. In order to be verified, a producer must attend a phase 1 educational meeting once every three years. Chris usually puts these on in February or March. However, Mr. Kerzka didn't want to wait that long so he drove down to the Traverse City area to attend one that was be-

ing held that September. He should be commended for wanting to be involved in the MAEAP system and to improving himself and the farm operation through continuing education.

Chris says congratulations are in order for Michael and Betty Kerzka for being the first farm in Emmet County to have their farm operation verified in one of the MAEAP systems. This shows a commitment to being good stewards of the land.

### District Cooperators

The Emmet Conservation District welcomed two (2) new cooperators in 2009. Andre Kitscher, Bear Creek Township and James Spencer IV of Pond Hill Farm, West Traverse Township.

**Financial Report Fiscal Year 2009  
Receipts and Disbursements as of  
Sept. 30, 2009**

**Income**

State Grant	10,740
County Grant	1,500
Interest	92
Tree Sales	15,693
Donations	168
Other	663

Total Income \$28,856

**Expense**

District Operations	19,090
Tree Sales	9,082

Total Expense \$28,172

Beginning Fund Balance	\$34,269
Ending Fund Balance	\$34,854



The District received a mini-grant from the Arbor Day Foundation which allowed us to plant two Prairie Fire Crabapple trees in Harbor Springs and one at the Educational Gardens in Petoskey. Dr. LaBeau and Cydney Steeb instructed Jr. Master Gardeners who assisted with the plantings. The District plans on planting two trees each year in other Emmet County communities.

**Other 2009 Projects.....**

The Educational Raingarden received its second installation of plants and decorative bridge to draw attention to the garden. Volunteers are continuing to maintain the garden and an educational workshop is planned for 2010.

The District organized the first landscape plastic recycling event for Emmet County which was held at Pollys Planting and Plucking. District volunteers along with several Pollys volunteers and Emmet County Recycling collected 9,500 pounds of plastic which will be recycled here in Michigan and not end up in our landfill.

Two educational workshops were held by the District. The first was called "Firewise" and provided information on steps to take to protect your property from wild fires. The second workshop discussed phragmites, an invasive non-native species of wetland weed that has been showing up around the area and what can be done to stop its spread.

Dr. Russell LaBeau and Cydney Steeb spent Earth Day at Sheridan Elementary School. Dr. LaBeau demonstrated the proper way to plant a tree and Cydney introduced the students to the wonderful world of worm composting. 250 trees were donated to the school for students to take home and plant.

Trees were also donated to LTBB of Odawa Indians Elders housing. Cydney supervised and assisted with the planting of these trees.

The no-till-drill was rented out to several farms during the year and is available for rent at a reasonable fee. Call Nancy at 439-8996 for rates or to schedule a rental.

**Thank You to the Following  
People for Their Generous  
Donations in Support of the  
District**

Kurt Anderson

Audrey Bauer

Charles Bayless

Treasure Brower

Roxanne Cook

Joel Donaldson

Bill Fedus

Doug Fuller

Fran Gano

Leroy Gregory

Kevin Hammond

Stephen Hume

James Johnson

Russell LaBeau

Geoffrey MacGlashan

Penny Marshall

Dan Steffes

**Volunteer Recognition**

The District received 495 hours of volunteer labor this past year. It would have been impossible for us to accomplish our work without this volunteer assistance. We would like to thank them all for their help.

Pat Duffy

Dee Irwin

Audrey Trimble

Terri Law

Master Gardeners

All Season's Maintenance