

Five-Year, Long-Range Plan (10/1/22 – 9/30/27)
Leelanau Conservation District
Contact: B. Long, 231-256-9783, blong@leelanau.gov



Organization of the Leelanau Conservation District:

A governmental subdivision of the State of Michigan and a public body corporate and politic, exercising public powers, as outlined in Conservation District Law, Act 463 of 1998.

The Leelanau Conservation District (LCD) was organized in 1943 by a petition to the State of Michigan signed by over 600 landowners in the county. The District works closely with Federal, State and local agencies and organizations to promote the wise use of our natural resources by providing information and technical assistance to the landowners and users.

Function of the Leelanau Conservation District:

To make available, technical, financial, and educational resources, from whatever their source, and to focus and/or coordinate them so that they meet the needs of the local landowners with conservation of soil, water, and related natural resources at the forefront.

Mission of the Leelanau Conservation District:

- *To provide assistance to all resource users in maintaining and improving the quality of our natural resources: water, air, plants and animals, for future generations through wise and sustainable use.*

Vision of the Leelanau Conservation District:

- *Leelanau County with abundant, high quality natural resources, provided through responsible and sustainable usage.*

Values of the Leelanau Conservation District:

- ❖ Inclusiveness – we respect people, value diversity and are committed to equality
- ❖ Service – we strive to provide excellent assistance to all customers
- ❖ Integrity – we are dedicated to openness, honesty and hard work
- ❖ Commitment – we are dedicated to the citizens and natural resources of Leelanau County
- ❖ Participation – we value and recognize the contribution of board members, employees and volunteers within or organization and communities.

Operations Priorities:

1. *Additional staffing – Communication/Outreach Specialist*
2. *Successional staffing – Executive Director, Admin Assistant, Soil Erosion Officer & Natural Resource Specialist.*
3. *Funding & Benefits Package – implement a retirement program and provide health insurance benefits to employee's*
4. *Advocacy – meet regularly with local and state legislators*

Natural Resource Priorities:

- *Water Quality, Wetland preservation & Restoration*
- *Development Impacts*
- *Forest Management, Health & Preservation*
- *Wildlife Management & Habitat*
- *Agricultural Management*

Measures of Success:

- *SESC Permits: SESC Applications & Permits*
- *Operations: Site visits completed, Plant sales, No-till drill usage, educational events*
- *FAP: Site visits completed, QFP applications, educational events, information disseminated*
- *MAEAP: Environmental outcomes report, Phase 1 trainings, assessments and verifications.*
- *CTAI: Reports*

Staffing Needs: Full Time Positions

1 Executive Director, 1 Administrative Assistant, 1 Soil Erosion Officer, 1 Soil Erosion Technician, 1 Communication Specialist, 1 FAP Forester, 1 MAEAP Technician, 1 CTAI Office Assistant

Budget Needs:

- *Operations: \$250,000*
- *Soil Erosion: \$200,000*
- *Forestry: \$125,000*
- *MAEAP: \$125,000*
- *CTAI: \$100,000*
- TOTAL: \$800,000**

Strategic Partnerships:

- *Leelanau County Board of Commissioners, MDARD (FAP, MAEAP & CTAI), NRCS, NWMISN CISMA, EGLE (Soil Erosion Permits, Critical Dunes), MSU Extension, Leelanau Conservancy, Grand Traverse Band of Ottawa & Chippewa Indians, Conservation Resource Alliance, Drain Commissioner, The Watershed Center, Leelanau Clean Water, Leelanau County Road Commission, Sleeping Bear Dunes National Lakeshore, Leelanau County Lake Associations (Lake Leelanau, Glen Lake, Lime Lake, Little Traverse Lake and Cedar Lake), Northwest Michigan Horticulture Research Foundation, Saving Birds Through Habitat, Benzie Leelanau Health Department.*

Benchmarks, Actions, and Timelines

Operations Priority: Staffing – Communications/Outreach Specialist

Measures of Success:

1. Increased awareness of the District throughout the community
2. Increased public participation in District programs
3. Increased volunteer participation

Benchmark	Annual Action Plan	Timeline
Hire communication/ outreach specialist	Develop job description and determine a recruitment schedule	FY 2024
Onboard & Train	Develop a training plan and priorities	1/1/24 to 6/30/24

Operations Priority: Successional Staffing

Measures of Success:

1. New full-time staff in place

Benchmark	Annual Action Plan	Timeline
Hire a Replacement for the Executive Director	Review and develop job description and training plan for ED and determine recruitment schedule	6 months prior to retirement
Hire a Replacement for the Administrative Assistant	Review and develop job description and training plan for AA and determine recruitment schedule	4 months prior to retirement
Hire a Replacement for the Soil Erosion Officer	Review and develop job description and training plan for SEO and determine recruitment schedule	4 months prior to retirement
Hire a Replacement for the Natural Resource Specialist	Review and develop job description and training plan for NRS and determine recruitment schedule	3 months prior to retirement

Operations Priority: Funding & Benefits Package

Measures of Success:

1. Benefit package to include Retirement Savings Plan
2. Benefit package to include Health Care plan
3. Soil erosion and sediment control program fully funded and staffed.

Benchmark	Annual Action Plan	Timeline
MERS program in place for all employees.	MERS program approved by the LCD Board and functional.	2/28/23
Find affordable health plans that may be available	Contact Districts with health care plans in place	3/1/23 to 6/1/23
Affordable health care available for staff.	Work with MACD to put together a state wide plan for all District to participate in.	10/1/23 to 10/1/24
Soil erosion program with 2 FTE's	Review and increase fee schedule to cover cost of 2 full time employees	3/1/23 to 6/1/23
2 FTE's available for SESC program	Hire part time employee to make up 2 FTE's for the SESC Program	6/1/23

Operations Priority: Advocacy

Measures of Success:

1. Meet with County Commissioners quarterly
2. Attend State Representative Coffee hours monthly
3. Contact Township representatives annually

Benchmark	Annual Action Plan	Timeline
Attend 1 Township each month	District staff will rotate meeting with each Township at least once per year.	2023 - 2027
To get State Congressman to District Events	Invite State congresspersons to district workshops, demos, meetings, esp. annual meeting	2023 - 2027

Natural Resource Priority: *Water Quality, Wetland Preservation & Restoration*

Measures of Success:

1. Reduced sediment and nutrient delivery to surface water
2. Reduced sediment delivery and stormwater runoff on construction sites

Benchmark	Annual Action Plan	Timeline
Education – Conduct informational meetings for lakeshore landowners	Hold 1 lakeshore workshop/demonstration every other year.	FY 2023 - 2027
Distribute educational materials regarding proper fertilizer and pesticide use.	Develop pamphlets and postings providing information on use and application of fertilizer and pesticides. Promote “no throw no mow” zones	FY 2024 - 2027

Natural Resource Priority: *Development Impacts*

Measures of Success:

1. Reduced sediment to surface water and wetlands
2. Reduced sediment and stormwater reaching neighboring properties
3. Increase awareness by the public regarding detrimental impacts from construction.

Benchmark	Annual Action Plan	Timeline
Issuing Soil Erosion & Sediment Control Permits	Continue to provide soil erosion permits to County applicants	FY 2023 - 2027
Keep contractors, landscapers & realtors informed of SESC changes.	Hold educational events as needed to keep customers informed of any changes to the SESC program	FY 2024 - 2027
Ensure that the LCD does not lose or profit in providing SESC permits	Review costs of the SESC program and request increases or decreases as necessary	FY 2023 - 2027

Operations Priority: *Forest Management, Health and Preservation*

Measures of Success:

1. 200 site visits completed
2. 10 QFP enrollments & verifications
3. 150 referrals to private and public sectors
4. 30 outreach events

Benchmark	Annual Action Plan	Timeline
Increase quality forest management practices throughout the County	Complete a minimum of 200 site visits annual to forest landowners leading to a minimum of 10 QFP enrollments and verifications.	2023 - 2027
Forest Management through logging and TSI are completed	Provide referrals to the private and public sector	2023 - 2027
Educate the public about forest management, tree health and plantings	Hold seedling sales in the spring and fall annually	2023 - 2027

Operations Priority: Wildlife Management and Habitat

Measures of Success:

1. Number of trees, shrubs and native plants sold
2. Acres of invasive plants treated
3. Numbers and acres of wildlife food plots planted with the District no-till drill

Benchmark	Annual Action Plan	Timeline
Develop a County autumn olive removal workforce.	Work with partners to remove 100 acres of autumn olive annually	2023 - 2027
Promote planting of native species in autumn olive removal areas.	Offer trees and shrubs at district sales that are suitable to replacement of autumn olive	2023 - 2027
Educate landowners on proper tree planting and protection	Hold annual tree planting workshops	2023- 2027

Operations Priority: Agricultural Management

Measures of Success:

1. Number of assessments and verifications completed
- 2.

Benchmark	Annual Action Plan	Timeline
MAEAP farm assessments and verifications	Conduct 13 on-farm assessments and 8 verifications per year	2023 -2027
Education – MAEAP - hold on-farm no-till demonstrations	Conduct farm no-till demos to promote use of no-till and reduced tillage for planting cover crops, pasture & hayland and pollinator fields	2023 - 2027
Education – MAEAP Phase 1 events	Hold 1 Phase 1 event per county (Benzie & Leelanau) every other year.	2023 - 2027