

Calhoun Conservation District

Annual Report - Fiscal Year 2025

To serve, educate, and empower community by providing technical assistance and information to landowners in all aspects of natural resource management.

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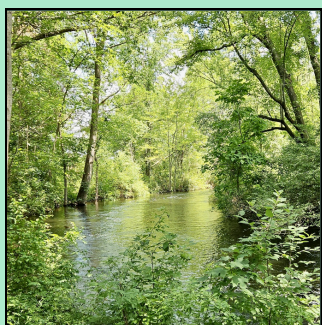
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Natural Resources Conservation Service

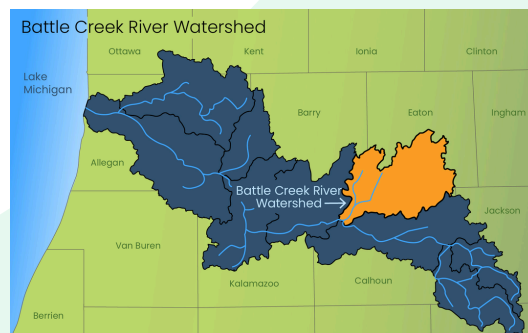


The USDA farm bill offers Calhoun County producer's the opportunity to apply for assistance to install conservation practices on their lands through the Environmental Quality Initiative Program(EQIP) and Conservation Stewardship Program(CSP). **In 2025, the NRCS assisted in practice implementation:**

- 91.4 acres of Prescribed Grazing
- 23.3 acres of Forestry Practices
- 1,599.7 acres of Cover Crops
- 515.7 acres of Residue Management
- 1,902.7 acres for Nutrient Management
- ≈100 acres of Conservation Cover

New contracts for 2025 include

- 4 CSP Contracts
- 9 EQIP Contracts



Watershed Protection

The Calhoun Conservation District has received a grant from the Michigan Department of Environment, Great Lakes and Energy to update the Battle Creek River Watershed Management Plan previously completed in 2004. The plan leveraged over \$1,00,000 in projects within the watershed and the new plan will provide strategic guidelines to reduce nutrient loads in the watershed. This plan will work with partners to identify concerns and assist producers in implementing best management practices that improve soil health, benefit sustainable agriculture, and improve water quality.

Michigan Agriculture Environment Assurance Program

Our Calhoun County CTAP Technician, Joselyn Ralph, has verified farms within the MAEAP program for the last two years. This year, she conducted 60 site visits that resulted in 33 assessments and 16 MAEAP verifications. Throughout this process, she helped producers complete 117 environmental risk reductions. She also introduced the Regenerative Agriculture Program (RAP) to Calhoun County, conducting 12 soil health assessments to address potential soil concerns. To schedule a MAEAP assessment or RAP soil health assessment, please contact Joselyn by email: joselyn.ralph@macd.org.



Conservation Needs Assessment

In 2025, the Calhoun Conservation District updated the conservation needs assessment for Calhoun County. The district received 103 submissions regarding priorities for natural resources locally. These results are analyzed and compose the district's five year plan. These priorities will be the district's focus and our goals are directly associated with the public's input. The top five natural resource priorities include:

- Impacts to Water Quality
- Farmland Preservation and Environmental Stewardship
- Wildlife Habitat Enhancements
- Open Space Conservation and Access
- Invasive Species Impacts

Hunting Access Program

The Conservation District received a state grant to assist with access to hunting lands through the HAP program. In 2024, 42 acres were enrolled, in 2025, 243 acres have been enrolled for public hunting opportunities.



CCD Tree Fundraiser

The CCD 2025 tree sale sold 7,200 trees that may be planted across the county. This is key for replenishing Michigan's vast forest systems.

Water Trails Plans

The CCD partnered with a Michigan State University class to compose a water trails plan. This plan has identified concerns and further improvements for paddling opportunities in Calhoun County.

No-Till Drill

The district hosts a DNR No-Till Drill available for public use. This year it was used to plant nearly 100 acres within Calhoun County.



Property Management

Brandt Woods

A new forest management plan has been completed for this property and it has been verified and enrolled into the MAEAP program. Plans have been made to replace the roof for the pavilion in 2026. *The property is closed to the public August through January for private hunting.*

Danklefsen Acres

This property is being evaluated for future use along the Battle Creek River.

Hart's Lake

The property management plan is undergoing an update to increase access and preserve natural resources. Trails are currently being expanded and improved on the property.

Holt-Rice Creek

The CCD completed the property management plan for the property owned by the DNR. The initial phase of the plan has been completed through a grant from the Marshall Community Foundation to improve accessibility for the property.

Jenney Woods

This property has been enrolled into HAP for public hunting for all legal species. The property has undergone updates to the parking area and is being prepped for a prescribe burn in 2026.

Check out our [website](#) to learn more about these properties.



Barry ■ Calhoun ■ Kalamazoo
BCKCISMA
Cooperative Invasive Species Management Area

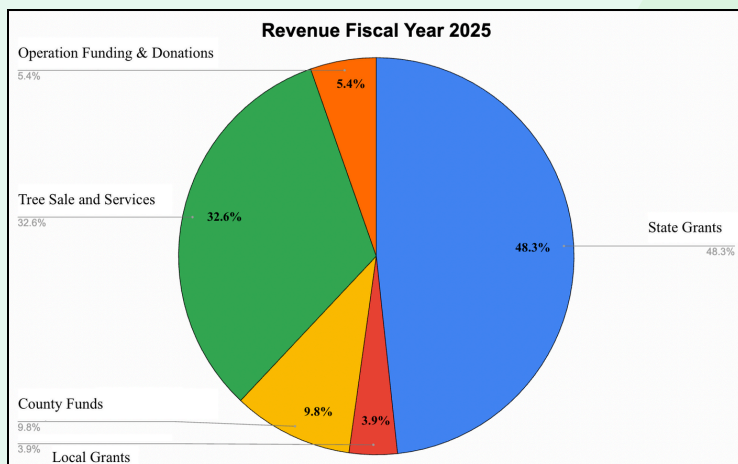
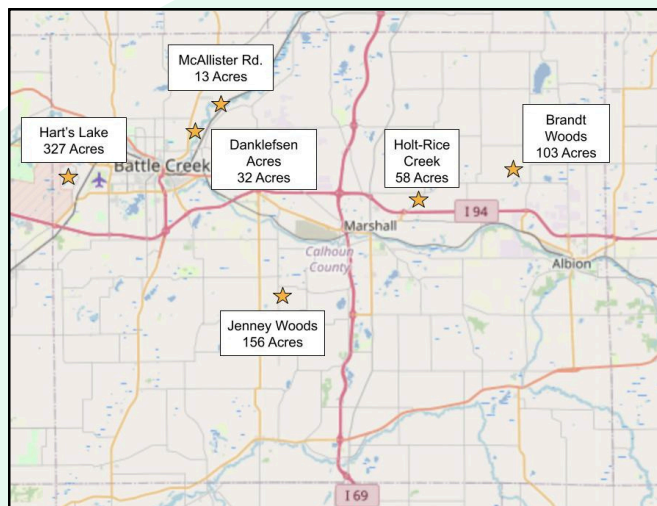
BCK Cisma

In 2025, the Cisma (Cooperative Invasive Species Management Area) strike team managed 9.5 acres of knotweed, including along Calhoun County's roads and in City of Battle Creek parks. In the City of Marshall Parks, the team treated 3.75 acres of shrubby invasive plants, mostly in Ketchum Park. Mile-a-minute weed continues to be detected in the Albion and Homer area. The team has treated mile-a-minute weed using foliar sprays and soil-applied herbicides across 336 acres. To determine the extent of mile-a-minute weed in the State, we've surveyed over 14,000 acres via private land and road surveys.

Although on-the-ground management has an impact, educating the public about invasive species remains the top priority. In 2025, we engaged over 550 people through direct outreach, over 300 people through printed materials distributed in Calhoun County, and estimated over 1,900,000 people via one billboard on I-94 near Albion.

In 2025, we found a few new invasive species in our service area, so we ask people to look out for and report purple jewelweed, stiltgrass, European frog-bit, and cinnamon vine.

Visit the CCD office to find information on these species or follow the team on Facebook @BCKCISMA.



Revenue

In FY25, the Calhoun Conservation District earned \$101,781.99 in revenues through grants, services and the native tree sale. The district is projected to increase revenue by 30% in the upcoming fiscal year with additional grants at the state level.



"To protect, promote and preserve the food, agricultural, environmental and economic interests of the people of Michigan"