

## Five-Year, Long-Range Plan (10/1/23 – 9/30/28)

### Alger Conservation District

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#### Organization of the Alger 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.

- *Alger Conservation District was incorporated in 1959 in response to soil conservation concerns and brought about by a county referendum by agricultural leaders and other landholders.*

#### Function of the Alger Conservation District:

- *To make available technical, financial, and educational resources, and focus or coordinate them so that they meet the needs of the local landowners with conservation of soil, water, and related natural resources.*

#### Mission of the Alger Conservation District:

- *To provide sound natural resource and management assistance to the people of Alger County*

#### Vision of the Alger Conservation District:

- *Sustainable farms, vibrant communities, and restored, protected, and enhanced natural resources. To engage the community, instill the values of conservation, and increase awareness of natural resources.*

#### Values of the Alger Conservation District:

- **Community engagement**
- **Education**
- **Appropriate action, relevancy, effectiveness**
- **Inclusiveness**
- **Participation**
- **Service**
- **Commitment**
- **Integrity**

#### Operations Priorities:

1. *Community Garden Development and Education*
2. *Partnership Development, Awareness, and Outreach*
3. *Staffing*
4. *Millage renewal and advocacy*

#### Natural Resource Priorities:

1. *Invasive Pests, Plants, and Animals*
2. *Stream, wetland and forest habitat degradation, and cleanups*
3. *Soil Health*
4. *Climate change*
5. *Inadequate septic systems and groundwater contamination*

**Measures of Success:**

- Acres treated with L2L CISMA projects and partnerships; MISG Grants; UP RC&D
- MiCorps and volunteer stream monitoring; MAEAP participation
- NRCS Technical Assistance, Applications, and Funding for private landowners. Monthly ACD Newsletter outreach. Local newspaper articles
- Tree Sale customer and stem count numbers, NRCS landowner visits and contracts, GLRI Impact reports, VISTA Team Member accomplishments, FAP accomplishments

**Staffing Needs:**

- 1 District Manager, 1 Program Coordinator, 1 Outreach coordinator, 1 CTAI; we will utilize Invasive Species Technicians from L2L CISMA

**Budget Needs (5 year):**

- Operations: \$1,040,000 (Purchased District Vehicle in January 2023)
- Invasive Species:\$160,000
- CTAI: \$500,000 (1:1 match with NRCS, \$250,000:\$250,000)
- Capital investments: \$80,000 (additional vehicle, supplies)

**Strategic Partnerships:**

- L2L CISMA, MDARD, EGLE, Alger County Board of Commissioners, Alger County Road Commission, MDOT, MSU Extension and Upper Peninsula Research and Extension Center, Alger 4H, USDA Natural Resource Conservation Service, MDNR, USFS, MAEAP UPRC&D, Pictured Rocks National Lakeshore, Seney Wildlife Refuge, UP Land Conservancy, Alger Townships and Municipalities, MACD, NACD, UP Whitetails of Alger County, Fred Waara Chapter of Trout Unlimited

**Benchmarks, Timeline, and Actions:**

**Operations Priority: Community Garden Development and Education**

**Measures of Success:**

1. Increased awareness of the District owned parcel and potential uses
2. Creating community garden space
3. Creating a “Friends of Alger Conservation District Community Garden” group

<b>Benchmark</b>	<b>Timeline</b>	<b>Annual Action Plan</b>
Employing an AmeriCorps VISTA Member	<b>Dec. 2022-May 2024</b>	Assist with community garden development, outreach, education, and group formation. Tree Sale work, social media, website etc. Invasive Species work and other grant work as needed.
Continue building infrastructure such as garden beds and shed	<b>May 2023-Oct. 2023</b>	Source donations or suppliers for wood, landscape fabric, soil.
Involvement with “Friends of ACD Garden” group	<b>May 2023-Oct. 2023</b>	Using social media and community outreach to develop a “Friends of” Group with a target membership in year one of 50 participants

## Operations Priority: Partnership Development, Awareness, and Outreach

### Measures of Success:

1. Alger Conservation District Annual Banquet 2023 attendance and participation
2. Increased volunteer base and communication, ACD Newsletter outreach, and local news articles
3. Increased events and attendance at Farmers Markets (for example)
4. One on one site visits and small-scale technical assistance (soil health)

Benchmark	Timeline	Annual Action Plan
Serve at least 500 residents of Alger County	<b>Jan. 2023 – Dec. 2028</b>	Work with and to promote FAP, Produce Safety, MAEAP, and Farm Bill programs
NACD Urban Agriculture Grant	<b>Dec. 2023-Dec. 2024</b>	Develop workshops and educational events geared towards local food production and pollinators
Small scale homesteading and production	<b>Jan. 2024-Dec. 2028</b>	Create workshops and opportunities for community engagement
ACD Tree Sale new customers	<b>May 2023-May 2028</b>	Promote and publicize to residents, new and old, provide online retail options
MSU UPREC Partnership	<b>May 2023-Oct. 2024</b>	Stream sampling near MSU Extension Farm, and extending to other local farms

## Operations Priority: Staffing – Hire additional staff as budget allows

### Measures of Success:

1. New active employees
2. Increased volunteer engagement
3. Increased events and attendance and community events
4. CTAI Position with NRCS/MDARD/etc.
5. Staff retention

Benchmark	Timeline	Annual Action Plan
Post job opening and hiring	<b>March 2023</b>	Post job announcements and interview candidates
Onboard and train outreach coordinator	<b>May 2023</b>	Hire and train employee
Higher level of autonomy for employee	<b>May 2024</b>	Provide training opportunities and attendance at MACD Annual Conferences
Community Service needs from local jails	<b>June 2024</b>	Reach out to local organizations for Community Service potential and individual participants

Research and identify funding for CTAI position	<b>2024</b>	Hire and train CTAI with NRCS and MDARD to serve private landowners in Alger County on Farm Bill programs
Add part time accountant	<b>2024</b>	Research and post need for part time accountant

**Operations Priority: Millage renewal and advocacy**

**Measures of Success:**

1. Increased awareness of millage need
2. Publicize successes from previous millage
3. Develop plan for use of future millage funds

<b>Benchmark</b>	<b>Timeline</b>	<b>Annual Action Plan</b>
Research millage proposals and adapt to current needs	<b>2024-2027</b>	Request information from other successful CDs and partners
Attend County Commission Meetings as needed	<b>2023-2027</b>	Be on hand to be a face of the District, to answer questions, and to address current issues
Create and/or update existing “Friends of ACD” group	<b>2024-2027</b>	Find and update “Friends of...” Group
Promote uses of Millage and local impacts	<b>2023-2027</b>	Create and regularly update successes and outreach directly tied to millage funds

**Natural Resource Priority: Invasive Pests, Plants and Animals**

**Measures of Success:**

<b>Benchmark</b>	<b>Timeline</b>	<b>Annual Action Plan</b>
Acres surveyed; acres treated; CISMA Partnership	<b>2023-2027</b>	200 acres treated and restored per year, increased public awareness across county, volunteer invasive workdays and workshops, CISMA outcomes
Forestry Assistance Program Goals	<b>2023-2027</b>	Site visits, referrals, completed projects, outreach events, public awareness or forest pests
Phragmites Outreach Direct Mailing	<b>2023-2024</b>	4000 booklets to be printed for direct mailing, CISMA and Land Management organization distribution

NRCS Technical Assistance, Applications, and funding for private landowners	<b>2023-2027</b>	Farm Bill contracts with Alger County landowners to cover additional acreage from technical assistance site visits
Private Landowner Engagement	<b>2023-2027</b>	Provide Technical Assistance and Guidance for small scale involvement and engagement to encourage landowners on treatments

**Natural Resource Priority: Stream, wetland and forest habitat degradation, cleanups**

**Measures of Success:**

<b>Benchmark</b>	<b>Timeline</b>	<b>Annual Action Plan</b>
Stream Monitoring at RSXings and results; Stream Cleanup events	<b>2023-2027</b>	MiCorps data and stream sampling results to ensure continued habitat improvement for connectivity issues and water quality; research and find grants/funds for Stream Cleanup days with volunteers
NRCS Technical Assistance, Applications, and funding for private landowners	<b>2023-2027</b>	Farm Bill contracts with Alger County landowners to cover additional acreage from technical assistance site visits
EGLE & UPPCO appliance and eWaste collection events	<b>2023-2027</b>	Coordinate and provide events to collect appliances for recycling and eWaste
Property acquisition from Lyme Timber	<b>2024</b>	Utilize DNR Trust Fund Grants and potentially Community Forest Grants to acquire parcel of land in City of Munising boundaries

**Natural Resource Priority: Soil Health**

**Measures of Success:**

<b>Benchmark</b>	<b>Timeline</b>	<b>Annual Action Plan</b>
Adopt Soil and Sedimentation Permit Program	<b>2024-2027</b>	Become certified as Part 91 Agent for Alger County, job shadow and train, take on Soil and Sed Program from Building Codes Dept.
RCPH High Tunnel Initiative with NRCS	<b>2023-2027</b>	Develop high priority funding with NRCS for private landowner assistance as a result of ACD Letter of Support, increase landowner awareness and cooperation

NRCS Technical Assistance, Applications, and funding for private landowners	<b>2023-2027</b>	Increase Farm Bill contracts with Alger County landowners to cover additional acreage from technical assistance site visits
Monthly ACD Newsletter and info	<b>2023-2027</b>	Develop, compile, and distribute one monthly newsletter to email list and post to Facebook and Instagram
Landowner Workshops and Education	<b>2023-2027</b>	Provide and increase amounts of events and activities for landowners, partners, and other natural resource professionals, and ask for acres impacted in collaboration with partners

### **Natural Resource Priority: Climate Change, Energy Needs and Access**

#### **Measures of Success:**

<b>Benchmark</b>	<b>Timeline</b>	<b>Annual Action Plan</b>
Tree Sale, Wildflower Sale	<b>2023-2027</b>	Prepare catalogs and retail sales website, distribution and promotion, pack, sort and distribute orders
Shoreline Restoration in Au Train and Christmas	<b>2024-2026</b>	Utilize GLRI grant funding for native plantings to reduce erosion on approximately 1 mile of highway, and over 6 acres of beach
Hiring and utilizing an AmeriCorps VISTA Team member	<b>2023-2024</b>	Climate Change priorities as identified by Manager; continue to update ACD Website and Square retail site for increased Tree and Wildflower sale awareness. ACD Social Media management; Outreach and Volunteer recruitment and retention; ACD Monthly Newsletter
NRCS Technical Assistance, Applications, and funding for private landowners	<b>2023-2027</b>	Farm Bill contracts with Alger County landowners to cover additional acreage from technical assistance site visits
MAEAP Technical Assistance and on-site visits	<b>2023-2027</b>	MAEAP Verifications and Technical Assistance for Alger County Landowners in forests and farmlands
Allow for small scale site visits and technical assistance, including alternative energy guidance and options	<b>2023-2027</b>	Allow time for and advertise more small scale site visits and technical assistance for private landowners in Alger County, provide guidance and education as appropriate

### **Glossary of Acronyms in order of appearance**

CISMA: Cooperative Invasive Species Management Association

RC&D: Resource Conservation and Development Council

MAEAP: Michigan Agricultural and Environmental Assurance Program

NRCS: Natural Resources Conservation Service (USDA)

GLRI: Great Lakes Restoration Initiative

VISTA: AmeriCorps Volunteers in Service to America

FAP: Forestry Assistance Program (Michigan Dept. of Ag.)

CTAI: Conservation Technical Assistance Initiative (NRCS Soil Tech Position)

MDARD: Michigan Department of Agriculture and Resource Development

EGL: Michigan Department of Environment Great Lakes and Energy

MDOT: Michigan Department of Transportation

USDA: United States Department of Agriculture

MDNR: Michigan Department of Natural Resources

USFS: United States Forest Service

MACD: Michigan Association of Conservation Districts

NACD: National Association of Conservation Districts

MSU UPREC: Upper Peninsula Research and Extension Center

RSXings: Road Stream Crossings

UPPCO: Upper Peninsula Power Company

RCPP: Regional Cooperative Partnership Program