

Forestry Assistance Program  
Annual Report Fiscal Year 2004  
Environmental Stewardship Division

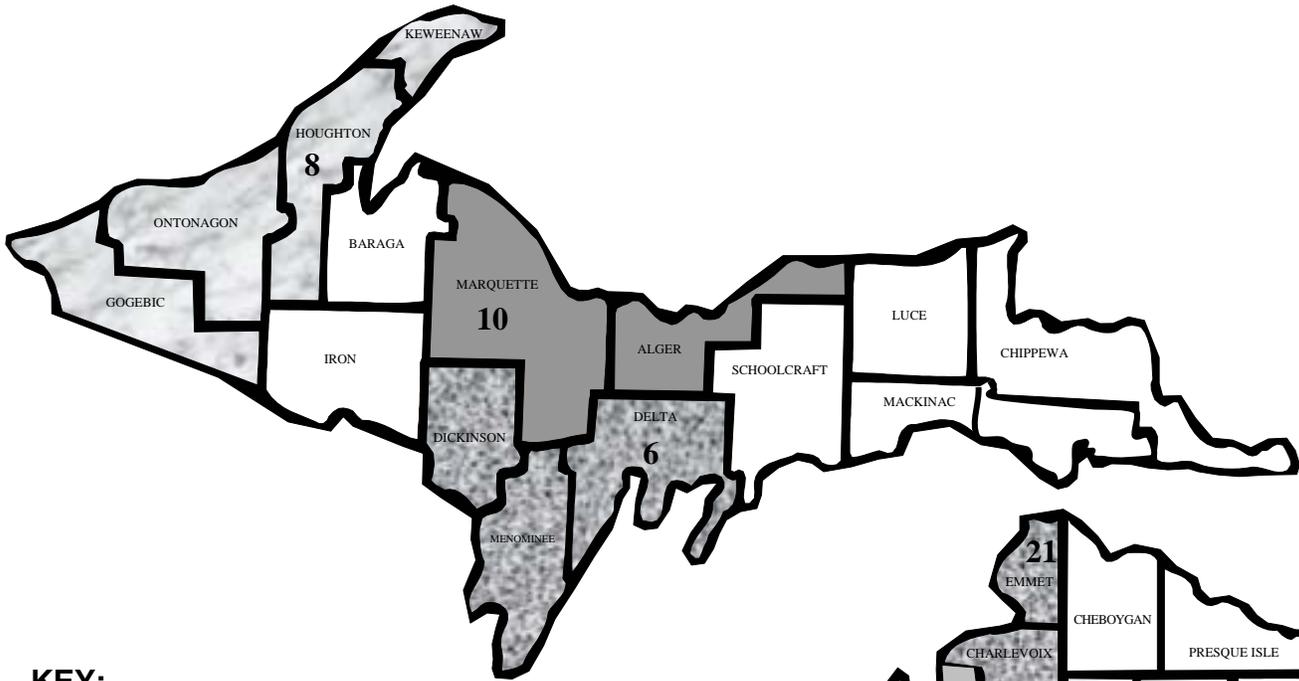


## **Introduction**

Under an agreement with the Michigan Department of Natural Resources (MDNR), the Michigan Department of Agriculture (MDA) awarded grants to Conservation Districts (CD) across the state to provide education and one-on-one technical assistance to private landowners and communities regarding local forest health issues. Professional foresters working out of 20 CD offices will provide coverage for 46 counties in the Upper and Lower Peninsulas of Michigan.

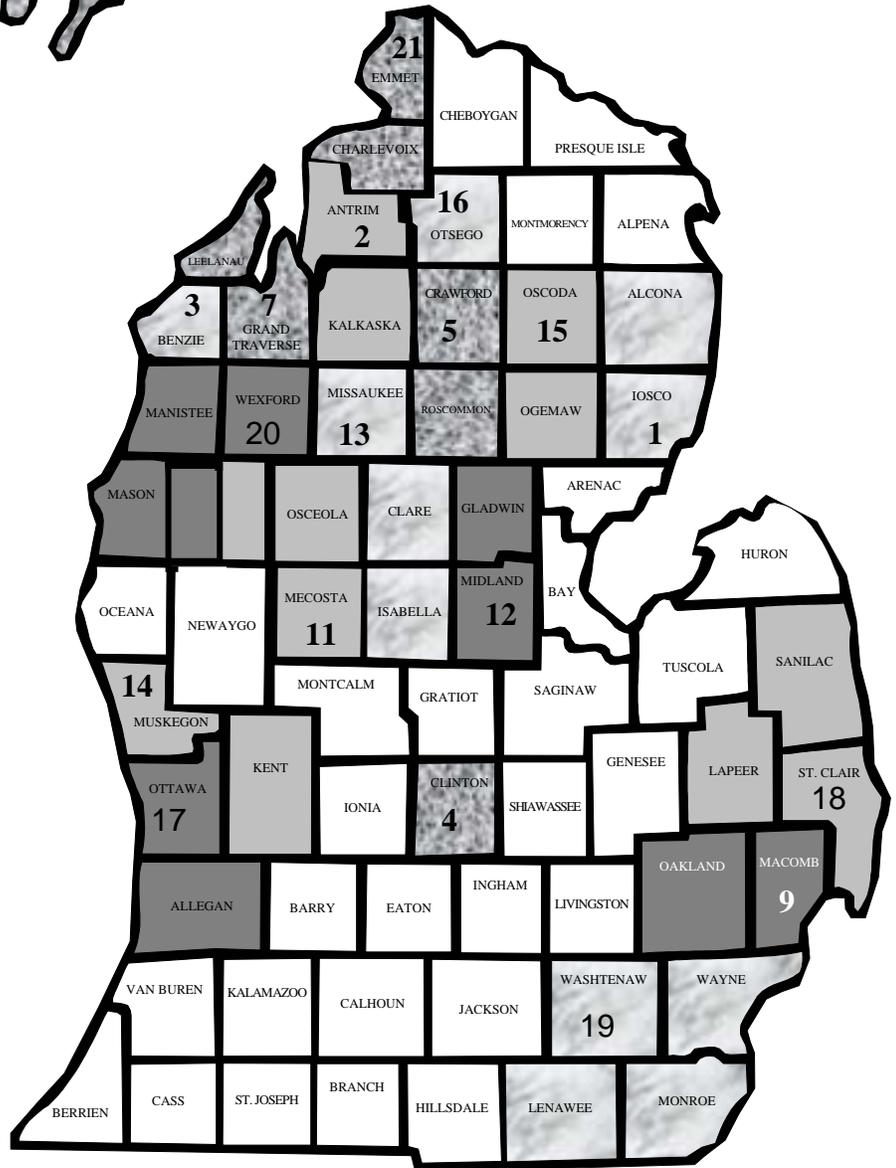
The purpose of the Forestry Assistance Program (FAP) is to assist Conservation Districts in their efforts to help Michigan citizens better understand, plan, manage, protect, and utilize their forest resources. Forest health issues include, but are not limited to, Emerald Ash Borer, Oak Wilt, and Beech Bark Disease.

This is the first year since 2002 that the Conservation Districts have had a granted forestry program from the state. The previous Cooperative Resource Management Initiative granted 31 foresters with state money. This money came both from the Michigan Department of Agriculture and Michigan Department of Natural Resources.



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\* Position not funded by the Forestry Assistance Program Grant.

## Forestry Program Deliverables

### A. Landowner Contacts

Conservation District foresters spent much of their time answering questions from landowners. The foresters had 11,983 phone calls or walk-ins from landowners about forestry.

#### Forest Health

About 80 percent of walk-ins and phone contacts with landowners were about forest health issues, ranging from curling leaves, leaf spots, insects, dying trees, and Emerald Ash Borer (EAB) concerns. Many of these landowner contacts end up with site visits.

#### Plan writing

Plan writing is usually handled by referring the client to the private sector. This is done by providing the client with a list of consulting foresters in the area. Several districts make the contact with the consultant for the landowner. CD foresters do write plans when the property is too small, a consultant in the area doesn't have time or cannot get the project done in a timely manner. These plans will range from Forest Stewardship Plans, Tree Farm Plans, Conservation Plans, Forest Land Enhancement Plans (FLEP), Resource plans, and tree planting plans.

#### Harvest Recommendations

Many contacts with CD foresters end up in referrals for harvesting of forest products. These are referred out to the private industry and often the landowner returns to the forester to ask if the harvest is being done properly. Landowners often contact the CD forester too late and the forest harvest wasn't what the landowner wanted. In most cases the area was either cut too heavily or the amount was grossly under priced. The message will continue to get out to the area that CD foresters can help with these types of situations and prevent this wrongdoing of forest owners. Many landowners have concerns about ash trees and if they should be harvested immediately even if they live outside the core infestation of EAB.

#### Wildlife

Many inquiries with CD foresters are how to attract wildlife to the property. This is followed up by education of forest landowners that often leads to forest harvests. Many landowners believe that leaving the forest alone is healthy for wildlife.

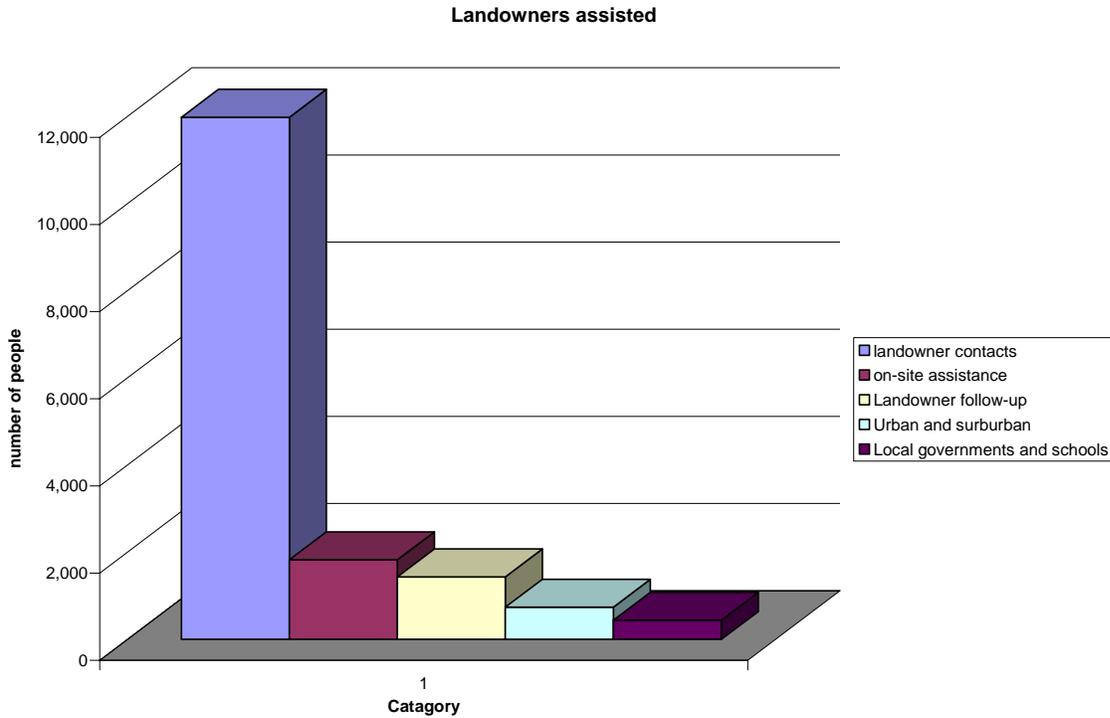
#### Landowners Location

Not only are landowners in the district helped where their land is located, but many landowners in these districts live outside of the area. These lands are held for hunting and recreational properties by persons living in urban and suburban areas of the state.

#### On-site Visits

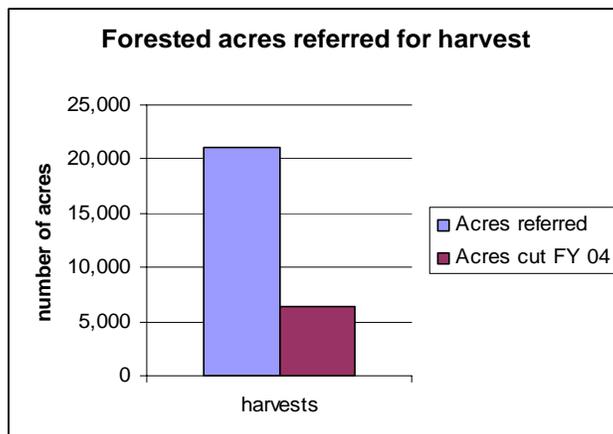
Many of the landowners that called in or visited the offices ended up with an on-site visit; 15 percent or 1,826. The acres that foresters worked on during these on-site visits totaled 81,248 acres. Onsite visit discussions covered landowners' options such as cost-share programs (FLEP, WHIP, EQUIP), tree planting recommendations,

should there be a timber sale, and how to keep the wildlife around or out. Of these 1,826 on-site visits, 40 percent were urban and suburban visits helping with individual trees on city lots or in subdivisions. CD foresters had 153 programs that targeted the urban and suburban landowners.

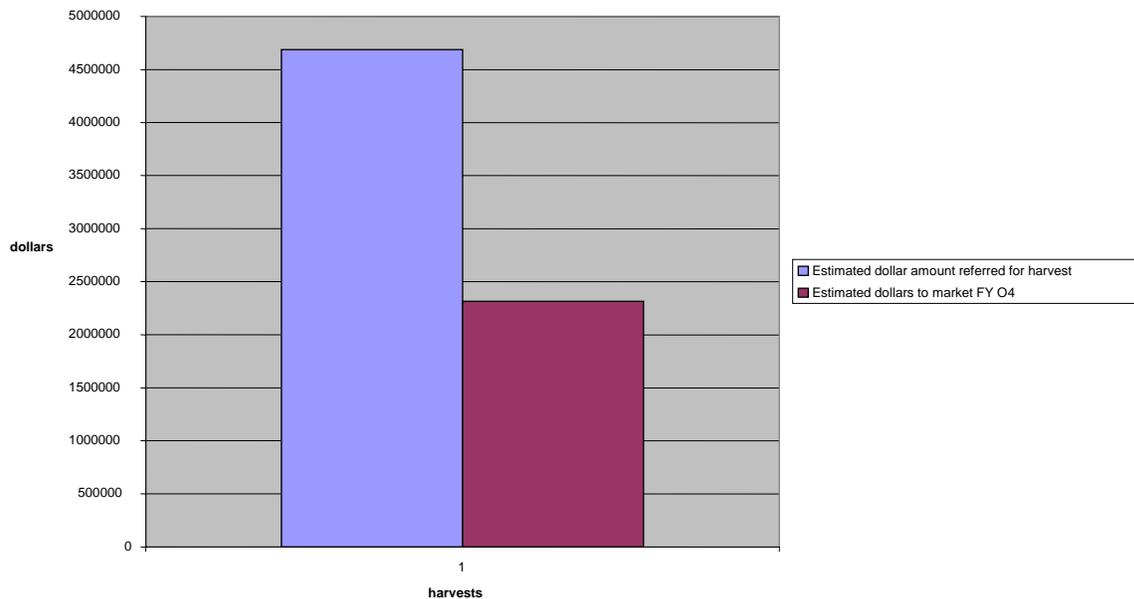


**B. Harvests**

- CD foresters made 473 harvest referrals during the year. These went to private industry for timber sale. Acres referred for harvest during this period totaled 21,148 acres. These were acres that were a direct result of contact with a CD forester. The estimated value of the timber referred for harvest was 4.6 million dollars.
- Not all acres were harvested during FY04. Actual acres harvested during FY04 as a result of CD Forester referrals were 6,368 acres. The value of the timber harvested as a result of the referral is \$2.3 million.



## Estimated \$ value of timber to market



### C. Programs presented and meetings

- Many types of programs were presented to the public on forestry topics. Many were on forest health that included EAB. Oak Wilt questions are becoming more predominate as it spreads across the state. The West side of the state has a spreading problem with Beech Bark disease and keeps foresters in these areas busy with identification and questions. Programs were presented to State Park residents on the hazards of moving firewood and the monitoring of movement of EAB. Programs were held at field days, tours, county fairs, home shows, wildlife expos, lake associations, schools, wildlife groups, community groups, as well as presentations to township and county officials. Foresters presented at 277 meetings where 16,444 people attended.
- Along with the public meetings, the CD foresters also met with public and private foresters. They attended or conducted 320 meetings with these professionals in their areas. These meetings were conducted as small groups discussing problems in coverage areas as well as one on one meetings.
- CD foresters worked on getting information out to the public by using the news media. Foresters have been on the radio, television, and in newspapers explaining what they do and why. They also write articles for newspapers on forest health and current forest problems in the area. During Fiscal Year 2004 the CD foresters wrote 208 such articles.

### D. Plans Written

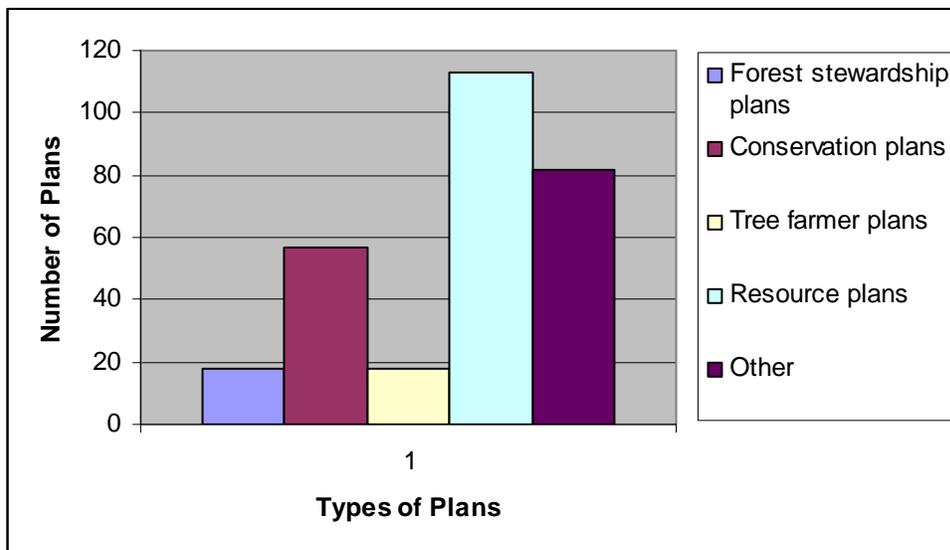
CD foresters were busy writing plans and referring persons to the private sector to write plans. The main types of plans foresters wrote were resource plans just for a specific use on the land. Foresters also wrote Forest Stewardship Plans on areas that were too small for consultants to do or plans that need immediate action such as for cost share programs. Foresters also assisted writing and reviewing Forest Land Enhancement Program plans (FLEP), Tree Farm plans, resource plans along with

several other types of plans. Many plans had to take into account the EAB problem in southeast Michigan as well as address EAB concerns out of the core area.

Table 1. Plan Writing

Types of Plans	Number	Acres Covered
Forest stewardship plans	18	1,326
Conservation plans	57	1,450
Tree farmer plans	18	1,441
Resource plans	113	3,868
Other*	82	1,984
<b>Total Plans and Acres</b>	<b>334</b>	<b>10,069</b>

\*tree planting, insect and disease, and wildlife plans



#### E. Referrals

As part of the job, CD foresters refer landowners to the private and public sector for many reasons. The main reason to refer landowners to the private sector is not to infringe on private sector jobs. The private sector will handle most of the plan writing, all timber sales, marking timber, wildlife plantings, and lining up timber sales. Landowners would be referred to the public sector for things like cost-share applications, permits for wetland or soil erosion, persons interested in the Commercial Forest Act (CFA), and some disease identification. These public referrals would include agencies like Michigan's Department of Natural Resources, Department of Agriculture, and Department of Environmental Quality, Michigan State Extension, United States Department of Agriculture's Farm Service Agency, Natural Resources Conservation Service and in some cases the Forest Service. In all the CD foresters referred 710 landowners to the private sector and 494 landowners to the public sector.

	Number of Land owners	Number of Acres
Public referrals	494	10,599
Private referrals	710	51,050

#### F. Reforestation

As part of the Conservation District programs they offer trees for reforestation and conservation planting. District Foresters were able to assist landowners in making wise choices on what types of trees to plant based on plans or soil type for the landowner. Many trees are sold to absentee landowners that own property away from where they live for recreation, hunting, or a second home. Trees that were planted with assistance of the CD forester covered about 4,024 acres.

#### G. Cost-Share assisted

Conservation District foresters assisted landowners getting into cost-share programs. These were federally funded programs such as the Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) (tree planting portion), Wildlife Incentive Program (WHIP), and Environmental Quality Incentive Program (EQIP). Several state funded programs were available for landowner's as well: Forest Land Enhancement Program (FLEP), and Forest Stewardship Program (FSP). Some districts offer local cost-share programs. CD foresters helped 294 landowners get into cost-share programs on 7,786 acres.

#### H. Continuing education

Foresters also kept up with current forest related issues by attending education classes, Forest Stewardship Plan Writing classes, Forest Land Enhancement Program Classes, SAF courses, Tree Farm training, forest habitat training, oak wilt training, and Emerald Ash Borer tree trap training. In total, 182 continuing education classes were attended. These classes enabled the forester to better explain different programs that forest landowners could participate in or forest health problems that are being encountered in the state.

#### I. Emerald Ash Borer

Conservation District foresters were also asked to help with the Emerald Ash Borer survey that was done throughout the state. 18 foresters, or their agents, worked in 37 counties and set 2,018 traps. These set traps were rechecked after about 6 weeks for EAB infestations. This took time away from their normal tasks of about 1 month of helping the public directly but it did help the public better understand the EAB problem. The publicity that went out prior to setting tree traps generated many more calls to the CD foresters and raised an awareness of the problem in the state. One of the sites outside the quarantine area was brought to the conservation district forester just because the wood cutter was aware of the program and what to look for and where to bring an infested tree.

With the ever increasing pressure put on private woodlands for recreation, development, logging, and wildlife, the Conservation District Foresters play an important role. CD Foresters help with the education of landowners on the importance of woodland management, forest health, cost-share information and wildlife management. CD foresters serve as a point of contact to refer landowners to persons in the private sector that can help them achieve their forestry goals.

FAP Program FY 2004 Totals

FY 2004 Deliverables	Total Accomplished	
<b>1. In-office &amp; phone assists</b>	11,983	number
<b>2. Landowner onsite assistance</b>	1,826	number
<b>3. Landowner onsite assistance</b>	81,248	acres
<b>4. Landowner follow-ups</b>	1,433	number
<b>5. Harvest Referrals</b>	473	number
Acres referred for harvest	21,148	acres
Estimated value of referral for harvest	\$4,686,733	dollars
<b>6. Timber Harvests as a result of CD Forester Referrals</b>	6,368	acres
	\$2,313,914	dollars
	2,451,642	boards
	60,170	cords
<b>7. Urban/suburban onsite assistance</b>	739	number
<b>8. Units of government assisted</b>	439	number
Townships	1,222	acres
County	1,270	acres
Schools	1,951	acres
Other	2,845	acres
<b>9. News articles/programs (newspaper, radio, TV)</b>	208	number
<b>10. Public programs presented</b>	277	number
<b>11. Public programs presented</b>	16,444	attendance
<b>12. Management of forestry demo site</b>	68	number
<b>13. Meeting with private &amp; public foresters</b>	320	number
<b>14. Plans (written by FAP forester)</b>	268	number
<b>15. Forest stewardship plans</b>	18	number
Forest Stewardship Plans	1,326	acres
<b>16. Conservation plans</b>	57	number
Conservation Plans	1,450	acres
<b>17. Tree farmer plans</b>	18	number
Tree farmer plans	1,441	acres
<b>18. Resource plans</b>	113	number
Resource plans	3,868	acres
<b>19. Other (List as completed)</b>	82	number
	1,984	acres
	25	
	0	
<b>20. Referrals - private sector</b>	710	number
<b>21. Referrals - private sector</b>	51,050	acres
<b>22. Referrals - public sector</b>	494	number
<b>23. Referrals - public sector</b>	10,599	acres
<b>24. Tree &amp; shrub planting assists</b>	5,217	number
<b>25. Reforestation tree plantings</b>	3,642	number
<b>26. Reforestation tree plantings</b>	4,024	acres
<b>27. Cost-share program assists</b>	294	number
<b>28. Cost-share program assists</b>	7,786	acres
<b>29. Continuing education</b>	182	number
<b>30. Urban and community outreach</b>		number
<b>31. Trap Trees Primary Area</b>	0	
Phase I	2,018	number