



Van Buren Conservation District August 2026 Report

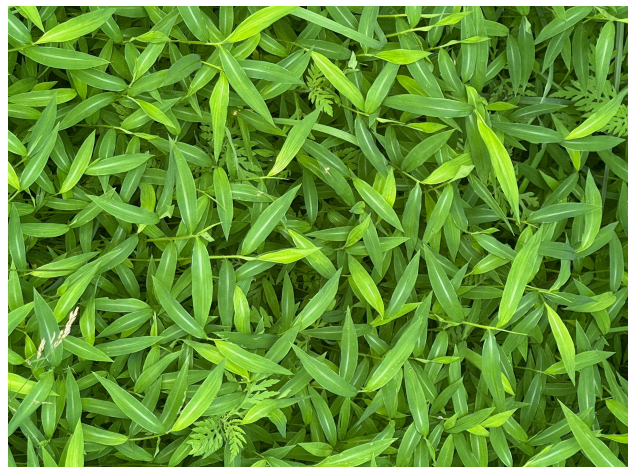
Discover with the District: Paddle School Section Lake – Please join us August 19 at 5:30 PM for a free event at the public boat launch in Glendale on School Section Lake. Spot birds and wildlife, enjoy an evening on the water, and learn how to protect Michigan's lakes. Registration is preferred – sign up on our website at VanBurenCD.org/2026-discover-repost Carpooling to this event is also encouraged. Please bring your own kayak, paddleboard, or canoe.

Accepting Nominations for Board Director – Due August 28 – The Van Buren Conservation District is accepting nomination petitions to be on the ballot for the 2026 Board Directors Election. Candidates who are residents of the conservation district interested in being on the ballot must submit a nominating petition, signed by a minimum of five residents of the conservation district and signed by the candidate (circulator) by 4:30 PM on Friday, August 28, 2026. The form must be completed in its entirety and be verified by a Van Buren Conservation District staff member.

The Van Buren Conservation District Director Election will be held Friday, October 29, 2026 from 8:00 AM – 4:30 PM at the Van Buren Conservation District office in the USDA Service Center at 1035 E Michigan Ave., Paw Paw, 49079. Please contact Executive Director Emily Hickmott with questions. director@VanBurenCD.org 269-633-9054

Invasive Species – Stiltgrass Lookout – In July, the CISMA Team found the first known location of stiltgrass in Van Buren County. Finding invasive species early gives us the best chance of responding to them before they get out of control.

Stiltgrass is a short, leafy grass. It prefers to grow in shade or partial shade, especially along field edges. Its leaves are 2-3 inches long, and the whole plant can be anywhere from a few inches to 3 feet tall. It can be a dense blanket covering a large area, or a few small plants growing beneath taller grasses.



The best way to identify stiltgrass is to look for a silvery line running down the middle of each leaf. This can be difficult to see, and we recommend holding the plant up to the light to look for it.

Upcoming Events (details available on [our website](#))

- Recycle Roundup in South Haven | Saturday, August 1
- Electronics Recycling Event – City of Gobles | Thursday, August 6



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- Electronics Transfer Station Host Drop-off – Bloomingdale | Saturday, August 8; Tuesday, August 11; and Saturday, August 15
- Artisan Market – Lawrence Park | Saturday, August 15
- Discover with the District: School Section Lake | Wednesday, August 19
 - Rain date: Wednesday, August 26
- Regenerative Agriculture Road Show | Wednesday, August 19
- Power Hours at Columbia Township Transfer Station | Saturday, August 22
- VBCD Board Meeting | Wednesday, August 26
- VBCD Board Director Nominating Petitions Due at 4:30 PM | Friday, August 28

Program Updates

Resource Recovery & Recycling (*Kalli Marshall*) – Summer came in full swing with an eventful month. We kicked off June with the Paw Paw Recycle Roundup event. We held our second electronics event of the year, educational events, and worked on continuing our efforts with outreach.

Agriculture & Water Quality Team (*Erin Fuller and Colleen Forestieri*) – In June, the Water Quality Team wrote a grant to work with farmers in four subwatersheds of the Paw Paw River to install practices like cover crops, no-till, and filter strips. There is a lot of effort in not only writing the grant, but also contacting partners and participating farmers for support letters. We also have been preparing for our Regen Ag Road Show, a bus tour of local farms, which will be on August 19th.

Invasive Species SWxSW Corner Cisma Team (*Alex Florian and Jena Johnson*) – June was an incredibly busy month for the SWxSW Corner Cisma team. The team completed surveys for Red Swamp Crayfish at Wolf Lake State Fish Hatchery. Additionally, they sampled for crayfish eDNA around Berrien, Cass, and Van Buren Counties as part of a pilot project. The team also surveyed for spotted lanternfly, cinnamon vine, and European frogbit.

Conservation Technical Assistance Program: MAEAP and Regenerative Agriculture Programs (*Kyle Mead*) – The CTAP Specialist has reverified nearly every producer that was due for reverification this fiscal year. He continues to reach out to those producers that have lapsed in Cass County and continues to reach out to producers who would be counted as New Verifications. The tech has also been helping to finish up the Conservation Innovation Grant that he has been assisting with for the last several years and looks forward to seeing the drone fly in the second half of July. Kyle is also helping other Ag and Water Quality staff organize a bus tour to highlight various farms around Van Buren County that are doing regenerative farming practices.