

Upper Peninsula
Resource Conservation &
Development Council

Area Plan

2008-2012



Michigan

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I. Introduction

The purpose of the Resource Conservation and Development Program (RC&D) is “to encourage and improve the capability of State and local units of government and local non-profit organizations in rural areas to plan, develop, and carry out programs for resource conservation and development.” (Public Law 97-98, Sec. 1528)

This document is the long-range plan for the Upper Peninsula Resource Conservation and Development Council (UP RC&D). It was developed by soliciting public input through a survey in the 15-county area served by the UP RC&D. In addition to the survey results, discussions were held at regional council meetings in the Eastern, Central and Western Upper Peninsula.

The RC&D Program guides the conservation, development and utilization of natural resources, strives to improve the general level of economic activity, and seeks to enhance the environment and standard of living in the communities where it is present.

II. Organizational Overview

A. Vision

Our vision statement, revised in 2007 is: The Upper Peninsula Resource Conservation & Development Council will promote the conservation of the natural resources of the Upper Peninsula for the benefit of its current and future residents. The Council will strive for a balance between the management of natural resources to protect the environment, and the implementation of economic development activities in order to sustain economy for the region. We will identify resource conservation and land use issues, and work with local communities to address these concerns.

B. Mission

Our mission statement, revised in 2007 is: To foster partnerships among diverse stakeholders that support a healthy environment and economy for the Upper Peninsula.

C. Background and Structure of Council

The original sponsors of the Upper Peninsula RC&D Council were the County Commissioners and the Conservation Districts in the 15 counties of the Upper Peninsula. Their first project plan and area was authorized by the U.S. Department of Agriculture in July of 1973. The UP RC&D Council became a 501 c3 non-profit organization in December of 1985.

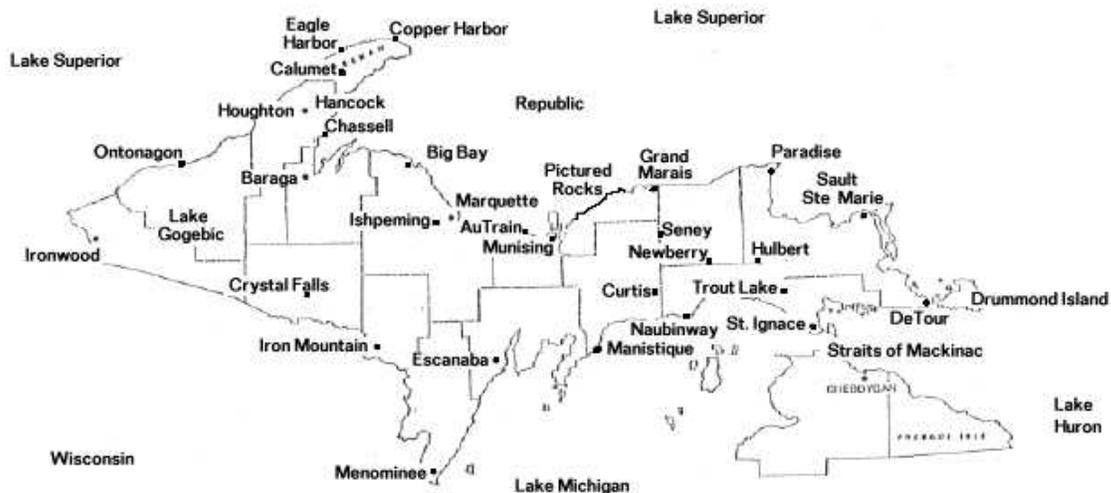
The 15 County Boards of Commissioners and the 13 Conservation Districts appoint representatives and alternates to serve on three Regional RC&D Councils. Each Regional Planning and Development District also appoints a representative and an alternate to their respective regional council. The Eastern U.P. RC&D Council includes the counties of Chippewa, Luce and Mackinac. The Central U.P. RC&D Council is made up of Alger, Delta, Dickinson, Marquette, Menominee and Schoolcraft. The Western U.P.

RC&D Council contains Baraga, Gogebic, Ontonagon, Houghton, Iron and Keweenaw Counties.

From the regional councils, representatives are drawn to serve on the full Upper Peninsula RC&D Council. It consists of up to three representatives selected from each of the regional councils. The full council meets quarterly and makes decisions on the administration and operation of the organization, as well as the final decision on which projects to accept for implementation.

D. Overview of the Area

The Upper Peninsula contains 16,452 square miles, almost one-third of the land area of the state, but just 3% of the total population. The maximum east-west distance in the Upper Peninsula is about 320 miles, and the maximum north-south distance is about 125 miles. It is bounded on the north by Lake Superior, on the east by the St. Mary's River, on the south by Lake Michigan and Lake Huron, and on the west by Wisconsin. It has about 1,700 miles of continuous shoreline with the Great Lakes. There are about 4,300 inland lakes, the largest of which is Lake Gogebic, and 12,000 miles of streams.



The peninsula is divided between the flat, swampy areas in the east, part of the Great Lakes Plain, and the steeper, more rugged western half, called the Superior Upland, part of the Canadian Shield. The rock in the western portion is the result of volcanic eruptions and is estimated to be at least 3.5 billion years old and contains the region's ore resources. A considerable amount of bedrock is visible. Mount Arvon, the highest point in Michigan, is found in the region, as well as the Porcupine and Huron Mountains. All of the higher areas are remnants of ancient peaks, worn down over millions of years by erosion and glaciers.

The Keweenaw Peninsula is the northernmost part of the peninsula. It projects into Lake Superior and was the site of the first copper boom in the United States, part of a larger region of the peninsula called the Copper Country.

Upper Peninsula soils are varied and support a variety of plant life. The fertile and well-drained soils supporting hardwoods are in direct contrast to the wet, organic soils of the conifer swamps. Over 90% of the land area is forested.

The present general economy of the area is characterized by a critical transition period. It is changing from the traditional economy based on heavy manual labor in farming, logging and mining, to a new economy of technological developments, automation, and larger scale operations. Major sources of income are from wood products, tourism, mining, agriculture and general manufacturing, as well as service industries including universities, hospitals, health care and government services.

E. Demographics

The Upper Peninsula remains a predominantly rural region. As of the 2000 census, the region had a population of 317,258. According to this census, only about a third (114,544 people) live in the twenty-one towns of at least 2,000 or more people, which cover 123.7 square miles---less than 1% of the peninsula's land area.

Cities and Towns of the Upper Peninsula		
City	Population	Area (sq mi)
Marquette	19,661	11.4
Sault Ste. Marie	16,542	14.8
Escanaba	13,140	12.7
Menominee	9,131	5.2
Iron Mountain	8,154	7.2
Houghton	7,134	4.3
Ishpeming	6,535	8.7
Ironwood	6,293	6.6
Kingsford	5,549	4.3
Gladstone	5,266	5.0
Negaunee	4,576	13.8
Hancock	4,323	2.5
Manistique	3,583	3.2
Norway	2,959	8.8
Newberry	2,686	1.0
St. Ignace	2,678	2.7

Munising	2,539	5.4
Bessemer	2,148	5.5
Laurium	2,126	0.7
L'Anse	2,107	2.6
Wakefield	2,085	8.0
TOTAL	114,544	123.7

Early settlers included multiple waves of people from Nordic countries. There are still active Swedish and Finnish speaking communities in many areas of the Upper Peninsula today. People of Finnish ancestry make up 16% of the peninsula's population. The U.P. is home to the highest concentration of Finns outside Europe. Other sizeable ethnic communities in the Upper Peninsula include those of French-Canadian, German, Cornish, Italian, and American Indian ancestry.

Counties of the Upper Peninsula			
County	Population	Land Area (sq mi)	Population Density (per sq mi)
Alger	9,862	918	10.7
Baraga	8,735	904	9.7
Chippewa	38,413	1561	24.7
Delta	38,520	1170	32.9
Dickinson	27,427	766	35.8
Gogebic	17,370	1102	15.8
Houghton	36,016	1012	35.6
Iron	13,138	1166	11.3
Keweenaw	2,301	541	4.3
Luce	7,024	903	7.8
Mackinac	11,943	1022	11.7
Marquette	64,634	1821	35.5
Menominee	25,109	1043	24.3
Ontonagon	7,818	1312	6.0
Schoolcraft	8,903	1178	7.6
TOTAL	317,258	16,420	19.3

F. Natural Resources

Water Resources. Perhaps the most valuable natural resource of the Upper Peninsula, and the one which makes it the most unique, is its water resources. Its 12,000 miles of streams, 1,700 miles of Great Lakes shoreline, and 4300 inland lakes, are of great importance to U.P. residents. The rivers and streams of the U.P. feed into three of the Great Lakes (Superior, Michigan and Huron) as well as into tributaries to the Mississippi River. Many communities in the area rely on water resources for part of their economic base and in some cases, their water supply. Ground water is the main supplier of rural and community water supplies. Clean, and in some areas pristine, water resources are the basis for many recreational activities including fishing, swimming and boating.

Forest Resources. Forests cover the majority of land in the Upper Peninsula, representing approximately 8.5 million acres or 79% of the total land area. They provide a source for environmental and ecological benefits, and they are vital to the region's economy. Over half of the employee compensation in the manufacturing sector in the UP comes directly from forest products industries. The forest products industries and tourism provide the foundation for the UP's private sector. In recent years, there has been a significant change in forestland ownership in the UP. Over 1 million acres of timberland that was owned by traditional forest products companies has been purchased by institutional investors. This is part of a nationwide trend that has finally reached Michigan.

Soil Resources. All of the soils of the Upper Peninsula developed from glacial drift and glacial lake sediments. The southwestern portion of the UP is characterized by loamy to sandy soils on rolling to steep moraines. The soils in the northwest UP have developed in clayey lake plain deposits. They are gently sloping to sloping, but are strongly dissected near Lake Superior and along streams. The west central UP is characterized by gently sloping to steep loamy soils on moraines with many associated outcrops of igneous rock. The eastern UP is relatively flat with loamy soils on ground moraines, and clayey and sandy lake bed soils. Locally important areas of sandy or gravelly outwash plains and organic soils are scattered throughout the west and central UP.

Mineral and Other Resources. The Upper Peninsula is very rich in mineral deposits including iron and copper. In the 19th century, mining dominated the economy. For many years, mines in the Keweenaw Peninsula were the world's largest producers of copper. The copper mines began declining as early as 1913, with most closing temporarily during the Great Depression. Mines reopened during World War II, but most quickly closed after the war ended. Copper mining ceased entirely in the 1990s with the closing of the White Pine Mine. Today, the Cleveland Cliffs Iron Company operates two mines in the central UP, and is the nation's largest supplier of iron ore pellets to the integrated steel industry.

G. Agriculture

Because of the highly seasonal climate and the short growing season, agriculture is limited in the Upper Peninsula. The main crops are small grains, pasture and hay. Corn,

potatoes, strawberries and a few other small fruits are also grown. Livestock operations include beef, sheep, and dairy. The growing season varies from 60 days inland to 140 days along the Great Lakes shorelines.

Present agricultural areas are concentrated on the clayey soils of the lake plains and gently sloping and sloping loamy soils on moraines. These areas offer the best combinations of soils and topography for sustainable agricultural activities.

H. Socioeconomic Information

The UP plays a fairly small role in the overall Michigan economy. However, it is very important for Michigan's forest products industries, which are central to the economy of the UP. More than half of the employee compensation in the manufacturing sector in the UP originates from forest products industries, and total industry output/sales are also considerable. Forest resources and forest ownerships within the UP are significant and diverse, and they are a source of opportunity for future economic activity. Tourism is another important natural resource-based economic sector in the UP.

Overall, on average, the UP is worse off economically than many parts of the state. For example, unemployment rates are generally higher in the UP than the state as a whole, and average employee compensation in the UP is 73.6% of the state's average. In addition, the population of the UP has remained relatively unchanged for many decades, with a slight decline in the past 20 years. Population stability in the UP may limit economic opportunities for employment and income.

Employment, though relatively stagnant in recent years in the EUP, has been growing in the UP as a whole. Over the past 10 years, employment in the WUP has been growing at 1% per year. Unemployment has been cyclic in recent years. Unemployment peaked in 1991 in Michigan and in 1992 in the UP. The year 2000, a decennial census year, is often used for trend comparisons, but the unemployment rate bottomed out at that time and has been substantially higher in the UP since then. There is considerable variation by county. The 2005 unemployment rate exceeded 10% in three UP counties: Baraga, Keweenaw and Schoolcraft. The UP is characterized by significant seasonal variability in unemployment. The unemployment rate is high during the winter and spring and considerably lower during the summer and early fall.

III. Resource Needs and Opportunities

A. Description of Public Participation Activities

A survey was developed using the Conservation Districts' resource assessments to provide the major issues to be considered as needs and opportunities across the region. There was also a section for individuals to list the top three needs in the area. The survey was sent by mail and email to 220 individuals. It was also handed out during quarterly regional council and full council meetings, as well as available to the general public during the U.P. State Fair and the Marquette County Fair. Council members and partners were encouraged to circulate it among groups that they work with as well. Over 70 surveys were returned and results tabulated.

The tabulated results were discussed at regional and full council meetings with further input given by attendees and incorporated into the final document.

B. Summary of Findings by Required Element

i. Land Management – Needs and Opportunities (in order of priority)

This element includes energy conservation and the production of energy crops, the protection of agricultural land as appropriate from conversion to other uses, farmland protection, and the protection of fish and wildlife habitats.

- 1) Promote Alternative Fuels
- 2) Protect and Improve Fish and Wildlife Habitats
- 3) Land Use-Unregulated Development
- 4) Forest Management Practices
- 5) Loss of Farmland/Promote Agriculture
- 6) Invasive Species Control/Management
- 7) Forest Fragmentation
- 8) Forest Diseases and Pests
- 9) Shoreline Development
- 10) Energy Conservation

ii. Water Management – Needs and Opportunities (in order of priority)

This element includes the conservation, use and quality of water, including irrigation and rural water supplies; the mitigation of floods and high water tables; the repair and improvements of reservoirs; the improvement of agricultural water management; and the improvement of water quality.

- 1) Groundwater Protection
- 2) Watershed Planning
- 3) Wetland Protection and Restoration
- 4) Lake Levels
- 5) Water Pollution
- 6) Riparian Corridor Protection and Management
- 7) Altered Hydrology/Poor Land Use Practices
- 8) Storm Water Management

iii. Community Development – Needs and Opportunities (in order of

priority) This element includes the development of resource-based industries; the protection of rural industries from natural resource hazards; the development of adequate rural water and waste disposal systems; the improvement of recreation facilities; the improvement of rural housing; the provision of adequate health and education facilities; the satisfaction of essential transportation and communication needs; and the promotion of food security, economic development, and education.

iii. **Community Development – Needs and Opportunities** (in order of priority) cont'd:

- 1) Forest Economy
- 2) Development of Resource-Based Industries
- 3) Green Space/Access/ Develop Trails
- 4) Recycling/Hazardous Waste Management
- 5) Tourism Promotion
- 6) Improvement of Recreational Facilities
- 7) Fire Protection

iv. **Land Conservation – Needs and Opportunities** (in order of priority)
This element includes the control of erosion and sedimentation.

- 1) Erosion Control
- 2) Sedimentation
- 3) Mined Land Reclamation

IV. Goals, Objectives, and Strategies

LAND MANAGEMENT ELEMENT

Sub-Element: Promote Alternative Fuels

Goal: Promote the development of two alternative forms of energy by 2012.

Objective: Contact all schools in the UP, and at least two local governments, to establish partnerships that will expand the use of alternative forms of energy by 2012.

Strategies:

1. Develop a fact sheet/brochure regarding the success of utilizing woody biomass as a heating fuel in North Dickinson Schools and other locations, that will be distributed to all schools in the UP by 2008.
2. Distribute a survey and analyze the results from all schools, in order to gauge their interest and their potential for successfully adopting woody biomass as a heating fuel by 2009.
3. Fund at least three engineering assessments for schools or other institutions by 2009.
4. Conduct demonstrations on harvesting woody biomass that enhance forest restoration in at least two different forest cover types by 2009.
5. Conduct three tours to facilities that have already adopted wood as a heating fuel to provide information on the feasibility and process of converting to wood energy by 2009.
6. Create a web-based clearinghouse and networking site for individuals wishing to buy or sell woody biomass and other products and services related to the conversion and use of wood as a source of heating fuel by 2009.

7. Work with Dickinson Conservation District to establish the use of switchgrass as a pelletized fuel by 2012.

Sub-Element: Protect and Improve Fish and Wildlife Habitats

Goal: Assist two sponsors yearly in their efforts to protect and/or improve fish and wildlife habitat.

Objective: Protect or improve at least four stream sites and at least 200 acres of wildlife habitat by 2012.

Strategies:

1. Work with the Gogebic Conservation District to fund the Black River-Narrows Creek Habitat Improvement Project by 2008.
2. Assist the Houghton-Keweenaw Conservation District to complete the stream restoration and habitat improvement of 47 acres at the Central and Winona Mine Sites by 2009.
3. Assist the Michigan Nature Association and Keweenaw County to find funding for the stream bank stabilization and habitat improvement of 11 acres at the Black Creek/Hills Creek Mine Site by 2010.
4. Assist the City of Gladstone to complete the habitat improvements of 20 acres at the Gladstone Marsh Outdoor Education Project by 2010.
5. Assist sponsors to complete the Bat Enclosures for Abandoned Mines Project by 2010.
6. Locate additional sponsors to improve 125 acres of wildlife habitat by 2012.

Sub-Element: Land Use/Unregulated Development

Goal: At least two communities in the UP will include environmental and resource protection ordinances as part of their zoning by 2012.

Objective: Provide technical assistance on land use tools to local governments annually.

Strategies:

1. Encourage participation by locally elected officials in Citizen Planner Program by assisting at least two sponsors in seeking funding for training opportunities for municipal planning and zoning administrators by 2010.
2. Assist at least one sponsor to set up a workshop in the eastern U.P. that will provide support to local governments to engage in community “visioning” and master planning processes by 2011.
3. Assist at least one community to update existing planning and zoning documents by making available on-line model zoning ordinances and templates by 2012.

Sub-Element: Forest Management Practices

Goal: To promote the adoption of forest best management practices (BMPs) by 2012.

Objective: Assist sponsors to find resources to provide technical assistance to forest landowners by 2012.

Strategies:

1. Provide a list of individuals from diverse backgrounds (state and federal government, university and extension, industry, environmental organizations) to MDNR that will agree to assist with the refinement of current forest management guidance to better address woody biomass harvesting by 2009.
2. By 2008, work with the Western Upper Peninsula Partners in Ecosystem Management (WUPPEM) to explore options for increasing the assistance to private landowners for adopting BMPs, including support for Conservation District forestry programs.

Sub-Element: Loss of Farmland/Promote Agriculture

Goal: Encourage landowners to utilize abandoned farmland in the eastern and western U.P. by assisting sponsors in their efforts to find alternative crops by 2012.

Objective: Provide an economic boost to the region by assisting local efforts in reclaiming abandoned farm fields by 2012.

Strategies:

1. Assist the Dickinson Conservation District in their efforts to find funding to offer planting incentives or marketing studies that would encourage the planting of switchgrass and other crops that can be used to produce energy by 2009.
2. Assist at least one other sponsor in their efforts to find alternative crops by 2011.

Sub-Element: Invasive Species Control/Management

Goal: Promote the re-establishment of native species on at least 50 acres in the region by 2012.

Objective: Encourage the control/management of at least three invasive species across multi-jurisdictional boundaries by 2012

Strategies:

1. Assist the Chippewa/East Mackinac and Luce/West Mackinac Conservation Districts to create a Cooperative Weed Management Area (CWMA) in the Eastern Upper Peninsula by 2010.

2. Support the Upper Peninsula Invasive Council (UPIC) in their efforts to hold a workshop on how to establish a Cooperative Weed Management Area by 2008.
3. Assist at least two tribes in the U.P. in their efforts at managing invasive species by 2009.

Sub-Element: Energy Conservation/Energy Efficiency

Goal: At least four communities in the U.P. will implement energy conservation/energy efficiency systems by 2011.

Objective: Develop information materials to help local communities save money, increase national security, and improve the environment by 2011.

Strategies:

1. Work with sponsor to provide dollar figures to the public on energy savings made by purchasing food grown locally by 2009.
2. Assist the Tahquamenon Area Civic Center Committee in researching possible green building strategies including alternative forms of energy and heating by 2010.
3. Assist at least two communities to expand recycling efforts by 2010.
4. Assist a sponsor in determining the need for upgrading power line infrastructure on eastern end of the U.P. by 2010.

WATER MANAGEMENT ELEMENT

Sub-Element: Groundwater Protection

Goal: Protect the water resource base by implementing at least two water quality programs by 2012.

Objective: Assist local communities in the region to install conservation systems by 2012.

Strategies:

1. Work w/MDEQ on groundwater issues surrounding well-drilling by 2009.
2. Assist at least one sponsor to implement scrap tire recycling by 2010.
3. Assist Marquette Township and the Marquette Conservation District to educate the public about the groundwater/surface water connection and implement low impact development practices by 2010.

Sub-Element: Watershed Planning

Goal: Improve water quality in the UP by completing plans on at least 5 watersheds by 2012.

Objective: Work with Conservation Districts to identify watersheds in need of planning assistance by 2012.

Strategies:

1. Complete the St. Mary's Rapid Watershed Assessment (RWA), Eastern UP-RWA, and the Keweenaw Bay Indian Community RWA by 2009.
- 2 Assist local sponsors to develop at least two additional funding proposals for watershed plans/assessments by 2012.

Sub-Element: Wetland Protection and Restoration

Goal: Improve water quality by installing practices to protect and restore 200 acres of wetlands by 2012.

Objective: Work with local sponsors to complete six wetland protection projects across the U.P. by 2012.

Strategies:

1. Assist local sponsors to complete the Gladstone Marsh Outdoor Classroom project by 2012.
2. Assist local sponsors with implementation of Badger Creek Trail by 2012.
3. Assist local sponsors with land acquisition for Lightfoot Bay Coastal Wetland Project by 2012.
4. Develop funding proposal to protect coastal wetlands on Black Creek/Hills Creek Mine Site by 2009.
5. Develop funding proposal to protect coastal wetlands on Chassell/Hamar Creek Flood Prevention and Habitat Restoration by 2009.
6. Assist Luce/W. Mackinac Conservation District with completion of improvements and signage at the Hamilton Lake Nature Area by 2008.

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT ELEMENT

Sub-Element: Forest Economy/ Development of Resource-Based Industries

Goal: Facilitate the development of an active and commercially viable woody biomass industry in the Upper Peninsula by 2012.

Objective: Identify additional efforts of partner agencies, local governments and others needed to expand the use of woody biomass as a low-cost fuel for schools and other institutions by 2009.

Strategies:

1. Seek funds to continue the Biomass Utilization and Restoration Network in the Upper Peninsula (BURN-UP) beyond 2009.

Sub-Element: Green Space/Access/Develop Trails

Goal: Provide additional opportunities for residents and visitors to the U.P. by 2012.

Objective: Assist sponsors in the planning and development of networks of motorized and non-motorized trails which will expand recreational opportunities by 2012.

Strategies:

1. Assist sponsors in Keweenaw County in the development of non-motorized trails near Keweenaw Mountain Lodge by 2012.
2. Participate on Steering Committee for Bike Trail Feasibility Study in Iron County, and assist in developing funding proposals for installation of trail by 2012.
3. Assist sponsors with feasibility studies, and installation of bike trails in Chippewa County by 2012.
4. Assist sponsors with the development of Badger Creek Trail by 2012.
5. Assist Schoolcraft County to develop funding for the South Town Creek Access Site by 2012.
6. Assist Luce County in their efforts to designate trails for ORV use by 2009.
7. Assist the Bay Mills Indian Community to develop the Superior Shore Trail by 2010.

Sub-Element: Recycling/Hazardous Waste Management

Goal: Expand recycling in at least two communities in the U.P. by 2010.

Objective: Locate information in the western, central and eastern UP regarding sources that will accept recyclables by 2008.

Strategies:

1. Assist in completing the Stephenson Recycling Project by 2009.
2. Assist the Keweenaw Conservation District in expanding opportunities for recycling in Keweenaw County by 2010.
3. Assist at least one county to apply to the MDEQ for funding for the Recycling Scrap Tire Project by 2010,

Sub-Element: Tourism Promotion

Goal: Increase tourism in at least two areas of the U.P. by 2012.

Objective: Improve and develop at least two areas for their recreational, scenic, wildlife or historic potential to increase tourism and economic opportunities in conjunction with ecosystem management principles by 2012.

Strategies:

1. Connect non-motorized trails across the U.P., linking North Huron Scenic Pathway along M-134 and Lake Huron between St. Ignace and Drummond Island to pathways in the Soo; and the Superior Shore Trail through Brimley to other pathways in the west and central U.P. by 2012.
2. Assist sponsor in development of old trolley path in downtown Sault Ste. Marie including installing park benches, interpretive signs on the history of the canal, and non-motorized pathway by 2012.

Sub-Element: Improvement of Recreational Facilities

Goal: Provide at least three new opportunities for recreation for U.P. residents and visitors by 2012.

Objective: Assist sponsors in the development of infrastructure, planning, funding and partnership building in at least three locations in the U.P. by 2012.

Strategies:

1. Assist Tahquamenon Area Civic Center Committee in their efforts to establish an ice rink and wellness center in Newberry by 2012.
2. Expand partnerships with the Superior Trail Riders in order to develop Soldier's Lake Equestrian Campground by 2010.
3. Participate in the steering committee for the Superior Shore Trail to help develop partnerships and funding strategies by 2010.

LAND CONSERVATION ELEMENT

Sub-Element: Erosion Control/Sedimentation/Mined Land Reclamation

Goal: Reduce erosion and sedimentation by installing erosion control systems on 300 acres of land by 2012.

Objective: Install at least five conservation systems to protect the land base in the U.P. by 2012.

Strategies:

1. Plan and implement practices to control erosion at Little Girl's Point Campground by 2011.
2. Assist Houghton/Keweenaw Conservation District with implementation of erosion control practices at the Central and Winona Mine Sites by 2009.
3. Assist sponsor in planning and implementing erosion control practices at the Black Creek/Hills Creek Mine Site by 2010.
4. Assist the KBIC, Chippewa/East Mackinac Conservation District, and others who have completed rapid watershed assessments to install erosion control practices at road/stream crossings by 2012.
5. Complete stream monitoring project on Dead River and Anna River by 2009.

V. Current and Potential Partnerships with the USDA and Others

The following agencies and organizations play important roles in developing and implementing area and annual plans:

- Conservation Districts
- USDA – Natural Resources Conservation Service
- USDA – Forest Service
- USDA – Rural Development
- Michigan State University Extension
- Michigan Department of Environmental Quality
- Michigan Department of Natural Resources
- Michigan Department of Transportation
- County and other local governments
- Michigan Technological University
- Northern Michigan University
- Bay Mills Community College
- Lake Superior State University
- Keweenaw Bay Indian Community
- Bay Mills Indian Community
- Hannahville Indian Community
- Sault Ste. Marie Tribe of Chippewa Indians
- Lac Vieux Desert Band of Lake Superior Chippewa Indians
- USFWS-Seney National Wildlife Refuge
- US Fish & Wildlife Service
- US Environmental Protection Agency
- National Fish and Wildlife Foundation
- Regional Planning Agencies (WUPPDR and EUPRPDC)
- Michigan Environmental Council
- The Nature Conservancy
- National Wildlife Federation
- Lake Superior Watershed Partnership

VI. Linkages to the NRCS Strategic Plan

Overarching Strategies:

The Upper Peninsula Resource Conservation & Development Council's overarching strategies are consistent with those of the Natural Resources Conservation Service. During the period of this Area Plan, 2008-2012, we will:

1) Seek and promote cooperative efforts to achieve conservation goals.

Since all of the projects undertaken by the Upper Peninsula RC&D Council are multi-jurisdictional in nature, it is necessary to work cooperatively with other agencies, organizations, individuals and groups to achieve our goals. Whether the project is a watershed plan, a wildlife habitat improvement project, or the construction of a recreational trail, it will have a number of partners involved in the planning, funding and implementation. Without cooperative conservation, it would not be possible to accomplish our vision:

"...a balance between the management of natural resources to protect the environment, and the implementation of economic development activities in order to sustain a healthy financial future..."

Our mission statement is synonymous with the strategy of cooperative conservation, *"To foster partnerships among diverse stakeholders that support a healthy environment and economy for the Upper Peninsula."*

2) Provide information and assistance to encourage and enable locally led, watershed-scale conservation.

We will continue to work with local governments, organizations and agencies to obtain resources to engage in watershed planning. We are currently working with groups to produce three Rapid Watershed Assessments in the eastern and western ends of the Upper Peninsula. Other watersheds, such as the Huron and Otter River Watersheds, and the Menominee River Basin, are seeking funding to conduct watershed planning activities. In the Sault Ste Marie Urban Watershed, planning is complete, and the next step will be to seek funding for implementation.

3) Facilitate the growth of market-based opportunities that encourage business and industry to invest in conservation on private lands.

We are working cooperatively with a number of industry groups, such as The Forestland Group, LLC; Nelson Logging, and others, to improve the forest health and support the economic vitality of the region.

Mission Goals:

The Natural Resource Conservation Service's mission goals are not time-bound; they are not conditions to be achieved at a specific point in time. Rather, they define the essential natural resource setting needed to sustain a high standard of living for a dynamic society. The Upper Peninsula RC&D Council's Area Plan addresses the following mission goals:

- Clean and Abundant Water
- Healthy Plant and Animal Communities
- Energy Conservation
- Renewable Energy and Biofuels
- Connected Landscapes

VII. Compliance Statements

The Upper Peninsula RC&D Council's program will be conducted in compliance with the nondiscrimination provisions as contained in Title VI and VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 as amended, the Civil Rights Restoration Act of 1987 (P. L. 100-259) and other nondiscrimination statutes; namely, Section 504, of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, the Age Discrimination Act of 1975 and in accordance with regulations of the Secretary of Agriculture (7CFR-15, Subparts A&B) which provide that no person in the United States shall, on the grounds of race, color, national origin, age, sex, religion, marital status, or handicap/disability be excluded from participation in, or be denied the benefits of, or be otherwise subject to discrimination under any program or activity receiving federal financial (or technical) assistance from the Department of Agriculture or any agency thereof.

The Upper Peninsula RC&D Council agrees that the signing of this document constitutes agreement to comply with federal laws concerning restrictions on lobbying, a drug-free workplace, and responsibilities for procurement, suspension, and disbarment.

The Upper Peninsula RC&D Council has had this application reviewed by the state. Comments made through the state single point of contact have been considered prior to submission of the application and that all applicable procedures have been followed. An environmental impact statement will not be prepared during the development of the area plan, but an environmental assessment or environmental impact statement will be prepared concurrently with the development of each project, when applicable, in accordance with federal procedures.

VIII. Signatures

The Upper Peninsula RC&D Council hereby adopts this RC&D Area Plan and agrees to use effectively the assistance provided by the U.S. Department of Agriculture to realize the goals and objectives outlined herein.

By: _____
Robert Larson, Chairperson

Date: _____

Attest: _____
Council Secretary-Treasurer

U.S. Department of Agriculture – Natural Resources Conservation Service
The State Conservationist hereby acknowledges the attached Area Plan of the Upper Peninsula RC&D Council as meeting the requirements under Public Law 97-98 to receive assistance from USDA.

Acknowledged By: _____
NRCS State Conservationist

Date: _____

IX. Appendix

Documented Public Input – A survey was developed using the Conservation Districts’ resource assessments to provide the major issues to be considered as needs and opportunities across the region. The respondents were asked to prioritize these needs and opportunities. There was also a part of the survey where individuals were asked to list their own top three needs in the area. The survey was sent by mail and email to 220 individuals. It was also handed out during quarterly regional council and full council meetings, as well as available to the general public during the U.P. State Fair and the Marquette County Fair. Council members and partners were encouraged to circulate it among groups that they work with as well. Over 70 surveys were returned and results tabulated.

The tabulated results were discussed at three regional UP RC&D meetings in the eastern, western, and central UP, and at full Council meetings, with further input given by attendees and incorporated into the final document.

In addition, a meeting with representatives from all of the tribes in the Upper Peninsula was held on September 25, 2007 in Marquette to gather input on resource concerns.