



St. Joseph
County
Soil & Water
Conservation
District



Today's Visions for Tomorrow's Future

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Letter from Ally Pudlo, Environmental Education Coordinator

Happy Holidays, everyone! I hope that you have all been enjoying the changing seasons as much as I have.

At St. Joseph County SWCD, I have been busy planning and presenting programs for the past few months. I have been at a few community programs across the county. You might have seen me with the Augmented Reality 3D Sandbox at St. Patrick's County Park for Celebrate The St. Joe near the end of August. I was also at Monarchs & Milkweed: A Migration Celebration at Bendix Woods County Park on September 12th and gave a wetland presentation at Potato Creek State Park on September 21st.



At the end of September, I lead two canoe trips on the St. Joseph River with two area high schools, Marian High School and LaVille Jr/Sr High School. Both groups learned about the St. Joseph River watershed, potential pollutants that affect watersheds, and how to monitor for those pollutants and determine the quality of rivers using Hoosier Riverwatch tests.



Special thanks to St. Joseph County Parks for renting their canoes to us, to Daragh Deegan and his crew from Elkhart County Public Works & Utilities for their fish of the St. Joseph River presentation, and to Rick Glassman for volunteering!

In mid-October, I was teaching Mishawaka 4th graders about native Indiana wildlife at The Mishawaka Res. In addition, I had the pleasure of leading an Indiana Master Naturalists class in Soils. Special thanks to Cardno Native Plant Nursery for donating a native seed mix for our seed flings activity!

Finally, I was able to participate in a few Halloween-themed community events around the county, including Treats On The Trail at Pinkhook Park and Fall Family Night at the Charles B. Hayes Family Sculpture Park just at the edge of the University of Notre Dame!

I will be participating in some more community programs coming up this fall and winter! Here's a sneak peek at some events that I will be at:

Friday, November 12th: Autumn Colors And Trees

- Location: Potato Creek State Park Nature Center 25601 IN-4, North Liberty, IN 46554
- Time: 2-3pm EST
- Info: Come explore the changing of the seasons as we discover what trees go through in the process of changing their fall colors. Then, make a colorful fall bookmark to take home.



Saturday, November 13th: Owl Prowl

- Location: Potato Creek State Park Nature Center 25601 IN-4, North Liberty, IN 46554
- Time: 5-6:15pm EST
- Info: Who is that in the woods at night? Come along on an owl prowl to discover more about these elusive birds, and then take a short night hike to try and talk with them! Please wear closed toe shoes for this program.



Friday, November 19th: Backyard Conservation and Birding

- Location: Potato Creek State Park Nature Center 25601 IN-4, North Liberty, IN 46554
- Time: 2-3pm EST
- Info: Have you ever wondered what you can do at your own property to help draw in native birds? Are you a birder who wants to do more conservation practices at home? Come learn more about backyard conservation and how it can help native wildlife and you!



Saturday, November 20th: Indiana Wildlife

- Location: Potato Creek State Park Nature Center 25601 IN-4, North Liberty, IN 46554
- Time: 1-2pm EST
- Info: Come meet some of the mammals that call Indiana home! Meet at the Nature Center to look at some taxidermy animals and pelts and learn what it takes for them to survive in Indiana.



Keep an eye on our Facebook page (@StJosephSWCD) for more upcoming programs and events!

If you would like to schedule a SWCD program or have questions about a potential program idea, please contact me either by email at Allison.pudlo@in.nacdn.net or by phone at 574-936-2024 ext. 4.

Indiana NRCS Announces Funding Available to Help Protect and Restore Sensitive Lands

State Conservationist Jerry Raynor announced today that Indiana's USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) is making funds available to help landowners protect and restore key farmlands, grasslands and wetlands across Indiana. The funding is provided through the Agricultural Conservation Easement Program (ACEP), created to protect critical water resources and wildlife habitat, and encourage private owners to maintain land for farming.

"Conservation easements are an important tool to help landowners and partners achieve their goals to protect land for future generations," Raynor said. "NRCS helps guide landowners and partners throughout the easement process by providing technical expertise, conservation planning and financial assistance."

Wetland reserve easements (WRE) allow landowners to successfully restore, enhance and protect habitat for wildlife on their lands, reduce damage from flooding, recharge groundwater and provide outdoor recreational and educational opportunities. Eligible landowners can choose to enroll in a permanent or 30-year easement. Eligible entities must submit applications for WRE's current funding pool on or before November 15.

In Indiana, over 1,700 acres have been enrolled in ACEP in the last year alone. Once restored, these acres will join over 80,000 acres of additional easements in the state. Many of these easements lie in critical migratory areas for waterfowl and other birds such as the Wabash River, Goose Pond, Kankakee Marsh, and Muscatatuck River Corridor.

"I cannot overemphasize the benefits of restoring, enhancing and protecting these working agricultural lands and critical wetlands," said Raynor. "NRCS is committed to restoring and protecting wetlands that provide important wildlife habitat and improve our water quality as well as preserving working agricultural lands to help protect the long-term viability of farming across Indiana."

ACEP applications may be submitted at any time to NRCS; however, applications for the current funding round must be submitted on or before the closing date – November 15 for WRE.

To learn about ACEP and other technical and financial assistance available through Indiana NRCS conservation programs, visit www.nrcs.usda.gov/GetStarted or contact your District Conservationist Deborah Knepp at (574) 936-2024 Ext 4.

Subscribe to Receive Free Text and Email Alerts From USDA

Did you know you can subscribe to receive free email and text message updates from your local USDA Service Center? Whether you're in the field, on a tractor or even on horseback, this service enables producers and stakeholders to receive notifications while on the go. Subscribers will receive text messages or emails about important program information, eligibility requirements and deadlines from the Farm Service Agency (FSA), Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS), and Risk Management Agency (RMA). You can sign up for email and text alerts by visiting www.farmers.gov/subscribe. From there you can choose from a wide number of topics including disaster assistance, conservation programs, crop insurance, farm loans, and more. Participants may unsubscribe at any time. For more information visit www.farmers.gov/working-with-us/stay-connected.



FREE LANDOWNER SURVEYS!

- Do you know what invasive plants you have on your property?
- Are you interested in providing quality pollinator or wildlife habitat on your property?
- I can help you identify invasives and recommend management techniques!
- Give SICIM;s Regional Specialist, Mandi Glanz, a call at (260) 243-2161 or email at mandi@sicim.info



INVASIVE SPECIES



PURDUE EXTENSION'S INVASIVE SPECIES PROGRAM IS COMING!

Register Today to Protect Indiana From Invasive Species

Registration is now open for Purdue Extension's new Invasive Species Signature Program, where you can help protect Indiana's ecology and economy by learning how to prevent the spread of invasive species.

Details on how to register are below. Don't miss your chance to help keep Indiana's public and private lands safe!

Dates: Thursdays, November 4, 11, and 18

Times: 6:00-8:30 PM ET

Location: North Liberty Public Library, 105 E Market St. North Liberty, IN 46554

Registration Info / Link

<https://cvent.me/o7gK7K>

For more information or questions, contact:

Phil Woolery at pwoolery@purdue.edu, 574-772-9141

Purdue University is an Equal Opportunity/Equal Access university.



St. Joseph County Soil And Water Conservation Partnership

What's Going On...

*Events hosted by the St. Joseph County SWCD
& Our Partners in Conservation*

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| Nov. 11 - Veterans Day - Office Closed | Dec. 21 - Monthly Board Meeting - Open to the Public. Location & time TBA. |
| Nov. 16 Monthly Board Meeting - Open to the Public., location and time TBA. | Dec. 24 - Christmas Day (observed) - Office closed |
| Nov. 25 - Thanksgiving Day - Office Closed | Dec. 31 - New Year's Day (observed) - Federal Holiday |
| Nov. 26 - County Holiday | |



SWCD Supervisors:

John Dooms, Chairman
Dave Vandewalle, Vice Chairman
Mike Burkholder
Sam James
Chris Matthys

SWCD Associate Supervisors:

Dave Craft
Chuck Lehman
Randy Matthys
Richard Schmidt
Dave Straughn
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SWCD Honorary Members:

Jerry Knepp
Keith Lineback
William Millar

St. Joseph County Soil & Water Conservation Partnership Staff:

Sandra Hoffarth, SWCD
Sarah Longenecker, SWCD
Ally Pudlo, SWCD
Debbie Knepp, NRCS

Farm Service Agency Staff:

Gideon Nobbe, CED
Devan Harrell
Katie Leitch
Aldona Martin
Tara Wolfe



The St Joseph SWCD & NRCS Staff & Board

Wish you a very happy holiday season.



Are you ready to "GO GREEN" and help us save money and natural resources? We can deliver your "Conservation Kaleidoscope" newsletter by email ... Give us a call or send us an email and tell us you'd like to "GO GREEN" THANK YOU!!!!



Scan me to go Green!