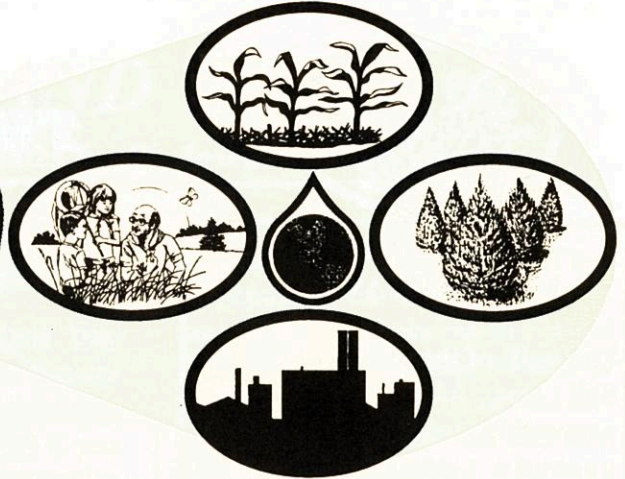




St. Joseph
County
Soil & Water
Conservation
District

CONSERVATION KALEIDOSCOPE



Today's Visions for Tomorrow's Future

Jul/Aug/Sep 2001
Volume 3, Issue 3

5605 U.S. 31 South, Suite 4 *South Bend, IN *
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Tonia Albright



Calendar of Events

July 4
Independence Day
Office Closed

July 16
SWCD Monthly Board Meeting
7:30 - Farm Bureau Mtg. Room

July 28 - August 4
St. Joseph Co. 4-H Fair

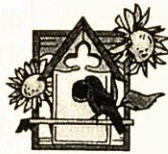
August 15
Education Calendar Opens
For Program Reservations

August 20
SWCD Monthly Board Meeting
7:30 Farm Bureau Mtg. Room

September 3
Labor Day - Office Closed

September 15
4-County Forestry Field Day

September 17
SWCD Monthly Board Meeting
7:30 - Farm Bureau Mtg. Room



*Have a Happy & Safe
4th of July*



The St. Joseph Co. SWCD, on behalf of Pheasants Forever has available wildlife food plot seed. At this time available seed consists of corn, grain sorghum, and sunflower seed.

This seed is free and our only request is your signature agreeing to the planting of the seed for food plots only. This seed is not for the purpose of bird feeders.

For further information, please call the office.

The St. Joseph Co. SWCD has butterfly/hummingbird wildflower seed packets available. Call the office for more information.

Wildflower Seeds Available



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THE NATURAL EDUCATOR

ENVIRONMENTAL PROGRAMS

The staff of the St. Joseph County Soil and Water Conservation partnership would be happy to provide your group or organization with an environmental presentation. The staff is available on a wide range of topics for all age groups. Just call the office and ask for Rick. Remember, the earlier you call the better the chance of the staff being available.

School Presentations

Since 1985 the St. Joseph County SWCD has provided educational programs to the schools of our area. Last year the district provided approximately 500 presentation in over 65 local schools.

This upcoming school year the district will again be offering presentations to our local schools. Available dates fill up fast, so please call early, but not too early. The date that the environmental education coordinator begins accepting reservation for the 2001 - 2002 school year is:

August 15, 2001

If you have any questions or would like more information, just give the office a call and ask for Rick. 219-291-2300 ext. 3 or check out the district's web page.



DRAGONFLIES JET FIGHTERS OF THE INSECT WORLD

Dragonflies and their closely related cousins the Damselfly are truly remarkable insects. Here in the United States there are 450 known species. Their long narrow bodies and large wings make them incredible flyers. Dragonflies have 4 wings or two pairs. They beat each pair separately and this allows them to fly straight forward, backward, straight up, straight down and they can even hover in one spot. Like all insects, dragonflies have compound eyes but they can have up to 90,000 smaller eyes in their larger compound eyes. This allows dragonflies to see their prey from quite some distance. And what do they eat? Small flying insects like gnats and MOSQUITOES.

Dragonflies lay their eggs in the water, ponds, lakes, marshes and slow moving rivers and streams. The naiad or larva can live for up to 5 years in the water before maturing in to an adult. Young dragonflies look a little like a cricket but without the long jumping legs. Damselfly naiads are long and skinny with three feathery gills on their abdomen. Both species eat a variety of aquatic life including mosquito larva to small fish and tadpoles.

So the next time you are at the lake take a closer look at our friends the dragonfly and damselfly.

ENVIROQUEST A BIG SUCCESS

The district again was involved in the EnviroQuest field day at the Joyce ACC. Sixth graders from throughout St. Joseph County attended this educational day. Students were treated to a variety of displays and booths. Every student had a list of questions that needed to be answered and only by participating in each display could they find the answers. This year's question from the district was name three ways to stop erosion in both urban and rural settings. A hands-on model helped to demonstrate different practices that could be used and how each was effective at stopping erosion.



MAKE YOUR OWN REFRIGERATOR DRAGONFLY

All you need is a wood clothespin, some paint, sturdy colored cellophane, glue and a magnet. Paint your clothespin any color you would like, don't forget two large eyes at the front of the clothespin. Cut the cellophane in the shape of wings and glue to clothespin about a third of the way from the head. Add the magnet to the bottom and let dry. Add to your refrigerator.



WOODLAND TIMES

Forestry News Updates for St. Joseph County

New Trees in Michiana!!

As you travel around the Michiana area this year, you probably have seen new trees planted in yards and fields. Here at the St. Joseph County Soil and Water Conservation District, we are proud to say that approximately 40,000 of those trees are from our 2000 – 2001 tree sales program.

The tree sales program has been a success due to the excellent conservation attitude of the community and hard work of volunteers. Our thanks go out to Randy Matthys and Family, Master Gardeners, Rum Village Nature Center, Extension Service, Department of Natural Resources, Natural Resources Conservation Service, St. Joseph County 4-H Fairgrounds, John Manuzak and Mishawaka High School Students, and John Glenn FFA.

This year we were able to donate trees to three different projects through our Tree Grant Program. The trees will be used for conservation, beautification, and educational practices. This program is just one of many ways that money raised from the tree sales program is given back to the community.



Saturday Tree Sales 2001

2001 Forestry Field Day

This year the Forestry Field Day will be hosted by St. Joseph County on September 15th. The field day is open for anyone to attend, so if you have never been to one be sure to attend. The field days are hosted by the Soil and Water Conservation Districts of St. Joseph, Elkhart, Kosciusko, and Whitley Counties. The host county rotates each year.



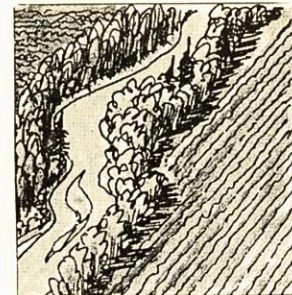
Youth Activity Participants:
Forestry Field Day 2000

The schedule of past field days has included talks and demonstrations by professionals on topics such as marketing timber, timber stand improvement, wildlife habitat, and pond management. Once again, the field day is open to anyone, so if you have any questions please contact our office.

Tree Plantings Have Multiple Benefits

How do you get the most benefits out of your tree plantings? Trees are one of your property's most valuable resources, because of their multiple benefits. They can provide a more enjoyable environment to live and work in, enhance agricultural productivity, and help reduce the threat of global warming.

Here are some ways that trees can be planted or maintained to help on your property. Trees can be planted in riparian buffers along streams or rivers. The trees form a natural forest along the streams that can help with erosion control, filtering functions, and serve as windbreaks. They also provide excellent wildlife habitat and places for hunting, fishing, and camping. Trees can also be planted in windbreaks. They can be used to help with wind erosion, be a living snow fence, and provide wildlife habitat. Management of windbreaks can provide income through thinning operations for harvesting trees for timber or specialty crops can be interspersed between the rows of trees.



A
Riparian
Buffer
along the
side of a
stream or
river.

Trees can be used to provide landscaping around your property. These uses might include a natural privacy fence or a sound barrier along a busy road. They can provide energy savings for heating and cooling. If trees are planted in open country they can provide shelter for livestock or wildlife during severe weather. Trees capture and store carbon dioxide which is the main culprit of global warming. During photosynthesis trees store the carbon in their wood and release oxygen into the atmosphere. If you are interested in getting more information on putting these practices to use contact our office.



FIELD NOTES



Natural Resources Conservation Service

Buffers Protect Farms and Water Quality

A conservation buffer strip is an area or strip of land maintained in permanent vegetation to help control pollutants and manage other environmental problems. Some examples of buffers are filter strips, riparian forest buffers, field borders, windbreaks and grassed waterways. Right now, the Conservation Reserve Program is offering added incentives and bonuses for anyone interested in applying these conservation practices.



Buffer strips help landowners by slowing water runoff, trapping sediment, and enhancing infiltration in the buffer. Buffers also trap fertilizers, pesticides, bacterial and viral pathogens and heavy metals. They can also help trap snow and cut down on blowing soil in areas with strong winds. They can protect livestock and wildlife from harsh weather and can protect buildings from wind damage.

Buffers can reduce noise and odor. They may be the primary source of food, nesting cover and shelter for many wildlife species.



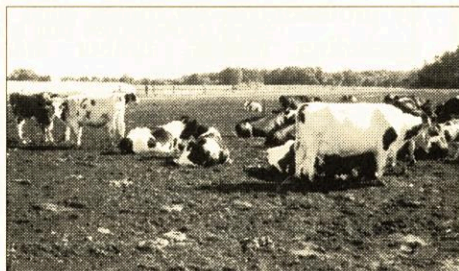
Or, they may be the connecting corridor for wildlife to move safely from one habitat area to another.

Buffers can help stabilize a stream and reduce its water temperature. They can serve as a turn row. Buffers offer a set-back distance of agricultural use from water sources.

Like the trim on a house makes the house look better, well-planned buffers improve the appearance of the farm. A system of buffers gives some diversity to the landscape. If they are used as a part of a conservation system on a farm, they will make good use of areas that shouldn't be cropped. Conservation buffers are a visual showcase of the conservation ethics of a farmer, a sign of a good neighbor.

Contact the USDA, Natural Resources Conservation Service for more information.

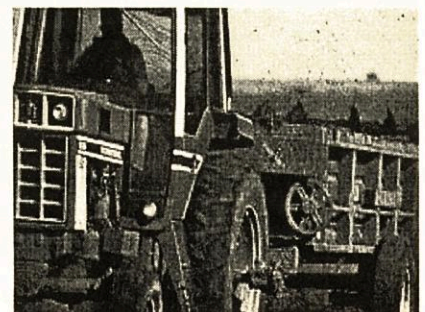
Indiana's Confined Feeding Rule Is Here



The new confined feeding rules go into effect in September, 2001. An animal feeding operation is a confined feeding operation if animals are confined and the following conditions apply: (1) confined for 45 days or more of a year, consecutive or nonconsecutive; and (2) the confinement area is covered with less than 50% vegetation; and (3) the number of animals exceeds the levels detailed below:



300 cattle, 600 swine, 600 sheep, 30,000 fowl, 300 horses, 5000 ducks (using wet system), other species not listed based on a reasonable estimate of the waste generated or any combination of animals that the combined result expressed as a percentage is greater than or equal to 100%. To comply with this rule, all confined-feeding operations must use the following performance standards when engaging in any agricultural activity: (1) avoid management practices that discharge into the state's water (2) minimize nonpoint-source pollution of the state's waters (3) design, construct and maintain waste management systems to prevent discharge of manure and other controlled waste and to minimize leakage and seepage (4) stage and apply manure to land without threatening the state's waters; prevent runoff, ponding, or spills; and minimize nutrient leaching beyond the crop root zone. If you have questions, or need help complying with the confined feeding rule, please contact the USDA, Natural Resources Conservation Service. We will be glad to assist in any way we can.





FIELD NOTES

Wetlands Still Subject to Protection in Agriculture

Despite the recent Supreme Court decision changing wetland regulations, wetlands are still protected from conversion to agricultural use, as they have been since the 1985 Food Security act was passed.

Jane Hardisty, State Conservationist with the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service, offers a reminder to farmers that altering a wetland to make it croppable will cause the owner to be ineligible for most USDA programs. This includes commodity and disaster payments for all the land they own or farm.

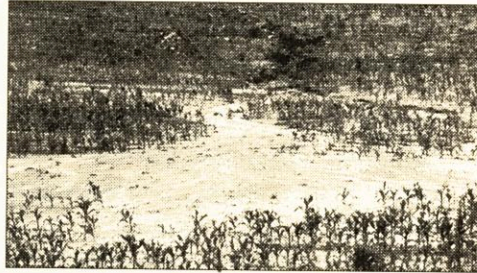
Wetland Compliance, or "Swampbuster" as it is sometimes called, has been in effect for 15 years, and it is expected to continue with the next Farm Bill in 2002, says Dwayne Howard, Assistant State Conservationist (Programs) for NRCS.

"Nearly all Indiana farmers are fully complying and protecting wetlands," says Howard, "but some of our field staff have received calls from farmers wondering if anything has changed since the recent Supreme Court decision. Nothing has changed regarding draining or altering wetlands for agricultural use," he adds. Actually through the Wetlands Reserve Program (WRP) and the Floodplain Easement Program (FEP), the farm community is restoring more wetlands than any other group. WRP and FEP help restore wetlands that are converted and used for agriculture. Over 30,000 acres of wetlands have been restored in

Indiana through these USDA programs.

For more information on wetland compliance and wetland conservation, please call the office.

New Found Gullies



Spring planting gives landusers a chance to see the changes Mother Nature has made to their land over the winter. Some of you may be finding that there are brand new gullies formed or that the small gullies that were there last year have become large ones. Now is the time to sketch where these gullies are on a map while it is fresh in your mind. Then you can decide what, if anything, should be done about them.

Valuable tons of topsoil are lost each year to sheet, rill and gully erosion in fields. This topsoil, which is a wonderful thing when on a field, becomes a problem for others when it leaves the field. Downstream waterways, streams and lakes become filled with sediment and the chemicals that are attached to it. There may be no way to stop erosion, but there are ways to minimize the extent of soil erosion from a field. Many farmers in this county have installed waterways and/or water and sediment control basins to help reduce the erosion from their land. A grassed waterway is a shaped grass strip constructed along the path of water flow. It is designed to carry the amount of runoff flowing in from its particular watershed.

The sides of the waterway are sloped to allow water to enter, but are flat enough for ease of crossing with farming equipment. The waterway is seeded with a hearty stand of fescue that will be able to withstand the water flow. The establishment of this grass is the most important part of building a waterway, and makes this time of year an important concern for planning. Not only do grass waterways serve to stop the gully from reforming, the grass filters out some sediment and chemicals before they reach our streams.

A water and sediment control basin (WASCoB) traps the surface water runoff and outlets it into an underground tile. This is accomplished by using an earthen levee built across the drainageway designed to store the surface runoff. A tile riser and subsurface tile are then used to carry this water to a proper outlet. The WASCoB is generally designed to have the water drain away within a 24-hour period. The slopes of these levees can be designed to allow farming across them, or they can be grassed, depending on the slope of the field and the dollar investment the landowner wishes to make.

Because the reduction of erosion on your farm not only helps you, but also benefits the general public, there are cost share programs available to reduce the cost of installing these practices. Contact the USDA, Natural Conservation Service at 219-291-2300, ext. 3 for more information.



FIELD NOTES

Restoring Indiana's Wetlands



Each May, thousands of individuals celebrate the uniqueness, beauty, and importance of wetlands. This year marks the 10th anniversary of American Wetlands Month with the theme, "American Wetlands-Keep 'Em Native." During May, conservation districts, grassroots organizations, and government agencies join individuals and educators across the country to acknowledge the importance of this valuable natural resource and the role wetlands play in the health of our Nation.

A wetland can be as tiny as a small wet spot or puddle or as large as the Everglades, and they are found in every state in the U.S. Landowners are voluntarily restoring wetlands on a scale never seen before.

In Indiana, many landowners turn to the Natural Resources Conservation Service's Wetlands Reserve Program (WRP). WRP provides financial and technical resources to landowners to restore wetlands on private lands. Since 1994, WRP in Indiana has restored more than 25,000 acres of wetland habitat. In addition to restoration, WRP provides financial support to agricultural producers by purchasing wetland easements on their high risk, high cost agricultural lands that frequently flood.

Indiana claims one of the nation's largest WRP easements on a 7,068-acre site in Greene County. The

landowner of the Wilder Wetlands Restoration, in areas known as Goose Pond and Beehunters Marsh, turned to WRP because of increasing difficulties raising crops in wet soil conditions. The restored site will provide a significant resting and nesting site for a variety of migratory waterfowl, shorebirds, and other wetland dependent species.

Other large Indiana wetland sites involving WRP include:

****Kankakee Sands-** - 2,780 acres in Newton County currently under a 30-year easement in WRP where warm season grasses and native plants will restore vegetation

****Muscatatuck River Basin-** - 1,300 acres of marginal cropland being restored as wetlands

****Cane Ridge Wildlife Management Area Project-** - a unique partnership cooperating to move and improve the local nesting habitat for a federally endangered species call the Interior Least Tern and to restore 463 acres of bottomland forest wetland.

Warm Season Grass Drill Available For Wildlife Habitat Planting

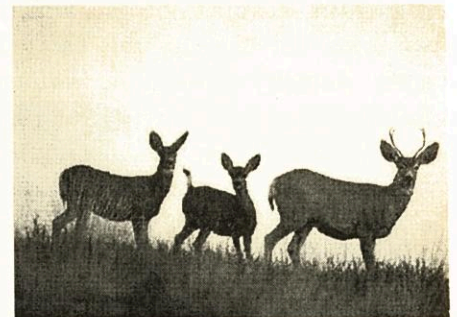


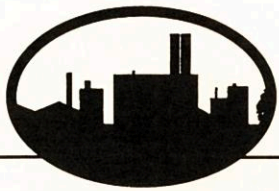
The St. Joseph & Elkhart SWCD's and the Pheasants Forever Chapter of Elkhart & St. Joseph Counties together purchased a Truax 6 foot warm season grass drill. This drill is a no-till drill that has a special seed box that is capable of planting the fluffy warm season grass (WSG) seeds. Unlike the common cool season grasses that have an early fall seeding option, there is no early fall planting period for WSG. The most favorable planting period for our county is from April 15 to June 15.



If you are considering planting WSG in the summer of 2002, the first weed control application needs to be applied this fall. The South Bend Field Office staff would be happy to help you in considering options and in planning for the planting of warm season grasses in the spring and early summer of 2002.

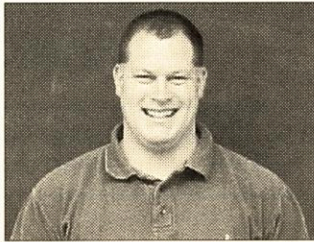
The office staff will begin taking names of people this fall who are wanting to use the drill to plant WSG next year. The WSG committee will meet in late March or early April to schedule the drill use for the 2002 planting season. To be able to receive consideration in this first planting schedule, you must call either the South Bend or Goshen Field Offices by October 15, 2001. People calling after October 15th, will be placed on the list accordingly. The field offices staff are looking forward to helping you plan your 2002 warm season grass planting.





URBAN MEANDERINGS

Let Me Introduce...



Troy Manges the new County Conservativist for St. Joseph County.

I grew up in Madison Township on the family farm. I graduated from Bremen High School in 1991 and then attended Purdue University. I received a degree in Soil and Crop Management from the Agronomy Department in December 1995. While at Purdue, I lived at Chauncey Cooperative House. I was active in intramural sports, served as house treasurer, and was also on the Purdue Crops Judging Team.

After graduating from Purdue, I started working full time for Frick Services, Inc. – Wyatt & Bremen location. While there I custom applied fertilizer and pesticides, helped improve their “Variable Rate Technology” soil sampling program, and began working with farmers to develop fertilizer and pesticide programs for their farms. In 1999, I received my Certified Crop Advisor (CCA) designation.

I live just north of Bremen on Miami Road with my wife, Melissa, and our son, Evan. Melissa is an English teacher at Bremen High School. We enjoy spending time

with family and friends, camping in the UP of Michigan, and watching Evan grow.

PHASE II OF ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY'S STORM WATER PROGRAM

A leading cause of water quality concern in the state of Indiana is soil erosion and the resulting sedimentation in the waters of the state. Erosion has long been associated with farming activities, but with the increased concentration of developmental property, construction sites left unprotected have taken the forefront in erosion awareness. Every phase of a construction project has the potential of contributing significant quantities of sediment-laden runoff.

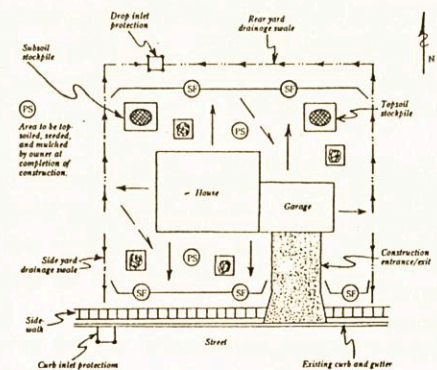
Phase I of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) storm water program was promulgated in 1990 under the Clean Water Act to address various levels of construction activities. Construction disturbing 5 acres of land or greater is listed as one of the activities requiring permit coverage to control the associated storm water runoff. Storm Water Phase II is the next step in EPA'S effort to preserve, protect and improve the Nation's water resources. The Phase II program expands upon Phase I by requiring operators of small construction sites (1 acre or greater) to implement programs and practices to control polluted storm water runoff, through National Pollutant Discharge Elimination (NPDES) permitting.

One of the tenets of the new Rule is

that erosion and sediment controls are cumulative actions with associated cumulative effects. It becomes increasingly more cost effective to control erosion before its onset, than to install one large stop-gap measure, or to ignore the problem and pay for the resulting clean up. One of the smallest watersheds we can control is our own backyard.

Every site is unique and poses its own restraints and potential hazards. Some of the most common practices for smaller watersheds are pictured in the following Practice Plan for dwellings under construction. Each practice will address a specific area of erosion. No single practice can control the entire watershed, but used in conjunction with others, every small practice will help to eliminate sedimentation to the waters of the state.

Sample Erosion/Sediment Control Practice Plan for a Typical One- or Two-Family Dwelling Under Construction



NOTES: 1. Erosion/sediment control measures must be functional and be maintained throughout construction. 2. Maintain positive drainage away from the structure(s).

For more information on the extent of Phase I, Phase II, the NPDES permitting process, and assistance in developing and implementing an effective soil erosion and sedimentation plan, contact the St. Joseph County SWCD.



**St. Joseph County Soil and Water
Conservation District**
5605 U.S. 31 South, Suite 4
South Bend, IN 46614

St. Joseph County Soil And Water

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Randy Matthys
Eugene Myers
Beverly Riddle
Richard Schmidt

MISSION

**To provide guidance and
education to the youth
and adults of St. Joseph
County and to administer
programs to preserve,
protect and improve soil,
water, air, plant, and
animal resources for
future generations.**

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Al Gostola
Harold Mutti

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Jerome Daugherty, IDNR
Rick Glassman, SWCD
Troy Manges, SWCD
Tonia Albright, SWCD

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