



St. Joseph  
County  
Soil & Water  
Conservation  
District



## Today's Visions for Tomorrow's Future

May/June 2022  
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### What's Going On...

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

#### May

3rd - Primary Election Day  
County Holiday

7th - SMIPP Weed Wrangle - 10am-12pm - Marshall County Memorial Forest

17th - SWCD monthly board meeting. Centre Township Branch Library in South Bend at 7 pm  
Open to the public

21st - Science Alive - Community Learning Center, Main Library South Bend, 10am - 4pm

30th - Memorial Day - Offices closed

#### June

7th - Humming birds and other pollinators - North Liberty Library, 2- 3pm

21st - SWCD monthly board meeting. Centre Township Branch Library at 7 pm. Open to the public.

### Springtime Reminders for Keeping Our Water Clean!



As the weather warms up and we get outdoors More, it is a great time to think about what stormwater is and what we can do to keep it cleaner as it moves into our waterways. Stormwater is water that comes from rain and snow/ice melt. The water either soaks into exposed soil or remains on top of impervious surfaces like pavement or rooftops. While some of the stormwater will evaporate, it often will flow as runoff to another location. As the water moves along it picks up pollutants including debris, sediment, pesticides, fertilizers, pet waste and more. This polluted stormwater can cause harm to our waterways and environment. Although we can't eliminate this pollution completely, you can do your part in preventing it. Check out these five ways to help prevent stormwater pollution this spring (and summer).

#### 1. Only Rain Belongs in the Drain

As you start spring cleanup outside, it's important to remember that storm drains are not garbage disposals. Items like leaves, yard waste, and other debris should be disposed of properly, and not swept into storm drains. The only thing that should be flowing into the storm drains is stormwater.

#### 2. Use Lawn Chemicals Sparingly

Most of us want a nice green lawn but when it comes to fertilizer, remember that a little goes a long way. When spreading the fertilizer, follow the package instructions and use it sparingly to assure the excess does not overflow into runoff when rain comes.

#### 3. Wash Your Car Over Grass or Gravel

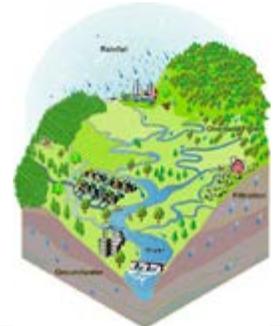
If you plan to wash your car at home, find an outdoor surface such as gravel, stone or grass to wash it on. This will allow the soap and road grime to be filtered out before it reaches our waterways. If you don't have a good, pervious space then it's your best bet to head over to your local car wash where they will have a system in place for recycling or removing wastewater.

#### 4. Pick Up Pet Waste

Although this sounds like a given, there are still many folks who do not pick up their pet's waste. Pick up, bag, and dispose of pet waste properly to assure that unhealthy bacteria is not flowing into local waterways.

#### 5. Plant Native

Native plants require little to no fertilizer and little watering once established. These plants are deep rooted which helps stormwater infiltrate and naturally filter into the groundwater rather than running off.



(Information referenced from <https://tataandhoward.com/6-ways-to-help-prevent-stormwater-pollution-this-spring/>)

# Education Happenings

Below are a few places that we've been in March and April! Keep an eye out on our Facebook page to see where and when we will be next!



Ag Days 2022



Beiger Elementary STEM night

## We welcome 2 new employees to the Indiana Conservation Partnership



Hi ! My name is Kelly Dodd and I am the new Administrative Assistant for the SWCD here in Plymouth. I am originally from Illinois, but moved to Winamac 10 years ago and moved to Knox 4 years ago. I enjoy gardening, traveling and festivals. I am very excited to learn more about all the programs available within the organization, and am very grateful for this great opportunity!



Hi! My name is Jacob Frame and I am the new Pheasants Forever biologist for Northwest Indiana. I graduated from Purdue University with a degree in wildlife biology. After graduation I moved to North Carolina where I worked on a research project for APHIS. The project used radio telemetry equipment to collect data on beaver habitat utilization. In my free time I enjoy hiking, fishing, and hanging out with my friends. I started working for Pheasants Forever in March of 2022 and I work closely with the NRCS, FSA, and IDNR to assist landowners with developing and enhancing wildlife habitat on their properties.

**\*\*CORRECTION from March/April Newsletter:** Jorge Lozoya, please call him at 574-936-2024 ext. 4 or e-mail him at : [Jorge.lozoya@usda.gov](mailto:Jorge.lozoya@usda.gov)

## USDA Report Shows a Decade of Conservation Trends

A new U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) report shows use of no-till, crop rotations, more efficient irrigation methods and advanced technologies have climbed in recent years. The report from USDA's Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) demonstrates progress made through voluntary conservation over a 10-year period. Findings from the report will inform future conservation strategies, including USDA's efforts to tackle the climate crisis.

The [Conservation Practices on Cultivated Cropland: A Comparison of CEAP I and CEAP II Survey Data and Modeling](#) was developed by USDA's Conservation Effects Assessment Project (CEAP). It found significant gains for soil health and soil carbon storage, while also identifying areas where additional and targeted nutrient management strategies are needed.

A new U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) report shows use of no-till, crop rotations, more efficient irrigation methods and advanced technologies have climbed in recent years.

Key findings include:

- Farmers increasingly adopted advanced technology, including enhanced-efficiency fertilizers and variable rate fertilization to improve efficiency, assist agricultural economies and benefit the environment.
- More efficient conservation tillage systems, particularly no-till, became the dominant form of tillage, improving soil health and reducing fuel use.
- Use of structural practices increased, largely in combination with conservation tillage as farmers increasingly integrated conservation treatments to gain efficiencies. Structural practices include terraces, filter and buffer strips, grassed waterways and field borders.
- Irrigation expanded in more humid areas, and as irrigators shifted to more efficient systems and improved water management strategies, per-acre water application rates decreased by 19% and withdrawals by 7 million-acre-feet.
- Nearly 70% of cultivated cropland had conservation crop rotations, and 28% had high-biomass conservation crop rotations.

Because of this increased conservation, the report estimates:

- Average annual water (sheet and rill) and wind erosion dropped by 70 million and 94 million tons, respectively, and edge-of-field sediment loss declined by 74 million tons.
- Nearly 26 million additional acres of cultivated cropland were gaining soil carbon, and carbon gains on all cultivated cropland increased by over 8.8 million tons per year.
- Nitrogen and phosphorus losses through surface runoff declined by 3% and 6%, respectively.
- Average annual fuel use dropped by 110 million gallons of diesel fuel equivalents, avoiding associated greenhouse gas emissions of nearly 1.2 million tons of carbon dioxide equivalents.

### Contact:

Deb Knepp, NRCS District Conservationist (deb.knepp@usda.gov)





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# St. Joseph County Soil And Water Conservation Partnership

## Saturday, May 21<sup>st</sup>: Science Alive!

Join us between 10am and 4pm EDT in the new Community Learning Center (attached to the Main Library downtown) to learn about watersheds and the importance they hold for the environment and our community!

## Tuesday, June 7<sup>th</sup>: Hummingbirds and other Pollinators

Summer is one of the best times of the year to see one of Indiana’s most brilliant pollinators, the Ruby-throated Hummingbird! Get the buzz on hummingbirds and other pollinators on Tuesday, June 7<sup>th</sup> from 2-3pm EDT at the North Liberty Library.

## Wednesday Evenings in June: Urban Conservation Series at Unity Gardens

In collaboration with Unity Gardens, the IASWCD Urban Soil Health Team, the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS), Indiana Department of Natural Resources (DNR), the State of Indiana Cooperative Invasives Management (SICIM), and the St. Joseph County SWCD is proud to present a month-long program series all about urban conservation. Listed below is the current schedule:

**Wednesday, June 1<sup>st</sup> - Urban Soil Health:** Jamie Perry, IASWCD Regional Urban Soil Health Specialist for Northeast Area, and Deb Knepp, District Conservationist for USDA-NRCS

**Wednesday, June 8<sup>th</sup> - Urban Pollinators:** Jessica Merkling, Urban Wildlife Biologist for the Indiana DNR

**Wednesday, June 15<sup>th</sup> - Urban Invasive Species:** Mandi Glanz, Regional Specialist serving Northwest Indiana for State of Indiana Cooperative Invasives Management (SICIM)

**Wednesday, June 22<sup>nd</sup> - Rain Gardens:** Sarah Longenecker, County Conservationist for the St. Joseph County SWCD

**Wednesday, June 29<sup>th</sup> - Rain Barrels:** Ally Pudlo, Environmental Education Coordinator for the St. Joseph County SWCD

Keep an eye out on our Facebook page to see where and when we will be next !

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!

## SWCD Supervisors:

John Dooms, Chairman  
Dave Vandewalle, Vice Chairman  
Marty Lappin  
Sam James  
Chris Matthys

## SWCD Associate Supervisors:

Dave Craft  
Chuck Lehman  
Randy Matthys  
Richard Schmidt  
Dave Straughn  
Dru Wrasse  
Mike Burkholder

## SWCD Honorary Members:

Jerry Knepp  
Keith Lineback  
William Millar

## St. Joseph County Soil & Water Conservation Partnership Staff:

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Sarah Longenecker, SWCD  
Ally Pudlo, SWCD  
Debbie Knepp, NRCS  
Jorge Lozoya, NRCS

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