



St. Joseph  
County  
Soil & Water  
Conservation  
District



## Today's Visions for Tomorrow's Future

January/February 2023  
Volume 25, Issue 1

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### What's Going On... Events hosted by the St. Joseph County SWCD & Our Partners in Conservation

#### January

2nd - New Year's Day  
(Observed)

16th - Martin Luther King,  
Jr. Day  
(Observed)- Office Closed

17th - January Board  
Meeting - Open to the  
Public 10am  
LOCATION: North  
Liberty Branch Library

21st - Soil Summit - 9am-  
3pm at 3701 Prast Blvd  
South Bend

#### February

10th - Annual Meeting →

20th - Presidents' Day  
(Observed) - Office Closed

21st - February Board  
Meeting - Open to the  
Public 9am  
LOCATON: Centre  
Township Branch Public  
Library

#### March

1st - Producer's Meeting  
(pg 3)

21st - March Board  
Meeting - Open to the  
Public 7pm  
LOCATION: North  
Liberty Branch Library

## 63rd Annual Meeting

- ◆ Be sure to mark your calendars to join us as we celebrate 63 years of serving St. Joseph County.

**When:** February 10, 2023

**Where:** St. Hedwig Memorial Center, 331 S Scott St., South Bend, IN 46601

**Time:** Doors open at 5:45pm, call to order at 6:30pm.

**Cost:** Tickets are \$15 each and the cost includes dinner.

### Nominees For Election

Joe Gregory and Theri Niemier are two St. Joseph County residents that are excited to run as supervisor for the SWCD. A brief overview of Supervisors' job duties includes participating in multi-district activities such as watershed projects, river basin projects, and resource conservation, educating and informing landowners, operators, general public, etc., administrating the SWCD programs and activities by delegating tasks, and supervising SWCD staff and volunteers, while coordinating conservation efforts with cooperating agency personnel.



### About our Nominees

#### Joe Gregory:

Joe is a mechanical engineer and landowner who lives in St. Joseph County. Joe has recently taken an interest in farming. He has been raising hogs and plans to expand to raise beef cattle as well. He is learning a lot about regenerative farming practices like rotational grazing and how to implement them for the success of his farm. He is interested in regenerative farming, renewable energy systems, rotational grazing, home vegetable gardening, and pollinator co-habitation.



#### Theri Niemier:

Theri has twenty-five years of experience in small regenerative farming and agriculture education and community farming as Farm Director and Manager of Farming the City. She helped establish campus urban agriculture learning center on the grounds of Good Shepard Montessori School. This urban agriculture learning center connects students and community to local food production to promote sustainable agriculture and earth stewardship. Prior to this, Theri was Founder and Director of Bertrand Farm, Inc, Niles MI, from 1996-2020.



## Upcoming Programs and Opportunities for Students

Happy New Year!

The St. Joseph County SWCD is continuing to offer free Education Programs for classrooms in the new year! We can schedule to visit with multiple classes and grades at your school for the whole school day. You can fill out the online request form at <https://www.stjosephswcd.org/education>, or you can email our Environmental Education Coordinator, Ally Pudlo, at [Allison.pudlo@in.nacdnet.net](mailto:Allison.pudlo@in.nacdnet.net), to book your program today!

Additionally, there are a few upcoming opportunities for students in St. Joseph County:

The National Association of Conservation Districts (NACD) is having their annual poster contest. This contest is open to public, private, and home-schooled students in grades K-12th. The contest starts at the district level; winners advance to the state level, and then to the national level, where they receive recognition at NACD's annual meeting. The theme for 2023 is "One Water". Winning posters reflect NACD's annual Stewardship theme and highlight the work of conservation districts and their state conservation associations, auxiliaries, and agencies to protect and enhance natural resources. Posters can be hand drawn or digitally made if they adhere to the contest rules. To view rules and guidelines for the poster contest, please go to <https://www.nacdnet.org/general-resources/stewardship-and-education-materials/contests/>. To be considered, posters must be submitted to our office by Monday, May 1<sup>st</sup>, 2023. You can either email digital posters to [stjosephswcd@gmail.com](mailto:stjosephswcd@gmail.com) or contact our office at 574-936-2024 ext. 4 to have our EEC pick up your posters. If you have any questions, please email Ally Pudlo at [Allison.pudlo@in.nacdnet.net](mailto:Allison.pudlo@in.nacdnet.net) for more information.

Indiana Envirothon is a great way for high school students to learn about their natural resources and compete with their peers across the state. Envirothon teams are made up of 5 members and can be sponsored by a high school, home schooled group, agricultural organization, scout troop, or community service group. Students will learn about 5 different environmental topics that they will be quizzed on



at regional competitions: Soil and Land Use, Aquatic Ecology, Forestry, Wildlife, and Current Issue (The topic for 2023 is "Adapting to a Changing Climate"). Now is the perfect time to start organizing a team! Regional Contests will be starting in March 2023. For more information, please go to <https://www.indianaenvirothon.org/>.

## Education Volunteers Needed

Passionate about the environment? Interested in topics like pollinators, soil health, water quality, composting, and wildlife? St. Joseph County Soil and Water Conservation District (SWCD) could use education volunteers. The SWCD Education Volunteers will help with a variety of programs and events that the district hosts. This includes things like in-school education programs, Science Alive, field trips, workshops, community programs, and more. If you are excited about conservation and want to share that with the community, you are the perfect fit! Contact Ally Pudlo, Environmental Education Coordinator, today at [allison.pudlo@in.nacdnet.net](mailto:allison.pudlo@in.nacdnet.net) or by calling (574) 936-2024 Ext. 4.



**Meet Our**  
Administrative  
Assistant Rylee Stout  
hired in October  
2022.

**About me:**  
Hello! My name is  
Rylee Stout and I am  
the new  
Administrative  
Assistant/Treasurer  
for St. Joseph County  
Soil and Water  
Conservation

District. I am a recent graduate from Ball State University where I majored in Business Administration. I spent time growing up listening to my grandma's stories of growing up on a farm and gardened often with her. I have a passion for nature and actively being outside. I grew up in Noblesville, IN and recently relocated to Rochester, IN where I am excited to start a garden in the backyard. I enjoy spending time with my family, reading, and cooking. I have two daughters that are my whole world, Ainslee and Swayze. I am so excited to start this new journey and use my education to help my community!



## Conservation Stewardship Program Sign-up Deadline Announced



**Sign-up Deadline:**  
*January 20, 2023*

*Indianapolis Dec. 13, 2022*— USDA’s Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) Acting State Conservationist Dan Hovland announced today that Indiana is accepting applications for the first round of fiscal year 2023 Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP) funding through **Jan. 20, 2023**. CSP is the nation’s largest conservation program.

While applications are accepted year-round, interested producers should submit applications to their local NRCS office by Jan. 20 to be considered for the current funding period. Applications received after Jan. 20 will automatically be considered during the next funding cycle.

CSP is a financial assistance program for producers who are already established conservation stewards and who want to add more conservation benefits on their land, such as improved water and soil quality, climate-smart agricultural practices and enhanced wildlife habitat.

“CSP enables landowners to take their conservation practices to the next level,” Hovland said. “The better the performance of their conservation practices, the higher the payment they will receive. CSP is truly an opportunity to invest in your land and ensure you are protecting vital natural resources such as soil, air, and water for years to come. This funding cycle is an opportunity to join the thousands of producers throughout the country who have already used CSP to positively impact more than 70 million acres nationwide.”

Information about CSP, including national and state ranking questions and enhancement descriptions, is available at [www.nrcs.usda.gov/Indiana/csp](http://www.nrcs.usda.gov/Indiana/csp). This one-stop shop, which provides information to help individuals determine whether CSP is right for them, will be continually updated as more information becomes available.

For more information about Indiana NRCS and other technical and financial assistance available through conservation programs, visit [www.nrcs.usda.gov/indiana](http://www.nrcs.usda.gov/indiana) or contact your District Conservationist at [Farmers.gov/service-locator](http://Farmers.gov/service-locator).

## Soil Summit

The newly formed Urban and Small Farm Working Group help urban farmers, small farmers and homeowners build healthy, resilient soil. We will be holding an educational event this January to teach about the basics of soil health farming on a small scale and to introduce the group. The Soil Summit is a full day event with 4 breakout sessions on building healthy soil.

**Date:** January 21, 2023

**Time:** 9:00 am – 3:00 pm (lunch will be provided)

**Where:** Unity Gardens Welcome Center, 3701 Prast Boulevard South Bend, IN 46628



## Producer’s Meeting

The St. Joseph and Marshall County Soil and Water Conservation Districts will be holding an educational meeting featuring two Indiana farmers as our main speakers. Rick Clark, a fifth-generation farmer in Warren County, Indiana, will present in the morning. His family has lived on the farm since the 1880s. Rick will share his personal transition from chemical dependency to regenerative practices and how it can be done. In the afternoon we will hear from Rodney Rulon of Rulon Enterprises LLC in Arcadia, IN. Rodney will be discussing the financial aspects of soil health farming. He is a fourth-generation farmer and serves on the Hamilton County SWCD board. PARP credits have been applied for.

**Date:** March 1, 2023

**Time:** 9:00 am – 3:00 pm (lunch will be provided)

**Where:** Christo’s Banquet Center, 830 Lincoln Hwy. East, Plymouth, IN 46563



## St. Joseph County Soil And Water Conservation Partnership

### 2023 Clean Water Indiana Funds

**Have you been considering trying no-till or cover crops? Or installing a filter strip or pollinator habitat? The St. Joseph County Soil and Water Conservation District has cost share funds available. Contact our office for more information!**

**No-Till** - \$15/acre (max 200 acres)



**Cover Crops** - 75% of cost up to \$20/acre (max 200 acres)



**Filter Strips** - 75% up to \$350/acre (max 6 acres)



**Pollinator Habitat** - 75% up to \$750/acre (min. 1/2 acre up to 10 acres)



**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:**

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

**Farm Service Agency Staff:**

Gideon Nobbe, CED  
Devan Harrell  
Aldona Martin  
Diane Stichter

**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!