

MONTHLY BOARD MEETING MINUTES

I. CALL TO ORDER – On Tuesday March 20, 2018, at 6:35 pm a regular meeting of the Board of Supervisors of the St Joseph County SWCD at the Centre Township Library, South Bend, IN was called to order by John Dooms, Chairman.

PRESENT – SWCD	PRESENT – SWCD/NRCS	Present - EX-OFFICIO	ABSENT – SWCD
John Dooms, Chair/Supervisor	Debbie Knepp, NRCS DC	N/a	Jim LaFree
Jeremy Cooper, Vice-Chair/Supervisor	Sarah Longenecker, SWCD CC	PRESENT – Public	Dave Craft
Stacey Silvers, Supervisor	Sandra Hoffarth, SWCD AA	n/a	Dru Wrasse
Mike Burkholder, Supervisor	Jane Sablich, SWCD EEC		Richard Schmidt
Dave Vandewalle, Supervisor			Randy Matthys
David Straughn			Dale Stoner
			Arlene Schuchman
			Chuck Lehman
			Carole Riewe

II. ADDITIONS TO AGENDA – Old Business h. 2018 Budget Adjustments

III. REGULAR BUSINESS

- a. **Legislative Updates** – n/a
- b. **Indiana Conservation Partnership Updates** – n/a
- c. **Minutes: February 22, 2018 board meeting** – Minutes were reviewed and approved as presented.
- d. **Treasurer’s Report: (2/20/2018-3/20/2018)** – The treasurer’s report was reviewed and approved as submitted by motion (Cooper, Vandewalle).
- e. **Approval of Claims (2/20/2018-3/20/2018)** –A motion (Cooper, Silvers) was made to approve Claim Nos. 11321-11327 for a total of \$2,942.34 as presented. Motion carried.

IV. OLD BUSINESS

- a. **St. Joseph Co. Soil & Water Conservation Partnership Staff Written Reports**
 - i. **Field Office & Education Reports** – The field office report was presented to the board & reviewed. (Attached)
 - ii. **NRCS Talking Points** - Knepp went over the NRCS DC talking points (attached)
- b. **Producer’s Meeting** – Dooms reported that due to more attendees than budgeted there was an overage in the budget. Total expenses for food was \$2,664.66. We received \$1,900 in donors and sponsorships and Starke County had \$250 as their district funds portion through the CWI grant. This left a deficit of \$514.66 which divided between the 3 counties leaves our portion at \$171.55. The CWI grant cannot cover food, only hall rentals, mileage or speaker fees. A motion (Cooper, Burkholder) was made to release these funds from the Education – Adult Education & Outreach fund since the producers meeting furthers the districts mission of educating the adults of St Joseph County. Motion carried.
- c. **Raingarden Sign** – Hoffarth went over the quotes she was able to obtain from Vanadco Signs, Fastsigns, Eco Owl Press & Alpha Graphics. A motion (Cooper, Vandewalle) was made to approve the quote from Vanadco Signs for a 36”x24” educational sign at the cost of \$1,844 including installation. Motion passed. Hoffarth will inform the board when the sign is installed.
- d. **Best Week Ever** – Sablich informed the board the Rain Barrell Assembly Day would take place at Purple Porch. They would like the event to be free. Sablich was able to find a place to store the barrels before the day. Cost to purchase 30 barrels along with the kits would be \$30 each for a total of \$900. A motion (Cooper, Burkholder) was made to release \$900 for the cost of the barrels and kits. Sablich and staff will work on trying to find sponsors to cover this cost if possible. Sablich will inform the board of further details as they become available.
- e. **SWCD Logo Attire** – Hoffarth went over the quotes she was able to obtain from It’s Tops, Aunt Linda’s Embroidery, & Graphie Tee’s. A motion (Cooper, Burkholder) was made to approve the quote from Aunt Linda’s Embroidery for 4 polo’s, 3 fleece sweatshirts/jackets, and 1 fleece vest for a total of \$215.24. Motion passed.
- f. **Conservation Fund** – Longenecker informed the board she has sent a letter to Peg kindly declining to facilitate a meeting at this point since the focus of the meeting no longer pertains to programs available in our county. The board was in agreeance.
- g. **Landfill Inspection** – Longenecker encourages anyone who hasn’t been along for the inspection should attend. She will contact the landfill to find some dates that work for them then coordinate with Burkholder, Silvers or Vandewalle on who can attend.

- h. **2018 Budget Adjustments** – a motion (Cooper, Burkholder) was made to increase the Parking listed under Education – Staff & Board Training from \$50 to \$80, increase staff mileage listed under District Operations from \$400 to \$800 and to increase Trailblazer Maintenance listed under Vehicle from \$1,500 to \$2,700. Motion passed. All other budgets are still under their approved amounts.

V. NEW BUSINESS

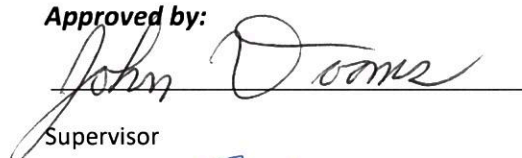
- a. **Schedules/ Upcoming Events / Any Related Claims** - calendars were handed out explaining upcoming special events & holiday schedules on the back of the agenda.
- b. **New Associate Supervisor** – A motion (Burkholder, Vandewalle) was made to approve David Straughn as a new Associate Supervisor to the St. Joseph County SWCD Board. Motion passed.
- c. **Chairman/Vice Chairman/Secretary/Treasurer Election** – By written ballots John Doms was voted as Chairman and Jeremy Cooper was voted as Vice Chairman for 2018. Sandra Hoffarth was unanimously voted as the Secretary/Treasurer for 2018.

VI. PRIVILEGE OF FLOOR – Cooper read a thank you card from Doms for the funeral flowers for his mother-in-law. Doms read a resignation letter from Arlene Schuchman. A motion (Cooper, Silvers) was made to approve this resignation. Motion passed. Thank you, Arlene, for all your years of service to our board.

VII. ADJOURNMENT – The board meeting adjourned at 7:30 pm.

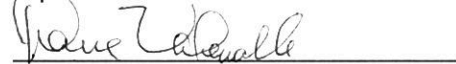
Respectfully submitted,
Sandra Hoffarth
Administrative Assistant
St. Joseph County Soil & Water Conservation District
2903 Gary Drive, Plymouth, IN 46563
Email: Sandra.hoffarth@in.nacdnet.net
www.stjosephswcd.org

Approved by:

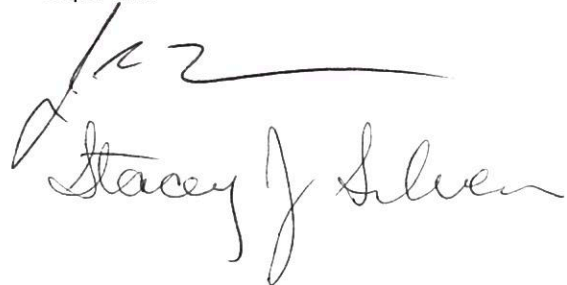

Supervisor



Supervisor



Supervisor



Field Office Report
February 19 – March 16, 2018

Field Work:

- Field review – 50 ac cover crops (CWI)
- Planning visit – 11 farms for cover crops (EQIP)
- Monitoring of WRP property (WRP)
- 3 farm visits to discuss converting to prescribed grazing (sheep, beef)

Environmental Quality Incentive Program (EQIP)

- Planning/rank/upload documents for funding – 10 applications
- Deliver wetland enhancement engineering plans to landowner

Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP)

- Determine eligibility for 2 applications

Conservation Reserve Program

- Review grassed waterway information with landowner after flooding event

Emergency Watershed Program

- Make contact with the Emergency Management Agency and The Drainage Board

Wetland Reserve Program

- 4 ownership/summary monitoring

Rule 5/Rule 13

- Complete 5 plan reviews

Wetlands – 3

- 5 potential violation requests

Highly erodible determinations – 2

- Biography and Letter of Support for Good Shepherd Montessori School Urban Ag Grant
- Update articles in civil rights/EEO file
- Newsletter – development and mailing
- NRCS vehicle inspection

Meetings

Staff – 4

- National Conservation Planning Listening Session
- Food Production and Conservation (FPAC) Teleconference
- Community Engagement Breakfast
- FPAC Town Hall meeting
- NRCS Area Meeting
- Indiana Conservation Partnership Webinar
- Webinars: Organic Weed Control
 - Cover Crops and Pest Problems (Parts 1 and 2)
 - Grazing and Nutrient Management

Office Closed: February 19

Education Report

March 2018

Environmental Education Coordinator, Jane Sablich

Breakdown:

Month	Total # Programs	Total # People	Total Revenue	Money Spent
January	2	45	\$ -	\$ 84.47
February	1	1000	\$ -	\$ 50.50
March	1	75	\$ -	

Ages Reached:

Program	January	February	March
0-Prek			
K-5th			
6th-8th			
9th-12th	24		
College			
Adult	21		
Seniors			
Mixed		1000	75
Total	45	1000	75

Education Update:

- ◆ Growing Summit (3/10) – Held a Backyard Conservation class and then stayed for about 2.5 hours with the augmented reality sandbox. Interacted with about 75 people.
- ◆ Teacher letters were sent out with survey link. \$50.50 was spent on postage. We are waiting on more surveys to come back.
- ◆ Other ongoing tasks: Helping with NAI Regional Conference planning, Indiana Watershed Leadership Academy, networking with community at a variety of meetings/events, programs as requested

DC Talking Points

March 2017

NORTHEY APPROVED AS UNDER SECRETARY

U.S. Senator and chairman of the U.S. Senate Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry, Pat Roberts, announced on Tuesday, February 27th that William Northey was approved to serve as Under Secretary of Agriculture for Farm and Foreign Agricultural Services within the U.S. Department of Agriculture. The Senate Agriculture Committee held a hearing on William Northey on Oct. 5. Northey was favorably reported out of the Committee with a bipartisan voice vote and has the support of more than 60 farm and conservation organizations.

FARM BILL

Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP)

NRCS is now accepting applications for enrollment in the Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP). Applications must be received by March 2, 2018 to be considered for this funding period. CSP was updated last year to be more transparent for applicants. Producers can see up front why they do or don't meet stewardship thresholds, pick practices and enhancements that meet their objectives, and see payment scenarios early in the process.

Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP)/Regional Conservation Partnership Program (RCPP)

Big Pine Watershed and Indiana Watershed Initiative projects have announced a second round of applications. Big Pine Watershed includes parts of Benton, Warren, Tippecanoe and White counties. The Indiana Watershed Initiative includes Shatto Ditch watershed located in Kosciusko County and the Kirkpatrick Ditch watershed located in Newton, Jasper and Benton counties. Farmers located in these areas that are interested in EQIP practices have until March 16th to sign up.

ACEP - Easement Application Due Date Change

ACEP applications will be due by August 17, 2018 for the FY2019 funding period. This earlier date will allow the field more time to complete ranking and application follow up information. Please get the word out to potential applicants and partners.

ICP WEBINAR – March 13, 2018 9:00 am to 10:30 am EST

Hold the date for the next ICP Leader's webinar to update partnership employees and SWCD supervisors on a few topics of interest, including ICP's conservation accomplishments, ISDA Indiana watershed storymaps, Indiana's certified conservation planner policy changes, Dicamba issues, Conservation Cropping Systems Initiative, Indiana Ag Nutrient Alliance, and Purdue's efforts regarding invasive plant species. Watch for dial-in information in late February.

UPDATING DUNS/SAM NUMBER

Farm Bill program participants who are entities must meet Dun and Bradstreet Data Universal Numbering System (DUNS) and System for Award Management (SAM.gov) requirements prior to receiving any contract payments from NRCS. The process to obtain a DUNS number, register in SAM.gov and annually renew registration is free for producers as long as they use the correct websites.



Helping People Help the Land

USDA is an equal opportunity provider, employer and lender.

However, because the process can be difficult, third party companies may be contacting our customers with offers to assist with registration. If our customers choose to engage in these services, it is important for them to pay attention and be knowledgeable about their decision as they will most likely be charged a fee. **It is important our customers understand there is no requirement to use these services to register or renew registration.**

In order to help communicate the free methods to meet the DUNS/SAM requirements, we have provided a fact sheet to assist the producers ([located on SharePoint here](#)). In addition, we have also added a link on each of the [Indiana Financial Assistance Program webpages](#) which describes how to meet the DUNS/SAM requirements at no cost. Questions can be referred to the Area Program Specialist or Adam Heichelbech, Financial Assistance Specialist at 317-295-5857.

American Farmland Trust Non-Operating Landowner Survey

The Indiana Conservation Partnership and many of our partners are interested in ramping up our efforts to work with non-operating landowners. There are currently many discussions and activities going on here in the Indiana. We know that if we want to see increased conservation on rented lands we must be reaching out to the landowners as well as the farmers. To accomplish this, we need more information about the non-operators who lease out their farmland.

American Farmland Trust will be starting their non-operator landowner survey in the 10 highest farmland rental states the first week of March, starting with Illinois, Iowa and Indiana. The purpose of the survey is to better understand land management goals and conservation practices from the perspective of the non-operating landowner. Non-operating landowners will receive a postcard first announcing the survey, followed by the survey.

The survey results will help both AFT and the ICP in our efforts to reach this important audience. For more information contact Jennifer Filipiak, Midwest Director at jfilipiak@farmland.org or (515)868-1331.



Producers workshop

\$2,664.66 total expenses for food

- \$1,900 ads & sponsorships
- \$250 Starke County's grant portion

\$514.66

÷ 3 counties

\$171.55 per county owes

RAIN GARDENS



What is a Rain Garden?

Do you want to channel water away from a low spot in your yard where water puddles and grass doesn't grow? Or do you simply want to do something that helps protect the quality of local streams? Well, here's a beautiful idea—plant a rain garden. Rain gardens are shaped as shallow bowls to capture and absorb water. They provide habitat for birds, butterflies and other wildlife, and can add color and creativity to your landscape.

Rain gardens are typically about 4-12 inches deep. You can make a rain garden any size, but often they are about 100-300 square feet. Rain gardens are a great way to plant natives in your yard, but you can also use your favorite ornamentals if they tolerate both wet and dry conditions and have deep roots to absorb lots of rainwater. Pick rain garden plants to reflect your interests—attracting wildlife, creating colorful expressions or multi-seasonal blooms, or simply providing good drainage.

Why are Rain Gardens Important?

A rain garden can help reduce storm water runoff on your property and add beauty and interest to your landscape. But its benefit can go well beyond your backyard. When rainwater hits pavement and quickly flows into drains and, ultimately, to rivers, streams or lakes downstream, it takes with it valuable soil and pollutants—like pesticides or motor oil.

Rainwater that is slowly absorbed into the soil through your garden doesn't take that quick ride. It is absorbed into the ground basically where it falls. Any pollutants brought down in the raindrops are filtered by the roots of your rain garden plants. By planting a rain garden, you are helping to protect your local waterways and your community.

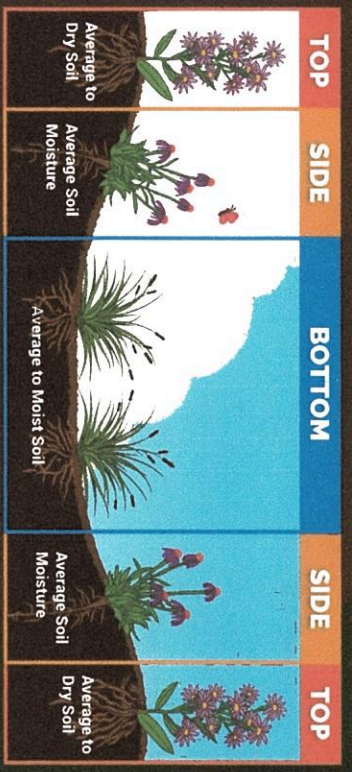


Choosing a Location

Rain gardens capture water flow from downslope drainage ways, driveways, or sidewalks. To pick the best spot, observe where waters drains on your property. Locate your garden 10-20 feet from the house and avoid utility lines, septic tank fields, wells, and directly under trees.

Capturing Water

Rain gardens are 4-8 inches deep and have gentle slopes so water flows in and out. Size your garden so that 1 inch of rain falls or flows into it and then soaks into the ground within 24 hours.



The right plants in the right places

Select plants that can tolerate wet and dry conditions and are zone appropriate. Choose plants that fit with your landscaping and your taste, keeping in mind any local or neighborhood ordinances and permits.

RAIN GARDEN PLANT SPECIES FOUND IN THIS GARDEN

 CARDINAL FLOWER <small>SCILLA SCILLA</small>	 COMMON MOUNTAIN MINT <small>SCILLA SCILLA</small>	 JOE-PYE WEED <small>SCILLA SCILLA</small>
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 DOWNY SUNFLOWER <small>SCILLA SCILLA</small>	 SILKY ASTER <small>SCILLA SCILLA</small>	 YELLOW CONEFLOWER <small>SCILLA SCILLA</small>
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This rain garden was made possible by:








For more information on natural resource conservation, visit us at www.stjosephswcd.org

