

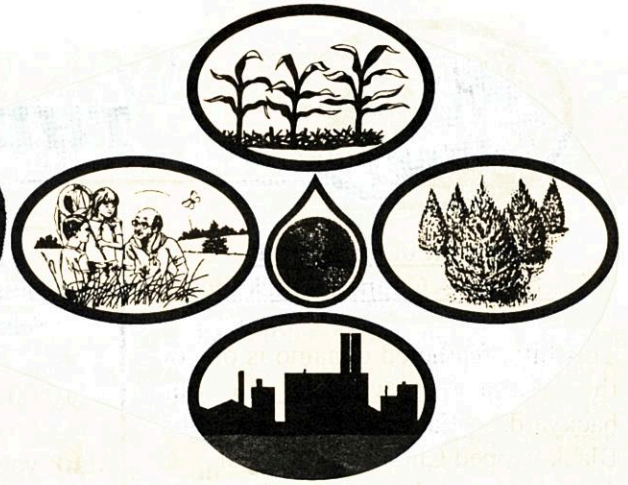


St. Joseph
County
Soil & Water
Conservation
District

CONSERVATION



KALEIDOSCOPE



Today's Visions for Tomorrow's Future

Jan/Feb/Mar 2003 5605 U.S. 31 South, Suite 4 *South Bend, IN * Telephone (574) 291-2300 Ext. 3 Editor: Troy Manges
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Calendar of Events

January 1

New Year's Day
Office Closed



January 20

Martin Luther King Jr. Birthday
Office Closed

January 21

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

January 24

St. Joseph Co. SWCD
43rd Annual Meeting

February 15

Science Alive
St. Joseph County
Public Library



February 17

President's Day
Office Closed

February 18

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

March 1

Tree Order Blanks Due at
SWCD Office

March 7, 8, 9

Ag Days – Scottsdale Mall

March 17

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



March 31

Tree Care & Planting Seminar
7 – 9 p.m.
St. Joseph Co. 4-H Fairgrounds

**St Joseph County
Soil & Water Conservation District's
43rd Annual Meeting**


The St. Joseph County's 43rd Annual Meeting will be held on Friday, January 24th, 2003, at St. Adalbert's Hall in South Bend. A polish style dinner will be served. In the event of cancellation due to incimate weather, a snow date of Friday, January 31st, 2003 is reserved.



Ticket prices are \$7.50/per person. Please call the office for reservations by Friday, January 17th, 2003 at 574-291-2300, ext. 3.

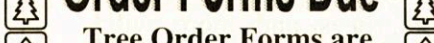



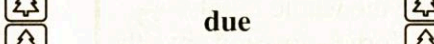

Entertainment for the Annual Meeting will be Mr. Richard Fansler. Mr. Fansler is an English teacher at John Glenn High School in Walkerton and has revitalized the Drama program at the school. He has directed 24 plays and musicals, and has performed in several shows during his own high school years.

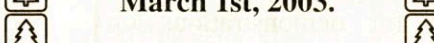



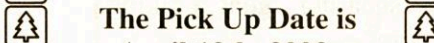



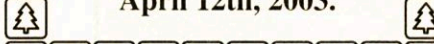


Order Forms Due




Tree Order Forms are



due



March 1st, 2003.



The Pick Up Date is



April 12th, 2003.




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THE NATURAL EDUCATOR

Portrait of an Animal The Black - Capped Chickadee

This little feathered dynamo is one of the friendliest visitors to our backyard. Easy to recognize the Black-capped Chickadee is about 4 3/4 inches to 5 3/4 inches long. Its black cap and throat patch are the main identifying features with the rest of the coloration varying from gray to dull white.

The voice is another way to identify the chickadee. This winter you will hear its buzzy *chick-a-dee-dee-dee*. You will know that spring is here when it begins its' breeding song, which is a whistled *fee-bee*, the second note is lower and often doubled.

The Black-capped Chickadee is a cavity nester and will nest in birdhouses. The nest will have 6 -8 brown speckled white eggs and be made of grass, fur, plant down, feathers and moss.

While your bird feeder is important to the chickadee, roosting sites are essential. With a heartbeat of over 500 beats per minute, the chickadee can actually use all of its body fat during the course of a winter night, just trying to keep warm. Having a place to escape the wind and cold is a lifesaver.

This little bird is easily tamed and if you have a bird feeder with a little patience and time you can have them feeding out of your hand. They like suet and black sunflowers seeds. They will provide hours of entertainment and amusement if you just put in a little effort.

Science Alive
South Bend Library
February 15, 2002
Saturday
10:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.

Mark your calendars for this excellent family day. All three floors of the library will be filled with educational and hands on displays. Display topics will include medicine to electricity, recycling to soil and fur to feathers. Bring the whole family, because there will be something for everyone.



Agriculture Days
Scottsdale Mall
March 7, 8 & 9

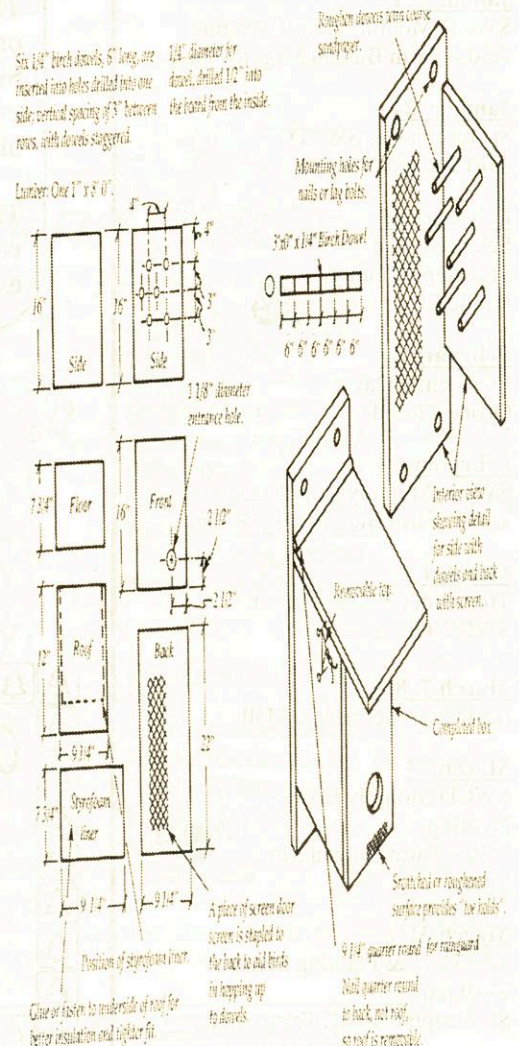
Come one, Come All

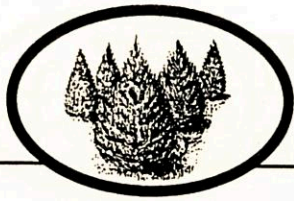
Pet rabbits, horses, cows, goats and more. Displays of antique tractors, bees and more will intrigue the whole family. Don't forget to stop by the stage for demonstrations on sheep shearing, goat milking and more.

It is cold. It is snowing. What should you do? Go outside of course. Winter is truly an amazing time to explore nature. The air is cleaner and if you dressed properly, you soon will not even think it is cold outside after a while. Look in the little nooks and crannies for hibernating insects and other life.

A great place to explore, especially in the winter on skis is Kingsbury Fish and Wildlife area, located in LaPorte County near Highway 6 and 35 (follow the signs from there). This is not a State Park and has no real trails, but mowed paths for wildlife make hiking and skiing easy. Their phone number is 219-393-3612

Black-capped Chickadee Roosting Box





WOODLAND TIMES

Forestry News Updates for St. Joseph County

Tree Care Seminar

The St. Joseph County Soil and Water Conservation District has a tree seminar scheduled for March 31, 2003 from 7 – 9 P.M. The seminar will be held at the Esther Singer Building at the St. Joseph County 4-H Fairgrounds. The topics of the tree seminar will include planting trees and how to care for your tree after planting. Please call us at (574) 291-2300 ext. 3 to reserve your spot by Friday March 28, 2003.

What should I consider when selecting a tree?

The following information is taken from the Tree City USA Bulletin #4 published by The National Arbor Day Foundation.

In selecting a tree, your first consideration must be what the tree needs. In other words, what environmental factors limit the ability of a particular species to live a healthy life? One indication is to look at the native species in your area. These trees have developed on their own through thousands of years of self-selection to survive where you now live. However, native species alone are usually not the answer. Some non-native species and horticulturally developed cultivars may also do well on your site and off attributes such as beauty, size, pest resistance or diversity that natives may not provide. (Care should be taken when planting non-native species to be sure they are not aggressive invasive species that can disrupt the natural habitat.)

Here are six environmental factors to consider when selecting a tree.

Minimum Temperature

The familiar “hardiness map” has zoned the country based on the average annual minimum temperature. The lowest temperature of the zone limits the range of many trees. Low temperatures, especially if they come suddenly, can freeze and kill the living cells in trees. Select a species suitable to the zone you live in. Caution: Elevation and exposure differences (the direction of the slope) within each zone also have an effect. North slopes, windy sites and higher elevations can make a site equivalent to one or two hardiness zones lower.

Moisture

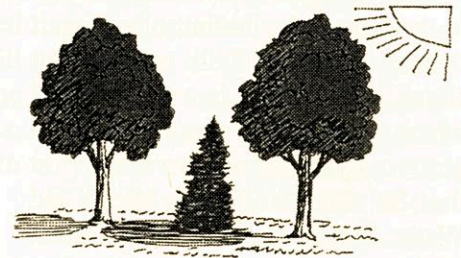
Each species tolerates wet or dry growing conditions to a different degree. Special attention must be given to your selection if the site periodically is flooded, subjected to very dry conditions, or is continually exposed to the drying effect of wind. Watering, of course, can modify a dry site, but even when you irrigate it is important to know the optimal soil moisture requirements of your species. Tip: Do not overwater trees. They will “drown” or develop root rot if the soil is kept too wet.



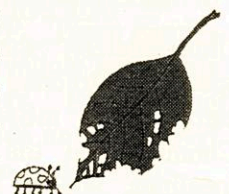
Light

Shade tolerance is the term foresters use to rate the light requirements of each species. Some species, like white birch and most pines, require full sunlight. They are shade intolerant. Tolerant species, like most maples, hemlocks, and yews grow well in shade. Others, like white oak, are somewhere in between and are referred to as having intermediate tolerance. Don't make the mistake of planting your tree where it is mismatched with its need for light.

Pests



Every locality has its problems with particular insects or diseases. The best way to avoid trouble is to avoid species that host these pests. In some cases it is possible to buy varieties that have been bred for resistance to a disease. For example, where white pine blister rust is a problem, it is best to buy white pine that are certified blister rust resistant. Some species, such as goldenrain tree and ginkgo, are known for their natural resistance to most pests. Others, such as American elm, are just the opposite. In most cases, planting a tree “offsite” is asking for trouble by placing it under stress that makes it more vulnerable to insects and disease.



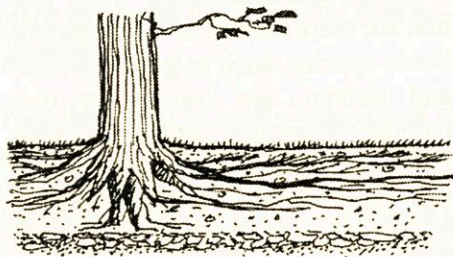


WOODLAND TIMES

Forestry News Updates for St. Joseph County

Soil

Soil factors are probably the most overlooked when selecting a tree. Soil depth, structure, and pH, in addition to soil moisture, can make the difference between success or failure after planting. For example, deep-rooted species will need adequate soil depth for their structural roots, whereas shallow rooted species may do all right on sites where soils thinly cover bedrock or a hard layer of clay. Species that need light, sandy soil should not be planted in rocky or clay-type soils. Also, each tree species has a tolerance range related to acidity and alkalinity just as it does for shade. This requirement should be matched with the soil where you plan to plant. You can get a copy of a soil survey map at the St. Joseph County Soil and Water Conservation District office. Unfortunately, soils are often disturbed in urban areas and trees which would typically do well in native soils may struggle due to poor soil structure of the mixed soil. Compaction of any soil due to heavy pedestrian use or vehicle use often reduces a tree's growth and size potential.



Air Pollution

Unfortunately, the ability of a species to tolerate air pollution is becoming more important. Chemicals in the air vary with localities, and in some cases the accumulative effects of pollution

are just beginning to show up. The best course of action is to ask a local professional if there are problems in your town and, if so, what species are affected. Similarly, salt spray from either the ocean or street de-icing can be a problem locally and some species are more sensitive than others. Where these are problems, ask a certified arborist, nursery professional, urban forester, or extension agent about which trees to avoid.

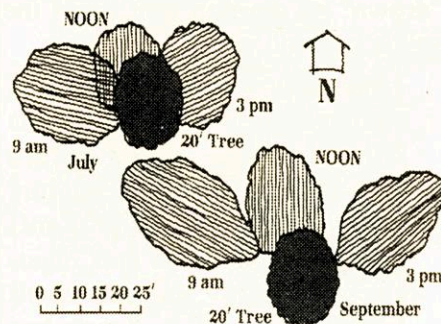
Tree Factors to Consider

1. The Tree's Purpose

A tree's function is the purpose you want it to serve for you. Some of the most common are listed here to help make sure you get the right tree for the right place.

Shade – Trees provide a greater cooling effect than man-made structures because not only do they block sun rays, but water is added to the air through transpiration. In the drawing notice the difference between July and early autumn. Plant where you want the shadow during the hottest time of the year and the time of day you desire the shade. High, wide crowned trees with deciduous leaves are the best providers of shade.

Aesthetics – Trees invariably add



beauty to the home landscape, but

with some planning this purpose can be served even better. One use is to use your trees to enhance the house or lot. Trees can be planted behind or to the side of a house to provide a background or they can be planted to add visual appeal to a patio or yard.

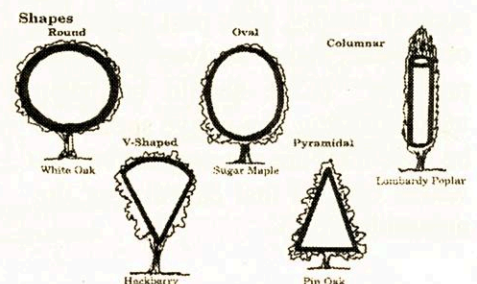
Windbreaks and screens – Low branching conifers that hold their foliage are most effective for screening unsightly areas and providing privacy. Noise is best reduced by tall, densely planted trees with fleshy, broad leaves. Windbreaks can be made most effective through a dense, step like arrangement of both conifers and deciduous trees.

2. Size and Location

Available space is probably the consideration most often overlooked or misunderstood when deciding what tree to plant. Even for professionals, it is often difficult to envision the planting site, 5, 10, or 20 years in the future. Yet this is essential. Before planting, know what the tree will look like as it nears maturity. Consider its height, crown spread and root space.

3. Crown Form or Shape

The character of tree crowns and thus often the form or shape of the tree varies among species as much as leaf shapes or bark patterns. Shape is another clue to how well a tree will fit the space you have available, what problems might occur, and how well it will help meet the goals you have for your property.





FIELD NOTES



USDA Seeks Comments On Farm And Ranch Lands Protection Program

WASHINGTON, Oct. 29, 2002 – The U.S. Department of Agriculture's Natural Resources Conservation Service is seeking public comments on the Farm and Ranch Lands Protection Program (FRPP), formerly known as the Farmland Protection Program. The 2002 Farm Bill amended the program and a proposed rule was published in today's Federal Register, Oct. 29, 2002.

"While the name of the program has changed to more accurately reflect that both farms and ranches are eligible for assistance, the program's purpose, which is to protect prime, unique and important soil from conversion to nonagricultural uses through the purchase of conservation easements, remains the same," said NRCS Chief Bruce I. Knight.

The proposed rule establishes eligibility criteria, state ranking considerations and guidelines for program administration. USDA encourages written comments on the proposed rule from individuals as well as governmental agencies and nongovernmental organizations during the 60 day comment period. The proposed rule can be viewed at <http://www.nrcs.usda.gov/programs/farmland/2002/FBRules.html>.

What Does the 2002 Farm Bill Offer You?

The Farm Security and Rural Investment Act of 2002 (Farm Bill) Represents the single most significant commitment of resources toward conservation on private lands in the Nation's history. The legislation responds to a broad range of emerging natural resource challenges faced by farmers, including soil erosion, wetlands, wildlife habitat, and farmland protection. Private landowners will benefit from a portfolio of voluntary assistance, including cost share, land rental, incentive payments, and technical assistance. The 2002 Farm Bill places a strong emphasis on the conservation of the working lands, ensuring that land remain both healthy and productive.

Following is a brief description of some of these conservation provisions included in the 2002 Farm Bill:

Conservation of Private Grazing Land Program

This program provides for technical assistance from NRCS to owners and managers of private grazing land to voluntarily conserve or enhance their resources to meet ecological, economic and social demands. The assistance offers opportunities for 1) maintaining and improving private grazing land and its management, 2) implementing grazing land technologies, 3) protecting and improving the quality and quantity of groundwater, 4) maintaining and improving wildlife and fish habitat. 5) maintaining and improving the esthetic character of private land grazing, and 6) encouraging the use

sustainable grazing systems.

Environmental Quality Incentives Program

EQIP is a voluntary conservation program that promotes agricultural production and environmental quality by providing financial and technical help to install or implement structural and management conservation practices on eligible agricultural land. EQIP applications are accepted throughout the year. Higher priorities are given to applications that encourage the use of cost effective conservation practices, address National conservation priorities and optimize environmental benefits. EQIP may pay up to 75% of the costs of certain conservation practices important to improving and maintaining the health of natural resources in the area. Incentive payments may be made to encourage a producer to adopt land management practices, such as nutrient management, manure management, integrated pest management, and wildlife habitat management.

Farmland Protection Program

This is a voluntary program that helps farmers keep their land in agriculture. USDA works through State, Tribal and local governments and non-governmental organizations to conduct the FPP. These entities acquire conservation easements from landowners. Participating landowners agree not to convert their land to non-agricultural



FIELD NOTES

uses and to develop and implement a conservation plan for any highly erodible land.

Wetland Reserve Program

The WRP is a voluntary program that provides technical and financial assistance to eligible landowners to restore, enhance and protect wetlands.

Wildlife Habitat Incentives Program

WHIP is a voluntary program that encourages creation of high quality wildlife habitats that support wildlife populations. Emphasis is placed on habitat areas for wildlife species experiencing declining or significantly reduced populations and practices beneficial to fish and wildlife that may not otherwise be funded.

Conservation Security Program

The CSP program is a voluntary program that provides financial and technical assistance for the conservation, protection and improvement of soil, water, air, energy, plant and animal life, and other conservation purposes. The program provides payments for producers who practice good stewardship on their agricultural lands and incentives for those who want to do more. Producers will receive a base payment depending on the level of conservation practices already in place, 75% of the cost of maintaining the conservation practice (as determined by the county average costs for 2001 of conservation practices maintenance), and 75% cost share to add new conservation practices to move into a higher tier

(of base payment).

For more information, contact the local NRCS/SWCD office.

Residue Still Required on Highly Erodible Land

Seventeen years ago, the first Farm Bill required residue on highly erodible fields. All producers in the various government programs received letters and maps indicating where the highly erodible fields were located. Each highly erodible field had a conservation plan developed for it which outlined crop rotation and residue levels needed to stay in compliance with the provisions of the Farm Bill.

Today, producers still need to follow these conservation plans on their highly erodible fields or new plans need to be developed to better represent what is being done on their farm. If you are not sure if you have any fields that are determined to be highly erodible or do not know what residue levels are required on your farm, please stop in the NRCS/SWCD office. We will be glad to assist you in protecting your valuable topsoil.

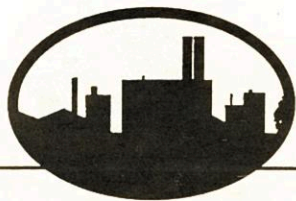
Local Producers Protect Natural Resources

In 2002, farmers and private landowners have planned and completed many conservation practices to protect and improve the soil, water, air, plants and animal resources in St. Joseph County. Following is a list of the conservation practices that have been installed:

3,543 acres of conservation plans on cropland acres
142 acres of conservation plans on grazing land acres
2,190 acres of conservation plans applied on cropland
65 acres of conservation plans applied on grazing land
1,493 acres of cropland acres with erosion reduction
865 acres of erosion control applied on urban land
983 acres of nutrient management
571 acres of pest management
17 acres restored wetlands
71 acres of wildlife habitat planted
234 acres of buffers planted (filter strips, grassed waterways, windbreaks)
55 acres of forest stand improvement
17 acres of tree plantings
2 waste storage facilities completed
3 grade stabilization structures completed
1 streambank stabilization completed (200 feet)
3,126 acres of conservation plans will help control flooding
2,360 acres of conservation plans will protect the water supply

Thank you to all the landowners who want to make a difference in the quality of our natural resources!





URBAN MEANDERINGS

Still More To Do In Fight Against Water Pollution

The Cuyahoga River in Cleveland caught fire in 1969. Why? It was so contaminated with oil, sewage and other pollutants that a spark from a train ignited an oil slick, which floated down river just long enough to do \$50,000 worth of damage to two key railroad trestles. That "burning river" served as a rallying point for the passage three years later of the Clean Water Act, a decisive blow in the war against water pollution.

While no Indiana rivers caught fire, like every other state, our rivers were polluted. Largely because of the Clean Water Act and the Indiana Department of Environmental Management's efforts, Indiana's waterways are much cleaner today than they were 30 years ago. For example, enforcement-driven activities have resulted in improved water in Northwest Indiana's Grand Calumet River, Indiana Harbor and Indiana Harbor Canal.

In addition, many areas downstream of the state's communities are cleaner now than they were 30 years ago. Through the Clean Water Act, state, local and federal money became available for construction of enlarged and improved wastewater treatment plants and collection systems.

While our successes are many, the 2000 National Water Quality Inventory released by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency indicates we still have a long way to go. Nearly 40 percent of national rivers and streams, 45 percent of lakes and 51 percent of estuaries are still too polluted for swimming or fishing. In Indiana, 41 percent of the state's rivers and streams should not be used for recreation because of E. coli bacteria levels.

Those facts ought to rekindle our environmental passions and snap our heads to attention about water resource issues.

We have done a good job of slowing the flow of industrial pollution, reducing discharges by billions of pounds a year since the passage of the Clean Water Act. Now, we need to concentrate on "nonpoint" sources of pollution. These include storm water run-off from farms, city streets and other sources, such as construction activities.

The little things-- a dime-sized drop of gasoline that spills onto the filling station concrete, too much fertilizer spread on a lawn or crop, a community car wash -- add up to big problems for our water. These are examples of nonpoint sources, which cause the majority of water pollution problems in the United States today. Every time it rains or snows, concrete and pavement are washed clean of everything that has been spilled on them since the last precipitation. That water flows into storm sewers and from the storm sewers directly into a body of water, untreated.

Even seemingly benign nonpoint sources, such as soil, soap and lawn clippings, can create pollution. Did you realize that sediment, just ordinary soil, is the No. 1 pollutant of waterways in Indiana? When sediment runs into waterways, light and oxygen are prevented from entering the water, making a poor habitat for fish and plants. It can result in the methodical killing of our fish and a gradual degradation of our waterways. That can be just as devastating as an environmental disaster or a large chemical spill.

Taking charge of water quality issues doesn't mean belonging to special

interest groups or doing anything time-consuming. You can save a waterway by changing your everyday habits and developing new ways to do old things. For example:

* *Wash your vehicle at a car wash instead of in your driveway. All of the soap and chemicals that are washed down the driveway end up in our waterways. If you wash it at home, wash it in the grass so the soapy water seeps into the ground.*

* *Dispose of used oil, antifreeze, paints, cleaning agents and other household chemicals properly. Don't pour them down drains and storm sewers or on the ground.*

* *Clean up spilled break fluid, oil, grease and antifreeze. Don't hose them into the street where they eventually can reach local streams and lakes.*

* *Avoid using lawn treatments that contain phosphorous. Algae thrive on phosphorous, a nutrient found in many lawn fertilizers. When the lawn run-off flows into a river, lake or stream, the phosphorous feeds existing algae, which then proliferate. This creates a habitat that is uncomfortable for most fish, which must compete with algae for oxygen.*

* *Use porous materials such as wooden planks or bricks for walkways and patios. Porous surfaces allow water to soak into the ground, where it is filtered through the soil.*

* *Use less water to preserve our supplies for the future. One example of a way we can all conserve water is to turn off the faucet while brushing our teeth.*

Water sustains life, supports commerce and agriculture, and provides recreation and enjoyment. If we want our children and grandchildren to enjoy the benefits of clean water, we must individually and collectively rediscover our environmental passion. That passion must run as deep as it did when the Clean Water Act was passed on October 18th, 1972.

(Article written by Lori F. Kaplan - Commissioner of the Indiana Department of Environmental Management).



**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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Dave Craft, V-Chairman
Steve Horvath, Member
John Kulwicki, Member
Dale Stoner, Member

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Randy Matthys
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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.

Honorary Members:

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Al Gostola
Harold Mutti

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Debbie Knepp, NRCS
Rick Glassman, SWCD
Troy Manges, SWCD
Tonia Albright, SWCD

Farm Service Agency Staff:

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