

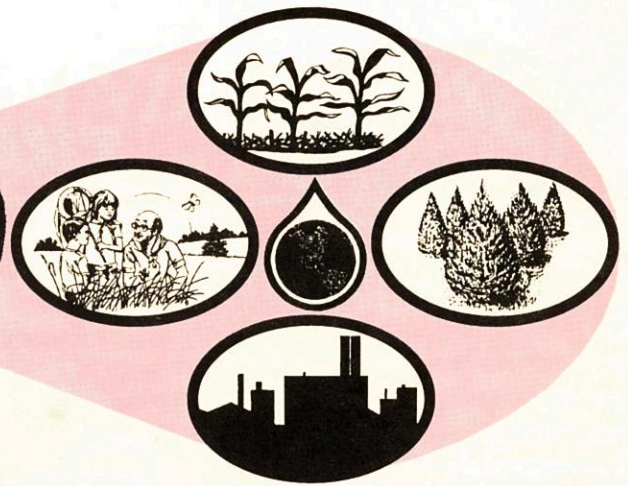


**St. Joseph
County
Soil & Water
Conservation
District**

CONSERVATION



KALEIDOSCOPE



Today's Visions for Tomorrow's Future

Apr/May/June 2004 5605 U.S. 31 South, Suite 4 *South Bend, IN * Telephone (574) 291-7444 Ext. 3 Editor: Troy Manges
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Calendar of Events



April 5

Tree Seminar – 7:00 PM
Farm Bureau Mtg. Room

April 9

Good Friday
Office Closed

April 16 & 17

Ag Days
St. Joseph County 4-H Fairgrounds

April 17

Tree Pick Up – 8 am to 12 noon
St. Joseph County 4-H Fairgrounds

April 19

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

April 29

Compost Seminar – 7:00 PM
Farm Bureau Mtg. Room

May 4

Primary Election
Office Closed

May 17

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

May 31

Memorial Day
Office Closed

June 21

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

TREE PICK UP
Saturday
April 17th, 2004
8:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.
St. Joseph County 4-H Fairgrounds
Esther Singer Building



Food Plot Seed

The St. Joseph County SWCD in cooperation with Quail Unlimited, has wildlife food plot seed available. There will be Sorghum available and possibly corn and sunflower.

There is no charge for the seed, however, there is one requirement that the seed be planted for food plots only.



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THE NATURAL EDUCATOR

COOKING WITH COMPOST

Come learn why we should compost, what we can compost and how to make sure it doesn't stink. Sponsored by your local SWCD and Solid Waste Management District.

Where – Farm Bureau Insurance Meeting Room. 5605 U.S. 31 South, South Bend.

When – Thursday April 29, 2004
7:00 p.m. – 8:30 p.m.

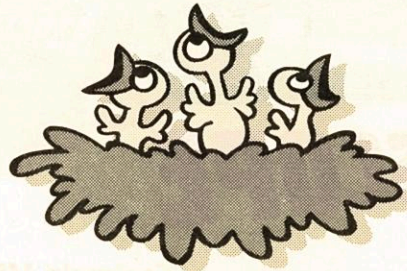
Each participant will receive a free compost bin.

EARTH DAY EVERY DAY

April 22 is earth day and I hope everyone can get outside and do something good for planet earth. I also would hope that we treat every day as earth day.

One of the easiest and greatest things that we can all do is RECYCLE. You are already paying for recycling so do it. Our natural resources are not growing but shrinking and it makes no sense to throw anything away that can be used again. I know we think that our resources will last forever. We also felt that we could never kill all the passenger pigeons, we were wrong.

So remember, RECYCLE, It is just the right thing to do. And don't forget to buy recycled products, it's all part of recycling.



BABY ANIMALS

Every spring our office, as well as area nature centers, receive many calls about baby animals and what to do with "orphaned" wildlife.

Well, I would like to first break a myth. If you handle a baby animal the mother will abandon the baby. **THIS IS NOT TRUE.** In fact, sometimes by handling the animal you can actually save its' life.

Baby Rabbits: Mom only goes to the nest once or twice a day to feed her young. She also does not protect her babies, so do not expect to see her around the nest. If your dog or cat finds the nest, place the young back in the nest, even if injured and leave the area. Young rabbits are almost impossible to raise by humans and by bringing them into the house, you have just signed their death warrant. Their best chance of survival is with their mother.

Baby Deer: Young deer are also left on their own for quite some time and mother will not try to chase you away, so again you will probably not see the mother near the baby. The best thing to do if you find a baby deer is be happy you saw one and walk away.

Baby Birds: Birds basically do not have much of a sense of smell, so again the parents will not abandoned them because you touch them.

The nest has been blown out of the tree: You can actually pick it up, dry it off, and replace the babies and nest back into the tree. You do not have to get it back to the same spot, just close. It may take a little while but the parents will begin to take care of the young. If the nest is to bad, place it in a bowl and put that back in the tree.

The baby fell out: If the young bird is not developed, place it back in the nest. If it has wing feathers and is hopping around, it left on its own, so leave it alone. Parents always can find their babies. Hungry babies tend to scream for their parents, just think of your little one. Basically with baby birds either replace them to the nest or leave them alone.

Notes – An old wise man once told me that when it comes to wild animals, if you have to chase it, leave it alone. And, if it is an adult and you do not have to chase it, it is hurt or sick, leave it alone and call a professional.

Bottom line – I know it is difficult to walk away from cute little baby animals, but honestly, most wild animals we raise usually die in the long run because we can not teach them like their own parents. And remember the food chain, yes the little one may get eaten but it is a natural thing. We must all eat to survive.

**BEFORE YOU PICK IT UP, CALL.
AN EXCELLENT PLACE TO CALL
IS:
RUM VILLAGE NATURE CENTER
(574-235-9455)
OR CONTACT THE SWCD OFFICE.**





WOODLAND TIMES

Forestry News Updates for St. Joseph County

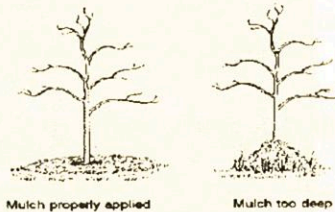
Caring for Trees

You have just planted your new trees where you wanted them. They were selected to grow best in the soils and other environmental conditions you have. As they grow, they will provide shade, act as a windbreak, or provide valuable wildlife habitat. The next question you may be asking yourself is, what do I need to do now to help my trees grow?

There are several things that you can do to help improve the life of your trees. The first thing that will help is to make sure that your trees have enough water. If the weather is cooperating and we are receiving rains on a regular basis, watering your trees is not a problem. If there is a long dry spell, especially in the hot summer months, the trees may be thirsty. A good sign that your trees may need a drink is when the lawn starts to turn brown due to lack of rain. Watering your trees once a week is a good way to help get your young trees established, especially during the first year after planting. Care needs to be taken, however, to not over water a tree. Watering too often can actually cause the tree to drown because the tree roots cannot get air to breathe. Trees respond best to thirst-quenching activities in the morning because the plant is cooler and will not be shocked by the cold water hitting it. Using a soaker hose or similar type of system that gives water time to soak into the ground slowly improves a tree's ability to utilize it.



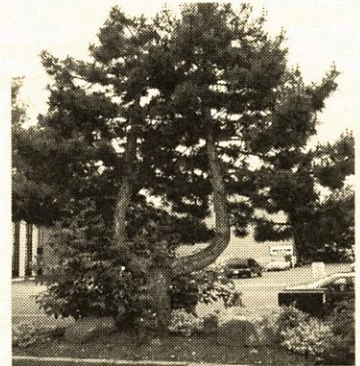
If you want to use mulch to help with weed control and to help keep the soil moist around the tree, there are a few things you need to consider. First, the mulch being used can contain diseases that will harm the tree. Also, mulch can act as a home for moles and other rodents that may burrow into the ground and feed on the tree roots. Many people use mulch and do not have any problems. You can buy mulch that is made from disease-free material. The mulch can also be placed around the tree in a 1 to 3 inch deep layer, but keep the mulch away from the tree a little bit to prevent the mulch from touching the tree. This can help prevent disease from coming into contact with the tree. When the mulch is mounded up against the tree, it can increase the chance for tree damage by rodents living in the mulch which can lead to disease problems.



Finally, many people feel that they need to fertilize their tree after they have been planted. This is not always a good idea. It is recommended that a soil test be done before the tree is planted. Once you have the soil test results, make the fertilizer applications to correct the fertility levels before you plant the tree. This will help prevent over applying fertilizers to the young tree. Many trees have been injured or killed due to over fertilization each year. These are just a few things to think about when caring for your trees.

Do You Have A Weird Tree?

To celebrate Arbor Day 2004, the Indiana Department of Natural Resources, Division of Forestry is searching for Indiana's "weirdest" trees. Maybe the tree has almost completely swallowed a sign or other object, or maybe it has the most misshapen trunk you have ever seen. But for some reason, this tree just stands out as different!



Check out this tree that seems to be making the statement of why.

To enter, take at least two color photographs of the tree that capture its uniqueness. On the back of each photo, write your name, address, phone number, county, and specific location of the tree. Send these non-returnable photographs to Sam Carman, Division of Forestry, 402 W. Washington, Room W296, Indianapolis, IN 46204. Digital photos along with the above information can be e-mailed to scarman@dnr.state.in.us. Indiana's district foresters will select the "weirdest" tree for each county. These will be included in "Invasion of the Weird Trees" on the Division of Forestry's website. To view the current "Invasion," go to www.in.gov/dnr/forestry/pdfs/invasion2002.pdf. The entry deadline is April 15, 2004.



FIELD NOTES

CONSERVATION FARMER OF THE YEAR HONORED



INDIANAPOLIS, IN – John Dooms, was honored as a 2003 Indiana Conservation Farmer of the Year on January 6, in Indianapolis at the Annual Conference of Indiana Soil and Water Conservation Districts.

Farming 962 acres of row crop or hay in rotation, John Dooms has been no-tilling since 1979.

Hard working and conscientious, John has served as a SWCD board member for 22 years, and is an active volunteer at the St. Joseph County's Ag days and 4-H Fair. Hosting manure testing field days and soil judging pits, John actively promotes district conservation programs.

In addition to John's service to the St. Joseph County SWCD, John's strong commitment to improving water quality and stabilizing soil erosion, has lead him to install terrace systems and an animal waste pit for his 100-head dairy operation.

John resides in North Liberty, with his wife Celeste, son Mike, and daughter Sarah. Amy, John's oldest daughter resides in South Bend.

John was also awarded the St. Joseph County Farmer of the Year at the 44th Annual Meeting of the St. Joseph County Soil and Water Conservation District.

Congratulations John!

44TH ANNUAL MEETING AWARD WINNERS

On January 23, 2004, the St. Joseph County Soil and Water Conservation District held their 44th Annual Meeting awarding the following individuals for their contributions to conservation.

Tenure Award



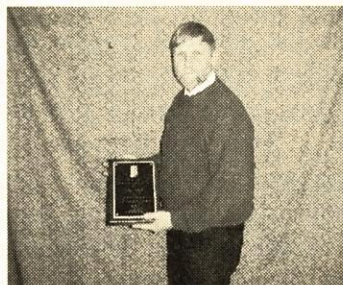
Gene Myers – 40 years of service

Honorary Member Awards



Keith Lineback, Bill Millar, Jerry Knepp

Conservation Farmer of the Year



John Dooms

Forestry Management Award



Hamilton Grove accepted by Joe Dzwonar

Conservation Teacher Award



*Leon Verhaege
John Glenn High School*

Congratulations to our Award Winners!



New Supervisor Appointed



Paul Williams, Jim Gries, Gene Matzat

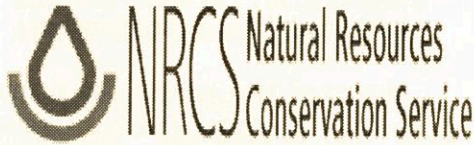
Gene Matzat administered the Oath of Office to Jim Gries for the position of Appointed Supervisor at the Annual Meeting on January 23rd, 2004.

Jim will serve a three year term in this position.

Congratulations Jim!



FIELD NOTES



NRCS Announces Proposed Rule for the Conservation Security Program

INDIANAPOLIS, February 26, 2004—USDA's Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) recently announced the release of a proposed rule to implement the new Conservation Security Program (CSP) designed to reward the best conservation stewards of the most environmentally sensitive areas in targeted watersheds. This program will reward the best and motivate the rest by identifying those agricultural producers who historically have been the best stewards of their land while providing incentives for others to meet those same standards.



Filter Strip

"Today is a new day for conservation," said NRCS State Conservationist Jane Hardisty. "CSP is a unique new program that will reward top notch conservation farmers and provide incentives to do even more to improve soil and water quality, reduce soil erosion, and enhance wildlife habitat on private lands."

Authorized by the 2002 Farm Bill, the fundamental intent of CSP is to complement existing conservation programs by supporting ongoing conservation stewardship of

agricultural working lands and enhancing the condition of America's natural resources. To ensure that CSP's limited resources are focused first on the most pressing environmental concerns, the rule proposes to prioritize eligibility based on selected priority watersheds. The eligible watersheds would be announced and identified through a CSP sign-up notification, which is targeted for the summer of 2004.



Filter Strip/Wildlife Habitat

NRCS offers a 60-day comment period on this proposed rule, which was published in the Federal Register on January 2, 2004. As part of the comment process, listening sessions have been held in a number of locations across the country to gain additional input. Indiana hosted a listening session on Wednesday, February 18, 2004, at the Martin House in Indianapolis. "Now is the time to voice your opinion to help shape this new conservation program," said Hardisty. Comments will be recorded and considered as NRCS develops the final rule.

Written comments on the proposed rule may be sent by mail to the NRCS Conservation Operations Division, P.O. Box 2890, Washington, DC 20013, or by e-mail to david.mckay@usda.gov; Attn: Conservation Security Program.

The proposed rule, as well as additional information on CSP and

other conservation programs, is available on the NRCS web site at:

<http://www.nrcs.usda.gov/programs/farmbill/2002/products.html>.

CONTRACTORS WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW

NRCS has been operating for the last year under a re-structuring of the field office staff and the creation of Tech Teams. Two Tech Teams per area in the state, or a total of eight Tech Teams were created and staffed. By doing this re-structuring, NRCS will be able to meet the high demand of workload that is being generated by the 2002 Farm Bill. The majority of the engineering work is being sent to the Tech Team offices. This is true for all counties in Indiana. The purpose of this is to allow the county field office staff to do the planning and the program paperwork with the landowners.



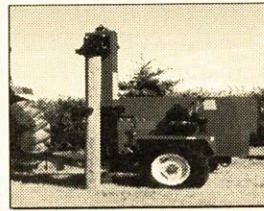
The field office staff is your main and first line of communication. If there are any questions on jobs, engineering plans, etc., the field office staff should be contacted first.

If needed, the field office will communicate with the Tech Team on the questions.



FIELD NOTES

Contractors are expected and required to give a minimum of 5 to 7 work week days (not weekend days) of notice before they move on a job site. This gives the Tech Team time to get staff scheduled to be on site. If this is not done and a Tech Team member is not able to be on site to complete the necessary job tasks, the landowner is at risk of not being paid, which in turn could fall back on the contractor.



Post Driver: Driving a post in place

Through Livestock Management Planning.”

The Soil and Water Conservation Districts in the St. Joseph River Basin that flows into Lake Michigan are sponsors of this project. This includes Elkhart, Kosciusko, LaGrange, Noble, Steuben, and St. Joseph Counties.

Through this program, fencing is one of the major cost-share best management practices (BMPs) in which the main purpose is keeping livestock out of ditches, streams, and lakes. Intensive rotational grazing has really picked up interest, especially with dairy producers.

Therefore, more fences are being built. It was purchased with the idea that it would be a service to the producers in both the Amish and English Communities. It is not intended to compete with the fence builders, but a lot of producers want to build or repair their own fence.

Whearthart Manufacturing in Saskatchewan, Canada, builds the Post Pounder. It is self-contained on a 2-wheel trailer with a 9 Hp. Honda engine and is easy to transport. It can be pulled in the field by a truck, tractor, skid loader, or a team and cart. It is user friendly and can be operated by one person. When operated by one person the operator on ground can move the hammerhead forward and

backward, in and out 15 inches.

However, two people can pound posts easier and faster. It also features a hugger that holds the posts in place during the pounding. The maximum hammer height is 13 ft. 9 inches and the minimum height is 4 ft. One producer reported that he pounded 50 posts in less than 2 ½ hours by himself.

It is available for use in any area, however, the area within the St. Joseph River Basin receives priority. There is a required minimum deposit of \$25 within the watershed and \$50 outside the watershed. There is also a charge of \$1 per post. The deposit is applied to the number of posts pounded. Delivery is available if requested. A lease agreement and a Waiver of Liability form must be signed before use.

For more information and or use of the Post Pounder, contact Dennis Wolheter in the LaGrange County Soil and Water District at the office located at 910 S. Detroit St. in LaGrange, Indiana, or by calling the office at 260-463-3471, ext. 3.



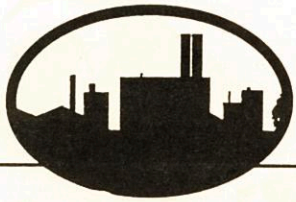
All engineering projects sent to the Tech Team will be laid out by the Tech Team staff. Same applies for construction checks. Again, it is very important for the contractor to keep the office staff and Tech Team Staff informed of progress. If the Tech Team Staff is not present during part of the construction or tile installation, they may not be able to certify correct installation of the practice. This could result in loss of payment to the landowner.

We will make every effort to work with you. Communication and timeliness are very important for the success of the conservation practice and the well being of the landowner.

WOODEN POST POUNDER FOR RENT

The Whearthart New Trailer Post Pounder was purchased through the IDEM Clean Water Act Section 319, Nonpoint Source Pollution Management Program. The project is called “Water Quality Improvement

Ag Days – 2004
St. Joseph Co.
4-H Fairgrounds
Commercial Building
Friday, April 16th
9:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m.
Saturday, April 17th
9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.



URBAN MEANDERINGS

Erosion Control Practices Have Added Benefits in Urban Setting

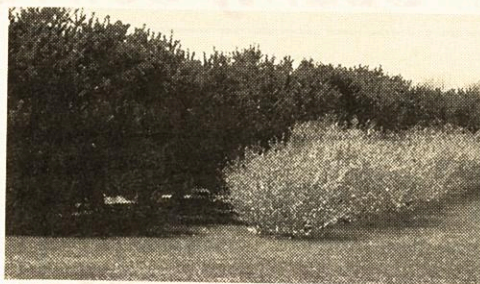
When talking about filter strips, windbreaks, and field borders, most people think of these practices being used in a rural setting. However, these practices are used everyday in the urban communities. Here are a few ways that these erosion and sediment control practices are a benefit to urban communities.

In a rural setting, filter strips are used mainly along ditches or around ponds. A filter strip is usually a minimum of 20 feet wide and has different grass species growing in it that help slow surface water down and filter out sediment and other potential pollutants. In an urban setting, a filter strip is used around retention/detention ponds. If your back yard is overlooking one of these ponds, it is serving as a filter strip. Your yard could also be acting as a filter strip if you have a drainage swale running through it. This will help slow storm water runoff while filtering out sediment and excess nutrients before they reach the retention ponds. Also, if you have a storm drain located in front of your house, the grass between the sidewalk and street acts as a filter. You can help maintain these filter strips by keeping a good grass cover in your lawn.



This filter strip along the road is helping protect the storm drain from receiving sediment and other pollutants through surface runoff.

Windbreaks are very useful in protecting your property from wind erosion. Windbreaks are usually anywhere from one to three rows wide. A one row windbreak usually consists of evergreens planted 4 to 6 feet apart. A three row windbreak will have a row of flowering trees or shrubs, a row of evergreen trees and a row of deciduous trees. The rows are spaced about 10 feet apart and there is 4 to 10 feet between trees, depending on the tree species. Most windbreaks in an urban setting are one row of evergreens. These trees can provide some energy savings as well. Trees planted on the south and west of the house can provide valuable shade from the hot afternoon sun in the summer months, which can help reduce the cooling bills. Blocking the cold north winds in the winter can also help reduce your heating expenses. Using a two to three row windbreak increases the number of tree species used. This allows you to

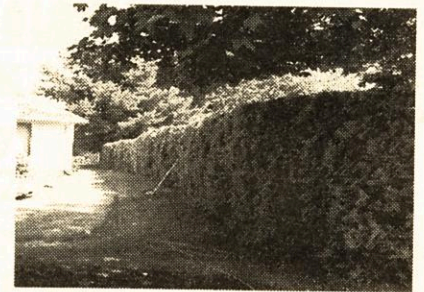


This windbreak will protect homes from cold winter winds while providing nesting places for song birds.

add beautiful spring and fall colors to the landscape which can increase your property values. Using different tree species can attract different types of wildlife such as song birds and butterflies.

Field borders in a rural setting serve as ways of connecting fragmented wildlife habitats. In an urban setting,

a field border not only will provide valuable wildlife habitat but can add beauty to the landscape. A field border can be anything from a grass planting to a tree planting. The grassed areas will generally be extensions of your lawns, but can be small native grass plantings with wildflowers in it. This can add cover for song birds from cats and dogs, while attracting butterflies to the wonderful wildflowers.



This hedge is providing privacy from neighbors and some security for birds from the neighborhood cats and dogs.

A hedge can serve as a field border as well. A hedge also acts as a living privacy fence. Hedges can be grown from evergreen trees or flowering trees and shrubs. They will provide added wildlife habitat as many birds prefer to build their nest in them.

Whether you have a filter strip, windbreak, or field border on your property, it is beneficial to you and the environment. It can add value to your property, help reduce heating and cooling bills, and provide valuable wildlife habitat to the community.





**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

Supervisors:

Paul Williams III, Chairman
Dave Craft, V-Chairman
Jim Gries, Member
John Kulwicki, Member
Dale Stoner, Member

Associate Supervisors:

Jerry Dominiack
John Doods
Steve Horvath
Melvin Kulwicki
Jim LaFree
Charles Lehman
Jay Lindenman
Joe Long
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.

Honorary Members:

Bernard Byrd
Al Gostola
Jerry Knepp
Keith Lineback
William Millar
Harold Mutti

Office Staff:

Debbie Knepp, NRCS
Rick Glassman, SWCD
Troy Manges, SWCD
Tonia Albright, SWCD
Beth Forsness, IDNR

Farm Service Agency

Staff:

Mike Hoskins, CED
Helene Cannoot
Cindy Philhower
Denise Trimboli