

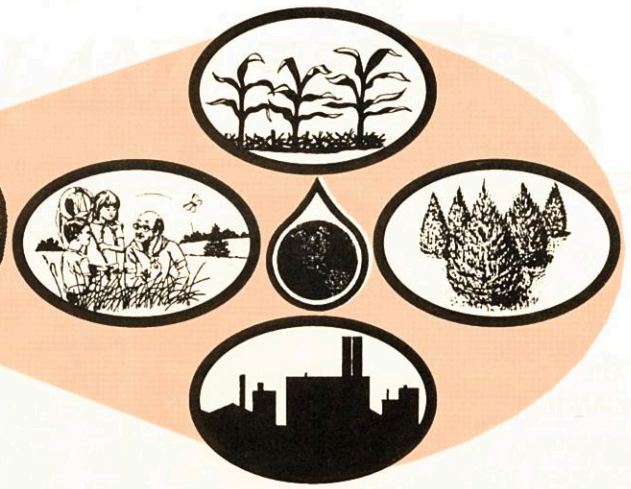


**St. Joseph  
County  
Soil & Water  
Conservation  
District**

**CONSERVATION**



**KALEIDOSCOPE**



*Today's Visions for Tomorrow's Future*

Oct/Nov/Dec 2002  
Volume 4, Issue 4

5605 U.S. 31 South, Suite 4 \*South Bend, IN \*  
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**Calendar of Events**

**October 9**

Compost Seminar  
Farm Bureau Mtg. Room  
7:00 – 8:30 pm



**October 14**

Columbus Day  
Office Closed



**October 21**

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

**November 11**

Veteran's Day  
Office Closed



**November 18**

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

**November 28 & 29**

Thanksgiving Holiday  
Office Closed



**December 16**

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

**December 25**

Christmas Day  
Office Closed



Looking Ahead.....



**The St. Joseph County's 43rd Annual Meeting has been scheduled for Friday, January 24th, 2003, at St. Adalbert's Hall in South Bend. A polish style dinner will be served.**



**What's Inside ...**

The Natural Educator .....	2
Woodland Times .....	3,4
Field Notes .....	5,6
Urban Meanderings .....	7



# THE NATURAL EDUCATOR

## Portrait of an Animal The COYOTE

The Coyote is one of the most amazing animals that we have, in my opinion. This is an animal that we decided needed to be wiped off the face of the planet. Instead of becoming an endangered species like many other animals that were up against the same fate, the coyote today is more plentiful and widespread than during pioneer days.

I would like to put one reoccurring story to rest. The Indiana Department of Natural Resources did not secretly release coyotes into Indiana to control the growing deer herd. The coyote is an extremely adaptable and intelligent animal and it learned how to live with us, and with this knowledge its population began to grow. Today the Coyote is well established through out Indiana, including St. Joseph County. Knowing this fact should not scare anyone but we do need to take a few precautions. Coyotes in our area still have a healthy respect for humans. (This is not true for the entire U.S.A.) But they will come close to our houses and love our little dogs and cats for dinner. So never allow these pets out at night without supervision. You also need to build pens for rabbits, chickens, hogs and other livestock strong enough to protect your investment. Actually, coyotes prefer native game, especially mice. Coyotes are opportunistic. In fact, by eating so many rodents, coyotes are actually beneficial.

So go outside this evening and listen, maybe you will hear a truly amazing animal, the coyote.

## COMPOST WORKSHOP

WEDNESDAY  
OCTOBER 9, 2002  
7:00 P.M. - 8:30 P.M.  
FARM BUREAU  
MEETING ROOM

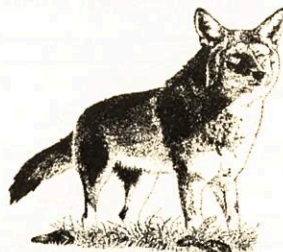
CALL FOR  
RESERVATIONS  
574-291-2300  
EXT. 3

ALL PARTICIPANTS  
WILL  
RECEIVE A  
FREE COMPOST BIN



WOULD YOUR GROUP,  
ORGANIZATION, OR  
SCHOOL LIKE AN  
E D U C A T I O N A L  
PROGRAM?

GO TO OUR WEB PAGE,  
UNDER EDUCATION TO  
SEE ALL THE TOPICS  
THAT ARE AVAILABLE OR  
JUST CALL THE SWCD  
OFFICE FOR MORE  
INFORMATION.



## Are You A Predator?

This might seem like a silly question, but in my work in our schools, teaching environmental education, it is amazing the number of our kids who do not believe that the answer is yes. It is true that we no longer have to go out to the fields and woods to hunt for our food, but the definition of a predator is an animal that kills another animal for its food. The hamburger, is a cow; the bacon, a hog. Yes, it is true that we paid someone to do the dirty work, but the fact still remains that when you sit down to a steak dinner, the only reason that cow died, is so you can live. You killed it.

This may seem harsh, but it is reality and something we need to make sure our children understand. Today, producers are becoming an even smaller percentage of our population and much of our farm land is being converted to urban settings. These homes are being purchased by people who never had to go out to the chicken coop to get dinner, and they do not like the smell of these animals being raised in "their" neighborhood. But we need the producer. You may be asking, what can I do about this? The answer is simple, talk with your kids. When you take a country drive, point out the corn field and discuss all the food we get from corn, from pop to corn pops. Do the same with soybeans and wheat. If you are not sure, read the ingredient labels. You will be amazed at the amount of food you eat that contains soybeans. Do not be afraid to point at a cow and say it will make some tasty hamburgers. One final thought, even if you are a vegetarian, you are a predator. Think about the animals, from insects, to snakes, to rabbits, that die in the production of your food. **It is not good, it is not bad, it is a fact of life, you are a predator. Please teach the children.**

And remember, we go hunting all the time we just call it grocery shopping.



# WOODLAND TIMES

Forestry News Updates for St. Joseph County

## Water Bars: Thank You Ma'ams

### Definition: Water Bars

1) a trench and a mound used to divert surface runoff on skid trails and light duty access roads; 2) a temporary measure on active roads; 3) used when closing roads and skid trails.

The purpose of water bars is to prevent erosion of bare mineral soil from roads by surface water runoff, and minimize the potential for soil movement into streams. A good water bar can be a powerful tool in reducing the sediment load in the watershed and also in the long-term stability trails.

Here are some guidelines to keep in mind when designing and constructing water bars:

- ◇ Install water bars as soon as each trail section is closed, because the majority of erosion occurs during the first major rain storm.
- ◇ Work from the end of the trail system to the log yard and access road to avoid driving over newly constructed water bars.
- ◇ Install water bars with a skidder, bulldozer, or construct by hand; compact after construction to avoid washout.
- ◇ Use the natural contour of the land as much as possible to reduce impact.
- ◇ Angle water bars approximately 30% downhill to the other side of the road.

- ◇ Build the water bar at least 12 inches higher than the road, and the ditch at least 12 inches below the surface to allow adequate drainage.
- ◇ Use a log reinforcement in the bar to prevent washout if the soil is sandy or highly erosive.
- ◇ The inlet end of the water bar should be extend beyond the side ditch or road area so it fully intercepts water flow.
- ◇ The outlet should extend beyond the road area to prevent water from reentering the road surface. Rocks, slash or logs may be placed at the mouth of the outlet to disperse and filter runoff.
- ◇ Water bars should direct water onto the stable forest floor and not into drainages or channels.
- ◇ Spacing between water bars should be close enough that water is unable to build up enough momentum to wash the bar out.

Water bars, deceptively simple tools, are one of the most effective methods of controlling soil erosion, protection water quality and preventing trail washout. A little preventative attention can have tremendous results!



Water bars are used to divert surface runoff after skid trails and roads are closed.



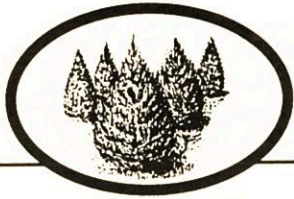
The St. Joseph Soil and Water Conservation District would like to announce the beginning of its 17th Annual Tree Sales Program. We would like to extend a big "Thank You" to everyone that has purchased trees from our program and have helped support the SWCD.

This year we are offering a variety of evergreen, deciduous, and flowering trees. Our new trees for this year are: White Oak, Green Ash, Norway Maple, Chinese Chestnut, Red-Osier Dogwood. Our sale will also include groundcovers and wildflower seed packets. The items being sold provide the following conservation benefits: providing shade, attracting wildlife, controlling erosion, and blocking the wind. They also can enhance the beauty of your property.



The order forms will be mailed out in October. If you are not on our mailing list, then please call us and request that an order form be mailed to you. Ordering will end on March 1st and the items will be available for pickup on April 12th. We should have a list of available species on our website soon.

[www.iaswcd.org/stjoseph](http://www.iaswcd.org/stjoseph)



# WOODLAND TIMES

Forestry News Updates for St. Joseph County

## Trees Provide Valuable Wildlife Habitat

Trees are nature's air conditioners. They shade and cool our homes, bring songbirds close by and mark the changing seasons. Kids love to climb them and sometimes build tree houses among their branches. For all of us, trees are a source of lumber, food and countless products— and they beautify our communities and countryside.



Equally important, trees conserve energy, reduce soil erosion, clean the air we breathe and help protect river and stream water quality. If trees are to provide all these benefits, we need to care for the trees we have and plant more for the future. Indiana's 92 Soil and Water Conservation Districts and their partnership agencies are a source technical help in deciding what species to plant based on soil and other considerations.



Birds and small animals need concealed places for nesting and hiding, protected from the eyes of predators. Planting conifers or evergreen trees, preferably in a group of three or more trees, can create such places in a farmyard or back yard. Planting hedges with low branches are another great bird habitat. Prickly or thorny plants keep some predators away. Planting shrubs or plants with overhanging branches are another good practice. Bird habitat doesn't stop with trees and shrubs; try building sloping, rock-faced mounds where birds can probe for food in rock crevices or forage on the sheltered slopes.



When planting trees to improve wildlife habitat, consider the importance of providing food trees. Good species for summer fruit are cherries, dogwood, plums and apricots. Seeds are great bird and small mammal food. For this, plant ashes, birches, firs, hemlock, maples, spruces and sweet gum. Butternut, black walnut, chestnuts, hazels, hickories, oaks and pecans produce nuts and acorns. Winter fruits from apples, crabapples, dogwood, hackberry, hawthorns and mountain ash are special when other sources of food are snow covered.



No matter what their individual food preferences may be, all birds and animals need a dependable source of water close by. This can be supplied by creating a small pond or birdbath in a protected area. Even dripping tap in the farmyard falling into a shallow pan will work.



Songbirds are natural pest control specialists and are important in the city and country for that reason. You can increase their presence with trees that provide both food and protection from their predators. Contact the St. Joseph County Soil and Water Conservation District for copies of publications like "Backyard Conservation" that can help you plan a great farmyard or backyard.



The Indiana DNR Division of Forestry's tree sale is also underway for 2002-2003. They have a minimum order of 100 trees per species. Contact our office for order forms and other ordering information. All orders placed by October 18, 2002 will be entered into the lottery for the trees. All orders placed after October 18th will be filled as long as supplies last.



# FIELD NOTES



## FARM BILL OFFERS NEW OPPORTUNITIES FOR FARMLAND PROTECTION



INDIANAPOLIS, June 7, 2002 - -

“For the first time, Indiana organizations have requested Farmland Protection Program funds, and those requests total \$950,000 to date,” according to Jane Hardisty, State Conservationist of the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS). The Farmland Protection Program (FPP) is a voluntary program that helps farmers protect their farmland from non-agricultural development. It was reauthorized and expanded in the new Farm Security and Rural Investment Act of 2002 (Farm Bill).

“The Farmland Protection Program is a way for us to work with communities to reduce farmland conversions,” explained Hardisty. “It’s a real win-win situation. The landowner retains all rights to use the property for crop production.”



The 2002 Farm Bill expands the program beyond state, tribal and local governments to include

non-governmental organizations as eligible entities to receive federal matching dollars to purchase conservation easements on private farmlands, to keep them in agricultural uses. Through 2001, more than 108,000 acres have been protected in 28 states.

“So far, three non-governmental organizations have asked for funding to purchase conservation easements from willing farmers in Indiana. The FPP money we requested for this year is based on those applications,” according to Hardisty.

Detailed information on the Farmland Protection Program and all other Farm Bill 2002 conservation programs is available from the local NRCS office, or by visiting the Indiana NRCS website at [www.in.nrcs.usda.gov](http://www.in.nrcs.usda.gov).



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## CONSERVATION PROGRAM IS READY TO ROLL

INDIANAPOLIS, July 1, 2002 - - The Environmental Quality Incentive Program (EQIP) is a voluntary conservation program that promotes agriculture production and environmental quality as compatible goals. Jane Hardisty, Indiana’s State Conservationist with USDA’s Natural Resources Conservation Service, says the new Farm Bill has provided enormous opportunities for farmers interested in applying conservation. “I am saying to Indiana farmers, **that**

**this Farm Bill is for you.** It’s easier and bigger than before, and offers farmers a lot of opportunities.”

“But this Farm Bill is about more than money for conservation. There is significant improvement in the policy on EQIP as well,” says Hardisty. “We will definitely be able to reach more farmers who have conservation concerns and solve a lot of resource-related problems.”

Through EQIP farmers can receive financial and technical help to install structural conservation practices and implement management conservation practices on their land. Farmers can apply for assistance year-round, and cost share rates are 75% for conservation practices that are important to the health of the natural resources in the area. Applications that incorporate the use of cost-effective conservation practices and optimize environmental benefits are given higher priorities.

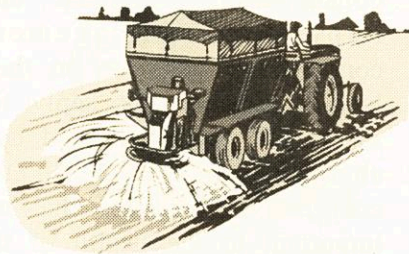
EQIP activities are carried out according to an EQIP plan of operations developed with the producer. An important change in this Farm Bill is that money can be paid in the first year of the EQIP contract. Other changes have been made to streamline the application process so farmers will find the program to be friendlier.





# FIELD NOTES

“In the past, EQIP resources were focused on conservation priority areas. This Farm Bill eliminates that emphasis so EQIP assistance is available to farmers everywhere who want to solve problems related to soil, water, and other natural resources,” said Hardisty. “In addition to cost-share dollars, there are some incentive payments available to encourage producers to adopt land management practices like nutrient management, pest management, wildlife habitat management, or for livestock producers to develop a Comprehensive Nutrient Management Plan.”



Stop at your local NRCS office to see what EQIP offers you. If you have access to the Internet, we have already posted information on our Farm Bill web site. Go to [www.in.nrcs.usda.gov](http://www.in.nrcs.usda.gov) and click on the green Farm Bill 2002.

## IS AN INTENSIVE GRAZING SYSTEM RIGHT FOR YOU?

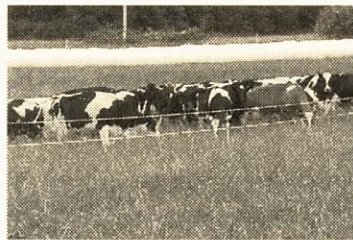
An intensive grazing system, or planned grazing system, allows livestock producers to plant forage and, using grazing rotations, maximize production and reduce sediment and nutrient runoff. The pasture is divided into two or more pastures or paddocks with fencing. Cattle are moved from paddock to paddock on a pre-arranged schedule

based on forage availability and livestock nutrition needs.

The planned grazing system improves vegetative cover (which reduces erosion and improves water quality), increases harvest efficiency and helps ensure adequate forage throughout the grazing season, increases forage quality and production which helps increase feed efficiency and can improve profits. Rotating also evenly distributes manure nutrient resources.

Livestock producers need to plan ahead to make this system work. Questions to address include the following:

- Is there enough water of good quality available in all pastures to meet the needs of your livestock?
- Is the mix of grass and legumes adequate for your herd and soil types?
- Will your pasture meet the nutrient needs of your cattle?
- Have you considered management alternatives for periods of low forage or production?



Other points to consider when planning the intensive grazing system include: (1) plan your rotation so the same paddock will not be grazed the same time year after year, (2) plan rest periods so each paddock will have adequate time to recover during the growing season to promote plant growth, (3) all livestock must be removed from pastures while they are

being rested and (4) some paddocks may need to be hayed or mowed during heavy growth periods.

If you are interested in having a grazing land specialist talk with you about your pasture system, please call the office. We will be glad to assist you in developing an intensive grazing system plan.



## VERKLER'S HONORED AS RIVER FRIENDLY FARMER



Scott and Randy Verkler, of Walkerton, were recognized as St. Joseph County's River Friendly Farmer Award recipient on August 14th at the State Fair.

Forty-three farmers across Indiana received this award for their work to protect and enhance Indiana's rivers, lakes and streams. Indiana's River Friendly Farmer program publicly recognizes farmers who do an outstanding job of managing their farms in an economically and environmentally sound way to help protect and improve Indiana's soil and water resources for future generations.

Congratulations to the Verkler's.



# URBAN MEANDERINGS

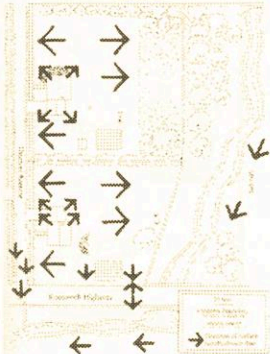
## Reducing Pollutants in Runoff

Stormwater is unavoidable, but its effect can be reduced by keeping harmful chemicals and materials out of the runoff.

### Where does stormwater go?

The next time you are home during a rain shower, head outdoors with your boots and umbrella and watch where the rainwater goes. On a sketch of your property, draw arrows showing the direction that stormwater flows off driveways,

rooftops, sidewalks, and yards. Does water soak into the ground quickly, or does it puddle in places and flow off lawns and driveways? Your soil type



affects water infiltration (soaking into the ground). As you might expect, water infiltrates sandy soil quickly but has a hard time seeping into fine-grained silt or clay soils.

During your walk, note how far it is to the nearest storm sewer, ditch, wetland, stream, or body of open water. Note whether runoff flows onto your land from adjacent streets, lands, or stormwater systems. If you live at or near the bottom of a hill, you may have special problems. Be sure to go out during more than one rain shower to get a good understanding of runoff flow during small and large storms.

### Are any car or truck wastes being carried away by stormwater?

Oil stains on your driveway and outdoor spills of antifreeze, brake fluid, and other automotive fluids are easily carried away by a rainstorm. An oily sheen on runoff from your driveway is a sure sign that you need to be more careful.

Routine maintenance can prevent your car from leaking and help identify potential leaks. If you change your own oil, be careful to avoid spills and collect waste oil for recycling. Oily car parts and fluid containers should be stored where rain and runoff cannot reach them. Never dump used oil, antifreeze, or gasoline down a storm drain, in a ditch, or on the ground. These wastes will end up in a nearby lake or stream, or they may pollute your drinking water. Washing your car in the driveway creates runoff without the help of a rainstorm—your hose provides the water. The dirty, soapy runoff drains directly into storm sewers, picking up oil and other pollutants as it goes. Try washing your car in the lawn or better yet use a commercial car wash.

### Are you household products stored outside the reach of stormwater?

Most households store lawn and garden products like weed killers, insect killers, and fertilizers. If stormwater or floodwater reaches these products, it can transport them into surface water and possibly your well. Pool chemicals, salt for water softeners, and a wide variety of other chemical products can also cause trouble if they are washed away. Keeping such products in waterproof containers and storing them up high and out of the potential path of runoff or floods is important.

### Do you use and handle chemicals safely?

Safe storage is only the first step in preventing contaminated runoff. When mixing chemicals, try to do it within a washtub so spills will be contained. If you spill chemicals, act quickly. When using pesticides it is very important to time it right. Do not apply pesticides and chemicals if

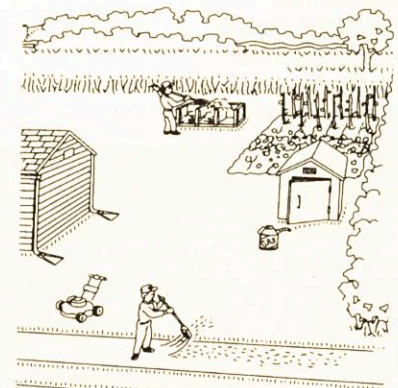
rain is expected within twenty-four hours.

### How are animal wastes kept from becoming a pollution problem?

Droppings from dogs and cats and from other commonly kept animals can be troublesome in two ways. First, pet wastes contain nutrients that can promote the growth of algae if they enter streams and lakes. Second, animal droppings are a source of disease. The risk of stormwater contamination increases if pet wastes are allowed to accumulate in animal pen areas or left on sidewalks, streets, or driveways were runoff can carry them to storm sewers. Droppings that are not mixed with litter or other materials should be flushed down the toilet. Or, if local laws allow it, droppings may either be buried or wrapped and put in the garbage for disposal.

### Are yard and garden wastes kept out of the stormwater?

If left on sidewalks, driveways, or roads, grass clippings and other wastes will wash away with the next storm. This can lead to an excessive amount of plant debris into the river causing it be unattractive or large amounts of algae. Avoiding this problem is easy—sweep clipping back onto the grass, and compost leaves and garden wastes on your property to recycle nutrients.





**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  
Steve Horvath, Member  
John Kulwicki, Member  
Dale Stoner, Member

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John Doods  
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Jay Lindenman  
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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  
Harold Mutti

### Office Staff:

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Rick Glassman, SWCD  
Troy Manges, SWCD  
Tonia Albright, SWCD

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