

MONTHLY BOARD MEETING MINUTES

Tuesday, February 16, 2016

- I. CALL TO ORDER - On Tuesday February 16, 2016, at 6:32 pm a regular meeting of the Board of Supervisors of the St Joseph County SWCD at the Centre Township Branch of the St. Joseph County Public Library was called to order by John Dooms, Chairman.**

PRESENT – SWCD

John Dooms, Chair/Supervisor
Stacey Silvers, Supervisor
Mike Burkholder, Supervisor
Dave Vandewalle, Supervisor
Dale Stoner
Randy Matthys
Jan Ivkovich

PRESENT – SWCD/NRCS

Debbie Knepp, NRCS DC
James Rodriguez, NRCS SC
Rick Glassman, SWCD EEC
Sandra Hoffarth, SWCD AA
Sarah Longenecker, SWCD CC

Present - EX-OFFICIO

n/a
PRESENT – Public
David Straughn

ABSENT – SWCD

Richard Schmidt
Dru Wrasse
Jeremy Cooper, Vice-Chair/Supervisor
Arlene Schuchman
Chuck Lehman
Carole Riewe
Dave Craft
Jim LaFree
Joe Long

II. ADDITIONS TO AGENDA -

III. REGULAR BUSINESS

- a. **Legislative Updates** – Dooms informed the board that Lt. Gov. Ellsperman is tentatively resigning due to a career change. Also, March 12 is the legislative deadline for the current session.
- b. **Conservation Moment** – Longenecker & Knepp gave the board a better idea of how the SWCD (board & staff) & NRCS work together. (See attached graph).
- c. **Indiana Conservation Partnership Updates – N/A**
- d. **Minutes: January 19, 2015 board meeting**– The minutes were reviewed and approved with correction of Minutes date change from October 20 to December 15.
- e. **Treasurer’s Report: (1/20/16-2/16/16)** – The treasurer’s reports were both reviewed and approved as submitted.
- f. **Approval of Claims (1/20/16-2/16/16)** - A recommendation (Silvers, Ivkovich) & motion (Burkholder, Vandewalle) was made to approve Claim Nos. 11093-11102 for a total of \$7,427.86 as presented. Both carried

IV. OLD BUSINESS

- a. **St. Joseph Co. Soil & Water Conservation Partnership Staff Written Reports** – The field office & Education reports were presented to the board and reviewed. (Attached). Rodriguez went over the NRCS talking points (attached).
- b. **Committee Reports**
 - i. **Annual Meeting recap** – Vandewalle gave a recap of the expenses for the 2016 annual mtg. (Attached). Net for 2016 was **-\$138.68** vs 2015 **-\$533.08**.
 - ii. **Rural Conservation** – Burkholder updated the board on the planning for our 2016 Producers Meeting. Planning is moving ahead. Longenecker did get a second key note speaker, Dan Towery and is continuing to secure the remainder of the breakout session speakers. Planning committee meeting will be tomorrow (Feb 17) with all 3 counties at the Plymouth USDA office. Any details will be shared via e-mail if needed before the next board meeting.
- c. **Ag Days – April 8, 9 & 10** – Ivkovich informed the board that the education committee discussed 2016 Ag Days. With the struggle/inability to get someone to cover a 3 hour shift at the Science Alive event, the committee is recommending we not participate this year at Ag Days. Recommendation carried. It was also discussed that we have always rented a table for \$200 for this event to display information about our tree sale. A recommendation (Matthys, Vandewalle) and motion (Burkholder, Vandewalle) was made to continue to pay the \$200 for the table rental with the intent of developing a booth idea for 2017. Both carried.
- d. **Annual Financial Review** – Dooms informed the board that himself and Burkholder (audit committee) conducted the internal audit on February 8, 2016. The audit committee (Silvers seconded) is recommending to approve the AFR as presented. Recommendation carries.

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.
 - i. **Project Learning Tree (Feb 27) & Project Wild (March 5)** – Glassman informed the board that he has two mandatory trainings coming up at no cost to the district. These trainings will keep his certifications.

- b. **Ginger Valley Spring Show – April 2-3** – Longenecker informed the board of a new opportunity for outreach and education. She suggests having a booth with the Rain Garden theme in order to reach more urban community members. A recommendation (Ivkovich, Vandewalle) was made to look into more details of this show.
- c. **Sustainability at the University of Notre Dame** – Longenecker explained that we were contacted last fall from a senior at Notre Dame who was looking for contact information on local farmers to have them complete a short survey. She then passed out cards with the survey link/QR code links to the survey. The study aims to learn from local farmers in St. Joseph County regarding their opinions and knowledge of wetlands and wetland restoration. A better understanding of farmers’ perceptions can benefit and inform land use policies and education. The survey should only take 5-10 minutes. You can find the survey at http://nd.qualtrics.com/SE/?SID=SV_72QZB6B3pSrWw8I
- d. **Notice of Destruction of Nonpermanent Records** – Hoffarth informed the board that we have 2 boxes of old records that are nonpermanent records that have been held for the appropriate timeframe. The first is the monthly statements, receipts, etc. from 2008. The second tree sale invoices from 2000-2008. Both will be shredded on or after March 16, 2016 unless otherwise contested from St. Joseph County or the state. Hoffarth will send a letter to both tomorrow.
- e. **Headwaters of the Yellow River Watershed** – Hoffarth informed the board from the previous steering committee meeting that we have the opportunity to test our sampling plot. For this grant, there are 12 sampling locations. Sampling location #12 is the only one that is located in St. Joseph County. It has tested high for E.coli. Our opportunity is to have the water tested to find out whether the E.coli is human or animal. This will aid in our efforts to get conservation in the southeast corner of our county. A recommendation and motion (Silvers, Burkholder) was made to release \$200 for this test. Both carried.
- f. **Standing Committees** – A sign-up sheet for 2016 committees was passed around. Hoffarth will contact those not in attendance tonight.
- g. **Election of Officers** – The election for chairman was held by paper ballot and by almost unanimous decision, John Dooms will serve another year as the chairman of the board of supervisors. The election for vice-chairman was held by paper ballot and by majority vote, Jeremy Cooper will serve another year as the vice-chairman of the board of supervisors.


VI. **PRIVILEGE OF FLOOR** – Hoffarth read a thank you card from Commissioner Dave Thomas for the annual meeting. Dooms also updated the board on Keith Lineback and Keith’s wife.

VII. **ADJOURNMENT** – The board meeting adjourned at 7:51 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



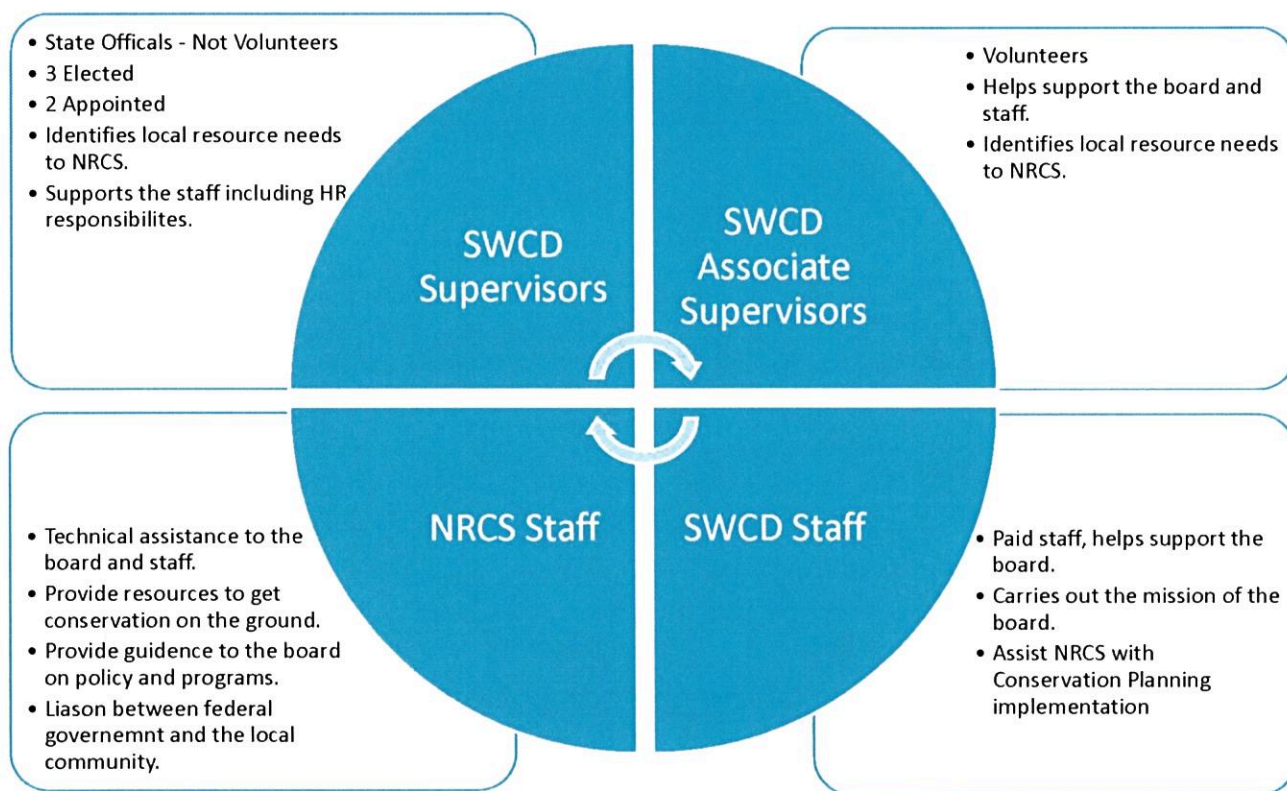
Supervisor

Supervisor

CONSERVATION MOMENT

February 2016

How SWCD & NRCS work together.



Field Office Report

January 19 through, 2016

Environmental Quality Incentive Program

21 applications – determined eligibility, created maps and conservation plans, ranked

Break down of practices:

Cover Crops – 10

Invasive Species Control – 4

Pollinator/Monarch habitat – 4

Seasonal High Tunnel – 2

Forage/Biomass Planting – 2

Waterline – 2

Heavy Use Area – 2

Prescribed Grazing – 2

Grade Stabilization Structure – 1

Roof Runoff Structure - 1

Wetland Reserve Program/Wetland Reserve Easement program

Eligibility documents for 71 ac site

New application received for 20 ac site

Conservation Reserve program

Site visit to start designing 95 acre wetland restoration

2 contracts developed and signed for filter strips

Delivered job sheets for filter strip seeding mixes

RULE 5/13

1 SWPPP review

Wetlands – 3 wetland determinations (St Joseph)

1 wetland determination (Marshall)

1 Potential wetland violation (569) investigated

Highly Erodible land – 6 determinations

Investigation and Evaluation – Potential 5 ac wetland restoration

Ditch erosion issues

Newsletter – articles, lay out

Annual Meeting

SWCD Grant planning

Producer Workshop planning

Meetings

Staff Meetings – 4

NRCS Area Meeting

MSP

NRCS Indiana Field Employee Council

Supervisors meeting

Food and Ag Council – 2

Grazing Conference

Comprehensive Nutrient Management Teleconference

Webinars – Urban Conservation Initiatives

Buffers for Pollinators

Soil Health Science

Holidays – January 18

Education Report

Work on Science Alive display

Work on District Display

Science Alive

(8) School's programs, provided for St. Jude, Madison S.B., Beiger, Knapp (LaPorte County), Horizon, Emmons, Christ the King and Marquette schools.

Programs presented:

- (2) Spirit of America- 4th, 5th grade
- (6) Legends and Folktales – 3 -1st, 2nd, 3rd, & 4th grade
- (4) Earthworms – 2 – preK, K, & 1st grade
- (5) Amphibians/Reptiles – 2-K, 2nd, 3rd, 4th grade
- (2) Endangered Species – 3rd & 4th grade
- (4) Animals of Indiana – 2-1st, 2nd, 4th grade
- (3) Sense of Wonder – 3-5th grade
- (2) Who's in the Hollowtree – K, 3rd grade
- (1) Water and you – 3rd grade
- (1) Wildlife Dynamics – 5th grade
- (2) Jethro the Scarecrow – K, 2nd grade
- (2) Environmental Concerns – 5th & 6th grade
- (1) Insect of Indiana – 1st grade
- (1) Bats of Indiana – 2nd grade

DC Talking Points
February 2016

2/16/16
J.R

Farm Bill Program Updates

Wetland Mitigation Bank Program - USDA announced on Thursday, January 23, that funding would be available through a competitive process to establish mitigation banks specifically directed at agriculture. The opportunity is open to eligible state and local governments, for-profit entities, and nongovernmental organizations (NGOs). The grant opportunity is currently open through March 28, and interested parties can go to grant.gov to apply. Grants are up to \$1 million. This opportunity will create wetland mitigation banks that agricultural producers may be able to use to offset wetland disturbances. There are currently no mitigation banks operating through this program in Indiana. If a project is initiated it could take a minimum of two years before the bank will be available for credits. Additional information will be sent out as it is received.

— Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP) - A national CSP announcement is expected in early February. As a reminder, CSP sign-up is continuous and applications should always be accepted at the field office. All documents used for the 15-1 general sign up will not be changed so these materials still are available on the Indiana Website for interested applicants.

Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza

In mid-January, the Indiana State Board of Animal Health (BOAH) announced ten commercial turkey farms in Dubois County tested positive for highly pathogenic avian influenza. Over 400,000 birds confirmed to have the HPAI H7N8 virus have been destroyed. Note this is a different strain than what caused the 2015 outbreak. Federal animal health officials and their Indiana counterparts are still investigating how the virus arrived however it is suspected it was through migratory birds.

Until further notice, NRCS employees have been instructed to suspend all visits to all poultry farms of all sizes (small backyard flocks to CFO permitted facilities) in Indiana. NRCS employees will call and ask producers prior to field visits if they have poultry or litter onsite if not readily known (e.g., backyard flock or poultry litter spread or stored on-site).

Please continue to encourage all poultry producers of any size, who experience any mortality issues or other unusual symptoms to report it to the USDA Veterinary Service office at 866-536-7593. For five or more dead wild birds report to IDNR 812-334-1137. For updates and more information, <http://www.in.gov/boah/2390.htm>

USDA National Agricultural Statistics Service (NASS) Conservation Effects Assessment Project (CEAP) Survey

As part of a national CEAP study, USDA National Agricultural Statistics Service (NASS) is contacting farmers to provide input on conservation practices on cultivated and non-cultivated agricultural lands to help NRCS and partners determine the efficiency and effectiveness of current conservation techniques and help identify best practices.

NASS is continuing to contact producers to conduct detailed surveys and to gather information on field level management on behalf of NRCS. This interview process will continue through February. Field offices may get calls from landowners expressing concern about legitimacy, confidentiality or use. NASS representatives visit selected farms to collect information, such as on-farm practices; chemical, fertilizer and manure applications; integrated pest management; and installed conservation practices. As with all NASS surveys, respondents are guaranteed by law (Title 7, U.S. Code, and CIPSEA, Public Law 107-

347) that their individual information will be kept confidential. No one representing NASS will ask a producer for personal information, such as social security number.

NRCS field staff is responsible for completing a supplemental survey by mid-April. If you have any questions, please contact Rick Neilson, NRCS Soil Scientist and State Resources Inventory Coordinator (SRIC) at 317-295-5875 or rick.neilson@in.usda.gov.

Conservation Client Gateway (CCG) is Available for Individual Farmers

Please help us continue to spread the word that Conservation Client Gateway is available to all individual farmers. CCG is a secure website that makes it easy for farmers to access conservation information and request assistance. Conservation Client Gateway will be extended to business entities and available on mobile devices in the future. For more information check out the website www.nrcs.usda.gov/clientgateway. CCG is completely voluntary, NRCS field staff will still be available in for individual assistance.

Annual Meeting

Income	2016	2015
Donors	\$ 825.00	\$ 500.00
Silent Auction	\$ 784.00	\$ 1,285.00
Tickets	\$ 1,845.00	\$ 1,875.00
Total Income	\$ 3,454.00	\$ 3,660.00

Expenses	2016	2015
Annual Report	\$ 223.26	\$ 643.80
Awards	\$ 202.98	\$ 37.19
Catering	\$ 2,242.50	\$ 2,427.30
Entertainment	\$ 300.00	\$ 500.00
Flowers	\$ 91.96	\$ 105.93
Guard	\$ 100.00	\$ 100.00
Hall Rental	\$ 350.00	\$ 350.00
Supplies - tickets	\$ 17.99	\$ -
Table Clothes	\$ 63.99	\$ 28.86
Total Expenses	\$ 3,592.68	\$ 4,193.08

Net	\$ (138.68)	\$ (533.08)
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MARSHALL COUNTY SOIL & WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT

2903 Gary Drive, Suite 1, Plymouth, IN 46563
Phone 574/936-2024 Ext. 3 Fax 855/496-7861



February 8, 2016

St. Joseph County SWCD
2903 Gary Drive
Plymouth, IN 46563

Dear Board:

As you know, Marshall County SWCD was awarded a 319/LARE grant to develop a Watershed Management Plan (WMP) for the Headwaters of the Yellow River Watershed. One of the components of this grant is to collect water samples from various sites within the watershed. We have been collecting and analyzing samples since June 2015. One of the most concerning results has been the high *e.coli* found in all the samples.

The question was asked whether or not there is a way to determine if the *e.coli* is animal or human. Certainly knowing this information would be helpful when trying to address the problem. There is indeed a test that can be run to make this determination, however, it is outside the scope of the currently funded grant. Marshall County SWCD has received an estimate on the cost for this additional testing, approximately \$200.00 per site, and because of the cost, has decided to fund three of the sites one time. Our project manager has told us these three sites will give us the information we need.

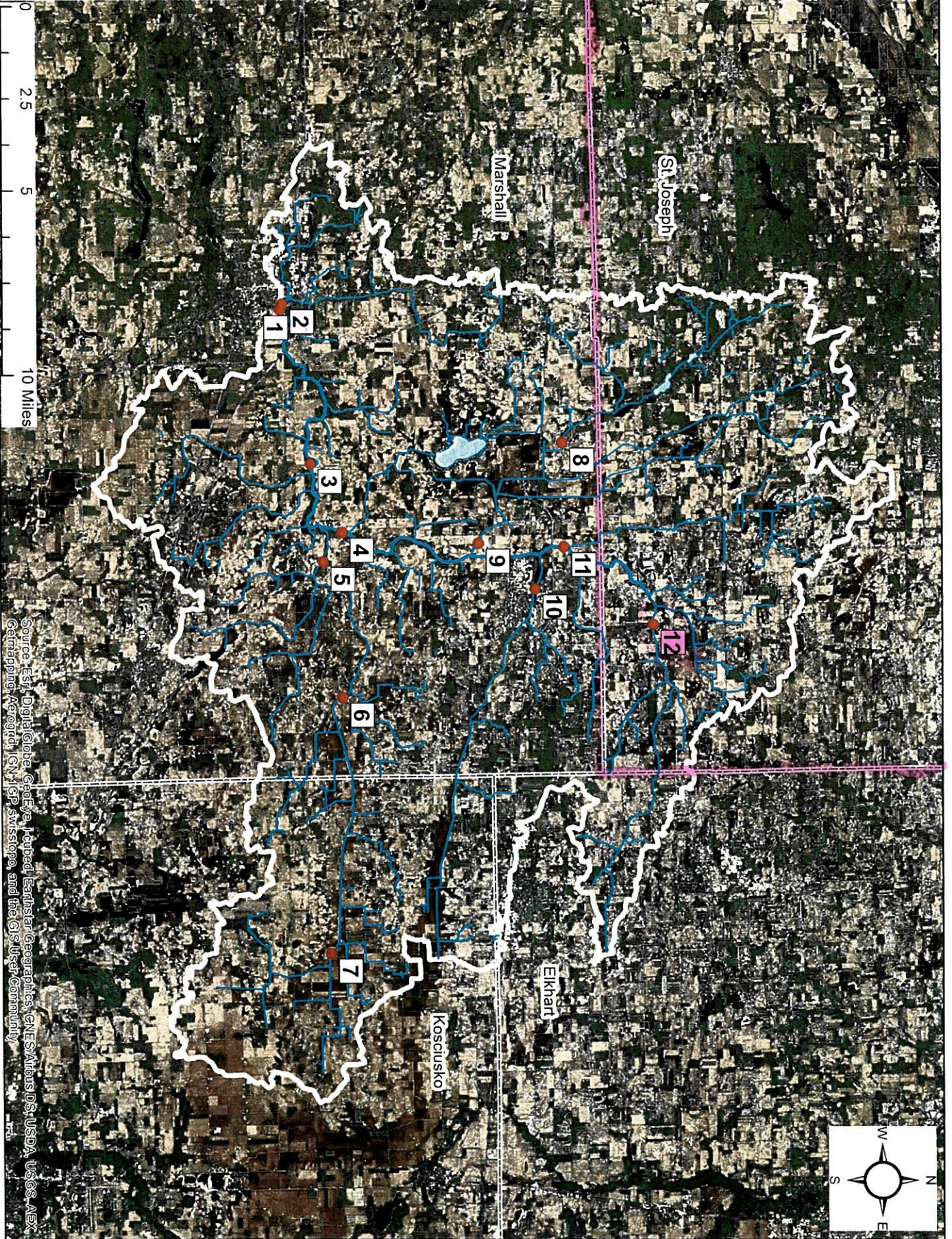
Of course the more data we collect, the more information we have on which to base our conclusions. The one site in St. Joseph County included in the watershed, #12, has tested very high for *e. coli*. We are not planning on including #12 in this additional test but will be testing the site immediately downstream. We wanted to give you the opportunity to fund the additional test on site #12 to determine whether the *e. coli* is animal or human. This information could be helpful in your conservation efforts in St. Joseph County as well as benefit the overall watershed.

We are planning on conducting this additional testing in the spring. Feel free to contact myself or any board member if you have any questions. Please let us know by early April if you feel this information would have value for you. Thank you.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Debbie Palmer". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Debbie Palmer
Marshall County SWCD



Source: Esri, DigitalGlobe, GeoEye, Earthstar/Geographics, CNES/Airbus DS, USDA, USGS, AeroX, Geomatics, AeroGRID, IGN, IGP, Swisstopo, and the GIS User Community