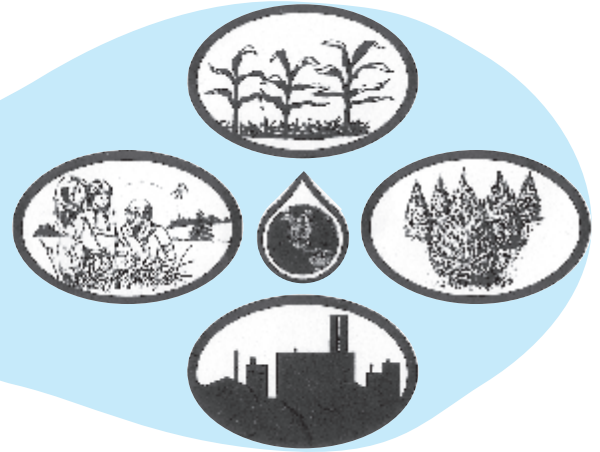




St. Joseph
County
Soil & Water
Conservation
District

CONSERVATION KALEIDOSCOPE



Today's Visions for Tomorrow's Future

July/August 2015
Volume 17, Issue 4

2903 Gary Drive, Ste 1, Plymouth, IN 46563
Website: stjosephswcd.org

Telephone (574) 936-2024
e-mail: info@stjosephswcd.org

What's Going On...

Events hosted by the
St. Joseph County SWCD
& Our Partners in Conservation

July

3rd—Office closed in observance of
Independence Day

3rd-11th—St. Joseph County 4-
H Fair

9th—Pasture Walk

21st—St. Joseph County
SWCD Board Meeting
(7:00 pm @ Centre
Township Library)

26th-29th—70th Annual Soil
& Water Conservation
Society Conference.
Greensboro, NC

August

Water Quality Month
www.epa.gov/OW

7th-23rd—Indiana State Fair
www.in.gov/statefair

13th—Pasture Walk

18th—St. Joseph County
SWCD Board Meeting
(7:00 pm @ Centre
Township Library)

29th—South Bend Art Beat:
Rain Barrel Auction

September

7th—Labor Day

Office closed

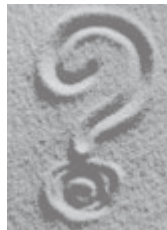
10th—Pasture Walk

15th—St. Joseph County
SWCD Board Meeting
(7:00 pm @ Centre
Township Library)

23rd—First Day of Autumn

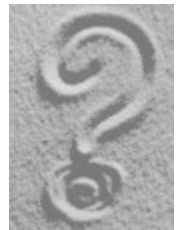


Did You Know? ...



Google now processes over 40,000 search queries every second on average, which translates to over 3.5 billion searches per day and 1.2 trillion searches per year worldwide (internetlivestats.com).

Information is now at our fingertips in seconds! Here is a list of just a few of the resources available to you. Don't forget to like us on Facebook and follow us on Twitter to get up to date links to articles, program information and much more!



www.stjosephswcd.org - Have you been to our site lately? Visit our Resources & Links page for more information not listed here including a list of places to buy rain barrels and composters.

Agricultural Marketing Service - National Organic Program is ensuring the integrity of USDA organic products in the U.S. and throughout the world. www.ams.usda.gov/nop

Ducks Unlimited is filling the skies with waterfowl today, tomorrow & forever. www.ducks.org

Farm Service Agency (FSA) www.fsa.usda.gov

Indiana Association of Soil & Water Conservation Districts. www.iaswcd.org

Indiana Conservation Cropping Systems Initiative (CCSI) has information on soil health events, hubs & practices. www.ccsin.iaswcd.org

IN Dept. of Natural Resources (IDNR) has information on Indiana parks, licenses & permits for hunting & fishing, animal rehabilitators, etc. www.in.gov/dnr

IDNR Division of Forestry. District forester Steve Winicker 219-843-4827 swinicker@dnr.IN.gov

Indiana Wildlife Federation. To promote the conservation of Indiana's wildlife & habitats. www.indianawildlife.org

Izaak Walton League takes a common-sense approach toward protecting our country's natural heritage. www.iwla.org

Michiana Beekeepers Association. Creating good and healthy beekeeping throughout Michiana. www.michianabees.org

Midwest Cover Crops Council - Cover Crop Decision Tool to help develop cover crop plans for your specific needs.

www.mcccdev.anr.msu.edu/VertIndex.php

Monarch Watch. Education, conservation, & research for the Monarch Butterfly.

www.monarchwatch.org

National Wild Turkey Federation, conservation of the wild turkey & the preservation of our hunting heritage. www.nwtf.org

Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS)

Information you need for NRCS programs, soils, the web soil survey, plants & animals including invasive species, pollinators, etc. & much more. www.nrcs.usda.gov

Purdue Extension. Education of Indiana citizens through the application of land grant university research & knowledge base.

www.extension.purdue.edu/stjoseph

Rural Development. www.rd.usda.gov/in

South Bend Medical Foundation Laboratory performs water testing in tap, river and swimming pool waters. 574-236-7263

St. Joseph County has links for departments like the drainage board, health department, parks and rec, etc. www.stjosephcountyindiana.com

Unity Gardens is a network to increase the availability of healthy, locally grown food in South Bend. www.theunitygardens.org

Xerces—Conservation of invertebrates & their habitat. www.xerces.org

Attention Teachers

In an effort to pass the conservation torch and help educate the next generation on being good stewards of our environment, the St. Joseph County Soil and Water Conservation District provides nature/environmental education



programs for classrooms all over St. Joseph County. Our Environmental Education Coordinator's calendar for the 2015-2016 school year will open up on August 10. There are more than 25 topics to choose from, including hands on programs and field trips! The programs are very affordable and a limited amount of grants are available as well.



To schedule programs for your class or school please email Rick at Richard.glassman@in.nacdn.net (best way) or call our office at 574-936-2024, ext. 4.

**Please note that his calendar fills up quickly so email or call soon to get the dates you'd like for your program!

Regional Conservation Partnership Program (RCPP)

DENVER, Colo., May 4, 2015 By Ciji Taylor

USDA NRCS – Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack announced today an investment of up to \$235 million to improve the nation's water quality, combat drought, enhance soil health, support wildlife habitat and protect agricultural viability. The funding is being made available through the Regional Conservation Partnership Program (RCPP), the newest conservation tool of the USDA's Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS).

"This is a new, innovative approach to conservation," said Vilsack. "This initiative allows local partners the opportunity to design and invest in conservation projects specifically tailored for their communities. These public-private partnerships can have an impact that's well beyond what the Federal government could accomplish on its own. These efforts keep our land and water clean, and promote tremendous economic growth in agriculture, construction, tourism, and other industries."

In January, USDA delivered first round funding to 115

high-impact projects across all 50 states and the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico.

"The Tri-State Western Lake Erie Basin Phosphorous Reduction Initiative" brings together more than 40 partnering organizations from Michigan, Ohio and Indiana to reduce the runoff of phosphorous to waterways in the western basin of Lake Erie. This project will target funding to the streams and rivers that have the largest impact on water quality in the lake.

In January, USDA announced \$394 million in awards in the first round of RCPP applications (which represented two years' worth of funding for fiscal years 2014 and 2015).

USDA is now accepting proposals for RCPP. Pre-proposals are due July 8. For more information on applying, contact Debbie Knepp or James Rodriguez at 574-936-2024 ext. 4. You can find more information at our website, then click the link for RCPP.

Have You Considered Using Cover Crops Yet?

By: J. V. Mannering, D. R. Griffith and K. D. Johnson Department of Agronomy, Purdue University

Too much of Indiana's cropland is losing too much soil through erosion to maintain its future productivity. To adequately protect our soils resource, the practice of using winter cover crops, such as rye, wheat and hairy vetch, needs to be revived where continuous row crops are grown on the highly erosive soils. Besides the soil conservation benefits, research confirms that cover crops increase crop yields on drouthy and erosive soils. Although some are using winter cover crops effectively, more farmers need to adopt the practice.

What are the advantages to using cover crops? Soil and water erosion control as well as wind erosion control tops the list! Recent studies show soil losses from corn or soy- beans no-tilled into a vigorous growth of rye or wheat to be 90-95 percent less than soil losses from corn and soybeans conventionally tilled.

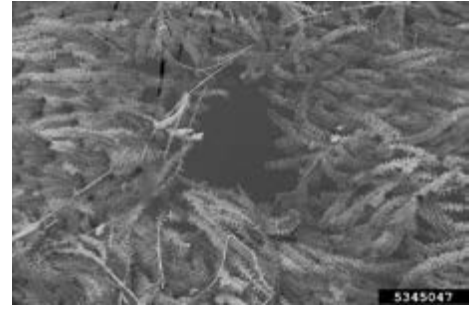
Still need proof cover crops are beneficial? Cover crops add much needed organic matter back into your soil which leads to improved crop yields. Cover crops also recycle nutrients that might otherwise be lost to leaching during the winter and spring.

For information on how to get started using cover crops, which falls under the EQIP program, contact Debbie Knepp or James Rodriguez at 574-936-2024 ext. 4.



Invasive Species

Hydrilla was discovered in Lake Manitou during a routine aquatic plant survey conducted by the Division of Fish and Wildlife in August 2006. Lake Manitou is a 735 acre natural lake in Rochester, Indiana (Fulton County). At the time of discovery, hydrilla had never been confirmed in a body of water in the Midwest. When found, the plant was scattered throughout a large portion of the northern basin of Lake Manitou indicating it had probably been present for a few years. Just a half inch sprig of hydrilla transferred to another body of water can form a new population. Under optimal growing conditions, hydrilla can grow an inch a day which allows it to quickly grow to the surface. Hydrilla has been declared a federal noxious aquatic plant.



Purple loosestrife has become such a pest because it came to North America without the insects that control it where it is native. Releasing the insects that control loosestrife in Europe can bring it under control. Between July 1998, and July 1999, the amount of purple loosestrife around the boat ramp at Pleasant Lake in St. Joseph county decreased dramatically. The insects that accomplished this are two small leaf eating beetles, *Galerucella californiensis* and *G. pusilla*. Before being released, they were carefully tested to make sure they would not become a threat to any other plants.



The insect's entire life cycle is tied to purple loosestrife. The larvae start feeding by destroying the growing tips. As they get bigger, they move down the plant, reducing the leaves to skeletons. The adult beetles continue to eat even more leaves as they lay eggs on the purple loosestrife. Without competition from purple loosestrife, native plants, and the wildlife that depend on them, can recover.

Galerucella were first released at Pleasant Lake in 1996 through the joint efforts of IDNR's Division of Entomology & Plant Pathology and Division of Nature Preserves. So far they have been released at about 40 sites across Indiana. We expect *Galerucella* to eventually spread to all wetlands where purple loosestrife has spread.

These are just two examples of invasive species known to be in Indiana at some point. For a full listing of aquatic and terrestrial invasives including plant, animal and pathogens/diseases please visit the Indiana Department of Natural Resources website <http://www.in.gov/dnr/3123.htm>.

2015 Pasture Walks

One of the ways Management Intensive Rotational Grazing has gained acceptance and following is through an active Pasture Walk program. Beginning in 1998, rotational grazers from the area have gathered on grazing farms for an informal tour. The groups discuss soil, weather conditions, forages, paddock arrangements, livestock varieties, breeds and genetics, watering systems, feeding practices, building arrangement, milking and farm equipment. Much of the interest in rotational grazing in the region still comes from dairymen, however the management system has been applied and adapted to all manner of livestock raising: beef cattle, poultry, sheep, goats, and even "exotics" like bison, llamas and alpacas. The Pasture Walk host typically describes what he does on his farm, and the attendees either ask questions or offer advice-or, as is more usual, both.

Currently the Pasture Walks take place from May through October every year, typically on the second Thursday afternoon of each month. The program is coordinated by the LaGrange County SWCD. NRCS personnel support and attend the programs and provide expertise and technical information. Most importantly, Pasture Walks are attended and supported by local livestock grazers, who come to each program with both questions and advice, good experiences and bad, and an intimate knowledge of what works...and what doesn't!



2015 Pasture Walk Schedule

- July 9 - Marvin & Susan Hershberger 10244 South Rogers Ave, Clare, MI 48617
- August 13 - Ray & Dorothy Miller 115 W 300 S, LaGrange, IN 46761
- September 10 - Marlin & Doris Eash 3540 N 675 W, Shipshewana, IN 46565
- October 8 - Jerry & Loretta Lehman 9485 W 200 S, Shipshewana, IN 46565



ST JOSEPH COUNTY
SOIL & WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT
2903 GARY DRIVE
PLYMOUTH IN 46563

NON PROFIT
ORGANIZATION
US POSTAGE PAID
SOUTH BEND IN
PERMIT NO. 225



St. Joseph County Soil And Water Conservation Partnership

Coming soon to a forest near you!

*Forestry Field Day hosted by the
St Joseph County SWCD!*

Date and time TBA in later months.



*We are planning a
fun and informative
day for everyone!*

Soil & Water Conservation

District (SWCD) Supervisors:

John Dooms, Chair
Jeremy Cooper, Vice Chair
Mike Burkholder, Member
Arlene Schuchman, Member
Stacey Silvers, Member

SWCD Associate Supervisors:

Dave Craft
Jan Ivkovich
Jim LaFree
Charles Lehman
Joe Long
Randy Matthys
Carole Riewe
Richard Schmidt
Dale Stoner
Dave Vandewalle
Paul Williams, III
Dru Wrasse

SWCD Honorary Members:

Bernard Byrd
Al Gostola
Jerry Knepp
Melvin Kulwicki
Keith Lineback
William Millar

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

Partnership Staff:

Debbie Knepp, NRCS
Rick Glassman, SWCD
Sarah Harville, SWCD
Sandra Hoffarth, SWCD
James Rodriguez, NRCS

Farm Service Agency Staff:

Gideon Nobbe, CED
Linda Bentele
Aldona Martin
Cindy Slonaker
Abby Ciesielski
Lorrin Awald

Are you ready to "GO GREEN" and help us save money and natural resources? We can deliver your "Conservation Kaleidoscope" newsletter by email ... Give us a call or send us an email and tell us you'd like to "GO GREEN" THANK YOU!!!!



Scan me to
go Green!