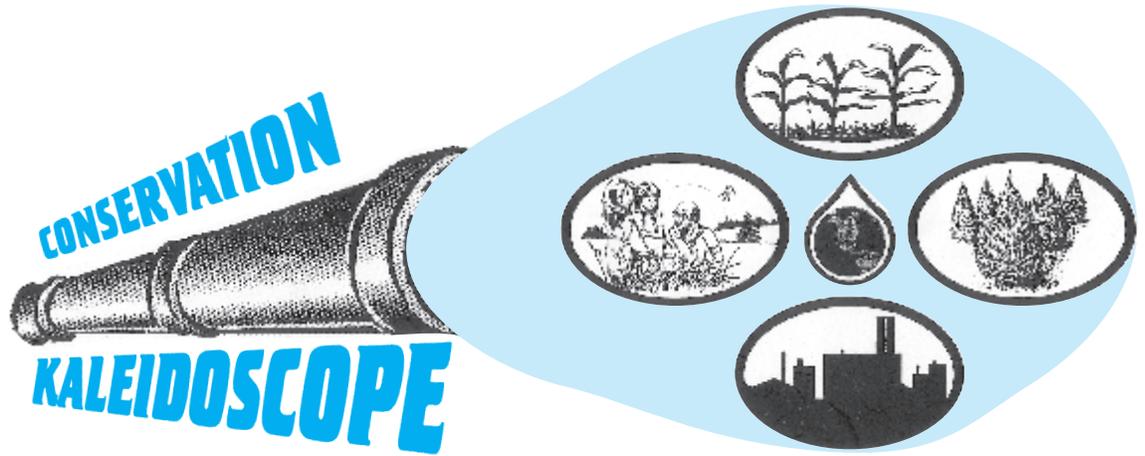




St. Joseph
County
Soil & Water
Conservation
District



Today's Visions for Tomorrow's Future

November/December 2013
Volume 15, Issue 6

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*

November -

- 11th - Veteran's Day - Office Closed - THANK YOU to all who have served!
- 19th (Tuesday) - St Joseph County SWCD Board Meeting (7:00 pm @ Centre Township Library)
- 28th - Happy Thanksgiving - Office Closed
- 29th - SWCD staff off

December -

- 17th (Tuesday) - St Joseph County SWCD Board Meeting (7:00 pm @ Centre Township Library)
- 24th - Christmas Eve - SWCD Staff off
- 25th - Merry Christmas!! - Office Closed

January -

- 1st - Happy New Year! - Office Closed
- 20th - Martin Luther King Day - Office Closed
- 21st - 7:00 pm @ Centre Township Library)
- 24th - St Joseph County SWCD's 54th Annual Meeting - 6:00 pm @ Hedwig Memorial Center, South Bend

*St Joseph County Soil and Water Conservation District's
54th Annual Meeting*



You are invited to join us for our 54th Annual Meeting to be held at Hedwig Memorial Center in South Bend! Doors will open at 6:00 pm on Friday, January 24th. We will be serving a polish style dinner for \$12.50 per person. Our Silent Auction Fundraiser is back by popular demand so make sure you get there in time to browse the "wares" and place your bid! Our guest speaker this year will be Sara Stewart, founder and executive director of the Unity Gardens in St Joseph County. In a few short years the Unity Gardens have expanded from one garden to over 55 community gardens, bees, chickens and more. Focusing on teaching, they have not only provided free, fresh, local grown food for anyone who wants it, they are also teaching how to grow, cook, preserve and more! Deadline for ordering tickets is January 16, 2014. We hope to see you there!

**St Joseph County Soil and Water
Conservation District's
28th Annual**



TREE SALE

**Evergreens! Flowering Trees! Shade Trees!
Ground Cover! Flowering Shrubs! Wildflower Seed!
Rain Barrels! Tumbling Composter!**

If you have not yet received a flyer and would like one, please contact our office at 574-936-2024 ext 4, or info@stjosephswcd.org.

Thank You

Keith Lineback Land Auctions and Sales
for your support!



Silt Fence 101

For the past couple of years now we have had very nice summer weather for contractors, road crews, and many other construction related companies to be able to get out and work for long stretches without much interruption from rain events. In a sense this makes my job of inspecting construction sites for Rule 5/Rule 13 compliance easier too! No rain means no erosion! With that being said, I have noticed that in some cases this lack of rain has begun to lull contractors into a state of false security. I would like to take a moment to review one of the most commonly miss-used, or improperly installed, best management practices (BMP) used today.

The practice that I would like to take a look at is the use of Silt Fence. Sometimes I think there is a mind set in the construction world that says “Silt Fence is the cure all to any erosion problem, so if you are going to use some why not use more, or none at all.” It seems that whenever I visit a site, there is no silt fence to be found anywhere, which may be justified. Many of the road sites I visit do not need silt fence as they drain into themselves. Other sites have miles of silt fence strewn everywhere, but seldom is it in the right place. For instance, look at the picture to the right. This silt fence has been placed in front of this outlet for some reason that is unknown. It is doing nothing but deflecting the water/sediment in a different direction. A stone apron would have been the more appropriate BMP to install at this site to protect the outlet.



In picture to the left you will notice that the silt fence is around a stockpile area. Now don't get me wrong, having silt fence around a stockpile is a good thing. However, notice the proximity of the stockpile to the silt fence in this picture. In some cases the pile is on top of the fence. Remember, silt fence works by slowing down water, in *sheet flow* situations, enough so that sediment and soil particles can drop out of the storm water runoff. The problem with having the silt fence so close to these stock piles is that any rain water

running off the piles will be moving too quickly for the fence to adequately slow the water down, and will either break or be over topped. For proper installation around stockpiles, silt fence should be installed about 3-4 feet from the toe of the pile, depending on the size of the pile. If you do not have that much room to install the silt fence, then you should either not be installing silt fence as a protection, or storing your soil in that place.

I guess the main thing that I want to stress to everyone is to use common sense when using silt fence, or any other BMP for that matter. These are just a couple of many example of how silt fence is used illogically on work sites. Some of the other biggest errors include running fence vertically or at an angle across a slope, putting fencing on the uphill side of the construction site, having one line of fence on a 2:1 slope with 20 foot of drop, etc. Remember what the intended purpose of the BMP is and you should be fine. As always, if you have any questions please feel free to contact Andrew Fox at the St. Joseph County SWCD office at 574-936-2024 x 4.

Thank You!
River Bend Hose Specialty for your support!



SOIL HEALTH = CONSERVATION CROPPING SYSTEMS
No (NEVER)-Till / Strip-Till + Cover Crops and Crop Rotations + Precision Nutrient and Pest Management + Buffers

KEY POINTS

- Soil health addresses multiple priority resource issues
- NRCS has a focused message to farmers, the public, and employees
- Farmers perceive changes to their current management as **RISK** that impedes adoption

High Quality technical assistance, education, and planning directly to the farmer is essential = NRCS is the *key* agency capable of helping farmers achieve soil health and the associated benefits



WHY FARMERS WANT HEALTHY SOILS:

- Decreased inputs (diesel, time, labor, nutrients, pesticides)
- Increased Soil Health
 - ◊ Organic matter = carbon
 - ◊ Reduced compaction
 - ◊ Nutrient sequestration and cycling (less inputs)
 - ◊ Increased water holding capacity and infiltration
 - ◊ Structural stability
 - ◊ Yield protection
 - ◊ "Insurance" against extremes in weather, input costs, markets



WHY THE PUBLIC NEEDS HEALTHY SOILS:

- Less energy (irrigation, nutrients, pesticides) and fuel needs
- Water quality (reduces nutrient and sediment loading)
- Air quality (reduces sediment, carbon, and nitrous oxide emissions)
- Ensures a stable, sustainable, secure, healthy domestic food source
- Increased infiltration = reduced runoff = reduced flooding AND drought protection
- Wildlife habitats

WHY USDA/NRCS IS FOCUSING ON SOIL HEALTH

- Healthy soils address multiple resource concerns across the nation
- Soil Health ensures *relevance and confidence* in NRCS from all of agriculture
- Farmers see that conservation makes sense and money
- Low technical and financial assistance needs
- Less need for expensive, high technical assistance practices (structures, waterways, etc.)
- Applicable coast to coast, north to south; Large/small; traditional/organic; beginning/limited



RESULTS GET ON THE GROUND



**ST JOSEPH COUNTY
SOIL & WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT
2903 GARY DRIVE, SUITE 1
PLYMOUTH IN 46563**

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



Return Service Requested

St. Joseph County Soil And Water Conservation Partnership

Happy Holidays



from your St. Joseph County Soil and Water Conservation District and a HUGE thank you to all of our supporters! It is because of your help that we are able to provide more conservation outreach for St. Joseph County!



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
Melvin Kulwicki
Jim LaFree
Charles Lehman
Joe Long
Randy Matthys
Eugene Myers
Carole Riewe
Richard Schmidt
Dale Stoner
Dave Vandewalle
Paul Williams, III
Dru Wrasse

SWCD Honorary Members:

Bernard Byrd
Al Gostola
Jerry Knepp
Keith Lineback
William Millar

St. Joseph County Soil & Water Conservation Partnership Staff:

Debbie Knepp, NRCS
Rick Glassman, SWCD
Andrew Fox, SWCD
Sarah Harville, SWCD
James Rodriguez, NRCS

Farm Service Agency Staff:

Gideon Nobbe, CED
Linda Bentele
Abby Curtis
Kathie Kensinger
Aldona Martin
Cindy Slonaker

Thank you
George "Andy" Beutter, Indiana Farm Bureau
for your support!

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!!!!