



St. Joseph  
County  
Soil & Water  
Conservation  
District

**CONSERVATION**



**KALEIDOSCOPE**



*Today's Visions for Tomorrow's Future*

Jan/Feb/Mar 1997  
Volume 1, Issue 1

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Fax (219) 291-5472

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Beth Gushwa

## Calendar of Events!

(All times are EST unless otherwise noted)

### January 1

**New Year's Day**  
Office Closed

### January 7

**LICA Meeting**  
9:00 - 3:00 E.S.T.  
Union Mills, LaPorte

### January 15

**Deadline for Advance Payment  
Paperwork**  
Farm Service Agency

### January 20

**SWCD Monthly Board Meeting**  
7:30 p.m. - Farm Bureau Mtg Room

### February 17

**SWCD Monthly Board Meeting**  
7:30 p.m. - Farm Bureau Mtg Room

### March 5

**Lakeville Winter Meeting**  
Old Lakeville School Project

### March 14 - 16

**Ag Days**  
Scottsdale Mall

### March 17

**SWCD Monthly Board Meeting**  
7:30 p.m. - Farm Bureau Mtg Room

### March 31

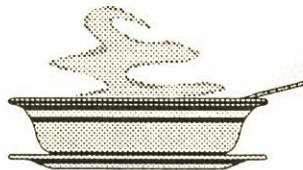
**Last day for Wheat Loan**  
Farm Service Agency

## A Facelift For The Future

As you can see, the St. Joseph County SWCD's District Newsletter has changed dramatically. We hope it will meet with your approval. With the new year, we have decided we would create a new attractive image, which would cover all of your conservation interests. We have combined our past newsletter, the Woodland Times Newsletter, and the education newsletter all into one. It will be sent out a maximum of four times a year depending upon available current information. In addition to the new changes, we have also revamped, our mailing list to be more cost-effective and efficient. If you are receiving the Farmer's Exchange, you will receive your copy through that publication and not through the mail. If you spot any inaccuracies on your mailing label (wrong address, wrong name, wrong post office box, duplicate mailings, etc.), please return the corrected label to us. We can better serve you by keeping an up-to-date mailing list! **Hope you enjoy the newsletter!** ☺

## 37th Annual Meeting

The 37th Annual Meeting of the St. Joseph County Soil and Water Conservation District will be held on Friday, January 17, 1997 beginning at 7:00 p.m. at St. Stanislaus Kostka Church located at 55756 Tulip, New Carlisle. This year's Annual Meeting speaker will be **Joseph R. Pearson**, Assistant Commissioner of Agriculture for Indiana. Mr. Pearson manages the daily operations of the Commission of Agriculture for Lieutenant Governor Frank O'Bannon, who is Indiana's Commissioner of



Agriculture. Tickets for the Annual Meeting can be purchased through the SWCD District Office or by contacting, one of the local Supervisors. Ticket price is \$7.50, which includes a Polish-Style meal at St. Stanislaus Kostka. For more information, please call the office at (291) 291-2300 by January 10, 1997. ☺

### **What's Inside . . .**

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# THE NATURAL EDUCATOR

## 'Tis The Season For The Birds

Not many things can cure the winter blues like a flock of birds around the feeder. In the United States alone, about 100 million people feed the birds. Some do their bird feeding by simply throwing out stale bread, others might have a yard full of feeders, each filled with something different. Which ever way you choose, bird feeding can be one of your winter highlights.

**Getting Started:** Any type of feeder will work but a platform style with a roof and hopper, is a good start. This type of feeder will hold most types of seed mixtures and doesn't demand daily attention. You might want to start with two feeders, the platform and a tube feeder for thistle seed. The best time to begin feeding is in October but anytime is a good time. By feeding earlier in the fall and later in the spring, you will attract a variety of migrating birds that you normally do not see.

**Picking the right spot:** When trying to place your feeder, remember that birds like to feed early in the morning and prefer to be out of the wind and in the sun. A sheltered southeastern exposure is great. Remember, though, that the object is for your pleasure, so sacrificing a little for a good view is not a terrible thing. Cover is good near but not too close. Shrubs and bushes should be 10 to 20 feet from the feeder. This is close enough for the birds to duck into for escape, but far enough away to prevent ambush for predators. Occasionally, predators like Cooper's and Sharp-shinned Hawks will

surprise a bird feeding at your feeder. This is why escape cover nearby is important. If a hawk is successful, remember, it is a "bird feeder" and enjoy something that most people never get to witness, predator and prey in action. If hawks become a problem, multiple feeder placement will help lessen the success ratio of the hawks.

**Other Needs: Water:** Birds need water and there are all types of bird bath heaters on the market today. It is necessary to provide water but it will bring a variety of birds and they will stay longer in your yard. **Suet:** Suet is beef fat and is relished by woodpeckers, chickadees, titmice and more. Many grocery stores sell suet. You can place it in an old onion bag and hang it from a tree.

**What to feed:** Every species of birds has its own preference of food. Today's commercial mixes range from poor to excellent. Most of your cheaper Standard mixes contain a lot of seeds that are not exactly highly preferred. They will attract birds but you might end up with a lot of waste. Look at the feeding chart below and try to buy a mixture that suits the birds needs and your wallet's. Remember that you can not go wrong with Black Oil Sunflower.

### **Preferred food of some common birds:**

Cardinal -- Sunflower, safflower  
Chickadee -- Sunflower, suet  
Tufted Titmouse -- Peanut kernels, sunflower, suet, safflower.  
Bluejay -- Sunflower, peanut kernels  
Nuthatches -- Sunflower, suet, peanut kernels.  
American Goldfinch -- Hulled sunflowers, thistle.

### **Ground feeding birds:**

Junco -- White and red proso millet, fine cracked corn.  
Sparrows -- White and red proso millet, fine cracked corn.

**The Next Step:** Winter is a perfect time to plan ways to improve your entire yard, no matter its size. Design your landscaping around the needs of wildlife. Food, Cover, Shelter and Water. By looking through some reference materials you can find plants that will provide the landscaping you desire and the needs of wildlife. Small ponds are an excellent addition to any yard. Check your local lawn and garden store for some excellent reference books on improving your yard for wildlife.

### **Family Activity**

Once you have some birds coming to your feeder, it's time to build a new style feeder, the "people feeder". Build yourself a dummy or scarecrow. Place a large straw hat on the scarecrow and have it sitting in a lawn chair. You might want to take an old pair of gloves for the dummy's hands. Place chair and dummy near feeders. Place bird seed on the hat and smear suet or peanut butter on the gloves. In no time at all the birds will accept this new bird feeder. After the birds have become accustomed to the new feeder the fun begins. As a family, take turns becoming the "feeder". Place the hat on your head and the gloves on your hands. Remove the dummy and have a seat and sit very still. Birds will land on you. **WARNING!!!** Little birds land harder than you would think. It won't hurt but it will take you by surprise. Please do not try to catch the birds, ENJOY!! ②





# Woodland Times

Forestry News Updates for St. Joseph County

This is certainly not the time to put on your brakes and forget to place an order for your 97' spring tree seedlings. Time is speeding by and before you miss your ticket to order, pick up the phone and call now. All service orders must be placed no later than March 3, 1997 to ensure availability and quality merchandise.



The program is all greased up and ready to roll off its track. Make sure you don't get caught in the spokes without placing an order for your evergreens, deciduous trees, flowering shrubs, ground covers, wildflower or native grasses. All the parts are at a reasonable cost and readily accessible. Special Delivery will be on Saturday, April 19th, 1997 from 8:00 - 12:00 at the 4-H Fairgrounds.

Your service representatives are standing by to receive your order as soon as possible. Just call (219) 291-2300 or stop by before March 3rd.

*Happy Motoring!*

VINES IN THE WOODS  
OR  
A FORESTER'S NIGHTMARE?  
*Steven E. Winicker, District Forester, Indiana Division of Forestry, IDNR*

A walk through most productive woodland areas will reveal a variety of vines. Vines are plants that depend on other plants for their support. Because they do not need to produce as much woody stem, as say a tree, or as other self supporting plants, they can grow rapidly in length.

There are two types of vines commonly found in the woods; those that attach themselves to the tree, such as poison ivy and Virginia Creeper, and those that hang from the tree like grape and bittersweet. The hanging vines cause the most trouble and are the main ones that need to be controlled.

Control of wild grape is essential in a woodland managed for occasional timber production. Following a cut, a few scattered vines can form arbors that pull down young trees and kill them. There is no economical way of eliminating a wild grape arbor. Before a harvest, however, wild grape can be eliminated.

In most cases, if a harvest is more than four years away and the tree canopy is dense and at least twenty feet above the ground, you can eliminate the wild grape by simply cutting all the stems that extend into the canopy. Any time of the year is suitable for this activity.

If the woods is less dense or you intend to do some cutting within the next three years, you will need to treat the vines with chemicals to reduce the sprouting. Grape vines are highly susceptible to herbicides containing 2-4-D. These herbicides can be applied by treating the lower 12 inches to 18 inches of the stem (including both sides of a layered grape vine) with the herbicide mixed with fuel oil. If you cut the vines, you should also spray the cut surface. The best time to treat vines is in the fall and early spring before the sap begins to flow. Nearly all herbicides, especially in cut stem applications, show diminished activity in the late spring and early fall when sap flow is heavy. A lesser reduction in herbicide effectiveness is seen in the summer.

**"In its primitive state, the earth offered only three great sources of life: those of the forest, of the meadows, and of the waters."**

*The Creation*

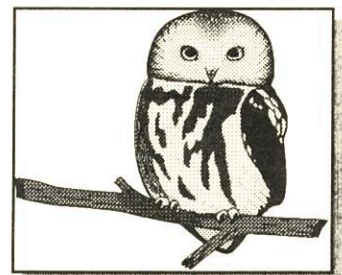
## "WHOO KNOWS BEST"

*(Question and Answer Section)*

With our new and improved format for the newsletter, we have decided to add a new item. We're going to call it "Who Knows Best". In this section, we are going to try and answer some of your forestry and/or wildlife questions that you have and can't find answers to. We ask that you be understanding because the newsletter is only planned to be circulated a maximum of four times a year. If you have a need for an immediate answer, you can call our office and we will try to direct you to the correct resource specialist as soon as possible.

You can fax or call our office with your questions and we will try to have them answered in future issues of the newsletter. We're going to try this, so don't become discouraged if you don't see your question in the next issue.

We also hope this section will provide us with ideas for future articles based on your interests and/or concerns. We will try to do our very best to service you in a timely manner. Please remember, the success of this new section depends upon your questions, as well as, your enthusiasm toward the section. It will also depend upon our response time to you for your answers. When you call or fax, please remember to state that your question is for the "OWL".



**The "OWL" knows best!**



## ANYONE LOOKING FOR EXTRA \$\$\$\$\$

All the holidays have passed and most of us are probably short of cash. However, we have some good news for schools, 501 (c)(3) non-profit groups and municipalities, who might be looking for extra funds this coming year for special urban forest projects. There are special grants provided through the USDA Forest Service and administered by the Division of Forestry that might help your cause. The first grant is:

(1) **Urban Forest Conservation Grant** - Projects might include education, training, management plans, tree inventories or helping to establish new tree groups: Grants range from (\$2,000 - \$20,000). Grantees must match the grant funds with in-kind services or a monetary match. Application Deadline is : **January 17, 1997.**

(2) **Arbor Day Grants** - Projects to conduct educational Arbor Day Events. (\$500 or \$1,000 grants ). Must be matched by applicant. **Deadline is January 17, 1997.**

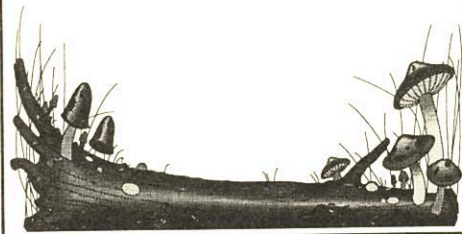
(3) **Cool Communities** - Grants available to plant trees around public buildings to demonstrate energy conservation. ((\$2,000 - \$5,000 grants). Must be matched by applicant. **Deadline is April 4th.** To receive more information on these programs or to obtain a grant application, please contact the Urban Forestry Office at (317) 582-2410)

In addition to these grant programs, NIPSCO is also sponsoring the **Environmental Challenge Fund**, which is a small grant program designed to (a) directly enhance, protect or preserve northern Indiana's environment and (b) produce a tangible result. Any 501 (c)(3) non-profit group or organization that does not operate for profit is eligible to apply. (Between \$500 and \$5,000 awards are possible. Applicant must demonstrate that at least 20 percent of the project budget has been secured as cash or in-kind contributions. **Spring applications are due February 15, 1997.** Contact Chris Newell Bourn at NIPSCO's Hammond Office (219) 647-5249 for additional information on this program.

### WHAT HAS A TREE DONE FOR YOU?

(Provided by: *Indiana Project Learning Tree*)

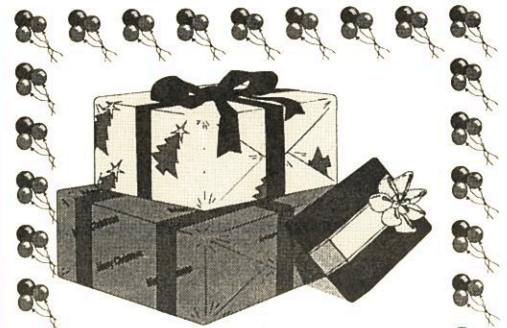
cider  
wax - soaps - jam  
syrup pet food supplements  
lacquer - oil spill control agents - toys  
rocket propellents - polishes - textiles  
sausage casings - baby foods - turpentine  
pallets- chewing gum - toothpaste - detergents  
essential oils - printing inks - gummed tape  
Christmas trees - carpet - rubber - shampoos  
varnish-oxygen-lumber- insecticide- recreation  
football helmets-cereal-photographic films-vitamins  
oil drilling muds- soaps -cooking utensils-ceramics  
appliance housings - fall color-plywood adhesives  
plastic fillers-dinnerware-firewood-cosmetics  
pharmaceuticals-clean water-soil conditioners  
fruit juice-camera cases-wildlife habitat-boxes  
jelly - hockey sticks - cleaning compounds  
particle board tires roofs  
oils skis  
asphalt  
mulch  
yarn  
toys  
wax  
glue  
cars  
inks  
fruit  
shade  
resins  
ceramic



### SPECIAL NOTES

*Keep an eye out for more information on special conservation programs such as: **EQIP, CRP, WRP, FIP, SIP***

*Also, if you are having trouble with deer and rabbit damage, you can call our office or stop by and pick up a copy of "Managing Deer Damage", A Property Owner's Guide provided by the Indiana Division of Fish and Wildlife, IDNR*



## GIFTS FOR THE GIVING


January 1st is just a memory and it is time to start thinking about 1997 birthdays, anniversaries, Valentine's Day, Grandparents Day, Sweetest Day and other special celebrations. Do you have as much trouble as I do when it comes to ideas for gifts and what to buy for someone? The St. Joseph County SWCD, in cooperation with the National Association of Conservation Districts (NACD) has tried to solve that worrisome problem. A brand new "Conservation Gift Catalog" has been designed just for your special gift needs. You can select items that are not seasonally directed such as gardening books, heirloom seeds, flowers and other speciality items that can be ordered anytime throughout the year. If you are looking for that unique gift, just call our office at (219) 291-2300 or 1-800-825-5547, Ext. 26.

We would also like to extend our sincere appreciation to all of those customers who have purchased conservation items through the National Conservation District Association (NACD) during the past three years. We hope that you have been pleased with the products that you have ordered and would plan to continue to support the program. Through your continued support, we have received additional funding to carry out our conservation goals for St. Joseph County.





## New Farm Bill Brings About Many Changes

The 1996 Farm Bill is providing exciting conservation programs for producers and ranchers throughout the United States. These conservation planning tools include some familiar programs such as the Conservation Reserve Program, the Wetland Reserve Program, and the Forestry Incentive Program. In addition to these old friends, the 1996 Farm Bill replaces the ACP cost share program with a new Environmental Quality Incentive Program. Many of the programs, old and new, have been revamped to better serve the producers. The next couple of pages will hopefully give you a general overview of the conservation opportunities available to you. If you have any questions, or are interested in getting involved in some of these programs, please give us a call at 291-2300. We are always ready to lend a helping hand. 


## Cost Share Available for Forestry Practices

In the future, the demand for sawtimber, plywood logs, and quality hardwood logs is expected to exceed supply. To prevent shortages of these products, more trees must be planted and more forest land placed under good forest management. But taking these measures is expensive, especially for small, private landowners who control the majority of the Nation's forest lands. The

Forestry Incentives Program, or FIP, is designed to share these expenses with eligible, private landowners.

Practices cost shared under FIP include tree planting, improving a stand of forest trees and site preparation for natural regeneration. The State Forester will provide the technical assistance in getting a forest management plan developed. The management plan developed by the State Forester is a requirement to qualify for cost share. Other eligibility requirements state that a landowner must:


- \* own no more than 1000 acres of eligible forest land.
- \* be a private landowner of a non-industrialized forest.
- \* have land that is suitable for reforestation if presently not in trees; for reforestation; or for improve-forest management; and
- \* have land that is capable of producing marketable timber crops.

To apply for FIP funds, contact the local Natural Resources Conservation Service. 

## EQIP

The Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) is a locally led voluntary conservation program for farmers and ranchers who operate land within a priority area. The priority areas will be watersheds, regions, or areas with special environmental sensitivity or with significant soil, water or other natural resource concerns. This means local people, usually with the leadership of conservation districts, assess their natural resource conditions and needs, set goals, identify programs and other resources to solve those needs, develop proposals and recommendations to do

so, implement solutions and measure their success. EQIP provides technical, financial and educational assistance to help solve serious natural resource problems.

"EQIP puts a strong emphasis on maximizing environmental benefits for dollars spent. The USDA will help producers make beneficial, cost-effective changes to conserve and improve soil, water, and other natural resources on their farms and ranches. It primarily helps producers work with priority resource concerns." from the 1996 USDA Farm Bill Conservation Provisions. 

## CRP

The Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) was created in 1985. It pays farmers an annual rent to plant introduced or native grasses or trees or to establish field windbreaks, filterstrips, grassed waterways, living snow fences, riparian buffers, salt tolerant vegetation, shallow water areas for wildlife and shelterbelts on cultivated, highly erodible croplands. "The objectives are to reduce crop surpluses, provide income support to farmers, protect the long-term productivity of the land through reduced wind and water erosion, and create wildlife habitat."\*

The sign-up period for planting of grasses and trees will be in February and there will be a continuous sign-up for the other practices. Producers will place a bid based on what they need to receive per acre to take their land out of production.

continued on page 6





# FIELD NOTES

## CRP

continued from page 5

These bids will then be ranked on a national basis according to the bid, benefit to wildlife and water quality. If the Farmer's bid is accepted the contract will be from 10 to 15 years.

"Since 1986, more than 36 million acres of American cropland have been idled. This has reduced erosion by an average of 19 tons per acre per year, saving more than 700 million tons of topsoil. During the 10-year program, 2.4 million erodible acres have been planted in trees, and another 2 million are being managed to benefit wildlife. Over 400,000 acres are now preserved as wetlands and 5,200 miles of filter strips have been developed to protect lakes, rivers and streams.

This program has significantly improved soil quality, water quality, wildlife population and habitat as well as increased the soil's productivity on CRP acres."\*\*

\*National Audubon Society, Birds and Conservation in the 1995 Farm Bill.

\*\*CRP, CRP-TO-CROPS Conversion, A guide for growers in the midwest.



## Continuous Sign-up for Wetland Reserve Program

The Wetlands Reserve Program has restored approximately 325,000 acres of high quality wetlands throughout the country, and over the next six years will restore an additional 650,000 acres. Agriculture Secretary Dan Glickman states "This is a popular and successful program and we want to do everything we can to make it easier for farmers to participate."

Beginning October 1, 1996, and continuing for an indefinite period, USDA will work with landowners so that eligible land may be enrolled at any time. This will give landowners more options for wetlands restoration and more time to work with USDA's Natural Resources Conservation Service conservationists to develop a plan to restore and protect wetlands.

To be eligible for WRP, land must be restorable and provide significant wetland and wildlife habitat. The program offers landowners three options: permanent easements, 30-year easements, and restoration cost-share agreements of a minimum 10-year duration.

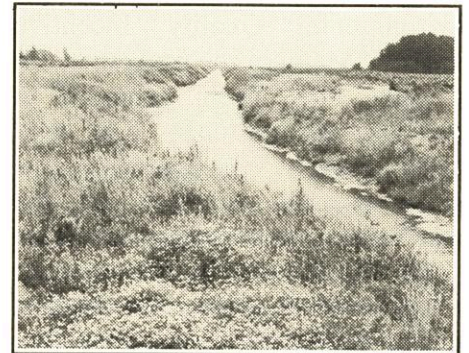


WRP is a voluntary program that offers landowners financial incentives to enhance wetlands in exchange for retiring marginal agricultural land. Congress authorized the WRP under the Food Security Act of 1985, as amended by the 1990 and 1996 Farm Bills. Landowners should contact the Natural Resources Conservation Service at 291-2300 for further information.



## Putting Grass to Work

The St. Joseph County Soil and Water Conservation District is pleased to announce their Filter Strip Cost Share Program which will begin this spring. Filter strips provide valuable protection to ditches, creeks, rivers, lakes and other waterways. This protection includes removing sediment and other pollutants from runoff or waste water, increasing infiltration, reducing erosion on the filter strip area and enhancing wildlife habitat. What does this mean to each of us? It means we can keep the sediment and pollutants out of the waterways, and tax payers will spend less of their hard earned dollars on pollutant cleanup.

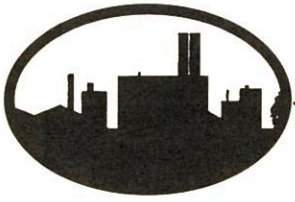


Filter strips can be used in the following situations: (1) on cropland at the lower edge of fields or above conservation practices such as terraces or diversions, or on fields adjacent to streams, ponds and lakes; (2) in areas requiring filterstrips as part of a waste management system to treat polluted runoff or waste water; and (3) on forest land where filter strips are needed as part of a forestry operation to reduce delivery of sediment into water ways.

If you have an interest in filter strips and would like to learn more about them, or if you would like cost share on a filter strip, contact the Soil and Water Conservation District Office at 291-2300.







# URBAN MEANDERINGS

## Welcome

Welcome everyone to the urban section of this exciting newsletter. This page will generally highlight topics that may be of interest or concern to all of you living in the urbanized areas of St. Joseph County. Every issue will contain articles of information as to the "goings-on" in the urban program of the office. In this first issue, a mix of items are included that I'm sure you'll find interesting and timely. Look for Conservation Tips as a regular feature. Also in upcoming editions, surprise guests will be appearing to educate, amuse and just provide good advice. **DEP**

## Storm Drain Stenciling

**Wanted:** Conservation minded student service groups.

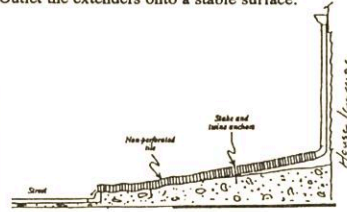
**For:** An educational project that will benefit everyone.

The district office is searching for groups to "surround" local subdivisions or retail parking lots to stencil a curb-side message next to storm drains reminding people that there is a stream on the other end. Items that are dumped or allowed to wash into storm drains account for a major source of non-profit source pollution in county ditches or streams.

This project is still wide open and flexible, so if you have a specific site, idea or group in mind to participate in this very exciting and educational project, please contact the office. For land's sake, Thanks !!! **DEP**

### CONSERVATION TIP: *Downspout Extenders*

Prevent fill and gully erosion in areas where roof gutters and downspouts empty onto newly graded areas by placing downspout extenders on the end of the discharge pipes. Outlet the extenders onto a stable surface.



Materials commonly used as downspout extenders include splash blocks, aluminum or plastic tubing, non-perforated plastic drainage tile, or plastic recoil material.

Downspout extenders have an added benefit in that they convey water away from basements and foundations.

For more information contact your local Soil and Water Conservation District.

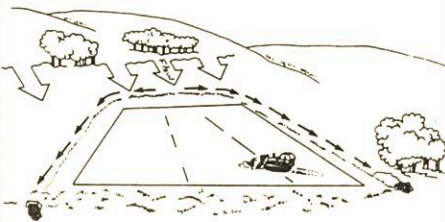
## A Land-Community Ethic\*

"... The individual is a member of a community of independent parts. His instincts prompt him to compete for his place in the community, but his ethics prompts him also to cooperate... The land ethic simply enlarges the boundaries of the community to include soil, water, plants, and animals collectively' the land... A land ethic of course cannot prevent the alteration, management, and use of these 'resources,' but it does confirm their right to continued existence and, at least in spots, their continued existence in a natural state... In short, a land ethic changes the role of Homo Sapiens from conqueror of the land-community to plain member and citizen of it. It implies respect for his fellow-members, and also respect for the community itself."\*

\* "Aldo Leopold's *A Sand County Almanac*, 1949.

### CONSERVATION TIP: *Divert Stormwater Runoff Away From Disturbed Areas*

Use dikes, diversions, and waterways to intercept runoff and divert it away from cut-and-fill slopes or other disturbed areas. To reduce on-site erosion, install these measures before clearing and grading.



For more information contact your local Soil and Water Conservation District.







**St. Joseph County Soil and Water  
Conservation District  
60455 U.S. 31 South  
South Bend, IN 46614**

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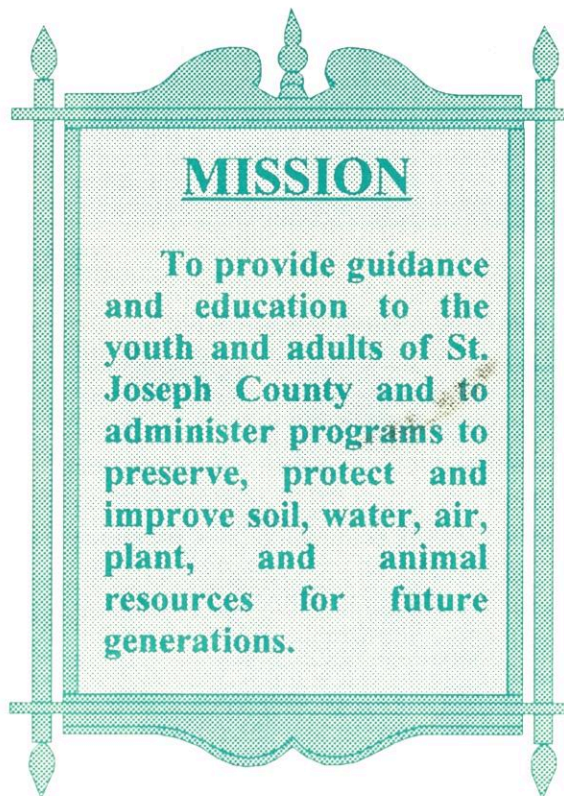
## *St. Joseph County Soil And Water Conservation District*

### Supervisors:

John Dooms, Chair.  
James LaFree, V-Chair.  
Albert Gostola, Mem.  
Janice Ivkovich, Mem.  
Joseph Long, Mem.

### Associate Supervisors

Gary Gadacz  
Rich Hamman  
Steve Horvath  
Charles Lehman  
Jay Lindenman  
Keith Lineback  
Randy Matthys  
William Millar  
Eugene Myers  
Richard Schmidt  
Dale Stoner  
Paul Williams III



### Honorary Members

Bernard Byrd  
Harold Mutti

### Office Staff

Debbie Knepp, NRCS  
Vince Herbst, NRCS  
Chris Forsyth, SWCD  
Rick Glassman, SWCD  
Beth Gushwa, SWCD  
John Law, IDNR