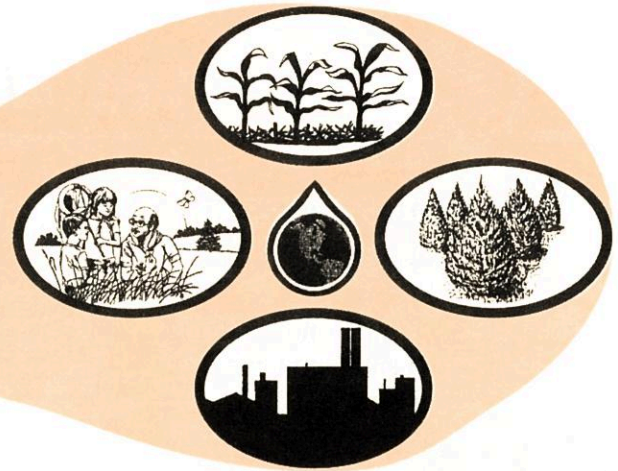
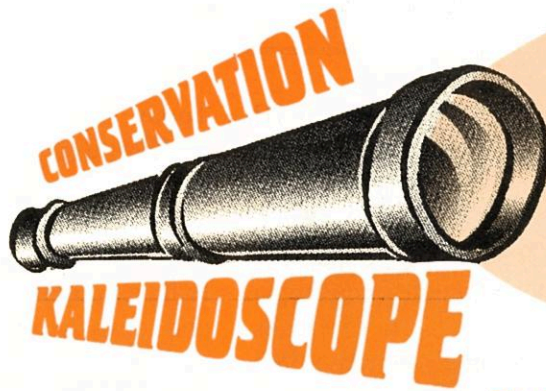




**St. Joseph
County
Soil & Water
Conservation
District**



Today's Visions for Tomorrow's Future

Oct/Nov/Dec 2007 5605 U.S. 31 South, Suite 4 *South Bend, IN* Telephone (574) 291-7444 Ext.3 Editor: Troy Manges
 Volume 9, Issue 4 Website: stjoseph.iaswcd.org Fax (574) 291-0284

Calendar of Events

October 15

SWCD Monthly Board Meeting
7:00 AM - Farm Bureau Mtg.
Room

October 16

Composting Workshop
7:00 PM - Farm Bureau Mtg.
Room

November 12

Veterans Day
Office Closed

November 19

SWCD Monthly Board Meeting
7:00 AM - Farm Bureau Mtg.
Room

November 22 & 23

Thanksgiving Holiday
Office Closed

December 17

SWCD Monthly Board Meeting
7:00 PM - Farm Bureau Mtg.
Room

December 25

Christmas Holiday
Office Closed



*Have a safe &
happy holiday
season!*

**St. Joseph County SWCD
48th Annual Meeting**



February 22, 2008

Friday 6:30 p.m.

St. Adalbert's Hall

Polish style dinner

\$8.00/person

Speaker: Dr. Ron Hanson

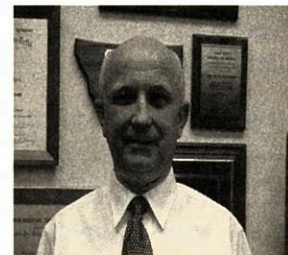
Reservations Due:

Thursday, February 14th

**Tree Sales
Order Forms**



Order forms for the
2007-2008 Tree
Sales Program will be mailed
during the first week of October.
If you have not received an order
form and would like to, please
contact the office.



Dr. Ron Hanson. This will be the second time Dr. Hanson will speak at our annual meeting. His background as Professor of Agribusiness at the University of Nebraska and his humor made him one of our favorite speakers. This years talk will focus on improving communications between family members working together in the family business. While his message is serious it is told with plenty of jokes, stories and cartoons. Please join us for this entertaining evening.

What's Inside . . .

The Natural Educator	2
Field Notes	3,4
Conservation Survey	5,6
Urban Meanderings	7



THE NATURAL EDUCATOR

Lake Michigan and the Aliens

Unfortunately, I am not talking about aliens from another planet, just other parts of our planet.

OK, quick name three native species of animals found in Lake Michigan. Did you say Coho Salmon, Chinook Salmon or Steelhead trout. Nope wrong. How about zebra mussel, Gobi or spiny flea. Wrong again. Well, maybe you thought alewife or sea lamprey or maybe carp. Sorry, wrong again. OK, maybe you said Lake Trout, yellow perch, emerald shiner or one of the seven species of Lake Chubs. Congratulations you got it right.

Since the 1800's over 180 different exotic species have been recorded in our Great Lakes, with a new species being found about every seven months.

Some of these were on purpose, like the salmon. But they were introduced because we had already changed the environment of the lakes. The opening of the Erie Canal in 1825 and the Welland Canal in 1829, allowed the first exotics, the Sea Lamprey and Alewife, into the lakes. With no barriers, these two adapted to fresh water and took over our lakes. Lampreys, with their rows of circular teeth, would grab a large fish, drill a hole into the fish and suck out the fishes body fluid.



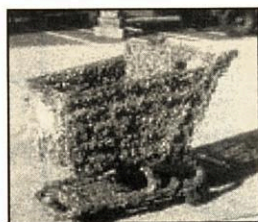
Sea Lamprey

The Aliens combined with unregulated commercial fishing and the large fish disappeared. The Alewife, a small silvery fish, found no predators and its population exploded. The Alewife then began to die and littered our beaches, driving the people away. By 1967, alewife comprised about 85% of the fish mass of Lake Michigan, and in return drove out many of the native species such as the Lake Chubs.

In the mid 60's, we found a way to chemically control the lamprey population. Native Lake Trout were too difficult to raise, so we headed to the ocean and in 1966 introduced the first Coho Salmon. Chinook Salmon, Steelhead and Brown trout soon followed, all exotics.

Some will say this was an improvement and there is no denying all of the money sport fishing brings into the communities of the Great Lakes, including South Bend and Mishawaka.

But the problem is we just keep adding exotics. Ocean going ships are a huge reason today. Ballast water from the ocean is dumped into fresh water harbors and creatures adapt. While this practice is against the law, it is not enforced. Think of that next time you cut your foot on the shell of a zebra mussel. Lake Michigan at one time had a great Yellow Perch fisheries. It was reduced by Alewife's, helped by the salmon and again under attack by Gobi's and Zebra Mussels.



Zebra mussel encrusted shopping cart

Today the lake may be attacked by another exotic, silver and bighead carp. These fish escaped into the Mississippi River system and in areas that they have taken hold have reduced commercial fishing by 80% and devastated the ecology of the river. The only thing keeping them out of Lake Michigan, a temporary electric barrier in the Chicago Sanitary and Shipping Canal. Yet congress refuses to pass the legislation necessary to provide the funding for an effective permanent barrier.

If these carp do enter the lake, the theory is, you can say good bye to our sport fishing.

What you can do? Learn as much as you can about exotics. They affect all of us, everyday.

Contact your legislators and encourage them to support legislation that will help stop ballast water contamination and support funding for projects to prevent the invasion of exotics.

Because simply put: Once they are established, good, bad or indifferent, WE ARE STUCK WITH THEM.

COMPOSTING *101*

OCTOBER 16, 2007

7:00 PM - 8:30 PM

Farm Bureau Building

5605 U. S. 31 South

South Bend, IN

Join us as we discuss the basics of composting!

Every participant will receive a free compost bin.

Sponsored by the St. Joseph County SWCD and the St. Joseph County Solid Waste Management District.

One lucky participant will win an Earth Machine compost bin



FIELD NOTES



Congressman Joe Donnelly Tours Local Conservation Practices

The St. Joseph County Conservation Partnership, consisting of the USDA-Natural Resources Conservation Service and the St. Joseph County Soil and Water Conservation District, welcomed Congressman Joe Donnelly back into St. Joseph County with a tour of conservation practices that has been implemented on the land.



John Dooms, SWCD Board Chairman, and Debbie Knepp, District Conservationist talk to Congressman Donnelly about residue left after no-till planting helping conserve the soil and moisture.

The Tour started out at John Dooms farm where John has been no-tilling corn and soybeans for at least 20 years. John has also been funded for irrigation management on his farm which is through the Ground and Surface Water Conservation part of the Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP). After discussing irrigation management and the new Farm Bill with Congressman



John Dooms talks about his irrigation system management to Congressman Donnelly, Kimberly Neumann, Area Conservationist, and Debbie Knepp, District conservationist.

Donnelly, the group headed to the second stop.

Along the way to the second stop, we were able to show Congressman Donnelly examples of other practices implemented in St. Joseph County, such as: filter strips, Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) tree plantings and EQIP intensive rotational grazing.

At the second stop, there were before pictures that showed what the ditch looked like with the cattle having full access to it. The banks were eroded and there was a gully washing into the creek as well.



Congressman Donnelly talks with the group about the practices on the farm. You can see the filter strips in the background.

Looking at it today you would never know that there had been an erosion problem. A grassed waterway, with a rock chute to

stabilize the outlet cured the gully and filter strips, willow sapling plantings on the ditch bank and fencing the cattle out of the ditch helped stabilize the ditch banks. This work was done in partnership with the drainage board.

The St. Joseph County Conservation Partnership would like to thank Congressman Donnelly for taking the time to meet with us to explain the new Farm Bill and give us an opportunity to show him some of the conservation practices that have been implemented in St. Joseph County.

The St. Joseph County SWCD Needs Your Help!

The St. Joseph County Soil and Water Conservation District (SWCD) would like your help in the form of filling out a survey. The survey is located on pages 5 and 6 of this newsletter. We are gathering information to help us update the SWCD's business plan. Your input will help make sure we are working on the needs of the community that fall within our area of work.

After you have filled out the survey please cut it out of the newsletter and send it back to us. The Survey will also be available on the SWCD website at www.stjoseph.iaswcd.org. We need the surveys returned to us by October 26, 2007. If you have any questions please call the office at (574) 291-7444 ext. 3.



FIELD NOTES

Your conservation partners working for you!



Pictured, Top L-R: Debbie Knepp, District Conservationist, Rafael Vega, Soil Conservationist, Bottom L-R: Troy Manges, County Conservationist and Jenny Davis, MS4 Conservationist

One of the Priorities of the St. Joseph County Soil and Water Conservation District and your local Natural Resources Conservation Service is to help people conserve the land. This will enhance our environment and our farming productivity. A big part of our job is to be in the field doing engineering designs, measuring residue levels and applying conservation in the land. We are working hard to assist farmers to conserve their natural resources. If you see us in the field, please stop by and talk to us. We will be more than happy to assist you in any way possible.

Highly Erodible Land Requirements

As part of the Highly Erodible Land (HEL) conservation provisions of the farm Bill, landowners with HEL ground are required to have a conservation plan in order to be eligible for the various government

programs. Leaving more crop residue in the field and using conservation systems, like "No Till", helps reduce the action of water on the soil, while enhancing the productivity of your farm now and in the future. Producers participating in the USDA programs have received letters and maps indicating areas on their property that have been classified as highly erodible fields. Plans are in place for those fields with crop rotation and residue levels needed. The goal of the SWCD and NRCS is to keep you in compliance with these regulations.



Crop residue left in a no-till soybean field.

This year a new Farm Bill is being written and approved, but the highly erodible field regulations still need to be followed according to the conservation plans already developed, or the old plans must be modified when the conditions on your farm have changed. If you are not sure if you have highly erodible fields, or have observed any signs of erosion problems (gullies, sheet or rill erosion) or do not know if you have the proper residue level, please stop by your local NRCS/SWCD office. We will be more than happy to help you conserve your topsoil and the productivity of your farm.

Summer Intern

Starting in June, continuing throughout July, and ending in August, the office staff grew by one member. My name is Matthew

Wieczorek, and through the summer I have been interning with the St. Joseph County Soil and Water Conservation District. In the fall, I'm heading back to Purdue University in West Lafayette to continue pursuing my degree in Wildlife Biology. I will be starting my junior year of school, and hopefully will only have one more year after this one. After completing school, I would like to work with the Department of Natural Resources, or a similar association, as a wildlife biologist, with one day hoping to manage wildlife areas.



I chose this internship because I believed that it would be a learning experience. I have not been disappointed. I have learned many things, including, but not limited to, various farm bill programs, how to determine tillage operations, & learned about Rule 5 and MS4 Storm Water Control. I have enjoyed working with the entire office staff, as well as everyone outside the office that I've had the fortune of meeting.

All things good must have a beginning, middle and end; and this job stays true to that mantra. In the end, I'm not only left with a deeper understanding of the Farm Bill and farming practices, also I have a better idea of what I want to do with my career after school, and how to pursue it. I thank each person I've come in contact with, because from each person I've talked to on the job, I've learned something, and for that, I thank you all.

St. Joseph County Soil & Water
 Conservation District
 5605 U.S. 31 South, Suite 4
 South Bend, IN. 46614

Office - 574-291-7444 ext. 3
 Fax - 574-291-0284
 Web Page - stjoseph.iaswcd.org

CONSERVATION SURVEY

PLEASE RANK EACH OF THE FOLLOWING NATURAL RESOURCE CONCERNS BY THEIR IMPORTANCE TO YOU.

Survey can also be found on our web page.

All surveys are due by October 26, 2007

NOT IMPORTANT
 SOMEWHAT IMPORTANT
 IMPORTANT
 VERY IMPORTANT

NOT IMPORTANT
 SOMEWHAT IMPORTANT
 IMPORTANT
 VERY IMPORTANT

	NOT IMPORTANT	SOMEWHAT IMPORTANT	IMPORTANT	VERY IMPORTANT
AIR QUALITY				
ANIMAL WASTE				
BIOLOGICAL DIVERSITY				
FLOODING				
AG LAND CONVERSION				
AG SUSTAINABILITY				
AG PRODUCTIVITY				
FORESTRY				
GRAZING LANDS				
IRRIGATION/WATER MANAGEMENT				
NUTRIENT MGMT				
PESTICIDE MGMT				
FOOD/FIBER PRODUCTION				
URBAN LAND USE				
INVASIVE EXOTIC SPECIES				
LIVESTOCK MANAGEMENT				
ORGANIC FARMING				
LANDFILLS				

	NOT IMPORTANT	SOMEWHAT IMPORTANT	IMPORTANT	VERY IMPORTANT
RIPARIAN CORRIDORS				
SOIL EROSION				
SOIL QUALITY/ SOIL HEALTH				
WATER QUALITY				
STORM WATER MGMT				
URBAN WATER POLLUTION				
WATER AVAILABILITY				
WETLANDS				
WILDLIFE				
ENDANGERED SPECIES				
LAND DISPOSAL OF ORGANIC WASTE				
RECREATION				
RURAL LAND USE				
BROWNFIELD AREAS				
RECYCLING				
WATERSHED PROTECTION				
OTHER				

WHICH GROUPS OR ORGANIZATIONS DO YOU FEEL THE DISTRICT SHOULD WORK WITH TO HELP ACHIEVE ITS NATURAL RESOURCE GOALS?

WHAT SPECIFIC AREAS OF OUR COMMUNITY DO YOU THINK ARE MOST IN NEED OF NATURAL RESOURCE CONSERVATION ASSISTANCE?

PLEASE SHARE ANY ADDITIONAL THOUGHTS OR COMMENTS IN THE SPACE BELOW OR ATTACH A SEPARATE SHEET.

----- fold here-----

PLEASE
PLACE
STAMP
HERE

ST. JOSEPH COUNTY SWCD
5605 U.S. 31 SOUTH, SUITE 4
SOUTH BEND, IN 46614

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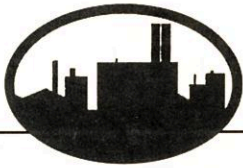
PLEASE CHECK THE FIVE MOST IMPORTANT SERVICES, PRODUCTS OR PROGRAMS THAT THE CONSERVATION DISTRICT CAN PROVIDE FOR YOU.

- _____ ANIMAL WASTE MANAGEMENT SYSTEM
- _____ CONSERVATION RESERVE PROGRAM
- _____ CONSERVATION PLANNING
- _____ ENGINEERING DESIGN
- _____ AGRICULTURAL EROSION AND SEDIMENT CONTROL
- _____ URBAN EROSION AND SEDIMENT CONTROL
- _____ COST-SHARE PROGRAM

- _____ WETLAND ASSISTANCE
- _____ WILDLIFE MANAGEMENT
- _____ SOIL SURVEY & SOIL INFORMATION
- _____ RESOURCE INVENTORIES
- _____ TREE SALES PROGRAM
- _____ FORESTRY PROGRAMS
- _____ FLOOD PREVENTION
- _____ ADULT EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS
- _____ YOUTH EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS

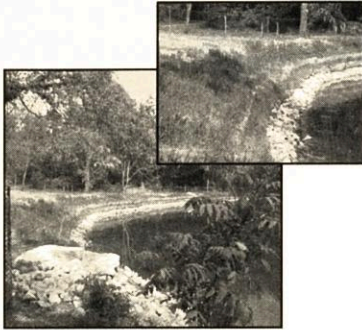
WHAT IS YOUR ZIP CODE? _____

THANK YOU VERY MUCH FOR YOUR TIME AND ASSISTING THE SWCD IN CHARTING ITS FUTURE.



URBAN MEANDERINGS

BAUGO CREEK BANK STABILIZATION



Rip rap and rock shot were placed below a series of soil encapsulated lifts along a 300-meter reach of Baugo Creek in hopes to halt erosion on this stream bank.

On Tuesday, May 15, the St. Joseph County Parks Department hosted a seminar at the Ferretie-Baugo Creek County Park, at which engineers from JF New discussed the Great Lakes River Basin grant project designed for Baugo Creek. Approximately \$40,000 was awarded to the project, which stabilized a 300-foot embankment of Baugo Creek that was experiencing an estimated 0.2 feet of stream bank erosion per year. The erosion was accredited to both urban and agricultural runoff generated throughout the Baugo Creek watershed.

The JF New team assigned to the project used bioengineering techniques, are incorporated native grasses, like Little Bluestem, into the plan. This was in an effort to provide habitat for wildlife in addition to stabilizing the bank.

To begin the project, spoil piles along the channel were removed to provide access to the floodplain

during high flow. Next, a series of soil encapsulated lifts, consisting of geotextile blankets, soil interlaced with native grass seed, and biodegradable erosion control blankets, were installed to stabilize the bank. In addition, riprap and shot rock material was placed at the toe of the bank to prevent undercutting of the bank and to provide habitat for fish and other aquatic organisms. The final step involved planting Red-osier Dogwood saplings along the bank to provide extra support for the bank.



Red Osier Dogwood and Little Bluestem add to the aesthetics of the bank stabilization project while adding native habitat and stabilization.

It is the hope of the project engineers, the St. Joseph County Parks faculty members, and visitors to the Ferretie-Baugo Creek Park that the bank stabilization project will prevent erosion and reduce sediment load in the creek. In time, we hope to see that the effort was successful.

For more information on the Baugo Creek stream bank stabilization project, please visit the St. Joseph County Parks website, at <http://www.sjcparks.org>

MEASURES TO IMPROVE SEDIMENT & EROSION CONTROL DURING THE SNOWY SEASON

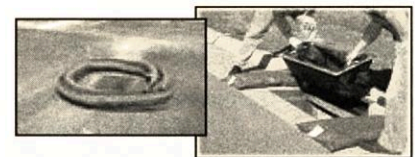
Stabilization through seeding— Make sure that all inactive areas on your construction site are seeded well before the onset of winter. Utilize **dormant** or **frost seeding techniques** if unable to establish vegetation during proper seeding dates.



Erosion control blankets stabilize a seeded slope until vegetation is established.

Perimeter protection—Install a sediment barrier between disturbed soils and lower lying areas on your construction site. Whether it be silt fence, straw wattles, Filter Soxx or a similar measure, just be sure to protect adjacent lots or roads from sediment from snowmelt.

Inlet protection— Protect storm drains by installing sediment control devices in receiving inlets. There are many different, yet acceptable types of inlet protection, so choose the type that best suits your site. Examples include, Catch-Alls, Filter Soxx, straw wattles with pea gravel bags, etc.



Filter Soxx (left) and Catch-Alls (right) are two means of protecting storm drains from sediment.



St. Joseph County Soil and Water
Conservation District
5605 U.S. 31 South, Suite 4
South Bend, IN 46614

NON PROFIT
ORGANIZATION
US POSTAGE PAID
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PERMIT NO. 225

St. Joseph County Soil And Water

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John Dooms, Chairman
Paul Williams III, V-Chairman
Dave Craft, Member
Jan Ivkovich, Member
Carole Riewe, Member

Associate Supervisors:

Jerry Dominiack
John Kulwicki
Melvin Kulwicki
Jim LaFree
Charles Lehman
Joe Long
Randy Matthys
Eugene Myers
Richard Schmidt
Dale Stoner

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
Jerry Knepp
Keith Lineback
William Millar

Office Staff:

Debbie Knepp, NRCS
Rafael Vega, NRCS
Jenny Davis, SWCD
Rick Glassman, SWCD
Troy Manges, SWCD

Farm Service Agency Staff:

Mike Hoskins, CED
Helene Cannoot
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Cindy Philhower
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