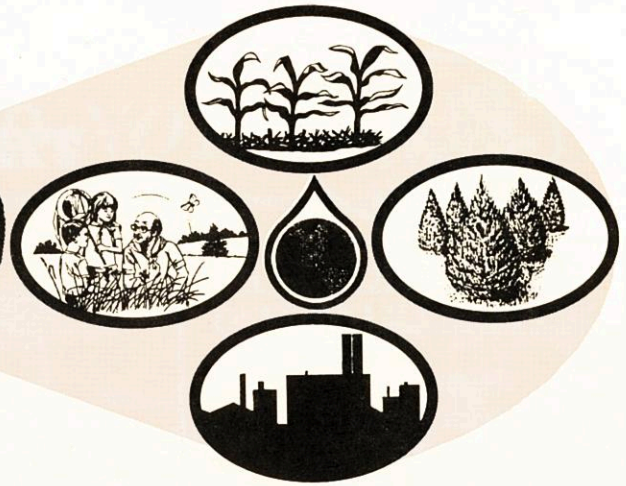




St. Joseph
County
Soil & Water
Conservation
District

CONSERVATION KALEIDOSCOPE



Today's Visions for Tomorrow's Future

Apr/May/Jun/2001
Volume 3, Issue 2

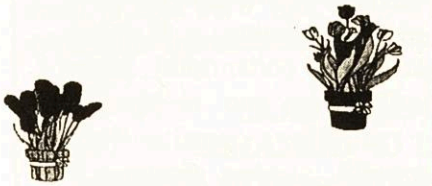
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Editor: Tonia Albright

Calendar of Events

- April 2**
Compost Seminar
7:00 – 8:30 pm
- April 13**
Good Friday – Office Closed
- April 16**
SWCD Monthly Board Meeting
7:30 – Farm Bureau Mtg. Room
- April 21**
Tree Pick Up – 8:00 – 12:00
St. Joe Co. 4-H Fairgrounds
- May 21**
SWCD Monthly Board Meeting
7:30 Farm Bureau Mtg. Room
- May 28**
Memorial Day – Office Closed
- June 18**
SWCD Monthly Board Meeting
7:30 – Farm Bureau Mtg. Room



Get Organized!

TREE PICK UP DAY

April 21, 2000
8:00 am to 12:00 noon
Pre-Orders & Extra Trees
St. Joseph County
4-H Fairgrounds
Esther Singer Building



Congratulations to Paul Williams on his election as Chairman of the St. Joseph County SWCD Board of Supervisors for a second year and to first time Vice-Chairman Dave Craft. Also, thanks to Dale Stoner for his past service as the Vice-Chairman.

THINK SPRING



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THE NATURAL EDUCATOR

HABITAT FOR LIFE 2001 POSTER CONTEST

“Habitat for Life” is the 2001 Soil and Water Stewardship Week Theme. Once again the St. Joseph County SWCD will be celebrating by sponsoring a poster contest for all St. Joseph County students, kindergarten through 12th grade.

Contest Categories are:

- K - 1st
- 2nd - 3rd
- 4th - 6th
- 7th - 9th
- 10th - 12th

All participants will receive a free tree and ribbon. The first place winners in each category will be sent to the State Competition in August.

Poster must be 22” x 28”

Posters may use any media to create a flat or two dimensional effect. (paint, markers, crayons, charcoal or other materials).

Posters are due into the SWCD office by: FRIDAY

APRIL 27, 2001

**NO LATER THAN
4:30 PM**

The information on the poster label, must also be on the back of the poster.

POSTER LABEL

NAME _____
 ADDRESS _____
 CITY _____
 PARENT’S NAME _____
 PHONE _____
 SCHOOL _____
 GRADE _____
 TEACHER _____

If you have questions,
just call the office



GO WILD IN YOUR BACKYARD

Spring is the time for renewal. And what better way to renew your spirit, than by helping out the other animals on planet earth.

Providing food, water, cover and shelter for the wild animals can be quite easy or very complex. It just depends on you. Here are some ways you can help.

Stop mowing your yard. Ok, maybe not the whole thing, but what about the edges and corners. Better yet, plant wildflowers in these places. These types of areas are great for very little creatures, insects and mice, which in return will attract larger animals.

Plant with the wildlife in mind. Many types of plants provide excellent cover and food for wildlife and are still quite showy. Dogwood trees are pretty in the spring and 47 different birds feed on their berries. Check out your local garden center for books with more information.

Build a bird house

These are just some simple ways to help. Remember, by improving your yard for wildlife, you are just giving back what we took from them in the first place.

FEELING THE HEAT AMERICA’S FOREST FIRES

In the year 2000 — 7,250,965 acres of land was burnt by wild fires. We spent over \$1 billion dollars trying to stop them.

Most of these fires caused more damage than they should have because of logging and previous fire suppression that allowed the fires to burn so hot, they were able to reach the crown of fire-resistant old growth trees.

FIRE IS NATURAL PART OF THE LAND.

So what did we get for our money, essentially nothing. Andy Stahl, executive director of forest Service Employees for Environmental Ethics put it this way: “The notion that we should continue to fight fires when they’re 10,000 acres or 100,000 acres is ludicrous. We never put out fires of that size. Nature does. But we always fight them. We might as well drop dollar bills on them”

Why bring this up in this newsletter? Because this effects all of us and the best thing for the planet is education. If we can better understand and accept the principal rules of earth, we can be better stewards. The above information came from the January-February 2001 Audubon Magazine (incite). It is an article every one who cares about how we treat this planet should read. I hope you find it intriguing.





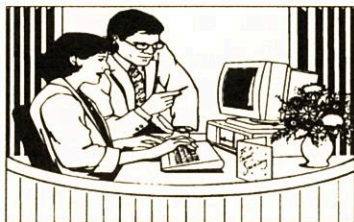
USDA NRCS

Natural Resources Conservation Service

**Ecommerce Website
Provides Service to Farmers**

The United States Department of Agriculture has a new website available to provide easy-to-use, free access to a centralized place to find useful information and documents. EForms is one of USDA's first applications available on the eCommerce website. EForms is the World Wide Web location of commonly used Natural Resources Conservation Service, Farm Service Agency and Rural Development forms. EForms is intended to be your first resource to find forms, and instructions for completing those forms, on the internet. Once completed, follow the simple steps to locate your nearest USDA servicing office, print the form, sign the form (if required) and fax or mail the form to the servicing office. You will be contacted once the form is received and processed.

No personal information is collected about you as you visit the site unless you choose to provide that information. In coming months, there will be additions made to the eForms site.



To get to the website: type <http://www.sc.egov.usda.gov/Main.asp>

FIELD NOTES

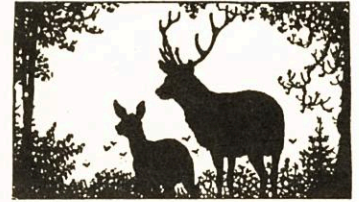
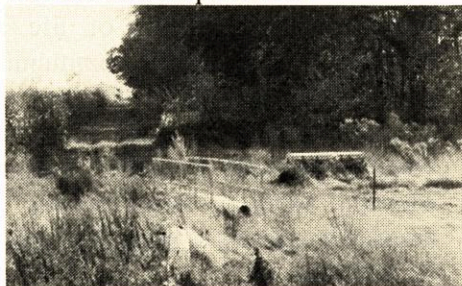
Money Available in Wildlife Program

The Wildlife Habitat Incentive Program (WHIP) is a voluntary program for people who want to develop and improve wildlife habitat primarily on private lands. It provides both technical assistance and cost-share payments to help establish and improve fish and wildlife habitat.



Participants who own or control land agree to prepare and implement a wildlife habitat development plan. NRCS offers participants technical and financial assistance for the establishment of wildlife habitat development practices. NRCS will work closely with IDNR district biologists to rank sites and develop the Wildlife Habitat Development Plan.

USDA and the participant enter into a cost-share agreement for wildlife habitat development. This agreement generally lasts from 5 to 10 years. The landowner agrees to install and maintain the WHIP practices. The landowner also allows NRCS access to monitor the effectiveness of the practices. USDA agrees to provide technical assistance and pay up to 75% of the cost of installing the wildlife habitat practices.



In addition, the St. Joseph and Elkhart County Soil and Water Conservation Districts in cooperation with Pheasants Forever have a warm season grass drill available for planting grasses for wildlife areas. The drill is provided free of charge to anyone who wishes to use it to plant native grasses. It can be used to plant areas that are in the WHIP program as well as sites that are not getting any type of cost-share.

For more information on WHIP and/or the warm season grass drill, contact the St. Joseph County Soil and Water Conservation District office.

FARM POND FISH STOCKING



If you are interested in stocking your farm pond, Matthys Farm Market has available the following: Channel Catfish, Large Mouth Bass, Fathead Minnows, Hybrid Bluegills, Hybrid Redear Sunfish, Butterfly Koi, Triploid Grass Carp, and Jumbo Tadpoles.

For more information call Matthys Farm Market at: 219-287-1935

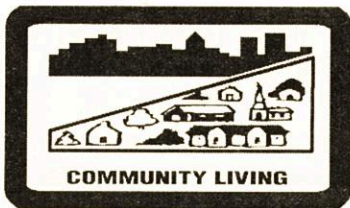


FIELD NOTES

Local People Working Together

The eighth and newest RC&D (Resource Conservation and Development) in Indiana is right in St. Joseph County's backyard. The Northwest Region RC&D includes Lake, Porter and St. Joseph Counties.

What is RC&D? RC&D is a unique process that helps people protect and develop their economic, natural and social resources in ways that improve their area's economy, environment and quality of life. Local RC&D councils provide a way for people to plan and implement projects that will make their communities a better place to live.



RC&D is based on the idea that people know what their communities need and can create solutions that will really work. RC&D projects may create new jobs in agriculture, forestry, tourism and other industries. Projects may focus on natural resource issues or may work to improve community development, economic growth or quality of life in Indiana's communities. The Northwest Region RC&D has already begun to look for projects that will benefit the local residents. Three issues that will be addressed is Land Use, Backyard Conservation and promotion of dry hydrants.

What is a dry Hydrant?

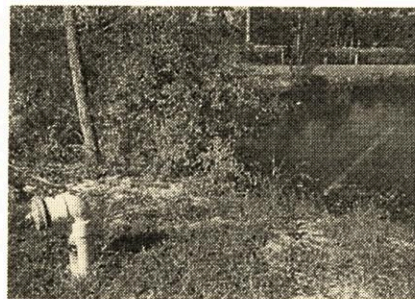
- A stand pipe that is not pressurized with water
- Serves the same purpose as a fire hydrant
- Provides local fire departments with an available supply of water during all seasons

What are the benefits of a dry hydrant?

- Provide dependable water source
- Improve fire protection
- Potential insurance rate reduction
- Protect rural structures from fire

Selecting sites for hydrants

- Install as part of new pond construction
- Good access for fire trucks
- Water supply deep enough for year round use (ice in winter can limit use on shallow ponds)
- Install on existing ponds with adequate depth and access
- Installation on lakes require permits and usually permanent easement



Dry Hydrant

There are many opportunities to get involved with your local RC&D. People from all walks of life are making changes in their communities and you can join them. Whether you live in a city or rural area, and whether you are a teacher, business owner, farmer, homeowner or consumer, there's a place for you in RC&D.



PENN INTERN LEARNS ABOUT ENVIRONMENT

My name is Sam James. I am a junior at Penn High School. I am currently in the Penn Internship Program. This course allows a student to get an up-close, "hands-on" look at what he/she might like to pursue as a job later in life. It allows us to experience what goes on and how things are run in our job area.

I am looking into a natural resource job. With the help of Mr. Mel Leinig and Mrs. Polly Corpe, I was introduced to the St. Joseph Soil and Water Conservation District. I go with the County Conservationist and check out places that may have



problems, or potential problems, that will cause environmental harm. We also help people who want to do something for the environment. I also do office work for the wonderful staff at the SWCD. I am learning a lot and am enjoying my stay here.





URBAN MEANDERINGS

Urban Spring and Summer Landscape Planning

Developing a long range master plan for your lawn can prove to be valuable in improving the quality of family life. Many times the front lawns are kept nicely manicured while the sides and rear sections of the homestead offer several other opportunities. Maybe a volleyball court could provide quality social and recreational enjoyment for your middle and high school kids. What are your hobbies? What activities does your family enjoy doing with friends? With the resources available to you, consider the options that your family could develop on your home turf.



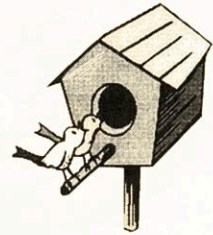
Late April through early May is an ideal planting time for wildflowers. Most wildflower gardens are planted with a seeding mixture of both annual and perennial varieties. These wildflowers provide daily beauty for your home because different varieties will bloom all the way to a killing frost. In addition to providing hummingbird and butterfly habitat, weekly lawn mowing duties are reduced because the wildflower plantings only requires one mowing after a killing frost each year. The reason for this final mowing is to scatter the annual seeds across the patch for next year.



Hedges can provide landscaping beauty and wildlife benefits at the same time. Several deciduous varieties have very colorful spring flowers and the fall berries provide food for small animals and birds. The evergreen hedges provide windbreaks for wildlife in the winter and also help reduce stress for young garden transplants in the early spring root establishment period. These corridors provide travel lanes and cover for small animals and birds.



Planting smaller flowering trees and shrubs can add spring color to your home and brighten family spirits after a long St. Joseph County winter. Ground covers can reduce weekly trimming around ornamental plantings and also help stabilize areas suffering from soil erosion on steep slopes. More remote areas of your lawn can be seeded to new varieties of lawn fescue that only require mowing two or three times per season. These newer types of turf grass will only grow 6 to 8 inches tall and were developed to reduce mowing costs. These areas could be separated by a row of flowers, small hedge, or some other planting that would have a height of 12 to 16 inches.



Additional wildlife habitat can be provided around your home through construction of artificial homes (bird houses, squirrel boxes and rabbit burrows). Bird feeders of all types can provide hours of summer enjoyment for all ages. An artificial chipmunk burrow with a food cake near a wooded section of your lawn last December would have been appreciated by "Chip" & "Dale".

There are many other different sources of information available and you are encouraged to seek the advice of your local landscaping retail establishment, nursery or seed house in discussing and planning for the landscaping of your home. Professionals can offer more specific recommendations based on your soil type, location, drainage and other site specific conditions. You may also contact the Purdue Cooperative Extension Service at 219-235-9604 for additional information.





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

St. Joseph County Soil And Water

Supervisors:

Paul Williams III, Chairman
Dave Craft, V-Chairman
Steve Horvath, Member
John Kulwicki, Member
Dale Stoner, Member

Associate Supervisors:

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Jerry Dominiack
John Doods
Jim Gries
Janice Ivkovich
Melvin Kulwicki
Jim LaFree
Charles Lehman
Jay Lindenman
Keith Lineback
Joe Long
Randy Matthys
Eugene Myers
Beverly Riddle
Richard Schmidt

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
Harold Mutti

Office Staff:

Debbie Knepp, NRCS
Jerome Daugherty, IDNR
Rick Glassman, SWCD
Tonia Albright, SWCD

Farm Service Agency Staff:

Mike Hoskins, CED
Helene Cannoot
Cindy Philhower
Denise Trimboli
Dee Fox