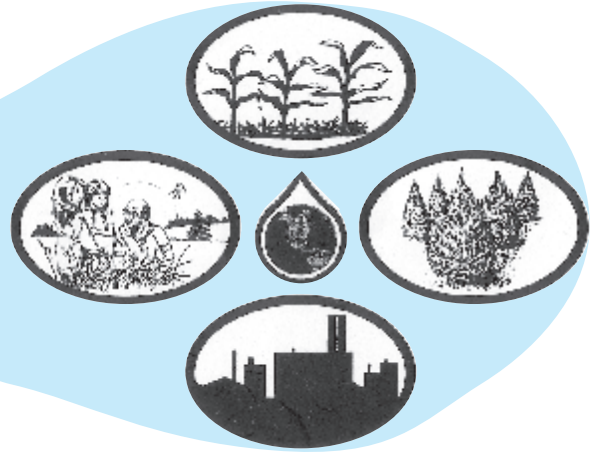




St. Joseph
County
Soil & Water
Conservation
District

CONSERVATION KALEIDOSCOPE



Today's Visions for Tomorrow's Future

November/December 2012
Volume 14, Issue 6

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What's Going On...

NOVEMBER

- 1 - Official Launch - 2013 Conservation Donor Program
- 6 - Election Day, SWCD Staff OFF
- 12 - Veterans Day, Office Closed
- 19 - **SWCD Monthly Board Mtg., 7PM - PUBLIC & NEW MEMBERS ALWAYS WELCOME!**
- 22 - Thanksgiving, Office Closed
- 23 - Day after Thanksgiving, SWCD Staff OFF

DECEMBER

- 17 - **SWCD Monthly Board Mtg., 7PM**
- 24 - Christmas Eve, SWCD Staff OFF
- 25 - Christmas, Office Closed
- 28 - DEADLINE for Silent Auction Donation FORM submission ... Silent Auction to be held at our 53rd Annual Meeting on 1/18/13 ... **Call today to learn how you can donate!**

JANUARY

- 1 - New Years Day, Office Closed
- 11 - DEADLINE to purchase Dinner Tickets - 53rd Annual Meeting on 1/18/13 ... Call today for info

SAVE THE DATE ...

Call for Your Tickets Today!
Fri, Jan 18, 5:45-9:15PM ...

St. Joseph County SWCD'S 53rd Annual Meeting, Holy Family Parish Ctr., South Bend ... **Silent Auction** ... Supervisor Election ... **Polish Family-Style Dinner** ... **Guest Speaker: Mike Hoffman**, WNDU-TV Chief Meteorologist & AgDay Meteorologist ... **Dinner Tickets \$12.50 each**

- 18 - Our 53rd Annual Meeting!
- 22 - **SWCD Monthly Board Mtg., 7PM**

FEBRUARY

- 1 - SNOW DATE for 53rd Annual Meeting
- 19 - **SWCD Monthly Board Mtg., 7PM**

Have you ever considered how the **MISSION** of the **St. Joseph County SWCD** is also something that is important to your own life?

As a subdivision of state government, we receive only limited monies from the state, and our funding from the county is currently limited to the salaries of our 3 staff members.

In other words, we must work hard to find ways to raise funds through (1) **grants**; (2) the **sale of products and services** that support our **mission** - such as our annual tree seedling sales, our rain barrel and composters sales, and fees from our in-school conservation educational programs that bring the fieldtrip right to the classroom; **and** ... this is where **YOU** come in ... (3) through **tax-deductible donations** received through our **Annual Conservation Donor Program**.

In this edition of the **Conservation Kaleidoscope** we aim to :

- (1) Tell part of the **story** of the **value** we provide to the community by highlighting some of the projects we have

Have You Heard?

been able to carry out because of the **generous donations** made during our **2012 Conservation Donor Program**

- (2) Acknowledge and thank the **individuals, organizations, and businesses** whose **donations** allowed us to undertake our 2012 **educational, outreach, and technical assistance projects**, all of which are aligned with our **mission**... a mission that benefits your family's daily quality of life as residents of St. Joseph County, Indiana and beyond
- (3) Officially **launch** our **2013 Conservation Donor Program** to raise funds that will enable us to successfully carry out our **mission** throughout 2013

MISSION of the St. Joseph County Soil & Water Conservation District

To provide **GUIDANCE and EDUCATION** to the youth and adults of **St. Joseph County** and administer programs to **preserve, improve, and protect soil, water, air, plant, and animal resources** for future generations



WE'RE MOVING AGAIN!

Due to the US-31Project, you may recall that in Dec. 2011 our office moved to a temporary location from our long-time home at the "old" St. Joseph County Farm

Bureau Insurance building on US 31 South. Our home in 2012 has been in Ireland Square Plaza at the intersection of Ireland & Ironwood in South Bend.

Our next move is expected to occur sometime between early November & mid-December 2012.

Our financial supporters greatly help us to offset the expenses related to these moves, so that we can continue to finance education and outreach projects that benefit our community.

Look for updates on our **website** and our **Facebook Page**, and in the next edition of the **Conservation Kaleidoscope**.

We hope you enjoy the stories, and we hope that you feel that the future-minded programs and services that we bring to your community do have a value in your life.

Perhaps you'll take that feeling one step further and consider helping us to fund next year's activities ... either for the first time, or as a loyal supporter.



THE NATURAL EDUCATOR

St. Joseph County Soil & Water Conservation Partnership: Education for the Young and Young-at-Heart



Board Member, Carole Riewe, representing the SWCD at the St. Joseph County Public Library's annual Science Alive event

The St. Joseph County SWCD has always known that the key to encouraging people to commit to putting conservation on the land is education and ever since our beginning in 1959, education has been a priority for the SWCD. It started with holding conservation field days and eventually progressed to the purchasing of no-till equipment so that local farmers and producers did not need to put out large investments to find out how well no-till work for them. Then, in 1985, the SWCD hired our first Environmental Education Coordinator (EEC) to continue with Adult Education and begin a program with our county's youth.

Since that time our EEC's have provided a tremendous amount of education to the residents of St. Joseph County in many different ways.

The picture above shows Carole Riewe, one of the SWCD board members, working at Science Alive at the downtown St. Joseph County Main Library. For the past 20 years, the first Saturday in February is the place to be for a wide variety of hands-on displays that educate participants of all ages. The SWCD is proud to be able to say that we have been there from the very beginning of this popular community event.



Another of the priority areas for the EEC is in our schools. What better way to get the conservation message out than by providing educational environmental-themed programs to our schools that also can be aligned with State Educational Standards? At one point, the EEC typically visited over 60 area schools, presenting over 600 environmental programs for 25,000+ students.

While budgets and time constraints have lowered those numbers, 2012 should still see the EEC visit around 50 area schools, and present over 420 programs for almost 20,000 students.



Pictured here in the lower two photographs are area students having fun learning during one of the SWCD's newest programs, "Sense of Wonder, Field trip in the Classroom". The "field trip" has four stations and students

learn about the animals of our area by reading, drawing, and exploring furs and owl pellets. They also get to explore a wetland and learn about soil and the difference between the soils found in our county.

Story continued on page 3



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THE NATURAL EDUCATOR



Currently, our EEC offers over 27 different in-school programs and field trips to our area schools. One of the most popular programs involves our EEC taking on the character of “Jethro the Scarecrow.” Jethro uses the ingredients of a cheeseburger to talk about where our food come from, tracing each ingredient back to the soil, a critical natural resource. Sticking with the importance of soil is our Earthworm program, where students not only get to learn about earthworms but also get to touch real earthworms (you would be surprised at how many students have never touched an earthworm!) and even eat one (okay it is a gummy worm covered in Nestle Quik Chocolate Powder.) Our Amphibians and Reptiles program allows students to learn about some of our native species. Students learn that without these slithering friends we would not have certain foods to eat because the mice and insects would get eat them first. The bravest students even get to wrap a live black rat snake around their necks—an experience they will not soon forget! A sampling of other youth programs we offer (many of which can be adapted for adult audiences) includes Spirit of the Earth, Water & Your, Tree I.D., Birds of Indiana, Indiana Endangered Species, Swamp Stomps, Owl Prowls, Environmental Lab tours, and many more! **For more info on booking our EEC or another SWCD representative for a program, give us a call.** Many of our programs are available at no-cost, or at a very low rate.

But we do not stop at educating the young. One of our longest-running Adult Programs is “Compost 101.” Every spring and fall the SWCD, in partnership with the Solid Waste Management District, hosts a free introductory seminar on composting. Some people attend year after year to further fine-tune their own compost systems. We also partner with our area SWCDs in Kosciusko and Elkhart Counties for an annual Forestry Field Day. This year’s event began at Quality Hardwood Products sawmill just outside of Warsaw and offered a unique look at our local forests, after the wood has left the woodland. Adult Programs that focus on agriculture-themes are also key to our mission of ultimately getting conservation practices installed on the land to benefit soil and water quality, and we talk about these on the following two pages of this newsletter.

Whether it is for the young or young-at-heart, or you live in the country, the city, or in-between, the St. Joseph County SWCD strives to bring conservation education to all. But none of these programs would be available with out the support of our Donors-Members whose support help fund the supplies needed for these programs.

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Striving to Improve Soil and Water Quality through Soil Health Education to Farmers

Thanks to our 2012 sponsors and affiliate member donors, area farmers started the year off right by digging into a hearty breakfast at the SWCD's 3rd Annual Producers' Breakfast & Pesticide Recertification Meeting held in February. After the meal, the farmers received some very useful information on the importance of promoting soil health on their farms. Speakers Jamie Scott, a Pierceton, Indiana farmer and cover crop innovator, and Sam St. Clair, NRCS District Conservationist, delivered an excellent demonstration called the "Slake Test" which was an eye opener to many in the room of the importance of Soil Health (visit Youtube and search for **soil slake test** to learn more).



Farmers learning about soil health at our 2012 Producers' Breakfast

The soil health theme was continued in an April field day, again made possible by our donor-members, & was hosted at the Farm of Randy Ehninger. Mr. Ehninger allowed the St. Joseph County SWCD to plant a cover crop test plot the previous fall in order to showcase the test plot at the April field day. The test plot consisted of twelve different species and various mixes. At the field day a soil/root pit was dug so that farmers and others in attendance could see the benefits to the soil below the surface. These benefits include reduced compaction and increased organic matter provided by the cover crops. Speakers Jamie Scott and Dave Robison, Cover Crop Agronomist with Cisco Seeds, provided detailed information on the strategies, weaknesses, and benefits of specific cover crops.

Because of support from our donors, in July the SWCD was able to hold another field day that showcased a New Carlisle dairy farm's commitment to water quality. The Gamble Family was kind enough to allow the SWCD and other local producers to conduct a tour of their Animal Waste Facility. Their facility, installed with the technical and financial assistance of our partners with the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS), reduces local nutrient loading of local waterways by storing manure until it can be spread in a responsible manor. Speakers Duane Riethman, NRCS Area Engineer, and Melissa Lehman, Certified Crop Adviser with Agronomic Solutions LLC, were present to describe the technical assistance that was provided by them to the Gamble family in developing the facility and the plans on how to properly utilize the manure after storage.



Jamie Scott, "cover crop innovator", discussing the importance of cover crop roots below the soil surface at our April Cover Crop Test Plot Field Day.



Farmers discuss cover crops and their connection to soil health at our April Field Day



Melissa Lehman of Agronomic Solutions explains the permitting aspect of using an Animal Waste pit for liquid manure storage.

These 2012 events helped spread the word about, and showcase the progress made to, protect soil and water quality in St. Joseph County and beyond. **Thank you also to all of the people—our board-committee members, partner-agencies, event speakers, volunteers, ag-industry vendors, farmers, and of course our sponsor and affiliate donor-members—that made this possible. So if you get a chance, take the time to support them too!**

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St. Joseph County Conservation Partnership Accomplishments in the Field

As the St. Joseph County Soil & Water Conservation Partnership, we, in cooperation with the USDA-NRCS and the Indiana Department of Agriculture, Division of Soil Conservation (ISDA-DSC), provide educational and technical assistance, often free of charge, and direct our efforts to help landowners. Despite some challenges faced throughout the year—such as an office relocation, the announced closing of the St. Joseph County Farm Service Agency (USDA-FSA), and dealing with unusual weather patterns—the St. Joseph County Conservation Partnership has been able to implement a lot of conservation on the ground in 2012. Here are just a few highlights ...



Project Site BEFORE Chemical Containment Area was installed

One local project—a while in the making—was that of a Chemical Containment area. The facility allows for the storage of fertilizer and other agricultural chemicals in a designated area that will contain any of these chemicals if there happens to be a spill. Should a spill occur, nearby waterways will be protected from contamination via runoff, and ground water will be protected from chemicals leaching through the soil. While these facilities can be more expensive than other possible solutions, they are well worth it when you think of the dangers that come with having no protection.



Completed Containment Area, with Building enclosure over it

NRCS was able to provide all of the engineer design for this project and some monetary assistance as well.



Completed Rock Chute Structures armor the ditch banks

2012 saw the culmination of another local NRCS engineering design project—the installation of rock chute structures in a ditch bank to prevent gully erosion from overland water runoff. These structures armor the ditch bank while giving runoff a chance to slow down and gradually enter the channel. This process reduces the amount of sediment that enters the water and retains valuable topsoil.

Soil health and its related farming practices such as No-till and cover crops were big hits in 2012. Many farmers will be planting cover crops for the first time this year, bringing with them thousands of new acreage under winter cover. With the drought this year, we saw a huge jump in cover crop acreage because farmers recognized the benefit of being able to tap into unused nutrients left over from the cash crop, which saves them from having to add nutrients in the form of expensive fertilizers. Other key conservation practices that were heavily implemented this year included intensive grazing, and invasive species control.

With the support of our donor-members, the SWCD is able to better prioritize our staff and board members' efforts toward working closely with NRCS to provide the educational opportunities and technical assistance that ultimately leads to improved water and soil quality in YOUR community and beyond. Won't you help us continue this valuable work by becoming a 2013 Conservation Donor Member today?



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St. Joseph County SWCD 2013 Conservation Donor Member Pledge Form

Yes, I would like to support St. Joseph County SWCD Conservation Projects in 2013!

GENERAL INSTRUCTIONS: Please complete this PLEDGE FORM and return it, along with your CONTRIBUTION, to: *St. Joseph County SWCD • Box 10068 • South Bend, IN 46680*

To ensure that your information is included in promotional materials and that you receive ALL of your BENEFITS, please have your MEMBER PLEDGE FORM completed and CONTRIBUTION submitted by the applicable DEADLINE for your selected OUTREACH PROJECT or EVENT.

Step 1: Provide Your Contact Information & Mailing Preferences

Contact Name: _____

Company/Organization Name (if applicable): _____

Name by which you would like to be recognized, if different from above (e.g. The Betty Frank Family): _____

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Step 2: Choose Your 2013 MEMBER GIVING LEVEL:

For more details on Donor Benefits for each Giving Level, please give us a call or visit our website.

PLATINUM MEMBER (\$1000+) - 17,200+ "Hits" (largest graphics/fonts) – My Donation: \$ _____

GOLD MEMBER (\$500-\$999) - 12,900+ "Hits" (2nd largest graphics/fonts) – My Donation: \$ _____

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BRONZE MEMBER (\$100-\$249) - 4,600+ "Hits" (4th largest fonts) – My Donation: \$ _____

PARTNER AFFILIATE MEMBER (\$50-\$99) - 3,800+ "Hits" (smallest fonts) – My Donation: \$ _____

PERSONAL AFFILIATE MEMBER (\$25-\$49) - 3,500+ "Hits" (smallest fonts) – My Donation: \$ _____

Step 3: Choose Your 2013 OUTREACH PROJECT or EVENT:

For more details regarding each Project or Event, please give us a call or visit our website.

- | | | |
|-------------------------------|---|---|
| COMMUNITY-FOCUSED
OUTREACH | } | <input type="checkbox"/> OUTREACH PROJECT 1. General Donation ... Donor Form Submittal Deadline for this Project: 7/15/13

<input type="checkbox"/> OUTREACH PROJECT 2. Conservation Kaleidoscope Newsletter – Bi-Monthly (Reaches 2,100+ Subscribers via USPS, Email, and Social Media) ... Donor Form Submittal Deadline for this Project: 3/15/13

<input type="checkbox"/> OUTREACH PROJECT 3. Youth Environmental Education – Support Ongoing School, Extracurricular & Outreach Programs for 20,000+ Youth in St. Joseph County! ... Donor Form Submittal Deadline for this Project: 3/15/13 |
| EVENT-FOCUSED
EDUCATION | } | <input type="checkbox"/> EVENT 1. 27th Annual Tree Sale Program – Also featuring Rain Barrels and Composters ... Benefits applied Jan.–Apr. 2013, and concludes with an Event on Sat., Apr. 13, 2013 with 400+ Attendees ... Donor Form Submittal Deadline for this Event: 2/15/13

<input type="checkbox"/> EVENT 2. Annual Meeting & Polish Family-Style Banquet – Fri. Jan. 18, 2013 (150-175 Attendees) ... Donor Form Submittal Deadline for this Event: 12/21/12

<input type="checkbox"/> EVENT 3. Agricultural Producers' Breakfast & Workshop – Feb. 2013 (50+ Attendees) ... Donor Form Submittal Deadline for this Event: 1/31/13

<input type="checkbox"/> EVENT 4. Conservation Field Tour(s) – At least 2 Tours, Spring-Fall 2013 (150+ Total Attendees) ... Donor Form Submittal Deadline for these Events: 3/15/13 |

STEP 4: Submit Your Payment Options – Payable to "St. Joseph County SWCD"

- CHECK MONEY ORDER

Support CONSERVATION by becoming a 2013 Donor Member of the St. Joseph County Soil & Water Conservation District

* GIVING-LEVELS & MEMBER BENEFITS – THE DETAILS *


for the St. Joseph County SWCD's 2013 CONSERVATION DONOR MEMBER Program

We recognize, and fully appreciate, that the support of the individuals and businesses who continue to donate as annual Affiliate Members has been a crucial ingredient to our ongoing success. Within the last few years, we have also been fortunate to receive financial support from Sponsors at higher giving-levels, especially from organizations and businesses.

For 2013, we wanted to offer "something for everyone", and we have worked to offer 6 GIVING-LEVELS that give our DONOR-MEMBERS:

- significant opportunities for DISTINCT MARKETING and COMPETITIVE ADVANTAGES and
- the opportunity to demonstrate YOUR particular SUPPORT of the OUTREACH PROJECT or EVENT that you select

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Font Size for Applicable Benefits	Largest	2nd Largest	3rd Largest	4th Largest	Smallest	Smallest
Tax-Deductible Donation Receipt, Certificate of Recognition, & Subscription to SWCD	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Special Recognition in SWCD Newsletter (usps & Online Distribution: 3200+ per bi-monthly edition)	*	*	*	*	*	*
OPPORTUNITY for Complementary TICKETS to SWCD's SPECIAL VIP EVENT, "Owl Prowl Hoot & Hike Cookout" in fall of 2013	In 3 Editions	In 3 Editions	In 1 Edition	In 1 Edition	In 1 Edition	In 1 Edition
Receive 2013 Annual Report/2014 Monthly CALENDAR	16 Free Tickets	12 Free Tickets	8 Free Tickets	6 Free Tickets	4 Free Tickets	2 Free Tickets
RECOGNITION in our POPULAR 2013 Annual Report/2014 Monthly CALENDAR (Approx. Distribution: 1650)	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
RECOGNITION on SWCD Website & Cross-Linked to Your Site (if applicable)	Logo + Contact Info.	Logo + Contact Info.	Name + Contact Info.	Name + Contact Info.	Name + Contact Info.	Name Only
RECOGNITION in SWCD's 2013 Annual Legislator Presentations	Logo + Contact Info.	Logo + Contact Info.	Name + Contact Info.	Name + Contact Info.	Name + Contact Info.	
RECOGNITION in SWCD Marketing Items (Electronic and/or Hardcopy)	Logo + Contact Info.	Logo + Contact Info.	Name + Contact Info.	Name + Contact Info.		
RECOGNITION in SWCD eNews and/or Online Media Posts	3 Times + Cross-Link to your Site	3 Times + Cross-Link to your Site	2 Times			
OPPORTUNITY to provide LITERATURE for YOUR selected EVENT	** Yes	** Yes	** Yes			
OPPORTUNITY for Complementary VIP TICKETS to SWCD's Annual Meeting Dinner Banquet, Fri., 1/18/13, Holy Family Church, South Bend	6 Free Tickets & Oral Intro., if Donation Submitted by 1/4/13	4 Free Tickets & Oral Intro., if Donation Submitted by 1/4/13				
Prominent RECOGNITION on Large Sign	*** Logo + Contact Info	*** Logo + Contact Info				
Exclusive RECOGNITION in Newspaper Ad runs in "The Farmers Exchange" (12,000+ Subscribers)	2 Ads, 3"X3"	1 Ad, 3"X3"				
Exclusive RECOGNITION on back side of BUSINESS CARDS carried and distributed by SWCD's 3 Staff Members and 5 Supervisors	On Total of 60 Business Cards					
Exclusive RECOGNITION in our POPULAR 2013 Annual Report/2014 Monthly CALENDAR on 2 Monthly Pages of YOUR CHOICE	2 Months, at least 2"X3"					



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Please note that the St. Joseph County SWCD is **not** considered a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization. However, **Internal Revenue Code 26 U.S.C. §170(c)(1)** provides that any donations made to **political subdivisions of a State** (including Soil & Water Conservation Districts like us) are **tax-deductible as a charitable contribution.**



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