



St. Joseph  
County  
Soil & Water  
Conservation  
District



**Today's Visions for Tomorrow's Future**

November/December 2019  
Volume 21, Issue 6

2903 Gary Drive, Ste 1, Plymouth, IN 46563  
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## SWCD to Host Chad Pregracke as 60th Annual Meeting Key Note Speaker



Thursday April 9, 1959 the St. Joseph County Soil & Water Conservation District was organized as a governmental subdivision of the state of Indiana by John R Walsh, Secretary of State of the State of Indiana. Our services and programs aim to meet the unique resource needs of St. Joseph County which includes improving our soil and water resources, promoting and expanding wildlife and woodland areas, and continuing to provide innovative and quality educational programs to the community. With the continued cooperation and support of concerned citizens like yourself we will continue our efforts to meet—and exceed—the challenges of the resource conservation needs of St. Joseph County, just as we have done for the past 60 years.

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### Chad Pregracke

Founder & President of Living Lands & Water

#### FROM COLLECTING MUSSELS TO USING MUSCLE TO COLLECT GARBAGE

The Mississippi River was literally Chad Pregracke's back yard while growing up near East Moline, IL. Between his childhood and first job as a clam digger, it didn't take long before realizing that he didn't like what he saw - above or below the river - and decided to do something about it.

#### WHAT STARTED AS 'ONE RIVER, ONE PIECE OF GARBAGE AT A TIME' TURNED INTO LIVING LANDS & WATERS FULL TIME

At the age of 17, Chad started making calls to government agencies to notify them of the problem, assuming someone would take care of it. Year after year passed by and the problem only worsened. In 1997, Chad decided that if no one else was going to clean up the river, he would.

In 1998 at the age of 23, Chad founded Living Lands & Waters. Today, the organization has grown to include a full staff and fleet of equipment. The crew averages nine states a year along the Mississippi, Illinois and Ohio Rivers, as well as many of their tributaries. Most recently, Chad expanded the mission of the organization to include Student Educational Workshops, The MillionTrees Project, Adopt-a-River Mile, Invasive Species Removal and The Great Mississippi River Cleanup.

Chad's vision, charisma, non-stop work ethic and natural leadership abilities have garnered him an abundance of awards and honors over the years. Most notably, Chad was the recipient of the Jefferson Award for Public Service (America's version of the Nobel Prize) in June 2002. Chad accepted this award in the United States Supreme Court in Washington D.C. In 2013, he was named CNN's Hero of the Year.

**Where:** St. Hedwig Memorial Center  
331 S Scott St., South Bend, IN 46601

**When:** January 31, 2020.

**Time:** Doors open at 5:45 pm and the call to order is at 6:30 pm.

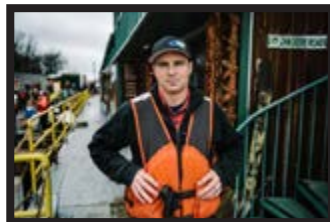
**Cost:** Tickets are \$15 each. Includes Dinner

**Key Note Speaker:** Chad Pregracke

**Mark your calendars to join us as we celebrate 60 years of serving St Joseph County.**



Find out more at  
[www.livinglandsandwaters.org/](http://www.livinglandsandwaters.org/)



### What's Going On...

Events hosted by the St. Joseph County SWCD  
& Our Partners in Conservation

#### November

- 5 - Election Day - County Holiday
- 7 - Family Nature Club See page 2 for details

11 - Veterans Day - Office Closed

19 - **Monthly Board Meeting** - Open to the Public 7:00 PM LOCATION: Alligator Room Centre Township - 1150 Kern Road South Bend.

28 - **Thanksgiving Day** - Office Closed

29 - County Holiday

#### December

17 - **Monthly Board Meeting** - Open to the Public 9:00 AM LOCATION: Farm Credit Services, 5310 S. Main St., South Bend.

23 & 24 - **County Holidays**

25 - **Christmas Day** - office closed

## Now is the Time to Plan for 2020

Now is the time to start planning for your 2020 cropping season. From weather to pests, each Indiana farmer faces a unique set of challenges. USDA's Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) offers voluntary Farm Bill conservation programs that benefit agricultural producers and the environment.

**The Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP)** is a voluntary conservation program that helps agricultural producers in a manner that promotes agricultural production and environmental quality as compatible goals. Through EQIP, farmers and ranchers receive financial and technical assistance to implement structural and management conservation practices that optimize environmental benefits on working agricultural land. Together, NRCS and producers co-invest in solutions that conserve natural resources for the future while also improving agricultural operations. Using these practices can lead to cleaner water and air, healthier soil and better wildlife habitat, all while improving agricultural operations.

Excessive rainfall and prolonged ponding conditions this spring resulted in many fields remaining unplanted to corn or soybeans this season. To protect exposed soil, many producers chose to plant cover crops to keep the soil covered, control erosion, increase soil fertility and organic material, improve soil tilth, increase infiltration and aeration of the soil, and improve overall soil health and water quality. Utilizing EQIP, and with the help of USDA NRCS, St. Joseph County farmers planted 721 acres of cover crops on prevented plant acres this year. An additional 128.4 acres of cover crops were planted through the Soil and Water Conservation District's Clean Water Indiana Grant.

Although cover crops are one of the most popular practices, EQIP can help implement other practices to

help you meet your production and conservation needs. Some of the practices include, but are not limited to:

- ◆ No-Till or Reduced Till
- ◆ Irrigation Management
- ◆ Nutrient Management
- ◆ Integrated Pest Management
- ◆ Seasonal High Tunnels (Hoop Houses)
- ◆ Conservation Crop Rotation
- ◆ Pollinator Habitat
- ◆ Forest Stand Improvement
- ◆ Prescribed Grazing

The application deadline for funding in 2020 has not been announced yet but typically happens in November or December. To discuss what practices are available through EQIP that may help meet your production goals or to apply, contact your District Conservationist, Deborah Knepp today to get started.



**Cover Crop**



**No-Till**



**Pollinator Habitat**

# FAMILY NATURE CLUB



## ALL ABOUT TREES

NOVEMBER 7th 6 - 7:30 PM

This class will take place at the peak season for fall colors. Lets learn how to measure and identify the different species of trees. We will also hike through the woods to explore the beautiful foliage.

Programs are **FREE**

**Register:**

<https://forms.gle/gf73fqxawgu14ezc8>

**Location:**

The Mishawaka Res  
13950 Scout Lane  
Mishawaka, IN 46544

**St. Joseph County Soil and Water Conservation District  
2020 Membership Form**

**Name:**

**Address:**

**City/State/Zip**

**Phone:**

**Email:**

**Website:**

**Please Confirm Your Giving Level**

\_\_\_\_\_ Affiliate Membership: \$25-\$99      \_\_\_\_\_ Silver Membership: \$250-\$499 \*  
\_\_\_\_\_ Bronze Membership: \$100-\$249 \*      \_\_\_\_\_ Gold Membership: \$500 & above

**THANK YOU** for your support! The many outreach and education projects we provide would not be possible without the help of community members like YOU!

All donors will receive a tax-deductible donation receipt, subscription to the SWCD newsletter, and recognition in our 2020 Annual Report & website.  
\*Bronze & Silver & Gold Memberships will include everything above PLUS a certificate of recognition, and recognition on the SWCD website will include address, phone number & website.

\_\_\_\_\_ **I would prefer to make my donation anonymous.**

**If you would like to donate to a specific outreach or project/event, please indicate below:**

- \_\_\_\_\_ **General Education and Outreach**
- \_\_\_\_\_ **Youth Environmental Education Supporter**
- \_\_\_\_\_ **Annual Meeting Banquet** (Donation must be submitted by 1-17-2020)
- \_\_\_\_\_ **Conservation Cost Share** (Help install conservation practices such as cover crops, no-till, pollinator habitat, raingardens, filter strips, etc.)
- \_\_\_\_\_ **Other** (Please Specify) \_\_\_\_\_

Please make checks payable to "**St Joseph County SWCD**" and mail along with this form to:

**St Joseph County SWCD  
2903 Gary Drive  
Plymouth, IN 46563**



**Want to donate with your Visa, MasterCard, or PayPal account? Visit our website at [www.stjosephswcd.org](http://www.stjosephswcd.org) and click on the "Donate" button.**

**Scan me to donate now!**



## St. Joseph County Soil And Water Conservation Partnership

The St Joseph SWCD  
& NRCS Staff & Board

Wish you a very  
happy holiday  
season.



**Soil & Water Conservation  
District (SWCD) Supervisors:**

John Dooms, Chair  
Jeremy Cooper, Vice Chair  
Mike Burkholder  
Dave Vandewalle  
Dave Craft

**St. Joseph County  
Soil & Water Conservation  
Partnership Staff:**

Sarah Longenecker, SWCD  
Sandra Hoffarth, SWCD  
Jane Sablich, SWCD  
Debbie Knepp, NRCS

**SWCD Associate Supervisors:**

Jim LaFree  
Chuck Lehman  
Randy Matthys  
Richard Schmidt  
Dave Straughn  
Dru Wrasse

**Farm Service Agency Staff:**

Gideon Nobbe, CED  
Aldona Martin  
Tara Wolfe  
Devan Herrell  
Katie Leitch

**SWCD Honorary Members:**

Jerry Knepp  
Keith Lineback  
William Millar



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!!!!

Scan me to go  
Green!