Allen County Soil & Water District
3718 New Vision Drive

Volume 1, Issue 1
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# Conservation chALLENge

## Allen County SWCD offers Equipment Rental

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Allen County SWCD has two Phillips Rotary Harrows available for rental this spring. The Harrow levels lumps and ridges on previously worked ground. Leveling in the spring after anhydrous application is done extensively. Some farmers work down standing corn stalk in the late fall or early spring with this harrow. It rolls over dry and brittle stalks breaking it up and working it into the surface. 2007 rental rates are 6.00/acre for the first 200 acres, $4.50/acre for all acres over 200.Allen Co SWCD has also acquired a Rawson 24-row Strip-Till Rig pulled by a Case IH MX-286 for rent. Rental fees for this combo is $6.00/acre for the first 200 acres, $4.50 for all acres over 200 for the strip-tiller and $60.00/hour for the tractor. An extra discount of $1.00 /acre is available for payment within 10 days. ❋❋



Phillips Rotary Harrow




*"In my opinion, the BMP Challenge program is a no-brainer. There is no way a farmer can lose."*

**-2006 Participant**

The BMP Challenge Program guarantees that the producer won't lose money by trying reduced tillage or state recommended nutrient rates. Through participating in this program, producers can find out for themselves that good conservation pays. This program is only for corn farmers, and it is necessary to enroll prior to either breaking ground or making the first nutrient application in the spring. There is still time to enroll for 2007. Producers can enroll up to 160 acres in the tillage and/or nutrient BMP Challenge Programs. With the assistance of their conservation technician or crop consultant a producer will set-up a side-by-side comparison - a check-strip containing their normal practice and the remainder of the field using either state recommended rates for nutrients or reduced tillage BMP's. During the fall the technician and producer do a yield assessment on the check-strip and adjacent rows to determine any yield loss. If the corn yield is reduced, the program will compensate the producer $3.50/bu based on net income loss. Although the BMP Challenge has been around for a couple years, it is relatively new in Indiana. It is funded in part through an NRCS Conservation Innovation Grant (CIG) awarded to the American Farmland Trust in partner-

Food Plot Seed is now available at the Allen County Soil & Water Conservation District Office. Stop by to pick up your supply today.

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# National Stewardship Week, April 29, May 6, 2007




National Association of Conservation Districts
*America's voice for natural resource conservation*
NACD's mission is to serve conservation districts by providing national leadership and a unified voice for natural resource conservation.

Today is the day to be a part of Conservation's Power in the Allen County Soil and Water Conservation District.




Allen County Soil and Water Conservation District encourages you to think about your personal responsibility to be a good steward of the natural resources, including energy during its annual Stewardship week celebration. The National Association of Conservation Districts (NACD) has proclaimed April 29 to May 6, 2007 as Stewardship Week with the theme Conservation's Power.

Think about the energy you use everyday. Does it come from renewable or non-renewable energy sources? Over 92% of energy used today comes from nonrenewable resources such as petroleum, natural gas, coal, and uranium. Only a small fraction of the energy we use comes from renewable sources. Is this good stewardship?

What can we do? Take the time to learn about energy efficiency (using less energy to perform the same function), energy conservation, and renewable energy. Then put what you learn into practice. Efficiency and conservation are key components of energy sustainability. Simply put, we need to meet today's energy needs while allowing our children to meet tomorrow's.

Greg Lake acts as the District Director for Allen County Soil and Water Conservation District. The District was formed to assist people in Allen County.

Allen County Soil and Water Conservation District is a member of the National Association of Conservation Districts (www.nacdnet.org) which oversees the Stewardship Week program. Stewardship Week is one of the largest national annual programs to promote conservation. NACD represents the nations 3,000 conservation districts, which were established to encourage resource conservation across the country.

"Conservation district leaders have been involved in these issues for a very long time," said NACD President Bill Wilson. "We're excited to see the general public's support and enthusiasm growing for renewable sources of energy. Educating our youth and community about conservation and energy today will result in a more educated and conscientious consumer tomorrow."

For information about Stewardship Week and conservation, contact Allen County Soil and Water Conservation District at 260-484-5848 or you can visit www.stewardship.nacdnet.org to learn more about NACD and Stewardship Week. There are opportunities to be a part of "Conservation's Power." Volunteer with your local conservation district to conduct activities at local schools, assist in their tree sales, or become an associate supervisor. Working together through various organizations, churches, and schools you can be a part of "Conservation's Power."

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conserving natural resources *for our future*

**Continued from page 1**




ship with other nonprofits. A producer, Certified Crop Consultant or SWCD staff can get enrollment forms and more information about the program on line at http://www.bmpchallenge.org. The program also requires that producers who see a net profit on their BMP acres with either reduced tillage or reduced nutrients to pay the program 33% of their fertilizer or cost savings with a maximum payment of $6.00 per acre. Some soil and water districts have used other grant funding to offset this or other costs involved with the program. Is there a producer in your county who might be just right for the BMP Challenge? Get more information by contacting the Allen County SWCD, your local crop consultant or call Rebecca Baumann, BMP Consultant at 608.333.7234. And remember, the BMP Challenge program can be promoted through the summer for enrollment in 2008! ❋❋

# Spring Fish Sale

Allen County SWCD is conducting a Spring Fish Sale in conjunction with Clear Creek Fisheries. Orders can be placed by phone at (260) 484-5848 x-101 or by mail at Allen County SWCD, 3718 New Vision Drive, Fort Wayne, IN 46845. Please include your address, phone number and e-mail address with your order.

**All orders must be received in the Allen Co SWCD office by 4:00 pm Tuesday, April 10th.** Orders will be available for pick-up between **9:00 AM and 12:00 noon** on **April 17** at the Allen County SWCD office.

The following fish will be available at the prices listed.

Channel Catfish

4-6 inch .....100/$35.00

6-8 inch .....100/$50.00

Redear Sunfish

2-3 inch .....100/$45.00

3-4 inch .....100/$55.00

Bluegill

2-3 inch .....100/$35.00

3-4 inch .....100/$45.00

Hybrid Bluegill

2-3 inch .....100/$40.00

3-4 inch .....100/$50.00

Fathead Minnows .....1 lb/$ 7.50

Jumbo Tadpoles (Northern Jumbo Bullfrogs)

Extra Large .....100/$30.00

Triploid Grass Carp.....$15.00 each

**(Minimum order of 6 Grass carp plus an additional $30.00 Delivery fee)**

Triploid Grass Carp will be delivered directly to you home along with any other fish you may order. Someone must be at your delivery address to take delivery of the fish.

**We will only be responsible for the condition of the fish until noon the day of delivery.**

Our offices are located at 3718 New Vision Drive. To find us:

Take Dupont Road East over I-69 (Exit 116), turn left on Parkview Plaza (1st stoplight east of I-69). Continue to the stop sign, turn right on New Vision Drive. Turn right at the 2nd entrance, go to the end of the building on the right (Building #3). Our office is located in the USDA Service Center, enter the last door and turn right to enter the SWCD office.

Please call the office at (260) 484-5848, ext 101 with any questions. ❋❋



Fishing season hasn't opened and a fisherman who doesn't have a license, is casting for trout as a stranger approaches and asks: " Any luck?"
"Any luck? This is a wonderful spot. I took 10 out of this stream yesterday", the fisherman boasts.
"Is that so?", asks the stranger. "By the way, do you know who I am?"
"Nope.", replies the fisherman.
"Well, you've just met the new game warden."
"Oh," gulped the fisherman, " Well, do you know who I am?"
"Nope.", says the warden.
" Well, you've just met the biggest liar in the state! ❋❋

# New Program Manager

Introducing Clint Nester, the new Program Manager who started with Allen County SWCD on January 29, 2007. Clint comes to us from Columbus, Ohio, where he attended Ohio State, majoring in Environmental Sciences. He graduated in 2004 and accepted a position with R.D. Zande and Associates in Columbus. Clint is actually coming back home, since he was raised in Edgerton, Oh and attended St Mary's Elementary and Edgerton High School. Following below is Clint's first contribution to our quarterly newsletter:



The St. Mary's and Maumee River Watershed Project is being funded by a grant administered by the State Soil Conservation Board's Clean Water Indiana Grant Program.

The primary goal of the project is to conduct an intensive public outreach program to create awareness of currently available conservation programs and to provide technical assistance to implement them. Included in these programs are CRP, EQIP, WRP and the Maumee River Basin Commission's Voluntary Agricultural Land-Use Conversion Program. Outreach efforts will include newsletters, grower meetings, on-site demonstrations and direct one on one contact. A field day has been tentatively scheduled for August 30, 2007.

A second goal of the project will be to develop a geo-referenced inventory of existing conservation practices located within the watershed. Once completed, the inventory will be used to assess and identify priority or "target" areas in the watershed for development of conservation practices.

A future goal of the project will be to develop a Watershed Management Plan (WMP) for the St. Mary's River Watershed. A WMP is a plan which addresses any issues or problems in the watershed, obtains input from the community, and provides suggestions to implement corrective actions and improve environmental quality in the watershed. Development of a WMP will allow the watershed to receive further funding from state and federal programs for cost share practices.

*The farmer is the only man in our economy who buys everything at retail, sells everything at wholesale and pays the freight both ways.*

## Backyard Conservation

### Bringing conservation from the countryside to your backyard

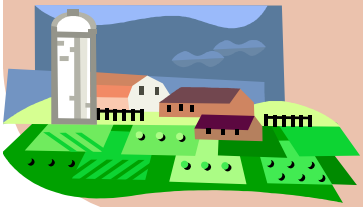
Just as they do on the farm, conservation practices on nonagricultural land can help increase food and shelter for birds and other wildlife, control soil erosion, reduce sediment in waterways, conserve water and improve water quality, inspire a stewardship ethic, and beautify the landscape.




**"Backyard Conservation"** shows you how conservation practices that are used on agricultural land across the country to conserve and improve natural resources can be adapted for use on the land around your home. These practices help the environment and can make your yard more attractive and enjoyable.

Whether you have acres in the country, an average-sized suburban yard, or a tiny plot in the city, you can help protect the environment and add beauty and interest to your surroundings. Ten conservation practices have been scaled down for homeowners and city residents to use in their yards. To find out more, go to http://www.nrcs.usda.gov/FEATURE/backyard/

# Allen County Soil & Water Conservation Distict Annual Meeting





The 62nd Allen County SWCD Annual meeting was held February 8, 2007 at 6:00 pm at Ternet Farms. A tenderloin and fish supper prepared by Richard and Alice Fritz was enjoyed by all. Several special recognition awards were presented during the evening.

A "Friends of the District" award was presented to the Little River Wetlands Project. The mission of Little River Wetlands Project, Inc. is to facilitate the restoration of wetlands in the historical Little River watershed and provide educational opportunities that inspire and challenge individuals to be good stewards of all natural resources. Their project area encompasses 25,000 acres of land once known as the Great Marsh, just southwest of Fort Wayne. Their programs educate people of all ages about wetlands and related nature topics. They are also a good neighbor, supplying consultation to private parties who wish to preserve or restore their land.



Randy Schaefer was presented with the "Conservation Farmer of the Year" for his implementation of a roofed waste management system which significantly reduced the amount of feedlot runoff from his operation. This system also helps manage manure application to better fit the weather conditions and his cropping sequence. Randy also is cover cropping and has completed 50 acres of Timber Stand Improvement in his woods.

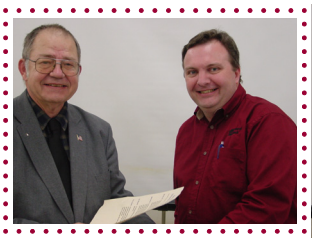


The Conservation Business Award was presented to Bob Walls, who is employed as General Manager for Republic Services, Inc. He has overseen the operations at both landfill sites on MacBeth Road in Allan County for several years. Bob and his staff have done an exemplary job ensuring minimal offsite erosion and sedimentation from both of these active landfill sites. Bob has also offered his sites for public educational opportunities in order to share the erosion and sedimentation control strategies used onsite with the community.

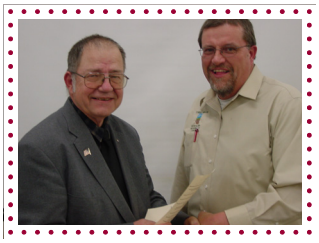


The final award for Distinguished Service was presented to Jeremy Palmer who joined the Allen County SWCD staff as an Agronomy Technician in 2000. He and his wife, Jaime, live near Columbia City with their two boys. Jeremy provided agronomic expertise to producers, and also managed the care and operation the SWCD's conservation tillage equipment. Jeremy left Allen Co SWCD in October to join the Albion NRCS Tech team. Jeremy's service to the District will be missed. Roy Buskirk swore in newly elected supervisor Dave Voors and appointed supervisor, Ray Melcher after the business meeting. Tom Crowe, who has served as supervisor for 9 years will continue to serve the SWCD board as an associate supervisor.

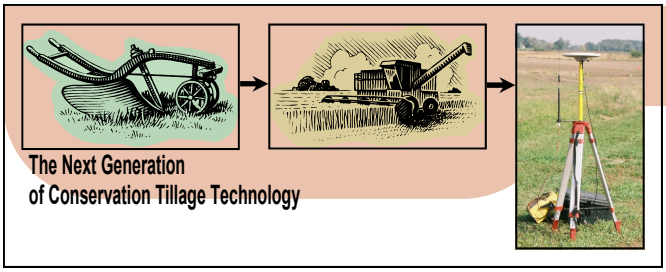




**Newly elected supervisor, Dave Voors accepting congratulations from Roy Buskirk**



**Re-elected supervisor, Ray Melcher accepting congratulations from Roy Buskirk**






## EXPO 2007

Six years in a row and as successful as ever. This year the 6th annual 2007 Tri-State Conservation Tillage Expo was held at a new location, the Auburn-Cord-Duesenberg Museum in Auburn, Indiana. The event was well attended by over 225 people representing 33 counties from Indiana, Ohio and Michigan.

Joe Draper of The Nature Conservancy's Upper St. Joseph River project welcomed participants on behalf of the Initiative's Board of Directors. Auburn Mayor Norman Yoder opened the program with a welcome to the city and the museum, and commented on the importance of agriculture to local economics and society in the region.



**New Technology**

The theme of this year's Expo revolved around new technology. Dubbed *the next generation of conservation tillage technology,* the program was kicked off by Barry Fisher, conservation agronomist from the Indiana Conservation Tillage Initiative. Fisher's message was energy conservation, focusing on no-till as having the greatest potential to deliver the most environmental gains at the lowest cost to the farmer and the public. He also introduced the NRCS Energy Estimator, an on-line tool for producers to determine their cost-savings under various planting and harvesting methods. Scenarios of savings through investment in high technology equipment were explored.

**Use of Biofuels**



The economic impact of biofuel production on crops and prices was addressed during a lunchtime presentation by Dr. Chris Hurt of Purdue University. Also representing Purdue, Dr. Tony Vyn looked at the ethanol question from the standpoint of corn-on-corn production, looking at soil fertility, pest management, and yields based on his research of various corn and soybean rotations that included several years of corn after corn.

From The Ohio State University, Randall Reeder presented methods of using high-tech machinery and attachments such as light bars, RTK, controlled sprayers and other equipment to minimize the traffic on fields, thereby controlling soil compaction. His Ohio State colleague, Dr. Larry Brown, addressed subsurface drainage systems in a presentation entitled "Managing Agricultural Drainage Systems for Water Quality Improvement."

Dr. Tim Harrigan of Michigan State University presented his research to a break-out group about application of manure on minimally-tilled fields. A second group was addressed by Kevin Cherry, market development representative from Orthman Manufacturing, Inc., focused on advantages of RTK and autosteer on crop production and Ryan Eby of Site Specific Management presented advantages of guidance and sprayer controllers on pesticide and nutrient applications.

Two lucky winners were drawn from the survey cards submitted for the event. Greg Lomont of Allen County and Sam St. Clair from Whitley County each won a half gallon of DeKalb County pure maple syrup.

# The Eastern Sub-Continental Divide



Do you know what a watershed is? Do you know which watershed you live in? Do you know how many watersheds are in Allen County? (see map below)

In this area, you are never very far from a waterway of one form or another. Whether it's a full-fledged river, a stream through your subdivision, or an "agricultural headwater stream," there is often water flowing close by.

What you may not realize is that in Allen County Indiana, the waters could be headed in two very different directions. I'm not talking about the flow actually reversing itself, though that can happen as well, but the sub-continental divide for the eastern half of the United States runs through our county.

We all know (I hope) about the Great Divide; that huge geographic barrier comprised mostly of mountain ranges with jagged peaks. The Great Divide separates the waters that flow into the Pacific Ocean from those that flow into the Atlantic Ocean. In essence, The Great Divide separates two immense watersheds.

So, let's define a watershed.
A watershed is any land that drains into a specific body of water. The scale of the land can vary greatly; as can the scale of the watershed you refer to. If you have a field that drains into a specific small stream, then you are a part of that stream's watershed. When that stream joins another stream or river, it is counted as a part of that larger watershed. So, your land is also a part of that larger watershed. So on, and so forth. Back to the Great Divide.

On the Atlantic side of the Great Divide, we have several divisions. There are the numerous rivers that flow from their sources directly into the oceans without joining the larger rivers that drain the majority of the land mass; they comprise what we refer to as the Eastern and Southern Seaboards. Then we have those larger rivers that drain the majority of the eastern land mass. Of these, the next largest division is between the Mississippi River system and the Great Lakes/St. Lawrence River system. That division extends from upper Minnesota and heads mostly eastward until it gets to the Appalachian Mountains; then it heads south.

What does this have to do with Allen County?

We straddle that divide. Don't look for any pronounced ridges, or even hills,; there aren't any that define this divide well. Just think of Ardmore and Hillegas Roads as the rough dividing line in our county.

Where do these waterways lead?

On the east side of this divide, the creeks might flow into the St. Joseph or the St. Mary's Rivers; then into the Maumee River to Lake Erie; over the Niagara Falls (or through the Welland Canal) to Lake Ontario; then into either the St. Lawrence Seaway or River and into the Northern Atlantic Ocean.

On the west side of this divide, the creeks might flow into the Eel or Little Wabash Rivers, then into the larger Wabash River and to the Ohio River. At Cairo, Illinois, the Ohio meets the Mississippi River and flows down to New Orleans and into the Gulf of Mexico.

It's rather amazing to think that you can make your choice of which waterway you want to follow here and end up in either Baton Rouge or Buffalo; Mississippi or Montreal. Both of these waterways are within several hundred yards of each other.

But after all, that's what put us on the map!

Matt Jones
Water Resource Education Specialist
Allen County Partnership for Water Quality




**Allen County is part of 6 different watersheds.**
**The St. Joseph, the Upper Maumee, the Auglaize, the St. Mary's, the Upper Wabash, and the Eel Watersheds.**

## Coming Events

April 7 at 8:00 AM..... ..... Wells County Cover Crop Field Day at Wayne Reinhard Farm, 1131 W State Road 124, Bluffton, IN

April 7 at 9:00 AM..... ..... Kosciusko County Cover Crop Field Day at JA Scott Farm, 6281 E Van Ness Rd, Pierceton, IN

April 14 from 9:00 AM to 12:00 ..... Soil Analysis Workshop at Hoham-Smith, Auburn, IN. Contact Tina @ (260) 484-5848, ext 117 for more information

April 17 from 9:00 AM to 12:00 ..... Fish Sale Pickup at Allen Co SWCD offices

May 5 from 9:00 AM to 4:00 PM..... Camp Scott Open House

May 16 at 8:30 AM ..... ..... Hoosier River Watch Basic Training, Contact Tina @ (260) 484-5848, ext 117 for more information

May 31 from 5:00 PM to 9:00 PM..... PBS Documentary "A Watershed Mentality" premier at Cinema Center Tech, at Andorfer Commons on the Indiana Tech Campus

June 13 at 8:30 AM ..... ..... Hoosier River Watch Basic Training, Contact Tina @ (260) 484-5848, ext 117 for more information

August 30 at 8:00 AM..... ..... Variety Plot Field Day Ray Melcher's Farm in association with Advance Grain Farms, Harper Rd, New Haven, IN

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