

Upcoming Events

February 25, 26, 27 & 28

2010 Home & Garden Show
Allen County War Memorial Coliseum – Fort Wayne

March 15

2010 SWCD Annual Meeting
6pm – Promise Lutheran Church

April 10

2010 Tree Sales Pick up
Order deadline: March 12

June 15

SJRWI Hoosier Riverwatch
8am – Nature Center / Metea Park

Allen County SWCD
65th Annual Meeting
March 15th @ 6:00 p.m.
Promise Lutheran Church

Name: _____

Address: _____

_____

Phone: _____

Number of Tickets: _____

Mail reservations to:

Allen County SWCD
3718 New Vision Drive
Fort Wayne, IN 46845

or contact us at
(260) 484-5848 x 3

the conservation chALLENge

☐ Yes, sign me up to receive this quarterly newsletter by email!

Name: _____

Address: _____

_____

Phone: _____

E-mail: _____

Mail to:

Allen County SWCD
3718 New Vision Drive
Fort Wayne, IN 46845

or contact us via email at:
betsy.hart-roberts@in.nacdnet.net

Allen County
Soil & Water
Conservation
District

3718 New Vision Drive
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Phone: (260) 484-5848
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Think Spring ...



ISSUE
IV
February
2010

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Dick Crowl - Chairman
Ray Melcher
Tom Crowe
Dave Voors
Matt Schlatter

Associate Supervisors

Brian Roemke
Don Rekeweg
Ellis McFadden
Paul Felger
Greg Kneubuhler
John Felger

County Council Liaison

Roy Buskirk

SWCD Employees

Greg Lake -
District Director

Betsy Roberts -
Administrative Assistant

Sharon Hall -
St. Joe River Watershed
Program Manager

Clint Nester -
St. Mary's Watershed
Program Manager

Matthew Jones -
Water Resource
Education Specialist

NRCS

Sherman Liechty -
District Conservationist

Tony Tate -
Soil Conservationist

ISDA

Cassandra Vondran -
Resource Specialist

U.S. Fish & Wildlife

Scott Fetters -
Biologist



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2010 Tree Sales Insert

Allen County SWCD
65th Annual Meeting

Monday, March 15th @ 6:00 p.m.
Promise Lutheran Church

The Allen County Soil and Water Conservation District's 65th Annual Meeting is scheduled for March 15th, 2010. This year's meeting will be held at Promise Lutheran Church located at 7323 Schwartz Rd in Fort Wayne. The evening's events will start with a *free* dinner beginning at 6:00 pm and short business meeting with Supervisor election to follow.

This year's Keynote speaker, Hans Kok, a conservation-tillage consultant and former Extension specialist, is with the newly formed Indiana Conservation Cropping Systems Initiative (CCSI). The Indiana CCSI will work closely with farm operators around the state to encourage the adoption of long-term continuous no-till practices using cover crops, nutrient & pest management, precision farming technology and the use of conservation buffers.

"Our goal is to help soil and water conservation districts get more cover on the ground," Kok says. "We will encourage farmers to practice continuous no-till and to increase use of cover crops."



A good stand of aerially seeded annual ryegrass in cornstalks is a great setting for Han Kok (right) and Dan Towery, leaders of Indiana's newest conservation tillage initiative, CCSI.

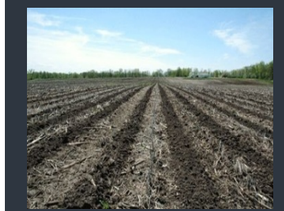
Reservations are required for this event . . .
please contact the SWCD office to reserve your tickets today!

We hope you will join us for this enjoyable evening!

COST SHARE FUNDS AVAILABLE THRU ST. MARY'S RIVER WATERSHED PROJECT

Beginning in March, cost-share funds will again be available through the St. Mary's River Watershed Project.

These cost-share funds can be used for several applications. Just a few of the practices that can qualify for assistance are:



- Equipment Modification
- Buffers
- Cover Crops
- Nutrient Management
- Two-Stage Ditch Design
- Rotational Grazing
- Fencing
- Pasture and Hay Planting

For more information on cost-share funding, contact Clint Nester or Greg Lake at the Allen County SWCD office.

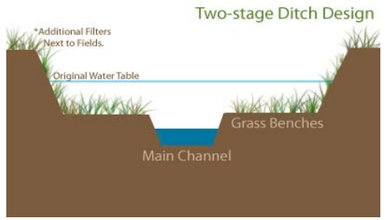


St. Marys River Watershed Project Explores Two-Stage Ditch Design

The St. Mary's River Watershed Project has begun investigating two-stage ditches as a way to improve water quality within the St. Mary's River Watershed. "When we look at many of the problems in the St. Mary's River Watershed, excess sediment and nutrient levels and flooding always seem to be near the top of the list. The two-stage ditch design is a single BMP can have an impact on all three problems" stated Clint Nester, Project Manager with the St. Mary's River Watershed. The two-stage ditch concept originated by observing natural processes that form stable streams and rivers. The design incorporates a floodplain zone, called benches, into the ditch by removing the ditch banks roughly 2-3 feet above the bottom for a width of about 10 feet on each side.

The benches allow more area for the water to spread out which decreases the velocity - or energy - of the water. When the water spreads out over the vegetated benches, sediment begins to settle and studies have shown that nutrients (nitrogen and phosphorus) are removed as well. A two-stage ditch not only improves the water quality, but also improves the biological conditions of the ditches where this is located.

Research has also shown that two-stage ditches require less maintenance when compared to a conventional ditch, saving time and money. Clint Nester also had this to say about two-stage ditch design, "In the two-stage ditches that have been installed in Northeast Indiana, the landowners seem to be very pleased with what has been done on their land. If we can find a BMP that the landowners like, a BMP that saves the county surveyor time and money by reducing maintenance costs, and a BMP that improves water quality – then I think we have found something worthwhile."



If you would be interested in learning more about two-stage ditches or exploring opportunities to install a two-stage ditch on your property, contact Clint Nester or Greg Lake at the Allen County SWCD office.



For those who would like to learn more about the health of our local streams and rivers, the St. Joe River Watershed Initiative (SJRWI) is offering a ***Hoosier Riverwatch*** volunteer stream monitoring workshop on **Tuesday, June 15, 2010**. Hoosier Riverwatch is an Indiana Department of Natural Resources education program that trains citizen volunteers to assess water quality and monitor the health of rivers and streams.

Through classroom presentations and hands-on testing in Cedar Creek, participants will learn how to complete biological monitoring, chemical assessment and habitat analysis. After completion of this training, volunteers are certified by Hoosier Riverwatch and can perform stream testing, submit data to the statewide volunteer monitoring database and lead student groups to help monitor local streams. Sampling kits are available on loan from the SJRWI to trained Hoosier Riverwatch volunteers.

The workshop will be held in the Nature Center at Metea County Park, 8401 Union Chapel Road, from 8:30 am to 4:00 pm.

There is no fee to attend this workshop, but workshop size is limited! Those interested in attending should **register by June 11**. To register, contact Sharon Hall at the SJRWI by calling (260) 484-5848 x120. Teachers are especially encouraged to attend!

To learn more about the Hoosier Riverwatch program, visit the IDNR website at …
hhtp://www.in.gov/dnr/nrec/2945.htm

HOME & GARDEN SHOW SET FOR FEBRUARY 25-28

The Allen County SWCD, along with the City of Fort Wayne Water Resources, will be sponsoring a booth at the Home and Garden Show this year promoting the use of rain barrels and the City's *"Catching Rain Fort Wayne"* rain garden campaign.

Come out and see what we have in mind for storm water management on *your* property!

Booth # 833 in the Garden Exhibition Hall



EQIP, WHIP AND CSP PROGRAM SIGN-UPS CONTINUE

Applications continue to be accepted for the Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) and Wildlife Habitat Incentive Programs (WHIP). Both programs are voluntary conservation practices that offer incentives to producers for implementing conservation practices.

CSP is a voluntary conservation program that encourages producers to maintain existing conservation activities, improve upon them and incorporate new ones in their operation.

Applications for CSP are taken year round. Information regarding these specific programs and more can be found on the NCRS website at

www.nrcs.usda.gov/programs

To see if you are eligible or a candidate for any of these practices, contact the NCRS office for more information or to schedule an appointment to sign up.

NRCS Natural Resources Conservation Service