News & Conservation

Vol.1No.I2005

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Allen County SWCD
3718 New Vision Drive
Fort Wayne IN 46845
260-484-5848

Allen County SWCD
Annual Meeting

March 1, 2005

Event starts at 6:00 p.m.

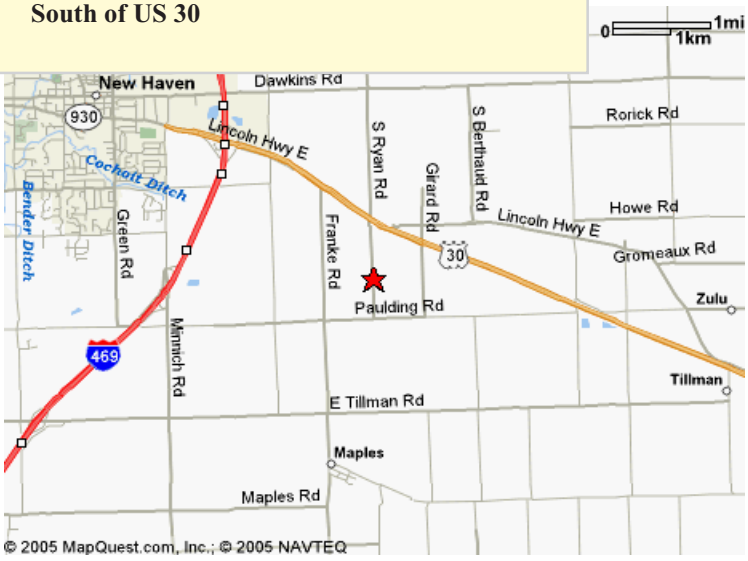
The Future of Ag in Indiana

Guest Speaker
Andy Miller,
Indiana
Assistant Commissioner of Agriculture

All You Can Eat Fish Dinner



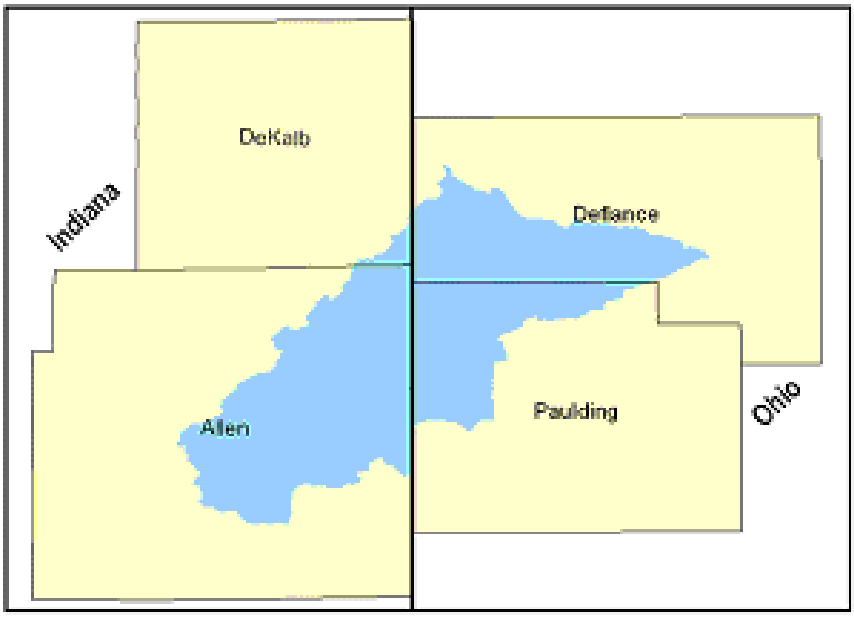
Rob Ternet Farm
5129 Ryan Road, New Haven
South of US 30



All programs and service of the Conservation Partnership and the Soil and Water District are offered on a nondiscriminatory basis, without regard to race, color, national origin, religion, sex, age, marital status or handicap.

Mark Your Calendar!

Conservation Security Program Information Meetings for the Upper Maumee Watershed



The Upper Maumee Watershed was selected to participate in the 2005 Conservation Security Program (CSP). Information meetings will be held to review eligibility requirements and the self-assessment process. If you are interested in participating in CSP, plan to attend one of these meetings!

The Conservation Security Program is administered by the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service. Contact your local NRCS office for additional information or visit us on the Web at

www.in.nrcs.usda.gov/programs/CSP/2005CSP.html or
www.oh.nrcs.usda.gov/programs/csp_2/csp_home_2005.html.

USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

Meeting Schedule

February 15, 2005
7:00-9:00 p.m.
NRCS Field Office
Allen County
3718 New Vision Drive
Ft. Wayne, Indiana

February 22, 2005
7:00-9:00 p.m.
NRCS Field Office
Allen County
3718 New Vision Drive
Ft. Wayne, Indiana

March 8, 2005
7:00-9:00 p.m.
NRCS Field Office
Allen County
3718 New Vision Drive
Ft. Wayne, Indiana

Office Phone:
(260) 484-5848

NRCS

St. Joseph-Maumee Lake and River Enhancement (LARE) Project Update

The Lake and River Enhancement (LARE) project is continuing in part of the St. Joseph and Maumee watersheds. This Fall, five different landowners in two group waterway projects saw tile installed along their proposed waterways. Installation of tile in the Fall allows time for the soil to settle above the tile before the waterways are constructed this Spring. Construction was also started on three structures this Fall and will be completed this spring.

A variety of practices are eligible for cost share under the LARE program. One of the more popular practices in the watershed is a filter strip. Filter strips are strips of grass along ditches and rivers and can be anywhere from 20 feet to 120 feet wide. In the LARE watershed, filter strips offer an excellent opportunity for producers to take advantage of two programs. Producers may be eligible to enroll filter strips into both the Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) and LARE. CRP offers excellent sign-up bonuses plus a yearly payment based upon soil types. Filter strips in the LARE program are eligible for a payment of $650/acre once installed. Please contact the office for more information regarding the eligibility of filter strips for both programs.

Cost-share assistance is also available for planting trees. Trees have many good qualities to improve water quality. A stand of trees can conserve soil by controlling erosion, aid in flood reduction and improve wildlife habitat. Water quality and cooling benefits also result from plantings adjacent to streams because trees provide shade for aquatic habitat and reduce stream bank erosion. Cost-share assistance is available to landowners up to 80% of the total approved cost.

Please contact the office if you have further questions regarding the LARE program.



Installation of tile at Graber group waterway Fall 2004

PROJECT WET® Water Education for Teachers

Free Water Education Workshops for Teachers

Allison Van Zandt, Water Resource Education Specialist, ACPWQ

If you are a teacher, home-educator or pre-service teacher who would like to learn more about water education, the Allen County Partnership for Water Quality has an opportunity just for you! We are holding a free Project WET workshop on April 23 from 9:00am-3:30pm at the ACPWQ office. Project WET: Water Education for Teachers is a collection of over 90 innovative, interdisciplinary activities (for K-12) that are hands-on, easy to use, and fun and they correlate with Indiana science standards.

Currently active in all 50 states and numerous countries, Project WET promotes critical thinking and problem solving skills and helps provide young people with the knowledge and experience they will need to make informed decisions regarding water resource management.

After attending the free 6-hour workshop, attendees will receive the Project WET Curriculum and Activity Guide, and will also have access to the ACPWQ's new Water Resource Education Library full of water testing kits, videos, books and educational supplies.

If you are interested in attending this workshop, contact Allison Van Zandt, Water Resource Education Specialist for the Allen County Partnership for Water Quality at 484-5848 ext.111, or allison-vanzandt@iaswcd.org.



–2005

Tri-State Conservation Tillage Expo

March 15, 2005
7:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.

Kruse WWII Victory Museum
on 11A south of Auburn at I-69

Buy your tickets **before March 5th** for **$12.00**.
Pick them up from your local SWCD or by calling
St. Joseph River Watershed Initiative at
260-484-5848 ext 3
Tickets purchased **after March 5** or at the door are **$15.00**

The day's events include

- **Nitrogen Management**
- **Carbon Sequestration and Conservation Tillage**
- **Effective Herbicide & Fungicide Application**
- **Organic Farming and Conservation Tillage**
- **Atrazine and Surface Water Concerns**
- **Developing a Farm Emergency Map**
- **DOT Regulations for Farmers**
- **Soybean Rust Update**
- **Fish & Chicken Lunch/Refreshments**
- **Exhibits**
- **CCA/PARP Credits ($10 extra)**

Sponsored By:
St. Joseph River Watershed Initiative
Allen County & DeKalb County
Soil and Water Conservation Districts
In cooperation with the
Indiana Department of Environmental Management
and a host of Conservation Partners

St. Marys and St. Joseph River Pesticide, Nutrient and Sediment Reduction Demonstration Project Phase II 2004 Year End Report

In 2004, the equipment leased through the St. Marys 319 project was used on 2,536 acres in the spring and 140 acres in the fall. This equates to a 1,824 (ton/year) Sediment Load Reduction, a 2,626 (lbs/year) Phosphorus Load Reduction and a 5,150 (lbs/year) Nitrogen Load Reduction based on the Load Reduction Model used by the Indiana Department of Environmental Management (IDEM).

In 2003, the equipment was used on 1,404 acres in the spring and 351acres in the fall. This equates to a load reduction of 837 tons of sediment, 1,520 lbs.of phosphorus, 3,031 lbs. of nitrogen based on the IDEM load reduction model.

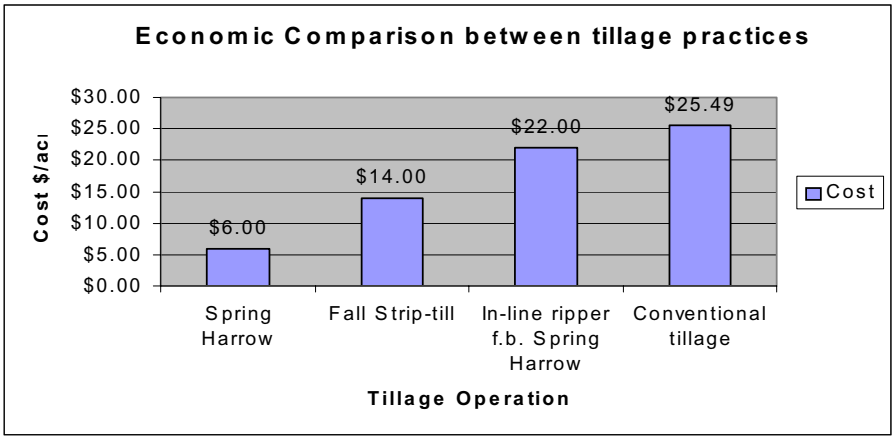
In 2004, the equipment leased through the St. Joseph 319 project resulted in a 1,388 (ton/year) Sediment Load Reduction, a 1,713(lbs/year) Phosphorus Load Reduction and a 3,421 (lbs/year) Nitrogen Load Reduction based on the Load Reduction Model used by the Indiana Department of Environmental Management (IDEM).

In 2003, the equipment was used on 1,240 acres in the spring and 483 acres in the fall. This usage resulted in load reductions of 770 tons of sediment, 1,401 lbs. of phosphorus, and 2,796 lbs. of nitrogen based on the IDEM load reduction model.

Producers who used this equipment enjoyed an economic advantage as well. The chart on the facing page shows the financial costs for the conservation tillage practices that are promoted by this grant, compared to conventional tillage practices.

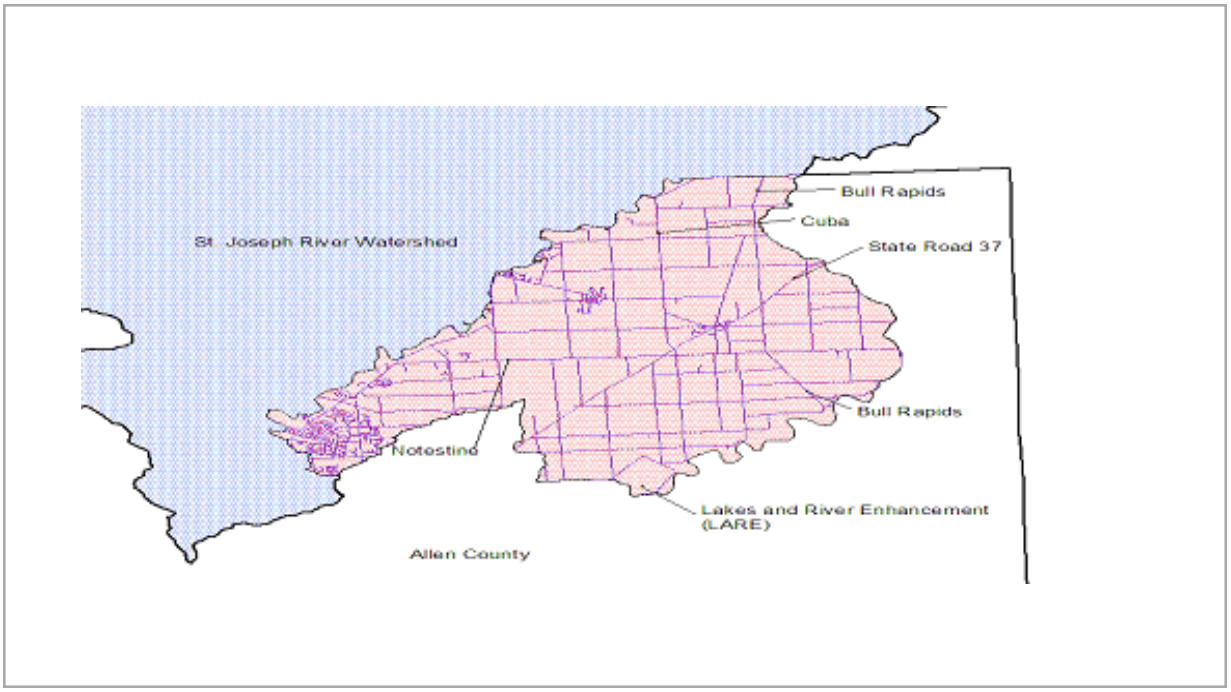
Producers who are practicing a conservation tillage system, such as Hugh Shaffer and Dan Fry, who use the Spring Harrow system, Randy Hardy, who uses the Fall Strip-till system, and John Corbat and Maynard Hine who use the In-line ripper followed by a Spring Harrow system all have a low tillage cost compared to other producers in the watershed who are practicing a conventional tillage system. The producers practicing a conservation tillage system over a conventional tillage system also have higher pollution load reduction numbers.

In the chart (on next page) The Spring Harrow, Fall Strip-till and In-line ripper followed by a Spring Harrow are the conservation tillage practices that are promoted by this grant. (See chart on the next page). The dollar amounts show that there is an economic advantage to conservation tillage compared to a conventional tillage practice.



Funding to Promote Conservation Buffers Available

Special attention is being placed on conservation buffers, (Filter strips and Waterways) in the St. Joseph River Watershed and LARE project area in Allen County. For a limited time Federal and State grant programs have come together to provide this great opportunity for farmers and land owners to install these practices. If you live or farm in this area, please contact Greg Lake at the Allen County SWCD office by March 31, 2005 for more details.



Prescribed Burning Workshop
J. Roush Lake (Huntington Reservoir)
Saturday - April 2, 2005

A prescribed burning workshop will be held at the J. Roush Lake Headquarters (formerly known as Huntington Reservoir) on Saturday, April 2, 2005. J. Roush Lake is located at 517 N. Warren Rd., Huntington, on State Rd. 5, approximately 1.5 miles south of State Rd. 224.

Since burning is one of the Mid-Term management activities that can be performed on existing or newly enrolled CRP contracts, this would be a very informative workshop to attend.

Pre-registration is required before March 25th, by calling Patrick Mayer, District Wildlife Biologist, at (260) 468-2515. If voice mail is reached, please leave your name, phone number, and how many individuals will attend.

Workshop will begin at 9:00 A.M. with presentations on proper burning procedures, techniques, equipment and safety. Weather premitting, an actual prescribed burn will be conducted on a warm season grass field following the morning session.

- Workshop is open to the public at no charge.

- Part of the workshop may be conducted outdoors; please dress appropriately for the weather.



Conservation Showcase Farms

The St. Marys/Maumee 319 Grant project selected two showcase farms in the St. Marys and Maumee watersheds and one in the St. Joseph River Watershed. These farms are located at Bowman & Bowman Farms, Inc. (Kevin Bowman) in the St. Joseph watershed, Max Delagrange's Farm in the Maumee watershed and Ellmar Farms (Ellis McFadden) in the St. Marys watershed. All of these operations either plant no-till or use a conservation tillage system for their corn and soybean production. They are helping us promote no-till and conservation tillage by allowing other producers, who are interested in these practices, to stop by their farms and talk with them about how they have been successful with their operations. If you have any questions about talking with these producers feel free to contact Jeremy Palmer at The Allen County Soil and Water Conservation District (260) 484-5848 ext. 3.

USDA Farm Service Agency

Marketing Assistance Loans, LDPs

Marketing assistance loans and loan deficiency payments can mean the difference between a good year and a not-so-good year. With that in mind, it's important to comply with the rules.

To be eligible for loans and LDPs, you must comply with conservation and wetland protection requirements; report how you use cropland acreage on the farm; have beneficial interest in the commodity on the date the loan or LDP is requested and, in the case of a loan, retain beneficial interest while the loan is outstanding; and ensure that the commodity meets CCC minimum grade and quality standards.

Beneficial interest means retaining the ability to make decisions about the commodity; responsibility for loss or damage to the commodity; and title to the commodity. Once beneficial interest in a commodity is lost, the commodity is ineligible for loan or LDP — even if you regain beneficial interest.

For commodities to be eligible for loans or LDPs, they must have been produced by an eligible producer, be in existence and in a storable condition and be merchantable for food, feed or other uses as determined by CCC. The quality of the commodity in farm storage must be maintained throughout the term of the loan.

Individuals and entities whose previous 3-year average adjusted gross income, or AGI, exceeds $2.5 million are ineligible for LDPs and market loan gains unless they can show that at least 75 percent of their AGI comes from agriculture.

The total of LDPs and market loan gains received by a producer is limited to $75,000 for each crop year. That means $75,000 for wheat, corn, grain sorghum, barley, oats, upland cotton, rice, soybeans, other oilseeds, dry peas, lentils and small chickpeas; and, $75,000 for peanuts, wool, mohair and honey.

You do not have to participate in the Direct and Counter-Cyclical Program to be eligible for loans or LDPs.

Violating provisions of the loan and LDP program may trigger administrative actions, such as assessing liquidated damages, calling the loan and denial of future farm-stored loans and LDPs.

The most common violations are removing or disposing of a commodity being used as loan collateral without prior authorization and providing an incorrect quantity certification.

CERTIFICATION

Every year, CRP acreage must be certified to ensure continuing compliance with CRP rules. Please call the office for an appointment so we may be ready for you to arrive. **July 15 is the deadline to certify planted crops and CRP Acreage.**

USDA Farm Service Agency

Electronic LDP Service Available

Producers who are connected to the Internet can now stay home and apply for an Electronic Loan Deficiency Payment, or eLDP, 24 hours a day, seven days a week. The producers will receive approval and payment by direct deposit within 48 hours.

To participate in the new service, you must meet all eligibility requirements for marketing assistance loans and LDPs for the commodity.

The voluntary eLDP service has stringent security measures to protect your private information.

You must have an e-mail address, direct deposit, and set up a customer profile through the county Farm Service Agency office.

To register, you can go to http://www.sc.egov.usda.gov and complete form CCC-634-E, "Request for Electronic Loan Deficiency Payment Services," or can obtain a form at the county office.

You must also have an active USDA eAuthentication Level 2 account, which requires filling out an online registration form at http://www.eauth.egov.usda.gov/ followed by a visit to the county office for identity verification.

DCP Contract Reminder

Producers: Are you planning to participate in the 2005 Direct and Counter-cyclical Program? If so, contact the county office staff to schedule an appointment to sign your 2005 DCP contract (CCC-509) before June 1, 2005. (You can sign your contract after June 1 and before Sept. 30, but you will be assessed a late-signing fee of $100.)

When you sign the CCC-509, you are agreeing to:

§ comply with highly erodible land conservation and wetland conservation provisions on all your land;
§ devote acreage equal to the base acreage to an agricultural or conserving use
§ effectively control noxious weeds and otherwise maintain base acres according to sound agricultural practices;
§ not plant perennial fruits and vegetables or harvest annual FAVs (other than lentils, mung beans, and dry peas) or wild rice on base acres (Exceptions: Double-cropping covered commodities or peanuts with wild rice, fruits, or vegetables shall be permitted in any region in which there is a history of this type of double-cropping.);
§ file acreage report with respect to all cropland on the farm; and
§ notify the county office staff when there is a transfer of or change of interest of a producer.

The DCP contracts are not like the old seven-year Production Flexibility Contracts. You must designate shares and sign a new DCP contract each year.

Internet access is also available for DCP signup. You must come in the office originally to enroll your user ID, but after you enroll you are eligible to process LDP payments, DCP contracts, and obtain a list of your payments for the year.

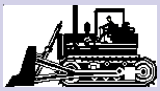


Dates to Remember

Continues	FSA - Farm Storage Facility Loans
Continues	FSA - Grasslands Reserve Program
February 15, 2005	CSP Meeting 7:00 - 9:00 p.m. Allen Co. SWCD office
February 22, 2005	CSP Meeting 7:00 - 9:00 p.m Allen Co. SWCD office
March 1, 2005	Allen County Annual Meeting
March 8, 2005	CSP Meeting 7:00 - 9:00 p.m. Allen Co. SWCD office
March 15, 2005	Tri-State Tillage Expo, WWII Museum, Auburn IN
March 31, 2005	FSA - Deadline for Wheat LDP Applications
March/April	Upper Maumee Watershed CSP Sign-up
April or May	Spring Fish Sale
May 31, 2005	FSA - Deadline for Corn & Soybean LDP Applications
June 1, 2005	FSA - Deadline for 2005 DCP Signatures



Rural Areas and Rule 5



Rule 5 is a statewide program that requires a stormwater runoff permit for construction sites with one acre or more of disturbed soil. A stormwater pollution prevention plan must be submitted for review before a permit is issued. Once the plan is approved and a permit issued, construction may begin. During construction, best management practices (BMP) are installed and maintained to prevent sediment and other pollutants from leaving the site.

Anyone who is involved with construction that disturbs one acre or more must comply with Rule 5. Activities include pond construction, new home construction with an outbuilding and/or pond, and other practices not normally associated with urban development. A few exemptions include the following agricultural activities: tillage, pasture/hayland establishment, tiling, or conservation practices such as Water and Sediment Control Basins (WASCOB), waterways, filter strips or harvesting trees. A few practices, animal waste systems and wetland restoration/creations for instance, are not exempt from the rule. Staff will be able to assist landowners in identifying when a practice is not exempt.

Reducing pollutants, especially sediment, in ditches and rivers is the main purpose of this rule. By doing your part, our water supply can be kept cleaner for future generations. If you have questions or would like more information about Rule 5, please contact the office or visit IDEM's website, www.in.gov/idem/guides/permit/water/stormwaterconstruction.html.

Allen County SWCD
3718 New Vision Drive
Fort Wayne IN 46845

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Mark your calendar – Allen County SWCD Annual Meeting March 1, 2005, 6:00 p.m. – Indiana's Agriculture Future with Andy Miller – All you can eat fish supper – Rob Ternet Farm on Ryan Road, south of US 30.