



# Grass Roots for Conservation



www.stormwaterelkco.org

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## Elkhart County Soil & Water Conservation District

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### 75th Annual Meeting Summary

The 75th annual meeting of the Elkhart County Soil and Water Conservation District (SWCD) was held in the Martin room of the ECCC Building, on the Elkhart County 4-H Fairgrounds, in Goshen on Feb 28, 2017. Following dinner there was a short business meeting. Alex Wait, SWCD Vice Chairman, conducted the supervisor election. Dale Leer of Goshen, was re-elected to serve a three-year term and Dean Rink was reappointed to serve a three-year term on the SWCD board. Elkhart County Commissioner Suzanne Weirick administered the Oath of Office to both Leer and Rink. Those who made an outstanding contribution to conservation in Elkhart County in 2016 were recognized. Jane Hardisty USDA-NRCS State Conservationist, spoke about the history of conservation and importance of protecting our land for future generations. The meeting was concluded by the SWCD giving away a decorated rain barrel to an affiliate member. Thank you to everyone who came out to support us and share in all of Elkhart County's accomplishments.

Conservation Award winners (from left) are Reed Farms, represented by George and Carolyn Reed, and Brent and Ashley Reed (Conservation Farmer of the Year); Nancy Brown (Conservation Educator of the Year); Martin and Penny Stroup (River Friendly Farmer); Jim and Peggy Garber (Friend of the SWCD); and Bob Pettit (Urban Conservationist of the Year). (photo courtesy of The Farmer's Exchange)



Youth Award winners were Justin Slabaugh, Fairfield soil judging; Grant Sanchez, Fairfield soil judging; Nick Bowser, Fairfield soil judging; Greta Yoder, Fairfield soil judging; Taylor McKinley, 4-H soil and water science award; Alison Robinson, 4-H forestry award; (back, from left) Andrea Diaz, poster contest; Andrew Bailey, 4-H recycling award; Vanessa Murillo-Cruz, poster contest; Abygale Royce, poster contest (annual report cover); and Noah Troup, poster contest (photo courtesy of The Farmer's Exchange)

Species	Price
American Arborvitae*	\$10.00
American Plum*	\$14.00
Chinkapin Oak*	\$14.00
Eastern White Pine*	\$12.00
Eastern Redbud*#	\$16.00
Nannyberry*	\$22.00
Norway Spruce	\$16.00
Red Maple*	\$16.00
Redtwig Dogwood#	\$14.00
River Birch*	\$22.00
Shagbark Hickory*	\$22.00
Speckled Alder*	\$14.00
Thornless Honeylocust*	\$16.00
Tulip Poplar*#	\$16.00
# Variety Pack - 2 each	\$20.00

\* Native to Indiana

### 12th Annual Elkhart County SWCD/Michiana Master Gardener

## TREE SEEDLING SALE

Saturday, April 22, 2017 • 9 AM - 1 PM

Elkhart County 4-H Fairgrounds • Sheep/Swine Arena

### QUALITY 10" - 24" SEEDLINGS

Featuring Native Indiana & Adapted Species

Last chance to  
purchase seedlings  
this year: available while  
supplies last!!!

Beautify Your  
Landscape -  
Go Green  
for Less!



For more information call the Elkhart County SWCD at: 574-533-4383, ext 3

# Build-A-Barrel Workshop

The Elkhart County Soil and Water Conservation District held its first ever rain barrel construction party, called appropriately enough the "Build-A-Barrel Workshop" on Saturday, January 14th, at the Sheep/Swine arena in the Elkhart County fairgrounds.

Despite the name, some attendees were surprised that this was really going to be hands-on, not just an informational meeting. The SWCD provided barrels (with a few extra pickles) and all necessary plumbing components to assemble them, with home owners supplying the elbow grease and the final design.

We limited the participants to 20 Elkhart County residents so that we would be able to complete all the barrels in a reasonable amount of time, and ended up with 21 barrels going out the door. Since this was the first time for this activity, we weren't sure how it would go. It ended up being very popular, so much that we had to turn down some aspiring builders.

After short presentations by the SWCD staff, our victims, *er* volunteers were off to build their barrels that



would meet general specifications for working rain barrels. Using provided drills and glue, the components were assembled on each barrel with much discussion, laughter, and some trial and error.

The new owners were then able to take their prizes home for decorating and installation. We look forward to the pictures of them once they have been placed under the downspouts.

Most barrels ended up being a collaborative effort, with a good time experienced by all that attended. The SWCD would like to do this activity again, so please watch Grass Roots or our website for the next opportunity.



## RAIN GARDEN AND RAIN BARREL WORKSHOP

Contact us  
for details!



WHEN

May 4th, 2017

WHERE

6:00 pm - 7:30 pm Ox Bow Haus

TO REGISTER

Or for more information

Please call 574-533-4383 ext 3

or email Deb at [debra.jimison@in.nacdnet.net](mailto:debra.jimison@in.nacdnet.net)



If you live in Elkhart, Goshen, Bristol, or unincorporated areas of Elkhart County you may be eligible for reimbursement from the Greater Elkhart County Stormwater Partnership up to \$250 for native rain garden plants and/or up to \$50 per rain barrel (maximum of two rain barrels per residence). Applications are available at [stormwaterelkco.org](http://stormwaterelkco.org)



# Make Your Soil Great Again – A Success

On Wednesday, March 1st about 150 area agriculturists attended our Make Your Soil Great Again cover crop meeting and tradeshow.

Opening remarks on the importance of conservation agriculture and the successes of Indiana farmers were made by our USDA-NRCS State Conservationist Jane Hardisty.

Dave Brandt, a conservation farmer in central Ohio's Fairfield County, followed Jane with a keynote address. Dave discussed the cover crop options farmers have to implement on their farm, including cover crop species, ways to establish a cover crop, and management practices in terminating the cover crop. He also stressed that before you start adding cover crops into your rotation, have a goal and then make a plan. If your goal is to promote organic matter with cover crops, you will choose different management options than if your goal is to break a plow layer or graze cattle.



During the breaks, attendees were able to have conversations with area agribusinesses, as well as enjoy a cup of ice cream from the ice cream machine.

To round out the day, there were three panel sessions – a cover crop establishment panel, a cover crop termination panel, and a panel explaining the programs offered by the SWCD, FSA, and NRCS to encourage implementation of conservation practices. The panels got everyone talking about cover crops!

Be sure to keep an eye out for our next event and thanks to everyone that made this meeting a success!



## Elkhart County Waters Calendar 2018-19

*Coming  
Soon!*

.....  
**Submit Your Photos  
by May 22, 2017**  
.....

(JPG digital format, 300 dpi, 11" x 8 1/2"  
Limit: 12 photos per photographer)

*It is that time again!*

If you would enjoy seeing your favorite photo on the Stormwater Partnership's bi-annual calendar, please send a copy to us.

We are looking for photos that show recreation along Elkhart County's waterways; local wildlife; stormwater control practices like rain barrels and rain gardens; all four seasons; agricultural conservation practices; and scenic shots of our local rivers, streams, and lakes.

We also include some shots of pollution, so send those too if you have a "good" bad example.

**For more complete details and forms,  
contact us at the SWCD office:  
jordan.beehler@in.nacdn.net or  
574-533-4383, ext 3**

# 2017 NACD Poster Contest

The Elkhart County Soil and Water Conservation District (SWCD) in conjunction with the National Association of Conservation Districts (NACD) is excited to sponsor the 2017 Poster Contest themed:



The Elkhart County SWCD will be awarding prizes for each of the five age categories. SWCD Staff are available to visit classrooms to help students investigate questions about soil health as they complete their posters or to assist teachers in soil health lesson planning.

Call us with any questions at 574-533-4383 ext. 3!

## Who Can Participate?

All public, private and home-schooled students and classes in grades K-12 in Elkhart County

## Poster Categories

K - 1st grade  
2nd - 3rd grade  
4th - 6th grade  
7th - 9th grade  
10th -12th grade

## How to Enter:

Submit your poster (with label) to the Elkhart County SWCD office by 4:30 pm on **May 5, 2017**

## Upcoming Events?

- April 17 **SWCD Board Meeting:** 7:00 PM, Purdue Extension Conference Room, Elkhart County 4-H Fairgrounds, Goshen.
- April 22 **2017 Tree Sale & Order Pick Up:** 9:00 AM-1:00 PM at the Sheep/Swine Bldg at the Elkhart County 4-H Fairgrounds. Make sure you bring your Confirmation sheet with you when you come to pick up your order.
- May 4 **Rain Garden/Rain Barrel Workshop:** Ox Bow Haus 6:00-7:30 pm, to register call (574) 533-4383 ext 3, or email Deb at [debra.jimison@in.nacdnet.net](mailto:debra.jimison@in.nacdnet.net)
- May 5 **Poster Contest Deadline:** The Elkhart County SWCD in conjunction with the National Association of Conservation Districts (NACD) is excited to sponsor our 2017 Poster Contest theme "Healthy Soils Are full of Life". Submit your poster in our office no later than **May 5th**.
- May 11 **LaGrange County SWCD Grazing Meeting:** Hosted farm in Elkhart county, more info coming.
- June 2017 **Elkhart County SWCD Cover Crop Forage Meeting:** Grazing cover crops, using cover crops as nutrient/manure management.

## SWCD - NRCS CONSERVATION PARTNERSHIP DIRECTORY

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### Board of Supervisors:

Tom Kercher, Chairman      Alex Wait, Vice Chairman  
Dale Leer      Dean Rink      Darrell Shover

### Associate Supervisors:

David Bontrager      Joe Brown      Brian Campbell  
Gary Kauffman      Keith E. Miller

### SWCD Staff:

James Hess, Program Manager      Jordan Beehler, Conservationist  
Lora Callahan, Secretary/Treasurer      Deb Jimison, Conservationist

### NRCS Staff:

Amanda Kautz, District Conservationist

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