



Grass Roots for Conservation



www.stormwaterelkco.org

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Elkhart County Soil & Water Conservation District

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Make Your Soil Great Again Field Day Recap

The 2017 “Make Your Soil Great Again” Field Day has come and gone. A big thank you goes out to Darrell and Stephanie Shover, Keith Miller, Lois Miller, and Kenneth Miller for allowing everyone to come and witness the power of cover crops on their farm.

The speakers walked us through the benefits and rewards of using cover crops for nutrients, soil structure, and return on investment. Jim Hoorman, USDA-NRCS Northeast Region Soil Health

Specialist, discussed the importance of

management styles and how operations need to adjust to new practices. He explained how soil structure creates many positive opportunities for us as producers and the cost savings associated with soil health.

Deb Jimison and Jordan Beehler, Elkhart Co. SWCD Conservationists, explained their “Soil Your Undies” experiment. Cotton under garments were planted on the site in July and were dug up to visualize the microbial activity in different soil types and structures.

Dean Baas, a Michigan State University Extension Educator in Sustainable Agriculture, talked about organic matter and how it relates to soil health. He explained the value of holding and utilizing our nutrients and water with organic matter. He reinforced that if our soil is healthy, our crops will be healthy and it helps our bottom line stay healthier.

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Make Your Soil Great Again Field Day Recap

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Zach Bolla, Seed Sales and Consultant from La-grange Co., gave a presentation on the value of grazing cover crops and how, if used correctly, can boost your bottom line.

We were all able to go out and witness many different varieties of cover crops on site and see how each performed in different conditions. The Elkhart Co. SWCD had several soil pits dug so everyone could see the examples of roots and amount of activity happening beneath the soil. Many of the sponsors brought out displays and equipment to show different options.

AgriFlight Services did an aerial seeding, so we all were able to witness cover crop seeding from a plane.

Again, thank you to all our sponsors who helped put this event together, we look forward to helping anyone looking for ideas or has questions about soil health and be able to guide them along the way.

If you are interested in learning more about cover crops and soil health or program options contact the Elkhart Co. SWCD at 574-533-4383 ext. 3



CLEAN WATER INDIANA PRACTICES

LIVESTOCK PRACTICES

- **EXCLUSION FENCING: \$1.19 PER FT**
 - MUST HAVE ADJACENT WATER BODY THAT YOU ARE RESTRICTING LIVESTOCK ACCESS TO
 - LANDOWNER PAYS ALTERNATIVE WATERING COSTS
- **HEAVY USE AREAS: \$1.00/SQ FT**
 - LANE, AROUND WATERER OR FEEDING AREA, ETC.
- **PRESCRIBED (ROTATIONAL) GRAZING: \$20.00/AC**
 - MUST DEVELOP GRAZING PLAN WITH THE SWCD/NRCS OFFICE
- **HAY/PASTURE RENOVATION**
 - INCLUDING 25% NATIVES: **\$216.25/AC**
 - COOL SEASON: **\$162.00/AC**

GENERAL CROP GROUND PRACTICES

- **FILTER STRIPS: \$553.00/AC (MINIMUM 20 FT WIDE)**
 - NO HAYING OR GRAZING ALLOWED
 - MINIMUM 5 YEAR COMMITMENT
- **COVER CROPS: \$20/AC (MAXIMUM OF 100 AC)**
 - CAN BE GRAZED/HAYED BUT IF THIS IS DONE WILL REQUIRE NO-TILL OR STRIP TILL FOR PLANTING OF FOLLOWING CASH CROP
 - SWCD WILL HELP PAY \$5/AC FOR DRILL RENTAL ON 3 YEAR CONTRACTS IF NEEDED TO ADOPT CONSERVATION TILLAGE TO MEET THIS REQUIREMENT

(These cost share prices cannot exceed 75% of total project costs)

Build-a-Barrel Workshop

The Elkhart County Soil and Water Conservation District (SWCD) recently held a "Build-A-Barrel" Workshop on Saturday, August 19th at the Sheep/Swine arena located at the Elkhart County fairgrounds. This was the second event this year.

The SWCD provided free pickle barrels, which provided a few bonus condiments, and all the necessary plumbing and equipment needed to assemble them. Our willing home owners supplied the elbow grease and the final design ideas for the water barrel lid.

After general instructions by the SWCD staff, everyone was off to build their barrels. Some were a noisy, collaborative effort with folks pitching in to help each other. Using the provided drills and glue, the parts were placed with maybe a little bit of trial and error.

The participants were Elkhart County residents from different areas, and all of the barrels were completed in a short amount of time. We ended up with 21 barrels going out the door. This program has proven to be quite popular, so much that we already have a waiting list for the next time.

The new owners were then able to take their prizes home for decorating and installation. We ask the owners to send in pictures of their barrels once they were at their new homes. And it seemed that a good time was had by all.

The SWCD plans more workshops, so watch Grass Roots or our website at www.elkcoswcd.org for the next opportunity. In one year, these workshops have provided our community with 42 barrels that are now being used. This benefits us all by improving our water quality.



Stormwater Clearance Renewal or NOT? Which is Right for Your Site?

This is a friendly reminder that on this December 31st the Stormwater Clearance will expire for all open construction site projects submitted during the years of 2006 to 2016. The Stormwater Clearance must be renewed by January 31, 2018. Renewal is done by submitting a Stormwater Clearance Renewal Application and the annual fee of \$100 made payable to the Elkhart County Treasurer (renewal fee is waived for government projects). You can find the renewal form at the Greater Elkhart County Stormwater Partnership website: <http://www.elkcoswcd.org/developers/forms/>

If your project is finished, then you need to submit a Notice of Termination (NOT) application as soon as possible for the NOT to be reviewed in time. The site needs to be inspected by the Elkhart Co. SWCD, so we need to be able to see the ground. This should be completed before

the snow flies, which of course is a variable situation. The NOT application can be found at the following website: https://secure.in.gov/idem/5157.htm#owq_stormwater

Once a NOT application is received for a project, the SWCD conducts the final site visit and if all of the NOT requirements have been met, and the associated MS4 entity with jurisdiction has no additional issues, then the NOT application is accepted. The accepted NOT application is forwarded on to the Indiana Department of Environmental Management Stormwater Department and a copy is sent to the Project Site Owner. If a project does not meet the NOT requirements by the end of the year, then the Renewal route needs to be followed.

If you have any questions, please contact Deb Jimison at debra.jimison@in.nacdn.net or at (574) 533-4383 ext. 3.

What Can We Do for You?



Have an idea for a workshop?
Want to learn about a specific
natural resource concern?
Do you have a burning
question we could answer?

We're looking for questions, comments, concerns, and
ideas on better ways to serve the residents of Elkhart County.

We would
love to hear
from you!



Give us a call: (574) 533-4383 ext 3
Send us an email: elkhartcountyswcd@gmail.com
Take a quick survey on our website: www.elkcoswcd.org

Upcoming Events!

- October 12 Pasture Walk:** Larry Yoder
4370 W 200 N, LaGrange, IN.
Starts at 1:00 pm at the farm.
- October 16 SWCD Board Meeting:** 7:00 PM,
SWCD Office, Elkhart County 4-H
Fairgrounds, Goshen
- November 20 SWCD Board Meeting:** 7:00 PM,
SWCD Office, Elkhart County 4-H
Fairgrounds, Goshen
- November 23-24 Thanksgiving Holiday:**
The SWCD & NRCS Offices will be
closed for the Thanksgiving Holiday.
- December 18 SWCD Board Meeting:** 7:00 PM,
SWCD Office, Elkhart County 4-H
Fairgrounds, Goshen
- December 25-26 Christmas Holiday:**
The SWCD & NRCS Offices will be
closed for the Christmas Holiday.

SWCD - NRCS CONSERVATION PARTNERSHIP DIRECTORY

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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.