The Farmer's Exchange
February 12, 2016
SWCD SUPPLEMENT

Elkhart County Soil & Water Conservation District

2015 ANNUAL REPORT

17746-B County Road 34 • Goshen, Indiana 46528
Phone 574-533-4383, Ext. 3 • Fax 855-408-4690
www.elkcoswcd.org • www.stormwaterelkco.org

Ashikha Amalnathan

74th Annual Meeting

Thursday, February 25, 2016

Dinner Starts at 6:30 p.m.

Featuring:

"Conservation Highlights from 2015"

Martin Room, Elkhart County 4-H Fairgrounds
17746 County Rd. 34 • Goshen, IN

Please make your reservations by calling or stopping in our office.

There is no ticket fee, but please consider supporting the Elkhart County SWCD with a donation or an Affiliate Membership!

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

ELKHART COUNTY
soil and water conservation
DISTRICT

17746-B County Road 34, Goshen IN 46528 • Phone: 574-533-4383, ext. 3 • Fax: 855-408-4690
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To Elkhart Soil & Water District Supporters

It's hard to believe 2015 is in the books. We had an exciting year. While we have experienced some challenges in personnel, I'm happy to report the SWCD is fully staffed. We now have 2 Conservationists. Jim Hess, former SWCD Board Chairman who joined the staff in September, and Deb Jimison, who joined us in November. Both have many years of experience in Conservation. I thank all the staff, board supervisors and associate supervisors for all their hard work and dedication.

Through your participation and that of our many partners much has been accomplished. We've participated and promoted many events, meetings and projects. Whether it be Contractor Workshops, Rain Barrels workshops, Filter Strips, no-till planting, cover crops, Conservation in the class room, Nutrient Management workshops, Forestry Field Days and much more, we all work together to promote and implement new ideas for Conservation.

As we enter in 2016, our challenges continue to be providing leadership, education and implementing practices to utilize and protect our resources to the best of our ability and be good stewards of those resources for us and future generations. "To leave it better than we received it."

Yours for Conservation,
Tom Kercher

Elkhart County Soil and Water Conservation District Minutes of February 26, 2015 Annual Meeting

The 73rd annual meeting of the Elkhart County Soil and Water Conservation District was held in the Martin Room of the ECCC Building, on the Elkhart County 4-H Fairgrounds, in Goshen. 103 people attended. The meeting began at 6:30 pm with Jim Hess welcoming everyone to the meeting. Jim Hess gave the invocation. Dinner followed.

After dinner, Jim Hess introduced Elkhart County SWCD board members, associates, and staff. Government officials present were: Mike Yoder, Elkhart County Commissioner. He was acknowledged for his support of the SWCD. Affiliate members were acknowledged for their support.

Before taking care of this year's business, Jim Hess said that there was some old business from last year that needed to be taken care of, since John Ulmer was unable to attend last year to accept his award of "Friend of the SWCD", we wanted to acknowledge him tonight.

The minutes of the March 13, 2014 annual meeting were approved on a motion by Tom Kercher and Dale Leer. The motion carried. The 2014 Annual Financial Report was approved on a motion by Garry Weybright and Dale Leer. The motion carried.

Alex Wait, Supervisor conducted the supervisor election. He stated the requirements for being a candidate and for voting. He then presented the slate. Tom Kercher's term of office will expire at the close of this annual meeting, and he has chosen to run for re-election. Alex Wait nominated Tom Kercher and Jim Hess seconded the motion. The motion carried. Nominations were closed with a motion by David Blough and Garry Weybright seconded the motion. The motion carried. As a single candidate was nominated a voice vote was conducted and Tom Kercher was elected to another term,

Awards were sponsored by the Elkhart County Soil and Water Conservation District. The awards were presented by Jim Hess, assisted by Supervisors and Associates, as follows:

The highest placing Elkhart County– Soil Judging FFA Masters Team, Samuel Burtsfield, Cody Haab, Emily Miller, and Micaela Yoder - Jr. High FFA Team, Gavin Erb, Peyton Gall, Westin Stutzman, and Brian Troyer. Fairfield High School Ag Advisor, Kraig Bowers, coaches both teams.

County poster contest winners were asked to come up front with their poster to be acknowledged. Poster Contest Cover Artist was Geneviéve Carreño, Forestry Award was Tristan Swihart, Recycling Award was Sarah Fuller, Soil & Water Conservation Award was Alison Robinson, and Wildlife Award was Mason Kintigh. River Friendly Farmer was Doug Beasy and Dean Rink, Conservation Farmer was Deer Grove Farms. Educator of the Year Award was Jeff Komins from Roosevelt STEAM Academy, Urban Conservationist of the Year Award was Maynard Yoder, Friend of the SWCD went to Steve Yeater.

Amanda Kautz, District Conservationist with (NRCS) Natural Resources Conservation Service spoke about Agriculture in Elkhart County, Nancy Brown, Program Manager for the (SWCD) Soil & Water Conservation District, spoke about Education, Jim Jackson, Urban Conservationist spoke about Urban Conservation.

Alex Wait, Supervisor announced that Tom Kercher was elected to a three-year term. The Oath of Office was administered by Elkhart County Commissioner to Tom Kercher.

The meeting adjourned by Chairman Jim Hess, at 8:15 pm.

Jim Hess
SWCD Board Chairman

Tom Kercher
SWCD Board
Vice Chairman

Alex Wait
SWCD Board Secretary

Lyle Burtsfield
SWCD Board Member

Dale Leer
SWCD Board Member

Lora Callahan
Recording Secretary

Mission Statement

The mission of the Elkhart County Soil and Water Conservation District is to assist land users and other agencies in the wise use of natural resources in Elkhart County.

2015 Conservation Highlights Featured at 74th Annual Meeting

The 74th annual meeting of the Elkhart County Soil and Water Conservation District (SWCD) will be held on Thursday, February 25, 2016. We will be highlighting conservationists and conservation activities in Elkhart County in 2015.

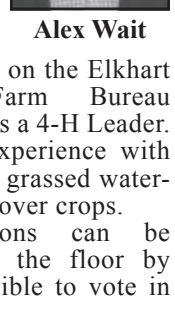
The meeting will be held in the Martin Room of the Elkhart County Community Center Building on the 4-H Fairgrounds in Goshen. Dinner starts at 6:30 p.m. There is no fee to attend, but reservations are requested and donations or affiliate memberships are cheerfully accepted.

This annual meeting provides the District with an opportunity to share activities and provide a financial accounting of the year. We will recognize adults and youth who have advanced conservation efforts in the county in 2015. A preview of those receiving recognition is available on pages 6 and 7 of this report.

As 2015 was the International Year of Soils, we will also highlight our "Soil Formation Cookie" activity.

An important item on the agenda is the election of a member to the Elkhart County Soil and Water Conservation District Board of Supervisors. Every county in Indiana has a Soil and Water Conservation District (SWCD or District). Each District is supervised by a board of local landowners who are responsible for the policies and programs of the SWCD. This board has five members; two are appointed for three year terms, and three are elected for three year terms. When Jim Hess resigned his appointed position this year to accept a Conservationist position with the SWCD, Dean Rink was appointed to complete his term which will expire in one year at the annual meeting held in 2017. Lyle Burtsfield has two years remaining in his appointed term. The elected positions are staggered, with one elected supervisor's term expiring each year. Tom Kercher has two years remaining in his term of office, and Dale Leer has one. Alex Wait's term of office will expire at the close of this annual meeting, and he has agreed to run for reelection.

Alex Wait, Elkhart, has been an Elkhart County SWCD supervisor since February 2010. A Concord High School graduate, he farms and works as an excavating contractor. In addition to serving on the SWCD board, he is on the Elkhart County Farm Bureau board, and is a 4-H Leader. Alex has experience with filter strips, grassed waterways, and cover crops.


Alex Wait

Nominations can be made from the floor by anyone eligible to vote in the election.

Anyone who attends the annual meeting, is of legal voting age, and occupies land in Elkhart County is eligible to vote in this SWCD Supervisor election. An individual may also vote if they attend; are of legal voting age; and represent a firm, company, or corporation that occupies land located within Elkhart County. Eligible individuals include the owner and tenant of the same land; as well as any owner's or tenant's spouse.

Next year will be our 75th anniversary! If you are interested in supporting the SWCD with an affiliate membership, you can be recognized at this historic event. Individual/family affiliate memberships are available for a donation of $25 or more. Your membership will be recognized at least twice a year in our monthly newsletter Grass Roots, and during the slide show at the annual meeting. Second tier or business memberships are available for an annual donation of $125 or more. Second tier membership guarantees at least two business card sized ads in our monthly newsletter Grass Roots and recognition at our 75th Annual Meeting during the slide show.

Make your reservation for the 74th annual meeting of the Elkhart County Soil and Water Conservation District by calling (574-533-4383, ext. 3) or stopping in our office on the 4-H Fairgrounds in Goshen.

Cover Artist Ashikha Minushi Amalnathan

Ashikha Minushi Amalnathan has been selected as the cover artist for the Elkhart County Soil and Water Conservation District's 2015 Annual Report. She is the daughter of Arul Amalnathan and Nilmini Amalnathan of Elkhart. At the time she entered the contest, she was in Mrs. Knapp's 3rd grade class at Pinewood Elementary. This year she is a member of Mrs. Szyarto's 4th grade class, also at Pinewood Elementary. Her favorite class is science. Other projects and interests of Ashikha's include tennis. Her future aspirations include studying at Purdue University or the University of Notre Dame and playing collegiate tennis.

SWCD - NRCS CONSERVATION PARTNERSHIP DIRECTORY

17746-B County Road 34, Goshen, IN 46528-9261
Ph. 574-533-4383, ext. 3 • Fax: 855-408-4690
www.elkcoswcd.org www.stormwaterelkco.org

Board of Supervisors:
Tom Kercher, Chairman — Alex Wait, Vice Chairman
Lyle Burtsfield — Dale Leer — Dean Rink

Associate Supervisors:
David Bontrager — Joe Brown
Brian Campbell — Gary Kauffman

SWCD Staff:
Nancy Brown, Program Manager — Jim Hess, 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.

Meet the Elkhart County SWCD Team

Supervisors

Tom Kercher
Board Chairman

Alex Wait
Vice Chairman

Lyle Burtsfield
Supervisor

Dale Leer
Supervisor

Dean Rink
Supervisor

Not pictured but serving as Associate Supervisors are:

- **David Bontrager**
- **Joe Brown**
- **Brian Campbell**
- **Gary Kauffman**

SWCD Staff

From left to right: Amanda Kautz, NRCS District Conservationist; Jim Hess, SWCD Conservationist; Lora Callahan, SWCD Secretary/Treasurer; Deb Jimison, SWCD Conservationist; Nancy Brown, SWCD Program Manager.

THANK YOU TO ALL OF OUR 2015 AFFILIATE MEMBERS

Aquatic Weed Control (Jim Donahoe)
Blough, David & Michelle
Bontrager, David & Mary Ellen
Brookview Farms (Richard Brookins)
Brown, Joe & Nancy
Burtsfield, Lyle
Casey's Erosion & Seed Solutions, LLC (Doug Beasy) *
Crop Tech, Inc. (Gary Kauffman)
Cross, Mike & Mary Ann
The Farmer's Exchange (Steve Yeater) *
Farmwald, Edmund & Linda
Groff, Rich & Nancy
Hess, Jim & Tereasa
Hibschman, Joe & Donna
Himes, Stephen G.
Hoene Tiling, Inc. (William Hoene)
Kercher's Sunrise Orchards, Inc. (Thomas & Maureen Kercher) *
Kuert Concrete, Inc. (Steve Fidler) *
Leer, Dale & Ruby
Lo-Ke Dairy (Keith E. Miller)
Marbach, Brady, Weaver, Inc. (Chris F. Marbach) *
Morehouse Grain Farms, LLC (Matt Morehouse)
Neff, David & Luann
Neff, Mike & Annette
Pine Crest Farms, Inc. (Stan Miller)
Progressive Engineering, Inc. (Bradley Cramer) *
Reed Farms (Brent & George Reed)
Richland Farm (Richard & Sue Snider)
Stanger Excavating (Colby Stanger)
Stroup, Martin & Penny
Sweet Corn Charlie Produce, LLC (Chuck Mohler) *
Teall Tax Service (James Teall)
Wakarusa Sawmill, Inc. (Steve Brown)
Warner Farms (Steve Warner)
Weybright, George & Rachel Family Farm
Yoder, Ainlay, Ulmer & Buckingham, LLP (John Ulmer) *
Zell, Bob & Laura

** Second Tier / Business Membership*

There is still time to renew your membership for 2016, or to become a new supporter of conservation in Elkhart County. The Elkhart County SWCD is again offering two tiers of Affiliate Membership. The first tier or individual membership is an annual donation of $25 or more. Your membership will be recognized at least twice a year in our monthly newsletter Grass Roots. The second tier or business membership guarantees at least two business card sized ads in our monthly newsletter *Grass Roots* and recognition at our Annual Meeting by way of a slide show. Second tier membership has an annual donation of $125 or more.

If you wish to become an Affiliate Member, you can mail a check or money order to: Elkhart County SWCD, 17746-B County Rd. 34, Goshen, IN 46528. Be sure to include your name as you would like it to appear in the upcoming editions of *Grass Roots*, and your full mailing address. For further information, contact the SWCD office at 574-533-4383, extension 3.

FSA Staff

Left to right: Ashley Reed, Program Technician, Penni Harley, Program Technician, Brenda Yoder, County Executive Director, Jenny Brosius, Program Technician

Annual Financial Report of Elkhart County SWCD

January 1, 2015 through December 31, 2015

Balance Brought Forward	$35,754.54
RECEIPTS	
State for District Operations	$10,000.00
Clean Water Indiana Grant	$0.00
County for District Operations	$0.00
Federal and State Funds (not CWI)	$0.00
Non Government Grants	$0.00
Other Grants (List)	$0.00
Total Intergovernmental Receipts	**$10,000.00**
Equipment Rental & Farm Income	$0.00
Donations & Memberships	$1,810.00
Other Charges for Services (DNR Tree Handling)	$205.00
Other Charges for Services (Postage)	$2.00
Other Charges for Services (Describe)	$0.00
Total Charges for Services	**$2,017.00**
Advertising	$0.00
Annual Meeting Income	$90.00
Interest from Checking, CDs, Savings, Etc.	$37.61
Reimbursements & Refunds	$0.00
Sale of Used Equipment	$0.00
Sales Income	$9,717.30
Workshop/Field Day Income	$3,706.81
Other Miscellaneous Revenue (Describe)	$0.00
Other Miscellaneous Revenue (Describe)	$0.00
Other Miscellaneous Revenue (Describe)	$0.00
Total Miscellaneous Revenue	**$13,551.72**
Sub-Total (before investment activity)	$25,568.72
Sale of Investments (CDs, saving accounts, transfers)	$0.00
TOTAL (balance forward + receipts + investments)	**$61,323.26**
DISBURSEMENTS	
Capital Outlays (Equipment)	$0.00
Annual Meeting Expenses	$1,888.30
Audit Expense	$150.00
Bonding and Liability Insurance	$0.00
Clean Water Indiana Projects	$0.00
Conservation Education Programs	$2,536.94
Contractual Services	$0.00
Cost-Share Projects/Federally-Funded	$0.00
Cost-Share Projects/SWCD-Funded	$0.00
CWI Payments to other SWCDs	$0.00
Dues & Subscriptions	$2,850.00
Employee Salaries Paid by District	$0.00
Office Supplies	$2,527.71
Other Services & Charges	$0.00
Postage & Delivery Expenses	$0.00
Printing/Copying Expense	$0.00
Rent	$0.00
Repair Expenses	$0.00
Sales Tax Paid to IN Dept. of Revenue	$758.50
Supervisor Per Diem	$0.00
Supplies for Resale	$0.00
Telephone or Other Utilities	$0.00
Travel/Lodging/Mileage/Registration/Meals	$2,307.09
Workshop/Field Day Expense	$2,455.36
Other Disbursements (DNR Tree)	$275.00
Other Disbursements (Describe)	$7,061.94
Other Disbursements (Describe)	$0.00
Other Disbursements (Describe)	$0.00
Total General Government Disbursements	**$22,810.84**
Sub-Total (before investment activity)	**$22,810.84**
Purchase of Investments (CDs saving accounts, transfers)	$0.00
TOTAL DISBURSEMENTS (disbursements + investments)	$22,810.84
BALANCE AT DECEMBER 31	$38,512.42
CLAIMS PAID BY COUNTY	
Salaries + Fringe	$184,742.60
Other	$96,515.81
INVESTMENT INVENTORY	
Beginning Investments	$69,685.04
Ending Investments	$69,894.45
Change (+/-)	$209.41
CASH BOXES	
Petty Cash	$0.00
Cash Change	$35.00

NISM Seminar Held To Educate Area Farmers

Approximately 57 area farmers and other agricultural specialists attended the Northern Indiana Soil Management Seminar (NISM) sponsored by the Elkhart County Soil and Water Conservation District (SWCD) and Elkhart County Purdue Extension Service on Friday, February 6, 2015. Speakers presented on a variety of fertilizer, weed, and general farming topics. Dr. Timothy Harrigan from Michigan State University kicked our day off with "Using Manure to Seed Cover Crops." He also spoke on "Monitoring Tile Outlets for *E.coli*". In the afternoon, Dr. Fred Whitford director of Purdue University's pesicide program spoke on "Rethinking the Sprayer Clean-out." Our day wrapped up with Jeff Burbrink, Purdue Extension- Elkhart County, talking about "Drift Watch," Eligible participants were able to get continuing education credits for Private Pesticide Applicator licenses and Crop Advisor Credits. Take a look at the photos to see a little bit of our busy day! Our meeting schedule is being restructured in 2016 and NISM will not be held, but check out our "Roller Coaster Conservation: Cover Your Assets" program being held on February 2, 2016 in Ag Hall!

Jeff Burbrink talked about the Drift Watch program and how to register sensitive crops on the website so the information is available to chemical applicators. This helps to avoid unintended crop injury from herbicide drift.

Dr. Fred Whitford spoke to a packed house about why cleaning out your sprayer is important. Without proper clean out issues with herbicide injury can develop if chemical residue is mixed with new chemical and accidentally applied to new crops.

Dr. Timothy Harrigan covered important manure management related topics including how to monitor tile outlets for contamination and slurry seeding cover crops. Manure is an important and valuable fertilizer that must be used responsibly!

TOTAL ACRES OF NEW CONSERVATION PLANS IN 2015: 2702 ACRES

Practice	Installed/Applied
Agrichemical Handling Facility (number)	1
Agricultural Energy Management Plan (number)	1
Comprehensive Nutrient Management Plan (number)	1
Conservation Cover (ac)	1
Cover Crop (ac)	2255
Early Successional Habitat Development/Management (ac)	2
Forage and Biomass Planting (ac)	26
Integrated Pest Management (ac)	1937
Invasive Species Control (ac)	37
Irrigation Water Management (ac)	2928
Manure Management (ac)	15
Mulch Till (ac)	232
No-Till (ac)	1314
Nutrient Management (ac)	942
Roof for Agrichemical Handling Facility (number)	1
Sprinkler System for Irrigation Efficiency Upgrade (ac)	39

Conservation Planning: What Is It and Why is it Important to Me?

Conservation Planning is an essential part of property ownership or any farming operation. It helps you to think about what you are currently doing, your objectives for the future, and how to achieve these goals in a sustainable manner. Once you finish the planning process, you should have a conservation plan that will be a record of your decisions and will serve as a roadmap to attain your goals.

Begin by setting your goals for your property or operation. What do you want to achieve? For a farm, this could be production oriented, like a desired number of bushels of corn per acre, and/or personal, like wanting to hand the operation down to your children. For other property, there could be other types of goals, such as attracting a certain type of wildlife. Along the same line, do you have anything you specifically want to protect and save for the future? This could be a particular feature of the property, such as woods or a wetland, or a general way of life. Also think about what you want to enjoy on your property. Do you want to garden, hunt, see cattle grazing in the pasture? All of these goals and desires play a large role in planning for the future.

Once you have your goals, it's time to take a look at your property and other assets and assess them. Are there limitations you see that could make meeting your goals difficult? These could be things like gullies in crop fields, invasive species, or poor water quality. Are these problems that occur every year? If they are, think about if you have been changing anything to address this. If you have and the issue is still showing up, it's time to think about a new solution. If you haven't, now is the time to begin!

This leads us to the next step, addressing any limitations you found. What changes can you make on your property? For example, to address a water quality concern on a crop field, you could add filter strips along the ditch to filter out much of the sediment and nutrients in runoff before it leaves the field and enters the ditch. Along these same lines, you could exchange conventional tillage for no-till with cover crops to reduce erosion and improve soil organic matter levels. While you are coming up with these solutions, don't forget to think about what you can reasonably accomplish. It is tempting to take on too much and try to fix everything all at once. It is great to have that as a long term goal, but break your changes into smaller short term portions. Remember to consider the following things:

1. What time frame are you working in?
2. Who is the decision maker? Are there others you need to talk to before making the final choice?
3. How much of your time can you give up to make these changes?
4. What finances are available?
5. How will you get needed supplies, equipment, services, etc?

Now that you have decided what you can reasonably do and what time frame you are working with, it is time to make the final list of changes and start preparing to put them into action. After you have implemented the changes, evaluate the results over time. Is the desired effect being achieved? Don't forget some changes may take a while to be visible, so don't give up right away. Also, if something isn't working, attempt to figure out why. Is it a technical problem, such as trying to no-till without the correct equipment? Just like anything in life, if you are not prepared and do not have the correct resources there is a higher chance of failure. It also never hurts to ask for an expert opinion. That person might have some experience or advice that will make the difference. If you have tried everything and still have a limitation, you can always go back to the drawing board. Things are continually changing, and we must adapt to these changes. As we all know, sometimes no matter how perfect the plan looks on paper we hit snags in real life!

The USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) offers conservation planning services. At the end of the process, you will have a plan that includes practices which address your objectives and natural resource concerns based on your goals, personal experience, and the technical knowledge of your NRCS planner. NRCS may also have cost share funds available through several Farm Bill Programs to help you implement your new conservation practices. Many common solutions like cover crops, no-till, filter strips, and various wildlife habitats are on the list of cost-sharable practices. If you would inquire about writing a conservation plan or would like more information about a cost share program, contact the Elkhart County USDA Service Center at 574-533-4383 Ext. 3.

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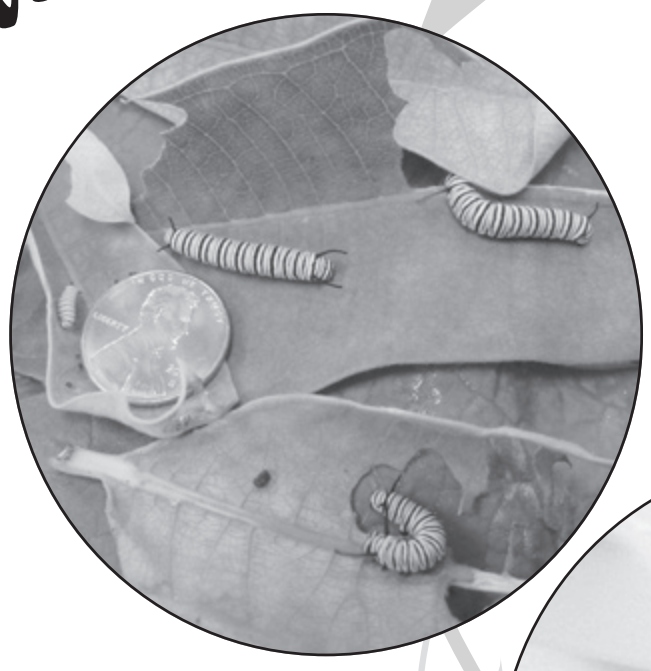
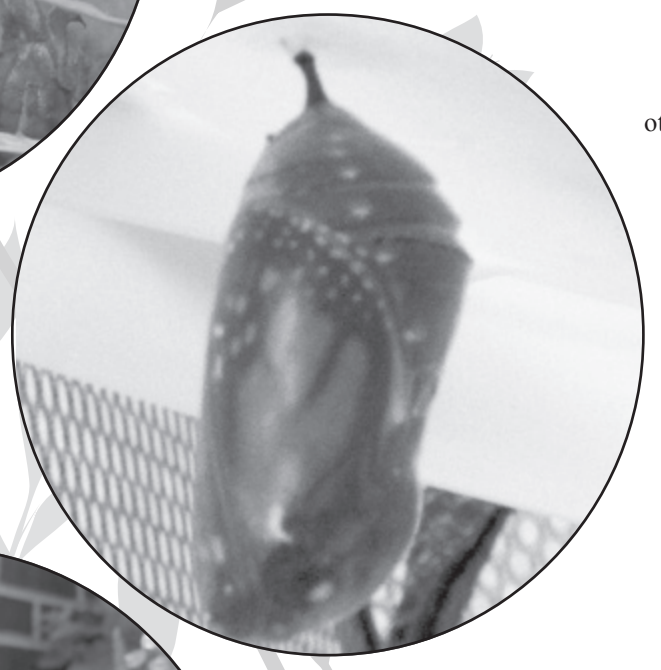
NRCS and Partners Launch Monarch Conservation Effort



Monarch Caterpillars



Clear Chrysalis

Adult Monarch

In the last 20 years the Monarch population has decreased from one billion to thirty-four million. That's a significant decrease in this eye catching and vital pollinator! Monarchs depend on milkweed to lay their eggs and feed the resulting caterpillars. Milkweed is the only plant that the caterpillars can eat, so it is essential to the next generation of monarchs that milkweed is provided. It takes four generations of monarchs to make the yearly migration to Mexico. That's a lot of caterpillars that need milkweed to survive! In order to help provide this important plant, the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) and their partners are launching an initiative to help farmers and landowners plant milkweed and other nectar plants in field borders, buffers, around wetlands, in native plantings, pastures, and other suitable areas. Technical and financial assistance will be available to help producers and conservation partners make pollinator and butterfly-friendly improvements to farms using funds from the Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) and remaining funds from the former Wetlands Reserve Program (WRP). Cost share funds are also available through the Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP) to establish monarch habitat.

How does this benefit you, you might ask? Not only do the milkweed and other nectar plants support monarchs, but they help other pollinators like bees that pollinate the food crops we eat. It also provides homes for beneficial insects that help control pest insect populations. Native plantings and permanent habitat also help to reduce erosion, increase soil health, and provide forage among many other benefits.

You can help monarchs even if you don't have a large amount of space! Plant native flowers including milkweed in fence-rows, fallow fields, or gardens. Adult butterflies need nectar from these flowers especially during late summer and early fall for energy during breeding and migration. Milkweed spreads quickly though so make sure you manage the seed pods or you will have it in places you do not want it. Also watch what variety you plant. There are some varieties of tropical milkweed commercially available that actually harm caterpillars instead of feeding them. The three most common types of native milkweed in the Midwest are common, swamp, and butterfly. Any of these would be safe to plant in this area. You can also use insecticides, herbicides, and seed treatments wisely. Use targeted applications when you need them instead of broadcast and use the least toxic alternative. That will help ensure that the butterflies landing on your flowers are not harmed as they feed. Every little bit helps these beautiful and important butterflies in their comeback!

For more information on Monarchs and how you can help visit:

www.usda.gov/monarchs

www.fws.gov/savethemonarch

www.xerces.org

www.monarchwatch.org

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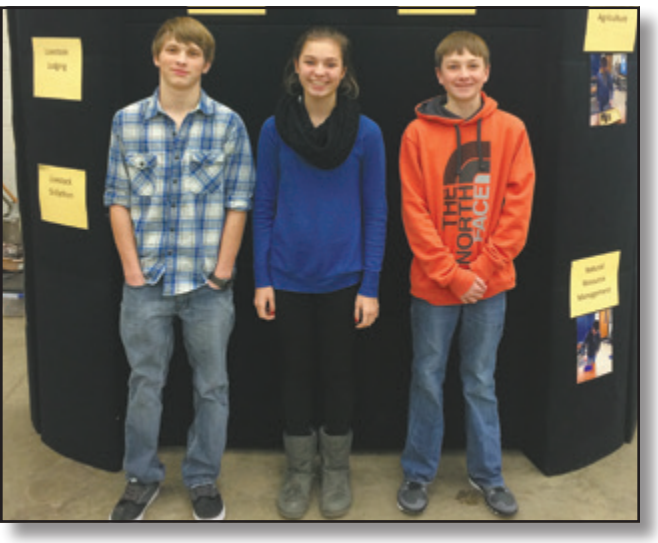
1513 E. Lincoln Ave.
(574) 534-4665

CONSERVATION AWARD WINNERS

Soil Judging Winners



The Fairfield Junior High FFA Soil Judging team of (from left) Alex Becker, Janae Brown, and Gavin Erb was the highest ranking Junior High Soil Judging Team in Elkhart County in 2015. They are coached by Fairfield Ag Advisor, Kraig Bowers.

The highest ranking 2015 High School Soil Judging Team from Elkhart County was the Fairfield High School FFA Soil Judging team of (from left) Nick Bowser, Grant Sanchez, Justin Slabaugh, and Nate Bowser. They are coached by Fairfield Ag Advisor, Kraig Bowers.

IT'S HARVEST TIME!

When the planting season comes, you carefully plan for the future harvest. When planning the harvest of a woodland, consideration should be given to future generations.

Indiana Wood Products wants to be a part of those generations. Let our trained forestry staff approach your woodlot with an eye to the future.

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"The Forestry People"

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Soil & Water Conservation Award

Nathan Peterson

Nathan Peterson is the son of Steve and Kris Peterson of Goshen. He is a 4 year member of 4-H. Nathan was a member of the Concord Lads and Lassies led by Kim Stoll from 2012 to 2015. In 2016, he will participate in the Foundation for Life Club led by Sharon Schaubert. His favorite 4-H projects were models, geology, and electricity. Nathan's other activities include chess club, church youth group, bicycle club, and genealogy club.

Recycling Award

Cadence Medina

Cadence Medina is the daughter of Shaunna Searfoss and Scott Ratliff of Goshen. She has completed 2 years of 4-H. Cadence is a member of the Goshen Go Getters led by Jan and Wayne Robinson. Her favorite 4-H projects are the skee ball machine she made for her recycling project, drawing a picture of an elephant with a flower on its head, and creating a ceramic lion bowl. Cadence's other activities include drawing, choir, reading, and helping her mother with her younger siblings.

Wildlife Award

Jordan Baker

Jordan Baker, daughter of Jonathan Baker and Jaime Baker of Elkhart, has completed 9 years of 4-H. She is a member of Clever Clovers, led by Laura Holland. Her favorite 4-H projects are genealogy, wildlife, and foods. Jordan's other activities include studying Certified Nursing Assistant (CNA) at the Elkhart Area Career Center, being a member of National Technical Honor Society (NTHS), and playing games with her sister.

Forestry Award

Alison Robinson

Alison Robinson is the daughter of Andrew and Jeanette Robinson of Middlebury and is starting her 7th year of 4-H. She is a member of Beef Club led by Jeff Lorenz and Kreative Kids led by Don and Colleen Prough. Her favorite 4-H projects are sewing, beef, and food. Alison's other activities include Starlights Show Choir and Youth Group.

Conservation Educator of the Year

Elkhart County Parks

Each year the Elkhart County Soil and Water Conservation District supervisors and staff select an individual or a group as our Conservation Educator of the Year. This year we have chosen to acknowledge the symbiotic relationship we share with another Department of Elkhart County Government, Elkhart County Parks and Recreation. If you remember your biology class in school, not all symbiotic relationships are good for both, but we feel that together, our departments show an excellent example of mutualism in our education programs. Mutualism is the kind of symbiotic relationship in which both organisms benefit.

The mission of the Elkhart County Soil and Water Conservation District is to assist land users and other agencies in the wise use of natural resources in Elkhart County. The Elkhart County Parks Department's mission is to enhance the quality of life; preserve the County's cultural, historical, and natural resources; and provide educational and recreational opportunities. While the Park Department preserves open space for all citizens to use for recreation and outdoor experiences, we work with individuals and groups in the wise management of resources that are used to provide other human needs. Both components are needed in healthy communities, and together we strive to make this county a good place for all citizens to live. We thank County Parks for their work in preserving nature.

The SWCD does not own any land, but the Elkhart County Park Department owns and manages 1500 acres providing plenty of room for picnicking, hiking, fishing or just experiencing the wonder of nature. We thank County Parks for allowing us to utilize these acres for programs and classes that are necessary for us to reach our educational goal of informing the public of the consequences our management decisions have on the natural resources we depend on.

As with most organizations, mission statements and policies are nothing without the people who dedicate themselves to accomplishing the goals included there. The best part of our relationship with Elkhart County Parks is that between our mutual policy makers and staff who carry out those ideals. We thank County Parks for the way our environmental education missions and goals complement each other. Excellent examples include both the Elkhart County Indiana Master Naturalist Program and the Greater Elkhart County Stormwater Partnership Education Committee.

We are especially grateful for Diane Madison, for the leadership she demonstrates; to Ronda DeCaire, for her willingness to work with us in finding those opportunities for us to collaborate on educational programs that not only compliment both of our organizational goals, but actually provide greater service to the community for our efforts; and to the Park Naturalists (Krista Daniels, Courtney Franke, and Andy Langdon) for their "boots on the ground" contribution to our joint educational efforts.

We are different agencies, with different missions and different goals, but we value the ways we can work together to preserve a part of Elkhart County while protecting its working lands.

CONSERVATION AWARD WINNERS

2015 Conservation Farmer of the Year

Lyle Burtsfield

Lyle Burtsfield has been selected by the Elkhart County Soil and Water Conservation District (SWCD) as the 2015 Conservation Farmer of the Year. Lyle lives and farms in Benton Township in Southeastern Elkhart County. His current rotation includes corn and soybeans, but earlier in his farming career he also had dairy cows and grew alfalfa for hay. When he began farming he worked with his father milking cows and then moved on to his own herd. He milked until about 1982 when he sold off the herd. The original irrigation pivots on the farm were actually installed to use with the alfalfa to produce better quality hay. Lyle has seen many changes over the years. Much of the land he and his father used to farm is now houses.

In his farming career, Lyle has never fall plowed. They used spring ridge till originally. His fields received much of the top soil from his fall plowing neighbors via wind and water erosion. When he first tried no-till in 1980, he borrowed a planter and no-tilled a field of soybeans in a field that was highly visible from US Highway 33. He says, "If it didn't work people needed to see, and if it did people needed to see." It was successful and his first planter was a John Deere 7000 to no-till both his corn and beans. There were issues with being able to plant through the built up residue, so Lyle made his own row cleaners and attached them to the planter. At the time none were commercially available. He now has one field that has been continually no-tilled for thirty-six years.

Cover crops have been used on the farm several times. Years ago Lyle and his father would use clover as a cover crop and it would be tilled under when they made their spring tillage pass. This added organic matter and nitrogen to the soil to be used by their cash crop. For approximately the last four years, rye has been aerially applied to use as a cover crop.

The irrigation on the farm is still there and while he has always kept track of his water usage, Lyle is now implementing an irrigation water management plan. This will take into account crop usage, soil moisture, rainfall, etc. to make sure the right amount of water is applied at the right time and erosion is not being caused by over application. He also has a portion of one of his fields in the Conservation Reserve Program. This plot is warm season grasses and wildflowers that provide great wildlife habitat in an area of the field that was hard to farm.

Lyle has also served long term on the SWCD board. He started as an associate in 1982 and became an appointed supervisor in 1987. He has helped with many educational field days and been instrumental in leading local conservation.

All of us at the Elkhart County SWCD would like to thank Lyle for his dedication to good stewardship and service on the SWCD board. Congratulations on being named 2015 Conservation Farmer of the Year!

River Friendly Farmer

Darrell Shover

Darrell and his wife, Stephanie, farm in Benton and Jackson Township in southeastern Elkhart County. Their farm is part of the Solomon Creek-Elkhart River watershed and Solomon Creek, Dausman Ditch, and Juday Ditch run directly through the farm. They raise corn, soybeans, small grains, and hay in addition to a small pastured beef cattle herd. Darrell uses many conservation practices to improve the quality of the water leaving his farm. The farm is 100% no-till and cover crops are used to add diversity to the crop rotation, organic matter, and cover the soil to prevent erosion over the winter and early spring. He also uses nutrient and pest management plans. These plans are used to ensure more site specific fertilizer and pesticide applications based on soil tests and scouting. By using these plans, Darrell insures that only the amount needed is applied and that a proper buffering distance is left between sensitive areas, such as wetlands and ditch banks, to prevent runoff into neighboring water bodies. He leaves buffer strips along the crop fields that border ditches and creeks to prevent runoff from entering them unfiltered. His beef cattle are also rotationally grazed ensuring proper cover is left in pastures preventing erosion. Darrell has also shared his conservation knowledge as a speaker at Elkhart County SWCD field days and will be hosting a pasture field day in 2016!

Urban Conservationist Award

Brads-Ko Engineering and Surveying, Inc.

There's a company right here in Goshen that has been assisting the construction industry since 1968. Started by Ray Pharis, Brads-Ko Engineering and Surveying, Inc. as their name implies, offers engineering and surveying services. The current principals are Ray's son Barry Pharis, President/General Manager since 1991 and Surveyor Greg Shock, Vice President since 1983.

Another service offered is helping clients obtain permits to be in compliance with Indiana's Rule 5, which addresses erosion control for land disturbed by new construction. These personnel are certified in storm water activities and stay current with training and developments in new technology.

Storm Water Professional Hillary Chrisman-White, with Brads-Ko since 2001, is a Qualified Construction Inspector of Storm Water and also a Qualified Preparer of Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plans. She also provides Post-Construction Management Plans. She follows storm water technology changes closely, obtaining information on new alternatives for use by Brads-Ko and their clients.

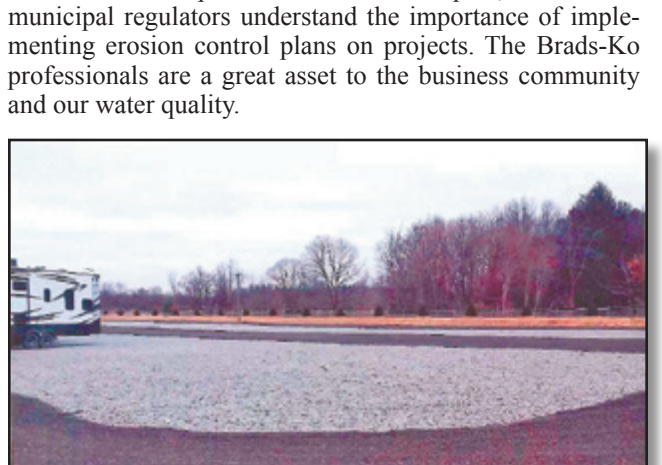
Tanya Miller is a Storm Water Technician and CAD Technician that has been with Brads-Ko since 1990. She maintains the day-to-day records of active sites, while conducting field and written inspections. Tanya also prepares SWPPPs and Post-Construction Plans.

Hillary and Tanya make themselves available to work through any problems on-site, offering solutions that are effective and easily applied. Providing site inspections for their clients is a valuable service that's beneficial to all involved.

Brads-Ko employees Hillary Chrisman-White and Tanya Miller review a Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP) together.

Brads-Ko storm water projects consider the environment, while offering a common sense approach for clients. They take the extra step to ensure that developers, owners and municipal regulators understand the importance of implementing erosion control plans on projects. The Brads-Ko professionals are a great asset to the business community and our water quality.

A beautiful storm water retention pond at a residential subdivision in Elkhart County.



An example of an Elkhart County Industrial property using recycled asphalt in the construction of a new driveway.

Friend of the SWCD

Jeff Burbrink

The on-line Merriam-Webster Dictionary defines educator as, "one skilled in teaching; a student of the theory and practice of education; an administrator in education." Many people in Elkhart County think that Jeff Burbrink is the definition of "educator." It is in his title. Jeff has been a part of the Purdue Cooperative Extension Service since 1982. His current title is Extension Educator in the field of Agriculture and Natural Resources.

Jeff has been president of the Elkhart County Plan Commission, and the Elkhart County Park Board. He is on the Solid Waste Management District Advisory Board and serves as an Advisor to the Elkhart County SWCD Board.

He has been honored with many awards during his career; here are just a few of them: he was named the 2007 Purdue Master Gardener Coordinator of the Year; in 2015 he was one of 49 to be honored by the National Association of County Agricultural Agents with the Distinguished Service Award; but word has it he considered it an even greater honor to receive the "Uncle Elmer Award" from the Ag Society of Elkhart County that same year.

The SWCD board and staff appreciate all the work he does that goes above and beyond what would be expected of him. He assists with our meetings to educate farmers on soil health and conservation practices. He introduces his Master Gardeners to our office during their classes, helps coordinate the SWCD-Master Gardener tree sale, and assists with the Elkhart County Indiana Master Naturalist Class.

Jeff isn't one of those people who has to tell you everything he knows. He is one of those people who listens to hear what it is you really want to know, and then helps you find the answers you need. His love of learning, and joy in finding answers is contagious, as is his leadership by example. Just watching how he conducts himself makes you want to be a better person. The SWCD Supervisors and Staff, are honored to recognize Jeff Burbrink for being a friend of farmers, gardeners, and naturalists – and especially the SWCD. *Thanks, Jeff!*

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Urban Conservation at Work on Yellow Creek Ditch Along U.S. 33

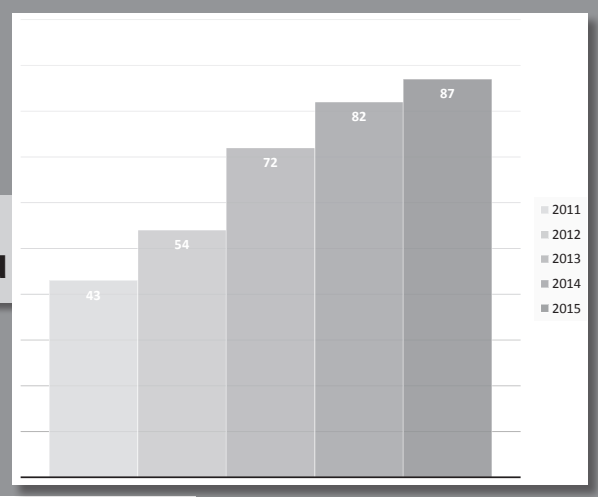
With a partnership between the Elkhart County Surveyor and the City of Elkhart, the Yellow Creek Ditch was transformed into a two-stage ditch, along US. 33 in front of Concord Mall.

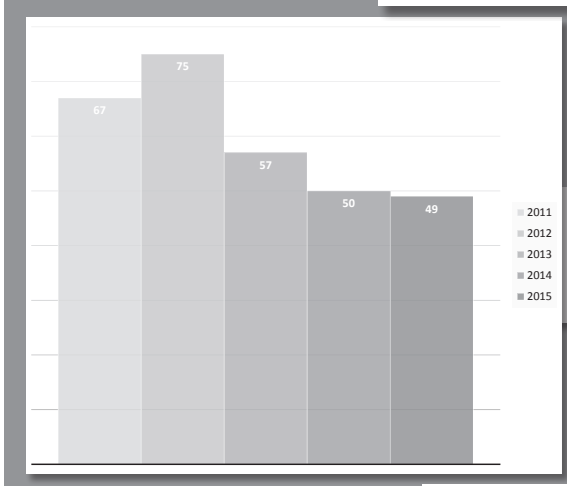
The two-stage ditch design incorporates a floodplain zone, called benches, into the ditch by removing the ditch banks roughly 2-3 feet above the bottom for a width of about 10 feet on each side. This allows the water to have more area to spread out on and decreases the velocity or energy of the water.

The benefits of the two-stage ditch over the traditional ditch include both improved drainage function and ecological function. The two-stage design improves ditch stability by reducing water flow and the need for maintenance, saving both labor and money.

The State of Stormwater Runoff Control on Construction Sites in Elkhart County

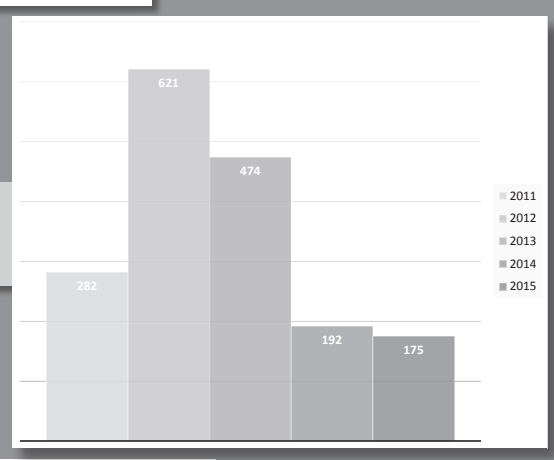
Construction Plans Received and Reviewed

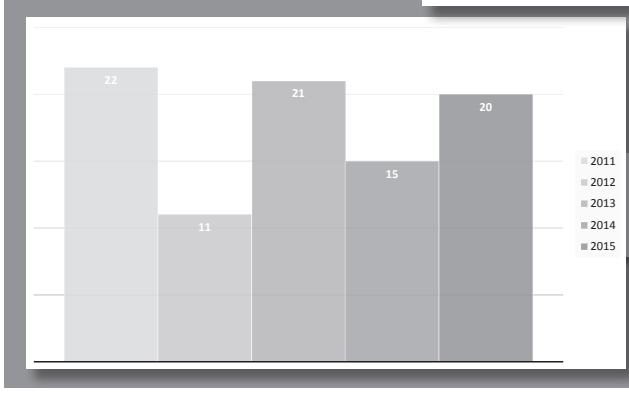




Sites Removed from Active Construction Site List

Site Inspections Conducted





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Rain Barrels and Rain Gardens – What Good Does That Do?

It seems water is in the news more frequently these days. Sometimes because there's too much, sometimes too little. In the future, more attention will need to be paid to water use and quality. You might wonder what solutions you could offer.

If you think you don't contribute much storm water, these calculations might surprise you. For a one inch rain, a half-acre lot receives about 13,277 gallons of water, or 339 40-gallon baths. Goshen gets over 39 inches of rainfall annually, resulting in 534,529 gallons per year, or 13,363 baths. That's a lot! To help reduce your storm water discharge, the Elkhart County Soil & Water Conservation District has some solutions.

Rain barrels can be simple or complex and as cheap or expensive as you want. Stores offer complete kits to bring home and install or some of you DIY types may want to assemble a product of your own. Prices range from a few tens to a few hundreds of dollars. Whatever works for your situation is perfect; it's not the thought but the doing that counts. From 2012-15, 42 rain barrels were installed in Elkhart county with incentive funds from the Greater Elkhart County Stormwater Partnership.

Rain gardens require a bit more effort, but the benefits justify the work. Look at your property to see what you need. Roof drains, improvements, underground utilities, ground slope and traffic patterns are things to consider. These gardens can be a real focal point of your landscaping. Use of native plants adds benefits for insects and require less maintenance. Since 2012, 13 gardens were installed.

The Greater Elkhart County Stormwater Partnership (GECSD) can pay if you live in Elkhart, Goshen, Bristol or unincorporated parts of Elkhart County. Just fill out an application, attend a workshop, submit receipts and photos for your barrel sites and receive $50 a rain barrel (2 per property allowed). Rain gardens must have a plan approved and visited by the SWCD prior to planting to receive up to $250. Application forms and more information are available on the GECSP website (www.stormwaterelkco.org) or from the SWCD office. Workshops will be held at Goshen's Rieth Center on March 9, and at Elkhart's Studebaker Park on April 6th and Wellfield Botanic Gardens on May 3rd. Activities at all sites run from 5-7 pm.

Another free service newly offered is soil borings at each proposed garden site. This will give information on the percolation rate to properly size the garden and to see if amendments are needed. Maps and soil type descriptions can also be provided. Please contact the SWCD office (574) 533-4383 X 3 or send email to debra.jimison@in.nacdnet.net.

Stormwater Partnership Hosts Workshops in 2015

The greater Elkhart County Stormwater Partnership hosted two workshops this year. The first workshop was held at Dal-Mar Catering in Nappanee IN on Feb. 25, 2015. A full breakfast buffet was offered along with speakers Pete Hanrahan from EJ Prescott discussing "Material Updates." Rob Beck from IDEM spoke on "IDEM'S perspective on Self-Monitoring." MutalBank covered sources of "Financing Erosion Control" for contractors. Finishing the workshop with the topic "Why is Erosion Control Important" was Dr. Nathan Bosch, Director of the Center for Lakes and Streams at Grace College. Over 50 people attended the joint partnership sessions between Elkhart, Kosciusko and St. Joseph Counties.

The Elkhart County SWCD (with support from the Greater Elkhart County Stormwater Partnership) provided training on "Perimeter Protection Alternatives." This workshop was held at AG Hall on the Elkhart County Fairgrounds Oct. 28, 2015. Doug Beasy, from Casey's Erosion and Seed Solutions, LLC explained different types of materials to use to keep your construction site stable and control sediment. D2 Land and Water Resource represented by Al McAuliffe and Mike Bledsoe, showed examples of erosion and what materials to use for all types of situations to keep our construction sites protected. Over 40 attendees gathered for this workshop to help educate and promote our "Best Management Practices."

A Look Back at the 2015 SWCD Urban Educational Programs and Seminars

Dr. Nathan Bosch, Director of the Center for Lakes and Streams at Grace College, talks to the gathered Contractors, Engineers, Plan Preparers, and Public Employees, on the "Importance of Erosion Control."

The Elkhart County SWCD Staff explains and educates the gathered crowd on the installation of a Rain Garden.

Nancy Brown, SWCD Program Manager shows different examples of Rain Barrels at the May 5, Rain Barrel and Rain Garden Workshop.

Indiana Department of Environmental Management Stormwater Specialist, Rob Beck, discusses "IDEM'S Perspective on Self-Monitoring Your Construction Site," at the February 25 workshop.

Rain Barrels can be very creative and very useful at the same time.

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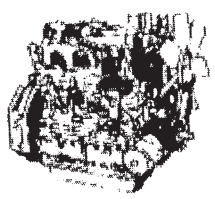

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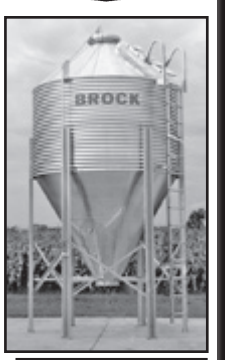

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Other Education Highlights in 2015

Here is a short summary of some of the many education activities of the SWCD in 2015 that are not included elsewhere in this report:

March 13, "Eye on the Sky Day" – we assisted Millersburg Elementary 2nd grade teachers with a series of activities related to weather.

April 22, "Earth Day" – for Millersburg Elementary 3rd graders. The SWCD led several activities to supplement the activities done by teachers. This allows the students to work in smaller groups and improves the experience for them.

April 23, "Rain Barrels" – Wakarusa 2nd graders learned of things their families can do to improve the quality of stormwater leaving their yards

May 15, "Soil Science" – Millersburg 4th graders participated in "round robin" sessions on soil formation, soil texture, weathering and erosion, and watersheds. SWCD again assisted teachers.

May 28, Middlebury 8th Graders – SWCD assisted teachers on field trip to Riverbend Park by conducting sessions on benthic macroinvertebrates.

June 17 and 18, "Benthic Macro Invertebrates and Water Quality" – Boy Scout Camp at Ox Bow County Park.

June 19, "Project Learning Tree Workshop" - for 56 educators who were attending a "summer camp" at ETHOS (Encouraging Technology and Hands On Science) in Elkhart. Project Learning Tree has been providing educators with a hands-on environmental education curriculum since 1976. At this workshop educators were encouraged to include activities that teach about trees in their inquiry based science classes. Along with other activities, they explored life in vacant lots, the different functions of different parts of a tree, and how to identify different tree species.

July 7, "Pond Critters" – for Bashor Home Summer School.

July 10, "Envirofest" – booth on water quality and ways homeowners can improve the quality of stormwater runoff. (Also a promotion of the IMN program.)

July 11, "Michiana Master Gardeners Garden Tour" – educational booth on soil health.

September 3, "Fidler's Pond History" – presented the geology and historical background on Fidler's Pond for the IMN Alumni sponsored "red Barn Series" for Goshen Parks.

September 11, "Life Cycles" – for Millersburg 2nd grade field trip at Benton Spillway. We assisted teachers with a session on tadpoles and frogs and collected benthic macroinvertebrate to discuss life cycles.

September 22 and 23, "Watersheds and Water Quality" – for Nancy Hannah's biology classes at NorthRidge High School.

September 26 and October 24, "Project WET and Project WILD Workshops" – these workshops were conducted at the Fairfield Administration Building in Benton to assist teachers with planning STEAM lessons and curriculum.

September 30, "Landscaping for Life" – assisted with Soils class for this wonderful program at Wellfield Botanic Garden.

October 10, "Hoosier Riverwatch" – training for adults who would like to participate in citizen science projects by monitoring surface water, or who just want to know about how we can monitor the health of our streams and riparian areas.

November 2 and 3, "Soils from a Farmer's Perspective" – Paul Steury's classes at Goshen Middle School.

This photo shows Jim Jackson explaining "Only Rain Down the Storm Drain" to people attending the Elkhart River Restoration Association's rain barrel auction at Goshen's June First Friday event. The SWCD participates in many such events each year. Some of our education outreach activities are geared toward the general public; others are designed for school students; and still others are workshops to present internationally renowned programs to allow local educators tools to incorporate inquiry based learning and hands on activities into their classrooms. With the emphasis on science, technology, engineering, arts, and math (STEAM) these programs are extremely helpful to educators.

Green Day at the 4-H Fair

Green Day at the 4-H Fair was again held on the second Friday of the fair. The SWCD joined many other groups in celebrating our natural environment and demonstrating ways to lower our impact with displays in the park. Our feature was the International Year of Soils, but we also decided to do some Monarch butterfly promotion as well. Nancy Brown, Program Manager, (right) is showing a young fair goer (left) some of the Monarch caterpillars that we raised in the office this year. Youth also had the opportunity to look at photos of some of the microscopic organisms that live in healthy soil. We also featured soil health in our static display in Ag Hall.

2015 Forestry Field Day

The Four County Forestry Field Day was held on the Bob Feitz Farm in St. Joseph County on October 17, 2015. This event was cooperatively sponsored by the Soil and Water Conservation districts of St. Joseph, Elkhart, Kosciusko, and Marshall counties. Participants learned about invasive species identification and removal (Mike Denman of Wakeland Forestry Management), timber sales (Steve Winicker IDNR District Forester), tree thinning (Tom Crowe and Jacob Hougham of Crowe Forest Management), wetlands (Rick Ward USFWS Biologist), and pollinator habitat (Mary Wojcik of Cardno) during this diverse program!

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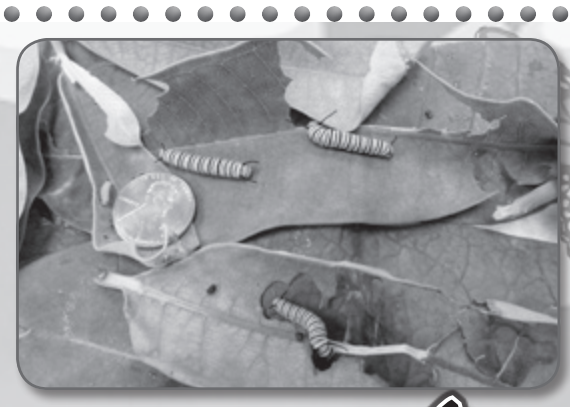
2015 Elkhart County Indiana Master Naturalist Class

Shown above are three members of the 2015 Elkhart County Indiana Master Naturalist Class (who shall remain anonymous to protect the innocent) learning about the differences between reptiles and amphibians from Elkhart County Parks Naturalist, Courtney Franke (third from left). This class is very hands on and one of the favorites each year. We plan to hold another class in 2016. It will be held on Thursdays, between Labor Day and Thanksgiving from 4-7 PM. Classes visit various parks throughout the county. After completing the class and quiz, members are expected to complete 23 volunteer hours to graduate. Volunteer hours are learned by assisting local natural resources agencies and organizations with educational programs, invasive species removal, maintaining trails, and other work that promotes the natural resource mission of that group. Visit our website to learn more about how to enroll in the 2016 class.



Magnificent Monarchs

You may have noticed the patch of common milkweed growing in the flower bed outside of the NRCS/SWCD Office the past few years. Some of you may have wondered, "Why do they let those weeds grow there?" We decided to let those milkweed grow to promote efforts to reverse the decline of Monarch butterflies (Danaus plexippus) in the United States. In our efforts to educate others on the plight of Monarchs, we have learned a lot! The photos showing one generation of Monarchs were all taken of butterflies we raised in the office this summer. By harvesting eggs and raising the caterpillars in the office we were able to protect them from predators and improve the survival rate.

Monarchs are the only native butterfly that cannot survive northern winters in one of their life stages. Other butterflies survive in their pupal state (cocoon), as eggs, or even as adults; but Monarchs, like birds, migrate twice a year. Monarchs are unique in that the ones that fly south in the Fall are three to five generations from the ones that made the journey north in the Spring, while birds repeat the journey, bringing the new generation south with them.

Monarchs are often called the "milkweed butterfly," because it is the only plant the larvae (caterpillars) will eat. Females lay eggs on many species of milkweed, but only milkweed. They lay one tiny, round, white egg on the underside of a leaf—usually only one per plant so there is plenty of food for all. The eggs hatch into a larva in 3—12 days, depending on temperature. There is an egg outlined in black in the upper left of the first photo above and three caterpillars around the penny.

As the larvae eat and grow they absorb the toxic chemicals in the milkweed plant (top row, middle photo). The chemicals stay in the body of the Monarch, even as an adult. This results in predators "getting sick" when they eat a Monarch—and they never do it again!

In about 2 weeks caterpillars grow to be about 2 inches long and attach themselves head down on a convenient twig. This common "j-shape" can be seen in the top right photo. There they shed their outer skin and in a few hours they become a pupa. The pupa is also called a chrysalis and is a lovely, waxy, transparent jade color (bottom right photo). Another 2 weeks pass and the chrysalis becomes transparent, revealing the orange and black of an adult Monarch (bottom, middle photo). An adult butterfly emerges, inflates it wings, and waits for them to dry. It then flies away and the life cycle continues (bottom left photo).

Migration from Elkhart County peaks in mid-September. Those butterflies will not reproduce immediately, but will fly to the Sierra Madre Mountains of Mexico, over winter there, and then start the journey back north. Several generations will continue the journey north, with the September generation, traveling south to continue the cycle.

You can help Monarch populations by allowing milkweed to grow in fencerows and flowerbeds, and by providing nectar plants to feed adults. Learn more at: monarchwatch.org and xerces.org.

NRCS is working with agricultural producers to combat the decline of monarch butterflies by planting milkweed and other nectar-rich plants on private lands. NRCS provides technical and financial assistance through the Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP), Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP) and Agricultural Conservation Easement Program (ACEP). To accelerate conservation to benefit monarch butterflies, NRCS is targeting conservation efforts at the heart of the butterfly's migration route. NRCS launched the effort in 2015, and assistance is available for producers in 10 states in the Southern Plains and Midwest, including Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Kansas, Minnesota, Missouri, Ohio, Oklahoma, Texas and Wisconsin. Producers can ask Amanda about programs by contacting her at 574-533-4383, extension 3.

2016 Poster Contest & Stewardship Week Theme

Did you know that trees can make people, communities, and the environment healthier? One hundred trees can remove 53 tons of carbon dioxide and 430 pounds of other air pollutants each year. Those same trees can catch about 139,000 gallons of rainwater per year. Shade trees in your yard can help you save on air-conditioning costs, and trees can also block winter winds and save winter heating costs? Tree-filled neighborhoods have lower levels of domestic violence and are safer and more sociable. Consumers stay longer and spend more when commercial areas are tree-lined. Each large tree in the front yard adds to the value of that home.

The Elkhart County SWCD is sponsoring a county wide poster contest for students grade K-12 in conjunction with the National Association of Conservation Districts (NACD) Stewardship and Education Committee's 2016 Stewardship theme: "We All Need Trees." Stewardship Week will be officially celebrated April 24 to May 1, 2016; but we encourage you to celebrate throughout the year. The deadline for students to submit entries to our office for the local poster contest is close of business (4:30 P.M.) May 9, 2016. Each entry should have a completed label attached to the back of the poster. A copy of the label is provided on the right.

It is important to learn and understand the many ways that trees improve our environment and provide valuable products that improve our lives. Students can find resources at school or the public library, science books, local newspapers, nature centers, and from the NACD website www.nacdnet.org, Stewardship & Education section. With assistance from a teacher or parents the internet can also provide information on the value of trees. Students should ask their teacher about other possible resources in their community.

Poster contest categories are grades K-1, 2-3, 4-6, 7-9, and 10-12. Entire classes may participate as a classroom project or individual students (including home schooled students) may enter by submitting their poster to the SWCD by the 4:30 P.M., May 9, 2016, deadline. We will award ribbons to the top three posters entered by any classroom. (Teachers: if you teach multiple classes be sure to indicate how many classes are represented, and which students are in each class.) All posters become the property of the Elkhart County SWCD.

Grand prizes of $25 gift cards will be awarded in each of the five grade categories, and these posters will be entered into the state poster contest. Second place prizes of $15 gift cards and third place prizes of $10 gift cards will be awarded in each category as well. One poster will be selected for the cover artwork of the 2015 SWCD annual report, which will be printed in January of 2017.

For additional information on contest rules and the theme please call the Elkhart County SWCD office at 574-533-4383, ext. 3 and visit the NACD website: www.nacdnet.org Stewardship & Education section.

Elkhart County SWCD POSTER LABEL 2016

(attach to the back of each entry)

Name: _____ Age:_____

Address:_____

City:_____ Zip:_____

Parent's Name: _____

Phone: _____

School:_____Grade:_____

Teacher: _____

2016 Tree Sale

Elkhart County SWCD & Michiana Master Gardeners

Order Deadline: Friday, March 4, 2016

Tree Pick Up & Sale: April 16, 2016

It is the desire of the Elkhart County Soil & Water Conservation District and the Michiana Master Gardeners to provide quality tree seedlings to those in the Elkhart County area who would like to plant small quantities of quality hardwood and conifer seedlings. Look below to see what we have to offer.

ELKHART COUNTY
soil and water conservation
DISTRICT

Elkhart County Soil and Water Conservation District Mission Statement:
To promote and implement the protection, conservation and wise use of natural resources in Elkhart County through partnerships.

The programs and services of the Elkhart County Soil and Water Conservation District and the Michiana Master Gardeners are offered on a nondiscriminatory basis without regard to race, color, national origin, sex, marital status, age or disability.

Michiana Master Gardeners' Association
"Helping Others Grow"

Michiana Master Gardener Association Mission Statement:
The Michiana Master Gardener Association is a not-for-profit educational organization dedicated to the improvement of the community. Members of the Association have completed the requirements of the Master Gardener Volunteer Training Program, working in affiliation with the Purdue Extension Service of Elkhart County. Its specific aim is to improve the quality of life in the community by providing information and technical assistance in the area of home horticulture through the use of trained and certified volunteers.

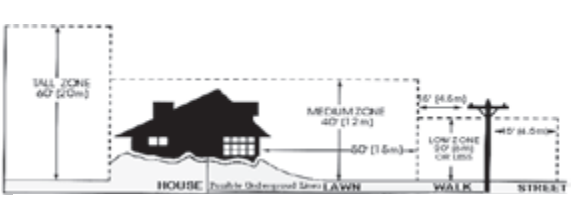
Terms and Conditions

- Payment must accompany the order.
- Orders of 500 - 999 trees per species receive a 20% discount. Orders of 1000 trees per species receive a 30% discount. (Call for pricing information.)
- Orders must be postmarked no later than: **March 4, 2016.**
- Trees are available to anyone and may be planted without restriction. We reserve the right to make alterations if necessary.
- We **DO NOT** furnish replacements.
- Sizes may vary due to weather conditions beyond our control.

Key
B-Border
C –Cone
D –Dry
EC-Erosion Control
F –Fast
FL –Flower
FR –Fruit
FS –Full Sun
M –Moist
MD –Medium
O-Ornamental
PS –Partial Sun
S-Shade
SD –Seed
SL –Slow
T-Timber
W-Wet
WB-Windbreak
WL-Wildlife

Species Information

Species	Mature Height	Growth Rate	Soil Drainage	Plant Products	Light	Salt Tolerant	Benefits
EVERGREENS							
American Arborvitae *(Thuja occidentalis)*	30-60'	SL-MD	Most Soils	C, SD	PS-FS	No	B, EC, WB, WL
Canaan Fir (*Abies balsamea var. phanerolepis)*	40-55'	SL-MD	Most Soils	C, SD	PS-FS	No	B, EC, WB, WL
Eastern White Pine (*Pinus strobus*)	75-100'	F	M, D	C, SD	PS-FS	No	B, EC, T, WB, WL
Norway Spruce (*Picea abies)*	40-60'	MD– F	Most Soils	C, SD	FS	Moderate	B, EC, WB, WL
DECIDUOUS TREES							
Red Oak *(Quercus rubra)*	60-75'	M	M, D	SD	PS-FS	Yes	EC, T, WL
Sassafras (*Sassafras albidum*)	30-60'	MD-F	Various	FL, FR, SD	PS-FS	No	EC, O,WL
Sugar Maple *(Acer saccharum)*	60-75'	SL-MD	Most Soils	FL, SD	PS-FS	Limited	EC, S, T, WL
Tulip Poplar (*Liriodendron tulipifera*)	70-100'	F	M, D	FL, SD	PS-FS	Intermediate	EC, S, T, WL
SMALL TREES AND SHRUBS							
Black Elderberry (Sambucus *nigra)*	5-12'	F	Most Soils	FL, FR	FS	No	B, EC, WL
Blackhaw (*Viburnum prunifolium)*	12-15'	SL-MD	Various	FL,	PS-FS	Moderate	EC, O, WL
Eastern Redbud (*Cercis canadensis*)	25-35'	MD-F	D	FL, FR, SD	PS-FS	No	EC, S, WL
Pagoda Dogwood (*Cornus alternifolia*)	25'	MD	M	FL, SD	FS	No	EC, O, WL
Pawpaw (*Asimina triloba)*	20-40'	MD	Moist Soils	FL, FR, SD	PS-FS	No	EC, O, S ,WL
Prairie Crabapple (*Malus ioensis)*	25'	MD	M, D	FL, FR, SD	PS-FS	Moderate	EC, O, WL



Call Before You Dig

Call the Indiana Underground Plant Protection Service (IUPPS) before you dig. Please call at least 2 days before you begin your project and follow these steps:

(1) Outline your project with white paint
(2) Call IUPPS at 1-800-382-5544
(3) Know your county and township where you are digging
(4) Provide the name and phone number of the person digging (if not you)
(5) Give the utility companies time to respond
(6) Dig with care!

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ **State:** _____ **Zip Code:** _____

Telephone: ***(WE MUST HAVE THIS FOR DAY OF PICK-UP)*** _____

Where did you get this form??? _____

ENTER QUANTITY OF PACKS AND TOTAL DOLLAR AMOUNT DUE BELOW

Species	Seedling Height	Pack of 5	Pack of 10	Pack of 25	Total $$
American Arborvitae *	12-18"	____ X $5.00	____X $8.00	____X $17.00	
Black Elderberry *	12-18"	____ X $8.00	____X $13.00	____X $30.00	
Blackhaw Viburnum *	12-18"	____ X $11.00	____X $19.00	____X $42.00	
Canaan Fir	8-12"	____ X $10.00	____X $18.00	____X $40.00	
Eastern Redbud *	12-18"	____ X $7.00	____X $13.00	____X $29.00	
Eastern White Pine *	12-18"	____ X $11.00	____X $20.00	____X $45.00	
Norway Spruce	12-18"	____ X $5.00	____X $8.00	____X $17.00	
Pagoda Dogwood *	12-18"	____ X $10.00	____X $17.00	____X $38.00	
Pawpaw *	12-18"	____ X $14.00	____X $24.00	____X $54.00	
Prairie Crabapple *	12-18"	____ X $10.00	____X $18.00	____X $41.00	
Red Oak *	12-18"	____ X $7.00	____X $12.00	____X $27.00	
Sassafras *	12-18"	____ X $10.00	____X $18.00	____X $39.00	
Sugar Maple *	12-18"	____ X $7.00	____X $13.00	____X $29.00	
Tulip Poplar *	12-18"	____ X $7.00	____X $12.00	____X $27.00	
Variety Packs: *(Two of each):*		**VP 1:** Eastern Redbud, Pagoda Dogwood, Prairie Crabapple _____ **VP 2:** Black Elderberry, Pawpaw, Sugar Maple _____		Qty of Packs ____ X $11.00	
*Native to Indiana				**Total Due**	$.

Make all checks payable to:
Elkhart County Soil and Water Conservation District
17746-B County Road 34, Goshen, IN 46528 Phone: (574) 533-4383 ext. 3

OFFICE USE: CHECK #_____ RECEIPT # _____ CONFIRMATION# _____