



# Grass Roots for Conservation



Vol. 45

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www.elkcoswcd.org

## Elkhart County Soil & Water Conservation District

17746 County Rd. 34, Ste. B ~ Goshen, IN 46528 ~ Phone: (574) 533-4383 ext. 3 – jhess@elkhartcounty.com



### COVER YOUR FUTURE

**WEDNESDAY, MARCH 4, 2020**

**9:00 A.M. – 3:00 P.M.**

*Elkhart County Community Center, Elkhart  
County 4-H Fairgrounds • Goshen, IN*

*A meeting and tradeshow on options in  
conservation management sponsored by:*

**Elkhart County Soil and Water Conservation District  
Purdue Extension Elkhart County  
USDA-NRCS**

#### **FEATURED SESSIONS:**

##### **"Respect Your Soil"**

Hans Kok, Ph.D., CCA (*Conservation Consultant*)

##### **"Future Weather Trends and Patterns"**

Jeffrey S. Dukes Ph.D.

(*Professor, Director of Purdue Climate Change Research Center*)

##### **"Building Resilience with Cover Crops"**

Eileen J. Kladviko, (*Agronomy Dept., Purdue University*)

##### **"Ask the Experts"**

Panel Discussion, All Speakers

**—THIS IS A FREE EVENT—**

*Lunch will be provided.*

To register contact the SWCD office  
at (574) 533-4383, ext. 3 or  
email [latkins@elkhartcounty.com](mailto:latkins@elkhartcounty.com)



### *Annual Meeting*

**Thursday, March 5, 2020**

**Dinner starts at 6:30 p.m.**

Martin Room, Elkhart County 4-H Fairgrounds,  
17746 County Road 34, Goshen, Indiana.

*You may know someone receiving an  
award on this list and may not know  
they are winning an award.*

Agri-Business of the Year  
**T & T Fertilizer, Inc.**

Conservation Farmer  
**Morehouse Grain Farms, LLC**

Conservation Educators of the Year  
**ACCELL Farm**

Friend of the SWCD  
**Ryan Owen**

River Friendly Farmer  
**Oneeda Farms**

Urban Conservationist of the Year  
**Andy Knox**

*Make your reservation by calling (574) 533-4383 ext 3, 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!*

15TH ANNUAL ELKHART COUNTY  
SWGD/MICHIANA MASTER GARDNER

# SEEDLING TREE SALE

**Deadline for our  
Tree Sale Orders is  
Friday, March 13, 2020**

We will have extra trees in 5 packs on  
April 18, 2020, that will be for sale when  
you come to pick up your order that day.

**FEATURING NATIVE  
& INDIANA ADAPTED  
SPECIES.**

**BEAUTIFY YOUR  
LANDSCAPE.**

**GO GREEN  
FOR LESS!**

**QUALITY 10"-24"  
SEEDLINGS**



**LAST  
CHANCE**

**For more information contact:  
574-533-4383, ext. 3 • [www.elkcoswcd.org](http://www.elkcoswcd.org)**

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SUPPLY CENTER

**STEVE FIDLER**  
PRESIDENT

Corporate Office  
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## GET YOUR EQIP APPLICATION TODAY!

Been thinking about adding manure storage? What about using cover crops or no-till? How about better utilizing your pasture? Maybe you want to add pollinator habitat or trees to an area of your farm? The Environmental Quality Incentive Program (EQIP) through the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service can assist in doing all this and more. EQIP is a competitive, voluntary conservation program available for agricultural producers and landowners. Through EQIP, NRCS provides financial and technical assistance to install conservation practices that reduce soil erosion and sedimentation, improve soil health, improve water and air quality, and create wildlife habitat. Many applicants are most interested in using funds to address soil erosion and water quality concerns on their land; however, funds are also available for pasture, forestry management, confined livestock operations, organic producers, high tunnels, and wildlife habitat.

At this time, the application deadline for 2020 EQIP has not yet been announced but is anticipated to be announced for early spring. Producers and landowners interested in applying are encouraged to contact the NRCS office. Participants must meet EQIP eligibility requirements. NRCS will work with applicants to determine eligibility and complete necessary worksheets and rankings for the applicant to complete for funding. Part of the application process will include a field visit with staff to the area of concern/where you want to install a conservation practice. Winter is a good time to do this, as the crop fields and areas of concern will be visible and accessible. Don't delay in getting your application in!

If you are interested in applying for EQIP or have more questions please contact Amanda Kautz, District Conservationist, at (574) 533-4383 Ext. 3. More information about EQIP and other technical and financial assistance available through Indiana NRCS conservation programs, visit: <https://www.nrcs.usda.gov/wps/portal/nrcs/in/programs/>.

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[www.marbach.us](http://www.marbach.us)

# 2020

Elkhart County

# Indiana Master Naturalist Program



An introductory program of nature discovery and service learning for adults brought to you by the Elkhart County Soil and Water Conservation District (SWCD).

## 2020 CLASSES

*Classes will be held at locations throughout Elkhart County*

<u>Date</u>	<u>Time</u>	<u>Class</u>
April 30	5:30-9:00 p.m.	Native Plants
May 7	6:00-9:00 p.m.	Fish & Herps
May 14	6:00-9:00 p.m.	Water
May 21	6:00-9:00 p.m.	Geology & Soils
May 28	6:00-9:00 p.m.	Entomology
June 4	6:00-9:00 p.m.	Forests & Trees
June 11	6:00-9:00 p.m.	Mammals & Birds
June 18	5:30-9:00 p.m.	People & Natural Resources & Quiz
TBD	TBD	Outdoor Adventure Skills



### REQUIREMENTS

- Be at least 18 years old
- Submit registration form to the Elkhart County SWCD
- Pay class fee of \$175 once registration is confirmed
- Attend at least 8 classes
- Complete final open book quiz
- Complete 24 hours of volunteer service

### FOR MORE INFORMATION:

visit: [www.elkcoswcd.org](http://www.elkcoswcd.org)

To register call  
574-533-4383 ext. 3 or  
email: [jwait@elkhartcounty.com](mailto:jwait@elkhartcounty.com)

### REGISTRATION ENDS

April 3, 2020

**Q. Mr. Worm do you prefer green vegetation or dead material? I am thinking of planting this spring into green cover crops. What are the advantages of planting into living cover?**



Send your questions to  
**Walden the Worm**

*The "Dear Abby" of conservation farming!*

A. Walden here. Good question! First keep in mind I do not have teeth, so I am limited on what I can eat. If you find your corn seed or roots have been eaten it was not me nor any of my kin. Most likely corn seed maggot and corn root worm are responsible. We earthworms feed on dead, decaying plants and soil microorganisms. We cannot move fast or far, so we must live near a food source. In a crop field, you, Mr. Farmer, are the one who manages that food source. Keep in mind green vegetation in time gives dead and decaying tissue. You can't have one without the other, and without either, I am no longer fed and working for you.

The advantages and benefits of planting green are many, yielding first year benefits as well as long term payoff. When the cover crop is allowed to grow until planting, more biomass is produced. The greater amount of soil cover helps to protect your soil from erosion from beating rain drops and overland flow. The longer growing time produces more biological glues, giving your soil a higher level of aggregate stability in water. This also will contribute to better soil structure and erosion resistance. The cover crop roots have time to grow deeper adding more pore space as they work their way through the soil profile. Living roots also exude sugar, which is food for my friends in the soil food web. Live roots help feed soil microbes and capture nutrients in their roots and top growth. When the cover crops are terminated, the now organic form of nutrients is rapidly released to your crop, be it corn, beans, or even hemp. This is called nutrient cycling. More roots and longer growth will also increase infiltration and in excessively wet years will help dry your field by using the extra water for continued growth. Lastly, I would like to remind you some years, when spring is dry or planting is late, bare soil before crop canopy can become too hot for good corn root growth. Soil temps above 87° F are too hot for good corn root growth.

Mr. Farmer, plant cover crops and leave soil covered; then my kin and I will be well fed and work for you. Your soil will become more productive and profitable, and soil organic matter levels will slowly increase. Soil organic matter is given on the first line of your soil test because it is very important!

Until next month,

- *Walden*

## Upcoming Events!

**Feb. 24 SWCD Board Meeting:** 5:30 p.m., SWCD Office, Elkhart County 4-H Fairgrounds, Goshen

**Mar. 4 Cover Your Future:** A meeting and tradeshow on options in conservation management, 9:00 a.m. - 3:30 p.m. Elkhart County Fairgrounds, see the above flyer for more information.

**Mar. 5 78th SWCD Annual Meeting:** *Save the Date* ~ 6:30 p.m. in the ECCC Building/Martin Room at the Elkhart County 4-H Fairgrounds, Goshen. To register call the office (574) 533-4383 ext. 3, or you can email Lora at: [latkins@elkhartcounty.com](mailto:latkins@elkhartcounty.com)

**Mar. 13 2020 Tree Sale DEADLINE:** Don't forget today is the last day to place an order, you better hurry before it is too late!!!

**Mar. 16 SWCD Board Meeting:** 5:30 p.m., SWCD Office, Elkhart County 4-H Fairgrounds, Goshen

**Apr. 10 Good Friday Holiday:** : The SWCD Office will be closed for the Good Friday Holiday

**Apr. 18 2020 Tree Sale & Order Pick Up:** 9:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m. 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, we will have extra trees in case you didn't order everything you wanted when you sent in your order.

**Apr. 20 SWCD Board Meeting:** 5:30 p.m., SWCD Office, Elkhart County 4-H Fairgrounds, Goshen

### SWCD - NRCS CONSERVATION PARTNERSHIP DIRECTORY

17746 County Road 34, Ste. B, Goshen, IN 46528-9261 • Ph. (574) 533-4383, ext. 3 • [www.elkcoswcd.org](http://www.elkcoswcd.org)

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**Associate Supervisors:** David Bontrager      Joe Brown      Brian Campbell      Gary Kauffman      Keith E. Miller  
**SWCD Staff:** James Hess, District Manager      Lora L. Atkins, Secretary/Treasurer      Todd Clark, Conservationist      Jenna Wait, 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.