



CONSERVATION AT THE CROSSROADS

Vol. 34, No. 1, Winter, 2013

SWCD Board Invites You to Attend Their 43rd Annual Meeting February 19, 2013, 5 - 7 p.m.

The Marion County Soil & Water Conservation District Board of Supervisors invites you to attend their annual meeting on Tuesday, February 19th from 5:00 to 7:00 p.m. at the Indiana State Fairgrounds, Discovery Hall Meeting Hall, 1202 E. 38th St. Indianapolis, IN.

This year, in addition to reviewing the accomplishments of the SWCD, we will give a few local organizations an opportunity to share their visions and plans for our community. Those invited to share include David Hirschle-Indianapolis Office of Sustainability- Urban Gardening Program, Pam Thevenow – Marion County Health Department - Water Quality & Hazardous Materials Management, Jodi Perras and others – Indianapolis Green Congregations.

We hope you will be able to join us. Light refreshments will be served and there is no charge for this year's meeting. Please RSVP by phone (317-786-1776) or email (marilyn-hughes @iaswcd.org) before February 13th.



Wonderful volunteers step up to be candidates for SWCD Supervisors each year. Find out more about our supervisors on our website - About Us - Supervisors at www.marionswcd.org.

SWCD

Board of Supervisors

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Marvin Brethauer,

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Mark Mongin
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Pete Baldwin

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Help Create “Guidelines for an Environmentally Literate Citizenry”

Comments are now being sought by the working group for the “Guidelines for an Environmentally Literate Citizenry” on their draft of this important document. An Environmental Literacy Plan is a document that outlines the vision and steps required to achieve an environmentally literate citizenry and sustainable communities throughout Indiana.

According to the Environmental Education Association of Indiana (EEAI), “environmental literacy is the primary and overarching goal of environmental education.” When an individual has an adequate understanding of how their actions and decisions affect the environment they can act on that understanding in a responsible and effective manner. An environmentally literate citizen has the knowledge, tools and sensitivity to weigh various sides of environmental issues to make responsible decisions as individuals and as members of their community.

*Comment on the Draft
Guideline at
<http://www.goshen.edu/eeai/>*

The first step in creating the Environmental Literacy Plan (ELP) for Indiana was to consider what concepts, skills, and experiences a person in Indiana should have in order to understand the environment and his/her role in it. In the beginning, the ELP working group is focusing our work on those concepts, skills, and experiences young people in grades K-12 should have. We all know that learning is life-long; the ELP working group plans to focus on pre-K and adults in the future.

We are calling these concepts, skills and experiences the *Guidelines for an Environmentally Literate Citizenry*. After the citizens of Indiana have had a chance to offer feedback on the *Guidelines*, they will be revised and considered complete. They will then be the building blocks for the rest of the Environmental Literacy Plan.

How was this draft created? It came out of a great deal of research, feedback, discussion, and editing by the ELP working group. Two sources were the basis for the document: (1) North American Association for Environmental Education’s (NAAEE) *Excellence in Environmental Education-Guidelines for Learning (PreK-12)*, and (2) Wisconsin Environmental Education standards.

The Mission of the Marion County SWCD is to assist Marion County land users in conserving soil, water and related natural resources by providing technical, financial and educational services.



Conservation at the Crossroads is published quarterly to give information to landusers by the Marion County Soil & Water Conservation District, Discovery Hall, 1202 E. 38th St, Suite 200, Indianapolis, IN 46205
Phone: 317-786-1776 FAX: 317-786-1757 website: marionswcd.org
The Marion County SWCD holds a regular monthly board meeting on the fourth Tuesday of each month at 3:00 p.m. These meetings are open to the public & are held at the SWCD office at the address above. This board meets to administer the program of soil & water conservation in Marion County. The district prohibits discrimination in its programs on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, religion, age, disability, political beliefs, and marital or familial status. (Not all prohibited bases apply to all programs.)

Check Out Our Updated Website!

Has it been awhile since you visited our website – www.marionswcd.org?

Please visit us soon and see our new, updated site. We have kept much of our best information, did some redecorating and re-organizing and added a few new highlights. Also you will find a very helpful search engine which will help you locate all of our natural resource topics.

to Marion County landowners and how to reach our NRCS District Conservationist. Our events tab will keep you updated on upcoming events and training sessions hosted by the SWCD.

In addition you can donate to the SWCD and become an Affiliate Member, learn more about our supervisors and staff, view our latest newsletters and annual reports, review the various services offered by the



The website is organized by major topics: Soil, Water, Trees, Go Green, Agriculture and Events. Under the soil tab you will find information on Rule 5 Erosion Control, our Stop that Dirt Campaign, Soil types and drainage, and Nutrient management with information on soil testing and soil testing labs. Under Water you will find information on water quality, watersheds, watershed projects, septic systems. Under Trees you will find basic information on choosing and planting trees, our favorite tree links and information on our next tree and shrub sale. Our Go Green section has a variety of topics including articles on wildlife, water management, plants, lawn & garden and many more. Under Agriculture you will find what USDA-NRCS programs are available

SWCD and locate our office easily with our map page.

Our latest news will continue to be found on the front page but you can also find important news releases and articles on important topics on our “News” page. Under the “Additional Help” tab you will find our contractors/service providers list and a list of our partner groups and agencies.

We hope you will enjoy visiting our site and return often for gathering information on your natural resource needs.

Check it out!
www.marionswcd.org

Save Trees!
A pdf version of this newsletter can be sent to your email mailbox. Contact Marilyn at marilyn-hughe@iaswcd.org or make a request on our website to be put on our email mailing list.

Nuisance Wildlife Information Online

Hoosiers trying to deal with nuisance wildlife can now access a broad range of information any time of the day, any day of the year on the Indiana Department of Natural Resources Web site.

An easy link to the DNR's Nuisance Wildlife online product is on the main DNR Web site. It can be accessed at www.IN.gov/dnr/fishwild/2351.htm.

The Nuisance Wildlife page provides specific information on the general characteristics, food habits, distribution, reproduction, prevention and control techniques, and disease threats of many species of mammals and birds, as well as general information about snakes.

Many wild animals in Indiana have become displaced as the result of urban growth and removal of their habitat. While some species may move to other areas where natural habitat exists, some species actually thrive in urban settings. Wild animals such as these are protected by the State of Indiana for all of the citizens of Indiana, but sometimes they cannot peaceably coexist.

Because of the large number of raccoons and other species that cause a nuisance for landowners throughout the state, the DNR is unable to provide assistance to actually help remove the animals. The DNR does offer some solutions and advice on how to try to prevent future problems and remove wild animals that have created a problem.

The DNR also licenses individuals to provide nuisance wild animal control services to the public. Find one near you by going to <http://wildlifehotline.info/> and clicking on the "Find A Professional" link near the top of the page.

Donate to the Marion County SWCD

Donors become affiliate members of the SWCD, becoming a significant part of fulfilling our mission to promote and enable residents to improve and conserve natural resources on their land. Affiliate members are rewarded for their generosity based on levels of contribution.

Copper Members (\$25-\$99) receive recognition in the SWCD newsletter and one ticket to the SWCD Annual Meeting.

Nickel Members (\$100-\$249) receive copper benefits plus a ticket to a SWCD workshop.

Platinum Members (\$250-\$500) Nickel benefits plus a coupon for a 3 gallon tree during our tree sale.

Silver Member (\$500-\$999) receives platinum benefits plus a 5 gallon tree.

Gold Member (\$1000 or more) receives silver benefits plus a SWCD rain barrel.

Contact the office 317-786-1766 or through our website www.marionswcd.org to donate.

Grazing Conference February 6th

Incredible lineup of speakers to help you learn new tricks of the trade, selecting cattle for fescue, extending the grazing season and improving your soil to get the most from your grass. For more information contact the Daviess County Soil and Water Conservation office at 812-254-4780 Extension 3, email Toni Allison at dcswcd@rtccom.net, or visit their website at http://daviesscoswcd.org/main/page_sigc.html.

Support the Mission of the Marion County SWCD by becoming an Affiliate Member! Check our website: www.marionswcd.org or call the office for more information (317)786-1776

Winter Help Needed to “Stop That Dirt!”

Winter is a critical time for water pollution caused by sedimentation. Just when our ditches and streams have to be prepared to be running at maximum capacity to handle the late winter and early springs rains, sediment is running off the land at accelerated speeds. Sediment not only pollutes the water, it also clogs up our waterways. During the winter the ground is often frozen, not allowing water to percolate through the soil and even worse, on many construction sites there is no vegetation to capture soil particles.

One of our main responsibilities at the SWCD is to minimize sedimentation by working with construction sites disturbing one acre or more to eliminate sediment leaving the construction site. Each construction site is required to have an erosion control plan in place and the erosion control measures kept in working condition.

In order to help our staff keep track of all of the construction projects in the county, we developed a “Stop That Dirt Campaign” where citizens can contact us when they see an erosion problem in the county. To help you know what to look for we have set up information and a form on our website that can be filled out and sent to us.

Also on our website we have information to help contractors meet erosion control standards set by the state. Glenn Lange on our staff is also available for consultation. You can reach him by calling the office 317-786-1776 or emailing him at glenn-lange@iaswcd.org.

Check our website for more information at www.marionswcd.org. The “Stop That Dirt Campaign” information can be found under the Soil icon at the top of the page and there is also a link on our rotating banner. Contractors can find information under the Soil icon then going to the Erosion and Sediment Control page.



Happy New Year from the Marion County SWCD Board and Staff!

Dig It! Dirt Facts

70,000

Different types of soil
in the U.S.

1

Tablespoon of soil has
more organisms in it
than there are people
on the earth

500

Minimum number of
years it takes to form
one inch of topsoil

5,000

Different types of
bacteria in one gram
of soil

.01

Percent of earth's
water held in soil

15

Tons of dry soil per
acre that pass through
one earthworm in one
year.

1,400,000

Number of earth-
worms that can be
found in one acre of
cropland

20,000

Pounds of living mat-
ter found in the top 6"
of an acre of soil

Winter Backyard Conservation

Food – Water – Shelter – the basic needs of wildlife can be more difficult for our urban wildlife to find during the wintertime. Homeowners interested in attracting wildlife to their yards can easily help them meet these basic needs.

Leaving plants and seedheads in your gardens until spring helps provide food. If you use bird feeders in the winter be sure to keep them filled all winter. The birds become dependent on you once they develop a habit of coming to your yard for food. You can adjust the types of seeds you

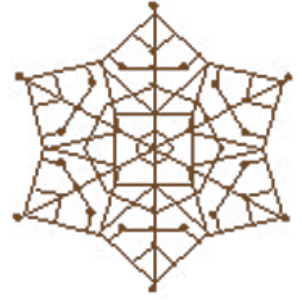
provide to attract your favorite winter species. Plant seed and berry producing shrubs and plants that



can provide food long after the tree leaves have fallen.

During very cold periods wildlife water sources freeze up causing great stress on many species. During a time when conserving energy for survival is a high priority, wildlife often has to roam far distances to find water. During sunny days of cold weather placing a black rubber lined water container on the south side of a building may be enough to keep water

from freezing for many hours of the day. Water heaters for bird baths and small artificial ponds are also available. Be sure to keep feed and water containers clean all winter.



You can provide shelter for wildlife by providing shrubs and evergreens in your yard. You can build a brushpile of branches and twigs in an out of the way place in your yard away from buildings. Brushpiles provide shelter for ground nesting birds, chipmunks, rabbits, hibernating reptiles, amphibians and insects. Start with larger limbs and crisscross stacking loosely adding leaves and cut grass.

Practice backyard conservation this winter and you will be rewarded with beautiful and entertaining wildlife outside your windows all winter long.

A BIG Thank You to Our 2012 Marion County SWCD Conservation Affiliate Members!

Nickel Members (\$100 - \$249)

Fred Weisheit, Fred's Excavating

Professor Frederick Bein

Copper Members (\$25 - \$99)

Bob Eddleman

Daryn Fair, Fall Creek Land Design

Mark Kautz

Winter Ecology Fun Facts

- ◆ Many insects' life spans end at the beginning of winter - right after they have laid eggs that will hatch in the spring.
- ◆ Animals who stay put and awake during the winter are helped by the changes their bodies make in response to shorter daylight hours. They also adapt their behavior to survive the cold.
- ◆ Mammals fur growth changes for the winter to provide them with warmth.
- ◆ Many birds grow 50% or more feathers for the winter - like a down comforter!
- ◆ Goldfinches' bodies can break down fat faster when they need extra help keeping warm.
- ◆ Deer seek southern slopes during the day, bedding down in depressions in the snow to soak up the sun's warmth. At night they gather in the woods where trees insulate them from the wind and cooler temperatures.
- ◆ Buddying up - small mammals will cuddle up for warmth when the temperatures dip way down. Raccoons will huddle in communal winter dens.

**From www.humanesociety.org/animals/resources/facts/winter_survival.html*

Cost Share Assistance Available for Upper White River Watershed

Landowners in parts of the northeast corner of Marion County may be eligible for cost-share funding for urban and agricultural projects to work to reduce nonpoint source water pollutants from the Upper White River Watershed.

The funding has been made available through an IDEM 319 grant to the Upper White River Watershed Alliance. Potential projects may include rain gardens, bioswales, pervious pavement, green roofs, wetland creation or restoration, filter strips, grassed waterways and cover crops.

To view a map of eligible areas, a listing of practices, and receive information on applying for this program please visit the Upper White River Watershed Alliance website: <http://www.uwrwa.org>

**Farm Services Agency News
Marion/Johnson Counties
3059 N. Morton
Franklin, IN 46131
317-736-6822**



Contact the office for
Farm Bill Updates

Contact Us
for more
information on soil
& water related
issues

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Fall Creek Watershed Cost Share Assistance for Urban Conservation Projects

Financial assistance is available to landowners in areas of Hamilton, Hancock, Marion and Madison Counties who wish to implement conservation practices that reduce stormwater runoff, help with drainage concerns, and contribute to clean water and soil health. Several cost-share programs are available to offset the expense of urban practices in several watersheds. Practices are varied and could include rain gardens / bioswales, water edge enhancements, filter strips, invasive plant removal, prairie plantings, tree plantings, and woodland and wildlife habitat.

Funds are limited and will be dispensed on a first-come, first-serve basis, so apply early. For application deadlines and details, contact Leslie White, Fall Creek Watershed Partnership Backyard Conservation Coordinator, at 317-773-2181 or leslie-white@iaswcd.org. Visit their website at: www.hancockswcd.org/Fall-Creek-Watershed-Partnership/



Bioswales are just one of the urban conservation projects which qualify for cost share assistance through the Fall Creek Watershed Partnership Project.

The Spring Tree & Shrub Sale orders will be due by May 2nd. Pick up date will be May 11th. Detailed information on each species will soon be available from the SWCD office - 317-786-1776 and at www.marionswcd.org.

SWCD

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