



CONSERVATION AT THE CROSSROADS

Vol. 36, No. 1, Winter, 2015

SWCD Board Invites You to Attend Their 45th Annual Meeting February 17, 2015, 5 - 7 p.m.

The Marion County Soil & Water Conservation District Board of Supervisors invites you to attend their annual meeting on Tuesday, February 17th from 5:00 to 7:00 p.m. at the Indiana State Fairgrounds, Discovery Hall 1202 E. 38th St. Indianapolis, IN.

During our annual meeting we will hear from the Paramount School of Excellence (PSOE) including its director Tom Reddicks. From its innovative framework, PSOE strives to become a dedicated "Green School". They make use of exciting components like wind turbines, recycling, composting, and student gardens in an effort to keep their students and families active and aware of their impact on the environment.

Tom has worked in public, private, and charter schools, and has had the pleasure of playing a role in the opening of three K-8 charter schools in the U.S.; all Core Knowledge schools. He has been writing school curriculum and presenting educational workshops around the country since that time.

"In my experience around the country, I have never worked in a more impactful, innovative, and interactive educational environment."

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 12th.



"Our school challenges the traditional boundaries between subject areas, creating a culture of constant connectivity within the school's Core Knowledge curriculum."

SWCD Board of Supervisors
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Conservation Workshop Assists Golf Course & Large Property Owners

The Fall Creek Watershed Partnership (FCWP) Backyard Conservation Program, as part of its mission to improve water quality and offer technical and education assistance to landowners and land users, offered a Golf Course Workshop on Conservation Best Management Practices with key partners including Golf Course Superintendents Association of America (GCSAA), Purdue Extension, White River Alliance and the Fort Golf Course on November 12, 2014, at the Fort Golf and Conference Center.

More than 50 participants attended this all-day workshop in Lawrence to be proactive in their intent to be good stewards of our environmental resources. The event was tailored to assist golf course superintendents and staff, as well as parks and recreation practitioners, MS4 managers, landscape architects, bioengineering and conservation firms, and pesticide and nutrient applicators with their conservation practice planning and implementation for clean water, healthy soils, and natural resources. Indiana State Chemist credits and GCSAA points were offered.

Topics ranged from a national perspective on nutrient regulation, nutrient and pest management, drought tolerant turf, irrigation tools for water conservation, the Audubon International Certified Cooperative Sanctuary Program, and habitat restoration: invasive and natives in the landscape. Keynote speaker Dr. Michael Hurdzan joined the group to share his vast experience in designing sustainable, accessible, and profitable courses across the globe. In light of challenges such as drought, he emphasized precision turf management by scientifically managing water and showcased several case studies. The Fall Creek Watershed Partnership and White River Alliance presented a variety of technical and financial resources available to help large landowners plan and install conservation projects. A panel of Superintendents representing private, public and university golf courses discussed the challenges and successes they have had with best management practices.

Special thanks are due our hosting course



superintendent Randy Brehmer, the Fort Golf Course, and to speakers Chava McKeel, GCSAA Government Affairs; Dr. Aaron Patton, Purdue University Extension; Jim Held, Automatic Irrigation Supply, Inc; Dr. Michael Hurdzan, Hurdzan Golf; Nancy Richardson, Audubon Golf Certification Program; Alex Salmins, Cardno JFNew; Shaena Reinhart, White River Alliance; and Leslie White, FCWP; Brent Emerick, Indiana University Golf Course and Athletic Fields; Adrian Roach, City of Peru Parks and Recreation Department; and Cory Troyer, Otter Creek Golf Course, moderator John Miller, GCSAA Great Lakes Regional Representative; and welcome committee members Bill Rice, Purdue Extension Hamilton County; Glenn Lange, Marion County SWCD, and Jan Maci, Backyard Conservation Program volunteer. We also wish to thank our sponsors and exhibitors for their commitment to helping us offer educational programs: Jacobsen Great Lakes (A Textron Company); Automatic Irrigation Supply; Cardno JFNew, D2 Land and Water Resource; Hoosier Aquatic Management.

The FCWP Backyard Conservation Program is made possible by Clean Water Indiana grants through the ISDA / Division of Soil Conservation. If you are a landowner in the Fall Creek Watershed of Hamilton, Hancock, Madison or Marion Counties and are interested in putting conservation practices and resources to work for you, contact Leslie White at leslie-white@iaswcd.org or 317-773-2181.

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.

Indianapolis Stormwater User Fees- Enhancing Citizens' Health & Safety

By John Hazlett, SWCD Supervisor

The following contains excerpts from the Proposed Storm Water Rate Adjustment webpage available from the City of Indianapolis Department of Public Works at the following address:

<http://www.indy.gov/eGov/City/DPW/RebuildIndy/StormWaterProgram/Pages/User-Rate-Adjustment.aspx>

During rain events, storm water runs off of rooftops, parking lots, streets, driveways and other surfaces in the City of Indianapolis' storm water drainage system. Many parts of the City lack adequate storm sewers and drainage, leading to standing water in yards and flooded streets and basements. Limited storm water management in some parts of Marion County also can contribute to raw sewage overflows into our rivers and streams.

In the late 1990s, the City developed a Storm Water Master Plan to identify project-by-project storm water needs throughout Marion County and subsequently established a storm water utility fee to generate the capital funding required to address drainage issues and improve the overall water quality. In 2012, the Marion County Storm Water Management District (MCSWMD) identified 380 flooding or drainage problem areas throughout the county, an estimated \$320 million in storm water infrastructure needs. The MCSWMD services approximately 300,000 customers in Marion County, including residents and businesses. There is an average of 20,000 storm water related complaints filed each year, highlighting the need to improve our storm water system to alleviate flooding and drainage problems.

In 2006, the City increased the storm water user fee from \$1.25 to a flat \$2.25 for

all residential users, based on an established 2,800 square feet of impervious area for each property. The City also established a fee for non-residential users proportional to the measured amount of impervious areas located on the property. Proposal No. 249 was introduced at the City County Council on August 18th, 2014, approved by the Public Works Committee on November 20th and passed by the full City County Council on December 8th by a 17-11 vote. Changes to the current fee structure include establishment of a base billing unit of 1,000 square feet of impervious area and storm water credit program discounts for incorporation of green and infiltrative practices. The full proposal is available for review here:

<http://www.indy.gov/eGov/Council/Proposals/Documents/2014/PROP14-249.pdf>



The Marion County Soil and Water Conservation District supports the City's desire to enhance the health and safety of the citizens of Marion County through the adjustment of our storm water utility fee and passage of Proposal No. 249.

Serving the Needs of Urban Agriculture

Urban agriculture, from community gardens to small farms, has increased in popularity and prevalence. In response to this growing audience, we have started an urban growers' materials / resource exchange program to connect groups in great need with those who have excess or discounted resources and volunteer interests.

This year, we worked with several community organizations to help plan and secure resources to implement three community gardens and to add teaching gardens to an existing garden. Broadway United Methodist Church created three raised beds and rain water harvesting for neighbors to grow and water vegetables and herbs. Highland Vicinity neighborhood greened a vacant street corner with raised garden beds, a strawberry patch, native trees and a rain garden. On a once vacant corner lot, Urban Patch members installed a fruit, herb and berry patch along with native trees, a rain garden and bench seating. Fall Creek Gardens added a section of teaching beds to their existing raised garden beds. Additional neighborhoods have requested technical assistance in planning and leveraging resources for new gardens.

These projects build a sense of community across cultures and ages, foster environmental awareness through hands-on learning, and encourage healthy lifestyles through physical activity, neighborhood beautification, native plantings, and fresh produce. With District programming, community members also have opportunities to learn how to care for and enrich their soil and yields through sustainable practices such as cover crops, conservation tillage, composting, vermiculture, mulching, and water conservation to name a few.

The urban sector experiences unique challenges and needs. Simple resources that rural growers may take for granted can be



James Whitfield and neighbors in Highland Vicinity harvesting the first year crop from new community garden raised beds

major setbacks for city growers. Watering is usually done at least in part by manual labor, quality top soil for raised beds is a constant need, getting seedlings and a few shade trees can be costly, and lumber and mulch for raised beds are expensive. Grassroots efforts like these usually operate by volunteers or part-time staff and have limited resources and support. For this reason, we are spreading the word to suburban and rural neighbors, construction firms, home and land improvement businesses, and nurseries and garden centers to see if we can match materials, supplies and other resources with gardening places in need.

If you represent a community garden or small farm with needs, or a supplier with products that an urban garden or farm could use, contact Leslie White at leslie-white@iaswcd.org or 765-274-6499 to learn more about this program.

A list of current needs is available on our website:

www.marionswcd.org

Materials and Financial Support for Fall Creek Watershed Urban Agriculture Programs

Allisonville Nursery
Big Car
City of Indianapolis
Department of Public Works
City of Indianapolis
Neighborhood Liaison Program
City of Indianapolis
Community Economic Development
The Children's Museum of Indianapolis
Gatewood Vegetable Farm & Greenhouses
Fall Creek Gardens
Green With Indy
Jane Hardisty
Hoosier Aquatic Management Inc.
Lowe's
Marion County Health and Hospital Corporation
ProBuild
Tree-o Tree Trimming Service
Wrights Tree Trimming Service

Volunteers:

Anthony Bridgeman
Maggie Goeglein
Davey Jackson and son
Christopher Hall
Rick May and daughter
John Moore
Johnny Moore
Joyce Moore
Justin Moore
Brian Neilson
Geneva Rawlins Tyler
Leslie White
Jim White
James Whitfield

Many thanks to our donors and volunteers, from those contributing materials and time to those giving \$25 to thousands of dollars. Your support makes everything possible.

WANTED: 2015 SWCD Affiliate Members

Affiliate members are individuals, groups or organizations who choose to financially support the work of the Marion County Soil and Water Conservation District. These funds are vitally needed especially during these lean financial times. The SWCD's traditional funding from state and local government has not seen an increase in 13 years, while our cost of operations have continued to rise. Without additional funding our services will not be able to continue.

Gifts from affiliate members are used to continue services provided to county residents including consultation in land use, erosion control and drainage problems. For many of our lower income residents, it is not financially possible to hire private engineering and consulting firms to design and install drainage and erosion control practices on their property. In many instances our office can provide simple, do it yourself suggestions that will alleviate or minimize their problems. No other agency is able to do this for individuals and small neighborhood groups.

Funding is needed to help continue erosion control inspections which are a critical part of improving and protecting water quality in the county. New construction, without proper erosion control can release literally tons of sediment into our waterways each year. Sedimentation clogs drainage ways, is a carrier for pollutants and is detrimental to fish and other aquatic life. In addition, the SWCD is active in promoting wise land use and improvements in water quality through their educational programs, workshops and publications. Education is key to long term progress in soil and water quality and has always been a high priority for this District.

For more information click the Donate Tab on our website: www.marionswcd.org or call the office at 317-786-1776.

THANK YOU 2014 Affiliates! Marion County Farm Bureau, Rick Bein, D2 Land & Water Resources, Inc., Bob Eddleman, George Haerle & Beth Mason.

Conservation Calendar

(Details can be found under the Events Tab at www.marionswcd.org)

January 11 - 13, 2015 - 72nd Conference of Indiana Soil & Water Conservation Districts, Indianapolis Marriott Downtown

January 14 - 17, 2015 - National No-Till Conference, Cincinnati, Ohio

January 14, 2015 - 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. Certified Crop Advisor Exam Prep Course, Beck Ag Center, West Lafayette

January 31, 2015 - applications due for Lake and River Enhancement grant funds, lare.dnr.IN.gov

February 4 through April 1, 2015 - various dates- DNR Winter Exploration Hikes & Workshops, Monroe Lake www.in.gov/activecalendar_dnr/EventList.asp

February 17, 2015, 5-7 p.m. Marion County SWCD Annual Meeting, Discovery Hall, Indiana State Fairgrounds, www.marionswcd.org

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

New Soil Health Program & Position

Indiana's Conservation Team led by the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS), the local Soil & Water Conservation Districts (SWCD) and the Indiana Department of Agriculture are actively promoting soil health in our state. While the focus thus far has been on the conventional farming community, thanks to federal and local financial assistance, the focus will now also turn toward the urban sector where the importance of soil health is equally vital.

The NRCS in Indiana has been promoting Soil Health by concentrating on these key principals:

- Minimizing Disturbance in order to decrease erosion
- Maximizing Soil Cover to protect the soil
- Maximize Biodiversity to enhance & diversify soil biology
- Provide Continuous Living Roots to increase water holding capability while protecting the soil from erosion & increasing organic matter in the soil

Early in 2015 a new Urban Soil Health Program will begin in central Indiana led by the Marion and Hendricks Counties' Soil & Water Conservation Districts with assistance from a recent Clean Water Indiana Grant. The Urban Soil Health Program will help urban landowners protect and build their soil which will in turn benefit water quality, improve soil water holding capacity to reduce flooding, increase nutrients and organic matter in the soil which will produce stronger, healthier plants, gardens and wildlife communities. In the urban environment these principles can be practiced through:

1) Urban erosion control & water quality improvement practices such as diversified



seeding, bioengineering techniques, bioswales, and rain gardens

2) No-till or minimal till gardening techniques, and mulching

3) Rotational planting, interplanting, companion planting and various composting techniques

4) Cover crops, filter strips and native plantings while encouraging eradication of invasive species that destroy natural diversity

5) Eliminating or decreasing chemical fertilizers, herbicides & pesticides in lawns and gardens through the use of natural alternatives and soil building techniques

Educational materials and workshops as well as cost share on implementation projects and soil testing will be used to promote soil health in Marion and its surrounding counties. Be watching our newsletters and website (www.marionswcd.org) for more information in the coming months.

We have recently transitioned to electronic-only newsletters. To ensure that you receive our updates please contact the SWCD office with your email address.

Coyotes Adjust to Landscape - Including Urban Areas

Personal experiences shape our attitudes toward most wildlife. This is especially true for coyotes. Thoughts range from worthless varmint that should be removed completely, to a beautiful creature deserving of protection. Urban conflicts are focused on attacks on pets, concerns for safety, and fear of the unknown.

Coyotes are a native species once limited to the prairie regions of western Indiana. Reports of coyotes in Indiana began to increase in the 1970s. They have adjusted to the landscape changes and now are common in all Indiana counties, including many urban areas. For some Hoosiers, this is old news. For others, the sight of a coyote is new and little is known about how to live with this species. The DNR has a [full list of tips](#) to minimize conflicts with coyotes.

Farm Services Agency News Marion/Johnson Counties

3059 N. Morton
Franklin, IN 46131
317-736-6822



**ARC/PLC yield update & base
allocation due by 2/27**

**ARC/PLC Program Election must
be completed by 3/31**

Prevention and Control

- Feed pets indoors whenever possible; pick up leftovers if feeding outdoors and store pet and livestock feed where it's inaccessible to wildlife
- Eliminate water bowls and other artificial water sources (if possible).
- Position bird feeders in a location that is less likely to attract small animals or bring the feeders in at night (to keep coyotes from feeding on the bird food or the other animals).
- Do not discard edible garbage where coyotes can get to it. Secure garbage containers
- Trim and clean shrubbery near ground level to reduce hiding cover for coyotes or their prey
- Do not allow pets to run free and provide secure nighttime housing for them
- If you start seeing coyotes around your home, discourage them by shouting, making loud noises or throwing rocks but NEVER corner a coyote – always give the coyote a free escape route.

The DNR manages trapping and hunting seasons for coyotes (Oct. 15, 2014 through March 15, 2015). Coyotes also can be taken outside of these seasons on private land. For more information go to <http://www.in.gov/dnr/fishwild/5688.htm>

**Contact Us
for more
information on soil
& water related
issues**

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**Phone:
317-786-1776**

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**On the Web:
marionswcd.org**

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 third Tuesday of each month at 4:00 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.

SWCD Welcomes Maggie Goeglein

Earlier this year the Marion County SWCD board of supervisors was joined by Maggie Goeglein. Maggie is the Executive Director of Fall Creek Gardens, an urban gardening resource center in the heart of Indianapolis. Her work there centers on developing a community-focused organization which shares tools, resources, and educational opportunities with anyone interested in growing sustainable, organic food for their families – particularly residents of urban neighborhoods with limited access to fresh, healthy, affordable food. In addition, Maggie works consistently to bring greater environmental health to the garden site, which is located on a brownfield, through the use of a 3,000 gallon rainwater catchment system, and the deliberate use of cover crops, mulch, and organic soil amendments in the garden beds.

Maggie holds an M.A. in Earth Literacy from St. Mary of the Woods College in Terre Haute. She is a member of the Indiana Organic Gardeners Association and serves as a director of the Board of Directors for the Mid-North Food Pantry.

At home, she and her husband enjoy exploring ways to live more sustainably, such as making rain barrels, drying laundry on a clothesline, and preserving the bounty of their garden harvest. They also enjoy the antics of their flock of urban chickens and exploring new ways to enjoy their wonderful eggs.



We welcome Maggie to the SWCD Board!

Blake Wilson Runs for SWCD Board Position

At the SWCD Annual meeting, Blake Wilson will be running for the vacant Board Supervisor position. Blake is a Licensed Professional Geologist (LPG) with over 25 years of experience in the environmental field. He holds a Bachelor's degree in geology from Ball State University and obtained his Master of Business Administration (MBA) in 2011. His environmental background includes asbestos inspection and management planning, lead, underground storage tank management, hazardous waste site characterization, wetland delineation and mitigation design, NEPA investigations,

storm water management, erosion control and environmental site assessment and testing. Blake's consulting background encompasses the management of large complex environmental projects such as reuse of a former military base, the development of two state prisons, four riverboat casinos, new interstate highways and the midfield terminal at the Indianapolis International Airport.



SWCD

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