

Marion County SWCD 50th Annual Report 2019



MARION COUNTY
SOIL AND WATER
CONSERVATION DISTRICT

The mission of the Marion County Soil & Water Conservation District is to assist Marion County land users in conserving soil, water, and related natural resources by providing technical, financial and educational services.

Chairman's Report

By D. Blake Wilson

The Marion County Soil and Water Conservation District (MCSWCD) for over 50 years has provided financial, technical and other related natural resource services for our citizens on soil conservation and water quality management issues and we continue to provide these same services today. Today however the focus of our efforts is towards the urban farmer and land development as less than 10% our land is now used for commercial farming activity. In our efforts to provide these direct technical, financial and educational resources to the residences of Marion County, the MCSWCD has proven once again to be a leader in urban soil health. MCSWCD has shown how urban agriculture and urban soil health can improve the lives and health of our community. Through grants and public partnerships, the district has become a leader in providing technical and financial resources to improve urban farming and clean water. Our staff of professionals has worked very hard this year to support and educate the citizens of Marion County.

I would like to take this opportunity to promote those items we are most proud of, but first I must recognize the loss of one of the state's true Conservationists, Harold Thompson. Harold Thompson was a member of our team and family. With over 40 years of experience working for the USDA NRCS, in 2015 he joined the MCSWCD to help launch a new Marion County "Soil Health Program" working with Kevin Allison to educate and promote urban farming. Harold provided training and workshops to local farmers to help educate the citizens in agriculture, watershed management, conservation and soil health. Harold worked tirelessly as a volunteer not only for Marion County but also Boone and Hendricks Counties and anywhere in else in the state, that asked. His soil health and invasive species demonstrations were a highlight of the Indiana State Fair. Harold lost his battle with cancer and passed away this past year. This was a great loss to the state and to us; he is truly missed.

(Continued on page 11)

What's Inside:

District Manager Report	Page 2
Soil Health Initiative	Page 3
Rule 5 Compliance	Page 4
50 Golden Years	Page 5
Reporting	Pages 6 & 7
Awards	Pages 8 & 9
20 by 2020	Page 10
Supervisors & Staff	Page 12

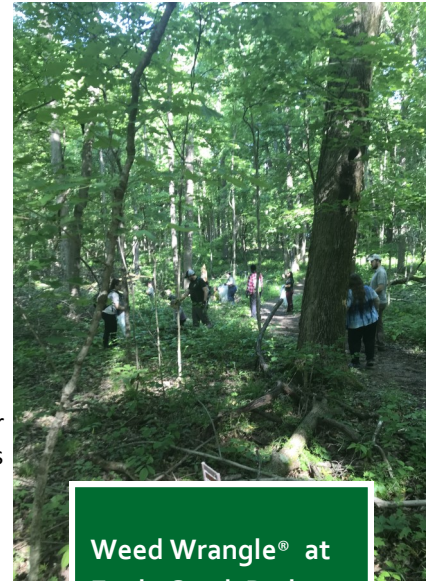


Harold Thompson was an integral part of our soil health team.

District Manager Year in Review

By John Hazlett

2019 saw a variety of new partnerships in conservation for our district that reflect the diversity of local organizations coordinating on inspiring work in Marion County. Supported by our traditional partners at the City of Indianapolis Departments of Public Works and Business and Neighborhood Services, the Indiana Conservation Partnership and Hoosier Heartland RC&D, the district expanded our reach by working with non-profits such as Friends of the White River, Reconnecting to Our Waterways (ROW), Women4theLand and others. Our growing relationship with the [City's Office of Land Stewardship](#) (OLS) continued in 2019 with an invasive removal effort in partnership with OLS and local corporation Salesforce and collaborating on a pond naturalization workshop for local HOAs that featured a guest speaker from the Spirit Lake condo association. OLS is one of many local environmental organizations collaborating within the Circle City CISMA (Cooperative Invasive Species Management Area) that the district is co-chairing and OLS even participated in the local working group convened by the Natural Resource Conservation Service to inform conservation priorities for federal NRCS programs.



Weed Wrangle® at Eagle Creek Park

In addition to non-traditional partnerships, the district also pursued various new funding sources beyond our City budget allocation and ISDA Clean Water Indiana Grant to further develop the programs and plans in our [2018-2020 Plan of Work](#). Working with various stakeholders from the Fall Creek Watershed via the ROW Fall Creek waterway committee, we helped raise funding to update the [2009 Lower Fall Creek Watershed Plan](#) in 2020 and eventually apply for IDEM 319 implementation funding. Project funders in this effort include [Reconnecting to Our Waterways](#) via their Flex Fund grants funded by the Nina Mason Pulliam Charitable Trust, Citizens Energy Group, a local developer and a local museum located near Fall Creek. Our district would like to recognize not only these donors but also the ROW staff for their assistance and support in helping develop the project application for funding. At the time of this update, the district has submitted a grant request in partnership with Friends of the White River to Nina Mason Pulliam Charitable Trust and their Partners for the White River-Phase 2 program as well as the NACD FY 2020 Urban Agriculture Initiative funding opportunity where we proposed a partnership with Indy Urban Acres. We are keeping fingers crossed as we wait to hear the results of these submittals so we can continue to leverage our traditional funding sources in the work we do.

Other key highlights from 2019 include the following:

- ◆ [Rehabilitation of a rain garden at Christian Park](#) in collaboration with Citizens Energy Group, Christopher Burke Engineering, Keep Indianapolis Beautiful and the City's Office of Land Stewardship.
- ◆ Publication of a [native pollinator guide](#) to be used for future outreach, which debuted at a sold out pollinator workshop we hosted in December.
- ◆ Development of a LARE grant submittal with the City of Indianapolis for streambank erosion along Little Buck Creek.
- ◆ The inaugural Circle City CISMA Weed Wrangle® at Eagle Creek Park.
- ◆ A district visit to the statehouse during the 2019 General Assembly to meet with senators and state representatives and support additional budget funding for the Clean Water Indiana Program.

Finally I'd like to thank our staff and board of supervisors for all of their hard work every day. Without their consistent, highly focused efforts none of our partnerships, programs and workshops would be possible!



Christian Park Rain Garden Planting

Soil Health Initiative

By Kevin Allison

The Marion County SWCD works to assist urban farmers, gardeners, and landusers to regenerate soil health and improve water infiltration and quality on our farms and landscapes.

In 2019, the SWCD provided direct technical assistance to 70 vegetable growers and visited 55 farms through the soil health initiative. With Clean Water Indiana funds, we facilitated soil health grants to 12 local growers for the implementation of conservation practices that included nutrient management, cover crops, mulching, native plantings, and support for perennial agriculture through tree and shrub plantings. We conducted 47 workshops, presentations, and trainings which reached over 1,400 attendees.

In the face of climate change and obstacles in food access and quality, education on carbon farming and regenerative agriculture is of utmost importance. Agriculture has important social values among communities, but farming and gardening as environmental endeavors should not be overlooked. Soil health's impact on soil, water, crops, and climate is key to navigating the pressures of our current reality. We take our message everywhere, giving presentations or hands-on-workshops at numerous local farms, the Indiana Small Farms Conference, libraries, Purdue Extension courses and master gardener conferences, STEM programs, our demonstration garden, and even to the top of the Salesforce tower for corporate education. We look forward to continuing education and technical assistance in 2020 and invite you to engage us.

We dove deep into Native Plantings in 2019 and took a very hands-on approach. Not only did we fund some exciting native plantings, but we were very active in helping to plant them alongside community leaders, youth, STEM educators, and urban farmers. We created and released a new guide entitled *Native Plantings for Beneficial Insects and Pollinators* with a recommended species list and methodology for establishing

habitat near small farms and gardens to decrease crop pests and increase pollination. In the spring, the SWCD staff utilized this species list to install a native planting adjacent to crop production at our demo garden, adding a beautiful aesthetic to Indy's Eagle Creek Trail.

The Marion County SWCD Eagle Creek Demonstration Garden is more alive than ever, both with workshops and ecology. The no-till vegetable production area is currently loaded with a diversity of cover crops, and as spring approaches, the roots will stimulate biological activity and enhance the soil for the season. These roots and their associated biological activity will even open pore space in the soil, which in turn provides for more air flow and less disease. Soil health practices like cover crops can be used to suppress weeds, manage moisture and nutrients, increase water infiltration and are an important tool in growing high quality, nutritional food.

Looking ahead in 2020, we are excited to introduce our new Soil Health System Trials (SHST), a Clean Water Indiana funded project that will incentivize four local farms to adopt and experiment with crop and soil management practices that build up soil organic carbon and soil health. The Farm at Butler, High Voltage Garden, Indy Urban Acres, and the Mad Farmers Collective are working closely with the SWCD to develop and implement a 3-year vegetable crop rotation that integrates cover crops, mulching, and no-tillage onto demonstration beds at their farms. This program will build on our partnerships with expert farmers to gain insight and feedback on the application of conservation practices in intensive vegetable production. This valuable information will enhance our technical assistance and workshops as we continue to educate growers and the public on the importance and techniques of soil health.



Come visit our demonstration garden alongside Eagle Creek Trail near 56th & Reed Road.



New native species planted at our demonstration garden.

Communicating Rule 5 Compliance

By Cheyenne Hoffa

A construction site has many moving parts. Depending on the type of project being built there can be dozens of subcontractors on the site throughout the day. While there typically is a general contractor that oversees the entire project, they cannot always ensure that the subcontractors will have any training on erosion and sediment control. For example, a piece of silt fence could be seen by a HVAC contractor as only an inconvenient barrier between her and her task of the day. But if the HVAC specialist drives over the silt fence, it puts the general contractor and the site owner out of compliance and fines can be accrued at the municipal or state level. The best way to deal with most non-compliance sites are by providing adequate education to both the general and subcontractors throughout site.

Using the correct language is important when communicating non-compliance issues with contractors. An HVAC contractor and an earthwork contractor will most likely have vastly different knowledge bases when it comes to erosion and sediment control compliance issues. When speaking with an earthwork or general contractor, more technical terms can be used because they have been trained on these issues. When speaking with subcontractors that have specialties in other areas, a basic reasoning for practices can be a great way to ensure they work to keep practices in place while working around them. Educating a contractor that works around these practices about the environmental and potential economic impact of non-compliance may resonate with them more than simply explaining the rule.

Tone is also important when speaking with contractors. Some contractors can be leery of regulators on their site. Speaking to them with an understanding of all the responsibilities of the site, while also being sure to communicate the importance of erosion and sediment control can be a delicate balance. Keeping the conversation cool, when tempers may flare is



Contacting us when you see sediment control violations helps us keep our waterways clean.

also important.

Fines and stop work orders that may follow non-compliance reports can have a large impact on a project's budget and timeline. But sediment pollution also has the potential for large impacts on everyone's waterways. Having municipal fines/repercussions that match the severity of non-compliance are also important.

Since education is the most important part of gaining erosion and sediment control compliance on construction sites, identifying especially non-compliant sites is key to disseminating that education. Citizen's within the City of Indianapolis Marion County can help to identify especially non-compliant sites and report them to the Marion County SWCD, the Indiana Department of Environmental Management (IDEM) or the City of Indianapolis' Mayor's Action Center (MAC). Some common issues that are easily identifiable are sediment tracked out into the street, sediment laden water flowing off a construction site during rainfall and bare and unworked areas for an extended period. Identifying these especially non-compliant sites can help us focus our resources where it is needed the most.

Thank You 2019
Affiliate Members!

Much gratitude is extended to these wonderful people who have financially supported our SWCD!

Judith Houser

Mark Kautz

Beth Mason

50 Golden Years of Great Things

By Julie Haxton Farr

Great things last! Not much these days lasts for 50 years – not refrigerators, furnaces, very few cars, songs or even marriages. But the best will last! Those things that are outstanding, built solid, dedicated, high quality, foundational and exceptional- they will last. We recently looked at an example of this - a retaining wall along Pogues Run which, as far back as we could trace, was built well over a hundred years ago and is still in better shape than many of the projects that are only 20 years old! It has lasted because of good quality materials and the expert workmanship of its builders.

You are looking at the Marion County SWCD’s 50th Annual Report! Our county’s SWCD is like that retaining wall – we have stood the test of time because of years of hard work, dedication, experience and a solid foundation. Our founding Supervisors and staff wanted to provide our county with assistance in making wise land use decisions, solve natural resource problems and educate our youth and community on the importance of soil and water quality. They created a strong foundation and good reputation on which others have built.

Annual Reports help us to look back over the previous year, celebrate the good work that has been accomplished and help us plan for the years ahead. Analyzing the past year we can see that our county’s growth is booming – lots of new construction means more need for protecting the soil and our water quality

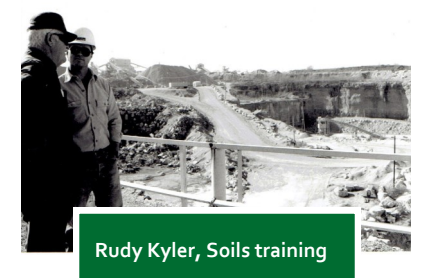
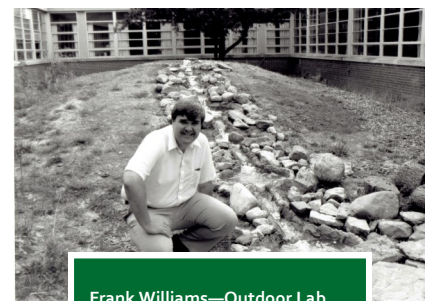
from sedimentation. (Note on page 7 the number of site visits Cheyenne, our Urban Conservationist made to construction sites this year.) There is also a great need to share information about the natural characteristics of the soil and topography of building sites. This year we will be looking at even more opportunities to correct problems and educate builders and developers in ways to protect the environment & make wise choices while they build.

This spring and summer brought us more rain than we have experienced in a LONG time! We had more calls than usual with citizens asking for help to solve drainage and stream bank erosion problems. In many instances problem areas are on private property and are therefore the landowners’ responsibility to solve. Our office holds a unique roll in providing technical assistance to help them find solutions. We also are happy to assist those who have purchased land and are looking for the best way to build and utilize their property. Many problems can be intercepted by gaining information about the soil and natural characteristics of a site before building decisions are made.

Annual meetings are a way for us to communicate what we’ve accomplished and share our vision for the future. The SWCD also often uses our annual meeting to share the stage with partnering organizations and agencies so that the attendees can learn about ways other groups are working to improve our county and the environment. This year we are highlighting efforts toward improvements to White River’s water quality.

Happy Anniversary SWCD! These are golden years for working for our environment.

A Short Glimpse into 50 Years of Conservation





Marion County Soil & Water Conservation District 2019 Annual Activities Report January 1 through December 31, 2019

The Marion County Soil and Water Conservation District (SWCD) is a unit of state government, supported primarily by the City-County Council with some funds from state government. The SWCD was established to provide technical assistance to Marion County residents and land users concerning the proper management of soil, water and other related natural resources. We work closely with local government, community organizations and residents on such items as water quality and drainage issues, soil erosion and sedimentation control, urban soil health, green space and wildlife habitat, conservation planning and education to help create a better quality living environment for everyone in the county.

This 2019 annual report was developed to keep city, county, and federal level legislators, government agency directors, and various community leaders informed of our on-going activities. This is just a snapshot of our activities, anyone with any questions or comments are encouraged to contact our Marion Co. SWCD office at 1200 Madison Ave. Suite 200, Indianapolis, IN 46225 for more details. Our phone number is 317-786-1776, and our web site is www.marionswcd.org



Assisting Residents with Flooding & Land Use Issues



Construction Site Reviews and Inspections Help Prevent Pollution



Urban Soil Health Program Cover Crops Help Rebuild Soils

I. 2019 Major Natural Resource Projects Summary

Marion Co. SWCD conservation projects and public outreach efforts were completed to help the district communicate, coordinate, assist, and cooperate with others on conservation needs and solutions for landowners and land users in the county. The efforts can take a minimum of 2-4 hours to several days or weeks or are ongoing depending on the type of project.

Project Summary	Numbers	Date	Comments
Clean Water IN – Urban Soil Health Program			
• Urban Soil Health Program – Presentations/Workshops	47/1400 Attendees	during year	Outreach/Training
• Urban Soil Health Program – Consultations/Site Visits	70/55	during year	Outreach/Training
• Urban Soil Health Program – Grants to Landowners	12	during year	Grants/Conservation Practices
Stormwater Pollution Prevention Program			
• City of Indianapolis-DPW & DCE - MOU & NPDES Report	3 items	12/01	MOU, budget, and report
• City of Indianapolis-DPW Water Quality Meetings	9 meetings	during year	Water Quality Issues
Other Projects & Coordination with Conservation Organizations			
• Indiana Association of Conservation Districts (IASWCD) Conference	3 days	1/6-8	Board & Staff Training
• Marion Co. SWCD Annual Meeting w- Annual Report	50+ attendees	2/19	Reported accomplishments
• Indianapolis Earth Day at White River State Park	150+	4/22	Hosted MCSWCD booth
• Distributed newsletter on activities & watershed programs	4 / yr	during year	900 on mailing list
• Marion County SWCD Website	6,542 users	during year	Public Outreach

II. Natural Resource Technical Requests, Contacts, & Visits with Land Users

Through on-site visits, telephone calls and written recommendations, the district assists landowners, land users, and construction site managers with drainage, water management, erosion control, vegetative management options, and other related natural resource topics. These assistance efforts take an estimated amount of hours shown below depending on the type of assistance provided to schedule, inventory available site data, visit the site, plan recommendations, and respond to the request with written comments to the land user, landowner, or contractor.

Township	# Technical Assists Provided (@ 0.5 hr)	# Site Visits Made (@ 1.5 hrs)	# Reports Provided (@ 1 hr)	# Surveys Provided (@ 2 hrs)	Preliminary Plat Reviews (@ 0.75 hrs)
Center	0	2	2	0	14
Decatur	3	16	11	2	0
Franklin	17	24	17	3	5
Lawrence	4	24	19	5	3
Perry	10	30	21	12	1
Pike	3	17	8	3	4
Warren	3	19	12	2	1
Washington	2	22	19	12	6
Wayne	12	14	7	4	1
TOTAL	50	168	116	43	35

Construction Site, Erosion Control and SWPPP Stormwater Reviews, Contacts & Reports

Township	# SWPPP * Reviews Provided (@ 3 hrs)	# Erosion Plan** Inspections Reports (@ 0.75hrs)	# of Site Inspections Made (@ 0.75hrs)	On-site TA Meetings
Center	16	29	136	6
Decatur	3	21	50	1
Franklin	8	39	144	4
Lawrence	7	32	72	3
Perry	3	15	40	3
Pike	0	14	66	2
Warren	4	8	33	1
Washington	7	30	101	4
Wayne	6	28	86	3
TOTAL	54	216	728	27

Notes: *SWPPP= Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plans
**Written Reports Detailing Non-Compliance Issues

III. State/Federal Cost Share/Grant Projects- SWCD brought into county additional: \$137,269.33

The Marion Co. SWCD is always looking for ways to assist landowners via a variety of county, state, and federal cost share and grant funds to assist with the installation of conservation practices in the county. Local funds are often limited or non-existent for the SWCD to provide monetary assistance for land improvement or land protection conservation measures. The projects can take a minimum of 2-4 days to several months depending on the type of activity. The following program funds are being provided through our joint, cooperative efforts with the USDA- Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) assigned to assist the Marion County SWCD and the Clean Water Indiana Grant Program, administered by the State Department of Agriculture, Division of Soil Conservation and the State Soil Board.

Program	Funds Provided	Type of Projects
NRCS Conservation Programs	\$20,149.92	Acres of Planned and/or Applied Land Conservation Practices
Clean Water Indiana Grant (CWI)	\$10,000.00	General District Operational Funds
IASWCD – District Operations	\$30,000.00	Urban Soil Health Program
Clean Water IN Grant – Urban Soil Health	\$77,119.41	Urban Soil Health Program - Technical Assistance, Demonstration, Cost-Share, Adult Education
ISDA – DOSC Regional Support	\$4,932.00	Technical & SWCD Support Staff
NRCS Staff Support	\$62,386.00	District Conservationist

EACH CITY/COUNTY TAX DOLLAR INVESTED IN THE SWCD LEVERAGES \$1.96 IN OTHER FUNDING

2019 River Friendly Farmer Award – St. Alban's Peace Garden

Annually, each SWCD can nominate a farmer for the River Friendly Farmer Award, a statewide initiative that recognizes farmers, who through good production management practices helps keep Indiana's rivers, lakes and streams clean. In 2019, our SWCD nominated the St. Alban's Peace Garden for their outstanding work in soil and water conservation, not to mention their dedication to providing produce to food pantries. The Peace Garden, with the guidance of farm manager Tate Nielsen, utilizes sound crop rotations, cover crops, mulching, biological pest management, and native plantings. They focus on protecting and improving soil structure with conservation practices so that water can infiltrate and be efficiently utilized to grow crops. They have a strong partnership with the Marion County SWCD through grant programs, participation in workshops, and by providing great feedback. They also partner with schools, individual volunteers, and a network of urban farmers to share information and experiences. The awards ceremony took place at the Indiana State Fair in August 2019, and a well-represented St. Alban's received a roaring applause for their enthusiasm for conservation and community.



SWCD Welcomes New Associate Supervisor Olivia Speckman

The Marion County SWCD Board welcomes their new Associate Supervisor Olivia Speckman. Olivia is a scientist at V3 Companies, formerly Williams Creek Consulting, in downtown Indianapolis. Professionally, as a consultant for V3, Olivia works with developers, property owners, and regulatory agencies in order to maintain or improve water, stream, and wooded area quality in Indiana and throughout the Midwest. In her spare time, Olivia places importance on bettering the conditions of waterways by gathering with other advocates through Reconnecting to Our Waterways and volunteering for cleanups that directly affect the local waterways. Olivia has earned a Bachelor's degree in Biology from Ball State University and a certification in Watershed Management through the Indiana Watershed Leadership Academy. Olivia brings experience with ArcGIS, AutoCAD, waterway permitting, and stakeholder coordination to the SWCD Board. Olivia currently resides in her hometown of Lawrence with her family and is looking forward improving her community through her work on the SWCD board.



2019 Partner in Conservation Award

By way of the 2019 Partner in Conservation Award, the SWCD board and staff would like to express our sincere gratitude to Elli Blaine. A few seasons back, the district won a 3-year Clean Water Indiana grant to hire a part-time Soil Health Outreach Coordinator to support our soil health initiative. From 2017 through 2019, not only did she support it, she amplified it.

The outreach position covered two counties, Marion and Hendricks, and both districts truly benefited from her efforts. Elli was key in updating both SWCDs' websites and in the coordination of beautiful outreach videos for the Hendricks County SWCD and Indiana USDA-NRCS. She assisted with SWCD outreach, cost-share programs, cover crop giveaways, numerous workshops, networking, technical assistance, and the overall vision of the initiative.

Elli spearheaded the district's partnership with Marion County Farm Bureau, Hoosier Heartland and Women 4 the Land to support women growers. The SWCD utilized Farm Bureau's \$5,000 contribution to put on educational events and workshops for women, and Elli was instrumental in their concepts, organization, content, outreach, and implementation. Eight workshops reached over one hundred attendees with themes including soil health, nutrient management, fruit trees, nutrition, permaculture, native plantings, and a celebration of women in agriculture.

Elli has a thirst for knowledge and quickly became adept in the technical aspect of soil health and conservation. In addition to the SWCD, she also worked full time at Indy Urban Acres, a project of the Indianapolis Parks Foundation, thus creating a perfect storm. Elli utilized this hands-on vegetable farming experience, coupled with technical training, to make herself a valuable technical asset to the SWCD and the local grower network. She provided technical assistance in conservation in urban agriculture to a



diversity of growers and helped multiple community and educational organizations with soil health practices and native plantings. Recently, the USDA-NRCS state office asked the soil health specialist to review and give input on updated cover crop seeding windows. Elli and Kevin tackled this technical task as a

team, just as they had done in countless projects before. Whether it be planting natives, crop planning, workshop implementation, or tossing hay bales, Elli's assistance is invaluable. The SWCD thanks Elli for her hard

work, accomplishments, and above all, for her enthusiastic and caring approach with people and the land.



Photos through
the lens of
Elli Blaine

Our 20 by 2020 Goal Reached!

At the beginning of 2019 our partners at the Indiana Department of Agriculture challenged all SWCDs to try 20 new things by 2020. The challenge was accepted by the Marion County District and we did it!!!! Here's our list. (Details can be found on our website: <https://marionswcd.org/swcd20by2020/>)

- 1) **CISMA Launch Event**
- 2) **Watershed Leadership Academy and Stormwater Booklet Update**
- 3) **NACD Webinar Presentation**
- 4) **Christian Park Rain Garden and State Fair Rain Garden Makeover**
- 5) **Drainage complaint database**
- 6) **DigIndy Tunnel Tour**
- 7) **Eagle Creek Pond Edge Enhancement Workshop**
- 8) **Dragonboat Races-Sept 2019**
- 9) **Library Seed Giveaway**
- 10) **Water Summit-August**
- 11) **ROW LFC Watershed Plan update efforts**
- 12) **St. Alban's River Friendly Farmer Award**
- 13) **White River Indy Star article on stormwater**
- 14) **NRCS Local Working Group-participation by City Office of Land Stewardship and Purdue Extension**
- 15) **Forty-Seven Soil Health Workshops**
- 16) **IU interns-Nick and Elizabeth**
- 17) **Growing Food with Beneficial Insects and Pollinators Workshop featuring Heather Holm**
- 18) **Native Plantings for Beneficial Insects and Pollinators Guide**
- 19) **Marion County SWCD Eagle Creek Demonstration Garden – Natives Establishment**
- 20) **Partnership with Women 4 the Land and Marion County Farm Bureau to execute Women Grower Workshops**

Whew! Big goal and great results!!!!



(Chairman's Report continued from page 1)



The "Soil Health Program" thanks to Kevin Allison, is a premier state program which is dedicated to educating urban farmers in Marion County. The accomplishments of Mr. Allison and his associates Ms. Elli Blaine and Mr. Harold Thompson have set the standard of how urban agriculture cannot only improve the lives of the farmers growing the crops but also the communities they live in. In Marion County over 200,000 people live in what are called food deserts. These areas do not have easy access to a supermarket. Many of the urban agricultural farms in these communities donate their produce to local food pantries to support their communities and neighbors. These urban farmers are using vacant and unusable tracks of ground turning them into productive agricultural farm plots. Currently over 130 urban farms and gardens are assisted by MCSWCD.

Kevin is recognized as a technical expert among Indiana agencies and local growers. Through workshops, demonstrations, field days, technical documents and even just hands on site visits Kevin has touched over 2000 local growers in the community and helped improve the community's ecosystem through beneficial insects and pollinators, soil health, water quality and aesthetics. Thanks to Kevin's work Marion County is stronger and healthier than ever.

One of MCSWCD's main focuses is water quality and stormwater management. MCSWCD is truly blessed to have two resource conservationists as part of our staff. Ms. Julie Farr who has over 30 years of experience resolving drainage issues and Ms. Cheyenne Hoffa who is an erosion control specialist. Julie works hands-on with residents, to resolve their drainage issues. Her knowledge and expertise allow her to address the numerous drainage problems that occur within Marion county due to land

development, erosion issues and other landscape modifications. Julie has helped homeowners and Homeowner Associations deal with drainage issues, pond management, culvert maintenance and stream bank erosion.

Cheyenne works with developers, contractors and the city to prevent soil erosion from occurring during development. Working with the construction community, Cheyenne's focus is to educate contractors on erosion control and to see that erosion control measures are implemented during any land development activity. Both of our resource conservationists work very hard to see that Marion County's streams and rivers are kept clean and healthy.

All these activities could not be accomplished without the leadership of our director Mr. John Hazlett. John has been a key figure and leader in establishing Marion County as a leader in conservation. His knowledge of government systems, water resources, conservation, grant writing, and project management is key to his success. John's ability to work with the city has provided several opportunities to expand our services in support of the city and has helped Indianapolis comply with current drainage and soil erosion regulations. John has devoted his life and career to cleaning up the environment. He has brought his passion and dedication to



this position. His one goal is to see that the citizens of Marion County have clean water and healthy soil.

2019 was a year of accomplishments. The MCSWCD touched over 5,000 residences of Marion county with training workshops, direct technical assistance, site visits, webinar resources and outreach programs. What makes MCSWCD the premier Conservation District is our staff. The staff goes out of their way to help our residences and promote clean water and healthy soil. Please contact our staff and talk with them directly about our work in this county. The staff would love to tell you what they do and how they can help you. We would love to hear from you give us a call.

Please join us at our 50th Annual Meeting, Tuesday February 18th, 4:00 p.m. The meeting and meal are free but please RSVP [HERE](#)

Meet Our SWCD Board

Blake Wilson, Chair is a Licensed Professional Geologist (LPG) with over 25 years of experience in the environmental field. 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.

Scott Minor, Vice Chair Scott is a landscape architect and environmental planner for the White River Alliance, a multi-stakeholder nonprofit working to improve and protect the waters of the Upper White River Watershed. Scott is a LEED-accredited and SEED Public Interest Design Professional with certifications in wetland delineation and environmental habitat stewardship and a strong interest in permaculture systems. His work today includes outreach planning for the Office of Land Stewardship, development of educational tools and workshops for the Alliance and Clear Choices Clean Water, and helping advance efforts to develop a statewide, regional planning framework to protect Indiana's water assets.

Heather Buck, Secretary is a Resource Planner at Christopher B. Burke Engineering, working in local natural hazard mitigation, stormwater management planning, & water quality monitoring. She serves as the President of the Indiana Lakes Management Society Board and as an Area Representative for EnviroCert International's Certified MS4 Specialist program.

Brian Neilson, Treasurer P.E., LEED AP, has over 30 years experience working with the public & private engineering sector. He is involved with alternative water & wastewater management, Low Impact Development, green infrastructure, watershed planning, stormwater master planning, combined sewer overflow abatement, water quality assessments of lakes, rivers & streams, and land use & greenway planning, among others.

Maggie Goeglein is the Development Director of the Edna Martin Christian Center, a 76-year-old community center serving Indy's Martindale-Brightwood neighborhood. Maggie provides direct service in the youth program and assists with fund development and site development for EMCC's new 12-acre facility. In addition to working with youth, Maggie has managed multiple large corporate service events focused on renovating the new facility and building a youth and seniors garden on the property, and worked with other staff on several successful grant applications totaling nearly \$1 million in funding.

Associate Supervisors

Paula Baldwin	Rick Bein	Marvin Brethauer
Bob Eddleman	Mark Kautz	Robert Kleinops
Beth Mason	Mark Mongin	Dennis Slaughter
Olivia Speckman	Henry Wallis	



SWCD Staff

John Hazlett, District Manager
 Kevin Allison, Urban Soil Health Specialist
 Cheyenne Hoffa, Urban Conservationist
 Julie Farr, Resource Conservationist, PT
 Jerod Chew, NRCS District Conservationist

Visit our website at

www.marionswcd.org

And checkout our
 Facebook page

