



MARION COUNTY  
SOIL AND WATER  
CONSERVATION DISTRICT

# Conservation in the Neighborhood

VOL. 42, NO. 3



SUMMER, 2021

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## Stream Steward & Rain Garden Workshops

Our Soil & Water Conservation District is working with Friends of the White River on a Stream Steward project funded by the Nina Mason Pulliam Charitable Trust's Partners of White River initiative. As part of this work we held a Stream Steward workshop on May 15th attended by 12 individuals who met at the Millersville Green-space along a stretch of Fall Creek between the 56th St and Emerson Way bridges. Fall Creek is an important tributary to the White River and a key focus area of our local restoration efforts as we work to update the 2009 Lower Fall Creek Watershed Management Plan.

SWCD staff provided an overview of the Lower Fall Creek watershed, described the impact of erosion and invasive plants and distributed a guide on solutions for backyard streambank erosion while showing participants bank conditions along Fall Creek.

A neighborhood representative from Millersville at Fall Creek Valley highlighted various efforts over the past decade to address invasive



Honeysuckle and other woody and herbaceous invasive plants in the corridor as well as the successful introduction of native understory plants via seeding.

For more information on [streambank erosion control](#) and how to control [invasive species](#) on your property visit our website.



**Don't miss our upcoming rain garden workshop on June 24th at the State Fairgrounds!**

**Details including how to register are included in the flyer on page 3. Space is**

## Staff Certifications and Committee Appointments

Congrats to our **Urban Conservationist Alena Jones** for earning a Professional Certificate in Watershed Management from Purdue University's Indiana Watershed Leadership Program. This rigorous six month program has a long history of providing attendees with the technical expertise and skills to improve local watersheds.

More information about this program is available [HERE](#).



**District Manager John Hazlett** has been selected to serve on the certification committee for the National Green Infrastructure Certification Program (NGICP). NGICP is an international ANSI-accredited program focused on the construction and maintenance of green infrastructure stormwater management systems. John earned his GIP (Green Infrastructure Practitioner) certification in 2017 and will serve on the certification committee with 14 other practitioners from around the country. More information about NGICP is available [HERE](#).

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see details on  
our website.](#)

## NACD Features Marion County SWCD and Partners

The weekly National Association of Conservation Districts' **eResource** featured our District and partners work through the 2020 Urban Agriculture Conservation grant we recently completed. Key partners on the grant included Indy Urban Acres and Groundwork Indy.

Read more [HERE](#)



*Planting into cover crop at Indy Urban Acres*



Free  
Event

PRESENT

# WORKSHOPS FOR A CLEANER WATERWAY

Limited  
to 25  
**Register  
today!**

with support from



Indy residents along Fall Creek will learn the benefits of and how to build your own **rain garden** in your yard to help manage stormwater and clean up the water going into waterways and aquifers. Step-by-step instructions provided, and you'll take home native plants from **Indy Urban Acres** to get your rain garden started. Event is outdoors - 6-foot distancing required.

**[Register HERE](#)**



**Rain Garden  
Workshop  
Thurs, June 24  
Indiana State  
Fairgrounds  
6:30 - 7:45PM**

*You'll take home native plants*

## Green City Mapper Tool



Along with various partners from the City of Indianapolis and Keep Indianapolis Beautiful, our District provided input on the creation of a new green infrastructure tool created by Indiana University researchers called the Indiana Green City Mapper. The tool provides an inventory of six forms of green infrastructure across Hoosier communities. The project was funded by IU's Environmental Resilience Institute.

More information about the tool and a link to the inventory can be viewed [HERE](#).

## SWCD Demo Garden

The SWCD Eagle Creek Demonstration Garden is an educational space for no-till gardening and soil health practices such as crop rotation, cover crops, mulching, compost, and nutrient management. Check out this blog post that illustrates how different cover cropping

strategies were used to prepare the growing beds for this

spring's vegetable plantings.



Visit our Demo Garden located at the Mayor's Garden Plots at West 56th St and Reed Road



## Cover Crop Seeding Window Update

The USDA-NRCS has updated their cover crop seeding windows. This is one of the most helpful documents in determining when specific cover crop species are best planted in Indiana. Download the 'Cover Crop Seeding Windows' pdf at

[Conservation Agronomy - Conservation Cropping Systems \(CCS\) | NRCS Indiana \(usda.gov\)](#)

For a more information on our Soil Health Program visit:

<https://marionswcd.org/soil-health-initiative/>

**SEEDING WINDOWS FOR COVER CROPS IN INDIANA**

NOTE: Northern and southern Indiana seeding dates for the tables below are divided on a general line along US 36 from Iroquois to Indianapolis and US 40 from Indianapolis to Ohio.

Best window of opportunity and greatest benefit for various cropping scenarios:

- After harvest
- After seed corn
- After edge corn
- After soybeans strips
- After wheat
- After early strip crops

Plant Species	March	April	May	June	July	August	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec/Jan
Buckwheat										
Clover, Balansa	R-2	IN	IN	IN	IN	IN	IN	IN	IN	
Clover, Barroon										
Clover, Crimson										
Clover, Red	R-2	S	IN	IN	IN	M	M	M	IN	R
Collards										
Corn/Soybeans										
Fest										
Kale										
Millet, Japanese/Pearl										
Oats, (Spring & Black)	R-2	S	IN	IN	IN	M	M	M	IN	R
Pea, (Field/Spring/Winter)	R-2	S	IN	IN	IN	M	M	M	IN	R
Phacelia										
Radish, Oil Seed										
Rapeseed										
Rye, Winter Cereal	R-2	S	IN	IN	IN	M	M	M	IN	R
Sorghum, Annual										
Sorghum-Sudangrass										
Soybean, (Forage & Field)										
Sunflowers										
Sweet Hemp										
Tall (Coated Seed)										
Triticale, Winter										
Turnips/Pasture	S-4	IN-4	IN-4							
Vetch, Hairy										
Wheat, (Winter & Spring)										

Legend:

- IN: In-season P/F-Free Dates Recommended
- R: Good/Fair/Early seeding from December thru March, increase seeding rates by 25%
- S: Expect lower biomass and production
- M: Sufficient moisture
- IN-3: Additional suitable seeding dates for all of Indiana
- IN-4: Additional suitable seeding dates for Southern IN (-South of I-70)
- S-3: Additional suitable seeding dates for north Northern IN (-North of I-70)
- R-1: Riskier Establishment (Season/Weather/Variety Dependent)
- R-2: Prohibit/Dormant Seeding
- R-3: Droughting quantity

Seeding window is part of the IN NRCS Cover Crop Seeding Calculator which can be found on the Field Office Tech Guide (FOTG) and downloaded [HERE](#).  
Version - May 2021

# Home Shoppers Should Do Their Homework

If you are in the process of wanting to buy or build a home this summer you know how crazy the market has become. Buyers need to make quick decisions which can sometimes lead to overlooking potential problems. In addition to the usual thorough home inspection, here are a few things to look for in regards to identifying potential drainage problems:

- 1) Look up the address on the [Web Soil Survey](#). The soil survey will give you a general idea of what the soils are like in the neighborhood, and while they may be a little off on a lot by lot basis, we've found that the Marion County Soil Survey is over all pretty accurate. Soil types which are poorly drained and have a seasonally high groundwater table will need to be looked at more closely for potential drainage problems and will not be good candidates for homes with basements.
- 2) Look at the topography of the lot. Is it steeply sloped or very flat? Is there good surface drainage away from the house? There should be at least 6 inches of fall away from the house within the first 10 feet. Where does the water drain to? Are there side yard swales and a swale in the backyard to take surface water away from the lot?
- 3) Are there depressional areas in the yard that are bare? A lack of grass may mean that water sits in that location for an extended period of time.
- 4) Is the lot within a flood zone? Is there a stream or ditch on the property? The city does NOT maintain drainage swales, ditches or creeks on private property so be prepared to keep those open and flowing well and protect them from erosion. Also look beyond the property to see if all adjoining neighbors are doing a good job of maintaining their sections.
- 5) Does the house sit at least 18 inches above the street level and the top of the bank of a rear yard swale?
- 6) Are there storm drain inlets on the street and where are they located? Are they kept clear of leaves and other debris? Keeping storm drain inlets clear is also a homeowner's responsibility.
- 7) If the home is on a septic system look for signs of bleed-outs as well as making sure that the home passes inspection of handling water pressure. See our website for a brochure on [caring for a septic system](#).

General information on [drainage around a home](#) can be found on our website. If you have questions or need assistance on drainage, erosion or other land use planning issues please [contact Julie Farr](#) at our office.



*Poorly drained soil types and poor surface drainage can lead to drainage & flooding problems during wet months of the year.*





## MARION COUNTY SOIL AND WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT

1200 S. Madison Ave., Suite 200  
Indianapolis, IN 46225

Phone: 317-786-1776

Find us on the web: [www.marionswcd.org](http://www.marionswcd.org)

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.

### \*\* PLEASE NOTE\*\*

Due to the current COVID 19 crisis our office hours are limited and staff is working remotely. Use the **“Contact Us”** tab on our website to leave a message & we will get back with you as soon as possible.

## Visit Pathway to Water Quality at the Indiana State Fair!

The Indiana State Fair is back!!! There are some changes and some decisions regarding Covid precautions have not been finalized yet but mark your calendar for July 30 through August 22nd. They will be closed to the public on Mondays and Tuesdays.

While you're there be sure to visit the Pathway to Water Quality on the northeast side of the fairgrounds to sit or take a stroll in the shade and learn about how to improve and protect our natural resources. Activities will be available for the kiddos too.



For the most up to date information on the fair visit their [website](#).

## Urban Conservation Update

**By Alena Jones, Urban Conservationist**

Over the past few months we have conducted over one hundred and twenty inspections as part of our urban conservation work on construction sites in Marion County. Despite a busy and very muddy spring construction season, project managers have been extremely proactive and responsive. We have continued to see a positive upward trend with increasing numbers of construction sites compliant with erosion and sediment control best practices.



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### SWCD Staff

John Hazlett,  
District Manager

Kevin Allison,  
Urban Soil Health  
Specialist

Alena Jones, Urban  
Conservationist

Julie Farr,  
Resource  
Conservationist, PT

Jerod Chew,  
NRCS District  
Conservationist

