

Conservation at the Crossroads

Spring, 2024 Vol. 45, No. 2

Spring Pond Workshop

Wednesday, May 29th 6:00 p.m.

Prepare to enjoy your pond this summer by learning how to better care for it! Get your questions and problems addressed by experts in aquatic management issues.

TOPICS:

- ◆ Responsibilities of pond owners & HOAs – Gail Boydston, DPW
- ◆ Vegetation & Algae Management / Benefits of Aeration Systems – Jimmy Ferguson, Aquatic Control
- ◆ Vegetative Buffers / Native Plants / Wildlife (Benefits & Nuisance Animal Control) – Bridget Sargent & Jessica Merklung, IDNR
- ◆ Fish Stocking, Fish Management & Habitat – Eric Hess, Clear Creek Fisheries
- ◆ Erosion Control / Additional Help & Resources – Julie Farr, MCSWCD
- ◆ ID Vegetation Samples – Aquatic Control

Fish order forms will be available from Clear Creek Fisheries. A portion of the sale proceeds will benefit our SWCD conservation work.



Light refreshments will be provided. Bring a lawn chair. The workshop will be held, rain or shine.

[REGISTER](#)

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Indiana Nutrient Management Tool

By: Kevin Allison, Soil Health Specialist

Do you want to learn how to fertilize your vegetable garden or market farm? Change your pH for optimal growing conditions? Better utilize soil test results? Calculate how much compost you need? The Indiana Nutrient Management Tool is a free, new tool that can help! Whether it be for a backyard garden or a market farm, the tool allows the user to create a plan for amounts of products needed to meet the nutrient goals, which can be based on soil test results or custom entries. Additionally, the inclusion of a compost tab enhances its utility, allowing users to convert between volume and depth of compost applications and obtain an estimated nutrient contribution.

Based on a farmer needs assessment, a recent Purdue University Diversified Farming and Food Systems [publication](#) lists “nutrient management for plant health” and “nutrients, pH, and amendments” as top production challenges in urban agriculture. This new calculator provides a framework to more efficiently manage the nutrient needs of diverse vegetable crops on our Indiana farms.

The tool was developed by the Marion County Soil and Water Conservation District in partnership with the USDA-NRCS-Indiana, Urban Soil Health Team, and with input from local growers and Purdue University professors. The data, math, and recommendations are derived from Michigan State University’s Nutrient Recommendations for Vegetable Crops in Michigan, Purdue University resources, the New England Vegetable Management Guide, and Oregon State University. The USDA-NRCS and its partners are equal opportunity providers, employers, and lenders.

The tool can be accessed [HERE](#)

It currently functions on newer versions of Microsoft Excel, and the SWCD and partners are working to expand its accessibility.

Please join Kevin Allison, Soil Health Specialist, Marion County SWCD, for an in-depth training on how to utilize it. If you can’t attend this webinar, please note that the SWCD is working on training videos to accompany the tool and will hold additional training webinars in the future.

Location: Virtual, Free

Day/Time: Wednesday, April 24, 11:00 AM to 12:00 PM

Register for
“How To”
training [HERE](#)





New cover crop tool training video online!

Visit the SWCD's Soil Health Guide and check out the updates to the cover crop section. We've added the Indiana Cover Crop Tool and a 20 minute training video on how to use it!

[CHECK IT OUT HERE!](#)

Nutrient Calculator			Feathermeal	Bloodmeal	Potassium Sulfate	Kelp Meal	Elemental Sulfur	Bone Meal	Kelp Meal	Pelleted 5-4-5	Lbs & Oz per Area
Area (sq.ft.)		Product to Apply per Area	0 lb 0 oz	0 lb 0 oz	0 lb 0 oz	0 lb 0 oz	0 lb 0 oz	0 lb 0 oz	0 lb 0 oz	0 lb 0 oz	Lbs per 1000 sq.ft.
Crop		Product to Apply per 1000 sqft									Lbs per 1000 sq.ft.
Nutrient	Goal	Actual									
Nitrogen (N)		0.0	12	13		1		3	1	5	% Nutrient - Use amendments tab for any customization.
Phosphorus (P2O5)		0.0				0.3		13	0.3	4	
Potassium (K2O)		0.0	0.35		53	2.5			2.5	5	
Sulfur (S)		0.0	0.4		18	2	90	2.5	2		
Calcium (Ca)		0.0	0.6			2		12	2	9	
Magnesium (Mg)		0.0				0.7		0.3	0.7		
Sodium (Na)		0.0						5.7			
Boron (B)		0.0									
Iron (Fe)		0.0									
Manganese (Mn)		0.0									
Copper (Cu)		0.0									
Zinc (Zn)		0.0									
Unit	Lbs/1000sqft	Cost / Lb									
		Cost / 1000 sq.ft.	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
		Cost / Area	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00

Spring Garden Workshops at SWCD Demo Garden

It's that time of year! Join Kevin Allison, Soil Health Specialist, for in-depth tours of the SWCD Demonstration Garden. The garden tour focuses on crop planning, no-till vegetables, cover crop management, use of tarps for bed preparation and weed control, use of compost and mulches, and native plantings for beneficial insects and pollinators. We'll go bed by bed to explore techniques and strategies that are boosting soil health in the garden!

View Ticket Options for Upcoming Session Dates and Times

Upcoming Sessions:

Tuesday, April 30 @ 7 PM

Saturday, May 11 @ 10 AM

Thursday, May 16 @ 7 PM

[REGISTER HERE](#)



SWCD Demonstration Garden

Wildergarden – A local resource

Wildergarden is a .13 acre residential yard in Broad Ripple. It is highly visible as a demonstration garden on a busy street corner. Their purpose is research and education in residential urban ecology. Wildergarden invites you to visit and take home some ideas for your own yard! Read more about this wonderful resource on the SWCD's guest blog from Julia Wilder, founder of Wildergarden.

[Check out our Blog Post!](#)



Upcoming Water Quality Happenings on Fall Creek

Join Millersville residents and several of our local partners for two unique volunteer and learning opportunities and experience the beauty of Fall Creek in early Spring while helping improve this unique natural asset in our city! Full event details can be found at the registration links provided below.

Friday 5/3/24 Fall Creek- Millersville Cleanup with White River Alliance and Keep Indianapolis Beautiful

9 AM-12 Noon along the Fall Creek Greenway between Kessler Blvd E Dr and Skiles Test Park

Help clean stormwater inlets and drainage ditches along the Fall Creek Greenway to help improve local water quality. Get event details and register [HERE](#)

Saturday 5/4/24-Stream Steward Workshop with Friends of White River

9:30-12 Noon along the Fall Creek Greenway between the 56th St and Emerson Way bridges

Join staff from the Marion County Soil and Water Conservation District and Friends of the White River and neighborhood representatives from Millersville at Fall Creek Valley, Inc. for a Stream Steward Workshop to learn how to become a more responsible riparian property owner! The workshop will be held at a beautiful spot on Fall Creek and will highlight several facets of streambank management including the following topics:

- Keeping trash out of our waterways
- Invasive plant identification and treatment options (including a Weed Wrangle activity!)
- Sediment and erosion control strategies
- Native plant and live stake installation options
- Distribution of a Stream Steward Guide Resource

The program is funded with the generous support of the Nina Mason Pulliam Charitable Trust. Another component of the grant in addition to the workshops focuses on the problem of illegal dumping along the river's banks.



[REGISTER HERE](#)

UPCOMING SUSTAINABILITY WORKSHOPS FOR EVERYONE!



CLIMATE CHANGE 101 **APR 9**

Dr. Gabe Filippelli, Executive Director of the **IU Environmental Resilience Institute**, will provide a presentation workshop on what climate change means for Central Indiana now and in the future + how Hoosiers are tackling the issue across the state.

RHODIUS PARK FAMILY CENTER
5:30 PM - 6:30 PM

ECO-THERAPY **APR 13**

Kelsee Keitel, a licensed psychotherapist and eco-therapist at **Hemlock Counseling Services**, will provide an engaging presentation on how to cope with feelings of climate change anxiety and will lead a brief hike.

WASHINGTON PARK FAMILY CENTER
1PM - 2PM

ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE **APR 26**

Kheprw Institute staff will engage attendees in a workshop focused on environmental justice, what it means, and how to tackle and prevent it. **AES Indiana** will be distributing free tree saplings on site for Arbor Day!

GARFIELD PARK BURRELLO FAMILY CENTER
11 AM - 12PM

WATER + RAIN BARRELS **MAY 1**

The **Marion County Soil & Water Conservation District** and the **White River Alliance** will give a rain barrel demonstration and a White River Report Card workshop along Pogue's Run. Rain barrels will be provided to the first 10 registrants.

BROOKSIDE PARK FAMILY CENTER
10AM - 11 AM

HEALTHY & SUSTAINABLE EATING **MAY 16**

The folks behind family-owned restaurant **Black Leaf Vegan** will provide a workshop in the park's demo kitchen on how to cook and eat more plant-based meals in your diet. A meal will be provided to those who register.

FREDERICK DOUGLASS PARK FAMILY CENTER
10 AM - 11 AM

HOME ENERGY REBATES **MAY 22**

The **Hoosier Environmental Council** will teach you how to take advantage of federal incentives depending on your budget, residence, and income level. These upgrades will lower your home energy costs and help manage indoor asthma triggers.

MUNICIPAL GARDENS FAMILY CENTER
6 PM - 7 PM



MORE INFO + TO REGISTER:

THRIVEINDIANAPOLIS.COM/EVENTS

SICIM Annual Report

State of Indiana Cooperative Invasives Management (SICIM) recently released their 2023 Annual Report which includes statewide invasive management efforts including those of our local CISMA group Circle City CISMA. To learn more about SICIM and the Indiana Invasives Initiative, make sure to check out the report [HERE](#)

World Water Day-Soil Health Lunch and Learn with the Cummins Water Works Team



District staff members Kevin Allison and John Hazlett recently worked with the leadership of the Cummins Water Works team to conduct a Soil Health Lunch and Learn for interested staff at the Cummins Distribution Headquarters in downtown Indianapolis. Over 60 employees attended in person and virtually to learn more about our soil health program and how to effectively utilize strategies like crop rotation, cover crops, mulching systems and native pollinators to improve soil health in small scale urban agriculture. A big thank you to our partners at Cummins and The Nature Conservancy-Indiana Field Office for hosting us and the opportunity to share our unique program!

Grants Available for Urban Forestry Projects

Grants totaling \$2 million are available to fund urban forestry throughout Indiana. Administered by the Indiana DNR Division of Forestry, Community & Urban Forestry, the funding is available through the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) Forest Service Urban & Community Forestry program.

Projects that are fundable through this grant include tree planting, tree inventories with management plans, urban tree canopy assessments, storm response planning, public and/or staff education, program outreach, and the establishment and strengthening of local urban forestry programs. Funds are awarded on a reimbursable basis, and no match is required.

Communities interested in applying should note that grant awards are available for a minimum \$20,000 and a maximum \$250,000, and only areas that have census tracts that meet federal requirements are eligible.

Applications are due July 12. All application materials are available for download [HERE](#)

Stockpile Management: Maintain Compliance & Optimize Your Construction Project

By Rob Kendall, Urban Conservationist

Stockpiles are common throughout construction, but the protocol around them is not always known to field staff. The following information is a valuable resource for managing construction stockpiles under the Construction Stormwater General Permit (CSGP). The following outlines essential best practices for stockpile management and how to handle stockpile changes throughout construction. By keeping this information in mind and in practice, project compliance will be achieved and disruptions can be avoided. Always feel free to reach out for more site-specific information on handling stockpiles within CSGP sites.

Strategic Stockpile Placement and Labeling:

- All stockpiles must be meticulously documented on your Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP).
- Confine stockpiles to designated areas within the permitted boundaries of your construction site.
- Stockpiles should be located away from drain inlets to prevent inhibited flow during rain events.

Effective Erosion and Sediment Control Measures:

- Silt fencing and wattles serve as the primary line of defense and must be installed along the down-slope perimeter of all soil stockpiles before material placement or removal begins.
- Implement robust stabilization measures such as perimeter fencing or covering tarps to prevent loose materials from escaping and potentially polluting nearby waterways.
- Consider employing multiple, smaller stockpiles as opposed to a single, large one for enhanced management and control. Smaller stockpiles are much more manageable and decrease the impact of any incident.

Protecting Inactive Stockpiles:

- Encircling the perimeter with a sediment control measure provides additional protection against erosion and should always be in place. Additionally, for stockpiles left inactive for more than 14 days (about 2 weeks), or in anticipation of a significant rain event, implement temporary seeding to promote vegetative growth and stabilize the soil. Alternatively, covering the stockpile with a tarp is an effective solution.

Minimizing Community Impact:

- Whenever feasible, strategically locate haul roads and stockpiles away from residential neighborhoods, businesses, and public spaces to reduce noise, dust, and disruptions for the surrounding community.



While the inlet is protected, the sediment from the nearby stockpile is overwhelming the erosion control measures. Surrounding the perimeter of the stockpile directly and moving it away from drain inlets helps decrease the sediment's movement toward waterways.

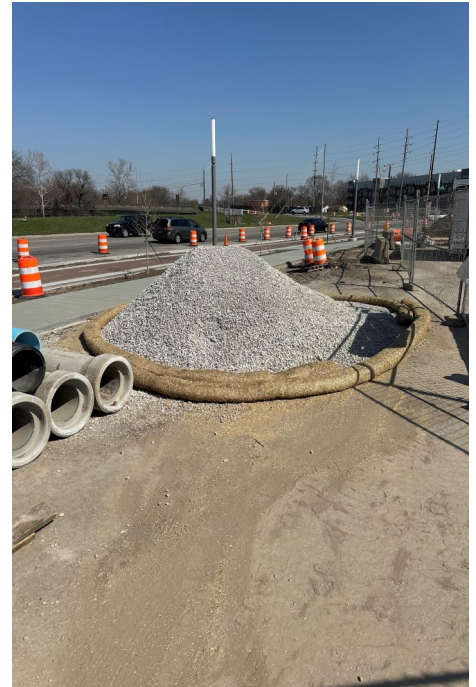
(Continued on page 8)

Preserving Existing Vegetation:

Where practical, shape the stockpile edges inwards to conserve existing vegetation growing on the pile as much as possible. This not only aids in erosion control but also reduces the overall volume of material requiring management.

SWPPP Modifications and Regulatory Updates:

- Minor revisions to your SWPPP within the approved project limits can be documented by "red lining", marking with a red utensil for easy identification, the plan and maintaining a detailed log of changes within your onsite project management records.
- For more substantial changes that involve additional land disturbance, specific procedures must be followed:
- Changes impacting less than an acre requires notifying Marion County Soil and Water Conservation District (MCSWCD), Business and Neighborhood Services (BNS), Indiana Department of Environmental Services (IDEM), as well as, submitting an Amended CSGP Notice of Intent before commencing work in the modified area.
- Disturbance exceeding one acre necessitates obtaining an additional permit coverage for the expanded area.



Proper stockpile perimeter protection keeps all material within a confined area with minimal chances of escape.

By adhering to these best practices for stockpile management, you can ensure your construction project operates efficiently, minimizes environmental impact, and maintains compliance with your CSGP. For any specific questions or to obtain further clarification regarding your project or local regulations, we encourage you to consult with your project manager or Marion County Soil and Water Conservation District.



This stockpile is located less than 5 feet from a drain inlet and prohibits the flow of stormwater to the inlet, causing the flooding seen on the photo to the right.



MARION COUNTY
SOIL AND WATER
CONSERVATION DISTRICT

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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 **

SWCD staff work in the office, remotely, and in the field. To reach us, email marioncountyswcd@iaswcd.org, utilize our website's 'Contact' tab, or call 317-786-1776 to leave a message when staff members are not in the office.

SWCD Board Supervisors

Heather Buck, Secretary
Tyler Gough, Member

Owen Dwyer, Treasurer
Brian Neilson, Chair

Maggie Goeglein, Vice Chair

Hoosier Riverwatch Training 4/26

Since 1996, Hoosier Riverwatch has engaged Indiana citizens in becoming active stewards of Indiana's [valuable water resources](#) through its hands-on water quality education and volunteer stream monitoring program. The statewide Hoosier Riverwatch volunteer network is still going strong, with over 3,000 trained stream monitors and over 31 certified instructors.

Hoosiers who want to get their feet wet (wearing boots or waders, of course), learn about water quality issues, and discover [how to monitor and protect their local streams](#) are invited to join Hoosier Riverwatch. Enthusiastic instructors provide the training, [loaner equipment trunks](#) are available for volunteers, and nonprofit organizations may qualify for [free monitoring equipment](#) from the Indiana Department of Environmental Management's Office of Water Quality.

Following an eight-hour basic training workshop, participants will be qualified to conduct habitat and biological surveys of their local streams. Monitoring activities include collecting and identifying small stream organisms called [macroinvertebrates](#) -- which serve as bioindicators of water quality -- and determining the physical and chemical characteristics of the stream. The data that volunteers collect and add to Hoosier Riverwatch's [online database](#) can be used to determine the health of streams and how they are changing over time. Join us and let's work together to ensure the health and beauty of Indiana streams and watersheds for ourselves and future generations.

The next local training will be held on April 26th at the Indianapolis Public Library, Fort Ben Branch, 9330 East 56th Street from 10 AM – 4 PM. Your instructor will be Dylan Allison.

[REGISTER HERE](#)



For more information about Hoosier Riverwatch check them out on [YouTube](#)



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