

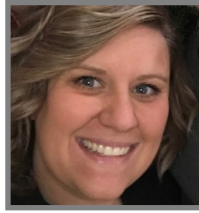
DEARBORN COUNTY SOIL & WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT 2020 ANNUAL REPORT

The Dearborn County Soil and Water Conservation District is committed to promoting natural resource conservation through education, available technology, technical assistance and partnership with other entities, with an understanding of our past and an eye toward the future.

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STAFF



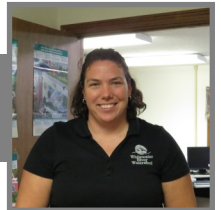
Jessica Rayburn
District Coordinator



Vickie Riggs
Educator/Technician



Jennifer Hughes
Storm Water Coordinator



Heather Wirth
Watershed Coordinator



Matt Jarvis
NRCS District Conservations

BOARD MEMBERS

- | | |
|----------------------------|----------------------------|
| Ken Gunkel — Chairman | John Kruse — Supervisor |
| Eric Callahan — Vice-Chair | Pat Holland — Supervisor |
| Darla Alford — Supervisor | Tom Klump — Associate |
| Brad Dawson — Associate | Robert Schroeder—Associate |

Aurora USDA Service Center
10729 Randall Ave, Suite 2
Aurora, IN 47001
812-926-2406 ext. 3
Follow us on Facebook
www.dearbornswcd.org

Office Hours
Monday — Friday
8:00 — 4:00
Due to the nature of our work there will be times the office is closed, please call before making a special trip.

2021 Monthly Board Meetings will be held on the 2nd Thursday of each month.

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

January -IASWCD Annual Conference	February -Native Plant Sale Order Forms Available	March -Annual Meeting	April -Pond Clinic	May -Native Plant Sale pickup	June -Backyard Workshop -Pollinator Workshop
July -Backyard Workshop	August -Backyard Workshop -Pasture Field Day	September -Backyard Workshop	October	November -Tillage Breakfast	December

Please watch for the dates of these events to be announced. Additional workshops and field days may be added throughout the year.

Snippet about Dearborn County SWCD...

The Dearborn County Soil & Water Conservation District (SWCD) was established in 1957 and is a legal government subdivision of the State of Indiana that works at the grassroots level to provide leadership for all conservation developments. The SWCD district is managed by a board of five supervisors, three are elected and two are appointed, who own land in the county. The board is also made up of associate supervisors, who aren't elected or appointed and cannot vote, but provide important input to the elected or appointed supervisors.

Dearborn County SWCD works closely with many partners: Natural Resources Conservation Service, Farm Service Agency, Purdue Extension, Indiana Department of Natural Resources, Indiana Department of Environmental Management, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, to provide services to the landowners. Thanks to these partnerships the SWCD can offer high levels of conservation services to the landowners in Dearborn County. The staff is passionate about helping landowners learn about and install best management practices that will have a positive impact on the environment and natural resources.

To educate the community about the positive impact they can make in the district, Dearborn County SWCD host several outreach and educational events throughout the year for adults and youth. These events help create awareness and education to the public. Some of the events usually held include: a cover crop field day, soil health field day, rain barrel workshop, AG day, permaculture workshop, and an annual conservation tillage breakfast. Another way the SWCD provides awareness is by e-newsletters, articles, social media, and flyers. Dearborn County SWCD also provides free soil, hay, pasture, and garden testing for Dearborn County landowners.

The SWCD board, staff, and partners are making it possible for the Dearborn County Soil and Water Conservation District to make a difference and better the environment for the community and our future generations. If you are interested in one of our programs, please contact us. As a reminder, due to the nature of our work there will be times the office is closed, please call before making a special trip to the office.



NRCS Pasture Condition Tool Available

Pasture condition scoring (PCS) is a systematic way to assess how well a pasture is being managed and resources protected. A pasture rated with a high score is well-managed with productivity (plant and animal) being sustained or enhanced. By rating the key indicators common to all pastures, pasture condition can be evaluated and the primary reasons for a low condition score can be identified. A low rating typically means the pasture has one or more challenges, such as poor plant growth, weedy species invasion, poor animal performance (low forage quantity and quality), visible soil loss, increased runoff, and impaired water quality in or adjacent to the pasture. The revised “Pasture Condition Score Sheet” (PCSS) should be used to rate individual pastures. The PCS should be performed—

- As a benchmark condition of the pasture.
- Early in the growing season before grazing events occur.
- At peak forage supply periods.
- At low forage supply periods.
- At plant stress periods such as drought or very wet conditions.
- When conservation practices (management) have been fully applied.

For best results, the livestock manager and conservation planners should evaluate the pastures the same time each year to note changes in the condition of the pasture. PCS results can be useful in deciding when to move livestock or planning other management actions. It assists in identifying which improvements are most likely to improve pasture condition or livestock performance. PCS involves the visual evaluation of 10 indicators. The Office staff is available to help understand the pasture conditioning tool and evaluate your pastures to improve your livestock operation.



EQIP Installed Conservation Practices 2020

Access Control—21 ac

Access Road— 480 ft

Animal Walkways—50 ft

Brush Management—231 ac

Conservation Cover—8 ac

Conservation Crop Rotation—1,419 ac

Cover Crop—299 ac

Fence—250 ft

Fire Break—3,734 ft

Forage Planting—63ac

Forest Management Plans—2 units

Forest Stand Improvement—71 ac

Grassed Waterways—3 ac

Habitat Development—250 ac

Heavy Use Area Protection—28,245 sq. ft

High Tunnel—2,606 sq. ft.

Livestock Pipeline—1,495 ft

Livestock Watering Facility—7 units

No-Till—1,469ac

Prescribed Grazing—88 ac

Pumping Plant—1 unit

Roof Runoff Structures —7 units

Spring Development—1 unit

Subsurface Drain—600 ft

Tree Planting—8 ac

Soil & Hay Testing

The Soil and Water Conservation District paid for 73 soil/forages tests for 43 Dearborn County landowners. These samples consisted of testing for: gardens, feed analysis, pastures/hay lands, lawns, cover crops, shrubs, trees, plant analysis, flowers, pollinators and orchards. A total of \$1,194.10 was spent on these activities this past year.

The tests can assist in proper nutrient management of your land and feed value, which can save you money by applying/adding only what is needed. The SWCD has a soil probe and a hay probe for loan, free of charge to Dearborn County landowners. If you need a soil test/forage test contact the office at 812-926-2406 ext. 3 and ask for Vickie.



Equipment Rental Totals

No-Till Drill

- 234.1 acres — Pasture/Hay
- 50.8 acres — Grain Crops
- 19.8 acres — Pollinator
- \$2,184.00— Income
- 20— Landowners
- 304.7 — Total Acres

Brillion Seeder

- 259.9 acres — Pasture/Hay
- \$2,184.00—Income
- 18 — Landowners

Equipment For Rent

Great Plains 7 ½' No-Till Drill has three seed boxes which can be used for hay/pasture land, warm season grasses, and small grains. The Brillion Seeder has two boxes and works excellent for seeding new alfalfa stands and other legumes or grasses. A 50HP tractor with hydraulics is needed for use with either piece of equipment. Rental fee is \$8.00/Ac. (minimum \$50.00). Call the office two to three days ahead of time to reserve, or for more information at (812) 926-2406 ext. 3.



Dearborn County SWCD Friend of Conservation

Congratulations to Wolfert Farm LLC, Kurt, Kim, Alexandra, Cheyenne and Steven, on receiving the 2019 Friend of Conservation Award. They own two farms in Dearborn County totaling 267 acres, and own a farm in Harrison, Ohio with 17 acres. Wolfert Farm LLC raise livestock such as certified organic angus and reining horses.

They take pride in their farms and have installed multiple many conservation practices with technical and financial assistance from Dearborn County SWCD & NRCS farm bill EQIP. Conservation practices they installed were: HUAPs (Heavy Use Area Protection) pads; Access Road; Fencing; Access Control to eliminate livestock from sensitive areas such as woodlands, streams, and pond. Alternative watering facilities were also installed on both farms to provide quality and quantity water for the livestock.

It is important to Wolfert Farm LLC that the livestock are very well taken care of and by installing these conservation practices they are addressing resource concerns and animal welfare. It is great to see a farm implementing these conservations practices and continuing to build on them. Not only do they raise organic angus beef and registered horses, but they also offer trail riding, riding lessons, and equine training at their facility.



Pictured above: Before and After of one of the HUAPs installed on the Wolfert Farm.

Dearborn County SWCD River Friendly Farmer Recipients

Each year, since 2000, the SWCD has had the opportunity to nominate two River-Friendly Farmer nominees, from each district. This year Dearborn County SWCD has submitted, Lobenstein Farm - Eric Callahan; and Wolfert Farm LLC - Kurt, Kim, Steven, Alexandra, and Cheyenne Wolfert for this award.

Eric grew up on his grandfather's farm, learning the farming operation from a very young age and with the help of his parents and grandparents, has continued improving and expanding the farming operation. Lobenstein Farm operation produces 500 acres grain crops, 40 acres specialty crops and raise beef, and sheep for market, and 400 laying hens for egg production. Not only does Lobenstein implement many conservation practices, they also participate in the "Farm to School" program and sell to farmer markets.

Wolfert Farm LLC raises organic certified angus beef and currently has 44 head of cattle on two farms they own in Dearborn County. They have worked hard to implement several conservation practices including a rotational grazing system that meets the certified organic standards. These conservations practices have helped improve water quality, herd health, soil health, air quality, forage quality/quantity, and wildlife habitats. The Wolfelt's also offer equine boarding, trail riding, and training reining horses. It is an honor getting to work with Wolfert Farm LLC.

Both farms have also been awarded the Dearborn County SWCD "Friend of Conservation" Award. SWCD is very proud of the conservation practices both farms have implemented in the past and continue to build on, as part of their farming operations. We look forward to seeing more great things from Lobenstein Farm and Wolfert Farm LLC.

Congratulations: Lobenstein Farm and Wolfert Farm LLC



Clean Water Indiana Grant— Completed December 2020

In 2018, Dearborn County SWCD was awarded a Clean Water Indiana Grant for landowner's cost share and educational purposes in Dearborn and Ohio Counties. This was a partnership with Ohio County SWCD. The cost share was reimbursed to landowners at 75% of their expenses for installing conservation practices to improve resource concerns on their farms. A total of \$100,000.00 was awarded to landowners in both counties, and \$7,000.00 was used for educational purposes to bring awareness about improving and sustaining our natural resources.

An application process was followed using ranking scores to provide funding to the interested landowners. \$47,774.25 was paid out to landowners in Dearborn County; \$52,225.75 was paid out to landowners in Ohio County. The landowners in Dearborn County provided a cash match of \$28,687.99 and an in-kind match of \$12,764.68. The landowners in Ohio County provided a cash match of \$20,941.36 and an in-kind match of \$13,037.35.



Total Practices installed in both counties were:

Access Road—1,695 ft	Heavy Use Area Protection—52,116.5 sq. ft
Brush Management (Invasive)—21 ac	Livestock Pipeline—1,955 ft
Conservation Cover—3 .5 ac	Roof Runoff Management—3 units
Cover Crop—26 ac	Subsurface Drain—1,155 ft
Forage & Biomass Planting—52 ac	Underground Outlet—235 ft
Fence—1,255 ft	Livestock Watering Facility—9 units

Load Reductions for all CWI practices installed, totaled for their lifetime, according to the Indiana State Department of Agriculture's calculations:

Phosphorus—2,435 lbs. Nitrogen—4,825 lbs. Sediment—4,335 tons



The CWI Grant was implemented between 2018 - 2020 and is completed.

Each Soil and Water Conservation District added funding for Forage Hay/Pasture planting, which the CWI Grant did not cover: Dearborn County - \$ 8,000.00 beginning balance, \$82.73 ending balance still available; Ohio County - \$4,000.00 beginning balance, \$772.72 ending balance still available.

New Invasive Species Group

A new CISMA group is now forming. So, what is a CISMA? A CISMA is a Cooperative Invasive Species Management Areas, also known as CWMA, Cooperative Weed Management Areas. CISMAs first became prevalent in the western US, but over the past decade have become more widespread in the eastern states, including the Midwest. Sometimes called Coalitions, Partnerships, or Councils, CISMAs are formed to collectively combat the problem of invasive species spreading across the landscape. They can vary greatly in their geographic range, activity level, and focus, and are usually comprised of representatives from various governmental agencies, non-profits, and concerned citizens or citizen groups. They might cover a single county or extend over multiple counties.



To join the CISMA and share your input, contact Jennifer Hughes at 812-932-9527 or jennifer.hughes@in.nacdn.net to get information about our next meeting. Watch your email for a Weed Wrangle being planned in the spring where we will be pulling garlic mustard from one of the County Parks.



Pictured on the left is Garlic Mustard in Bloom. Pictured on the right is Garlic Mustard in the Rosette stage. Garlic Mustard is an invasive and should be pulled out of the ground.



Native Plant Sale

We are excited to be having the native plant sale again this year. There will be 4-6 different varieties of plants to purchase ranging from \$2-\$4 per plant. Order forms will be available in February at the office or by contacting Jennifer Hughes, jennifer.hughes@in.nacdn.net or 812-532-9527. Orders will be due May 3rd. Don't miss out on the opportunity to get some beautiful native plants.

Backyard Conservation Cost Share

Native plants provide food and shelter to many of our native pollinators and our honeybees. In 2020, one acre of native plants was cost shared through the Backyard Conservation Program; a landowner also signed up for rain barrel cost share. The Dearborn County SWCD will again offer a Backyard Conservation cost share program for 2021. Any Dearborn County landowner is eligible to participate. Eligible practices will be Rain Barrels, Tumbling Composters and Native Plantings. To determine eligibility, a site visit must be conducted, and an application must be signed and submitted.



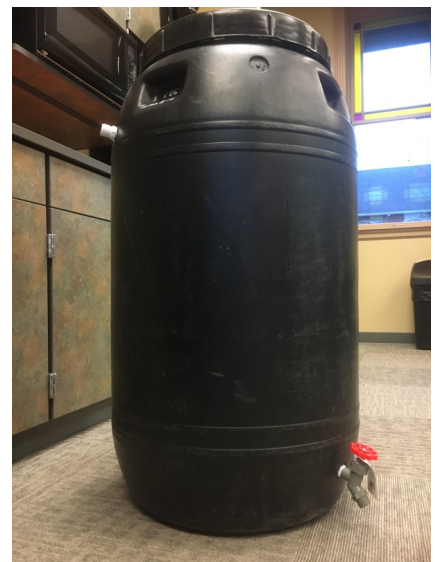
- Native Plants will be cost shared at 50% up to a maximum of \$100 per homeowner
- Rain Barrels will be cost shared at 50% up to a maximum of \$25 for one per homeowner
- Tumbling Composters will be cost shared at 50% up to a maximum of \$50 for one per homeowner

All Cost Share is reimbursed after a field visit, conservation plan is implemented on the homeowner's property and receipts have been submitted. Projects must be installed within one year of a signed conservation plan. If you are

interested in signing up for the cost share program or would like more information, call the office at (812) 926-2406 ext. 3.

Backyard Conservation Series

2020 changed the way the SWCD produced the Backyard Conservation Series. The program kicks off each year in March with new topics at the Lawrenceburg branch and North Dearborn branch libraries. In March, Kaiser Pickles in Aurora, donated 10 barrels to turn into rain barrels. 10 people attended the Lawrenceburg branch library workshop, and each attendee took home a rain barrel. Then COVID hit and we held two sessions through Facebook Live using the Lawrenceburg Library. Those programs topics were composting and wildlife shelter. Due to issues related to COVID-19, we cancelled the rest the series, but we hope to continue these series in 2021 at the libraries, but it will depend on COVID status. Watch our Facebook page for upcoming sessions or sign up for our newsletter at <http://eepurl.com/P95rD>.



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Construction Site Run-off

Construction Site Run-off General Permit is a performance-based regulation designed to reduce pollutants that are associated with construction and/or land-disturbing activities. The requirements of the Construction Site Run-off general permit apply to all persons who are involved in construction activity (which includes clearing, grading, excavation and other land-disturbing activities) that results in the disturbance of one (1) acre or more of total land area. If the land-disturbing activity results in the disturbance of less than one (1) acre of total land area but is part of a larger common plan of development or sale, the project is still subject to storm water permitting.



The major problem associated with erosion at construction sites is the movement of soil off the site and its impact on water quality.

Construction site erosion is a source of sediments, toxins, and nutrients which pollute our receiving waters such as the Ohio River, Whitewater River, Tanners Creek, Hogan Creek and all the other waterbodies in our community.

2020 saw 19 new Construction Site Run-off General Permits that consisted of school improvements, ponds, grading, subdivisions, utility improvements, dredging, commercial, borrow sites, fill sites, and cemetery expansion. Ten (10) projects were completed in 2020. Each construction site can lose up to 100 tons of sediment a year if they do not implement erosion and sediment control practices. By implementing the Construction Site Run-off General Permit in Dearborn County, approximately 50,000 tons of sediment was kept out of our creeks and rivers.

Erosion Control Ordinance

The Dearborn County Erosion Control Ordinance is in place for any land disturbances less than 1 acre in the non-incorporated parts of the county. This ordinance requires any land disturbance project to minimize erosion and sedimentation potential and is enforced by the Building Department with technical assistance provided by the SWCD. The Building Department is the jurisdictional entity that will bring any project into compliance. In 2020, there was one project that was in violation of the Erosion Control Ordinance and one compliant project that was corrected. The Building Department and SWCD will continue to partner together in protecting our most precious natural resource, the soil.

Hogan Creek Watershed 2020 Review

The Hogan Creek Watershed Project is currently working on its 4th 319 implementation grant. The grant includes funds for education and outreach efforts like workshops, field days, clean-ups, signs, and newsletters. Unfortunately, Covid-19 has cancelled many educational events that were planned for 2020. Luckily, the project was able to hold a septic system maintenance and care workshop for homeowners and offer an on-line version. Participants were able to stream the program live and also watch the recording on Purdue Extension and Dearborn SWCD Facebook pages.

The project also is implementing a \$200,000 cost-share program to assist landowners and help them install best management practices to improve the water quality of the watershed. To date the following practices have been installed with the help of the current grant:

Access Road—30 ft

Animal Walkway—705 ft

Cover Crops—29.4 ac

Critical Area Planting—0.5 ac

Fence—3,068 ft

Heavy Use Area Protection—39,125 sq. ft

Hay Planting—44 ac

Pipeline—105 ft

Water Tanks—2 units

Stream Crossing—1 unit

These practices saved 1,476 tons of sediment, 1,426 lbs. of phosphorus, and 2,861 lbs. of nitrogen from polluting the streams in the watershed yearly.



Whitewater River Watershed Project – 2020 Accomplishments

The Whitewater River Watershed Project had a busy year in 2020. The project was finishing up its first implementation grant which ended in November 2020 and started its 2nd implementation grant in February 2020. The first implementation grant ended as a success. The Whitewater River Watershed Cost-share Program funded 25 landowners in the watershed. The following practices were installed at 70% cost-share:

Access Road—396 ft	Mulch—17,183 sq. yds
Animal Walkway—11,433 sq. ft	Pasture/Hay Planting—43.2 ac
Crops—1230.5 ac	Pipeline—3,940 ft
Critical Area Planting—2.0 ac	Roof Runoff—277 ft
Fence—18,614 ft	Trickle Flow Collector—4 units
Grassed Waterway—1.8 ac	Underground Outlet—1,589 ft
Heavy Use Area Protection—40,117 sq. ft	Watering Facility- 11 tanks
Lined Waterway/Outlet—45 ft	

The landowners who were willing to install best management practices through the cost-share program helped save the following reductions of sediment and nutrients from entering the streams in the watershed.

Sediment - 9,861 T/yr	Phosphorous - 11,421 lbs/yr	Nitrogen - 21,956lbs/yr
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The sediment and phosphorus reductions surpassed the Whitewater River Watershed Management Plan's interim goals. Almost all of the grant's short-term goals and outcomes were also achieved. Over 400 adults participated in the watershed's educational events and workshop during its 1st implementation grant. More educational and cost-share opportunities are available now and in the future thanks to the project's 2nd implementation grant. If you are interested in participating in the new cost-share program or would like to see if a certain educational topic covered, please contact Heather Wirth - 812-212-1066 or heather.wirth@in.nacdnet.net



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Dearborn County SWCD 2020 Annual Report

Annual Meeting March 11, 2021

You're invited to attend the 63rd Annual Meeting of the Dearborn County Soil and Water Conservation District. It will be held **Thursday, March 11th at 6:30 PM** virtually via zoom. The public is welcomed to attend and learn more about the district and its services. The elected supervisors and appointed supervisors will be sworn in.

Please contact the office, by Monday, March 8th, at 812-926-2406 ext. 3 or email Jessica Rayburn, District Coordinator, jessica.rayburn@in.nacdnet.net to obtain the zoom link and/or call in number.

