Dearborn County
Soil & Water Conservation District
2022 Annual Report

The Dearborn County Soil and Water Conservation District Mission Statement

Promote wise use of natural resources through technical assistance and education.

Dearborn County SWCD & USDA are Equal Opportunity Providers, Employers, and Lenders.

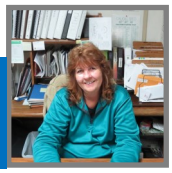
Picture of Gladys Russell Wildlife Refuge: Bowman Barn taken by Alejandra Gonzalez-Lopez

See Page 3 about cover.

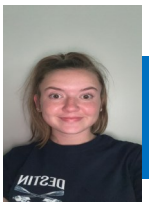
Pictured Left to Right: Tom K, Matthew, Tom G, Chris, John, Jane, Kim, Ken, John, Eric.

Staff

Beth Terrill
District Coordinator



Vickie Riggs
Educator/Technician



Kyla Dick
Storm Water Coordinator

Heather Wirth
Watershed Coordinator

Matt Jarvis
NRCS District Conservationist

Alejandra González-López
NRCS Soil Conservationist

Board Members

Ken Gunkel—Chairman	Robert Schroeder—Associate
Eric Callahan—Vice Chair	Tom Klump—Associate
John Kruse—Supervisor	Kim Wolfert—Associate
Matthew Johnson—Supervisor	Tom Gaynor—Associate
Chris Powell—Supervisor	John & Jane Lech-Associates
Pat Holland—Associate	Brad Dawson—Associate

Aurora USDA Service Center
10729 Randall Ave, Suite 2
Aurora, IN 47001
812-926-2406 ext. 3
www.dearbornswcd.org
facebook.com/dearborncountyswcd

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.

2023 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** -Tree Giveaway -Native Plant Sale Orders Due	**May** -Native Plant Sale pickup	**June**
July	**August** -Pasture Field Day	**September** Ag Day	**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. This calendar is tentative and dates may change.

Gladys Russell Wildlife Refuge

Gladys Russell donated a 120 acre farm to the Department of Natural Resources in 1980. Dearborn County acquired the land after her death in 1992. The Dearborn County Park and Recreation Board began restoration of the facilities in 1995. Recent additions to the refuge include 28 acres of land donated by James and Carolyn McManaman. Art and Roberta Bohman donated a turn-of-the-century barn which has been reconstructed as a living example of a mortise and tenon barn. Today, the Gladys Russell Wildlife Refuge includes a fishing lake, woodlands, grasslands, and trails that allow users to experience a small piece of nature.

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 held include: a cover crop field day, soil health field day, rain barrel workshop, AG day, permaculture workshop, and a 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.

EQIP Installed Conservation Practices 2022

Cover Crop-14 Acres

Conservation Cover—10 Acres

Conservation Crop Rotation– 171 Acres

Fence– 5299 Feet

Firebreak– 3734 Feet

Forest Stand Improvement– 558 Acres

Heavy Use Area Protection Area– 2099 Feet

Herbaceous Weed Control– 4 Acres

Livestock Pipeline– 775 Acres

Pasture and Hay land Planting—39 Acres

Prescribed Grazing– 25 Acres

Reduce Tillage—171 Acres

EQIP Watering Facility and HUAP

Pictured above is a 23' x 23' HUAP (Heavy Use Area Protection) that a landowner installed. This HUAP includes a Watering Facility. For more information on EQIP and the install of practices like this please contact Matt Jarvis 812-926-2406 ext. 3.

Roof Runoff Structure—1

Wildlife Habitat Management—7 Acres

Tree Planting– 2 Acres

Access Road—480 Feet

Access Control—52 Acres

Brush Management (Invasive Species Control) - 101 Acres

Spring Development—2 springs

Subsurface Drain—175 Feet

Underground Outlet—485 Feet

Watering Facility—9

EQIP Fence Exclusion

Pictured above is part of the 1,250' of Woodland Livestock Exclusion Fencing that this landowner installed. For more information on EQIP and installing fence please contact Matt Jarvis 812-926-2406 ext. 3.

NRCS Tour

Indiana NRCS State Officials Visit Dearborn County On June 22, the local Soil and Water Conservation Districts (SWCD), was host to the Indiana Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) State officials and the NRCS leadership team staff, with a tour to Dearborn, Jefferson, and Washington Counties, to visit farm locations that have participated in farm bill programs that implemented conservation practices to address natural resource concerns. Two farms that participated in the Environmental Quality Incentive Program (EQIP) were visited in Dearborn County, and one completed Emergency Watershed Program (EWP) project located on West Laughery Creek Road.

The attendees were able to see firsthand how the EQIP conservation practices implemented on the farms improved their grazing systems. Practices such as, heavy use area protection pads eliminated erosion and run off; alternative watering systems with fencing dividing pastures providing rotation grazing which improved quality and quantity of forage. The water system also allowed the farmers to fence out previous sensitive areas the cattle used for drinking, such as creeks and ponds, which provides better water quality for the animals, and eliminate sediment and run off into streams. The local farmers discussed with the NRCS state officials' team, how the practices and the program helped them to help their land. EQIP has helped numerous landowners in recent years, improve or eliminate resource concerns on the land pertaining to improve soil health, water quality, air quality, plant health, and animal health. In 2022, 37 landowners were funded for nearly one million dollars to implement conservation practices that range in a life span from five to 15 years. EQIP is a farm bill program offered in every state.

Agency partners from NRCS, Dearborn County SWCD, and Dearborn County Highway Department, have secured and brought in nearly 4 million dollars to the county through EWP in the past six years. EWP is available to all county entities to seek and obtain financial assist in road repair caused by substantial rainfall or catastrophe and is an emergency situation to get fixed. Many times, the roads will have a slip that prevents emergency vehicles a route to assist residents in an emergency. It is a cooperative effort between the local agencies to submit substantial paperwork to the federal government to seek and secure funding, which makes it possible for the local county highway departments to make the repairs. It is a match type grant, which helps counties with little budget for road repairs. Tim Grieve, Dearborn County Highway Department's Supervisor, spends many hours analyzing and submitting forms to the NRCS State Office to secure EWP funds. Tim also manages the entire project from securing the engineering contracting firm and overseeing the project through completion. The local NRCS and SWCD agencies also provided assistance with the EWP request to the NRCS State Engineer, Mike Cox.

During the tour, Jerry Raynor, NRCS State Conservationist, presented an award to Vickie Riggs, Dearborn County SWCD Environmental Technician for her 21 years of conservation planning/engineering service to NRCS and the landowners in Dearborn and Ohio Counties.

The Aurora Service Center, located on Randall Avenue, Aurora, serves Dearborn and Ohio County landowners. The staff at the service center are: Matt Jarvis, NRCS District Conservationist; Alejandra Gonzalez-Lopez, NRCS Soil Conservationist; Beth Terrill, SWCD District Office Coordinator; Vickie Riggs, SWCD District Technician; Heather Wirth, Whitewater Watershed Coordinator; Kyla Dick, SWCD Storm Water Coordinator; Carry Stegner, FSA Program Specialist; Kathy Harris, FSA Program Specialist; and Chuck Deputy, FSA County Executive Director.

Soil & Hay Testing

The Soil and Water Conservation District paid for 120 soil tests for 59 Dearborn County landowners. These samples consisted of testing for: gardens, pastures/ hay lands, lawns, cover crops, shrubs, trees, flowers, pollinators and orchards. A total of $1,802.61 was spent on these activities this past year which included totals of 35 Garden, 7 Lawn, 36 Hay Land, 29 Pasture Land, 1 Orchard and 12 Flowers.

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, hay probe, and tree spade 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 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.

2022 Equipment Rental Totals

No-Till Drill

- **$2,863.60— Income**
- **85.4 acres — Pasture Grass/Hay**
- **150.2 Acres— Soybean/Cover Crops**
- **51.2 acres — Warm Season Grass/Pollinators**
- **9.8 Acres Alfalfa**
- **71.4 Pasture Mix**
- **28 — Landowners**
- **368 — Total Acres**

Brillion Seeder

- **$712.40 — Income**
- **9 — Landowners**
- **82.8— Total Acres**
- **4 acres—Cover Crops**
- **49.4 acres—Alfalfa**
- **24.4 acres—Hay Mix**
- **5 acres—Teff Hay Grass**

Outreach & Training

The Annual SWCD Conservation Tillage Meeting was held at Agner Hall on November 4. The Breakfast was catered by Rolling Pin Catering and was free to those who attended.

Contributing Sponsors who helped make the day a success was Dearborn County Indiana Farm Bureau, RJE Fertilizer, Consolidated Grain & Barge, Helena, and Chris Powell from Aurum Realty.

Bill Johnson , Professor of Weed Science, from Purdue University gave a presentation on 'What's New on the Weed Management Horizon'; Robert Zupancic, NRCS Grazing Specialist spoke on 'Pasture and Hay Weed Management'; Jeff Hermesch , Dearborn County Purdue Extension Educator spoke about 'Bee Aware - Pollinator Protection' and PARP recertification was offered.

OKI Tour

The OKI Tour was held at East Fork State Park in Bethel, Ohio. The tour focused on Hops Production, Community Gardens, Local Schools with Student Landscaping, 2021 Restoration Area, Rain Gardens, Rock Berms, Drainage Tile, Pocket Wetlands, and Streambank Erosion.

Ken Gunkel, Kyla Dick and Beth Terrill all attended from the Dearborn County Soil and Water Conservation District Board and Staff.

Dearborn County SWCD River Friendly Farmer Recipients

We are very pleased to recognize John & Jane Kruse from the Sunman area. They were named Dearborn County's 2022 River Friendly Farmers.

John and his wife Jane have been no-tilling grain crops in a rotation system – corn, soybean, wheat, and cover crops for 47 years on their farm.
By implementing no-till, John feels it improves soil health and structure, reducing fertilize usage and labor time, decreases machinery usage, improves plant health and improves water quality. Continuous no-till and cover crops nearly eliminates any erosion, soil loss and nutrient loss from the fields. Therefore, improving water quality.

Other practices implemented on the farm are timber stand improvement and wildlife habitat management, wetlands, grassed waterways and filter strips.
John has been a member/supervisors for the Dearborn County SWCD for 20 years; 4-H Fair Board member; 2022 SWCD Regional Director; Vice President Church Board member; Past Treasurer of the Ohio-Kentucky-Indiana Regional Council of Governments; presenter/speaker at agriculture meetings on no-till and cover crop topics; hosted farm tours, and received the IASWCD Conservation Farmer of The Year Award.

John & Jane Kruse, receiving their RFF Award during the Indianapolis State Fair

Congratulations….

John & Jane Kruse!

Pictured above: Winners from the other counties in Indiana who also won the RFF award.

Dearborn County SWCD Friend of Conservation Awards

Jason earned his degree in forestry in 1996 from Southern Illinois University in Carbondale, IL. He has worked as a technician with the Illinois Natural History Survey and as a forester for Westvaco Paper Company in western Kentucky. Most recently, he coordinated log sales at a veneer mill in Edinburgh, IN. Jason also has a teaching certificate and taught elementary school for five years. He enjoys spending his time off with his wife and two children.

Jason Utley State Forester

Jeff Hermesch

Purdue Extension,

Dearborn County

Jeff Hermesch is the Agriculture & Natural Resources and Community Development Extension Educator in Dearborn County, Indiana.

Jeff began his Extension career in Decatur County, Indiana, in 2013 as the 4-H Youth Development Extension Educator and then transitioned to the Agriculture & Natural Resources Extension Educator. In 2022, he transferred to Dearborn County.

Hermesch received a B.S. in Turfgrass Science from Purdue University in 2004 and a M. Ed. from Indiana Wesleyan University in 2012. Prior to Purdue Extension, Jeff was a middle school science teacher and athletic fields groundskeeper in minor league baseball and college athletics.

Hermesch has been involved in a variety of Extension programming including Master Gardener, consumer and commercial horticulture, field crop production, local foods, soil health, Purdue Hops Team, and DIY Lawn Care Team.

His specialty is in Turfgrass Science where he has worked in several communities to enhance green spaces including parks and athletic complexes.

Jeff grew up in Millhousen, IN and currently resides in Hidden Valley Lake with his wife Kelly, their two sons and daughter.

They are expecting another daughter in late March 2023.

Dearborn County SWCD Partnership Awards

Chuck Deputy FSA

Chuck Deputy is currently the County Executive Director for Farm Service Agency in the Dearborn/Ohio and Switzerland County offices.

Chuck started in the Dearborn/Ohio County FSA Office 8 years ago and has been CED in Switzerland County for 32 years.

Chuck lives in Jefferson County on his family farm with his wife Lacie where they raise hay and horses.

He is a graduate of Purdue University with a BS degree in Animal Agri-Business.

Carry Stegner FSA

Carry Stegner is a program technician for Dearborn/Ohio County Farm Service Agency. She started her journey with Farm Service nine years ago. She transferred to the Dearborn/Ohio County office in 2022from Jennings County to get closer to home. Carry grew up in Rexville, Indiana and graduated high school from South Ripley. After high school she earned a degree in paralegal studies with a minor in office administration. Later she earned her real estate license selling real estate in Indiana until she stared with the Farm Service Agency. She lives on a farm in Ohio County with her husband Jeremy, son Ben, a horse named Hawk, and a dog named Tess.

Dearborn County SWCD Partnership Awards

Kathy Harris FSA 20 Years

Kathy Harris was born and raised in Ohio County and graduated from Rising Sun High School in 1974. She married her husband Morris in 1979 and they have been married for 43 years. They have two children, Wade and Shalon and four grandchildren, Abby, Camden, Peyton and Kaitlyn plus a dog named Odie.

Kathy retired from the Dearborn-Ohio Farm Service Agency in October of 2022 after 20 years of service.

She is thankful for the opportunity to have met and worked with some amazing farmers and co-workers. Everyday was an adventure for her but she is super excited for the next chapter in her life, whatever it may be.

Tim Grieve Highway Dept.

Tim Grieve has been with the Dearborn County Highway Department for sixteen years and serves as the Highway Superintendent. He worked in West Chester, Ohio for the Highway Department for ten years as the Assistant Highway Superintendent before coming to Dearborn County.

He has a degree in Horticulture from Cincinnati State and lives in southern Dearborn County on a farm with his wife Tammy where they raise hay and horses together.

Ag Day

Dearborn County SWCD, NRCS, and Whitewater River Watershed presented to local 3rd graders for Ag Day!

Matt Jarvis, NRCS and Alejandra Gonzalez-Lopez, NRCS, presented acre demonstrations.

Heather Wirth, Watershed Coordinator, Kyla Dick, Stormwater Coordinator, and Alejandra Gonzalez-Lopez provided information on the importance of Watersheds and demonstrated using the EnviroScape.

Construction Site Run-off

The old “Rule 5” was replaced by IDEM (Indiana Department of Environmental Management) with the new Construction Stormwater General Permit in December of 2021. The requirements of the Construction Stormwater 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.

Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System

A municipal separate storm sewer system, also known as a MS4, is defined by the Indiana Department of Environmental Management as “a conveyance or system of conveyances owned by a state, city, town, or other public entity that discharges to waters of the United States and is designed or used for collecting or conveying stormwater. Regulated conveyance systems include roads with drains, municipal streets, catch basins, curbs, gutters, storm drains, piping, channels, ditches, tunnels, and conduits. It does not include combined sewer overflows and publicly owned treatment works”. Dearborn County recently became an MS4 on April 13th of this year and is now required to obtain permit coverage under the Indiana Department of Environmental Management. The SWCD is actively working in collaboration with various county departments to achieve compliance.

Erosion Control Ordinance

The Dearborn County Erosion Control Ordinance is in place for the non-incorporated parts of the county. This ordinance requires any building 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.

2023 Native Plant Order Forms Available Now!!

Asclepias tuberosa (Butterfly Weed)
Butterfly weed has orange flowers and reaches 12 - 24 inches tall, with a spread up to 24 inches. Plugs should be planted 12 - 18 inches apart. Butterfly weed performs best in full sun and dryer soils. The flowers bloom from June through August.

Symphyotrichum cordifolium (Heart-leaved Aster)
Heart-leaved Aster typically has pale blue to purple flowers. It can grow 24 - 36 inches tall, and have a spread of 12 - 24 inches. Plants should be spaced 12 - 24 inches apart to allow sufficient growth. Heart-leaved Aster does best in partial sun, with moist and well-drained soils. It blooms September - November.

Chelone glabra (White Turtlehead)
This forb grows in moist to wet soils. It needs partial shade to reach heights of 24 - 48 inches tall. Plants should be planted 24 - 36 inches apart. The white flowers bloom from August through September. Flowers purportedly resemble the heads of open-mouthed turtles.

Andropogon gerardii (Big Bluestem)
Big Bluestem is a warm season tall grass. It can grow to be 6 - 8 feet tall but can be pruned to shorter heights if desired. It requires full sun and is well adapted to poor soil conditions. Big Bluestem is a grass to add color to your landscape and help with erosion.

Dearborn County SWCD 2023 Native Plant Sale

Order Deadline is April 28th, 2023

Orders not paid for in advance cannot be guaranteed.
After April 28th, call 812-926-2406 ext. 3 before sending payment to guarantee we have those plants in stock.

Name of Plant	Quantity/ Number of Plugs	Cost Per Item	Total Cost
Asclepias tuberosa (Butterfly Weed)		$2.50	
Symphyotrichum cordifolium (Heart-		$2.50	
Andropogon gerardii (Big Bluestem)		$2.50	
Chelone glabra (White Turtlehead)		$2.50	
Special Request:		Subtotal	
		7% Tax	
		Total	

If you need special arrangements or have questions, before ordering, contact us at:

812-926-2406 ext. 3 or
Kyla.dick@in.nacdnet.net

Mail this order form and payment to

Dearborn County SWCD
10729 Randall Avenue
Aurora, IN 47001

Name:			
Address:			
City:		Zip:	
Phone:			
Email:			
Day & Time of Pickup:			

2022 Tree Giveaway

Ken Gunkel, Center, Chairman for the DCSWCD Board is pictured with the FFA students from East Central High School who participated in the 2022 Tree Giveaway, held at Bright Park. Approximately 600 trees were given away in exchange for a non-perishable food item or a monetary donation . $563.50 was received and donated to the Dearborn County Park Board while the food that was collected was given to the Clearing House in Aurora and the North Dearborn Food Pantry.

Whitewater River Watershed 2022 Projects

The Whitewater River Watershed Project is working on completing its 2nd implementation grant by providing funds to install best management practices through the cost-share program and through education and resources to promote change without cost-share. 2022 was a big year with many best management practices being installed through the project's cost-share program. In the past, the Whitewater River Watershed's cost-share program has been limited to only funding practices on the Indiana side of the watershed. The project has many partners and active landowners in Butler and Hamilton Counties in Ohio who have assisted and greatly contributed to the project over the years. The project is happy to announce the Butler and Hamilton County SWCDs and partners have worked together and developed a plan and will be able to apply for grants to provide a cost-share program for the Ohio side of the Whitewater River Watershed. The Dearborn County SWCD also applied for another 319 implementation grant to continue the project in the future. With both efforts, a lot of good practices and improvements can be made throughout the entire watershed. If you own or operate land in the Whitewater River Watershed and are interested in the project or cost-share program, please contact Heather Wirth at **heather.wirth@in.nacdnet.net** or call 812-212-1066.

Hogan Creek Watershed Project

The Hogan Creek Watershed Project has came to an end after 17 years of work. The project started in 2005 with a 205J Grant to conduct water monitoring and develop a watershed management plan specify to its watershed. The project was fortunate enough to receive 4 other grants to implement the watershed management plan through education and cost-share programs. A large number of best management practices have been installed over the years to help improve the water quality of the streams. The practices that have been installed and maintained over the years are saving 22,475 tons of sediment from entering the streams every year. They have also reduced the amount of phosphorus and nitrogen from entering the streams by 25,2288 lbs of phosphorus a year and 49,204 lbs of nitrogen a year. Many of the practices installed not only helped control erosion but also provided many other benefits like improving soil health, fencing livestock out of creeks, and helping the land to be more productive and manageable. Many highly attended workshops/field days were held over the years as well. Some of the topics covered during these events were cover crops, soil health, rotational grazing, pasture management, invasive species, timber stand improvement, pollinators, septic systems, backyard conservation, and much more. Trash cleanups were held on a regular basis throughout the project's time to clean-up areas along the streams. Area youth were also educated on the watershed concept, erosion, and best management practices during Ag Days and other events. The Hogan Creek Watershed Project would like to thank the landowners and operators who have participated in the cost-share program and installed best management practices on their land. The project would also like to thank the community for coming to the educational events and hopefully tried some of the practices and different management systems on their own.

Dearborn County SWCD
10729 Randall Avenue, Suite 2
Aurora, IN 47001

Phone: (812) 926-2406 ext. 3
http://www.dearbornswcd.org

Non-Profit Org
U.S. Postage
PAID
Lawrenceburg, IN 47025
Permit No. 139

Dearborn County SWCD 2022 Annual Report

Annual Meeting March 9, 2023

You're invited to attend the 65th Annual Meeting of the Dearborn County Soil and Water Conservation District. Free catered meal by Rolling Pin Catering.

It will be held ***Thursday, March 9th at 6:30 PM*** **at The Dearborn Adult Center, 311 W Tate St, Lawrenceburg, IN 47025**

The public is welcome to attend and learn more about the SWCD and its services. The elected supervisors and appointed supervisors will be sworn in.

Please contact the office, by *Wednesday, March 1st*, at 812-926-2406 ext. 3 or email Beth Terrill, District Coordinator, at stella.terrill@in.nacdnet.net to RSVP.