

Franklin County Soil and Water Conservation District



Spring 2017



Franklin County Soil and Water Conservation District (SWCD)
10165 Oxford Pike
Brookville, IN 47012
(765) 647-2651, ext. 3

www.franklincountyswcd.org

**Due to the nature of our work there will be times the office must be closed. Please call ahead before visiting.*

District Supervisors:

Michael Schwab – Chairman
David Hartman – Vice-Chairman
Louis Schwegman – Secretary
Darin Hodapp – Supervisor
Tim Hofer – Supervisor

Associate Supervisors:

Roger Bommer
Lee Giesting
Clinton McNally
Eugene Meyer
John Selm

Conservation Staff:

Evan Divine – NRCS
Chris Fox – SWCD

The SWCD Board of Supervisors meets on the third Wednesday of each month starting at 7:30 p.m. The public is invited to attend.

April-Cancelled May 10* (new date)

Conservation Tillage Breakfast

Join us for the 11th Annual Conservation Tillage Breakfast and workshop on **Saturday, March 11th** at Zimmer Tractor in Brookville beginning at 7:30am. Speakers will cover a variety of topics. PARP credits will be available. Please bring your card and \$10 for PARP.

Changes coming



By Evan Divine

Over the past 3 ½ years I have had the pleasure of working with a lot of Franklin County residents and I have been very grateful for the opportunity and the relationships I have made here. I have learned a lot through my experiences and I have enjoyed being able to help others apply conservation practices to their farms. When folks ask me what I do I often follow up my job description by telling them that I'm one of the very few government employees that people actually invite onto their farms, and that everything we do is voluntary. As much I as have enjoyed working here it is time for me to pursue some of my own personal endeavors, and my last day with the NRCS will be March 3rd. My future days will be spent starting a barn reclamation business that I will operate full time. I still consider this to be in the field of conservation, just in a little different capacity. Starting on March 6th Lori Divine will be the Acting District Conservationist in Franklin County. Lori has been with the NRCS for 5 years and she

is currently a Soil Conservationist in the Connersville office. Lori has also been assisting in the Richmond office for the past year and a half and she will continue to work out of that office a couple days a week, but the majority of her time will be spent in Brookville. If you wish to meet with her please call the office and schedule an appointment. She can also be reached at lori.divine@in.usda.gov.

Thank you all for being so great to work with and making it a pleasure to serve here. Keep up the great conservation efforts!

By: Chris Fox

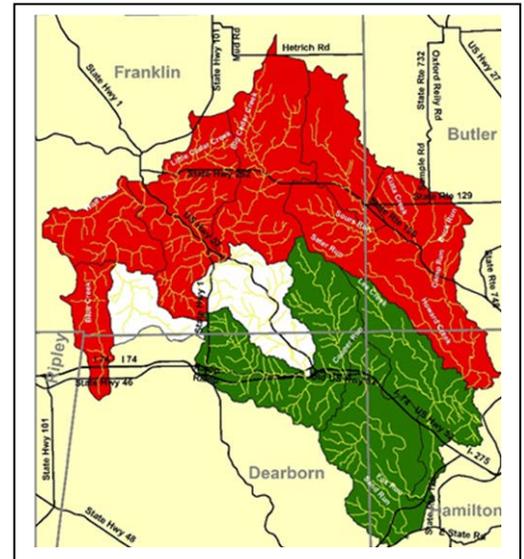
The SWCD office will also be experiencing a temporary change. I will be taking an educational leave of absence beginning on March 27 and returning mid-July. During my extended leave, the SWCD Board, FSA, NRCS and ISDA staff are going to pitch in to help keep the office running. I have done a lot of planning and organizing to get the office ready before I depart. I will also be working remotely using my laptop and working out of other USDA offices whenever I can to stay connected to the Franklin County SWCD office. We appreciate your patience during this time.

Whitewater River Watershed Cost-share Program

The Whitewater River Watershed project received \$200,000 to provide 70% cost-share on best management practices that will help improve the water quality of the Whitewater River Watershed. The table below lists the conservation practices that are available with their not to exceed rates.

Practices	Percent Cost-share	Not to Exceed
Access Road	70%	\$2.50/sq ft
Animal Trails and Walkways	70%	\$2.50/sq ft
Cover crops	70%	\$35/ac
Critical Area Planting	70%	\$375/ac
Filter Strip	70%	\$550/ac
Grade Stabilization	70%	\$75/ft
Grassed Waterway	70%	\$4.75/ft
Heavy Use Area Protection		
Gravel	70%	\$2.50/sq ft
Concrete	70%	\$3.25/ sq ft
Lined Waterway or Outlet	70%	\$75/ft
Mulching	70%	\$1/ sq yd
Forage and Biomass Planting	70%	\$295/ac
Permanent Fencing	70%	\$3/ft
Pipeline	70%	\$4/ft
Pumping Plant	70%	\$1,700/unit
Riparian Buffer Establishment	70%	\$700/ac
Roof Runoff Management System	70%	\$6.50/ft
Spring Development	70%	\$1,600/unit
Stream Crossing		
Rock	70%	\$2/sq ft
Culvert	70%	\$5,000/unit
No-Till System	70%	\$15/ac
Nutrient Management		
Plan Development	70%	\$5/ac
Implementation	70%	\$5/ac
Prescribed Grazing	70%	\$5/ac
Subsurface Drain & Underground Outlet	70%	\$3/ft
Tree and Shrub Establishment	70%	\$650/ac
Watering Facility	70%	\$800/tank

When a landowner shows interest in the cost-share program, his/her property will be checked first to insure it is located inside the Whitewater River Watershed boundaries. A field visit will be conducted by the Watershed Coordinator, and the cost-share ranking sheet will be completed. Landowners whose property is located in a “High” priority areas (red) and has a high ranking will be funded first. If money is still available, landowners whose property is located in the “Medium” priority areas (green) will be eligible in the summer of 2018. Cost-share funds will be available until February 2020 or when all of the money is allocated. Each applicant may receive up to a maximum of \$8,000.



All practices must be completed according to NRCS (Natural Resources Conservation Service) FOTG (Field Office Technical Guide) specifications. Many practices are engineered and must be installed according to the designs provided. Payment is a reimbursement and typically takes 4-6 weeks after paperwork is sent to IDEM. Landowners are responsible for paying for all materials and contractors after the work is completed. All practices and paperwork must be completed and submitted by January 2020.

If you are interested in the cost-share program or would like more information, please contact Heather Wirth at 812-926-2406 ext. 107, email heather.wirth@in.nacdnet.net, or contact the SWCD office.





ARBOR DAY

Franklin County SWCD will be holding the 6th annual tree giveaway & food drive on **Arbor Day, April 28th** beginning at 9am. Over 700 tree seedlings will be available on a 1st come basis at the office. There will be a limit of 5 trees per person. A variety of tree species will be available, including: silky dogwood, chokecherry, white oak, tulip tree, Norway spruce, white pine and pecan. Trees provide many vital services to our community by producing oxygen, creating shade, reducing run off, preventing erosion and creating habitat for a variety of wildlife species. Again this year, we are asking for canned food donations, which will be given to the SIEOC food pantry and Works of Mercy Center in Brookville. While donations are not required to receive trees, they are greatly appreciated.

“The best time to plant a tree was 20 years ago...the second best time is now.”

Black bear in southern Indiana to wake soon

The black bear that wandered into southern Indiana last year should be soon waking from hibernation. This is the second confirmed black bear in the state in 144 years. Remember to keep your distance and to remove all attractants if you live near Big Oaks National Wildlife Refuge. Black bears were historically abundant across Indiana. Habitat loss and unregulated hunting caused black bears to be extirpated from Indiana and much of the Midwest by 1850. The last confirmed report of a black bear in Indiana was in 1871, until a young male black bear was found in St. Joseph County in northern Indiana in 2015.

Has Spring Sprung?

By: Chris Fox

As I write this it is late February but feels more like early May. This has been a rather unseasonably warm winter and the signs of spring are springing up everywhere. For me, the start of spring is often tied to sights and sounds like the calls of the spring peepers or the song of a Red-winged Blackbird. It is not unusual for people to celebrate the coming of spring according to the arrival of a song bird. But Hinckley, Ohio has taken it in a slightly different direction. Every year since 1957 on March 15th, the city of Hinckley has celebrated the return of the “buzzards”, a common name for the turkey vulture. Most people aren’t very excited to see a turkey vulture, so then why do thousands of people flock to Hinckley to witness the return of these much maligned birds? It could be that the return of the buzzards at the same place and same time each year is observed as a natural phenomenon, or it might be that it symbolizes the return of spring...or just maybe some actually believe that this misunderstood bird is worthy of celebrating. Turkey vultures serve an important ecological role as nature’s sanitizing agents. Turkey vultures have several unique abilities to help with this process. For one, they have a very acute sense of smell (rather rare among birds). They also have a very unique digestive system that kills all virus and bacteria. They are often seen circling as they soar in thermals in search of food. Here in SE Indiana we have both Turkey and Black Vultures and often see them year round as we are on the edge of their wintering grounds. So, now as you look to the skies and see a “buzzard” I hope you have a new appreciation of this unique bird.

Dates to Remember

April 13: *Ag-Day* for Franklin County 3rd and 4th grade students.



April 28: Celebrate *Arbor Day* at the SWCD 6th Annual tree give-away & food drive.

May 4: *Native Plant Sale* Pick up at Franklin County SWCD from 9am-4pm.

May 29: Memorial Day. Observed holiday. **Office closed.**

2017 Poster Contest Winners

- | | |
|-----|--|
| K-1 | 1 st Elizabeth Davis
2 nd Jerod Rauch
3 rd Ella Amrhein |
| 2-3 | 1 st Ethan Short
2 nd Maddy Smith
3 rd Audrey Tebbe |
| 4-6 | 1 st Haley Wiesemann
2 nd Abbi Baxter
3 rd Sophia Taylor |
| 7-9 | 1 st Trevor Robertson
2 nd Charlotte Barrett
3 rd Madison Jones |

Congratulations to our contest winners!

Indiana’s oldest known bald eagle spotted again

A 28-year-old bald eagle, one of the original eagles brought to Indiana in the 1980s as part of a restoration program, has been spotted again at Monroe Lake. Bald eagle C43 is the oldest known bald eagle in Indiana. She arrived in 1988 as a nestling from Whitestone Harbor, Alaska. Biologists brought C43 and 72 other eaglets to Indiana to start the bald eagle restoration program. The young eagles were released at Monroe Lake with the hope they would nest. Thanks to those efforts we now have several pairs of eagles nesting in Franklin County.



Photo by Clare Bozell



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Wenning Farms, Inc
Roger Wenning
Cover Crop Specialist
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