

# Franklin County Soil and Water Conservation District



## Winter 2013



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

[www.franklincountyswcd.org](http://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  
John Selm - Supervisor  
Darin Hodapp – Supervisor

### **Associate Supervisors:**

Roger Bommer  
Clinton McNally  
Eugene Meyer

### **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.

**Dec 18      Jan 15      Feb 19**

### **Hoosier Harvest Market: Food Hub**

If you would like to sell produce or buy Indiana-grown food products online visit [hoosierharvestmarket.com](http://hoosierharvestmarket.com) website or call Michael Morrow at (317) 800-0312 for more information.

## EQIP Sign Up

On November 5<sup>th</sup> State Conservationist Jane Hardisty announced the sign up period for the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service Environmental Quality Incentive Program (EQIP). EQIP provides farmers and landowners with financial and technical assistance to install conservation practices on their land to address specific resource concerns. Indiana is now accepting applications for general EQIP which includes practices such as fencing, animal watering systems, pasture planting, wildlife habitat, erosion control structures, timber stand improvement, manure storage structures, crop and pest management, plus soil health practices such as no-till and cover crops. Farmers and landowners have until February 21, 2014 to submit an application. For more information contact Evan Divine, District Conservationist, NRCS.

### **Great Plains No-till Drill Rental**



Do you need to plant cover crops, hay or wildlife habitat? The District has both a 7' and 10' drill available to rent for \$10 per acre with a \$50 minimum.

## SAVE THE DATE

Join the Franklin County SWCD for their **51<sup>st</sup> Annual Meeting and Dinner February 19, 2014** held in the Franklin County High School cafeteria. A catered buffet meal will be served at 6pm. Musical entertainment will be provided by the **Dulcimer Society**. The keynote presenter will be **Kathy Hersey**, cofounder of the **Utopia Wildlife Rehabilitation Center** in Hope, Indiana. The educational program will include several live birds & animals and a discussion of the centers mission, the current state of wildlife in Indiana, and why wildlife is important. Following the presentation there will be an election, awards ceremony and a recap of the SWCD activities for the 2013 year. At the conclusion of the meeting, door prizes will be handed out. Please **RSVP** by **February 12, 2014**.



**UTOPIA WILDLIFE  
REHABILITATORS**

### **Upcoming in the Spring of 2014:**

8<sup>th</sup> Annual Conservation Tillage Breakfast & Workshop, Spring Fish Sale, Arbor Day Tree Giveaway & food drive, Ag-Day and field days.

**United States Department of Agriculture**



**CONSERVE FRANKLIN COUNTY: Managing nutrients leads to better yields & cleaner water**

**Submitted by Evan Divine, District Conservationist**

Nutrients can help or harm, either leading to bountiful harvests or contributing to water quality issues. How we manage nutrients affects how much is taken up by plants and how much is lost from our farm fields. Nutrients come from many sources in rural, suburban and urban America. Farmers and ranchers play an important role in finding solutions to prevent nutrients from making their way into our streams, rivers and other water bodies, including Brookville Lake.

Producers across the United States and here in Franklin County help improve water quality by managing nutrients, using the right kind, the right amount, applied at the right time, and using the proper method of application. Plants need nutrients to develop properly. On farms, nutrients are often provided through fertilizer, manure and compost. As the nation's private lands conservation agency, USDA's Natural Resources Conservation Service helps producers use nutrients wisely – through a conservation practice called nutrient management.

Nutrient management allows farmers and ranchers to achieve optimal agricultural and economic outcomes while improving the quality of air, soil and water. Through nutrient management, farmers and ranchers perform a soil or plant tissue test to determine nutrient needs and apply only the amount needed to optimize crop yields. To improve timing, nutrients should be applied when plants can best absorb them, while considering factors like weather, irrigation events and crops that will follow. Sometimes it's best to split nutrient applications to increase the chances of nutrient uptake by the crop while minimizing losses through runoff and leaching.

Nutrients can also be managed through other conservation practices like managing more crop residue on the soil surface and planting cover crops. By maintaining more crop residue on the soil surface and by planting cover crops, the soil is less likely to erode. When soil erodes, it takes nutrients with it.

In the past two years, producers worked with NRCS to implement nutrient management on more than 3.5 million acres in the country. Managing nutrients comes with benefits for the producer, too. Producers can see cost savings from lower inputs and potential yield increases, thus creating a win-win situation.

High concentrations of nutrients in water, such as nitrogen and phosphorus, can be harmful to humans, animals and aquatic life. When the runaway nutrients reach estuaries, they can lead to hypoxic zones, or oxygen-depleted waters. The Chesapeake Bay, Great Lakes and Gulf of Mexico experience hypoxic events every summer. With 88 percent of surface water falling on private land before it reaches our lakes, streams and underground aquifers, private landowners, like farmers and ranchers, play an important role in decreasing the amount of nutrients in our waterways.

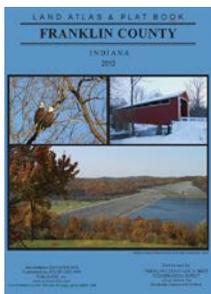
**Evan Divine is a District Conservationist with the USDA's Natural Resources Conservation Service. He works in the agency's Brookville office and can be contacted at (765) 647-2651 or [evan.divine@in.usda.gov](mailto:evan.divine@in.usda.gov).**

*USDA's Natural Resources Conservation Service helps America's farmers and ranchers conserve the nation's soil, water, air and other natural resources. All programs are voluntary and offer science-based solutions that benefit both the landowner and the environment. Learn more at [www.in.nrcs.usda.gov](http://www.in.nrcs.usda.gov).*



Evan Divine, NRCS--DC

Clint Harrison has accepted a District Conservationist (DC) position in Bartholomew County to be closer to his family. We thank Clint for all his years of service and welcome the new DC, Evan Divine. Evan grew up on his family's Martin County farm in Southwest Indiana. He received a Bachelor's degree in Natural Resources & Environmental Science from Purdue University in May of 2012. He began working for the NRCS as a Soil Conservationist upon graduation. Evan started his career in the Greensburg Field Office and has also assisted landowners in Rush, Shelby and Wayne Counties. He is looking forward to providing conservation & technical assistance to the residents of Franklin County and getting to know the members of the community.



New Plat Book Now On Sale

A new updated version of the Franklin County Plat Book is now available at the SWCD office. The book is full color and includes aerial photos of each township. The 2013 books sell for \$25 each, cash or check only.

## "Outstanding Owls"

Owls are found throughout the world and on all continents except Antarctica. A total of 19 species are found in North America. Indiana is home to 4 year-round residents: the Great Horned, Barred, Eastern Screech and Barn Owl. During the winter Hoosiers may also encounter the Northern Saw-whet, Long-eared, Short-eared or Snowy Owl. These majestic and mysterious birds provide an important ecological service.



### Interesting Owl facts:

- Owls cannot turn their eyes but, instead, they rotate their heads up to 270 degrees. However, they can't turn their heads completely around.
- Many owl species have ears that are different sizes and different heights on their heads which helps give the owl superior hearing.
- Several species of owls (such as the Great Horned or screech owl) have "ear" tufts on their head but they are not ears at all. These feathers are for communication and help to keep the owl camouflaged.
- An owl has 3 eyelids: one for blinking, one for sleeping and one for keeping the eye clean.
- The flattened facial disk of the owl funnels sound to the ears and magnifies it as much as 10 times.
- A pair of Barn Owls may take up to 4,000 rodents per year to raise a family. Unfortunately, the Barn Owl is endangered in Indiana. See the website below for plans to construct an owl nest box.

[http://www.in.gov/dnr/fishwild/files/fw-Barn\\_Owl\\_Brochure.pdf](http://www.in.gov/dnr/fishwild/files/fw-Barn_Owl_Brochure.pdf)

## Dates to Remember

# 2 0 1 4

**January 1:** New Year's Day! Observed holiday. **Office closed.**

**January 6-8:** IASWCD annual conference in Indianapolis. *Limited staff available.*

**January 15:** SWCD monthly meeting at 7:30pm.

**January 20:** Martin Luther King, Jr. holiday! **Office Closed.**

**January 22:** Assessing Forage Quality—6:30pm Gov't Center Room #203. Contact Extension Office for details (765) 647-3511.

**February 8:** 8<sup>th</sup> Annual Food and Growers Seminar—9-2pm Batesville Intermediate School. \$20/per person includes lunch. <http://foodandgrowers.org/>



**February 17:** Presidents Day! Observed holiday. **Office closed.**

**February 19:** SWCD 51<sup>st</sup> Annual Meeting & Dinner at Franklin Co. High School cafeteria at 6:00pm. **RSVP.**

**March 15:** 8<sup>th</sup> Annual Conservation Tillage Breakfast & Workshop (PARP)—8:30am at Zimmer Tractor.



Anna Morrow, ANR Extension Educator, is hosting a series of trainings focusing on soil fertility and nutrient management. For more details call (765) 647-3511.



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10165 Oxford Pike  
Brookville, IN 47012-9414



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Roger Wenning  
Cover Crop Specialist  
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