

# Conservation Today For Tomorrow

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## Field Borders Provide Benefits



**Field borders are strips of permanent vegetation established at the edge of a field or around the outside of the field.**

Field borders are highly effective conservation practices in many ways. They reduce erosion from wind and water especially where the normal end rows in a row crop field go up and down hill. A permanent grass or legume strip ties the soil down and keeps it on the farm and out of road ditches and waterways. When the field border is on the downhill side of the field, it serves as a filter strip, removing sediment, nutrients and pesticides from the runoff water.

Another important benefit is serving as a home for beneficial insects, especially pollinators. They also can be a place to manage harmful insects when they congregate in the grassy strip. Beneficial wildlife make their homes in the field border and move out into the crop fields to harvest harmful insects and other plant pests.

Field borders also serve to connect other types of buffers such as grassed waterways and filter strips. They can serve as a turn strip at the ends of fields and as roadways and access routes to growing crops. Normally the width of a field border is based on owner desires and objectives.

Thoughts to consider in the planning process include width needed to park, load and unload equipment and the planned use for travel roads. Mowing, harvesting and weed control activities within the field border should be planned for after July 15 to accommodate ground nesting wildlife. Consider using warm season grasses and native forbs because they normally provide greater wind erosion protection and wildlife habitat. If the field border is near a stream channel consider plants tolerant to sediment deposits and that have a fibrous deep root system. They will provide better bank stabilization.

Rows of shrubs adjacent to field borders increase wind erosion control and enhances the border's ability to harbor beneficial insects and may provide additional wildlife benefits.

Stop by the Soil and Water Conservation District Office to discuss field borders with district or conservation partnership personnel.



News from   
**“Green” Payments:**  
*Are you ready for CSP?*

INDIANAPOLIS, September 7, 2005 – State Conservationist Jane Hardisty, of USDA’s Natural Resources Conservation Service, knows the conservation ethic of Indiana farmers. She has been working with them as a conservation proponent for almost 30 years.

“Indiana farmers measure-up well with their counterparts in other states,” says the conservation agency leader. “The new Conservation Security Program (CSP - not to be confused with CRP!) rewards the best, and Indiana farmers who have been doing the right thing for years are benefiting from this program. When you drive through a rural community you can see which farms are operated by good land stewards.”

The new conservation program is entering its third year in 2006. Farmers in six other Indiana watersheds have already had a chance to sign up. The new Indiana watersheds for 2006 include the **Wildcat Creek watershed in eastern Tippecanoe County.**

“We are getting the word out now so farmers have as much time as possible to learn about CSP and to prepare for the sign-up,” says Hardisty. “There will be an announcement sometime during the fall about the timing and length of the sign-up. And for farmers who are not in a 2006 selected watershed, our message is that CSP will come to your watershed soon. When it does, you want to be ready.”

How do you do that? For many it’s just getting your record-keeping in order. Is your fertility management plan up to date? Do you have your soil test records? And if you have livestock, is your comprehensive nutrient management plan up to date?

*continued on page 2*



## Conservation

### Farmer-of-the-Year

**Tom Osborn (Osborn Farms)** has been named Tippecanoe County Conservation Farmer of the Year for 2005.

Tom along with wife, Toni, son Doug and son-in-law, Chris Brown, farms nearly 4000 acres in Tippecanoe and Clinton Counties. Tom began his farming career in the late '60s.

Tom began using no-till practices in the early 1990s. Today, he and his family continuously no-till approximately 3000 acres with a crop rotation of corn, bean, and wheat.

Tom built and maintains 8 grassed waterways, maintains 60 acres of woodland, and manages 15 acres of hayland. The farm has 483 acres of land enrolled in the Environmental Quality Incentive Program (EQIP).

Tom recently planted 10 acres of warm season grasses through the CRP (CP33) Upland Gamebird Habitat program. He also installed 10 acres of filter strips, and a one-acre wetland to improve water quality and provide additional wildlife habitat.

Tom is an active member of the Lauramie Creek Watershed Steering committee, a Laurmie Twp. volunteer fireman, past president and current member of the 4-H Exhibit Association, and past member of the Tippecanoe County Extension Board. Tom also served on the FSA County Committee for 2 terms

Tom and his family will be recognized at the SWCD Annual Meeting in March 2006.



#### Update...

Osborn Farms has been selected by the Indiana Association of Conservation Districts (IASWCD) as one of 4 (statewide) **Indiana Conservation Farmers of the Year**. He and his family will be recognized at the IASWCD Conference in Indianapolis in January.

**Congratulations Osborn Farms!**

## Master Farm Conservationist



**Marion Klutzke** has been named Tippecanoe County 2005 Master Farm Conservationist for his lifetime dedication to soil and water conservation on his farm.

Marion has no-tilled since the 1980s. He has installed several waterways, rotates crops, and has used cover crops.

Marion retrofitted his corn planter in the 1980s so that he could apply 1/2 his nitrogen along with starter. The nitrogen is incorporated between every two corn rows.

Marion is an avid restorer of Allis-Chalmers farm equipment and he annually hosts an event where he and other enthusiasts harvest wheat with antique harvesters.

**Congratulations Marion!**

-Linda Eastman  
**Rural Conservation Committee News**



Barry Fisher explains how to maximize corn yields during a recent no-till field day in Hancock County by making sure your planter is adjusted correctly.

### A Dozen Do's for Successful No-till Corn following Soybeans

Purdue Publication, "A Dozen Do's for Successful No-till Corn Following Soybeans" is a good resource for helping you be successful with no-till. Web link: <http://www.ces.purdue.edu/extmedia/AY/AY-313.pdf> It includes the following chapters:

1. Equip Your Combine to Chop and Evenly Spread Residue
2. Select a Corn Variety with Good Vigor, Cold Tolerance, and Disease Resistance
3. Do Not Plant Into Live Vegetation - Burn Down Weeds Well Before Planting

4. Maintain and Adjust the Planter
5. Use Starter Fertilizer
6. Minimize the Risk of Nitrogen Loss
7. Rely on Soil Conditions to Determine Planting Date
8. Planter Efficiency and Stand Improvement
9. Scouting for Insects, Rodents, Weeds, and Disease
10. Soil Testing: Lime, Phosphorus, and Potassium Management
11. Control Traffic to Prevent Unnecessary Soil Compaction
12. Seek Advice from Successful No-Tillers

#### CSP continued from page 1

Two tools are available to help farmers do a self-assessment to see where they stand. The Initial Questionnaire and the Self-Assessment Workbook can be found at <http://www.in.nrcs.usda.gov/programs/CSP/csphomepage.html> (linked on the left side of the page) or at the NRCS office servicing the county.



Wildcat Creek Watershed - eastern Tippecanoe County

### Pheasant Habitat Priority Area



The Indiana Division of Fish and Wildlife is looking for landowners who want to create pheasant habitat by providing a cash incentive to enroll in the CP33 option of Continuous CRP. They also will cost share up to 90% of the cost of developing grass and other habitat. Southern and northwestern Tippecanoe County are the areas of interest.

Call Dean Zimmerman at: 765-567-2152.

### Calendar of Events

#### November

- 4 SWCD Board Meeting
- 11 Veteran's Day - Closed
- 24-25 Thanksgiving - Closed

#### December

- 2 SWCD Board Meeting
- 23-26 Christmas - Closed
- 30 New Year - Closed

#### January

- 6 SWCD Board Meeting

## Stormwater...SWPPP...NPDES...MS4...UCC...

What are they and how could they possibly be important to you?

First...**Stormwater**. Simply put, **stormwater** is rainwater or snowmelt that runs off the land and into streams, rivers, and lakes. Stormwater can pick up debris, chemicals, sediment, and other pollutants as it runs across the land flowing directly into a lake, stream, river, or wetland or into a storm sewer system which is an untreated discharge into the same waterbodies.

Next, you might ask “What is an **SWPPP**?” It is the acronym for a **Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan**, and it is a requirement of the Clean Water Act Phase II. It is a written document required for construction activity that 1) identifies potential sources of pollution; 2) describes best management practices for the reduction of pollutants from a site; and 3) helps assure compliance with the terms and conditions of the **National Pollution Discharge Elimination System (NPDES)** program.

The **NPDES** program was developed by the Environmental Protection Agency to help ‘curb’ the stormwater runoff problem. Phase I addressed industrial wastewater and municipal sewage treatment plant discharges, in addition



to discharges from large construction activities disturbing 5 acres or more of land. The Phase II rule addresses **MS4s** and regulates small construction activity that results in a land disturbance of equal to or greater than 1 acre and less than 5 acres in size.

So, now you find yourself asking, “What on earth is an **MS4**”? By definition, a **Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System** is a conveyance or system of conveyances designed to carry stormwater. It is owned or operated by a public entity, but is not part of a combined sewer or a public owned treatment works. Under Phase II, there are three types of regulated **MS4s**.

The first is one that lies within an “urbanized area” as designated by the U.S. Census. The second is designated as having a potential for adverse impacts on water quality. And the third lies outside an “urbanized area” but is directly

connected to one that is. In Tippecanoe County, there are seven **MS4s** including the City of Lafayette, the City of West Lafayette, Purdue University, Ivy Tech, Battle Ground, Dayton, and the urbanized portion of Tippecanoe County.

And last, but definitely not least, is the **Urban Conservation Committee (UCC)** of your Soil and Water Conservation District. We are working cooperatively with each of the above **MS4s** to address stormwater issues by reviewing **SWPPPs** and providing urban conservation education and assistance as the Clean Water Act **NPDES** Phase II moves forward.

The importance of the above information is to identify a common bond between ag and urban neighbors. As **USDA** leads the agricultural community down the conservation path, the **EPA** is steering the urban community in the same direction. Regardless of who is driving, we’re all headed down the same road and towards the same destination – a place where our natural resources are valued and conservation is the key to getting there. So, along the way, take a few minutes to stop and smell the roses or the fresh cut fields and don’t forget to wave at your neighbors – we’re all in this together!

-Chris Remley

**Urban Conservation Committee News**

## Education Reaches All Ages

Don Emmert, TSWCD Water Quality Educator, has had a busy couple of weeks with the beginning of the 2005-06 school year. His travels around Tippecanoe County have been vast, stretching from the Battle Ground monument to Ross Park to Lauramie Creek in Stockwell. Don’t forget the stops at Purdue’s ACRE farm, Klondike Elementary School, and Montgomery County to assist with their County Field Days for all 4<sup>th</sup> grade students. Don has had the summer to prepare for such educational opportunities and he is making the most of his time while offering water quality education to students, home schoolers, college students and adults.

Whether Don is in a classroom, walking along a waterway or wading in a stream, he is eager to discuss natural resource concerns about water quality. Looking ahead on Don’s calendar you may see him on Purdue’s or Ivy Tech’s campus teaching labs, Lafayette/West Lafayette



**Don Emmert trains Lauramie Creek stakeholders how to identify macro-invertebrates which are indicators of stream health**

Chamber of Commerce talking to the Water Committee, or in school schools to educate K-12 about water quality.

Even with a calendar filling up with events, it is never too late to let him know of water activities in the County. If you are aware of an idea or event that you think Don should know about, don’t

hesitate to contact him at (765) 474-9992, Ext 111.

If you would like to receive Don’s Education Newsletter, please e-mail him at [don.emmert@in.nacdn.net](mailto:don.emmert@in.nacdn.net) and he will add you to the electronic mailing list.

-Don Emmert

**Education Committee News**



1812 Troxel Drive, Ste C3  
Lafayette, IN 47909  
phone 474-9992, ext. 3  
website [www.tippecanoeswcd.org](http://www.tippecanoeswcd.org)

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**Tippecanoe County SWCD  
Board of Supervisors**

Jim King, Chair  
Roger McClellan  
Chuck Shelby  
Roger Verhey  
Dale Workman

**A NO-TILL WORKSHOP** will be held in February. Watch for details in the January newsletter or call our office to have your name added to the workshop mailing list.

**SWCD Office Staff**

Chris Remley (ext. 101)  
District Administrator  
Linda Eastman (ext. 110)  
Rural Conservation Coordinator  
Don Emmert (ext. 111)  
Water Quality Educator  
Brock Welge (ext. 113)  
Erosion Control Technician

**NRCS Office Staff**

Mark Eastman  
District Conservationist

**ISDA Staff**

Sue Gerlach (ext. 115)  
Resource Specialist

**SWCD Committee Chairs**

Rural Conservation - Jim King  
Urban Conservation - Dave Kovich  
Education - Lorraine Rund  
Personnel - Roger Verhey  
Finance - Steve Roy  
Marketing - KD Benson

**On the Lookout...Great Leaders Always Needed.**

Are you interested in providing local leadership on efforts to improve the water quality of our streams, rivers and lakes, the productivity of our soils, and/or the protection of natural wetlands?

These are just a few of the natural resource issues that supervisors in all of Indiana's 92 soil and water conservation districts (SWCDs) help to address.

Each county in Indiana has a Soil and Water Conservation District. SWCDs are local subdivisions of state government, governed by a five-member board of elected and appointed public officials known as supervisors. Election and appointment of new supervisors (for three year terms) are conducted at the local SWCD annual meeting in the first quarter of the calendar year.

Supervisors work with the Indiana State Department of Agriculture's (ISDA) Division of Soil Conservation, USDA's Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS), Purdue Cooperative Extension Service (CES)

and the community to address urban and agricultural soil and water conservation concerns. District staff support the SWCD board at the local level and maintain daily operations.

The SWCD Board of Supervisors meet monthly to discuss local natural resource issues and help set policies.

To learn more about a supervisor's roles and responsibilities, and to understand the time requirements, qualifications, and benefits of becoming a supervisor, please consult the Supervisor Handbook and Job Description information found online at the ISDA, Division of Soil Conservation website: <http://www.in.gov/isda/soil/swcd/index.html> or contact our office for more information.

If conservation is important to you and you are interested in becoming a candidate, please contact me at 765-474-9992, Ext. 101. We are always on the lookout for great leaders!

-Chris Remley  
**District Administrator**

All programs and services of the Tippecanoe County SWCD, ISDA, IDNR, and USDA NRCS are offered on a non-discriminatory basis without regard to race, color, age, gender, national origin, religion, marital status, or handicap.