



Dubois County Soil & Water Conservation District

1486 Executive Blvd. Suite A • Jasper, IN 47546
812-482-1171 x3 • www.duboisswcd.org

Winter 2013

The Conservation Conversation

Annual Meeting held at Ferdinand Community Center

The Dubois County Soil and Water Conservation District 67th Annual Meeting was held on Thursday evening, January 31st, 2013 at the Ferdinand Community Center.

The evening began with a catered fried chicken dinner. Glenn Menke gave the Invocation.

Dubois County SWCD Supervisor Board Chair, Brenda Sermersheim, welcomed everyone and introduced the Board of Supervisors, Associate Board Members, NCRS partnership staff, FSA staff, County officials, Regional Foresters, Purdue Extension staff, and members of the VUJC Land Stewardship Initiative program.

John Jackle, Chair of the SWCD Nominating Committee explained the election requirements and conducted the election of SWCD Supervisor, Greg Hoffman.

Hans Kok, was introduced as the keynote speaker for the evening. Kok is the Coordinator for Indiana Conservation Cropping Systems Initiative (CCSI). The CCSI promotes a continuous systematic approach to production agriculture, resulting in improved profitability, soil quality, and water quality.



County Commissioner, Larry Vollmer administering the oath of office for both Greg Hoffman and Glenn Menke.

To conclude the evening, Brenda Sermersheim shared the SWCD's highlights for 2012, including the five year partnership with VUJC Land Stewardship Initiative.



Guest speaker, Hans Kok's speaking on the topic of Cover Crops.

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Indiana District Employee Association's Star Award

Radius Weisman was named the Indiana District Employee Association's Star Award Recipient for the Southwest region.

Amanda Bough, SWCD technician presented Radius his award during the Annual Meeting activities on Thursday evening, January 31st, 2013 at the Ferdinand Community Center.

Each year, employees are nominated by their peers and submitted to the regional director representing their region. Only eight employees are then capable of receiving the Star Award across the entire state with one employee representing each region. This award is an honorable recognition of the hard work that the employee has shown and the lives that they have changed during the course of their career.

Radius, after retiring from the Farm Service Agency began working part time with the Dubois County SWCD. With his vast knowledge of the county and previous work with the FSA, he is an exceptional addition to the staff. Presently, he works part time with Amanda and assists with surveys throughout the county. He also assists the NCRS District Conservationist with field visits; as well as, CRP waterway re-enrollment checkouts. Radius is an integral part to the SWCD and was proudly nominated to be recognized as the 2012 Star Award winner.

Amanda Bough and Radius Weisman with his Indiana Association District Employee Association Star Award.

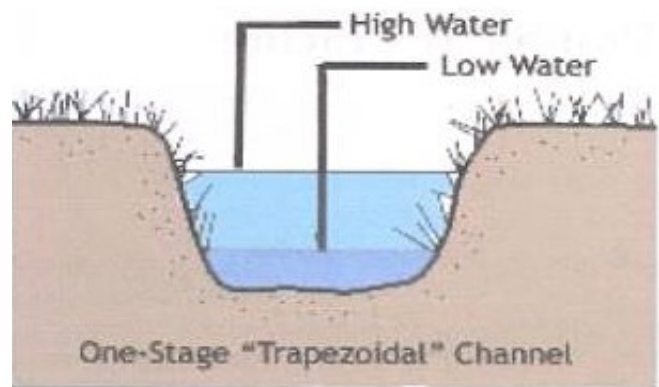


Two-Stage Ditch as a Cost-Share Practice

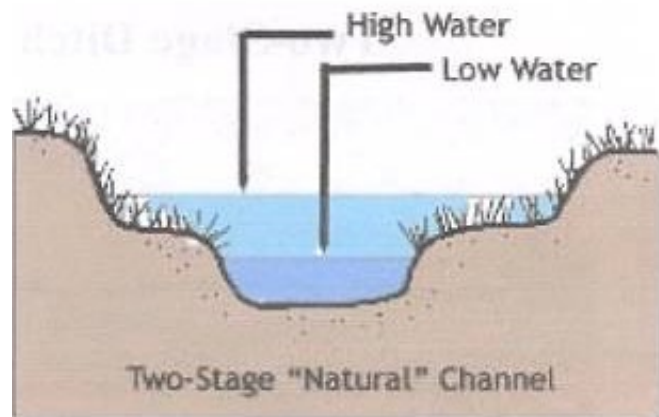
A Two-Stage Ditch is a cost-sharable practice through EQIP that creates a narrow floodplain within an existing ditch. The ditch floodplain is created by flattening the ditch banks two to three feet above the bottom of the channel. Bench width averages 2 times the main ditch channel width. This allows more area for water to spread out.

The Two-Stage Ditch successfully reduces ponding in fields, limits soil loss from bank failure/erosion, and improves water quality. This design also reduces long-term maintenance costs that would generally be associated with regular clean-outs of traditional ditches to maintain proper drainage.

Bottom-dipping of conventional ditches costs \$1-\$1.50/linear foot and is effective for 3-15 years. Two-Stage Ditch construction averages \$8-\$12/linear foot and can last 30 years plus.



The shallower, wider ditch mimics a natural floodplain, which dissipates the energy of the larger flows and reduces its destructive forces on ditch sides. Sloping the ditch banks on a 3:1 slope adds stability and capacity to the ditch.



The narrow floodplain or bench created with a Two-Stage Ditch slows water during high flows, reducing both soil and nutrient runoff into streams.

The Nature Conservancy has funding through December, 2013 to pilot Two-Stage Ditches within the Wabash River watershed and can pay up to \$7.50/linear foot of the installation costs on 1/2 mile ditch segments.

*Please contact Cassie Hauswald
at **The Nature Conservancy**
at (812) 737-2087 for more information.*

Ring Farms Named Conservation Farmer of the Year, 2013

Ring Farms has been named the 2013 Otto J. Bauer Memorial Outstanding Conservation Farmer of the Year by the Dubois County Soil and Water Conservation District (SWCD). Old National Bank sponsors this award and representative, Tim Robinette presented the award to Dave and Brent Ring at the SWCD's Annual Meeting held at the Ferdinand Community Center on January 31st, 2013. Dave's wife, Kathy, son, Brent, and grandson, Dillon were also on hand to receive the award.

Ring Farms is located between Holland and Huntingburg about 1 1/2 miles west of the Huntingburg Airport and is a multi-generational farm which was started by his grandfather in 1854. Dave currently lives near the original home. Dave's son Brent, has joined him as the next generation.

After graduating college, Dave began a teaching career as a business and shorthand teacher at Winslow High School and later at Southridge High School. He was the Ag educator at Southridge High School for 16 years. He is currently retired but still spends a lot of time on the farm; especially, in the spring time. Many acres of corn, soybeans, and wheat are grown on the farm along with hay for the 120 dairy cows.

Dave would like to see the farm continue through the Ring family utilizing more precision in agriculture. Throughout Dave's involvement in the family farm, he has installed dry dams, waterways, filter strips, cover crops, and has practiced crop rotation. He believes that the value in stalling conservation practices "saves the soil for future generations so they have something to farm. It also protects water quality in streams."

Dave works with Farm Bureau, attends get-togethers, and seminars as a way to network with others. He stated that there weren't many conservation practices available for his father or grandfather. He believes that farmers are now more conscious of soil health than they were 30-40 years ago.

Dave has experienced many challenges as a farmer including weather conditions like last year's drought and fluctuating pricing—both input and sales. He recommends using conservation practice; such as, planting cover crops, no-tilling or minimum tilling, and keeping up with technology. He still enjoys farming, "It is something to plant a seed and watch it grow."

Dave is involved in Salem United Church of Christ, Optimist Club, Masonic Lodge, Shriners, Farm Bureau, and is on the advisory board for the Huntingburg Foundation Board.

The Outstanding Conservation Farmer of the Year award is named in memory of Otto J. Bauer who was a champion of soil and water conservation efforts in Dubois County and a member of the SWCD Board of Supervisors from 1969-1986.



Tim Robinette presents the award to Dave Ring, accompanied by Brent and Dillon Ring

2013 OFS Brands Forest Stewardship Award Presented to Lee Schnell

Lee Schnell was presented the 2013 OFS Brands Forest Stewardship Award by Scott Recklehoff, representing OFS Brands at the Ferdinand Community Center during Dubois County SWCD's Annual Meeting on January 31st. The SWCD Board of Supervisors annually recognizes forest landowners who carry out a wise forestry stewardship program on their land. Lee dedicated the award to his dad, Dennis, and thanked Bart Pitstick, Dubois County NCRS, for the Best Management Practices, Judi Brown, SWCD Executive Director, for administering those Practices, and Amanda Bough and Radius Weisman, SWCD Technicians, for their planting inspections, and Adam Dumond and Steve Brandassee for their help and knowledge in Forestry Management. Lee commented that, "We have the best team in the state."

Schnell's property is located near Lick Fork by Patoka Lake in Dubois County. His great-grandfather purchased the land in the early 1900's and deeded it to his son. The property has continued to be passed down through the generations with Lee currently owning it. His goal is keep the land in the family and to be able to pass it on to his children. Lee and his family live in a remodeled home which his grandfather built in 1968.

Schnell commented that the woodlands were put into classification basically for tax purposes, it met the qualifications, and the district foresters' advice were readily available to him. The foresters are more prone to inspect and make sure the woodlands are in proper order. He worked with the district foresters to compile a management plan. Some of the objectives of this plan are to keep the forest young and growing, to keep it disease free, and to utilize this natural resource the best way possible.

In 2005, Schnell had a select harvest of over 200 trees on 28 acres marked by Multi-Resource Management (Thom Kinney and Justin Herbaugh). In 2006, TSI (Timber Stand Improvement) was completed in the harvested area, marked by Thom Kinney and completed by Schnell. In 2008, fencing was installed to exclude cattle from 101 acres of high quality oak forest.

In 2010, over 125 acres of forest were enrolled in the Classified Forest and Wildlands program and a salvage harvest of 141 dead and storm damaged trees was completed. In 2011, 1.5 acres of a wildlife food plot and a .5 acre of a pollinator habitat were established.

Schnell would recommend others to contact the local foresters for their opinions and plans as he believes they have a wealth of information and knowledge. He also recommends others attend educational field days and workshops and fence out cattle. Caring for the forested property gives Lee a sense of fulfillment. He believes it is beneficial to take care of the natural resource of the woodlands to be able to enjoy it in the years to come as a recreational area for hiking and camping and as an educational area promoting field days.

Lee was a member of the Dubois County Farm Bureau, Inc. from 2001-2012. He was an Associate Member of the Dubois County SWCD Board from 2005-2012 and is a member of St. Celestine Catholic Church.



Scott Recklehoff presents the award to Lee Schnell.

Norbert Begle and Stan Leinenbach Named River Friendly Farmers

Fifty-five River Friendly Farmers representing 40 Indiana counties were honored for the work they do to promote soil health and water quality on their farms. They join an elite group of 600 winners since the award was first given in 2000.

Recipients were honored by Lt. Governor Becky Skillman and Indiana Farm Bureau President Don Villwock at the 2012 Indiana State Fair. Also on hand for the ceremony was USDA NCRS State Conservationist Jane Hardisty and President Abraham Lincoln (played by Wilbur Tague of Brownsburg, IN) who helped celebrate the USDA's 150th anniversary.

The award is sponsored by the Indiana Association of Soil and Water Conservation Districts (IASWCD) and Indiana Farm Bureau, Inc.

The 2012 Dubois County recipients are Norbert Begle and Stan Leinenbach.

Norbert farms 660 acres in the Patoka Watershed. He raises soybeans, popcorn, and turkeys. 15.5 acres of his land are enrolled in the Conservation Reserve Program (CRP). Begle's rolling land requires erosion control. He works to keep topsoil on cropland and out of the surrounding creeks. Waterways, dry dams, rock chutes, and filter strips have made a difference minimizing soil erosion. Water is much cleaner due to less soil and chemical runoff.

Norbert controls unwanted brush and weeds on the farm. He has about 50 acres of woodlands which creates good cover for wildlife. Two lakes on the farm provide most of the needed water for their turkey production.

Norbert no-tills, rotate crops, and incorporates all of the turkey manure to prevent runoff. He said his soil health has greatly improved over the years; especially, by rotating crops and using the no-till method.

Stan Leinenbach and his son, Nathan, have a grain and farrow-to-finish hog operation. The Leinenbach farm is located in Patoka Watershed. By installing dry dams, field borders, and waterways, they minimize erosion. Their conservation practices have improved water quality and having less chemical runoff. No-till/minimum till allows for more organic material to remain on the soil surface. Wheat cover crops also lessen erosion and hold nutrients in place. Soil testing and manure testing enables the father/son team to monitor the correct amount of manure to apply to each acre of corn production. They also side dress 85% of the crops' nitrogen requirements with their nitrogen application.

They have numerous small acreage plots of 1-4 acres that have been established as wildlife areas. Various grasses have been planted for these wildlife areas.



Alan Smock with Norbert Begle and Stan Leinenbach, 2012 River Friendly Farmers of Indiana

Upcoming Winter/Spring Events

SW INDIANA CROP SEMINAR

March 6, 2013
12-4:45PM eastern time

Dubois County 4-H Fairgrounds

This program is free of charge.
For additional information call
Purdue Extension-Dubois County office at
812-482-1782



PURDUE
UNIVERSITY

PURDUE EXTENSION



- 9-9:45 am Registration
9:45-10 am Introduction and Welcome, Kenneth Eck
10-10:30 am Swine Nutrition Strategies, Brian Richert
10:30-11 am State Fertilizer & Manure Regulation Changes, Julie Stephens
11-11:45 am Changes in Packer Quality Assurance Needs & General Animal Handling Considerations, Ed Tice
11:45-12:15 pm Lunch provided by Indiana Pork
12:15-1:15 pm State Regulatory & Legislative Issues & How They Will Affect You, Josh Trenary and Spencer Morris
1:15-2 pm Exploring Changing Consumer Preferences for Pork Production: Purchasing Behaviors and Perceptions in 2012, Nicole Olynk Widmar and Melissa McKendree
2-2:15 Break
2:15-3 pm Local Health Concerns—A Veterinarian's Perspective, John Baker, DVM
2-4:30 pm Pork Quality Assurance Plus (PQA+) Certification, Kenneth Eck

There is no charge to attend this event, but reservation are requested by March 13th, 2013 through Indiana Pork office at (317) 872-7500.



Dubois County Cattle Association Annual Meeting

Thursday, March 14th, 2013
6:30pm EST

Southern Indiana Purdue Ag Center Conference Room
Cuzco, IN

**\$5.00 per person
for 2013 Dubois County Cattle Association
Membership Dues
&**

\$5.00 per person per meal

**Reservations due before March 7th
Call 812-482-1782**

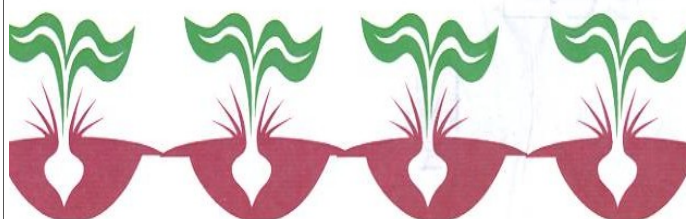
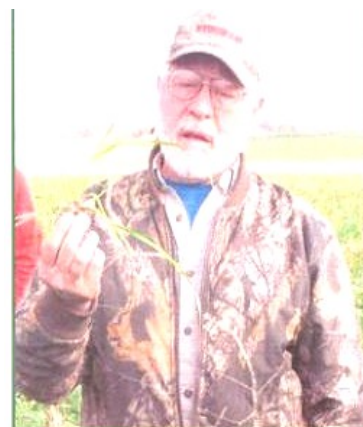
Conservation Cropping Meeting Monday March 25th, 2013

Featuring Renowned Soil Health and Cover Crop Expert
Mike Plumer

Washington Community
Building
Eastside Park
Washington, Indiana

1pm-4:30pm

For more information call
Daviess County SWCD
(812) 254-4780 ext 110





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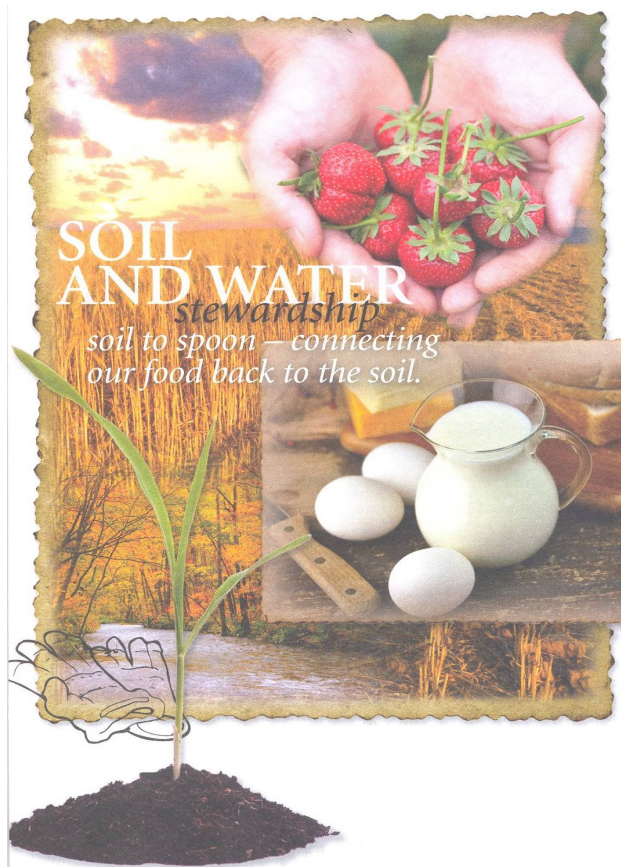
The Conservation Conversation

OFFICE HOURS: MON-FRI 8 AM TO 4 PM

OFFICIAL BUSINESS NEWSLETTER

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or call 812-482-1171 x3



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*“Round my Indiana Homestead
wave the cornfields.
In the distance loom the woodlands clear and cool.
Oftentimes my thoughts revert to
scenes of childhood.
Where I first received my lessons,
nature’s school.”*

Paul Dresser, “On the Banks of the Wabash, Far Away.”

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