



2020 annual report **DUBOIS COUNTY SOIL & WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT**

The Soil and Water Conservation District marks its 75th Anniversary

BY JUDI BROWN

The Dubois County Soil Conservation District was born on September 19, 1945.

The first records of the Soil Conservation District were typed by unknown hands on a manual typewriter, the copies on yellow or pink paper so thin you can see through it. It closely resembles the tissue paper that in the year 2021 we put into gift bags, to protect and conceal our gifts. The file also includes a telegram!

While the Soil Conservation District was officially born in fall of 1945, and the first year of official duties completed in 1946, the yellow and pink tissue paper documents reveal that a great deal of labor to protect local soil began many years before. A letter dated December 7, 1942 was sent by Mr. R.H. McMurtrie of Huntingburg to Ward L. Studor, District Conservationist, located at Purdue University in Lafayette, Indiana. Mr. McMurtrie was requesting conservation assistance on his farm. Where today we would take our cell phone out of our pocket and make this request from our District Conservationist located in Jasper, in 1942, a letter was likely the only option. He notes that he was completing a

five-year planning program and was requesting additional assistance, while acknowledging that World War II may not allow Ward L. Studor to travel down to Dubois County to visit the farm in person. Mr. McMurtrie, after completing the work begun in 1937, noted, "...we want to again thank you and take a lot of satisfaction in having built up a couple of the most run-down farms in Dubois County."

The next letter isn't dated until December 11, 1943; it is noted busy schedules derailed efforts to begin the conservation district. Then, as now, there was always more work than hours in the day. R.O. Cole, Purdue Extension Soil Conservationist in Lafayette writes to Ward Studor, now located in the Washington Indiana Courthouse, and asks him to contact C.A. Nicholson, Dubois County Agricultural Agent with the Purdue University Agricultural Extension Department. Their plan is to reach out to local church leaders and ask them to discuss soil conservation with their congregations.

Notable in the file is another letter written to Ward Studor in February 1944. The letter is written on USDA Agricultural Adjustment Administration letterhead, and is from Bruno Ragle, Chairman of the Dubois County Agricultural Conservation Association, requesting conservation assistance for a landowner. Over the next months many letters were mailed be-

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The Soil and Water Conservation District marks its 75th Anniversary

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between Ward Studor, Bruno Ragle, and C.A. Nicholson. The three men were planning two field events for local farmers to see and learn about conservation practices already built on farms in the county. The timing of the field events was an issue: although they were pleased at the turn out, weather and planting prohibited many farmers from attending. Never fear, Bruno Ragle assures Ward Studor, the farmers who attended the field day will pass the news around to their neighbors.

Soil conservation promotion efforts continued, and the Huntingburg Kiwanis Club requested a presentation by Ward Studor. Mr. Studor contacted Ag Agent C.A. Nicholson about scheduling farm visits for him since he was going to be coming to Dubois County all the way from his office in Washington, IN. He made arrangements to spend the night locally. The old documents note that there was a great deal of interest in soil conservation during the 1930s and 1940s in Dubois County among the county farmers and businessmen.

1944 transitioned into 1945 and the process of forming a soil conservation district moved along, including having the required public meetings. Ward Studor notes that "it is evident that a lot of time had been spent in the organization of this meeting by Mr. Nicholson and others." After this public meeting, township representatives carried petitions across their townships for signatures. Only five townships were to be included in the soil conservation district: Boone, Madison, Bainbridge, Patoka, and Cass. More than enough signatures were collected, and plans were made for a public hearing at Ireland High School on April 5, 1945. Once public comments were made, a referendum would be held in which 60% of the "land occupiers" had to be in favor of the formation of the district.

There was a great deal of interest in conserving soil, but formally forming the district was not without considerable opposition. The 29 pages of minutes from the April hearing show statements made by residents in favor of a district were met with catcalls and an uproar from the crowd. World War II was still being waged, and many landowners objected

to the term "land occupiers" in Indiana District law; they felt it sounded like "Fascism, Communism or Nazism". Some participants noted that their sons were in Germany fighting against Nazism. Other landowners spoke strongly about the result of people receiving free money from the government; they referred to it as a "governmental Santa Claus" that would lead to entitled people giving up their liberties. But many spoke to the benefits of working together to protect our natural resources, and how good soil and clean water was vital for the success of local farms and for life in general.

Local newspapers played a role in the formation of the district. Press releases and editorials in newspapers, including the then called Jasper Herald, noted that 71% of the eligible farmers voted in the referendum, and 77% voted in favor of forming the district. The articles note that farmers not included in the five-township area can carry petitions and begin the process to include their area into the district. Later documents note that the Herald routinely ran a popular column, entitled Conservation's Candid Camera.

Kenneth Welton, State Conservationist for the USDA Soil Conservation Service, assisted R.O. Cole, Ward Studor, and C.A. Nicholson through the process of creating the district. Claude A. Gramelspacher, Bainbridge Township, and Albert E. Rudolph, Boone Township, were sworn in as Supervisors by the State Committee, according to Indiana law, on August 31, 1945. The process for nomination and election of the remaining three Supervisors culminated in the oaths of office being taken on January 10, 1945 by Ora Blesch, Cass Township, Hubert Wagner, Madison Township, and Gus Ahrens, Patoka Township at the very first official business meeting of the Soil Conservation District.

January 1946 sees C.A. Nicholson arranging for temporary office space for the new Soil Conservation District in the Purdue Agricultural Extension office, then located in the "Federal Building", the US Post Office on 6th Street in Jasper. Later that year, Albert

Rumbach, Postmaster, converted a 14' x 18' storage room into office space for the Soil Conservation District. Uebelhor-Struckman Chevrolet Company provided storage space for a US Government owned vehicle at a price of \$0.50 per day, allowing the USDA Soil Conservation Service to station a Technician in the newly formed Jasper Office. In February 1946 a Memorandum of Understanding was signed between the USDA and the Soil Conservation District, allowing any branch of the U.S. Department of Agriculture to cooperate with the district. Hermann A. Beck became the first Soil Conservationist stationed in Dubois County, housed in the Jasper Post Office basement. Beck remained about one year, until he was stationed in Okinawa after the war ended.

On January 11, 1949, Marion Township was added to the Soil Conservation District, and in November 1949, Columbia and Ferdinand Townships were included as well. In 1955, Hall, Harbison, Jackson, and Jefferson Townships were added. There were small exceptions of land in Cass and Patoka Townships where landowners refused to sign the petitions and allow their property to be part of the District. Another change occurred in 1961: the name of the District was changed to Soil and Water Conservation District. And in 1977, a stroke of a legislative pen set the boundaries of the district as the county lines, so the entire county officially became a part of the Soil and Water Conservation District.

The minutes from 1946 show the work of the District being carried out by the five Supervisors, who received no monetary compensation for their time. They were assisted by the two or three USDA Soil Conservation Service staff members stationed in the Jasper office. The men divided themselves into committees to carry out the Soil Conservation District (SCD) workplan. Over time, the District also had men who volunteered as Associate Supervisors, who served on the committees and assisted in getting the work accomplished. SCD operations included field days, providing education materials to schools and churches, county driving and airplane tours, attending state meetings, and planning for the annual meeting. An early annual report notes about the air tours, "The 'back forty' has no secrets from aerial visitors, and several men last summer stated that he was going to go home and do something about it." The annual report also mentions



Meet the Supervisors from 1966

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District marks its 75th Anniversary

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that these same men began farming in horse and buggy days, and what a thrill an air tour was for everyone.

The early minutes note that the first piece of District equipment, a disc plow, was purchased by the five supervisors themselves in July 1956. The District also had a USDA owned dozer used for conservation projects. When it was sold, equipment was purchased for use in Dubois, Pike, and Martin Counties. Documents from the early 1960's reveal watershed area programs being formed. If county residents made the request, the federal government provided funds for flood control to improve soil and water quality. These watershed areas were formed between the Districts, across county lines. During this time frame, the SWCD Supervisors purchased a tree planter to assist landowners who wished to reforest their property. The SWCD sponsored a 4-H Soil Conservation Award during the late 1960s and began a soil judging competition as well.

Times change, as do office protocols. The tissue paper letters refer to the support staff in the various offices as "girls". Nicholson, Studor, and Cole are very complementary of the quality of the work done by these ladies as they recorded and processed the early District documents. Prior to 1965, small stipends were paid to various women for their typing assistance. The 1965 records refer to District Clerk, Mrs. Mattingly, possibly spouse of longtime SCS employee Hugh Mattingly. 1964 minutes show that the Supervisors requested and received a \$1,500 appropriation from the Dubois County Commissioners and Council to pay Mrs. Mattingly, who worked five mornings a week in the District office beginning in January of 1965. In 1967, this funding increased to \$2,475. 1967 records

refer to Mrs. Maurice (Beverly) Hoffman as District Clerk, and in 1968, Mrs. Earl (Betty) Englert staffed the office part time. In October of 1997, Betty Englert retired. Prior to her retirement, then SWCD Supervisors Robert Brunsman, Leo Betz, Dennis Freyberger, Duane Hopf, and Jack Welp made a request to the Dubois County Officials to make the SWCD Clerk's position full time. Their request was approved, and in 1998, Judi Brown became the SWCD District Coordinator, the first full time employee.

Funding for the District came slowly. The minutes show Supervisors' motions to pay bills, "when and if the treasury allows". Some requests for reimbursements went unpaid. Old ledgers show negative balances in the SCD funds. Early funding came from rental of the District equipment, including a land leveler and tree planter. Donors covered the expenses for pancake and sausage suppers, the newsletter, and annual meeting meals. Early Annual Meetings were followed by social hours, where coffee and doughnuts were served by the wives of the SCD Supervisors. In February of 1959, a letter thanks Robert Gramelspacher of Jasper for his efforts with the Indiana legislature, after legislation passed allowing \$300 each for the 80 existing Conservation Districts in the state. The Supervisors sent a request for \$291, and ultimately received \$280 for operations.

The first annual meeting was held at the Tivoli Theatre, with three other groups, including the Purdue Agricultural Extension Office. A film provided by the USDA Soil Conservation Service (SCS) about conservation was shown. The early minutes show that the SCS provided a series of educational films that were shown at SCD meetings and loaned to schools. For the first annual meetings, coffee and doughnuts were the faire, and as the 1950s and 60s progressed, the food was either

catered, or chili was prepared by the SWCD Supervisors and their wives. The VFW was a favorite location for the annual meetings in the 1980 and 90s, and their fried chicken dinners were also a favorite.

Time marches on, and change comes in its wake. The Soil Conservation Service, now known as the Natural Resources Conservation District, the Agriculture Stabilization Service, now the Farm Service Agency, and the Soil and Water Conservation District staff moved from the cramped space in the basement of the Post Office in fall of 1989. In 2021, one USDA staff member still remains in the Jasper Service Center who started their career in those basement rooms! Many Dubois County landowners likely remember visiting those basement offices over the years before the USDA Service Center moved to its suite of offices on Executive Blvd in Jasper. From the early years of the five Supervisors carrying forth the mission of the District, and then part time staff being hired, the SWCD now has three full time staff members, and two part time, all paid by Dubois County Government, plus two additional staff members funded through grants. Other changes are seen in the make-up of the staff in the Service Center:



PLANNING THE 1955 AIR TOUR

both men and women serve as field staff and conservationists. And in 2008, the first and currently only female Supervisor, Brenda Sermersheim, was elected. Brenda has served as SWCD Chair since 2012. One thing that has not changed, though, is the dedication of the people serving Dubois County, as seen by the many years of service to the District both by the Supervisors, the Associate Supervisors, and the staff.

Saturday, September 19, 2020, the SWCD's 75th anniversary, was spent in the throes of a world-wide pandemic. All the in-person events that the SWCD typically hosts and participated in were cancelled beginning in March, and by late 2020, were held virtually. No fanfare marked the SWCD's 75th birthday. To honor all the people who came before, the celebration of the SWCD's 75th anniversary is going to be held at SWCD events throughout 2021.

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2020 Soil & Water Conservation Achievements

By Judi Brown

The Dubois County Soil and Water Conservation District (SWCD) celebrated its 75th year of serving the landowners in Dubois County in 2020! No one who lived through this past year needs to be reminded of how different our lives suddenly looked in March. Our "diamond" year began normally, and despite it all, we accomplished much.

Who are we?

The Dubois County SWCD is a subdivision of Indiana state government and is a part of the Indiana Conservation Partnership. SWCD staff administers a variety of federal, state, and county-level water quality and cost share programs. The SWCD plays a role in the Indiana Conservation Partnership, eight Indiana agencies and organizations who share a common goal of promoting conservation. To fulfill its role, the Dubois County SWCD partners with local government agencies, citizens' groups, and individuals.

SWCD leadership is provided by a board of five local residents called Supervisors. In 2020, the Supervisors were Brenda Sermersheim, Glenn Menke, Glenn Goepfner, Pat Eckerle, and Alex Hohl. Brenda Sermersheim served as Chair of the SWCD Supervisors, and Glenn Goepfner as Vice Chair. The SWCD was sorry to accept the resignation of Supervisor Alex Hohl on December 31st. Alex agreed to serve on the Dubois County Council, and the SWCD Supervisors look forward to working with him as he serves the County in that capacity.

Dubois County Government provides funding for a qualified and experienced SWCD staff. They are Judi Brown, Director, Patti Schroeder, Administrative Assistant, Justin Bary, Resource Specialist, the late Radius Weisman and Bart Pitstick, Technical Specialists, and Melissa Ruschau, Project Manager of the VUJC Land Stewardship Initiative.

In addition, the SWCD has two grant funded staff positions. Emily Finch serves as the Invasive Species Specialist for Dubois, Daviess, and Martin Counties. Emily's position is funded through a Clean Water Indiana grant, made available through the ISDA Division of Soil Conservation. Jennifer Knable-Thompson serves the people of Dubois County through a cooperative position funded by an agreement with the Natural Resources Conservation Service. Patoka River and Lower East Fork White River Watershed Coordinator Julie Loehr, funded through EPA 319 grants, rounds out the SWCD staff.

Funding for the SWCD

The SWCD receives operating funding through several sources. Dubois County Government provides operating funds to the SWCD in addition to funding the staff positions. Dubois County Councilwoman Charmian Klem serves as the SWCD's liaison to Dubois County Government. Another source is an appropriation from Indiana State Government, in addition to supplemental funds from the State in the form of Clean



Reclaimed Mineland Peer to Peer Shop Talk, February 2020.

Water Indiana grants. The SWCD staff administered two Clean Water grants in 2020, one focusing on invasive species control, and one focusing on pasture management practices. The Dubois County office also participated in a third Clean Water project, through which cost share was made available for planting cover crops.

A significant funding partner to the SWCD is the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service. The NRCS provides the SWCD office space and supplies, including computer and printer equipment for the staff members. The SWCD also receives operating funds through a Contribution Agreement between the NRCS and the Knox County Soil and Water Conservation District. SWCD staff members assist the NRCS and Farm Service Agency staff with Conservation Reserve Program practice implementation and receive operating funds in exchange for this assistance. The combined funding from Dubois County, the State of Indiana, the US Government, as well as various grants allows the SWCD to continue its soil and water conservation work.

Our landowners are our partners in conservation success!

The landowners of Dubois County serve as important partners to the SWCD as well. The conservation practices constructed on the land by the landowners decrease soil erosion, improve water quality, and improve the soil health on the acres involved. Other benefits of these improvements are the addition of cash

flow to the local economy through the hiring of contractors and the purchase of materials. At the end of the day, these improvements will improve the farmland, help provide food and fiber for county residents, and through the taxes paid by the landowner, help the bottom line for Dubois County government.

Award Winning SWCD in 2020!

The Dubois County SWCD was named an Indiana Showcase District in 2020 for our Tri-County Invasive Species Partnership. The Dubois, Daviess, and Martin County SWCDs completed a three-year Clean Water Indiana project, through which Emily Finch served as the Invasive Species Specialist for the three counties. Cost share was made available to the landowners through this project as well. The three County SWCDs received the Showcase Award in recognition of the successes of the partnership.

Conservation on the Land

One of the major projects of the SWCD is our VUJC Land Stewardship Initiative (LSI). The LSI began 10 years ago, when the SWCD began managing the 40 acres of crop land on the VUJC Campus. Since then, the SWCD has been working with VUJC, the Indiana Conservation Partnership and the Conservation Cropping Systems Initiative on this project. We are currently utilizing innovative practices on the crop land, and we host tours and events to share the results of our work on the project. In February of 2020, the LSI hosted a Shop Talk at Mill Creek Farms, where local



Public meeting for Lower East Fork White River Watershed Management plan, February 2020

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2020 Soil & Water Conservation Achievements

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farmers learned tips to farm reclaimed mine land. Plans were underway for a fall field event at VUJC, but due to the pandemic, we converted that event into a virtual Soil Health Diagnostic Lunch N Learn Series. The four sessions have been recorded and posted to the Land Stewardship Initiative's Facebook page, and are also available on the SWCD's YouTube Channel.

Another success story: Invasive Species Targeted in Dubois County!

2020 saw the completion of the very successful Tri-County Invasive Species Project. The accomplishments of that project are featured elsewhere in this report, but it is important to note that the Dubois, Daviess, and Martin County SWCDs received another Clean Water Indiana grant, to allow us to build on the successes of our first Invasive Species project. Watch for announcements about the new project!

SWCD Education and Outreach Events

Typically, the SWCD is visible within the community, planning, hosting, and participating in a variety of events to provide information and technical advice to county landowners. Our public programming was cut short in 2020, but we were able to host our Annual Meeting in St. Anthony in February, and the first Shop Talk, about farming reclaimed mine land. We also participated at the Jasper Home Expo in March, but this event was scheduled immediately before the Shelter at Home order began, so SWCD staff were not present at the display table. At this point, the SWCD staff began to telework and became experts at Zoom meetings and video production.

As March moved into April, a committee began planning the Soil Health Diagnostic field event for the VUJC Land Stewardship Initiative, which was converted to a virtual event. Emily Finch, Invasive Species Specialist, made several demonstration videos

about invasive species control methods. One video was released to teachers across the state for their use. And others were posted on the YouTube channel, and released on the SWCD's Invasive Species Awareness Coalition's Facebook page. The SWCD staff, led by Emily Finch, worked together to produce a video sharing the history of the SWCD, who the staff are, and what we do in our day-to-day. This video was posted on the SWCD YouTube Channel as well. These videos can be viewed at <https://www.facebook.com/dcsxcd/videos>. You do not have to be on Facebook to view them. 4H Fair displays were judged virtually, in July.

The SWCD again supported the Patoka River Watershed project and the Lower East Fork White Project, funded through EPA grants. Julie Loehr, Watershed Coordinator, focused on creating the Watershed Management Plan for the Lower East Fork White watershed; as well as, administering the cost share portion of the Patoka Watershed

project. Many Dubois County landowners, and the soil and water resources benefitted from this funding source. Rather than host the annual Creek Sweep, individuals were encouraged to pick up trash and debris from the tributaries in the Middle Patoka watershed. SWCD staff assisted at the scaled back Patoka Lake Watershed clean up day in August as well.


As always for the past 75 years, conservation practices were accomplished by landowners throughout the county, assisted by the Conservation Partnership staff.

Conservation Practices Accomplished, Utilizing Variety of Funding Sources:

Bottomland Timberland Establishment, Brush Management (Invasive Species Control), Cover Crops, Critical Area Planting,

Diversions, Filter Strips, Forest Management Plans, Forest (timber) Stand Improvement, Grade Stabilization Structures,

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2020 Soil & Water Conservation Achievements

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Grassed Waterways, Habitat Buffer for Upland Birds, Hardwood Tree Planting, Heavy Use Protection Areas, Herbaceous Weed Treatment, Pasture Renovation, Permanent Native Grass Planting, Livestock Watering Systems, Pollinator Habitat Installation, Residue and Tillage Management, No Till; Riparian Forest buffer, SARE Permanent Wildlife Habitat, Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan reviews, Site visits to monitor construction on active sites, Underground Outlet, and Tiling, Waste Storage Facility, Water and Sediment Control Basins and Wetland Restoration.

Events assisted with:

Agriculture Economic Summit, Virtual; Dubois County 4-H Project Judging, Virtual; Dubois County Creek Sweep, Duck Race at the Jasper Municipal Pool, Envirothon, Southwest Indiana Regional; Jasper Chamber of Commerce Home Expo, Patoka Lake Clean Up Day.

Other SWCD Projects and Programs

The SWCD provides a no-till drill, erosion control blanket staplers, hand seeder, tile flags, and spinning jenny, at

minimal or no cost to landowners for conservation uses.

Staff and Supervisors maintain contact with national, state, and local elected officials by attending and hosting events, including legislative breakfasts.

SWCD Supervisors and Staff participate in training opportunities to allow them to operate at their full potential. Training and meetings attended:

Annual conference of Indiana Soil and Water Conservation Districts, Conservation Webinars, IASWCD Region Meetings, Required County and Federal training sessions, Rule 5 Sediment Control Training, Soil Health Trainings.

Organizations supported

Dubois County Weed Board, Four Rivers Forestry Committee, Friends of the Patoka Refuge, Indiana District Employee Association, Indiana Forest and Woodland Owners Association, Invasive Species Awareness Coalition of Dubois County, Jasper Rotary Club, Jasper Stormwater Board, Lincoln Hills Forestry Committee, Lower East Fork White Watershed Committee, Middle Patoka Watershed Committee, Patoka 2000 Jasper Chamber of Commerce, Patoka Lake Watershed Steering Committee, Women Empowering Women, Jasper Chamber of Commerce.



Trash removed from Patoka River Watershed, fall 2020.

Here are the projects that were selected for State Fair.

Project	4-H Member Name
Forestry Level 1	Sawyer Reckelhoff
Forestry Level 2	Alexandra Hohler
Forestry Level 3	Elizabeth Hohler
Wildlife Level 2	Alexandra Hohler
Wildlife Level 3	Elizabeth Hohler
Soil and Water Science	No entries
Recycling	No entries selected for State Fair

2020 4-H Conservation Awards

Dubois County SWCD promotes and educates others concerning many different aspects of conservation through their programs during the year. There are opportunities for adults; as well as, students of all ages to participate in SWCD events. The SWCD salutes and congratulates the younger members of our county who are interested and have participated in conservation practices in 2020.

The many Dubois County 4-H clubs also partner with SWCD by promoting, educating, and encouraging conservation projects. The hope is these activities are laying the foundation to continue to engage in behaviors that reduce and/or improve our environmental impact on our planet.

Left is the list of 2020 4-H award winners.

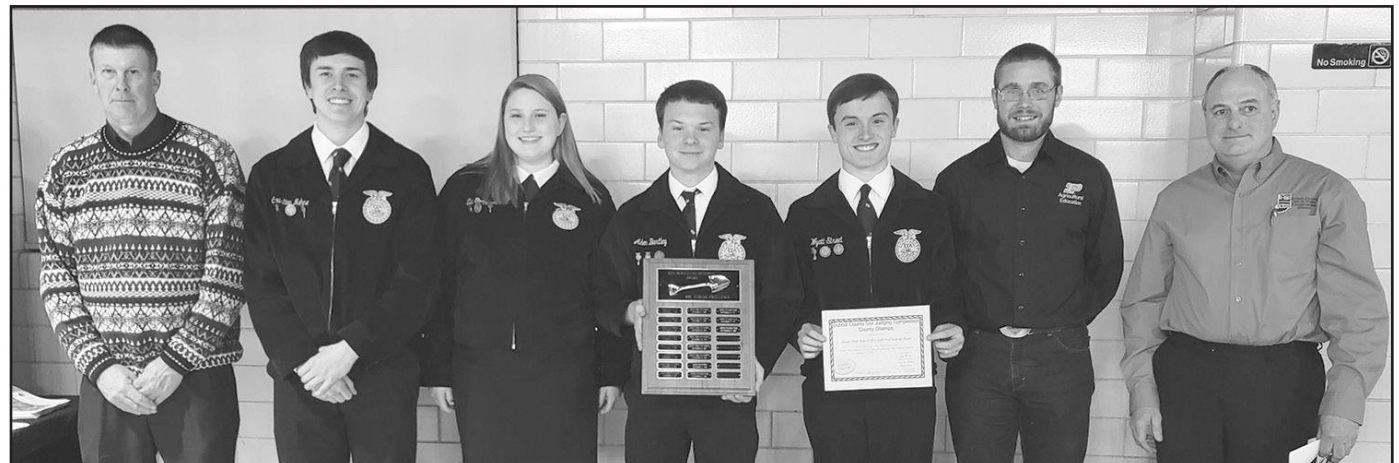
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2020 Indiana Supervisor of the Year Brenda Sermersheim with Tom Bechman.



SWCD Board Chair Brenda Sermersheim, Charmian Klem - 2020 Friend of Conservation award winner and SWCD Board Supervisor Pat Eckerle.

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Land Stewardship Initiative 2020 Annual Report

SWCD and Vincennes University Jasper Campus (VUJC). LSI's goal is to be a demonstration site for No-till farming practices and to educate the community about soil health practices. 40 acres of land have been set aside at VUJC to be farmed using continuous no-till and cover cropping systems in a corn and bean rotation. 2020 and the Corona Virus changed the ways the project shares information and outreach, but the message remains the same- Soil health is the root of everything!

Several repairs and improvements happened in the spring of 2020. In April, several earthwork projects were completed. This included fixing a suck hole caused by an old tile line in the WASCoBs, repairing a stream crossing and adding a more secure structure to prevent erosion. Additionally, erosion that was eating into the field borders was addressed and the area was stabilized with the addition of a rock chute to manage the water flow.

For the past few years there has been a wet spot in Field 1. This lower lying area has been prone to holding a large pool of water after a significant rain reducing yields. This spring Bart Pitstick and Alan Smock installed a hidden drain to resolve the issue. The two men dug down several feet to the existing tile line in the field and added a junction and a vertical perforated pipe. A cap was placed on the top of the structure approximately one-foot underground. The hole was filled with gravel creating pore space and allowing water to infiltrate more easily. In May, a significant rain event tested the system and it passed with flying colors.

The goal for the 2020 crop season was to once again plant green, this time on a larger scale. However, we did not plant green - as we were unable to borrow a roller crimper due to universities being shut down due to the pandemic. Planting did occur early in the season which lead to an early harvest as well as early planting of cover crops. Facebook posts were created showing all of these events.

Only two in-person events were held early in the year before social distancing prevented this type of outreach. On February 10th a group of farmers gathered together for a round table discussion about farming recently reclaimed mine ground. Mark Anson, a farmer from Monroe City, IN, shared anecdotes and facts gleaned from his soil own health journey as well as tips for farming reclaimed mine ground. Jeff



VUJC
Land Stewardship
Initiative

soil health...the root of everything

Coats, retired from the NRCS, explained some of the federal RCPP programs available to assist farmers with planting cover crops on reclaimed mine ground. In total there were close to 40 people gathered in Mill Creek Farms' shop.

The only other in person event that was able to be held was the SW Indiana Envirothon competition. Melissa Ruschau presented an aquatics section to high schoolers before the testing began. This included hands on refreshers of aquatic macro organisms and a 3-d virtual watershed table. Two Dubois County high schools qualified for the State competition that sadly was cancelled.

All other on-site school visits and career day presentations were put on hold. The SWCD created videos detailing what the SWCD is, and the various staff members described their roles, and this was shared on the Dubois SWCD YouTube channel. The SWCD also increased the frequency of Facebook posts sharing what was happening out in the LSI farm fields and well as educational videos, including what microscopic life lives in the

soil, and harvest videos.

In October, State Soil Health Specialist - Stephanie McInain visited the LSI. She came to see the differences in soil structure that have occurred with 9 years of no till cover crop management as compared to the acre of soil that has been continuously tilled with no cover crops in the same field. She offered her insights into the changes that she could see in the soil color, the soil aggregation (ability to hold together when wet and not erode), the improved water infiltration (ability of soil to quickly soak in water during a rain fall to prevent runoff) rates in the no till cover crop soil, and the differences in compaction layers between to soil samples. These results were shared in the LSI 2021 virtual education series and are available on the SWCD YouTube channel.

If you would like a chance to tour the LSI property to see these changes in person or have questions about adopting cover crops please call Melissa Ruschau to arrange a visit (812) 482-1171 ext. 3. The district has purchased a soil health testing kit and is willing to come to your farm for a site visit and evaluation of your soils' health because after all - Soil health is the root of everything!



Planting at the LSI during Spring 2020.

Your support is appreciated!



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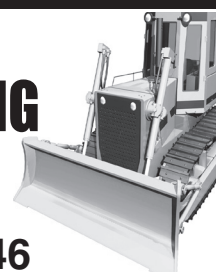
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1979 David Schnell

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1990 Welp Homestead Farm

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1993 Don Eck

1994 Ralph Jochem

1995 Wehr Family

1996 Wanda Kalb Family Farm

1997 Lloyd Prusz Family Farm

1998 Ed Reckelhoff, Jr.

1999 Ponder-Yonder Farms

2000 Stan Leinenbach

2001 Norbert & Elfrieda Johanneman

2002 Alan and Ruth Small

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2005 Brad Wehr

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2008 Balsy Haven Dairy

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2010 Norman Schue

2011 Clarence & Sue Brames

2012 Oxley's Rolling Hills Farms

2013 Ring Farms

2014 Welp's Farm and Greenhouse

2015 Mill Creek Farms

2016 Alan Weyer

2017 Kurt Voelkel

2018 Kenny Beckman

2019 Dustin Schmett

2020 Brad & Andrea Welp

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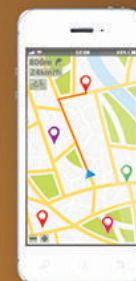
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Invasive Species Specialist Report

2018-2020 CWI Grant Project SWCDs Celebrate Success in 3 Year Invasive Species Project

EMILY FINCH

For several years the Soil & Water Conservation District (SWCD) has worked to address the threat of invasive species such as Honeysuckle, Autumn Olive, or newer invaders like Japanese Stiltgrass. That is why we are happy to report on the successes of our 2018-2020 Invasive Species Project, and our plans to continue this work in 2021.

The 2018-2020 Invasive Species Project was a collaboration between the Daviess, Dubois, and Martin County SWCDs. It was made possible with funding by a Clean Water Indiana grant from the Indiana State Department of Agriculture's State Soil Conservation Board. The project established an Invasive Species Specialist position who increased invasive species education/outreach in the three counties, and supported private landowners managing invasives through technical assistance and cost share.

The Specialist position was first held by Megan Ritterkamp in 2018, and then Emily Finch in 2019 and 2020. One of the project's first successes was establishing the new Daviess-Martin Cooperative Invasive Species Management Area (CISMA). Since its first meeting in December 2018, the CISMA has created a facebook page, a brochure, and developed a Mission Statement. Partner agencies and citizen volunteers help the CISMA to reach the community with informational booths and events such as the Bluffs of Beaver Bend Wildflower Walk and Glendale Resource Management Fair.

The Daviess-Martin CISMA Mission: To educate, assist, and connect people to protect our native wildlife and habitats from the impacts of invasive species.

With help from the new CISMA, as well as the existing Invasive Species Awareness Coalition of Dubois County, this project supported a total of 71 events, directly attended by 1,816 people, and estimated to have reached over 13,000 more with educational booths at public venues. We could not have done this without our CISMA volunteers, who logged over 1,000 hours during planning meetings and events. Beyond

events, the project also developed 17 new handouts about invasive species, including a colorful AlterNATIVE series that highlights native landscaping alternatives to popular invasive landscaping such as Callery (Bradford) Pear and Burning Bush. In fact, the two local CISMAs also raised awareness of these invasives through a billboard campaign with the taglines "Callery 'Bradford' Pears are Pretty...Awful!" and "Breakup with Your Burning Bush!"

In 2020, invasive species outreach adapted to covid with several online events and recorded videos. This included videos on managing poison hemlock, a pre-recorded invasive species 101 video for area schools, and attending virtual meetings of local girl scouts and master gardener groups. The most popular virtual event was a recorded wildflower walk at the Bluffs of Beaver Bend during stay-at-home orders. This 30 minute video was viewed by 638 people, and estimated to have reached over 3,200 people on Facebook.

One of the biggest impacts of this project was the assistance it provided for area landowners. Over the three years the Specialist provided technical assistance to 93 landowners/managers, managing over 7,000 acres in the three counties. Of those landowners, 58 received site visits and 44 received customized invasive management plans. The project also offered cost-share of up to \$800 for landowners to control invasive plants on up to 10 acres. In the

end, 24 landowners successfully completed control efforts on 211 acres, utilizing \$15,146 of cost-share funds provided by the grant. Proving that invasive control work can be both difficult and expensive, participating landowners recorded an additional \$11,435 in expenses, and 2,000 hours of unpaid labor for their efforts. Landowners also expand our efforts in the community, sharing their knowledge of invasive species management and encouraging neighbors in invasive control.

While 2020 marks the end of this project, the SWCDs are excited to continue their partnership into 2021. A new

(Continued on page 11)



Invasive Specialist Emily Finch shows the difference in size between a 1st year poison hemlock seedling and a 2nd year plant in early spring. The larger second year plant is the one that will send up a flowering stem later in spring, to produce seed and die. The first year plant will not flower until next year.



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Invasive Species

(Continued from page 10)

2021-2023 Clean Water Indiana grant has been awarded to support the Invasive Species Specialist position, continuing invasive species outreach and technical assistance to landowners. The new grant also adds another invasive species management goal, conducting roadside surveys of priority invasive plants such as Poison Hemlock and Phragmites. Specific survey plans are being developed, and the hope is to contact landowners with invasives found adjacent to areas where highway departments are already conducting control efforts. Unfortunately, funding was not approved to continue to offer invasive control cost-share to landowners, though the SWCDs may explore other funding options to incentivize control of invasive populations discovered during the road surveys.

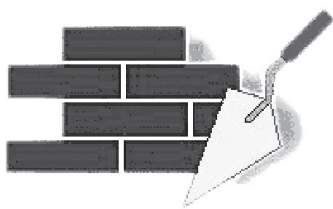
If you have a question for our Invasive Species Specialist, or would like a free site visit to assess the invasive species on your property, contact Emily Finch at Emily.Finch@in.nacdnet.net or 812-482-1171 x3.



A FINE PASTURE; AN EXCELLENT HERD

This picture is from the Dubois County SWCD archives.

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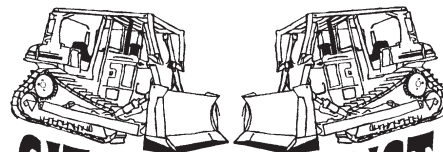
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Duck Race 2020

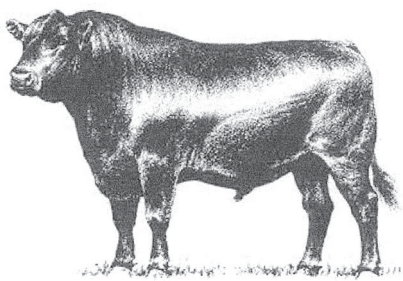
Left: A socially distanced Duck Race was held at the Jasper Municipal Pool as part of the Water Quality Education program, July 2020.



3D Stream Table

Right: Melissa Ruschau demonstrates a 3D Stream Table to help educate water quality at the SW Indiana Regional Soil & Water Envirothon, March 2020.

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NRCS District Conservationist Talking Points

USDA URBAN ADVISORY COMMITTEE

USDA is seeking members for a new advisory committee on urban agriculture, part of a broader effort to focus on the needs of urban farmers. The 12-person committee will advise the Secretary of Agriculture on the development of policies and outreach relating to urban, indoor and other emerging agricultural production practices as well as identify any barriers to urban agriculture. USDA is seeking nominations for individuals representing a broad spectrum of expertise, including:

- Four agricultural producers (two agricultural producers in an urban area or urban cluster and two agricultural producers who use innovative technology).
- Two representatives from an institution of higher education or extension program.
- One representative of a nonprofit organization, which

may include a public health, environmental or community organization.

- One representative of business and economic development, which may include a business development entity, a chamber of commerce, a city government or a planning organization.

- One individual with supply chain experience, which may include a food aggregator, wholesale food distributor, food hub or an individual who has direct-to-consumer market experience.

- One individual from a financing entity.

- Two individuals with related experience or expertise in urban, indoor and other emerging agriculture production practices, as determined by the Secretary.

TILLAGE TRANSECTS

The Indiana Conservation Partnership is committed

to completing the annual Indiana Conservation Transect in 2021. To ensure Indiana's consistent set of tillage and cover crops adoption data continues, we are requesting that each county complete a transect in the late winter/early spring of 2021.

USDA SERVICE CENTER STATUS

Based on the rise in COVID cases both nationally and within the USDA-Farm Production and Conservation (FPAC) workforce, effective December 1, all FPAC offices located in counties with significant COVID-19 infection rates have stepped back reopening process. Producers wishing to conduct business with the FSA, NRCS or any other service center agency should call ahead to confirm and schedule appointments. More information on service center status can be found at <https://www.farmers.gov/coronavirus/service-center-status>.

FSA Important 2021 Dates to Remember

March 12: 2021 ARCPLC election & enrollment deadline

March 15: Grassland signup begins

April 1: Nesting season begins for Conservation Reserve Program practices

April 23: Grassland signup deadline

June 22: Final date to submit a prevented plant claim for soybeans

July 15: Reporting date for all other crops

August 1: Nesting season ends for Conservation Reserve Program practices

October: Election & enrollment for 2022 ARCPLC begins

November 15: Final date to submit a prevent plant claim for wheat

December 15: Reporting date for fall-seeded small grains.

The Dubois County USDA Service Center is open for business by phone appointments only. All visitors wishing to conduct business with the Farm Service Agency should call the service center at 812-482-5565, ext. 2 for a phone appointment.

*Thank You to those who support the
Dubois County SWCD!*

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Form approved by State Board of Accounts, 2002

ANNUAL FINANCIAL REPORT OF _Dubois_ COUNTY SWCD

January 1, 2020 through December 31, 2020

File with State Board of Accounts by February 29, 2021 (via Gateway) and with your
ISDA District Support Specialist by March 31, 2021.

Balance Brought Forward	\$58,853.14
RECEIPTS	
State for District Operations	\$10,000.00
Clean Water Indiana Grant	\$24,532.34
County for District Operations	\$5,950.00
Federal and State Funds (not CWI)	
Non Government Grants	
Other Grants (NACD)	\$9,441.95
Total Intergovernmental Receipts	\$49,924.29
Equipment Rental & Farm Income	\$27,457.59
Donations & Memberships	
Other Charges for Services (Example, Rule 5 inspections)	
Other Charges for Services (Describe)	
Other Charges for Services (Describe)	
Total Charges for Services	\$27,457.59
Advertising	
Annual Meeting Income	\$3,275.00
Interest from Checking, CDs, Savings, Etc.	\$72.61
Reimbursements & Refunds	\$548.71
Sale of Used Equipment	\$200.00
Sales Income	\$37.46
Workshop/Field Day Income	
Other Miscellaneous Revenue (VUJC-LSI project, playing cards)	\$6,934.53
Other Miscellaneous Revenue (beginning Petty Cash)	\$39.00
Other Miscellaneous Revenue (Sales tax collected)	\$160.40
Total Miscellaneous Revenue	\$11,267.71
Sub-Total (before investment activity)	\$88,649.59
Sale of Investments (CDs, saving accounts, transfers)	
TOTAL (balance forward + receipts + investments)	\$147,502.73
DISBURSEMENTS	
Capital Outlays (Equipment)	
Annual Meeting Expenses	\$4,836.37
Audit Expense	\$1,428.00
Bonding and Liability Insurance	\$195.00

Clean Water Indiana Projects or other State grant funded projects	\$35,046.09
Conservation Education Programs	\$6,039.52
Contractual Services	
Cost-Share Projects/Federally-Funded	\$5,418.01
Cost-Share Projects/SWCD-Funded	
CWI Payments to other SWCDs	
Dues & Subscriptions	\$3,250.00
Employee Salaries Paid by District	
Office Supplies	\$802.44
Other Services & Charges	\$2,656.92
Postage & Delivery Expenses	\$3,970.30
Printing/Copying Expense	\$1,726.29
Rent	
Repair Expenses	\$4,886.10
Sales Tax Paid to IN Dept. of Revenue	\$1,240.20
Supervisor Per Diem	\$1,953.07
Supplies for Resale	
Telephone or Other Utilities	
Travel/Lodging/Mileage/Registration/Meals	\$1,766.60
Workshop/Field Day Expense	
Other Disbursements (marketing, advertising, awards, sponsorship)	\$3,028.83
Other Disbursements (VUJC-LSI project)	\$16,051.18
Other Disbursements (Fed WH, grant salaries)	\$28,833.84
Other Disbursements (misc and ending petty cash)	\$2,776.91
Total General Government Disbursements	\$125,905.67
Sub-Total (before investment activity)	\$125,905.67
Purchase of Investments (CDs saving accounts, transfers)	
TOTAL DISBURSEMENTS (disbursements + investments)	\$125,905.67
BALANCE AT DECEMBER 31	\$21,597.06
CLAIMS PAID BY COUNTY	
Salaries	\$143,086.00
Fringe	\$19,327.00
Other	\$0.00
INVESTMENT INVENTORY	
Beginning Investments	
Ending Investments	
Change (+/-)	\$0.00
CASH BOXES	
Petty Cash	\$40.26
Cash Change	

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The SWCD's monthly meetings are on the first Thursday of each month in the USDA Service Center in Jasper. The public is invited and encouraged to attend.

Contact the office for the most up to date meeting time.



STATE OF INDIANA
OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY OF STATE
CHARLES F. FLEMING, Secretary of State

To Whom These Presents Come, Greeting:

WHEREAS a certificate of the incorporation of the DUBOIS COUNTY SOIL CONSERVATION DISTRICT as a governmental sub-division of the State of Indiana was issued by my office on the 19th day of September, 1945, and

WHEREAS Gus Ahrens, Claude A. Grammelspacher, Albert E. Rudolph, Ben Seng and Hubert Wagner, Supervisors of the Dubois County Soil Conservation District, presented to this office on the 14th day of November, 1949, an application in the form required by law for a certificate of the inclusion of additional territory within the DUBOIS COUNTY SOIL CONSERVATION DISTRICT, accompanied by a statement from the State Soil Conservation Committee in the form required by law,

NOW, THEREFORE, I hereby certify that said application and statement have been filed in this office as by law provided.

In Witness Whereof, I have hereunto set my hand and affixed the seal of the State of Indiana, at the City of Indianapolis, this 14th day of November, 1949.

Charles F. Fleming
CHARLES F. FLEMING, Secretary of State.

By: ERNEST WEATHERHOLT, Deputy.

From the State of Indiana November 1949

Still on file at the SWCD office, is the Certificate of Incorporation for the Dubois County Soil Conservation District. The certificate from Indiana Secretary of State Charles F. Fleming is dated November 14, 1949, which added townships to the original Certificate issued in 1945. Gus Ahrens, Claude A. Grammelspacher, Albert E. Rudolph, Ben Seng and Hubert Wagner are recognized as the Supervisors at the time.



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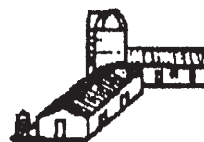


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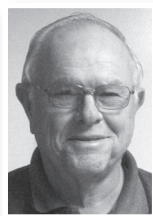
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Emily Finch
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USDA NRCS



Andrea Gogel
ISDA Resource Specialist



Julie Loehr
Patoka River
Watershed Coordinator

Radius Weisman



Radius Weisman, 75, of Jasper passed away on Friday, March 20th, 2020 at Memorial Hospital in Jasper. He was a 1962 graduate of Ireland High School. He received a bachelor's degree in agriculture from Purdue University. He was a member of the United State Army National Guard. He retired from the Farm Service Agency in 2000 and began working part-time at Dubois County Soil and Water Conservation Service in 2003. He was a good mentor for interns and other staff throughout his years of service.

Andrew Helming temporary Board Supervisor



Andrew Helming is the temporary elected SWCD Board Supervisor after Alex Hohl's resignation in December. Hohl's 3-year term was ending this year, but he resigned early after he was asked to complete Jerry Hunefeld's term as a Dubois County Council member. Hohl took office on January 1st.

Helming is an agricultural teacher at Greater Jasper School Corporation. He advises the local FFA chapter and coaches and trains students for soil judging competitions. He also is currently operating the family farm using no-till methods and cover crops. He manages the forestland and manages invasive species.

Helming's name will be put on the ballot for a new term as SWCD Board of Supervisors on the virtual annual meeting held on March 11th, 2021.

Dubois County Soil and Water Conservation District Endowment

Everyone plays a role in conserving and preserving our natural resources. The Dubois County Soil and Water Conservation District promotes the vital benefits of protecting and preserving all natural resources.

Soil and Water Conservation District works to reduce soil erosion and promote clean water while providing technical, financial, and informational assistance to conserve natural resources for future generations. By educating county landowners and farmers on proper soil and water management, Soil and Water Conservation District is ensuring our natural resources are preserved.

Dubois County Soil and Water Conservation District Endowment was established to support the mission of this organization. The endowment helps fund the organization each year, assuring the work they do today can continue for generations to come.

Whether a small gift or an estate gift, all contributions made to the Dubois County Soil and Water Conservation District Endowment support the long term sustainability of this important mission.



Dubois County Soil and Water Conservation District Endowment

DUBOIS COUNTY
Community Foundation

☐ I'd like to learn more about including this endowment in my estate plans.

Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____

Email: _____

\$ _____ Total tax deductible gift

Dubois County Soil and Water Conservation District Endowment

Attn: Dubois County Community Foundation

P.O. Box 269 Jasper, IN 47547

P: 812.482.5295

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