

# Hendricks Communicator



Soil and Water  
Conservation  
District



VOL. XX No. I

*"A Quarterly Newsletter Devoted to Conservation"*

**Annual Report 2004**

## Annual Report Edition

### **Hendricks County Soil and Water Conservation District 53<sup>rd</sup> Annual Meeting**

The District's 53<sup>rd</sup> Annual Meeting was held at the 4-H Fair Grounds Community Building in Danville. The meeting began with the meal catered by Affaire Catering and was attended by approximately 98 people from the Hendricks County District, with a few visitors thrown in. Board Vice-Chairman Dave Wyeth did an excellent job as M.C., taking the place of Jim Loughmiller who was ill and could not attend.

The business of the meeting is to report about the activities of the District and to provide a financial statement. Please look for the Annual Report insert in this newsletter in case you missed the meeting. Also an election was held. Mike Starkey of Brown Township was elected to a three-year term as Supervisor. Jim Loughmiller was earlier re-appointed by the State Soil Conservation Board to yet another three-year term as Supervisor. Jim has been a member of the Board of Supervisors since 1990. Hendricks Circuit Court Judge, Jeffrey V. Boles handled the swearing-in ceremony.

Awards were given during the meeting which is always a highlight. Carol Ford received the Donald H. Lawson Award for Conservation Education and Wayne Mathew received the Conservation Farmer of the Year Award. Be sure to check out the details of their accomplishments in the Annual Report insert. Also, David Wyeth, who is going off the Board after three terms received a plaque for his service.

Our speaker for the evening was Fred Whitford who is the Pesticide Program Coordinator for the Purdue Extension Service. Dr. Whitford provided a very entertaining, laugh-out-loud, presentation highlighting how different people perceive the need, risks and use of farm chemicals. A couple of our local political friends, County Councilmen Hursel Disney and Larry Hesson, especially enjoyed the presentation as they were unwittingly made a part of it. Thanks to these good natured gentlemen!

A good time was had by all! If you missed it, join us next year!

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#### Mission Statement

*To help the citizens of Hendricks County manage, conserve and enhance natural resources today for the benefit of tomorrow's generations through education, public information, leadership, technical assistance and development of innovative programs.*

# STORMWATER QUALITY CORNER

As noted in our Fall newsletter, Hendricks County and each of the five larger towns in our county are implementing new stormwater quality programs. One of the water quality concerns in our still agricultural, but urbanizing areas is the potential for stormwater runoff to carry agricultural chemicals to local streams. For example, low levels of atrazine have been documented in the past in School Branch and Fishback Creeks in Brown Township which are tributary to Eagle Creek Reservoir. The use of vegetative filter strips in fields along streams and water courses can intercept these pollutants and prevent them from continuing downstream.

## Atrazine, Filter Strips and Corn Producers

For the past 40 years atrazine has provided excellent, economical weed control for corn producers. In 1992, the EPA accepted voluntary label revisions for all agricultural products containing atrazine. The label restrictions were voluntarily adopted by atrazine registrants in response to detections of atrazine in surface water. When atrazine is applied correctly it is a very safe product. However, atrazine can cause concerns, particularly in areas with intensive row crop production, when it becomes suspended in storm water runoff and enters open ditches, streams, rivers, lakes, reservoirs and wells. As a part of the voluntary label restriction, various setbacks for mixing/loading and application must be observed. Examples of application setback areas include 50 feet from wells and sinkholes; 66 foot arc from points where field drainage may enter streams or standpipes; and 200 feet from any lake or reservoir. As always, closely examine the label directions for complete details and use products accordingly.

Application setback areas can be treated in one of two ways: 1) the setback area can be planted to a crop and treated with a non-atrazine based product or 2) the setback area can be grassed. If application setback areas are grassed, most of the areas will qualify for filter strips under the Conservation Reserve Program (CRP).

The CRP program offers an attractive solution for the atrazine setback dilemma. Filter strips can be placed adjacent to and parallel to streams, open ditches, wetlands and other permanent bodies of water. Filter strip widths can vary from 20 feet to 120 feet. Cost share assistance for filter strip installation is available. In addition, an annual payment is made for the acres included in the practice based on soil rental rates for each soil type. Contract lengths run from 10 to 15 years. With CRP assistance, it is quite possible to realize the same or even greater economic benefit from filter strips as compared to growing a crop in these marginal field areas.

Filter strips can be planted to cool season grass species or warm season grass/forb mix, depending on chosen widths and landuser objectives. Strips can vary in width to straighten the edges of a field where the stream or ditch causes curves. If strips will be used to turn on, be sure to calculate width needed to turn, usually 45 to 60 feet or more depending on planter widths.

To evaluate the need for atrazine setbacks on your farm, talk with your agricultural chemical dealer. To find out more about CRP Vegetative Filter Strips, please contact us the Soil and Water Conservation District office at (317) 745-2555, Ext. 3 or stop in to see us.

*Adapted from an article written by Chris Torp, NRCS & Dave Flakne, Syngenta.*

## Environmental Education Workshop for Educators

An Environmental Education Workshop for teachers and youth leaders will be held at Gallahue Girl Scout Camp in the hills of Brown County on Wednesday, April 27 and Thursday, April 28, 2005, from 8:00 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. The cost is \$35.00 per person for one day early registration (late registration one day is \$45.00) or \$55.00 per person for the 2-day (late registration two days is \$65). **Late registration is after March 18<sup>th</sup>.** Class sizes are limited. **Registration deadline is April 11, 2005.**

This environmental workshop targets field studies involving hands-on activities and the latest supplementary curriculum materials in education matching Indiana's DOE science and math standards for formal and non-formal educators who are interested in providing natural resources education to the audiences. Some topics that will be included in this year's workshop are: Geology, Using your Senses Outdoors, Ag 101—Back to Basics, Paper Bag Books, Archeology for Elementary Students, Soils, Leopold Education Project, Designing Environmental Field Days, Writing with Science Inquiry, Ballyhoo III—Idea Exchange, On Jeweled Wings—Butterflies, Moths & Hummingbirds, Limberlost: Tricks & Tools for Teachers to name just a few!

The workshop is sponsored by the Hoosier Heartland Resource Conservation and Development Council Education Committee, and the Hoosier Capital Girl Scout Council. For registration information contact the Hoosier Heartland RC&D office at 6041 Lakeside Boulevard, Indianapolis, IN 46278-1989, call (317) 290-3250, email [hhracd@cd.org](mailto:hhracd@cd.org) or your local soil and water conservation district. Registration information is also available on our web site at <http://www.hhracd.org>.

### Upcoming Events

- |             |  |
|-------------|--|
| Feb. 8      | Hendricks County SWCD Annual Meeting - 6:30 pm                                 |
| Feb. 17     | Contractors Workshop - Farm Bureau Bldg. @ IN State Fair Grounds - 9:00 am     |
| Feb. 25     | Hendricks County No-till workshop - Golden Eagle Restaurant - Danville 7:30 am |
| April 27/28 | Camp Gallahue Environmental Education Workshop                                 |

## 2004 DISTRICT ACTIVITIES AND ACCOMPLISHMENTS

1. Nineteenth year for publishing the District Newsletter.
2. Fifteenth year for completing the Tillage Transect.
3. Sponsored the 4-H Soil & Water Conservation Project.
4. Completed Clean Water Indiana grant from IDNR.
5. Promoted the Hoosier Heartland R.C. & D. Activities.  
Forestry Committee - Backyard Tree Farm & Plant-a-Million Tree  
Urban Committee - Pond Pro workshop & Contractors workshop  
Education Committee - Camp Gallahue Conservation Teachers  
Camp
6. Home Page on the Information Superhighway  
<http://www.hendricks-swcd.org>
7. Technical Assistance to individuals/groups ..... 2,014
8. Resource Management Systems installed which include:  
Conservation Tillage ..... 71,400 acres (transect data)  
CRP - Conservation Buffers:  
Grass Waterways ..... 64,133 feet  
Filter strips ..... 12,442 feet  
..... 7.6 acres  
Clean Water Indiana  
Buffer & Filter strips ..... 16,228 feet  
..... 8.7 acres
9. Urban Conservation - Info/Education and on-site assistance.  
Reviewed 130 erosion control plans for development sites; 128  
development site visits.

## CLEAN WATER INDIANA PROGRAMS

During 2002, the District received a Clean Water Indiana Grant from the State Soil Conservation Board in the amount of \$10,021. Based on the terms of our grant application these funds were to be used to provide incentive payments (\$650 per acre) to producers to install vegetative field border and filter strip practices on their farms. Target areas included the Big Walnut watershed and other settings throughout the county. The West Central Chapter Quail Unlimited was a cooperating partner for the Big Walnut Watershed.

In September 2004, the project was completed. The District had nine cooperating producers who installed a total of 25,692 feet / 14.0 acres of field borders or filter strips on their farms. These projects will provide water quality benefits to Hendricks County streams. The field borders / filter strips filter soil particles and intercept chemical and other pollutants as stormwater exits fields to local waterways. A big "Thank You" goes to our cooperators for this program including: (2003) Mike Starkey, Wes Davis, Owen Hack, Anna Gooding, Brad Williams and Gary Owen; (2004) Loren and Jim Heald, Joe Nysewander, Mike Ross and Tammy Richardson.



**Clean Water Indiana**  
Conserving and Enhancing Our Land, Lakes, and Rivers

## WAYNE MATHEW CONSERVATION FARMER OF THE YEAR

Wayne Mathew has been named the 2004 Conservation Farmer of the Year. Wayne operates a grain farm on about 1,200 acres mostly in Eel River and Union townships. Wayne no-tills his soybeans and uses conservation tillage on his corn crop. Over the years Wayne has demonstrated good stewardship of the land he farms by employing several conservation practices, including grass waterways, rock chutes and drainage tile.

An interesting feature about Wayne's work on grass waterways is that, after NRCS survey and design, he installed them himself. He shaped them by using a tractor pulling a scraper and a small dozer. The seed bed is prepared using a disk, broadcast seeder and a small cultipacker. He finished the most recent projects using erosion control blanket. Actually it seems that the women's movement brought equal opportunity to the Mathew farm when Wayne's wife Marilyn found herself helping out installing the blankets!

Born in Rensselaer, Indiana, Wayne grew up on his family's White County farm. After graduating from Wolcott High School in 1955, he farmed with his father, worked for the Newton County Co-op and served in the Army. Marrying Marilyn in 1959, he studied to be a diesel mechanic which led the family to Indianapolis and Cummins Diesel by 1963. In 1965 the Mathews bought their farm in Hendricks County and began building what had been a small dairy farm into their successful grain operation of today. Wayne and Marilyn have been married 46 years and have been on their farm for 40 years. Their family has two daughters, two sons, 6 grandchildren and 2 great grandchildren. Wayne says that he always felt very fortunate to have the opportunity to raise his family on the farm and to build his operation. There's "nothing like it," he says with a smile.

Congratulations Wayne for your conservation work. The Danville plant of Irving Materials, Inc. (IMI) each year donates five yards of concrete to our Conservation Farmer of the Year. Thanks to IMI for their support.



## **Carol Ford Receives 2004 Donald H. Lawson Award for Conservation Education**

The Donald H. Lawson Award for Conservation Education was established as a memorial to Don Lawson's years of dedicated service as a co-founder of the District, a district cooperater, and a district supervisor.

This year's recipient is Carol Ford. Mrs. Ford is the coordinator of the Outdoor Education Center at Avon



Community Schools. Of particular interest to the Board was Carol's growth in her work. She began as an interested parent volunteer in 1995 working to clear brush, poison ivy and honeysuckle from the chain link fence and trails

at the Center. Since 2002 she has been the Outdoor Education Center's coordinator... coordinating everything from transportation of students, to enlisting volunteer efforts, to encouraging teachers to develop an internet web-based file of lesson plans utilizing the Center in fulfilling statewide education standards. She led efforts to build the amphitheater, the new covered bridge, the butterfly and cabin gardens and the rebuilding of the dam. Most recently, she encouraged her Center committee members toward completing an application process ending in the Avon Outdoor Education Center being named the Outdoor Lab of the Year by the Indiana State Tree Farm Committee.

Carol has worked hard to teach herself how to make the Center a valuable resource for her teachers and students. She has completed the Master Gardener program, the Master Naturalist program, Project Wet, Project Wild and Project Learning Tree and the Indiana Coverts program. She also attended a grant writing workshop to help obtain funds for the Center. One of the Center's steering committee members describes Carol as, "...a major go-getter and her enthusiasm is contagious among the committee members as we encourage the Avon Schools to utilize the center to its full extent."

A typical Carol Ford quote: "When we have our spring flower sale, it's not about earning money, although the Center can use it. It's so we can encourage the growth of natural native plants." Carol Ford embodies the conservation ethic and imparts it to her teachers and students with great enthusiasm. We are pleased to name her for the Donald H. Lawson Award.

### **4-H Soil & Water Conservation Participants**

**Tamara Truax**

**Seth Hayden**

**Mariah Truax**

**Nick Horein**

**Ethan Truax**

**Javier Camba**

**Cole Smith**

## **ADDITIONAL DISTRICT MILESTONES 2004**

You are accustomed to seeing District staff surveying grass waterways or making field visits on construction sites, but we also engage in many other conservation activities during the year. Here are some highlights:

- ✓ Our conservation education efforts touched an estimated 2000 students during the year – youth and adults. Youth events included the Hendricks County Ag Day, our distribution of Keep Indianapolis Beautiful tree seedlings to elementary school classrooms and a morning spent talking about watersheds to Tri-West High School earth science students. At yet another event, assisting Hoosier Heartland RC&D and Boone County SWCD, a water quality presentation was made at a Pond Pro Workshop in Zionsville.
- ✓ We continue to advocate and educate promoting no-till systems. Barry Fisher from NRCS and Putnam County continues his excellent program with the Conservation Tillage Initiative. Again this year we cooperated with Barry and Putnam County to help host the Conservation Expo in September. A number of Hendricks County producers attended and heard a variety of expert and practical presentations on no-till topics at this field day event.
- ✓ EPA and IDEM continue to increase demands for stormwater quality programs in growing communities. The urbanizing areas of the County as well as the towns of Brownsburg, Avon, Plainfield, Danville and Pittsboro are subject to the new Phase II stormwater requirements. This year we participated on organizing subcommittees for the County's required Stormwater Quality Management Plans and the development of a model Stormwater Quality Management ordinance for our local communities. We also cooperated to develop an exhibit and to host an information booth at the Hendricks County Fair getting out the word on stormwater quality to fairgoers. Lastly, with expert help from our DNR Conservation Partners, we hosted a workshop in December geared toward county and municipal personnel on the review of Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plans for construction sites.
- ✓ We continue to attend county and local planning authority meetings to advise on erosion control and other conservation matters. For the Hendricks County Area Plan Commission we assisted in the review of 46 minor plat cases, 73 major plat cases, 87 development plan reviews and a handful of planned unit development and divisional lot split cases. For the Town of Avon, we assisted in the review of 22 plats and 22 development plans. We assist the other towns in the county on an ad hoc basis providing information as needed. The District continues to participate in the County's Planning with Power effort geared presently toward the development of a Conservation Subdivision Ordinance and Design Guidelines.
- ✓ The District completed its Clean Water Indiana Grant Program. This year we had four additional participants resulting in the installation of field borders or filter strips totaling 16,228 feet / 8.7 acres. The grant was closed out and a final report forwarded to DNR – Division of Soil Conservation.
- ✓ We continue to assist the Hendricks County Park Board with their projects at McCloud Park. Associate SWCD Supervisor, Paul Miner, sits on the Park Board. This year we provided technical assistance on erosion control issues and on the planting of native, warm season grass in the old fields on the property. The warm season planting is done in cooperation with the West Central Chapter Quail Unlimited Conservation Buffer Project.

## Continuous CRP continues ...

50% + 40% cost share program for eligible conservation practices!

The Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) which includes a buffer Initiative has three practices that are important and cost-effective:

### *Grass Waterways - Grass Buffer Strips - Riparian Buffer Strips*

In addition, the annual rental payment per acre based upon the soil type plus a five dollar per year maintenance allowance will be included. Also, during this time period there is a one time \$10 per acre times the CRP length (10 or 15 year) incentive payment, which could amount to: \$100 or \$150 per acre.

Aside from the benefits of these practices to water quality by vegetating these highly erosive areas, increased farmability, increased profits, and annual payments make this a great opportunity.

The additional incentive payments include:

- 40% cost-share
- one time \$10 per acre times the length of contract

Besides this coming *spring or fall for installation of the conservation practices*, it may be necessary to *construct the conservation practices*

*during the summer to meet the Fiscal Year deadline, if the additional 40% incentive payment is not continued into FY 2006.*



## Well Water Testing Program offered

For the third time, Hendricks County will conduct a ground water/private well testing program. The water testing will cover:

(1) Nitrate test: which covers the presence of Nitrate, Ammonia, Chloride, Sulfate, Silica Conductivity, and soluble reactive to Phosphorus; (2) Triazine screen: which looks for herbicides such as Atrazine, Cyanazine, and Simazine; and (3) Lasso/Dual screen: which indicates the presence of pesticides Alachlor (Lasso) and Metolachlor (Dual).



The Heidelberg College Water Quality Lab, a nationally recognized laboratory, will do these tests. Confidentiality of participants will be maintained throughout the process.

Previous testing was done in 1991 and 2000.

Watch for future announcements for details of the upcoming testing program.

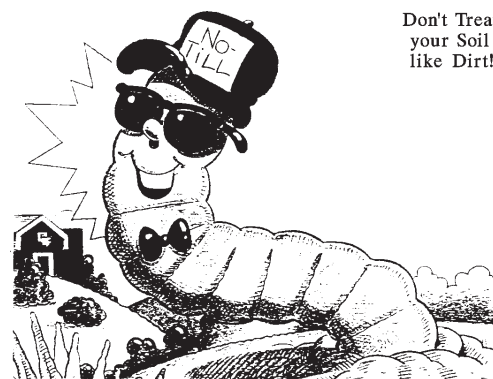
## No-Till 201 Workshop

A workshop is planned for February 25, at 7:30 am at the Golden Eagle Restaurant in the Old Farm Shopping Center in Danville.

Topics to be covered are:

- Review of the national No-till Conference recently held in Cincinnati, January 13-14, 2005
- No-Till considerations - nitrogen management and planter setup, adjustments & maintenance
- Cover Crops
- Conservation Security Program (CSP) - How to prepare

A no-till tip: "Seek advice and recommendations from others who are successful at no-till, not from those who have tried it. Using conventional farming management and methods can lead to disappointment under a no-till system. Remember ... if you think it can work, or you think it can't, you're usually right!"



Don't Treat  
your Soil  
like Dirt!

# HENDRICKS COUNTY



## SOIL & WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT

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