

HELLO AND GOODBYE TO VALUABLE PARTNERS

This spring has brought some changes to conservation partnerships here in Marshall County. We are sorry to see River Watson leave his position as environmental educator at the Recycle Depot. River has been a pleasure to work with, especially with the Earth Day tree event and sharing booth space at the Marshall County 4H Fair. River will continue his efforts in conservation by serving on the board of the Potawatomi Wildlife Park. The county is also losing past District Coordinator Deb Palmer, who is retiring from her position with the Lake Maxinkuckee Environmental Fund in Culver. We have worked with Deb on a number of educational events over the years and will miss her expertise in all things having to do with water quality. Even though she is officially retiring, she will be serving on the board for the new county sewer district, helping to keep our lakes and rivers clean. We do welcome new LMEF president Adam Thada! We have worked with Adam in the past when he was with Ancilla as their director of ecological relationships, and we look forward to working with him again in his new role! Partnerships are key in conservation, and we are so lucky to have such great ones here in Marshall County!

MARSHALL COUNTY SWCD BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

Chairman—Mike Large

Vice Chairman - Joel Fisher

Board Members - Craig Hawley,
Tim Gochenour and Joe Skelton

Troy Manges
USDA NRCS
District Conservationist

Jodie Overmyer - District Coordinator
Tim Kroeker - Watershed Coordinator

Conservation: the careful maintaining and protection of something valuable especially in its natural or original state

Marshall County SWCD

2903 Gary Drive

Plymouth, IN 46563

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

NON-PROFIT OR
US POSTAGE PAID
PLYMOUTH IN 46563
PERMIT NO. 240

DISTRICT COST SHARE

The District continues to offer an easy cost share application for conservation practices. Have you thought about trying cover crops, or do you have a field that needs a filter strip next to a ditch? How about putting in a few acres of pollinator habitat? The District Cost Share program can help pay for all of these practices, along with no-till in the spring. Clean Water Indiana dollars continue to support these practices, and the Indiana State Department of Agriculture relies on the Soil and Water Conservation Districts to help get these conservation practices on the ground. Cover Crops will pay \$20/A plus an additional \$5 if planted after wheat or if field is adjacent to a body of water. Filter strips pay \$350/A and no-till can pay up to \$20/A as well. Pollinator habitat pays \$750/A. While this grant cannot cover all of the costs that will be incurred from installing important conservation practices, it does help with some expenses and you will be helping the local environment by participating! **Give us a call for more info!**



2903 Gary Drive Plymouth IN 46563

574-936-3026 ext. 3

www.marshallcountyswcd.org

CONSERVATION CONVERSATIONS

What can YOU do?

Here at the Soil and Water office, it's our job to educate the residents of our county about the importance of keeping our water clean and our soil healthy. We encourage people every day just to do something, anything, to help in this endeavor. Sometimes those "things" can take very little effort, with a lot of return! Education is key, and to become more educated, we encourage you to attend a field day or an interesting meeting to learn about watersheds, soil health, invasive plants, native plants, rain barrels and raingardens, water

testing, composting, septic health, forestry management...so much information, so little time! Maybe you don't have time to attend a meeting but you might have time to read an article or follow a FB page, and then SHARE an informative post to help get the information out there to more people. It's all about information and education, and it can be fun! Our educational events are so interesting, and networking at these events can be valuable. Connections for Conservations! Hey, that's catchy! Let's connect soon!



Participate in a field day!



Attend an educational meeting!

SUMMER 2024

UPCOMING EVENTS

PURDUE EXTENSION MASTER
GARDENER BASIC TRAINING

Purdue Extension will be offering their training series beginning August 20 through November 19 on Tuesdays from 6-9 p.m. at the Bremen Public Library. This is a GREAT opportunity to further your knowledge of home horticulture, with classes in plant and soil science, insect and disease identification and control, woody and herbaceous ornamental plants, lawn care, and fruit gardening. Registration is \$200/person, \$300/couple. Contact Brianna at the Marshall County Extension office to sign up. 574-935-8545.

BREAKFAST WITH A FORESTER

Arrow Head RC & D is bringing a District Forester back to Marshall County on June 18th at 8:00 a.m. at Christo's Family Restaurant to answer your questions about managing your woodlands. Join us for a cup of coffee, a great breakfast and good conversation about your forested acres. We hope to see you there!

PAY DIRT is BACK!!

Elkhart County SWCD is hosting their Pay Dirt Field Day event on August 22nd at the Hoosier Homestead Farm in Goshen. Many topics will be discussed and demonstrations will be held. Check their website for details!

www.elkcoswcd.org

DON'T FORGET THE KAYAKS!

In 2021 the District purchased six kayaks so that residents of the county would have another way to enjoy the many lakes and two beautiful rivers that are located here. The thought behind this purchase was that people care about what they know about. What a better way to get to know a body of water than to spend time paddling, floating and fishing in it! These kayaks are held at the Plymouth Parks Department and can be checked out at the pool office during summer pool hours, which is Monday through Saturday from noon to 6. You will need to have safe transportation for them (racks, trailers or truck beds) and provide your own life preservers. Paddles are included. There are 4 medium kayaks, 1 smaller kayak, and 1 larger kayak. There is no charge to check them out, all that is asked is that they are taken care of and returned in good condition and cleaned up. Never kayaked before? Another reason to check one out. This outdoor activity is becoming more and more popular...once you try it, you may become HOOKED! Give the Plymouth Parks Department a call at 574-936-2876 to reserve a couple today (don't forget to invite a buddy!)



RAY ARCHULETA and BARRY FISHER TO HEADLINE SOIL HEALTH EVENT

Wow! A big event is being held in our part of the state, and we want to tell you all about it. This August 14-17, our partners at the Wabash, Miami, Pulaski and Fulton County SWCD's are hosting "Successful Soil Solution Workshops". The schedule will be as follows: August 14 will be in Miami County and will concentrate on interseeding. August 15 will be in Wabash County and will cover no-till and cover crop practices. Pulaski County will host a session on grazing on August 16, and then the Main Event will be held in Fulton County on August 17th. The Main Event is a field workshop that will be packed with activities including designing a basic cover crop mix, and understanding and interpreting the New Haney Soil Test. Internationally acclaimed Soil Scientist Ray Archuleta and Indiana's own Barry Fisher will be the professionals that can answer all of your soil health questions. Ray Archuleta has spent his career researching and teaching soil health. He is a Certified Professional Soil Scientist who has over 30 years of experience as a soil conservationist, water quality specialist and conservation agronomist. Barry Fisher just recently retired from NRCS and is currently President of Fisher Soil Health. He was awarded the Certified Crop Adviser Conservationist of the Year. Both Ray and Barry will be invaluable sources of information during this special event, sponsored by Fulton County REMC, Beacon Credit Union, Arrow Head Country RC & D, and Conservation Cropping Systems, Initiative (CCSI) Registration fees are \$25/ day and will include lunch. Registration deadline is August 5th.



To register, scan code or go to <https://www.ccsin.org/registration-other-events>

USDA and the Marshall County SWCD prohibit discrimination in their programs on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, religion, age, disability, political beliefs and marital or familial status.

INVASIVES PLANTS - A THREAT TO OUR WOODLANDS

Invasive plants and their management is becoming a conservation priority in Indiana. Foresters have been recommending management for years, as it affects the quality of timber by limiting resources (light, water and fertility) to desirable hardwoods and affecting their growth. But this is only one of many negative impacts they can have. By "taking over" a woodland or fallow ground, they change the entire ecosystem of the affected area. They crowd out desirable native plants that contribute to the food web for wildlife and pollinators, while contributing nothing themselves. Some can alter soil chemistry, others can harbor disease carrying pests, and this can contribute to the extinction of imperiled species. Indiana leads the fight in the country against invasive plants through a collaboration with the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) and the State of Indiana Cooperative Invasives Management (SICIM) called the Indiana Invasives Initiative. Through this partnership, regional specialists work at the local level with local people using local resources to target invasive plants. The Regional Specialist for our area is Ronda Spaulding. She works closely with our working group (called a CISMA—Cooperative Invasive Species Management Area, ours is called SMIPP, the St. Joseph/Marshall Invasive Plant Partnership) While there are many invasive plants to worry about, these four are at the top of the list! Check our website for a calendar of control!

Asian Bush Honeysuckle



Honeysuckle is more than likely the most prominent invasive plant in our area. It blooms in May and then gets red fruit in early fall. This fruit isn't beneficial to migratory birds, and is low in nutrition. Because of that heavy fruit, it is easily spread and quickly crowds out beneficial natives. It is easily treated with cut stump applications in the fall.



Russian & Autumn Olive



This plant is easily identified by its silvery leaves. It has thorns which makes it a REAL pain in the *\$#! It happily moves into vacant lots and fields and can quickly take over. It was used in wildlife plantings before it was known to be so detrimental to native habitat. Olives respond well to a cut stump treatment in the fall as well.

Oriental Bittersweet



Non-native Bittersweet (there is a native one, but it is not seen very often) will completely take over an area. It is referred to as the "Kudzu of the North" and if you've ever been down south, you've seen Kudzu covering trees and building. This plant is quickly becoming a serious invader, so please don't purchase any fall decorations with the orange berries of this plant, this could help it spread!

Tree of Heaven

Tree of Heaven is double trouble! Like other invasives, it is very good at moving into disturbed ground and right-of-ways that aren't maintained very well. It seeds prolifically, and will grow absolutely ANYWHERE (Have you ever read A Tree Grows in Brooklyn? That is a Tree of Heaven!) The other reason it is bad is because it serves as a host to the new Spotted Lanternfly insect, which is attacking fruit crops and wreaking havoc in vineyards (Oh, NO) and orchards. This one looks like our native black walnut and sumac, so it is important to identify it correctly!