



Conserving the Natural  
Resources of Steuben County  
for Future Generations!

# The Conservator

Steuben County, Indiana Soil & Water Conservation District

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FALL/WINTER 2013

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## SPECIAL POINTS OF INTEREST:

- Cover Crop Field Day
- Agronomy Field Day

Scan this symbol  
with your  
smartphone to link  
to our website.



## Lake Life Course is Back

When the days get cooler and the leaves start turning on the trees, Lake Life classes will begin again. "Lake Life 102" will begin Tuesday, September 24<sup>th</sup> from 6:00 to 8:30PM, and continue every Tuesday until October 29<sup>th</sup>.

The six-week course will give you a basic understanding of what it takes to live near and respect the beautiful natural resources that Steuben County offers. Come be a part of our annual educational celebration of lake life! Classes will be relevant to both newcomers and graduates of last year's sessions. The class will



cost \$50, and includes all class materials and snacks. Class location is the Steuben County Community Center Multi-Purpose Room, 317 S. Wayne St., Angola.

Lake Life 102 is sponsored by

the Purdue Cooperative Extension, The Steuben County Soil and Water Conservation District, and The Steuben County Lakes Council.

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## Conservation Day Camp

Three one-day Conservation Camps were held by the SWCD's of Northeast Indiana this summer. Youth, ages nine to thirteen, attended camps.

Par-Gill Natural Resources Learning Center in LaGrange County was the site of the first Conservation Day Camp on June 20th. Campers learned about birds, wildlife habitat, and conserving precious natural resources. Campers met the great 19th century ornithologist John James Audubon, portrayed by Scott Beam, and looked at macro invertebrates in their pond study. Master Naturalist, Julie Diehm, talked about wild edibles and campers taste tested wild edibles such as cattail, day lilies, and many others. Campers hand cranked ice cream and built birdhouses to finish off the day.

On July 18th, Conservation Day Camp was held in Steuben

County at Pokagon State Park. Marjorie Hershman (pictured right) talked to campers about wildlife on the beginning of a Nature hike. Campers were able to tour the Nature Center, where Marjorie introduced them to endangered species living at the Nature Center, such as the Blanding's Turtle, Eastern Box Turtle, and Eastern Massasauga Rattlesnake. Other species introduced were the American Bald Eagle, American Badger, and many others. Campers performed water testing at Lake James and cooled off with a refreshing swim in Lake James.

Camp Whitley, near Columbia City, held the final Conservation Camp on August 8th. Conservation Officers covered firearm safety and Camp Whitley staff showed campers how to shoot a bow and arrow. Campers had the opportunity to shoot clay pigeons



targets with shot guns and practice shooting the bow at a target with the assistance of Camp staff. Wildlife Educator, Rick Glassman played wildlife games with the campers, and introduced them to some reptile friends. Camp ended with a refreshing swim in Troy-Cedar Lake.

Be sure to look for Conservation Day Camp locations next year!

## Tillage Transect: 2013



No till corn  
with cover crop

The 2013 Steuben County Tillage Transect was completed on June 5th and 6th with the help of SWCD Supervisor Sharon Gerig, SWCD Staff Kayleen Hart and Mandy Courtright, NRCS District Conservationist Brian Musser, and Indiana State Department of Agriculture (ISDA) Resource Specialist, Cassandra Vondran.

The tillage transect consists of visually observing the tillage practices, residue cover, and crops planted on 280 fields across the entire county. The data gathered from the tillage transect is used to evaluate crop rotation, conservation tillage, and estimate soil erosion.

Four different tillage practices were used for evaluation: No-till (previous crop residue 75%-

100%), Mulch-till (30%-75%), Reduced-till (16%-30%), and Conventional-till (0%-15%).

In fields planted to corn in 2013, the use of No-till was 31%, Mulch-till 23%, Reduced-till 26%, and Conventional-till 20%. In fields planted to soybeans the use of No-till was 68%, Mulch-till 18%, Reduced-till 10%, and Conventional-till 4%.

When compared to 2012, the use of No-till in 2013 was down 6% in corn and 2% in soybean fields. The use of No-till in both corn and soybeans has begun to fluctuate in recent years and is beginning to show a downward trend. Looking at the last eight Tillage Transects from 2002-2013, the 2013 No-till corn is down 21% compared to the highest reading of 52% in 2002. No-till soybeans

are down 26% in 2013 compared to the highest recorded of 94% in 2010.

As No-till numbers have begun to decline in recent years, the use of Reduced-till and Conventional-till have begun to increase steadily in corn, and soybeans show an increase in Mulch-till.

There are several factors that could be behind the decrease in the use of No-till. It is too early to tell if farmers are moving away from No-till or if the decline is temporary. Our office is here to assist with issues you maybe having with No-till, and options that are available to continue using this beneficial practice.

To see the full report with graphs please visit our website: [www.steubenswcd.org](http://www.steubenswcd.org)

## Lake Life 102 (con't.)

(Continued from page 1)

Our agenda this year includes:

**September 24:** *Steuben County Geography* - presenter Pete Hippensteel, a retired Tri-State University professor, and the *History of Pokagon State Park* - presenter Fred Wooley, Pokagon State Park Interpretive Naturalist.

**October 1:** *County Official Panel*. Representatives from the County Commissioners, Council, Plan Commission, and Surveyor's office will present what types of things their offices do and answer questions.

**October 8:** *Over, Under, and On* features three topics. The *Over*

portion discusses Seaplanes - presenter Randy Strebis; the *Under* portion focuses on scuba diving featuring the Steuben County Underwater Rescue & Recovery Team (SCURRT); and the *On* portion talks about the development of boating and boat restoration - presenter Terry Archbold from Dry Dock Marine.

**October 15:** *Natural Shoreline Benefits* - presenter Doug Nusbaum, IDNR; *Waste Water Treatment Plant Operations and Improvements* - presenter Craig Williams, Angola Waste Water Treatment Plant Superintendent; and *Water Monitoring Results* on the County's Geographic Information System (GIS) - presenter Chad Hoover, Steuben County GIS Coordinator.

**October 22:** *Identifying Fish* - presenter Neil Ledet, IDNR; *Fish Cleaning* - presenter Ted Bohman, Pokagon State Park Property Manager; and *Lake Patrols* - presented by an Indiana Conservation Officer.

**October 29:** *Food Safety Handling* and class meal by Harger's Butcher Shop and Catering; and *Places to Visit*, presented by the Steuben County Tourism Bureau.

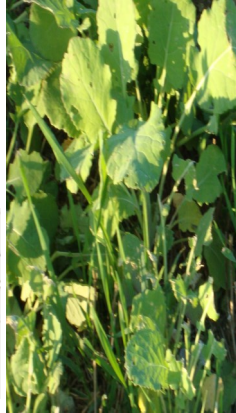
To reserve your place in this class, please give any of our offices a call: Purdue Cooperative Extension (260) 668-1000 ext. 1400, the Lakes Council (260) 665-1730 or the SWCD (260) 665-3211 ext. 3.

We hope to see you there!



# Cover Crop Field Day

When: September 17  
 Time: 6-8 PM  
 Where: Jeff Conrad's  
 0191 CR 41  
 Waterloo, IN 46793



DeKalb County in coordination with Steuben County will be hosting a Field Day presenting 10 plots that were planted on August 5, 2013. We hope to see you there!

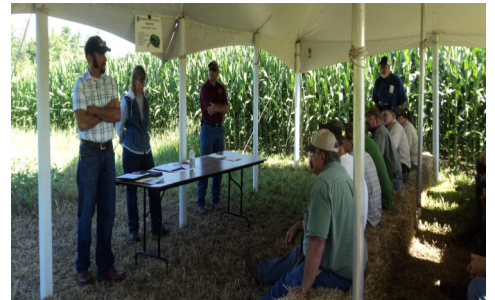
# Agronomy Field Day 2013

On July 24, the annual Agronomy Field Day at The Andersons Waterloo Ag Center had over 115 people in attendance. The field day is sponsored by The Andersons, DeKalb and Steuben County SWCD's.

Participants were taken on three rotating plot tours, where they learned about fungicide and nitrogen, cover crops, and insect management. The Fungicide and Nitrogen Management stop was presented by Jeff Bradford and Greg Myers from The Andersons. They spoke about when and how much of these products

to apply. Derek Thompson, NRCS District Conservationist and area farmer, Kent Tracey, DeKalb SWCD and area farmer, and Cassandra Vondran, ISDA, were able to answer questions on cover crops at the next stop. Dr. Andrew Michel, Ohio State University, rounded out the tour, speaking about different invaders in the corn or beans and showing how an app for smart phones can be used as a tool for insect management.

Mike Mock, The Andersons, gave an update on where the markets are and where they're



headed. Dr. Jeffrey Reutter, Director: Ohio Sea Grant College Program, explained why and how Lake Erie is affected by algal blooms. Dr. Fred Whitford, Purdue University, presented about Extracting Stuck Equipment Safely and asked the audience questions.

It is always a very informational day, and we look forward to seeing you next year at Agronomy Field Day.

## Affiliate Members

The District Board gratefully acknowledges its current 2013 Affiliate Members. The donations received from these individuals and business help support the Information and Education programs of the District. If you or your business would like to become an Affiliate Member, please contact our office.

### Platinum

- Angola Seed & Supply**  
Angola, IN
- City of Angola/Trine University MS4**  
Angola, IN
- Farm Credit Services Mid America**  
LaGrange, IN
- Farmer's State Bank**  
LaGrange, IN
- North Central Co-Op**  
Wabash, IN
- Moody & Crew**  
Fremont, IN
- The Nature Conservancy**  
Angola, IN

### Silver

- Aquatic Enhancement Survey, Inc.**  
Angola, IN
- Edon Farmer's Co-Op**  
Edon, OH
- D & J Habitat Restoration**  
LaOtto, IN
- Diggin' & Dozin, Inc.**  
Angola, IN
- Kevin Northup Excavating**  
LaGrange, IN
- Noll Bros. Oil, Inc.**  
Hudson, IN
- Tom Green Engineering**  
Angola, IN

### Bronze

- Carper Farm Supply, Inc.**  
Ashley, IN
- Caruso's Restaurant**  
Angola, IN
- Daft Erosion Control, LLC**  
Ada, OH
- Hoham Feed & Supply**  
Auburn, IN
- Stroh Farm Supply**  
Stroh, IN



## Steuben County Soil & Water Conservation District

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[www.steubenswcd.org](http://www.steubenswcd.org)



[facebook.com/SteubenIndianaSWCD](https://facebook.com/SteubenIndianaSWCD)

**Conserving the Natural Resources of  
Steuben County for Future Generations!**

You can help us go green by subscribing to the newsletter via e-mail. Visit our website and click on the Newsletter tab or call the office to change your subscription at any time. You may change your subscription to *The Conservator* at any time.

All programs and activities of the Steuben County Soil and Water Conservation District and its Partnership Agencies are offered on a non-discriminatory basis, without regard to race, color, national origin, age, disability, and where applicable, sex, marital status, familial status, parental status, religion, sexual orientation, genetic information, political beliefs, reprisal, or because all or part of an individual's income is derived from any public assistance program.

### Upcoming Events...

- Nov. 11<sup>th</sup> Veteran's Day (*Office Closed*)
- Nov. 13<sup>th</sup> Steuben SWCD Board Meeting  
7:15 PM @ USDA Service Center
- Nov. 28<sup>th</sup> Thanksgiving (*Office Closed*)
- Nov. 29<sup>th</sup> Thanksgiving Holiday (*Office Closed*)
- Dec. 10<sup>th</sup> Pigeon Creek Steering Committee Meeting  
6:30 PM @ Steuben County Community Center
- Dec. 11<sup>th</sup> Steuben SWCD Board Meeting  
6:15 PM @ USDA Service Center
- Dec. 24<sup>th</sup> Christmas Eve (*Office Closed Half-day*)
- Dec. 25<sup>th</sup> Christmas Day (*Office Closed*)
- Jan. 1<sup>st</sup> New Year's Day (*Office Closed*)
- Jan. 9<sup>th</sup> Steuben SWCD Board Meeting  
6:15 PM @ USDA Service Center
- Jan. 21<sup>st</sup> Martin Luther King Jr. Day (*Office Closed*)

*\*\*For more events and updates please check the website.\*\**

*Times and places of meetings are subject to change due to unforeseen issues.*

### USDA Farm Service Agency

**September 16, 2013:** Deadline to submit signatures for DCP producers earning a payment. Signatures for -0- share producers (cash rent owners) are needed by September 30, 2013.

**Early October:** CRP and DCP payments issued. If you have changed whom you bank with, please let us know so your payment will be deposited without delay.

**December 15, 2013:** Deadline to certify fall planted crops (WHEAT, rye, etc.). You will be assessed a late filing fee after this date.

**After harvest:** Price support loans available for wheat, corn, beans. Some policies have changed since last year.

**Please call the office for more details. (260) 665-3211, ext. 2**

### Steuben County 4H Fair

The Steuben County Soil and Water Conservation District sponsors the Grand Champion and Reserve Grand Champion trophies at the Steuben County 4H fair every year, which was held July 19th through the 25th this year. We also serve as project superintendent.

The **2013 Grand Champion in the Soil and Water Conservation project was Griffin Hosek and Reserve Grand Champion was Xavier Hosek.** We would encourage any child enrolled in 4H, who enjoys learning about Natural Resources to contact our office and learn about the project. The fair is a really fun week, so contact the Purdue Extension Office at 260-668-1000, ext. 1400, for more information on joining the 4H program.