



Conserving the Natural Resources of Steuben County for Future Generations!

The Conservator

Steuben County, Indiana Soil & Water Conservation District

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



Steuben County Spring Tillage Transect

The 2016 Steuben County Spring Tillage Transect was completed on June 15th and 16th with the assistance of NRCS District Conservationist Brian Musser, SWCD staff Janel Meyer and Tara Lee, and Bridget Harrison, Director of the Clear Lake Township Land Conservancy.

The tillage transect is a windshield survey that collects information on tillage practices, residue cover, and crops planted from 280 points across the county. Data gathered from the survey is used to track cropland use, conservation cropping systems, cover crop adoption and crop residue which can be used to estimate soil erosion rates.

Four different tillage practices were used for evaluation: No-till (previous crop residue >30%); Mulch-till (30% - 75% residue); Reduced-till (16% - 30% residue); and Conventional-till (0% - 15% residue).

In fields planted to corn in 2016, the use of No-till was 49%, Mulch-till 13%, Reduced-



No-till field from the Steuben County 2016 spring tillage transect.
(Photo courtesy of Steuben SWCD)

till 11% and Conventional-till 27% (Figure 1). In fields planted to soybeans the use of No-till was 85%, Mulch-till 5%, Reduced-till 3% and Conventional-till 7% (Figure 2).

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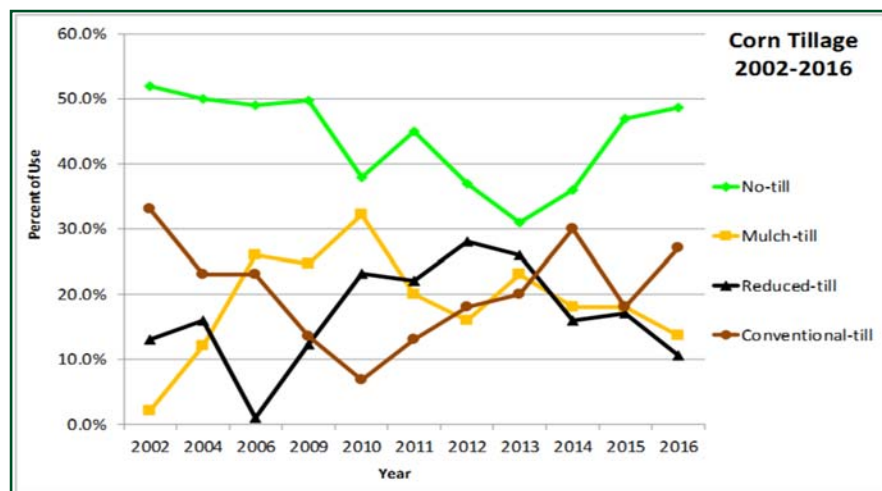


Figure 1. 2002-2016 Corn Tillage data from the Steuben SWCD spring tillage survey (Steuben County, Indiana).

Transect Survey (continued from page 1)

When compared to 2015, the use of No-till in 2016 increased 2% in corn fields and 3% in soybean fields (Figures 1 and 2). The use of No-till has fluctuated throughout the years; however, an upward trend has been observed since 2014. Comparing 2002-2016 Tillage Transect data, 2016 No-till corn was only 6% lower than the highest level observed in 2002 (52%). No-till soybeans were down 10%, compared to the highest level recorded in 2010 (94%). Between 2015 and 2016, Conventional-till nearly doubled for corn fields; soybean field Conventional-till increased over a third (5% in 2015 to 6.6% in the 2016 survey). For more information about our Tillage Transect, feel free to contact our office or visit our website at www.steubenswcd.org.

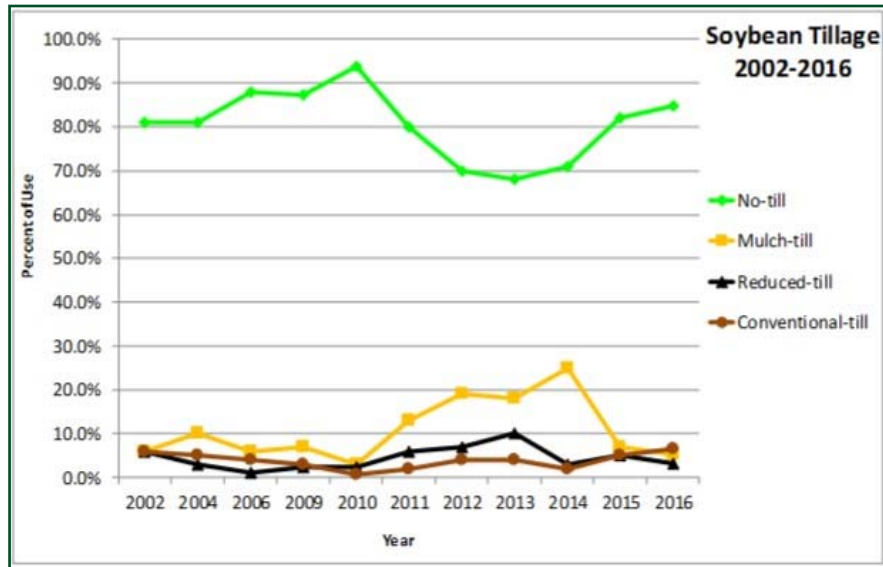


Figure 2. 2002-2016 Soybean Tillage data from the Steuben SWCD spring tillage survey (Steuben County, Indiana).

FSA Updates

- **August 7th-13th is National Farmer's Market Week.**
- **Dairy producers can now enroll for 2017 coverage in the Margin Protection Program for Dairy (MPP-Dairy).** Contact the office for further details.
- **Marketing Assistance Available for 2016 Wheat:** The 2014 Farm Bill authorized 2014-2018 crop year Marketing Assistance Loans (MALs) and Loan Deficiency Payments (LDPs). MALs and LDPs provide financing and marketing assistance for wheat, as well as other commodities such as feed grains, soybeans and other oilseeds, pulse crops, rice, peanuts, cotton, wool and honey. MALs provide producers interim financing after harvest to help them meet cash flow needs without having to sell their commodities when market prices are typically at harvest-time lows. A producer who is eligible to obtain an MAL, but agrees to forgo the loan, may obtain an LDP if such a payment is available. Daily LDP rates for all counties can be viewed at <http://www.fsa.usda.gov/programs-and-services/price-support/ldp-rates/index#>.

Please contact the office (260-665-3211, X2) for more details.

During the National Soil and Water Stewardship Week, the Steuben SWCD sponsored a poster contest for kindergarten through fifth grade students featuring the theme "We All Need Trees". Posters had to showcase the importance trees have in our everyday life.

The winner was Christina Minick's 1st grade class at Ryan Park Elementary. This unique poster was truly a class effort. Each student drew and colored their own 8 ½ x 11" page. Individual pages were then combined into one, creating a composite poster. The result: one large beautiful tree, complete with



its own trunk and crown.

Mrs. Minick and each of her students were given a small gift bag to thank the class for the great job on their poster. Congratulations!

Summer Fun at Conservation Camps



Painting bird feeders for Conservation Camp at Pokagon State Park.
(Photo courtesy of Steuben SWCD)

All three 2016 Conservation Camps were a great success this year! Camps were hosted and sponsored by the DeKalb County, LaGrange County, Steuben County, and Whitley County Soil & Water Conservation Districts. Each camp offered a different conservation message & recreational opportunity.

This year at Delt Church Park in LaGrange, campers took a nature hike and learned about different tree species. Then campers were given "Canoe 101" basic instructions and canoed on the Little Elkhart River.

At Pokagon State Park, campers participated in "Bird Olympics" and made bird houses and feeders from recycled materials to

take home. They finished the day with a refreshing swim in Lake James.

We ended the season at Camp Whitley where campers got to shoot skeet and try their hand at archery. Campers were entertained by Wildlife Educator Rick Glassman and his reptile friends, and afterwards, all campers hit the water slide into Troy-Cedar Lake.

Look for all new & exciting camps next season starting in June. Contact our office for additional information.

4th Grade Youth Conservation Field Day

On Tuesday, September 6th, we will host our annual 4th grade Youth Conservation Field Day at Pokagon State Park. The fun-filled day includes presentations on soil health, forestry, fish management, wildlife, entomology, and water quality. The Dumpster Drummers will be back to entertain the children and teach them about being good stewards.

If you are interested in assisting, please give us a call.

Affiliate

Members

The District Board gratefully acknowledges its current 2016 Affiliate Members. The donations received from these individuals and businesses 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 (\$100)

Angola Seed & Supply
Angola, IN

City of Angola /
Trine University MS4
Angola, IN

KFG Turf & Rental
Angola, IN

Sheets LP Gas
Angola, IN

The Nature Conservancy
Angola, IN

Silver (\$50)

Clear Lake Township
Land Conservancy
Fremont, IN

Edon Farmers Co-Op
Edon, OH

Farm Credit Mid-America
LaGrange, IN

Sue A. Myers
Angola, IN

Noll Bros. Oil, Inc.
Hudson, IN

Kevin Northup Excavating
LaGrange, IN

Sandhill Environmental Services, LLC
Angola, IN

Gold (\$75)

Aquatic Enhancement Survey, Inc.
Angola, IN

Tom Green Engineering
Angola, IN

Bronze (\$25)

Auntie V's
Angola, IN

Carper Farm Supply, Inc.
Ashley, IN

Daft Erosion Control, LLC
Ada, OH

Hoham Feed and Seed
Auburn, IN

Stroh Farm Supply
Stroh, IN

John G. Williamson
Angola, IN



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facebook.com/SteubenIndianaSWCD

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

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...

- | | |
|----------------------------|---|
| August 6 th | Steuben Co Lakes Council Annual Meeting
8:00 AM @ Lake James Christian Assembly
1800 W. 275 N., Lake James |
| August 10 th | Steuben SWCD Board Meeting
7:00 PM @ USDA Service Center |
| August 11 th | Soil Health Field Day at Roemke Farms
8:00 AM — 2:00 PM; Harlan, IN
Call 260-484-5848 x 3 for more info. |
| August 24 th | Getting Back to Your Roots Field Day
8:30 AM — 3:30 PM at Mike Werling's Farm
10140 N. 450 W.; Decatur, IN
Pre-register by 8/22 @ 260-724-3763 x 3 |
| September 3 rd | Steuben Co Lakes Council Meeting
8:30 AM @ the First Congressional United
Church of Christ in Angola |
| September 5 th | Labor Day — County Offices Closed |
| September 6 th | 4th Grade Youth Conservation Field Day
9:00 AM @ Pokagon State Park |
| September 14 th | Steuben SWCD Board Meeting
7:00 PM @ USDA Service Center |
| September 20 th | Lake Life Classes Begin — see article on page 4 |

For more events and updates please check the website.

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

2016 Lake Life Class

The Steuben County SWCD and The Steuben County Lakes Council (SCLC) are excited to present our 5th year of "Lake Life". Sessions are planned for six weeks and will be held every Tuesday starting September 20th through October 25th from 6:00 pm to 8:30 pm. Each week will feature a different topic and speaker (s). Preliminary 2016 schedule:

9/20/16: NE Indiana Solid Waste Management District and a 200-year look at Steuben County Lake history.

9/27/16: Trine University tour & presentation by Trine's environmental organization SPEAK.

10/4/16: Dairy operation tour & well maintenance.

10/11/16: Water quality with presentations by the SCLC and the Indiana DNR (LARE program).

10/18/16: Underground Railroad and Cemetery walk.

10/25/16: Dinner at Mad Anthony's Lakeview Ale House & craft beer brewing presentation.

Class fee is \$50 for new participants and \$30 for returning students, and includes all materials/refreshments. For more information, or to reserve your place in this class, please give our office a call:

Steuben County SWCD (260-665-3211, ext. 3)

We hope you will consider joining us this year!

