



Providing leadership and assistance  
in the proper use and management  
of soil, water, and related natural  
resources in Steuben County.

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**A telltale sign of spring.  
Welcome back.  
Good to see you!**

*Photo by Janel Meyer*

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



# The Conservator

Steuben County, Indiana Soil & Water Conservation District  
1220 N 200 W, Suite L ~ Angola, IN 46703 ~ Phone: (260) 665-3211, ext. 3

VOLUME 43, ISSUE 2

SPRING 2020

## Message from the Steuben SWCD District

As we navigate through these unprecedented times due to the effects of the coronavirus pandemic, we want to provide an update on the Steuben County Soil and Water Conservation District. We know the importance of staying connected and being able to access our day to day business remotely. While we have encountered some challenges, overall, we have been able to continue office operations and continue delivering the same level of service our customers expect.

Changes to our operations have occurred in order to ensure everyone remains safe and protected. All of our services and programs are still in effect; however, we have had to cancel or postpone several educational events this spring (e.g., Spring Garden Series, Forestry Field Day). We are moving forward planning future educational events and ask for flexibility and patience while we navigate through this dynamic issue and work to define new standards. Check our website and Facebook page for updates and changes. The Steuben SWCD remains committed to our mission—to provide leadership and assistance in the proper use and management of soil, water, and related natural resources in Steuben County.

The Angola USDA Service Center is operational; customers may contact the center to make arrangements to complete necessary business. To keep the amount of foot traffic coming into the office to a minimum, we will continue to complete necessary business by alternative means such as over the phone, electronically, or by mail. Feel free to leave staff a phone message if no one is available. Due to the nature of the work performed by District staff, occasionally there will be times when no one will be in the office. We can also be contacted by email at [steubenswcd@gmail.com](mailto:steubenswcd@gmail.com).

We all long for our lives to return to “normal”. There is much to be thankful for—we hope you have used these past couple months to reflect on the good all around us; our family, our friends, our environment. Our land, waters, trees, plants, insects, and more, play a vital role in our daily lives. We hope you have taken the time to stay connected to nature and conservation. May we all take care of each other and continue caring for this beautiful and precious world.



*Indiana State Department of Agriculture Photo*

We are all wishing our farmers a safe and prosperous planting season. As motorists, please remember to be alert, slow down and share the road. Farm equipment is wide, sometimes taking up most of the roadway. Exercise caution when passing. Let's keep everyone safe!

## 2020 Affiliate Members

**THANK  
YOU FOR  
YOUR  
SUPPORT!**



### Bronze Level

Carper Farm Supply  
Caruso's Restaurant  
Bill & Diana Clingan  
Daft Erosion Control LLC  
Hoham Feed and Seed  
Deloris Howarth  
Niann Lautzenhiser  
Erik & Laura Sorensen  
Stroh Farm Supply

### Silver Level

Booth Farms  
City of Angola MS4

Clear Lake Township Land Conservancy  
Tom & Marilyn DeWeese  
Edon Farmers Co-Op  
Steve & Pauline Elett  
Franklin Paul Group, LLC  
Kevin Northup Excavating  
Peter Mountz  
Sandhill Environmental Services LLC  
John Williamson

### Gold Level

Aquatic Enhancement & Survey, Inc.  
S & P Earthwork, Inc.

### Platinum Level

Cameron Memorial Community Hospital  
Dailey Farms  
Farm Credit Mid-America  
Lake George Conservancy, Inc.  
Sheets LP Gas, L.P.  
Steuben County Lakes Council  
Stoy Farms  
Tom Green Engineering  
The Wilson Farm in Memory of Loyal Wilson  
Travis Wilson  
Tom Wilson

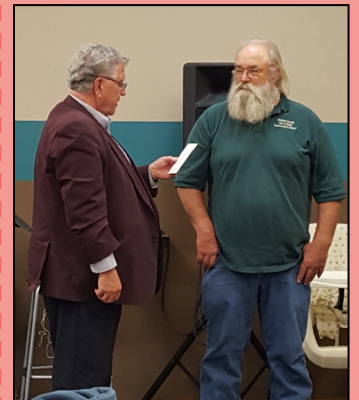
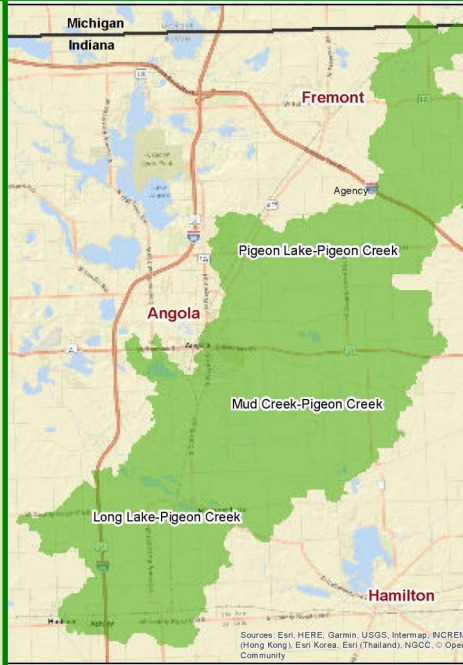
## GRANT FUNDING AVAILABLE TO HELP PROTECT PIGEON CREEK

The Steuben SWCD continues work with land-owners located in upper stretches of Pigeon Creek on implementation of conservation practices that reduce the amount of sediment & nutrients entering Pigeon. Cost-share assistance is available to assist with the installation of:

- Buffers/filter strips
- Critical area plantings
- Exclusion fencing
- Grassed waterways
- Nutrient management
- Pasture plantings
- Tree plantings

Contact the office for free conservation planning for your property & potential funding dollars. Cost-share funds available for installation of practices in the Pigeon Creek sub-watersheds of Pigeon Lake, Mud Creek, & Long Lake (area highlighted in green on map).

*Care for your land  
to protect your water quality.*



Ken Shelton, Steuben County Councilman, administers the Oath of Office to Chuck Howard at the Steuben County SWCD's March 11, 2020 Annual Meeting.

Chuck Howard was re-elected to serve a third term as a Steuben County SWCD Board Supervisor at the SWCD's March 11<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting.

Congratulations, Chuck!



## Farm Service Agency Updates *Please call the office, (260-665-3211, ext. 2) for more details.*

### 1. CRP Continuous Enrollment Period

The Farm Service Agency is accepting offers for specific conservation practices under the Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) Continuous Signup.

CRP is a voluntary program that contracts with agricultural producers so that environmentally sensitive agricultural land is devoted to conservation benefits. CRP participants establish long-term, resource-conserving vegetative species, such as approved grasses or trees (known as “covers”), to control soil erosion, improve the water quality and enhance wildlife habitat. In return, FSA provides participants with annual rental payments and cost-share assistance. Continuous signup enrollment contracts are 10 to 15 years in duration.

Under continuous CRP signup, environmentally sensitive land devoted to certain conservation practices can be enrolled in CRP at any time. Offers are automatically accepted provided the land and producer meet certain eligibility requirements and the enrollment levels do not exceed the statutory cap.

Unlike CRP enrollments under general CRP signups or CRP Grasslands, offers for continuous enrollment are not subject to competitive bidding during specific periods. For more information, including a list of acceptable practices, visit [fsa.usda.gov/crp](https://fsa.usda.gov/crp)

### 2. USDA Opens Signup for Added Causes of Loss Under WHIP+

USDA announced additional disaster assistance available to agricultural producers, including producers impacted by drought and **excess moisture**. Through WHIP+, USDA is helping producers recover from losses related to 2018 and 2019 natural disasters.

USDA’s Farm Service Agency (FSA) opened signup on March 23 for producers to apply for eligible losses of drought (D3 or above) and excess moisture.

In June 2019, more than \$3 billion was made available through a disaster relief package passed by Congress and signed by President Trump. In December 2019, Congress passed, and President Trump signed the Further Consolidated Appropriations Act of 2020 that provides an additional \$1.5 billion for the continuation of disaster assistance program delivery.

#### WHIP+ New Qualifying Disaster Events

Producers who suffered these types of loss in 2018 and/or 2019 can apply for WHIP+ assistance at their local FSA office.

### 3. Agriculture Risk Coverage and Price Loss Coverage Enrollment for 2020

The deadline to enroll in the Agriculture Risk Loss

(ARC) and Price Loss Coverage (PLC) programs for the 2020 crop year is **June 30, 2020**.

FSA offices have multiple programs competing for the time and attention of our staff. Because of the importance and complexities of the ARC and PLC programs; and to ensure FSA meets your program delivery expectations, please do not wait to start the enrollment process. Contact your FSA county office and make an appointment soon to ensure your contracts are signed well ahead of the deadline.

ARC and PLC provide financial protections to farmers from substantial drops in crop prices or revenues and are vital economic safety nets for most American farms. Farm owners have a one-time opportunity to update PLC payment yields that take effect beginning with crop year 2020. If the owner accompanies the producer to the office, the yield update and enrollments may be completed during the same office visit.

#### More Information

For more information on ARC and PLC, download our [program fact sheet](#) or our [2014-2018 farm bills comparison fact sheet](#). Online ARC and PLC election decision tools are available at [fsa.usda.gov/arc/plc](https://fsa.usda.gov/arc/plc). To enroll, contact your [FSA county office](#) for an appointment.

### 4. Certification Deadlines

Certification for Corn, Soybeans, CRP, and perennial forage is **July 15<sup>th</sup>**. Please try to make an appointment as soon as possible after you have planted your crops in order to get them certified. We have many programs with deadlines around the same time period, so the earlier you can do this, the better. If you would like maps, contact the office, and we will get these printed off, so you can fill them out at home with your crop and planting dates. Not procrastinating will also cut down on errors made, because it will give all parties a chance to review the information.

### 5. Farm Reconstitutions

When changes in farm ownership or operation take place, a farm *reconstitution* is necessary. The reconstitution, — or recon — is the process of combining or dividing farms or tracts of land based on the farming operation.

To be effective for the current Fiscal Year (FY), farm combinations and farm divisions must be requested by **August 1 of the FY** for farms subject to the Agriculture Risk Coverage (ARC) and Price Loss Coverage (PLC) program.

Please let us know if any of your farms that you rent have changed ownership, or have sold off part of the acreage as soon as possible.





## Steuben County Soil & Water Conservation District

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Angola, IN 46703

260-665-3211, ext. 3

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



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

**Providing Leadership and Assistance in the Proper Use and Management  
of Soil, Water, and Related Natural Resources in Steuben County.**

Please 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 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

May 25 <sup>th</sup>	County Offices Closed Memorial Day Holiday
June 2 <sup>nd</sup>	County Offices Closed Election Day Holiday
June 6 - 7 <sup>th</sup>	Free Fishing Days for Indiana Residents
June 10 <sup>th</sup>	Steuben SWCD Board Meeting 5:00 PM @ USDA Service Center
June 22 - 28 <sup>th</sup>	2020 National Pollinator Week <a href="http://www.pollinator.org">http://www.pollinator.org</a>
July 3 <sup>rd</sup>	County Offices Closed Independence Day Holiday
July 8 <sup>th</sup>	Steuben SWCD Board Meeting 5:00 PM @ USDA Service Center
July 9 <sup>th</sup> (Tentative)	Conservation Camp—Steuben County 9-2:30 PM @ Pokagon State Park
July 17 - 24 <sup>th</sup> (Tentative)	Steuben County 4-H Fair Crooked Lake, Angola, IN
August 4 <sup>th</sup> (Tentative)	Conservation Camp—Whitley County 9:00-2:30 PM @ Columbia City, IN

*\*\*For more events and updates please check our website\*\*  
Times and places of meetings subject to change.*

## SWCD - NRCS - ISDA CONSERVATION PARTNERSHIP DIRECTORY

### Board of Supervisors:

Craig Holman, Chairman    Chuck Howard, Vice Chairman  
Gene Diehl    Kayleen Hart    David Perkins

### Associate Supervisors:

Timothy Groosbeck    Daniel Oberst

### SWCD Staff:

Janel Meyer    Tara Lee  
Administrative Coordinator    Resource Conservationist

### NRCS Staff:

Arthur Franke, District Conservationist

### Indiana State Department of Agriculture Staff:

Kate Sanders, Resource Specialist