



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

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### Steuben County Soil & Water Conservation District 2021 CONSERVATION CAMP

#### Birds of Pokagon

Tuesday July 13, 2021

9:00 a.m. to 2:30 p.m.

Pokagon State Park Nature Center

450 Lane 100 Lakes James, Angola, IN 46703

Ages 8 - 14\*

Cost: \$10.00 - includes lunch and bird house craft



\*Due to COVID-19 restrictions Camp is limited to 15 campers.  
To register, please call the Steuben County  
Soil & Water Conservation District  
(260) 665-3211 ext. 3  
800 P.O. Box 201, 2021

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 44, ISSUE 2

SPRING 2021

## Staff & Board Supervisor Updates at the Steuben SWCD

What a year 2021 has been so far! There have been a few changes to staff and the SWCD Board we would like to share.

In February, Aimee Wentworth joined the District as the new Resource Conservationist. She previously worked in the private sector and for the Indiana Department of Natural Resources at Pokagon State Park (2014—2020). At Pokagon, Aimee worked in various capacities, including Office Attendant, Accounts Clerk, and Trine State Recreation Area Foreman. In 1999, she received her Bachelor of Science degree in Environmental Science from what is now Salem International University in West Virginia. Eventually, after starting a family and settling in DeKalb County, Aimee received her Master of Science degree in Organizational Leadership from Trine University in 2016. She and her husband transplanted to Steuben County soon thereafter. The Wentworth family enjoys exploring Indiana's beautiful State Parks and camping.

In March, Beth Williams joined the District as a Board Supervisor. Beth was chosen to fulfill Gene Diehl's vacant appointed term (Gene's untimely death on January 31, 2021 resulted in this vacancy). Per State Law, the SWCD is governed by a board of five local supervisors who are Steuben County residents familiar with the conservation needs and opportunities in the county; three are elected by the landowners and land users in the county and two are appointed positions.

Beth is the Administrative Assistant for Blue Heron Ministries and a former Steuben County SWCD Resource Conservationist. Professionally, with Blue Heron Ministries, she is working on woodland improvements and invasive species removal, as well as prairie land restoration.

We would like to congratulate Craig Holman on his re-election to the SWCD Board. At our March 10th annual meeting, we held our 2021 Board of Supervisors' election virtually in compliance with Indiana Open Door Law. Nominations from the floor were taken, and virtual plus hard copy ballots were accepted and tallied by the elections committee. The District had one open elected board position. The elections committee nominated two county residents; no nominations were received from the floor. It was a close race, but incumbent Craig Holman was re-elected to serve a fourth term on the Steuben County SWCD Board.

## SUMMER FUN! July 13, 2021 Steuben SWCD Conservation Camp

Register by June 22nd  
(260) 665-3211, ext. 3

Where: Pokagon State Park (9 - 2:30 p.m.)  
Cost: \$10 (includes lunch & bird house craft)  
Ages: 8 - 14 (limited to 15 campers)

## 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 (FSA) is accepting offers for specific conservation practices under the Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) Continuous Signup. You can apply for this program until August 6, 2021.

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. Certification Deadlines

Certification for corn, soybeans, CRP, and perennial forage is **JULY 15th**. **Please try to make an appointment as soon as possible after you have planted your crops in order to get them certified.** 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.

### 3. 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 or 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.

### 4. 2020 Agricultural Risk Coverage Individual Elections (ARC-IC)

If you enrolled for individual coverage in 2020, please turn in your 2020 yields for each crop you planted to the FSA office before July 15th. A yield certification form will also need signed. Contact our office as soon as possible with this information so you don't miss out on any payment for 2020 (these will be issued in October).

### 5. Coronavirus Food Assistance Program 3 (CFAP3)

“Top-up” payments of \$20/acre were recently issued to producers who had participated in the CFAP2 program last year. The signup period for CFAP2 was also reopened for anyone who did not sign up originally. Please contact our office if you know someone who did not originally sign up. The original application period for CFAP2 ended Dec. 11, 2020. USDA reopened CFAP2 signup beginning **April 5, 2021, for at least 60 days**. A signup deadline will be announced at a later date. For more information, please contact our office, or visit [farmers.gov/cfap](https://farmers.gov/cfap) for details on all eligible commodities, producer eligibility, payment limitations and structure and additional program resources.

## 2021 Affiliate Members



#### Bronze Level

Carper Farm Supply  
Caruso's Restaurant  
Mike & Sue Claphan  
Bill & Diana Clingan  
Daft Erosion Control LLC  
Hoham Feed and Seed  
Niann Lautzenhiser  
Peter Mountz  
Sue Myers  
Stroh Farm Supply

#### Silver Level

Booth Farms—William Booth  
City of Angola MS4  
Clear Lake Township Land Conservancy  
Edon Farmers Co-Op  
Deloris Howarth  
Kevin Northup Excavating  
Sandhill Environmental Services LLC  
John Williamson

#### Gold Level

Aquatic Enhancement & Survey, Inc.  
S & P Earthwork

#### Platinum Level

Dailey Farms  
Tom Green Engineering  
Lake George Conservancy, Inc.  
Steuben County Lakes Council  
Pete Thompson  
The Wilson Farm in Memory of  
Loyal Wilson  
Travis Wilson  
Tom Wilson

## Environmental & Economic Effects of Home Water Softening

**Article contributed by a team of Purdue University Engineering Students who are assisting the City of Angola with a project to reduce salt in the City's wastewater.**

Although the City of Angola has unusually hard water resources, the City of Angola Drinking Water Plant softens water before it distributes the resource to its residents. Many Angola residents also own a water softener, which also works to soften water through the use of salt. This "extra" softening may not be needed and is actually causing a problem for the Wastewater Treatment Plant, and the water that is discharged into local waterbodies. Unfortunately, traditional wastewater treatment processes cannot remove salt from water. So, this salt makes it into waterways causing an overall negative environmental impact and issues for our local fish species. Elevated salt levels can impact fish survival, fish reproduction, growth rates, etc. Our purpose with this article is to educate water softener users that not only could they help the environment, but also save money by not paying for an unnecessary service.

In a recent Angola water utility customer survey we conducted, we found that 64% of users knew the Angola Drinking Water Plant softens water before distribution to residents. Our team also found that only 49% of users knew of the possible harmful side effects of operating an at-home water softener.

Even if you do not receive city water and view your water softener as an essential appliance, there are still things you can do to mitigate the number of salts that enter the environment.

- Over softening can be wasteful and results in excess salts being released to the environment. **Make sure your unit is optimized. If you are an Angola Utility customer**, the city provides free in-home water sampling to help optimize your softener. **Contact the City Utilities office to schedule a visit at (260) 665-3422.**
- You can also check your unit's settings and adjust them if they're too high. If your water softener is equipped with a timer, you can extend the time between regeneration cycles. This is pertinent especially if you had changes in your household size or added more efficient appliances and fixtures.
- Reducing your overall water use can also help. It will have environmental and economic benefits, including less need for water softening.

Overall, water softeners can cause negative impacts to the environment. If you still think your softener is an essential appliance, there are things you can do to mitigate the level of salts that enter the ecosystem. We hope you found this information helpful and informative.

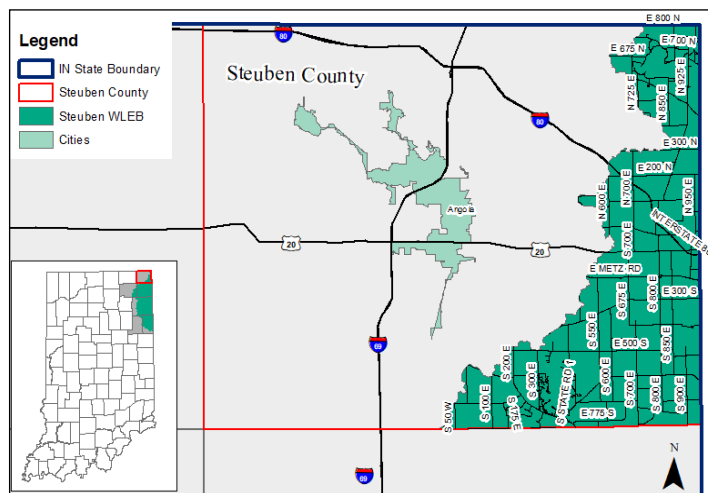
## Free Water Test Kits for Agricultural Fields located within the Western Lake Erie Basin

The Indiana State Department of Agriculture (ISDA) is offering free water testing kits to Steuben County producers located in the Western Lake Erie Basin (WLEB) for use on their own operations.

Producers can:

- ◇ Learn what nutrients are leaving the field
- ◇ Potentially improve farm economics
- ◇ Test nitrates, nitrites, and phosphates
- ◇ Test results are for private use, and will NOT be collected.

Contact the Steuben County SWCD Office for a free kit.  
(260) 665-3211 x 3



Project funded by the Great Lakes Restoration Initiative.





## Steuben County Soil & Water Conservation District

Peachtree Plaza 200  
1220 N 200 W, STE L

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 31 <sup>st</sup>	County Offices Closed Memorial Day Holiday
June 5 - 6 <sup>th</sup>	Free Fishing Days for Indiana Residents
June 9 <sup>th</sup>	Steuben SWCD Board Meeting 5:00 PM (Steuben Co. Community Center)
June 21 - 27 <sup>th</sup>	2021 National Pollinator Week <a href="http://www.pollinator.org">http://www.pollinator.org</a>
July 5 <sup>th</sup>	County Offices Closed Independence Day Holiday
July 13 <sup>th</sup>	Conservation Camp—Steuben County 9-2:30 PM @ Pokagon State Park
July 14 <sup>th</sup>	Steuben SWCD Board Meeting 5:00 PM (Location TBD)
July 16 - 22 <sup>nd</sup>	Steuben County 4-H Fair Crooked Lake, Angola, IN
August 11 <sup>th</sup>	Steuben SWCD Board Meeting 5:00 PM (Location TBD)

*\*\*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:

Kayleen Hart, Chair      Chuck Howard, Vice Chair  
Craig Holman      David Perkins      Beth Williams

### Associate Supervisors:

Timothy Groosbeck      Daniel Oberst

### SWCD Staff:

Janel Meyer      Aimee Wentworth  
Administrative Coordinator      Resource Conservationist

### NRCS Staff:

Arthur Franke, District Conservationist

### Indiana State Department of Agriculture Staff:

Kate Sanders, Resource Specialist