

The Conservator

Steuben County, Indiana Soil & Water Conservation District

1220 N 200 W, Suite L ~ Angola, IN 46703 ~ Phone: (260) 665-3211, ext. 3

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

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Indiana Invaders

After a long winter, everyone gets excited to see the world start to turn green again. We think of it as the first welcome of spring. What we do not often think about though is, in Indiana, many of the plants that are green earliest in the year are not native. In fact, many are invasive species. Before plant species from different parts of the world were brought to Indiana, springtime in Indiana was not green. It was tawny – a light, warm brown color. If you have areas of native warm season prairie grasses around you, this is a familiar color.



Norway maple is an invasive species. It is a non-native popular landscape plant that can spread into native woodlands. It invades woodlands by outcompeting sugar maple due to its shade tolerance. Wildflower diversity is also reduced because it forms a dense canopy.

Photo courtesy of William Ward, DeKalb County SWCD

An invasive species is a plant that has come from a different ecosystem and finds an advantage in the new environment where it has been introduced. In this new environment, without the predators and/or physical limitations (sunlight, water, nutrients, etc.) of its usual ecosystem, the plant can grow and reproduce without the checks and balances that are part of the plant's original plant community. Invasive plants displace native plants and disrupt native plant communities. Let's consider the long-term results of invasive species taking over our landscape.

Invasive species can completely change an ecosystem. For example, if an invasive plant such as Autumn olive is introduced into a native prairie, it outcompetes all of the native prairie plants, and the entire area transitions to a monoculture of Autumn olive. Not only are the native plants lost, but so are all of the native insects that feed on the native plants, the native birds that feed on the native insects that feed on the native plants, and so on, all the way up the food chain. Invasive species cause a dramatic decrease in biodiversity on all levels.

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Indiana Shows Strong Conservation & Water Quality Improvement Trends



2021 Indiana
Conservation
Partnership
Accomplishments

Learn More

The Indiana Conservation Partnership (ICP) recently announced its 2021 soil health and water quality accomplishments. The ICP works with Hoosier landowners to provide technical and/or financial assistance for the implementation of conservation projects.

In 2021, landowners supported by the ICP installed more than 31,500 new conservation practices. The ICP report shows that over the last year landowners helped prevent nearly 1 million tons of sediment, over

1.9 million pounds of nitrogen and nearly 1 million pounds of phosphorus from entering Indiana waterways! To see the report, visit www.isda.in.gov and click on "Learn More" under the 2021 Indiana Conservation Partnership Accomplishments box.

2022 Conservation Camp Steuben County Soil & Water Conservation District

Terrific Trees

Tuesday July 12, 2022
9:00 a.m.—2:30 p.m.
Pokagon State Park Nature Center

Ages 8—14
Cost: \$10—includes lunch and craft

To register, please call the
Steuben County Soil & Water
Conservation District
(260) 665-3211 ext. 3

Register by June 27, 2022

The Steuben County SWCD will be offering a \$5 scholarship for Steuben County 8 - 14 year old youth that would like to attend the July 12th or any of the NE Indiana Conservation Camps. Total cost for each Steuben County youth will only be \$5.00/camp. The other camps will be offered on June 23rd in LaGrange County & August 3rd at Camp Whitley in Whitley County.

Contact the office for additional details and to register.

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

Bridget Harrison

Daniel Oberst

SWCD Staff:

Janel Meyer, *Administrative Coordinator*

Aimee Wentworth, *Resource Conservationist*

NRCS Staff:

Arthur Franke, *District Conservationist*

Indiana State Department of Agriculture Staff:

Kate Sanders, *Resource Specialist*

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www.steubenswcd.org

www.facebook.com/SteubenIndianaSWCD

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



Indiana Invaders *(continued from page 1)*

As humans, with giant grocery stores and planes to fly fruits and vegetables across the world in every season, we do not often think about how much different foods can have an affect on us. Have you ever traveled to a different place, only to discover that the local cuisine did not sit well with you, and ended up feeling ill the entire trip? The same thing happens to native insects and animals when an area is taken over by invasive plants—the insects and animals either have to leave the area and find native plants for food, or they have to make do with a meal that is very hard or even impossible for them to digest. Animals that do not get the calories and nutrition they need are less able to reproduce. They raise fewer young, or sometimes none at all. This can have long-term consequences on the native wildlife.

According to the US EPA, nationally, invasive species (this includes plants, insects, and animals) result in an estimated \$138 billion a year in damages to agricultural lands, rangeland, forests, people's homes and yards, food supplies, fishing, boating, outdoor recreation, and many other areas. They also estimate that invasive species impact 42% of the currently endangered species, and are responsible for 70% of extinctions of native aquatic species in just this century. Invasive species do not just impact one group of people or one type of land use, we all are affected.

In agricultural fields, invasive species such as Palmer amaranth can compete with a cash crop, and impact yield. In forests, invasive species like honeysuckle or Autumn olive

can outcompete the walnuts and acorns that are lying in wait for an opening in the canopy for enough sunlight to germinate. These native saplings, which would eventually grow to harvestable size and provide profit to the landowner, are shaded out by invasives and killed.

It does not all have to be all bad news though. Each time an invasive is removed, it makes space for a native plant to return, and decreases the amount of seed that invasive plant would have produced. Each invasive plant, shrub, or tree produces thousands, in some cases tens of thousands, of seeds each year. These seeds can stay in the soil for decades, so every single plant removed helps. In April 2019, in Indiana, the Terrestrial Plan Rule (312 IAC 18-3-25) went into effect. This rule lists 44 species of invasive plants that are illegal to sell, gift, barter, exchange, distribute, transport, or introduce the plants in the State of Indiana. For more information on this rule visit <https://www.in.gov/dnr/rules-and-regulations/invasive-species/terrestrial-invasive-species-plants/>.

If you see an invasive species on public land, report it to <https://www.eddmaps.org/indiana/>. Indiana DNR is actively trying to keep tabs on invasives so that they can be removed. If you have questions about invasive species on your private land, contact the Steuben Soil and Water Conservation District office. We can come out to help you identify potential problems, and talk about the most effective ways to remove unwanted plants. If we all pitch in and work to remove invasives, we can make strides in protecting Indiana's rich landscape.

Sources:

<https://www.epa.gov/watershedacademy/invasive-non-native-species>

<https://www.in.gov/dnr/rules-and-regulations/invasive-species/terrestrial-invasive-species-plants/>

Steuben County SWCD Self-Guided Conservation Tour COMING SOON!



The Steuben County SWCD, in cooperation with several very gracious Steuben County landowners, has established a Self-Guided Conservation Practice Tour that travels throughout the county. There will be 10 stops on the tour, from pollinator plantings to tree plantings, no-till farming systems, and a constructed wetland. Individuals will be able to pick up a tour map at the office or download from our website. Whether you want to learn more about conservation practices or just want to see places in the county you haven't explored yet, this tour is for you! Those who complete the tour and take photos of the signs at each site will receive a Steuben County SWCD baseball cap (*while supplies last*) upon showing the photos to District office staff during business hours. They will also be entered into a drawing for a gift card, which will be awarded when the tour closes. Additional details COMING SOON!!



Steuben County Soil & Water Conservation District

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www.steubenswcd.org



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 30 th	County Offices Closed Memorial Day Holiday
June 4 - 5 th	Free Fishing Days for Indiana Residents
June 8 th	Steuben SWCD Board Meeting 5:00 PM (Community Center)
June 20 - 26 th	2022 National Pollinator Week http://www.pollinator.org
June 23 rd	Conservation Camp—LaGrange County 9 - 2:30 PM (ParGil Center)
July 4 th	County Offices Closed Independence Day Holiday
July 12 th	Conservation Camp—Steuben County 9 - 2:30 PM (Pokagon State Park)
July 13 th	Steuben SWCD Board Meeting 5:00 PM (Community Center)
July 15 - 21 st	Steuben County 4-H Fair Crooked Lake, Angola, IN
July 27 th	Agronomy Field Day The Andersons, Waterloo, IN

****For more events and updates please check our website****

Times and places of meetings subject to change

2022 Affiliate Members

Bronze Level

Bill & Diana Clingan (Hudson)
Crowe Forest Management LLC
Daft Erosion Control LLC
Hoham Feed & Seed
Deloris Howarth (Fremont)
Lake of the Woods/McClish
Lake Association
Niann Lautzenhiser (Hamilton)
Peter Mountz (Garrett)
Stroh Farm Supply

Silver Level

Booth Farms—William Booth
Carper Farm Supply
City of Angola/Trine U. MS4
Clear Lake Township Land
Conservancy
Franklin Paul Group, LLC
Beverly Holse (Ashley)
Kenn-Feld Group
Kevin Northup Excavating
Ken Shelton (Angola)
John Williamson, Jr. (Angola)

Gold Level

Aquatic Enhancement &
Survey, Inc.
Holman Excavating
Raymond Lauer (Fremont)
S & P Earthwork

Platinum Level

Angola American Legion
Post #31
Cameron Memorial Hospital
Dailey Farms
Edon Farmers Co-Op
Farm Credit Mid-America
Mary Jo Fitzenrider (Fremont)
Tom Green Engineering
Chuck & Nila Howard (Hamilton)
Lake George Conservancy, Inc.
Lake James Lake Association
Stoy Farms
Lynn Wernet (Angola)

Platinum Plus Level

The Wilson Farm