

The Conservator

FALL 2023
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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.



Steuben SWCD's 2023 Education Journey

This year has kept the Steuben County SWCD and partners busy with many education events teaching students and adults about water quality and soil health — and how their actions can improve local water resources. Some of this year's highlights are presented below.

The Steuben County SWCD began our 2023 education journey with an urban soil health workshop in January. Participants learned how cover crops help improve soil health and reduce wind and water erosion.

RIGHT

January 28, 2023
Cover Crops and Soil Health Workshop.

Photo courtesy of Steuben County SWCD



In April and May, Resource Conservationist Aimee Wentworth participated in a co-curricular program she called "Earth Friends" at Angola Middle School on Monday afternoons for 7 weeks with a group of 8 students. Topics

discussed included aquatic macro-invertebrates, pollinators, soil, water availability, and the water cycle.



ABOVE: Water cycle in a bag demonstration. This simple science experiment is a fun and easy way to teach students about the water cycle and how it works.

Photo courtesy of Steuben County SWCD

Also in April, Aimee presented to a group at the Charity: water Chari-Tea event in Fremont, where she talked about limited freshwater availability and how to protect and preserve our precious water resources. In addition, the 2023 Indiana Master Naturalist (IMN) workshop began in April, with sessions running through early June.

Aimee and Administrative Coordinator Janel Meyer traveled to the YMCA of Steuben County's Summer Day Camp in June to present to their campers about pollination and pollinators. They had a great time sharing the

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2023 Steuben County Contractor Breakfast

2023 CONTRACTOR BREAKFAST

FRIDAY, DECEMBER 1

9:00 AM - NOON

TRINE UNIVERSITY'S CLUB Z
1215 THUNDER DRIVE, ANGOLA, IN

SPEAKERS INCLUDE REPRESENTATIVES FROM:

- WESSLER ENGINEERING INC.
- LAGRANGE COUNTY SURVEYOR'S OFFICE
- INSTATURF®

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT CERTIFICATES WILL BE AVAILABLE UPON REQUEST

ALTERNATE DATE IN CASE OF INCLEMENT WEATHER IS DECEMBER 8

Registration required by November 17 for this free event.

Online: <https://steubenswcd.org/event/contractor-breakfast/>

Call: (260) 665-3211 ext. 3

Email: steubenswcd@gmail.com

THANK YOU TO DUNHAM'S SPORTS AND TRINE UNIVERSITY FOR
SPONSORING THIS YEAR'S SPECIAL DONATIONS

Presented by the City of Angola/Trine University MS4
and Steuben County Soil and Water Conservation District



The Steuben County SWCD and the City of Angola/Trine University MS4 are inviting all local contracting professionals to attend the free 2023 Steuben County Contractor Breakfast on Friday, December 1st.

The 2023 Contractor Breakfast will feature three speakers. Michaela Taul, Environmental Scientist with Wessler Engineering, Inc, is going to talk about the City of Angola's updated Stormwater Management Ordinance and Technical Standards to meet the new MS4/CSGP requirements, and LaGrange County Surveyor Zachary Holsinger will detail sediment issues his office encounters due to excessive stormwater erosion runoff from disturbed sites. Finally, InstaTurf® representative Tim Lancaster will have samples of his product and will discuss its uses and benefits. Professional Development Certificates will be available for those who request them.

Event organizers would like to express their gratitude to those who have donated items for door prizes, including Angola Dairy Queen, Dunham's Sports, and Trine University, among others.

Registration is required by November 17.

December 8 is the alternate date in case of inclement weather. If travel difficulties due to weather conditions exist on December 1, please tune in to WLKI at 100.3 or visit www.WLKI.com for postponement information.

SWCD - NRCS - ISDA CONSERVATION PARTNERSHIP DIRECTORY

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SWCD Staff:

Janel Meyer, *Administrative Coordinator*

Aimee Wentworth, *Resource Conservationist*

NRCS Staff:

Arthur Franke, *District Conservationist*

Jamie Perry, *Natural Resource Specialist*

Indiana State Department of Agriculture Staff:

Kate Sanders, *Resource Specialist*

steubenswcd@gmail.com

www.steubenswcd.org

Steuben County Soil and Water Conservation District

Learn why the Steuben County SWCD was formed
and how we accomplish our mission at:

https://youtu.be/w8KU_nslcY



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

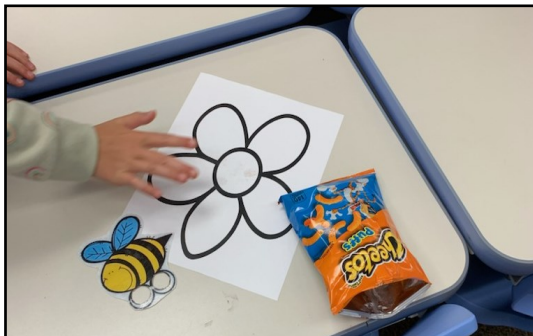
Steuben SWCD's 2023 Education Journey *(continued from page 1)*

Cheetos® Bee activity with the students; there were over 70 campers present between all their classes!

RIGHT

Pollination is a sticky situation! In this lesson, students learn how pollination works by using Cheetos® to simulate pollen.

Photo courtesy of Steuben County SWCD



During June and July, Aimee, Janel, and Natural Resources Conservation Service District Conservationist Arthur Franke visited camp for Scouts BSA, a program of the Boy Scouts of America. There, they assisted 12 Scouts in meeting some of the requirements for the Soil and Water Conservation Merit Badge. They discussed soil health and did the slake test demonstration, engaged the scouts with the Enviroscope® watershed model, and talked about watersheds using the Augmented Reality Sandbox (ARS) Unit.



ABOVE

July 12, 2023 Steuben County Conservation Campers pass water down relay lines with a spoon to demonstrate that water gets diverted along the water cycle.

Photo courtesy of Steuben County SWCD

July 12 was the Steuben County SWCD's Conservation Day Camp, held annually at Pokagon State Park. This year's theme was "Our Wonderful Water." The Pokagon naturalists led the campers in a program about aquatic animals and a nature hike, then the campers painted suncatchers and participated in The Incredible Journey, an activity from Project

WET curricula that helps students understand the water cycle. Dani Tippman of the Miami Tribe of Oklahoma visited the campers in the afternoon and talked to them about the Indigenous Peoples' connections with water, which had the kids enthralled. She even brought an example of a cattail mat for them to pass around. The day ended with a spoonful

of water relay race and the traditional Oh! Deer activity.

Also in July, Aimee took the ARS Unit to the 4-H Fairs in Huntington County and Steuben County. In Huntington County, over 100 kids and parents alike enjoyed learning about watersheds and the flow of surface water. About 40 youngsters interacted with the ARS unit in Steuben County during Family Fun Day in the Lion's Building.

A Water Quality Field Day was held in August in conjunction with the Alliance of Indiana Rural Water program, where attendees learned about programs and conservation practices available to assist landowners with soil and water conservation.



ABOVE

Angola Middle School 8th grade students collect chemical and habitat parameters on the John Leach ditch in Commons Park.

Photo courtesy of Steuben County SWCD

The annual Steuben County 4th Grade Youth Conservation Field Day was held at The Potawatomi Inn in September, with over 250 students participating. The SWCD also held a water quality field day for 8th grade students from Angola Middle School in September as well, walking them through an introduction into

Hoosier Riverwatch water quality testing protocols.

In October, Aimee was invited to lead a nature-themed program at Lima-Brighton Preschool in Howe. She led the class of 18 students in a lesson about fall and the changing colors of the leaves.

As you can see, it has been a busy time for Steuben County SWCD staff — and these are just some of this year's activities. We thank all of the businesses, schools, and organizations listed above for letting the Steuben County Soil and Water Conservation District be a part of your programs.

If you would like SWCD staff to present to your class or group, please call the office at (260) 665-3211 ext. 3.

Mark your calendars now! Planning for the 2024 Indiana Master Naturalist workshop is underway. Keep watching for more information to come out soon!



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



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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, sex, gender identity (including gender expression), sexual orientation, marital status, familial status, parental status, religion, genetic information, political beliefs, reprisal, or because all or part of an individual's income is derived from any public assistance program.

Upcoming Events

November 23 - 24 th	County Offices Closed Thanksgiving Holiday
December 1 st	Steuben County Contractor Breakfast 9:00 - 12:00 PM (Club Z at Trine University, Angola, IN)
December 8 th	Steuben County Contractor Breakfast Snow Date
December 13 th	Steuben County SWCD Board Meeting 5:00 PM (Angola USDA Service Center)
December 25 - 26 th	County Offices Closed Christmas Holiday
January 1 st	County Offices Closed New Year's Day Holiday
January 10 th	Steuben County SWCD Board Meeting 5:00 PM (Angola USDA Service Center)
January 15 th	County Offices Closed Martin Luther King Jr. Day Holiday

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

2023 Affiliate Members

101 Sheds • Angola American Legion Post #31 • Angola Seed & Supply, LLC • Aquatic Enhancement & Survey, Inc. • Booth Farms • Carper Farm Supply • City of Angola/Trine U. MS4 • Clear Lake Township Land Conservancy • Bill & Diana Clingan • Crowe Forest Management, LLC • Dailey Farms • Edon Farmers Co-Op Association • Farm Credit Mid-America • Tom Green Engineering • Tom & Alice Filbrun • Hoham Feed & Seed • Holman Excavating • James Holse • Chuck & Nila Howard • Deloris Howarth • Lake George Conservancy, Inc. • Raymond Lauer • Niann Lautzenhiser • Peter Mountz • Kevin Northup Excavating • Robert L. Parker • Jim & Jean Parsell • Dewey & Marcia Powers • S & P Earthwork, INC • Sandhill Environmental Services, LLC • Karen Spake • Steuben County Lakes Council • Steve Schroeder • Stoy Farms • Stroh Farm Supply • Lynn Wernet • John Williamson, Jr. • Bob & Connie Wilson • The Wilson Farm • Fred Wooley

Fawn River & Pigeon Creek Watershed Land Treatment Project Grants



The Steuben SWCD's Fawn River & Pigeon Creek Watershed Land Treatment Project Grants still have funding available to provide cost-share and incentive payments to land users for the construction of a variety of conservation practices to help reduce the amount of sediment & nutrients entering area waterbodies. Call our office at 260/665-3211, ext. 3 to begin planning next year's projects.