

# The Conservator

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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.*



## Managing Residential Stormwater in a Changing Climate

Have you noticed weather patterns such as precipitation and temperatures changing, along with extreme weather events becoming more common? According to “*Indiana’s Past and Future Climate: A Report from the Indiana Climate Change Impacts Assessment*,” temperatures are rising, more precipitation is falling and coming in heavier down-pours, and the last spring frost of the year has been getting steadily earlier. The assessment predicts wetter winters and springs by mid-century, while forecasted changes for summer and fall precipitation are less certain.

Why does this matter? It matters because of the increased risk of flooding and risk of increased amounts of fertilizer and sediment washing into nearby water bodies from both residential and agricultural areas, which negatively impacts water quality.

As a homeowner, what can you do to reduce the potential of flooding? Reduce stormwater from running onto your neighbor’s property? Reduce the potential of fertilizer running into waterbodies? Answer: **SOAK UP THAT RAIN!!** Install a conservation practice to soak up the rain and reduce runoff.

When natural areas are converted to make room for development or smaller lake houses are replaced

with larger houses, we are introducing impervious surfaces (e.g., rooftops, roads, parking lots, and driveways) or surfaces where water can’t infiltrate which changes the way water flows over and through the land. That’s right, you have stormwater running off your yard! Hard surfaces create stormwater runoff. Small changes in the way properties are managed can have a big impact and help protect the waterbodies we play in and depend upon.



**LEFT**

Stormwater Runoff

*Photo courtesy of NCDENR*

Take steps to protect your home and community now – using simple residential practices such as: (1) redirecting down spouts, (2) installing pervious pavers or gravel, (3) installing rain barrels, (4) increasing the number of urban trees and shrubs, and (5) growing native plants to reduce the amount of water running off your property.

(continued on page 3)

### ALSO IN THIS ISSUE

Thanks for the Ride!.....2

SWCD-NRCS-ISDA Conservation Partnership Directory.....2

Managing Residential Stormwater in a Changing Climate (continued from page 1).....3

July 16, 2024 Steuben SWCD Conservation Camp.....3

Indiana Conservation Groups Have Record Year for Conservation Practices, Again.....3

Upcoming Events.....4

2024 Affiliate Members.....4

## Thanks for the Ride

By Aimee M. Wentworth

For those of you who might not know, my last day as the Resource Conservationist at the Steuben County Soil and Water Conservation District (SWCD) was May 8<sup>th</sup>. It has been an incredible journey, but I have accepted the Interpretive Naturalist position at Pokagon State Park.



**ABOVE:** Former Steuben County SWCD Resource Conservationist Aimee Wentworth prepares for an upcoming youth conservation education event.

*Photo courtesy of Steuben County SWCD*

While here at the SWCD, I have completed many projects and been a part of a lot of educational programs. In my first few months, I created nine lesson kits that have materials for a lesson and demonstration/activity in each one that are available for groups to check out for free or to have presented by an SWCD employee (<https://steubenswcd.org/lesson-kits/>). I also produced several educational videos, such as *Stormwater* and *Invasive Species* (<https://sites.google.com/view/steubenenvironmentalscience/>). Completing the setup of the Steuben County Soil Science GeoTrail with Purdue Extension – Steuben County was something else I accomplished. It is my sincere hope that my successor will continue the *Conservation Farming Legacies* video series that I began last year (<https://steubenswcd.org/conservation-farming-legacies-video-series/>).

I have enjoyed working with all of you and with all of our partners at the SWCD, such as Purdue Extension of Steuben County, Clear Lake Township Land Conservancy, Blue Heron Ministries, Angola Middle School, YMCA Summer Day Camp, and the members of the Indiana Conservation Partnership (ICP) (<https://icp.iaswcd.org/>). I would like to express my appreciation to the Steuben County SWCD Board of Supervisors for their support over the past three years. And thank you to Arthur Franke (NRCS District Conservationist), Jamie Perry (NRCS Natural Resource Specialist), Kate Sanders (ISDA Resource Specialist), and especially to Janel Meyer, SWCD Administrative Coordinator, for welcoming me into the world of conservation. I will miss you all!

Thanks for the ride.

## SWCD - NRCS - ISDA CONSERVATION PARTNERSHIP DIRECTORY

### Board of Supervisors:

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

### Associate Supervisors:

Timothy Groosbeck  
 Brad Hamlin  
 Daniel Oberst  
 Ryan Waite

### SWCD Staff:

Janel Meyer, *Administrative Coordinator*  
 Vacant, *Resource Conservationist*

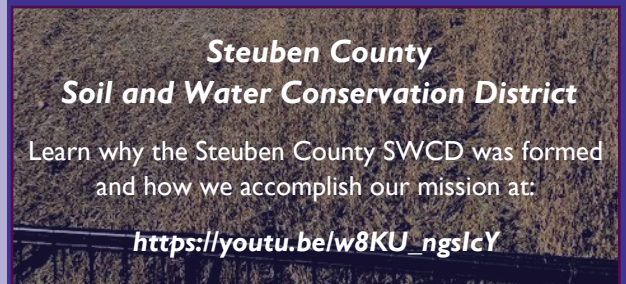
### NRCS Staff:

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



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

## Managing Residential Stormwater in a Changing Climate *(continued from page 1)*

Redirecting down spouts can be as simple as adding a downspout extension to direct water to a vegetated area where water can better infiltrate. Pervious pavers or gravel are alternatives to traditional pavement and allow rainwater and melting snow to seep through and infiltrate. Rain barrels capture rainwater from roofs and can provide you with water for lawns, flowers, and plants. Increasing the number of trees and shrubs not only provides shade and aesthetics but the tree leaves, branches, and bark intercept and absorb rainwater and reduce erosion by slowing rainfall before it hits the ground.

In addition to the above practices, you could plant more native plants in your landscape. Growing native plants involves using “conservation landscaping” to convert areas of your lawn to beautiful gardens using native plant species. Compacted soil growing lawn grass does little to absorb runoff. By contrast, native species have deeper root systems which help increase infiltration and filter water. Native plants are also better adapted to the region’s particular climate conditions; once they are established, they should require little watering.

If you want more information what you can do as a homeowner to further protect our precious water resources, call the Steuben County Soil and Water Conservation District (SWCD) at 260/665-3211, ext. 3 and we will be more than happy to help. Also – check out the new SWCD video “*Managing Stormwater in the Home Landscape*” which can be found under the “Urban” tab on the Steuben County SWCD’s website at [www.steubenswcd.org](http://www.steubenswcd.org).

## July 16, 2024 Steuben SWCD Conservation Camp

**2024**  
**CONSERVATION CAMP**

**July 16**  
**9:30 a.m. - 2:30 p.m.**

**Ages 8 - 14 years old**

**Pokagon State Park**  
**450 Lane 100 Lake James**  
**Angola, IN**  
**Nature Center/Upper CCC Shelter**

**Cost: \$10**  
**Includes: Naturalist program, snack, hike, fun activities, and lunch!**

**Steuben County youth receive a \$5 scholarship - total cost per child: only \$5!**

**Contact the Steuben County Soil and Water Conservation District by July 8 to register (260) 665-3211 ext. 3**

## Indiana Conservation Groups Have Record Year for Conservation Practices, Again

*Revised from the Indiana State Department of Agriculture May 15, 2024 Press Release*

Indiana landowners, for the second year in a row, set a record in the number of conservation practices to maintain soil health, according to the Indiana Conservation Partnership (ICP). The ICP, which works with Hoosier landowners to provide technical or financial assistance for the implementation of conservation projects, recently announced its 2023 conservation accomplishments. In 2023, landowners supported by the ICP installed more than 50,000 new conservation practices, up 3,000 from 2022. Last year’s 47,000 conservation practices installed was also a record.

The ICP report showed that over the last year landowners helped prevent over

1.6 million tons of sediment, over 3.6 million pounds of nitrogen and over 1.8 million pounds of phosphorus from entering Indiana waterways.

In the fall of 2022, and emerging in the spring of 2023, Hoosier farmers planted more than 1.6 million acres of living cover, which includes cover crops and winter wheat. Cover crops and no-till practices implemented with ICP’s assistance sequestered an estimated 41,000 tons of soil organic carbon, which is the equivalent to the carbon emissions of more than 30,168 cars.

Indiana State Department of Agriculture Director Don Lamb congratulates Hoosier farmers and landowners on another record year.



## 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



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, 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

- June 12<sup>th</sup> Steuben County SWCD Board Meeting  
5:00 PM (Angola USDA Service Center)
- June 17 – 23<sup>rd</sup> National Pollinator Week  
<https://pollinator.org>
- June 20<sup>th</sup> LaGrange County SWCD Conservation Camp  
9:00 - 2:30 PM (ParGil Learning Center, LaGrange, IN)
- June 21– 27<sup>th</sup> Steuben County 4-H Fair  
Steuben County Park/Fair Grounds (Crooked Lake, Angola, IN)
- July 4<sup>th</sup> County Offices Closed  
Independence Day Holiday
- July 10<sup>th</sup> Steuben County SWCD Board Meeting  
5:00 PM (Angola USDA Service Center)
- July 16<sup>th</sup> Steuben County SWCD Conservation Camp  
9:00 - 2:30 PM (Pokagon State Park, Angola, IN)
- July 24<sup>th</sup> Agronomy Field Day  
The Andersons (Waterloo, IN)
- August 6<sup>th</sup> Whitley County SWCD Conservation Camp  
9:00 - 2:30 PM (Camp Whitley, Columbia City, IN)

*\*\*Times and places of meetings subject to change\*\**

### 2024 Affiliate Members

#### BRONZE LEVEL

- Carper Farm Supply
- Jerome & Lynn Chandler (Angola, IN)
- Mike & Sue Claphan (Angola, IN)
- Bill & Diana Clingan (Hudson, IN)
- Daft Erosion Control LLC
- Hoham Feed & Seed
- Thelma Knowles (Hudson, IN)
- Niann Lautzenhiser (Hamilton, IN)
- Ronald L. Parker (Pleasant Lake, IN)
- Karen Spake (Angola, IN)
- Stroh Farm Supply
- Janet Young (Hudson, IN)
- Peg Zeis (Fremont, IN)

#### SILVER LEVEL

- City of Angola MS4
- Clear Lake Township Land Conservancy
- Crowe Forest Management LLC
- Tom & Alice Filbrun (Angola, IN)
- James Holse (Ashley, IN)
- Deloris Howarth (Fremont, IN)
- Peter Mountz (Garrett, IN)
- Kevin Northup Excavating
- Sandhill Environmental Services LLC
- John Williamson, Jr. (Angola, IN)

#### GOLD LEVEL

- Booth Farms (Orland, IN)

#### PLATINUM LEVEL

- Angola American Legion Post #31
- Angola Seed & Supply, LLC
- Aquatic Enhancement & Survey Inc.
- Budreau Ins. and Financial Services Inc.
- Cameron Memorial Community Hospital
- Catalpa Cove Family Giving Fund
- Dailey Farms (Angola, IN)
- Ecosystems Connections Institute LLC
- Edon Farmers Co-Op Association, Inc.
- Farm Credit Mid-America
- Tom Green Engineering
- Chuck & Nila Howard (Hamilton, IN)
- Lake George Conservancy, Inc.
- Raymond Lauer (Fremont, IN)
- Jim & Jean Parsell (Angola, IN)
- Dewey & Marcia Powers (Angola, IN)
- Steve Schroeder (Fremont, IN)
- Ken Shelton (Angola, IN)
- Steuben County Lakes Council
- Stoy Farms (Ashley, IN)
- Shane & Chanda Swager (Angola, IN)
- Lynn Wernet (Angola, IN)
- The Wilson Farm (Hudson, IN)
- Fred Wooley (Fremont, IN)