



BMPy Ride
Tour in
Copperas
Creek



Rock Island County Soil and Water Conservation District

Rock Island County SWCD Fall 2020 Newsletter

www.RockIslandSWCD.org

CHALLENGES AHEAD

The world's population will grow to an estimated 9 billion people by 2050. This means more food will need to be grown in the next 40 years than has been grown in the previous 500! This population increase places tremendous pressure on farmers to produce enough food to feed the world. At the same time, we face the impacts of climate change, weather extremes, the continual loss of prime farmland, and the need to reduce the use of finite resources. The daunting challenge for farmers to produce more crops, however, does not have to come at the expense of our natural resources. Through conservation planning and financial assistance, local, state and federal agencies are available to help farmers protect their natural resources.



Our goal is to help landowners find conservation practices that work with their systems. Here is a breakdown of practices and how they impact common resource concerns. Every person can make a difference!

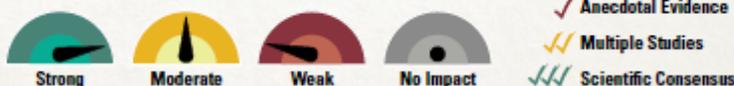
LOCAL INSPIRATION

On our recent BMPy Ride tour showcasing local farms that having implemented conservation best management practices, Stephanie Fuhr shared her vision that has literally come to life at her home in Reynolds. Her family's site included a 2+ acre triangle lot that was an awkward space for farming, but a much more natural site for prairie restoration, since the roads that border it make natural fire breaks. In their first summer there in 2013, they only spotted 2 adult monarchs. Her vision for the conversion of the site to a prairie ecosystem was initially inspired by the monarch population crisis due to habitat destruction in Mexico, extreme weather events related to climate change and the use of glyphosate dominated weed control in their migratory corridor of the Midwest. After reaching out to both NRCS and U.S. Fish & Wildlife and discussing assistance options, she decided to utilize the small seed grant from USFWS to get started sewing the prairie in November of 2014. It does take several years for everything to become established and it is some work pulling Canadian thistle in the spring and cutting out the mulberries and Japanese honeysuckle, but over the past 5 years, the monarchs have come in large numbers as well as bees, other butterflies, songbirds, and even foxes. The seed mix used contained 46 native varieties of plants. She says community members have been very supportive and enthusiastic, offering compliments on the plot. Next, she plans on adding some oak trees for nesting birds and doing a burn late this fall/winter.

Practice	ABILITY TO ADDRESS RESOURCE CONCERN						
	Soil Health		Nutrient Loss Reduction			Habitat	
	Impact	Confidence	Nitrogen Impact	Phosphorus Impact	Confidence	Impact	Confidence
Cover Crops							
No-tillage							
Strip-tillage							
N Management							
P Management							
Diverse Rotations							
Wetlands							
Saturated Buffers							
Bioreactors							
Field Buffers							
Controlled Drainage							
Terraces							
Ponds							
Water/Sediment Control Basins							
Grassed Waterways							
Strategically Placed Perennials							
Prairie Strips							

* Soil health improvement occurs within the practice footprint. However, no improvement is measured in the rest of the field.
Potential habitat impact if pollinator habitat is installed above the practice.

LEGEND



ABOUT US....

Rock Island County SWCD Leadership

Elected Directors:

Twila Cederstrom
Gary Blanchard (Chairman)
Nathan Oak (Treasurer/Secretary)
Brian Parkinson (Vice-Chair)
Julie Voelker

Associate Directors:

Sally Ferguson
Marcus Thomas
Bob Westpfahl, County Board Rep

Conservation Team

Rich Stewart - Resource Conservationist
Dawn Temple - Administrator
Joe Gates - Conservation Specialist
Ross Smith - Education Coordinator
EmiLee Novack - Graduate Intern



COVID-19 UPDATE

Our office remains closed to the public, but we are conducting business as usual. If you need to come to our office, please call ahead. Thank you for your patience during this time!

NEW FACES

EmiLee Novak joined the RISWCD team in August as a conservation intern. She's currently enrolled in the Recreation, Park, and Tourism Administration Graduate program at Western Illinois University- Quad Cities and plans to graduate in December. EmiLee completed an Associates of Applied Science in 2017 in Parks and Natural Resources from Kirkwood Community College in Cedar Rapids, Iowa. She then transferred to Upper Iowa University in Fayette, Iowa and completed her Bachelor of Science degree in 2019 with majors in Environmental Science and Conservation Management. EmiLee enjoys hiking, kayaking, biking, and most of all, birding. EmiLee's undergraduate thesis looked at Song Variation of Cerulean Warblers in Northeast Iowa. She has also worked with a variety of raptors like the Great Horned Owl and the Bald Eagle. In addition, EmiLee has been an Americorps Service Member at Nahant Marsh in Davenport. EmiLee plans to continue her career in the natural resource field with an emphasis on education.



Marcus Thomas has worked at John Deere for 19+ years and has split his career between engineering and human resources positions. Since 2015, Marcus has managed the Talent Central Global Performance Management and the Careers & Development processes at Deere. Marcus started with Deere in the Intelligent Solutions Group as a factory liaison engineer / program manager. Then he moved over to the Waterloo Tractor operations, where he held positions as a module leader and manufacturing engineer. In 2006, he transitioned into HR, by joining the Talent Acquisition group as a midcareer staffing lead in the Quad Cities and then progressed through the following positions as the A&T Engineering Development Program (EDP) Manager and as the Global Learning Leader for Engineering which led to his current position today. Prior to Deere, Marcus worked in the automotive industry for several years with two different companies. Marcus has a BS in Mechanical Engineering from Southern University, Baton Rouge, LA and a MBA from Auburn University. He enjoys church, reading, STEM activities, technology, biking and spending time with family and friends.



We are currently seeking farmers with a passion for conservation, community leaders, and professional staff with special interest in marketing, technology, or natural resources to be a part of

Get involved! Board members needed!



our executive leadership team as associate board members. If you are interested in getting involved, please contact Sally Ferguson at: sallyeferguson@outlook.com

CONSERVATION SALES

ALL SALES SUPPORT CONSERVATION IN ROCK ISLAND COUNTY!

2020 FALL TREE SALE



PRE-ORDER ONLINE

www.rockislandswcd.org/trees.php

3 Gallon Conservation Grade Trees
Varieties include:

Pecan, American Chestnut, Black Walnut, Eastern Red Cedar, Norway Spruce, White Pine, Swamp White Oak, Bur Oak, White Oak, Northern Red Oak, Paw Paw, American Persimmon, Tulip Tree, Sweetgum, Redbud, American Hazelnut, Elderberry, Buttonbush, & Downey Serviceberry



Special Fall Pollinator Pocket: 1-gallon size plugs including Aromatic Aster, Butterfly Milkweed, Nodding Wild Onion, Blue Wild Indigo, Wild Quinine, & Rough Blazing Star

SALE QUESTIONS: (309) 764-1486 x 3
OR
Info@rockislandswcd.org

PICK UP: October 26 & 27, 2020 8:30am-5:00 pm
3010 1st Avenue East, Milan – Tailored Living Garage



Fall Fish Sale - CANCELLED
We will resume fish sales in Spring 2021!

CONSERVATION SUCCESS STORIES

LOCAL PARTNERS CONFIRM SIGHTINGS OF THE RUSTY PATCHED BUMBLEBEE!

Illiniwek Forest Preserve in Hampton, Ill. last week became one of a few sites nationwide with a confirmed sighting of the endangered Rusty Patched Bumble Bee, or *Bombus affinis*. The species has declined by 96 percent in the last 20 years and is likely to be present in only 0.1% of its historical range. The sighting was confirmed by Isaac Stewart, assistant professor of biology at Black Hawk College's East Campus, and is a milestone moment for the Rock Island County Forest Preserve's conservation efforts. "I was out walking my dog and happened to see this bee that looked awfully unusual," said Mike Petersen, head park ranger at Illiniwek. "I sent a picture of it to Isaac and he came out the next day and identified 10 female and 3 male Rusty Patched Bumble Bees in under an hour. We are beyond excited that our prairie restoration efforts are paying off in such a big way."



In 2017, the Rusty Patched Bumble Bee was the first bumble bee protected under the Endangered Species Act (ESA). Once common through the United States and Canada, today, the species is only found in fragmented populations of the Midwest. "This is the best possible indicator that the prairie restorations the Forest Preserve District has been working on are paying off," said Stewart. "Finding this new sighting is really important in our efforts of staving off the extinction of this species."

The Rock Island County Forest Preserve District, which includes Illiniwek, Loud Thunder Forest Preserve, Dorrance Park, Martin Conservation Area, Niabi Zoo and Indian Bluff Golf Course, has been working hard to provide suitable habitats for all plants and animals that call its properties home. Over the last five years, the Forest Preserve District has planted 55 acres of prairies between its six properties, and this fall, a season record-breaking 44 prairies are expected to be planted. Indian Bluff is home to one of the state's rarest native, undisturbed hillside prairies. "Remarkably, prairie once covered 60 percent of Illinois, but today only one percent of that land remains," said Jeff Craver, Forest Preserve District director. "It is our organization's goal to re-establish these habitat-rich lands, and to educate our visitors and citizens to do the same in their own backyards."

To help foster an environment that's attractive for Rusty Patched Bumble Bees, Stewart recommends people focus on wildflowers that are native to the region, like beebalms. "There are many very pretty wildflowers at local nurseries, but it's really important the flowers are native to the area. Also, try to plant a selection of wildflowers that bloom through the spring and fall. In addition to summer blooms, the bees need nectar to feed on early in the spring and late into the fall."

If you think you've spotted a Rusty Patched Bumble Bee, take a picture of the animal and share it with an expert for confirmation. Websites like www.bumblebeewatch.org/ have portals to submit photos of bees. Do not attempt to capture, touch or disturb the bee! Plan a visit to Illiniwek Forest Preserve or follow them on Facebook for more exciting news and updates.



Nahant Marsh is a 305-acre wetland preserve in Davenport, IA. Its history as a nature center began as a 13 acre US EPA superfund site in need of cleanup and restoration from years of lead contamination. It is now home to hundreds of species, a layover site for migrating birds and water fowl, and the home of an education program that teaches thousands of youths and adults annually about the importance of nature. In 2018, the Nahant Marsh Board purchased a 40-acre parcel comprised of frequently flooded farmland and a degraded wetland. This year, they began the process of restoring and expanding wetlands and prairies on this parcel. Restoring this land to wetland and sand prairie will allow the area to absorb and filter more flood water. Restoration will include expanding the wetland area, planting native plant species, and building a public trail. This area will be more flood-absorbent, create new hiking and educational opportunities for the public, and create new habitat for wildlife.

Nahant is also celebrating their 20 year anniversary, and they are seeing success stories from the last twenty years of restoration efforts. One of those success stories is the documentation of a federally endangered bee, the Rusty Patched Bumble Bee, *Bombus affinis*, in July! This is the first confirmed sighting of this rare bee in Scott County. The confirmed sighting at Nahant Marsh showcases the importance of protecting and restoring natural areas. Nahant will continue to restore and enhance the biodiversity in the prairies and woodlands, which are critical habitat for this species and many others. Nahant is receiving guidance from the US Fish and Wildlife Service to ensure our natural resource management practices will benefit the recovery of this rare species. While the building is currently closed due to the global Covid-19 pandemic, the trails are open from sunrise to sunset and programs are being held for the public on a limited basis. For more information, please visit www.nahantmarsh.org.



POLLINATOR CONSERVATION ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS

THE PARTNERS FOR FISH & WILDLIFE PROGRAM'S POLLINATOR OPPORTUNITIES



What the program is:

The U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service's Partners for Fish & Wildlife program provides technical and financial assistance to landowners interested in improving wildlife habitat on their land, including high-quality pollinator habitat. Projects are custom-designed to meet landowners' needs and are targeted to benefit monarch butterflies, rare-and-declining native bees, other pollinators, and other wildlife.

How you can help pollinators by participating in the program:

New pollinator habitat can be created or existing habitat can be enhanced, with financial assistance that varies depending on the project. Projects greater than five acres are preferred but not required. The program can often be conducted with certain other programs or grants.

How the financial assistance works:

The Fish & Wildlife Service can contribute money toward site preparation, seed, and/or planting while encouraging the landowner to contribute in some capacity. Unfortunately, there is not an annual payment but the program may be able to assist on sites where more lucrative annual payment programs are not available.

Benefits of pollinator habitat:

Pollinator habitat not only helps pollinators and plant pollination, but helps grassland birds, improves water quality, and conserves soil. It can also be aesthetically pleasing and can reduce mowing or maintenance costs.

Who to contact:

If you're interested in learning more, please contact Scott James, Private Lands Biologist, at (309) 757-5800 x 205

Pollinator Habitat Initiative and the Conservation Reserve Program

Pollinators have declined worldwide as a result of habitat loss and other factors; however, the Conservation Reserve Program (CRP),— Pollinator Habitat Initiative (CP-42), offers landowners a way to create longer-lasting meadows of high-quality native wildflowers that support pollinators and other wildlife populations throughout the growing season while increasing the percentage of fast-blooming forage legumes and other wildflowers that have traditionally been a part of CRP plant mixes.

For more than 25 years, CRP has provided millions of acres of habitat for honey bees and other pollinators. With abundant acres of legume-rich forage or diverse wildflower plantings, CRP lands offer hives (bee

colonies) large-scale sources of pollen and nectar that keep pollinators and their habitat healthy. CP-42 practices are comprised of native plant species although exceptions are made if diverse native seed mixes are unavailable. The species mix should include a variety of plants that flower at different times throughout the growing seasons providing a diversity of pollen sources that are critical for honey bee and native bee health. These plants can be an integral part of the conservation practices that landowners, farmers, and ranchers install as part of their conservation plan. Combined, these efforts will increase pollinator habitat across the U.S. and contribute substantially to crop pollination on farms where their habitat needs are met.



Continuous CRP starts October 1st.

Landowners of cropland can begin the process of offering land into the Conservation Reserve Program starting October 1st. Land can be offered in under the **continuous** CRP program for certain practices. These include wetland restoration, grassed filterstrips, riparian buffers, grassed waterways, wildlife habitat field borders, and a new practice – prairie strips.

For more information contact our office in Milan or the Farm Service Agency in Aledo.

USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer.



CONSERVATION ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS



COVER CROP PREMIUM DISCOUNT PROGRAM FALL COVERS FOR SPRING SAVINGS

The Illinois Department of Agriculture (IDOA) is offering farmers that plant cover crops a \$5/acre discount on their crop insurance bill. IDOA's Cover Crop Premium Discount Program is offered for acres of cover crops installed outside of state and federal program incentives (e.g., EQIP, CSP and state cost share). IDOA is supporting 50,000 acres of cover crops with this year's funding.

- 1. Interested participants may sign up acres planted to cover crops in the fall of 2020 and will be planted to an insurable crop the following spring.**
- 2. Eligible applicants will receive the \$5/acre insurance premium discount on 2021's crop insurance invoice for every acre of cover crop enrolled and accepted in the program.**

COVER CROPS: A FARMERS SAFETY NET

Crop insurance is an integral part of the farm safety net that provides protection for farmers when adverse weather impacts their crop yields. Cover crops can improve the resiliency of Illinois farm operations by preventing erosion and improving the soil's ability to absorb and hold water for crops. Because more resilient soil results in less yield variation from year to year, another benefit may be fewer insurance claims over time.

Introducing cover crops to your rotation takes purposeful management. Many producers interested in beginning with cover crops start with a cereal rye after corn harvest, before soybean planting. The Midwest Cover Crop Council is a great source for those that are interested in alternative cover crop species; MCCC provides species, rate, date, and termination recommendations, vetted by experts across Illinois. You can find more information on their website at:

<http://mccc.msu.edu/covercroptool/covercroptool.php>

WHY ILLINOIS?

The Illinois Nutrient Loss Reduction Strategy recognizes cover crops as one of the most effective in-field management strategies to stem the loss of both nitrate-nitrogen and total phosphorus from corn-soybean fields, yet less than 4% of Illinois' cropland is planted to cover crops annually.

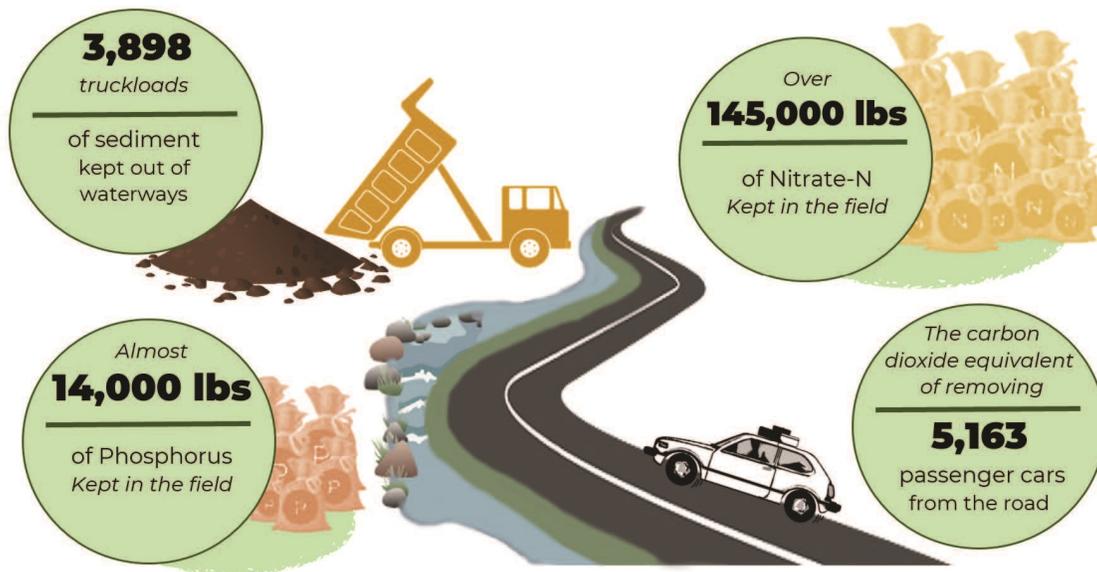
"I first got started with cereal rye cover crops through an EQIP program through the NRCS—and it's been very successful alongside my bean crops. I was influenced by this program incentives to plant more covers than what I was originally going to this year."

*- Montgomery and
Bond County Illinois Farmer*

CONSERVATION ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS

WHO BENEFITS FROM THIS PROGRAM?

When cover crops are integrated into a farming operation, they improve soil's overall function and health, enhancing the resiliency of Illinois cropland and resulting in less yield variation from year to year, which may translate to fewer insurance claims over time. In addition to the farming operation, the community and environment benefits. The below graphic displays an average of nutrient, sediment and GHG reductions from the implementation of 50,000 acres in the 2019 Illinois Fall Covers for Spring Savings Cover Crop Premium Discount Program.



HOW CAN I APPLY?

Farmers will need to certify their fall planted cover crop acres with the FSA office and use the FSA 578 form to apply for the program through the Illinois Department of Agriculture website:

<https://www2.illinois.gov/sites/agr/Pages/default.aspx>

Farmers submit cover crop reward applications to IDOA beginning December 15, until January 15.

WHO DO I CONTACT?

Those that need assistance in applying for this program can consult their local SWCD office:

<https://www2.illinois.gov/sites/agr/Resources/LandWater/SitePages/Directory.aspx>

OR the Illinois Department of Agriculture (IDOA): <https://www2.illinois.gov/sites/agr/Resources/LandWater/Pages/Cover-Crops-Premium-Discount-Program.aspx>

HOW WILL IDOA VERIFY ELIGIBLE ACRES?

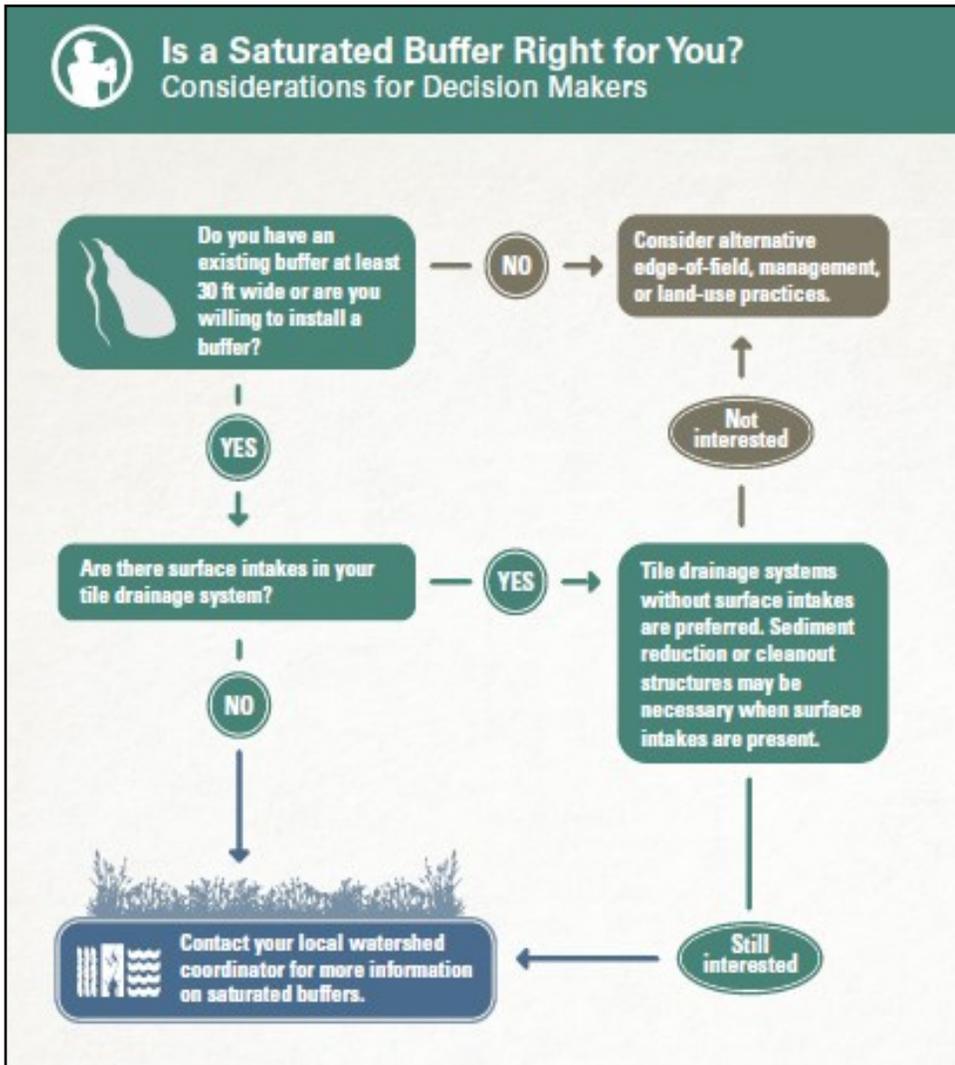
IDOA will use a combination of tools to verify acres in cover crops applied for through this program.

Applications will be reviewed for overlap in enrollment of other federal and state programs. IDOA will then employ a variety of tools at their discretion. Applicants must maintain documentation on cover crops that have been seeded (e.g., seed bills) and utilize Midwest Cover Crop Council - Cover Crop Tool recommendations for seeding rates/dates.

CONSERVATION NEWS

ATTENTION COPPERAS CREEK WATERSHED LANDOWNERS : WE ARE CURRENTLY ACCEPTING APPLICATIONS FOR FINANCIAL & TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE TO IMPLEMENT CONSERVATION BEST MANAGEMENT PRACTICES

Best Management Practices available at 60% cost-share include Streambank Stabilization projects, Saturated Buffer, Bioreactors, WASCObS, Grassed Waterway, and Dry Dams. Apply by October 15th for priority consideration. If you have natural resource concerns on your property and are interested in signing up please visit our website for more information and the application form.
www.rockislandswcd.org/copperas-creek-watershed.php



A saturated buffer is an area of perennial vegetation between agricultural fields and waterways where tile outlets drain. Tile lines connect to a control structure, which distributes water laterally along the buffer. As water drains into the buffer, the living roots of perennial vegetation absorb water and nutrients, like nitrate-nitrogen. A saturated buffer has the potential to remove 50% of nitrate-nitrogen from water that is diverted through the buffer. In addition, saturated buffers decrease turbidity and volume of water in waterways, helps stabilize stream banks and provide wildlife habitat.

Cost of installation and equipment depends on the length of the buffer and how many tiled acres, but on average runs about \$6.25 per foot. So for 100 tiled acres/1,000 feet long, the cost would be approximately \$6,250. With grant funding, we can provide a 60% cost-share for this low maintenance and highly functional conservation practice.
Call our office to get signed up!



The 319 watershed grant provided by Illinois EPA is in full swing with the first project being completed in July. The project was comprised of 3 separate streambank locations that were being stabilized for erosion due to excessive stream velocities. This project included 720 feet of streambank stabilization which will prevent 50 tons of soil erosion as well as reducing nitrates by 99 lbs. and of 50 lbs. of phosphorus annually.



CONSERVATION NEWS

PARTNERS FOR CONSERVATION — COVER CROP ASSISTANCE NOW AVAILABLE

Cost-sharing through the state of Illinois' Partners For Conservation (PFC) program is available for cover crops that will be sown this fall. The cost-share rate is 60% not-to-exceed \$40 per acre and a maximum of \$1,600. Farmers can apply by contacting our office at 309-764-1486, Ext 3. Limited funds available; first come, first serve. Not sure how to get started? We can help you determine what species, mix and seeding requirements you will need. Technical assistance for conservation planning is always free!

Benefits of Cover Crops:

- Reduce compaction, erosion & sediment loss
- Increase yields
- Save on production costs of herbicides and fertilizers
- Increase soil biological activity & earthworms
- Increase organic matter mostly in top 2 inches; about 0.1%/year
- Improved water filtering
- Increased water holding capacity & infiltration
- Increased nutrient cycling
- General increased capacity for production on ANY soil

NATIONAL FARMER SURVEY DOCUMENTS A WIDE RANGE OF COVER CROP BENEFITS

"The 2019-2020 National Cover Crop Survey shows that an ever-growing number of farmers of all types and in all regions of the U.S. continue to find advantages to using cover crops," says Rob Myers at SARE. "While the first survey in 2012 showed the benefits of cover crops in a drought year, this year's survey showed that cover crops helped farmers in wet weather as well, with many of them being able to plant in wet spring weather when conventional neighbors couldn't. The survey showed farmers are figuring out how to make cover crops work for them economically, while using them as a tool to address challenging issues such as herbicide-resistant weeds."



For the full survey report and many additional insights on farmer experiences with cover crops, visit

<https://www.sare.org/news/2020-cover-crop-survey-report/>

New Online Resources to Conduct USDA Business

Champaign, IL, September 8, 2020 -- It's more important than ever to have a quick, secure way to get important business done with your local USDA team. That's why the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) has partnered with the Farm Service Agency (FSA) to deliver Box and OneSpan, new tools to help farmers get important documents signed and shared with USDA service center staff. These are often the quickest, simplest options for both USDA employees and customers. Why? "Because you don't have to create or sign into a secondary account and you can electronically sign papers and forms using your computer or your smart phone. Basically, you can do what you need to with just a few clicks," explains NRCS State Conservationist Ivan Dozier. The tools can save time and offer convenience to Illinois farmers. By using Box or OneSpan, producers can digitally complete most business transactions with USDA without ever leaving their homes or agricultural operations. Dozier and Graff both noted that Box and OneSpan do not replace existing systems that use e-Authentication for digital signature. Instead, they provide additional efficient, customer-friendly resources for conducting business with USDA.

Box is a secure, cloud-based site where FSA or NRCS documents can be managed and shared. Producers who choose to use Box can create a username and password to access their secure Box account, where documents can be downloaded, printed, manually signed, scanned, uploaded, and shared digitally with Service Center staff. **OneSpan** is a secure eSignature solution. Like Box, no software downloads or eAuthentication are required. Producers interested in eSignature through OneSpan can quickly confirm their identity through two-factor authentication, which includes a text message with verification code sent to their mobile device or a personalized question and answer. Once identity is confirmed, documents can be reviewed and e-signed through OneSpan via the producer's personal email address and, once signed, immediately become available to the appropriate Service Center staff. These new tools are available to any USDA customer with access to a mobile device or computer with printer connectivity.

Neither of these options are mandatory—farmers who prefer to hand deliver signed documents or mail them in or just drop them off—can still get their USDA business taken care of that way as well. "It's just another option USDA is offering Illinois farmers to be safe and save time," stated Dozier and Graff. Both Box and OneSpan perform most effectively in Chrome. Visit farmers.gov/mydocs for current information or for help getting started with these secure solutions for signing and sharing USDA documents.

CONSERVATION NEWS

National Association of Conservation Districts Technical Assistance Grant supports extra staffing to provide ongoing conservation technical assistance.

Conservation Planning

A USDA-Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) comprehensive conservation plan is the first step to managing all the natural resources on your farm. The planning process combines your existing production methods with recommended conservation practices to best manage your farm's unique natural resources, while allowing you to improve sustainability and productivity.

Your conservation plan is the end product of the NRCS conservation planning process. As your conservation decision partner, NRCS provides free assistance to landowners to reach land use and natural resource goals. Our local offices, staffed with conservation professionals with local knowledge, can help you make well-informed conservation decisions.

During the planning process, we will:

- » discuss your objectives,

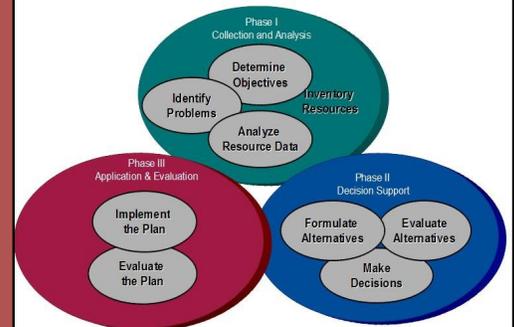
- » examine your natural resource concerns,
- » point out areas for possible protection and improvement,
- » discuss your economic goals for the farm, your current farming operations and your future plans,
- » review your conservation practice options, and
- » help you weigh your alternatives.

We will help you balance the needs for profit, protection and productivity. Each of these factors is considered when NRCS writes a plan for your approval and implementation.

A conservation plan provides you a step-by-step road map for meeting your natural resource conservation goals. It includes helpful information on each of the practices included in your plan: how they benefit your farm, how to maintain them, and how they help the soil, water and wildlife.

CONTACT JOE GATES OR WYATT JUNIS FOR MORE INFORMATION ON CREATING OR UPDATING YOUR COMPREHENSIVE CONSERVATION PLAN!

NRCS Planning Process



Although the CTA program does not include financial or cost-share assistance, clients may develop conservation plans, which may serve as a springboard for those interested in participating in USDA financial assistance programs. CTA planning can also serve as a door to financial assistance and easement conservation programs provided by other Federal, State, and local programs.

NUTRIENT MANAGEMENT PLANS

It's September....do you know where your fertilizer is?

Hopefully, it's used by your safe and secure ready to be season and not the way to the



been efficiently crops or it's in your soil used next in the creek on Gulf of Mexico.

If you're not sure of the status of this precious production input, you should consider getting a nutrient management plan for your farm. A nutrient management plan can help you decide if you are applying fertilizer in the best way for you, your crop, and the environment. You may be able to save some money, increase your yields, and help reduce nutrient runoff. There are several conservation programs available to help you develop and implement a nutrient management plan. If this sounds like something you would like to incorporate on your land, give Joe Gates a call!

THE BASICS OF NUTRIENT MANAGEMENT:

- Know what you have - Sample and test your soils regularly.
- Know what you are applying - Have your manure, compost, or other material analyzed for nutrient content. Know and understand the nutrient content of chemical fertilizer.
- Know how much you're applying- Calibrate your fertilizer spreader.
- Use the recommended amounts for the crop you want to grow - Follow soil test recommendations.
- Minimize erosion and runoff - nutrients may leave in solution or attached to sediment.
- Maintain buffer areas - their purpose is to filter nutrients and sediment from runoff.

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A big thank you to our current sponsors featured below! The printing of our bi-annual newsletter would not be possible without their support.



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Rock Island County
Soil and Water Conservation District
3020 1st Ave E
Milan, IL 61264

FALL 2020 Newsletter

Table of Contents

Pg. 1	Challenges Ahead
Pg. 2	About Us
Pg. 3	Conservation Sales
Pg. 4	Conservation Success Stories
Pg. 5-7	Conservation Assistance Programs
Pg. 8-10	Conservation News
Pg. 11	Sponsors

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FOR SALE

Flags (multiple colors): \$.15 each or 100 for \$12

Native Grass Seed and Pollinator Mixes

Custom designed mixes to meet your needs.
Call 309-764-1486, Ext. 3

FALL SEEDING??

Our 7.5 foot Great Plains No-Drill Seeding Drill is available for rent. It can be used for grain, small seed or native grasses.

Rent our drill for
\$100/day + \$12/acre.

Pick-up at SWCD
office in Milan.

