

Community and Classroom Conservation



LaPorte County Soil and Water Conservation District
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Coming Soon—In the works:

- Joint Annual Meeting with Row Crop will be held February 11, 2012 at the Best Western in La Porte
- Tree Planting Workshop 6:30 pm Monday, February 13, 2012 at Saugany Lake Conservation Club OPEN TO PUBLIC
- LaPorte/Starke Winter Irrigation Workshop with Zach

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Cover Crop your Way to Better Soil Health

As a farmer in La Porte County, ask yourself – would you like to increase yield potential over time, reduce erosion and improve the battle against annual winter weeds? Are you looking for dramatic cost savings in nutrient applications and to lessen soil erosion? Your answer – of course!

The LaPorte County SWCD is partnering with Dave Robison of Cisco Seeds and Westville Farm Supply to provide a series of cover crop workshops and field days. The first two have already been held at Westville High School.

When the daylight hours shorten and temperatures keep us indoors, we think longingly of warmer times and greener landscapes. Many people use this time wisely planning how we can improve our lifestyles, landscapes and even livelihoods by planting trees.

Let La Porte County Soil & Water Conservation District help

The first showed producers what the various seed types look like and how to make seed selections. The second workshop dug a little deeper and allowed farmers to ask specific questions, learn more about the AMAZING benefits of using cover crops, and included a visit to the SWCD demonstration plot at Westville High School.

Are you interested? Have no fear! The SWCD will be completing the series Spring 2012. You will be able to see how the cover crops have improved the soil, look at the

earthworm activity, and learn how to deal with your cover crops once they've done their job. Keep your eyes out for a spring cover crop workshop; you'll be glad you did.



Dave Robison, Cisco Seeds shows us a radish being used as a cover crop

Start Planning Now for 2012 SWCD Tree Sale

your planning process with our 2012 Tree Sale.

Not only will you enrich your life and landscape, you'll give a two-fold gift to future generations: Your trees will improve the air and protect the soil of tomorrow, and your purchase supports La Porte County SWCD education/outreach. Your Tree Sale support ensures we can

continue to provide high quality FREE conservation programming for schools and community groups throughout the year.

This year we are offering some different species for your consideration (see page 3). Catalogs & order forms will be available in January.

Pickup: April 28, 2012 LaPorte County Fairgrounds

Due to the nature of the work performed by the District staff, occasionally there are times when no one will be in the office. Please call before making a special trip to the office. (219) 326-6808 Ext. 2116

Third of a series highlighting local agriculture and natural resource programs in our community schools.



Amanda Maycroft,
Environmental Sciences Teacher,
Krueger Middle School

"The idea of adding environmental science to the curriculum this year is so students will learn about what the environment is about and keep it around"
- - Krueger Asst. Principal
Vera Jones

A Bit of Background

My name is Amanda Maycroft and I teach environmental science for 6th, 7th, and 8th grade at Krueger Middle School. This is my first year as an educator and I am so blessed and proud that our students are already on the move to creating change at Krueger Middle School.

I am originally from Muskegon, MI and just recently moved to Michigan City for the environmental science teaching position. Growing up I spent almost my entire childhood playing outside, either on the beaches of Lake Michigan or in the acres

of woods that surrounded my home.

Environmental Science is a brand new course at Krueger Middle School. Being the first year, each grade level is working with the same curriculum. Our final goal is that each grade level will have a focus on certain environmental concepts.

While we will be covering a wide range of ideas and concepts over the course, my goal is that students walk away with a general idea of the importance of our natural resources, feel em-

Amanda Maycroft

powered and capable of being an agent of even the smallest change, and capable of making decisions pertaining to their environment. It is our duty as educators to create citizens that will help preserve and protect our resources and my hope is that this class will help generate that interest and inspiration to guide them toward becoming that environmentally conscious citizen. I foresee a very bright future for the environmental science program at Krueger Middle School and look forward to many new projects that will pick up again in the spring!

Krueger Middle School makes a SPLASH!

Ok, so we really only had one student fall into the creek. Trail Creek, that is!

The students in Amanda Maycroft's Environmental Science class made a big splash in terms of their learning though! The students were treated to some special guests: Jenny Orsburn and Colin Highlands from the Lake Michigan DNR Coastal Program, Brian Breidert and the Fisheries Biology staff of the DNR, Joe Exl from NIRPC, and

EthelTurkowski and Nicole Mes-sacar (SWCD) joined the students in doing some high-quality, hands-on water sampling! Jenny and Colin helped the students understand land-use and stream flow. The fisheries biologists told them about invasive species and did a little electro-fishing to show the students what fish live in their Creek. Joe did some chemical analysis with the students to help them learn about impacts

of phosphorus, nitrogen and dissolved solids in the Creek. Nicole and Ethel helped the students collect aquatic insects. They learned how those bugs can be used to assess the water quality of the stream.

It was an enormously successful program and we were all delighted to see Dr. Eason-Watkins, MCAS Superintendent, don a pair of boots and explore the stream with the students!

Coastal Awareness Month

To celebrate, the SWCD partnered with some special groups to provide an excellent learning opportunity to the community.

4th and 5th graders from Lake Hills Elementary in Michigan City were invited to the shore of Lake Michigan to experience some coast-related activities. Brian Breidert and his staff at the Department of Natural Resources allowed students to get up close with native fish friends and invasive fish foes. This

allowed them to understand the delicate balance of freshwater ecosystems. Maggi Byrne and Erik Sprenne led an enthusiastic crew of volunteers from the Northwest Indiana Paddling Association in delivering phenomenal kayaking instruction. Many special thanks to Kenneth Nesbitt for driving kayaks from Michigan for the program! Esther Guncheon and Olga Shturmina -Welch from the Lubeznik Center for the Arts

provided wonderful instruction in the art of fish printing. The staff of the W.G. Jackson and the Annis Water Resources Institute braved less than perfect lake conditions bringing the research vessel to Michigan City to provide a floating classroom experience. They provided excellent instruction in the use of high-tech water quality sampling tools. This hands-on, interactive science is invaluable to students today.



This awesome educational opportunity was funded by a Lake Michigan DNR Coastal Program Grant through their Coastal Awareness Month program.

September 2011

Clean water . . . It starts with you!

Thanks in part to funding from our 2011 Clean Water Indiana grant, the fence in this photo now helps protect water quality in the Trail Creek Watershed by preventing cattle - and their waste - from entering the creek, which flows out to Lake Michigan.

In addition to this protective fencing, Clean Water Indiana funding helped expand a woodland riparian zone in Michigan City's Patriot Park, bolstered a slumping creek bank within a stunning riparian zone at Friendship Gardens, re-stored woodland riparian habitat in

Galena township, and lessened farm sediment runoff with a protective cover of annual cover crops on a soybean field just south of Michigan City. Thanks to all the partner landowners in this successful collaboration and look for more Clean Water Indiana success stories in the future.

For a video of the serene mid-summer scenery of Trail Creek as it passes through the Deutscher farm, check out our You Tube channel at our website

www.laporteswcd.com



Todd Ames, recently retired from the Natural Resources Conservation Service, inspecting a fence line (at the height of last July's intense heat) at the property of cattleman Rick Deutscher.

New Species Selections available for SWCD 2012 Tree Sale



Blackhaw

Shrub/small tree with red-orange fall color & bird attracting fall fruit. Showy white flowers bloom in late spring. Widely adaptable: full sun or shade, moist or dry soils. 15-20'



Persimmon

Edible bitter green fruit becomes sweet and tasty after few frosts/light freezes. Bark is dark gray/black and blocky with distinctive orange color between blocks. Attracts birds, mammals.

50-60'
Growth:
Slow-Med
Sun:
Full-partial



Red Oak

Known for strength and brilliant fall color. Foliage turns bright reddish- or golden-brown in the fall. After 10-12 years, will begin to bear acorns. Moderate water requirements, does best in well-drained soil. Tolerant to pollution, salt and compacted soil. Generally used as a specimen tree and for wildlife.

50-60'
Full Sun
Rapid Growth

To plant trees is to give body and life to one's dreams of a better world.

-- Russell Page

SWCD Staff, Board of Supervisors and Partners

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Indiana Conservation Partnership

Indiana Association of Soil and Water Conservation Districts
Indiana Department of Environmental Management
Indiana Department of Natural Resources
ISDA Division of Soil Conservation
State Soil Conservation Board
Purdue Cooperative Extension Service
USDA Farm Service Agency
USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service

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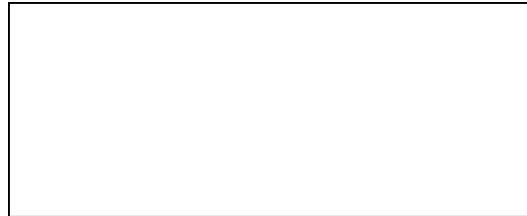
Mission Statement:

To enhance the environment by preserving the soil, water and related natural resources of La Porte County.

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We're on the Web!

www.laporteswcd.com



See our new facility—Open House Thursday, January 26, 2-6 pm

La Porte County Commissioner Ken Layton has declared Thursday, January 26, 2012 the Open House date for the new facility near the Animal Shelter and the county fairgrounds built to house Purdue University Extension-La Porte County, La Porte County Solid Waste District and the La Porte County Soil and Water Conservation District.

SWCD Staff and Supervisors look forward to

this unique opportunity to visit with anyone interested in seeing our new home and sharing the District's message and mission.

Mark your calendars and spread the word—We'd like to see YOU!



Open House will be held from
2-6 pm CST
January 26, 2012

Your Support Matters to Us, Become an Affiliate Member

We invite you to become a member of the premier conservation organization of LaPorte County. Dedicated members made our soil and water conservation programs successful through the years. Your membership today ensures our continued success THIS year. Our education programs are dependent upon donations by individual memberships and business memberships.

Just a few of the ways your memberships help to support the district's work: *school visits, award programs, library materials, education materials & supplies, adult and youth workshops and other educational programs.*

2012 Affiliate Memberships:

Regular Membership \$ 30

Supporting Membership \$ 50

Corporate Membership \$100 and up

Member names are included in District publications and on our website (with a link to your website if provided).

CARE ABOUT CONSERVATION? Become a member and invite a friend to do the same.