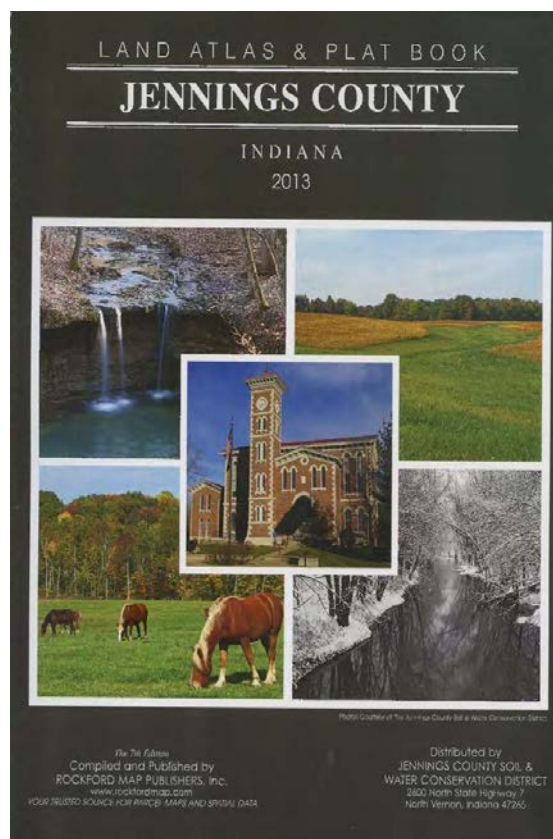


Jennings County Plat Books Available at SWCD

The SWCD has for sale the 2013 version of the Jennings County Plat Books. These books show property ownership and include aerial views of each township, which are listed in alphabetical order for ease of use. They have also been revised to show ownership of smaller land parcels that were not listed in previous versions of the plat book.

Plat books can be picked up at the SWCD office in the USDA Service Center at 2600 N State Highway 7, just north of North Vernon. They will also be available at the Jennings County Area Plan Commission, MainSource Bank, and North Vernon Abstract. The price is \$25.00 each. We can also mail copies for an additional cost of \$2.32 each. For questions, call us at 812-346-3411 X3.

Our plat book publisher also has available an electronic version of the plat book which can be loaded on a smart phone or tablet and provides measuring distance and area on the maps as well as GPS based location as you drive. We can show a demo of the maps but they must be ordered directly from Rockford Map Publishers.



Incentive Programs for Jennings County Farmers

The Indiana State Department of Agriculture (ISDA), through the State Soil Conservation Board, has announced that the Jennings County Soil and Water Conservation District (SWCD), in cooperation with nearby counties, has received approval for a grant to promote soil and water conservation practices with local landowners. ISDA administers the Clean Water Indiana (CWI) grants which are available to SWCDs and emphasize practices that contribute to improving water quality in Indiana's lakes and rivers.

This grant covers all of Jennings, Jackson, Scott, and Jefferson Counties. This grant is set up to promote buffer practices and permanent cover practices such as tree planting or pasture and hayland planting, as well as long-term wildlife plantings.. Incentive payments will be made for the following conservation practices: \$400 per acre for hardwood tree planting, riparian buffers and bottomland timber planting; \$100 per acre for native grass planting, wildlife habitat planting (warm season grasses and shrubs) and filter strip. The incentive program will be similar to Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program which is available in Sand Creek Watershed. These incentives will be available to landowners applying these practices through the Continuous Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) as well as those applying the practices without program assistance.

Contact the SWCD office for more information about these grant opportunities.

CREP Available in Sand Creek Watershed

Indiana recently expanded its Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP). What is CREP? CREP is one of Indiana's most sought after conservation programs. A joint partnership between the Indiana State Department of Agriculture (ISDA) and USDA's Farm Service Agency (FSA), CREP offers lucrative financial incentives for agricultural landowners to enhance sensitive or difficult to farm areas. Previously, CREP was only available in 3 watersheds; with the recent expansion, CREP is now available in 11 watersheds and 65 counties. ISDA and FSA will be working closely with all organizations in the Indiana Conservation Partnership to ensure excellent planning and implementation assistance is available to landowners. The recent expansion includes the Upper East Fork of White River Watershed which includes the Sand Creek Watershed in Jennings County.

Not only are the financial incentives rewarding to landowners, but landowners can also take pride in knowing they are playing a role in protecting water quality and enhancing wildlife. Practices such as filterstrips, stream buffers, native grasses, tree plantings and wetland restoration are all available through the CREP program. Strategic planning and location of these types of practices can improve the overall function of a working farm. The use of conservation practices can also help prepare your farm for a greater rating for the Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP).

The financial benefits are better than ever for landowners. Included as a financial incentive is a one-time state payment for CREP practices that range from \$100 to \$950 per acre, depending on the practice. CREP also offers increased funding for conservation projects over continuous CRP. With a 40% premium paid beyond the soil rental rates (SRR) plus the state incentives, CREP can add up to very attractive yearly income on acreages enrolled. For landowners that receive straight rental payments on their farmland, the monetary advantage is very competitive with most rental rates.

Soil Testing Available Through SWCD

The Soil and Water Conservation District has an arrangement with A & L Great Lakes Lab at Fort Wayne to accept soil samples for nutrient testing. Landowners may bring samples to the SWCD office, where they will be forwarded to the lab. Test results and fertilizer recommendations will be sent back to the SWCD for review with landowners.

Soil nutrient recommendations are available for most crops, pasture and hay, lawn and garden and other uses. Test results are stored at the SWCD office and can be accessed later if more information is needed or cropping practices change on the tested fields.

For more information, contact the SWCD by calling 812-346-3411 X3.

SWCD Equipment For Rent

The SWCD has a Great Plains model 1006NT drill which is available for rent. This drill is equipped to plant conventional seeds as well as native grass seeds and clover seeds. It is 10 feet wide and the rental fee is \$8.00 per acre with a minimum of \$75.00.

Also available is a new in 2014 Brillion seeder which does an excellent job of planting grasses and/or legumes in a prepared seedbed. This seeder is 10 feet wide and rents for \$8 per acre.

Controlling Kudzu in Jennings County

If you have traveled in the southeastern United States, you have probably seen kudzu, a vining plant that overtops trees, utility poles, and anything else that gets in its way. This plant is not common in Indiana but there are areas where it grows and it is invasive because it will spread, especially in wooded areas. Jennings County is on the northernmost edge of the range for this plant and there are presently twelve known places where it is growing in the county.

In addition to its invasive nature, it is a host plant for soybean rust, a disease of soybeans. This makes two good reasons for getting rid of the plants.

The Soil and Water Conservation District (SWCD) board is working with the Indiana Department of Natural Resources (IDNR) to help locate and eradicate the pest. Since we are on the northern edge of the range, it is important to stop it here so it does not spread farther. At this time IDNR has funds to pay for the cost of herbicides to eliminate kudzu. The SWCD will work with landowners to help re-seed the areas if that is needed after getting rid of the kudzu. At present there are twelve known locations where kudzu grows in Jennings County

Anyone who knows where kudzu is growing in the county should contact the SWCD as soon as possible. We will assist with positive identification and get in touch with IDNR specialists to assist with eradication of the plants. To see more information and learn to identify the plants, there are several web sites where you can learn more. One good one is:

<http://www.in.gov/dnr/entomolo/pdfs/kudzufactsheet.pdf>.

Water Testing Available

The Jennings County SWCD is partnering with the Jennings County Health Department and Environmental Labs of Madison to offer testing services for drinking water as well as swimming pool water and waste water. Drinking water can be tested for coliform bacteria, nitrates, fluoride, and metals. Swimming Pool water can be tested for total coliform and E-Coli, which is the same test required by the state of Indiana and local health departments for public pools. Waste water (or any water source) can be tested for E-Coli bacteria.

Each test requires a separate sample bottle which can be picked up at the SWCD office along with instructions. Samples should be taken to the Health Department office in Vernon where they are sent to Environmental Labs each Monday afternoon or they can be taken directly to the lab in Madison. These test kits are laboratory certified and intended for private use only. Each of the tests cost \$25 except for the metals which costs \$50 and tests for six different metals.

NRCS LAUNCHES LATEST VERSION OF WEB SOIL SURVEY

The Natural Resource Conservation Service recently released the latest version of its Web Soil Survey 2.1. Originally launched in August 2005, the free, web-based program provides a variety of information on soils, including soil maps, properties and interpretations aimed at helping visitors with land use decisions.

The latest version includes a number of enhancements and improvements, including a new “search” feature, the capability to download raw soil data clipped to the geographic extent of the defined area of interest, the ability to print soil and interpretive maps on multiple pages, a new distance-measuring tool, and more. Additional enhancements are planned for future releases.

According to NRCS: “Soil surveys provide critical information for land use decisions, both on the farm and in the city. Whether a developer is looking to build on or purchase land, or a farmer is considering alternative crops, soil survey data is a critical element in the equation that produces profits. This is essential to rural America and the need for producers and ranchers to maximize productivity without harming natural resources.”

To access the survey, visit www.websoilsurvey.nrcs.usda.gov If you need assistance using this web-based program, you may contact the local Soil and Water Conservation District.