



# Jennings County Soil & Water Conservation District

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## 2nd Quarter Edition Newsletter May 2016

### “SHARE SOME SPACE”

#### Pollinator Project

With two major ideas currently being implemented, it proves that the residents of Jennings County (and a few other surrounding counties) really can come together to support a good cause. That cause continues to be educating all of us about the importance of pollination, what are pollinators and how to create pollinator habitat.

The **Pollinator Potted Plant sale** ended up to be a **HUGE SUCCESS**, with over 130 customers who will be planting over 2600 plants! That means another 130 new habitat sites for butterflies, bees, moths, and all the other pollinators that serve us well.



### Pollinator Pathway Progress

Pictured: Ralph Cooley, Richard Winegarten and Dan Megel.

Our Pollinator Pathway Project continues to be built as members of the pollinator committee finish up with spreading mulch over the geotextile fabric. The next move will be planting hundreds of potted flowers this May.

## District Hosts Information Meeting at SEPAC

On the evening of March 31, 2016, your Soil and Water Conservation District provided a meeting about how to establish warm season grasses with forbs, how to maintain them, and what to expect over the next 5 years.

Several landowners will be adding additional forbs with CRP acres, which will create pollinator habitat, trap sediment, and uptake nutrients along field and creek edges. This will be done by installing conservation practices such as filter strips and field borders.

The meeting had 30 participants and speakers in attendance. It started with a complementary meal, an open discussion on weed control, seed rates, etc., and then headed to the shop area. With the district's Great Plains No-till drill in the shop area, Mark Bateman and Tony Eppley, of Jacobi Implements, gave a "hands on" discussion of setting the drill, depth control, gear ratios, etc. The speakers then fielded any specific questions drill users had.

Note: The No-till Drill rents for \$8 per acre with a \$75 minimum acre usage. We ask that when you rent it, use it and get done so we can keep it moving for the next customer.



Several volunteers at the Developmental Service Inc. at Scipio assisted with a "hands on" workshop on how to plant wild native flowers in potted containers. The potted plants will then be donated to the City Park Pollinator Patch. Andy Ertel and Kelly Kent, District Employees delivered the program.

Meredith Inman's Kindergarten Class from St. Mary's School planted a Redbud tree to celebrate Earth Day. The tree was donated by your Jennings County Soil & Water Conservation District.







# AGENCY PARTNERS PAGE

## NRCS - Jenny Vogel, District Conservationist

### CRP's SAFE Program is Huge Success

In Jennings County we were fortunate to have an allotment of acres in the State Acres for Wildlife Enhancement (SAFE) Program which is part of the Conservation Reserve Program (CRP). The acres we were allotted are to be planted to habitat for the Henslow Sparrow. The Henslow Sparrow is a near threatened grassland bird. In the last year, producers in Jennings County have signed up to plant, or have planted, over 435 acres in warm season grasses and legumes providing habitat for this species. This type of planting is beneficial for other types of wildlife such as rabbits, quail, turkeys and many more. In addition, 25 producers have enhanced their planting with wildflowers that will provide habitat for the native pollinators. The Jennings County SWCD received a Clean Water Indiana Grant (CWI) that provided an incentive to producers to enhance their SAFE acreage by planting a pound of wildflowers per acre. This enhancement provided over 400 acres of pollinator habitat within the wildlife habitat. With the decrease in pollinators due to habitat loss, this program was available at a perfect time. Jennings County will be a buffet for the bees and butterflies! These pollinators are crucial for our fruits and vegetables such as blueberries, melons, tomatoes and more. It's a win-win situation for our wildlife, pollinators and those of us who like to eat! Even though the program has ended, the plantings will be around for the next 10 years, providing a multitude of benefits.

## FSA - Lacie Deputy, CED

### Farm Service Agency Program Updates

#### Required Management on CRP Acres

Participants in the Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) are responsible for completing required management on their CRP acreage. These management activities are separate from routine maintenance requirements and are outlined in the Conservation Plan of Operations (CPO).

Landowners must complete the necessary management activities outside of the Primary Nesting Season. In Indiana, the Primary Nesting Season for a contract that was approved for enrollment prior to February 8, 2007 has a primary nesting season of March 1 through July 15th. A contract that was approved for enrollment on or after February 8, 2007 has a primary nesting season of April 1 through August 1st.

Required management activities for grass practices include: prescribed burning, strip disking, strip spraying, inter-seeding forbs/legumes/pollinator habitat. Management practices for tree practices include: inner seedling planting, inter-seeding forbs/legumes/pollinator habitat, Invasive plant control, follow-up weed control, pruning/thinning.

When prescribed burning is identified as a management option, producers must be proactive in preventing the spread of wildfire. Fire management includes installing firebreaks, which should be included in the contract support document and installed according to NRCS firebreak standards.

The purpose of these required or Mid-Contract Management (MCM) activities is to enhance the wildlife habitat value of the enrolled acres for species such as Northern Bobwhite, pollinators, and others. In grass fields, the perennial grasses tend to crowd out desirable broadleaf plants and litter accumulates. So, a purpose of MCM is to set the perennial grasses back to enable these broadleaf plants to germinate and thrive. In tree plantings, undesirable vegetation may compete with young trees, or in older plantings, the trees may start to compete with each other and limit growth and wildlife habitat value. So a purpose of MCM is to help improve tree growth and maintain diversity—Continued on next page..

# Pathway Support

A surprise of \$1000 towards the development of the interactive pollinator pathway at the Jennings County Fair Grounds came from the Fair Board. Here, Fair Board member Beth Steiner presents the check to Andy Ertel, with the Soil and Water Conservation District.



The Jennings County Extension Homemakers made a generous contribution of \$250 towards the development of the Pollinator Pathway. Rob Chapman, Wildlife Biologist and Richard Winegarden, Volunteer, are holding the check. Both of these men serve on the Pollinator Committee

## Thanks to our Newsletter Sponsor

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**Dan McGuckin, CF, CWB**  
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Prescribed Burning

Would you like to have your business card featured here? Contact the SWCD office for more info.

## Farm Service Agency Program Updates—Continued

### Update Your Records

FSA is cleaning up our producer record database. If you have any unreported changes of address or zip code or an incorrect name or business name on file they need to be reported to our office. Changes in your farm operation, like the addition of a farm by lease or purchase, need to be reported to our office as well. Producers participating in FSA and NRCS programs are required to timely report changes in their farming operation to the County Committee in writing and update their CCC-902 Farm Operating Plan.



**Jennings County SWCD**  
**2600 N. State Hwy 7**  
**North Vernon, IN 47265**

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## **YOUR JENNINGS COUNTY CONSERVATION TEAM**

### **SWCD Staff**

*Andy Ertel, Executive Director*  
*Kelly Kent, Administrative Assistant*

### **NRCS STAFF**

*Jenny Vogel, District Conservationist*

### **SWCD Supervisors**

*Brad Ponsler, Chairman*  
*Dan Megel, Vice-Chairman*

*Jerry St. John*

*Matt Branham*

*Tom Schneider*

### **Associate Supervisor**

*Don Biehle*

*Rob McGriff*

*Bob Steiner*

## **Calendar of Events**

**May 24, 2016 Board Meeting 7pm @**  
**USDA Service Center**

**June 28, 2016 Board Meeting 7pm @**  
**USDA Service Center**

**July 11—16, 2016 Jennings Co. Fair**

**July 26, 2016 Pollinator Workshop**  
**@ Jennings County Fairgrounds**  
Check out our website for added events  
[www.jenningswcd.org](http://www.jenningswcd.org)

*Jennings County Soil and Water*  
*Conservation District*

### *Office Hours*

*Monday—Friday*

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