

CONSERVATION NEWS

MONROE COUNTY, INDIANA

"Conservation is about the Conversation"

NEWS FROM MONROE COUNTY SOIL & WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT & PARTNERS

MAKING HISTORY AT THE STATE HOUSE



ABOVE: Senator Eric Koch with Monroe County Soil & Water Conservation District Team: Erica Eason, Resource Specialist; Martha Miller, District Manager; Whitney Schlege, Board Chair; Clint Conard, Supervisor; Daniel Welage, NRCS -District Conservationist and Dallas Conder, 2nd Chair.

In 1943, Monroe County landowners envisioned a better future for their children and their children’s children by establishing the Monroe County Soil & Water Conservation District (SWCD) by a referendum vote. Eighty years later, that vision holds strong as conservation efforts to improve the land and protect the environment continue through the efforts of Monroe County’s SWCD and funding from the Clean Water Indiana (CWI) program.

On Tuesday, January 9, 2024, the Monroe County SWCD team shared the privilege of attending the Indiana Association Soil & Water Conservation Districts (IASWCD) annual meeting with hundreds of like-minded conservationists from across the State of Indiana. This year’s annual meeting proved to be history in the making.

For the past twenty years, Indiana legislators were only invited to attend a breakfast held during the IASWCD annual meeting. However, this year, the IASWCD took the conversation of conservation straight to the legislators and held the event in the State House itself!

Continued on next page.



ABOVE: Monroe Co SWCD Supervisors listen as Lt. Gov. Susan Crouch address the Clean Water Indiana Group.

LEFT: Lt. Gov. Susan Crouch and Les Zimmerman, IASWCD.

MAKING HISTORY AT THE STATE HOUSE CONTINUED

The breakfast at the State House event was in part a way to thank Indiana legislators for the increased funding of the Clean Water Indiana program for 2024 and 2025, as well as to express the importance of the consistent funding source that is the CWI program. Currently, the Clean Water Indiana program funds the operating expenses of all 92 Soil & Water Conservation Districts in Indiana, and itself is primarily funded through a portion of the State's cigarette tax revenue.

The CWI program is responsible for providing local matching funds, as well as grants for sediment and nutrient reduction projects. Additional matching of funds is acquired through the hard work of your local SCWD team and their important partnerships with other government services. This combination of state-funding and matching funds from partnerships helps support the mission of Monroe County SWCD and nurtures that vision made over eighty years ago for a better and brighter future in Monroe County!



Indiana Clean Water supporters brave the rain and cold to visit with legislators at the Indiana State House.



Representative Matt Pierce takes time before beginning his day to meet with Monroe County Soil & Water Conservation District Team.



Pictured from Left - Right: Erica Eason, Resource Specialist; Martha Miller, District Manager; Rep. Matt Pierce; Clint Conard, Supervisor; Whitney Schlegel, Supervisor; Dallas Conder, Supervisor.

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PRESIDENT TEDDY ROOSEVELT AT ANNUAL CONFERENCE



"I recognize the right and duty of this generation to develop and use the natural resources of our land; but I do not recognize the right to waste them, or to rob, by wasteful use, the generations that come after us."

-President Teddy Roosevelt

Joe Wiegand 'Teddy Roosevelt' was the Keynote speaker at the Indiana Association of Soil & Water Conservation District.

1943

Celebrating 80 years of Agriculture & Conservation

2023

The year was 1943, Franklin Delano Roosevelt was President. WWII was in full swing and America had been involved for 2 years. The Pentagon, was dedicated as the worlds largest office building. The All-American Girls Professional Baseball League played its first game. The ABC network (American Broadcasting Company) began broadcasting. And Monroe County farmers and landowners organized Monroe County Soil & Water Conservation District.

The Monroe County Soil Conservation District originally included parts of Beanblossom, Bloomington, Richland, Van Buren and Washington Township in Monroe County, Indiana with an approximate acreage of 44,800 acres.

The boundaries were extended in 1946 to include the entire County. Now, we celebrate 80 years of conservation!

FARM MEETING
ELLETTSVILLE H.S.
TUES. EVE. APR. 20
8 P.M.
MEETING TO BE CONDUCTED
BY STATE COMMITTEE
TO DETERMINE FEASIBILITY
OF
MONROE COUNTY
CONSERVATION DISTRICT

Dear Mr. Summ
Tonight the supervisors met
and elected Sumner Wiley - president
Walter Duncan Vice-president and
you as secretary. I am enclosing some
material which was passed
out.
Very truly yours
Glenn W. Poe
P.S. Next meeting will
be held November 4, 1943



1943

Celebrating 80 years of Agriculture & Conservation

2023

Saturday, March 23, 2024 -
Ivy Tech Bloomington - Shreve Hall
Doors Open at 8:00am / Breakfast Starts at 9:00am

Guest Speaker Hunter Smith

**Husband, Father, Farmer, Musician & former
NFL football player, Super Bowl Champion with
the Indianapolis Colts**



Out of all of the roles he fills, it is the farmer role he loves to talk about most.

And he can. Because he is a real farmer...doing real work...producing real food...in a real place.

Hunter challenges audiences with a 360 degree approach to farming as it affects families, communities, wildlife, and soil. His family farm, WonderTree, has become a central Indiana hub for local, pastured protein.

Hunter, in word and in deed, proves the merits of herbivores and omnivores—hoofed and beaked—living in synergistic ecological relationships. He believes people, the crowning achievement of creation, are the nucleus of this dynamic; as the people go, so goes the earth.

Hunter enjoys discussing the “why,” the “how,” the hardships, and the incalculable rewards awaiting people who, once again, enter into visceral relationships with nature through agriculture



1943

Celebrating 80 years of Agriculture & Conservation

2023

Saturday, March 23, 2024

Ivy Tech Bloomington - Shreve Hall

Doors Open at 8:00am / Breakfast Starts at 9:00am

Limited Seating. Purchase Your Tickets Today!



Scan the QR Code or
click to [Purchase Tickets](#)

\$15

You can also contact the office
to purchase a ticket
812-778-9948

Become A Friend of Conservation



Support
MONROE COUNTY

SOIL & WATER
CONSERVATION DISTRICT
Click to Donate

WOODLANDS & WILDLIFE: WHITE OAK MANAGEMENT

INDIANA FORESTRY & WOODLAND OWNERS ASSOCIATION

Oaks are a critical species for our Indiana forest ecosystems. They support more insects and wildlife than any other type of trees. But our oaks are projected to become a much smaller portion of the forest if landowners and foresters don't take action. If you are interested in encouraging white oak regeneration on your property, some helpful hints to get you started:

- Talk to a forester about your objectives and get their advice. If you don't have a forester, go to www.findindianaforester.org to see foresters working in Indiana.
- Determine if you have a white oak site. While it is adaptable to most anywhere in Indiana it has preferences for slope and aspect and will grow (and regenerate) best under certain sites and conditions.
- Identify the oak management practices that will work best for you, based on your objectives, time, and finances.
- Consider NRCS cost share programs that can provide payments for practices that encourage oak regeneration.
- Read the Landowners for Oaks Series from the White Oak Initiative for detail on recommended management practices. This series, made up of 11 publications, is geared toward landowners engaged in upland oak management with a focus on white oak.
- All factsheets in the series are available as a PDF for download at: <https://www.whiteoakinitiative.org/landowners-for-oaks>

Information Above taken from the Indiana Forestry & Woodland Owners Association



When early settlers discovered forests full of white oaks, they were ecstatic. They discovered a wood that rivaled the cherished English oak. They started using white oak wood in flooring, furniture, bridges, and railroad cars. The durability of white oak is prized so much so that it was commonly used as the keels of mine sweepers and patrol boats during World War II. As with many oak trees, white oak is not only sought after for its strength, but its longevity.

<https://arbordayblog.org/treeoftheweek/white-oak-king-kings/>

URBAN SOIL HEALTH

MISSION

Improve soil health on Indiana's urban and community small-scale agricultural land.



<https://www.urbansoilhealth.org/about>

ENHANCE local partnerships to form self-sustaining Working Groups across Indiana to address soil health in urban and small farm settings.

INCREASE the adoption of soil health management systems by urban and small-scale farmers and gardeners in production processes.

PROVIDE education to farmers and gardeners that operate diverse production systems. Co-learn from these growers' expertise and practices.

SLAUGHTER
ORCHARD & CIDERY

MONROE COUNTY PRODUCER TO RECEIVE ONE OF THREE INDIANA STATE DEPT OF AG SPECIALITY CROP GRANTS

The Indiana State Department of Agriculture (ISDA) announced three Indiana specialty crop projects that received a total sum of \$446,169 through funding provided by the United States Department of Agriculture's (USDA) Specialty Crop Block Grant Program (SCBGP).

"Agriculture is big business in Indiana and is incredibly diverse, and these projects are no different," said Lt. Gov. Suzanne Crouch, Indiana's Secretary of Agriculture and Rural Development. "This funding will allow the specialty crop sector in Indiana to flourish for years to come."

Specialty crops include fruits, vegetables, tree nuts, dried fruits and horticulture and nursery crops. For a full list of specialty crops please visit ams.usda.gov.

Annually, Specialty Crop Block Grants are available to non-profit and for-profit organizations, governments, public or private colleges and universities for up to a three-year project term and will fund specialty crop research, education and market development. To qualify, projects must aim to benefit the industry as a whole, rather than one product, individual or organization. Applications undergo a competitive scoring process, including review by an external scoring committee.

Some of the projects awarded this grant cycle include Bloomington's Slaughter Orchard and Cidery's efforts to reduce waste by promoting the use of ground harvested apples for hard ciders. Purdue University projects will develop a technique that will allow honey producers to ensure the quality of their honey products and create a produce food safety program for small fruit and vegetable growers in Indiana.

<https://salemlider.com/news/purdue-university-purdue-extension-and-slaughter-farms-awarded-grants-specialty-crop-research>

AG WORLD CONSERVATION: THREE WORDS - SAME FOCUS

Sustainable Farming- 1970's Regenerative Farming- 1980's Conservation Farming- 1990's

The words sustainable and regenerative farming sound a little strange and also somewhat familiar. That's because conservation farming was the forerunner of these terms.

In 1961 Richard Peden, a Monroe County Farmer, made this statement, "It's my ambition to have the water clear enough to drink when it runs off this farm." Richard (or Dick as he was known by family and friends) was on to something. Something, that in that time of history, was strange and new- using soil management to improve water quality.

Managing the soil was the root of his farming, because without healthy soil there was no farm. Dick went on to say, "A two-inch rain will run off muddy, and muddy water will carry away three tons of topsoil to the acre. That's as much as a farmer can build up in a year's good management." These were the principals that the Monroe County Soil & Water Conservation District's original board lived by.

So what exactly is Sustainable farming? Wikipedia explains it like this.

"Sustainable agriculture is farming in sustainable ways meeting society's present food and textile needs, without compromising the ability for current or future generations to meet their needs.[1] It can be based on an understanding of ecosystem services. There are many methods to increase the sustainability of agriculture. When developing agriculture within sustainable food systems, it is important to develop flexible business process and farming practices. Agriculture has an enormous environmental footprint, playing a significant role in causing climate change." https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sustainable_agriculture

So how is Regenerative farming different? Again, Wikipedia explains it like this.

"Regenerative agriculture is a conservation and rehabilitation approach to food and farming systems. It focuses on topsoil regeneration, increasing biodiversity,[1] improving the water cycle,[2] enhancing ecosystem services, supporting biosequestration,[3] increasing resilience to climate change, and strengthening the health and vitality of farm soil. Regenerative agriculture is not a specific practice itself. Rather, proponents of regenerative agriculture use a variety of sustainable agriculture techniques in combination.[4] Practices include recycling as much farm waste as possible and adding composted material from sources outside the farm." https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Regenerative_agriculture

Seems like Mr. Peden was on to something in 1964. He was an advocate and dedicated supporter of the Monroe County Soil & Water Conservation District and it's mission. While some of the practices have been improved upon, and the words we use have changed, conservation farmer's like Richard "Dick" Peden led the way.



WATERSHED NEWS: WHAT EXACTLY IS A WATERSHED?

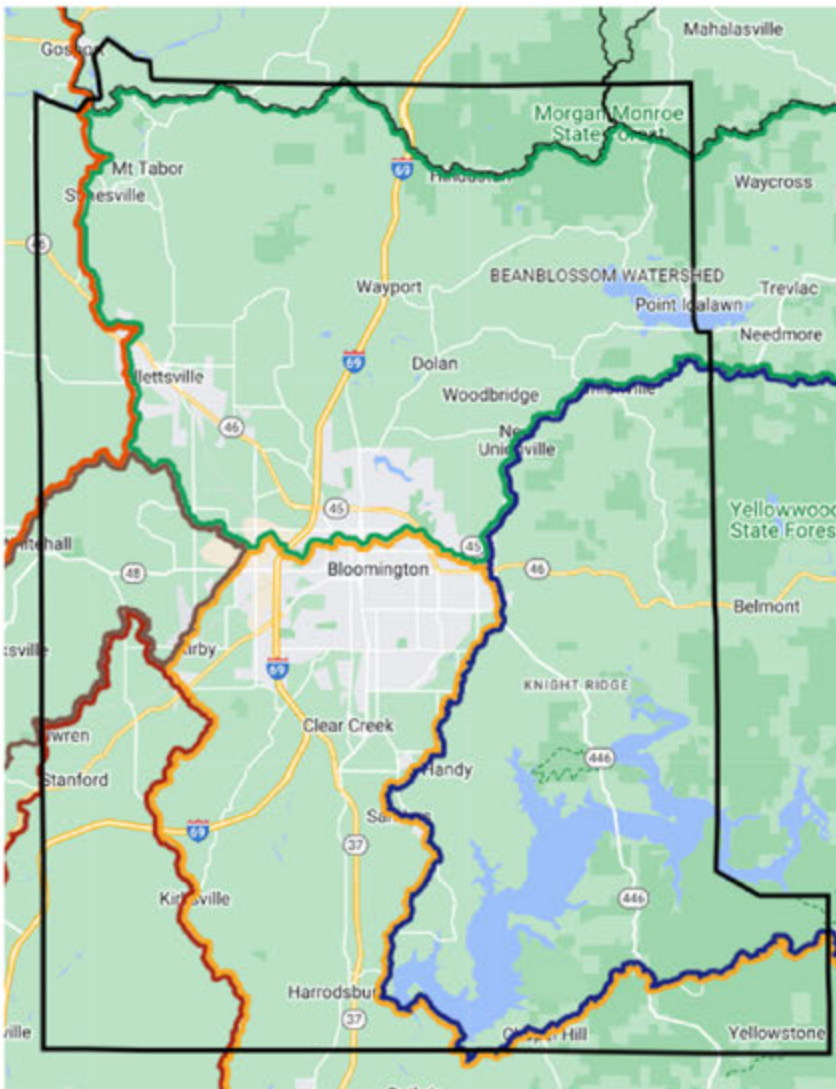
A watershed is an **area of land** that drains or “sheds” water into a specific waterbody. Every body of water has a watershed. Watersheds drain rainfall and snowmelt into streams and rivers. These smaller bodies of water flow into larger ones, including lakes, bays, and oceans. **Everyone lives in a watershed!**

In Monroe County there are seven HUC 10 watersheds. A HUC 10 is just a number assigned to a certain area or amount of land that water “sheds” across.

Currently there are IDEM approved management plans for:

- Beanblossom
- Salt Creek (Lake Monroe)
- Lower Salt Creek
- Plummer/Richland
- Fish

Click on the map below to go to an interactive Watershed Map to explore more. For questions about your watershed and activities you can get involved with, visit www.monroecsoil.org and click on the request assistance tab.



Land Use Includes all activities on land



WHAT'S COMING UP...

Advancing Ecological Restoration in the 21st Century



Ecological restoration uses science to restore nature's art. The tools and philosophy of this young practice are rapidly evolving as plant communities are better understood. Natural area managers have many more resources available than just a couple of decades ago. Monitoring and the resulting scientific publications have greatly increased our understanding of how plant communities react to everything from management activities to excessive herbivory. Invasive species monitoring has increased our ability to prioritize and effectively treat infestations. Experienced land stewards have learned best management practices for maintaining the integrity of the plant communities under their watch.

Our natural areas are set within a larger landscape that has been subject to a wide range of anthropogenic disturbance since European settlement. This history is vital to understanding and stabilizing the ecological processes that were disrupted by this disturbance. Further, approaching restoration from a larger watershed perspective enables us to reconnect systems and address larger issues outside the boundaries of natural areas such as nutrient and sediment management.

Featuring guest speakers:

Justin Thomas

Cassie Hauswald

- Bob Easter
- Kevin Tunesvick
- Ellen Jacquart
- Michael Jenkins

Please join us as we explore these topics and network with other restoration professionals at our ecological restoration conference on March 5th.

[Get Your Tickets Today!](#)

WHAT'S COMING UP...

Daviess County SWCD Presents:

SOUTHERN INDIANA GRAZING CONFERENCE

SPEAKERS:

Dr. Will Winter
Wesley Tucker
Devon Churchill

COST:

\$35 Per Person (postmarked by 3/8/24)
\$70 Meet & Greet
\$45 Per Person (postmarked by 3/21/24)
\$90 Meet & Greet
\$50 Per Person (postmarked on or after
3/22/24)
**Includes refreshments & lunch

TO REGISTER:

Online: <https://sigc2024.eventbrite.com>
***Additional Fees Apply

By Mail: Send form & check to Daviess Co
SWCD @ 2526 E National Hwy.,
Washington, IN 47501

Questions?: Daviess Co SWCD 812.
254.4780 Ext. 3

There will also be a Meet & Greet the evening before the Conference (additional fee required). This includes a homestyle Amish meal & opportunity to talk with SIGC speakers. The Meet & Greet will be held at the Gasthof Amish Restaurant in Montgomery, IN on March 26, 2024, 6-8 pm (EST). You must have a paid conference registration to attend. Seats are limited.



8:30 am-3:45 pm EST

27
March

Shiloh Community Center
8872 E 1000 N,
Odon, IN 47562

Doors open @7:30am EST

WHAT'S COMING UP...

Diversified Farming and Food Systems



2024

INDIANA SMALL FARM CONFERENCE

February 29 - March 1

Hendricks County Fairgrounds • Danville, Indiana

Monroe County Master Gardeners

2024 SPRING GARDEN FAIR

Saturday, April 13, 2024

9:00 am - 4:00 pm

Switchyard Park Pavilion

1601 S Rogers Street

Bloomington IN

**Stop By and
Visit Us There!**



WHAT'S COMING UP...

The 27th annual Great Backyard Bird Count February 16 through 19, 2024



A group of cardinals and juncos perch on bare, thin branches in the snow.

Flock Together for the
Great Backyard Bird Count

Share the joy of birding with others
during this global event.

[Visit AUDUBON for more information](#)

CONNECT WITH US



Conservation Team



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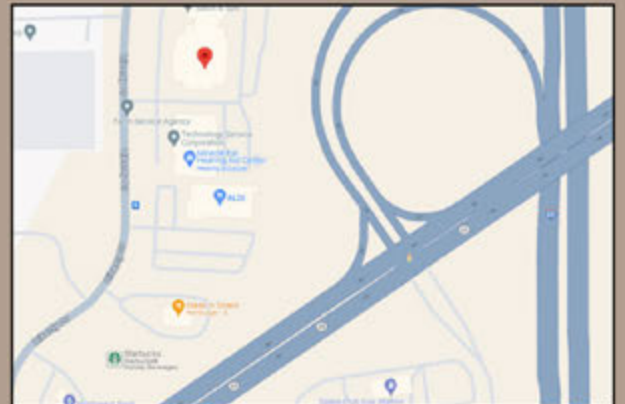
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 [Instagram: monroecsoil](https://www.instagram.com/monroecsoil)

 [Youtube: monroecoswcd](https://www.youtube.com/monroecoswcd)



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