

CONSERVATION CONVERSATIONS

A QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER OF
MARSHALL COUNTY SOIL & WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT
2903 GARY DRIVE PLYMOUTH IN 46563
574-936-2024 X 3



June 2017

www.marshallcountyswcd.org

Summer

Reducing Nutrient Load

“Across the Mississippi River Basin, 45% reductions in nitrogen and phosphorus loads are necessary to meet national goals established to reduce the size of the Gulf of Mexico hypoxic zone (USEPA, 2007). To address this challenge, nutrient loss reduction strategies were completed in Iowa in 2013, Minnesota in 2014, and Illinois and Indiana in 2015. The release of these state-based strategies in the upper Midwest has heightened the conversation around drainage nitrate loss to an unprecedented level. While tile drainage systems are essential components of agriculture in this area (Skaggs and van Schilfgaarde, 1999), we must collectively work at a scale never before realized to meet our water quality goals. This effort will require a variety of water quality practices implemented broadly across the Corn Belt landscape. No one practice will be suitable for every acre, but every acre needs at least one new practice to meet these ambitious goals.

There are a number of practices now being promoted as a part of state nutrient strategies, all of which have different N-reduction effectiveness, spatial suitability, additional benefits and impacts, and cost. Producers, crop advisors, and agri-business and drainage industry professionals are being asked to consider these practices, but there is no comprehensive multi-state source of information presented in a practical Extension-style format allowing these practices to be compared and assessed for suitability at individual sites. Consistent and thorough information is required to provide clarity about these practices to aid in on-farm decision making and informed policy and planning decisions across the region.”

Laura Christianson

Assistant Professor, Department of Crop Sciences

University of Illinois

Contact the SWCD office to get a free copy of the publication [Ten Ways to Reduce Nitrogen Loads from Drained Cropland in the Midwest](#)

Headwaters Yellow River Watershed Management Plan Update

We are in the final phase of a three year grant to create a Watershed Management Plan (WMP) for the Headwaters of the Yellow River Watershed. The final draft has been submitted to IDEM. As part of the grant we are creating a drone video of the watershed as well as planning a field day sometime in the fall. Creating the WMP is not the last step but the first step in improving water quality. We are working on a 319 Implementation Grant application to help fund improvements. Stay tuned for more information.





GO GREEN!

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Hoosier Riverwatch Training

Volunteer Lake & Stream Monitoring Workshop

Saturday July 22, 2017

Marshall County SWCD Office

Time: 8:30 am—4:00 pm

Bring lunch and shoes for getting in the river!

Watershed Walking Tour

Take a walk in Plymouth's Centennial Park

You will learn about:

Stream Monitoring
Rain Gardens
Native Songbirds
and more

(Date To Be Determined)

More information is available at www.marshallcountyswcd.org. Both events are free and open to the public. Registration is required. Please contact the SWCD office at 574-936-2024 x 3 or info@marshallcountyswcd.org

COMMUNITY GARDEN UPDATE

- ◆ Planted thornless, fall blackberries—looking for a crop fall 2018
- ◆ Planted everbearing strawberries—looking for a crop later this year
- ◆ Sensory Bed—use your senses to touch, taste, see and smell
- ◆ Bee's Buffet planted for the pollinators
- ◆ Wheelchair Accessible Raised Bed is a huge hit
- ◆ Clay saucers as a water source for the pollinators



Volunteers Welcome!

USDA and the Marshall County SWCD prohibit discrimination in their programs on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, religion, age, disability, political beliefs and marital or familial status.

Conservation: the careful maintaining and protection of something valuable especially in its natural or original state

Marshall County SWCD

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