

2023 Annual Report



Allen County
Soil & Water
Conservation District



Join the Allen County SWCD at an upcoming event

North East Indiana Farmer Forum



Going Green for Ag



Join ADM re:generations, The Maumee Watershed Alliance, and Allen County Soil & Water Conservation District, Conservation Cropping Systems Initiative, and Purdue University Extension in Decatur, Indiana for a Farmer Forum. Learn more about the latest in cover crops and what new incentives will be available.

Special Guest Speakers Barry Fisher & Rodney Rulon, Farmer Roundtables, and more!

8:30 a.m. Thursday, March 14th 2024

Zion-Friedheim Lutheran Church Family Life Center,
10653 N 550 W Decatur, IN 46733



Conservation Cropping
Systems Initiative

Registration Requested



Urban Soil Health Day

Join the Allen County SWCD for our 1st Urban Soil Health Day!
This event will focus on conservation practices for urban and small farms.

Saturday, July 13 2024

A Day At The

Lake

Date TBA 2024

Experience Lake Erie aboard an Ohio State University research vessel and visit the beautiful Put-In-Bay, Ohio with the Allen County Soil and Water Conservation District!

Annual Soil Health Field Day

September 4, 2024

Roemke Farms

12125 State Rd 101 Harlan, In 46743

Allen County SWCD Smart Soils Initiative

What is the Smart Soils Initiative?

A new program from Allen County SWCD that utilizes digital technology tools, an advanced drone and soil moisture sensors to provide technical assistance to farmers interested in testing conservation practices, such as no-till and/or cover crops on their farms.

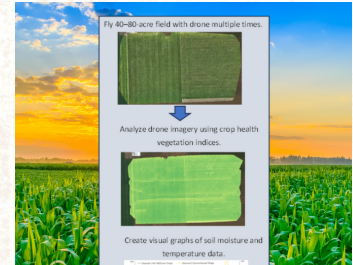
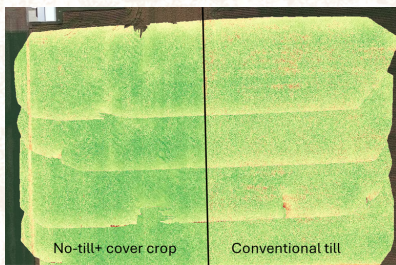
This opportunity can provide on-farm data unique to each farm and help producers decide what is best for their farm operation.

How much does it cost?

The Smart Soils Initiative is a no-cost, free service to farmers located in Allen County, Indiana.

How much work is expected from the producer?

One of the main objectives of this program is not to be a heavy burden to the farmer, who can choose how much they want to participate in their on-farm demo. We have a specialized, trained staff person who can help with field site selection, experimental design, and data collection. We only ask the farmer to be willing to provide cropping management details and harvest data for our statistical analysis. Following harvest season, we will meet with the farmer to present them the un-biased results of their on-farm demo.



LIVE COLORFULLY.
GROW BEAUTIFULLY.

proudly sponsored by



The USDA is an equal opportunity provider, employer, and lender.



The Allen County SWCD partnered with Chris and Vonda Walker and the Bloomingdale Neighborhood Association to expand the Bloomingdale Gardens with funding from the Small and Urban Farms Program.

The District installed 6 raised beds illustrating mulching techniques, cover crops, and various soil health practices. The District, partnering with the Walkers, hosted garden tours, cover crop planting demonstrations, and community events. The garden is open to the public- 420 High Street, Fort Wayne, IN.

ANNUAL FINANCIAL REPORT OF ALLEN County

January 1, 2023 through December 31, 2023

File with State Board of Accounts by February 29, 2024 (via Gateway) and
within GMS by March 31, 2024.

Balance Brought Forward	\$	127,021.88
RECEIPTS		
State for District Operations	\$	13,000.00
Federal and State Funds (not CWI)	\$	285,487.84
Non Government Grants	\$	7,818.10
Total Intergovernmental Receipts	\$	306,305.94
Equipment Rental & Farm Income	\$	12,764.24
Donations & Memberships	\$	13,883.75
Total Charges for Services	\$	26,647.99
Annual Meeting Income	\$	42.00
Interest from Checking, CDs, Savings, Etc.	\$	17.67
Sale of Used Equipment	\$	196,602.50
Sales Income	\$	3,445.83
Workshop/Field Day Income	\$	4,250.40
Other Miscellaneous Revenue (Sales Tax Collected)	\$	9.17
Other Miscellaneous Revenue (2023 EOY Balance Adj.)	\$	4.20
Total Miscellaneous Revenue	\$	204,371.77
Sub-Total (before investment activity)	\$	537,325.70
TOTAL (balance forward + receipts + investments)	\$	664,347.58
DISBURSEMENTS		
Capital Outlays (Equipment)	\$	57,085.05
Annual Meeting Expenses	\$	1,552.43
Audit Expense	\$	262.20
Conservation Education Programs	\$	1,000.00
Cost-Share Projects/Federally-Funded	\$	311,511.49
Dues & Subscriptions	\$	4,930.00
Employee Salaries Paid by District	\$	457.62
Office Supplies (D201)	\$	3,853.29
Other Services & Charges (D312)	\$	5,015.53
Postage & Delivery & Operating Expenses (D202)	\$	9.65
Rent	\$	3,100.19
Repair Expenses	\$	157.00
Taxes Paid	\$	9.09
Supplies for Resale	\$	2,464.17
Telephone or Other Utilities	\$	60.82
Travel/Lodging/Mileage/Registration/Meals (D302)	\$	6,051.05
Workshop/Field Day Expense (D312)	\$	11,160.40
Other Disbursements (NGO Other Grant Expenses)	\$	10,845.67
Other Disbursements (Other Supplies)	\$	4,086.84
Other Disbursements (Other Local Government funding)	\$	880.06
Total General Government Disbursements	\$	424,492.55
Sub-Total (before investment activity)	\$	424,492.55
TOTAL DISBURSEMENTS (disbursements + investments)	\$	424,492.55
BALANCE AT DECEMBER 31	\$	239,855.03
CLAIMS PAID BY COUNTY		
Salaries	\$	136,374.00
Fringe	\$	22,673.00
Other	\$	21,380.00
INVESTMENT INVENTORY		
Beginning Investments		\$1,357.37
Ending Investments		\$1,357.37
CASH BOXES		
Petty Cash	\$	70.00
Cash Change	\$	50.00



From Your District



The Allen County Soil and Water Conservation District had a busy 2023. We hosted nine events and participated in an additional eleven in and around Allen County. The District was able to connect with hundreds of growers and community members to promote the wise use of our soil, water, and related natural resources. We offered free soil testing and technical assistance to over fifty growers and gardeners within the Western Lake Erie Basin. We partnered with local organizations to offer classes, webinars, and workshops on seed saving, cover crop planting and termination, interpreting soil tests, marketing your farm operation, conservation programs, nutrient management, and more. We worked with New Tech Academy on the build of watershed display for our education trailer. We partnered with Easter Seals Arc through our Bloomingdale Gardens Project, and we offered support to our local 4-H clubs through classes and guidance.

2023 provided some much needed growth for the District. We added three Conservation Program Specialists to our staff. These specialists work one on one with producers to promote conservation in our area. We would like to welcome Rhiannon Lake, Jesus Rosario, and Mark Rekeweg to our dynamic team.

Last year Watershed Project Manager, Joelle Neff, left the District to pursue a career with the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS). With Joelle's departure we had a very important role to fill within the District. We were very fortunate to bring Elyssa Lewis on as our new Watershed Project Manager. Elyssa will be heading up the Urban and Small Farms Program. Elyssa graduated from Purdue with a degree in Sustainable Farm Systems. Her passion for conservation and urban farming will be a huge asset to the District.

As winter comes to an end and we begin to think spring, keep in mind that the Allen County SWCD is a resource to you and the community. We offer free soil testing and technical assistance. We can connect you with resources and programs available to your specific needs. Our dedicated staff would love the opportunity to meet with you and discuss your operation, whether you are a large scale producer or a community gardener, we are here to help.

Native Plant Sale!

In 2023 The Allen County Soil and Water Conservation District partnered with Riverview Nursery to hold a Native Plant Sale! Building on last year's successes we are doing it again. Plants are now on sale and will be ready prior to Mother's Day!

All orders with payment must be to the Allen Co. SWCD office by April 12, 2024.

Pickup date is **May 11, 2024** at Bloomingdale Gardens, 420 High St, Fort Wayne, IN 46808.



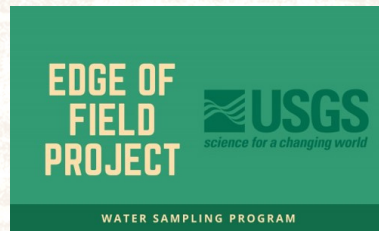
Project Updates and Highlights

Urban and Small Farms Program

In 2022, the Allen SWCD assisted 12 farmers and gardeners in collecting nearly 24 soil tests. Each of these growers received a nutrient management recommendation once the soil sample was analyzed. The District partnered with our local NRCS staff to answer questions about soil health (particularly cover crops) and high tunnels. The Urban and Small Farms Program hosted 8 virtual workshops through the “Coffee and” webinar series; this series has reached over 250 individuals, many of whom are farmers or gardeners within the Western Lake Erie Basin. Through a partnership with The Maumee Watershed Alliance, the District was able to provide Pontoon Eco Tours to 65 individuals in 2023. Finally, the demonstration garden beds at Bloomingdale Gardens were established and used multiple times to teach various soil health practices.



USGS Edge of Field Project



Allen SWCD and USGS partnership: Edge of Field Project. This project collaborates with local farmers to collect water samples to measure nutrients, sediment, and other critical elements for USGS research.

The SWCD staff were trained how to collect samples and send the collection and other information to USGS.

Information is collected and sent after significant rain/snow fall events when water has entered the systems.

The systems are built on the land of cooperating landowners and farmers, at no cost to the farmer. USGS incurs all of the installation costs and other necessary elements.

Healthy Soils Collaborative

In 2023 the Allen County SWCD partnered with Purdue Extension and Heartland Communities to form a working group through the Indiana Association of Soil and Water Conservation District's Urban Soil Health Program. Through this program The Healthy Soils Collaborative is able to offer urban growers free soil testing and technical assistance.



Project Updates and Highlights

On Farm Demo

The district entered into a three year contribution agreement from NRCS to implement demonstration farms across the Western Lake Erie Basin. Within these farms they will demonstrate different best management practices, equipment or new innovative technology. If you are interested in becoming a candidate for your farm to be a part of our program please reach out to Allen County SWCD to get more information.



NACD

A National Association of Conservation Districts, NACD, grant allows our District Conservationist Tim Bomba a component that helps put conservation on the ground. The funding for a Technical Specialist/Agronomist gives producers support for implementing soil saving and soil health practices such as reduced tillage, cover crops, nutrient management, manure handling, and erosion control. The experience of using conservation farming gives producers a mentor to talk and share details with, and helps them be successful.



CRP Contribution Agreement

Allen County SWCD was awarded a contribution agreement through a NRCS funded project in 2020. The agreement is a five-year long project that is based on the Conservation Reserve Program (CRP). The district received the grant to do the work of 15 different counties across the state of Indiana. We are doing very detailed work both in the field and in the office, providing information to Farm Service Agency for newly established and re-enrollment agreements. Each year nearly 500 site visits are made to identify established practices. Allen County SWCD is working on 600 plans per year all around the state!



IUPUI



The Allen County SWCD assisted Indiana University Purdue University Indianapolis (IUPUI) in their carbon research efforts. The researchers at IUPUI want to further understand the impact that agricultural practices have on the release of carbon from the soil. The Allen County SWCD assisted this research by performing testing on three different fields that have the same soil type but are managed differently. One of the fields is managed conventionally. The second field is no-tilled, and it does not incorporate cover crops. The third field incorporates no-till and cover crops. The big question is, which management style will release the most carbon, and which will release the least amount of carbon?

For more information on programs available through the Allen County SWCD, upcoming events, and how to become involved, visit our website at www.allenswcd.org.