



CONSERVATION CONNECTION

The Montgomery County Soil & Water Conservation District Newsletter



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Director's Statement

What a year! We accomplished a lot in 2022 with new events, new partnerships, and a brand new urban soil health working group, Community Growers of Montgomery County (CGMC)! We are still navigating hybrid events as we continue to offer some meetings both in-person and on Zoom. I was able to experience my first 4th grade field days after two years of cancellations. It is simply amazing what our team was able to accomplish over those few days. We reached hundreds of students and were grateful for the wonderful weather.

The year brought some challenges as well. This year we had twice the fieldwork in the fall as we were checking two years' worth of CRP practices. Double the waterways and double the filter strips to equal about 400 practices reviewed!

We have greatly expanded our outreach to include urban communities and we look forward to reaching new producers, community groups, and gardeners in the coming year. Thank you to all of our partners, the USDA service center staff, and the dedicated citizens of the county for all their help in propelling our programs forward and helping to conserve the county's natural resources!

Kristen Latzke
Conservation Director

Upcoming Events & Important Dates

- Dec. 23th-26th: Office Closed
- January 2nd: Office Closed
- January 5th: January SWCD Board Meeting in the USDA Service Center conference room at 8 am
- January 16th: Office Closed
- January 19th: CISMA Steering Committee Meeting at 5pm in the USDA Service Center Conference Room
- January 24th: Upper Sugar Creek Project steering committee meeting 2pm HHSB Success Center
- January 24th: Recreationalist Listening Session at 6 pm HHSB Success Center
- February 2nd: SWCD Board Meeting at 8 am at the USDA Service Center Conference Room
- February 20th: Office Closed
- February 27th: 2023 Montgomery County Annual Meeting Stone Creek Lodge 5 pm
- April 6th: April SWCD Board Meeting in the USDA Service Center conference room at 8 am
- April 7th: Office Closed

Upper Sugar Creek Watershed Project

4th Quarter Update: August 18th- November 17th

Sara Peel, Arion Consultants

The second draft of the watershed management plan was submitted to IDEM on August 15, 2022. The steering committee met on October 25, 2022, to review stakeholder concerns and associated data.

Water chemistry monitoring occurred on August 17th, September 28th, October 24th, and November 16th, and will occur through the end of the year. Biological monitoring occurred in July and August with fish community assessments occurring on July 18th-20th and August 1st and macroinvertebrate community and habitat assessments occurring on July 15th and 16th. Macroinvertebrate community identification is underway and the species list and IBI, mIBI and QHEI data will be included in the next draft of the watershed management plan.

The Upper Sugar Creek steering committee met on October 25, 2022, reviewed stakeholder concerns and associated evidence as well as discussed upcoming outreach events. Wabash College students are working to compile public meeting comments and results and transcriptions from the farmer listening session, which will be incorporated into the next WMP draft. The Montgomery County SWCD social media will be used to promote the project and has been updated 18 times with relevant information. The Upper Sugar Creek informational brochure continues to be distributed including at the farmer listening session and at high-profile locations.

October Events

Here at the office we had an October full of forestry themed events! We removed a ton of invasive species, both on the Sugar Creek Trail and our office complex, including honey suckle, burning bush, and spirea with the help from the public and two lab sections from Wabash college. We also had a Women4theLand Forestry Learning Circle where women landowners were able to learn, ask questions, and teach each other about all things forest management. We have wrapped up all of our events for the year, but check back in next year on our website at <https://montgomerycoswcd.com/events/> to find events that may interest you.

Below: Wabash students stand with a pile of honeysuckle. This was just a fraction that was removed during this weed wrangle.



To the left: attendees of learning circle during introductions.

To the right: attendees of learning circle learn about pruning techniques.



Annual Meeting Save the Date!

Stonecreek Lodge 2865 IN-47 Crawfordsville, IN

5:30 PM - 8:30 PM

February 27th, 2023

RSVP by calling 765-362-0405 ext. 3
or using the QR code to the right



Get to Know Us!

Raoul Moore, Secretary/Treasurer

Raoul's family moved to the area in 1954 when his father got an English Professor job at Wabash. In 1956 his family moved to a 40 acre hobby farm north of town at junction of Walnut Fork and Sugar Creek. They grew most of their food and truck farmed for some income. His father did timber stand improvement and planted a hard to access field near the creek to trees in 1958. One of those walnut seedlings is now 24" diameter at breast height (DBH). The Moore Family Farm currently has about 700 acres of woodlands with about half of those as plantations from 25 different years. The changes in AG have made many smaller, high perimeter to volume fields uneconomic to farm. Some soils since the clearing off of the state and 100 years of plowing have lost fertility also making them unattractive for farming. Raoul's hope is to get more people nurturing their woodlands and converting areas to trees.

