

ST. JOSEPH RIVER REVIEW

A PUBLICATION BY THE ST. JOSEPH RIVER WATERSHED INITIATIVE

St. Joseph River Watershed Initiative - 3718 New Vision Drive - Ft. Wayne, IN 46845 - (260) 484-5848, ext. 3
www.sjrwi.org

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Dear Watershed Stakeholder,

Did you know that the 694,400 acres that make up the St. Joseph River watershed is a dynamic economic driver in Indiana, Ohio and Michigan?



It's true. The beautiful landscape, productive farmland, plentiful water, excellent transportation corridors, and industrious workforce combine to make our three states an economic engine as well as a great place to live, work and play.

As citizens and stakeholders of this watershed, our job is to maintain, protect, and improve our land and water so that future generations can use and enjoy our portion of the Great Lakes Basin as much as we do.

At the St. Joseph River Watershed Initiative, our mission is to develop partnerships that promote economical and environmentally compatible land uses to improve water quality in the St. Joseph River Watershed. With our partners, we provide outreach education

throughout the watershed, we support the voluntary actions of landowners to use Best Management Practices on their land, and we monitor and track the quality of water in the river and its tributaries.

We maintain a water quality database that helps identify sources of pollution and critical areas for intervention. We support conservation efforts. We provide assistance for watershed management and planning, and the coordination of rural, urban and suburban water quality concerns. We share information about the watershed through public educational forums and training of volunteers.

We believe that you will want to be part of our effort to sustain our watershed and preserve its natural beauty for the next generation. Please consider becoming an active partner in the work of the St. Joseph River Watershed Initiative.

To find out more, please contact us at the St. Joseph River Watershed Initiative office, 260-484-5848 x120, or visit us on the web, www.sjrwi.org.

Gratefully,

Mary Jane Slaton
Chair, Board of Directors

Jane Loomis
Executive Director

Get involved!

- Join in one of our projects in your locality
- Train to become a volunteer water quality monitor
- Adopt your local stream for clean-up activities
- Sponsor an educational activity in your neighborhood
- Place conservation practices on your urban, suburban or rural land
- Become a regular financial donor to the Initiative
- Serve as a technical advisor or member of the Board of Directors

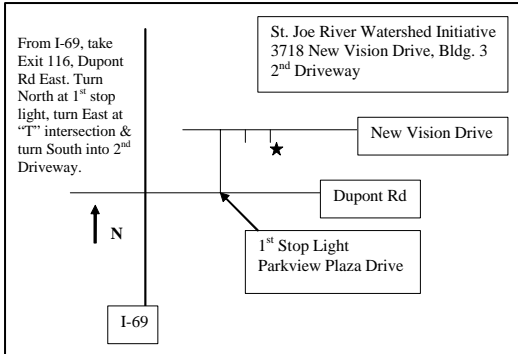
Lower St. Joseph-Bear Creek Subwatershed

Setting Goals and Taking Steps to a Cleaner Watershed

The stakeholder meeting for the 4th quarter of 2006 is scheduled for 6:30 p.m. Thursday evening, December 14, at the Allen County USDA Service Center, located at 3718 New Vision Drive in northern Fort Wayne.

The focus of the stakeholder meeting will be the draft watershed management plan. The draft is available for review on the Initiative's website, www.sjrwi.org.

Think "worst first" – how can we reduce pollution most efficiently? Will it happen in your neighborhood?



"We've gathered input from stakeholders, collected data, and created maps. The next steps are to determine which problems are causing the most damage and what treatment measures will have the most effect, and then to set up specific and realistic targets for reducing pollutants and mitigating impacts," said Jane Loomis, director of the planning project. "We need everyone's help to establish exactly what should be done to improve the watershed, and to determine which steps come first. We have to think *worst first* – how can we reduce pollution most efficiently at the lowest cost?"

Please roll up your sleeves and join us on December 14 to celebrate how far we've come with the plan and to move on to the important next steps! Holiday refreshments will be served. ■



Fort Wayne City Utilities Wins Award



Fort Wayne City Utilities received the 2005 Platinum Award for Sustained Competitiveness from the Association of the Metropolitan Water Agencies. Platinum Award winners are regarded as some of the country's best-operated water systems.

Every year, the Fort Wayne City Utilities is required by law to produce a drinking water quality report or a Consumer Confidence Report (CCR). This report contains information on the source of water and the quality and health risks associated with any contaminants in the water. This information helps consumers make an informed choice about the water they drink.

For more information see www.cityoffortwayne.org or www.epa.gov/safewater/ccr/index.html ■

SJRWI Water Quality Checks



Riverwatchers-Get Connected

"Getting Connected with the Database" is the focus of the next Hoosier Riverwatch volunteers meeting. There will be a demonstration on how to enter data into the Riverwatch database so volunteers will be more comfortable with the process. What do you do with all that data and how do you access it? These questions and more will be discussed at the meeting on December 6 at 6:30 p.m. at the St. Joseph River Watershed Initiative office, located in the Allen County USDA Service Center building, 3718 New Vision Drive, Fort Wayne. ■



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Cedar Creek Subwatershed

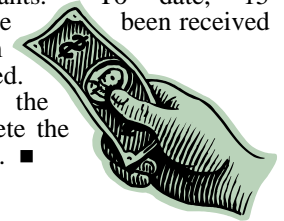
Stakeholder Meeting

Let's come together and celebrate how far we've come to date! There will be a stakeholder meeting on December 12 at the Eckhart Library in Auburn at 6:00 p.m. Check out the progress that has been made in the Cedar Creek watershed so far! You'll see reports on the Cedar Creek signage project, best management and septic system cost-share programs, and the watershed education curriculum effort. Holiday refreshments provided. ■



Cost-Share Septic System Replacement Program

The Cedar Creek Cost Share Replacement Program is continuing to accept new applicants. To date, 15 applications for cost-share have been received and three septic system installations have been completed. Applicants who contract with the program have one year to complete the replacement of their failing system. ■



The Septic-Soil Connection

According to Dr. Brad Lee, associate professor of Soils Science, Purdue University, Indiana soils aren't *bad*. Some soils in Indiana just have more problems than others when it comes to septic systems. The soils in Northeast Indiana are great soils – for crops. But we need to take extra care and attention when placing septic systems in this area.

Dr. Lee joined Dr. Don Jones, professor of Agricultural and Biological Engineering, Purdue University, for a conference on November 9 focusing on septic system maintenance and other issues, such as placement of septic systems, common causes of failure, and the importance of common sense use and regular maintenance. The conference, entitled *Down and Dirty – The Septic-Soil Connection*, drew 53 attendees, including homeowners, installers, inspectors, real estate professionals, and soil scientists. A question-and-answer session allowed many from the audience to ask specific questions of the presenters.

According to one attendee, it was "...A great presentation for conscientious homeowners. This helps to educate on do's and don'ts of septic system use."

Health department professionals were also on hand to answer questions and provide information. Gary Chapple of the Fort Wayne-Allen County department joined Bernie Sukala and Cathy Manuel from the DeKalb County department and Jack Chronister from Noble County. Denise Wright, Environmental Scientist for Residential Onsite Sewage Systems for the Indiana State Department of Health was also available to provide information and answer questions.

Supper preceding the conference was provided by Eickholtz, Inc., Zimmerman Brothers Excavating Services, Pirana ABG Systems, and LaOtto Excavating. *Down and Dirty* was sponsored by the SJRWI, along with the three county health departments, the DeKalb County Soil and Water Conservation District and the Indiana Department of Environmental Management, funded through the Cedar Creek Watershed Management Plan Implementation grant.

For more information about septic system maintenance, check out the links on the Initiative's website, www.sjrwi.org. ■



Dr. Don Jones explains septic systems at the Down & Dirty septic conference

The average single-family home uses 80 gallons of water per person each day in the winter and 120 gallons in the summer. Showering, bathing and using the toilet account for about two-thirds of the average family's water usage.



Conservation Tillage

“Farmers that were unable to get their fall strip-tillage completed could consider spring strip-tillage in March if dry soil conditions exist that allow soil fracturing.” said Tony Vyn, Purdue University Cropping Systems Specialist. He strongly recommends that only shallow strip-tillage (6” to 8”) be considered. If the strip-tillage unit accommodates rolling baskets, the baskets with straight bars should be used, and that additional down pressure be applied to the baskets when operated in the spring.

Additionally, if poor soil conditions due to adverse weather prevents the strip-tillage being completed in March (ideally four weeks prior to planting), the producer should forego strip-tillage and consider use of a shallow spring tillage tool such as the Phillips or Phoenix Rotary Harrow, Great Plains Turbo-till or other similar residue-disturbing tool. Vyn also states: “I encourage producers to run these units shallow and to only use them on a single pass. Research has shown that



running these units on a second or third pass can be detrimental to both plant stands and final yields.” ■

Cost Share

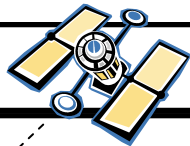
Cost Share opportunities exist for agricultural producers in the St. Joseph River watershed. Three programs are available, Conservation Tillage Practices, Nutrient and Pest Management Practices and Crop Consulting Services. There is a 100 acre commitment with a 75% cost-share with a maximum payment of \$3,000. For more information, contact Greg Lake at (260) 484-5848 X3. ■

Tillage Equipment Available

A wet fall has all but eliminated the ability of producers to do any kind of fall tillage. The Initiative’s equipment will still be available in spring. The 2007 Expo will focus on how to work with no-till on very wet lands. ■



See what’s new on the St. Joseph River Watershed Initiative website at www.sjrwi.org



Coming Soon!

2007 Tri-State Conservation Tillage Expo

“The Next Generation of Production Agriculture”
February 28

Auburn Cord Duesenberg Museum, Auburn, Indiana.



“Water is the most critical resource issue of our lifetime and our children’s lifetime. The health of our waters is the principal measure of how we live on the land.”

- Luna Leopold, Hydrologist



*Happy Holidays from the
St. Joseph River
Watershed Initiative*

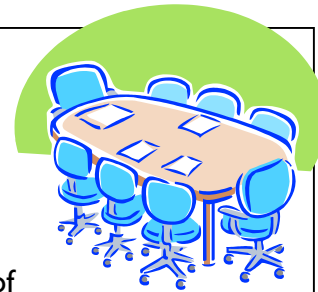


Thank you to the following individuals and organizations for their donations during the third quarter to the St. Joseph River Watershed Initiative.

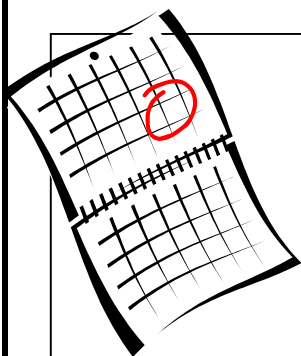
- Wal-Mart •
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And to all our volunteers and partners who help promote the work of the St. Joseph River Watershed Initiative.

Board of Directors Meeting



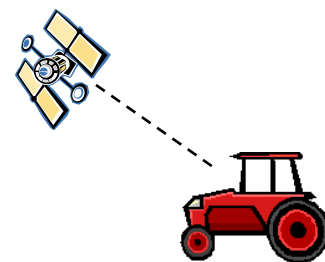
The public is invited to attend the next Board of Directors meeting for the St. Joseph River Watershed Initiative on December 4 at 6:30 p.m. The meeting will be held at the DeKalb County Annex Building, 215 E. 9th Street. ■



Upcoming Events

St. Joseph River Watershed Initiative

- **December 4** Board of Directors Meeting for the St. Joseph River Watershed Initiative at 6:30 p.m., DeKalb County Annex Building, Auburn, IN.
- **December 6** Hoosier Riverwatch Volunteer's Meeting 6:30 p.m. (See page 2 for details).
- **December 12** Cedar Creek Stakeholder Meeting 6:30 p.m. (See page 3 for details).
- **December 14** St. Joseph-Bear Creek Stakeholder Meeting 6:30 p.m. (See page 2 for details).
- **February 28, 2007** 2007 Tri-State Conservation Tillage Expo



Noble County

- **Tree Sale**, Noble County SWCD. Pre-order required with pick-up on April 13, 2007. Contact Stacey McGinnis at 260-636-7682 x3 for more information.



Williams County, Ohio

- **March 24** Maple Syrup Day, Williams County Fairgrounds. ■

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St. Joseph River Watershed Initiative

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