



Hoosier



Headlines

A Bimonthly
Indiana NRCS Newsletter

May/June 2009

Issue 21

In This Issue

- Heart to Heart with Hardisty
- Employee Spotlight—Doris Scully
- Hoosier Happenings
- Asian American/Pacific Islander Heritage Month
- Partners' Web Links
- Personnel Update
- Featured Website—NRCS Indiana Publications
- Mark Your Calendar

Heart to Heart ... with Hardisty



We were honored to have Secretary of Agriculture Tom Vilsack visit Indiana on June 2. The Secretary made stops in Indiana primarily to announce national and state funding under the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 (ARRA).

At the Secretary's first stop in Terre Haute he announced funding through ARRA of \$3.3 million for the completion of the Honey Creek Watershed project. This project, which began in the 1990's, is a prime example of conservation partners coming together to improve the watershed with flood prevention measures. By completing this project, hundreds of homes and businesses will be protected from flooding, as well as 1,300 acres of crop fields and pasture land.

In Terre Haute, the Secretary also made a national announcement of 289 selections for floodplain easements under ARRA. Of these, 13 Indiana floodplain easement applications were selected for a funding of over \$8 million. This funding will help restore flood-prone areas to their natural state.

The Secretary then held information sessions at the FFA Headquarters in Indianapolis and the NRCS state office. His last stop was at the Hendricks County 4-H Fairgrounds and Conference Complex where he hosted a rural community forum.

Many NRCS employees and partners participated in the events of the day. I want to thank all of you who were involved to make the day a true success for NRCS, USDA, and for conservation.



Jane E. Hardisty

*** * * * Employee Spotlight * * * ***

**Doris Scully,
District Conservationist**

Q: Doris, many of us have known you for years, but we want our newcomers to get to know you, too. First, how did you got involved in conservation?

A: Actually, my interest in conservation started at a young age as I grew up on a small farm in Owen County. My grandpa no-tilled a lot of his ground long before it was “cool.” Even though the technologies had not caught up yet, he had some success with it. I can remember my father having District Conservationist Rick Sabo come out with the district planter and help him start some no-tilling. I took soil and water conservation in 4-H, along with other natural resource projects. In addition, I wrote a report about it in elementary school and gave a speech about it at the SWCD speech contest. I guess, as I look back, I must have been destined for this profession. Though my B.S. degree was in Agricultural Education, the good Lord provided a way for me to stay in conservation.



Q: How long have you worked with NRCS and in what positions?

A: I can’t believe I have to divulge that incriminating information. However, it has been a good run. This is my 22nd year with NRCS. I started out as a soil conservationist in Bloomington, then in Greencastle. After two years in each office, I became the district conservationist in Owen County. Restructuring took place at that time, and I became the district conservationist for the Bloomington Service Center covering Owen, Monroe, and Brown counties. Since October 2002 I’ve been the district conservationist in Clay

County and really enjoy the county and its people.

Q: Tell us about your family. Are the gray hairs showing now that you have teens?

A: Oh my! This is an interesting time in our personal lives. The twins, now 15, are taking driver’s education. Look at my hair now, because those gray hairs are not nearly as noticeable as they will be in a year or so. Our third son will be 13 in August. Of course being the typical younger brother, he feels he should be able to give driving a try as well. So, what used to be me saying, “Everybody in, we are going to town,” now turns out to be, “OK who’s turn is it this time?”.

Q: Do you have any hobbies or special interests?

A: My hobbies include whatever our three sons are doing; playing football, baseball, running track, and FFA involvement (and on some judging teams). They are all in 4-H, of which I’m a leader; and they are all in our church youth group which is active in community missions—I get to help lead that, too. It’s a good thing the twins will be driving next year to help reduce some of the chauffeuring duties. Then in my spare time, I enjoy coaching my niece’s volleyball team, teaching Sunday school, helping my husband with his screen printing business, being active in our women’s ministries, and working at our church camp. I really enjoy getting to work outside on the farm. We have a few cows and a little crop ground. I try to help my Dad when I can. A special interest of mine, something God has laid on my heart, is helping abused children. Our church is involved with activities to help “at risk” children. I plan to become more involved in that ministry over the next few years.

Q: What has been your most rewarding experience with the agency?

A: Wow, it’s difficult to nail down to one experience when I work with excellent coworkers that I learn from everyday and with innovative producers; everything from organic dairies to cover crop/notillers. However, there have been some special projects I was involved with over the years. I enjoyed getting to help develop the rainfall simulator for the 1995 Farm Progress Show in Vigo County; helping with the SWCS International Conference when it came to Indianapolis; and helping with the Illiana Ag Show for many years. Most of all I enjoy the heart of our job—finding a solution to a natural resource problem, getting to see the finished product, and knowing that the customer is pleased with the project.

Hoosier Happenings

KUDOS to...

****Nancy Manion** for serving Indiana for the past three years as the statewide Earth Team Volunteer (ETV) Coordinator. Nancy previously served as the regional ETV Coordinator for four years. Thanks, Nancy, for all of your great work!

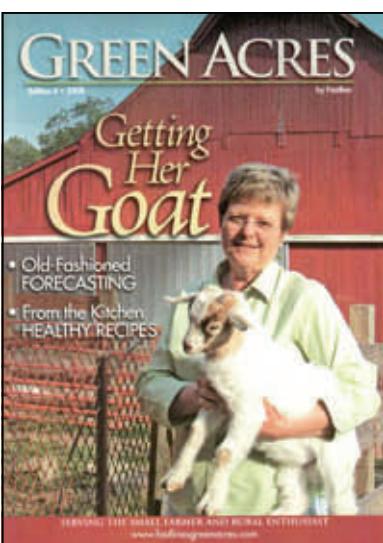


****Eddy Adams, Denise Held, Mike McGovern and Elise Brown** for a great job in preparing for Ag Secretary Vilsack's trip to Indiana. They provided various details and updates while the site visit plans were conducted, making for a great event. —Dianne Guidry, Director, Public Affairs Division, NHQ

****Jeff Cannaday** for working with a Purdue engineering student on his senior design project—a grassed waterway and rock chute. The student said Jeff did an excellent job mentoring and teaching him design principles that NRCS uses.

LARR'S LOVE STORY PUBLICIZED!

District Conservationist Pat Larr's love story has spread beyond her southern Indiana community as it was featured in Edition 4 - 2008 of **Green Acres**, a Fastline Publication out of Buckner, KY.



In addition to her love for conservation, Pat is devoted to the goats that she raises on her 257-acre farm. She originally purchased four goats to help eliminate some invasive plants, but her herd has grown to nearly 160. Raising her goats has become a second full time job that Pat plans to continue when she's ready to

retire from NRCS. In addition to goats, her farm includes corn and soybean fields, forestland, wetlands, chickens, cats, dogs, two parrots, and a lovebird.

PARTNERS PROMOTE FPE PROJECTS

When there was a call for Floodplain Easement Program (FPE) projects through stimulus dollars, with only a three-week turnaround, partners stepped up to the plate to help get the word out. The Nature Conservancy (TNC) offered to work with the SWCDs along the Wabash River to fund direct landowner mailings about the opportunity. NRCS drafted a sample letter that could be used by all SWCDs for direct mailings, along with a program fact sheet. The Indiana Association of SWCDs shared the information with the SWCDs. Many Districts across the state, even those outside of the TNC's targeted area, conducted mass mailings to landowners about the sign-up. As a result of these efforts, Indiana collected over 190 applications on 10,859 acres for the FPE sign-up. Those not selected for national funding will be evaluated for eligibility in the Indiana Wetlands Reserve Program. The FPE stimulus sign-up was an example of how working with traditional and non-traditional conservation partners helps NRCS accomplish its mission.

WORKING WITH THE MASTERS

District Conservationist Tony Branam represented NRCS at the 5th Annual Garden Celebration at the Johnson County Fairgrounds. With the Backyard Conservation display as a backdrop, Branam spoke directly to over 70 attendees about related topics, particularly on trees and pollinators. He distributed over 160 copies of the *Backyard Conservation* booklet to the gardeners, and 80 copies of the *Farming for Pollinators* brochure. The Garden Celebration was sponsored by the Johnson County Garden Club and the Purdue Master Gardener Program of Johnson County.

CONGRATULATIONS, BOB EDDLEMAN!

Though retired from NRCS, Bob Eddleman's conservation work never ends. And to prove it, Bob received the Indiana Wildlife Federations 2009 Outstanding Conservation Achievement Award for Forest Conservationist of the Year on June 5. He earned this award primarily because of his work in the Plant A Million Trees project with Hoosier Heartland RC&D and the ten SWCDs in the Central Indiana RC&D area.

(more on Page 4)

—Special Emphasis— May—Asian American/Pacific Islander Heritage Month

May 2009 was designated as Asian American/Pacific Islander Heritage Month. The theme selected for this year's Heritage Month was **Leadership to Meet the Challenges of a Changing World**. Regarding AA/PI Heritage Month, NRCS Chief Dave White said, "It is important for us to embrace each other's heritage and culture and to learn about the people we work with daily."



Thomas Share, on the watershed planning staff in Davis, California, won first place in the AA/PI poster contest this year. NRCS selected his poster from among 10 entries. When asked about the inspiration behind his poster design, Tom replied, "In designing this poster I wanted to show our challenges in a diverse way and emphasize that all cultures and ages are facing them together. The old man in the background was a late addition that I felt kind of completes the story that the challenges and changes we see span the generations."

Contact: Asghar Chowdhery, Indiana's AA/PI Special Emphasis Program Manager at asghar.chowdhery@in.usda.gov

Hoosier Happenings (cont.)

ISDA ACCEPTING AWARD NOMINATIONS

The Indiana State Department of Agriculture is now accepting nominations for the 2009 AgriVision Award. The award will be given to one Hoosier who has demonstrated exemplary leadership, maximized Indiana's agricultural potential and secured our future as a world leader in agricultural production. Nominations will be accepted until June 30. Visit <http://www.in.gov/lg/> for more information.

URBAN STUDENTS DOWN ON THE FARM

Most urban students lack an awareness of agriculture, having little if any contact with farming, and many have a negative view of agriculture. When asked to consider an agriculture career, most will answer "no way." To educate these students on agriculture today and introduce them to the work that NRCS does, conservation partners hold an annual Conservation Education Field Day. NRCS, Hoosier Heartland RC&D, and Shelby County SWCD hosted this year's event at a private forest/wildlife preserve and farm with 35 students attending from New Horizon High School of Indianapolis.



Above: Gary Struben and John Allen of the MLRA Staff at the state office provided hands-on instructional sessions.

PARTNERSHIP LINKS

Indiana Association of Soil & Water Conservation Districts, *Weekly Updates*:
<http://www.iaswcd.org/whatsnew/index.html>

ISDA, Division of Soil Conservation
<http://www.in.gov/isda/soil/>

Purdue University - www.purdue.edu

Indiana Conservation Partnership - www.iaswcd.org/icp/index.html

Personnel Update

Conversion:

Kristi Sheldon, Student Trainee to Soil Conservationist, Williamsport, effective 05/10/09

Retirement:

Dave Hague, District Conservationist, LaGrange, effective 06/30/09

Featured Web Site—NRCS Indiana Publications

http://www.in.nrcs.usda.gov/intranet/publications_IN_NRCS.html

Indiana NRCS has developed publications for employees to use with partners and customers. These publications, located on the Indiana NRCS Web site as shown above, include the following.

- 2008 Farm Bill—EQIP and Organic Agriculture
- 2008 Farm Bill—How to Apply for Programs
- 2008 Farm Bill—Indiana Talking Points on NRCS Conservation Programs
- Energy Conservation System
- Healthy Forests—EQIP
- How NRCS Manages Funds: Audits and More
- So You Inherited the Farm—Now What?
- USGS Indiana Water Science Center Streamgages

Mark Your Calendar

June

06/24/09 SW Area Meeting, Vincennes

06/30/09 NW Area Meeting, Lafayette

July

- 07/07/09 NE Area Meeting, Columbia City
- 07/08/09 SE Area Meeting, North Vernon
- 07/28/09 NW Area Meeting, Lafayette
- 07/29/09 SW Area Meeting, Vincennes
- 07/08-09/09 CTIC's Water Quality Credit Trading Workshop, Atwood Lake Resort & Conference Center, Sherrodsville, Ohio. Contact CTIC at 765-494-9555 or ctic@conservationinformation.org
- 07/29/09 CTIC's Conservation in Action Tour. Go to www.conservationinformation.org for information.

August

- 08/04/09 NE Area Meeting, Columbia City
- 08/12/09 SE Area Meeting, North Vernon
- 08/25/09 NW Area Meeting, Lafayette
- 08/26/09 SW Area Meeting, Vincennes
- 08/04-06/09 Farm World Expo, Boone County Fairgrounds, Lebanon
- 08/07-23/09 Indiana State Fair, Indianapolis
- 08/26-27/09 Water Quality Credit Trading Workshop, Crowne Plaza, Indianapolis Airport, Indianapolis. Contact CTIC at ctic@conservationinformation.org

Note: For a listing of Natural Resources Education Center workshops, go to www.in.gov/dnr/nrec