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*Heart to Heart
... with Hardisty*



 We are nearing our last quarter of fiscal year 2006 and can stop for a moment to look at the many accomplishments we have made helping people help the land. But we have much left to do, as Chief Knight has stated, to make sure we get across the finish line. Our number one priority is to fully implement the 2002 Farm Bill. I have complete confidence in you to get the job done in Indiana.

 Energy-saving biofuels, such as ethanol, are making the news, and rightly so. But, as an agency, we need to focus on 'on-farm' energy savings. Utilizing the new energy calculators, we can offer a considerable energy savings to our customers through practices such as no-till and nutrient and pest management. Let's remember this message and help spread the word that NRCS is also in the business of saving energy!

 Have you heard about the new NRCS store at the state office? This store makes shopping for a spot award a little easier with a display area of all our award options. Stop in to see what is available, then submit your completed AD-287-2 form to Pam Davidson on the Public Affairs staff to fill your spot award request.

Also, you can view samples of agency publications and posters at the display area. This gives you an option to sit down with Pam Davidson or Mike McGovern and list the publications you need for an event or field day. Happy shopping!

Earth Team Volunteers – Essential to Indiana Conservation

And the award goes to . . .

This winter LaPorte County Earth Team Volunteers (ETV) received the annual Indiana NRCS Earth Team Award for their tremendous contributions to conservation in 2005. This ETV group represents a variety of organizations with diverse talents. Individuals who comprise the team range from special needs adults, to high school students, to boy scouts. Also, civic groups and SWCD associate supervisors provide assistance on a regular basis with many of the projects.

The Special Needs Adults annually package more than 800 bags with educational materials that are given out at the LaPorte County SWCD's fifth grade field days. They stamp the SWCD logo and name on bookmarks, Soil Stewardship materials, and other materials provided to the public for information and education. They also stamp return addresses on SWCD and NRCS envelopes. Those who can, provide assistance by making "nature" bracelets that are distributed to children at the fair. They also decorate nut cups and placemats used for the annual dinner meeting.

The high school students, boy scouts, and associate supervisors sort and wrap over 8,000 tree seedlings for distribution during the SWCD's annual sale. Every year groups such as the Terre Verde Garden Club, Audubon Society, and Master Gardeners give a week of their time and energy to man a station and teach fifth graders about some part of nature during field days.

The District supports the ETV program through the efforts of Kelli Smoker, SWCD Education Coordinator. She maintains contacts and records, provides supervision, and assists with all projects. Under her guidance the ETV program has grown and will continue to do so.

Crew Committed to Clean Up

It takes an energetic, committed crew to clean up 150 cubic yards of trash in one morning! That is exactly what happened on March 4th at the Fair-

banks Landing Fish & Wildlife Area located in southwest Indiana. IDNR's Division of Fish & Wildlife manage this relatively new 8,000-acre recreational area. Now heavily used by outdoor enthusiasts, ETVs were enlisted to clean up the area which had been an illegal dumping site for years.

Sycamore Trails RC&D's Fish & Wildlife Committee spearheaded the clean-up day, which brought out 58 local volunteers ranging in age from 7 to 73. Work teams included folks from the RC&D's Fish & Wildlife Committee, Sullivan County American Indian Council, Life in Fairbanks Township (LIFT), Wabash River Heritage Corridor Commission, Indiana Horse Council, Outdoor Obsessions Hunting Club, IDNR, and Indiana Michigan Power (I&M). NRCS and the Sullivan County SWCD staff assisted in recruiting local volunteers. Sycamore Ridge Landfill and Jamax Corporation helped with the disposal of all materials collected from the area. I&M provided financial support for supplies and lunch.



(Photo by Mike Brian, I&M)

This great cooperative effort will provide a cleaner, safer environment for folks to enjoy the natural resources of this Hoosier haven!

For assistance, contact the Indiana Earth Team coordinator in your Area: Northeast Area, Bill Lambert; Northwest Area, Julie McLemore; Southeast Area, Pat Larr; and Southwest Area, Michelle Phillips. Or contact Nancy Manion, Indiana's Earth Team Volunteer Coordinator at nancy.manion@in.nrcs.usda.gov.

Attention: Please remember to submit your ETV hours!

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

Dan Hovland, Area Conservationist

On April 2, 2006 Dan Hovland became the newest member of the Indiana NRCS Leadership Team as the area conservationist for southwest Indiana. We asked Dan to give us some background information so we and our partners could get to know him better.

Q: Dan, tell us a little about yourself. Are you a native Hoosier?

A: No, I wasn't fortunate enough to be raised a Hoosier, although I saw the movie. I was born in Minnesota and raised in North Dakota. I was fortunate enough to travel around the wide open spaces and see a number of different cultures—and a lot of country. The state tree was the telephone pole, and no the movie FARGO is nothing like North Dakota, although we do sound quite similar.

Q: What led you to the field of agriculture and a career with NRCS?

A: It had to be the MONEY! No, but really, it had a lot to do with growing up in North Dakota where all you have is the outdoors. Working along with nature and conserving our natural resources has been truly an honor and a privilege. I know we all wonder or have at least asked ourselves the question, "I really get paid to do this?". Love of nature and the great outdoors and knowing that I could make a difference has led me on the career path that I have taken. Also, my father works for NRCS, and it has been a privilege to follow in his footsteps.

Q: As compared to your previous employment in North Dakota and Michigan, what do you like most about working in southwest Indiana?

A: I hope no one from back home gets a hold of this, but I would have to say the people. These are the friendliest people I have ever had the honor of working with. They truly act and treat each other as family. All I can say is WOW!



Q: Tell us about your family.

A: This is by far my favorite topic of discussion. I have been married for seven years to my lovely wife Tatum. We have three beautiful children, Jayda – 3, Elijah – 2 and little Samuel is 4 months. They have been the joy of my life and help me keep everything in perspective: God first, family second, career sometimes third—this is only because you need to be open to change. I truly do praise the Lord for my family.

Q: Do you have any hobbies or special interests?

A: Well, we had quite a few until we had children. In all seriousness, my family loves the outdoors, camping, canoeing, sports or anything else you can do outdoors. Before children, my wife and I volunteered some of our time as EMT's for our local ambulance service.

After children we became leaders for a young adult ministry for our church in Michigan. It took quite a bite of our time, but we enjoyed it tremendously.

Q: We work for an ever changing, progressive agency. How do you envision our future?

A: I truly believe this perspective can change on a daily basis depending on where in the country you are. I believe that new innovations are coming along daily, new ways of doing business will come around, and we need to be ready and willing to change and adapt. If we are able to achieve this, then truly our future looks bright. We have the technical expertise the World needs to maintain and improve each of our natural resources.

Q: What advice would you give to young, aspiring conservationists?

A: I would say never loose perspective on life—if you need help with perspectives, review question four. I would also say that you never let anyone tell you it can't be done, because if you are willing and have the determination truly anything is possible.

CTIC Announcement

Syngenta Crop Protection and *No-Till Farmer* are seeking nominations for exceptional individuals or organizations for the No-Till Innovator Awards, which will be presented at the National No-Tillage Conference in Des Moines, Iowa. Nomination categories include consulting, crop production, organization, and research and education.

Submit nominations online at www.syngentacropprotection.com/notill by July 14, 2006.

FOCUS ON THE FIELD

Students Experience Conservation Down on the Farm

Indianapolis Public School students typically learn about agriculture and conservation from textbooks. However, on May 12, 2006 a group of more than 40 Crispus Attucks Junior High School and John Marshall Middle School students had a chance to go 'down on the farm' to see it firsthand. Though it was a cool, rainy day, these students happily participated in the outside activities.



(Photo by Ron Lauster)

NRCS, Hoosier Heartland RC&D, and the Hancock, Marion and Shelby County SWCDs hosted the Conservation Field Day at the Ken Fallis Farm and Symbiosis Wooded Education Center in Shelby County near Blue Ridge, Indiana. "We wanted to use the event to introduce students to agriculture and conservation, the conservation work we do, help dispel some misconceptions urban young people have of agriculture, and introduce them to many of the agricultural career opportunities that are available," said Bennie Clark, NRCS soil scientist and Black Emphasis Program Manager.

The day was filled with science-related natural resource activities for the students' participation. Various stations were set up for the students to view demonstrations on how NRCS, SWCDs, Purdue Cooperative Extension, and IDNR provide assistance to farmers and landowners. Topics that were covered during the day included horticulture, watershed management, wildlife, no-till, soils, geographic information systems, forestry, and hydrology. The students left with a better understanding of conservation and agriculture, and what the Indiana Conservation Partnership can do for Hoosier landowners.

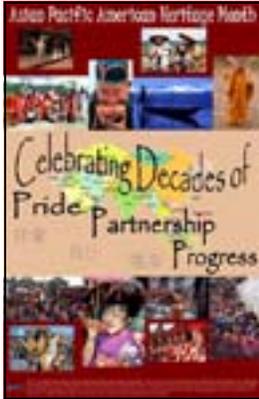
Where's the Beef?

Do you know where the beef you eat is raised and processed? Folks in southeastern Indiana can answer that question, thanks to the Historic Hoosier Hills RC&D. Two existing RC&D committees, "Jennings County Growers and Southeast Indiana Forage and Livestock," have teamed up with Westport Lockers to develop a Branded Beef program to benefit local livestock producers and consumers in the RC&D area. The program covers Clark, Dearborn, Decatur, Franklin, Jefferson, Jennings, Ohio, Ripley, Scott, and Switzerland counties. Because of this program, new markets have been created for livestock producers and new jobs and business ventures generated.

The project, which was initially funded with a \$200,000 grant from The Indiana Rural Development Council, has a goal of providing locally born and raised beef to retail outlets, restaurants, and institutional markets under a branded label. To sell under this label, producers need to be program certified and follow guidelines that insure animals meet the quality criteria set by the program.

(continued on page 6)

May—Asian Pacific American Heritage Month



Recognition for Asian Pacific Americans began when President Jimmy Carter signed a joint resolution 27 years ago declaring the first Asian Pacific American Heritage Week as May 4-10, 1979. In 1990, President George Bush extended the week into a month-long celebration. Two years later, Public Law 102-450 designated May of each year as Asian Pacific American Heritage Month.

As we observe this year's theme, "Celebrating Decades of Pride, Partnerships, and Progress," consider the following statistics provided by the U.S. Census Bureau regarding Asian/Pacific Islander communities in the U.S.

- 60% family households are maintained by married couples
- \$57,518 median income in 2004, highest among all race groups
- 1.1 million businesses owned in 2002
- \$343.3 billion in receipts of Asian-American-owned businesses in 2002
- 28% Asian-American-owned businesses in health care
- 49% age 25+ have a bachelor's degree or higher
- 87% age 25+ have at least a high school diploma
- 9.8% poverty rate in 2004
- 53% own their homes
- 3.4% population growth between 2003 and 2004 (highest of any race group during that time period)
- 2.3 million people age 5+ speak Chinese, second only to Spanish as the most widely spoken non-English language

~Hoosiers Celebrate~

On May 15th, state office employees celebrated Asian Pacific American Heritage Month with speaker June Kiyomoto, Executive Director of Asian American Alliance, Inc. Ms. Kiyomoto (shown below with Asghar Chowdhery, Indiana NRCS AA/PI Emphasis Program Manager) gave a detailed presentation on various Asian individuals who have made and continue to make significant contributions in Indiana.



They included: Dr. Young Woo Kang, advocate for the disabled; KP Singh, artist, author, community leader; Hidetaro Suzuki, Indianapolis Symphony Orchestra concertmaster; David Hochoy, artistic director of Dance Kaleidoscope; Dr. David Wong, Prozac discoverer; Dr. Bobby Fong, President of Butler University; Cynthia Ridgeway, Assistant U.S. Attorney; and Albert Chen, CEO and founder of Telamon Corporation.

Ms. Kiyomoto noted that the national Asian population exceeds 12 million, with an additional 404,000 Pacific Islanders. Nearly 66,000 Asians reside in Indiana.

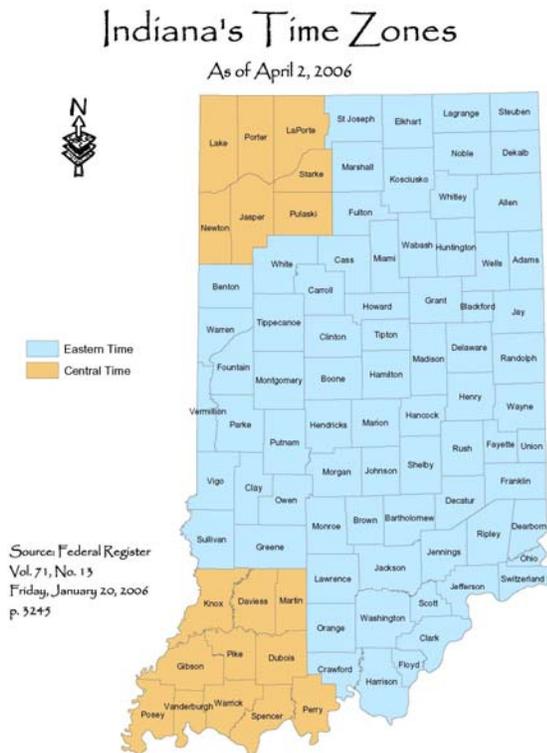
LINKS FOR PARTNERSHIP NEWSLETTERS

Indiana Association of Soil & Water Conservation Districts, *Weekly Updates*:
<http://www.iaswcd.org/WeeklyUpdates06.htm>

ISDA, Division of Soil Conservation, *Cultivating Connections*:
<http://www.in.gov/isda/soil/news/index/html>

What time is it?

Though a few believe we're in the *Twilight Zone*, changing the time in Indiana has led to confusion for many of us, especially since the State is divided between two time zones. Perhaps this map will help you know which Indiana counties are on Eastern Time and which are on Central Time.



ATTENTION!

The Indiana Conservation Partnership Strategic Plan is now on the Web at:
<http://www.iaswcd.org/1-13-06icpPlan.pdf>
 for you to view or download.

Focus on the Field (cont. from page 4)



Pictured above: The City Meat Market in Madison, Indiana

The project's first retail outlet, *City Meat Market*, opened in December 2005 in Madison, Indiana. Now, many restaurants and institutions, such as school systems in Ripley, Franklin, and Switzerland counties, are buying beef through the program.

The advantage to the consumer is access to locally grown, quality beef that has been raised under guidelines set by a group of producers who take pride in their product. The producer will benefit by receiving a premium for their product and the advantage of shipping to a local processor, thus cutting shipping costs and reducing stress and shrinkage on the animal.

With a growing demand for the Branded Beef, a meeting was held May 31, 2006 to introduce the program to other livestock producers. Workshops are scheduled throughout the summer to certify producers who want to participate.

The group is busily moving through the process of forming a cooperative, while meeting with other businesses and institutions to inform them about the program. Partnering with Historic Hoosier Hills RC&D in this project are representatives from Indiana Farm Bureau, Inc., Franklin County Beef Producers, NRCS, SWCDs, and Purdue Cooperative Extension Service, along with local certified producers and processors.

PERSONNEL UPDATES

Re-assignments:

- Neil Deckard, Technical Services Team Leader, Rensselaer, 6-11-06
- Tyler Martindale, Agricultural Engineer, Northeast Area Office, Ft. Wayne, 6-11-06
- Jim Morin, Agricultural Engineer, Southeast Area Office, North Vernon, 6-11-06

Featured Website—CNMP Watch

<http://www.cnmpwatch.com>



The National Association of State Departments of Agriculture (NASDA), in cooperation with NRCS and EPA, launched a new website for nutrient management planning information. The CNMP Watch website is designed to assist the agricultural livestock industry and others with information and guidance related to nutrient management plans and comprehensive nutrient management plans (CNMPs).

The site provides news and information from around the U.S. to provide the most comprehensive information source possible, which includes: news, events, nutrient management tools, manure management technologies, and links to other informative websites. Because each state has its own specific requirements, the site brings unique state-by-state information for agriculture professionals.

CNMP Watch goes a step further to provide valuable information to the agriculture industry as a whole, including federal and state government, livestock producers, and agricultural service providers.

(From: NASDA e-News, April 3, 2006, Issue XIV, Number 11.)

Mark Your Calendar

June

- | | |
|-------------|---|
| 06/15/06 | Forage Management Workshop, Lafayette |
| 06/21-23/06 | Hoosier Chapter SWCS Summer Meeting and Indiana Water Resources (IWRA) Spring Symposium, West Lafayette |
| 06/25-30/06 | North Central Region National Soil Survey Work Planning Conf, Medora, ND |
| 06/27/06 | NW Area Meeting, Lafayette |
| 06/28/06 | SW Area Meeting, Switz City |

July

- | | |
|-------------|--|
| 07/09-11/06 | NACD North Central Region Meeting, Crowne Plaza City Centre, Cleveland, OH |
| 07/11/06 | NE Area Meeting, Columbia City |
| 07/12/06 | SE Area Meeting, North Vernon |
| 07/17-20/06 | NRCS Efficiency Workshop, St. Louis, MO |

July (cont.)

- 07/25/06 NW Area Meeting, Lafayette
07/26/06 SW Area Meeting, Switz City

August

- 08/01/06 NE Area Meeting, Columbia City
08/02/06 SE Area Meeting, North Vernon
08/09-20/06 Indiana State Fair, Indianapolis
08/29/06 NW Area Meeting, Lafayette
08/30/06 SW Area Meeting, Switz City

September

- 09/12/06 NE Area Meeting, Columbia City
09/13/06 SE Area Meeting, North Vernon

November

- 11/07-10/06 North American Lake Management Society International Symposium, Crowne Plaza Hotel, Indianapolis
11/28-30/06 Innovations in Reducing Nonpoint Source Pollution, Radisson Hotel City Centre, Indianapolis

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

Helping People Help the Land