

# Fayette County Soil and Water Conservation District



Picture of 2007 Conservation Field Days

**63<sup>rd</sup> Annual Meeting and  
Banquet  
February 21, 2008**

***District Highlights***  
***July 1, 2006 through June 30, 2007***

The Fayette County Soil and Water Conservation District (SWCD) Board of Directors held eleven regular meetings during fiscal year 2007. The meetings are held on the fourth Thursday of each month. All meetings are open to the public. Meetings from April through October are held at 8:00 p.m., and meetings from November through March at 9:30 a.m., in the USDA building at 301 South Third Street, Vandalia.



Gale Meseke and Steve Henna were re-elected directors at the annual meeting in February 2007. The organizational meeting of the Fayette County SWCD Board was held in March 2007 with Dale Jahraus elected Chairman, Kelly Tarter, Vice-Chairman, Steve Henna, Treasurer, Gale Meseke, Secretary, and Jake Hortenstine, member.

The Fayette County SWCD Staff for FY '07 consisted of: Tony Pals, Resource Conservationist (RC) and Karen Sanders, Administrative Coordinator (AC). The Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) Staff includes: Mary Ann Hoeffliger, District Conservationist (DC), and Scott Smith, Soil Conservation Technician (SCT).

Fiscal year 2007 included the period of July 1, 2006 to June 30, 2007. Allocations used for operating funds were received from the Illinois Department of Agriculture (IDOA), Bureau of Land and Water Resources (BLWR), and the Fayette County Board.

Special thanks to everyone for your past and present support!



The Fayette County Soil & Water Conservation District was able to provide \$33,784.94 cost share for the installation of conservation practices in the county through the state funded Conservation Practices Program.

The District, in developing an Annual Plan of Work, coordinated their objectives and activities with NRCS, Illinois Dept. of Natural Resources (IDNR), University of Illinois Extension (U of I), and the Farm Service Agency (FSA).

Members of the District Board, district employees and NRCS staff attended two Council 10 Meetings this past year. Members of the District Board also attended two Council 10 Executive Meetings in FY07. Three members of the District Board and two SWCD employees attended the Association of Illinois Soil and Water Conservation District's (AISWCD) Annual Meeting and the Illinois Department of Ag, Bureau of Land and Water Resources' Summer Conference in Decatur.



SWCD and NRCS Staff attended various meetings, training and workshops throughout the fiscal year, including:

- NRCS Employees Meetings
- Winter Training
- C-2000 Watershed Workshops
- Upper Little Wabash Eco-System Partnership Meetings
- Carlyle Lake Watershed Eco-System Partnership Meetings
- International Association of Administrative Professionals Meetings (IAAP)
- Association of Illinois Soil & Water Conservation District Employees Association (Karen is on the board)
- Soil Judging Contest for all county Vo-Ag Departments
- RC & D Meetings
- RC & D Training
- Zell Farm Meetings
- Carlyle Lake Days
- Grazing Training
- IT Security Training



- Certified Professional in Erosion and Sediment Control training
- ArcGIS training
- Pasture Walk at Tony Snow's Dairy
- Meeting on the East Fork
- Kaskaskia Water Quality Meeting
- Henry White Farm Tour
- Meeting on Brownstown Experiment Station
- Meeting on Carbon Credits
- Meeting on Digitized Soil Survey
- LEAM Meeting at Holy Cross Church
- Participate in "Real World" day sponsored by U of I Extension
- Advanced Quickbooks Training
- Microsoft Office FrontPage - Website Design

In addition, Scott Smith spent 28 days in New Orleans helping repair drainage structures damaged by Hurricane Katrina.



Throughout the year the District gives and arranges several presentations on conservation to various schools, clubs, and organizations. These included the following:

- Soil loss presentations to Fayette County High Schools
- Poster Contest presentations to all fourth graders in the county



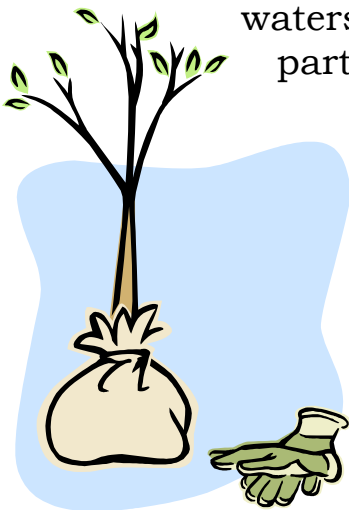
- Vandalia Lake Appreciation Day for Vandalia 6<sup>th</sup> graders
- Judges for 4H projects at the Fayette & Effingham County Fairs
- Carlyle Lake Conservation Days
- Conservation Field Days
- Presentations to Fayette County Board
- Presentation at Summer Conference on Turnover Taskforce

The district offers several, hands on, classroom activities for the grade schools. These classes are offered to all teachers in Fayette County from Kindergarten to Fifth grade. All activities focus on protecting out natural resources but at the same time gives the students a fun way of learning. The programs that were presented to the students this year and the number of students presented to include: Edible Soil (250), Where Pizza Comes From (250), Backyard Composting (125), Incredible Edible Landfill (100), Aquifers (175), Farm Charms (175), and Circle of Earth Bracelets (75). We would like to say "Thank You" to all of the teachers that have allowed us into their classrooms. We would also like to thank all of the businesses that have donated supplies to make these presentations such a success. We enjoy teaching the kids almost as much as it seems they enjoy the activities.



The Fayette County SWCD assists NRCS and FSA with CRP in plan development, and survey, design, and installation of the conservation practices on those CRP acres. This past fiscal year, 722.1 acres were accepted into the program through the continuous CRP signup.

The District distributed 300 White Pine Seedlings to the third grade students in Fayette County, in celebration of Earth Week and Arbor Day. Thanks to the Illinois Department of Natural Resources for donating these seedlings. We also provided a set of watershed activity books to each 4th grade students participating in the poster contest.



The District's Annual Tree Sale was held in April 2007. There were approximately 5000 trees sold, including: White Pine, Norway Spruce, Blue Spruce, Red Osier Dogwood, and Red Oak. The District is sponsoring another Tree Sale in April 2008. This year the St. Elmo FFA wrapped the trees for us. Thank you Mr. Wagner and students. We would also like to thank everyone who responded to our 2007 Tree Sale and encourage you to do so again in 2008!

The Fayette County SWCD again co-sponsored a local Envirothon Competition with the Effingham, Cumberland, Jasper, and Shelby County SWCD's at the Ballard Nature Center. The Envirothon is a national program for high school students covering five subjects dealing with the environment (Wildlife, Aquatics, Forestry, Soils, and Alternative/Renewable Energy were the topics used in 2007). The students compete as a five-member team with the winners going to Monticello for the state contest. The overall winning team for this year was Vandalia Community High School. This was the second year in a row that Vandalia has gone to the state competition, and the third year a Fayette County school has won the local contest. Thanks to the Fayette County Farm Bureau for providing the t-shirts for everyone again this year.



The Fayette County Soil & Water Conservation District annually co-sponsors a soil judging contest with Marion and Effingham counties for all the Ag departments in those counties. The contest in FY '07 was held on the Harold Kuebler farm on the county line near Altamont. Seven schools participated. The students judge five pits on qualities of the soil and its tendency to erode. Digging of the pits was donated by Terry Smith Welding. South Central took top honors for Fayette County.



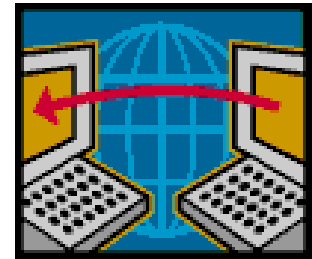
Last year, the District purchased a new Truax Grass Seed Drill to be used in the county for no-tilling warm and cool



season grasses and legumes, and a filter fabric plow for fabric checks in grass waterways. We have already used the drill on over 700 acres and installed over 2000 feet of fabric checks. We also have a root plow to use as an alternative to clearing fencerows, a tree planter, and an acorn planter available for rent.

The District has established a good working relationship with the local radio station, WPMB/WKRV. In addition, news articles on conservation and District activities were printed in the Vandalia Leader-Union, Ramsey News Journal, Farina News, Beecher City Journal, Altamont News, St. Elmo Banner and Effingham Daily News. This relationship is greatly appreciated by the District. The SWCD also publishes and distributes over 3000 copies of our newsletter, "Conservation Conversation". This is published six times per year to keep county landowners and operators informed about various conservation activities. This past year we also published "Carlyle Lake Watershed – At a Glance" newsletter three times. This goes out to nearly 6000 landowners in Carlyle Lake Watershed.

As another way of providing information on conservation, the district developed a website. The address is: [www.fayettecountyswcd.com](http://www.fayettecountyswcd.com). Here you can find copies of our newsletters, information on cost-share programs, highlights from the annual meeting, pictures from some of our activities, and lots more. Visit us soon and browse.



The Fayette County SWCD would like to express their appreciation to the sponsors of the following awards for the year 2007: the First National Bank of Brownstown, for sponsoring the Poster Contest, and the First National Bank of Vandalia, for sponsoring the Fayette County Conservation Farm Family.

The District would also like to thank each and every one who has attended the Annual Banquets. You have made them a huge success. We would also like to extend our sincere appreciation to all that have graciously donated cash and door prizes. Again, we say

