Conservation News

Coles County Soil and Water Conservation District

6021 Development Drive, Suite 2, Charleston, IL 61920

Phone: (217) 345-3901 ext. 3 **Email: info@colescountyswcd.org**

http://www.colescountyswcd.org **facebook.com/ColesCountySWCD**

Volume 65 Issue 1

Coles County SWCD's 2024 Conservationist of the Year: Rick and Connie Goble

Rick and Connie Goble of Hutton township were chosen as the Coles County SWCD's Conservationists of the Year for 2024. You may know the Gobles from the Charleston Farmers Market where they've been vendors for many years, or from their bountiful farm stand on Rt. 130 near Fox Ridge State Park. Recently, the Gobles have participated in programs through the district and partner agencies to increase their conservation efforts, particularly related to specialty crop production. In addition to constructing a 'high tunnel' to help extend the growing season, they're using cover crops and crop rotation to improve soil health. The Gobles aren't new to conservation though. They've been implementing conservation practices for years, and a large portion of their farm in rural Hutton township is managed as native habitat for wildlife and pollinators. For the last few years, the Gobles have been utilizing prescribed burning to maintain their grassland habitats, a management practice that Rick is particularly familiar with since he used to conduct prescribed burns for IDNR before he retired. Please join us in congratulating the Gobles for their much-deserved recognition as the Coles County SWCD's 2024 Conservationists of the Year!

The object of this award is to provide recognition to an outstanding conservationist in the Coles County Soil and Water Conservation District that exemplifies Total Resource Management. Recipients are selected based on their use of best management practices, implementation of new and innovative technologies, demonstrations of commitment to conservation and stewardship, participation in educational programs and community involvement, and leadership in community, government, and nonprofit or grassroots groups to further their work.

The Gobles were presented with their award at the SWCD's annual holiday party and award ceremony in December. Pictured (left to right) are Bill Janes (chairman), Connie Goble, Rick Goble, J.C. Doty (board member), and Todd Easton (secretary/treasurer).

Upcoming Events:

January:	February:	March:
1st—New Years Day (Office Closed)	6th —SWCD Board Election	7th— Tree Sale Orders Due
14th—Board Meeting	11th—Board Meeting	11th—Board Meeting
20th—MLK Day (Office Closed)	17th—Presidents' Day (Office Closed)	15th—Fish Sale Orders Due

Charleston Field Office Staff and Directors

Coles Co. SWCD Board of Directors

Bill Janes: Chairman
Justin Thomas: Vice Chairman
Todd Easton: Secretary/Treasurer
J.C. Doty

Coles Co. SWCD Employees

Misti Neal Lewis
Administrative & Education Coordinator

Lauren Oertling
Resource Conservationist

NRCS Employees

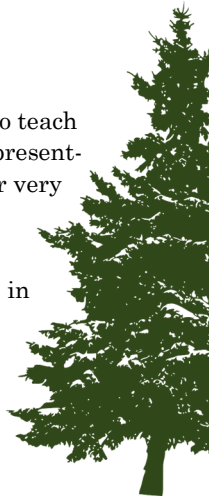
Andy Brantner: District Conservationist
Stephen Head: Soil Conservationist

IDOA Employees

Shannon Kuffel: Conservation Planner

As a cooperator of NRCS, SWCD must provide reasonable accommodations to USDA customers with disabilities, where appropriate. Individuals requiring reasonable accommodation for any NRCS or SWCD programs or services should contact Carzella Pritchett, Illinois NRCS' Disability Emphasis Program Manager, at (217) 353-6651 directly. Determinations on requests for reasonable accommodation will be made on a case-by-case basis. USDA-NRCS/SWCD are an equal opportunity employer and provider.

Sponsors Sought for Third Grade Arbor Day Program



Although it may not feel like spring outside, we are anticipating warmer weather and that means gearing up to teach Coles County's third graders all about trees this Arbor Day! Every third grade classroom that we visit will be presented with the history of Arbor Day, a discussion of the importance of trees, and each student will take home their very own white pine seedling.

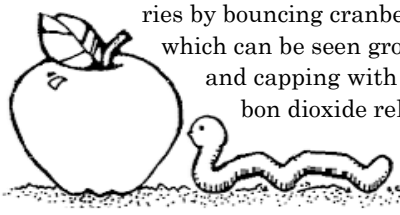
The SWCD is seeking donations to help provide the students with their trees. Each tree costs about $3 and we would like every third grader in Coles County to receive a tree. Will you help us meet our goal of placing a tree in each student's hand? Here's an example of the impact of your gift.

-$75 will purchase trees for one classroom
-$450 will purchase trees for one school
-$1400 will purchase trees for all Coles County 3rd graders

Please mail donations to Coles County SWCD, 6021 Development Drive Suite 2, Charleston, IL 61920.

Education Update

Coles County SWCD's Education Coordinator Misti Neal Lewis has been busy visiting area schools and delivering hands-on conservation and agriculture education to Coles County's students. Last quarter, she visited second grade classrooms around the county and led the students in learning with seasonal themes. In October, the lesson centered around pumpkins and life cycles, and featured the book "Pumpkin Jack." November's lessons started with the book "Time for Cranberries" followed by a hands-on "cranberry bounce" activity where the students used the scientific process to make predictions and test their theories by bouncing cranberries on their desks and recording the results! The lesson in December featured wheat, which can be seen growing around the county over the winter. After mixing up a yeast solution in a water bottle and capping with a balloon, the classes read "Still There was Bread" while the balloon inflated due to the carbon dioxide released by the yeast during fermentation, the process that makes bread "rise!"



If you'd like Mrs. Lewis to come to your classroom, email info@colescountyswcd.org!

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Notice of Election of Directors

To All Owners and Occupiers of Lands Lying Within the Boundaries of Coles County Soil and Water Conservation District: Notice is hereby given that an election will be held on the 6th day of February, 2025 from 7:00am to 5:30pm at 6021 Development Drive, Ste. 2, Charleston, IL 61920. Three (3) Directors will be elected to serve the Coles County Soil and Water Conservation District of the State of Illinois. All persons, firms or corporations who hold legal title or are in legal possession of any land lying within the boundaries of the said district are eligible to vote at said election, whether as lessee, renter, tenant or otherwise. Only such persons, firms, or corporations are eligible to vote.

NRCS Announces Ranking Dates For EQIP: February 28, and CSP: May 2

NRCS accepts producer applications for its conservation programs year-round, but producers interested in funding during the current fiscal year should apply by their state's ranking dates. The dates for Illinois are EQIP: February 28, and CSP: May 2.

EQIP provides technical and financial assistance to agricultural producers and forest landowners to address natural resource concerns. NRCS works one-on-one with producers to develop a conservation plan that outlines conservation practices and activities to help solve on-farm resource issues. Producers implement practices and activities in their conservation plan that can lead to cleaner water and air, healthier soil and better wildlife habitat, all while improving their agricultural operations. EQIP helps producers make conservation work for them. Financial assistance for practices may be available through EQIP. Some producers may also qualify for advance payment.

The Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP) helps you build on your existing conservation efforts while strengthening your operation. If you are already taking steps to improve the condition of the land, chances are, CSP can help you find new ways to meet your goals. NRCS works one-on-one with producers to develop a conservation plan that outlines and enhances existing efforts, using new conservation practices or activities, based on management objectives for your operation. Producers implement practices and activities in their conservation plan that expands on the benefits of cleaner water and air, healthier soil and better wildlife habitat, all while improving their agricultural operations. CSP offers annual payments for implementing these practices on your land and operating and maintaining existing conservation efforts. Want to take it a step further? CSP also offers bundles where you can select a suite of enhancements and receive a higher payment rate.

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To inquire about becoming a sponsor, please contact our office at (217) 345-3901 ext. 3 or email info@colescountyswcd.org

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Coles County SWCD Spring 2025 Tree Sale

Return order form with payment to: Coles County SWCD, 6021 Development Drive, Suite 2, Charleston, IL 61920

Name: _____
Address: _____
City: _____
Phone Number: _____
Email: _____

☐ Save a tree! I would like to receive the newsletter via email.

Important Dates:
Tree Orders Due: Friday, March 7th
Tree Sale Pick Up: Friday, April 4th
8:00am to 4:30pm at Coles Co SWCD Office

Please remind me prior to pick up:
☐Phone ☐Email

	Size / Age	Price Per Bundle	Total	
Conifers	**Sold in bundles of 10 trees**		**# of bundles**	**Price**
Eastern White Pine *Pinus strobus*	12-18" 2-2 seedlings	$40/bundle		$
Norway Spruce *Picea abies*	14-20" 2-1 seedlings	$30/bundle		$
Deciduous Broadleaves	**Sold in bundles of 5 trees**		**# of bundles**	**Price**
Allegheny Serviceberry *Amelanchier laevis*	12-18" 1-0 seedlings	$20/bundle		$
Redbud *Cercis canadensis*	12-18" 1-0, 2-0 seedlings	$20/bundle		$
Common Persimmon *Diospyros virginiana*	12-18" 1-0 seedlings	$20/bundle		$
Tulip Poplar *Liriodendron tulipfera*	12-18" 1-0 seedlings	$20/bundle		$
White Oak *Quercus alba*	12-18" 1-0, 2-0 seedlings	$20/bundle		$
Mixed Species Theme "Packs"	**Sold in assorted bundles of 10**		**# of bundles**	**Price**
Native Nut Pack *3 Hazelnut, 2 Northern Pecan, 2 Butternut, 3 Black Walnut (Mix of trees and shrubs!)*	12-18"	$50/bundle		$
Native Pollinator Pack *2 each of Red Osier Dogwood, Choke Cherry, American Plum, Meadow-sweet, Pasture Rose (Mix of trees and shrubs!)*	12-18"	$50/bundle		$
Native Wild Berry Pack *3 Elderberry, 2 Shadblow Serviceberry, 3 Native Flowering Raspberry, 2 Red Mulberry (Mix of trees and shrubs!)*	6-12"	$35/bundle		$
Tree Guard *Each 4" diameter tube speeds photosynthesis by trapping moisture, thereby raising relative humidity and ambient temperature inside the tube. Also protects the tree from animals, wind desiccation, small rodents, and insects. Includes a 48 inch wood stake.* *Note: Tubes are recommended for deciduous trees only.*		$4 Each		$
			Total	$

Have questions about what to order? Planning a special project or large forestry restoration and need a different species? We may be able to place special orders with the nursery for larger orders (minimum 25 trees/species). Give us a call!

Disclaimer: "These plants are for conservation purposes only and shall not be used as ornamentals or for landscaping."
All orders subject to nursery availability. Trees/shrubs will arrive alive. There is no warrantee or guarantee of survival after delivery.

For Office Use: Date Rec'd: _____ **Check#/Cash:** _____ **QB:** _____ **Ex:** _____

Coles County SWCD Spring 2025 Fish Sale

Return order form with payment to: Coles County SWCD, 6021 Development Drive, Suite 2, Charleston, IL 61920

Name: _____
Address: _____
City: _____
Phone Number: _____
Email: _____

☐ Save a tree! I would like to receive the newsletter via email.

Important Dates:
Fish Orders Due: Friday, March 14th
Fish Pick Up: Wednesday, April 2nd
11:00am at Coles Co SWCD Office

Please remind me prior to pick up:
☐Phone ☐Email

Fish Species	Size	Price	Quantity	Subtotal
Channel Catfish	4-6"	$1 each		$
	6-8"	$1.25 each		$
Largemouth Bass	3-4"	$1.75 each		$
Bluegill	1-2"	$1 each		$
	3-5"	$1.25 each		$
Hybrid Sunfish	1-2"	$1 each		$
	3-5"	$1.25 each		$
Red Ear Sunfish	2-4"	$1.50 each		$
Black Crappie	3-4"	$1.75 each		$
Fathead Minnows	1-3"	$12 per lb		$
Triploid Grass Carp	8-11"	$12.50 each		$
(See below)				
		Total		$

Note: Please bring containers (5-gallon buckets work well) to transport your bagged fish to your pond.

TABLE MUST BE COMPLETED FOR ALL GRASS CARP ORDERS:

County	Township	Range	Section	Pond Size (Surface Acres)	Water Name	# of Fish
Ex: Coles	*T11N*	*R9E*	*16*	*12 ac.*	*Pond*	*4*

Note: If you don't know the township, range, and section please write the pond's GPS coordinates below or give us a call!

New pond? Suggested stocking rates:
Largemouth Bass: 30-50 per acre
Bluegill:150-250 per acre
Redear Sunfish: 200-250 per acre
Fathead minnows: 4-10lbs per acre
Channel Catfish: 25-100 per acre
Recommendations are for new ponds 1/2 acre or more

Call our office or the IDNR fisheries biologist for restocking guidelines!

For Office Use: Date Rec'd: _____ **Check#/Cash:** _____ **QB:** _____ **Ex:** _____