

Sycamore Trails RC&D 2005 Annual Report



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Office Staff

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Michelle Phillips, Program Asst.
Laura Stearley, Financial Asst.
Tara Boesch, Office Asst.

1007 Mill Pond Lane, Suite B
Greencastle, IN 46135

Phone (765) 653-9785
FAX (765) 653-9455

Email:
strcd@sycamoretrails.org

Website:
www.sycamoretrails.org

Highlights of 2005

Sycamore Trails Enhances Development of Other Organizations

One of the unique benefits that our Council can offer other organizations is assistance in developing and establishing their group as an independent nonprofit with their own tax-exempt status. This status as a 501(c) (3) organization can be critical to obtaining grants -- often the lifeblood of nonprofits. Until it reaches this status on its own, a newly-formed group may be able to become a part of Sycamore Trails, if the group's mission falls in line with ours.

Friends of State Parks

Sycamore Trails began several years ago to assist local citizens who wanted to form "Friends" of State Parks groups to improve state parks in their areas. We first took the Friends of Turkey Run and Shades State Parks under our Council to help them get organized and enable them to obtain grants to help get them up and running strong. We then provided the same service to the Friends of McCormick's Creek State Park.

Both groups have done an outstanding job of recruiting committed volunteers and have been able to obtain their own 501(c)(3) nonprofit status with the Internal Revenue Service. They are both now independent entities, and in 2005 they "fledged" from under the Sycamore Trails' oversight.

It has been a pleasure to work with these groups and to see their progress and their many successful efforts in assisting their local State Parks. We continue to work with these now independent groups

as partners in various projects.

Indiana Conservation Tillage Initiative

This group is focused on promoting conservation tillage and no-till farming. We have had a working relationship with them, and in August of 2005 they became an official standing committee of the Sycamore Trails RC&D Council. We look forward to assisting them with their efforts, which reach even beyond our nine counties to the entire state of Indiana.

West Central Indiana Business Innovators

This is a new group which was officially adopted into our Council at the October board meeting. Based in Montgomery County, their mission is to support economic development in West Central Indiana by providing support to entrepreneurs who show promise and are ready to enlarge their enterprises and require assistance in doing so. They hope to encourage the growth of fledgling business enterprises by providing such assistance as quarters in which a business may operate; utilities or other "in-kind" support; advisors in finance, marketing, operations, and other facets of business; and providing clerical support for the start-up business at no or modest expense to the business.

These efforts fit well with our resource development objectives. We look forward to enhancing economic development and employment opportunities in our nine-county area with the efforts of this new committee.

Accomplishments in 2005

Sycamore Trails Resource Conservation and Development Council is a nine-county conservation organization that works through volunteer committees to improve resources and communities in west central Indiana. Sponsoring organizations of the RC&D Council are the Soil and Water Conservation Districts, the County Commissioners, and the Cooperative Extension Boards in each of the nine counties, as well as the city of Terre Haute. Under the authority of Board Members appointed by our sponsors and through the efforts of local volunteers passionate about improving their communities, the following efforts have been completed in the 2005 calendar year.

Education Committee - Angie Williams, Chair

- ◆ Instructed 15 adults in an Indiana Master Naturalist course, in cooperation with Clay County SWCD and Purdue Extension
- ◆ Instructed 45 people on Pond Management principles, in cooperation with Purdue Extension, Clay & Owen County SWCDs, IDNR and private landowners.
- ◆ printed/distributed 5000 copies of children's "Boofo" Soil & Water Conservation newsletter edition

Fish and Wildlife Committee - Roger Stonebraker, Chair

- ◆ installed fish structures to improve fish habitat at Raccoon Lake SRA in Parke County
- ◆ instructed 24 youth on hunting safety and ethics, and provided actual quail hunting experience in cooperation with Royal Flush Shooting Preserve, Quail Unlimited/West Central Indiana Chapter, Pheasants Forever/Coal Creek Chapter, Indiana State Rifle and Pistol Association, Friends of NRA, and IDNR - Div. of Fish & Wildlife
- ◆ Trained 24 adults on Basics of Wildland Fire Management and Suppression, in cooperation with Eli Lilly Company and IDNR - Div. of Forestry (Fire Control Headquarters)
- ◆ Held joint field day with our RC&D Forestry Committee, educating 30 people on woodland management, including management for wildlife benefits, in cooperation with Purdue Dept. of Forestry/Natural Resources; IDNR - Divisions of Forestry and Fish & Wildlife, and private landowners
- ◆ printed/distributed 5000 copies of children's "Boofo" Fish and Wildlife Newsletter (contributions from Nucor Steel and Pheasants Forever/Coal Creek Chapter)

Forestry Committee - Don Carlson, Chair

- ◆ staffed forestry education tour as part of the Maple Syrup Festival in Parke County
- ◆ held awards banquet at DePauw University with 56 people in attendance, to honor top woodland stewards and to educate woodland owners on forestry management (grants from C.C. Cook & Son Lumber Co., Pike Lumber Co., International Paper, and Loggers, Inc.)
- ◆ held 3 educational meetings & field days of the Putnam County Woodland Owners
- ◆ printed/distributed 5000 copies of children's "Boofo" Forestry Newsletter (grants from International Paper and Indiana Hardwood Lumberman's Association)
- ◆ Presented forestry sessions to 1500 5th graders at Vigo County school field days

Accomplishments (continued from page 2)

- ◆ Held a timber stand improvement (TSI) field day in Parke county
- ◆ Hosted a joint forestry/wildlife field day in Clay County at the Purdue Finley Woods and Lewis Purnhagen property attended by about 30 people
- ◆ Developed a management plan for woodland owned by Reelsville Water Company in Putnam County
- ◆ Held Forest Industry Recognition Tour & Dinner for landowners, forestry industry, and agency personnel. Pike Lumber Company hosted the tour.
- ◆ Awarded Savings Bonds to Forestry winners from county 4-H fairs
- ◆ Distributed nearly 7,000 tree seedlings at Montgomery County Fairgrounds in partnership with Nucor Steel

Land Trust Committee - Bud Sharp, Chair

- ◆ Monitored conservation easement that the Council holds on 250 acre tract of wildlife/agricultural/timberland in Vigo County
- ◆ Worked with Central Indiana Land Trust, Inc. to develop a management agreement to protect Mossy Point Nature Preserve, a 104-acre tract of forestland along Sugar Creek in Parke County.

Abandoned Mine Lands Committee - Charlie Lee, Chair

- ◆ Continued work under an agreement funded by IDEM and IDNR-Reclamation to reclaim at least twenty abandoned coal mine sites
- ◆ Hosted a tour of five reclaimed sites to demonstrate benefits of our reclamation work
- ◆ Reclaimed 12 environmentally damaging abandoned coal mine sites

Other Council activities

- ◆ Operated the Interstate Welcome Center on I-74, under contract with Indiana Office of Tourism Development
- ◆ Installed 5 dry hydrants to improve rural fire protection
- ◆ In cooperation with the West Central Chapter of Quail Unlimited, Putnam and Hendricks County SWCDs, and IDEM, installed 112 acres of conservation buffers and warm season grasses through the Big Walnut/Deer Creek Conservation Buffer Project
- ◆ Accepted two organizations -- Indiana Conservation Tillage Initiative and the West Central Indiana Business Innovators -- under our council umbrella
- ◆ "Fledged" Friends of Turkey Run and Shades State Parks and Friends of McCormick's Creek State Park as independent nonprofit organizations with their own 501(c)(3) IRS tax exempt status
- ◆ Supported IDNR-Division of Reclamation "ReLeaf" program to create forests on recently mined lands.
- ◆ Represented the Indiana League of RC&Ds at the RC&D Leadership Forum in Washington, D.C., visiting all members of Indiana's congressional delegation to promote and explain the RC&D program.
- ◆ Conducted Board training session at McCormick's Creek State Park
- ◆ Attended Regional RC&D Conference in Iowa

Sycamore Trails RC&D Council, Inc.

Statement of Financial Income and Expense

January through December 2005

	Jan - Dec 05	
Balance 1/1/05		\$ 50,695.95
Income		
Contributed Support	107,507.93	
Earned revenues	41,212.61	
Interest-savings/short-term inv	794.09	
Reimbursements from others	5,598.92	
Rebates/Refunds	79.69	
ReLeaf Prog Landowner Deposit	3,600.00	
Total Income	158,793.24	\$ 158,793.24
Expense		
Grant & contract expense	91,666.57	
Workshop/Event Expense	7,519.11	
Program Expenses	4,534.13	
Salaries & Related Expenses	35,763.66	
Other personnel expenses	316.00	
Non-personnel exp-Mgmt/Overhead	2,606.88	
Travel & meetings expenses	4,407.72	
Misc expenses		
Discretionary Exp	73.90	
Insurance	1,769.00	
Friends Tent purchase	219.76	
Endowment Fund Contrib.	4,085.00	
Legal Fees	250.00	
Membership Dues	750.00	
Reimbursable Expenses	4,234.96	
Refunds	210.00	
Sponsorship of event-Consrv Tillg	300.00	
Website Fees	102.09	
Misc. Expenses - other	785.00	
T-shirts for Friends of Turkey Run	132.50	
Spam Blocking service	40.00	
Business expenses		
Entity Filing Fees	14.28	
Total Expense	159,780.56	\$ 159,780.56
	-987.32	
Balance 12/31/05		\$ 49,708.63

Sources of Funding

GENERAL OPERATIONS SPONSORS

Midland-Impact LLP
Land O'Lakes Foundation
R.R. Donnelly Foundation
(made possible by Jim Spence's volunteer work)

PROJECT SPONSORS

C.C. Cook & Son Lumber Co., Inc.
Indiana Hardwood Lumbermen's Association
International Paper
Loggers, Inc.
Pike Lumber Company, Inc.
Soil & Water Conservation Districts
of Clay, Fountain, Montgomery, Owen,
Parke, Putnam, Sullivan, Vermillion,
and Vigo Counties
Pheasants Forever, Coal Creek Chapter
Nucor Steel Corporation, Crawfordsville Div.

PROJECT GRANT/CONTRACT SOURCES

Indiana Dept of Natural Resources
- Div of Reclamation
Indiana Dept of Environmental Mgmt -
Office of Water Mgmt
Indiana Office of Tourism Development
Wal-Mart
ERM Group Foundation

PROJECT PARTNERS

West Central Chapter Quail Unlimited
Purdue Cooperative Extension Service
Soil & Water Conservation Districts

INDIVIDUAL DONORS

David Burns	Bill Hartman	Paul Oberholtzer
Frank Cottengim	Steve Herbert	Michelle Phillips
Linda Croft	Melvin Kelly	Gerald Runyon
Gwen Dieter	Vic Leas	Bud Sharp
Max Evans	Arthur Mayes	Jim Spence
Rodger Foster	Bob Mayrose	Amber Willen
John Gettinger	Robert Miller	Rob Yoder
Judy Harris	Raoul Moore	Several anonymous donors

Contributing to Our Success

All the time, effort, and expertise donated by our Council and Committee members . . .

THANK YOU!

Earth Team Volunteers

National Volunteer Week in April provided an opportunity for us to express our appreciation for our individual Earth Team Volunteers. **Allen Williams** (seated left) heads up our dry hydrant effort, focusing his time in Putnam County, but also traveling to other counties to provide the benefit of his experience. **Margaret Neild** (seated right) is an invaluable help in the office, always available and reliable. Bud Sharp, our Treasurer, and Greencastle Mayor Nancy Michael (standing) joined us for lunch to offer their thanks and support for the volunteer efforts of these two faithful volunteers.



Sycamore Trails Resource Conservation & Development Council, Inc.
1007 Mill Pond Lane, Suite B
Greencastle, IN 46135-1887



NONPROFIT ORGANIZATION
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GREENCASTLE, IN PERMIT NO. 224

Serving Nine Counties in West Central Indiana

Clay
Fountain
Montgomery
Owen
Parke
Putnam
Sullivan
Vermillion
Vigo

What Is Sycamore Trails Resource Conservation and Development Council?

Our Vision: Local citizens cooperating to maintain a healthy, vibrant, and diverse environment and economy in the Sycamore Trails RC&D area.

Our Mission: To motivate, assist, enable, and coordinate local citizens in the conservation and development of natural, human, and economic resources.

Sycamore Trails Resource Conservation and Development (RC&D) Council was organized by local people in 1970. The RC&D program is a combination of people, rural development needs, opportunities, and solutions.

RC&D provides a vehicle for dealing with many rural issues through citizen participation. It is as much a way of doing things—a process—as it is a program.

Many dedicated volunteers make Sycamore Trails RC&D successful. Local people work together to set goals and priorities, select projects, and take actions.

Office space, a program coordinator, and a program assistant are provided through the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Natural Resources Conservation Service. However, no federal funds are provided for the operation of the RC&D Council or resource committees.

Sycamore Trails is incorporated as not-for-profit within the state of Indiana and is tax-exempt by Internal Revenue Service determination.

Sycamore Trails serves as a framework for local individuals, groups, businesses, and units of government to cooperate *regionally* to meet common needs

and tackle common problems.

If you have an interest in helping improve the quality of life in west central Indiana, you have a place in Sycamore Trails RC&D. You may be an individual or a representative of a group, organization, association, or agency.

To find out more about Sycamore Trails RC&D and to voice your concerns about resource problems and opportunities, contact the office or a Council Board member.

This institution is an equal opportunity provider.