

Sycamore Trails RC&D 2006 Annual Report



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Office Staff

Bill Beard, Coordinator
Michelle Phillips, Program Asst.
Laura Stearley, Financial Asst.
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Highlights of 2006

National Conference

Sycamore Trails was selected to present two success stories at the National RC&D Conference in Savannah, GA in June. Jim Spence spoke on the very popular Master Naturalist program that Sycamore Trails helped initiate in Indiana. Steve Herbert and Charlie Lee shared our successful Partners for Reclamation program. Other Board members attending the National conference included Dave Burns, Marshall Nuckolls, and Bud Sharp.

Clean-Up at Fairbanks Landing

Our Fish & Wildlife Committee spearheaded an effort to clean up parts of a relatively new 8,000-acre IDNR recreational area in Sullivan & Vigo Counties. On March 4, some 58 local citizens, ages 7 to 73, worked to clean up this area which had long been a place of illegal dumping. Over 150 cubic yards of trash were removed with the help of people from Sycamore Trails, Sullivan County American Indiana 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). LIFT prepared and served lunch, courtesy of I&M. Sullivan County Soil & Water Conservation District and NRCS personnel helped recruit workers, IDNR Division of Fish & Wildlife provided equipment for the removal of large discarded items, and Sycamore Ridge Landfill and Jamax Corporation provided assistance for the disposal of all materials collected.

Ron Ronk, IDNR Property Manager at Fairbanks Landing, called the day "a huge success." He stated, "The property appearance is greatly improved, benefiting our many property users, and more importantly discouraging additional dumping."

Invasive Species Workshop

This one-day workshop on September 30th helped landowners and managers to identify non-native species posing threats to Indiana, and highlighted management techniques that are successful at controlling non-native species. Forty-six people from all over Indiana came to Turkey Run State Park to gain valuable information and hands-on experience in dealing with exotic species.

Topics included:

- ◆ Invasive Plants to Avoid - Ellen Jacquart of the Nature Conservancy
- ◆ Invasive Insects - Jodie Ellis of Purdue
- ◆ Bush Honeysuckle / Methods of Control - Keith Ruble, Superintendent of Vigo County Park & Rec. Dept.
- ◆ Overview of Turkey Run State Park's Invasive Plant Control Program - Barbara Cummings, IDNR Interpretive Naturalist
- ◆ Tour of invasive species in the park

Coordinator Bill Beard Retires

Bill Beard first came to Sycamore Trails in 1994 as an Acting Coordinator, and became our official full-time Coordinator in July of 1996. His efforts helped develop the quality of our Board of Directors, and started the Council down a path of financial sustainability. Besides organizational improvements, he helped oversee projects undertaken by our various committees over the years, benefiting the natural resources and quality of life in our RC&D area.

Bill retired Sept. 30, 2006, and will be remembered for his many contributions to the success of Sycamore Trails. Actually, he's still contributing as a Council Earth Team Volunteer!

Accomplishments in 2006

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 2006 calendar year.

Education Committee – Mark Evans, Chair

- ◆ Instructed 35 adults in two Indiana Master Naturalist courses, in cooperation with Owen County Soil & Water Conservation District (SWCD), McCormick's Creek State Park, and Purdue Extension in Owen and Montgomery Counties
- ◆ Instructed 38 people on Pond Management principles, in cooperation with Purdue Extension, Clay County SWCD, Indiana Dept. of Natural Resources (IDNR) Division of Fish & Wildlife and private landowners.
- ◆ Printed/distributed 5000 copies of Soil & Water Conservation edition of children's "Boofo's Nature News" newsletter, partnering with the SWCD's in each county.
- ◆ Sponsored an educational workshop on invasive species of plants & insects at Turkey Run State Park for 46 adults. Partners included Turkey Run State Park, Friends of Turkey Run & Shades State Parks, Vigo County Parks Dept., Purdue University, The Nature Conservancy, Purdue Cooperative Extension.

Fish and Wildlife Committee – Steve Herbert, Chair

- ◆ Trained 24 adults on the Basics of Wildland Fire Management and Suppression.
- ◆ Trained and certified 22 adults on Advanced Prescribed Fire Management, enabling them to complete prescribed fire plans, and conduct the burns. Partners were Pfizer, Inc., Sullivan County Chapter of Quail Unlimited, IDNR Divisions of Forestry and Fish & Wildlife.
- ◆ Sponsored a clean-up day at Fairbanks Landing State Fish & Wildlife Area. 58 people, from age 7 to 73 turned out to remove over 32 tons of trash. Partners included Sullivan County American Indian Council, Life in Fairbanks Township (LIFT), Wabash River Heritage Corridor Commission, Indiana Horse Council, Outdoor Obsessions Hunting Club, IDNR, Sycamore Ridge Landfill, Jamax Corporation and Indiana Michigan Power (I&M).
- ◆ Held joint field day with our RC&D Forestry Committee, educating 60 people on sound management for woodlands, and fish and wildlife habitat. Partners included Purdue Dept. of Forestry/Natural Resources; IDNR - Divisions of Forestry and Fish & Wildlife; and USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service.
- ◆ Printed/distributed 5000 copies of Fish and Wildlife edition of children's "Boofo's Nature News" Newsletter (Financial assistance from Nucor Steel and Pheasants Forever/Coal Creek Chapter)

Forestry Committee – Raoul Moore, Chair

- ◆ Continued development of a management plan for woodland owned by Reelsville Water Authority in Putnam County
- ◆ Co-sponsored Forestry Management for the Private Woodland Owner course with Purdue University, IDNR and the Forestry Committee
- ◆ Held 3 educational meetings & field days of the Putnam County Woodland Owners

Accomplishments (continued from page 2)

- ◆ Printed/distributed 5000 copies of the Forestry issue of children's "Bofo's Nature News" newsletter (financial assistance from International Paper and Indiana Hardwood Lumberman's Association)
- ◆ Presented forestry sessions to 1500 5th graders at Vigo County school field days
- ◆ Assisted with the National FFA Conference in the forestry area
- ◆ Sponsored a forestry education day in Clay County at the Purdue Finley Woods for 75 Clay County home schooled children.
- ◆ Held Third Annual Forest Industry Recognition Tour & Dinner for landowners, forestry industry, and agency personnel. C.C. Cook & Sons Lumber Company hosted the tour.
- ◆ Held awards banquet with 60 people in attendance, to honor top woodland stewards and to educate woodland owners on forestry management (financial assistance from Pingleton Sawmill, Inc., Pike Lumber Co., and Loggers, Inc.)
- ◆ Awarded Savings Bonds to Forestry winners from county 4-H fairs
- ◆ Staffed forestry education tour as part of the Maple Syrup Festival in Parke County
- ◆ Distributed tree seedlings in Montgomery County in cooperation with Nucor in March

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 a multi-year agreement funded by IDEM and IDNR Div. of Reclamation to reclaim at least twenty abandoned coal mine sites over the time span of the agreement. Reclaimed 13 environmentally damaging abandoned coal mine sites in 2006.

Other Council activities

- ◆ Operated the Interstate Welcome Center on I-74, under contract with Indiana Office of Tourism Development
- ◆ Installed 13 dry hydrants to improve rural fire protection under a grant from the USDA Forest Service.
- ◆ Obtained a grant from ERM Foundation to help fund an educational raft trip organized by Sullivan County SWCD.
- ◆ Supported IDNR-Division of Reclamation "ReLeaf" program to create forests on recently mined lands. Five properties, covering 60 acres, were planted in trees.
- ◆ Provided start-up/expansion assistance to small business by taking in the West Central Indiana Business Innovations under the Council.
- ◆ Provided assistance to Indiana Conservation Tillage Initiative
- ◆ Assisted Putnam County SWCD in developing a grant proposal for Big Walnut/Deer Creek Watershed plan. A grant was awarded to Putnam SWCD in November 2006.
- ◆ 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.
- ◆ Attended National RC&D Conference in Savannah, presenting two success stories at breakout sessions.
- ◆ Conducted Board training sessions with Indiana Nonprofit Resource Network to improve Council capacity and sustainability.

Sycamore Trails RC&D Council, Inc.
Statement of Financial Income and Expense
 January through December 2006

	<u>Jan - Dec 06</u>	
Balance 1/1/06		49,708.23
Income		
4000 · Contributed Support	143,524.15	
5000 · Earned revenues	39,704.08	
5310 · Interest-savings/short-term inv	1,419.67	
6100 · Reimbursements from others	1,677.26	
6200 · Rebates/Refunds	26.14	
6300 · ReLeaf Prog Landowner Dep	3,570.00	
Adjusting entry for voided transaction	49.77	
Total Income	<u>189,921.30</u>	189,971.07
Expense		
7000 · Grant & contract expense	126,172.01	
7100 · Workshop/Event Expense	7,931.88	
7200 · Program Expenses	1,528.82	
7400 · Salaries & Related Expenses	37,133.84	
8100 · Non-personnel exp-Mgmt/Overhead	1,697.90	
8300 · Travel & meetings expenses	7,036.60	
8500 · Misc expenses		
8501 · Accountant fees	250.00	
8502 · Discretionary Expense	264.23	
8504 · Chemical Spraying	50.00	
8520 · Insurance-non employee	2,236.00	
8521 · Software purchase	209.90	
8525 · Endowment Fund Contrib.	8,220.00	
8530 · Membership dues	1,045.00	
8550 · Reimbursable Expense	865.37	
8555 · Refund of Expo funds to SWCDs	1,945.45	
8560 · Outside computer serv-Website	184.10	
8561 · Council Anti-virus software sub	39.99	
8500 · Misc expenses - Other	<u>180.00</u>	
Total 8500 · Misc expenses	15,490.04	
8600 · Business expenses	<u>13.14</u>	
Total Expense	<u>197,004.23</u>	197,004.23
Net Income	<u>-7,033.16</u>	
Balance 12/31/06		42,675.07

Sources of Funding

PROJECT SPONSORS

C. C. Cook & Sons Lumber Company
 Indiana Hardwood Lumbermen's Association
 Indiana Michigan Power
 International Paper
 Jamax Corporation
 Loggers, Inc.
 Nucor Steel Corporation, Crawfordsville Div.
 Pike Lumber Company, Inc.
 Pingleton Sawmill, Inc.
 Soil & Water Conservation Districts
 of Clay, Fountain, Montgomery, Owen,
 Parke, Putnam, Sullivan, Vermillion,
 and Vigo Counties
 Sycamore Ridge Landfill
 Sullivan County Chapter of Quail Unlimited
 Pfizer, Inc. - Vigo County
 Pheasants Forever, Coal Creek Chapter
 Vigo County Parks
 Wabash Valley Audubon Society

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
 ERM Group Foundation
 USDA Forest Service

PROJECT PARTNERS

Central Indiana Land Trust, Inc.
 IDNR Div. of Forestry Fire Headquarters
 IDNR Div. of Forestry
 IDNR Div. of Fish & Wildlife
 Life in Fairbanks Township (LIFT)
 Purdue Cooperative Extension Service
 Purdue University
 Soil & Water Conservation Districts
 The Nature Conservancy

DONORS

Land O'Lakes Foundation	Melvin Kelly
Nucor Steel Corporation	Charlie Lee
R.R. Donnelley Foundation	Bob Mayrose
<i>(made possible by Jim Spence's volunteer work)</i>	Robert Miller
Judy Bengochea	Raoul Moore
David Burns	Paul Oberholtzer
Frank Cottengim	Michelle Phillips
Linda Croft	Gerald Runyon
Max & Joy Evans	Bud Sharp
Rodger Foster	Jim & Sue Spence
John Gettinger	Glen Summers
Judy Harris	Amber Willen
Bill Hartman	Allen Williams
Steve Herbert	Rob Yoder
	Several anonymous donors

DONATIONS IN HONOR OF INDIVIDUALS

Anonymous donations were made to our Endowment Fund in the Putnam County Community Foundation in honor of two individuals:

In honor of Jack Nelson, for all his work improving landscapes. Jack has been active with our Forestry Committee for many years. He is retired from IDNR and now devotes his time to his private forestry business.

In honor of Chuck Phillips, for his support of not-for-profit organizations. Chuck has helped Sycamore Trails by donating signage for our trailer, portable signs to help folks locate our various event sites around west central Indiana, and some nice folders imprinted with our logo and information.

Earth Team Volunteers

Margaret Neild has continued her faithful service to the council by assisting in the office with mailings and other tasks.

Jamie Grivas, a Greencastle High School senior, also helped during a free hour several mornings a week.

Allen Williams continued to donate many hours and great expertise on the dry hydrant program. He even had his wife Mary involved.

Bill Beard, who retired at the end of September as the RC&D Coordinator, came back as an Earth Team Volunteer to help with several items.

Contributing to Our Success

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

THANK YOU!

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



NONPROFIT ORGANIZATION
U.S. POSTAGE PAID
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.

Sycamore Trails RC&D is an equal opportunity provider and employer.