

Conservation Conversation

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SWCD Receives Grant for Vandalia Lake

By Tony Pals

Fayette County SWCD has just received word that we received a \$64,000 grant through IDNR's C2000 program for work around Vandalia Lake. As you probably know, phosphorus has been identified by the IEPA as the number one pollutant in Vandalia Lake. One of the ways phosphorus gets to the lake is through runoff from the 11,000 acres of cropland in the watershed. So the district put together a grant to pay for filter strips around the streams and ditches in the watershed to catch that phosphorus before it gets to the lake. Now, it gets a little complicated here, so bear with me. This grant was written to be a 40% match to an EPA 319 grant to do the same thing – get filter strips around the lake. We had applied for the C2000 grant, and the 319 grant, two years ago, and probably would have gotten the 319 grant if the C2000 grant had been funded. So at this writing we are waiting

to hear about funds from the EPA, but right now it sounds like they will be able to find the money for this project. So, altogether, we will have \$150,000 for our filter strip project around the lake. That will allow us to put a filter strip along 87,000 feet of streams and ditches going toward the lake. We must remember, however, that this will still be a voluntary program. We must again count on the conservation mindedness of the farmers in the watershed. They have certainly shown that conservation ethic in past programs to help the lake. Hopefully they will continue to do so. And, hopefully we have developed an incentive program that will make it worth their while to participate. Time will tell. We plan on a meeting for the landowners in the watershed as quickly after confirmation of the 319 funding as possible to go over all the details of the program we have put together. Perhaps we can get some filter strips seeded this fall yet, with the bulk seeded next spring. More in future newsletters.

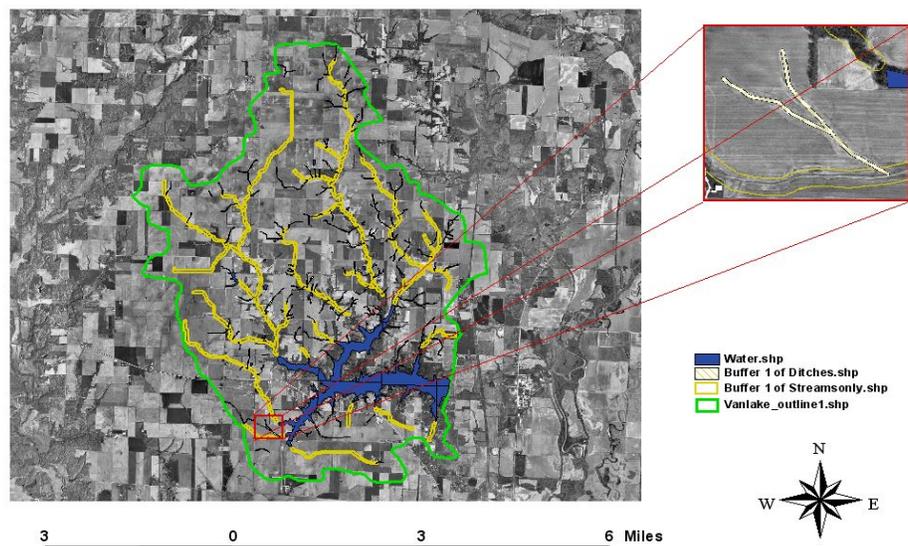
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Proposed Filter Strips/Field Borders



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Nelsie's News

By Nelson Torbeck

The weather is cool and rainy. Folks say it will stay the same the rest of the week. Sure have had a lot of storms so far this year - more than usual. We haven't had any damage, but it sure did look like it could some times. Grandson Tim had some damage to his house roof in Taylorville. It took part of it off; he was glad he wasn't there. I don't like storms! The rain is fine, but we could stand some warm weather for the corn that's planted. I'd say that most of the corn is planted and up. There has been some beans put in the ground, but it's too cool for beans. The old timers used to say that you should sweat when you fill the planter boxes. Course, we used to load the pickup with sacks, and then fill the boxes. Shoot, my planter used to hold four bushels - would have to refill every couple rounds. It's done a little different today. Big wagons, augers, big planters, big tractors, lots of acres, that's called progress. I saved more money in the seventies, than they do now and that's called progress. Okay, so much for that. We have not had any varmints around the place so far this year, guess I shot them all last year. We had all sorts of them around last year this time. We've got all the next winter's wood cut and split for the shop. It takes Granny and I quite a while to do it, cause we take a lot of breaks. Then I'll get the saw pinched in the tree. I hate that when that happens. Course, I forgot the wedges. Have to run back to the place and get them. Thank heavens for the 4-wheeler. Splitting wood's not bad if you have good neighbors that will let you use their splitter. Thanks, Denny and Lee! I spend a lot of time in the shop making wooden



toys. We use as many different woods as we can in each one. We usually make six at a time. Janice helps me cut the pieces out, then I put them together. It takes the most time to figure out what wood goes where. We enjoy doing it - at least I do. After Janice gets done helping me, she goes back to her rug making. By golly, Jordy's in between sports right now; too late for basketball and too early for baseball. So I don't have any results now. He'll start playing the end of the month, so next time. Jordy was staying with us for a few days during Easter Break. It was Tim's birthday and there's a place to eat called Jordy's in Taylorville. So we took Scott's and Jordy to eat at Jordy's. You talk about eat! He ate a pony shoe. Now that's a lot for a little guy like him. We came home and he said "I can't believe I ate the whole thing". Travis said "He'll start filling our in a couple of years". Grandson Jaron will be heading for Germany after school is out. His Aunt Alicia is going on a tour and taking him along. I told him to look up some of our relatives while he was there. Don't forget the Augsburg picnic the first Sunday in June starting at 5:00 p.m. - lots of good food, and entertainment. If you don't get the newsletter before the date, well, come next year, same time, same place. Looks like the end of the page is getting close, so I'd better wind things up. Here's a question for the month, "If con is opposite of pro, is Congress opposite of Progress?" How about this for an old saying, "We learn more and more about less and less, until eventually we will know everything about nothing".

Envirothon Results

By Tony Pals



Fayette County schools again participated in the Council 10 Envirothon held annually at Ballard Nature Center at Altamont. If you recall, Council 10 is made up of Effingham, Cumberland, Jasper, Shelby, and Fayette counties. High Schools from these counties sent five member teams to compete in this event on April 5th. This year only two Fayette county schools were represented: Vandalia and South Central. They did really well, however. In fact they came in first and third in the 16 team competition (Vandalia first and South Central third). The teams go to five stops dealing with different aspects of conservation, with a speaker at each site. They are then tested on each of the subjects. I know I say this every year, but I feel its worth repeating - the speakers came from four different agencies, all working together to provide conservation education. As hectic as everyone's schedules seem to be



these days, it is pretty amazing that we can get that many different agencies together on a single day. I think it shows the dedication to conservation education the presenters have. The topics were: Soils, Aquatics, Wildlife, Forestry, and Water Stewardship in a Changing Environment. Presenters for each topic were: Ken Gotsch, from NRCS, Ken Pearson and LeeAnn Crutin, from USACOE, Roger Jansen, with Effingham County SWCD, and Barb Lieberoff, with IEPA. Barbie Elliot's Vandalia team was made up of: Austin Wollerman, Taylor Wollerman, Randi Nichols, Drew Bell, and Sara Schwarm. Because of a scheduling conflict, Randi was replaced by alternate Zach Roper at the state competition held at Monticello on May 3rd and 4th. The Vandalia team placed 10th there and promise to work hard to get back. Apparently they had a good time. Thanks to everyone who helped with Envirothon this year.



Conservation Conversation
FAYETTE COUNTY SWCD
301 South Third Street
Vandalia, IL 62471
618-283-1095, Ext. 3
Fax: 618-283-4962

Non Profit Organization
Permit #53
Vandalia, IL

Conservation Calendar

June 2006

14 - Flag Day
18 - Father's Day
22 - Board Meeting

July 2006

4 - Independence Day
25 - Kelly Tarter's Birthday
28 - Scott Smith's Birthday

Vandalia Lake Day

By Tony Pals



In 2003, the SWCD put on Vandalia Lake Appreciation Day for Vandalia 6th graders, a one time event funded through a 319 Education Grant. Kind of like Conservation Field Days, with presentations on various topics on

conservation, this event is geared specifically to better understand Vandalia Lake watershed, its impact on the lake, and the resources of the lake. Like I said, that was supposed to be a one time event. On May 9th we held that one-time event for the fourth year. The kids like it, the teachers love it, and we enjoy putting it on. This is another one of those programs that involve inter-agency cooperation I



talked about in the article on the Envirothon. We had John Blythe from the Vandalia Sport Fishing and Conservation Club talk on Fishing in Vandalia Lake. Bob Hammel from IDNR spoke on wildlife in the watershed.



Ginger Boas and Debbie Boley from U of I Extension had the students playing Conservation Trivia. Denise Willenborg, from the Effingham County SWCD explained erosion with the use of a rainfall simulator. Phil Pruitt from the ACOE talked about snakes, and I had the kids calculating the total sediment delivered to the lake annually from four erosion sources. (They got it right every time).

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