



# Indiana Master Naturalist Program Underway at Bradford Woods

This fall, Brown, Johnson, and Morgan county Soil and Water Conservation Districts along with Hoosier Heartland RC&D Council, Inc. will sponsor an 8-week Master Naturalist Program. The



purpose of the program, developed by Todd Hutson, Purdue Extension Service Ag Educator and first presented by the Sycamore Trails RC&D, is for people to obtain training in natural resource principles. In turn, Program coordinators hope participants share this knowledge through community service and volunteer leadership.

When the idea was presented to the Hoosier Heartland RC&D Education Committee, a program committee was formed. Brown, Johnson, and Morgan county SWCD's took the lead and started the program rolling.

The program runs August 20 through October 8 at Bradford Woods in Martinsville, Indiana.

Each session is on a Tuesday night from 6 to 9 p.m. In addition to the 8 courses, a field day will also be held.

Course topics include tree ecology and identification, ornithology, fish ecology and habitat, soils, insects, mammals, reptiles/amphibians and wetlands, and fungi. Experts representing government agencies, not for profits, and universities will present the courses. It only took two weeks to fill the 30 open slots for the course.

Participants are expected to complete the eight class sessions, field day, plus an open book final exam. After completing 15 hours of community service,

participants will receive an Indiana Master Naturalist Certificate.

"We are very excited about this program and the potential for it to spread to other SWCD's and RC&D's throughout Indiana.," said Becky Fletcher, Hoosier Heartland RC&D Coordinator. "It is a wonderful opportunity to put natural resource education knowledge to work in Indiana."

For more information contact Brown County SWCD at 812/988-2211, Johnson County SWCD at 317/736-9540, or Morgan County SWCD at 765/342-5594.

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## Inside Echoes

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VOLUME 3 ISSUE 2

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# Trees to Furniture Project

On May 30, the Backyard Trees Committee visited the *Trees to Furniture Project* site. This was the first time since 2000 that committee members viewed the site. In 2000, several committee members helped with the initial clean-up of the site.

“We were extremely impressed with the great progress that has been made,” said Kathryn Mascaro, Chairman of the Backyard Trees Committee. “The site is well organized now, with assigned locations for tree drop off, sawing, mulch piles, and board storage.”

The purpose of this program is to offer a useful outlet for urban wood waste which is normally landfilled, buried, or burned. Trees that have to be removed because of storm damage, hazards, or development are brought to the site and milled into usable lumber (high quality trees), mulched, or sold as firewood.

The current project is a pilot project intended to test out the feasibility of a larger operation. The staff person in charge of the operation is Maria Steiner with Keep Indianapolis Beautiful. The site is 3 acres of what was formerly Central State Hospital. It is centrally located, easily accessible from several main roads, and gated at night.



Trees come from Indy’s Parks Department. Since there is currently no equipment for hauling trees, park personnel drop off dead or damaged trees that they remove from their property. A group from Wood-Mizer brings a sawmill in every Saturday. Wood-Mizer’s Customer Service employees run the sawmill which teaches them the ins and outs of sawmills, as well as gives them on the job knowledge to better serve their customers.

The milled lumber is taken to a large lumber company willing to work with the project and accept green lumber; there is no kiln on the sight for drying the lumber. A large tub grinder belonging to Indy’s Parks Department grinds excess debris into mulch which is put back into parks and planting projects in the city. Wood-Mizer has been milling about 1,500 board feet once a week for the past few months.

Watch for more information on this pilot project in future issues of *Echoes*.

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## ***2002 Farm Bill and the Indiana Conservation Partnership***

Last July, Hoosier Heartland RC&D and the Indiana Association of Soil and Water Conservation Districts, Inc. (IASWCD) hosted a meeting to begin dialogues on how the 2002 Farm Bill will affect the partnership.

Members of the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS), Indiana Department of Natural Resources, and Indiana's Soil and Water Conservation Districts (SWCDs) listened to Jane Hardisty, NRCS State Conservationist, explain the 2002 Farm Bill options and opportunities and how the law is currently being interpreted and implemented. Dwayne Howard, NRCS, presented a quick overview of the bill so that all present would have an idea of the general components. Howard also compared 2002 funding with funding from the past bill, as well as explained Indiana's program involvement. The meeting also included discussions on how the partnership might work together to move conservation forward in Indiana.

Other key discussions included the new Conservation Security Act which will allow farmers to be paid for good stewardship, and "third party vendors." This was of particular interest to many districts as a way to fund new technical staff. Unfortunately, SWCDs and RC&Ds will not be allowed to bid on these contracts. It was determined that the SWCDs and RC&Ds close working relationship with NRCS would provide them too much inside information to make it competitive for private contractors. There is much to be worked out in the way these entities will be given job approval, oversight, and payment. It can be expected that new programs, such as this one, will be more fully developed by October.

Bio-technology was also a topic of discussion. SWCDs and RC&Ds will be called upon to point out potential producers who might be interested in these new options and also have the expertise to add practical information on conservation concerns and outcomes.

Hoosier Heartland RC&D wishes to thank Jane for her efforts in establishing this early dialogue on the farm bill. Things are changing almost daily in the way that the components are being interpreted, yet the opportunity to meet and discuss what the future holds is invaluable to the hope that conservation remains a strong part of the bill in the future.

For more information, check out the Farm Bill Websites at <http://www.nrcs.usda.gov/programs/farmbill/2002> or <http://www.swcs.org>.



## **Attention Fire Departments**

The Dry Hydrant Grant program is proceeding well and may be extended beyond the December 2002 deadline.

A dry hydrant is the piping and connections to a permanent water source in a rural area for use by fire departments. Sources of water generally are retention ponds, lakes, etc. Dry hydrants can also be installed on bridges and swimming pools. Increasing the number of sources of water for fire fighting is important as more and more homes are built in wooded settings in rural areas. Inadequate water supply is the most common factor contributing to increased values lost and acres burned.

The \$80,000 grant, awarded to the HHRC&D from the USDA Forest Service, provides for the installation of 100 dry hydrants and/or drafting basins in the ten county Hoosier Heartland Area. The dry hydrants will provide a significant increase in water supplies and may allow some rural fire departments to reduce their ISO rating, thus providing a significant savings to homeowners on their insurance premiums. Recently, two newly installed dry hydrants were put to the test soon after installation in Boone County during a barn fire and a combine fire.

The project will include obtaining or reimbursing homeowners for all plumbing materials, suction heads, strainers, signage, plus the actual installation per project per fire department. The grant will pay 50 percent of the cost of materials and installation. Generally labor will provide the 50 percent match for the material cost.

Several Fire Departments have already installed dry hydrants or are in the planning/approval process. They include Zionsville Fire Department, Hazelwood Liberty TWP Fire Department, Brooklyn Volunteer Fire Department, Worth TWSP Volunteer Fire Department, Plainfield Fire Department, Benton TWP Volunteer Fire Department, New Whiteland Fire Department, EEL River Fire Department, Marietta Volunteer Fire Department, Trafalgar Fire Department, and Amity Community Fire Department.

Zionsville Fire Department has completed two hydrants of which one is a demonstration site. Fairland has completed one hydrant, Brooklyn Fire Department is working on three hydrants, and Hazelwood Liberty TWP Fire Department is working on two.

A large amount of grant money is still available during this ideal construction time. Fire departments can obtain checklist and grant application forms from Bonni Browning, HHRC&D office, at 317/290-3250 or e-mail at [bonni@in.rcdnet.org](mailto:bonni@in.rcdnet.org)

# Education Activity

The Education Committee wrapped up the 2002 Camp Gallahue Workshop and is currently preparing for next year's event. The 2003 workshop is scheduled for April 23-24.

One upcoming project that the Education Committee would like to highlight is another installment of our ArcView training class, entitled Getting to Know ArcView GIS Workshop. This is a beginning level class designed for anyone who wants to learn the basics, and/or who has little or no experience with ArcView 3.2.

Attendees will learn the basics of the program and will become familiar program screens, menu items, and buttons. Participants will also be challenged with mini-projects to work on throughout the training.

This is a "hands on" course with examples. Participants will not be subjected to long, boring lectures.

For more information, check out the website <http://marionswcd.org>, and click on the Upcoming Events link.

You can access *Echoes* through the Hoosier Heartland RC&D website located at [www.hhrd.org](http://www.hhrd.org).

# Calendar of Events

## October 2002

- 3\* Urban Committee Meeting, 9:00 a.m.
- 8\* Forestry Committee Meeting, 6:30 p.m.
- 9\* Education Committee Meeting, 9:30 a.m.
- 18 L-THIA Workshop, IUPUI University Library, 8:30-4:00 Indianapolis, IN (registration required)
- 22 MS Publisher, Level II Computer Workshop  
New Horizons Computer Learning Center (registration required)
- 22\* Rural Issues Committee Meeting, 10:00 a.m.
- 24\* Executive Committee Meeting, time/location TBA
- 25 ArcView/GIS Workshop, 8:30-4:00  
IUPUI University Library (registration required)

## November 2002

- 7\* Urban Committee Meeting, 9:00 a.m.
- 7 MS Excel Level II Computer Workshop  
New Horizons Computer Learning Center (registration required)
- 13\* Education Committee Meeting, 9:30 a.m.
- 14\* Backyard Trees Committee Meeting, 1:00 p.m.
- 14 MS Word Level II Computer Workshop  
New Horizons Computer Learning Center (registration required)
- 21 Executive Committee Meeting, time/location TBA
- 26\* Rural Issues Committee Meeting, 10:00 a.m.

## December 2002

- 2 HHRC&D Quarterly Council Meeting, 6:00 p.m.

\*Contact the council office for meeting location/ agenda

Deadlines for submitting copy for *Echoes* are as follows: 11/1/02, 2/1/03, 5/1/03, 8/1/03, and 11/1/03. To contribute an article, contact Cathy Deal at 317/290-3250.

