



# Rock Island County Soil and Water Conservation

Rock Island County SWCD Fall 2021 Newsletter

[www.RockIslandSWCD.org](http://www.RockIslandSWCD.org)

## CHALLENGES AHEAD

### The Mississippi River Plastic Pollution Initiative Quad Cities

The Mississippi River is the drainage system for 40% of the United States – flowing through all or part of 32 US States and 2 Canadian Provinces. Plastic waste and other litter travels through storm drains, tributaries, and smaller rivers into the Mississippi River, ultimately making its way into the ocean. The [Mississippi River Plastic Pollution Initiative](#) was designed to address this problem. Under the leadership of the [Mississippi River Cities & Towns Initiative \(MRCTI\)](#), the mayors of the Mississippi River – in partnership with the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), the University of Georgia, local governments, organizations, and the education community have come together to make this initiative a reality.

Through this initiative, community volunteers have been collecting data at key sites along the Mississippi River. This data aims to help determine what, where, and how plastic waste makes its way to the river. Already, the initiative has collected data on over 75,000 pieces of litter throughout three pilot cities: Baton Rouge, LA; St. Louis, MO; and St. Paul, MN. This data has been analyzed and is now available to view in a [Scientific Report](#).  
<https://www.unep.org/resources/report/mississippi-river-plastic-pollution-initiative-2021-science-report>

Quad Cities has been chosen as the next pilot location and includes all 5 of the Quad Cities as well as several other peripheral river communities. Further data collection will be taking place the Quad Cities this October. This data will be generated through a 'citizen science' approach using a free mobile app for tracking upstream and coastal litter called the [Debris Tracker](#).

Training on the use of the Debris Tracker app will be provided by the University of Georgia, both virtually and in person. Registration for the first virtual training is now open and will take place on 9/30/21 at 6:30pm CST. Register to attend the training [here](#) or email [debristracker101@gmail.com](mailto:debristracker101@gmail.com). In person trainings will be taking place at organized data collection events in October, including on October 15th during an official Quad Cities launch event. Follow MRCTI on facebook for up to date information on events. Let's take some action to reduce pollution in our amazing river!

Interested in joining data collection in the Quad Cities from October 1st-31st? Follow these three easy steps to get involved:

1. Download the [Debris Tracker App](#) on Google Play or the App Store
  - > Open the App and allow access to your location then Click "Start Tracking" and select the list named "*Mississippi River Plastic Pollution/MRCTI*"
2. Use the Field Guide
  - > The [Mississippi River Citizen Science Field Guide](#) provides detailed information on how to collect data easily and safely.  
<https://debristracker.org/mississippi>
3. Collect Data
  - > Select an area from the Quad Cities sampling map: Open [the map](#), select a yellow square (transect), and proceed to the location. Find a 3ft wide-pathway where litter typically accumulates (such as a road-side or sidewalk) and follow the path to record all items within the pathway transect for at least 30 minutes. *OR*
  - > Join an organized event through [XStream Cleanup](#) *OR*
  - > Collect "opportunistic" data and use the Debris Tracker App while taking a walk or while out and about with a friend or family member!

**The lives and livelihoods of future generations depend on our actions today!**

## ABOUT US....

### **Rock Island County SWCD Leadership**

#### Board of Directors:

Gary Blanchard (Chairman)  
Christine Nordick (Vice-Chair)  
Nathan Oak (Treasurer/Secretary)  
Bill Parchert, III

#### Associate Directors:

Sally Ferguson  
Marcus Thomas  
Jason Flickinger  
Bob Westpfahl, County Board Rep

### **Conservation Team**

Rich Stewart - Resource Conservationist  
Dawn Temple - Administrator  
Joe Gates - Conservation Specialist  
Joey Deloian - RC II  
Lou Liva - PCM Specialist

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Wyatt Junis - NRCS  
Ed Griffin - NRCS  
Jason Hessman, DC - NRCS

Marty McManus - IDOA

## NEW FACES



Joey Deloian started at RISWCD in late May as the Resource Conservationist II. Joey graduated from Southern Illinois University Carbondale in May of 2020 with a Bachelor's degree in Forestry with a specialization in Wildlife Habitat Management and Conservation. Joey grew up in Manhattan Illinois, outside of Joliet, and gained a passion for the outdoors when visiting his grandparents in Northern Wisconsin. From 2018 to 2020, Joey worked as a seasonal Restoration Technician with The Forest Service at Midewin National Tallgrass Prairie in Wilmington Illinois. He carried out duties such as planting native grasses and forbs, harvesting native seed, destroying invasive species, and assisting in plant and grassland bird surveys. Deloian is very excited for the opportunity to help farmers and landowners while simultaneously promoting conservation of our natural resources.

Rock Island, Henry, Mercer, and Knox Counties are now represented as PCM's newest region by Precision Conservation Specialist, Lou Liva. Lou is excited to return to the region after graduating from Augustana College in 2012. He looks forward to using his background in science education to help farmers examine a financial perspective of conservation.

Precision Conservation Management (PCM) is the premier conservation program of the Illinois Corn Growers Association. The program, which is free to join, assists farmers in adopting conservation practices by providing unique aggregate reports and cost share opportunities as well as one-on-one consultations that assess the cost benefits of in-field and improve on-farm decision making.

See page 4 for more information.



# CONSERVATION SALES

ALL SALES SUPPORT CONSERVATION IN ROCK ISLAND COUNTY!

## 2021 FALL TREE SALE



PRE-ORDER ONLINE by 10/17

[www.rockislandswcd.org/trees.php](http://www.rockislandswcd.org/trees.php)

3 Gallon Conservation Grade Trees

Varieties include:

Pecan, American Chestnut, Sugar Maple, Norway Spruce, White Pine, White Oak, Swamp White Oak, Bur Oak, Scarlet Oak, Dwarf Chinkapin Oak, Wild Plum, Shagbark Hickory, Hackberry, Downy Serviceberry, Tulip Tree, Blackgum, Sycamore, Persimmon, Bald Cypress, N. Pin Oak, Thuja 'Green Giant' Arborvitae, Paw Paw, Sweetshrub, Buttonbush, Wild Black Currant, Virginia Sweetspire, Smooth Wild Rose, Prairie Rose & Lead Plant

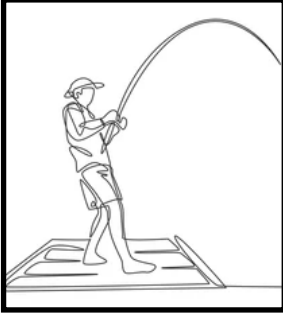
Native Plants: Pale Purple Coneflower, Prairie Alumroot, Bigfruit Evening Primrose, Wild Blue Phlox, Golden Alexander

\$10 each or 3 for \$27

**SALE QUESTIONS: (309) 764-1486 x 3  
OR  
Info@rockislandswcd.org**

**PICK-UP: October 27th & 28th, 2021 9 am-5 pm  
QCCA EXPO CENTER - NORTH HALL**

# CONSERVATION SALES & OPPORTUNITIES



TIME TO STOCK YOUR POND! FALL FISH SALE DAYS - THROUGH 9/30

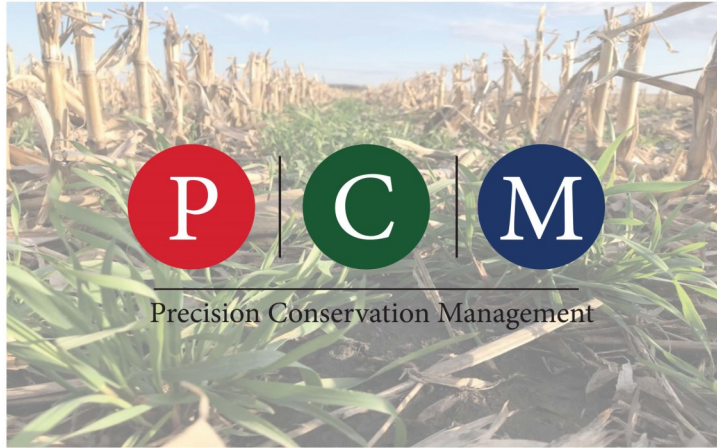
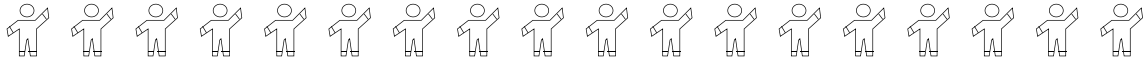
Pre-Order Online: [www.rockislandswcd.org/fish.php](http://www.rockislandswcd.org/fish.php)

Pick-Up: 10/8 @ 8am



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Precision Conservation Management is a farmer service program led by the Illinois Corn Growers Association and Illinois Soybean Association helping farmers understand how they can use conservation practices without sacrificing farm income. PCM is FREE to join and provides one-on-one consultations to identify in-field practices that increase conservation and improve the grower's bottom line.

Farmers get paid to participate and have exclusive opportunities to access cost share for practices like cover crops, reduced tillage, and nutrient management. Precision Conservation Management is now serving Henry, Knox, Mercer and Rock Island Counties.

**Find out where conservation makes cents on your farm:**

Contact Lou Liva at (309) 391-2346

Visit our website: [www.precisionconservation.org](http://www.precisionconservation.org)

*Farm incomes and environmental outcomes*



# CONSERVATION ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS

## PARTNERS FOR CONSERVATION

We are now accepting applications for the Partners for Conservation (PFC) program! PFC is a state funded cost-share program administered through the Soil & Water Conservation District. PFC provides cost-share assistance at 60% rate for the construction of projects that promote soil conservation and protect water quality, reduce soil erosion and improve water quality, and reduce potential ground-water pollution. Eligible conservation practices in the Partners for Conservation program include:

- Filter Strips
- Diversions
- Grade Stabilization Structures
- Grassed Waterways
- Hayland & Pasture Planting
- Water and Sediment Control Basins
- Terraces
- No-till and Strip-till Planting
- Cover Crops
- Temporary Cover
- Critical Area Planting
- Pollinator Habitat

Construction may begin once applications have been approved by the Rock Island County SWCD, surveying of the site has been done, and designs have been completed. When construction is finished and a check-out of the project has been conducted, bills need to be turned into RISWCD for payment on the project. If you have a resource concern or are interested in trying out cover crops, please call our office

Do you want to increase infiltration on your fields, provide weed suppression, reduce erosion and improve the health of your soil long-term? Then cover crops may be a perfect option to try out!

The United Nations estimates that, if current soil degradation rates are not reversed, there may be less than 60 harvests left in the soil around the world. Less than 60 harvests? That's within our children's lifetimes – a daunting thought. Sustainable soil management can turn the tide of soil degradation and possibly even climate change. And cover crops are a major piece of sustainable soil management.

Sustainable soil management can be done in an affordable, practical way, and should be encouraged by growers who want to protect the land for future generations. More and more no-tillers are using cover crops and are enjoying the multiple benefits they have to offer. Even backyard gardeners and non-traditional farmers can utilize these strategies. Growers are seeing enhanced soil biology, increased soil organic matter, boosted yields and more. It all starts with the soil, and cover crops are a critical component to helping soils thrive.

Besides PFC, there are multiple cost-share programs and other incentives to assist landowners with costs related to planting cover crops and other soil health practices. Contact our office for more info. We are here to help you help your land!

## WHAT'S YOUR PLAN???

If you don't have an up to date conservation plan, now is the time to be proactive and get a plan or review your old one. Experienced conservation planners at the SWCD and NRCS are ready to assist with developing a conservation plan. Start with the fields that are a priority or create a comprehensive plan for your entire farming operation. The planning process starts with a field visit and a discussion about your farming system, your interests and needs, and progresses to a conservation system customized for you and your land. You select the best practices to address the natural resource concerns on your land. You are part of the planning process from start to finish, it's free, and you set the schedule to implement the plan. Conservation planning is the key to access all of the USDA and SWCD conservation programs. Each year, millions of dollars of conservation funding is available to Illinois farmers and landowners through programs including the Environmental Quality Incentive Program (EQIP), Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP), Partners for Conservation (PFC), Conservation Reserve Program (CRP), and Precision Conservation Management (PCM). Your conservation plan can help you choose the best conservation program to accomplish your conservation goals. Let's get started! Contact Joe Gates, Conservation Specialist to set up a meeting to discuss opportunities for your farm at 309-764-1486 X 3.

## KEEP PLANTS & POLLINATORS HAPPY WITH FALL GARDENING IN THE AIR

With the weather getting colder and fall on the way, it's important to know how to put your garden to rest and plan for the next growing season. Learn how to support pollinators, grow vegetables and herbs in any size garden, and find and plant trees for long-term success in "Gardening in the Air", a webinar series offered by U of IL Extension and IA State University Extension. Experts from both institutions will present on a wide variety of timely gardening topics with online sessions on October 9 beginning at 9 a.m., CST. Register for one or more at [go.illinois.edu/GIAsignup](https://go.illinois.edu/GIAsignup). Sessions are free, but a donation is appreciated. Access links and handouts will be provided upon registration.

### Pollinators:

- [Pollinators, Plants and People](#); (9-10 a.m.)
- [Planning for Pollinators this Fall](#); (10:15-11:15 a.m.)
- [Pollinator Gardening](#); (11:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m.)

### Trees:

- [New & Alternative Shade Trees for the Home Landscape](#); (9-10 a.m.)
- [Planting and Growing Healthy Shade Trees](#); (10:15-11:15 a.m.)
- [Trees and Shrubs for Pollinators](#); (11:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m.)

### Vegetables and Herbs:

- [Big or Small: Cover Crops for All](#); (9-10 a.m.)
- [Backyard Greenhouse Basics](#); (10:15-11:15 a.m.)
- [Harvesting and Preserving Herbs](#); (11:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m.)

# CONSERVATION NEWS

## CRP INCREASES RATES

Starting in October, the USDA Farm Service Agency will be accepting offers for specific conservation practices under the Conservation Reserve Program continuous signup. Under the continuous CRP signup, environmentally sensitive cropland devoted to certain conservation practices can be enrolled at any time. The rental rates for CRP are higher than last year and cost-share percentage has been increased.

Landowners thinking about enrolling new acres under the CRP, also should contact the FSA office to determine eligibility and practice requirements. They can also contact our office in Milan to answer questions and discuss possible CRP opportunities. This is a great time to add some conservation to your farm!

### *Common practices eligible for continuous CRP include:*

- Grassed waterways
- Vegetative and Riparian filter strips
- Pollinator Habitat
- Wetland restoration
- Windbreak and shelterbelts
- Shallow water areas

**\*\*To be eligible for CRP, the land must have been owned for one year and was cropped (corn, soybeans, oats, wheat, etc) for 4 out of six years from 2013 to 2018.**

## COPPERAS CREEK UPDATE



Completed Streambank Stabilization project

Construction work continues on Copperas Creek Watershed. Several projects are completed or in the final stages including Streambank Stabilization, Water and Sediment Control Basins, Grassed Waterways, and a Grade Stabilization Structure. The current 319 Grant from the IL EPA is to be wrapped up by December 31<sup>st</sup> of this year.



Joey Deloian digs for artifacts at a streambank site while completing a cultural resource review

Illinois EPA is expected to release the next Notice of Funding Opportunity for 319 grants in the next few weeks and the Copperas Creek Steering Committee and RISWCD staff will work together to write a proposal for another round of funding for BMP projects in Copperas Creek Watershed. RISWCD staff will hold a stakeholder meeting this winter to showcase the projects and obtain feedback from landowners on future needs within the watershed.



Completed WASCOB project



Grassed waterways

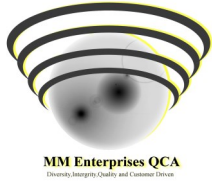
## MILL CREEK WATERSHED PLAN UPDATE

A meeting was held this summer at Sherrard High School to a group of landowners and farmers in the Mill Creek Watershed. The purpose of the meeting was to give a brief progress report on the Resource Plan that is currently being done in the watershed and answer questions from stakeholders. Dawn Temple gave an overview of the grant itself. Rachel Curry, Watershed Coordinator with University of Illinois Extension office discussed the Nutrient Loss Reduction Strategy and why the state is interested in promoting work on a watershed-by-watershed approach rather than a county or state level program. Rich Stewart gave the group a report on how the Copperas Creek watershed projects are funded and examples of work in that particular watershed. Finally, Jeff Boeckler, with Northwater Consulting discussed his role with doing the actual inventory work and completing the Resource Plan by sometime in 2022. For the immediate future, Jeff will be accessing land in and along Mill Creek and its tributaries to complete an inventory of streambank conditions and areas of erosion. If you live along Mill or Mud Creek, the Mill Creek Steering Committee or RISWCD staff will be contacting you to obtain permission to gain access to your land for the streambank survey and inventory beginning in October after the leaves have dropped. Thank you in advance for your cooperation. We need your assistance in order to obtain an accurate picture of the watershed.

***If you would like to meet one-on-one with one of our staff members to discuss resource concerns on your property, please call our office and we will be happy to assist you!***

# RISWCD NEWSLETTER SPONSORSHIPS

A big thank you to our current sponsors featured below! The printing of our bi-annual newsletter would not be possible without their support.



## M & M Enterprises QCA

Quad City Water Conservation Specialist

<http://mmenterprisesqca.fixr.com/>  
309-854-3983

**FREE 1 HOUR CONSULTATION**

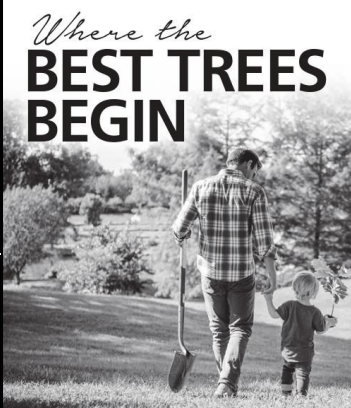
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First Five New Customers to Hire MME QCA for their Lake Or Pond Services Receives 20% Off With This Coupon



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## Quad City Conservation Alliance

2621 4<sup>th</sup> Avenue  
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A Non-Profit Coalition of Conservation Clubs



# GOLD STAR FS, INC.

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Soil & Water Conservation District  
3020 1st Ave E  
Milan, IL 61264  
309-764-1486 X 3  
[www.rockislandswcd.org](http://www.rockislandswcd.org)

LIKE US ON FACEBOOK TO SEE UPDATES ON  
EVENTS AND PROJECTS!



Quad Cities'  
Farmers' Market  
[Online](https://www.qcfarmersmarket.online/)

QC Farmers' Market is a cooperative of farmers and food producers local to the Quad Cities area. When you buy from us, you're buying directly from the producer, and all products are homegrown and handmade, without exception.

Please come see us at our new real farmers' market every Saturday from 8 am until noon in the west parking lot of Schwiebert Park, 17th St. and 1st Ave., Rock Island.

Our online store is open between 9 am Wednesday and 9 pm Sunday. We have two convenient pick up locations on Tuesday evening:

Pick up your order the following Tuesday either at Teske's : 2423 16th St, Moline between 4 pm and 5:30 pm *OR*

at our Downtown Rock Island pick up in the west parking lot of Schwiebert Park: 17th st and 1st ave between 6 pm and 7 pm

<https://www.qcfarmersmarket.online/>

## BI-CAN

Bi-State Conservation Action Network

THROUGH THE YEARS:  
**Conservation**  
in the QC

**BREAKFAST INCLUDED!**  
Goodwill Donation



**BICAN Meeting**  
October 12, 2021  
8:00 a.m. - 10:00 a.m.  
**Izaak Walton League**  
8440 N Harrison St.  
Davenport, IA 52806

### AGENDA

- 8:00 Breakfast served
- 8:30 Welcome and Introductions
- 8:45 BioBlitz Results
- 9:00 Panel Discussion and Open Networking



Register online at <https://web.extension.illinois.edu/registration/?RegistrationID=24198>

## FOR SALE

**Flags (multiple colors): \$.15 each or 100 for \$12**

### Native Grass Seed and Pollinator Mixes

Custom designed mixes to meet your needs. Call 309-764-1486, Ext. 3

## FALL SEEDING??

Our 7.5 foot Great Plains No-Till Seeding Drill is available for rent. It can be used for grain, small seed or native grasses.

Rent our drill for  
\$100/day +  
\$12/acre.

Pick-up at SWCD  
office in Milan.

