

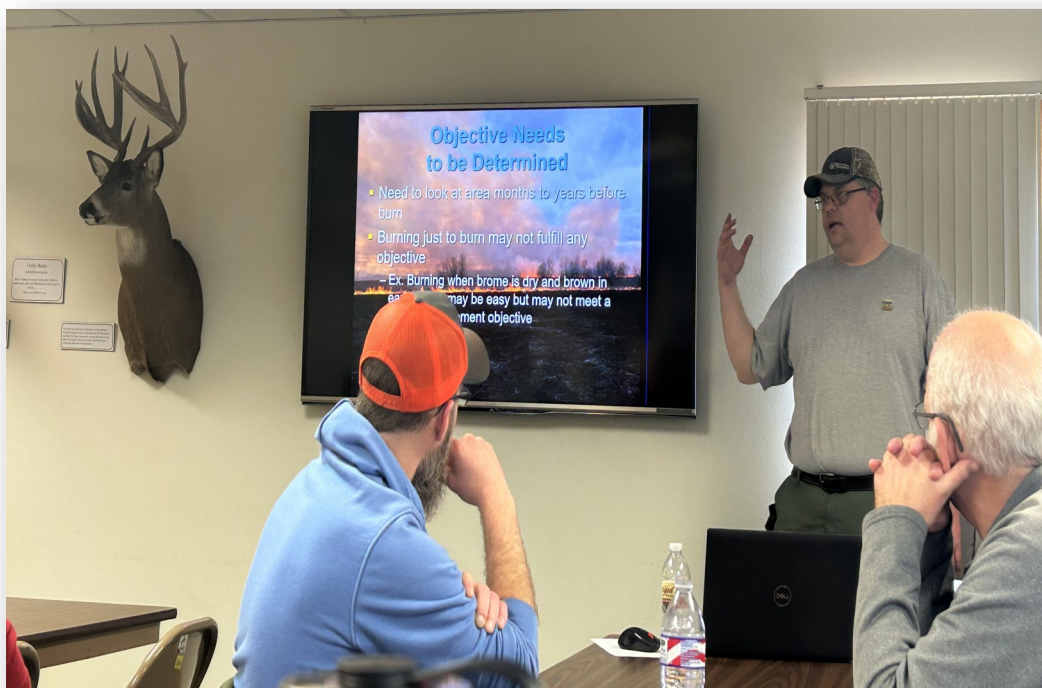
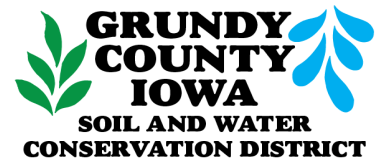
Winter 2023 Grundy County Wildlife Habitat Series

Our Lunch N' Learn habitat series this winter was a success. The Grundy County Soil and Water Conservation District, the Grundy County Conservation Board, and the Local Ringneck Chapter #52 Pheasants Forever are sponsored a series of workshops aimed at educating landowners and others interested in improving wildlife habitat.

Joe Herring, DNR forester, provided information on the Ash trees and the effects of the Emerald Ash Borer and what can be done to rebound from damage done by the pest. Lexi Ashbrook and Dan Borchardt from Pheasants Forever spoke about small food plots and how to create and manage them for wildlife habitat. Jason Auel, Iowa DNR Biologist, & Chase Babcock, Grundy County Emergency Management, discussed preparing for a successful prairie burn.

Our largest turn out for the event was the presentation on prepping for a successful prairie burn. Auel touched upon every step for a burn, even things that most people wouldn't even think of like wind speed and the behavior of fire when on a hill. He provided all information and sources for clarification and proper planning.

Support for programs like these are made possible by the Conservation Club donations. We'd like to thank the Grundy County Conservation Board for providing the space to hold the workshop and Barlea Roots for catering each event. We'd also like to thank Pheasants Forever chapter 52 for their donation to help us accomplish our goal towards wildlife habitat education.



Jason Auel presenting prairie burns

ATTENTION!!

Cover Crop sign-up is happening now. If you are planning on doing cover crops this fall, please call or stop by the office to sign up for cost share assistance, available on a first-come basis.

After you plant, FSA will certify your crops from now through July 15th.



2022 Conservation Club Members

Harlan Persinger

Freese Farms

Jim & Brenda Everts

Phil & Diane Schildroth

Keith & Dorothy Sheller

Harlyn & Karen Riekema

Roger & Marcia Dudden

Noel & Dottie Rewerts

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Rodney Hartman

Kathy Bine

Jennifer Bine

Juhl-Aronsen Farm Ptnshp

Beth Thompson

The SWCD Commissioners would like to thank everyone who donated to the district. Your funds are used to help with the district's activities and programs in education, classroom activities, scholarship, Envirothon, field days, and Stewardship Week, etc. Remember all donations are tax deductible. The SWCD commissioners are elected officials but to not receive any compensation for their duties.

MEMBERSHIP FORM (CLIP AND RETURN TO OUR OFFICE TO MAKE A DONATION)

2023	MEMBERSHIP	2023
GRUNDY COUNTY SOIL AND WATER CONSERVATION CONSERVATION CLUB		
Name _____		Donation _____
Amount _____		
CONSERVATION CLUB MEMBER		

Congratulations to our winners!



Congratulations to Robert and Kathryn Camarata of Grundy Center for winning the state Izaak Walton windbreak award.



Congratulations to Austin Betts, of Grundy Center, for winning our local scholarship! Austin is pursuing a degree in Environmental Resource Management at the University of Northern Iowa.



Fred Abels, Esther Meyer, and Hartley Meyer pose with a memorial plaque gifted for Harvin Meyer, honoring his work with the SWCD.

Why Use a Rain Barrel?

By John Oltman, Commissioner of Grundy County SWDC

Regardless of where you live, whether in a rural setting or in town everyone can benefit from the use of rain barrels.

Rain barrels can be purchased and cost as much as several hundred dollars or built from a simple kit and a plastic recycled barrel.

There are so many advantages of rain barrels. It is such a simple way to keep collecting a free resource for the benefit of yourself, and the environment.

1. REDUCES RAINWATER RUNOFF

One important benefit of rain barrels is that they reduce the amount of runoff from our roofs. Runoff is a huge problem in urban and suburban areas, polluting our waterways with fertilizers, pesticides, and other contaminants. Running water also gathers leaves as it flows, causing storm drain blockages and floods. Reducing runoff helps keep streams clear, and the plants and animals that rely on them healthy.

2. IMPROVES LOCAL WATER QUALITY

Keeping dirt, pesticides, fertilizers, and yard debris out of our local rivers and streams also improves the local water quality. Polluted runoff from storm drains enters natural waterways and causes a lot of downstream damage.

3. PREVENTS SOIL EROSION

Slowing down the flow of gutter runoff also helps to reduce soil erosion. Erosion can damage your foundation, as well as remove the nutrient-rich topsoil from your garden. Collecting runoff from the roof preserves that topsoil for your plants and prevents further damage to your landscaping.

4. HEALTHIER FOR YOUR PLANTS

Not only do rain barrels benefit the environment, but they're also great for your plants too. Rainwater is the best choice for potted plants, and it's so much better than municipal water! Municipal water contains chlorine and other chemicals that can build up in the soil, and harm sensitive potted plants. Even well water contains iron and other heavy minerals that can also build up and damage sensitive plants.


5. HELPS TO CONSERVE WATER

Another huge benefit of rain barrels is that they help to conserve water, since you can use it for other things besides your garden. While not potable, since rainwater is soft it is useful for all kinds of tasks, like filling up buckets for washing the car, patio furniture, windows, the dog, or other household chores. It can also be used for filling up your pond and outdoor water features when they get low. Plus, if it sits in the sun for part of the day, you will have pleasantly warm water to clean with.

6. SAVES YOU MONEY

One of the biggest advantages of rain barrels (and a popular one!) is that they help to save money on your bills. Whether it's your utility bill or electric bill, they provide you with a free supply of water, which gets replenished again and again, for no extra cost.





Black Hawk Creek Watershed and Dry Run Creek Watershed hosted a workshop where people converted 55-gallon drums into a functioning rain barrel to harvest rainwater. This event was put together with the help of Black Hawk Soil & Water Conservation District, the Iowa Department of Agriculture and Land Stewardship and Grundy Soil & Water Conservation District; supporting partners include Conagra Foods, Green Iowa AmeriCorps, and the Iowa Waste Exchange.

Rainwater in an urban setting is unable to freely infiltrate into the ground due to impervious surfaces (roofs, decks, sidewalks, roads, etc.). This run-off can increase flooding, as well as introduce pollutants such as soil, lawn fertilizers, pesticides, trash, animal waste, road salts, and chemicals into waterways. Overtime the accumulation of these pollutants can negatively affect waterways.

Rain Barrels are an easy way to reduce run-off by capturing rainwater from roofs. In addition to reducing pollution, rain barrels can reduce the amount of water used from municipal sources to care for gardens and landscaping. According to the US EPA, 30% of daily water use is utilized outdoors. With rain barrels storing rainwater for that purpose, that percentage is reduced.

I think it's important for everyone to get involved in water quality improvement. While a rain barrel is a lot smaller than a wetland restoration, both are equally important when it comes to conservation.

Faith Luce, Watershed Coordinator for Grundy SWCD



CDI Spring Regional

The Grundy Soil and Water Conservation District hosted a regional gathering of fellow district commissioners and agency professionals on Tuesday, March 7th. Approximately 30 people attended and gathered at the Wellsburg Community Center. These meetings take place once a year on a rotating basis, with each county in the region taking a turn at hosting. The region encompasses Winnebago, Worth, Mitchell, Howard, Hancock, Cerro Gordo, Floyd, Chickasaw, Franklin, Butler, Hardin, and Grundy counties.

The topics discussed were the long length of time it takes to get projects funded and obstacles to funding programs, the high cost of meeting government construction standards, the future of healthy soils efforts, and potential points to bring to congressional representation. Policy updates were also presented by Susan Kozak with the Iowa Department of Agriculture, Ben Cottrell with the Natural Resources Conservation Service, and Miranda Hays with the Iowa DNR. John Whitaker, Conservation Districts of Iowa Director, emceed the meeting.

The meeting concluded with local presentations from Faith Luce, project coordinator for the Black Hawk Creek watershed project and special guests, Jason and Tyler Schildroth of Reinbeck, who presented their story about pursuing a water quality wetland project on their land. A lunch was catered by the Sloppy Egg restaurant in Wellsburg.

Cover Crop Workshop

As cover crop usage has expanded to over 35,000 acres in the county, the SWCD recognized a need for grower support. Terry Basol, ISU Extension Agronomist, presented information on effective termination and scouting for pests. Courtney Myers and Faith Luce, local staff, presented on available cost-share programs. Sarah Tweeten, from the Iowa Corn Growers, updated the audience on 2023 Farm Bill priorities. A panel discussion with three local farmers concluded the event. A big thanks to Bill Noteboom, Brad Ohrt, and Henry Rolston for volunteering to share their experiences managing cover crops and improving soil health!

Refreshments were provided by Farm Credit and lunch was provided by the Iowa Corn Growers. Thanks to all our sponsors and presenters for a wonderful event!



The “*Partners in Resource Management*” newsletter is provided free to owners and operators of land in Grundy County, Iowa, and others interested with issues involving resource management.

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Send questions or comments to: Grundy County Soil and Water Conservation District

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Phone: (319) 824-3634, ext. 3

Office Hours: 8:00 to 4:30, M-F

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John Oltman: Vice Chair

Don Davidson: Treasurer

James Everts: Co treasurer

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Assistant Commissioners

Jim Kadner

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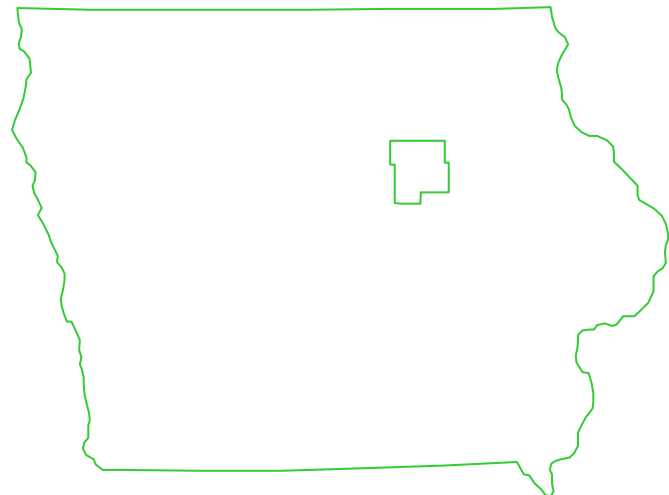
Hunter Filloon (District Technician)

Yolanda Butler (Soil Conservation Technician)

Heather Kitzman (Team Resource Conservationist)

Faith Luce (BHCWS Project Coordinator)

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MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of the Grundy County Soil and Water Conservation District is to provide leadership to people regarding technical, educational, and financial assistance that conserves natural resources.



Camarata Windbreak