

WINTER 2025

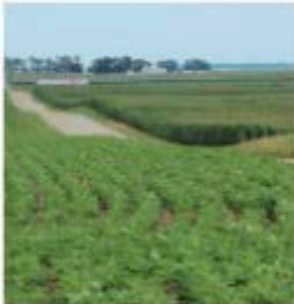
# CONSERVATION CORNER

Quarterly Newsletter of the  
Tippecanoe County Soil & Water Conservation District



## Annual Meeting -

February 12 9 am @ John S Wright Forestry Center  
1007 N 725 W, West Lafayette, IN



*Bryan Young*

PURDUE WEED SCIENCE

Bryan will discuss latest research and recommendations on herbicide application via drones

*Breakfast*

CONTINENTAL BREAKFAST

Enjoy a light breakfast presented by the Tippecanoe Soil & Water Conservation District

*Annual Report*

2024

Tippecanoe County SWCD 2024 Recap

For more information, please visit our website, call or visit our office.

Registration is free  
To Register - visit <https://tippecanoecountyswcd.org/all-events>

| [tippecanoecountyswcd.org](https://tippecanoecountyswcd.org) | 1812 Troxel Dr. | 765-474-9992 ext.3 |  
Lafayette, IN 47909

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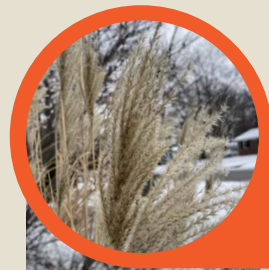
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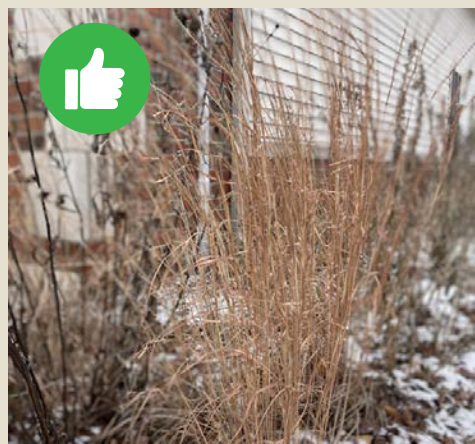
# Invasive Insights

By Robert Suseland, Habitat Specialist  
rsuseland@tippecanoe.in.gov | (765) 474-9992 ext. 4008

I am officially declaring war on invasive Chinese silvergrass (*Miscanthus sinensis*). Chinese silvergrass, sometimes called maiden grass or *miscanthus*, is an Asian grass species that has been widely used as an ornamental grass throughout the United States. As you drive through Tippecanoe County, you can find it planted near many mailboxes. Chinese silvergrass spreads via underground stems, called rhizomes, and via windborne seeds and is now escaping into natural areas where it outcompetes native vegetation and reduces wildlife populations. If you have Chinese silvergrass on your property, please consider removing it. Foliar treatment with systemic herbicides such as glyphosate or imazapyr with a surfactant during the active growing period is effective in the autumn and/or late spring. Read and follow all herbicide label instructions. Landscaping with natives is always recommended. Little bluestem, indiagrass, and switchgrass are great, native alternatives to Chinese silvergrass. Feel free to email me with any questions you have. For more information on invasive plants, check out the Tippecanoe Invasive Cooperative Taskforce (TICT) webpage: [tippecanoecountyswcd.org/tict](http://tippecanoecountyswcd.org/tict)



Chinese Silvergrass  
(*Miscanthus sinensis*)



Little Bluestem  
(*Schizachyrium scoparium*)



Indiagrass  
(*Sorghastrum nutans*)



Switchgrass  
(*Panicum virgatum*)



## NRCS Spotlight: Sarah Vaughn

Sarah has been the NRCS District Conservationist in Tippecanoe County since 2021, assisting landowners make the most of their land through USDA programs. Need a hand? You can reach her at 765-474-9992 ext. 4005 or send her an email at [sarah.vaughn@usda.gov](mailto:sarah.vaughn@usda.gov). When she's not busy at work, you'll find her enjoying family fun with her husband Peter and their two energetic boys!



# Habitat Happenings: Small Scale Native Plantings

By Robert Suseland, Habitat Specialist

rsuseland@tippecanoe.in.gov | (765) 474-9992 ext. 4008

There are many reasons why you may choose to establish native plantings. Some landowners want to provide habitat to pollinating insects and other wildlife. Some landowners want to improve the aesthetics of their property. Planting native plants can improve the pollination of fruits and vegetables and even bring in beneficial insects that prey upon crop pests. Planting native plants can be used to stop soil erosion, increase soil health, improve water quality, and to retire unproductive farmland.

## Tips for a successful project:

- A site and project specific plan should be developed for every project.
- Free technical assistance is always available from the Tippecanoe County SWCD.
- Proper site preparation, appropriate planting methods, and science-based plant selection and planting rates are all crucial for successful habitat establishment.
- Select regionally appropriate, native plants.
- Inadequate site preparation is the primary reason for a failed planting
- Broadcasting seed on snow in January or February is a great way to plant seeds.
- Herbicide is a great site preparation option. Used properly, herbicides are safe and effective tools.
- Solarization is a great site preparation option, especially in smaller areas.
- Patience is very important when establishing native plants. A planting can take 3-5 years to fully establish.

It can be difficult to find cost-effective, species rich, native seed mixes. We recently purchased a seed mix for mesic to dry mesic sites and a seed mix for wet mesic to wet sites to divide up for smaller projects. Whether you need seed for 10 square feet or 3000 square feet, we have you covered. Reach out to us do discuss your project and to discuss pricing. The mesic to dry mesic mix specifications are below.



Common Name	Scientific Name	Bloom Period	Bloom Color	Seeds Per Square Foot
Sideoats Grama	<i>Bouteloua curtipendula</i>	July - August	Green/Tan	1.5
Yellowfruit Sedge	<i>Carex annectens</i>	July - August	Green	2.1
Bicknell's Sedge	<i>Carex bicknellii</i>	May	Green	1.8
Shortleaf Sedge	<i>Carex brevior</i>	July - August	Green	2.0
Troublesome Sedge	<i>Carex molesta</i>	May - June	Green	1.2
Fox Sedge	<i>Carex vulpinoidea</i>	May - June	Green	1.7
Little Bluestem	<i>Schizachyrium scoparium</i>	August - September	Purple - Bronze	1.4
Prairie Dropseed	<i>Sporobolus heterolepis</i>	July - August	Cream	0.7
Lead Plant	<i>Amorpha canescens</i>	June - July	Purple	0.7
Swamp Milkweed	<i>Asclepias incarnata</i>	July - August	Pink	0.3
Common Milkweed	<i>Asclepias syriaca</i>	June - August	Pink	0.2
Prairie Coreopsis	<i>Coreopsis palmata</i>	July - August	Yellow	0.5
Purple Prairie Clover	<i>Dalea purpurea</i>	July - August	Purple	1.0
Purple Coneflower	<i>Echinacea purpurea</i>	June - August	Purple	0.3
Grass-leaved Goldenrod	<i>Euthamia graminifolia</i>	September - October	Yellow	1.6
Dowry Sunflower	<i>Helianthus mollis</i>	August - September	Yellow	0.2
Western Sunflower	<i>Helianthus occidentalis</i>	August - September	Yellow	3.0
Round-headed Bush Clover	<i>Lespedeza capitata</i>	August - September	Green	0.4
Savanna Blazing Star	<i>Liatris scariosa</i>	August - September	Purple	0.2
Wild Bergamot	<i>Monarda fistulosa</i>	July - August	Purple	0.8
Riddell's Goldenrod	<i>Oligoneuron riddellii</i>	September - October	Yellow	0.5
Foxglove Beardtongue	<i>Penstemon digitalis</i>	June	White	0.7
Prairie Cinqufoil	<i>Potentilla arguta</i>	July - August	Sulphur/White	1.3
Slender Mountain Mint	<i>Pycnanthemum tenuifolium</i>	July - August	White	1.3
Common Mountain Mint	<i>Pycnanthemum virginianum</i>	July - August	White	1.3
Showy Black-Eyed Susan	<i>Rudbeckia fulgida</i>	August - September	Yellow/Orange	1.4
Royal Catchfly	<i>Silene regia</i>	July - August	Red	0.5
Early Goldenrod	<i>Solidago juncea</i>	July - August	Yellow	1.7
White Heath Aster	<i>Symphotrichum ericoides</i>	September - October	White	0.5
Calico Aster	<i>Symphotrichum lateriflorum</i>	September - October	White	0.6
Skyblue Aster	<i>Symphotrichum oolentangense</i>	September	Blue	0.9
Common Spiderwort	<i>Tradescantia ohimensis</i>	June - July	Purple	0.4
Golden Alexander's	<i>Zizia aurea</i>	May	Yellow	0.5





## Conservation Equipment Grants Available

By Mike Smith, Conservation Ag Specialist

Funding for conservation equipment modifications is currently available in much of central Tippecanoe County. This watershed-based grant can **fund improvements to existing equipment** that can improve farm profitability and soil health and water quality outcomes. Some of the most commonly approved modifications include: **no-till closing wheels and row cleaners for planters, air seeders for cover crops, and tool bar attachments** to enhance precision nutrient management. These grants are especially flexible. If you have an idea for how an equipment modification could improve soil health or water quality for your operation, **contact Mike Smith at [mjsmith@tippecanoe.in.gov](mailto:mjsmith@tippecanoe.in.gov) or 765-474-9992 x4006.**

## Supervisor Spotlight: Doug Osborn



Doug has been farming almost all of this life, where he was helping on his family farm at a young age of 9. He then owned his own ground at the age of 16 and started farming with his parents. Doug graduated from McCutcheon High School in 1992. After graduation he took some Ag classes at Purdue before he joined the family partnership in 1994. When Doug started farming with his parents, he was very passionate about soil health so they started implementing cover crops and no till practices to their operation. Along with farming he was also the owner and operation of Lauramie Excavating with his dad Tom for 15 years. Doug has 4 daughters, Taylor, Josie, Kinzie and Mia as well as 5 grandkids with 2 on the way.



# NO-TILL PLANTER CLINIC

Join the Tippecanoe County Soil and Water Conservation District for an informal discussion on planter set-up.

Michael Strasburger (Strasburger Farms) and Barry Fisher (Fisher Soil Health) will provide an in depth look and answer questions about the modifications the Strasburgers have made to their planter that have allowed a successful transition to no-till. We will also discuss cost-share opportunities that may be able to cover a portion of the cost of equipment modifications that improve soil health.



January 22, 9-Noon

Strasburger Farms NW of West Lafayette

(Detailed address to come)

To register contact:

[mjsmith@tippecanoe.in.gov](mailto:mjsmith@tippecanoe.in.gov)

765-474-9992 x4006



Tippecanoe County  
**Soil & Water**  
Conservation District

## Equipment for Establishing Spring Covers

Don't overlook spring cover crops on fields that were too dry last fall!

Our spreader cart offers a cost-effective option for covering ground quickly.



"The earlier the better" is generally the rule with cover crops, but dry conditions in our area this fall may have led some to reconsider establishing a cover following harvest.

A cover of something like spring oats and radish planted late-winter or early spring can still provide significant benefits to weed suppression and reduced compaction.

Small spreader carts like the one available for rent from the SWCD are an ideal tool for broadcasting a last-minute cover crop; especially over frozen ground. Contact us for advice on cover crops or for questions about renting equipment.

## Upcoming Events:

January 8 - SWCD Board Meeting

January 22 - No-Till Planter Clinic

January 27 & 28 - Staff @ Annual Conference

February - Native Plant Sale Begins

February 12 - SWCD Annual Meeting @ 9 am

February 17 - Office Closed

March 12 - SWCD Board Meeting

May 9 & May 10 - Native Plant Sale

May 10 - Native Plant Fest

June 10 - Beneficial Insects on Small Farms Field Day