

# Reporter

St. Charles County Soil and Water Conservation District

## Reporter Has a New Look!

Soil and Water Conservation District's Program Office has made a few changes to our computer systems trying to streamline everything. In doing so, the program that we regularly use to create the Reporter is no longer available to us. During the technological switch, St. Charles County SWCD has decided to revamp the Reporter. You can expect the same quality information with a new look!

Happy  
Holidays

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FACEBOOK!



@St. Charles County Soil  
and Water Conservation  
District

## St. Charles SWCD Hosted Their 81<sup>st</sup> Annual Meeting in St. Peters

Farmers and cooperators of the St. Charles County Soil and Water Conservation District gathered for their 81<sup>st</sup> annual meeting and dinner November 20, 2025 at the University of Missouri Extension Center in St. Peters. Despite the government shutdown that



happened prior to the Annual Dinner Meeting, about 70 people came and enjoyed a delicious Thanksgiving style dinner catered by Dean Andrews Catering. The guest speaker for the evening was Shelly Colatskie, a bat ecologist from Missouri Department of Conservation. Colatskie captivated the audience with discussion on Missouri's bat species. Colatskie spoke about the importance of bats for agricultural pest control, White Nose Syndrome, and how you can help protect bats. Thank you, Shelly for your wonderful presentation!

## Roger Steinmann is Cooperator of the Year

The 2025 Cooperator of the Year Award was awarded to Roger Steinmann at the annual meeting dinner. Mr. Steinmann was not able to attend the Annual Dinner, but he was later presented the Cooperator of the Year Award. Mr. Steinmann (pictured) was recognized for his decades of conservation efforts on his land. Through the use of no-till and cover crops, Roger Steinmann has improved soil health and farm production on his farm while



protecting the land from erosion and promoting clean water. In addition to his efforts, he continuously spreads the word of the benefits of cover crops to other landowners in the county; and continues to be an example of responsible land stewardship that will benefit generations to come.

**DID YOU  
KNOW?**



**SOME PEOPLE BELIEVE THAT BATS  
ARE DIRTY, BUT THEY ARE  
ACTUALLY QUITE CLEAN. THEY  
SPEND MUCH OF THEIR DOWNTIME,  
UPSIDE DOWN GROOMING THEIR  
VELVET-LIKE FUR. THINK OF THEM  
AS TINY, FLYING CATS!**

**St. Charles County  
Soil & Water Conservation District  
330 Interstate Dr.  
Wentzville, Mo., 63385  
636-922-2833, ext. 3**

The Reporter Newsletter is published by the St. Charles County Soil & Water Conservation District quarterly, in March, June, September, and December.

**Editor- Theresa Strunk  
Writer- Alexandria Hecht**

For advertising information or to submit news, email [Alexandria.hecht@swcd.mo.gov](mailto:Alexandria.hecht@swcd.mo.gov).

The district is supervised by a board of supervisors made up of farmers from St. Charles County and a University of Missouri Extension representative:

**Board of Supervisors**

Adam Bonderer, Chairman  
Jim Petersen, Vice-Chairman  
Eli Isele, Secretary  
Bob Feise, Treasurer  
Bruce Siem, Member

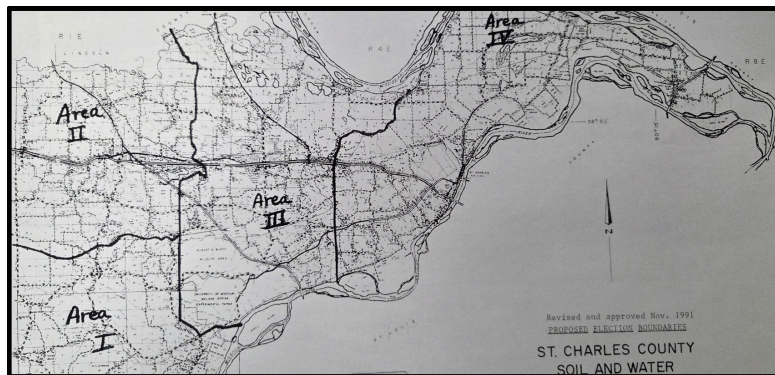
**SWCD Personnel**

Theresa Strunk, Manager  
Charlie Perkins, Technician  
Alexandria Hecht, Info/Ed Specialist

**NRCS Personnel**

Kevin Barber, District Conservationist  
Liz Hawkins, Resource Conservationist

The mission of the Soil & Water Conservation District is to conserve the soil and water resources of the county; promote the wise use of these resources through education; protect residents from undue hardship caused by erosion, sedimentation and flooding; protect the agricultural soil base to ensure continued productivity; and preserve the quality of water and water courses within the county.



## Support Your Local SWCD by VOTING in February

**Board of Supervisor Election**

**Areas II and IV**

**February 1-22, 2026**

**Two ways to vote:**

1. Print a ballot from website: <https://mosoilandwater.land/st-charles>, and mail to Supervisor Elections, 330 Interstate Dr. Wentzville, MO. 63385
2. Vote at University of Missouri Extension office, 260 Brown Rd., St. Peters.

**Voter eligibility:**

One vote per independent farm enterprise by a landowner or the landowner's legal representative

(a farm is defined as land which has been assigned a USDA/FSA farm number, or land assessed by the county as agricultural and producing \$1000 or more in agricultural products per year)

## St. Charles County Stream Care Guide is Online

This Stream Care Guide highlights the watersheds in which we live and the activities within these watersheds that can harm water quality. It explains the functions of a stream and the natural and human influences that affect stream ecosystem changes. St. Charles County has made it available online to all residents. You can visit the county website's Stormwater Management and Watercourse Protection page to link to the new Stream Care Guide, or scan the QR code on the right.

**NEW**

### Stream Care Guide Available

Educating St. Charles County Residents About Local Streams and How to Protect Waterways and Private Property

To help the community better understand our impact on waterways, landscaping and stream stabilization tips, St. Charles County—in partnership with the City of Wentzville and the St. Charles County Soil & Water Conservation District—has created a unique and engaging Stream Care Guide. In this guide, residents will find out how they can:

- Prevent or minimize erosion issues.
- Avoid flooding impacts.
- Protect property values.
- Preserve water quality.
- Contribute to the survival of fish and wildlife.

As stewards of the two mightiest rivers on the North American continent, everything we do has the potential to affect our county's tourism, flooding, tax dollars, and the beauty of life's most important natural resource: water.

Scan the QR code with your phone's camera to begin reading the Stream Care Guide to learn more about the county's local waterways and what you can do to protect them and your property.



# Permanent Vegetative Cover: A Solution for Healthier Soil and Cleaner Water

When partnering with Soil and Water Conservation Districts (SWCD), the goal is to reduce soil erosion and improve water quality within your practices. That is exactly the purpose of Permanent Vegetative Cover Establishment. This practice is converting cropland to pasture to help reduce soil erosion.

Permanent vegetative cover establishment improves soil health by reducing erosion through its canopy and root systems, which filter and slow runoff. Plants improve soil structure and increase water infiltration by creating channels in the soil, reducing the likelihood of runoff and erosion. Additionally, the plant roots create organic matter, which improves the soil fertility and overall health of the soil.

Water movement is positively affected by establishing permanent vegetative cover because the grasses and legumes that are planted tend to hold soil particles in place with their root systems and slow runoff velocity. Soil that is covered and protected has a harder time being carried into our waterways. Root systems improve the infiltration rate, which means less surface water runoff and fewer pollutants being carried into our water bodies because the roots are absorbing and cycling nutrients.

To be eligible for cost-share, SWCDs take into consideration sheet and rill erosion or ephemeral gully erosion. The amount of erosion must exceed the acceptable level of soil loss. Post-installation erosion rates must be less than pre-installation erosion rates.



## Policies:

Within this practice, certain policies must be followed and applied in order for the state's cost-share of 75% of the state's average cost to be applied. The pasture seeding component has a 5-year maintenance life, and native, warm-season grasses have a 10-year maintenance life.

- On land where the slope exceeds 2%. All cultural operations shall be performed on the contour, except where SWCD determines this to be unnecessary.
- Grazing must be delayed until the new seeding has attained good growth. It is recommended that it be at least 12" tall. Further grazing should be controlled throughout the season to ensure good growth before winter.
- Cost-share is authorized for:
  - Pasture seeding
  - Reseeding
  - Lime: assistance is limited to the minimum requirements to establish adequate cover to control erosion. Limestone shall be applied in accordance with the minimum needs as recommended by the establishment, determined by a soil test.
  - Fertilizer: fertilizer application according to a soil test may be waived if the individual nutrient requirement is less than 25 pounds per acre and the total application amount is less than 50 pounds per acre.
  - Preparation of a seedbed may consist of plowing, disking, or spring-tooth plowing, or chemical methods in a no-till system of grass establishment. The cooperator may use any seedbed preparation method, but the assistance amount is based on the Pasture Seeding components.

See Permanent Vegetative Cover, pg. 4



- Cost-share is not authorized for:
  - Conversion from woodland or forest to pasture. Cost-share cannot be provided for dozing or cutting of trees. If an area has been cleared, the owner must establish permanent vegetative cover at their own expense. To be eligible in the case of conversion from woodland to pasture, the land must have been in crop or pasture/hay for three years before contract approval.
  - Clearing rocks or other obstructions from the area to be seeded.
  - Fencing
  - Nutrient build-up.
  - Nutrient application based on crop production goals rather than establishment recommendations.
  - Vegetative cover that consists of only legumes.
  - Land established in permanent vegetative cover that is under a maintenance agreement for a seeding practice on the same acres.

If you see signs of erosion on your land, contact your local Soil and Water Conservation District to see what you can do to improve your practice.



Mark your calendars for February 4, 2026, for St. Charles County Soil and Water Conservation District's Annual Programs Workshop. It will be at University of Missouri Extension Office in St. Peters from 9am to 12:30pm. Come out and enjoy some warm biscuits and gravy while you learn about what is happening in each program. This Program Workshop will provide lots of information about Soil and Water Conservation Districts and Natural Resource Conservation Service cost-share opportunities. The Missouri Department of Conservation will cover all things invasives, MU Extension of St. Peters will discuss



their important work within the community. Kelly Dunlap with the Peruque Creek Watershed Alliance will speak about the 319 Grant and how to get involved with the alliance. Lastly, Rusty Lee, a Field Specialist in Agronomy is our guest speaker for the afternoon and he will provide information on warm season grasses and alternative winter feeding. The voting period for St. Charles County SWCD elections is from February 1 through February 22 for two supervisor positions. The programs workshop invites you to come out and vote for your Area II and Area IV candidates!



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# Trump Administration Announces \$12 Billion Farmer Bridge Payments for American Farmers Impacted by Unfair Market Disruptions



President Donald Trump with the support of the Secretary of Agriculture, Brooke L. Rollins, announced the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) will make \$12 billion available in one time bridge payments to American farmers in response to trade market disruptions from tariffs and the increase of production costs that are still impacting farmers. The bridge payment's purpose is intended to aid farmers until historic investments from the One Big Beautiful Bill Act (OBBBA) are enacted.

Of the \$12 billion available, \$11 billion is set to be used for the Farmer Bridge Assistance (FBA) Program, which provides broad relief to United States row crop farmers who produce Barley, Chickpeas, Corn, Cotton, Lentils, Oats, Peanuts, Peas, Rice, Sorghum, Soybeans, Wheat, Canola, Crambe, Flax, Mustard, Rapeseed, Safflower, Sesame, and Sunflower. Farmers who qualify for the FBA Program can expect payments to be released by February 28, 2026.

Eligible farmers should ensure their 2025 acreage reporting is factual and accurate. Crop insurance will not be required, but the USDA strongly encourages producers to take advantage of the new OBBBA risk management tools to best protect against price risk and volatility in the future.

The remaining \$1 billion in bridge payments will be reserved for commodities not covered in the FBA program such as specialty crops. Payments for specialty crops are still under development due to requiring additional understanding of market impacts and economic needs. The \$12 billion in farmer bridge payments, including those provided through the FBA Program, are authorized under the Commodity Credit Corporation (CCC) Charter Act and will be administered by the Farm Service Agency (FSA). To submit questions, justification for USDA farmer bridge aid producers can reach out to [farmerbridge@usda.gov](mailto:farmerbridge@usda.gov) or reach out to your local FSA office.

*“Of the \$12 billion available, \$11 billion is set to be used for the Farmer Bridge Assistance (FBA) Program.”*

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If you are interested in advertising, contact Ally Hecht at St. Charles County SWCD.

**Thank you to this year's Annual  
Dinner sponsors!**  
**We appreciate your generosity  
and your continued support of  
our local agricultural  
community.**



**2025 Annual Meeting Door Prizes  
Were Provided by:**

**Fastlane--** Boozy gift basket



**The O'Fallon Hoots baseball team--** four game tickets

**The Dean Family--** kid's toys, umbrella, lunch tote

**Serena Boschert--** handmade artwork

**FCS Financial--** Annual Meeting Dinner Sponsor

**Missouri Organic Association--** MOA Conference ticket

**St. Charles County SWCD--** popcorn tins, tools, bird seed, chip and dip set, puzzles, candy, children's tractor,

**Tractor Supply, Troy, MO.--** Dewalt angle grinder, grinder blades, welding helmet

**The Perkins Family--** Wine and sausage gift basket

**Straatmann Feed in New Melle--** Gift Certificate

**Eli the Bee Guy--** 2 bottles of pure, raw honey



# Way Back When...

**Date:** April 20, 1971

**Subject:** Diversions

**Photographer:** Les Volmert

**Location:** On old US 40 in the City of St. Charles, Mo.

**This Picture Shows:** “Charles Hafer checks the stand of fescue on a diversion that protects a steep bank on his property. Prior to the establishment of the diversion and seeding, the bank was badly eroded and sent thousands of tons of sediment into his lake. After building the diversion and seeding, and building a silt basin, he was able to dredge out the big lake. In 1971, it cost about \$8,000 to restore the large lake to its former size and approximate depth.

**Photo Credit:** USDA– Soil Conservation Service



**Comparing Prices:** Dredging a large pond (over 10,000 square feet) typically costs \$10,000 to \$25,000 or more, but can range from a few thousand dollars to well over \$50,000 depending on factors like pond size, depth, volume of sediment, site accessibility, and disposal methods. The cost can also be broken down by volume, with prices ranging from \$20 to \$60 per cubic yard.

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# Reporter



330 Interstate Dr.  
Wentzville, MO. 63385

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## Missouri Soil and Water Conservation Districts Held Their Annual Training Conference

Despite challenging weather on December 1<sup>st</sup>, 114 Soil and Water Conservation Districts (SWCDs) convened at the Margaritaville Conference Center in Osage, Missouri for the annual Missouri Association of Soil and Water Conservation Districts (MASWCD) conference.

The first day included an opening session, lunch, informative workshops, and concluded with an awards banquet. The second day featured a breakfast, and Employees Association meeting, training sessions for board members, and an awards lunch where Charlie Perkins (at right) of St. Charles County SWCD was honored as the State Technical Specialist of the Year. The final day featured district workshops and concluded with a key presentation by Missouri State Climatologist Zachary Leasor on Missouri's weather systems and their impact on agriculture.



## Important Date or Events

- 1/15/26** Application deadline for EQIP and CSP programs
- 1/19/26** Office Closed in observance of Martin Luther King Jr.
- 2/1/26 - 2/22/26** Voting Period for SWCD Board Supervisor Election
- 2/2/26** Wheat and small grains report due (FSA)
- 2/4/26** Programs Workshop \*\*See details on page 4
- 2/16/26** Office closed in observance of Washington's Birthday

