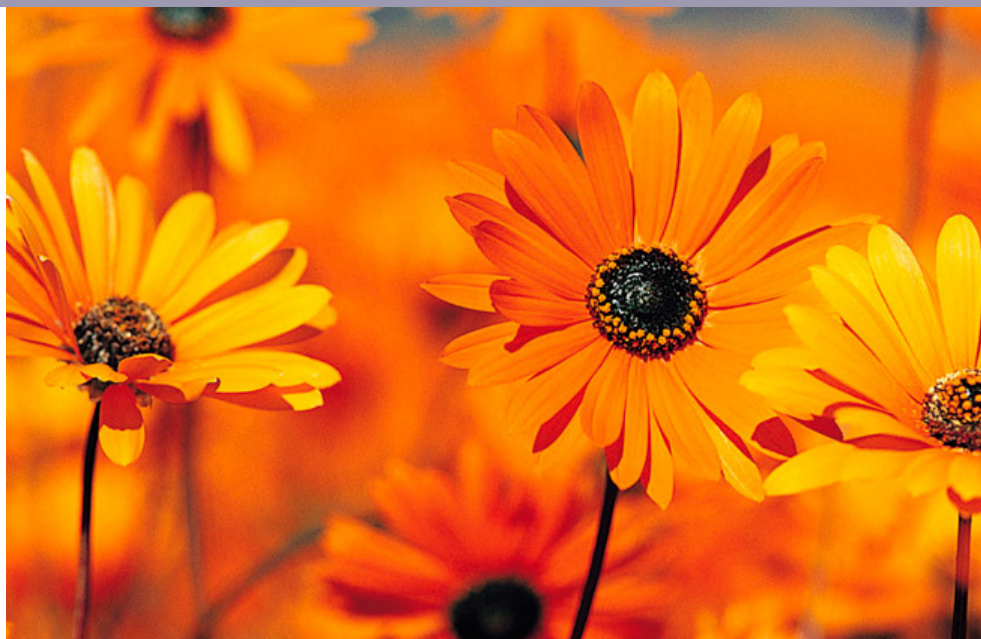


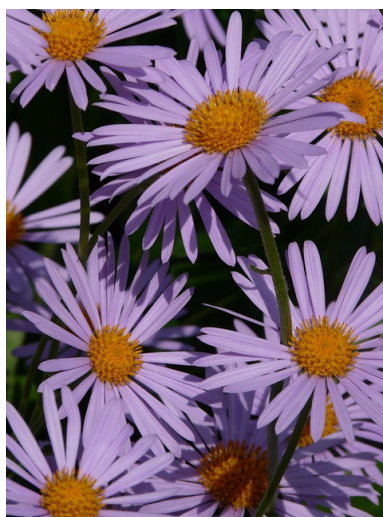
# Conservation Connection



## Spring Fish Sale

Orders Due:  
Tuesday, April 2, 2024

Fish Pick-up:  
Wednesday, April 17, 2024  
11:00 am  
Kendall SWCD office



## Spring Tree Sale

Orders Due:  
Thursday, April 18, 2024

Tree Pick-up:  
Thursday, April 25, 2024  
12 noon-4pm  
Kendall SWCD office

Order forms are printable at  
[www.kendallswcd.org](http://www.kendallswcd.org)

### SWCD Board of Directors:

Butch Konicek, Chair

Kerri Horton, Vice Chair

Scott Kaufmann, Treasurer

Rita Feltes, Secretary

Deanna Bazan, Director

### SWCD Staff:

Ariel Beauchamp  
Education Coordinator

Alyse Olson  
Resource Conservationist

Julie Brown  
Administrative Coordinator

### USDA-NRCS Staff:

Erika Luft  
Acting District Conservationist

Megan Andrews  
Soil Conservationist

# SWCD Director Highlights

You might be wondering what a Kendall County Soil & Water Conservation District Director does. Soil & Water Conservation Districts are governmental bodies that were created with the purpose of promoting the protection and conservation of soil, water, and other natural resources. As a result, directors are elected officials who ensure that we are fulfilling our mission through the programs & events that we offer as well as the information and resources that

we provide to the community. Directors attend our 10 board meetings each year, participate in sub-committee meetings, and help out at district special events. They play a vital role in how we function as a district. We are extremely grateful for the directors that serve on our board and wanted to share more about them with you in this newsletter. We are also currently seeking associate directors for our board to one day join our phenomenal board of directors. Please reach out to our office for any questions or interest.

## THANK YOU, BUTCH, FOR 18 YEARS OF SERVICE!

The Kendall County Soil & Water Conservation District's (SWCD) board and staff would like to recognize the 18 years of service Butch Konicek has provided to the district, serving as both Vice President and President on the Board of Directors. Butch has been a pillar to the district offering his financial expertise, volunteering at district events, and representing the district in a strong and thoughtful manner. He has not only been a great leader, but he has also put many smiles on people's faces with his humor and wit.



Butch is an integral part of the agriculture community. Growing up he worked on his family's cattle & grain farm, he assists the community through his work as a certified financial planner, and he volunteers at the Kendall County 4-H Fair and Kendall Grundy Beef Association's Annual Beef Banquet.

Because of his desire to serve, we know his choice to retire from the district's board was not an easy one. In recognition of all his years of service, the Kendall County SWCD board and staff have awarded Butch the 2023 Conservation Partner of the Year award. Thank you, Butch, for being a solid and steady leader to the Kendall County Soil & Water Conservation District!

## DEANNA BAZAN, DIRECTOR

Deanna Bazan grew up on a farm in DeKalb County and has always loved the outdoors. She started teaching in Plano, and that is where she first learned of the SWCD through Ag in the Classroom lessons with her 5th graders. She was invited to serve as an Associate Director and eventually was elected as a Director. This spring she celebrates 25 years with the dedicated Staff and Board members who work together to serve Kendall County. Deanna is passionate about our natural resources and finds the District a good way to practice her stewardship ethic and give back to her community. She is grateful for the opportunity to keep up with current events in agriculture and legislation, and she loves to be a part of the networking that happens within our county organizations for the betterment of this place we call home.



Deanna has made a career in education, both in the Plano School District and at the Kendall County Outdoor Education Center, and you will now find her volunteering with the Ag in the Classroom program as well as the Dickson-Murst Farm Partners. Deanna and her husband, Brian, live in Plano where they raised their two children, Hannah and Matthew.



## KERRI HORTON, VICE CHAIR



Much of Kerri Horton's career has been as a Director at Ferguson Partners where she coordinates the firm's global research activities. She has more than 20 years of executive search industry experience and has contributed to the successful completion of numerous executive level searches in multiple functions within the real estate and financial industries.

While she is directing various business development and search-related tasks she finds it most difficult to keep her mind from wandering to the farm where she gardens and tends to her beehives. Instilled early on, by both of her grandmothers, her lifelong love of growing flowers and gardening is now more of an obsession, and she is grateful for having grown up in rural Kendall County surrounded by corn and

bean fields. She is most happy digging in the soil and pulling weeds.

Kerri was thrilled at the invitation to serve as an Associate Director of the SWCD and was elected as a director in 2023. She realizes there is much for her to learn (starting with how can there be so many acronyms) but is excited to partner with a great board and an amazing staff as she grows in the role.

Kerri holds a B.A. in English literature from LeMoyne College and an M.A. in arts and media management from Columbia College.

## SCOTT KAUFMANN, TREASURER

Scott Kaufmann is in his second year serving as a Director at KCSWCD. Scott's dad grew up on a family farm in Buckley, IL and shared his love for agriculture throughout his life. Scott found a natural fit when he first heard about the District and shared their values of improving our home County and its place in the wider ecosystem. Scott appreciates the opportunity to work together with Kendall County residents to leave the area in a better position for future generations of farmers and families. Beyond his work at KCSWCD, Scott works for the DuPage County Health Department on behavioral health programs to improve services for those with mental health and substance use needs. For fun he loves to go hiking at the crack of dawn and biking along the Fox River. When he's not on the trails, Scott and his wife, Rebecca, are having a blast raising their three kids Winnie, Dylan, and Lincoln.



## RITA FELTES, SECRETARY



Rita grew up in Streamwood, Illinois. She grew up playing on the farm and learning about farming from her older brother and his wife where they lived in Elgin Illinois.

She always loved being outdoors, taking multiple classes about the outdoors, and obtaining her Master Naturalist certificate. Being a children's librarian and living in Amish country was the perfect place to put some of that into practice with the children she taught.

When she moved back to Illinois she decided to join as a member of the Kendall County Soil & Water Conservation District board where she has been for approximately 2 years. Helping teach with Ag in the Classroom, taking all the extra classes she can find, and working part-time at a senior home keeps her busy during retirement.

"I've learned a lot from being part of the Soil & Water Community and for that I am very grateful! These are things I can share with children to help them be more aware of our wonderful world and how to protect it."

# SWCD Updates and Resources

## PARTNERS FOR CONSERVATION PROGRAM:

Funding is currently available through the Partners for Conservation (PFC) Program. The program is intended to help landowners and operators implement projects that conserve soil and protect water quality but may need some technical and/or financial assistance to get started. We'd love to assist you with your conservation project!

Be sure to take advantage of available funds while they last. Cost-share rates are 75% of the estimated project cost (based off our current cost list for Kendall County). Questions? Contact Alyse at (630)553-5821 x3 or email [alyse.olson@il.nacdnet.net](mailto:alyse.olson@il.nacdnet.net).

## Cost Share Program Sign Up

### Conservation Practices Include:

- Cover Crops
- No Till/Strip Till
- Conservation Cover
- Well Decommissioning
- Filter Strips
- Grassed Waterways
- Terraces
- Pasture/Hayland
- Planting
- Saturated Buffers,
- Bioreactors
- Rain Gardens and More!

**Accepting  
Applications!**

**Deadline  
March  
29th**



For information & applications call or email:  
(630) 553-5821 x3  
[alyse.olson@il.nacdnet.net](mailto:alyse.olson@il.nacdnet.net)

## SPRING POND SEMINAR 2024

The Kendall & Grundy County Soil & Water Conservation Districts will host our Spring Pond Seminar in-person on **Wednesday, March 6th**. The evening will begin at 6:00pm at the **Kendall-Grundy Farm Bureau** located at 4000 N Division Street (Route 47), Morris, IL 60450, north of the interchange with Interstate 80.

The evening will feature Seth Love, Illinois Department of Natural Resources Fisheries Biologist, who will provide information on pond maintenance/care, fish stocking rates, pond shocking, chemicals, feed and related questions. The workshop is free, but we kindly request you RSVP by contacting the Kendall County SWCD office at (630) 553-5821 x3 or email [alyse.olson@il.nacdnet.net](mailto:alyse.olson@il.nacdnet.net) to reserve your spot. A light dinner will be provided. We hope you can join us!

## BEST OF LUCK, JULIE!

Julie Brown, our Administrative Coordinator for the past 4 years, has accepted a new position that will further her career. Julie was a true asset to the district and accomplished great things during her time here. She not only handled our finances, maintained our budget, managed our website & social media accounts, and prepped our board meetings, but she also coordinated and promoted countless sales/



events and even organized our first ever used tire recycling event. Not to mention she is the most orderly person we know! She was always thinking of ways to improve the district and offer more to the community! We wish you the best, Julie!



# Kendall County Ag In the Classroom 2023–2024 Programs

We are springing into 2024 having grown our program offerings to over 5,000 students since September 2023, averaging over 1,000 students a month in K-12th grades. Students loved the scientific inquiry on making soybean plastic and testing different products to slow down the process of apples. Lately, students have learned about the water cycle and created their own water cycle bracelet. Our last presentation will be on pollinators in April and May.

All programs are free of cost thanks to our donors and partners. These presentations make excellent curricular tie-ins. We are always looking for more volunteers to help present these programs in classrooms. Volunteers can commit to as little as 2 hours/month to help spread education on conservation and agriculture. Please reach out to the Education Coordinator, if you are interested at [kendallaitc@gmail.com](mailto:kendallaitc@gmail.com).



## 2024 Agriculture Career Contest



Last year, pictured to the left, Emily Graver was the first place winner in 2023 Agriculture Career Contest. Students in 6th–12th grades who submitted an entry had a chance to win \$100 for first place or \$50 for second place. Students wrote an essay no more than 500 words on a agriculture career that fit their interests. This contest is to inspire students to consider careers in agriculture and discover the diversity and flexibility in work that agriculture offers.

The 2024 Agriculture Career Contest is taking entries now until March 29th, 2024. You can learn more about the contest rules and ways to submit entries by emailing [kendallaitc@gmail.com](mailto:kendallaitc@gmail.com)

Thank you to these organizations for supporting the Ag in the Classroom program:  
Kendall County Board, Kendall County Farm Bureau Foundation, Kendall County Young Leaders, and Kendall County Beef Producers.



## **A Conservation Plan for your Operation**

**Are you interested in increased crop yields, decreased input costs and increased resilience to weather extremes? NRCS provides assistance to develop a specialized conservation plan for your agricultural or forestland operation.**

**A conservation plan can help you to identify resource concerns along with an opportunity to explore and select conservation practices that can address these concerns. Once you have a plan, financial incentives can support implementation of conservation practices.**

**Whether you are a grain producer, livestock producer, specialty crop producer or a forest landowner there are opportunities available for you and your operation.**

**Have you considered cover crops, reduced-till, strip-till, no-till or nutrient management? Interested in building soil health, creating wildlife habitat or tree/shrub plantings? Need to address erosion concerns with the recent weather events?**

**Now is time to contact NRCS, at your local field office, in Kendall County, to learn about new opportunities for conservation on your farm, information on available programs, conservation practices eligible for financial incentives and the program application process.**

**Even if you are not currently ready to implement any new conservation practices, now is a great time to create a conservation plan and explore expanded financial opportunities that are available to support implementing your plan.**

**Contact your local NRCS Soil Conservationist, Megan Andrews, for more information at (630)708-4010 or [Megan.Andrews@usda.gov](mailto:Megan.Andrews@usda.gov).**

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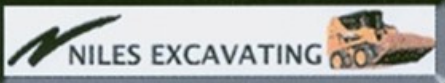
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# Spring Cover Crop Seeds Now Available!

A pea & oat seed mix is now available \$5 per pound. Planting this mix is a great way to make a natural pathway in your garden. It works as a protective barrier for the soil, slowing down erosion, holding nutrients and reducing weeds. To purchase your seeds, stop by the office or email us at [alyse.olson@il.nacdnet.net](mailto:alyse.olson@il.nacdnet.net)!

Cash or check accepted. All seeds sold first come first serve while supplies last. Seeding rate: 2 lbs per 1,000 square foot or 75 lbs per acre. Fall planting dates are March 30th– April 29th, weather dependent.



**Kendall County Soil & Water  
Conservation District**

7775A Route 47  
Yorkville, IL 60560

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