

SOIL & WATER NEWS

402 N Kays Drive, Normal IL 61761 309-452-3848 extension 3
www.mcleancountyswcd.com



McLean County Welcomes New Board Members

Soil and water conservation districts are charged with the responsibility to care for the states land, water, air, plant and animal resources through responsible land use. SWCD's work side by side with federal and state employees to install conservation practices that are funded through local, state or federal funds, as well as matching landowner contributions. SWCD's provide rural and urban citizens alike with both technical assistance and services on a number of issues including: soil health, erosion and sedimentation control, water quality protection, storm water management, green infrastructure, farmland protection, flood prevention, land use issues, environmental protection programs and stream bank stabilization. The leadership of McLean County SWCD is five local farmers that have been elected to lead these efforts with the staff. In 2024 two new directors joined the board including Garrett Conaty of Lexington, and Collin Loeffler of Stanford. Garrett and Collin represent their areas and will bring continued leadership to the McLean County SWCD board, that is now more than 83 years old. You can learn more about the past and current SWCD board on our website, including our long history in McLean County.



Garrett Conaty



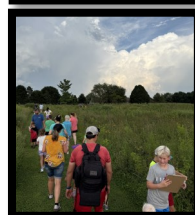
Collin Loeffler

Conservation Cost-Share Opportunities through McLean County SWCD

Partners for Conservation funds are available for conservation installation that will conserve soil and benefit water quality. This funding pool is available on behalf of the McLean County Soil and Water Conservation District. The funds can be used for projects outside of current practices enrolled in an active government contract. Cost-share is based on a practice component list that sets expectations for average costs of installation. Cover crop cost-share is capped at \$10,000 per applicant or 75% of total costs, whichever amount is less. It is important to note that applications must be filled out and approved before seed or other project costs occur as payments cannot be made retroactively. Conservation practices include but are not limited to: cover crops 75% cost share up to 3 year maximum, grassed waterway construction 75% cost shared, water well decommissioning 75% cost shared and new adoption of no-till or strip till 75% cost shared up to \$3200 maximum. Make an application with Brett Irwin at 309-452-3848 ext 3 or email at brett.irwin@il.nacdn.net.

Urban Twilight Pollinator Scavenger Hunt and Prairie Walk

The McLean County SWCD has been working in partnership with The First Baptist Church of Bloomington for more than a year to develop five acres of green space to a pollinator habitat area. Recently we coordinated a Twilight Pollinator Scavenger Hunt and Prairie Walk in partnership with Pheasants Forever. Children and families enjoyed the mowed paths and visited various stations to learn more about plants and pollinators that use the space. Zach Stephenson, IL Pheasants Forever Farm Bill Biologist, lead a private tour of prairie plants and helped answer questions about the various species and bloom periods. More than 50 adults, and children attended the event and took home a door prize for completing their scavenger hunt questions. Families attended from neighboring subdivisions on bicycles and evening walks. It was an exciting time for all the partners to see the prairie in bloom, and a learning center for the community. Are you interested in creating a pollinator habitat? Contact our office to begin the process!



SWCD Office Hours

Monday-Friday
8:00am to 4:30pm

SWCD Board of Directors

Mike Kelley - Chairman
Jeff Mathews - Vice Chairman
Irvin Bane - Director
Garrett Conaty- Director
Collin Loeffler - Director

SWCD Staff

Brett Irwin
Resource Conservationist/
Administrative Coordinator
Jackie Kraft
Watershed Coordinator
Ross Fogle
Watershed Conservation Specialist

NRCS Staff

Allan Hertzberger
Acting District Conservationist
Matt Bell
Soil Technician
Devin Jefferson
Soil Conservationist

Visit our Website!



www.mcleancountyswcd.com



Find us on Facebook!

The McLean County Soil and Water Conservation District does not discriminate against any person on the basis of race, religion, color, gender, sexual orientation, national origin, ancestry, age, marital status or disability. This policy covers all programs, services and procedures of the District, including employment.

The USDA is an equal opportunity employer.

McLean County SWCD Foundation



The McLean County Soil and Water Conservation District Foundation was established in 2024. A non-profit 501c3 organization that accepts contributions to further promote the positive image of Agriculture through conservation education. The organization consists of a board of directors and is administered by the McLean County Soil and Water Conservation District. Since 2015, the Jim Rutherford Conservation Scholarship has been awarded to 25 local students with scholarships amounting to \$14,500. The McLean County SWCD Foundation awarded two \$1000 scholarships in 2025. The proceeds were received through the generous donations of our community, and the annual golf outing fundraiser. Special thanks to Hughart Family Limited Partnership, Parker Kemp Foundation, Richard Farms and Compeer Financial for underwriting our scholarship awards in 2026! If you would like to help us award future applicants, please consider making a donation! Additional details and future registrations can be found at www.mcleancountyswcd.com/jimrutherford/.

Jim Rutherford Conservation 2025 Scholarship Awards



Chase Ragar, son of Eric Ragar and Chelsey Wingfield is of Danvers IL at Olympia High School planning to pursue a Agri business degree. Chase is active in track and field, 4-H, and FFA as a member and Chapter Treasurer. Chase has a strong understanding of conservation and works with his family farming operation and implements regenerative agricultural practices. He was also a top 10 contestant at the Section 9 Soils Judging contest in 2024! Agricultural instructor, Bryce Hoffman writes "Chase exhibits those qualities of a true leader." Congratulations Chase!



Chase Boester, son of Rodney and Cara Boester is of Bloomington IL at University High School planning to pursue an Agricultural Engineering degree at the University of Illinois. Chase is the captain of Varsity Tennis, active in soccer, ACES and Rotary Interact. He has been an officer and volunteer for the Chinese Club, and Special Olympics. Chase worked for a local agricultural consulting company in the summer, learning of the importance of soil health. Chase writes "With my major, I want to create better irrigation systems, erosion controls and nutrient management plans to impact soil and water conservation positively. Congratulations Chase!

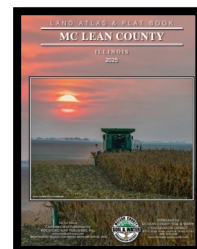
Drone Demonstration for Cover Crop Delivery

In cooperation with Birkey's Drones and Purdue University, the McLean County SWCD held a informational meeting about cover crop seedings with drone technology. Dr. Shalamar Armstrong and Michael Ruffatti discussed cover crop adoption, tile drainage research, and cover crop adoption. Birkey's Drones gave an overview of the technology, and talked about the various uses drones are helping farmers and cooperatives with to maximize farm efficiencies. The event also included various program availabilities through the USDA and SWCD. To learn more about cover crop programs and opportunities, contact the office for sign-up information.



McLean County 2025 Plat Books Coming soon!

The McLean County SWCD is a vendor of the McLean County Plat Book. Every two years a new plat book is released in McLean County. Parcel information is collected by Rockford Maps, and is based on the tax information provided by the McLean County Tax Assessors office. Plat Books will be \$35 cash or check, and \$40 with a credit card. Shipping is available at an additional charge. You can reserve your plat book by contacting our office and asking for Brett Irwin. Once released we will contact you when they arrive. Contact our office at 309-452-3848 ext 3.



McLean County Soil & Water Conservation District

2025 FALL FISH SALE



Description	Quantity	Price	Total Amount
Fathead Minnows		\$14.00 per pound	
Albino Catfish 4-6" (NB)*		\$7.00 per fish	
Channel Catfish 6-8" (NB)*		\$65.00 per 50	
Channel Catfish 8"-10" (NB)*		\$85.00 per 50	
Hybrid Sunfish 1-2"		\$100.00 per 250	
Hybrid Sunfish 3-5"		\$65.00 per 50	
Bluegill 1-2"		\$100.00 per 250	
Bluegill 3-5"		\$65.00 per 50	
Black Crappie 2-4"		\$140.00 per 100	
Redear 1-2"		\$100.00 per 250	
Largemouth Bass 3"		\$85.00 per 50	
Largemouth Bass 5-8"		\$185.00 per 50	
Triploid Grass Carp		\$18.00 per fish	
HB Black OR Blue Pond Dye (Circle one)		\$22.00 per quart	
HB All Seasons Blend Bacteria (2 pounds per acre)		\$11.00 per pound	
Triton High Protein Fish Food		\$50.00 per 50# bag	
Electrofishing Survey		\$975.00 per pond	
Texas Hunter Automatic Fish Feeder (75lb capacity)		\$1,059.00	
TOTAL			

All fish are sold in quantities as advertised.

Send Order and
Payment to:
McLean County SWCD
402 N. Kays Drive
Normal, IL 61761

Credit Cards 4% surcharge

Phone: (309)452-3848 ext. 3
www.mcleancountyswcd.com

Payment & Order DEADLINES
Grass Carp - September 18
All Other Items - October 2

Free delivery for fish orders over
\$1000

PICK-UP

Thursday, October 9
9:00am
Interstate Center South
Parking Lot
1106 Interstate Dr
Bloomington, IL 61705

*(NB) Not Bagged Disclaimer:

All Catfish will need coolers filled with pond water in order to pick-up.

Name: _____

Address: _____

City _____ Zip _____

Phone: _____ Email: _____

INFORMATION BELOW REQUIRED BY IDNR IF PURCHASING GRASS CARP:

Township _____ Section _____ Size of pond (Acres) _____

McLean County Soil & Water Conservation District

2025 FALL TREE SALE



ORDER DEADLINES:
September 24, 2025

Send Order and Payment to:
McLean County SWCD
402 N. Kays Drive
Normal, IL 61761
*Credit cards 4% surcharge.

PICK-UP
Thursday October 2, 2025
8:00 am — 4:00 pm
McLean County SWCD Office

Phone: (309)452-3848 ext. 3
www.mcleancountyswcd.com



Scan this QR code with
your cell phone
camera to open all
Tree descriptions and
product information.

Larger Trees and Shrubs (#5 containers) 4-5 feet tall			
Description	Quantity	Price	Total
Weeping Willow		\$60.00	
Red Pointe Maple		\$60.00	
Fall Fiesta Sugar Maple		\$60.00	
Bur Oak		\$60.00	
Swamp White Oak		\$60.00	

Fruit Trees (#5 containers) 4-6 feet tall			
Fuji Apple -use another variety as pollinator		\$60.00	
Snow Sweet Apple-use another variety as pollinator		\$60.00	
Tawara Asian Pear - self fertile		\$60.00	
Bailey Hardy Peach- self fertile		\$60.00	

Conifers (#1 containers)			
Eastern White Pine 15-18"		\$15.00	
Colorado Spruce 18"		\$15.00	
Norway Spruce 18"		\$15.00	
Black Hills Spruce 15"		\$15.00	
White Fir 15-18"		\$15.00	

Smaller Shrubs & Protectors (#1 containers)			
Black Chokeberry, 12-18"		\$12.00	
Gray Dogwood 15-18"		\$12.00	
American Hazelnut 15-18"		\$12.00	
Tree Protector, 2ft Vinyl w/stake		\$5.00	
Tree Protector, 4ft Vinyl w/stake		\$7.00	
TOTAL			

Name: _____
 Address: _____
 City _____ Zip _____
 Phone: _____
 Email: _____

NOTE: The District cannot accept responsibility for sizes and/or the viability of plant materials as stated by the nursery. All planting material requires commitment to assure survival. Putting plants under stress (i.e. lack of water, planting too deep or too shallow, or a delay in planting) will weaken the plants and lessen survival rates. Do not plant larger trees too close to buildings, sidewalks, driveways or utilities. It is your responsibility to learn proper planting techniques and to select appropriate planting sites. The District cannot be responsible for replacing stock that do not survive.

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McLean County Soil & Water Conservation District

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(309) 452-3848 ext. 3
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TREE AND FISH SALE INFORMATION INSIDE!

No-Till Drills, Broadcast Seeders, and Tree Planter Available for Rent

Three no-till drills, two three-point broadcast seeder, a tree planter, and multiple hand/UTV broadcast seeders are available for wildlife habitat installation in McLean County. Some of these pieces of equipment were purchased in cooperation with Illinois DNR through Habitat Stamp funds raised by Illinois Hunters. Reporting of habitat installation is required to maintain records of the acres installed. Equipment is owned by the McLean County Pheasants Forever Chapter. A rental agreement, and Pheasants Forever membership is required.

Rental Agreement Details:

- \$250 Security Deposit
- \$150 Daily Charge for Native Seedings with Drills & Tree Plantings
- \$200 Daily Charge for Drill operation on Waterway Seedings
- \$250 Daily Charge for Three-Point Broadcast Seeder
- All Equipment includes a \$100 Weekend charge if not returned by COB Friday
- \$45 Pheasants Forever Current Membership required
- Copy of Current Seed Tag is Required when equipment is returned

Equipment Requirements/Specifications:

- Minimum 50 horsepower tractor for equipment use
- Drills have pioneer ends and 2 hydraulic lines for raising/lowering
- Drill is 8 feet wide and does 5 feet of planting
- Drills include three seed boxes, capable of planting native & pollinator habitat or food plots
- A hitch pin for drill transportation required (45mph max speed)
- Three Point attachment for broadcast seeder or Tree Planter required
- A 2" ball for transport (35mph max speed) of Tree Planter, already on a trailer
- Tree Planter is capable of planting up to 4-5' bare root trees
- PTO required for broadcast seeding
- Trailer or pick-up bed required to transport of Three Point Broadcaster

