

SOIL & WATER NEWS

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



McLean County SWCD Board Of Director Service Awards

Soil and water conservation districts are charged with the responsibility to care for McLean County's land, water, air, plant and animal resources through responsible land use. Your elected board of directors leads that effort and represents landowners and operator's throughout the county. We are fortunate to have passionate conservation minded directors that don't just serve on the board, but they apply those practices to their land and operations. Throughout the history of this district 40 directors have served in the role at various amounts of time. The Association of Illinois Soil and Water Conservation Districts recognized two of those individuals this year at the annual conference. Congratulations to Irvin Bane of Bellflower for his 40 years of service and Jeff Mathews of LeRoy for 5 years of service to the McLean County SWCD Board of Directors! Illinois Soil and Water Conservation districts were created for the purpose of facilitating the conservation and orderly development of Illinois land and water resources lead by locally elected government officials known as SWCD Board of Directors. The Board of Directors is the policy-making body for the local unit of government. The term of office for a director is two years with two board members elected on year and three board members elected the following year. The McLean County SWCD Board of Director history reflects many incredible conservation minded individuals in our community. Thank you for your service to McLean County! If you would like to learn more about the history of McLean County SWCD, you can visit our website at mcleancountyswcd.com/history-mclean-county/.



Irvin Bane



Jeff Mathews

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
District Conservationist
Matt Bell
Soil Technician
Devin Jefferson
Soil Conservationist

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CRPG- Climate Smart Agriculture Program & I-Cover Program

The Illinois Department of Agriculture is implementing the agricultural portion of the inaugural Climate Pollution Reduction Grant (CPRG) Program, known as Climate Smart Agriculture Program. The intent of the program is to promote the implementation of no-till and strip-till practices via the Partners for Conservation (PFC) program and the State of Illinois Priority Climate Action Plan. The program has more than \$67 million in funding available for selected applicants over the next three years. The payment rate for each of the three consecutive years is \$35 per acre on the same fields each year, with a 3,000 acre cap per application. Illinois Soil and Water Conservation Districts are assisting with the selected applicants USDA Farm Bill eligibility, work with applicants on conservation planning, verify practice implementation and assist with payment and reporting documents. McLean County has 41 producers selected for the program on 22,131.83 acres. Additionally the Illinois Department of Agriculture implemented the I-Cover Program. I-Cover stands for Infield Conservation for Operationalizing Vital Ecosystem Resilience. The intent of the program is to promote the implementation of cover crops and the adoption of new technologies to implement cover via the Partners for Conservation Program through the NRCS Regional Conservation Partnership Program (RCPP) multi-state grant. The IDOA secured \$7 million for the program to be allocated in 2026, 2027, and 2028 on the same fields. Landowners and producers that were chose will be new adopters of cover crops or those who utilize new techniques for earlier establishment of cover crops. McLean County has one producer that was selected for a total of 445 acres. Similar to CRPG, Illinois Soil and Water Conservation Districts are assisting with the selected applicants USDA Farm Bill eligibility, work with applicants on conservation planning, verify practice implementation and assist with payment and reporting documents. Your local Soil and Water Conservation District continues to be the local delivery system for conversation and these programs that bring funding to our local area for implementation.

McLean County SWCD Foundation Scholarship Awards



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. Through generous donations we have helped more than 27 local students with scholarships pursuing agricultural degrees with an emphasis on conservation stewardship. The organization consists of a board of directors and is administered by the McLean County Soil and Water Conservation District. To make a contribution you can mail your contribution to our office mailing address of 402 N Kays Drive, Normal IL 61761.

Jaidyn Ormsbee, son of Josh Ormsbee is of Bloomington IL, at Normal Community High School. He is planning to pursue a bachelor's degree in Agricultural Education from Illinois State University. Jaidyn is a Leadership Team member and mentor in FFA. He is active in scholastic bowl, social studies club, and his local church. Jaidyn writes "My interest and experience with soil goes back to my sophomore year of high school, when I competed in the Section 9 soils contest and got first place. This moment was a huge moment in my high school career, as it was what got me to consider agriculture as a potential career pathway." Congratulations Jaidyn!



Chase Steege, son of Lea Smith and Chad Steege is of Le Roy IL at Le Roy High School planning to pursue an Ag Business Degree at Heartland Community College. Chase is the Le Roy FFA President, and the 2026 senior class president. He has been employed with an organic farming operation in McLean County for six years, learning the importance of conservation practices like cover crops and conservation tillage. Chase writes "I believe that the goal of farming is to produce food while keeping the land, water and ecosystems healthy." Congratulations Chase!

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



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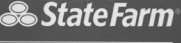
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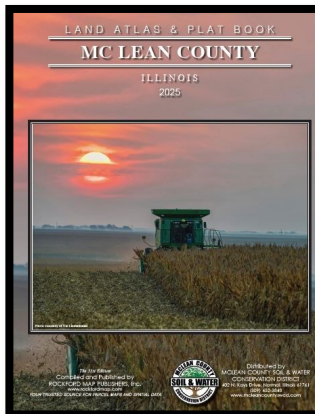
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PLAT BOOKS, TREE, AND FISH SALE INFORMATION INSIDE!

McLean County SWCD Updates

Plat Books Available



The McLean County 2025 Plat Book is available for purchase at the McLean County SWCD Office. McLean County Plat Books are provided by Rockford Map Publishers, who collects public information through McLean County tax records to publish the plat book every two years. If you would like to

purchase this edition you can visit our office at 402 N Kays Drive, Normal IL 61761. Plat Books are \$35 per book, cash or check. If you would like to purchase with a credit card, \$40 per book. Shipping is available for an additional charge.

Sugar Creek Watershed

The McLean County SWCD was recently awarded a 604b grant to engage landowners and farmers in the Sugar Creek Watershed. The watershed is located almost entirely in McLean County. It encompasses 80,300 acres throughout central and southern McLean County. An actionable plan will help to address water quality impairments and is a necessary first step to secure grant funding for implementation. The 604b grant was awarded by the Illinois Environmental Protection Agency. Partners include the McLean County SWCD, Bloomington-Normal Water Reclamation District, Illinois Farm Bureau, City of Bloomington, Town of Normal, and McLean County.