

## NEWS RELEASE



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### **League of Resource Conservation & Development Councils Celebrates National RC&D Week**

INDIANAPOLIS, September 17, 2007—The Indiana League of Resource Conservation & Development (RC&D) Councils joins thousands of volunteers and community leaders across Indiana in celebrating “RC&D Week,” September 23-29, 2007. RC&D week was declared in recognition of the anniversary of the designation of the first 10 RC&D areas formed in the early 60’s. In the past 43 years the RC&D program has grown from 10 designated areas to 375 designated areas, covering over 85% of the United States and its territories.

Among the first in the nation to be authorized was the Lincoln Hills RC&D Council, located in southern Indiana near the Ohio River. Indiana currently has 10 councils serving 72 of its 92 counties.

Howard Conner, President of the Indiana League of Resource Conservation and Development Councils, expressed his pleasure and pride as the hundreds of RC&D Council members prepare to celebrate the community service that RC&D Councils provide to Indiana.

Conner states, “Here in Indiana, we are happy to recognize the many local leaders, private citizens, and partners who are taking action every day to determine their community’s needs and create solutions for these needs by working with their RC&D Councils.”

RC&D operates as a unique public-private partnership that builds relationships, creates financial leverage, and increases the ability of communities to protect, enhance and develop their own economic, natural and social resources in ways that improve their environment and quality of life. The RC&D program is administered by the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) and the Secretary of Agriculture makes the total resources of the Department available to help carry out projects.

RC&D areas are established at the request of local citizens or groups who work with sponsoring county organizations, such as the Soil and Water Conservation Districts, Commissioners, and Extension Service to develop an area-wide plan. The RC&D Council works with these local sponsors to connect the area’s residents with those who can provide assistance like government agencies, organizations, or businesses.

Annually, Indiana's RC&D councils carry out over 100 projects, helping to address issues such as sustainable land use, mine reclamation, rural fire protection, small business support and development, community land stewardship, and a variety of environmental education needs.

Indiana's NRCS State Conservationist Jane Hardisty says, "RC&D holds a very special place in my heart. I have worked with local RC&D councils for many years, as well as the Indiana League of RC&D Councils. Each day RC&D demonstrates that locally developed solutions to local problems work the best. That's because people know their own community and are willing to work hard to make it a better place to live."

Hardisty explains how Indiana NRCS supports each RC&D council by providing a coordinator to work hand-in-hand with local leaders to reach the council's goals. The key to the success of the program is local involvement and leadership.

Two Hoosiers, Tom Roney of Hancock County and Marshall Nuckolls of Clay County were honored for their leadership as inductees to the National RC&D Hall of Fame, created in 2005 to recognize outstanding contributions to the mission of RC&D. These two local leaders, who work with the Hoosier Heartland and Sycamore Trails Councils respectively, exemplify the level of dedication to Indiana's natural resources that brings us national prominence.

"Over the years," says Hardisty, "I have worked with a great number of very dedicated citizens through RC&D. I can think of no better way to recognize the efforts of these tireless volunteers than the recognition of RC&D Week throughout Indiana."

Resource Conservation and Development Councils are made up of volunteers who serve their communities in all 50 states and U.S. territories. RC&D Councils identify, address and solve the challenges needed to sustain and improve the quality of life in their own communities.

<http://www.rcdnet.org>

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