

**Iowa Learning Farms Program  
12IFLM005  
Integrated Farm and Livestock Management Demonstration Program**

**Year-End Report  
January-December 2012**

**INTRODUCTION**

In looking back at previous ILF annual reports, the introductions are chock-full of statistics that are always higher than the year before. We have said every year that ILF has never been busier. This year is no different. More events, more people reached, more and new ways to address a varied audience keep the ILF team at a pace that has never been busier.

The number of field days and workshops grew from 24 events last year, to 27 in 2012. Attendance at all of them has grown as well. We gained several new farmer partners this year because of our successful events. Conservation farmers are seeing the good work that ILF is doing and want to become a part of it.

The Conservation Station fleet was busy as well, although the drought enabled the team and interns to go to more events. Our student interns had very little water sampling to collect, so they went out with the CS instead. The events were many, varied and successful, talking with over 21,000 people about soil and water quality from Iowa and around the world.

ILF's outreach efforts included traditional means of press releases and conferences, but also saw growth in webinar series views, YouTube video views and social media including Facebook and blogging.

--Lois Wright Morton  
*ILF Program Director*

--Jacqueline Comito  
*ILF Program Manager*

--Matt Helmers  
*ILF Administrative Manager*

<b>Field Days/Workshops=No. in Attendance</b>	<b>Meetings/Presentations=No. in Attendance</b>	<b>Conservation Station (CS)/Classroom events=No. in Attendance</b>	<b>Publications/Educational Materials=Distribution</b>	<b>Webinars</b>
March 27: ILF/PFI Cover Crop Field day, Joe Kriegel farm, Poweshiek Co.=45 (Lundvall)	Jan. 5-6: Pheasants Forever State Convention, exhibit booth, Des Moines=68/280 (Andrews, Lundvall, Staudt)	March 8: Prairies, Wetlands, Croplands school visit, Wilder Elem., Indianola=69 (Staudt, Stevenson)	<i>Wallaces Farmer</i> January 202	Jan 18: Comito Live participants=16, 121 archive views*
March 28: ILF/PFI Cover Crop workshop for NRCS staff, FEEL site, Boone=47 (Lundvall, Comito)	Jan 13-14: Practical Farmers of Iowa Conference, exhibit booth, Ames=45/500 (Lundvall, Brown, Stevenson)	March 15: Prairies, Wetlands, Croplands school visit, SE Warren School=44 (Staudt, Comito)	<i>Wallaces Farmer</i> February 2012	Feb. 15: Chad Hart Live participants=19 66 archive views*
March 29: ILF/PFI Cover Crop workshop for NRCS staff, ISU NW Research Farm, O'Brien Co.=40 (Lundvall, Andrews)	Jan. 17: ILF Regional Partner meeting, Tripoli=5 (Comito, Helmers, Lundvall)	March 16: Prairies, Wetlands, Croplands school visit, Emerson Elem., Indianola=67 (Staudt, Stevenson)	February =ILF Winter Newsletter	March 21: David Laird Live participants = 26 139 archive views* *as of 4/4/2012
April 3: ILF/PFI Cover Crop workshop for NRCS staff, ISU NE Research Farm, Floyd Co.=40 (Lundvall, Comito)	Jan. 20: ILF Regional Partner Meeting, Sigourney=8 (Comito, Helmers, Lundvall)	March 26: Prairies, Wetlands, Croplands homeschool presentation, Ames=9 (Staudt, Stevenson)	February=Prairies, Wetlands and Croplands education enhancement booklet	April 18: Leigh Adcock, WFAN Live participants=22 70* archive views
April 4: ILF/PFI Cover Crop workshop for NRCS staff, ISU SE Research Farm, Washington Co.=40 (Lundvall)	Jan 25: Conservation Partnership Day, Des Moines=56 (Comito, Helmers)	March 30: Prairies, Wetlands, Croplands school visit, Whittier Elem., Indianola=52 (Staudt, Stevenson)	February=Prairies, Wetlands and Croplands poster sets	May 16: Helmers Live participants=27 63* archive views
April 5: ILF/PFI Cover Crop workshop for NRCS staff, ISU Armstrong (SW) Research Farm, Lewis=38 (Lundvall)	Jan. 27: ILF Regional Partner Meeting, Cherokee=7 (Comito, Helmers, Lundvall)	April 5: Iowa Valley Community Schools, Marengo=213 (Andrews, Stevenson, Staudt, Oster)	<i>Wallaces Farmer</i> March 2012	June 20: Ken Moore Live participants=11 33* archive views
May 23: ILF field day at Swiss Valley Nature Center, Dubuque Co.=37 (Brown, Andrews, Stevenson, Sloan, Wright)	Jan. 31: ILF Regional Partner Meeting, Anita=4 (Comito, Helmers, Lundvall)	April 11: NRCS Area 3 Awards Meeting, Manchester=62 (Andrews, Stevenson)	March=2012 Field Day Guide	July: Nathan Anderson Live participants=17, 99^ archive views
June 5: Strip-tillage field day, Dean Tiefenthaler farm, Breda=56 (Comito, Lundvall)	Feb. 2: ILF Regional Partner Meeting, Ames=5 (Comito, Helmers, Lundvall)	April 13: Davis Co. Community Schools Ag Day, Bloomfield=179 (Stevenson, Staudt)	<i>Wallaces Farmer</i> April 2012	August: Sec. Northey @ State Fair Live participants=27 100^ archive views

June 14: ILF no-till field day, Mark Mueller farm, Waverly=92 (Andrews, Lundvall, Kelly, Oster)	Feb. 3-4: Iowa Coalition of Conservation Educators Winter Solstice Conference, exhibit booth, Moravia=34/90 (Andrews, Stevenson)	April 13: Mahaska Co. 3 <sup>rd</sup> Grade Ag Day, Oskaloosa=296 (Andrews, Oster)	<i>Wallaces Farmer</i> May 2012	Sept: Matt Liebman Live participants=25 80^ archive views ^as of 10/4/2012
June 20: ILF no-till & cover crop field day, Manning =56 (Andrews, Comito, Wright)	Feb. 8: IDALS Strip-till Adoption Meeting, Story City=15 (Lundvall, Hanna)	April 18: Epworth Elementary, Epworth=98 (Comito, Stevenson)	<i>Wallaces Farmer</i> June 2012	October: J. Arbuckle Live participants=16, 64† archive views
June 21: ILF strip-till/no-till field day, Osage=95 (Lundvall, Sloan, Carpio)	Feb 27: Black Hawk Watershed Coalition meeting, Sac City=6 (Lundvall, Comito, Licht)	April 20: Earth Day Celebration, Muscatine=51 (Andrews, Lundvall, Oster)	<i>Wallaces Farmer</i> July 2012	November: Amy Kaleita Live participants=28 190† archive views
June 23: Patch-Burn Grazing Project field day, Kellerton=15 (Lundvall)	March 6-7: Iowa Water Conference, Ames Exhibit booth=90/400 (All staff)	April 22: Floyd Co. Outdoor Family Fair, Charles City =75 (Stevenson, Staudt, Sloan)	<i>Wallaces Farmer</i> August 2012	December: Keegan Kult Live participants=46 141† archive views
June 27: GreenSeeker in-season corn N fertilizer field day, Sumner=55 (Helmers, Lundvall, Meerdink)	March 20: ISU Research And Demonstration Farms Managers, Ames=23 (Lundvall)	April 23: Jones Co. Elementary School Visits, Anamosa & Monticello=187 (Andrews, Staudt, Oster)	Watershed-based Community Assessment Toolkit, August Distributed at CDI Conference	†as of 1/2/2013
July 10: Story County CREP Tour, Colo=15 (Helmers, Stevenson)	April 17: League of Women Voters meeting, Des Moines =31 (Comito, Brown)	April 23-May 7: 6 <sup>th</sup> Grade Tours at Linn Co. Solid Waste Agency, Marion=2,200 (agency staffed)	<i>Wallaces Farmer</i> September 2012	
July 11: Pasture Improvement & Rotational Grazing Field Day, Triple C Farm, Leon=43 (Comito, Lundvall)	May 20-24: National Water Conference, Portland, OR=30 (Comito, Staudt)	April 26: Arbor Day 3 <sup>rd</sup> Grade Outdoor Classroom, Cresco=80 (Stevenson, Oster)	Whole-Farm Approach Think Piece, September Available at CDI Conference	
July 12: Dickinson County CREP wetland tour, Milford=13 (Andrews, Brown)	June 26: Agricultural Educators Annual Conference exhibit booth, Ankeny=25 (Sloan, McArtor)	April 30: Iowa Soil and Water Conservation Week/Food Bank Fundraiser, Des Moines=41 (Comito, Andrews, Staudt)	Strip-till How-to DVD, September	
July 14: Badger Creek Lake Watershed Field Day, Winterset=54 (Comito, Staudt, Kelly)	June 27: Open World Program/Iowa Sister States Visitors from Russia, Ames=9 (Comito, Staudt)	May 1: Van Buren Elementary Ag Day, Douds=291 (Stevenson, Oster, Staudt)	<i>Wallaces Farmer</i> October 2012	

Aug. 3: Northwest Iowa Cover Crops Workshop, Lester=35 (Andrews)	July 16: CREP Wetland Listening Session, Rockwell City=13 (Andrews, Comito, Helmers, Lundvall)	May 3: Waukon 6 <sup>th</sup> Grade Outdoor Classroom, Waukon=136 (Andrews, Stevenson)	<i>Wallaces Farmer</i> November 2012	
Aug. 3: Northwest Iowa Cover Crop Workshop, Rock Valley=30 (Andrews)	July 17: CREP Wetland Listening Session, Woodward=12 (Andrews, Comito, Helmers, Lundvall)	May 4: Decatur Co. 4 <sup>th</sup> /5 <sup>th</sup> Grade Ag Awareness Day=143 (Comito, Stevenson)	<i>Wallaces Farmer</i> December 2012	
Aug. 21: Cover Crop Working Group Field Day, Riceville=51 (Lundvall)	July 19: CREP Wetland Listening Session, Mason City=16 (Andrews, Comito, Helmers, Lundvall)	May 7: Sioux Co. 5 <sup>th</sup> /6 <sup>th</sup> Grade Outdoor Classroom, Hawarden=113 (Stevenson, Oster, Wright)	October: Strip-Till How-to DVD	
Aug. 24: Cedar River Coalition Field Day, Brandon=25 (Lundvall, Benning, Oster)	July 24: CREP Wetland Listening Session, Graettinger=8 (Andrews, Comito, Lundvall)	May 8: Bremer Co. 5 <sup>th</sup> Grade Outdoor Classroom, Frederika=150 (Staudt, Sloan, McArtor)		
Sept. 7: Competine Creek Watershed No-till and Cover Crop Field Day, Martinsburg=42 (Lundvall)	Aug. 21: NRCS Cover Crop Tour, Bedford=20 (Andrews)	May 8: Buena Vista Co. 6 <sup>th</sup> Grade Outdoor Classroom, Peterson=132 (Andrews, Carpio, Kelly)		
Oct. 8: Field Day, Chris Henning Farm, Jefferson=45 (Comito, Helmers, Staudt)	Sept. 5-6: Conservation Districts of Iowa Annual Conference, Des Moines=230 (All ILF staff)	May 9: Carroll Co. 5 <sup>th</sup> /6 <sup>th</sup> Grade Environmental Field Days, Carroll=156 (Comito, McArtor, Meerdink)		
Oct. 23: Strip-till Field Day, Bob Lynch farm, Gilmore City=27 (Andrews, Comito)	Sept. 12: Hypoxia Taskforce/NASDA New Technology Expo, Boone=46 (Comito, Helmers, Staudt, Andrews, Brown)	May 10: Iowa Children's Water Festival, Ankeny=288 (Brown, Sloan, Oster)		
Oct. 26: ILF/PFI Cover Crop Field Day, Pete Crew farm, Webb=36 (Andrews, Comito)	Oct. 16: Iowa Science Teaching Section Fall Conference, Ames=58 at booth, 7 at presentation (Staudt, Brown, Stevenson)	May 10: UNI Sustainability Day, Cedar Falls=105 (Stevenson, Kelly, Meerdink)		

Oct. 30: ILF/PFI Cover Crop Field Day, Steve McGrew farm, Emerson=30 (Helmers, Stevenson)	Nov. 15: Microsoft/ DigiGirlz Workshop & Iowa Women of Innovation Awards, Des Moines=430 (Comito, Staudt)	May 11: Edgewood-Colesburg 2 <sup>nd</sup> Grade Field Day, Kern Tree Farm=57 (Comito, Staudt, Carpio)		
Oct. 31: ILF/PFI Cover Crop Field Day, Mike Henning farm, Winterset=13 (Staudt)		May 11: Palo Alto Co. 5 <sup>th</sup> Grade Outdoor Classroom, Ruthven=130 (Andrews, Sloan, Wright)		
Nov. 8: ILF/PFI Cover Crop Field Day, Art Behrens farm, Carroll=47 (Comito, Lundvall)		May 15: Adair Co. 5 <sup>th</sup> Grade Outdoor Classroom=120 (Stevenson, Oster, Meerdink)		
Dec. 7: ILF Cover Crop Workshop, Bloomfield=32 (Andrews, Benning)		May 16: Independence Community Schools 5 <sup>th</sup> /6 <sup>th</sup> Grade=206 (Andrews, Sloan, Carpio, McArtor)		
		May 17: Edwards Elementary School, Ames=95 (Comito, Staudt, Carpio)		
		May 18: Roland-Story 2 <sup>nd</sup> Grade, Story City=80 (Comito, Sloan, Kelly)		
		May 22: Cedar Rapids Jefferson High School=70 (Helmers, Andrews, Meerdink, McArtor)		
		May 24: Dubuque Co. 6 <sup>th</sup> Grade Outdoor Classroom, Swiss Valley Nature Center, Peosta=84 (Stevenson, Sloan, Wright)		
		May 31: Fremont Co. Ag/Natural Resources Day, Sidney=23 (Staudt, Sloan, Oster, McArtor)		

		June 2: Big Creek Lake Watershed Appreciation Day, Polk City=120 (Brown, Oster, McArtor)		
		June 2: Cedar Rapids Farmers' Market=200 (City of CR staffed)		
		June 6: Leopold Center for Sustainable Agriculture Advisory Board meeting, Nashua=22 (Comito, Helmers, Staudt, Wright)		
		June 8: Des Moines Science Teachers, Project-Based Learning @ ISU=17 (Andrews, Meerdink, McArtor)		
		June 8: Field Day at Hewitt Creek, New Vienna=30 (Helmers, Kelly, Oster)		
		June 12: Western Iowa No-till Demonstration Field Day, Shelby=53 (Stevenson, McArtor)		
		June 15: Worth Co. Fair, Northwood=35 (Sloan, Kelly, Carpio)		
		June 19: Iowa Teacher Ag Academy, Nashua=27 (Stevenson, Carpio, Staudt)		
		June 22: Bulter Co. Fair, Allison=80 (Sloan, Carpio, Wright, McArtor)		
		June 23: Breakfast on the Farm, Calmar=250 (Sloan, Carpio, Wright, McArtor)		

		June 26: Sigourney Farmers Market=45 (Meerdink, Oster, Wright)		
		June 29: Ag in the City, Knoxville=50 (Meerdink, Kelly, Wright)		
		July 7: Farmers Market, Clinton=67 (Kelly, Oster, Sloan)		
		July 11: North Iowa Fair, Mason City=85 (Sloan, Kelly, Oster)		
		July 12: Dallas County Fair, Adel=70 (McArtor, Wright, Meerdink)		
		July 12: Cedar County Fair, Tipton=40 (Sloan, Kelly, Carpio)		
		July 13: Cherokee County Fair, Cherokee=75 (Sloan, McArtor, Oster)		
		July 14: Quad Cities Farmers Market, Davenport=169 (Stevenson, Meerdink, Wright)		
		July 16: Adams County Fair, Corning=80 (Sloan, Kelly, Carpio)		
		July 16: Washington County Fair, Washington=89 (Brown, McArtor, Meerdink)		
		July 17: Science Camps, Science Center of Iowa, Des Moines=124 (Carpio, Stevenson, Staudt)		
		July 18: Harrison County Fair, Missouri Valley=0 (Wright, Carpio)		

		July 18: Henry County Fair, Mt. Pleasant=50 (Sloan, McArtor, Meerdink)		
		July 19: Camp H2O Bible Camp, Montour=38 (Staudt, Sloan, Kelly)		
		July 19: Winnebago County Fair, Thompson=22 (Meerdink, Wright)		
		July 20: Franklin County Fair, Hampton=87 (Stevenson, McArtor, Wright)		
		July 20: Tama County Fair, Tama=76 (Andrews, Oster)		
		July 22: Mills County Fair, Malvern=45 (Helmets, Meerdink, Staudt)		
		July 23: RAGBRAI, Lake View=253 (Kelly, Oster, Stevenson)		
		July 24: Union County Fair, Afton=85 (Sloan, Meerdink, Wright)		
		July 25: Grundy County Fair, Grundy Center=40 (Sloan, Meerdink, McArtor)		
		July 25: Wayne County Fair, Corydon=100 (Kelly, Wright, Oster)		
		July 26: Page County Fair, Clarinda=25 (Sloan, Kelly, Oster)		
		July 27: Humboldt County Fair, Humboldt=53 (Stevenson, Wright)		
		July 27: Plymouth County Fair, LeMars=130 (Andrews, McArtor, Meerdink)		



		July 28: Hancock County Fair, Britt=98 (Kelly, Wright)		
		July 28: Sioux City Farmers Market=205 (McArtor, Andrews)		
		July 30: Lucas County Fair, Chariton=77 (Kelly, Meerdink, Oster)		
		Aug. 2: Bremer County Fair, Waverly=75 (Wright, Kelly, Oster)		
		Aug. 2: Kossuth County Fair, Algona=163 (McArtor, Andrews, Carpio)		
		Aug 9-19: Iowa State Fair, Des Moines=1800 (All staff and interns, IDALS)		
		Aug. 25: North Grand Farmers Market, Ames=95 (Comito, Meerdink, Kelly, Wright)		
		Sept. 11: 3 <sup>rd</sup> Grade Outdoor Classroom, McNay Research Farm, Chariton=128 (Lunvall, Oster)		
		Sept. 13: Crawford County 7 <sup>th</sup> Grade Ag Day, Denison=104 (Stevenson, Oster)		
		Sept. 19: Clarke County 3 <sup>rd</sup> Grade Field Day, Osceola=130 (Lundvall, Oster)		
		Sept 23: Iowa Outdoor Expo, Des Moines=90 (Kelly, Carpio)		
		Sept. 25: Fairfield Public Library=63 (Staudt, Stevenson)		

		Oct. 2: Lyon Co. 5 <sup>th</sup> Grade Outdoor Classroom, Lake Pahoja, Inwood=175 (Stevenson, Andrews)		
		Oct. 4: Meskwaki Community Day, Tama=182 (Stevenson)		
		Oct. 5: ISU Environmental Chemodynamics Class, Ames=22 (Andrews, Staudt)		
		Oct. 9: Charles City Middle School=143 (Andrews, Staudt)		
		Oct. 11: Knoxville 7 <sup>th</sup> Grade EcoDay=160 (Comito, Stevenson)		
		Oct. 12: Bishop Garrigan School, Algona=129 (Staudt, Stevenson)		
		Oct. 16: International Media Professionals Group, Bob Lynch farm, Gilmore City=18 (Andrews, Comito)		
		Oct. 19: Fellows Elementary School Visit, Ames=73 (Staudt, Wright, Brown)		

**Legend of projects that are interconnected to ILF grant and co-fund activities:**

	ILF/PFI Cover Crops working group (IDALS)
	Prairies, Wetlands, Croplands: Keys to the Future Lie in the Past (IDALS)
	Leopold Center for Sustainable Agriculture
	Community Assessments: Key Components to Successful Community-Based Watershed Improvement Projects (IDNR)
	Water Rocks! (IDNR)
	Small Feed lot project (IDNR)
	Nitrogen Retention and Greenhouse Gas Fluxes of Constructed Wetlands in Agricultural Watersheds within the Upper Mississippi River Basin (USDA-NIFA)

Iowa Learning Farms grant only pays a portion of each of our six-staff members' salaries. Without additional grants, we would not be able to keep our team together.

Submitted by: Drs. Lois Wright Morton, Jacqueline Comito, Mark Hanna, Matt Helmers, and Mike Duffy; John Lundvall, Carol Brown, Ann Staudt, Aaron Andrews, Nathan Stevenson

# OUTREACH/EDUCATION

## **Field Days/Events**

### **JANUARY-MARCH 2012**

In January and February, we held farmer partner meetings in five different locations in the state and had 29 participants. Those who attended gave us several excellent suggestions on new directions to take and ways to improve the ILF farmer partner network. We were able to schedule several field days as a result of these meetings.

Cover crop management was discussed at three field days in Poweshiek, Boone, and O'Brien counties on March 27, 28, and 29, respectively. Our cover crop how-to DVD was distributed at each field day, along with the 2012 Iowa Cover Crop Directory and our cash grain response to winter rye cover crops report. Field day participants were also offered free copies of the Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education (SARE) book "Managing Cover Crops Profitably."

A series of statewide cover crop management workshops for Iowa NRCS staff and the general public were held in late March and early April at the ISU farms. ILF/PFI Cover Crop Working Group team member Tom Kaspar, of the USDA/ARS National Laboratory for Agriculture and the Environment, summarized his results and observations from the cover crop research plots. Webster City and Storm Lake-area pilots to discussed particulars of aerial-seeding cover crops into standing row crops prior to harvest. Project farmer partners Jeremy Gustafson and Jerry Sindt also shared their experiences during the Boone and Calumet workshops, respectively.

ILF had its own track at the Iowa Water Conference, March 6-7. "Iowa 2035: What Would We Like to See? Sustainability from a Local and Regional Perspective" included talks from ILF farmer partner Nathan Anderson and ISU agronomy professor Matt Liebman and Jacqueline Comito. The balance of the afternoon track was devoted to a panel discussion. Panel members included ILF farmer partners Nathan Anderson, Tim Palmer, and Rob Stout. Non-farmer panelists included Chad Graeve, Pottawattamie County Conservation Natural Resource Specialist, Roz Lehman, Polk County resident and Iowa Rivers Revival Executive Director, and Rick Sandstrom, Marion, Iowa, Homeowners' Association President.

### **APRIL-JUNE 2012**

The cover crop management workshop series for Iowa NRCS staff and the public continued this quarter. Workshops were held April 3, 4 and 5 at ISU research and demonstration farms. Tom Kaspar, USDA/ARS National Laboratory for Agriculture and the Environment, shared the results and observations from nearly 20 years of cover crop management research. Project farmer partners Rick Juchems, Rob Stout, and George Schafer shared their experiences.

Thanks to financial support from Dr. Matt Helmers and ISU/Heartland Regional Water Quality Initiative, Jacqueline Comito and Ann Staudt attended the National Water Conference in Portland, Oregon, May 21-24. They were able to showcase ILF on the national stage through their presentation “Iowa Learning Farms: Bringing a Culture of Conservation to Iowa’s Youth.” Missouri folks were interested in using ILF as a model to create a similar farmer network in their own state.

Strip-tillage crop management was featured at a Black Hawk Lake Watershed improvement field day on June 5. ILF farmer partner Dean Tiefenthaler spoke about his strip-till experiences. Attendees visited a corn field planted into strip-till and saw Tiefenthaler’s strip-tillage equipment. ILF farmer partner Dave Nelson was a featured speaker at the field day also.

New ILF farmer partner Mark Mueller hosted a no-till corn-on-corn management field day at his farm near Waverly on June 14. Mueller and ILF farmer partner Collin Jensen of West Union were key speakers. Local NRCS personnel also spoke about cost-share funding for those wanting to try no-till for the first time.

ILF farmer partner Barry Kusel hosted a field day near Manning on June 20. Rainfall forced the event indoors at a local church. Kusel shared his experiences with 30 years of no-till crop management. Attendees also learned about fertilizer nutrient management and placement research from ISU Extension Soil Fertility Specialist Antonio Mallarino, cover crop management from NLAE research agronomist Tom Kaspar, and current crop issues from ISU Extension Field Agronomist Mark Licht.

New ILF farmer partners Dana, Randy, and Steve Norby hosted a field day at their Osage-area farm on June 21. The Norby brothers detailed how five years of planting corn into strip-tilled seedbeds and 15 years of no-till soybean planting has reduced soil erosion and improved soil structure on their farms.

In response to a request from our funders for expanded outreach and education pertaining to pasture and grazing issues, ILF co-sponsored an event with the patch-burn grazing research team based at ISU. The pasture walk was held near Kellerton on June 23. Attendees learned from project leaders about the benefits of patch-burn grazing to control eastern red cedar, improve feed quality of stockpiled pasture grasses and forbs, and restoration of bird and insect populations.

On June 26, student interns Sara Sloan and Brett McArtor staffed an exhibit booth at the annual conference of the Iowa Association of Agricultural Educators in Ankeny. They distributed “Out to the Lakes” DVDs and *Water Quality Matters To Us All* books.

ILF partnered with AgVantage FS and ISU Extension Agronomists John Sawyer and Dan Barker on an in-season corn nitrogen fertilizer field day near Sumner on June 27. Farmers and landowners learned how GreenSeeker technology allows AgVantage FS to apply post-emergent N fertilizer over more acres faster than typical side-dress application of anhydrous ammonia or liquid UAN fertilizers.

## **JULY-SEPTEMBER 2012**

ILF hosted field days, tours and workshops in this third quarter covering a variety of topics. Two cover crop workshops were held in Lester and Rock Valley on August 3. ISU Extension and Outreach field agronomist Joel DeJong served as workshop facilitator and lead promoter of these workshops. A joint PFI cover crop field day was held near Riceville on August 21 on the John Schwarck farm. A pasture improvement and rotational grazing field day was held near Leon on July 11 on the Todd Coffelt farm. A watershed celebration event was held at Badger Creek Lake on July 14. The Cedar River Coalition field day was held on the Richard Sloan farm on Aug. 24 and focused on cover crops. The Competine Creek Watershed field day near Martinsburg, held on Sept. 7 on the Tim Davis farm discussed no-till and cover crops.

Two CREP wetland tours were held in Story and Dickinson Counties on July 10 and 12, respectively. All field days and workshops in which the public was invited were promoted to local newspapers, radio and ag media. Additional promotion included postcards mailed to landowners in close proximity to the field day site, flyers to ISUEO, SWCD/NRCS offices, and the ILF website. Some field days were included in the 2012 Field Day Guide booklet as well.

## **OCTOBER-DECEMBER 2012**

There were five field days in October and even an outdoor field day held in November, followed up by a cover crop workshop in December. Attendance was lighter but they were highly engaged in the topics. New farmer partner Chris Henning hosted a field day on her farm on Columbus Day in conjunction with Women, Food and Agriculture Network (WFAN). Her event was well attended; half the attendees were women and included a group from Uganda. Bob Lynch became a farmer partner because he saw the value and importance of what ILF is accomplishing after the field day on his farm on Oct. 23. Pete Crew also became an ILF farmer partner. Pete is Jerry Crew's son and is farming with his dad. The field day was on cover crops, which the Crews have implemented on some of their acres recently.

## **Conservation Station Fleet**

### **JANUARY-MARCH 2012**

Since there were no scheduled Conservation Station or Lil' CS events during the January–March timeframe, we found the time to do some much-needed work on the trailers. As the sun drives natural rainfall, now it drives simulated rainfall too. The ILF rainfall simulators have gone off the grid. Both the Conservation Station and Lil' CS have been equipped with new high efficiency solar panels sufficiently capable of maintaining power for operation of the rainfall simulators housed in the ILF trailers. With these upgrades, the challenges associated with maintaining power to the simulators will be eliminated and the addition serves as a great example of a small step that can be taken toward conservation of natural resources. The gallery poster hanging system in the Conservation Station has been expanded adding another wall to be utilized for presenting educational materials in the Learning Lab. Howe's Welding made repairs to the soil cutter used for taking undisturbed soil samples for the rainfall simulators. Due to the abnormally warm spring conditions Andrews and Stevenson, with the help of a graduate

student, were able to successfully obtain soil cores for the rainfall simulators without complication. New Live Roof modules, to be implemented on the rainfall simulators, were also obtained during the Iowa Water Conference from Rooftop Sedums, LLC. The Lil' CS has undergone extensive renovations to upgrade its rainfall simulator. Upon completion of these upgrades, the Lil' CS will have the capability to demonstrate both surface runoff and subsurface drainage on undisturbed soil surfaces, similar to its larger counterpart.

We have received a multitude of requests for spring and summer events and 64 events have already been scheduled for the 2012 season. During the past two seasons, the CS fleet was on display at 70 counties in Iowa. We have taken a multi-faceted, targeted approach to reaching out to the remaining counties that we have not yet visited and are excited to report that 19 of those scheduled events for this year are in new counties. Just 10 counties to go before we've been to all 99!

### **APRIL-JUNE 2012**

The April-June period was the busiest quarter on record for the Conservation Station fleet, with 48 events completed and 7,308 total visitors between the two trailers. While the CS calendar is closed for the summer months, we continue to work closely with each event's local organizers leading up to the event—working out specific details such as location and event timing, as well as providing them with a Conservation Station media kit (upon request) that they can use to help promote our visit.

We have continued to make a concerted effort to reach all 99 counties. Through additional targeted outreach this quarter, we've successfully been able to add events (visits to county fairs, farmers markets, and more) in a number of counties that we haven't yet visited. We are getting ever closer to that elusive 99... with the events that are now scheduled through the summer, we will have visited 95 of the 99 counties by the end of 2012! Through a partnership of ILF, IDALS-DSC, and Iowa Farm Bureau, plans are also underway for the Lil' Conservation Station to be on display at the Iowa State Fair, August 9-19.

The Conservation Station's popularity extends well beyond the borders of our state. We received an additional out-of-state request this quarter for the CS to be on display at the Ozaukee Co. (WI) Fair, north of Milwaukee. We hosted a group of Russian scholars from the Iowa Sister States/Open World program on June 27. Our visitors were greatly impressed and voted us most popular among all the activities and presentations they attended during their nine-day stay in Iowa!

### **JULY-SEPTEMBER 2012**

The July–September period has surpassed last quarter as the busiest on record for the Conservation Station fleet with a total of 53 events. The drought conditions this summer meant that many of the water quality monitoring sites around the state were completely dry—leaving us with more student intern availability than usual. Due to the students having less field work, their time was opened up for additional travel with the Conservation Station fleet; so we added more summer events than would otherwise have been possible for our staff. Summer events included visits to county fairs, farmers markets, field days, and for the first time, the Iowa State Fair. Through a partnership with the Iowa

Farm Bureau Federation, the Lil' Conservation Station was set up in Farm Bureau Park just south of the grandstand for the duration of the state fair. ILF staff, student interns, IDALS and NRCS staff worked together to staff the trailer each day of the fair, visiting with 1800 fairgoers over the course of the 11 days.

The Conservation Station fleet welcomed its newest addition this quarter: the Conservation Station 3 (CS3 for short)! Specifically targeted for outdoor classrooms and school visits, the CS3 was designed to meet these needs, with storage space inside the trailer for tables, chairs, educational modules, t-shirts, and more. The trailer features a rainfall simulator similar to its cousins, and the outside of the trailer can be truly transformed into its own classroom with posters, banners and activities.

### **OCTOBER-DECEMBER 2012**

The Conservation Station fleet wrapped up the 2012 season with several fall school visits, outdoor classrooms, farmer field days and a presentation to a group of visiting international media professionals. The new cover crop tray was a great addition to the rainfall simulator, particularly for the late fall cover crop field days. All three trailers in the fleet have been winterized and are spending a few months in storage at the Farm Progress Show site west of Ames.

A new video was completed of Matt Helmers demonstrating the Conservation Station's rainfall simulator, explaining the relationships between land management choices, surface runoff, surface drainage, nutrient transport, erosion, and more. This video has been posted on the Iowa Learning Farms and Water Rocks! YouTube channels.

## **ELECTRONIC OUTREACH**

### **Webinars**

#### **JANUARY-MARCH 2012**

The second year of the monthly webinar series kicked off in January with presenter Jacqueline Comito who spoke about farmer identity in the age of environmental uncertainty. Prior to her webinar, Comito was interviewed by Mick Fjar, farm director at AgNews890 AM radio station out of Fargo, ND. February's webinar featured Chad Hart, who discussed the production and distribution of bioenergy. ISU Agronomy professor David Laird provided information about biochar in March. The webinars originate from the Brenton Center on the ISU campus the third Wednesday of each month at 11:30 a.m., and are archived on the ILF website.



## **APRIL-JUNE 2012**

The April 2012 ILF Webinar featured Leigh Adcock, Executive Director of Women, Food and Agriculture Network (WFAN), who discussed efforts to encourage women landowners to become involved in soil conservation and land management on their acres. Matt Helmers discussed the Science-based Trials of Rowcrops Integrated with Prairies (STRIPs) project at Neal Smith National Wildlife Refuge in May. In June ISU Agronomy Professor Ken Moore detailed preliminary corn yield response data and potential water quality benefits associated with perennial ground cover.

## **JULY-SEPTEMBER 2012**

The July webinar featured young northwest Iowa farmer Nathan Anderson, who presented his thoughts for sustainability on his farm and his hopes for the future of farming. August's webinar was a different format, broadcasting live from the State Fair. Comito and Helmers interviewed Iowa Secretary of Agriculture Bill Northey in an informal question and answer session. In September, ISU agronomy professor Matt Liebman gave a presentation on his research in extended crop rotations and STRIPs project at Neal Smith Wildlife Refuge.

## **OCTOBER-DECEMBER 2012**

The October webinar featured ISU professor of sociology J. Gordon Arbuckle, who presented findings from the latest Iowa Farm and Rural Life Poll regarding farming and climate change. In November, ISU Agriculture and Biosystems Engineering professor Amy Kaleita presented information on precision farming and conservation. The December webinar featured Iowa Soybean Association watershed management specialist Keegan Kult, who presented information about the installed bioreactors on Iowa farms.

2012 Webinar archived views, as of January 2, 2013:

December (Kult) = 141	August (Northey) = 110	April (Adcock) = 102
November (Kaleita) = 190	July (Anderson) = 143	March (Laird) = 242
October (Arbuckle) = 64	June (Moore) = 93	February (Hart) = 148
September (Liebman) = 112	May (Helmers) = 115	January (Comito) = 170

2011 Webinar archived views, as of January 2, 2013:

January (Comito) = 337	May (Christianson) = 397	September (Cox) = 213
February (Anderson) = 238	June (Soupir) = 198	October (Hanna) = 78
March (Singer) = 411	July (Heaton) = 234	November (Petersen) = 99
April (Helmers) = 270	August (Cruse) = 489	December (Harr) = 111

## Website

The numbers below indicate how many page views and how many “unique” visitors there were on our website each month.

<b>January 2012</b>	<b>February 2012*</b>	<b>March 2012</b>
Page views: 3,305	Page views: NA	Page views: 3,723
Unique visitors: 783	Unique visitors: NA	Unique visitors: 937
Visitors who visited once: 597	Visitors who visited once: NA	Visitors who visited once: 710
Visitors who visited more than once: 186	Visitors who visited more than once: NA	Visitors who visited more than once: 227

*\*Iowa State University Extension server had files corrupted in February, losing data for this month.*

<b>April 2012</b>	<b>May 2012</b>	<b>June 2012</b>
Page views: 3,314	Page views: 2,706	Page views: 2,843
Unique visitors: 703	Unique visitors: 625	Unique visitors: 700
Visitors who visited once: 563	Visitors who visited once: 522	Visitors who visited once: 586
Visitors who visited more than once: 140	Visitors who visited more than once: 103	Visitors who visited more than once: 114

<b>July 2012</b>	<b>August 2012</b>	<b>Sept 2012</b>
Page views: 10,656*	Page views: 1,782	Page views:
Unique visitors: 722	Unique visitors: 582	Unique visitors:
Visitors who visited once: 541	Visitors who visited once: 473	Visitors who visited once:
Visitors who visited more than once: 181	Visitors who visited more than once: 109	Visitors who visited more than once:

*\*Number is skewed due to new website construction and moving of content from current website to new website.*

<b>October 2012</b>	<b>November 2012*</b>	<b>December 2012</b>
Visits: 1,967	Visits: 1,007	Visits: 251
	Page Views:	Page Views:
Unique visitors: 1,046	Unique visitors: 522	Unique visitors: 118
Visitors who visited once: 799	New Visitors: 436	New Visitors: 80
Visitors who visited more than once: 247	Returning Visitors: 571	Returning Visitors: 171

*\*Reporting switched to Google Analytics in November*

## Blog

### APRIL-JUNE 2012

ILF staff began blogging on April 6, summarizing highlights of ILF outreach and education efforts. As of July 5, the blog site has been visited/viewed 1,117 times and has over 30 posts by ILF team members and student interns. This additional format for outreach works well to inform others of experiences that may seem out of place in a news article. The blog is informative and humorous and offers a personal side to why soil and water quality are important. [www.iowalearningfarms.wordpress.com/](http://www.iowalearningfarms.wordpress.com/)

### JULY-SEPTEMBER 2012

As of October 4, the blog site has been visited/viewed 2,675 times and has 59 posts by ILF team members.

### OCTOBER-DECEMBER 2012

The ILF blog site is gaining followers as well as the ILF Facebook page. The blog postings also appear on the Facebook page, which creates activity and “likes.” As of January 2, 2013, the blog has had 4,349 views of the 79 posts by ILF team members.

## YouTube activity

### JANUARY-MARCH 2012

<b>Converting Your Planter for No-Till:</b>	<b>Views</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Date Posted</b>
Conclusion	921	4/4/2012	12/11/2009
Furrow Point	894	4/4/2012	12/11/2009
Fertilizer Applicators	1,186	4/4/2012	12/11/2009
Row Cleaners	3,252	4/4/2012	12/11/2009
Closing Systems (Case IH)	4,113	4/4/2012	12/11/2009
Closing Systems	1,185	4/4/2012	12/11/2009
Depth Adjustment (Case IH)	2,355	4/4/2012	12/11/2009
Depth Adjustment	487	4/4/2012	12/11/2009
Seed Opener (Case IH)	2,147	4/4/2012	12/11/2009
Seed Opener	9,132	4/4/2012	12/11/2009
Intro and Leveling	7,055	4/4/2012	12/11/2009
<b>Culture of Conservation Videos</b>	<b>Views</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Date Posted</b>

The Work of our Hands	133	4/4/2012	11/12/2009
Don't Call it Dirt: A Passion for Soil	3,262	4/4/2012	11/12/2009
A Culture of Conservation: Iowan to Iowan	205	4/4/2012	11/12/2009
Water is Life	1,169	4/4/2012	11/12/2009
We All Have a Place in the Watershed	233	4/4/2012	5/21/2009
Reclaiming Stewardship	149	4/4/2012	4/9/2009
<b>Troubled Waters</b>	<b>Views</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Date Posted</b>
Play All version	206	4/4/2012	10/7/2011
Part 1: Natural Resources and Biodiversity	402	4/4/2012	3/24/2010
Part 2: Human Intervention & Modification	316	4/4/2012	3/24/2010
Part 3: Pollutants	143	4/4/2012	3/24/2010
Part 4: Ecological Resilience	261	4/4/2012	3/24/2010
Part 5: Blessed be the River	367	4/4/2012	3/24/2010
<b>Conservation Station</b>	<b>Views</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Date Posted</b>
Six minute promotional film for the CS	336	4/4/2012	5/1/2011
<b>Cover Crop How-To</b>	<b>Views</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Date Posted</b>
Part I – planting	87	4/4/2012	7/18/2011
Part II – terminating	54	4/4/2012	7/18/2011
<b>Implementing Grassed Waterways</b>	<b>Views</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Date Posted</b>
Part 1: The need for waterways	44	4/4/2012	7/18/2011
Part 2: Conservation practices	38	4/4/2012	7/18/2011
Part 3: Design considerations	45	4/4/2012	7/18/2011
Part 4: Waterway capacity	87	4/4/2012	7/18/2011
Part 5: Establishing a waterway	50	4/4/2012	7/18/2011
Part 6: Financial Assistance	27	4/4/2012	7/18/2011
Part 7: Waterway maintenance	38	4/4/2012	7/18/2011
Part 8: A Farmer's Perspective	39	4/4/2012	7/18/2011
<b>Manure Management and Conservation</b>	<b>Views</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Date Posted</b>
Part 1: Managing Manure Nutrients for Crop Growth	64	4/4/2012	7/18/2011
Part 2: Sampling Liquid Manure	44	4/4/2012	7/18/2011

Part 3: Sampling Open Lot Manure	39	4/4/2012	7/18/2011
Part 4: Sampling Stockpiled & Composted Manure	52	4/4/2012	7/18/2011
Part 5: Manure Sample Analysis	40	4/4/2012	7/18/2011
Part 6: The Value of Manure Nutrients	234	4/4/2012	7/18/2011
Part 7: Injection Equipment	326	4/4/2012	7/18/2011
Part 8: Putting It All Together	95	4/4/2012	7/18/2011
Play All version	286	4/4/2012	9/29/2011
<b>Out to the Lakes</b>	<b>Views</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Date Posted</b>
Posted in its entirety	314	4/4/2012	9/29/2011

#### APRIL-JUNE 2012

<b>Converting Your Planter for No-Till:</b>	<b>Views</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Date Posted</b>
Conclusion	974	7/5/2012	12/11/2009
Furrow Point	975	7/5/2012	12/11/2009
Fertilizer Applicators	1,375	7/5/2012	12/11/2009
Row Cleaners	3,857	7/5/2012	12/11/2009
Closing Systems (Case IH)	4,576	7/5/2012	12/11/2009
Closing Systems	1,265	7/5/2012	12/11/2009
Depth Adjustment (Case IH)	2,702	7/5/2012	12/11/2009
Depth Adjustment	532	7/5/2012	12/11/2009
Seed Opener (Case IH)	2,419	7/5/2012	12/11/2009
Seed Opener	10,200	7/5/2012	12/11/2009
Intro and Leveling	7,793	7/5/2012	12/11/2009
<b>Culture of Conservation Videos</b>	<b>Views</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Date Posted</b>
The Work of our Hands	140	7/5/2012	11/12/2009
Don't Call it Dirt: A Passion for Soil	3,837	7/5/2012	11/12/2009
A Culture of Conservation: Iowan to Iowan	220	7/5/2012	11/12/2009
Water is Life	1,233	7/5/2012	11/12/2009
We All Have a Place in the Watershed	248	7/5/2012	5/21/2009
Reclaiming Stewardship	150	7/5/2012	4/9/2009

<b>Troubled Waters</b>	<b>Views</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Date Posted</b>
Play All version	240	7/5/2012	10/7/2011
Part 1: Natural Resources and Biodiversity	425	7/5/2012	3/24/2010
Part 2: Human Intervention & Modification	349	7/5/2012	3/24/2010
Part 3: Pollutants	153	7/5/2012	3/24/2010
Part 4: Ecological Resilience	286	7/5/2012	3/24/2010
Part 5: Blessed be the River	416	7/5/2012	3/24/2010
<b>Conservation Station</b>	<b>Views</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Date Posted</b>
Six minute promotional film for the CS	428	7/5/2012	5/1/2011
<b>Cover Crop How-To</b>	<b>Views</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Date Posted</b>
Part I – planting	126	7/5/2012	7/18/2011
Part II – terminating	79	7/5/2012	7/18/2011
<b>Implementing Grassed Waterways</b>	<b>Views</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Date Posted</b>
Part 1: The need for waterways	44	7/5/2012	7/18/2011
Part 2: Conservation practices	45	7/5/2012	7/18/2011
Part 3: Design considerations	61	7/5/2012	7/18/2011
Part 4: Waterway capacity	103	7/5/2012	7/18/2011
Part 5: Establishing a waterway	62	7/5/2012	7/18/2011
Part 6: Financial Assistance	35	7/5/2012	7/18/2011
Part 7: Waterway maintenance	44	7/5/2012	7/18/2011
Part 8: A Farmer’s Perspective	51	7/5/2012	7/18/2011
<b>Manure Management and Conservation</b>	<b>Views</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Date Posted</b>
Part 1: Managing Manure Nutrients for Crop Growth	74	7/5/2012	7/18/2011
Part 2: Sampling Liquid Manure	49	7/5/2012	7/18/2011
Part 3: Sampling Open Lot Manure	43	7/5/2012	7/18/2011
Part 4: Sampling Stockpiled & Composted Manure	70	7/5/2012	7/18/2011
Part 5: Manure Sample Analysis	47	7/5/2012	7/18/2011
Part 6: The Value of Manure Nutrients	266	7/5/2012	7/18/2011
Part 7: Injection Equipment	445	4/4/2012	7/18/2011

Part 8: Putting It All Together	114	4/4/2012	7/18/2011
Play All version	332	4/4/2012	9/29/2011
<b>Out to the Lakes</b>	<b>Views</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Date Posted</b>
Posted in its entirety	408	4/4/2012	9/29/2011

## JULY-SEPTEMBER 2012

<b>Converting Your Planter for No-Till:</b>	<b>Views</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Date Posted</b>
Conclusion	1,008	10/4/2012	12/11/2009
Furrow Point	1,011	10/4/2012	12/11/2009
Fertilizer Applicators	1,452	10/4/2012	12/11/2009
Row Cleaners	4,061	10/4/2012	12/11/2009
Closing Systems (Case IH)	4,780	10/4/2012	12/11/2009
Closing Systems	1,313	10/4/2012	12/11/2009
Depth Adjustment (Case IH)	2,808	10/4/2012	12/11/2009
Depth Adjustment	548	10/4/2012	12/11/2009
Seed Opener (Case IH)	2,507	10/4/2012	12/11/2009
Seed Opener	11,456	10/4/2012	12/11/2009
Intro and Leveling	8,199	10/4/2012	12/11/2009
<b>Culture of Conservation Videos</b>	<b>Views</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Date Posted</b>
The Work of our Hands	143	10/4/2012	11/12/2009
Don't Call it Dirt: A Passion for Soil	4,480	10/4/2012	11/12/2009
A Culture of Conservation: Iowan to Iowan	226	10/4/2012	11/12/2009
Water is Life	1,276	10/4/2012	11/12/2009
We All Have a Place in the Watershed	276	10/4/2012	5/21/2009
Reclaiming Stewardship	150	10/4/2012	4/9/2009
<b>Troubled Waters</b>	<b>Views</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Date Posted</b>
Play All version	278	10/4/2012	10/7/2011
Part 1: Natural Resources and Biodiversity	457	10/4/2012	3/24/2010
Part 2: Human Intervention & Modification	373	10/4/2012	3/24/2010
Part 3: Pollutants	156	10/4/2012	3/24/2010
Part 4: Ecological Resilience	301	10/4/2012	3/24/2010

Part 5: Blessed be the River	424	10/4/2012	3/24/2010
<b>Conservation Station</b>	<b>Views</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Date Posted</b>
Six minute promotional film for the CS	523	10/4/2012	5/1/2011
<b>Cover Crop How-To</b>	<b>Views</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Date Posted</b>
Part I – planting	183	10/4/2012	7/18/2011
Part II – terminating	105	10/4/2012	7/18/2011
<b>Implementing Grassed Waterways</b>	<b>Views</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Date Posted</b>
Part 1: The need for waterways	56	10/4/2012	7/18/2011
Part 2: Conservation practices	47	10/4/2012	7/18/2011
Part 3: Design considerations	71	10/4/2012	7/18/2011
Part 4: Waterway capacity	131	10/4/2012	7/18/2011
Part 5: Establishing a waterway	73	10/4/2012	7/18/2011
Part 6: Financial Assistance	36	10/4/2012	7/18/2011
Part 7: Waterway maintenance	51	10/4/2012	7/18/2011
Part 8: A Farmer’s Perspective	56	10/4/2012	7/18/2011
<b>Manure Management and Conservation</b>	<b>Views</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Date Posted</b>
Part 1: Managing Manure Nutrients for Crop Growth	86	10/4/2012	7/18/2011
Part 2: Sampling Liquid Manure	58	10/4/2012	7/18/2011
Part 3: Sampling Open Lot Manure	53	10/4/2012	7/18/2011
Part 4: Sampling Stockpiled & Composted Manure	95	10/4/2012	7/18/2011
Part 5: Manure Sample Analysis	57	10/4/2012	7/18/2011
Part 6: The Value of Manure Nutrients	313	10/4/2012	7/18/2011
Part 7: Injection Equipment	543	10/4/2012	7/18/2011
Part 8: Putting It All Together	134	10/4/2012	7/18/2011
Play All version	385	10/4/2012	9/29/2011
<b>Out to the Lakes</b>	<b>Views</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Date Posted</b>
Posted in its entirety	443	10/4/2012	9/29/2011
<b>Land Formation in Iowa</b>	<b>Views</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Date Posted</b>
Animated illustration of Iowa land from past	92		6/29/12



to future based on alterations		10/4/12	
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## OCTOBER-DECEMBER 2012

<b>Converting Your Planter for No-Till:</b>	<b>Views</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Date Posted</b>
Conclusion	1,055	1/2/2013	12/11/2009
Furrow Point Maintenance	1,081	1/2/2013	12/11/2009
Fertilizer Applicators	1,606	1/2/2013	12/11/2009
Row Cleaners	4,345	1/2/2013	12/11/2009
Closing Systems (Case IH)	5,081	1/2/2013	12/11/2009
Closing Systems	1,383	1/2/2013	12/11/2009
Depth Adjustment (Case IH)	2,951	1/2/2013	12/11/2009
Depth Adjustment	574	1/2/2013	12/11/2009
Seed Opener (Case IH)	2,634	1/2/2013	12/11/2009
Seed Opener	13,702	1/2/2013	12/11/2009
Intro and Leveling	8,698	1/2/2013	12/11/2009
<b>Culture of Conservation Videos</b>	<b>Views</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Date Posted</b>
The Work of our Hands	155	1/2/2013	11/12/2009
Don't Call it Dirt: A Passion for Soil	5,645	1/2/2013	11/12/2009
A Culture of Conservation: Iowan to Iowan	253	1/2/2013	11/12/2009
Water is Life	1,449	1/2/2013	11/12/2009
We All Have a Place in the Watershed	314	1/2/2013	5/21/2009
Reclaiming Stewardship	155	1/2/2013	4/9/2009
<b>Troubled Waters</b>	<b>Views</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Date Posted</b>
Play All version	340	1/2/2013	10/7/2011
Part 1: Natural Resources and Biodiversity	468	1/2/2013	3/24/2010
Part 2: Human Intervention & Modification	406	1/2/2013	3/24/2010
Part 3: Pollutants	163	1/2/2013	3/24/2010
Part 4: Ecological Resilience	349	1/2/2013	3/24/2010
Part 5: Blessed be the River	431	1/2/2013	3/24/2010
<b>Conservation Station</b>	<b>Views</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Date Posted</b>
Promotional film for the CS	578	1/2/2013	5/1/2011

<b>Cover Crop How-To</b>	<b>Views</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Date Posted</b>
Part I – planting	245	1/2/2013	7/18/2011
Part II – terminating	141	1/2/2013	7/18/2011
<b>Implementing Grassed Waterways</b>	<b>Views</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Date Posted</b>
Part 1: The need for waterways	57	1/2/2013	7/18/2011
Part 2: Conservation practices	51	1/2/2013	7/18/2011
Part 3: Design considerations	91	1/2/2013	7/18/2011
Part 4: Waterway capacity	150	1/2/2013	7/18/2011
Part 5: Establishing a waterway	79	1/2/2013	7/18/2011
Part 6: Financial Assistance	56	1/2/2013	7/18/2011
Part 7: Waterway maintenance	73	1/2/2013	7/18/2011
Part 8: A Farmer’s Perspective	75	1/2/2013	7/18/2011
<b>Manure Management and Conservation</b>	<b>Views</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Date Posted</b>
Part 1: Managing Manure Nutrients for Crop Growth	99	1/2/2013	7/18/2011
Part 2: Sampling Liquid Manure	80	1/2/2013	7/18/2011
Part 3: Sampling Open Lot Manure	70	1/2/2013	7/18/2011
Part 4: Sampling Stockpiled & Composted Manure	106	1/2/2013	7/18/2011
Part 5: Manure Sample Analysis	63	1/2/2013	7/18/2011
Part 6: The Value of Manure Nutrients	351	1/2/2013	7/18/2011
Part 7: Injection Equipment	670	1/2/2013	7/18/2011
Part 8: Putting It All Together	150	1/2/2013	7/18/2011
Play All version	438	1/2/2013	9/29/2011
<b>Out to the Lakes</b>	<b>Views</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Date Posted</b>
Posted in its entirety	502	1/2/2013	9/29/2011
<b>Land Formation in Iowa</b>	<b>Views</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Date Posted</b>
Animated illustration of Iowa land from past to future based on alterations	187	1/2/2013	6/29/12
<b>Strip-tillage Crop Management</b>	<b>Views</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Date Posted</b>
Part 1	200	1/2/2013	10/12/2012

Getting Started with Strip-till: Equipment	58	1/2/2013	10/12/2012
Getting Started with Strip-till: Tractor Horsepower	41	1/2/2013	10/12/2012
Getting Started with Strip-till: Soil Structure	32	1/2/2013	10/12/2012
Strip-till and Your Fertilizer Program	167	1/2/2013	10/12/2012
Strip-Till Recommendations	163	1/2/2013	10/12/2012
<b>Conservation Station-Rainfall Simulator</b>	<b>Views</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Date Posted</b>
Matt Helmers demonstrates the RS	66	1/2/2013	11/5/2012

## Other Outreach

### JANUARY-MARCH 2012

- The 2012 Field Day Guide was completed in time to hand out at the Iowa Water Conference. It was mailed to the ILF mailing list of 1,560 people and emailed to over 1,000 people. These lists include past field day participants, partners, SCWD commissioners and offices, ag educators, students, personal requests, Iowa legislators and others. The ILF field days will also be included in Practical Farmers of Iowa field day guide, due to mail at the end of April.
- The Winter ILF newsletter was distributed in February
- Three *Wallaces Farmer* columns were submitted
- The “internal” e-newsletter was sent each month to our farmer/non-farmer partners, agency partners, steering committee and ISU Extension field agronomists.
- 145 copies of *Water Quality Matters To Us All* were given out at conferences and field days and mailed to requestors. Linn County assistant SWCD commissioner Larry Jons requested 20 copies to distribute to educators in their county.
- 392 DVDs were given out at conferences including Pheasants Forever, MOSES (via Leopold Center) and Conservation Partnership Day. The cover crop how-to DVD was included in packets for NRCS staff who attended the March 28 and 29 field days. Also, the Culture of Conservation series (3 DVDs), along with the educational enhancement booklets, are included in packets for educators when ILF staff visit schools.
- Various ILF press releases and references to ILF were found through Google Alerts on these media websites: *Farm News*, *Iowa Farmer Today*, *Farm Bureau Spokesman*, KNIA/KRLS Knoxville and Pella radio stations, *Des Moines Register*, Tri-State Neighbor, Iowa Ag Connection, Drovers Cattle Network, *Cedar Rapids Gazette* and their sponsored web page Eastern Iowa Life, *Wallaces Farmer*, Leopold

Center, Practical Farmers of Iowa and ISU Extension and Outreach. Links to ILF webinars were found on International Biochar Initiative website, E-collegiate News, Anamosa and Manchester 247, in addition to the most of the media above.

- An article ran in the *Indianola Record Herald* “Fourth-graders learn about prairies, wetlands, in new program” featuring the Prairies, Wetlands and Croplands project and Harold Whipple.
- Material from the four-page publication “Cover Crops: Frequently Asked Questions” has been incorporated into an accompanying booklet with the “Adding a Cover Crop to a Corn-Soybean System” DVD, which is distributed at all ILF education and outreach events.

#### **APRIL-JUNE 2012**

- The spring ILF newsletter was distributed in May
- Three *Wallaces Farmer* columns were submitted
- Copies of *Water Quality Matters to Us All* were given out at field days and mailed to requestors.
- The cover crop how-to DVD was included in packets for NRCS staff who attended the April 3, 4, and 5 field days
- 25 new ILF farmer-partner signs were produced and will be distributed statewide.
- A full color brochure has been created to promote ILF’s farmer partner program as well as recruit new farmer partners
- ConservationPack.org postcard developed to promote new C-Pack website
- New Conservation Station promotional postcard developed
- All outdoor classrooms and school visits include presentations and interactive activities led by ILF staff, and also teachers are presented a complimentary packet of resource materials. Depending on the age of their students, resource packets may include the complete Culture of Conservation DVD series, accompanying educational enhancement activities, *Water Quality Matters To Us All* book, Conservation Pack certificates/worksheets, and “Dogs, Frogs and Nature Songs” music CD.
- Conservation Station Media Kit – provided to local event organizers upon request to promote upcoming Conservation Station visits
- Various ILF press releases and references to ILF were found through Google Alerts on these media websites: *Farm News, Iowa Farmer Today, Farm Bureau Spokesman, Des Moines Register, Cedar Rapids Gazette* and their sponsored web page Eastern Iowa Life, *Wallaces Farmer*, Leopold Center, Practical Farmers of Iowa, Farms.com, UrbanFarming.org, Iowa Ag Connection, DiscoverAdel.com and ISU Extension and Outreach; other Iowa newspapers include *Charles City Press, Fort Dodge Messenger, Dubuque Telegraph Herald, Waverly Democrat, Ames Tribune, Denison Bulletin Review, Creston News Advertiser, Decorah Journal* and *Sigourney News Review*.

#### **JULY-SEPTEMBER 2012**

- A full color brochure has been printed and is currently being handed out to interested farmers and conservationists at ILF field days and related conventions. The goal of the brochure is to promote and recruit new partners to our farmer partnership program.
- A “Whole Farm Approach” think piece was created and printed in time for the CDI conference. The think piece is an overview of the “whole farm” project, looking at land management choices on a specific farm historically through the years up to future projections. A

farm in northwest Iowa was the case study for the think piece, with three additional farms to be analyzed similarly in northern, eastern and southeastern Iowa. More research and background information will be collected for this project in order to expand it to a presentation or display.

- A new website is being developed at the request of Iowa State University Extension and Outreach. The software that was used to create the current ILF website is no longer being supported by ISU. The new site will be a content management system using Drupal software. During this quarter, the site has been developed and content migrated to the new site. It will go live in October.
- Promotional material for the field days, CREP tours and workshops were written, designed, mailed and emailed throughout the quarter including news releases, flyers and postcards. Also, an exhibit display was created for the Conservation Districts of Iowa conference indoor display and outdoor area. Three *Wallaces Farmer* columns were submitted and published.
- Various ILF press releases and references to ILF were found through Google Alerts on these media websites: *Farm News*, *Iowa Farmer Today*, *Farm Bureau Spokesman*, *Des Moines Register*, *Cedar Rapids Gazette* and their sponsored web page Eastern Iowa Life, *Wallaces Farmer*, Leopold Center, Practical Farmers of Iowa, Farms.com, Urban Farming.org, and ISU Extension and Outreach, KTIV (Sioux City), Soil and Water Conservation Society website; other Iowa newspapers include *Sigourney News Review*, *Mason City Globe Gazette*, *Pella Chronicle*, *Sioux City Journal* and *Southwest Iowa News(.com)*.

## **OCTOBER-DECEMBER 2012**

- The new website went live on October 18. We continue to build and update pages, including the partners' page. Work on getting new bios written and current bios updated is ongoing.
- The new Strip-till DVD was duplicated and mailed to Extension and SWCD offices and to requestors and also uploaded to YouTube.
- Promotional material for October field days were written, designed, mailed and emailed throughout the quarter including news releases, flyers and postcards. Three *Wallaces Farmer* columns were submitted and published.
- Appreciation cards were sent to farmer partners in December, thanking them for their participation with ILF.
- Various ILF press releases and references to ILF were found through Google Alerts on these media websites: *Farm News*, *Iowa Farmer Today*, *Farm Bureau Spokesman*, *AgriNews*, *Des Moines Register*, *Cedar Rapids Gazette* and their sponsored web page Eastern Iowa Life, *Wallaces Farmer*, Leopold Center, Practical Farmers of Iowa, StripTillFarmer.com, Farms.com, Croplife.com, Nationalhogfarmer.com; ISU Extension and Outreach; other Iowa newspapers include *Spencer Daily Reporter* and *Dubuque Telegraph Herald*.

## Conservation Pack

### JANUARY-MARCH 2012

The Conservation Pack has been hugely popular among students in grades K-8. In partnership with ISU's Brenton Center for Agricultural Instruction & Technology Transfer, we are in the process of designing a unique website specifically dedicated to the Conservation Pack and its ideals of working together to protect soil and water resources. The website (ConservationPack.org) will launch in April and will be widely promoted at Conservation Station school visits and outdoor classrooms. The Conservation Pack has also been featured in a Kids Who Conserve campaign with WHO-HD (November 2011–April 2012). Each 15-second commercial is seen by 18,000 households, with the campaign bringing increased visibility to ILF programs across the Central Iowa viewing area.

### APRIL-JUNE 2012

We are pleased to announce that our new website for the ever-popular Conservation Pack (ConservationPack.org) has launched! The website features our three conservation dogs: their profiles as well as their adventures exploring the many environments around them in Iowa; songs, music videos, activities (worksheets, coloring pages) and resources for parents/educators. Furthermore, given the popularity of the Conservation Pack, the website allows users to submit their own pets to become official members of the Pack and be featured on our website. Our six-month Kids Who Conserve campaign with WHO-HD concluded at the end of April.

#### Conservation Pack website:

<b>May 2012</b>	<b>June 2012</b>
Page views: 536	Page views: 437
Visits: 102	Visits: 94
Unique visitors: 55	Unique visitors: 56
Visitors who visited more than once: 47	Visitors who visited more than once: 49

### JULY-SEPTEMBER 2012

<b>July 2012</b>	<b>August 2012</b>	<b>Sept 2012</b>
Page views: 250	Page views: 423	Page views: 190
Unique visitors: 45	Unique visitors: 66	Unique visitors: 53
New visitors: 36	New visitors: 53	New visitors: 47
Returning visitors: 30	Returning visitors: 43	Returning visitors: 21

## OCTOBER-DECEMBER 2012

October 2012	November 2012	December 2012
Visits: 87	Visits: 74	Visits: 81
Page views: 206	Page views: 175	Page views: 274
Unique visitors: 67	Unique visitors: 65	Unique visitors: 59
New visitors: 59	New visitors: 57	New visitors: 52
Returning visitors: 28	Returning visitors: 17	Returning visitors: 29

## ADMINISTRATION AND EVALUATION

### JANUARY-MARCH 2012

Comito is serving on the search committee to hire the Iowa Water Center's new associate. This staff person will play a role with ILF and our other project Water Rocks! We have a fine list of candidates for the job and it is our hope that we will hire someone who will help realize the Iowa Water Center's mission and build a stronger link between IWC and ILF. In addition, Staudt and Andrews reviewed the applications of over 30 students, interviewed 14 and hired 5 students to help staff the Conservation Stations and conduct water quality data research. In addition, we have two students returning from last year. We are really pleased with the quality of student candidates and feel like we have a great group to help us through the summer. Staudt is refining the training of the new students over last year's weeklong training. This year the students are meeting every Tuesday for five weeks so that they are ready to go by the second week of May when we have 13 events in two weeks. As many of you know, our ISU student interns are important to our outreach and serve as wonderful ambassadors for ISU and ILF. We find that participants at events love to talk to these students, to see them active in our program and to hear their stories.

In addition, Comito and Stevenson sent out follow-up evaluations to all attendees at 2011 ILF field days. The purpose of the follow-up evaluation was to discover what actions, if any, people took as a result of the information gained at our field days. We had an excellent response to the follow-up evaluations; the results, along with the earlier evaluations, are in a separate report that will be distributed to the ILF Steering Committee soon. We are also beginning our evaluation of first quarter field days for 2012. We created a new organization system to make the evaluation process both efficient and effective. Nathan Stevenson is the key contact person for the day-to-day evaluation work. Comito handles the reporting of the evaluation data.

## **APRIL-JUNE 2012**

ILF's seven student interns have been one of the main reasons we were able to carry out as many Conservation Station visits as we did this quarter. Staudt organized and conducted a spring training session with the student interns, meeting with them each Tuesday night for five weeks at the end of the spring semester (March 27-April 24). This allowed the student interns to hit the ground running immediately after completing final exams, coinciding with the peak season for school visits and outdoor classrooms, with each intern attending multiple Conservation Station events their first week on the job. This year's group of interns is particularly outstanding; they are a really important part of our outreach and great ambassadors of ILF and ISU. Intern training continues through the summer with a series of Lunch n' Learn seminars (a new addition this year) presented by ILF team members on a variety of topics including biological indicators, urban conservation, building a culture of conservation, and cover crops.

## **JULY-SEPTEMBER 2012**

As noted last quarter, this summer's group of undergraduate student interns was particularly outstanding. In addition to fieldwork and ILF outreach, each student carried out an individual internship project that was specifically tailored to their interests and allowed further exploration into different avenues of research/outreach. An end-of-summer symposium was held on July 26, in which each intern gave an oral presentation on his or her unique internship project efforts. Several interns have continued working with us on a part-time basis this fall.

Evaluations are on-going. ILF staff, via an event evaluation form, evaluates all other events and activities. Event evaluations for all events this quarter are included in their own file. Field day participants are asked to fill out comment cards and were sent evaluation surveys a few weeks following each event. School events and outdoor classrooms continue to be evaluated as well. The result of all these evaluations will be processed and released with the year-end report. An evaluator, usually Comito, attends all field days in order to better understand how the information is being received and to evaluate the effectiveness of the event. We will do a follow-up survey of ILF field days in early January.

We are currently in the process of writing the new contract so that it will be in place by January 2013. In addition, Comito is writing several grants to help continue to fund our youth program. Grants to the Vice President for ISU Extension and Outreach, EPA and USDA-NIFA are all due in the next quarter.

## **OCTOBER-DECEMBER 2012**

All project events and outreach were evaluated on multiple levels. The result of these evaluations will be processed and released after we complete the follow-up evaluation analysis in January. The report will be presented at the February steering committee meeting. We continue to seek new means of evaluating and improving the work that ILF is doing in terms of outreach and education.

Two major changes have happened in terms of ILF administration and staffing. Lois Wright Morton has stepped down as Program Director for 2013. Dr. Wright Morton served ILF successfully for two years and helped Helmers and Comito diversify our funding portfolio. We are



thankful for the contribution Lois made to the Iowa Learning Farms. Drs. Helmers and Comito will continue to direct the program in their capacity as co-managers of the Iowa Learning Farms.

John Lundvall left Iowa State University and the Iowa Learning Farms team so that he could farm full-time in 2013. We held a search to replace him and interviewed one candidate in late November. Elizabeth Juchems will return to Iowa State University Extension and Outreach and the Iowa Learning Farms team on May 6. Liz, daughter of ILF farmer partner Rick Juchems, was an intern for ILF for several years while an undergraduate at ISU. Liz will join the team in May after completing her graduate degree in agricultural economics at the University of Nebraska. She will be working in several areas including ILF field days, economic issues, expanding farmer participation and Conservation Station education and outreach. We are really pleased to have Liz back on the team and look forward to see the many different ways she will help us improve our conservation mission.

This quarter we also submitted the 2014 proposal for Section 319 funding of Iowa Learning Farms. We put in the proposal a year in advance per the IDNR's request. It was submitted to EPA in the middle of December.

## **WORK WITH DEMONSTRATIONS AND OTHER DATA**

### **Anthropological/Sociological**

#### **JANUARY-MARCH 2012**

Comito, Dr. Jon Wolseth and Lois Wright Morton put the finishing touches on three journal articles utilizing data from water and soil quality stakeholders and submitted the articles for publication this quarter. "The State's Role in Water Quality: Soil and Water Conservation District Commissioners as Risk Brokers and Production Cheerleaders" was submitted to *Human Organization*, an applied anthropology professional journal, in January. "Stewards and Businessmen? 'Existential Recognition' Among Farmers in an Age of Environmental Uncertainty" was submitted to *Culture, Agriculture, Food and Environment* in February. "Tillage Practices, the Language of Blame, and Responsibility for Water Quality Impacts in Row Crop Agriculture" was submitted to *Human Ecology Review* for possible publication in March. Comito continues to give presentations on the publication *Water Quality Matters To Us All* and works with watershed groups on improving their community assessment. During this quarter, Comito returned to formal classroom teaching Environmental Sociology for the ISU sociology department.

#### **APRIL-JUNE 2012**

Comito, Dr. Jon Wolseth and Lois Wright Morton's article "The State's Role in Water Quality: Soil and Water Conservation District Commissioners as Risk Brokers and Production Cheerleaders" has been accepted by *Human Organization*, an applied anthropology professional journal, for publication in the winter issue. *Human Ecology Review* has accepted their article "Tillage Practices, the Language of Blame, and Responsibility for Water Quality Impacts in Row Crop Agriculture" for publication later this year. The third article, "Stewards and Businessmen? 'Existential Recognition' Among Farmers in an Age of Environmental Uncertainty," has been reviewed for *Culture, Agriculture, Food and Environment* and we are in the process of reworking it for publication. We are confident that it, too, will be published soon. The articles will be linked on the ILF website after they are published. We will also make copies available to members of the ILF Steering Committee. Also during this quarter, Comito finished her semester teaching Environmental Sociology for the ISU Sociology department. Comito continues to supervise Water Rocks! and the community assessment project and has begun work coordinating listening sessions for the wetlands project with Drs. Helmers and Crumpton.

### **JULY-SEPTEMBER 2012**

Comito conducted four listening sessions for wetlands project with Drs. Helmers and Crumpton. The listening sessions have been transcribed for analysis later this fall. We completed the Watershed-based Community Assessment Toolkit and distributed copies of it at the Conservation Districts of Iowa's annual conference. Comito also helped supervise the development of the Conservation Station 3, which had its debut at the CDI conference in early September. The third quarter is always the busiest when it comes to evaluation work. All ILF lead field days that were completed in this quarter have been evaluated. A report on these activities will be available later in the year. Comito continues to supervise Water Rocks! and the community assessment project.

### **OCTOBER-DECEMBER 2012**

We completed survey data collection for the Black Hawk Lake watershed project and began work on a qualitative survey. All the data has been entered into a statistical analysis program and we are beginning to analyze the findings. In addition, we began analysis on the four wetlands listening sessions conducted earlier in the year. Comito is leading the team in creating outreach and educational materials on wetlands in Iowa.

## **Agronomic**

### **JANUARY-MARCH 2012**

In January, we added Dean Tiefenthaler, in Black Hawk Lake Watershed, as a farmer partner demonstrating strip-tillage. We are consulting with ISU Extension Field Agronomists, ISU FARM personnel and local watershed improvement groups to identify potential 2012 on-farm demonstrations. Madison County ILF farmer partner Tim Palmer serves as our primary contact with two other Madison County cow-calf farmers. He has recommended them as excellent candidates to demonstrate pasture improvement and rotational grazing practices.

There is also potential for ILF staff to work with ISU Extension Soil Fertility Specialist John Sawyer, his assistant scientist Dan Barker, FS Growmark Ag business partner, and approximately 8-10 northeast Iowa farmer partners on an in-season corn nitrogen (N) fertilizer sensing and application demonstration project. In 2011 Barker and the FS Growmark AgVantage team, centered in Hazleton, conducted on-farm side-by-side trials comparing corn leaf greenness and grain yields from field-length, replicated corn N fertilizer treatment strips. Treatments included a “base” preplant corn N fertilizer rate, the base N rate plus a single in-season rate of supplemental N broadcast-applied as stabilized urea fertilizer, and the base N rate plus a variable-rate of in-season supplemental N broadcast-applied as stabilized urea fertilizer. The variable-rate application was based upon corn leaf greenness assessed by a Greenseeker® sensor mounted on the N fertilizer applicator. FS Growmark’s objective is to demonstrate timeliness and N fertilizer effectiveness of a planned in-season broadcast application of stabilized urea fertilizer and to encourage farmers to limit fall anhydrous ammonia fertilizer applications.

The work will continue in 2012, with ILF serving as an outreach and education partner, scheduling and coordinating a workshop or field day to help disseminate project findings and adding the N fertilizer farmers as new ILF farmer partners.

#### **APRIL-JUNE 2012**

Women, Food, and Agriculture Network Executive Director Leigh Adcock helped ILF connect with Greene County landowner Christina Henning, who was added as a new ILF farmer partner in May. Henning has installed a number of soil-conserving structures on her land.

In 2012 ILF is serving as an outreach and education partner with ISU Extension Soil Fertility Specialist John Sawyer, his assistant scientist Dan Barker, and the AgVantage FS Growmark team centered in Bremer and Buchanan counties for on-farm, side-by-side trials comparing corn leaf greenness and grain yields from field-length, replicated corn N fertilizer treatment strips. Fourteen northeast Iowa farmers are hosting the on-farm demonstrations in 2012 and were added as new ILF farmer partners during the quarter:

Allen Alber, Independence  
Gary Blake, Hazleton  
Wayne Brownell, Oelwein  
Burco Farms, Independence  
Dan Forsyth, Oelwein  
Mark Happel, Sumner  
Mike Kirchoff, Woolstock

Darwin Peterson, Oelwein  
Richard Rohrig, Aurora  
Jake Steere, Tripoli  
Chad Vandaele, Fairbank  
Rick Vandaele, Fairbank  
Bronson Wierck, Fairbank  
Gary Wilson, Fairbank

Video producer Jon Anderson and Lundvall continue working on editing and videotaping work for the ILF strip-tillage how-to video—the first draft was completed in early May.

ISU Extension Field Agronomist Mark Licht, central Iowa ISU FARM Specialist Zach Koopman, ISU Ag Engineer Mark Hanna, and ILF student intern Brett McArtor monitored corn plant emergence and early corn growth at the Ames-area ISU Johnson Farm replicated no-till, strip-till, and full-width tillage system demonstration.

### **JULY-SEPTEMBER 2012**

ILF hosted several field days, tours and workshops within this third quarter covering a variety of topics. Two cover crop workshops and a field day were held in Lester and Rock Valley on August 3. ISU Extension and Outreach field agronomist Joel DeJong served as workshop facilitator. A joint PFI field day was held near Riceville on August 21 on the John Schwarck farm with a good crowd in attendance. A pasture improvement and rotational grazing field day was held near Leon on July 11 on the Todd Coffelt farm. Also a watershed celebration event was held at Badger Creek Lake on July 14. Two watershed field days were held: The Cedar River Coalition field day was held on the Richard Sloan farm on Aug. 24 and focused on cover crops. The Competine Creek Watershed field day near Martinsburg, held on Sept. 7 on the Tim Davis farm discussed no-till and cover crops. Two CREP wetland tours were conducted this quarter in Story and Dickinson Counties on July 10 and 12, respectively. Plans are currently being made for additional cover crop field days in October and November. In addition, we continuing are work with Drs. Sawyer and Barker on the AgSystems project looking at nutriment management on 15 farmer plots in northeast Iowa.

### **OCTOBER-DECEMBER 2012**

This quarter ILF began planning for at least six new on-farm demonstrations to begin in 2013. Andrews began recruiting cooperators for demonstrations and identified the following cooperators: Nathan Anderson (Cherokee Co.), Craig Fleishman (Dallas Co.), Sam Spellman (Dallas Co.), Bob Lynch (Humbolt Co.), Mark Thompson (Humbolt Co.), Tim Palmer (Madison Co.), and Seth Watkins (Page Co.) as having interest in taking part in a new on-farm demonstration to feature the performance of select conservation practices as related to the Nitrogen Science Assessment and Iowa's Nutrient Reduction Strategy. Helmers and Andrews met with field agronomist Mark Licht and ISU Extension watershed specialist Jamie Benning to brainstorm and share ideas for potential data collection. Demonstrations will highlight select cover crops after seed corn, cover crops and grazing, on-farm STRIPs, strip-tillage and nutrient management, and extended crop rotations utilizing small grain and winter cover crops. Data collected may include but not limited to; above ground biomass, soil nitrate measurement, stand counts, residue measurement and crop grain yield. Andrews will continue to re-engage existing ILF farmer partners who may have interest in on-farm demonstrations while actively recruiting new ILF farmer partners.

## **Water Quality**

### **JANUARY-MARCH 2012**

Research and development continues on the whole farm water quality-modeling project. Successful model runs have been performed for the Helmers farm from each of the time periods of interest (1930's, 1950's, 1970's and present day). Additional model runs will be performed to assess the impact of implementing further conservation practices such as no-till and cover crops on sediment delivery and water discharge from the watershed. Results are being implemented in the development of a "whole farm approach" themed module to be housed in the Conservation Station. A preliminary draft of content has been developed and approved for the Helmers farm. Initial stages of gathering management and land use data have also begun for the Staudt farm. Landowner approval has been obtained for the Doug Nolte farm in Muscatine County and Andrews will be conducting an interview with him as spring 2012 field operations come to a close.

### **APRIL-JUNE 2012**

Successful model runs for the initial Helmers farm were completed last quarter including pre-plow (bluestem prairie), 1930's, 1950's, 1970's, and present day land use scenarios. This quarter, we completed model runs for theoretical strip-till and no-till scenarios to assess the impact of implementing such conservation practices versus the present day management in the watershed. Also last quarter, a whole-farm themed module preliminary draft was created for the Conservation Station with the information and results obtained from the initial model runs.

Due to the resources and staff time necessary for generating such a module, as well as the number of other current ILF projects underway, work on creating the whole-farm approach module has been postponed. It is unclear if a module is the best method of portraying results. First, we will generate a new four-page "It Begins With You" publication based on the whole-farm approach before reassessing the possibility of a Conservation Station module. A preliminary outline has been generated for this publication and is now in the review process.

Also this quarter, the necessary data was prepared and modeling began on the Staudt farm. Successful model runs have been completed for pre-plow and present day land use scenarios. Andrews also took five soil cores (each 4 ft. deep) from hill slope transects at both the Helmers and Staudt farms with a hydraulic soil sampling probe. The cores are presently being dried at the ISU Ag Engineering Farm.

### **JULY-SEPTEMBER 2012**

A new "It Begins With You" piece was written using modeling data from the Helmers farm in northwest Iowa. The publication was completed in time for the Conservation Districts of Iowa conference and was well received by SWCD commissioners and other conference participants. Andrews will be taking soil cores at the Doug Nolte farm in fall as harvest comes to a close. Andrews is planning to interview Nolte to gather information on past and present land management for further modeling at this site. Modeling work on the Staudt and Nolte farms will resume during winter 2012/13.

## **OCTOBER-DECEMBER 2012**

Andrews and Helmers coordinated ILF tracks to take place at the PFI conference on January 10-12, 2013. Andrews recruited 10 speakers for the conference tracks including three ILF farmer partners. Tom Kaspar and cover crop working group participant Rob Stout will be presenting on cover crops at the conference. Additional tracks will be focused on nutrient reduction strategies, whole farm conservation and strip-tillage.

## **Economics**

### **JANUARY-MARCH 2012**

Since the individual experiment analysis has been eliminated, the work in the economics component has shifted. This quarter we completed a publication “An Overview of Conservation Practices for Landlords.” The focus of this report is to provide a clear, easy to read description of conservation practices that landlords could have put in place on their land. Too often we all know the jargon and forget there are many people who aren’t familiar with the terms. This publication hopes to fill that void. We will be using the publication in conjunction with the standard lease form that shows landlords how to get conservation practices implements. We are in the initial stages for the farmland ownership survey. Funding for the survey was obtained from several different sources. The questionnaire is being developed and will be administered in the fall of the year. One change to the farmland ownership survey this time is the addition of questions regarding owners placing their land in trusts. The use of trusts has increased dramatically over the past several years. This additional study, funded by the Leopold Center, is designed to examine the impact of the change in land ownership patterns on the use of conservation practices.

### **APRIL-JUNE 2012**

Dr. Duffy had two ISU undergraduates working with him until they graduated in May. Rachel Owen worked to gather data on soil types and susceptibility to erosion, which is part of updating the cost of erosion to the landowner. Lindsay Calvert worked on compiling the conservation practices definition and fact sheets for absentee landowners. These are completed. The fact sheet was printed by the Leopold Center and is available by hard copy and online and are linked on the ILF website.

## **AFFILIATE AND LEVERAGED PROJECTS**

### **ILF/PFI Cover Crop Working Group**

#### **JANUARY-MARCH 2012**

On-farm demonstration work continues, with 10 farmer partners in Butler, Greene, Guthrie, Ida, Shelby, Tama, Taylor, Washington (two farmer partners) and Webster counties. In September, winter rye (*Secale cereale*) was aerial-seeded into standing corn and soybean crops at

our Ida, Shelby, Washington and Webster County demonstration sites. Winter rye was drilled following corn or soybean harvest at the Butler, Greene, Guthrie, Tama, and Taylor county sites. In 2011, corn grain yield was not statistically different when grown following a winter-hardy cereal rye cover crop or no cover crop at any of five on-farm locations in Greene, Ida, Shelby, Washington and Webster counties. Corn grain yields were, in fact, a bit higher following winter rye at three of five demonstration sites. A preceding winter rye cover crop made no difference in 2011 soybean yield at three of five demonstration sites. Soybean yield was greatly reduced following winter rye at the Shelby County site, possibly due to a combination of wet spring and very dry summer growing conditions. Encouragingly, the 2011 soybean yield in the Tama County site increased by 8 bu/acre following the winter rye cover crop. Tama County farmer partner Mark Pokorny reported good suppression of lambsquarter and waterhemp by the winter rye cover crop in his soybean demonstration site planted to a conventional (non-glyphosate resistant) soybean variety.

### **APRIL-JUNE 2012**

The cover crop how-to DVD continues to be distributed at all ILF-sponsored field days. Field day participants are also offered free copies of the Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education (SARE)-published book “Managing Cover Crops Profitably.”

In addition to the March workshops, cover crop management workshops were held with Iowa NRCS field staff and the public at ISU Research and Demonstration Farms near Nashua (April 3), Crawfordsville (April 4) and Lewis (April 5). Unusually mild early spring weather conditions resulted in plenty of winter rye regrowth and comfortable conditions for the workshops.

Tom Kaspar and ILF farmer partner Barry Kusel shared their experiences with cover crops at the Manning-area field day hosted by Kusel on June 20. Discussion among farmers and Mitchell County NRCS personnel at our June 21 field day near Osage will likely result in scheduling of a local cover crop management meeting in late August.

On-farm demonstration continues with 10 farmer partners across the state. In June, the project was granted continued funding through June 2013, so we will re-establish replicated, side-by-side strips with and without winter-hardy cereal rye cover crops at 10 existing on-farm demonstration sites in fall 2012.

### **JULY-SEPTEMBER 2012**

This quarter Iowa Learning Farms participated in two concurrent cover crop workshops held in Rock Rapids and Rock Valley, in addition to one southern Iowa cover crop field day held at the Paul Ackley farm near Bedford. All 10 of the project site hosts moved ahead with plans to continue their demonstrations via late summer-fall seeding of winter rye cover crop. Cooperators Buman, Stout, Shaeffer, Sindt, and Nelson plan to aerial seed their sites pre-harvest in early September, as in previous years. All other demonstration site hosts received winter rye seed so they could drill winter rye post-harvest. We purchased three infiltrometers to do water infiltration measurements on all the sites in the upcoming year.

## **OCTOBER-DECEMBER 2012**

Four field days were held in October with PFI handling the promotion and ILF providing food for the events. A workshop was held in December in Bloomfield for those who received EQIP dollars, as well as the public, to add cover crops to their rotations. On-farm demonstration work continues with 10 farmer-partners in Butler, Greene, Guthrie, Ida, Shelby, Tama, Taylor, Washington (two farmer-partners) and Webster counties. Seeding began in early September and continued through October. Post-harvest drilling of seed took place at the Butler, Greene, Guthrie, Tama and Taylor county locations and pre-harvest aerial seeding took place at the Ida, Shelby, Washington and Webster county locations. Seven out of 10 cooperators reported their cash crop yields in November 2012. This quarter we also began planning for spring infiltration and soil quality sampling. Cornell sprinkler infiltrometers were purchased which will be used to conduct infiltration measurements at cooperator sites as they hit the 5-year mark.

## **Prairies, Wetlands and Croplands Project**

### **JULY-SEPTEMBER 2012**

Extensive work has gone into development of the Prairies, Wetlands and Croplands educational module this quarter, including the development and design of classroom posters, a 16-page booklet of enhanced learning activities, an Iowa landscape feltboard, and a highly engaging in-class presentation. In addition, through funds from Water Rocks! project as well as this one, we designed and produced an original biodiversity card game for 2-5 players called Creature Cache. Students compete to collect creatures in each of their three ecosystems (prairies, wetlands and croplands), but also face droughts, floods, and stealing/swapping with other players! In partnership with Harold & Kay Whipple, ILF staff visited four Warren Co. schools' 4<sup>th</sup> grade classrooms (and one Ames homeschool group) in March. Student and teacher reception has been highly enthusiastic!

### **APRIL-JUNE 2012**

Two additional school visits were completed this quarter, fulfilling the required number of classroom visits for this affiliate project. Student and teacher reception continues to be highly enthusiastic. All project tasks have been completed, leaving us with a fun and engaging module (including classroom posters, enhanced learning activities, feltboard, Creature Cache biodiversity game, two songs, and two videos) that we will continue to use with school visits and outdoor classroom outreach in the future.

## **Water Rocks!**

### **JANUARY-MARCH 2012**

Planning and preparation are underway for Phase I of Water Rocks!. We met with the DNR in early March to discuss approaches to the project. We have begun work recording several songs, developing music videos and creating in-class hands-on activities that will all be Water



Rocks! educational products. We developed a logo during the period and used funds to help develop Creature Cache, a card game to help young people learn about biodiversity and interconnectedness of prairies, wetlands and croplands. Comito and Staudt also met with Entrepreneurial Technologies of West Des Moines to discuss development of the Water Rocks! Website and interactive watershed game.

### **APRIL-JUNE 2012**

Campaign branding has been a key focus this quarter. A full color brochure has been designed for Water Rocks! to provide an overview of the campaign. It highlights the many different approaches this campaign uses including multimedia web games, social media, music videos, public service announcements, career exploration as well as a Water Rocks! website. A corresponding poster has also been designed for immediate promotional outreach. Website development work has progressed nicely. We have a contract in place with Entrepreneurial Technologies of West Des Moines to complete website development and creation of Phase I of our watershed computer game, with a targeted September launch date. Additional project work this quarter includes development of multiple storyboards for public service announcements/video ads, music composition, filming Conservation Pack minute footage, and ongoing development of two educational modules (wetlands and stormwater).

### **JULY-SEPTEMBER 2012**

It's been a highly productive quarter for the Water Rocks! team! Four video ads have been filmed, representing multiple series (What's In Your Water, Iowa Treasures, and I Am An Iowan) in the Water Rocks! campaign. We have collaborated with videographers Jon Anderson and Andrew Bentler on story lines, plots, and script for several additional video PSAs. The Conservation Dogs have been out and about conducting interviews with water quality folks across the state; eight interviews were completed and filmed this quarter.

Website development has made great progress, with the [www.waterrocks.org](http://www.waterrocks.org) design and layout nearly finalized and watershed development game making substantial strides. We are targeting the website and game going live in October. Additional activities this quarter include refinement of Water Rocks! publicity/print materials, music composition, development and compilation of enhanced learning activities, and ongoing development of two new educational modules (wetlands and storm water).

### **OCTOBER-DECEMBER 2012**

The Water Rocks! team has continued to make great strides this quarter. Most notably, the Water Rocks! website ([www.waterrocks.org](http://www.waterrocks.org)) went live the first week of November. The website features headline stories with a built-in blog, songs, videos, "Meet the Experts" interviews, enhanced learning activities, information about the campaign, and Rock Your Watershed! interactive watershed game. The Rock Your Watershed! game challenges students to select land management practices for ten parcels of land in a shared watershed, while balancing profit (from agricultural crop production) and water quality parameters (sediment, nitrogen, and phosphorus).

Water Rocks! musicians spent three days in the studio this quarter recording new songs for the Water Rocks! music videos as well as background music for the video PSAs. Multiple videos are in progress for each of our three PSA series: What's In Your Water?, Iowa

Treasures, and I Am An Iowan. We hope to build up a number of videos so, starting in the spring we can release a new video each month. Jackie Comito met with new contractor Alyssa Lundgren in December; she will assist in editing and production of the “Adventures of the Conservation Pack” series.

Our new wetlands educational module is on target to launch in the spring. Several interactive activities for this module are in development, including “Habitat Hopscotch” and “Wetlands BINGO,” in addition to LCD digital photo microscopes for older students.

We are pleased that Water Rocks! is continuing to draw attention through a variety of means beyond traditional classroom outreach: Iowa Academy of Science – Iowa Science Teaching Section Fall Conference in October, DuPont Pioneer Iowa Women of Innovation Awards in November, year-end Iowa State University Foundation fundraising appeal, and email to teacher contact list. We have submitted multiple grant proposals in hopes of securing funding for Phase II of Water Rocks!.

## **Community Assessment Project**

### **JANUARY-MARCH 2012**

Project progress from Year 1 was discussed and early drafts of each section of the community assessment toolbox were completed. Each of the three target watersheds was contacted to discuss the possibility of scheduling a Conservation Station visit or other outreach event locally. Plans are underway for a joint CREP wetland tour/community BBQ/Conservation Station visit in the Badger Creek Lake watershed this summer. The Silver Creek Watershed team has also responded positively and we hope to schedule a joint field day/Conservation Station visit there. In addition to the three original watersheds, we are doing community assessments of **Hickory Grove Lake Watershed and beginning a project with Black Hawk lake watershed coalition**. At Hickory Grove Lake, Aaron Andrews has been meeting individually with about 65 percent of “operators” of the land within the watershed to see what they are doing on their land in order to incorporate in a model. He is also working on educational signage that will be installed within the park. Signage will include information on the project and what is currently being done to improve the watershed, what is a watershed, etc. In addition, he continues to collect data concerning lake land usage. We attended a meeting with the Black Hawk Lake Watershed Coalition in January. The purpose of the meeting was to launch the watershed project. Comito and team will be conducting a community assessment of the Black Hawk Lake and assist coalition in gaining citizens and farmer’s cooperation in improving the watershed.

### **APRIL-JUNE 2012**

Black Hawk Lake - On June 11, 993 surveys were mailed out to residents, landowners and operators within the Black Hawk Lake watershed. Our goal is to have 40% of the surveys returned. Within the first three weeks we are already approaching a 30% return rate. A postcard with a

friendly reminder and thank you was sent out on June 25 with a second round of surveys to be sent out July 16. Stevenson and two student interns (Carpio and Kelly) visited the Black Hawk Lake Watershed on June 26 and June 27 to conduct social mapping, testing out this component of the community assessment toolbox. Two additional Black Hawk Lake watershed logos were created for potential use. Badger Creek Lake Watershed - Plans are progressing for a July 14 CREP wetland tour/community picnic in Badger Creek Lake watershed. The Conservation Station will be on site, and we are in the process of designing a custom module to display in the learning lab at this event to illustrate the opportunities and challenges associated with water quality, soil erosion, etc. at Badger Creek Lake watershed. Silver Creek – The Conservation Station visited Prairie’s Edge Nature Center near Cresco to educate area 3<sup>rd</sup> grade students on various water and watershed-related issues as part of their Arbor Day Outdoor Classroom.

## **JULY-SEPTEMBER 2012**

The Watershed-based Community Assessment Toolkit (CAT) was completed in late August, just in time for the Conservation Districts of Iowa conference. Several copies of the publication were handed out at the conference. The rest will be mailed to each SWCD office that didn’t receive a copy at the conference. The PDF files are on the website as well as the worksheets and surveys in Word for downloading, too. Comito gave a presentation at CDI Annual Conference about the CAT, its background and what it should be used for.

**Badger Creek Lake Watershed:** A watershed field day/CREP wetland tour/community picnic was held on Saturday, July 14. The evening event was a great success, with 54 people in attendance. Inside the Conservation Station’s learning lab, we created a unique module specific to Badger Creek Lake (with historical photographs as well as challenges/opportunities associated with the lake) – field day attendees LOVED it.

**Black Hawk Lake Watershed:** Two additional mailings have been sent to the property owners and operators within the Black Hawk Lake Watershed. The second mailing was sent out in the middle of July with a response rate of over 17 percent. A third mailing was sent in the middle of August with a response rate of over 13 percent. Our initial goal of 40 percent has been far surpassed. To date, 53 percent of the owners and operators within the watershed have responded to the survey.

Social mapping has been completed and a Google map document was created showing the “hot spots” within the communities of Lake View, Breda and Carnarvon. Although Carroll is not within the Black Hawk Lake Watershed, “hot spots” were also identified and entered in the Google map due to the large amount of landowners who reside in Carroll.

The Conservation Station visited Black Hawk Lake Watershed on July 23 as RAGBRAI made a stop in Lake View. We created a unique Black Hawk Lake module to display inside the Conservation Station’s learning lab, educating RAGBRAI participants and local residents on the challenges and opportunities at Black Hawk as well as providing visitors with free popcorn!

**Hickory Grove Lake Watershed:** Andrews processed lake user survey data collected by ILF interns in late July and provided this information to Comito, in addition to anonymous data and notes from individual one-on-one meetings with landowners and

operators. The Hickory Grove Lake Watershed Citizen Awareness Campaign proposal was drafted as a part of the ILF Community Assessment Project funded through IDNR. Andrews' work on the Hickory Grove Lake Watershed Management Plan is ongoing and components of the citizen awareness campaign will be utilized in public outreach efforts described in the plan. New signage about the project efforts is being finalized and will be printed and installed at Hickory Grove Park in existing signage structures.

## **OCTOBER-DECEMBER 2012**

The Watershed-based Community Assessment Toolkit (CAT) was completed in late August and were mailed to the SWCD offices that didn't attend CDI conference in early October. CAT is available on the ILF website and can be easily be downloaded.

**Black Hawk Lake Watershed:** To date, 55 percent of the owners and operators within the watershed have responded to the survey and all the data was entered into SPSS this quarter. The watershed restoration team has supplied us with the names of 13 farmers who we would like interview in more depth to have a greater understanding of farmer attitudes and behaviors in the watershed. The interviews will be conducted in 2013. A first draft of the BHL community assessment (without survey findings) was completed during this quarter.

**Hickory Grove Lake Watershed:** Andrews continued to work on drafting the Hickory Grove Lake Watershed Management Plan. Comito, Brown, Stevenson, Staudt and Andrews finalized the Hickory Grove Lake Watershed Citizen Awareness Campaign as a part of the ILF Community Assessment Project funded through IDNR. Select components of the citizen awareness campaign were utilized in developing the HGL public outreach efforts described in the watershed management plan. A watershed advisory group meeting was held with key project stakeholders on November 16 to review the watershed management plan draft. Comito presented at the meeting as a featured guest highlighting the major components of the awareness campaign and provided insight as to directing future public outreach efforts. The public outreach signage was printed and delivered to Hickory Grove Park staff in late November. The new signage was installed at the park by the end of November.

## **Iowa Water Center**

### **JANUARY-MARCH 2012**

Most of this quarter was spent finalizing and hosting the annual Iowa Water Conference, held March 6-7. Once again, the turnout was high and attendees took away a lot of information.

### **APRIL-JUNE 2012**

Rick Cruse and the Iowa Water Center (IWC) have a new IWC Program Coordinator, Melissa Miller, who started work June 15. Miller holds a B.S. degree in kinesiology and has a consulting firm specializing in communication, strategic planning, design and training. Prior to joining the Iowa Water Center she worked with the Story County Medical Center managing day-to-day foundation operations and their grants program while conducting extensive internal and external communications. Melissa and her husband operate a cash-grain farm near Hubbard.

Jordon Foss is an undergraduate student who started work as an hourly assistant to Rick Cruse on June 1. He is president of the Iowa State University Soil and Water Conservation Club. In June, Jordon has been assisting Rick with the following:

- Evaluating cover crop effects on water infiltration
- Distributing the joint CAST/Iowa Water Center report “Land Management Impacts on Stream Water Quality in Agricultural Watersheds” to other water resources research institutes
- Distributing “Getting Into Soil and Water” to science teachers in Iowa high schools
- Developing an expert list for the new Iowa Water Center website
- Populating the new Iowa Water Center website
- Formatting/reviewing an invited book chapter “Soil Erosion and Soil Sustainability.”

## **JULY-SEPTEMBER 2012**

During this quarter we have been developing a cost (production loss) estimate associated with failure to install waterways and will have this completed and ready for the fall quarter. Cruse and staff displayed the groundwater flow model at the Farm Progress Show and at the State Fair. We mentioned ILF at the Farm Progress Show, specifically to Tom Vilsack, when he asked how we use the model to educate citizens.

## **Accelerating Strip-tillage Adoption Project**

### **JANUARY-MARCH 2012**

On February 8, The Bistro Restaurant in Story City was site of a lunch and afternoon discussion with ILF farmer partners currently using strip-tillage management. Participants included Dean Lemke and Matt Lechtenberg of IDALS, ISU Extension Field Agronomist Mark Licht, ILF representatives Mark Hanna and John Lundvall and ILF farmer partners Tom and Jim Wagner, Jon Gisleson, Fred Abels, Mike Hermanson, Gary Nelson and Webster County farmer Mark Peterson. KEY Co-op was represented by agronomist Brandon Hanson, administrator Terry Thompson and retired CEO Jim Penney. KEY Co-op has offered custom strip-tillage services to Story City and Roland-area farmers for two years and their representatives were invited to share their perspectives about custom strip-tillage and opinions about other regional co-ops offering similar custom strip-tillage services.

Independent videographer Jon Anderson and Lundvall are continuing work on the ILF strip-tillage how-to video. Video interviews were conducted in late February with strip-tillage farmers Arlo Van Diest, Dave Nelson and Gary Nelson.

ISU Extension Field Agronomist Mark Licht, central Iowa ISU FARM Specialist Zach Koopman, and staff of the Ames-area ISU Ag Engineering Farm completed strip-tillage operations at the Ames-area ISU Johnson Farm to repeat our 2011 replicated no-till, strip-till, and full-width tillage system demonstration.

## **OCTOBER-DECEMBER 2012**

During this quarter, the Strip-till Crop Management how-to video was completed and distributed to Iowa State University Extension and Outreach county offices, SWCD/NRCS offices and to those who requested the DVD after seeing an article about the video in *Wallaces Farmer* and the Fall ILF newsletter. Copies have been given out at the annual Iowa Science Teaching conference, too. Most of these went to teachers to give to their school's ag educator or FFA adviser.

## **Water Quality Initiatives for Small Iowa Beef and Dairy Open Feedlot Operations**

### **JANUARY-MARCH 2012**

This project encourages best-management practices to reduce environmental impacts caused by runoff from small open beef and dairy feedlots. During this quarter, project partner ISU Extension Ag Engineer Shawn Shouse completed work on extension publication PM-3018, "Small Open Beef Feedlots in Iowa - A Producer Guide." The publication is being distributed statewide. Shouse and his ISU Extension Ag Engineer colleagues are actively seeking demonstration sites for feedlot management and water quality education and outreach field days in 2012. The goal of project demonstrations and field days is for farmers to implement the best-management practices outlined in PM-3018 and discussed at field days. Subsequent ILF quarterly reports will include evaluation summaries of as-yet unscheduled small feedlot project field days and workshops.

### **APRIL-JUNE 2012**

This project encourages best-management practices to reduce environmental impacts caused by runoff from small open beef and dairy feedlots. In this quarter, project partners ISU Extension Ag Engineer Shawn Shouse and Angie Rieck-Hinz continued their search for demonstration sites for feedlot management and water quality education and outreach field days. No formal meetings were held between ILF staff and other project partners during the reporting period, though we have stayed in contact about possible 2012 field days. The project demonstrations and field days goal is for farmers to implement the best-management practices outlined in ISU Extension Publication PM-3018.

## **Nitrogen Retention and Greenhouse Gas Fluxes of Constructed Wetlands in Agricultural Watersheds within the Upper Mississippi River Basin**

### **JULY-SEPTEMBER 2012**

We conducted four listening sessions in the Des Moines Lobe area in counties that have CREP wetlands. These listening sessions were recorded so that they can be analyzed. We are currently working on the creation of outreach materials to educate the public on the benefits of wetlands. Outreach will include revamping the CS module on wetlands.

### **OCTOBER-DECEMBER 2012**