

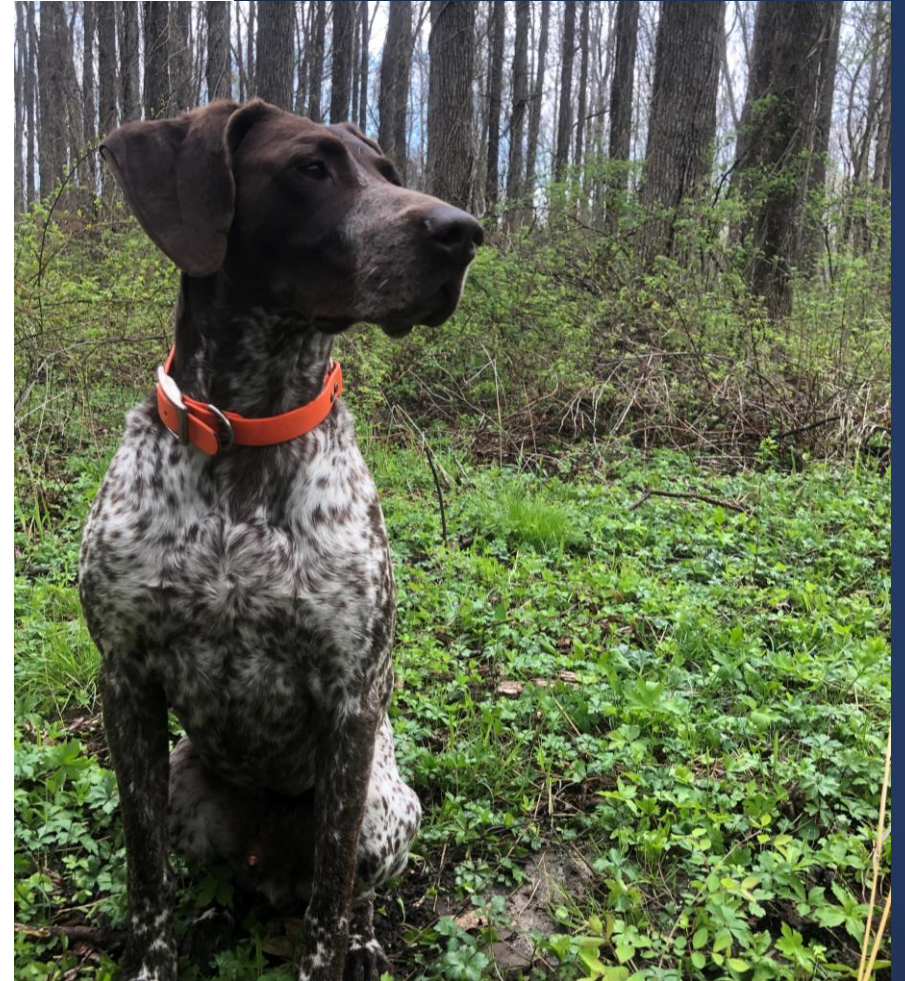


Precision Conservation Management (PCM) Program Overview

Shane Sinclair – Precision Conservation Specialist

Personal Background

- Hometown: Monticello, IL
- Hobbies: Hunting, fishing, hiking, dog training (“Gauge”)
- Education: B.S from Southern Illinois University, Carbondale
 - Forest Hydrology
- Summer/Seasonal Work:
 - Illinois Natural History Survey – Stream Technician (2015-2017)
- Hired on by PCM: July 20, 2018



What is “PCM”?

- PCM = Precision Conservation Management
 - Farmer service program aimed to educate farmers and landowners about conservation practice adoption and the subsequent economic implications
- What is Precise about it?
 - One-on-One advisor engagement with each farmer
 - Discuss what in-field practices the farmers use on each field
- Where does Conservation come in?
 - Identify the local nutrient management concerns
 - Plan for implementation of various Best Management Practices (BMPs)
 - Leverage key partnerships with Soil & Water Districts, NRCS, FSA, etc.
- What are you Managing?
 - Study and discuss the input cost variation for each “class” or style of operation with each farmer
 - Show how and where other farmers are spending and/or saving money by utilizing conservation on their farms

Program Background – Heavy Hitters

2015:

- Illinois Corn Growers Association (ICGA) to make a voluntary project that would help farmers address environmental concerns listed in the IL-NLRS
 - While still being able to promote and maintain long-term profitability
- ICGA was awarded a 5-Year, \$5.3M grant through the USDA's Regional Conservation Partnership Program (RCPP) to promote and apply conservation practices through NRCS guidelines
 - ICGA matched \$5.3M to support program growth
- Started the program in 13 counties in central IL and 10 in western Kentucky
 - Hired 4 Precision Conservation Specialists

2018:

- Added 3 more counties (Piatt, Macon, DeWitt) and 1 more Specialist
- Helped draft and was awarded a separate, watershed-specific RCPP for Otter Lake in Macoupin County
 - Promote/apply No-Till, Strip-Till, Cover Crops, Nutrient Management, Filter Strips, Grassed Waterways, WASCObS, etc.

2021:

- The 5-Year RCPP was renewed for another \$5.3M
- Illinois Soybean Association (ISA) partnered to create funding for 3 additional regions/Specialists
 - 30 Illinois counties, 10 Kentucky

2022:

- Over 375 farmers enrolled



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PCM Reserve Specialist & Advisor



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Frank Rademacher

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Chris Stewart

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PCM

PARTNERS!



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SUSTAINABLE FOOD LAB



I ILLINOIS



NFWF



Heartland Science and Technology Group

Science and Technology Group



United States Department of Agriculture Natural Resources Conservation Service



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Program Offerings

Each farmer gets a custom-made Resource Analysis Assessment Plan (RAAP)

- Compare/contrast various farming practices
- Identify the most cost-effective conservation-based strategies
- Farmer ***gets paid*** \$500 in year 1, \$250 in year 2 just for participating

Turn ideas into conservation

- Serve as Technical Assistance
 - Use notes taken from the farmer over the last year to create a plan, find local cost-share dollars, help enroll into state/federal programs, monitor progress in-field

Public Outreach and Education

- Create peer networks: 5-Year Transition Program (5YT)

5-Year Transition Program (5YT)

- Research based, sub-project of PCM that helps farmers with the challenges of trying something new
- 40 acres of “Treatment”, 40 acres of “Control”
 - Treatment: No-Till/Cover Crops
 - Control: Conventional “as you were” system
- Periodic samples are taken in the field throughout the year to highlight improvements of various soil health metrics
 - Soil structure, water holding capacity, in-season crop health, etc.
- Pool local knowledge of the farmers in the program
 - Create a peer network





Top Left: Strip-Tilled Soybeans

Top Left-Center: Soybeans planted outside of cover crop

Tip Right-Center: Soybeans plated within cover crop zone

Top Right: 5YT Transition area of "Control" and "Treatment"

Bottom Left: Field Staff surveying and collecting samples

Bottom Right: Fall Strip-Tillage into multi-species cover crop

PCM PRESENTS: "COFFEE TALKS"



PCM, Otter Lake Water Commission, and SIU-Edwardsville are hosting six "coffeetalks" in your area before the end of the year. These will be informal events - no planned speakers, no PowerPoints... just folks meeting up to drink (free!) coffee and discuss farming, local conservation efforts and, maybe, learn about how we can prevent regulation on row-crop agriculture.

All "Coffee Talks" will be from 8-9:30am at the designated location:

- Tuesday November 30: Otter Lake Water Commission (6475 W. Montgomery Rd., Virden)
- Thursday December 2: Ron's Red Bird Café (112 W. Center St., Girard)
- Tuesday December 7: Otter Lake Water Commission (6475 W. Montgomery Rd., Virden)
- Thursday December 9: Carlinville Plaza Café (170 Carlinville Plaza, Carlinville)
- Tuesday December 14: Otter Lake Water Commission (6475 W. Montgomery Rd., Virden)
- Thursday December 16: Ron's Red Bird Café (112 W. Center St., Girard)

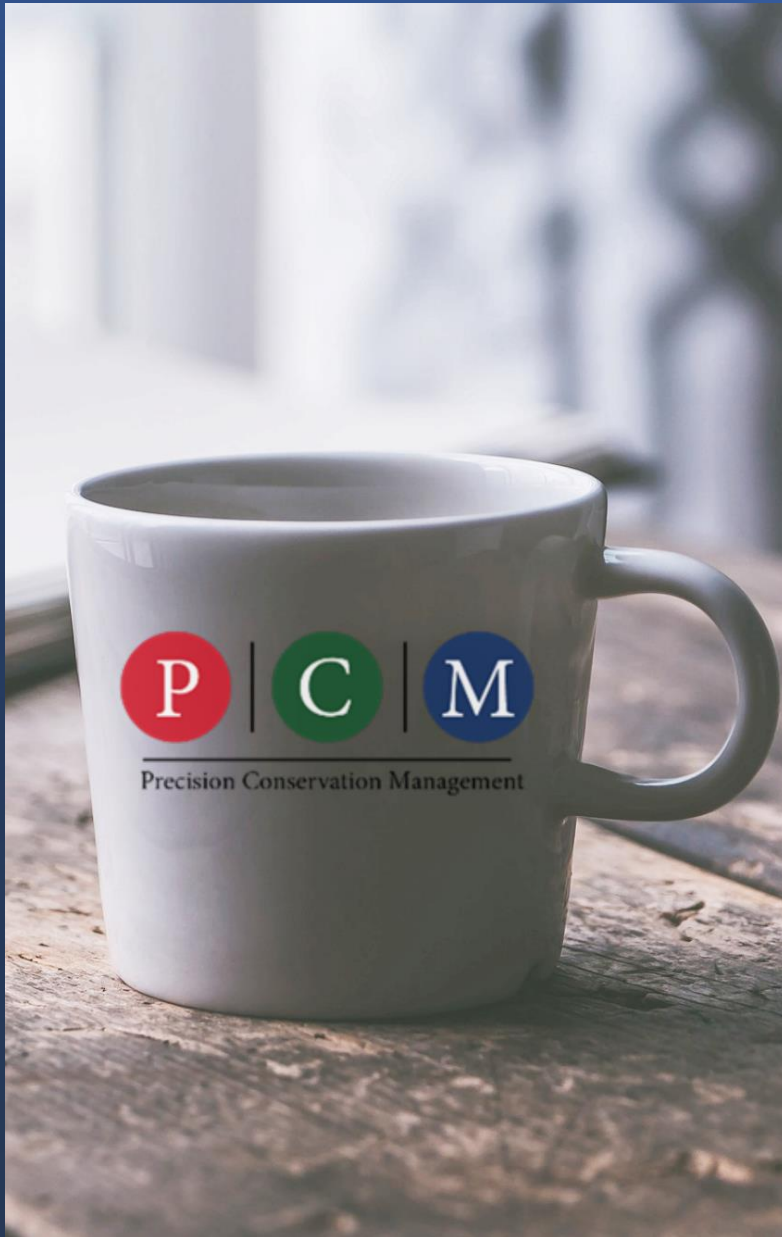
Contact Shane Sinclair at: (309) 445-5017

or ssinclair@precisionconservation.org

OR

Visit the Facebook Page:

"217 Lakes and Recreation"





Wrap-up

- PCM works to identify what conservation practices are working around your farm and which ones aren't
 - Both agronomically and economically
- Conservation Specialists guide you to and help you through various cost-share opportunities to help alleviate the cost of conservation adoption
- Farmers have added opportunities to stay engaged and have research done on their own farm
- And get paid to do it!

THANK YOU

