

AGENDA
STATE SOIL CONSERVATION BOARD MEETING
April 21, 2020
Conference call

- I. 9:30 am.: Call to Order**
- II. Approve Minutes of January 2020**
- III. Clean Water Indiana**
 - a. Clean Water Indiana Grants Committee- Amy Burris
 - 1. SWCD led grant guidelines and application template
 - 2. Non-SWCD led grant guidelines and application template
 - b. Reporting requirements- Tara Wesseler-Henry
 - c. Clean Water Indiana Grants, 2nd round- Jordan Seger
- IV. State Soil Conservation Board Business**
 - a. Business Plan- Brad Dawson
- V. Soil and Water Conservation Districts**
 - a. Benton SWCD- Geneva Tyler
 - b. Clay SWCD- Nathan Stoelting
 - c. Crawford SWCD- Laura Fribley
 - d. Hamilton SWCD- Geneva Tyler
 - e. Harrison SWCD- Laura Fribley
 - f. Henry SWCD- Tara Wesseler-Henry
 - g. Jay SWCD- Jennifer Thum
 - h. Jefferson SWCD- Laura Fribley
 - i. Montgomery SWCD- Nathan Stoelting
 - j. Vermillion SWCD- Nathan Stoelting
 - k. Vigo SWCD- Nathan Stoelting
 - l. Wells SWCD- Jennifer Thum
- VI. ISDA Updates**
 - a. Water Quality and CREP- Julie Harrold
- IX. Public Comment**
- X. Next Meeting:**
2020 Meeting Dates

May 19, TBD	September 15, NRCS State Office
July 21, NRCS State Office	October 27, TBD
- XI. Adjourn**

*****PLEASE NOTE*****

This agenda is in DRAFT FORM. Open Door Law does not prohibit the public agency from changing or adding to its agenda during the meeting.



State Soil Conservation Board

March 17, 2020
Clean Water Indiana
Grants Committee



What's New in CWI 2020

SWCD-Led Competitive Grants

- Guidance
 - Due date is September 11th.
 - Removed restrictions on rain barrels.
 - Clarified that lead districts must meet deadlines as outlined in Indiana Code, and CWI grant reporting must be up to date.
 - Changed "*To verify that seed mixes are free of these species, a district can request the seed lab card from the distributor*" to **MUST request a seed lab card..**
- Application
 - Limited attachments to 3 pages versus 5 pages.
 - Applications will NOT be blind scored this year.
 - Removed Preventing Workplace Harassment Training and Success Stories from self-assessment.
 - Removed Annual Financial Report entered into Gateway from deadline requirement.
 - Removed Recommendation for Temporary or Vacant Appointment: Within 30 days of vacancy from deadline requirement.

Non-SWCD Led Competitive Grants

- Guidance
 - Maintains that this is a competitive opportunity.
 - All applicants who have NOT received CWI funds in the past must submit a Concept paper by July 16th to the State Soil Conservation Board meeting to be reviewed at the July 21st board meeting.
 - At the July meeting the SSCB will determine which proposals they would like to invite to submit a full application.
 - Application deadline is September 11th for a consistent timeline with SWCD-led grants
 - Applications will be scored and ranked alongside the SWCD-led proposals for funding consideration. The CWI grants committee will present their recommendations for both SWCD-led and Non-SWCD led projects at the October SSCB meeting.
 - Maintains that applications must be submitted by natural resource related conservation groups.
 - Project dates are now standardized to begin on January 1st.
 - Changed "*To verify that seed mixes are free of these species, a district can request the seed lab card from the distributor*" to **MUST request a seed lab card..**

- Application non-SWCD
 - Added that applicants must submit letter(s) of support from SWCD(s).

GMS (Grants Management Software)

GMS is the new web based grant management software the state will be using on all grants for submitting applications, reporting, communications, modifications, and invoicing. The 2021 Grant applications will be submitted via GMS. GMS will be available to districts and non-SWCDs to submit their application two weeks prior to the deadline. The application may a little different formatting than the current application, however, it will have all the same information. Also, the 2019 and 2020 active grants will be using GMS for reporting. Any questions or concerns about the GMS program can be sent to the DSSs or Leah Harmon.



Clean Water Indiana 2021 SWCD-Led Competitive Grants Guidance

Executive Summary: The Clean Water Indiana (CWI) Grant Program (IC 14-32-8-5) utilizes the Clean Water Indiana Fund to Support Indiana Soil and Water Conservation Districts (SWCDs) in efforts to improve water quality by reducing sediment and nutrients from nonpoint sources. The State Soil Conservation Board (SSCB) is accepting competitive proposals for targeted projects up to three years in length.

Application Process: The link to the online application is available on the Clean Water Indiana Page of the ISDA website. (<http://www.in.gov/isda/3441.htm>) Applications are completely online and can be updated in your browser. Applications will be submitted via a web portal. Districts should complete the online application and may attach zero (0) to three (3) additional 8.5x11 pages if desired. Attachments will be accepted in word document or pdf format and are limited to 3 pages total. For example a district could submit 1 document of no more than 3 pages or up to 3 single page documents. Attachments should provide material support and clarity for the application narrative for the proposal but will not be scored on their own.

Application Deadline: The application must be submitted by **September 11, 2020 at 4 pm EDT**. By submitting the application, the lead SWCD certifies that each partnering district has agreed to the terms outlined in the application.

Eligible Applicants: Applications can be submitted by any SWCD in the State of Indiana. However, only one application is permitted per project and must be submitted by the lead SWCD. SWCDs may be lead on only one application in the 2021 grant cycle. Lead districts must be up to date on all CWI reporting.

Ineligible Projects: The 2021 CWI grant program cannot be used to fund research equipment. Conservation practices and lab analysis of soil and water that are components of research projects are eligible. Projects relating to urban practices that will reduce sediment and nutrient are eligible. Cost-sharing is also not allowed on specific practices that an entity is required to install to comply with a state or local rule or ordinance. *Example: CWI funds cannot be used to meet MS4 requirements unless the proposed use of funds goes above and beyond the requirement outlined in the MS4 permit's Storm Water Quality Management Plan.*

Proposal Logistics: This grant opportunity is competitive. Proposals can be for any amount that would accomplish the project described. A lead district must be selected to serve as the grantee to receive and administer the grant. However grant funds can be shared between districts through cooperative agreements locally. The grant proposal must document how the

grant funds will address at least two of the State priority resource concerns referenced in the State Soil Conservation Board's (SSCB's) Business Plan adopted in 2020. Proposals that outline how CWI funds will leverage additional funding from other sources as well as engage other partners are strongly encouraged. CWI project proposals that will be in tandem with ongoing projects are encouraged. *Example: CWI funds might be used to add technical assistance to help implement sediment and nutrient reduction practices cost-shared through a LARE or 319 project.*

Project Dates: All 2021 Clean Water Indiana Grant projects shall take no longer than three full years to complete. Projects will start on January 1, 2021 and must be finished and all funds spent by December 31, 2023.

Project Description: The proposal must identify the current nonpoint source water quality concern(s) in the selected district(s). The proposal must also identify how addressing this resource concern pertains to both the SWCD business plan(s) and the SSCB business plan.

Partnerships: Each application must state clearly what each partner and participating district will be contributing to the proposed project (i.e. outreach, professional assistance, estimated funds, etc.) Partnering districts and organizations must be identified with a point of contact for the project, their contact information, and an explanation of any anticipated cash or in kind match from the partner.

Conservation Practices: Conservation practices and structural measures shall follow NRCS Field Office Technical Guide where applicable. New technologies not currently in the technical guide may be implemented if reviewed and concurred in by a technical representative of the Conservation Implementation Teams (CIT) or their designee. *Please note that pollinator plantings must be free of species that are noxious, invasive, and/or pigweed. To verify that seed mixes are free of these species, a district MUST request the seed lab card from the distributor. For more information, please contact your DSS.* For cost-share practices, CWI funds may be used to pay up to a maximum of 75% of the total conservation practice cost. At least 25% of the cost must be provided by the landowner/producer as match. However, cover crop cost share is limited to a maximum of \$20/acre. If applying for cost share, please describe the process you will implement to select grant recipients. Priority will be given to SWCDs who demonstrate a strategic process for managing cost share dollars and prioritizing first-time users.

Funding Restrictions: Proposals must fall within the funding context allowed under the Clean Water Indiana Law (IC 14-32-8). The law prohibits funds to be used for food, food related paper products, office equipment or district self-promotional materials (i.e. mugs, t-shirts, pens, etc.)

Match Requirements: A 50 percent cash and/or in-kind match is required. Match contributions can be federal, state, and/or local sources including such things as landowner costs, staff time, supervisor time, equipment use, purchase, rental, etc. Proposals that request

funds for staffing require a 25% cash or in-kind match for the staffing component. *Example: District A submits a \$10,000 for solely a staff position. District A's proposal requires a match of \$2,500. District B submits a \$10,000 proposal that includes \$5,000 for staff and \$5,000 for cost share. Proposal B is required to have \$3,750 match.* The match is applicable only if directly related to the purpose of the proposed project. The grants committee may give preference to cash match rather than in kind during the scoring process. Grant proposals must use the match standards outlined below to develop their project budget.

Match Standards: (all figures are per hour of project work)

ICP Staff/SWCD supervisors (including associates) \$25*

Landowner Time: \$25

Professional Services: \$25

Student/Intern/Volunteer: \$10

*ICP match rates were calculated from publicly available data in Gateway and public transparency portals.

Any landowner contribution toward the remaining portion of cost share practices should be counted as cash match.

In general, time spent working on the project should be considered in-kind match; whereas money would be considered cash match.

Leveraging Funds: SWCDs are encouraged to partner with traditional and non-traditional organizations/agencies at the local, state, and federal level to leverage additional funds for their project/initiative. Projects which add to the percent cost-share/incentive rate offered through another program are prohibited. *Example: A project where CWI funds are used for cost share and 319 funds for technical assistance are acceptable. A project where CWI and 319 funds are both used to give producers a larger cost share amount is prohibited.*

Scoring Procedures: The SSCB will utilize a scoring sheet to aid in ranking the proposals. The SSCB may use discretion when awarding grant funds.

Process of Payments: Once the proposal is approved by the SSCB, the Indiana State Department of Agriculture (ISDA) will issue an electronic contract to the designated lead SWCD. SWCDs should return their electronically signed contract to ISDA within 30 days of receipt in order to receive their funds. Funds must be utilized in a timely manner. Districts will receive 50 percent of their grant funding up front and the remaining 50 percent as reimbursement to the lead district. *Please note that reimbursement claims may be made no more frequently than quarterly and require updated SharePoint financial reporting, conservation project tracking (if applicable), a claim voucher and a Quickbooks or similar financial report showing that requested funds have been paid by the SWCD(s).*

Reporting Requirements: Financial and project status reports through SharePoint will be required for the duration of the grant and a final report will be due at the end of the grant. This

report must be completed semi-annually (every 6 months) and summarize the outcomes and achievements of the project. These reports will be due 30 days following the anniversary date of the grant and are cumulative. *Example: grants that begin on January 1st will have reports due January 31st and July 31st.* The first report will be due on July 31st, 2021. Tracking of conservation practice implementation (following FOTG standards) must be reported through SharePoint's conservation tracking system on a (minimum) quarterly basis.

Grant Reviews: ISDA routinely visits with its grantees to ensure projects and grants are proceeding as intended and offer guidance and support if needed. Each year, ISDA will strategically select grants to review. These reviews can include open grants and grants that have been completed in the last three years. Upon completion of a review, ISDA will send a summary of results to all districts involved in the project and their board(s). If found during formal review or routine reporting checks, failure to make progress on the project or report progress as specified in the grant agreement will be noted in a project's file and may jeopardize a district's ability to receive competitive grant funds in future cycles.

Questions:

For assistance please contact your District Support Specialist (DSS).

<i>Northeast:</i>	Jennifer Thum	jthum@isda.in.gov	(260) 341-6966
<i>Northwest:</i>	Geneva Tyler	gtyler@isda.in.gov	(317) 518-4036
<i>South:</i>	Laura Fribley	lfribley@isda.in.gov	(812)595-5641
<i>Southeast:</i>	Tara Wesseler-Henry	twesseler@isda.in.gov	(765) 745-0306
<i>Southwest:</i>	Nathan Stoelting	nstoelting@isda.in.gov	(812) 320-9873

Deadlines that SWCDs must meet to be eligible to be lead on an application for CWI 2021:

- Election Committee Report: November 1, 2019
- Recommendation for Supervisor Appointment: November 1, 2019
- Nominee for Election: December 1, 2019
- Annual Meeting Held: March 31, 2020
- Election held at Annual Meeting: March 31, 2020
- Annual Financial Report and Audit Form/Page 2 of AFR: March 31, 2020
- Certification of Election of Supervisors: Within 7 days of election

The items are not specified in district law but are considered essential for district operations and will be considered for CWI 2020. These questions will appear as a self-assessment on the CWI application.

- District Annual Meeting Information: January 1, 2020
- Updated SharePoint Directories: Within 30 days of changes
- The district has a current business plan.
- The district has had at least one current supervisor/staff/active associate attend a Leadership Institute workshop session since 2008. **Note that in order for an associate supervisor to count toward this item, they must be listed in the SharePoint directory.*
- The district has at least one current supervisor/staff/active associate graduate of the Leadership Institute program. **Note that in order for an associate supervisor to count toward this item, they must be listed in the SharePoint directory.*
- District Staff or supervisors participated in the fall/winter 2019 cover crop transects.
- District has applied for a grant other than CWI in the last 3 years and how many.

Please describe why this project is needed. (Maximum 2000 characters)

What are the goals of the project and how will you track progress toward these goals? This tracking should go beyond the required reporting in SharePoint.
(Maximum 2000 characters)

Describe each partner and their specific contributions and anticipated match to the project.

Describe how CWI funds will be utilized. (Maximum 2000 characters)
Please use this space to provide additional details about your project budget.

Self Assessment

These items are not specified in district law but are considered essential for district operations and will be considered for CWI 2020.

District Annual Meeting Information: January 1, 2020	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>
Updated SharePoint Directories: Within 30 days of changes	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>
The district has a current business plan.	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>
The district has had at least one current supervisor/staff/active associate attend a Leadership Institute workshop session since 2008. *Note that in order for an associate supervisor to count toward this item, they must be listed in the SharePoint directory.	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>
The district has at least one current supervisor/staff/active associate graduate of the Leadership Institute program. *Note that in order for an associate supervisor to count toward this item, they must be listed in the SharePoint directory.	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>
District Staff or supervisors participated in fall 2019 cover crop transects.	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>
District has applied for a grant other than CWI in the last 3 years.	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>
If so, how many?		

Attachments

Please attach any documentation, up to 3 (8.5x11) pages total, that you feel will help the grants committee.

For example a district could submit 1 document containing no more than 3 pages or up to 3 single page documents. Attachments must be submitted in word or pdf format. Other file types will not be considered.

This documentation may include, but not limited to, letters of support from project partners, example cost share ranking systems, job descriptions, etc.... Attachments should provide material support and clarity for the application narrative for the proposal but will not be scored on their own.



Clean Water Indiana 2021 Non-SWCD Led Competitive Grant Guidance

Executive Summary: The Clean Water Indiana (CWI) Grant Program (IC 14-32-8-5) utilizes the Clean Water Indiana Fund to Support Indiana conservation groups (nonprofits or units or subdivisions of government), in cooperation with local Soil and Water Conservation Districts, in efforts to address the priority concerns of the State Soil Conservation Board (SSCB) business plan. The SSCB is accepting competitive proposals for targeted projects up to three years in length. The Clean Water Indiana fund is administered by the Indiana State Department of Agriculture (ISDA) under the direction of the SSCB (IC 14-32-8-6).

Application and Selection Process if applicant HAS NOT received funding in the past: Interested parties who have not received CWI funds in the past must submit a concept paper to the SSCB, which will be reviewed at their meeting on July 21st, 2020 in Indianapolis. At this meeting, the SSCB will decide which concepts will move on for further consideration for CWI funding. Selected concepts will receive applications, which will be scored and ranked alongside the SWCD led proposals for CWI funding consideration. The CWI grants committee's funding recommendations for both SWCD-led and Non-SWCD led projects will be presented to the full SSCB at the October SSCB meeting.

Contact the State Soil Conservation Board at cleanwaterindiana@isda.in.gov to request the concept paper form.

Deadlines: Concept papers are due **Thursday, July 16th, 2020** and any further applications must be submitted by **September 11, 2020, at 4 pm EDT**. Submit concept papers to cleanwaterindiana@isda.in.gov.

Application and Selection Process if applicant HAS received funding in the past: Interested parties who have received CWI funds in the past may submit a Non-SWCD Led Application. The link to the online application portal will be available on the Grants & Funding Opportunities page of the ISDA website (<https://www.in.gov/isda/2474.htm>). Applications are completely online and can be updated in your browser. The online application should be available by July. Until that time, ISDA will provide a template for applicants to work from. Applicants should complete the online application and may attach zero (0) to three (3) additional 8.5x11 pages if desired. Attachments will be accepted in word document or pdf

format and are limited to 3 pages total. For example applicants could submit 1 document of no more than 3 pages or up to 3 single page documents. Attachments should provide material support and clarity for the application narrative for the proposal but will not be scored on their own. All applications will be scored and ranked alongside the SWCD led proposals for CWI funding consideration. The CWI grants committee's funding recommendations for both SWCD-led and Non-SWCD led projects will be presented to the full SSCB at the October SSCB meeting.

Application Deadline: The application must be submitted by **September 11, 2020 at 4 pm EDT**. By submitting the application, the lead SWCD certifies that each partnering district has agreed to the terms outlined in the application.

Eligible Applicants: Applications can be submitted by natural resource related conservation groups in the State of Indiana. Preference may be given to projects tied to the Indiana Conservation Partnership and its shared goals.

Ineligible Projects: The 2021 CWI grant program cannot be used to fund research equipment. Conservation practices and lab analysis of soil and water that are components of research projects are eligible. Projects relating to urban practices that will reduce sediment and nutrient are eligible. Cost-sharing is also not allowed on specific practices that an entity is required to install to comply with a state or local rule or ordinance. *Example: CWI funds cannot be used to meet MS4 requirements unless the proposed use of funds goes above and beyond the requirement outlined in the MS4 permit's Storm Water Quality Management Plan*

Funding Restrictions: Proposals must fall within the funding context allowed under the Clean Water Indiana Law (IC 14-32-8). The law prohibits funds to be used for food, food related paper products, office equipment or self-promotional materials (i.e. mugs, t-shirts, pens, etc.)

Proposal Logistics: This grant opportunity is competitive. The grant proposal must document how the grant funds will address at least two of the State priority resource concerns referenced in the State Soil Conservation Board's (SSCB's) Business Plan adopted in 2020. The plan can be found at <https://www.in.gov/isda/2361.htm>. Proposals can be for any amount that would accomplish the project described. The SSCB may use discretion when awarding grant funds. Proposals that outline how CWI funds will leverage additional funding from other sources as well as engage other partners are strongly encouraged. Proposals that outline how CWI funds will leverage additional funding from other sources as well as engage other partners are strongly encouraged.

Project Dates: All Clean Water Indiana Grant projects shall take no longer than three full years to complete. Projects will start on January 1, 2021 and must be finished and all funds spent by December 31, 2023.

If funded, lead entities will need to set up a vendor and bidder profile with the State of Indiana.

Project Description: The proposal must identify the current natural resource concern(s) in the selected district(s). The proposal must also identify how addressing this resource concern pertains to both the organization's business plan and the SSCB business plan.

Partnerships: Each application must state clearly what each partner and participating district will be contributing to the proposed project (i.e. outreach, professional assistance, estimated funds, etc.) Partnering districts and organizations must be identified with a point of contact for the project, their contact information, and an explanation of any anticipated cash or in kind match from the partner.

Conservation Practices: Conservation practices and structural measures shall follow NRCS Field Office Technical Guide where applicable. New technologies not currently in the technical guide may be implemented if reviewed and concurred in by a technical representative of the Conservation Implementation Teams (CIT) or their designee. *Please note that pollinator plantings must be free of species that are noxious, invasive, and/or pigweed. To verify that seed mixes are free of these species, a district MUST request the seed lab card from the distributor. For more information, please contact your DSS.* For cost-share practices, CWI funds may be used to pay up to a maximum of 75% of the total conservation practice cost. At least 25% of the cost must be provided by the landowner/producer as match. However, cover crop cost share is limited to a maximum of \$20/acre. If applying for cost share, please describe the process you will implement to select grant recipients. Priority will be given to SWCDs who demonstrate a strategic process for managing cost share dollars and prioritizing first-time users.

Match Requirements: A 50 percent cash and/or in-kind match is required. Match contributions can be federal, state, and/or local sources including such things as landowner costs, staff time, supervisor time, equipment use, purchase, rental, etc. Proposals that request funds for staffing require a 25% cash or in-kind match for the staffing component. *Example: District A submits a \$10,000 for solely a staff position. District A's proposal requires a match of \$2,500. District B submits a \$10,000 proposal that includes \$5,000 for staff and \$5,000 for cost share. Proposal B is required to have \$3,750 match.* The match is applicable only if directly related to the purpose of the proposed project. The grants committee may give preference to cash match rather than in kind during the scoring process. Grant proposals must use the match standards outlined below to develop their project budget.

Scoring Procedures: The SSCB will utilize a scoring sheet to aid in ranking the proposals. The SSCB may use discretion when awarding grant funds.

Process of Payments: All funded entities are required to register as a bidder with the State of Indiana. Instructions for registration can be obtained from the Indiana State Department of Agriculture (ISDA) grants program manager. Once the proposal is approved by the SSCB, the ISDA will issue an electronic contract to the grantee. Grantees must return their electronically signed contract to ISDA within 30 days of receipt in order to receive their funds. Funds must be utilized in a timely manner. Up to 50 percent of grant funding may be disbursed at the beginning of the grant, if justified by the applicant in their proposal and approved by the SSCB. All other payments will be made as reimbursement 45 days in arrears upon receipt of an updated report and claim voucher. *Please note that reimbursement claims may be made no more frequently than quarterly and require updated financial reporting, a claim voucher and a Quickbooks or similar financial report showing that requested funds have been paid by the lead entity.*

Reporting Requirements: Financial and project status reports through SharePoint will be required for the duration of the grant and a final report will be due at the end of the grant. This report must be completed semi-annually (every 6 months) and summarize the outcomes and achievements of the project. These reports will be due 30 days following the anniversary date of the grant and are cumulative. *Example: grants that begin on January 1st will have reports due January 31st and July 31st.* The first report will be due on July 31st, 2021. Tracking of conservation practice implementation (following FOTG standards) must be reported through SharePoint's conservation tracking system on a (minimum) quarterly basis.

Grant Reviews: ISDA routinely visits with its grantees to ensure projects and grants are proceeding as intended and offer guidance and support if needed. Each year, ISDA will strategically select grants to review. These reviews can include open grants and grants that have been completed in the last three years. Upon completion of a review, ISDA will send a summary of results to the organization involved in the project and their board (if applicable). Failure to make progress on the project or report progress as specified in the grant agreement, as observed in a formal review or routine reporting checks, will be noted in a project's file and may jeopardize an organization's ability to receive competitive grant funds in future cycles.

Questions: Please contact the State Soil Conservation Board at cleanwaterindiana@isda.in.gov.



**Clean Water Indiana
2021 Non-SWCD Led
Competitive Grant Application**

**Character counts for the questions below include spaces.*

** If funded, lead entities will need to set up a vendor and bidder profile with the State of Indiana.*

Contact Information

Lead Entity	
Address	
City, State, ZIP	
Lead Entity Contact Name & Title	
Email Address	
Phone	
Project Amount Request	
Signatory Authority	
Signatory Authority Email	

Local SWCD Contact

Cooperating SWCD	
Point of Contact	
SWCD Phone	

Project Information

Project Name	
Please describe your project. (Maximum 4000 characters)	

Please describe why this project is needed. (Maximum 2000 characters)

What are the goals of the project and how will you track progress toward these goals? (Maximum 2000 characters)

Describe each partner and their specific contributions and anticipated match to the project.

Describe how CWI funds will be utilized. (Maximum 2000 characters)
Please use this space to provide additional details about your project budget.

If requesting disbursement of up to 50% of funds at the beginning of the grant,
please provide a justification. (Maximum 2000 characters)

How does the project meet the goals of the State Soil Conservation Board Business Plan?

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How will CWI funds be utilized?

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State Soil Conservation Board Business Plan 2020-2024

The mission of the State Soil Conservation Board (SSCB) is to provide information, advice, consultation and resources to Soil and Water Conservation District supervisors to assist them in carrying out their powers and programs.

Key Actions/Progress: The SSCB will provide policy and funding direction to the Indiana State Department of Agriculture-Division of Soil Conservation (ISDA-DSC) on the administration of the Clean Water Indiana Program (CWI), to help address statewide natural resource concerns on rural, suburban, and urban lands as identified in local Soil and Water Conservation District business plans.

The SSCB has identified the following as statewide priority natural resource concerns to be addressed over the next five years:

- **Water Quality** including sediment, nutrients, pesticides, *E-coli* and other non-point sources of water pollution found in our streams, rivers and lakes.
- **Soil Health/Degradation** which includes but isn't limited to, soil biology impacts that degrade soil quality, the loss of top soil due to water and wind erosion, the depletion of organic matter, as well as soil compaction.
- **Invasive Species**, both flora and fauna, specifically in regards to developing an understanding with state organizations in regards to invasive species control
- **Erosion**
- **Streambank Erosion**

Other statewide priority:

- **District Capacity/Accountability** which empowers Soil and Water Conservation Districts to effectively address the prior mentioned resource concerns.

Strategic Plan Vision:

The SSCB identified the priority resource concerns above. We will prioritize our evaluations of the CWI grant program based on these resource concerns. In the next five years we will use these resource concerns to guide all decisions made by the SSCB. The SSCB has determined the following four areas in which we will focus our attention on to help advance conservation in Indiana. We have also identified priorities that will help guide our CWI grant program during the life strategic plan.

Proposed High Level Goals and Action Items

▪ Engage supervisors to be effective leaders in their communities and at the state level.

Actions:

- Support Leadership Institute for supervisors and employees by increase participation and access. Consider providing both in person training as well as on-line training opportunities.
- By 2023, 60% SWCD supervisors of the district will have attended training. (3/5?)
- Support new supervisor orientation
 - Each new supervisor will be required to participate
 - New supervisors shall be advised on the reporting requirements for SWCD's to remain eligible and within legal requirements of the state.

▪ Increase local SWCD capacity to be effective partners in the Indiana Conservation Partnership delivery of conservation across the state.

Actions:

- The leveraging sheet will continue to be updated and available for SWCD use annually.
- Create a portfolio of example policies for SWCDs
 - County council representative as an SWCD Associate Supervisor
 - Supervisor attendance policy
- Work with ICP to find creative ways to increase capacity at local level
- Ensure all capacity funding through ICP is supported by local officials
- Encourage and facilitate when possible non-ICP (non-traditional) partnerships for new resources (i.e., food industry, fertilizer suppliers)>
- Encourage supporting tools for current SWCD staff by working closely with IDEA, ISDA and IASWCD.
 - Job description
 - Performance evaluations

▪ Keep elected officials, local to state, informed on conservation progress and needs to reach statewide goals.

Actions:

- Produce a "State of the State" annual report targeted at decision makers.
- Ensure resources are available for outreach materials for counties to use to educate decision makers.
- Support the ICP to establish metrics for soil and nutrient loss for Indiana.
- Lead or facilitate opportunities for elected officials to learn about resource concerns.

- **Report to IN [larger public] progress and concerns for the priority natural resources concerns.**

Actions:

- Improve communication/coordination with IASWCD to make sure both successes and needs are being shared widely cross the state.
- Build a communication strategy by supporting existing ICP partnership, SSCB will help to ensure delivery of communications and resources needed to be effective.
- SSCB will take leadership role on reporting conservation status both successes and needs that will help advance conservation.

Strategy Plans for CWI funding:

CWI Grants goals

- SSCB would like to see specific outcomes on grant applications and impact on community defined in each application.
- Increased accountability across the state to ensure deliverables are being met and accountability requirements in compliance.
- Grants that are awarded that are intended to be long-term projects (greater than 3 years) become sustainable projects with a plan developed and implemented for funding from a different source (non-CWI).