



Clean Water Indiana Grants Report March 2024

2024 Grants

Contracts have been completed and communication has been sent to grantees to make initial claims of 50% of the awarded funds.

2020, 2021 and 2022 Grants-REPORTS WERE DUE JANUARY 31ST

Of 49 2020-2022 CWI grants, only three reports were late.

2024 Grants- first reports will be due July 31st, 2024

CWI Training Funds

The CWI Training funds application opportunity closed March 5, 2024. The funds were available in the form of reimbursements and are reserved for training registration fee reimbursements only. All \$50,000 in training funds have been allocated. Two districts were not funded due to inadequate funding, and a 3rd District was partially funded with the last of the funds.

These funds assisted District supervisors and staff to attend trainings such as IASWCD Annual Conference, IDEA Fall Conference, Indiana Watershed Leadership Academy, MS4 related trainings and Pesticide applicator trainings.

Annual Financial Report (AFR) (This is not the Gateway report for SBOA)-DUE MARCH 31st

-The AFR template was sent to all districts that may be used as a resource and auditing of financials.

-As of March 6, 52 AFRs have been approved on GMS. An additional 33 are either in draft form or submitted. This is comparable with approvals and draft/submitted AFRs this same time last year.

Capacity Reports

As of March 6, 42 Capacity Reports have been approved. An additional 22 Capacity Reports have been submitted and/or are in draft status.

CWI GRANT SPOTLIGHT

Brown 2022

From their January 31, 2024 CWI Grant update:

Goal 1: Creation of 300 total acres of pollinator habitat to protect water quality

– Our office and partners have met with eleven landowners who are interested in applying for the CWI grant. 4 properties are signed up with our office and slotted to receive funding pending project completion. If all projects complete their work, they will run through all the grant funds and we will have a total of ~25 acres converted to pollinator habitat. We have continued to post about the grant and localized pollinator information on social media with some engagement and cross-sharing.

Goal 2: Creation of buffer strips for protecting soil

– We are at the beginning stages of planning a demonstration buffer strip along our office road Memorial Dr (locating the area to use, designing the buffer strip, designing educational outreach materials, and writing up a project proposal to the landowner). Our office has partnered with Purdue Extension to host an Ag Breakfast this February. We are currently looking for a speaker who can share the benefits of buffer strips on farms. The goal is to tie the speaker with the breakfast theme and our grant. - This idea did not come about due to grant funding being allocated to the 4 applicants, which will run through all the funding.

Goal 3: Offer resources on implementing conservation best management practices for the reduction of sediment and non-point sources of pollution.

- Our office continues to post on social media about how native plants filter runoff and prevent erosion.

*We have allocated all funding, but continue to have information on our website, social media, and office bulletin to hopefully create a wait list for future funding.



Clean Water Indiana 2025 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 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 Process

Applications are submitted online through the Indiana Grant Management System (GMS). A request for a GMS account is required. Please visit:

<https://survey123.arcgis.com/share/898f6ffc7f794f80abda15c5b773ba93> to request a GMS account for a CWI grant access.

All applications will be scored and ranked for CWI funding consideration. The SSCB CWI grants committee's funding recommendations will be presented to the full SSCB at their October meeting.

Applicants who are not a local Soil and Water Conservation District (SWCD) must be working with a SWCD as a partner.

Applicants should request the amount of funds that are needed for the project **to the nearest whole dollar**. It is not the goal of the SSCB CWI Grants Committee to fund partial applications. Partially funded applications will be made only in special situations.

Applicants must provide an Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) for all partners involved with the grant. (See MOU template)

No more than three attachments, with a total maximum of six pages, may be uploaded with the application. **Any MOU documents will not count against your six page maximum.**

Application Deadline: September 5, 2024 by 12p.m. EST

Late applications will not be accepted.

By submitting the application, the lead applicant certifies that each partner has agreed to the terms outlined in the application. The designated signatory of the lead applicant must have prior approval from their boards, managers, etc.

Upon submission of the application, if a pdf copy is needed please request a copy here:
<https://survey123.arcgis.com/share/2a1a2557c61b4e688b028032c37697a4>

Eligible Applicants

- Any SWCD or natural resources related conservation groups in the State of Indiana.
- One application is permitted per project and must be submitted by a lead applicant.
- Lead applicants must be up to date on all awarded CWI grant reporting.
- Lead applicants may be lead on up to two applications.
- Applicants are not limited to the number of applications they can be partners on.
- Projects relating to urban practices that will reduce sediment and nutrient are eligible.
- Conservation practices and lab analysis of soil and water that are components of research projects are eligible.
- Equipment purchases for SWCDs and non-SWCDs to own and make available to land owners is allowable.
- All grant deadlines and reporting requirements have been met. (if applicable)

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.)
- CWI grant dollars shall not be utilized to pay directly for employee benefits, such as retirement, health insurance, paid time off, taxes, etc. If CWI competitive grant dollars are being utilized to fund a staff position, once the funds are disbursed to a staff person, they may utilize their stipend/wages as they see fit. This only pertains to CWI competitive grant dollars and not to the \$10,000 CWI statutory match.
- Cannot be used to fund research equipment.
- 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.*
- Cost share programs for the modification or purchasing of equipment to enhance assets to a landowner is not allowable for a grant request.
- Recycling grants are not eligible.

Funding Staff

CWI grant dollars shall not be utilized to pay directly for employee benefits, such as retirement, health insurance, paid time off, taxes, etc. If CWI competitive grant dollars are being utilized to fund a staff position, once the funds are disbursed to a staff person, they may utilize their stipend/wages as they see fit. This only pertains to CWI competitive grant dollars and not to the \$10,000 CWI statutory match.

The grant may ask for no more than 10% of the total grant funds for administrative support of the grant.

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 2021. 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 2025 Clean Water Indiana Grant projects shall take no longer than three full years to complete. Projects will start in 2025 after a fully executed contract between the lead applicant and the Indiana State Department of Agriculture is signed. Partners do not sign the contracts. All funds must be spent by December 31, 2027.

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.

An MOU is now required to show board or partner approval for all match and project contributions listed in the grant application.

Conservation Practices

- Conservation practices and structural measures shall follow NRCS Field Office Technical Guide and conservation planning principles, if practices installed are not applicable, please work with your DSS. 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.
- Pollinator plantings must be free of species that are noxious, invasive, and/or all amaranth. To verify that seed mixes are free of these species, a district MUST request the seed lab card from the distributor.
- For all cost share programs, CWI funds may be used to pay up to a maximum of 75% of the total conservation final practice cost.
- For cover crop cost share programs, the maximum cost share is 75% of the total final cost of the practice, with 25% of the cost being the responsibility of the landowner, and a maximum dollar cap at \$30/ac.
- Any CWI funded applications that have cost share funds for livestock alternative watering systems, MUST fence out the existing watering sources that have a natural resource concern.

- If applying for cost share, please describe the process you will implement to select grant recipients. Priority will be given to projects who demonstrate a strategic process for managing cost share dollars and prioritizing first-time users and new acreage.

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. State employee time may not be used as match.

Each grantee must track in-kind/ cash match for all partners and be able to provide documentation.

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

ICP Staff/SWCD supervisors (including associates) \$30*

Landowner Time: \$30

Professional Services: \$30

Student/Intern/Volunteer: \$15

*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.*

SWCDs are encouraged to work with county officials to retain staff hired through staffing grants at the completion of any CWI grant funding. We recommend having discussion with your county while applying for the grant to make them aware of potential new employees and retention options once grant has ended.

CWI Promotion

Any CWI funded projects will be required to have a CWI logo for equipment, handouts, and presentations.

Photo(s) required for grant final report.

Process of Payments

All funded SWCDs 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). Once the proposal is approved by the SSCB, 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. All other payments, after the 50% is spent, will be made as reimbursement 45 days in arrears upon receipt of an updated report and claim that is submitted on GMS. *Please note that reimbursement claims may require updated financial reporting, a claim voucher and a financial report showing that requested funds have been paid by the lead entity.*

10% of the total grant funds will be withheld until the final report is completed.

All funds must be spent at the end of the grant. Applicants need to make sure all cost share or incentive payments are made to the landowner by the December 31st deadline.

Reporting Requirements

Financial and project status updates will be required for the duration of the grant and a cumulative final report will be due at the end of the grant. The grant updating form will be provided on GMS. This update must be completed semi-annually (every 6 months) and summarize the outcomes and achievements of the project for the 6 months. The total match and in-kind for each report is cumulative. Tracking of conservation practice implementation (following FOTG standards) must be reported through Conservation Link: conservation project tracking system (CPT) spreadsheet shall be completed by the 1st Friday of the quarter. The final report of the grant is a cumulative report; 10% of the total grant funds will be withheld in the state account before submitting the final report. All in-kind must be reported in full for each grant update. In-kind cannot be accounted for at a later report. Any state employee's time may not be counted as in-kind match.

Grantees are expected to meet all deadlines. If reporting deadlines are not met on the due dates, the lead and the partners will not be eligible for CWI grant funding a year after the grant is complete. If special circumstances prevent a grantee from meeting a deadline they may make an in-person request to the SSCB for a waiver.

Photo(s) required for grant final report.

Reporting Deadlines

Grant updates due in GMS annually: January 31st, July 31st

Conservation Project Tracking in Conservation Link: 1st Friday of January, April, July, and October

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. Also, no grant payment will occur until the grantee corrects any grant failures. Grant Reviews must take place or be scheduled within 90 days of being contacted by ISDA, or lead applicant will be ineligible for future grants for two years. Exceptions may be made (e.g. FMLA).

Modifications

Modifications should not be taken lightly. These grants were awarded based upon merit. Largely changing the program of a grant could be seen as favoring some applicants over others. Other applicants may have submitted similar applications to the proposed modification but were not funded. No modification requests will be accepted following the last SSCB meeting in the final year of the grant term. Please contact the DSS team before submitting a modification.

A 5% transfer of total funds may be transferred to another category permitted it was listed in the grant application.

Questions

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

<i>North</i>	Sandra Hoffarth	shoffarth@isda.in.gov	(317) 460--0428
<i>Central:</i>	Geneva Tyler	gt Tyler@isda.in.gov	(317) 518-4036
<i>South:</i>	Laura Fribley	lfribley@isda.in.gov	(812) 595-5641
<i>West:</i>	Nathan Stoelting	nstoelting@isda.in.gov	(812) 320-9873
<i>East:</i>	Kylie Wheeler	kywheeler@isda.in.gov	(765) 480-1713

Deadlines that SWCDs must meet or have met to be eligible to be lead on an application for CWI 2024

- Election Committee Report: November 1, 2022
- Recommendation for Supervisor Appointment: November 1, 2022
- Nominee for Election: December 1, 2022
- Annual Meeting Held: March 31, 2023
- Election held at Annual Meeting: March 31, 2023
- Annual Financial Report and Audit Form/Page 2 of AFR: March 31, 2023
- Certification of Election of Supervisors: Submitted in timely manner

The items are not specified in district law but are considered essential for district operations and will be considered for CWI 2023. These questions will appear as a self-assessment on the CWI application.

- Updated SharePoint Directories: Within 30 days of changes
- The district has a current business plan.
- District Staff or supervisors participated in the county conservation transects.
- District has applied for a grant other than CWI in the last 3 years and how many.
- All grant deadlines and reporting requirements have been met. (if applicable)

Removed

Moved

New

JT Looking for numbers



Otter Creek Cost Share Conservation Program - Scope of Services Modification

Future verbiage

PROJECT INFORMATION

Grantee

Vigo County SWCD

Project Title

Otter Creek Cost Share Conservation Program

Grant Amount

\$50,000.00

PROJECT CONTACT

Name

Nathan Stoelting

Phone

8123209873

Email

nstoelting@isda.in.gov

MODIFICATION INFORMATION

*(required) Activity to be Changed

Currently, we have made extensive efforts to provide cost-share to landowners within the Otter Creek watershed. The very successful 319 program has taken all the cost-share needs in this area. However, others near the watershed signed up for cost-share, but did not qualify because they were outside of the watershed. If we open up our cost-share program to the entire county we can have all the cost share dollars tied up very quickly.

*(required) Proposed Change

Expand area of cost share to encompass entire counties in both Clay and Vigo.

*(required) Provide the justification for each change of activity requested. Clearly describe the new activity, how project beneficiaries will benefit as a result of the changes and the overall impact on the program.

319 program just grabbed too many of our prospective applicants.

SIGNATURE

A rectangular box containing a handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Brunken".

Save

Clear

Submission Date

Dec 6, 2023



Submit



State Soil Conservation Board

ISDA – DSC Director’s Report

March 12th, 2024

Budget

54310: Clean Water Indiana:

Item	FY2024	Update
Training Reimbursements	\$50,000	Allocated
District Match	\$1,840,000	Deadline March 30 2024
CWI Competitive Grants	~\$2,300,000	\$2,313,285
CREP & CREP PEA	~\$1,875,000	~\$1,875,000
IRA – Resilient Indiana	\$540,000	Signed
IDEA Proposal	\$4,400	Complete
Agreements/Equipment	\$100,000	Allocated
Revolving Dishonesty Bond	\$2,000	Paid

- FY2025 Considerations
 - Will know more regarding CREP demand ahead of budget vote in May
 - New Harmony super gauge – We will budget around \$30,000 for this item.
 - The Clean Water Indiana Grants committee met and discussed where they would like to see the 2025 focused on.
 - Next legislative budget session is January 2025

Process Timeline:

Calendar Year 2023												Calendar Year 2024											
J	F	★	A	★	J	J	A	S	★	★		J	F	★	A	★	J	J	A	S	★	★	
a	e	a	p	a	u	u	u	e	c	o	e	a	e	a	p	a	u	u	u	e	c	o	e
n	b	r	r	y	n	l	g	p	t	v	c	n	b	r	r	y	n	l	g	p	t	v	c
State Fiscal Year 2023						State Fiscal Year 2024						State Fiscal Year 2025											

- ★ SSCB Budget Vote Ahead of Next Fiscal Year
Fiscal Year Runs July 1 – June 30
- ★ CWI Award Vote in October
- ★ CWI Contracts
- ★ Annual Financial Reports Due – Match Dollars Distributed upon receipt.

Staffing

Deputy Director – We have two interviews next week for this position.

Interns:

Starting May 20th, ISDA will have two interns that will focus on marketing and data. Division staff have been working together to dig through our list of projects that have been on the back burner either due to lack of time or just staff. We hope to bring the interns to the next SSCB and have them gain an understanding of what being a board member entail.

Board Terms:

- Larry Clemens continues to serve until an appointment has been made. All appropriate filings have been submitted.
- Due to long wait times for appointments, we are awaiting a response on IC 14-32-2-4 which states “The terms shall be staggered so that at least three (3) members are appointed every two (2) years.”

First Name	Last Name	Organization	City	State	Term Expiration
Gene	Schmidt	SSCB	Laporte	IN	4/31/2026
Amy	Burris	SSCB	Loogootee	IN	12/31/2027
Kenny	Cain	SSCB	Crawfordsville	IN	4/31/2026
Ray	Chattin	SSCB	Decker	IN	12/31/2027
Larry	Clemens	SSCB	Angola	IN	4/31/2026
Brad	Dawson	SSCB	Guilford	IN	4/31/2026
Jane	Hardisty	SSCB	Greenfield	IN	12/31/2027

Strategic Planning for FY2025 CWI:

- Held a session in February to discuss the CWI competitive grants and allocated distribution, SSCB business plan, watershed basin commissions, and the Board Certification Program.
- We will need to discuss the next strategic planning session.

Division Programmatic Updates:

- ISDA Staff will provide updates on ISDA programs during ICP Reports section of SSCB Agenda

SSCB Website Changes:

- We will make some changes to this website, and I hope you all view them positively.
 - First, the addition of SSCB headshots with their territory coverage underneath.
 - SSCB packets are uploaded to the website the day before each meeting.
 - I am open to additional suggestions.

May SSCB Meeting Preview:

- 2025 Budget Breakdown
- 2025 CWI Networking session dates
- Guest speaker from DNR to talk about their LARE, RCPP and Invasive efforts. – Suggestions
- Status of BCP module –
- Status of SSCB business plan update
- SSCB Training Plan – all members



**Mississippi River
Gulf of Mexico
Watershed Nutrient
Task Force**

Gulf of Mexico Hypoxia Task Force (HTF) What is it? and Updates

State Soil Conservation Board Meeting
March 12th, 2024

Julie Harrold – Program Manager, CREP and WQ Initiatives
Indiana State Department of Agriculture

jharrold@isda.in.gov



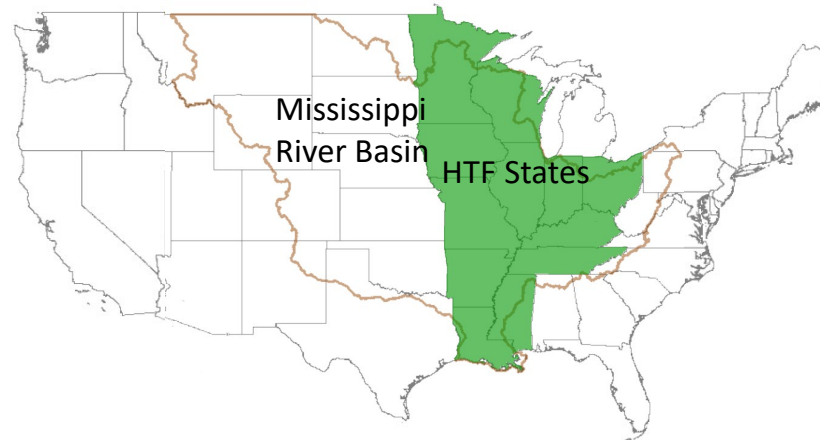
Background - Gulf of Mexico Hypoxia Task Force & State Strategies



- The Gulf of Mexico dead zone occurs every summer due to nutrient pollution from the Mississippi River Basin caused by many factors.

- To help protect our local streams and the Gulf of Mexico, Indiana and 11 other states in the Mississippi River Basin have developed state nutrient reduction strategies to reduce the nutrient loads leaving their state.
- These strategies are part of a national plan developed by the Gulf of Mexico Hypoxia Task Force (HTF) to reduce the size of the Gulf of Mexico hypoxia zone.

<https://www.epa.gov/ms-htf>



Gulf of Mexico Hypoxia Task Force (HTF) Members



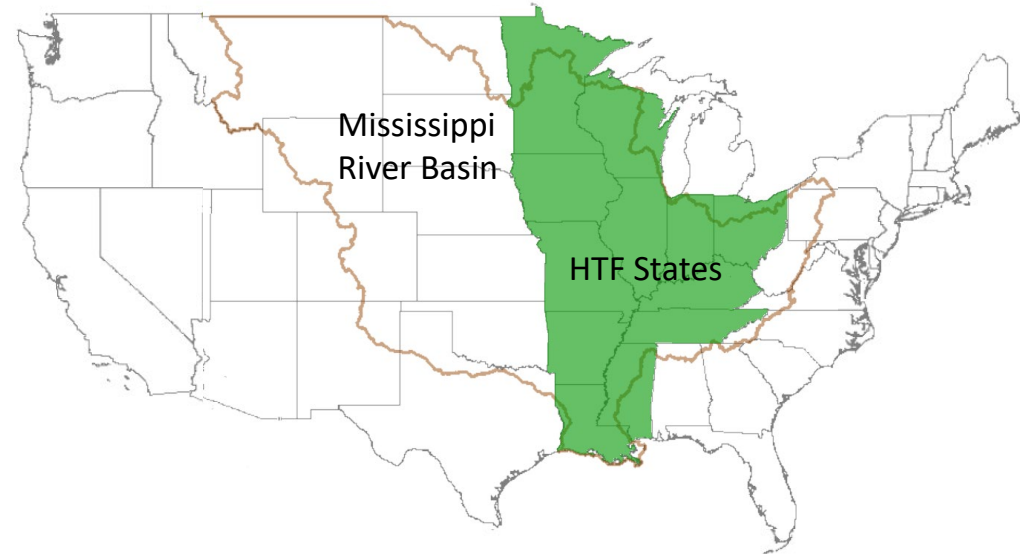
<https://www.epa.gov/ms-htf>

5 Federal Agencies and Tribes:

- US Army Corps of Engineers
- US Environmental Protection Agency
- US Department of Agriculture
- US Geological Survey
- National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration
- National Tribal Water Council

12 State Agencies:

- Arkansas
- Illinois
- Indiana
- Iowa
- Kentucky
- Louisiana
- Minnesota
- Mississippi
- Missouri
- Ohio
- Tennessee
- Wisconsin



Each state is represented by one of the following:

- Agriculture agency,
 - Environmental Quality agency, or
 - Natural Resources agency
- The Indiana State Department of Agriculture (ISDA) is the agency that represents the state of Indiana on the HTF. We joined the Task Force in 2011.

Gulf of Mexico Hypoxia Task Force (HTF)

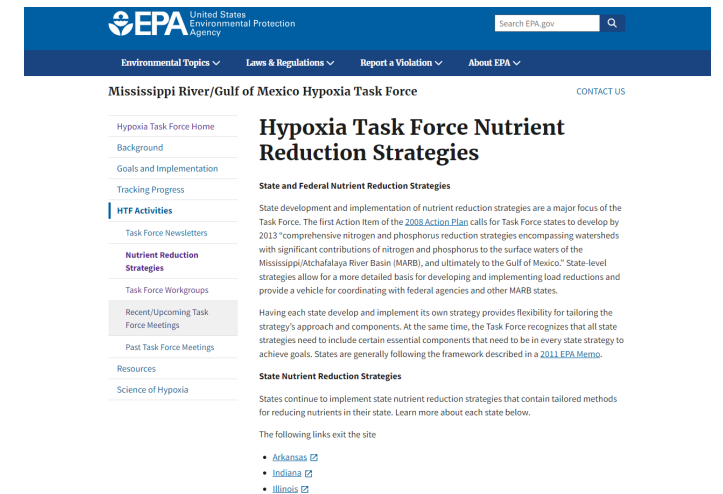


- Task Force Members:
 - meet 1-2 times in-person during the year.
 - Representative from each of the 5 federal agencies and each of the 12 member states.
 - Includes a co-chair from the feds and a co-chair from the states.
- Coordinating Committee:
 - Meets virtually every 6 weeks, and at the in-person task force meeting.
 - Includes the 5 federal agencies and the 12 member states.
 - Coordinating Committee state members can include more than one agency.
- Partnership with SERA-46:
 - 12-member state Land Grant Universities
 - Help with implementation needs and strategies, research needs, etc.

State Nutrient Reduction Strategies



- Each member state has a State Nutrient Reduction Strategy.
- The 2008 Action Plan by the HTF called for state strategies and a dual nutrient reduction effort under Action Item 1:
 - “Complete and implement comprehensive nitrogen and phosphorus reduction strategies for states within the Mississippi/Atchafalaya River Basin encompassing watersheds with significant contributions of nitrogen and phosphorus to the surface waters of the Mississippi/Atchafalaya River Basin, and ultimately to the Gulf of Mexico.”
 - These strategies are a cornerstone of the HTF efforts to help meet the goals.
 - There are eleven key actions in the 2008 Action Plan that outline critical needs to:
 - “complete and implement nitrogen and phosphorus reduction strategies,
 - promote effective conservation practices and management practices,
 - track progress,
 - reduce existing scientific uncertainties, and
 - promote effective communications to increase awareness of Gulf hypoxia.”



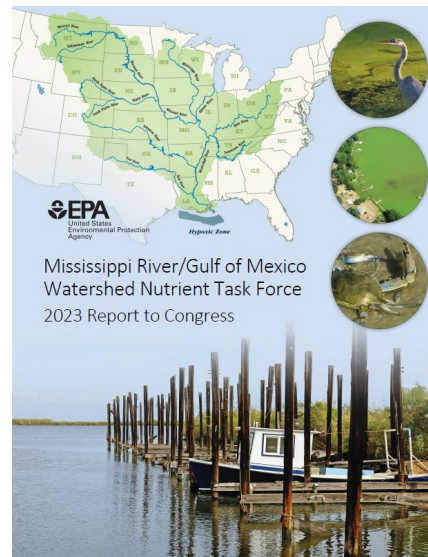
HTF Workgroups and Communication



- There are several Workgroups charged with specific tasks and goals.
 - Adoption of Innovative BMPs
 - Communications
 - Ecosystems and Social Metrics
 - Funding, Traditional and Non-traditional
 - **Non-Point Source Measures**
 - Point-Source Measures
 - **Research Needs**
 - Water Quality Monitoring
 - **Water Quality Trends**

- Bi-annual Report to Congress

- Quarterly Newsletters



A screenshot of the EPA website for the Mississippi River/Gulf of Mexico Hypoxia Task Force. The page has a blue header with the EPA logo and navigation links. The main content area is white with a blue sidebar on the left. The sidebar lists various sections like "Hypoxia Task Force Home", "Background", "Goals and Implementation", "Tracking Progress", "HTF Activities", "Task Force Newsletters", "Nutrient Reduction Strategies", "Task Force Workgroups", "Recent/Upcoming Task Force Meetings", "Past Task Force Meetings", "Resources", and "Science of Hypoxia". The main content area has a heading "Hypoxia Task Force Workgroups" and a paragraph of text. Below this are three sections: "Adoption of Innovative Best Management Practices (BMPs)", "Communications", and "Ecosystem and Social Metrics". Each section has a "Workgroup Charge" and a brief description. The "Funding, Traditional and Non-Traditional" section is also present with a "Workgroup Charge" and a brief description. The "Nonpoint Source (NPS) Metrics" section is a link.

Hypoxia Task Force Website



<https://www.epa.gov/ms-htf>

A screenshot of the EPA website for the Mississippi River/Gulf of Mexico Hypoxia Task Force. The page features a blue header with the EPA logo and navigation menus. The main content area has a large satellite-style image of the Gulf of Mexico with a dark blue overlay box titled "In the Spotlight" containing a list of links. The Windows taskbar is visible at the bottom.

An official website of the United States government [Here's how you know](#)

EPA United States Environmental Protection Agency

Search EPA.gov

Environmental Topics ▾ Laws & Regulations ▾ Report a Violation ▾ About EPA ▾

CONTACT US

Mississippi River/Gulf of Mexico Hypoxia Task Force

In the Spotlight

- [HTF 2023 Report to Congress](#)
- [View the agenda for the 38th HTF Public Meeting](#)
- [EPA Provides Bipartisan Infrastructure Law Gulf Hypoxia Program Funding to HTF States and Tribes](#)
- [Hypoxia Task Force Newsletter - October 2023](#)

Mississippi River Gulf of Mexico Watershed Nutrient Task Force

Type here to search

43°F Cloudy 10:13 AM 3/6/2024

Hypoxia Task Force Website



<https://www.epa.gov/ms-htf>



Task Force Background

- [Current Members](#)
- [Task Force Partnerships](#)
- [History of the Task Force](#)
- [Related Legislation](#)



Goals and Implementation

- [Action Plans and Goal Framework](#)
- [Federal Strategies](#)
- [Implementation](#)



Tracking Progress

- [Task Force Success Stories](#)
- [Hypoxic Zone Size](#)
- [Point Source Reports](#)
- [Nonpoint Source Report](#)
- [Reports to Congress](#)
- [Tracking Progress Overview](#)



HTF Activities

- [Task Force Newsletters](#)
- [Upcoming Task Force Meetings](#)
- [Nutrient Reduction Strategies](#)
- [Task Force Workgroups](#)
- [Past Task Force Meetings](#)



Resources

- [Gulf Hypoxia Program](#)
- [Task Force Studies/Reports](#)



Science of Hypoxia

- [Hypoxia 101](#)
- [The MARB](#)
- [Nutrient Pollution](#)
- [Additional Task Force Resources](#)



Current Gulf Hypoxia Action Plan Goals



Coastal Goal (adopted 2015):

- The HTF goal is to reduce the areal extent of the Gulf of Mexico hypoxic zone to less than 5,000 square kilometers by the year 2035, with an agreed upon interim target of a 20% nitrogen and phosphorus load reduction by the year 2025.

Within Basin Goal (adopted 2008):

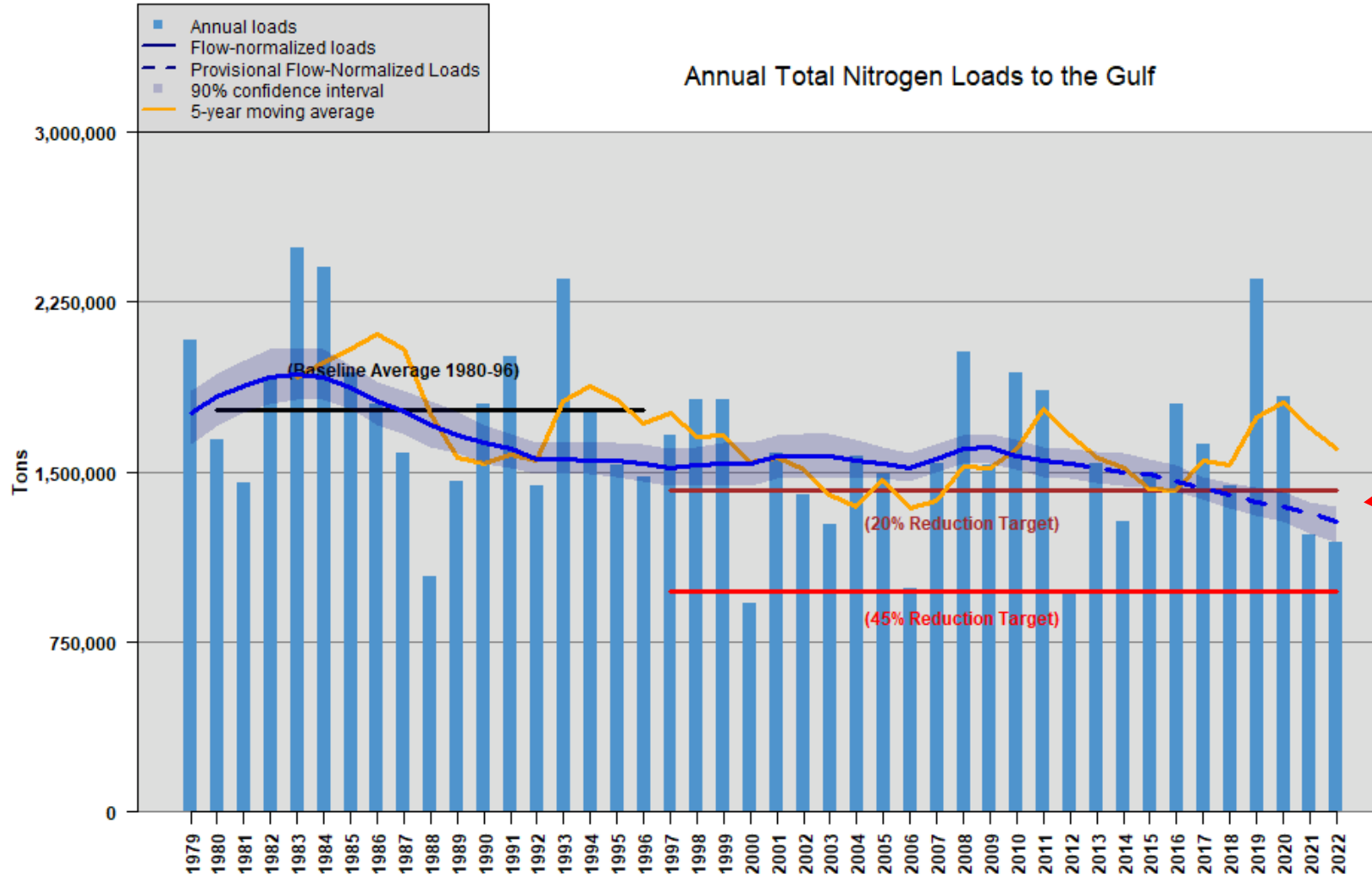
- To restore and protect the waters of the 31 states and tribal lands within the MARB through implementation of nutrient and sediment reduction actions to protect public health and aquatic life as well as reduce negative impacts of water pollution on the Gulf of Mexico.

Quality of Life Goal (adopted 2008):

- To improve the communities and economic conditions across the MARB, in particular the agriculture, fisheries and recreation sectors, through improved public and private land management and a cooperative, incentive-based approach.

Coastal Goal – Total Nitrogen

The HTF goal is to reduce the areal extent of the Gulf of Mexico hypoxic zone to less than 5,000 square kilometers by the year 2035, with an agreed upon interim target of a 20% nitrogen and phosphorus load reduction by the year 2025.

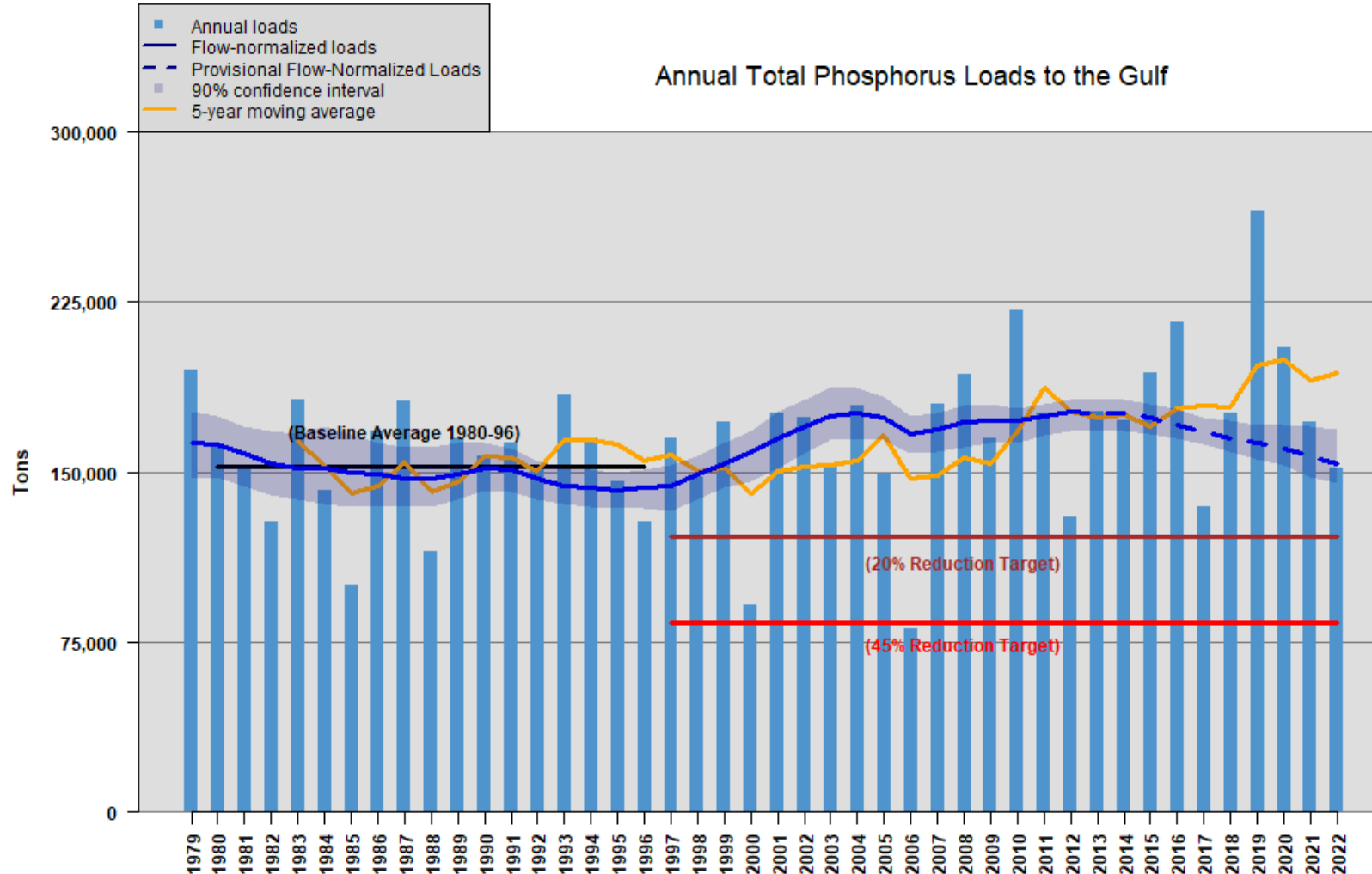


- The Hypoxia Task Force has met the 2025 Interim goal for **total nitrogen**, the 20% reduction target.

- There are many factors that contribute to this.
- There is still more work to do.

Coastal Goal – Total Phosphorus

The HTF goal is to reduce the areal extent of the Gulf of Mexico hypoxic zone to less than 5,000 square kilometers by the year 2035, with an agreed upon interim target of a 20% nitrogen and phosphorus load reduction by the year 2025.



- TP is increasing and more work is needed.
- There are many factors that contribute to this as well.

Gulf of Mexico Hypoxia Task Force (HTF)



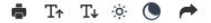
- Notice of the HTF meeting the interim target for TN was included in the 2023 Report to Congress.

https://www.epa.gov/system/files/documents/2023-11/10305_2023-htf-report-to-congress_508.pdf

- American Farm Bureau had a news release about this.

<https://www.fb.org/news-release/farmers-collaborate-with-state-and-federal-agencies-to-meet-nitrogen-loss-goals-two-years-early>

🏠 > NEWS RELEASE | DEC 06, 2023



Farmers Collaborate with State and Federal Agencies to Meet Nitrogen Loss Goals Two Years Early

TOPICS
Water Quality
Water



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photo credit: AFBF Photo, Cole Staudt

A new report by the Environmental Protection Agency's Hypoxia Task Force (HTF) demonstrates that the hard work of farmers and ranchers to reduce nutrient losses in the Mississippi River watershed is paying off. The report reveals that the twelve participating states have met interim nitrogen reduction goals two years ahead of schedule and are also making considerable progress in bringing down phosphorus losses.

The goals, which are part of a comprehensive strategy established by state and federal agencies across the Mississippi River watershed region, tasked farmers, ranchers and trusted advisors with helping to reduce nutrient losses by 20 percent by 2025. Through dedication to the implementation of conservation and best management practices, nitrogen loss has already been reduced by 23 percent, which exceeds the goals established in the Gulf Hypoxia Action Plan 2008.



State Soil Conservation Board

March 12th, 2024

ISDA – CREP & Water Quality Initiatives, Julie Harrold



Program Updates

Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program

- CREP Expansion:
 - The CREP Programmatic Environmental Assessment (PEA) has begun. We are working with VERSAR. Timeline for completion of the PEA is mid-June.
 - ISDA's goal for the program expansion to start is October 1, 2024.
 - Training with ISDA Resource Specialists and SWCD for CREP Administration is being planned for within the next few months.
 - Work on setting up the contracts between ISDA and the SWCD CREP Administrating counties has begun.
- Approximate acres signed up so far this calendar year are 88.6 acres.
- Attached to this report is the usual report showing the current status of acres and dollars in CREP, including total completed acres and total enrolled acres since the beginning of the program, and total dollars paid out through the CREP program.
- To date, the state has paid out more than \$11.2 million. For every state dollar that is spent, the federal match is approximately \$4-\$13 for every state dollar, which is currently between \$41.2 million and \$134 million of federal dollars depending on the practice.

IN State Nutrient Reduction Strategy (SNRS)

- The next revision of the SNRS is to be released in late calendar year 2025.
- Indiana Science Assessment
 - Component 1:
 - An online web tool has been developed and released displaying the results of the water quality trends report and making the results more accessible to conservation partners and the public. It can be found on the Science Assessment website at: <https://www.in.gov/isda/divisions/soil-conservation/indiana-state-nutrient-reduction-strategy/indiana-science-assessment/>.
 - Core Team is discussing internally what the next steps of this component will look like.
 - Component 2:
 - Contract with Purdue for INREP has been fully executed and work is continuing.
 - An INREP manager has been hired at Purdue. His name is Chris Hay. A graduate student is continuing to work with us as a research assistant
 - Fact sheets showing the results of four practices are available; Cover Crops, Phosphorus placement, phosphorus rate, and DWM.



State Soil Conservation Board

March 12, 2024

Nutrient Stewardship Updates, Breegan Andersen



Mississippi River Basin Soil Sampling Program

- Indiana's Mississippi River Basin (MRB) Soil Sampling Program re-opened on Feb. 19th, 2024, and will close once we reach workload capacity. There are 135 farms enrolled totaling around 5,500 acres as of March 7th, 2024.
- The program acreage enrollment threshold has been reduced to 100 acres to ensure Resource Specialist are able to maintain workload capacity for other program contributions.
- The program webpage has been updated to reflect changes and can be found on the [ISDA website](#).
- This program includes Indiana watersheds within the MRB and excludes the WLEB and Lake Michigan Basins. This is due to federal statutory language associated with the funds.
- We continue to work on developing a novel procurement process with the State to reduce the burden of the contracting process for Ag Retailers and Crop Advisor participation. Updates will be shared when we have more information.

Gulf Hypoxia Program (GHP)

- US EPA anticipates publishing the next implementation memo prior to the new federal fiscal year allowing ISDA to submit our next GHP workplan.
- As a reminder, these are non-competitive funds established under the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law to allow Hypoxia Task Force Member states to further their nutrient reduction strategy efforts.



State Soil Conservation Board

March 12, 2024

Technology Development and Strategy

Leah Harmon



Update

Beginning in March 2024, I will have a new position within ISDA. I will be the Director of Technology Development and Strategy. This role will serve the entire agency and formalizes a lot of the work I have already been doing. It has been my pleasure to serve the Division of Soil Conservation for the past 9 years and I look forward to serving ISDA in a different capacity. Since soil conservation is ISDA's largest team, I will still be involved just not in the same ways I always have been.

In my new role, I have 5 key focus areas:

1. Technology strategy and process development
2. Creating efficiency using tech as a resource
3. Technology implementation, documentation and training
4. Fostering partnerships through technology
5. Data driven reporting

If the SSCB or the Clean Water Indiana program have technology needs in the future, please let me know and I will be happy to help.



State Soil Conservation Board
March 12, 2024 District Support Specialist (DSS) Report:
1/1/24 to 3/1/24



Statewide or Regional Trainings for SWCD Supervisors and Staff

- **Completed since last report:**
 - DSSs hosted a New Supervisor Training at Annual Conference (23 attendees signed in)
 - DSSs attended IASWCD Annual Conference and participated in various ways, such as moderating and facilitating, and giving updates at Region Meetings. It was a great time to visit with SWCDs and Partners.
 - Laura hosted a regional training via Teams: "AFR Memo, AFR, Internal Audit, AFR Resource Guide & Capacity Report Training" (10 counties present).
 - Laura hosted two regional sessions via Teams: "AFR Get Help, Give Help" (10 counties present).
 - Sandra hosted a NNW Staff get together (9 counties present).
 - Nathan hosted a "AFR, Ask, Listen, and Assist" session (7 counties present).
 - Sandra hosted two virtual open office hours via for AFR assistance (4 counties participated).
- **New Supervisor Training:** available year-round via your ISDA DSS in both in-person and virtual options as well as a recorded link.

Clean Water Indiana

- Grant Updates for CWI competitive grants were due January 31. DSSs assisted grantees with various tasks tying to these reports. Thanks to all grantees for their hard work on these grants and reporting duties!
- DSSs continue to provide assistance to groups with active competitive CWI grants.
- DSSs assisted Districts with Training Reimbursement applications. All funds are spent now. Great job SWCDs!
- Capacity Reports are due March 31. DSSs are assisting with these as well and can provide a summary of results for the SSCB.
- Annual Financial Reports (AFRs) are due March 31 in GMS. AFRS were due in Gateway by February 29. Thanks to the DSS crew for assisting SWCDs on these, and to the SWCDs for their work as well. This can be a lot of work!
- ISDA provided input during the SSCB Grants Committee meeting as they develop guidance for 2025 CWI Competitive Grants.

DSS Committee Work and Other Key Accomplishments:

- DSSs participated in regional or statewide committee work including: All Employee Meeting, Board Certification Program, Clean Water Indiana, ICP Training and Certification Program, State Soil Conservation Board, and Transect.

- ISDA and IASWCD met to discuss Summer Summit possibilities for 2024.
- Team members from the ISDA, Southern Indiana Cooperative Invasives Management and the Urban Soil Health Program met with the Indiana State Board of Accounts (SBOA) to get further clarification and information on SBOA’s position on an SWCD holding and accounting for property or cash belonging to a non-profit organization or a private individual. Current communications have been sent out, and we’ll send other communications from SBOA as we get them.
- DSSs provided input during the SSCB Strategic Planning meeting.

Elections, Appointments and Annual Meetings

- SWCD Annual Meetings are underway through March 31. New Supervisors will be updated in the Supervisor Directories by SWCDs, and in the Term Directory by DSSs. DSSs are helping with various topics tying to the meetings, and attending some of them as well.

DSS Activities Statewide For This Reporting Period	Total
Input, Assistance & Attendance At SWCD Board Meetings	26
Assistance with SWCD or Partner Strategic Planning	12
Attendance at SWCD Annual Meetings	20
Other Events with SWCDs For Training, Assistance, Guidance, CWI, etc.	139
Total Number of Counties Impacted by Activities of Significance	80

Board Certification Program

The Board Certification Program was rolled out at IASWCD Annual Conference. The website hosts various trainings and modules pertinent to SWCD Supervisors. There is no certification tied to the program at this time. View the website here: <https://bit.ly/swcdbcp>

Highlights

Southwest Program Manager

Julie Loehr, CCSI SW Program Manager submitted her resignation with her final day being February 2nd. Applications are in review

Clean Water Indiana Breakfast at the Statehouse

- CCSI and NRCS staff manned a soils health demonstration area that also included a selection of cover crop root banners.
- CCSI Agronomists coordinated with NRCS, ISDA, SWCD and Purdue staff to collect soils from most of Indiana's legislative districts to use during soil health demonstrations for elected officials.

National No-till Conference

- CCSI, NRCS, ISDA, Purdue, and SWCD staffed manned an Indiana Conservation Partnership soil health demonstration booth organized by CCSI.
- Video of slake demos by Don Donovan, NRCS, were recorded by a Ying Li, a TNC staff member based out of Asia. Within hours of sharing with her China-based farmer groups, the video had been viewed hundreds of times
- Video of Amanda Kautz, Darlene Florence, and Sarah Vaughn, all NRCS, was recorded by a visiting Ukrainian Farmer with over 45.5K YouTube subscribers. The video featured all of the available soil health demonstrations as well as the CCSI cover crop root banners.
Ukrainian Video - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Bvh9tQRs0hg>
No-Tiller's website - <https://no-tiller.com/>
- CCSI was invited by Randall Reeder, OSU professor emeritus, to bring the booth to the Conservation Tillage and Technology Conference in Ada Ohio – March 12-13

Intro to Soil Health

- 60 registrants, 45 live attendees (some register to watch the videos later)
 - 30 NRCS
 - 8 University: 5 Purdue, 1 Michigan State, 1 Ohio State, 1 University of Missouri
 - 13 SWCD, including 1 from Iowa
 - Others included: CTIC, New Jersey Audubon Society, a community empowerment group

Farmer-led Mentoring Program

- Led by Jim Moseley and supported by AGree/Meridian Institute a group of top soil health farmers from around the state have been meeting to design a farmer-led mentoring program.
- Next in-person meeting will be in June
- Rollout / soft launch summer 2024

No-Till and Cover Crop Handbook

- Based on SARE project out of NJ and edited by Lessiter Media (No-Till Farmer)
- Approval received to order enough handbooks for Fundamentals of Soil Health attendees *and* one for every USDA Service Center, every county-level Extension office in the state, and non-colocated SWCD office

Podcasts

- Jay Brandt and Jimmy Emmons – The Legacy of David Brandt
- Barry Fisher and Chris Lee – The Legacy of Fred Woods

Cover Crop Root Boxes

- Instructions acquired from Becks Seed on methods used to create corn root display (see photo)
- Elam Fisher, Byron Seeds will be working this summer to replicate the process using cover crops



G1. Farmer Engagement and Involvement

1. Innovative and Visionary Farmers

Quarterly Target: 1 ride-a-long, shop visit, or other (Each – CCSI-POTF, Program Manager)

Listening sessions with Innovative and Visionary Farmers. Use to help identify needed field day and training topics.

- 01/09-12 National No-Till Conference – All staff
- 01/18 Oscar Wells (NEPM)

Conservative and Pragmatic Farmers

Meetings and other opportunities for listening sessions to gain perspective on adoption issues/concerns of soil health practices. Use to help develop outreach topics and tactics.

Quarterly Targets: 1 ride-a-long, shop visit, or other (Each – CCSI-POTF, Program Manager)

•

2. Farmer Influencers

Quarterly Targets: 1 LLP per region adding an influencer to their outreach planning team or board.

(Each - NPM, SPM)

•

3. Presentations

Quarterly Targets: Average of 3 soil health presentations or demonstrations. (CCSI-POTF)

- 01/04 Purdue ANR Extension: CCSI Program and partnerships with Purdue (D)

G2. Local Level Partnership Support

1. Facilitate and Support Local Level Partnership's Outreach and Education

Quarterly Target: CCSI as a group materially participate in / support average of 15 LLP Outreach Efforts groups (CCSI Team Goal)

Workshops Completed

- 01/09 – IASWCD Clean Water Indiana Breakfast at the Statehouse,
- 01/09-12 National No-Till Conference, 800 attendees
- 01/12 Indiana Farmers Union
- 01/19 Area Corn and Soybean Day, Evansville
- 01/18 Ft Wayne Farm Show
- 01/22-23 Indiana Hort Conference
- 01/30 Howard County SWCD Annual Meeting
- 02/01-02 Northern Indiana Grazing Conference
- 02/06 Regional Soil Health Workshop, Salem
- 02/06 Jackson County PARP
- 02/07 Area Corn and Soybean Day, Evansville
- 02/14-15 Joint Council of Extension Professionals Leadership Conference
- 02/21 Posey County Ag Day, New Harmony
- 02/22 Ag Women Engage 2024 Conference, Ft Wayne
- 02/26 Lake County Winter Farmer Meeting
- 02/28 St. Joe and Marshall SWCD Producers Meeting

Workshops in Progress:

- 03/05 Orange County Soil Health Workshop
- 03/13 Landwise Workshop, Daviess County POSTPONED
- 03/20 SoilCon, Kosciusko County
- 3/21 Wayne County Conservation Focus Workshop
- 03/26 St Joe PARP
- 03/2024 – ADM Growers Meetings
- 03/2024 Howard/Tipton Workshop
- March or April – Purdue Extension Nutrient Management Workshop
- Summer 2024 – Understanding Ag Grazing Schools (2)
- 08/09-10/2024 Manure Management Workshop
- 08/2024 Indiana Corn/Soy Upper White Growers Workshop
- 2021 – 23 – Kankakee Basin and WLEB series of events to support existing RCPP (WLEB) and proposed RCPP (Kankakee) (NPM)
- 2024 – Ray Archuleta – Cass, Miami, Wabash, and Fulton Counties
- 09/2024 Porter County Event
- November 2024 – Spencer County SWCD

2. Consistent Soil Health Messaging

Annual Target: Outlined in fall with training team.

Foundational Soil Health Trainings / Awareness, Knowledge and Understanding of Soil Health

Completed Trainings

- 02/13-14 MCCC Annual Conference
- 02/27 CCSI-SARE Intro to Soil Health; 60 registrants, 45 live attendees

Trainings in Progress:

- 04/2, 9, 16, 23 CCSI-SARE Foundations of Soil Health Systems
- 06/11-13 Soil Health and Sustainability for Midwestern Field Staff
- Soil Health Scouting / Diagnostics Modules
- Soil Health PARP Regulatory Topic Development

Professional Development Opportunities

Annual Target: Outlined in fall with training team.

Advanced Soil Health Trainings / Applied Soil Health Knowledge and Skills

Completed Trainings:

Trainings in Progress

- Summer 2024: CCSI-SARE Continuing Soil Health Education: Machinery and Equipment Set-up (tentative)
- September 2024: Engaging New Audiences

4. Messaging to/from Local Level Partnerships

Monthly Targets: 2-3 LLP visits. 1 Teleconference / Region (Each - NWPM, NEPM, SWPM, SEPM)

- 01/16 Miami County SWCD Board Meeting
- 2/8 – Hamilton Co SWCD Annual Meeting

- 2/13 – NNW IDEA fall conference planning meeting
- 2/13 – M&G Ashley Heims, Starke Co SWCD
- 2/15 – M&G Summer Brown, Purdue Extension Jasper County
- 2/26 – NE/NW CCSI Regional Teleconference (staff only)
- 2/26 – Montgomery County SWCD Annual Meeting
- 2/29 – Lower Kankakee Watershed Initiative steering committee meeting
- 2/29 – M&G Jamie Reed, Purdue Extension Newton County
- 2/29 – LaPorte Co SWCD Annual Meeting

G3. General CCSI Outreach / Communication

1. Marketing and Messaging

Quarterly Targets: 3 Podcasts; 6 Newsletters; Use social networks and other media tools to deliver soil health messaging and information.

Completed Materials:

- Podcasts
 - Mike Lessiter and Hans Kok – National No-Till Conference: Past, Present, Future
 - Jay Brandt and Jimmy Emmons – The Legacy of David Brandt
 - Barry Fisher and Chris Lee – The Legacy of Fred Woods

Completed Materials:

- Purdue Extension Soil Health Signature Series – next “soft launch” = March

Materials in Progress:

- Regulatory Pesticide Considerations for Soil Health Systems, by Hans Schmitz, Ann Kline, Mathias Ingle, Ashley Adair, and Matt Pearson, OISC – PARP Regulatory Topic in draft status

G4. Research

Quarterly Targets: None

CCSI no longer leads research projects; CCSI provides connectivity between researchers and cooperators; potential research needs.

- Support – Purdue University NIFA – Empowering Indiana’s Organic Farmers – Assessing Regional and Farm Scale Soil Health with a Farmer Network (Rui)
- Support – 1000 Farms Project, Ecdysis Foundation (Lundgren) – 2024 sampling coordination in W IN

OTHER

Professional Development (*Training for CCSI Staff, Certifications*)

Conferences / Events Season!

- 1/9 - IASWCD Annual Meeting and CWI Statehouse Breakfast, Indianapolis, IN
- 1/16 – Urban Updates Topic: Compost and Vermicomposting
- 1/17 – Brassica Bolting Trial Presentation at From Food to Flowers: Everything Local Conference
- 1/20 - Michiana Seed Swap - vendor w/ information and cover crop seed giveaway
- 1/23 – Season Extension Workshop
- 1/24 - Circular Indiana Networking Event in Fort Wayne
- 1/24 – IU Bloomington guest presentation for Urban Agriculture class
- 1/26 – Switzerland Small-Scale Ag Breakfast
- 2/2 – Indiana Tech lecture: Soil Health & Conservation on Small Farms
- 2/3 – Fruit Tree Workshop
- 2/10 - Bee and Butterfly Prairie Planting Workshop
- 2/13-2/14 - Midwest Cover Crop Council
- 2/17 – Floyd Co. Community Ag Breakfast
- 2/19 – Guest Lecture: ENV 265 & ENV 201/401 at Hanover College
- 2/20 – Urban Updates Topic: Nutrient Management Calculator release
- 2/20 - Keep it Growing: Season Extension Workshop (Virtual)
- 2/22-2/25 - Marbleseed Organic Farming Conference, LaCrosse Wisconsin
- 2/29-3/1 - Purdue Small Farms Conference
- 3/7 - Guest lecturer at St Francis University soil science class
- 3/6 - Soil Health in the Classroom: Medora Community School Envirothon
- 3/5 - Bed Prep for Healthy Soils
- 3/12 – Urban Updates Topic: Perennial Fruit Crops on Diversified Farms
- 3/23 - Educational program at Allen Co Gardening Symposium
- Attending SWCD Annual Meetings



USH at CWI Breakfast at the Statehouse – cover crop root tubes were great



USH at Purdue Small Farms Conference – so many farmers!

Technical Resources / Projects

- Nutrient Management Calculator – Released in collaboration with Marion County SWCD, NRCS, Purdue
- SARE Grant Receipt for project: “Solving the Compost Conundrum: Utilizing Microbial Inoculation to Increase Soil Fertility and Health on Small Farms, 2024-2026
- Cover Crop seed packages – Ordered from Byron Seeds for 4,000 packages to distribute via team and WGs

Site Visits / Technical Assistance

- 20+ site visits, 10+ technical assistance

Working Groups / Special Projects

- 1/11 – **“Move that Pile: Transitioning an Aerated Static Compost Pile into a Windrow, Pt. 1”**, Hands-on Compost Workshop for Hanover Compost Cooperative
- 1/21 - **Soil Summit** by SCRAP Working group (St Joseph County Regenerative Ag Partnership) – 40+ people
- 1/29 – **“Windrow Compost Health, Pt. 2”**, Hands-on Compost Workshop for Hanover Compost Cooperative
- 1/25 – **Bramble Workshop** with Purdue Extension by PUSH-IT group
- 3/6 - **Creative Growing** Garden workshop - Parke/Vermillion/Vigo Soil Health Alliance
- /Madison County – Kickoff meeting!
- DeKalb /Steuben – Kickoff meeting!
- DUCT (Dearborn Urban Conservation Team) – Established!
- Warren / Fountain – Forming a group!
- Training for all new groups, **startup soil health kit** - books and educational resources for all groups



New demo garden underway in Jennings Co. – Jennings SWCD, Parks Department.



Hanover Compost Club – compost from campus waste

Yard Sprouts workshop
HOW TO UTILIZE HOLISTIC PLANTING AND MAINTENANCE PRACTICES IN GARDENING

February 21, 2024
6-8 p.m. *free!*

light refreshments provided

LOCATION
● Endris Lodge, Lapping Park, 2404 Greentree N, Clarksville, IN

REGISTRATION & MORE INFO
● www.clarkswcd.org or scan the QR code to the right

FUTURE WORKSHOPS
● March 20, 2024 - Yardening
● April 17, 2024 - Native plants & trees
● August 21, 2024 - Fall season gardening

Join us to learn how to extend the growing season of your garden utilizing cold frames (we'll show you how to make one yourself!), how to utilize raised beds (perfect if you're short on space or just want a small garden), and how to select plants that grow well in cool weather.

Brought to you by the Clark County S.O.I.L. Health Team (Promoting Sustainability, Outreach, Innovation, & Leadership in Clark County) in partnership with Indiana Urban Soil Health, Purdue Extension, and Clarksville Parks & Recreation. Activities and programs will be made available to all citizens, regardless of race, color, religion, gender, national origin, marital status or disability.

Creative Growing
With Parke, Vermillion and Vigo Co SWCD's

MARCH 6TH
9AM-NOON

TALKS ON ORGANIC FARMING, BENEFICIAL INSECTS AND REGENERATIVE AGRICULTURE

Terre Haute Convention Center
800 Wabash Ave, Terre Haute, IN 47807

SOIL HEALTH ON THE SMALL FARM WORKSHOP | PART 1

“The Small Farm of the Future”
Presentation by Dan Perkins

- MARCH 12TH, 2024
- 6:00 PM
- LILLY CENTER FOR LAKES & STREAMS, WINONA LAKE, IN
- SCAN QR FOR RSVP & DETAILS



Kosciusko County
Soil And Water
Conservation District



LILLY CENTER FOR
**LAKES
& STREAMS**
A Division of Grace College

**KOSCIUSKO URBAN HEALTHY SOILS
WORKING GROUP**

BENEFICIAL INSECTS FOR FRUIT AND VEGETABLE GROWERS

Green Lacewings Family Chrysopidae	Brown Lacewings Family Hemerobiidae	Ladybird Beetles (Ladybugs)	Syrphid Flies (Flower Flies)	Long-legged Flies <i>Condylostylus</i>	Tachinid Flies
 Egg Larva	 Larva	 Adult Larva	 Adult Larva	 Adult	 Adult
Soldier Beetles <i>Chauliognathus</i>	Ground Beetles <i>Harpalus, Poecilus</i>	Plant Bugs, <i>Plagiognathus</i>	Assassin Bugs, <i>Zelus</i>	Damsel Bugs, <i>Nabis</i>	Spined Soldier Bug, <i>Podisus</i>
 Adult Larva	 <i>Harpalus</i> <i>Poecilus</i>	 Adult	 Eggs Adult	 Adult	 Adult
Braconid Wasps	Potter and Mason Wasps Subfamily Eumeninae	Yellowjackets <i>Vespa, Dolichovespula</i>	Paper Wasps, <i>Polistes</i>	Thynnid and Scoliid Wasps	Jumping, Wolf, and Orbweaver Spiders
 Adult Parasitized "Mummy" Aphids	 Adult	 Adult	 Adult	 Thynnid Wasp Scoliid Wasp	 Jumping Spider Wolf Spider

Indiana NRCS State Conservationist Report

March 2024 State Soil Conservation Board Meeting

FARM BILL PROGRAMS

Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP) Application Dates

Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP) – Application deadline of March 15.

Historic Level of Farm Bill Funding

USDA made record investments in private lands conservation in fiscal year 2023. In fiscal year 2023, USDA supported more than 45,000 conservation contracts, more than any year in the 89-year history of NRCS, totaling over \$2.8 billion in financial assistance to producers for conservation efforts. NRCS also released updated state-by-state data (<https://www.nrcs.usda.gov/resources/data-and-reports/rca-data-viewer>) showing where investments went in FY2023 for resources provided under both the Farm Bill and Inflation Reduction Act.

Indiana NRCS is currently obligating a record \$88M of Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP), Conservation Stewardship (CSP) and Agricultural Conservation Easement Program (ACEP) dollars to Indiana landowners.

- INNRCs is obligating over \$50M in EQIP. In FY 2024 EQIP- Inflation Reduction Act (IRA) funding is \$26.5M.
- INNRCs is obligating \$20M in CSP with \$8.6M coming from IRA funds.
- INNRCs should be obligating around \$18M in ACEP to Indiana landowners.
 - ACEP has \$10.6M coming from IRA Funding.
 - Indiana easement closed one Agriculture Land Easements (ALE) easement in 2018. In Fiscal year 2024 Indiana has a record three ALE applications.

BLACK LOAM CONFERENCE SERIES – NORTHWEST EVENT

Legacy Taste of the Garden will be hosting five events throughout Indiana in 2024 to reach BIPOC farmers and producers. The first stop of the Black Loam Conference will take place March 28 at the Dean and Barbara White Community Center in Merrillville, Indiana. The events are free to attend, but seating is limited so pre-registration is required. This year's Black Loam conference series will focus on strategically building sustainability and community wealth for BIPOC and historically underserved farmers and businesses. You can register for this event at:

<https://www.legacytasteofthegarden.com/event-details-registration/indiana-black-loam-merrillville>.

COMPOSTING AND FOOD WASTE REDUCTION PROJECTS

USDA is investing approximately \$11.5 million in 38 Composting and Food Waste Reduction cooperative agreements that support innovative, scalable waste management plans to reduce and divert food waste from landfills. This includes one project in Indiana.

USDA prioritized projects that anticipate or demonstrate economic benefits, incorporate plans to make compost easily accessible to farmers, including community gardeners, integrate other food waste strategies, including food recovery efforts and collaborate with multiple partners. The collaboration between NIFA and the Office of Urban Agriculture and Innovative Production is part of [USDA's framework](#) to transform the U.S. food system to benefit consumers, producers and rural communities by providing more options, increasing access, and creating new and better markets for small and mid-size producers.

Recipients include projects in 23 states. Indiana's project aims to establish a comprehensive residential waste management program in Gary, Indiana. The project focuses on promoting sustainable household waste practices, reducing landfill waste, and fostering community engagement. Collaboratively, project partners seek to address the environmental, social, and economic challenges associated with residential waste management by implementing a holistic approach that includes waste reduction, recycling, composting, and community outreach.

For a complete list of these recommended cooperative agreement recipients and project summaries, visit usda.gov/urban. These new agreements build on USDA's \$12 million investment in 82 agreements since 2020.

AVIAN INFLUENZA UPDATE

New Incident Reported – Allen County

A Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza (HPAI) incident was identified in Allen County. As such, a 20km surveillance zone has been established by BOAH for portions of Allen, Noble, Dekalb and Whitley counties.

BOAH Recommendations for site visits:

To balance regulatory oversight with disease containment following a diagnosis of Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza (HPAI), the Indiana State Board of Animal Health recommends suspension of regulatory activity requiring visits to sites with poultry or avian species throughout the county where an active Control Area or Surveillance Zone has been established.

If site visits cannot be avoided, partners should exercise exceptional biosecurity practices including pre-visit notifications, down-time between farms, PPE, seasonal influenza vaccinations, and avoiding live poultry, wild birds, and their droppings.

Previously Reported Incident – Daviess County

On February 14, the control area around the Daviess 02 turkey flock was released and the surveillance zone was discontinued. Please continue to keep the various biosecurity protocols in mind when visiting all livestock facilities (call and schedule visit; confirm biosecurity procedures for facility; etc.).



Report to State Soil Conservation Board

March 12, 2024

Accomplishments Highlights

Goal: Create a 'brand' for Resilient Indiana

- Developed a logo
- Abbreviation will be RITA

Goal: Reintroduce myself to the SWCDs and various ICP partners

- Attending SWCD Annual Meetings within each IASWCD Region
To date: Putnam, Scott, Decatur, Dubois, Vanderburgh, Jay, Elkhart
- Met with various partners
ISDA RS Team Leader
ICP Leadership
NRCS Leadership/ACs
Dr. Prokopy (PU)
Central Hardwoods Joint Venture
IASWCD Board
IDEA Board
ISDA DSS team

Goal: Gather information on where to place technicians – considering local interest, workload, office space and training opportunities

- Collected feedback as I met with the various partners
- Created a SWCD survey that IDEA is helping me to distribute to collect feedback from individual districts - <https://forms.gle/xhnfE8wGd43GoYtQ8>

Goal: Attract highly qualified candidates for the Conservation Technician positions

- Developed a pre-posting flyer and shared it with various partners
- Developed a Google form to collect emails of those interested in being notified when the positions are posted
- Attended Purdue's Forestry and Natural Resources Career Fair

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