

State Soil Conservation Board Meeting
October 25, 2016
Huntington University – Dining Commons

Members in Attendance:

Ray Chattin
Bob Eddleman
Nola Gentry
Warren Baird

Members absent – Larry Clemens, Robert Woodling, Rex Blanton

Others in Attendance:

Jordan Seger, ISDA	Susi Stephan, Wabash SWCD	Matt Williams, ISDA
Leah Harmon, ISDA	Amy Mattox, Clear Elevation	Clint Orr, Clinton SWCD
Jennifer Thum, ISDA	Andrea Baker, Kosciusko SWCD	Leah Harden, Clinton SWCD
Dave Lefforge, ISDA	Darci Zolman, Kosciusko SWCD	Ben Reinhart, Purdue Extension
Nick Alles, ISDA		Amy Work, IASWCD
Ted McCammon, ISDA	Cheryl Jarrett, Huntington SWCD	Cress Hizer, IASWCD
Walt Sell, Purdue Extension		Becky Daugherty, Delaware SWCD
Julie Harrold, ISDA	Susan Lawrence	
Mary Lou Musselman, Miami SWCD	Andrew Pursifull, NRCS	Susan Hovermale, FSA
		Brandi Frazier, Madison SWCD

- I. 9:30AM Call to Order – at 9:35 – Ray had everyone introduce themselves**
- II. Draft minutes of September 2016**
Nola moved; Warren second.
Motion carried.
- III. Clean Water Indiana**
 - a. Clean Water Indiana Grants –Leah Harmon**
 - a. Leah stated that this year we had 31 applications compared to 26 last year, and a total request of \$2,529,142, which was about \$750,000 more than last year. The grants committee met last week and will discuss their top grant applications later on today. The AFR's are still in process. There is a new process for districts to receive their funds; they will be required to register as bidders. We have completed four grant reviews since the last meeting; there are a few follow up items that need to happen with a few districts. These are mostly conservation project tracking. We are doing another review this week and one more in December. Leah provided a written report for more detailed information.
 - b. Hendricks County- Leah Harmon**
 - i. They are seeking a modification to their 2015 application. It will require a vote of approval from the SSCB. Leah explained that their original budget showed \$7500.00 for an incentive payment for landowners to provide feedback on the economics of cover crops and no-till, and the district is finding that producers are proving feedback without the incentive. Therefore, they would like to turn those funds back into cost-share.
 - ii. Nola- stated that this grant modification will get stuff on the ground
Nola moved to approve the modification request, and Bob, seconded.
Motion carried.

c. CWI Grants Committee Report- Bob Eddleman

We received 31 proposals for a total request of \$2.5 million dollars, which is the most ever requested for competitive grants. It's a shame that we don't have enough money to fund all proposals. Bob read from the written grants committee report. In effort to save money there is always a reversion which is 4% this year. After reversion, the CWI grants budget has a little more than \$ million. Some of this funding has already has been approved for CSSI and training grants for. The board should consider a request for competitive grants and training funding. In your packet, you will find three maps. The first shows requested funding, and the second sheet shows the grants that are recommended for funding. The final map shows themes of the individual grant proposals with a breakdown of funding requested.

This year, the SSCB adopted three major changes for the CWI 2017 grants. The first one is the removal of the funding maximum. The second one was the removal of the funding categories, and the last one was the blind scoring. This was the big change for the committee and DSS team. In the blind scoring process, Leah removed identifying details so the scorer would be unbiased. This was a step forward.

The grants committee met and we went through the proposal as individually to make our recommendations. A list of the recommended proposals is on the grants committee report. They are in alphabetical order. New this year, the grant proposals that were funded were asked to take pictures and videos to publish the benefits of the projects to the districts. Any applications that revolved around equipment are required to install a CWI logo onto that piece of equipment.

As in years past, we are offering training funds. In the past, we have set aside \$30,000.00 for training, and the grants committee would like to recommend the same amount in 2017. The committee recommends an additional \$20,000 be offered to the districts specifically for grant writing training. The SWCDs need assistance with grant writing. Most of the districts only seek out CWI funds, where funds are limited. We hope that the districts will take advantage of the grant training funds to take trainings and seek out additional sources of funding for their projects.

If a district get approved for grant training funds, they would be required to submit a grant request outside of CWI and 319 funding in order to be eligible for grant training writing reimbursement in the future.

Bob recommend approval of the CWI committee request, and Nola seconded the motion. For discussion, Nola likes the idea of grant writing training. It is an art to get their foundation grants. If we can have people trained to be good grant writers, we have a lot of potential for good applications.

All in favor, motion is carried.

Ray thanked the grants committee for all their hard work. Hhe could not imagine making the difficult choices that they had to do. Ray talked about the information that he presented from Pennsylvania at the last SSCB meeting.

Bob – we need as a board to thank Leah, and all the DSSs for working with districts and helping them understand the grant process and put together effective grant proposals. In addition, it seems that grants get better and better and it is a tribute to the districts.

Ray – we did need assessment from the districts statewide and looking at the disparity of what the SWCD vision and local natural resources how it was reflected in those numbers, maybe we should do that again and see what has changed. See what the climate is.

IV. State Soil Conservation Board Business

a. SSCB Chairman's Report-Ray Chattin

1. 2017 Meeting Dates – time to start thinking about that. Leah, we have meeting at annual conference, Jan 22 and a roundtable at annual conference too. As a board, we have bounced around about other meeting scheduled. Leah will follow up with rooms. Ray – maybe it is not doable, he was wondering if the SSCB could hold their fall meeting in conjunction with the district showcase award. Makes sense that we can. Jordan see if we can do something. Problems with parking at TNC. Ray wanted to see if we could hold the meetings at NRCS, where they have ample parking.
Leah will double check on NRCS to see if we can hold our meetings there.
2. Ray mentioned several dates that he wants the SSCB to have representation at. Ray went over the dates.
3. Ray- we will need a new vice chair. Rex would be available. We need to vote in January with the full board. We will need to make appointments to the grant committee. Ray wanted to serve on that committee.

V. Soil and Water Conservation Districts

a. Grant County- Jennifer Thum

Nola moved to appoint Robert Emery. Bob seconded this motion.
All in favor, motion is carried.

b. Clinton County did a presentation – Clint Orr – Supervisor for Clinton spoke about what is going on in their county, and how they are working with Jane Frankenberger with Purdue University. Their goal is to show how this can benefit agriculture, and benefit the environment at the same time with the reuse of nitrogen and suggestion of atrazine. They provided a pamphlet on their drainage project.

Leah Harden– part of the program is how do we take this project to conception to actuality. The SSCB and ISDA are two entities that are have at the table as we drive this forward.

Ray appreciated what Clinton County is doing and thanked them for sharing, and he hopes that they can keep the board updated on how the SSCB can be of assistance on this.

VI. 10 Minute Break 10:21

a. Ray introduced Dr. Porter the Director of the Agriculture College of Huntington University.

- i. Dr. Porter stated that he is pleased that the SSCB could use this facility and see the Ag College and facilities. Dr. Porter talked about what the students are doing. In addition, he spoke about his former life at the University of Minnesota. Dr. Porter stated that they are adding things as they go,. Currently they have a major in Ag business, and we have eight tracks the business side, and Ag policy. Agriculture is new to HU. In the future and there is a shortage of AG teachers so they are in the process of adding this program. They plan to add on several buildings to supplement their program. They are a 4-year undergraduate degree.

VII. ISDA Updates

a. Director's Report- Jordan Seger

- i. Jordan stated that he provided a written report. He did want to highlight a few items.
- ii. Shout out to IASWCD to support the grants program to make that happen. Just a reminder that 1 million comes from general fund appropriations, which is essentially the funding for

competitive grants. We will be working with LG's office on grants paperwork and we will have one page summary forthcoming to be posted on website to learn more about these projects.

- iii. He introduced Matt Williams – working in Danville with Jerod Chew and covering four counties. Matt – lived Montgomery Ball State graduate, conservation and has been in employed with NRCS, and most recently with a Ag seed dealer. He has also worked for the March of Dimes, as an event planner and corporate sponsorship and wanted to get back in conservation. We are glad to have Matt on board.
- iv. Jordan added that we have a pending offer to an individual for a NE position, which would be based within the Albion Tech Team. With this addition, we would be back up to full staff.
- v. Jordan touched on the KPIs. We use these to show our government about showing progress and being accountable. The KPIs have to continue to justify the budget. We have to be accountable and transparent with these dollars, we had to come up with KPI, A person can visit any State agency and can see in real time how they are tracking their goals. For the Division you can see the load reductions. As you see the goals and numbers, we have been blowing the numbers out of the water. We complete the projects in the fourth quarter, so the numbers are low, but we are compiling the practices in the 4th quarter. These figures include districts and CWI work.
- vi. We will be planning more 3J visits, we rolled out the fall and winter transect that we have done for years and we have done a tillage transect back to 1990. Indiana has the best tillage history because of transect and added cover crops that get this done and make it happen. We are dealing with different software company to use remote sending down the road. Because we have these good partnerships, we have increase no-till acres by 466% since 1990.
- vii. Cover crops increased by 413% since 2011, which is something to be proud of. The partnership makes this possible.
- viii. The last thing, he congratulated the district showcase winners. Huntington group, Washington, Jennings, and Hamilton.

b. Technical Report- Jennifer Thum

- i. Jennifer pointed to her written report. Conservation planning is when RS's work with NRCS. Jennifer introduced NE resource specialists. Conservation workload is related to the Division's KPIs. Fourth quarter is when stuff is done. Public interaction is when an RS goes to workshops, field days, and promotes ISDA and district programs. Jennifer am proud of the work RSs are doing. Jennifer highlighted the each NE RS's individual work that they do outside of NRCS. Jennifer highlighted the work with the Amish. This effort is a huge success in both Adams and Allen Counties. She thanked Andrew with the Huntington Tech Team. Jill has created Amish specific education booklets, which have been well received. Adams County SWCD has horse drawn drill for rent, and the partnership is working on demo farm at Berne auction house. Field days have included Amish pasture walks. The region has three RCPP grants Kosciusko and Notre Dame, St. Joseph great lakes basin, and theWLEB. NE has done well with CWI grant past few years.

c. Agricultural Affairs-Jordan Seger

- i. Jordan went over the written report. Jordan mentioned that INFA partners collected over 43,000 corn stalks in the last three months. They were sent up to A and L labs in Fort Wayne. The winter grower meetings have been scheduled, which will look at aerial imagery and compare data, and this will be a good year for discussion. There was a tour of A&L labs at IDEA conference.
- ii. CCSI- staff has been brought on board and the initiative is getting up to full team. Thanks to CWI contribution over the years.

d. Accountability and Technology- Jordan Seger –

- i. Jordan went over Deb's report. Deb is working on a new SharePoint package to do the accountability to upgrade that software.
- e. District Support-Jennifer Thum
 - i. IDEA conference in NE was well attended. Tara participated in a visioning session for Fayette County. Laura hosted an Urban 101. The DSS team had their annual DSS retreat where they developed their annual plan of work. The team has provided training and assistance for various projects and is helping districts prepare for elections. The DSS team will host an LI Impacting Community in French Lick Dec 2-3.
- f. Water Quality and CREP- Julie Harrold –
 - i. Julie – The allocation of \$660,000 has been split between 6 of the 10 CREP administrators. There has been a demand, we are now at \$1.76 million obligated towards practices. We have had over 2,700 acres of signup in 2016. Total competed acres of 10,103.93. Total enrolled acres are 12,892.92. The Gulf Hypoxia Task Force will meet in New Orleans in December.

VIII. Conservation Partner Reports

- a. IASWCD Report
 - a. Amy Word– CCSI hired Ashley Brucker, who started on Oct 17th and hit the ground running. CCSI will be present an updated to the SSCB at the IASWCD annual conference. Annual conference will be January 23rd -24th. Registration is now open and links are on the website. Sara Peel will continue to be the coordinator for Pathway to Water Quality. PWQ liked the ambassador style volunteer position and will continue this format in 2017
 - b. District Showcases tours are scheduled.
 - c. IASWCD will be extending its contribution agreement for NRCS for Districts to provide administrative and technical services for Farm Bill programs. This extension will be a 3-year agreement.
- b. IDEM Report
 - a. No report
- c. DNR Report
 - a. No report.
- d. Purdue Report
 - a. Walt handed out several items to the audience. Walt went over the reports. People want to hear what Purdue is doing in terms of research. They have had good discussion, draw from that discussion, go back to Purdue, and have other outreach efforts. Purdue has also been doing new to farming events.
 - b. The Rotary District is having a one-day conference in the WLEB.
 - c. Boiler Bridge – share what is happening in the Ag College and Purdue Extension.
 - d. State Soil Judging CDE – Great turnout for that event.
- e. FSA Report
 - a. State CRP cap – we only have 24 million acres because of the 2014 farm bill, Working with NRCS and ISDA and SWCD as we wrap up, we have leeway in these starts. Because of the cap, we had to hold a hard line and customers that had acres expire were not approved for the October start date. We are looking at the offers we received for CRP and seeing if we can get those approved. We do have authority to move forward with CREP should we hit national ceiling we will be stopped with CREP. The national office is monitoring those acres. If a producer walks in with new acreage with CRP they would have a choice to start contact November 1, 2017, but do not have ability to start their offer March or April 2017 and get their seeding started this spring. National office will enter those numbers. We can do offers for new acres, reenrollments and process and send them to NRCS and ISDA and does conservation planning but just can't get those who want to start right now. CRP is not going to shut down. State acres for wildlife- we do have some acres that we could take

acres for Indiana Bat and other areas that we can take offers for those areas in the state, but can to process those for the next October.

- b. Ray –if the caps are reached, they have to choose re-enroll or new acres. Our understanding is that they should monitoring those filter strips, and get paperwork start complete, that will be in pipeline and show that it's approved. So national office is watching those, they will stop our approvals if we get to that point. CREP falls into that 24 million acres. NRCS waiting on administrative funding for technical assistance for CRP.
- c. Jordan – 24 million cap, understand that for next farm bill discussion, is that 24 million here to stay with new farm bill? There are so many things compete for farm bill, but balance with production Ag and don't take acres out of production but focused on critical to conservation. No idea on what the next farm bill will bring. Susan – the cap has been going down.
- d. Conservation compliance and acreage reporting process. Should be up in partners and NRCS and will be detailed imagery for the program.
- e. Joint training next week on interpreting the new imagery and talking about some things, and off-site wetlands.
- f. FSA – state environmental coordinator. Susan is now serving in this role.
- f. NRCS Report
 - a. Andrew Pursifull with the Tech Team – Engineer
 - i. CSP is one of their big pushes next year and will push their DCs and will have trainings on this. EQIP – super busy with designs There will be a contrition agreement webinar at 2:30pm on the 27th. It will be recorded. The security awareness training will have to go through that with Ag learn. CEAP survey.
- g. IDEA Report
 - a. Mary Lou wanted to thank the board for coming north. IDEA is made up of eight region directors, and she serves as the secretary of the group. She thanked the DSS for her position, and knows that the DSS get many questions and appreciates them for working with the districts. In 2016 IDEA had 141 members, and of those 33 are in their first year of employment, and there is a huge turnover.
 - b. ISDA help host the supervisor/staff summit and ISDA provided supervisor training, good partnership effort there. The IDEA fall conference at Oakwood in Syracuse had 75 members in attendance with five guests. We had IASWCD there, it helps to promote professional development, employee training and networking. One of the highlights is the auction and the money raised goes toward the annual poster contest and scholarship for district employees to attend the future conferences. IDEA is conducting survey trainings for their members.

VIII. Public Comment

- a. No public comment
- b. Ray encouraged those to stay for the tour and hopes to see everyone at the annual conference

X. Next Meeting:

2017 Meeting Dates

January 22, 2017: IASWCD Annual Conference

Bob moved to adjourn the meeting. And Nola seconded it.

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.

DRAFT