

MINUTES
STATE SOIL CONSERVATION BOARD MEETING
May 17, 2016
Christie's on the Square
Salem, IN

Members in Attendance:

Ray Chattin
Robert Woodling
Bob Eddleman
Rex Blanton
Nola Gentry
Warren Baird
Members absent – Larry Clemens

Others in Attendance:

Jordan Seger, ISDA	Courtney Mobillian, ISDA	Amy Work, IASWCD
Leah Harmon, ISDA	Scheryl Vaughn, Boone County SWCD	Terry Ault, Jackson County SWCD
Jessica Hoehn, Washington County SWCD	Meg Leader, ISDA	Jim Brown, Washington County SWCD
Whitney Sauerheber, Washington County SWCD	Jane Hardisty, NRCS	Kent Yeager, Sen. Donnelly's Office
Jill Roll, Washington County SWCD	Ruth Hackman, NRCS	Ashley Langreck, Indiana AgriNews
Sharon Baird	Lisa Holscher, CCSI	Nathan Stoelting, ISDA
Christina Bruce, Lawrence County SWCD	Mike Johnson, ISDA	
Laura Fribley, ISDA	David Bausman, ISDA	
	Kevin Baird, ISDA	
	Walt Sell, Purdue Extension	
	Jennifer Boyle Warner, IASWCD	

I. 9:30 AM: Call to Order – Ray Chattin called the meeting to order at 9:32 a.m.

New member, Mr. Blanton gave a brief introduction and background.

Mr. Chattin thanked Washington County for hosting the meeting and setting up the afternoon tour.

II. Approve Minutes of March 2016

a. Mr. Eddleman moved. Mr. Woodling 2nd. All in favor. Motion carried.

III. Clean Water Indiana

a. Clean Water Indiana Grants –Leah Harmon

Newton County SWCD submitted a thank you to the board for grant funding that included a progress report regarding their active competitive grant. All 2016 CWI grants have submitted claim vouchers. AFR contracts went to districts two weeks ago. About one third of districts have returned their signed agreements. All 92 districts qualified for at least part of the match. The ISDA YouTube channel has been updated to include new tutorial videos. The FAQ page has also been updated. The DSS team has completed two grant reviews since the last meeting. Projects are going well; no modifications are needed. Leah has designed a new logo for the Division of Soil Conservation which officially launched today.

a. CWI Reboot - Leah Harmon

Leah has been hosting information sessions regarding the 2017 grant cycle and the new guidance. Sessions were held at all four March region meetings. Four other information

sessions have been held throughout the state, with four more planned. Sessions will be held in all eight NRCS regions.

b. CWI Communications - Jordan Seger/Leah Harmon

Jordan-The changes to this year's guidance were based upon feedback received from districts. ISDA is focusing on providing consistent communication for all districts. Leah and the DSS team have compiled an FAQ page that is a living document and will be updated periodically. The FAQ document can be located at http://www.in.gov/isda/files/CWI_2017_FAQ.pdf.

Leah- New questions should be directed to Leah so that she can update the FAQ document. Leah can approve grant modifications up to \$1,000 or 7% of the grant amount. Modifications larger than that will go before the grants committee or full board depending on size. Grant reviews are being standardized. Reports will be sent to all districts and supervisor. Results will also be presented to the SSCB.

Jordan- We are trying to avoid counties fishing for answers. Having Leah as the point of contact provides a consistent message. Today, we look to the board to fill in missing pieces and to vote to adopt the communications policy.

Chattin- We appreciate your efforts.

Mr. Woodling moved to approve the policy. Mr. Baird- second. Motion carried.

b. Clean Water Indiana Budget Update- Jordan Seger

Jordan- Nothing out of the ordinary to report. There has been a lot of interest in CREP, driven by rain and low commodity prices. ISDA is looking to expand CREP enrollment this year. Some of the largest nutrient reductions come from tree planting. The state fiscal year ends in June. We are looking to set the next budget going forward.

c. CWI Legislation Update-David Bausman

David- This was the first agency bill for him. An overview of the bill is included in your packets. The bill has 3 major points:

1. Technical correction of ISDA-DSC funding. Since the Division moved from DNR, the statute has been updated to direct funds to ISDA.
2. Changed merger language. It now allows for \$10,000 matching grants to reflect future merges. This figure can be prorated if part of a current district merges with another.
3. Matching funds. Source is no longer only local political subdivision. It is open to other sources.

Jordan- This goes into effect July 1st. Since it was not in effect this AFR season, we expect a district to approach the board to receive the full \$10,000 support.

David- There has been a lot of positive response in the legislature for SWCD legislation.

Ray- Thank you David.

IV. State Soil Conservation Board Business

a. SSCB Chairman's Report-Ray Chattin

Ray attended two regional trainings and was impressed and please with the turnout at content. He also attended "The Power of Us". He thanked Jane for making it happen. Ray sees the current challenges as invasive species, forests, wetlands and wildlife. He has been visiting districts to discuss the role we can play and giving them examples for projects. He sees a challenge because lawmakers do not see the effects of invasive species. They do not understand the problem. Knox county has a new invasive species coordinator starting. The council put up the money with local support. He pointed to successes and encouraged people to work toward the same goals.

Nola- We need to make progress one county at a time.

Bob- The mayor of Indianapolis was speaking at the 40 West business club. Bob mentioned Indianapolis is the center of invasive species due to past plantings. A staff member has called him to follow up after the meeting, which was a month ago. There is a close connection between water, soil quality, and invasive species.

Ray- It takes someone standing up and speaking to lead change.

Robert- We lead by example. Pathway to Water Quality is pretty close to invasive free. Ash trees will come out next year.

V. Soil and Water Conservation Districts

- a. Boone County- Leah Harmon
Recommendation to appoint Ben Lawson.
Mr. Eddleman moved. Ms. Gentry second. Motion carried.
- b. Clinton County- Leah Harmon
- c. Recommendation to appoint Matt Kelly
Mr. Eddleman moved. Ms. Gentry second. Motion carried.
- d. Marshall County- Leah Harmon
Recommendation to appoint Tim Gochenour.
Ms. Gentry moved. Mr. Baird second. Motion carried.
- e. Henry County- Leah Harmon
Recommendation to appoint Jesse Posey.
Mr. Blanton moved. Mr. Woodlind second. Motion carried.
- f. Knox County- Nathan Stoelting
Recommendation to appoint Deanna Hill
Ms. Gentry moved. Mr. Woodling second. Motion carried.
- g. Monroe County- Nathan Stoelting
Recommendation to appoint Bill Williams
Mr. Eddleman moved. Mr. Blanton second. Motion carried.
- h. Vigo County- Nathan Stoelting
Recommendation to appoint Larry Owen.
Mr. Woodling moved. Ms. Gentry second. Motion carried.

VI. 10 Minute Break

VII. ISDA Updates

- a. Director's Report- Jordan Seger
Jordan has a written report and will present highlights.
Staffing- Jordan introduced Courtney Mobillan who is a SPEA grad student focused on water quality. She will be the DSC intern this summer. ISDA has made an offer which has been accepted for the RS position in Albion. This is a part time position at this time. It may become a full time position later. Jordan welcomed Rex.
4Rs- This is from the fertilizer institute. It is being adopted in the WLEB and is focused on retailers. There is an extensive certification process. Two retailers in Indiana portion of WLEB are enrolled to be certified. Indiana is looking to expand 4R program statewide. Retailers pay fees for certification. The ICP will support and promote.
Water Quality Trading has \$100,000 for forestry projects. Trees can be planted starting spring 2017. Districts will receive 10% to manage the program.
ISDA submitted a pollinator grant with INDOT and Department of Corrections for pollinator habitat along I-65 from Gary to Indianapolis. This grant will add milkweed and native wildflowers to provide a natural snow fence.
Ray- Watch for invasive species in the seed mix.
David- INDOT is aware of this issue and is working to ensure invasives are not in the mix.
Jordan- Jordan, Jane and Jennifer are scheduling district visits. Twelve were completed in 2015. Five or six visits are scheduled through June. SSCB members are welcome to join these visits. Jordan also highlighted recent press releases.
Rex- is there going to be a particular focus for 4Rs?

Jordan- Two big retailers in the NE are already in the process. The WLEB is covered. Our challenge is that some are ready to go. ACI giving full endorsement adds value. They have been dealing with a lot of regulation.

Jane- Jordan had a lot of work with ACI behind the scenes. There is an upcoming 4R summit in Indy.

Ray- Ray commended Jordan on his report and leadership and asked for an update on the Iowa governor's water quality proposal/

Jordan- The proposal did not get any traction. Other proposals are in the house and senate, with a sales tax focus. There is no movement.

Ray- That level of funding would be impressive in Indiana.

Jordan-From his Missouri visit, \$80 million in funding for parks and conservation. Other states have more funding, but we have partnerships. We work better together.

Ray- These other states have funding because it was necessary.

b. Technical Report- Mike Johnson

A written report is available. No questions.

c. Agricultural Affairs-Meg Leader

A written report is available. Meg touched on highlights.

Infield Advantage is registering fields. ISDA is anticipating 1000 fields, but that number may be less due to rain. 28 fields are currently enrolled. 25 producers have signed up for the IN pork project. This is jointly funded by Corn and Soy and Indiana Pork and provides extra sampling for manure fields. This data will be presented at the Indiana Pork conference in December. ANL will be offering a tour on October 7th. CCSI has applied for a CIG grant to broaden the network, further conservation cropping systems, and expand adoption throughout the state. Red Gold has upcoming workshops. 44 of 50 producers submitted applications for the program. The Red Gold March grower meetings were a half day and included presentations on soil health. Hans did the Ohio presentation. The NE tech team did the Indiana presentation. Most people in attendance had never seen a slake test. Meg has been working on the pollinator grant which aims to plant about 200 acres.

d. Accountability and Technology- Jordan Seger

ISDA is publishing results of the fall cover crop and tillage transect. 1.18 million acres of cover crops were planted statewide. This does not include wheat and other green cover. CTIC gave a presentation in St. Louis. Indiana is the only state continuing surveys and has the best data. ICP is continuing its partnership with CTIC to ground truth with aerial imagery. The ICP web application has been updated with county and programmatic funding. It is very challenging to line up fiscal years. The DSS team will be gathering success stories from districts. ISDA has created a WLEB interactive story map on the website. You can click a county and get past projects and funding. This also includes historical water quality data.

Jane- Thank you to Kent. The last fly in included a visit with Sen. Donnelly. The data caught his interest. He challenged us to have two million acres of cover crops.

e. District Support-Laura Fribley

A written report is available.

225 people attended the 4 March region meetings. The DSS team is hosting CWI and internal controls information meetings. Districts need to adopt internal controls by March 1st. So far 29 counties have attended. More information sessions are planned. ISDA is hosting the supervisor summit on August 23rd. IDEA will host a staff summit that day. Geneva will return from leave in three weeks.

Ray- He appreciated the DSS willingness to attend SWCD meetings.

Jordan- Can you define internal controls?

Laura- It is setting up a checks and balance system to ensure success. It also involves separation of duties and increases transparency. This is an SBOA program. ICP training and certification event is forthcoming in Bedford. Any employee is welcome to attend.

f. Water Quality and CREP- Jordan Seger

CREP is working with FSA in Washington, D.C. for an amendment. We were paying the same amount for a reenrolled wetland as a new wetland. The committee decided that it was too high for a reenroll. This rate has been reduced from \$950 to \$450. The savings go to other projects. ISDA is waiting for final approval from FSA. 1300 acres have been enrolled in CREP this year, which exceeds last year's total.

The state nutrient reduction strategy is our basis to interact with 11 other states. A teleconference regarding data was held on May 16th. Indiana is the first state to use our data to work national models to show reduction of the dead zone.

VIII. Conservation Partner Reports

a. IASWCD Report

Jennifer welcomed Rex to the SSCB. CCSI has offered the director position to an individual and hopes to get a communication person soon. CCSI will be fully staffed by August. Additional CCSI case studies are in progress. Six or eight more are expected. CCSI is applying for a CIG grant. There is funding in place from ICMC/ISA and Knox county to continue sampling this year. More work is scheduled at Pathway to Water Quality. The volunteer system has been reworked. Volunteers are now ambassadors with fewer being needed per shift. Groups can sign up for a day. Individual sign up is in June. CRP agreements of over \$500,000 are going out to districts. Jennifer introduced Amy Work who was hired in April. There will be a conservation congress on September 30th. The theme is conservation ethics. How do we build more engagement and support from the public? It will be at Brown County State Park.

b. IDEM Report- no report

c. DNR Report – no report

d. Purdue Report- Walt Sell

Thanks to the ICP for helping Wally Tyner with his project. It has nearly 38 growers. He still needs more traditional farmers. The Midwest Cover Crops Council is conducting interviews for the program manager position on campus today. Ron Turco, Walt and others are discussing Purdue's role in the 4R program. There will be a fall conference on nutrient management. A pollinator team has been formed on campus to help move the effort forward. Thanks to Lisa Holscher for jointly presenting a webinar which discussed partnerships and CCSI.

e. FSA Report- no report

f. NRCS Report- Jane Hardisty

Welcome to Rex. A written report is available. The Power of Us received rave reviews. The majority of the SSCB attended. Thank you. A group photo was sent out today. The first round of EQIP applications received 1100 applications. It is the strongest yet. She is looking for more funds. CSP sign up all exceeded previous totals. Two new RCPP projects were approved- Knox County and the Big Pine Watershed. There is also a regional project for monarchs. The state technical committee will meet June 30th. There are about 20 Women Caring for the Land meetings planned. This is geared toward female landowners for agriculture and conservation. Six counties met for WLEB. The WLEB now has a program manager and communication person. They have been impressed with Indiana's partnership and coordination. Eagle Marsh, WRP easement in Allen County, has constructed a berm to split water flow north and south to restrict movement of Asian carp. This is an example of a successful partnership. Eight summer interns will be starting next month. Staffing is getting filled slowly. State level positions have had interviews. Five new level five DC positions will be filled. Money has been added to the CRP agreement. A new Toolkit will be unrolled this summer. Training will be available.

Ray- What is the EQIP shortfall?

Jane- We could use another \$12 million.

EQIP and CSP will probably merge in the 2018 Farm Bill. The CRP cap needs to be looked at.

Jordan- Can growers that don't get EQIP funding be communicated to other ICP agencies?

Jane- We have cooperative working agreements. Field offices can transfer grower info (EQIP) within offices. CRP is an FSA program, but Jane can help.

g. IDEA Report- Terry Ault

Thank you to Pathway to Water Quality for access to older NACD material. IDEA will host a staff summit in August concurrent with the supervisor summit. The IDEA fall conference is October 5-7 in Syracuse. They plan on asking the SSCB to support the event. Thanks to the SSCB for including IDEA.

VIII. Public Comment

Kent Yeager- I appreciate attending. I am the state ag liaison, working part time. In Sen. Donnelly, you have someone who is interested in agriculture and farming. He knows it's important to Indiana. He is very interested in conservation. He deeply appreciated the effort and is proud that Indiana is seen as the conservation leader.

Ray- We appreciate you joining us.

Kent- It is about balancing water quality and production.

Bob- We need a bigger focus on invasive species. Maybe a national effort or special program.

Kent- It has not been on people's radar.

Bob- We need a statewide conference on invasive species.

Kent- Many people do not pay attention.

Robert- Invasive species are hindering our ability to use renewable resources.

X. Next Meeting:

2016 Meeting Dates

July 22, TNC Indianapolis

October 25, Huntington County

September 20, TNC Indianapolis

XI. Adjourn- 11:59 a.m.

Mr. Baird moved. Mr. Eddleman second. Motion carried.

Minutes were approved by:

	
	
	
	