

**MINUTES**  
**STATE SOIL CONSERVATION BOARD MEETING**  
**9:00 a.m. Tuesday, April 14, 2009**  
**Indiana Government Center South**  
**Conference Center Room 2**  
**302 West Washington St.**  
**Indianapolis, IN 46204**

**Members in Attendance:**

Nola Gentry  
Bob Eddleman  
Jim Cherry  
Larry Clemens  
Bill Mann  
Warren Baird

Kelly Gentry, ISDA  
Amy Eizinger-Ott, ISDA  
Paul Hoffman, ISDA  
Allan W. Haynes, DeKalb Co. SWCD  
Scheryl Vaughn, Boone Co. SWCD  
Roger Kult, NRCS  
Jennifer Boyle, IASWCD  
Paula Baldwin, IASWCD  
Shelia Lingle, IN Soybean Alliance  
MaryLou Renshaw, IDEM

**Others in Attendance:**

Jerod Chew, ISDA  
Deb Fairhurst, ISDA  
Sara Slater-Atwater, ISDA

- I. 9:05 AM: Call to Order**
- II. Draft Minutes of February 2009**

*Bill Mann moved to approve the minutes as presented. Bob Eddleman seconded and the motion carried.*

**III. Leadership Development**

**a. District Requests – Kelly Gentry**

Fayette County – See Attachment

*Jim Cherry moved to approve the Fayette County vacant appointment request. Eddleman seconded and the motion carried.*

LaPorte County – See Attachment

*Mann moved to approve the LaPorte County vacant appointment request. Cherry seconded and the motion carried.*

Porter County – See Attachment

*Eddleman moved to approve the Porter County temporary appointment request. Larry Clemens seconded and the motion carried.*

Vanderburgh County – See Attachment

*Eddleman moved to approve the Vanderburgh County vacant appointment request. Mann seconded and the motion carried.*

Wells County – See Attachment

*Cherry moved to approve the Wells County reappointment request. Clemens seconded and the motion carried.*

**b. CWI Requests – Amy Eizinger-Ott**

Clark County – See Attachment

*Eddleman moved to approve the Clark County CMIG extension request. Cherry seconded and the motion carried.*

DeKalb County – See Attachment

*Mann moved to approve the DeKalb County SNRG reallocation request. Clemens seconded and the motion carried.*

Elkhart County – See Attachment

Eizinger-Ott mentioned this is a Region Technician grant. If they contract with a new person then a new contract will need to be created. Eddleman mentioned their request does not include the qualifications of the person they would like to hire. They need to consider if the person they hire will be able to be trained and carry out the job in three months. More discussion followed on the role of the new person and their terms.

*Cherry moved to approve the Elkhart County Regional Technician request. Eddleman seconded and the motion carried.*

Harrison County – See Attachment

*Mann moved to approve the Harrison County CMIG extension request. Warren Baird seconded and the motion carried.*

#### **IV. Division Report**

##### **a. CREP Update – Sara Slater-Atwater – See Attachment**

Slater-Atwater reported on the current CREP amendment/expansion. In order to expand CREP we must have a PEA (Programmatic Environmental Assessment) done. This document is complete and discusses features of the proposed watershed including; geology, water resources, social consequences, etc. It lays out the two alternatives: 1. Expand CREP; 2. don't expand CREP. The report says any negative consequences are minor and temporary while expanding CREP will improve water quality and habitat.

Slater-Atwater also reported FSA has signed the FONSI (Findings of No Significant Impact) and it needs to be publicly noticed. We need to publish the NOA (Notice of Action) that directs people to the PEA. The public will have 30 days to comment. Then the consultant will put together a comment matrix. FSA in Washington is finalizing the actual amendment.

Slater-Atwater also announced Schneider has completed their work on the wetlands piece; IUPUI and Purdue are still working.

N. Gentry asked what our strategy would be if we get the full expansion. It will be critical to get designs done in a timely manner. People lose interest if the process takes a long time. Slater-Atwater said that will be discussed later once we know we get the full expansion. Clemens asked if they could get a copy of the proposal that went to FSA. Chew said they would get that to the board. Clemens also suggested that a meeting with other partners be conducted to bring them on board with the CREP amendment and training so they can help answer questions in their office. Chew agreed it is important to get Districts and partners on board to help market and implement CREP.

##### **b. Clean Water Indiana Grants – Amy Eizinger-Ott – See Attachments**

Chew asked the board what type of reports they would like to see from CWI and CREP. We are able to make changes. Clemens suggested taking utilizing the reports to track leveraging as well as attempting to show the environmental impact we have made with conservation through the state. Chew said we could use the numbers from workshops, cover crops, no till, etc. and perhaps we can make maps that layer the different practices. The current reporting method does make quantifying the implementation of specific conservation measures difficult.

More discussion followed on different types of reports that can be used to show conservation impacts.

Chew stated that since we are coming to the end of our fiscal year it would be a good time to look at what has been leveraged. N. Gentry mentioned that some grants would be easy to do and some would be a lot harder. She suggested taking the grant process and having districts tell the SSCB what their goal is for

their grant; an example might be how many people they expect at a workshop, and then report on their turn out. Maybe we can set the application up to have an objective.

Eddleman noticed they have approved a lot of grant changes/amendments. Perhaps we can look at the reasons for those changes and help smooth them out to overcome those issues in the first place. We need to address how these grants work with the partnership and other programs and how they can complement each other.

Roger Kult, NRCS, stated you need to have a good tracking system. He mentioned that they have and are willing to work with ISDA, Districts, etc. to pull whatever data that they may need.

N. Gentry simply stated we have to prove Indiana is practicing effective conservation.

Jennifer Boyle, IASWCD, said the 319 grants program has an ideal way of reporting. There are ways CWI can be tracked and reported that will be beneficial to legislators. She mentioned that the IASWCD legislative committee has been working hard on communicating the leveraging that occurs with SWCDs. It is not a lack of them understanding conservation. For example, the CREP expansion, the faster we can get those dollars allocated the more they will see the progress we are making and what good things can come by funding conservation.

Boyle appreciated the CWI report that was given, but stated that the IASWCD has asked for a break down of the entire CWI funds.

**c. Technical Support Update – Jerod Chew**

Chew reported last week the division had an all staff meeting that went very well. We had lots of good feedback. Chew praised his team on their hard work. It has been a busy first week for me and we have some great things we are working on. We have an excellent staff and we will be working hard on coming up with creative ways to get all the work done since we are short staffed. He also mentioned he will be meeting with the RS Team Leaders soon.

**d. District Support Update – Jerod Chew**

Chew mentioned that the DSSs are meeting tomorrow. We will be discussing options to continue to provide adequate district support while dealing with a shortage of DSSs. We don't want to burn our DSSs out and we want to continually be looking at the best ways that we can provide support to the SWCDs.

N. Gentry asked what the state policy is on hiring. Chew stated currently the state is in a hiring freeze meaning essentially any positions to be filled must be approved through a state hiring committee first. Boyle asked how many field staff ISDA is down. Chew said we are down to six DSSs and roughly twenty seven RSs. We've tried to maintain approximately 35 RSs, but it has been a couple years since we have had those numbers.

**e. DeKalb County Progress Report – Allen Haynes – See Attachment**

Allen Haynes reported on the success they have had with the regional technician that was funded through the CWI grants program and the Nature Conservancy. He stated they were very fortunate with the person they hired. We wanted to secure this position for 3 years. Now we are at the point where we want to make this position permanent. We have been coming to the County Counsel for the past year letting them know what we wanted to do. We now have their support to make this a permanent position. The final decision will not be made until August.

Haynes also mentioned they took place in the CWI round table discussion during the annual conference. We would now like to know if it would be possible to fund this position full time.

Chew asked if their regional technician had a specific program he worked on or did he help all over. Haynes replied he worked on the technical side only. He keeps project flowing, even for NRCS. He is the only one that works with the tech team. He doesn't help plan field days. This position is very

valuable to our county as well as many other counties. The county is definitely getting something back with his investment.

Eddleman asked if he is geared toward a technical engineer or cover crops and no-till. Haynes said he does both. He is very smart and savvy.

Clemens asked what the total package for this position costs. Haynes replied roughly \$40K. We have also showed this spreadsheet to the county counsel once and they were sold on the position.

County counsel is on board, but we need to bring some extra money to the table. We would like to increase his salary, bringing the total package to \$45k to \$50k. We have already proven to the counsel that whoever is in this position will be well needed, just look at the numbers on the handout.

N. Gentry thanked Haynes for the good information. This will be helpful for our business plan and looking into future CWI funding options.

## **V. SSCB Board Reports and Discussion**

### **a. SSCB Chairman's Report – Nola Gentry**

N. Gentry stated on behalf of the board congratulations to Chew on his new role.

### **b. SSCB Sub-Committee Reports and Recommendations**

#### **i. Executive Committee Report and Recommendations – Nola Gentry**

##### **1. Shareholder Input Gathering Update – Alice Irvan – See Attachment**

Irvan stated how very pleased she was to work with wonderful people on this project. They were very committed and very passionate. There were some concerns about getting feedback from all state holders. With a moderate budget we had to do an online survey using emails lists provided by ISDA.

Paula Baldwin, IASWCD, asked if this presentation will this be available online to view. Kelly Gentry said it would be as soon as they can get it posted. It will be also available in the minute attachments.

#### **ii. CWI Grants Committee Report and Recommendations – Warren Baird**

#### **iii. District Capacity Committee Report and Recommendations – Bob Eddleman**

Eddleman mentioned he would be meeting with MaryLou Renshaw later this month on the memorandum. He also mentioned the position description for the Sustainable Cropping Systems Initiative has gone out on notice. They are looking to hire someone by June. Baird asked whose role it will be to administer them and stated that he felt it should be a government agency. Eddleman stated that the position will be administered by an oversight committee from the partnership. The program is overseen by this committee.

## **VI. Delivery System Workgroup Update – Jerod Chew**

Chew reported on training opportunities through NASCA grant to hold state pilot training. We are currently waiting to see if Indiana will be selected as a pilot state to have a training program developed through this grant.

## **VII. Conservation Partner Reports**

### **a. DNR Report – Gary Langell – See Attachment on LARE**

### **b. IDEM Report – Marylou Renshaw – See Attachment**

Renshaw also extended her congratulations to Chew on his new position as DSC Director. Chew asked if the 319 grant eligibility will change. Renshaw stated they will stay the same.

### **c. Purdue Report – Gary Steinhardt – no report**

### **d. IASWCD President's Report – Paula Baldwin – See Attachment**

Baldwin also mentioned we need to prove the point of leveraging. We are successful in Indiana and the most success is where we have the federal dollars. We need to keep that in the back of our minds while we make decisions.

### **e. Farm Services Agency Report – Gail Peas**

f. **NRCS State Conservationist's Report – Roger Kult** – See Attachment

**VIII. Public Comment**

Tony Hahn, ISDA Chief of Staff, thanked the board for all of their hard work. He also mentioned most of the board has had a chance to meeting with ISDA director, Ann Hazlett. He stated she has made conservation a priority in Indiana. By the next SSCB meeting ISDA will have our new strategic plan.

Chew also announced Paul Hoffman will be taking over Eizinger-Ott's role with the grants and SSCB. Eizinger-Ott will now be finding grants and working with the entire department. Chew also stated we will be communicating with districts when the final change takes place.

N. Gentry also mentioned Crissy Goode is now ISDA's communication program manager. This means she will no longer have a role with Leadership Institute. We will eventually need to find someone who will take over those duties. The next Leadership Institute training is in June.

Clemens stated the Nature Conservancy has worked with Alcoa the past two years on the Wabash River looking at the entire length of the river. Their study is now done and is on the web at [www.nature.org](http://www.nature.org). Clemens would like to share their findings with the board sometime during their next board meeting. He also mentions their study ties in with the current CREP amendment.

**IX. Next Meeting:** June 9, 2009 in the Upper Northeast Region. The executive committee asked the board to meet June 8<sup>th</sup> in the afternoon and evening to discuss their business plan. Also, the board decided to tour a conservation practice in the area. ISDA central staff will work with Jim Lake on the tour. Once the tour locations are determined a location for the meeting will be set.

**X. Meeting Adjourned: 11:45 AM**