

**AGENDA**  
**STATE SOIL CONSERVATION BOARD MEETING**  
**July 29, 2019**  
**Indiana Farm Bureau**

- I. 9:30 am.: Call to Order**
- II. Approve Minutes of May 2019**
- III. Clean Water Indiana**
  - a. Clean Water Indiana Grants –Leah Harmon
- IV. State Soil Conservation Board Business**
  - a. Chairman’s Report
  - b. FY 2020 Budget Review and Approval- Jennifer Thum
  - c. SSCB Business Plan
  - d. Indiana Invasives Initiative Update- Dawn Slack
- V. Soil and Water Conservation Districts**
  - a. Cass SWCD- Geneva Tyler
  - b. Cass SWCD- Geneva Tyler
  - c. Cass SWCD- Geneva Tyler
  - d. Dearborn SWCD- Geneva Tyler
  - e. Lawrence SWCD- Geneva Tyler
  - f. Gibson SWCD- Nathan Stoelting
- VI. ISDA Updates**
  - a. Director’s Report- Jennifer Thum
  - b. Technical Report- Mike Johnson
  - c. Soil Health- Jennifer Thum
  - d. Accountability and Technology- Jennifer Thum
  - e. District Support- Geneva Tyler
  - f. Water Quality and CREP- Julie Harrold
- VIII. Conservation Partner Reports**
  - a. IASWCD Report
  - b. IDEM Report
  - c. DNR Report
  - d. Purdue Report
  - e. FSA Report
  - f. NRCS Report
  - g. CCSI Report
  - h. IDEA Report
  - i. IANA Report
- IX. Public Comment**
- X. Next Meeting:**  
**2019 Meeting Dates**
  - September 17: NRCS State Office
  - October 29: TBD District Showcase
- XI. Adjourn**

**\*\*\*PLEASE NOTE\*\*\***

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



# State Soil Conservation Board

July 29<sup>th</sup>, 2019  
Clean Water Indiana Grants



## Program Updates

### Clean Water Indiana Competitive Grants

2019

- Financial reports are due 7/31. Conservation project tracking is also due at this time. I will be quality controlling both financial reports and conservation project tracking during August.

2018

- Projects Expire 12/31/20 (except Hamilton)
- Financial reports are due 7/31.

2017

- Projects Expire: 12/31/19
- These grants are the focus of CWI reviews this year, since many of them were flagged by the CWI communications policy. So far reviews have gone well
- Financial reports are due 7/31.

### Non-SWCD Led Projects

*IASWCD (CCSI)*

- Expires: 12/31/21
- All reimbursement so no claims yet.

*SICIM*

- Total Amount Claimed: \$30,000 of \$120,000
- Expires: 12/31/19
- We processed this as an amendment to their original agreement to get them on the same schedule as other CWI grants.

### Grant Reviews

- Since the last meeting, I and DSSs have completed 2 grant reviews.
- The grants that were reviewed are:
  - Adams (2017)
  - Allen (2018)
- Most of these grants were flagged per the CWI communications policy.
- They all have a plan to move forward to successfully finish their projects.
- No modifications are needed at this time.

### Grants Management System

- The Lieutenant Governor's Family of Business is working to launch a grants management system. ISDA is starting with the livestock grants program.
- Clean Water Indiana grants will be migrated to the new system in a future phase.



**State Soil Conservation Board**  
**July 29, 2019**  
**District Support Specialist (DSS) Report: 5/11/19 to 6/25/19**



### **DSS Coverage Areas**

Leah Harmon will be transitioning to a new role at ISDA as Deb Fairhurst prepares to retire later this year. In order to make this transition as smooth as possible for SWCDs, the DSS team transitioned Leah's counties on June 4. Hamilton, Hendricks, and Marion County SWCDs are now assigned to Geneva Tyler. Johnson and Morgan County SWCDs are now assigned to Nathan Stoelting. A new DSS coverage map can be found at <https://www.in.gov/isda/files/DSS%20Map%20060419.pdf>.

### **Preventing Workplace and Sexual Harassment Training**

As of June 24, 92 SWCDs have either taken the Preventing Workplace and Sexual Harassment Training with ISDA, or have participated in a similar training provided by their county. Great work everyone!

### **Summer SWCD Supervisor and Staff Trainings**

ISDA and IASWCD are combining the past "region meetings" that took place in the spring and fall into one summer training for SWCD staff and supervisors. All four summer evening trainings will be identical and take place on four separate dates in four separate locations throughout the state. Cost is \$20 per person. Register here: <https://tinyurl.com/SWCDSummer19> and attend the training of your choice:

- August 20: Fulton County
- August 22: Orange County
- August 27: Delaware County
- August 29: Putnam County

Joe Schmees will kick off the meeting with a presentation "YOUR Association: Not your ordinary Association!" Dinner and networking will follow. Next, there are three breakout sessions to choose from:

- Working with Local Officials- Cress Hizer
- Planning Your Website: Do You Know What a Good Website Takes?- Purdue's Digital Ready program
- Developing a Cost Share Program and Tracking It- DSS or RS

### **Online Maps**

ISDA DSSs and RSs are presenting the maps discussed at the May SSCB meeting (e.g. cover crop and tillage transect data maps, 2018 ICP Conservation Accomplishments) as they visit SWCD board meetings.

**DSS Intern**

DSS Intern Kenna Porter is doing a great job and all is going well on her projects. Thank you Kenna!

**Grant Writing and CWI Networking Sessions**

Please join us at the upcoming Grant Writing & CWI Networking Sessions. Please register with Tara Wesseler-Henry: [twesseler@isda.in.gov](mailto:twesseler@isda.in.gov).

- July 18, 2019: Bartholomew Co Public Library
- July 23, 2019: Marion Public Library

**Staff SWCD Region Meetings:**

Meetings were held in both Brookville and Muncie. 14 SWCDs were in attendance.

<b>DSS Activities Statewide For This Reporting Period</b>	<b>Total</b>
Assistance With SWCD Business Plans/Annual Plans of Work	3
Input, Assistance & Attendance At SWCD Board Meetings	16
Visits With SWCD Supervisors/Staff For Training, Assistance, Guidance, Input, etc.	18



# State Soil Conservation Board

July 16<sup>th</sup>, 2019

ISDA – CREP & Water Quality Initiatives, Julie Harrold



## Program Updates

### **Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program**

- CRP and CREP sign-up began on June 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2019 for certain practices in CRP, and for all practices within CREP. Interest and enrollments are starting back up again.
- The heavy rainfall and flooded areas have slowed down installation so far this year.
- Due to the heavy rainfall and flooded areas in Indiana this spring, we had several CP31-Bottomland Timber projects that were not able to be planted and three of these projects were to be paid for with support dollars from a 2<sup>nd</sup> Agreement between ISDA and TNC. I worked with Mike Dunn at TNC to amend this Agreement to extend the expiration date of the agreement so that these projects could still be supported by TNC. I have completed the progress report for this 2<sup>nd</sup> Agreement, and a final report will be submitted once the tree plantings are completed.
- I am currently working with Mike Dunn at TNC to complete the 3<sup>rd</sup> Agreement with them for support dollars. This will be for the state fiscal year 2020.
- Also, since the last SSCB meeting, TNC has provided an additional \$60,000 from Lilly Endowment funds to be used and/or obligated toward bottomland timber establishments and wetland restorations in any of the CREP watersheds. This Agreement goes until September 2019.
- With the SSCB appropriation and the support dollars from TNC, this next state fiscal year there will be approximately \$773,333 allocated toward CREP. These dollars are much appreciated and the program would not be what it is without them!
- Attached to this report is 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 \$6.39 million. For every state dollar that is spent, the federal match is approximately \$4-\$13 for every state dollar, which is currently between \$23 million and \$77 million of federal dollars depending on the practice.

### **IN State Nutrient Reduction Strategy (SNRS)**

- Core-Team has met twice in the last two months to work on the development of the Indiana Science Assessment. Lots of work is being done to see this move forward.
- Updates to the GIS Basin Story Maps have been completed for all 10 of the Basins.
- The current version of the Strategy can be found on the ISDA webpage at <http://www.in.gov/isda/2991.htm>.
- Comments on the SNRS can be sent to [ISDANutrientReduction@isda.in.gov](mailto:ISDANutrientReduction@isda.in.gov).

### **Western Lake Erie Basin**

- To view the Indiana WLEB Domestic Action Plan (DAP) and other information, visit the following webpage, <http://www.in.gov/isda/3432.htm>.
- To view the National Lake Erie DAP, visit <https://www.epa.gov/glwqa/us-action-plan-lake-erie>

SSCB Meeting - March 19th, 2019 - CREP Summary

	Native Grasses	Permanent Wildlife Habitat	Filter Strip	Hardwood Tree Planting	Riparian Buffer	Bottomland Timber Establishment	Wetland Restoration	Wetland Restoration (non-floodplain)	Total		
	CP-2	CP-4D	CP-21	CP-3A	CP-22	CP-31	CP-23	CP-23A			
	Acres	Acres	Acres	Acres	Acres	Acres	Acres	Acres	Acres	Goal	Percentage of Goal
Total Reported Completed on SharePoint as of 7/9/2019	214.58	14.00	4,743.49	34.43	614.46	6,265.79	1009.66	2,366.23	15,262.64	26,250.00	58.14%
Total CREP Enrollment	229.58	20.36	5,043.26	34.43	640.92	7,165.81	1440.55	3,268.36	17,843.27	26,250.00	67.97%
Total Acres in Extension				1.00	53.70	428.50	121.70	6.00	610.90		

	Native Grasses	Permanent Wildlife Habitat	Filter Strip	Hardwood Tree Planting	Riparian Buffer	Bottomland Timber Establishment	Wetland Restoration	Wetland Restoration (non-floodplain)	Practice Total	SWCD Administrative Fee	Total
	CP-2	CP-4D	CP-21	CP-3A	CP-22	CP-31	CP-23	CP-23A			
	Dollars	Dollars	Dollars	Dollars	Dollars	Dollars	Dollars	Dollars	Dollars	Dollars	Dollars
Total CREP Dollars	\$ 21,458.00	\$ 1,400.00	\$ 474,349.00	\$ 14,018.00	\$ 259,213.00	\$ 2,613,441.00	\$ 909,137.00	\$ 1,644,974.00	\$ 5,937,990.00	\$ 452,336.50	\$ 6,390,326.50

Federal Match of \$4-\$13 is between \$ 23,751,960.00  
 \$ 77,193,870.00

SSCB Meeting - March 19th, 2019 - CREP Acres (broken down by watershed)

Post-Expansion Acres

CREP Watershed	Native Grasses	Permanent Wildlife Habitat	Filter Strip	Hardwood Tree Planting	Riparian Buffer	Bottomland Timber Establishment	Wetland Restoration	Wetland Restoration (non-floodplain)	Total
	CP-2	CP-4D	CP-21	CP-3A	CP-22	CP-31	CP-23	CP-23A	
	Acres	Acres	Acres	Acres	Acres	Acres	Acres	Acres	Acres
Highland-Pigeon	0.00	0.00	11.08	0.00	3.10	114.73	0.00	0.00	128.91
Lower Wabash	0.00	0.00	9.88	0.00	0.00	530.24	0.00	0.00	540.12
Lower East Fork White	38.50	7.00	45.37	13.10	41.10	664.44	0.00	0.00	809.51
Lower White	10.70	0.00	5.00	0.00	72.28	1528.21	31.00	0.00	1647.19
Middle Wabash-Busseron	0.00	0.00	0.80	0.00	13.50	1253.46	385.41	29.81	1682.98
Middle Wabash-Deer	6.60	0.00	51.39	0.00	0.00	67.89	24.60	14.62	165.10
Middle Wabash-Vermillion	4.50	0.00	41.98	6.97	19.60	503.42	291.06	143.95	1011.48
Tippecanoe River	93.84	0.00	346.51	0.00	3.41	21.40	73.30	1099.82	1638.28
Upper East Fork White	0.00	0.00	141.17	0.00	31.40	106.50	0.00	0.00	279.07
Upper Wabash	21.25	7.00	450.37	2.56	12.23	220.61	82.59	66.85	863.46
Upper White	35.09	0.00	95.44	0.00	277.14	196.99	0.00	71.18	675.84
<b>Reported Completed as of 7/9/2019</b>	<b>210.48</b>	<b>14.00</b>	<b>1198.99</b>	<b>22.63</b>	<b>473.76</b>	<b>5,207.89</b>	<b>887.96</b>	<b>1426.23</b>	<b>9,441.94</b>
<b>Enrolled as of 7/9/2019</b>	<b>225.48</b>	<b>20.36</b>	<b>1498.76</b>	<b>22.63</b>	<b>500.22</b>	<b>6,107.91</b>	<b>1318.85</b>	<b>2328.36</b>	<b>12,022.57</b>

Pre-Expansion Acres

CREP Watershed	Native Grasses	Permanent Wildlife Habitat	Filter Strip	Hardwood Tree Planting	Riparian Buffer	Bottomland Timber Establishment	Wetland Restoration	Wetland Restoration (non-floodplain)	Total
	CP-2	CP-4D	CP-21	CP-3A	CP-22	CP-31	CP-23	CP-23A	
	Acres	Acres	Acres	Acres	Acres	Acres	Acres	Acres	Acres
Highland-Pigeon	2.50	0.00	215.00	10.80	16.40	109.20	0.00	0.00	353.90
Tippecanoe River	0.00	0.00	2916.80	0.00	7.80	20.40	121.70	924.00	3990.70
Upper White	1.60	0.00	412.70	1.00	116.50	928.30	0.00	16.00	1476.10
<b>Total Acres Prior to Expansion of CREP</b>	<b>4.10</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>3,544.50</b>	<b>11.80</b>	<b>140.70</b>	<b>1,057.90</b>	<b>121.70</b>	<b>940.00</b>	<b>5,820.70</b>

	CP-3A	CP-22	CP-31	CP-23	CP-23A	Total Extension Acres
Extension Acres -Tippecanoe			14.80	121.70		136.50
Extension Acres -Upper White		1.00	53.70	413.70	6.00	474.40
<b>Total Extension Acres</b>		<b>1.00</b>	<b>53.70</b>	<b>428.50</b>	<b>121.70</b>	<b>610.90</b>

## SSCB Meeting - March 19th, 2019 - CREP Dollars (broken down by watershed)

### Post-Expansion Dollars

CREP Watershed	Native Grasses	Permanent Wildlife Habitat	Filter Strip	Hardwood Tree Planting	Riparian Buffer	Bottomland Timber Establishment	Wetland Restoration	Wetland Restoration (non-floodplain)	Practice Total	SWCD Administrative Fees	Total
	CP-2	CP-4D	CP-21	CP-3A	CP-22	CP-31	CP-23	CP-23A			
	Dollars	Dollars	Dollars	Dollars	Dollars	Dollars	Dollars	Dollars	Dollars	Dollars	Dollars
Highland-Pigeon	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 1,108.00	\$ -	\$ 1,240.00	\$ 45,892.00	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 48,240.00	\$ 4,824.00	\$ 53,064.00
Lower Wabash	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 988.00	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 212,096.00	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 213,084.00	\$ 21,308.40	\$ 234,392.40
Lower East Fork White	\$ 3,850.00	\$ 700.00	\$ 4,537.00	\$ 5,240.00	\$ 16,440.00	\$ 265,776.00	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 296,543.00	\$ 29,654.30	\$ 326,197.30
Lower White	\$ 1,070.00	\$ -	\$ 500.00	\$ -	\$ 28,912.00	\$ 611,284.00	\$ 29,450.00	\$ -	\$ 671,216.00	\$ 67,121.60	\$ 738,337.60
Middle Wabash-Busseron	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 80.00	\$ -	\$ 5,400.00	\$ 501,384.00	\$ 366,139.50	\$ 28,319.50	\$ 901,323.00	\$ 90,132.30	\$ 991,455.30
Middle Wabash-Deer	\$ 660.00	\$ -	\$ 5,139.00	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 27,156.00	\$ 9,840.00	\$ 5,848.00	\$ 48,643.00	\$ 4,864.30	\$ 53,507.30
Middle Wabash-Vermillion	\$ 450.00	\$ -	\$ 4,198.00	\$ 2,788.00	\$ 7,840.00	\$ 201,368.00	\$ 276,507.00	\$ 136,752.50	\$ 629,903.50	\$ 62,990.35	\$ 692,893.85
Tippecanoe River	\$ 9,384.00	\$ -	\$ 34,651.00	\$ -	\$ 1,364.00	\$ 8,560.00	\$ 69,635.00	\$ 973,703.00	\$ 1,097,297.00	\$ 109,729.70	\$ 1,207,026.70
Upper East Fork White	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 14,117.00	\$ -	\$ 12,560.00	\$ 42,600.00	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 69,277.00	\$ 6,927.70	\$ 76,204.70
Upper Wabash	\$ 2,125.00	\$ 700.00	\$ 45,037.00	\$ 1,024.00	\$ 4,892.00	\$ 88,244.00	\$ 78,460.50	\$ 55,230.00	\$ 275,712.50	\$ 27,571.25	\$ 303,283.75
Upper White	\$ 3,509.00	\$ -	\$ 9,544.00	\$ -	\$ 110,856.00	\$ 78,796.00	\$ -	\$ 67,621.00	\$ 270,326.00	\$ 27,032.60	\$ 297,358.60
Upper White Extensions	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 1,800.00	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 1,800.00	\$ 180.00	\$ 1,980.00
<b>Reported Paid as of 7/9/2019</b>	<b>\$ 21,048.00</b>	<b>\$ 1,400.00</b>	<b>\$ 119,899.00</b>	<b>\$ 9,052.00</b>	<b>\$ 191,304.00</b>	<b>\$ 2,083,156.00</b>	<b>\$ 830,032.00</b>	<b>\$ 1,267,474.00</b>	<b>\$ 4,523,365.00</b>	<b>\$ 452,336.50</b>	<b>\$ 4,975,701.50</b>

### Pre-Expansion Dollars

CREP Watershed	Native Grasses	Permanent Wildlife Habitat	Filter Strip	Hardwood Tree Planting	Riparian Buffer	Bottomland Timber Establishment	Wetland Restoration	Wetland Restoration (non-floodplain)	Practice Total
	CP-2	CP-4D	CP-21	CP-3A	CP-22	CP-31	CP-23	CP-23A	
	Dollars	Dollars	Dollars	Dollars	Dollars	Dollars	Dollars	Dollars	Dollars
Highland-Pigeon	\$ 250.00	\$ -	\$ 21,500.00	\$ 4,316.00	\$ 6,564.00	\$ 43,680.00	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 76,310.00
Tippecanoe River	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 291,680.00	\$ -	\$ 3,120.00	\$ 8,160.00	\$ 48,680.00	\$ 369,600.00	\$ 721,240.00
Tippecanoe River Extensions	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 3,700.00	\$ 30,425.00	\$ -	\$ 34,125.00
Upper White	\$ 160.00	\$ -	\$ 41,270.00	\$ 400.00	\$ 46,600.00	\$ 371,320.00	\$ -	\$ 6,400.00	\$ 466,150.00
Upper White Extensions	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 250.00	\$ 11,625.00	\$ 103,425.00	\$ -	\$ 1,500.00	\$ 116,800.00
<b>Total Acres Prior to Expansion of CREP</b>	<b>\$ 410.00</b>	<b>\$ -</b>	<b>\$ 354,450.00</b>	<b>\$ 4,966.00</b>	<b>\$ 67,909.00</b>	<b>\$ 530,285.00</b>	<b>\$ 79,105.00</b>	<b>\$ 377,500.00</b>	<b>\$ 1,414,625.00</b>



# State Conservationist's Report

July 2019

---

## **CHIEF'S PRIORITY - CYCLE TIME STUDY**

The field office level cycle time survey has just ended. This survey helps NRCS measure the amount of work being done for customers across the nation and ensure field offices are staffed efficiently and continue to provide a high level of customer service. The state and area level survey will begin in the near future.

## **FARM BILL**

### **Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP)**

Indiana has made excellent progress on obligating FY19 funds for approved EQIP applications. To date we have obligated over 99% of our original allocation of \$20.5 million dollars. Indiana has requested additional dollars to help fund a portion of the remaining preapproved applications.

Indiana has recently received an additional \$900,000.00 to assist landowners on cover crop plantings. These funds were provided as a special funding request due to the wetness and flooding that has occurred in Indiana in 2019.

### **Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP)**

CSP contracts continue to be reviewed for obligation. Indiana has requested additional funds for CSP to try and fund as many of the applications as possible. We are still awaiting notification on the additional CSP funds.

A sign-up for Grassland Conservation Initiative-a component of CSP is currently on going. This program involves lands with a crop base that are currently in grass and allows the participant to receive a payment to have it remain in grass. Eligible participants were identified by working with FSA and eligible participants have been notified.

### **EQIP and CSP Local Working Groups**

The Local Working Group bulletin and letter to SWCD's will be released soon to provide guidance on the roles and responsibilities of the Local Working Group. The Local Working Group is a subcommittee of the State Technical Committee and provides recommendations on the resource concern priorities for the local community. These priority resource concerns are used to prioritize rankings for the Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) and Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP). The bulletin will have a due date of November 1, 2019 and will require counties to prioritize the highest 10 resource concerns in the county.

### **MRBI/NWQI Priority Watersheds**

NRCS is seeking new priority watersheds for the Mississippi River Basin Initiative and National Water Quality Initiative. MRBI has a primary focus of improving water quality while also restoring wetlands, enhancing wildlife habitat, and sustaining agricultural viability in small watersheds of the Mississippi River Basin. Projects should align with state nutrient loss reduction strategies. NWQI is a joint initiative between NRCS and EPA to address agricultural sources of water pollution, specifically nutrients, sediment and pathogens in priority watersheds. Implementation projects for both MRBI and NWQI must have a watershed assessment that meets NRCS guidelines and targets efforts at the 12-digit HUC level. Applicants can apply for funding to complete a watershed assessment before applying for implementation funding. Proposals are due to Indiana NRCS by **September 20**. Interested partners should contact Jill Reinhart for watershed assessment guidelines.

### **Big Pine Watershed Regional Conservation Partnership Program (RCPP)**

A sign up for Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP) dollars has been announced for farmers in the Big Pine Watershed Regional Conservation Partnership Program (RCPP) to improve water quality by installing conservation practices. The Big Pine watershed covers almost 210,000 acres in western Indiana which includes portions of Benton, White, Warren, and Tippecanoe counties. The partnership is working with farmers in the area to increase the number of nutrient and sediment reducing practices on cropland.

**August 9** is the cutoff date this year to be considered for funding for this partnership project.

### **Regional Conservation Partnership Program (RCPP) Sign up for Monarch and Pollinator Habitat**

Pheasants and Quail Forever and NRCS are encouraging farmers to submit CSP applications by **August 9** to establish habitat for monarch butterflies and other wildlife on private property. Indiana is part of the multi-state RCPP project which directs additional funds to these habitat efforts, including the states of Wisconsin, Minnesota, Iowa, Illinois, Missouri, Oklahoma, and Texas. This project focuses on encouraging landowners to establish monarch-friendly plantings as well as completing enhancements that help manage beneficial areas by controlling brush and weeds, protecting them from pesticides, and improving grazing systems. Also, conservation enhancements that provide benefits for pollinators also help reduce erosion, increase soil health, control invasive species, provide quality forage for livestock and make agricultural operations more resilient and productive.

### **WET SPRING OPTIONS FOR FARMERS**

With the excessive rainfall throughout Indiana and delayed/prevented planting, NRCS has made the following variances available for conservation practices:

#### **Tree and Shrub Planting Standard (612) Variance**

A variance to the Indiana Field Office Technical Guide (FOTG) Tree/Shrub Establishment Standard (612) has been granted for fiscal year 2019 only. All Indiana FOTG standards that involve tree/shrub planting refer to the (612) Tree/Shrub Establishment criteria; therefore, this variance applies to all other standards involving tree/shrub establishment.

All state level partners have concurred that survival and growth of bareroot seedlings after July 1<sup>st</sup> can be successful if seedlings have been properly stored in cold storage until they are planted, and they are planted as soon as site conditions are suitable.

This variance pertains to tree plantings under USDA Indiana technical responsibility. USDA or authorized Technical Service Providers will certify tree plantings as complete for reporting, financial assistance payments, etc., once trees have been planted and to the specifications in the Tree Planting Plan and Forestry Technical Note #2 (*Tree and Shrub Establishment*), if the following criteria are followed:

#### Variance Criteria

- Trees must be planted as soon as site conditions are suitable.
- Follow the seedling care and handling guidance in Purdue's publication *FNR-210 Planting and Care of Fine Hardwood Seedlings*.
  - Bare-root seedlings are stored in controlled environments at tree nurseries until shipped or picked up.
  - Seedlings should be planted as soon as possible (within a few days of delivery). If they are not planted immediately, they need to be placed in cold storage and protected.
  - Seedling roots need to be kept moist, but not wet, by periodic watering.
  - Arrangements may need to be made with tree nurseries for longer storage.

### **Cover Crop Standard (340) Variance**

A variance to the IN FOTG Cover Crop (340) Standard has been granted for fiscal year 2019 due to excessive wet weather. The cover crop **cannot be harvested for seed/grain under any circumstances**. Recent designations from RMA and guidance from Purdue University recognizes annual cash crops such as corn, soybeans and grain sorghum (milo), and alfalfa as cover crops for the fiscal year 2019 growing season only.

#### RMA Key Points

- From [farmers.gov/prevented-planting](http://farmers.gov/prevented-planting): “An acceptable cover crop must be generally recognized by agricultural experts as agronomically sound for the area for erosion control or other purposes related to conservation or soil improvement is planted at the recommended seeding rate, etc. The cover crop may be the same crop prevented from planting and may still retain eligibility for a prevented planting payment. The cover crop planted cannot be used for harvest as seed or grain.”
- From MyFPAC blog [Getting Questions about Prevented Plant and Cover Crops?](#): “It (corn) cannot be harvested as grain or seed and should be managed like a cover crop and not a corn silage crop.”
- Farmers and USDA customers are not required to meet the Indiana Cover Crop (340) Standard on their prevented plant acres to remain eligible for crop insurance benefits, however, see other key points and criteria for Farm Bill program participants and those seeking NRCS technical assistance.
- Purdue’s recognition of grain crops as cover crops meets the RMA requirements.
- RMA rule changes enable producers to hay, graze, or cut cover crops for silage, haylage, or baling on prevented plant acres after September 1, 2019 for this cropping season only.

#### National NRCS FOTG Standard (340) Cover Crop Key Points

- The national standard does not include “*LIVESTOCK PRODUCTION LIMITATION – Inadequate feed and forage*” as a purpose.
- The national standard states “*Do not harvest cover crops for seed.*”
- The national standard allows that “*When a cover crop will be grazed or hayed ensure the planned management will not compromise the selected conservation purpose(s).*”

#### Indiana FOTG Standard (340) Cover Crop Key Points

- Waivers to the national FOTG Cover Crop (340) Standard are not authorized for fiscal year 2019.
- All technical advice from NRCS to customers will adhere to the Indiana Cover Crop (340) Standard.
- All Farm Bill program implementation requirements will meet the Indiana Cover Crop (340) Standard.
- Following NRCS standards does not guarantee compliance with crop insurance or other legal requirements - customers must communicate their cover crop plans with their specific crop insurance agent, seed supplier, and others to ensure compliance with specific rules.
- A grazing and or harvest plan is required for all cover crops being harvested.

#### Criteria Applicable to Cover Crops

- Integrated Pest Management strategies (scouting, economic thresholds, etc.) will be followed for all applications of herbicides (especially residuals), insecticides (including seed treatments), rodenticides, fungicides, etc.:
- Cover crop species should be selected applicable to the appropriate seeding window. NOTE: oats and radish can be seeded starting July 1, 2019.
- Due to the short growing season, consult Purdue Extension guidance pertaining to potential risks associated with late planted grains and cover crops for silage.

## **COMPLIANCE STATUS REVIEWS**

NRCS has begun conducting the annual status reviews. Completing status reviews is required by law and Indiana NRCS and FSA take compliance seriously. We also use this opportunity to discuss conservation with program participants. Although these reviews sometimes put USDA in the difficult position of “friend and judge,” it is more an opportunity to educate the landowner about why compliance is required and help them get back on the conservation track to keep them eligible for our programs. If a producer is unwilling to make the recommended changes, then USDA must take the harder road with them. In these situations, nobody wins – neither the producer nor the resource. We value our local partners’ support and promotion of the value of conservation, and the technical assistance that some of our producers will need as they continue their conservation journey.

## **SUDDEN OAK DEATH IN INDIANA**

The Indiana Department of Natural Resources (DNR) confirmed more than 70 Walmart stores and 18 Rural King stores in the state have received rhododendron plants infected with sudden oak death (SOD), a fungal pathogen that kills oak trees. SOD travels in more than a hundred species of host plant material. It causes some browning of the leaves in the host but does not kill it. For a list of those plants see the following [https://www.aphis.usda.gov/plant\\_health/plant\\_pest\\_info/pram/downloads/pdf\\_files/usdaprlist.pdf](https://www.aphis.usda.gov/plant_health/plant_pest_info/pram/downloads/pdf_files/usdaprlist.pdf)

If you purchased rhododendrons prior to June 1<sup>st</sup> from Walmart or Rural King call 1-866-NO-EXOTIC (663-9684) or the local extension office at 1-888-EXT-INFO (1-888-398-4636). To learn more about SOD, see: <https://www.aphis.usda.gov/aphis/ourfocus/planthealth/plant-pest-and-disease-programs/pests-and-diseases/phytophthora-ramorum/sod>.

## **PLANNING TEAM LEADER POSITION UPDATE**

The new NRCS Planning Team Leader (PTL) positions have been advertised. This position is a multi-county supervisory district conservationist responsible for conservation planning, conservation application, supervision, and partnership collaboration throughout the service area. There are 8 service areas in the state. The PTL will supervise 8-14 district conservationists and field office soil conservationists within the Conservation Delivery Team (CDT) service area. This position will work closely with the CDT Leader to coordinate workload for the area. The PTL will be supervised by the area conservationist. The state conservationist sent a message to all employees on June 20 explaining the position in greater detail along with a comprehensive question and answer document addressing employee questions. Contact your area conservationist for more information. The plan is to have these positions in place by October 1.

## **CHANGE IN USDA EMAIL ADDRESSES**

NRCS email addresses were recently changed as part of Secretary Sonny Perdue’s OneUSDA initiative. Each user’s primary email account for all USDA employees has been set to @usda.gov. For example:

Old: [johnny.soilsaver@in.usda.gov](mailto:johnny.soilsaver@in.usda.gov)

New: [johnny.soilsaver@usda.gov](mailto:johnny.soilsaver@usda.gov)

Because multiple users across the agencies may have the same name, they will continue to have a middle initial or number in the address, for example [steve.brown2@usda.gov](mailto:steve.brown2@usda.gov). Emails with the old address will continue to forward for a while longer. Please update your contact information in your directories for those on your mailing lists.