

State Soil Conservation Board Meeting
May 12, 2015
Lake Maxinkuckee Depot
Culver, IN

Members in Attendance:

Scott Ham
Nola Gentry
Rob Chattin
Robert Woodling

Others in Attendance:

Jordan Seger, ISDA	Julie Harrold, ISDA
Meg Leader, ISDA	Roger Kult, NRCS
Jennifer Thum, ISDA	Sarah Harville, St. Joseph SWCD
Geneva Tyler, ISDA	Emily Neitzel, IASWCD
Trevor Laureys, ISDA	Cress Hizer, IASWCD

Call to Order 9:38am

I. Approve Minutes of March 2015

Mrs. Gentry moved to approve the minutes as read, Mr. Woodling seconded the approval. All in favor, motion carried.

II. Clean Water Indiana

a. Clean Water Indiana Grants – Jordan Seger

The 2015 grants, Leah has been working with grant services, and has worked through some bugs and found some new efficiencies. All grant agreements are signed and the funds are going out the door.

During the 2015 CWI grant process, we set aside a 3% reserve in case we needed those funds. Those reserve funds were requested. As a result, we will not be able to move forward on a second round of funding. As a result, we cannot move forward with a second round of funding. The last grant round was the largest awarded in CWI history.

AFR – statutory obligation, the state match of \$10,000 of CWI funding and we had 91 districts that showed at least some local government funding on their AFR to qualify for the statutory match. (Leah Harmon put together a handout that broke down where we are at with the 2015 grants and the AFRs.)

b. Clean Water Indiana Budget Update – Jordan Seger

Every state department was requested to given back 3% of their general fund budget. During the legislative session, the CWI fund was going to be reduced by \$30,000, but the IASWCD, pushed to have those funds back added to top that fund off at \$1 million. At the end of the legislative session, the \$30,000 was put back in. The tax revenues have not met the predictions, so this general session, many agencies got hit hard.

This next fiscal year, 2016 – will look similar to grant amounts and training amounts. We will start budgeting in the next couple of months and start looking at the next cycle and we will work with controller to review it.

c. Scholarships/Sponsorships Training Funds

Jordan talked about some of the changes moving forward and references a handout that was together by Laura Fribley. Scott added a few comments that we have heard negative and positive feedback; the actual number of people that we could help, supervisors and staff has more than doubled. Not looking at huge funds, but also looking at reducing the speaker cost if they sponsor an event, that they have endorse

The board discussed what to do with the remaining funds of the scholarship/sponsorship; there is \$2,989.23 in the account. The board talked about placing some of those funds into the leadership Institute. **Mrs. Gentry made a motion to allocate the reaming education funds \$2,989.23 to the leadership institute. Mr. Woodling seconded it. All in favor, motion carried.**

d. State Soil Conservation Board Business

i. SSCB Chairman's Report

Scott discussed getting Robert and Ray on the grants committee. He has wanted to streamline this process with technology, and we need to dive into it. At the last board meeting the group discussed having Ray as the Vice Chair and serving on both the executive and grants committee. Jordan asked ISDA counsel, and he was told that Ray could do all three. Warren indicated at the last board meeting that he would like to get off the grants committee. Can we have Ray as the vice chair, executive committee and grants committee, he actually can got counsel and we can.

IASWCD annual conference

Communication with association, we are looking at having the SSCB meeting at the annual conference. They need to find a space and time on the agenda for the meeting. There has been interest on both sides to have the meeting back at annual conference.

Business Plan

We had a meeting to look at the plan, and the board is looking at drafts and revisions, no decision has been made at this time. We need to look at getting rid of the old technology and focus more on the needs of the state and the districts. So the plan will get revised this year, the board will look over next month, during July and go through it to see if there are any decisions to do a five year business plan. The draft needs to go to Larry, Warren and Bob. Nola asked the board if they should send this to the districts and then get feedback from the districts. Jordan stated that ISDA could

facilitate feedback using the CWI email, and it could go on the IASWCD newsletter and instructions on how to provide feedback. We should give the option of anonymous, but the default should be to list your name, district, but then at the end there click at box that says anonymous. In addition, at the bare minimum the individual completing the survey would be required to state what region of the state their district is from. We could use the IASWCD regions. This would help with what goals are going to be met and the SSCB regional concerns listed in their business plan.

III. Soil and Water Conservation Districts

a. Ohio County SWCD – submitted a letter to the SSCD board, saying that between Feb and November and they lost two staff members. They did not meet the March deadline to list the candidates for Supervisor(s) on SharePoint, but they did work on finding two new supervisors. No action needed. Robert – would like to have the SSCB respond to them, Scott Ham will contact them. Jennifer checked SharePoint and the two members that were listed on the letter were elected supervisors.

b. Delaware County Letter of Support – Jordan Seger

- i. ISDA can do a letter with Ted's signature, and need one from the SSCB. Jennifer and Leah worked on one from the SSCB, Scott had a few changes.

c. Directors Report – Jordan

Jordan introduced, Trevor an intern from St. Joseph County, graduated from IU SPEA.

Indiana Grown Initiative – there will be more out of on this program in July, this is a marketing program and a diverse board that looks at example local grown programs like Kentucky Proud. This will be for products that were grown, raised and process in Indiana. The program is broad, and it focuses on consumers that they want to buy local. It will be statewide Indiana.

China trade mission – specific to AG contracts, the LG and Governor are bringing a few companies over there to get contracts in place, popcorn, etc.

Staffing – Hired a new RS based in Princeton, Andrea Gopal – construction background, interned with NRCS and knows the Tech Team and has been out in the field already. New RS Kevin __ based in Columbus and comes from a farming background, new graduate from Franklin College.

Logan Gardner accepted a new position in Washington. His position is important to water quality and CREP initiative. ISDA is looking at filling the position with an internal candidate. That position may not be located in INDY.

AG Industry – Avian influenza, headlines, it's affecting all poultry. IOWA has been hit hart and millions of birds have been affected. Minnesota turkey population has been hit hard as well. The Indiana animal board of health is taking the lead on this.

New Dairy Strategy – focuses on the raw milk that leaves our state, and items that it could be processed in Indiana. As a result, the strategy will focus on getting

processors to the State of Indiana. There is a strong interest with the dairy groups looking to relocate to Indiana.

EPA – finalize the nutrient reduction strategy. Ted and Jordan will be traveling to Columbus Ohio to meet with hypoxia task force.

Spring Tillage Transect – that will be starting up in a few weeks. They are looking at how to use satellite imagery to gather the same data and not use staffs time, we might be able to do this in the future. We have six pilots this spring. CTIC and the software county came to Indiana because of all the data that we have.

Award – the GIS council, had a request for one of the awards, the excellence of GIS and Logan, Meg and Leah nominated Deb Fairhurst and she won the award. The ICP partners wrote letter of support for her.

Ted's new appointment

Ted will have additional role, Director of the Agricultural Division within the IDEC. He will be, tasked with getting new agricultural businesses and prospects to our states. We need to try and attract them to come here and Ted has been working with them for the past year and he has already been doing this, but no changes internal.

d. Technical Report – Julie Harrold

Presented the information for NE area of the technological side, it's time to get the landowners signed up for CREP. Julie touched on couple of the highlights, one of the big things that are going on are the Resource Specialist have been doing windshield surveys checking ditches, culverts throughout every stream. R The CREP activity, there are four regions that touch the NE, no new projects. Julie talked about the RCPP project the NE has three. The WLEB, Norte Dame, St. Joseph.

In addition, Julie talked about the work that is being done at the Albion Huntington tech teams.

e. Agricultural Affairs – Meg Leader –

INField website is up, www.INFieldAdvantage.org the website under tools there are three neat videos. Meg encouraged everyone to watch the videos, one is an overview of the program and the other two are case studies. They are looking to add new case studies and new items will be added to the websites. The case studies are the district led groups. Corn and Soy check off funds are covering the whole cost of the program. Corn and soy are committed to funding this in the future.

Red Gold Conservation program – 50 contractors growers, we had 46 turn in their application, and that is an all time high. The internal goal was to break 90%, the final site visits will be in July, and we had a tie in the 4th place. Two from Indiana placed in the top four. Ted will be presenting the award this year.

Pollinator Program – Meg talked about the heritage program and how INDOT is working to plant native flowers that will be beneficial to pollinators. This potential program, is a three year process that takes out invasive plants and replaces them with native. As they cut back on mowing, the communities are reacting negative and we are hoping that the districts can help spread the education of this and make it a positive of why this is going on and how it can

benefit. Scott thought they maybe the INDOT could add a sign that says for the pollinators to help those that cannot tell what an invasive is and native plant.

f. Accountability and Technology – Jordan Seger

Deb is at a GIS conference in Bloomington

Data analyses are completed for the 2013 and 2014 cumulative nutrient load reductions based on the life of the practices. The 2013 and 2014 reports are online; we are the first state to complete these analyses. They will be on the IASWCD and ICP website. The site is mobile friendly. We started to tell this story a different way. Currently the model looks at the practices completed in a calendar year. Such as, grass waterways have a lifespan of 10 years; we get benefits for 10 years of that practice. However, the model only counts the benefit for one year. As a result, Deb is trying to see if we can map cumulative benefits, to get the design lifespan of the practice. We are looking at 10 millions of pounds of reduction looking at the lifespan of the project. We are now leaps and bounds ahead of the other states.

ICP web application – Select County, then year you can see what money is going into the districts and they can post their success story.

Cover Crop Transect – completed and we will be able to see cover crop use and the cover crop system.

g. District Support – Geneva Tyler

Geneva highlighted a couple of points and the region meeting; we had _____ people in attendance in total of the states. Nathan completed the MBTI training and we use that program at the Leadership Institute workshops.

CWI - The DSS have completed 4 CWI audits to date. The audits are more to have a conversation with them, go through the paperwork and the financials.

Annual Meetings - Geneva then talked about the annual meetings, specifically Lake, Harrison and Jay County.

Supervisors Summit- limited to two supervisors per district, same format.

h. Water Quality and CREP – Jordan Seger

Working to make sure that the money is allocated in the right region. Hope to introduce the new project manager at the next SSCB meeting

IV. Conservation Partner Reports

IASWCD – letter to go out to the districts about the pathway water quality and its importance. They are looking for quotes from SSCB and ISDA to encourage the districts to volunteer. There was discussion on when the sign-up sheets are released to the agencies vs. the Districts. Nola mentioned that we do a training session at the Normandy Barn and then let the supervisors tour the pathway to water quality. We can look at the numbers, to see if we do a training there this year, and does not have to be at the same time, but we can do a tour of the facility after the workshop.

National Annual Conference – NACD supervisors and maybe staff member that they want to go. It's in Reno Jan 30 – Feb. 3rd.

IDEM – No report

DNR – No report

Purdue – No Report

FSA – No Report

NRCS - Roger gave the report.

Talked about the bird flu, trying to figure out what the impacts will be and how to provide assistance to the bird owners. NRCS will make the same not to visit the large poultry facilities. That being said, it may not be the larger facilities, it could be coming from the backyard ones. They will come out with information to stop the site visits; you need to come see us.

Agreements that NRCS is pursuing, contribution agreements, those will be coming any day now to provide assistance on that. Program support specialists, do an agreement with the association and they will do the call for proposals to the districts. All state conservationists will have the functions in place by June of 2016. This encourages cross county work and will model the CWI grants. In addition, another agreement will come out, slide scanning agreements. We are looking for the districts to finish up scanning the slides to be used for wetland determination.

Data Cleanup

USDA has started an effort to reduce the amount of data stored on agency computers and serves across the country. This includes those CCE machines used by partners.

Vacancies

Roger talked about the NRCS vacancies around the state. In addition, Gary Langell will be retiring at the end of June and Roger wanted to recognize him for all the work that he did with the private land coordination for fish and wildlife and working with NRCS and FSA.

IV. Public Comment

Scott asked if there were any questions on the reports or if there was any other public comment.

There was none.

VII. Next Meeting

2015 Meeting Dates

July 14, 2015 – The Nature Conservancy

September 15, 2015 - The Nature Conservancy

October 27, 2015 - TBA

VII. Adjourn

The meeting was adjourned at 11:42am

Minutes Prepared by: Jennifer Thum

Approved by:

	
	
	