

State Soil Conservation Board
Meeting Minutes
July 22, 2016

Members in Attendance:

Ray Chattin
Bob Eddleman
Nola Gentry
Robert Woodling
Warren Baird
Larry Clemons
Rex Blanton

Others in Attendance:

| | | | |
|-----------------------|---------------------|---------------|----------------|
| Jordan Seger | Jane Hardisty | Jim Woody | Steve Provines |
| Leah Harmon | Tara Wessler- Henry | Lisa Holscher | Amy Work |
| Jennifer Boyle Warner | Jennifer Thum | Laura Fribley | Meg Leader |
| Nathan Stoelting | Walt Sell | Julie Harrold | Jason Kishton |

I. 9:30 AM: Call to Order

Ray Chattin called to order the meeting.

II. Approve Minutes of May 2016

Nola moved, Warren seconded,
All in favor, motion carried.

III. Clean Water Indiana

a. Clean Water Indiana Grants –Leah Harmon

Competitive grants – Over the course of April and May, we did the CWI roadshow, which trained 60 districts across the state. We have since been answering questions for individual districts. The FAQ page has been updated, and it is on the website. The grants committee will be meeting after this meeting to talk about a few items.

AFR grants- We are processing those contracts, and we are still waiting on three of them. Some agreements have come back fully executed and are awaiting claims.

Since the last meeting, we have finished one grant review, and we will complete seven more by the end of the year.

Jordan – There are 10 reviews done in a year.

b. Delaware SWCD - Jordan Seger/Leah Harmon

The SWCD sent a letter, which is in your packet. The county did not receive the full \$10,000 from their county and are requesting the remaining match to receive the full amount. This would be the last year that an exception would be needed, because the law went into effect on July 1st. Jordan - this would just be approving to match the funding from the Ball Foundation and they are doing good things. The district is very active, and this is the last year this will happen.

Rex moved, Robert seconded that motion to fund them to get the full \$10,000

All in favor, motion passed.

Nola – Are there any other districts that did not get the full amount and may have gotten any private foundation? The other districts to not receive the full match were Fayette and Union. Leah was not sure if they received any private funding. We still budget for all counties to receive the funds.

c. Vanderburgh SWCD- Leah Harmon

The district sent a letter to update the SSCB on their 2014 CWI. This grant will close out at the end of this year. They are awaiting completion of their two-stage ditch. A contractor has been selected, and work will begin any day.

Laura – We are doing a grant review and hope to see the project in November at the time of the grant review. No action is needed.

IV. State Soil Conservation Board Business

a. SSCB Chairman's Report-Ray Chattin

Ray had the members and guests in attendance introduce themselves.

Ray spoke about the 3J's on their quest to visit each of the SWCDs. He enjoys representing the SSCB to the districts, talking about their business plan, and meeting the people that they serve. It has been inspiring to him. They have had great conversations. He joined the meeting in Fulton, and he is not sure he will be able to make them all. He will not accept mileage or per diem for the SSCB. It's not his goal to deplete the state's resources. He is here to help and offer encouragement, ideas, and challenges to the districts. He was asked to serve on Issue Based Action Team, which is a work in progress. Put together by Purdue Extension, they are working on addressing local community's natural resource issues in Indiana. He serves on it with Jill Reinhart and Jennifer Boyle-Warner. He was asked to serve as the Southern Indiana Invasive representative, but also brought SSCB chair perspective to that process too. Working with local communities and bringing them together, this project focuses heavily on invasive species, and he looks forward to this coming forth.

Jane – Raphael Vega and Adam Heichelbech are working on a new project under the NRCS leadership program. They are trying to learn about T by 2000, and are looking at whether it is time that the partnership needs to come up with the next T by 2000. They have been talking with past leaders to see what led to the governor's commission back in 1983 and to find out what led to the creation of ISDA, additional two SSCB members and a few other items. That information will then go to the ICP to see if further exploration is warranted. They are talking to those previous leaders. Ray wanted to speak with them about T by 2000.

Ray spoke about Westmoreland District in PA. They have a staff of 17. Their total budget for 2015 was over 2 million. Ray discussed more of this county.

Jane, Raphael will give a status of their project at the next SSCB meeting. This will be added to the next agenda. Momentum is going and everyone wants to get on board with this. What are we working towards? What things are going to happen with CWI funds we have things to think of in terms of budget and funding. They will be just presenting information. Ray is looking forward to this process..

V. Soil and Water Conservation Districts

a. Elkhart County- Jennifer Thum

With the death of Supervisor Lyle Burtsfield, a vacancy was on their board. The Elkhart SWCD board recommended that Darrel Shover be given a temporary appointment, and whose term expires 2018. Darrel is a farmer, who implements no-till, filter strips, cover crops and grazing management on his farm.

Nola moved to accept the resignation and approve the appointment, Bob seconded the motion.

All in favor, motion passed.

b. Marshall County-Jennifer Thum

Steve Martin resigned, board recommended Mike Large. He is a farmer and serves on the REMC board.

Larry moved, to accept the resignation and approve the appointment, Warren second the motion.

All in favor, motion passed.

c. Jefferson County- Laura Fribley

Laura – elected supervisor that stepped down for personal reasons. Mark Darnold has been involved with the districts over the years.

Warren moved, to accept the resignation and approve the appointment Rex seconded.

All in favor, motion passed.

VI. 10 Minute Break

Meeting resumed at 10:14

VII. ISDA Updates

a. Director's Report (includes CWI budget update)- Jordan Seger

Jordan provided a written report. Jordan highlighted the CWI budget. In his report at the top of the page, we just ended the state fiscal year, and we just started FY 2017. The budget is set for two years.

Legislative piece- we just came off a short session. This January is, when they will set the budgets for FY 18 and 19'. Specifically, year-end, we have the two different budgets, CWI and DSC sliver. CWI, includes the dedicated portion, the cigarette tax, based on sales. We get a select percentage plus our general fund appropriation. This is attributed to the IASWCD. We started this FY with \$4,714,609, and we have shared those graphics before.

Jordan provided the funding breakdown.

The funds do rollover. We ended with about \$10,000 that will be rolled over to the CWI competitive grant budgets with 89k going to CCSI.

Income – we brought in over \$600,000, and that came in the source of a WLEB grant, an Elector Power Research Institute grant for Water Quality Trading, corn and soy checkoff for INfield Advantage.

Last bullet – the competitive grants, the board and the committee will have the known dollar at the next board meeting. In 2016, we had around \$900,000 for those grants. The amount will look like the same for this competitive grant cycle.

Staffing – we added Zack Holsinger, an RS in the NE area, based out of the Albion Tech Team. We now have a 24 RS, out in the field, including 10 in the CREP program. We have six DSS, three program managers, and one director.

Then outside of the division, we have about 25 other staff members. They have a separate budget.

Last session, we had a few changes to Indiana code. We cleaned up some language. One of the areas was that if two districts were to merge, we could now pay them each their \$10,000 match if they come up with their local match. This next long session, we do not have any legislative proposals.

State Fair – celebrating the bicentennial. Staff will work the fair.

Water Quality Trading – Tara is the lead on this. We are looking for RFP for tree plantings. \$100,000 comes from that for forestry work. Four districts will help with administration of these projects.

Jordan spoke in more detail about how the water quality trading program works. We are in the conservation business, and if you want to get conservation on the ground, we will connect you with those people to make that happen.

Jordan then spent some time discussing ISDA's infographics that related to nutrient reduction. Conversations about showing train car reduction maps. They wanted to know what is the overall context of the maps, and what are we actually losing in terms of nutrients. Trevor has been assigned to dig into the models, climate, soil etc. He's been looking at SWAT mode and looking at smaller watersheds. The SWAT model looks at weather and many other factors. There are tons of layers that go into this, you can split out a year, and the total amount of nutrients that is running off a field and we are trying to marry that with the tillage transect and the nutrient load reductions. We will have more to report on this. It is a cool step in the right direction.

Robert – do you see opportunity to look at resiliency component? How did fields with conservation do, compared to those that do not when you are looking at major storms. We do not have data on this.

Jordan – At this time we are not digging in field-to-field comparison, but INfield Advantage does

Robert applauds this effort.

MN is digging into this as well.

Larry – Feel free to call Larry to reach out to his staff for assistance on this project. Chris Johnson would be the person to contact.

Ray – cigarette tax funding – does anyone have an idea on how that account will look like in next few years. It's about 3% reduction in packs of cigarette sold.

Jordan stated that historically after the taxes are increased, the sales go on the decline.

Ray brought this up, that the DSC staffs at 34, back in 05 the staff was 68. As SSCB, does not have an opinion on those numbers and the level of funding should be for conservation.

b. Technical Report- Jim Woody

Jim provided a written report and handouts. Jim stated that he and his team is close to the Greencastle delivery team. The charts of CRP, EQIP, shows how much work is left to implement, which is a huge amount. The contractors and farmers need to implement them. The second sheet is the Princeton team. The EQIP workload is large, and they have a lot of survey work and things that need to be built as well.

Employees and technical assistance, there are some vacancies, staff that is not fully training yet.

Robert – when will we have funding for positions? The NRCS has been short in Princeton for a while. Are there candidates for those positions?

Jane – it is all over the board. We are not seeing the numbers that are on their panels as they use to. They are getting backgrounds from all over the board. Few and few are existing partner people. A lot do not know about agriculture. The ones out of college are smart and want to learn.

The last sheet is the SW – shows the CWI grants that are due, LARE, and the CREP and shows the trends. The largest INfield advantage groups are in the SW. Some of the DCs are inclined to promote CREP, so that program has large number of applications this year.

c. Agricultural Affairs-Meg Leader

1. Meg conducted a presentation on INFA, on the results and trends

Meg discussed her written report. We are done with the enrollment numbers this year. Meg indicated that the fall trainings will begin soon. In addition, she has organized a tour of A and L Labs in Fort Wayne.

Red Gold – Finalist farmers were visited the last week of June.

A few months ago, ISDA social media did not have a lot of DSC posts and she has been communicating with staff. Look for these posts if you are on social media. The last post was a family farm, with four generations.

c. Accountability and Technology- Jordan Seger

No written report.

Deb's out – all is going well.

d. District Support-Laura Fribley

Laura has a written report. Ongoing activities, internal controls, CWI meetings and soon we will be doing election work. Laura invited the board to August communication Leadership Institute, at Fair Oaks. Geneva can answer any questions. The supervisor summit is August 23rd at Hendricks County Fairground.

e. Water Quality and CREP- Julie Harrold

New agreement with ISDA and FSA, fully executed and glad that it is done. No longer any easements, any extensions. Incentive payments, more money for new projects. Added yearly goal of them,

Reports are in your packets, summary of where we are with acres and dollars.

Current 2016 enrollment is 12,235 acres. The CREP program is trying to divide the funds they receive from SSCB.

CRP Cap is set at 24 million. We were at 23 million at June. FSA is still asking producers to sign up if they are interested. Once we get to the next FY, some of those lands currently enrolled will come out of contract, and those funds will become available.

Nutrient reduction strategy – link on your papers. Comments can go to the email address that is on the report as well. The Nutrient Reduction Strategy workgroup has met recently. Discussing action items to that plan and working towards watershed prioritization based on the IDEM system and working on prioritize the HUC 12 in those basins.

Hypoxia Task Force – Data sharing with this.

WLEB – Always something going on there. A new thing that come up as part of the Annex IV, DAP has to put together part of that process and IDEM is charge of putting on that. Julie is on that committee. The plan is due in December.

VIII. Conservation Partner Reports

a. IASWCD Report

CCSI – Lisa was hired as the new director. We have three other positions, program manager, communications and agronomist. Lisa hopes that by September we will have full staff. As we look into 2017, CCSI will ask to give a report or presentation at and SSCB meeting.

State fair- all spots for Pathway have been filled.

During state, fair the River Friendly Farmer ceremony will be held on August 17.

The association appreciates SSCB attending at the 4-H building at 1:00pm. We have 48 recipients attending.

The Indianapolis Zoo, there presentation on water quality and how Indiana affects waters downstream in the dolphin exhibit. The Zoo worked with TNC on this.

The zoo will be working with Marion County SWCD staff too.

Women for the land, statewide committee, Amy is working on the website, extension is part of this too. IASWCD is supporting that too. We are helping with that effort too.

Urban association soil health grants, \$50,000, Marion and Hamilton SWCDs received \$50,000 for technical assistance.

b. IDEM Report

Written report provided – synopsis of 319 grants.

c. DNR Report

No report.

d. Purdue Report

Walt had handouts.

At this point to move forward we need funds to get teacher resources. We submitted a SARE grant and are hopeful to hear if it received funding. The focus of the proposal is to develop a soil health repository at Purdue to have resources available for Ag teachers and/or science teachers to pill off what they needed for that.

The focus of the proposal would be resources directed towards the Midwest, that would be available to anyone that had access online. We need a person to take that on, and current staffing might not have the expertise to make it a tool. With resources from the grant, we could use someone with those skills.

Jordan – have you engaged with FFA? If you get the grant, we can help you work with State and National FFA.

e. FSA Report

Two quick updates. We are getting close to that CRP cap.

FLP loans – update, they have loaned out \$181 million so far and the most money ever in history – right now 2 million approved waiting to be funded. Waiting to see if they will be funded. They have been busy with loans. CRP- It has been a record year for CRP enrollment too.

Jordan – Why?

Jason – CRP enrollment is due to prices.

f. NRCS Report

So much going on, our folks are working and Farm Bill programs 18 million was allocated early and 10 million backlogged. National NRCS asked if we need more money and Indiana says it needs 10 million. Indiana received the fourth highest amount of funds. CSP also exceeded goals and asked for \$100,000. Indiana received those funds.

WREP – asked for additional funds, and Indiana got that.

HQ knows that they have extra funds; Indiana seems to be able to get the funds.

We are getting our fair share.

Finally, getting 20 positions filled due to change in HR process. I hope that by the end of calendar year, we will have 20 new position hired on. Five additional soil conservationist in tech teams, 8-soil conservation technicians on those teams too. These are low-grade positions to do the grunt work, help the DC's in the field. There will be a career ladder for them, GS 5 but they can do to 11 or engineering move their way. They will be trained. Positions that could not be hired, that salary is going to LIDAR maps. IN are 8 years old, the maps now are the latest technology. They are looking to do the whole state. Jane wants to give a demonstration of this and how they use it.

Jordan – we are using that for the modeling. B/C all collaborates has access to this state. Other people can get to this too.

Jane wants to mention that at the last 3J meetings, Ray does an excellent job for them to promote their districts and the LI.

Already working on the new farm bill programs. We need to keep our ears and eyes open.

Never seen as much as conservation on the ground as we do now. Things are looking good.

CCSI - The Cover crop tile drain plug, the link will be posted to the CCSI website.

g. IDEA Report

No report

IX. Public Comment

X. Next Meeting:

2016 Meeting Date

September 20, TNC Indianapolis

October 25, Huntington County

XI. Adjourn

Rex moved, Nola seconded to adjourn the meeting.