

AGENDA
STATE SOIL CONSERVATION BOARD MEETING

March 11, 2015

The Nature Conservancy

620 E Ohio St

Indianapolis, IN

- I. 9:30PM: Call to Order**
- II. Approve Minutes of February 2015**
- III. Clean Water Indiana**
 - a. Clean Water Indiana Grants – Leah Harmon
 - b. Clean Water Indiana Budget Update- Jordan Seger
- IV. State Soil Conservation Board Business**
 - a. SSCB Chairman’s Report-Scott Ham
 - b. Conference Call In Number
 - c. CCSI
 - d. Business Plan Retreat
 - e. CWI Round 2
 - f. Leadership Institute
- V. Soil and Water Conservation Districts**
 - a. Vermillion SWCD- Nathan Stoelting
 - b. Martin SWCD- Nathan Stoelting
- VI. ISDA Updates**
 - a. Director’s Report- Jordan Seger
 - b. Technical Report- Jim Woody
 - c. Agricultural Affairs
 - d. Accountability and Technology-Deb Fairhurst
 - e. District Support-Laura Fribley
 - f. Water Quality and CREP-Logan Garner
- VII. Conservation Partner Reports**
 - g. IASWCD Report
 - 1. CCSI- Les Zimmerman
 - b. IDEM Report
 - c. DNR Report
 - d. Purdue Report
 - e. FSA Report
 - f. NRCS Report
 - g. IDEA Report
- VIII. Public Comment**
- IX. Next Meeting:**
2015 Meeting Dates
 - May 12, Lake Maxinkuckee Depot, Culver, Indiana
 - July 14, The Nature Conservancy, Indianapolis
- X. Adjourn**

September 16, The Nature Conservancy,
Indianapolis
October 27, Sugar Ridge Fish and Wildlife
Refuge, Pike County

*****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.



Conservation Cropping Systems Initiative



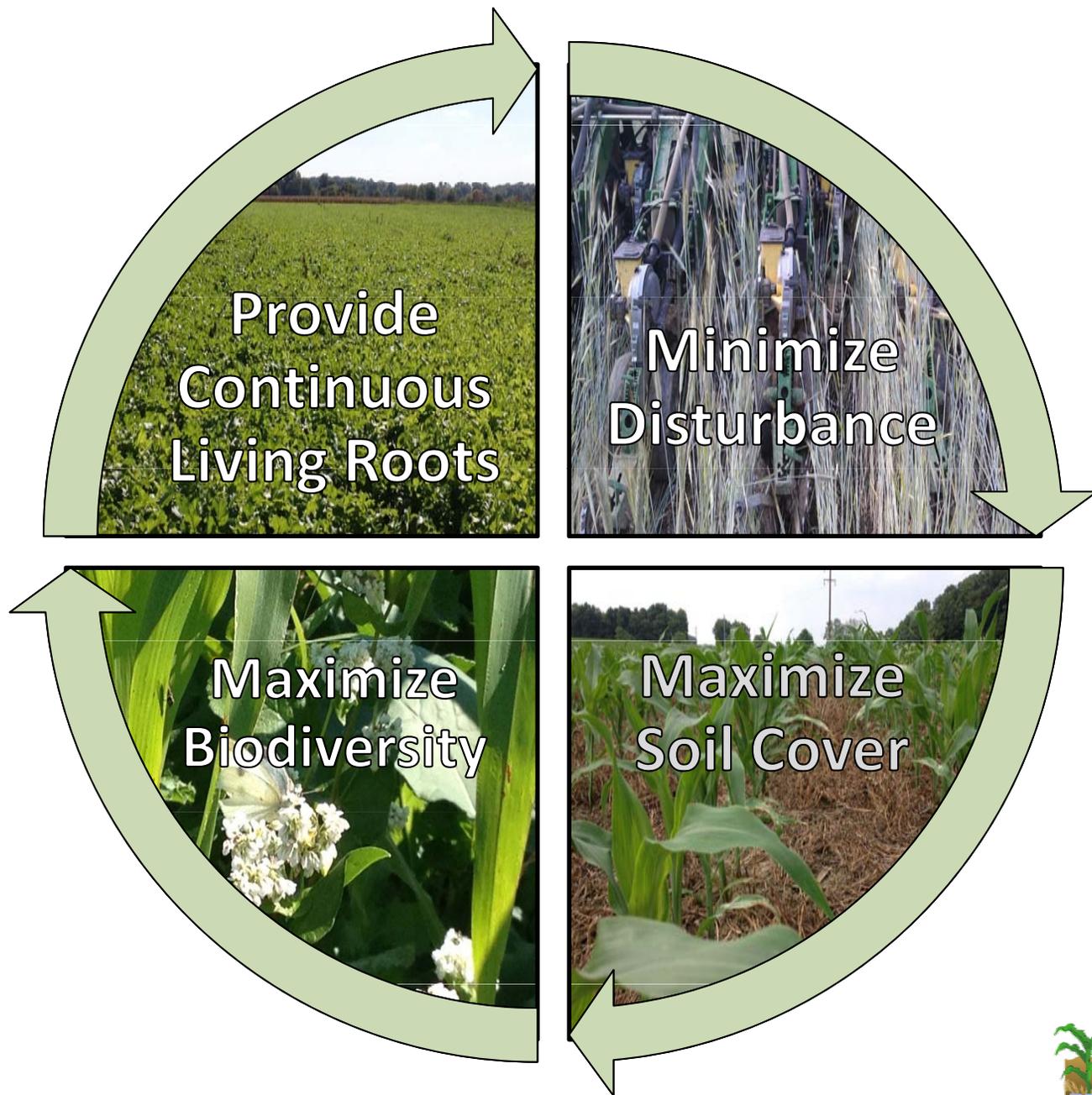
Photo Courtesy of Pike Co. SWCD

Project Focus

1. Technical Excellence for Indiana Conservation Partnership Employees, Farmers, and private ag industry
2. Conservation Cropping Systems Implementation
3. Education and Outreach
4. Quantifying Soil Health Benefits
5. Partnerships



Soil Health Principles



Technical Excellence



2 - Intro to Soil Health



4 - Advanced Soil Health



2 - Presentation Skills

Conservation Cropping Systems Implementation



Education and Outreach



Technical Assistance

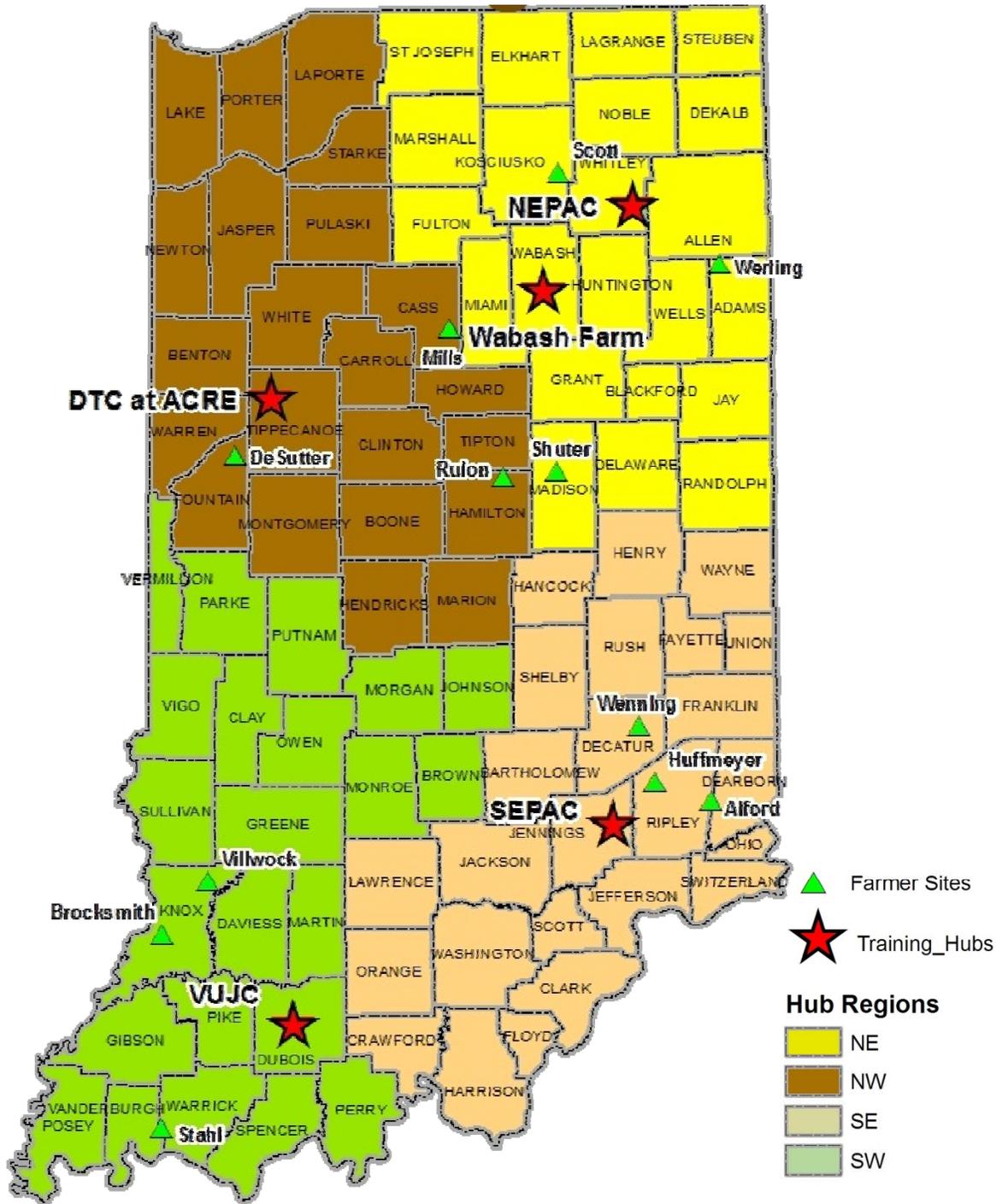
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Photo by Pike County SWCD



Regional Field Days

Quantifying Soil Health



CCSI Regional Hubs



Indiana Conservation Partnership



INDIANA ASSOCIATION OF
soil and water conservation
DISTRICTS



DUBOIS SWCD
WABASH
SWCD

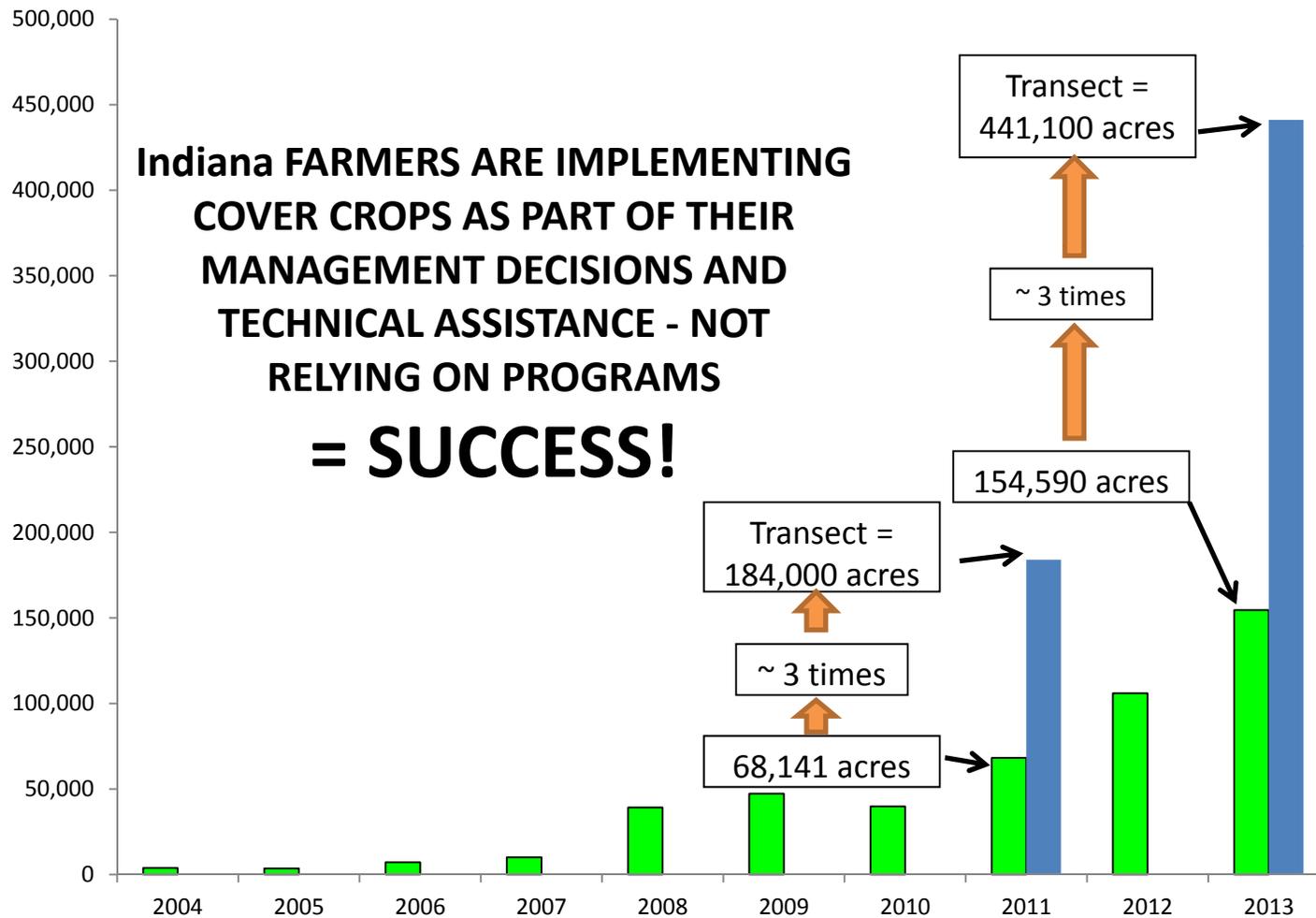


The state of Indiana has been on the forefront and cutting edge of this soil health effort with cover crops being kind of the main focus to get it going. Many other things are being developed to go along with it to improve soils, to make them stronger and more productive and reduce the loss of nutrients in soil itself into the water streams of America. So it's exciting to be going to where all of the technology has been developed for this and we hope we can showcase it.

Earl Garber, president NACD (LA)



Success Story



Project Success

- 325+ field days/workshops reaching over 16,000 people
- 275+ producers provided assistance through phone calls, emails and site visits;
- 100+ producers provided with high level technical one-on-one assistance;
- 350+ agency staff receiving high level technical training;
- 120+ private providers (i.e. CCA's) receiving high level technical training;
- Replicated strip trials on 17 sites totaling 148 strips;
- Over 1,500 aggregated samples pulled (approx. 18,000 individual cores; measurements by 60-70 people);
- Attendees from Ontario, MI, KS, MN, WI, OH, IL, KY at field days



Project Success

- Significant public outreach through website, FaceBook, and Twitter
- Significant media coverage through various state outlets (i.e. Indiana Prairie Farmer, AgriNews, Brownfield, etc.)
- 12 HUB farmers identified/promoted
- IN led nation in 2011 in # acres in cover crops through NRCS programs (68,000). Today, estimates range over 600,000 acres.
- Nationally recognized as a leader in soil health!
- NACD Soil Health Forum and Tour in 2014



Project Future

- More data collection/measurements/economic info
- More HUB farms/demonstration areas
- Coordination with On-Farm Network
- Targeting new audiences (i.e.: landowners, lenders, livestock producers)
- Continue to identify top producers around the state
- Develop consistent information/messaging
- Collaboration with private sector
- Increase financial support
- Increase media/outreach; disseminate results, etc.
- Grow peer to peer support network
- ICP staff as the experts in the field!



Continue to Develop Partnerships!

- Ag business
- Ag product dealers (Coops, Fertilizer dealers)
- Commodity Groups (Corn, Soybean, Livestock)
- Universities (Purdue, Vincennes, IVY Tech)
- Wildlife Groups
- Gardening Clubs, Vegetable producers (organic and non-organic)
- Who ever is interested in working to improve Soil Health



Keys to Success

- Passionate People
- Strong Leaders
- Partnerships
- Working Through Challenges
- This is a *JOURNEY*, not a Destination



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- Website

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- Pinterest

[/CCSIIndiana](https://www.pinterest.com/CCSIIndiana)



Contacts

PROGRAM ASSISTANCE

- Lisa Holscher

Lisa.holscher@in.nacdnet.net or 812-890-3631 (cell)

- Jennifer Boyle Warner

jennifer-boyle@iaswcd.org or 317-502-7273 (cell)

TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

- Barry Fisher

Barry.fisher@in.usda.gov or 317-295-5850 (office)

- Eileen Kladvko

kladvko@purdue.edu or 765-494-6372 (office)





State Soil Conservation Board

February 17, 2015
DSC Technical Assistance Report

Field Staff Activities

January 1, 2015 – March 2, 2015

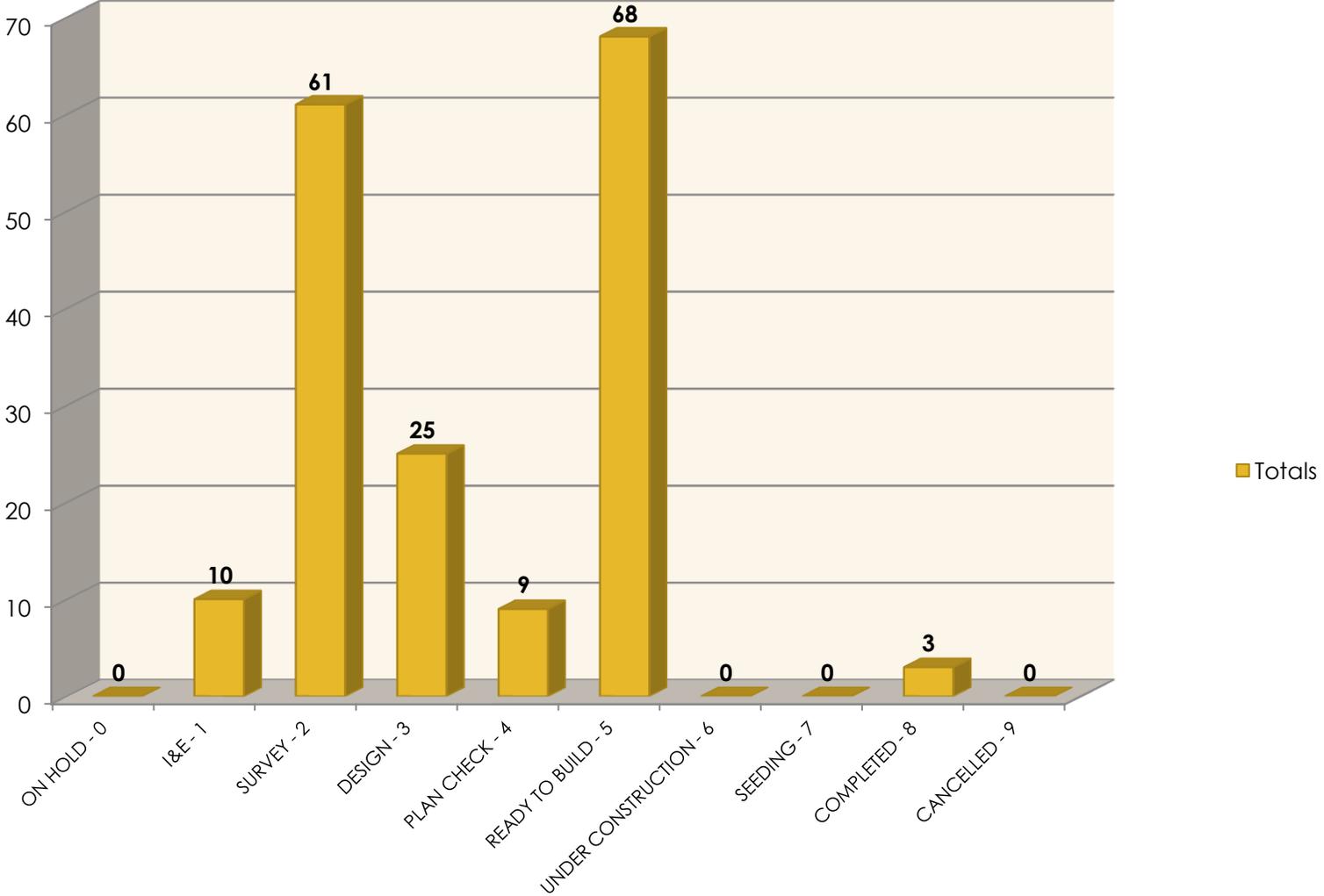
Resource Specialist Activities	Total
SWCD Board Meetings	63
ICP Meetings, Conference Calls, Webinars, etc.	127
Field Days	4
Training	31
Conservation Planning	110
Survey, Design and Inspections	211
Construction	0
Public Interaction	8,010
CREP – Met with Landowners	22

DSC Conservation Workload

January 1, 2015 – March 5, 2015

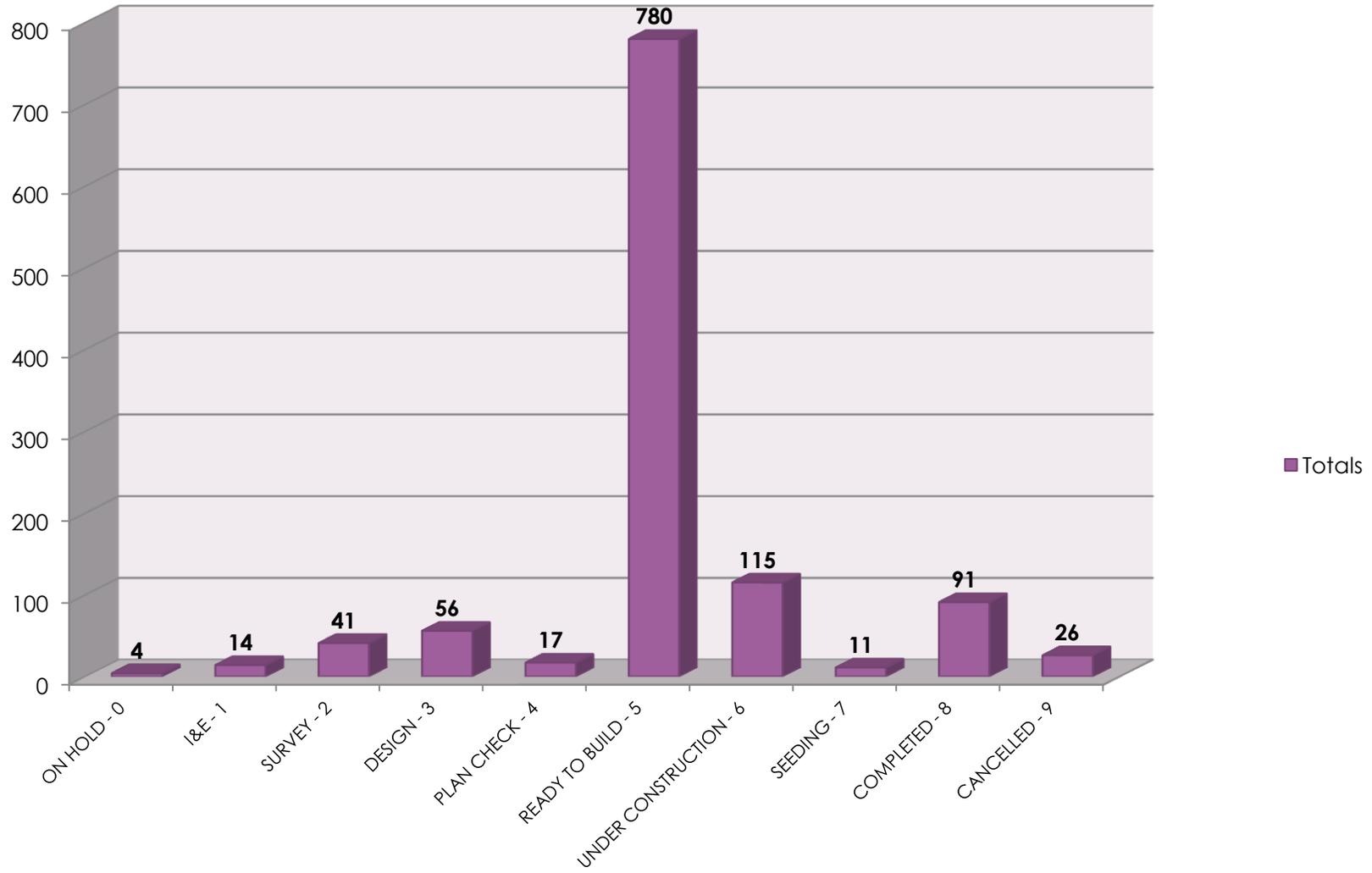
Action	Currently Reported
Technical Assistance	125
Practices Underway	91
Completed Practices	13
Practice Acres	727
Practice Feet	1,550
Field Acres	969
Nitrogen Reduction	2,240 lbs.
Phosphorus Reduction	1,122 lbs.
Sediment Reduction	839 tons
Total Watersheds (HUC8) Impacted	15

Practices Requested in FY 2015 by Status

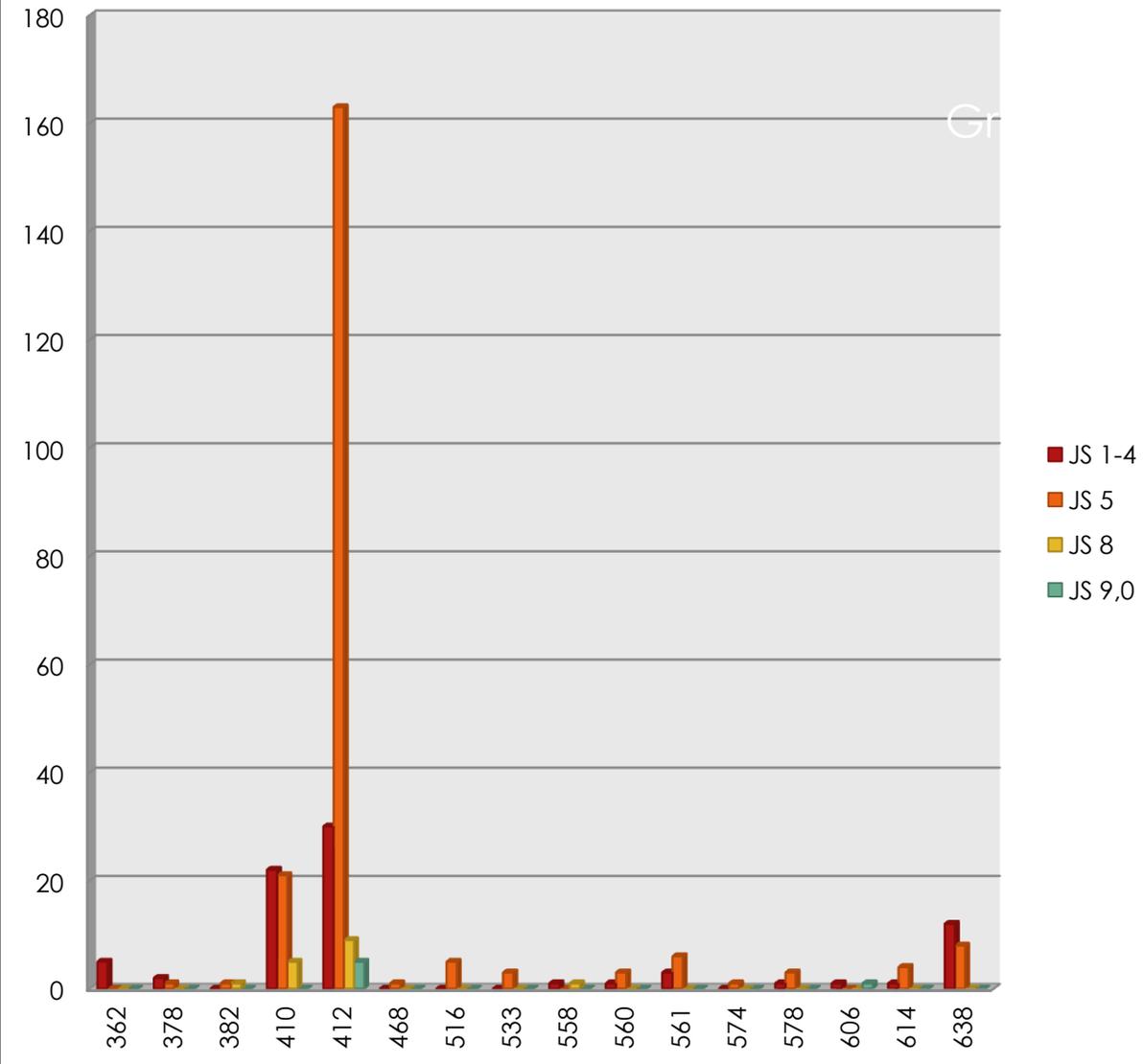


Totals

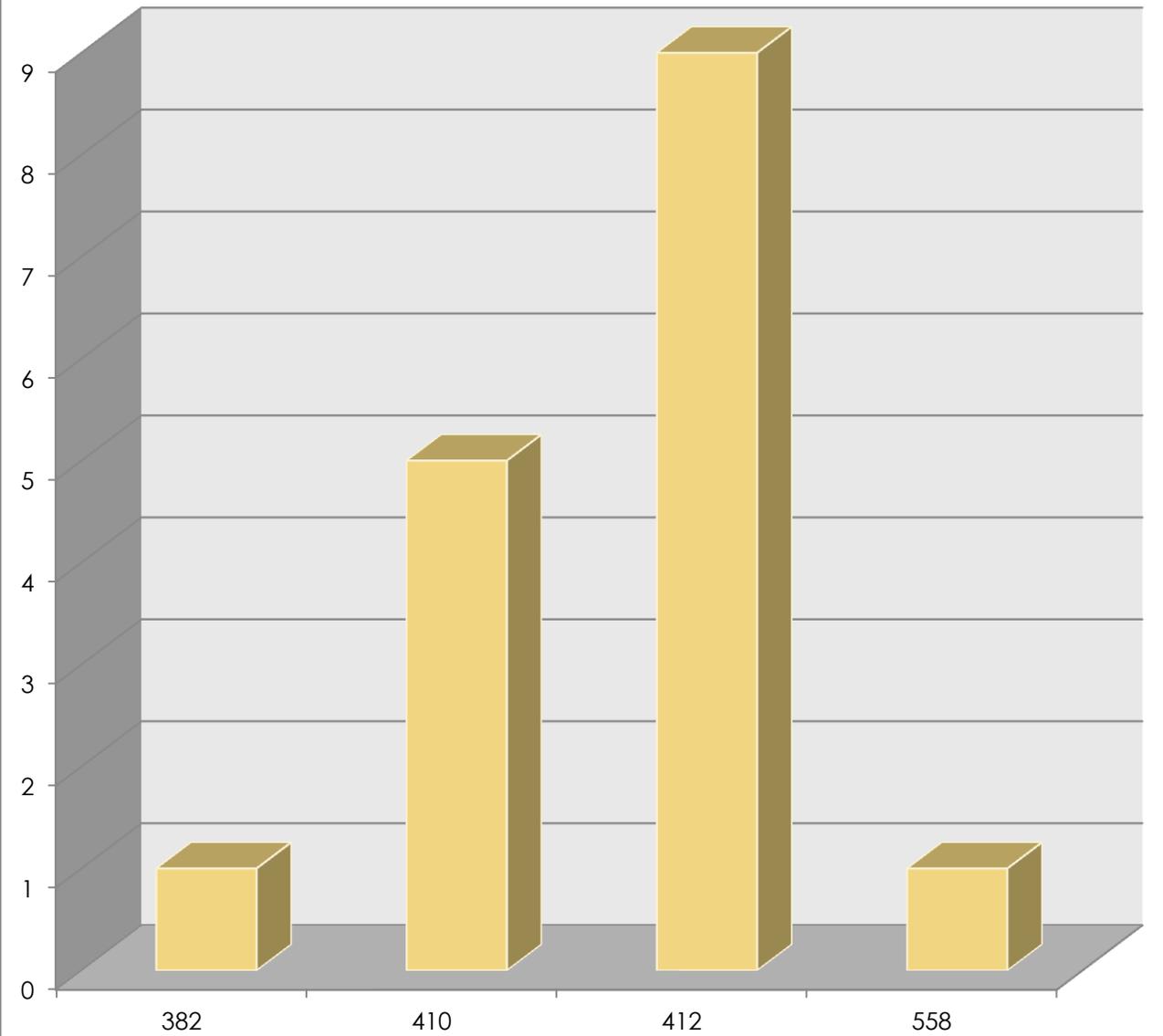
Practices Requested in FY(s) 2014 and before by Status



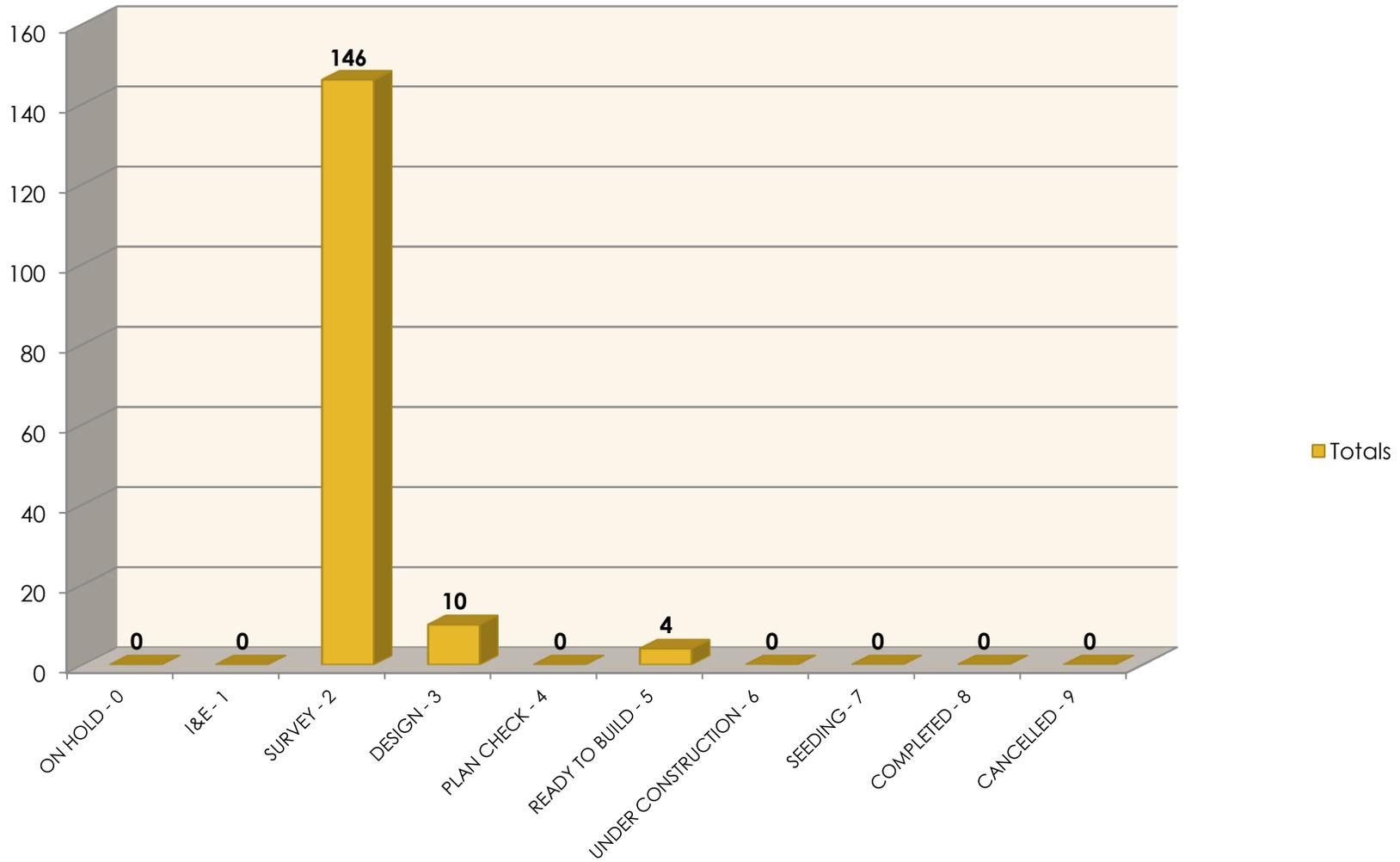
Total Amount of Jobs Per Practice Dependant on Job Status



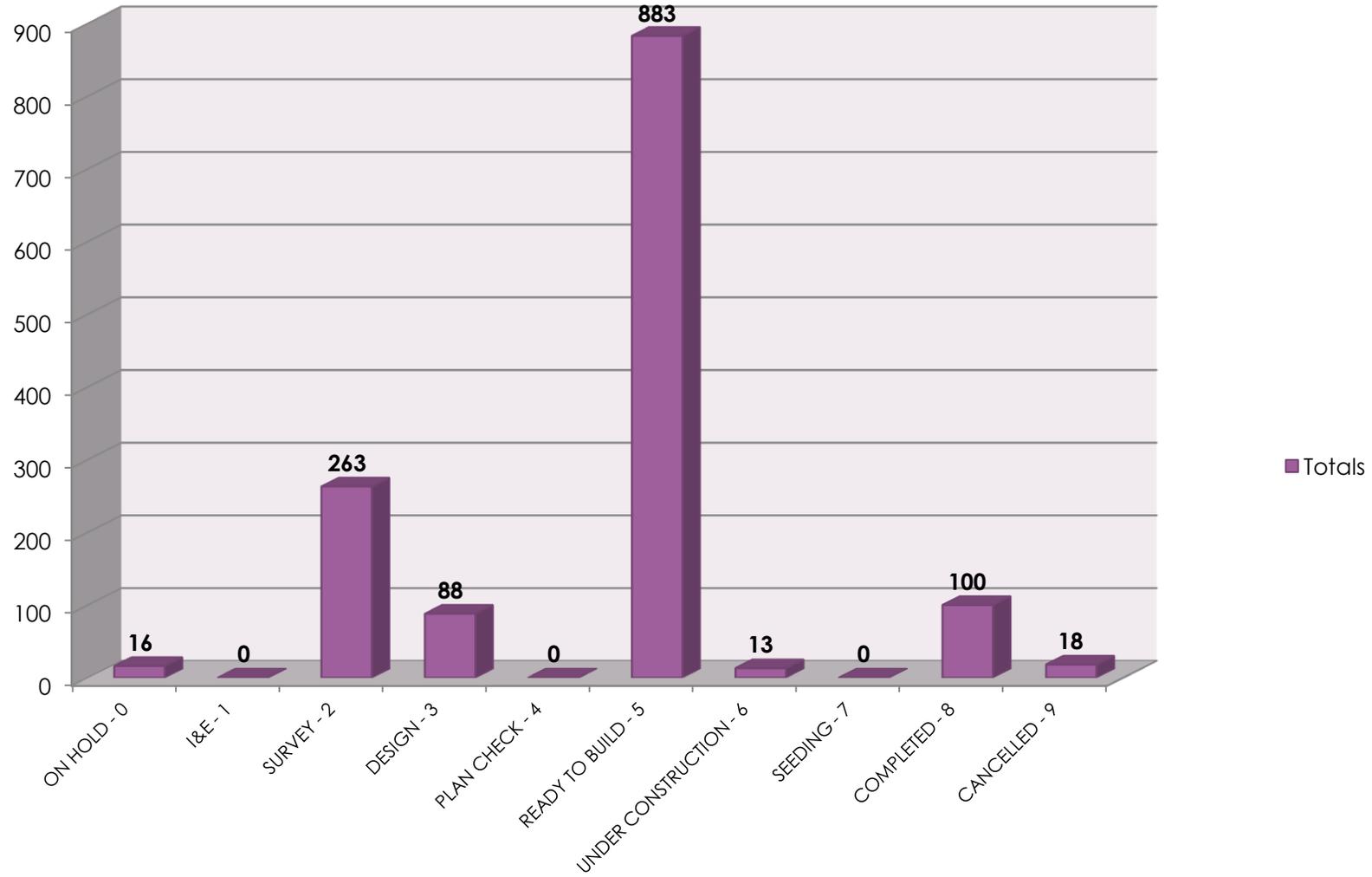
Total Amount of Jobs Completed Per Practice



Practices Requested in FY 2015 by Status

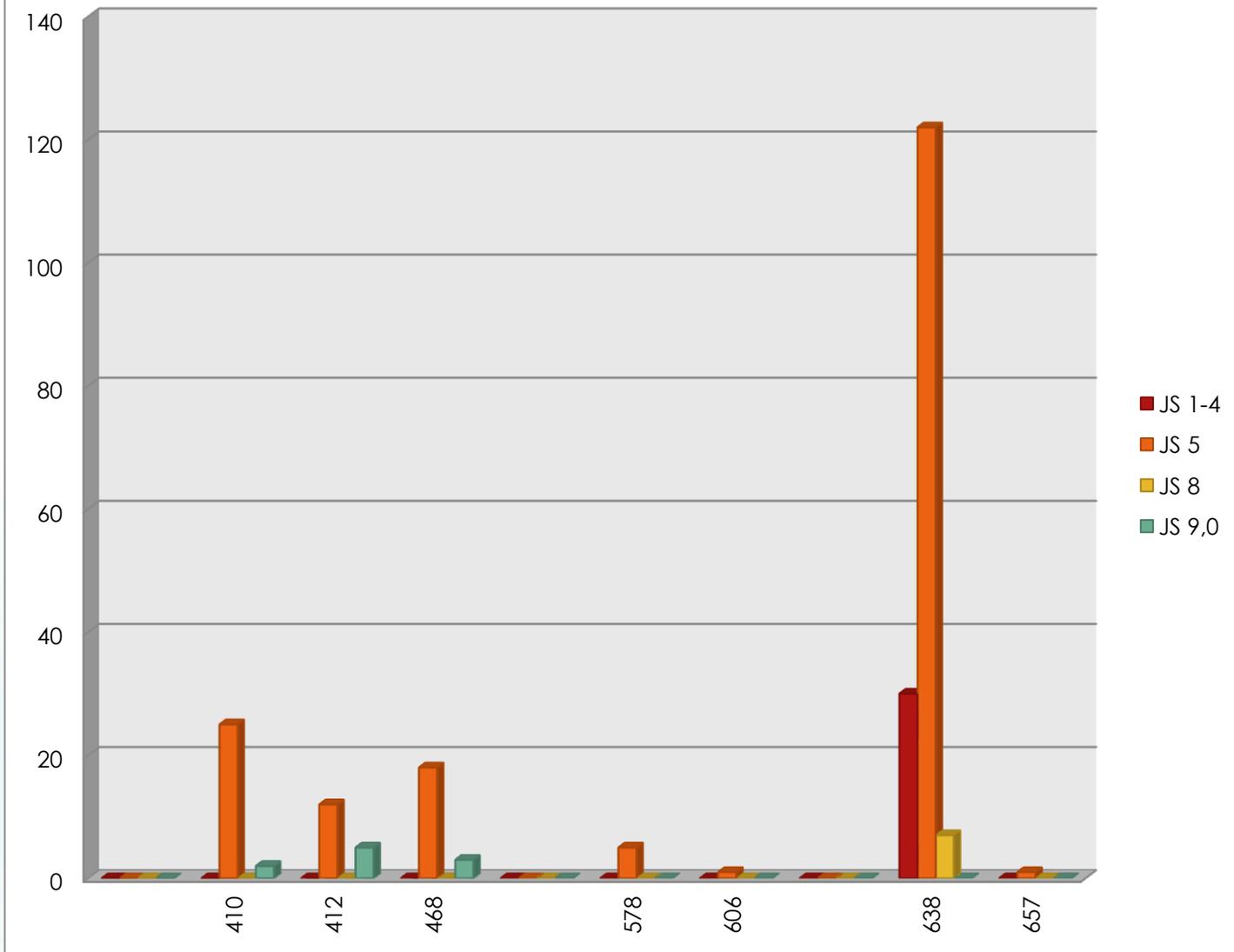


Practices Requested in FY(s) 2014 and before by Status



Princeton CDT

Total Amount of Jobs Per Practice Dependant on Job Status



Princeton CDT



State Soil Conservation Board

March 11, 2015

Agricultural and Environmental Affairs Program Manager



Program Updates

➤ On Farm Network/INfield Advantage

- The OFN Winter meetings will be completed on March 12. They are going well with plenty of grower engagement
- I was part of a panel discussion during the Iowa Soybean Association's Annual Research Conference on February 19, 2015. The panel highlighted the Multi-state On Farm Partnership. Corn and Soy paid for some of the OFN group leaders to attend and two district staff people, as well as some ISDA staff, attended.
- The Indiana Corn Marketing Council/Indiana Soybean Alliance is sponsoring the program's group leaders to attend the Indiana Ag Forum on March 16. There may be a breakout session during the afternoon.

➤ Red Gold Environmental Stewardship Program

- The 2015 award program will be accepting preliminary applications from March 27 through April 27. The top five finalists will be visited the first week of July and the winning farm will be announced in early August.



State Soil Conservation Board

February 17, 2015
Accountability and Technology



Program Updates

2014 Conservation Accomplishments

Region 5 Model analyses are Nutrient load reductions are completed for the Northwest and Southwest Regions. Northeast and Southeast will have their analyses completed by March 16.

IDEM reported that the GRTS database is once again operational. They pulled the Section 319 practices for 2014 and are currently waiting on the point data from EPA. The point data will be married to the practice data once received.

All 2014 practice data has been aggregated by county and program into a spreadsheet. Once IDEM's data is submitted, the 2014 Conservation Accomplishments map will be created featuring the total amount of practices installed in each county.

The nutrient load reduction maps will be created the latter part of March or first of April, along with the 2014 ICP Conservation Accomplishments Report and 2014 ICP Nutrient Load Reductions poster.

2014 Division KPI and Performance Measures (Updated from previous SSCB report)

KPI			2013	2014
	Yellow Target	Green Target		
Top soil stabilization, prevention of sediment from entering waters of the State	252,000,000	280,000,000	283,560,000	198,808,000
Program Measures				
Nitrogen reduced from entering waters of the State	262,350	291,500	302,008	219,803
Phosphorus reduced from entering waters of the State	132,264	146,960	152,633	108,995
Number of soil and water conservation practices installed	450	500	731	571
Number of newly enrolled acres in the Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP)	2,428	2,698	2,663	2,881
Number of acres in On Farm Network	39,600	44,000	42,630	50,540

ICP Accomplishments Web Application

Login issues continue with the WebCMS11 software. IN.gov is working to correct the issue, but has not given any definite timeline.

All partners were requested to submit a breakdown of program dollars invested in each county. Deadline for the funding data is March 20.

IN.gov developers are working to update the web application to include the 2014 county web pages. It is hoped that the SWCDs will be able to begin entering their 2014 success stories in April.

ISDA-District Support Specialists Team Activity Report (February 7, 2015 – February 27, 2015)

Major Activities or Events:

- Assistance with updating Business Plans and or Annual Plans of Work: Crawford, Kosciusko
- Jennifer spoke at a press release for the St. Joseph, Michigan Watershed RCPP project

Ongoing Key Support:

- SSCB Scholarship and Sponsorship (training cost share) program and CWI Grants: DSSs continue to support SWCDs and the SSCB on various tasks and needs related to these programs
- DSSs have attended SWCD Annual Meetings in the following counties and presented and/or assisted upon request: Crawford, Decatur, Elkhart, Fayette, Franklin, Hamilton, Hendricks, Howard, Jay, Knox, Marion, Parke, Pulaski, Vanderburgh, Wabash, Warren
- DSSs have attended SWCD Board meetings and assisted with various topics in the following counties: Carroll, Crawford, LaPorte, Scott, Vanderburgh
- SWCD Staff visits: DSSs visited staff and provided training, assistance with various projects or tasks, and provided guidance in the following counties: Marion, Martin, Sullivan, Vigo
- Supervisor visits: Nathan visited with Greene Co, and Leah assisted supervisors and staff in Marion Co
- DSSs attended events, field days, workshops, or Partnership meetings where they were also able to interact with the following Districts: Adams, Allen, Benton, Decatur, Dubois, Huntington, Jasper, Johnson, Marion, Miami, Montgomery, Morgan, Scott, St. Joseph, Tippecanoe, Warren, Washington, Wells
- DSSs are assisting SWCDs with Annual Financial Reports and Gateway responsibilities, and SWCD election documents

Committees and Advisory Roles: DSSs have been involved serving on committees and accomplishing related tasks.

- Jennifer: River Summit, RCPP, Tri-State Conservation Expo
- Tara: Water Quality Trading, Soil and Water Conservation Society's Spring Meeting
- Geneva: SSCB duties
- Leah: SSCB duties, CWI Grants

Other Key Items:

- Planning is underway with IASWCD for SWCD March region meetings
- Planning is underway for 2015 Leadership Institutes
- DSSs and the SSCB met to plan the August Chair/ViceChair workshop

Upcoming Events:

- March SWCD evening region meetings: March 17 (Delphi), March 19 (Washington), & March 25 (Columbia City). Presentations include IN's Nutrient Reduction Strategy, and Pathway to Water Quality. There will be three breakout sessions, including training for New Supervisors and Staff.
- SWCD Chair/ViceChair workshop: August 25th at Hendricks County Fairgrounds.

**Note: due to the large amount of data summarized, errors or omissions may exist.*

NRCS State Conservationist's Report March 2015

NRCS Budget

We have received our 2015 budget and it is one of the first years ever we are not starting out in a deficit. We are trying to digest everything but feel good about proceeding with staffing and training plans.

Staffing

NRCS went through a major operations improvement effort last year looking at staffing, training, quality assurance, etc. As a result of holding vacant positions and the operations improvement effort, we will proceed with filling 14 vacancies at the field and state office level.

Soil Health

Indiana continues to lead the country in soil health efforts thanks to many of you. Nationally, a new soil health division has been established at headquarters and we have a hired new director and assistant director. Other positions for regional soil health leadership are expected to be filled soon.

We recently partnered with IASWCD and Marion County SWCD to hire an urban soil health conservationist in Marion County (Kevin Allison). Kevin will be working with community gardeners and urban residents on their special soil health needs.

We are excited that Purdue Extension has announced three positions that will support the Conservation Cropping Systems Initiative (CCSI) and our soil health work here in Indiana

- Extension worked with IASWCD to hire the CCSI agronomist (to take Hans Kok's place). The position is for one year and will be housed at Purdue.
- Ronald Turco, Agronomy professor has been named the assistant dean of agricultural and environmental research for the College of Agriculture. This position is new and will focus on soil health and water quality. Ron has also been appointed as the new director of the Purdue Global Sustainability Institute at Purdue for the next two years.
- Another key soil health position recently announced is that Walt Sell will become the ANR Assistant Program Leader for Soil Health, a newly created position within Purdue Extension. Along with soil health, he will focus on water quality and nutrient management. Walt will help coordinate efforts among the ICP members in the field, making connections and providing resources and support. Walt will begin on April 15th.

The Midwest Cover Crop Council is moving from Michigan State to Purdue. It will be a great opportunity for the ICP to have them in the state.

There are lots of upcoming soil health events – watch for field days and workshops near you.

Contribution Agreements

Indiana is evaluating the need for new contribution agreements for the following work:

- NRCS is in need of assistance with slide scanning, program support, administrative support, and certain CRP activities. Some of this work will involve field reviews, as well as data entry into our business software systems. We are considering pursuing contribution agreements with partners to accomplish this work. This will allow our District Conservationist's as much time as possible to do Conservation Planning and meet with customers on their farms.

2014 Farm Bill Program Updates

Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP): Application approval will begin after March 6th.

Agricultural Conservation Easement Program (ACEP): NRCS has opened a public comment period for the ACEP interim final rule. If you are interested in seeing the rules or commenting, please let your District Conservationist know. The deadline is April 27th.

Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP) – The deadline for farmers and forest landowners with expiring CSP contracts to re-enroll is March 31, 2015. The deadline for general sign-up CSP applications is Friday, March 13, 2015.

Conservation Compliance Requirements for Crop Insurance Participants: To be eligible for premium subsidy on any federally reinsured crop insurance policy, including specialty crops, livestock, and pasture, farmers must file form AD-1026 certifying compliance with FSA by June 1, 2015. The Risk Management Agency has notified farmers who might be first time program participants and requesting premium reduction for crop insurance or those who have insurance, but records indicate an AD-1026 is not on file with FSA.

Special Initiatives Updates

Mississippi River Basin Initiative (MRBI): Phase II of MRBI is coming. We worked with ICP Leaders and the State Technical Committee to select five 12-digit watersheds in the Mississippi River Basin to focus additional targeted EQIP dollars this year. The five recommended watersheds will be finalized and submitted to national headquarters this week and should be approved by early April.

National Water Quality Incentive (NWQI): A second NWQI EQIP sign up has been announced, with an application deadline of March 20. Beargrass Creek in Wabash County has been added as a targeted watershed in 2015. NWQI focuses EQIP funds to address nutrient reductions. The other three watersheds are:

- Eagle Creek in Hendricks and Marion Counties
- Silver Creek in Kosciusko and Wabash Counties
- Ell Creek in Dubois County

Resource Conservation Partnership Project (RCPP): The FY16 solicitation for new RCPP pre-proposals is expected soon. Agreements for the three projects that include Indiana are being written, including:

- Indiana Watershed Initiative led by the University of Notre Dame
 - Kosciusko, Newton/Jasper/Benton, Howard Counties
- Tri-State Western Lake Erie Basin Phosphorus Reduction Initiative led by Michigan Department of Agriculture and Rural Development - MDAR
 - Steuben, Noble, DeKalb, Allen, Wells and Adams Counties
- Michigan/Indiana St. Joseph River Conservation Partnership led by MDAR
 - St. Joseph, Elkhart, Lagrange, Steuben, Kosciusko, Noble and DeKalb Counties