

**STATE SOIL CONSERVATION BOARD MEETING
MINUTES**

December 9, 2025

Location: Indiana Soybean Alliance

8425 Keystone Xing Ste 200, Indianapolis, IN 46240

MS Teams

Board Members Present

Gene Schmidt
Jane Hardisty
Kenny Cain
Brad Dawson
Jeff Healy
Chris Lee
Jewel Wise

Amy Work
Meg Leader
Elli Blaine
Damarys Mortenson
John Hazlett
Stan Moore
Tonya Williams
Mark Kingma
Luke Mullet
Roger Miller
Craig Broady
Amy Burris
David Bausman
Jared Chew

Ophelia Davis
Sara Day
Andrea Gogel
Leah Harmon
Jessica Hatt
Quinton Hayes
Lisa Holscher
Julie Clark
Trevor Laureys
Rebecca McClellan
Allison McKain
Megan Malott
Julie Morris
George Reger
Megan Ritterskamp
Jared Thomas
Walt Sell
Mary Lou Watson
Tara Wesseler-Henry
Grace Williams

Others Present

Ray Chattin
Breegan Anderson
Jennifer Thum
Laura Fribley
Sandra Hoffarth
Brandi Frazier
Tracey Johnson
Claire Rekeweg
Nathan Stoelting
Geneva Tyler
Kylie Wagoner
Liz Rice

Present Virtually

Holden Abrell
Bonnie Brown
Leah Walthery
Cindy S
Jennifer Creager
Darlene

I. Call to Order: 9:02 by Gene Schmidt

II. Approval of Minutes of October 21, 2025

Jane Hardisty moved to approve minutes. Brad Dawson seconded. Jeff asked that minutes be reviewed and edited. Discussion was to review those changes and review edited minutes at January meeting. Motion was then made by Jeff to table minutes approval until they were edited. Jewell seconded. Board voted unanimously to edit minutes, review, and possibly approve at January meeting.

III. Clean Water Indiana

Jennifer Thum gave the CWI Report for Tara Wesseler-Henry. Grant committee met and had a successful meeting earlier this month. Grant reviews are almost

complete. One review is left to complete for 2025. Capacity reports are currently being submitted. These reports will summarize how CWI funds are being used around the state. Grant writing training is being developed currently. Jane Hardisty asked about discussing CWI grants in the future with the board to get thoughts on current grant requests and active grants to see if CWI funding is being used as the board desires. Jane Hardisty also asked about the capacity reports. She was hoping to see a summary of how all CWI funds are currently being used and spent around the state. The board requested to review CWI funding in January. Breegan Anderson summarized how the request for information or request for proposals works since there were some changes in administrative policies for some programs.

IV. State Soil Conservation Board Business

- a. Each board member took turns to speak on SSCB activity since last meeting.
 - a. Kenny Cain started and summarized his work as a member of the CCSI Steering Committee.
 - b. Chris Lee attended a market ready meeting, a Purdue Extension event.
 - c. Jeff Healy met with Jennifer Thum to learn more about the budget and how that process works.
 - d. Jewel Wise attended the SNE Region Meeting at Red Gold. She enjoyed seeing what goes into the process of tomato production in Indiana.
 - e. Brad Dawson met with CWI committee.
 - f. Jane Hardisty was asked to speak at an annual meeting on February 24.
- b. SSCB Training

Some training for State Soil Conservation Board members is needed. This will need to be completed at a board meeting to observe open door laws.
- c. SWCD concerns

Topics of data centers, solar farms, and water quantity are big issues around the state. Districts are forced to deal with these issues consistently. Jane Hardisty was wondering if any information needs to be given to the districts to help them be better prepared for issues surrounding these topics. Gene Schmidt said he attended the South-Northwest meeting. Some concerns regarding the conservation impact on resources following land use change was one of Genes' biggest takeaways from the meeting. Districts need to be provided with the best possible information to help guide local decision

makers when these changes take place. Jane Hardisty also mentioned that NRCS has announced some of their changes in alignment. Gene Schmidt doesn't believe that we can accumulate enough information as fast as we need it across the state, so he requests District Support Staff make State Soil Board Members aware of issues as they arise, so they help districts guide through challenges.

d. **Division of Soil Conservation Director's Report**

Jennifer gave director's report. Report was handed out and made available, and she also summarized the report. Jennifer also handed out the current working budget for the board to review. Details are provided and Jennifer and Jeff will work through the details. Jennifer also discussed the issue of term limits. She is getting more details from Jonathon. He will work with the board on their terms. Breegan Anderson summarized details on a district capacity needs assessment. The Division of Soil has reached out to different agencies that can do this and have found a bid that works. They are hoping this will get things rolling with this group soon.

e. **ISDA continues to work with IDEA on a marketing video.** Jennifer gave an update on the status of that video.

V. Soil and Water Conservation Districts

- a. Cass County SWCD: Sandra Hoffarth gave details on resignation in Cass County. Details on a temporary supervisor appointment in Cass County was provided to the board.
- b. Clay County SWCD: Nathan Stoelting provided the details on Clay County supervisor replacement.
- c. Gene Schmidt asked if we could keep a tracking document that shows the most common reasons supervisor resign.
- d. Jeff Healy made a motion to approve the temporary supervisor request. Brad Dawson seconded. Motion carried.

VI. ICP Reports

- a. ISDA
 - i. Breegan Anderson summarized written report on CREP and State Nutrient reduction strategy.
 - ii. No updates on technical assistance.
 - iii. Laura Fibley provided a district support update. She summarized report as well. Board asked some questions regarding conservation link. Gene asked about mentoring program.
- b. IASWCD: Liz Rice provided a summary of the IASWCD report.
- c. CCSI: Lisa summarized her written report virtually.

- d. Purdue: Walt Sell provided updates via Teams.
- e. NRCS: Damarys Mortenson summarized the NRCS updates.
- f. FSA: Jared Thomas summarized his written report on FSA activities.
- g. IDEA: Brandi Frazier gave an update on IDEA activities.
- h. RITA: Meg Leader provided and summarized a report on RITA.
- i. USH: Elli Blaine provided an update for Urban Soil Health.

VII. Public Comment

Gene then wanted to share thoughts on the government shutdown. A request was made that the partnership works together to find a way for districts to have at least some access to office work during shutdown scenarios so that they can continue work as needed.

VIII. Break

IX. Recognitions

- a. Former SSCB members
Jennifer helped lead a recognition ceremony to honor previous SSCB members Ray Chattin and Amy Burris.
- b. Board Leadership Program
Jennifer then recognized the Board Leadership Program. Scott County received the recognition for most trainings completed as a district. Tying for second was Jasper and Kosciusko counties. Also being recognized were the top individuals. Marion County's Owen Dwyer was the top achieving participating individual. Matt Mace was the second highest participant for individuals. Jeff Baker from Warrick County was the third highest participant in the training program.

X. Meeting adjourned at 12:25.