

ICP 2014 Accomplishments

Our Conservation Partnership Staff Training and Certification program has offered numerous trainings for partnership staff in 2014 including conservation selling skills training, storm water management/Rule 5, and rain garden design training. Our goal continues to be to provide consistent statewide training to all partner employees to improve technical skills and help us operate more efficiently by capitalizing on all available staff. Stay tuned for more trainings to come in 2015!

2014 was another successful year for the *Pathway to Water Quality Exhibit* at the Indiana State Fair. The PWQ Committee, consisting of representatives from SWCDs, NRCS, ISDA, SSCB, IDEM, and IDNR tirelessly gave countless hours to maintain and improve the exhibit. A special thanks to all the volunteers who worked at the exhibit this August. Without your help, we could not make the PWQ a sought after exhibit at the fair. We enjoyed two special visits this year by Senator Joe Donnelly and Lt. Governor Sue Ellspermann.

2014 marked the eighth year for the *Leadership Institute* for SWCD supervisors, employees, and ICP partner staff. Two sessions were held with 49 participants completing the classes. Since 2006, 87 participants have completed the entire Cornerstone training series and 76 SWCDs have participated. In addition, a follow-up session on Leadership in Conflict was held with 33 participants.

Focus Area: Conservation Cropping Systems Initiative (CCSI)

- Co-hosted the NACD National Soil Health Forum and Tour with over 250 in attendance from around the country.
- Conducted numerous soil health workshops in 2014. They included:
 - 12 Conservation Innovation Grant (CIG) Farmer Events with over 600 attendees
 - 2 Introduction to Soil Health trainings for 50 attendees
 - 4 Advanced Soil Health trainings for over 200 ICP partners and ag professionals
 - Presentation and media skills training for 40 attendees
 - 25 additional field days with over 1,700 attendees
 - Concerted outreach effort to CCAs and ag professionals commenced
- Provided one-on-one technical assistance to 44 individuals
- Soil Health Investigations:
 - Replicated strip trials on 17 sites totaling 148 strips
 - Over 1,200 aggregated samples pulled; over 50 people involved in helping to pull samples
 - Participation in USDA-ARS study on Soil Health Nutrient Tool (Rick Haney, ARS Temple Texas)
- 2nd annual hub meeting convened; and 2nd annual top-tier farmer



MISSION

The mission of the Indiana Conservation Partnership is to provide technical, financial and educational assistance needed to implement economically and environmentally compatible land and water stewardship decisions, practices and technologies.

VISION

The ICP's land and water stewardship assistance will improve the quality of Indiana's streams, rivers and lakes; protect our drinking water; and increase soil quality to boost food and fiber production.



MEMBERS

- Indiana Association of Soil and Water Conservation Districts and our 92 SWCDs
- Indiana Department of Environmental Management
- Indiana Department of Natural Resources
- ISDA Division of Soil Conservation
- Purdue Cooperative Extension Service
- State Soil Conservation Board
- USDA Farm Service Agency
- USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service

roundtable convened.

- Numerous press releases on events, farmers, and soil health testing.
- Monthly teleconference calls with four regional hub teams to discuss events, trainings, and future needs.
- CCSI partners include: Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education Program, Conservation Technology Information Center, Purdue Extension, USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service, Indiana State Department of Agriculture, State Soil Conservation Board, Indiana Soybean Alliance, Indiana Corn Marketing Council, Indiana Association of Soil and Water Conservation Districts, and the Wabash and Dubois County Soil and Water Conservation Districts.

Focus Area: Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP)

- Oversaw over 9,600 acres enrolled in the Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program in Indiana.
- Increased annual enrollments in CREP by approximately 18% from 2013 to 2014.
- Added several hundred acres in signups for wetland restorations, CREP's most effective nutrient-removal practice.
- For the first time in CREP's history, designated nearly all CREP annual funding for 2014 to payments to be made for practices signed up this year (upon completion).
- Renewed contract with Brendan Kearns, the IDNR's Healthy Rivers Initiative employee. One of his responsibilities is the continued promotion of CREP.

Focus Area: Watershed Initiatives

- Made progress in the development of a statewide strategy to identify high priority resource concerns.
- Maintained a map of all funded watershed projects to identify gaps in relation to resource concerns.
- Participated in the Ohio River Water Quality Trading Project.
- Supported Great Lakes Restoration Initiative, Western Lake Erie Basin, and Mississippi River Basin Initiative projects. Communication plans also put into place.

Focus Area: Targeting, Monitoring, Outcomes

- Promoted the success of various conservation efforts, such as the Healthy Rivers Initiative, Great Lakes Restoration Initiative projects, Western Lake Erie Basin, and the Mississippi River Basin Initiative projects.
- Worked with researchers across the state on linking water quality monitoring to the success of conservation practices.
- Participated in the development of the Nutrient Strategy Plan for Indiana.
- Developed success stories on collaborative projects.
- Adopted the EPA's Region 5 model to estimate nitrogen, phosphorus, and sediment reductions from ICP conservation workload statewide.
- 2013 ICP workload estimates for nitrogen, phosphorus, and sediment reductions will be completed and published by January 2015, with quarterly Region 5 updates completed for ICP workload by ISDA staff moving forward.
- Use of the Region 5 model on the ICP/statewide scale was recognized by the Gulf of Mexico Hypoxia Task Force and USEPA as a beneficial and proactive measure in assessing the impact of conservation in Indiana.
- Participated in Indiana Water Quality Forum.

Find the ICP Online

[Indiana Conservation Partnership
www.icp.iaswcd.org](http://www.icp.iaswcd.org)

[Indiana Conservation Partnership Reports
www.in.gov/isda/icpreports/](http://www.in.gov/isda/icpreports/)

[Pathway to Water Quality
www.icp.iaswcd.org/outreach/pathway/](http://www.icp.iaswcd.org/outreach/pathway/)