

ICP 2013 Accomplishments

The Indiana Conservation Partnership continues to collaborate and carry out major projects each year that greatly benefit our staff and volunteers. In addition to these projects, the ICP identifies focus areas each year that we agree to work together on.

2013 Projects

The *Conservation Beyond 2016* advisory committee made up of a group of SWCD supervisors and staff, worked together during 2013 to develop a set of pilot projects that will be eligible for Clean Water Indiana funding. This advisory group was charged with developing pilot projects to help implement the *Conservation Beyond 2016* recommendations.

Our *Conservation Partnership Staff Training and Certification program* has offered numerous trainings for partnership staff in 2013 including nutrient management 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 2014!

2013 was the 20th anniversary of *Pathway to Water Quality*. Lt. Governor Sue Ellspermann joined members of the Indiana Conservation Partnership (ICP), State Fair officials and volunteers to celebrate. As part the exhibit's anniversary and re-dedication, the front pond was restored as a model to show land owners and users what can be done using native plants in or near a water feature.

2013 year marked the seventh year for the *Leadership Institute* for SWCD supervisors, employees, and ICP partner staff. Two sessions were held with 55 participants completing the classes. Since 2006, 78 participants have completed the entire Cornerstone training series and 72 SWCDs have participated.

Focus Area: Conservation Cropping Systems Initiative (CCSI)



- Conducted numerous soil health workshops in 2013. They included:
 - o 50 Events with 3,690 attendees
 - o 12 Conservation Innovation Grant (CIG) farmer events with 885 attendees
 - o Intro to Soil Health with 88 attendees
 - o Four CIG Advanced Trainings with 144 attendees
 - o Advanced three-day training with 136 attendees
 - o The Advanced Farmer Roundtable provided research and technical assistance needs to the Midwest Cover Crop Council
- Provided technical Assistance (TA):
 - o One-on-one TA was provided to 56 individuals
 - o The CCSI Mentoring Program was relaunched
- Conducted Soil Health Investigations:
 - o Replicated strip trials on were conducted on 17 sites totaling 148 strips.
 - o Pulled over 1,200 aggregated samples (approximately 15,000 individual cored stalks; measurements by 50-60 people)



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

Conservation Cropping Systems Initiative (CCSI) continued

- Media
 - Relaunched the website, Soil Health Events Calendar established
 - Increased CCSI's social media on Facebook and Twitter
 - Produced 12 news releases specific to CCSI events
- 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 8,150 acres enrolled in the Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program in Indiana
- Increased annual enrollments in CREP by approximately 20% from 2012 to 2013
- Held two CREP steering committee meetings this year (after newly forming the steering committee in late 2012) in order to lift eligibility restrictions on wetland restorations to boost enrollment. The lifted restrictions place CREP CP-23 and CP-23A practices in the same guidelines as those in CRP. The resulting enrollment totaled over 400 acres signed up for wetland restorations in Indiana, greatly contributing to this year's enrollment increase
- Provided new CREP watershed and personnel maps to CREP leaders and their administrating counties
- Hired a new CREP Leader, Nan Hammel, for the Upper White Watershed, a particularly active and important watershed in the program
- Hired a new contractor, Brendan Kearns, for the IDNR's Healthy Rivers Initiative in 2013. His secondary priority is to promote CREP and WRP.

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 nutrient reduction strategies, including both the state strategy and the effort by Indiana commodity groups and Farm Bureau
- Participated in the Ohio River Water Quality Trading Project
- Supported Great Lakes Restoration Initiative and Mississippi River Basin Initiative projects.

Focus Area: Targeting, Monitoring, Outcomes

- Promoted the success of various conservation efforts, such as the Healthy Rivers Initiative, Great Lakes Restoration Initiative projects, 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
- Monitored legislative initiatives
- Developed success stories on collaborative projects.

YOUR INDIANA CONSERVATION PARTNERSHIP

Indiana Conservation Partnership
www.iaswcd.org/icp/index.html

Indiana Conservation Partnership Reports
www.in.gov/isda/icpreports/

Pathway to Water Quality
www.pathwaytowaterquality.org