

# TRAINING AND CERTIFICATION PROGRAM

## What is the Training & Certification Program?

The Indiana Conservation Partnership's (ICP) Training and Certification Program (TCP) strives to improve efficiency in training amongst all technical employees, resulting in a more highly skilled workforce and seamless delivery to customers. The joint move towards a more standardized training, certification and development program was formalized by an ICP Agreement in September 2010. Partners also showed full support for the program as outlined in the 2013 Cooperative Working Agreement. Any employee trained and certified through this program will be recognized as competent by every agency in the ICP.



## TRAINING NEEDS IDENTIFIED

Earlier this summer, ICP employees were surveyed to determine their current technical training needs. In all, 245 employees from six agencies returned the "Individual Development Inventory" spreadsheet. Thank you to all who participated.

Completed surveys were compiled and ranked by the total number of requests per subject. Following are the "Top 10" out of 154 possible topics, although there are actually 15 subjects listed because of

several "ties".

1. **Weed ID**
2. **Wetland Plant ID**
3. **Tree & Shrub ID**
4. **Conservation Planning**
5. **Wetland Restoration; Raingardens**
6. **Hydric Soils for Wetland Delineation**
7. **Wetland Creation**
8. **Soil Testing & Interpreting Results; Pasture & Range Forage ID; Forest Health Assessment**
9. **USLE or RUSLE Evaluation; How to Talk to Producers-**

**"Selling Conservation"**

10. **NRCS Customer Service Toolkit; Website Management**

Several key subjects showed a reduction in the number of times they were requested since the last big survey in 2011 (e.g. cover crops, USLE or RUSLE Evaluation, and Nutrient Management). We assume/hope this is an indication of all of the good training taking place around the state.

## SSCB & SECTION 205(J) GRANTS WRAP UP

Two grants were finalized in 2014. The First, a Section 205(j), was completed in January. This included the salary for our Coordinator, Harold Thompson. He remains actively involved as an Earth Team Volunteer. The second grant came from the State Soil Conservation Board. These dollars helped fund several key trainings that ranked highly in 2011's training inventory: two

EnviroCert courses (Certified Professional in Erosion and Sediment Control & Certified Erosion, Sediment and Storm Water Inspector), six Beginner and Intermediate Raingarden workshops, and three Conservation Selling Skills workshops. They also helped sponsor the June "Conservation in

the City" event. Tree/Shrub ID books were also purchased for each county. We thank our funders for the opportunity! *Photo by Jason Donati: instructor Rusty Schmidt leads a raingarden training.*



# CONSERVATION SELLING SKILLS



In November, Chuck Hitzemann of Positive Growth International led three Conservation Selling Skills workshops for 90 ICP employees representing six agencies. Chuck provides salesmanship training designed for conservation professionals. Attendees were reminded of the basics when working with clients (e.g. prepare for the appointment, be punctual, remove sunglasses); learned what can motivate customers (pride, hope of gain, fear

of loss, hope of approval, etc.); reviewed how to ask open-ended questions (begin questions with when, what, who, how, or where– but be cautious starting with “why”); discussed adapting their presentation to the client’s personality; and much more. *“Excellent presentation,”* said one attendee. *“Particularly useful information for when I’m preparing for a meeting with a landowner or making cold calls.”* Since the training, the ICP Team has received

multiple requests for similar sessions and one supervisor noted her employees have made great strides in serving their clientele effectively. Unfortunately, demand exceeded the number of slots available for the training. Attendees are asked to please share the knowledge they learned with others. Want to hear more? Please ask someone who attended! *Photo above, courtesy of Chuck Hitzemann: Indianapolis workshop attendees*

## ICP TCP TEAM MEMBERS

*For more information or to relay suggestions, please contact: Angie Brown (IDEM), Jan Came (IDEA/Vigo Co SWCD), Bob Eddleman (SSCB), Brad Joern (Purdue), Doug Nusbaum*

*& Zack Smith (IDNR), Brenda Gettinger & Laura Fribley (ISDA), Jason Kishton & Susan Hovermale (FSA), Paula Baldwin & Emily Neitzel (IASWCD), Roger Kult & Susan Meadows*

*(NRCS), Troy Hinkle (Knox Co SWCD), Vickie Smith (Dearborn Co SWCD), or Harold Thompson (Earth Team Volunteer). Thanks to this crew for their commitment and expertise.*

[HTTP://ICP.IASWCD.ORG/](http://ICP.IASWCD.ORG/)

*Success! 61 employees from various ICP agencies participated in the Region V training webinar. Visit <https://engineering.purdue.edu/watersheds/webinars/2014/> to view this and other archived webinars.*

***Coming in  
2015:  
Forestry  
training  
including  
Tree &  
Shrub ID***

*Win! 21 employees were trained in December’s Advanced Nutrient Management course.*