

## **Indiana Conservation Partnership Training and Certification Program December 2012 Update**

In September, 2010, the Indiana Conservation Partnership (ICP) Leaders entered into an agreement to facilitate training and certification for our ICP technical employees.

This agreement provides the framework to jointly carry out a consistent training and certification program resulting in a highly skilled workforce. The training and certification will be based on multiple levels or “tiers” of abilities, skills and knowledge. Any ICP technical employee trained and certified through this program will be recognized as competent by every agency in the ICP.

The ICP was successful in February of 2012 in securing a 205j grant from the Indiana Department of Environmental Management (IDEM) to assist the ICP in conducting the training and certification program. The grant is through the Hoosier Heartland RC&D with administration through the Marion County SWCD with funds from the 205j grant. Harold Thompson has completed the first six months of a two year grant coordinating the ICP Training and Certification Program.

In 2010 a training assessment survey completed by ICP employees identified needed training that they felt was needed to strengthen the skills to do their jobs. Based on the requested training from this assessment, the following areas were identified as high priority: Nutrient Management, Cover Crops and Soil Health, Urban Conservation, and Revised Universal Soil Loss Equation<sup>2</sup> (RUSLE<sup>2</sup>).

All ICP employees who requested cover crops/soil health and RUSLE<sup>2</sup> training have had the opportunity to attend training provided by NRCS and Purdue Extension.

Listing of training sessions on the IASWCD web site has given ICP employees a central location to review and schedule training opportunities. Over 500 ICP attendees have participated in ICP sponsored training during 2012. Partners are encouraged to post their upcoming training opportunities open to ICP employees on the IASWCD Events Calendar <http://www.iaswcd.org/whatsnew/index.html> .

Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education (SARE) grant funds have been utilized by partnership employees to allow them to attend training that they would have likely not been allow to attend due to budget restraints. Collaboration with the SARE program will continue in the future. <http://www.northcentralsare.org/State-Programs/Indiana>

The ICP Leadership has accepted the recommendation of the ICP Training and Certification Team to have all ICP employees complete the Aglearn Conservation Planning Course-Level 1. More information will be coming soon.

Plans are being formulated for nutrient management and urban conservation training in the first quarter of 2013.

A variety of certification models and programs are being solicited and will be evaluated for use in an Indiana certification program. Plans are to have an ICP certification program done by the end of 2013 .

Updates on the ICP Training and Certification Program can be found in the IASWCD’s “Conservation Updates”, which can be viewed online <http://www.iaswcd.org/whatsnew/index.html> or automatically delivered to your inbox.

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