

Welcome to Pathway to Water Quality's Volunteer Information

for the 2016 Indiana State Fair

General Volunteer Information

Pathway to Water Quality is a model watershed located in the northeast section of the Indiana State Fairgrounds, modeling the path water travels through different land uses. What was once a parking lot in 1993 has grown up to be a lush, shaded, serene retreat on the Fairgrounds, where young and old alike can learn how our actions impact soil health and water quality on a daily basis. It is the premier showcase exhibit for the **Indiana Conservation Partnership** (ICP). If you have any questions as you read about the various volunteer positions available during the 2016 Indiana State Fair, contact the PWQ coordinator, Sara Peel, 765-337-9100, pathwaytowaterquality@gmail.com.

Pathway to Water Quality: Where Does Your Water Shed?

- **Pathway is a watershed** showing that land 'sheds' water, or drains, to a common place. Visitors can "**Walk the Path the Water Walks.**"
- **Water is affected differently by different land uses.** Visitors can tour different land uses at Pathway that are present in a watershed, including urban and agriculture lands and forests.
- **There are many ways to keep the water clean and safe, and improve soil health.** Pathway shows how we care for our natural resources.

As a volunteer at Pathway during the Indiana State Fair, you are an important face for the Indiana Conservation Partnership as people visit **Pathway to Water Quality**. Please be friendly, relate the conservation messages of the exhibit and engage visitors in conversations.

You will find additional information on PWQ [on our website](#), including links to the volunteer sign-up, this document on serving as a volunteer, PWQ brochure and map.



Our Sponsors:

Pathway to Water Quality is sponsored by the organizations and state and federal agencies that comprise the **Indiana Conservation Partnership**. All of these entities are partners who are committed to water quality and soil and water conservation in Indiana:

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

Video Introduction to Pathway

There is a *short video* to acquaint you with the PWQ exhibit. It will be helpful for those of you who have not volunteered before, or who have not been to the exhibit for a few years. **Pathway** changes every year so take time to get acquainted with PWQ at the Indiana State Fair! The video is located on [PWQ's home page](#).

New This Year at Pathway

- **Ambassadors:** This year, we introduce the ambassador. Your job as ambassador is to move throughout the exhibit answering questions and interacting with guests. You are not expected to be an expert! Learn more about ambassadors from our [quick video](#)!
- **Interpretive Signs:** You will see new interpretive signs around the exhibit. These were developed and designed by students enrolled in a Ball State University Department of Natural Resources Immersive Studies class. All signs include a QR code to direct visitors to a resource page on our Pathway website where they can find additional information about all the major topics found in the exhibit.
- **Green Roof:** A new greeter stand covered by a green roof will greet Pathway attendees. The green roof captures water and demonstrates a new conservation opportunity to attendees.
- This year, we will feature small farm crops from "**Indiana Grown**" producers in the ag area including melons, tomatoes, popcorn and sweet corn.
- This year **We All Need Trees** and we will have a special activity where folks can interact with wood products, tree farmers and materials made from wood.

Volunteer Positions

The [online volunteer registration](#) provides the shifts available each day. Please sign up by **July 15** in order to insure you receive your State Fair admission ticket and letter by fair time.

Waiver of Liability

The Indiana State Fair (ISF) requires anyone who volunteers at the exhibit to (electronically) agree to the ISF's waiver of liability. When you register online for a shift, you must check the box indicating "you have read the ISF waiver of liability" and agree to the terms of the waiver.

Greeter Area

This position is critical to drawing visitors to **Pathway** during the fair. The *Greeter* is positioned at the entrance. People who sign up for this position should be friendly, outgoing individuals who really enjoy talking with others and inviting them into the exhibit.

The greeter's primary responsibilities are:

1. Promote any demonstrations taking place at PWQ throughout the day. We'll provide you with a schedule.
2. Encourage children to visit the interactive education area when it is open (12 to 7 p.m. daily).
3. Ask visitors as they are leaving Pathway to play the "*Wheel of Conservation*." They spin the wheel and answer a question about soil and water conservation. Right or wrong, they will get a small prize (PWQ bookmark).
4. Be helpful with any other State Fair information (refer to the ISF program for exhibits, shows, etc.; direct people to the nearest restroom).



Home Area

Volunteers in this area will talk to visitors about practices that can be done around the home to protect water quality. Some of these practices include utilizing native vegetation, water conservation, phosphorus-free fertilizer, a pervious concrete driveway at the model home, rain gardens and rain barrels. Several practices will have

handouts that are available in the clear boxes located on the gazebo posts. Extra copies are in the cabin. If supplies of any handouts are running low, let the day coordinator know.



Raised Bed Garden: a 4 x4-foot raised-bed vegetable garden

with cover crops shows how a small garden can be incorporated into a living space. See information on [raised bed / container gardening](#). You will find information on gardens & cover crops [on the web](#).

Rock waterfall: Visitors should be aware that soil is covered by these rocks, protecting it from erosion. Water running over rocks tends to cleanse itself as impurities bubble out. Also, the sound of running water attracts wildlife.

Pervious concrete: The pervious concrete path was extended to three-quarters of the exhibit last fall. Pervious concrete contains openings that allow rain water to soak through into the soil below. This helps replenish groundwater supplies, making more water available for humans, animals and plants. Standard concrete, asphalt and other nonporous paving materials divert rainwater into ditches and waterways keeping it from soaking into the ground. Increased water runoff also produces more soil erosion and allows pollutants to enter our drinking water supply. The pervious concrete also contains the PWQ logo at the entrance to Pathway. Our contractor for all of PWQ's pervious installation is Jim Miller, [C2 Products](#), Arcadia.

Model home: This model home demonstrates some conservation activities available to Hoosier homeowners. The home makes good use of trees. Summer shade lowers energy needed to cool the home. Trees growing on the west side form a wind break, helping to keep the home warmer in winter. The yard is well covered in grass. This holds soil in place and allows rainwater to slow



down as it runs off, allowing more water to soak into the ground. Fertilizers used on the yard are phosphorus-free and contain only the needed amounts of

nitrogen and potassium. This lowers the amount of fertilizer running off into waterways during heavy rains, thereby decreasing algae blooms in lakes and streams.

Wildlife benefit from the bird feeders scattered throughout the yard. Small birds will enjoy a meal and may become a meal themselves for predators and birds of prey. Bird feeders are a good place to watch, and explain the need for "the circle of life."

Native plants areas: [Native plants and flowers](#) growing around and behind the home provide natural food and shelter for wildlife. Natives are attractive additions to the yard. The flowering plants add color at varying times of the season, and grasses form edging, dividers and barriers. Their growth patterns and nutritional content fill the needs of native wildlife. Non-native plants produce attractive blooms and green leaves, but do not provide the nutrients needed by Indiana's wild creatures.

Native plants also keep soil in place. Their long roots hold securely throughout the seasons including periods of flood and drought. Many non-natives aren't as deeply



rooted. Native plants also grow in a symbiotic relationship, meaning they keep each other in check, ensuring that each species will be available when needed. Non-natives can become invasive, over-

crowding native plants. Some crowd out all natives and leave the soil below them bare and exposed to erosion.

Rain barrels and rain gardens are used to conserve water and reduce runoff. The barrel, located at the corner of the home, gathers water running off the home's roof. This can be used to water plants, wash cars or fill any other outside need. This lessens the municipal water used by the homeowner, lowering the demand on the utility. It also lowers the homeowner's water bill.

Rain gardens are small, plant-filled depressions in the yard. They collect rainwater and hold it for a few days, allowing it to soak into the ground. This replenishes groundwater supplies and lessens erosion from runoff. The plants are water-loving; they store water in their leaves and stalks, releasing it as needed by the plant and the surrounding soil. This lowers the homeowner's need to water.

Compost bin: The compost bin provides the homeowner with a way to send less trash to the landfill. Vegetation from the home and yard, food scraps, leaves, coffee grounds and many other organic materials can be composted. By mixing and decomposing, these materials will be turned into fertilizer and humus for use in the garden, flower beds and around trees. No need to buy fertilizer when you can compost.

Please do not allow children to play in the stream or the home area! This is for their safety.

Ag & Forestry Area

Volunteers in this area will talk to visitors about conservation practices in agriculture and forestry, as well as technical assistance that the [Indiana Conservation Partnership](#) provides to private land owners. Volunteers are encouraged to engage people in conversation about soil and water conservation and the work of the [Indiana Conservation Partnership](#). Volunteers in this area will talk to



visitors about. This year, we will feature **from farm to table** by showcasing locally grown produce and organic foods grown and sold here in Indiana. This includes green beans, melons, tomatoes and sweet corn. The new **Indiana Grown Initiative**, a program of the Indiana State Department of Agriculture, "enhances Indiana's strong agricultural presence by promoting locally grown while building sustainable communities."

Emphasis is on:

- **Soil health** with cover crop displays in around the flag pole area. Crops featured will be Crimson Clover, Radishes and Sorgham Sudan Grass. We also will have live soil health and invasive demonstrations on the bridge on busy days of the fair.
- **Agriculture and/or forestry:** BMPs at Pathway include: cover crops, waterways, terraces, buffer strips, no-till, grass filter strips, forests stand improvement.
- Knowledge of **Conservation Delivery Teams** (CDTs): Eight CDTs (2 in each area) serve multiple counties providing engineering design, on-site layout and practice implementation. Teams are made up of engineers, soil conservationists, civil engineer technicians, SWCD staff and ICP personnel working together to put more practices on the land and deliver effective and efficient conservation. Tech teams are located in Rensselaer, Lebanon, Huntington, Albion, Greensburg, Salem, Greencastle and Princeton.
- **Two Stage Ditch Design** that includes a floodplain bench to reduce flooding and filter nutrients (sponsored by The Nature Conservancy of Indiana). The concept is simple. The design incorporates a floodplain zone, called benches, into the ditch by removing the ditch banks roughly 2-3 feet above the bottom for a width of about 10 feet on each side. This allows the water to have more area to spread out on and decreases the velocity - or energy - of the water.
- **Woodlands areas** show how good timber management makes woodlands productive, provides wildlife habitat and protects water and soil quality.
- **Water History Cabin's Well Pump:** enjoy a cup of cool, clear water over by the Water History Cabin. Live interpreters will be scheduled at the cabin on weekends and other special days to help bring the soil and water conservation message alive to the public. The schedule will be emailed to you.

Soils Area

Volunteers in this area will talk with visitors about soil characteristics and how soil quality affects the quality of

water. Volunteers should have knowledge of:

- Basic soil properties, such as color, texture, structure, soil organic matter and bulk density, and how these properties influence surface runoff and water movement in soils.
- The valuable role soil organisms play in the quality of our soil health.
- The soil survey data and how to access it. **The Web Soil Survey** (WSS) provides soil data and information. It is produced by the National Cooperative Soil Survey (NCSS) and operated by the USDA NRCS. It provides access to the largest natural resource information system in the world. NRCS has soil maps and data available online for more than 95 percent of our nation's counties.
- **Indiana Soils Program (NRCS) Helping People Understand Soils and Published Soil Surveys for Indiana:** **This site** provides an archive of past and present Soil Survey and survey publications.
- **Soil Health:** Improving soil health is key to long-term, sustainable agricultural production.
- The **Soil Web App** is an online soil survey browser used to access USDA-NRCS detailed soil survey data for most of the U.S. on all types of devices (desktops, smart phones and tablets). Soils area volunteers are encouraged to download the **Soil Web App** to demo to fair goers.
- **Soils 101** is 15 videos featuring South Carolina NRCS Soil Scientists. Topics are: Soil Physical Properties, Soil Biology, Soils for Conservationists, Soil Survey, and Soils for Homeowners. They are designed to help educate and to benefit anyone with an interest in soils.
- Soils area volunteers should be able to explain the significance of having an official **state soil, Miami**.



Grazing / Pasture Management Area

Volunteers in this area will engage participants in discussions on why well managed pastures can improve animal health and performance, increase profitability and enhance wildlife habitat while protecting water quality.

More information is available online.

Back this year: There will be live animals grazing in this area. Look for sheep in the pasture / grazing areas on most days!



- Stress the importance of maintaining minimum grazing heights and be able to show how this relates to plant growth, animal performance and water quality.
- Be prepared to talk about the impact of grazing livestock around water bodies and creeks. Discussion topics include why it is important to restrict livestock access time and provide adequate crossings and access points to reduce sedimentation disturbances that impact water quality.
- The pasture is not mown to simulate a grazed pasture and regrowth.
- The creek is fenced separately, but with access. This is so it can be “flash” grazed to help maintain it but greatly reduce any negative impact on it.

Education Area

Volunteers in this area will engage participants in water quality and conservation activities. The theme for the Education Area this year will be **We All Need Trees**. Check out the National Association of Conservation District’s [website](#) for more information. There are more informative links to educator guides and other materials as you scroll down the page.

Activities

Examples of Education Area activities are listed. When you sign up to work this area, a detailed guide for your shift will be emailed to you from Cindy Newkirk, Hancock County SWCD.



- We have the **Pathway Seek and Find Activity** available every day. This will be items related to Pollinators that are somewhat hidden in the Education Area; some more hidden than others. Participants will be given a laminated Seek and Find Card and a dry erase marker. You can discuss or ask questions to about the role that soil, plants, animals, farms and ranches play in our watersheds. (A cheat sheet will be provided on the location of the items, it is up to you if you want to find them first or peek at the cheat sheet.)
- There will be **Conservation Educational Posters** in the eight display cases in the Education Area. You can point these out to the participants and discuss, etc. You can quiz the people to go find an answer.
- **Tree Identification Walk:** Identify trees—or test your luck-as you make your way around the watershed.
- **Water Quality Interpreters:** Learn more about water

quality from our Tuesday, Saturday and Sunday interpreters!

- We have Aldo Leopold Benches for parents to “sit a spell” while their children explore our Pathway to Water Quality Education Area.
- Local Heroes, Your Hardworking Pollinator handouts and activity booklets.
- We also will give out wildflower seed packets.



How Do You Sign Up for Shifts?

Go to www.pathwaytowaterquality.org. You will find a link to the job descriptions, video, and the [online volunteer registration](#). Remember: Those who volunteer to work a weekend shift (Saturday or Sunday) will receive two (2) admission tickets to the fair.

When signing up, you will need to provide your cell phone number in case there is an emergency before or during the fair where we would need to make contact with you. These numbers are not shared with anyone other than Day Coordinators.

You are responsible for the shift/shifts you sign up for. You will receive a confirmation email when you sign up for a shift. You’ll also receive a reminder email a day or two before your shift/s. If you cannot work a shift/s, it is **your responsibility** to find a substitute/s, so have someone in mind beforehand who is willing and able to fill in for you at the last minute (someone from your agency or organization).



If you need to change a shift, simply go back to the online sign up and make the change. All volunteers who sign up by Wednesday, July 15, will receive a complimentary admission ticket to the fair. After that date, we cannot guarantee that the ticket will arrive in time. We will do our best to see that you receive your State Fair ticket (most will go out through inter-department/agency mail).

When you arrive for your shift, check in with the Day Coordinator at the water history cabin located back by the pasture/grazing area near the water pump. He/she will give you a PWQ badge and lanyard to wear that says “Ask me about Pathway to Water Quality.” This person is your point of contact during your shift. If you need to leave Pathway during your shift, please let the Day Coordinator know.

The water history cabin is air conditioned and is for PWQ volunteers only. This is a good place to store any personal belongings you might bring with you (it is not locked, however we usually have several volunteers nearby). There is a refrigerator you can use. Remember to stay hydrated! We have the best water available at the state fair – so bring your water bottle. Wear comfortable shoes, sunscreen and a hat (if you want). Mosquitos can be a problem at times and there is bug spray in the cabin – use it!

Remember

- Arrive early for your shift and check in with the day coordinator (don't just go to your area). If you are signing up for the first or last shift of the day, the day coordinator can use help in setting up or putting away display items.
- Plan lunch or dinner breaks before or after your shifts.
- **Note parking information:** Your State Fair admission ticket **DOES NOT** include parking in the infield. Parking expenses **are not** reimbursed by the Pathway Committee, so please check with your employer about their policy for reimbursement. Volunteers (and employees) can park at the 46th Street lot with an admission ticket and ride the State Fair shuttle to the fairgrounds. It can take as long as 45 minutes to arrive at the exhibit, so plan plenty of time to get to this lot, park and get to Pathway before your shift. Shuttle service runs to and from the fairgrounds daily, so you will be able to get back to your car by bus. Parking also is available in the State Fair infield for \$5 per car. [A list of additional parking opportunities is available online.](#)
- Restrooms are located nearby PWQ (in the green barn) and in the Normandy Barn (large white barn located in Pioneer Village). Please let someone know if you are leaving your area. Day Coordinators will give you a break during your shift.
- The PWQ Web site is located at: www.pathwaytowaterquality.org.



PWQ Demonstrations

Details coming soon!

