

# Pathway to Water Quality Volunteer Information

2026 Indiana State Fair: August 7 – August 23 (closed Mondays); Theme: Always a Hit

## EXHIBIT INFORMATION

[Pathway to Water Quality](#) is a model watershed located in the northeast section of the Indiana State Fairgrounds, demonstrating 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 daily. It is the premier showcase exhibit for the [Indiana Conservation Partnership](#) (ICP).

### Pathway to Water Quality: Where Does Your Water Shed?

- **Pathway is a watershed** showing that land ‘sheds’ water, or drains, to a common place such as a stream, river, or lake. We all live in a watershed. 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.** When water runs off the land, it takes fertilizers, loose soil, litter and other pollutants with it. Pathway shows how proper management practices at home, on the farm and in business can protect our soil & water resources.

A short video walk-through of the exhibit from 2015 is available at <https://youtu.be/OqXLwukrZQw>. This video will be helpful for those who have not worked at PWQ before.

## VOLUNTEER POSITIONS & DEMONSTRATIONS

Volunteers 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.

**Greeter:** This position is critical to drawing visitors to PWQ during the fair. The *Greeter* is positioned at the entrance. People who sign up for this position should be friendly, outgoing individuals who enjoy talking with others and inviting them into the exhibit. The greeter’s primary duties are:

- Promote any demonstrations taking place at PWQ throughout the day.
- Encourage children to visit the interactive education area when it is open (12:30 to 7 p.m. daily).
- Ask visitors as they are entering or leaving PWQ to play the “*Wheel of Conservation.*” They spin the wheel and answer a question about soil & water conservation. Right or wrong, they’ll get a small prize.
- Be helpful with any other State Fair information (refer to the ISF program for exhibits, shows, etc.; direct people to the nearest restroom).

**Pathway Ambassador:** Ambassadors move throughout the exhibit answering questions and interacting with guests - one ambassador will be stationed in the main PWQ area and a second may be stationed in the Soil Health Area. You are not expected to be an expert! Learn more about ambassadors from the PWQ Volunteer [training video](#).

**Education area:** People in this area will engage young people (and adults) in water quality and conservation activities. Some activities for 2026 include an Augmented Reality Sandbox and a watershed map puzzle. Detailed instructions will be emailed prior to your shift and will be available in the education barn.

**Counter:** These volunteers are stationed at the greeter stand to count the number of visitors to PWQ during their shift. This position is used on a limited number of days to estimate attendance.

**Demonstrations:** In addition to the regular volunteer positions, you can also sign up to provide a demonstration or hands-on activity. Example topics include soil health, cover crop basics, invasives (ID, control), tree planting/care, pollinators, composting, watershed basics, aquatics and water quality, rain gardens, rain barrels, native plants, etc. Sign up for demonstrations at <https://signup.com/go/SyMMMns>. Please include details for your demo and highlight any materials you might need.

## VOLUNTEER SIGN-UP

**Registration:** Sign up for the regular volunteer positions at <https://signup.com/go/BYvuLJM>. Shift times are 9:00 am – 12:30 pm (greeter only), 12:30 pm – 4:00 pm, and 4:00 pm – 7:00 pm. Please sign up by **July 1** to ensure you receive your State Fair admission ticket and parking pass by fair time. Volunteers that sign up for a Saturday or Sunday shift will receive two (2) admission tickets to the fair as a thank you for working a weekend shift.

**Communication:** 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 contact you. These numbers are not shared with anyone other than Day Coordinators. Digital tickets and parking passes will be emailed in July to the address provided during registration.

**Waiver of Liability:** The Indiana State Fair (ISF) requires anyone who volunteers at the exhibit to 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.

**Finding Substitutes:** You are responsible for the shift(s) you sign up for. If you cannot work your 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).

### Navigation

- Parking (Gate 4): <https://maps.app.goo.gl/HqGcDTGHxxkpsM6o8> (39.832694, -86.127567)
- PWQ exhibit: <https://maps.app.goo.gl/hqahtftis43Ky1qP6> (39.830820, -86.130398)

### Arrival & Check-in

- **Arrive early** for your shift (weekends and Two-dollar Tuesdays are extremely busy). It may take 30 to 60 minutes to get into the fairgrounds.
- Check in with the Day Coordinator at the water history cabin located back by the pasture/grazing area near the water pump when you arrive for your shift. He/she will give you a PWQ badge. 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. Lunch or dinner breaks should be planned for before or after your shifts.
- If you are signing up for the first or last shift of the day, please help the day coordinator in setting up or putting away display items

### Facilities/Miscellaneous

- **Restrooms** are located near PWQ (in the green building) and in the Normandy Barn (large white barn located in Pioneer Village). Please let someone know if you are leaving your area.
- The **Water history cabin** is air conditioned and is for volunteers only. There is a refrigerator you can use. You can store personal belongings in the cabin, but don't store any valuables since it's not locked.
- Wear comfortable shoes, sunscreen and a hat (if you want). Mosquitoes can be a problem at times and there is insect repellent spray in the cabin for you to use.
- Remember to stay hydrated! We have the best water available at the state fair – so bring your water bottle.

## WORKING AT THE FAIR

## RESOURCES

- If you have questions, please contact the PWQ Coordinator, Sara Peel, at 765-337-9100 or [pathwaytowaterquality@gmail.com](mailto:pathwaytowaterquality@gmail.com).
- Detailed information on the key points and features on display at the exhibit is currently being updated for 2026 and will be posted to the [PWQ website](#) soon.