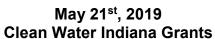


State Soil Conservation Board





Program Updates

Clean Water Indiana Competitive Grants 2019

- I posted a story map that shows details about each grant and the overall program year.
- We did have some remaining funds at the end of our fiscal year budgeting process. The grants committee decided to fund the agricultural BMP portion proposal led my St. Joseph SWCD in the amount of \$65,000. Marshall SWCD is also participating in the project.
 - This was the next grant in the ranking process from October.
 - The SSCB has previously voted to fund the next grant in line based upon committee recommendations.
 - This grant is currently in the contract process and will begin June 1st.
- Financial reports are due 7/31.

2018

- Projects Expire 12/31/20 (except Hamilton)
- Financial reports are due 7/31.

2017

- Projects Expire: 12/31/19
- These grants are the focus of CWI reviews this year, since many of them were flagged by the CWI communications policy. These reviews will be conducted this spring, so that we can formulate strategies for any barriers these grants have to successful completion of the projects.
- Financial reports are due 7/31.

Non-SWCD Led Projects

IASWCD (CCSI)

- Expires: 12/31/21
- All reimbursement so no claims yet.

SICIM

- Total Amount Claimed: \$30,000 of \$120,000
- Expires: 12/31/19
- We processed this as an amendment to their original agreement to get them on the same schedule as other CWI grants.

Grant Reviews

- Since the last meeting, I and DSSs have completed 6 grant reviews.
- The grants that were reviewed are:
 - o SICIM (2018)
 - o Knox (2017)

- Dearborn (2019)
- o Hamilton (2017)
- o DeKalb (2017)
- Delaware (2017)
- Most of these grants were flagged per the CWI communications policy.
- They all have a plan to move forward to successfully finish their projects.
- No modifications are needed at this time.

Training Reimbursement/Sponsorship

- The committee voted to cap each district at \$1000.
- Total awards were \$28,620.

AFR

- All 92 Districts qualified for at least a portion of the AFR \$10,000 match.
- In total ISDA distributed \$911,563.89
- Funds were sent to SWCDs during the first week of May.

ICP Reports

- The ICP reports website for 2018 is up and functional.
- This website shows funding from ICP agencies to all 92 counties, which is broken down by program.
- This year we are not asking SWCDs to submit their success story to the site.
- ISDA is looking for new ways to showcase this conservation data that will be useful for districts.

TECHNICAL REPORT FOR SOUTHEAST REGION

MAY 21, 2019

Clean Water Indiana Grants-- Currently 9 active CWI grants involving 14 counties totaling \$635,900 in available funds. Two counties are involved in multiple grants. 75 practices designed and awaiting completion.

EPA 319 Grants-- Eight grants for land treatment involving 15 counties. Five counties with multiple grants. 33 practices designed and awaiting completion.

Lake and River Enhancement--Two LARE grants.

INFA--- Staff currently assisting group leaders with field enrollments.

STAFF--New Resource Specialist, Cassidy Rohrig, started May 13th and will service Bartholomew, Decatur, Rush and Shelby counties.



State Soil Conservation Board May 21, 2019 District Support Specialist (DSS) Report: 3/2/19 to 5/10/19



Summer SWCD Supervisor and Staff Trainings

ISDA and IASWCD are combining the past "region meetings" that took place in the spring and fall into one summer training for SWCD staff and supervisors. All four summer evening trainings will be identical and take place on four separate dates in four separate locations throughout the state. Feel free to attend the date and location that best fits your schedule. This year's August training will provide a time for networking, partner updates, State Association news, technical training and a Digital Ready program offering from Purdue Extension. More details to follow.

• August 20: Fulton County

August 22: Orange County

• August 27: Delaware County

August 29: Putnam County

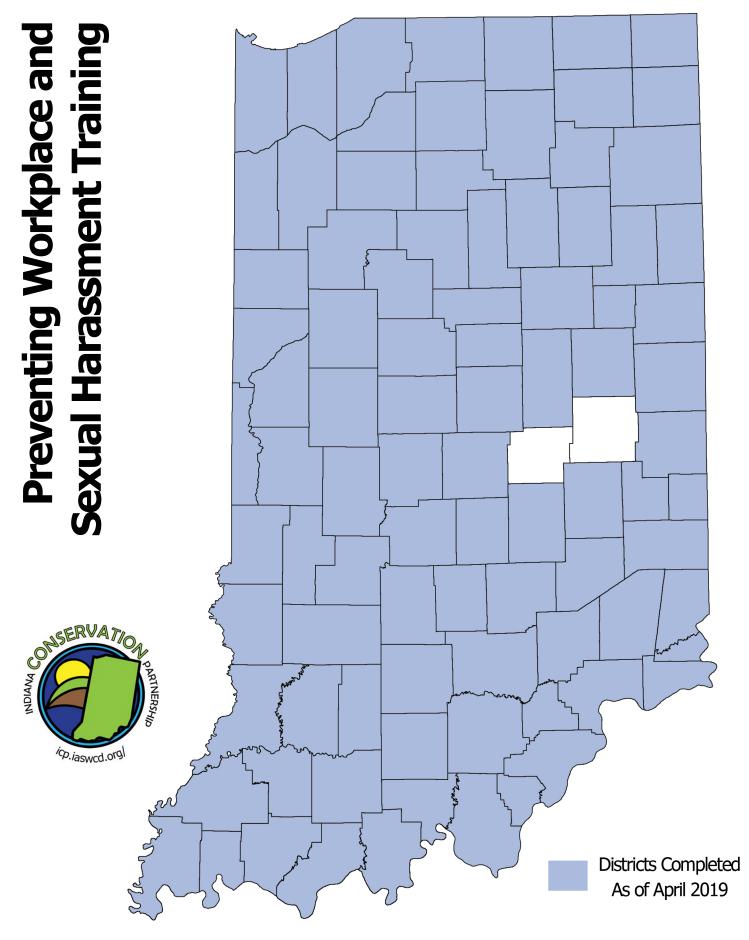
Facilitated Session

- Nathan Stoelting and Geneva Tyler, were recently invited to lead IDEM's Recycling Development Board through a morning of Strategic Planning. Tara Wesseler-Henry, also sits on the board, which is charged to promote, fund, and encourage programs facilitating the development and implementation of waste reduction, reuse, and recycling in Indiana. They also determine funding for grant projects. Nathan and Geneva facilitated the board's discussion to define their mission and prioritize funding opportunities.
- Jennifer Thum, was contacted by The Nature Conservancy to assist with conducting a SWOT and
 a gap analysis for the Indiana and Illinois SWCDs, and conservation partners in the Lower
 Wabash Watershed. The goal of the project is to discuss current programs and practices that
 are being utilized to promote soil health and then brainstorm strategic goals and action steps on
 how to move forward together on soil health efforts

SWCD Local Staff Meetings Coordinated by DSSs

- April 17, Pike County: some highlights included a presentation by Dubois County SWCD staff
 Patti Schroeder and Justin Bary regarding their experiences with WordPress, Q&A with Josh
 Croy, IFB, about the IASWCD insurance policy, and discussions on CWI Grant Reporting led by
 ISDA RS Don Ryan
- May 2, Jackson County: a few highlights of this meeting included an overview of CCSI and how
 they can help with Jessica Hoehn, CCSI, an activity about hot buttons and triggers and how to
 deal with them more effectively with Laura Fribley, ISDA, and the hardwood industrys'
 connections to forest conservation and management with Chris Gonzo, ISDA/IDNR.

DSS Activities Statewide For This Reporting Period	Total
Assistance With SWCD Business Plans/Annual Plans of Work	9
Input, Assistance & Attendance At SWCD Board Meetings	37
Visits With SWCD Supervisors/Staff For Training, Assistance, Guidance, Input, etc.	45



Leah Harmon, ISDA Program Manager May 15, 2019



State Soil Conservation Board



May 21st, 2019 ISDA – CREP & Water Quality Initiatives, Julie Harrold

Program Updates

Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program

- CRP is still on hold so there have been no new sign-up yet this year, but some projects from last year are getting processed for payment.
- It was announced on May 15th that continuous CRP will start sign-ups again on June 3rd, 2019 for certain practices in CRP/CREP. Unfortunately, CP31 (Bottomland Timber Establishment) is not included in the list of practices. Filter strip, Riparian Buffers and Wetlands are.

IN State Nutrient Reduction Strategy (SNRS)

- Marylou Renshaw, Ben Wicker and I did a presentation on Indiana's SNRS for a Hypoxia Task Force webinar series, which features all the states strategies.
- Work since last board meeting has been mostly focused on the development of the Indiana Science Assessment.
- The current version of the Strategy can be found on the ISDA webpage at http://www.in.gov/isda/2991.htm.
- Comments on the SNRS can be sent to ISDANutrientReduction@isda.in.gov.

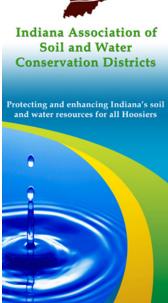
Gulf Hypoxia Task Force (HTF)

The HTF face-to-face meeting took place last week, May 15th – 17th in Baton Rouge, LA. I did a
presentation on Indiana's involvement as a pilot state for the Walton Family Foundation Grant
about creating a Non-Point Measurement Framework for the Basin states, and what we learned
and gained from that involvement. Presentation included the discussion of the development of
Indiana's Science Assessment.

Western Lake Erie Basin

- Purdue St. Marys project; the St. Marys Advisory Committee is meeting once a month to discuss educational needs and opportunities, and other pressing matters.
- The DAP Advisory Committee continues to meet periodically to work on the progress of the plan.
 To view the Indiana WLEB Domestic Action Plan (DAP) and other information, visit the following webpage, http://www.in.gov/isda/3432.htm.
- To view the National Lake Erie DAP, visit https://www.epa.gov/glwqa/us-action-plan-lake-erie





IASWCD

225 S. East Street Suite 740 Indianapolis, IN 46202

Phone: 317.692.7325

Web: www.iaswcd.org

PRESIDENT:
Roger Wenning
Decatur County

VICE PRESIDENT: Bobby Hettmansperger Wabash County

TREASURER:
Marc Roberts
Montgomery County

SECRETARY: Jeff Baker Warrick County

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR:
Joe Schmees
joseph-schmees@iaswcd.org

To: State Soil Conservation Board

From: Roger Wenning, President, IASWCD

Date: Tuesday, May 21, 2019

Conservation Cropping Systems Initiative (CCSI)

 Several soil health trainings are scheduled for this year. We are currently working to fill a vacant Program Manager position.

Pathway to Water Quality

 Pathway will continue to have a coordinator for 2019 thanks to funding from the ICP partners. The PWQ Committee has been meeting at the beginning of each month, along with work days to prepare the site for fair. Volunteer sign up will open Monday, June 3, at 8 am. Please encourage volunteers to sign up!

Legislative Issues

 State Budget session – IASWCD push for increased Clean Water Indiana was unsuccessful in adding funds to the General Fund line item. While unsuccessful procuring more money for Clean Water Indiana, we did have 13 Districts visit the Statehouse, and several that reached out to legislators outside a formal visit. This was successful in raising the profile of Districts with legislators.

Other

- Applications for River Friendly Farmer Awards are currently open on the IASWCD website, and are due by June 14. The River Friendly Farmer ceremony will be on Farmer's Day, August 14, at the State Fair. All partners are encouraged to attend to honor the recipients.
- The IASWCD Board will have a Board Meeting at Morgan-Monroe State Forest training center on June 20. Unlike our usual format, we will not be including partners, and will be doing some planning for the year ahead.
- ISDA and IASWCD have been working together to plan summer training meetings for Districts. The dates are August 20 (Fulton County), 22 (Orange County), 27 (Delaware County), and 29 (Putnam County).
- 2020 SWCD Conference Planning committee has met and will now be working on securing speakers. We have invited NRCS Chief Matthew Lohr to be our Keynote Speaker for 2020. We are awaiting his response.

THE IASWCD MISSION is to enable the conservation of natural resources of Indiana.

State Conservationist's Report May 2019

CHIEF'S PRIORITIES

The next field office level cycle time survey will run from April 29th to July 26th. While this takes staff time, this survey helps USDA measure the amount of work being done for customers across the nation. By doing so, NRCS is able to staff field offices more efficiently and continue to provide outstanding customer service.

FARM BILL

Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP)

Indiana NRCS anticipates beginning to make approval decisions on FY19 EQIP applications after May 17. There have been a number of national technical issues implementing the 2018 Farm Bill which has delayed approval decisions later than in typical years.

Agricultural Conservation Easement Program (ACEP)

Indiana NRCS received an allocation of \$7.26 million for 2019 ACEP funding. Offers for selected applications will be sent to landowners by **June 21st.**

Big Pine Watershed Regional Conservation Partnership Program (RCPP)

Dollars are still available for farmers through the Big Pine Watershed RCPP. The watershed which includes portions of Benton, White, Warren, and Tippecanoe counties and the partnership is working with farmers in the area to increase the number of nutrient and sediment reducing practices on cropland. Applications are accepted year-round, but to be considered for this round of funding, applications must be received by **June 21, 2019**. RCPP is a partner-led program, with NRCS directing technical and financial assistance to priorities identified by partners.

EQIP Deadline Announced for Western Lake Erie Basin (WLEB)

EQIP dollars are available to farmers who want to voluntarily invest in conservation practices to improve water quality in the WLEB. These additional dollars expand on the substantial conservation efforts already underway in the basin area. NRCS plans to work with farmers to install conservation practices such as notill, cover crops, buffers, agricultural drainage water management systems, and nutrient and pesticide management. While applications are accepted on a continuous basis, **June 21, 2019** will be the cutoff date this year to be considered for funding for this program. The eligible Indiana portion of the WLEB includes parts of Adams, Allen, DeKalb, Noble, Steuben and Wells counties. Landowners with acreage in the following watersheds may be eligible for funding: St. Joseph-Maumee, St. Mary's, Upper Maumee and Auglaize.

Wetland Reserve Enhancement Partnership (WREP)

WREP is a component of the Agricultural Conservation Easement Program (ACEP). Through WREP, states, local units of governments, non-governmental organizations and tribes collaborate with NRCS through cooperative and partnership agreements. These partners work with tribal and private landowners who voluntarily enroll eligible land into easements to protect, restore and enhance wetlands on their properties.

Wetland reserve easements help to reduce impacts from flooding, recharge groundwater, enhance and protect wildlife habitat and provide outdoor recreational and educational opportunities. Partners benefit from WREP by targeting outreach and enrollment priorities supported by NRCS, including places impacted by natural disasters.

Proposals should be emailed to NRCS at SM.NRCS.WRE@wdc.usda.gov by June 14, 2019.

On-Farm Conservation Innovation Trials

On-Farm Trials are newly authorized in the 2018 Farm Bill and support more widespread adoption of innovative approaches, practices and systems on working lands. On-Farm Trials projects are a collaboration between NRCS and partners to implement on-the-ground conservation activities and then evaluate their impact. Incentive payments are provided to producers to offset the risk of implementing innovative approaches.

The Soil Health Demo Trial (SHD) component of On-Farm Trials focuses exclusively on implementation of conservation practices and systems that improve soil health. Eligible entities receiving funding agree to follow consistent soil health assessment protocols to evaluate the impacts of practice and system implementation. Those entities eligible include agricultural businesses, non-governmental organizations with experience working with agricultural producers, and non-Federal government agencies.

Up to \$25 million annually is available for On-Farm Trials. Funding goes directly to partners, which in turn provide technical assistance and incentive payments to producers to implement innovative approaches on their lands. Producers receiving On-Farm Trials payments must be eligible to participate in EQIP.

Applications should be submitted through <u>Grants.gov</u> by **July 15th**. A <u>webinar</u> for applicants is scheduled for **May 29, 2019** from 3:00 – 4:00 p.m. Eastern Standard Time

http://www.conservationwebinars.net/webinars/conservation-innovation-grants-on-farm-

trials/?sr=wp~upcoming. There is also a new On Farm Trials webpage.

https://www.nrcs.usda.gov/wps/portal/nrcs/detail/national/programs/financial/cig/?cid=nrcseprd1459039. For more information about Conservation Innovation Grants, contact Jill Reinhart, ASTC Partnerships at jill.reinhart@usda.gov.

VEHICLE MANAGEMENT TOOL (VMT)

The VMT is a web-based tool is now in operation in Indiana (we are serving as a pilot state). This tool is used to reserve vehicles and helps track use, mileage and maintenance through the vehicle log process. All partnership staff and service center employees and volunteers are expected to use it for scheduling vehicle use. The tool is accessed using an e-auth account. Staff who missed the instructional webinar will be sent a link to view the recorded version as soon as it is available. Also, a VMT User Guide will also soon be available. The VMT is simply a reservation and tracking tool, it does not replace any established vehicle use policy.

Now that the Vehicle Management Tool (VMT) is operating and proven to be effective, you may cease using paper vehicle logs to document your use of GOVs. Information that fleet managers needed from the hard copy vehicle log is now available in the VMT. To ensure that we are capturing the data that is necessary for fleet card audits and USDA utilization reporting, it is important that every FPAC driver log their vehicle use in the VMT for every vehicle trip they make. This will be reflected in policy soon. Even though the requirement to keep paper vehicle logs has gone away, you are still required to keep fleet card receipts for owned vehicle fleet card transactions in accordance with NRCS General Manual 120-406-O (mainly for receipts under \$5 and non-fuel purchases) until further notice.

NRCS EMPLOYEE EMAIL CHANGES

All Indiana NRCS email addresses were recently changed as part of Secretary Sonny Perdue's OneUSDA initiative. Each user's primary email account has been set to @usda.gov. Here is an example of the change:

Old: johnny.soilsaver@in.usda.gov New: johnny.soilsaver@usda.gov

Because multiple users across the agencies have the same name they will continue to have a middle initial or number in their address that makes it unique, for example steve.brown2@usda.gov.

Emails with the old address will continue to forward for a while longer. Please update the contact information in your directories for those on your mailings lists.

USDA SEEKS FEEDBACK FROM GROWERS ABOUT 2019 CROPS, STOCKS, INVENTORIES, VALUES

During the first two weeks of June, USDA's National Agricultural Statistics Service (NASS) will conduct two major mid-year surveys, the June Agricultural Survey and the June Area Survey. The agency will survey over 2,500 farmers across Indiana to determine crop acreage and supplies levels in 2019.

NASS gathers the data for the June Agricultural Survey online, by mail, phone and in-person interview. For the June Area Survey, agency representatives visit randomly selected tracts of land and interview the operators of any farm or ranch on that land. Growers provide information on crop acreage – including biotech – crops as well as grain stocks, livestock inventory, cash rents, land values, and value of sales.

NASS results will be released June 28, 2019. All reports are available on the NASS website: http://www.nass.usda.gov/Publications. For more information on NASS surveys and reports, call the NASS Great Lakes Regional Field Office at (800) 453-7501.



State Soil Conservation Board

March 19 - May 20 2019

Highlights

- Northern Program Manager
 - Trisha McClain accepted a new position as Biological Scientist with Grissom Air Force Base. Her last day was April 26th.
 - o 4/18 Position re-listed
 - 5/20 Telephone interviews
 - Goal: To make an offer before the end of May.
- Goal 1 Farmer Engagement and Involvement, including pragmatic and legacy farmers, and farmer influencers
 - o 33 Events, 658 Attendees, including:
 - April and May Steve Groff, Cover Crop Expert, "Tours". Events included:
 - 4 Roundtables
 - 2 CCSI-SARE No-Till Pumpkin Trainings for ICP staff
 - 1 Byron Seed Event 150+ attendees, predominantly Amish/Mennonite
 - Southwest Purdue Ag Center discussion of no-till pumpkin demo plots
 - Illinois-Indiana Buffalo Association Conference support Soil health considerations of grazing.
 - Indiana Lake Management Society Conference presentations on soil health and managing partnerships
 - IANA-SARE Ag Retailer Training
 - Looking at potential partnership with TNC Indiana to leverage respective projects.
 - Gearing towards initial roundtables within individual organizations "inhouse" trainings vs public.
- Goal 2 Local Level Partnership Support
 - CCSI-SARE Soil Health and Supportive Trainings 5 Events, 88 attendees:
 - 4/3 Core Cover Crops
 - 4/4 Core Soil Health Systems
 - 4/11 and 5/17 Advanced Soil Health Systems No-till/Cover Crop Pumpkin Production Focus, with Steve Groff
 - 5/9 Presentation and Media Skills with Fred Whitford and Ag Media
 - 3 Soil Health Trainings in progress, including:
 - June 3-5 3-Day Soil Health Training
 NRCS Certified Planners who have not taken the course may be required to attend 3-Day training within the next 5 years.
 - Week of July 22 CCSI-SARE Advanced Soil Health Systems
 - 4 events 1 in each region (NW, SW, NE, SE)
 - Focused on equipment set-up and modifications w/ Paul Jasa,
 University of Nebraska, and AJ Adkins NTM Ag

- 8/1 Hoosier Chapter SWCS training, focus on planting green.
 - Featured Speaker Trey Hill, Harborview Farms Maryland/Chesapeake Bay farmer
- 10 local level partner workshops in progress, including:
 - June 12-14 Sustainable Agriculture 4H Academy
 - 7/31 Roger Wenning Annual Meeting
 - 8/6-7 Tri-State Training, Knox
 - 8/8 Small Group Meeting, Knox
 - 8/11 Farmer Round Table, Posey/Vanderburgh
 - 8/12 Regional Ag Forum Farmer-led, Big Creek Watershed (Haubstadt)
 Speakers Include
 - Rick Clark, American Soybean Association Conservation Legacy Award Winner
 - Randy Krone, Indiana Farm Bureau president
 - Martin Barbre, USDA-RMA Director
 - 9/6 Jill Clapperton Event, Indianapolis area
 - 9/10 Wabash and Grant SWCD Cover Crop Field Day, featuring Frank Gibbs / Smoking Tile-Worm Channel Demo
 - 9/17-19 or 9/24-26 ICP Soil Testing and Interpreting Results Training
 - Late September Jamie Scott field day

Goal 3 – Communications

- Marketing Campaign / Strategies
 - Increased posting to Facebook from (almost) every event and meeting attended.
 - 4/11 Communications Planning w/ NRCS, IASWCD, ISDA, W4tL (D, Comm Contractor)
 - 5/14 Inaugural Newsletter 26.4% open rate
- Soil Health Podcasts with Hoosier Ag Today, plus supplemental articles
 - Soil Health Podcast now available for subscription on Apple Podcasts, Stitcher, GooglePlay Music, and Spotify
 - March John Tooker, Penn State neonicotinoid seed treatments and slugs
 - April and May Cover crops and preventing soil erosion with Ben Wicker, IANA, and Allen Dean, NE Indiana/NW Ohio Farmer
 - Equipment set-up with Phil Needham and Barry Fisher pending USDA-NRCS approval.
- Social Media for the period of March 19 May 19
 - Twitter: 74,400 impressions, 1683 followers
 - Facebook: 18,085 impressions, 785 unique engagements
- Other:
 - INFA 2.0 Newsletter article for SWCDs and other local partners deployed.

Other:

 Invited speaker at American Society of Agronomy / Crop Science Society of America / American Society of Soil Scientists Annual Conference (November 2019)

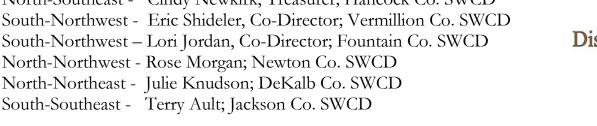
2019-2020 IDEA Region Directors

South-Southwest - Erica Burkemper-Fischer, President; Pike Co. SWCD

North-Southwest - Martha Miller, Vice President; Monroe Co. SWCD

South-Northeast - Mary Lou Musselman, Secretary; Miami Co. SWCD

North-Southeast - Cindy Newkirk, Treasurer; Hancock Co. SWCD





146 paid IDEA Members for 2019



Poster Contest 2018 –

Theme was Watersheds: Our Water, Our Home; there are five divisions judged by grades: K-1, 2-3, 4-6, 7-9 and 10-12 and judging takes place at the IASWCD Office by District Staff. IDEA awards each winning SWCD with a \$100.00 to be given by the District to the Winner!

Winners were:

- o Sophia Rackow Vermillion County SWCD K-1
- o Dalton Lawlyes –Vermillion County SWCD 2-3
- o Nicole Bender Posey County SWCD 4-6
- Rachel Hazelwood Vermillion County SWCD 7-9
- o Olivia Braun Lake County SWCD 10-12
- Poster Contest 2019 will be <u>Life in the Soil: Dig Deeper</u> and there are five divisions judged by grades: K-1, 2-3, 4-6, 7-9 and 10-12 and judging takes place at the IASWCD Office by District Staff





IDEA Fall Conference was October 2, 3 and 4, 2018 in Bloomington, Indiana at Lake Monroe; 104 attendees were educated with the theme for the Conference as "Review the Basics, Renew your Mind and Regenerate your Passion" Excellent sessions and networking for IDEA District Staff. Hosted by the North-Southwest Region of Brown, Clay, Greene, Johnson, Monroe, Morgan, Owen, Parke, Putnam, Sullivan, Vermillion and Vigo Soil and Water Conservation Districts

 2019 IDEA Fall Conference will be October 1-3, 2019 and will be at Clifty Falls State Park, Clifty Inn at Madison, Indiana Hosted by the South-Southeast Region of Clark, Crawford, Floyd, Harrison, Jackson, Jefferson, Jennings, Lawrence, Orange, Scott, and Washington Soil and Water Conservation Districts



• 2018 Fall Conference District Scholarship winners: IDEA has given back to the Districts \$5,286.59 since 2014 (IDEA hosts a drawing giving back to the Districts that are selected for District Staff to attend the next year's conference with up to \$200.00 for Conference registration and hotel expenses)

Heather Rogers	Pulaski	NNW
Susan King	Warrick	SSW
Jennifer Creager	Clay	NSW
Brandi Frazier	Madison	SNE
Mary Booker	Dearborn	NSE
Chris Remley	Tippecanoe	SNW
Vicki Wehner	Jefferson	SSE
Andrea Baker	Kosciusko	NNE

- IDEA is creating a Region Conservation Partnership Calendar for 2020 that will be handed out at the IASWCD Annual Conference showcasing the 2019 Poster Contest Winners.
- The IDEA Regions Directors with Region Staff and ISDA District Support Specialist (DSS) have been meeting monthly, bi-monthly and/or quarterly dependent on the Region to help further the strength of IDEA and District Employees.
- IDEA Silent Auction will once again be happening at the IASWCD Annual Conference in January 2020. We encourage you to bring a donated item, (do some shopping this summer to bring to the Conference); as well as stop by the Auction in January and sign up to buy one of the items. Proceeds go to our Poster Contest and Scholarship Programs.



2018 State Poster Contest Winner Artist:

Sophia Rackow

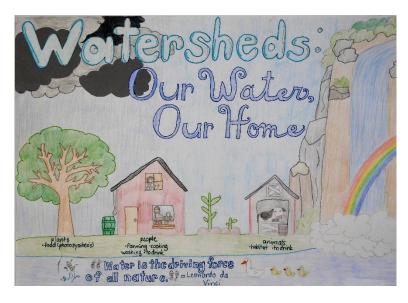
SWCD: Vermillion County Category: Grades K-1

2018 State Poster Contest Winner Artist:

Dalton Lawlyes

SWCD: Vermillion County Category: Grades 2-3





2018 State Poster Contest Winner Artist:

Nicole Bender

SWCD: Posey County Category: Grades 4-6



2018 State Poster Contest Winner Artist:

Rachel Hazelwood

SWCD: Vermillion County Category: Grades 7-9

2018 State Poster Contest

Winner Artist:

Olivia Braun

SWCD: Lake County

Category: Grades 10-12

