

MINUTES
STATE SOIL CONSERVATION BOARD MEETING

March 11, 2015
The Nature Conservancy
620 E Ohio St
Indianapolis, IN

Members in Attendance:

Scott Ham
Nola Gentry
Bob Eddleman
Robert Woodling
Ray Chattin
Larry Clemens

Others in Attendance:

Deb Fairhurst, ISDA	Jane Hardisty, NRCS
Geneva Tyler, ISDA	Emily Neitzel, IASWCD
Leah Harmon, ISDA	Mike Starkey, IASWCD
Scheryl Vaughn, Boone SWCD	Les Zimmerman, IASWCD
Logan Garner, ISDA	Julia Wickard, FSA
Laura Fribley, ISDA	Jordan Seger, ISDA
Jennifer Thum, ISDA	Gary Steinhardt, Purdue

I. Call to Order: 9:35am

II. Draft minutes of February 2015 Minutes

Nola moved to approve. Bob requested a correction under Clean Water Indiana to remove the word "Extra" due to limited funding to begin with. Nola suggested that on page 2 that the words "County" be changed to lower case to "county." Ray Chattin seconded the motion. Motion passed pending specified changes.

III. Clean Water Indiana

- a. CWI Budget Update- Jordan reported that we started 3% from where we were last year. We had additional 1.5% reserve come in and new round hinges on new revenue forecast. The Division of Soil Conservation appreciates IASWCD's support. Last year there was 4.5% reduction and then another 3%, so all in all a 7.5% reduction in budget. There were efforts to look at e-cigarette taxes as a potential source of revenue, but discussions didn't get anywhere.

IV. State Soil Conservation Board Business

- a. SSCB Chairman's Report- Scott reported that per diem has been reduced to \$35 and a new per diem form is in the SSCB binder for board members to sign.
- b. Correspondence- Scott read letter of appreciation from Newton County, thanking the SSCB for \$10,000 support from the state and a summary of their annual meeting.

- c. SWCD Annual Meetings- Nola commented that Meg Leader did a good job at presenting In Field Advantage at Benton County SWCD's annual meeting. Bob mentioned that Benton County has come a long way.
- d. Business Plan Retreat- Scott reported that a date is picked for April 20. No decisions or voting will be made, but will be a time to review comments from around the state. Everything that requires a vote or decision making will be brought back to the full board. Nola asked that District Support Specialists utilize a Survey Monkey type survey to SWCDs to gather input from Districts regarding Statewide Resource Concerns. Jordan suggested that we utilize the NRCS locally led meeting information. Ray brought up the point that only using NRCS information will limit the input to Farm Bill program related resource concerns. Jordan confirmed the action item that ISDA will put together a survey for SWCDs as well as communicating with partners for input.
- e. CWI Round 2- The SSCB grants committee will be looking at where to use remaining funds once the dollar figure is available.
- f. Scholarship and Sponsorships- Scott reported that the program went well but there are many bugs to be worked out. We are looking at procedures and ways to improve the application process for scholarships. Any changes to the training dollars disbursements will go into effect for the next fiscal year.
- g. Leadership Institute- years ago seed money was given to the LI program. We want to continue to support the program, but we will have to wait and see what is available and vote at a future meeting.
- h. Delaware County SWCD Follow-up- Nola reported that she would like to reach out to Delaware County SWCD to continue the discussion and support. The SSCB needs to try and meet with the SWCD soon to begin conversations prior to budget season. Jordan Seger commented that despite presented information indicating there was no local support, Delaware Co is receiving \$5,000 from their county. Larry Clemens commented that this is a precedent setting situation. Scott Ham commented that there is a resolution through the IASWCD that legislation be changed to allow the CWI dollars be matched with any dollars acquired by the SWCD. Robert commented that now that we know that Delaware Co is receiving \$5,000, they will still receive \$10,000 total, not \$15,000. Jennifer Thum will coordinate a meeting with the SSCB and the Delaware County SWCD staff and supervisors.

V. Soil and Water Conservation Districts

- a. Vermillion County SWCD Temporary Supervisor-Nola moved. Larry second. Motion carried.
- b. Martin County SWCD Temporary Supervisor-Bob moved. Nola second. Motion carried.

VI. ISDA Updates

- a. Director's Report- Jordan reported that Amy Sims been hired on and was previously employed by the Spencer County SWCD. She will mostly cover Warrick, Spencer, Dubois and Perry counties. She already has contacts with landowners and will be able to hit the ground running. Amy is filling a position vacated by retirement, Gary Seibert. Two more positions are being posted. One position is located in Bartholomew County and another in Gibson, working with the Princeton CDT. Jordan's goal for the year is to fill vacancies in 45 days. Jordan interviewed candidates for summer intern positions on 3/10/15. These

positions are paid, and intern wages will come from ISDA budget, not CWI. Twenty-seven candidates applied for the position.

Jordan also reported that based on the SSCB's vote in February, we are working on the contract for ISDA's support for CCSI at \$89,000. It is a three year agreement: \$89,000 for year 1 with the ability to continue with the \$89,000 in years 2 and 3.

Deb will be working with NRCS to start demonstrating cumulative effects of conservation practices. Current reduction maps only show 1 year snapshot.

AFR's under review currently. Right now we have 92 counties receiving full or some match from CWI. Looks like the budgeted \$920,000 will be allocated to the districts and demonstrates good political support from SWCDs.

- b. Technical Report- Jordan reported that Jim Woody is working with Amy Sims getting her on board. There are 2 handouts with bar graphs and table. Bar graphs are specific to SW workload, mostly from NRCS tracking. Tables are specific to DSC workload statewide. See handouts for more information.
- c. Agriculture Affairs- Jordan reported for Meg Leader. Meg is in Noble County wrapping up On Farm Network/In-Field Advantage meetings. Noble County is first-year group. Rebranding the program and the name change will be officially announced at the Livestock Forage Forum, March 16, 2015. The name change will differentiate between Iowa's OFN program and Indiana's program. The partnership with IA is still strong and we continue to work closely with Iowa. See report for additional details.
- d. Accountability and Technology- Deb Fairhurst reported she will be working with Mike Cox to develop cumulative reports regarding nutrient load reductions. Larry Clemens asked if there is an extrapolation we can do to show percent reduction- ie, how do the pounds reduced translate into the total picture? Jordan commented that while we don't know the load in IN going to the Gulf of Mexico, for now we can gather the data that we can to at least show if IN is reducing or increasing the N load. The numbers in Deb's report are solely from ISDA and local SWCD conservation practices. The number of soil and water conservation practices installed is solely DSC numbers.

Also, WebCMS has changed, and Deb will be working with DSS's to assist SWCDs in the submission of those reports. See report for additional details.

- e. District Support- Laura Fribley and Jennifer Thum- See report for details. Jane Hardisty commented that Kelly Barkell and Kimberly Neuman will be traveling to PA to receive training regarding communicating and working with Amish communities.
- f. Water Quality and CREP- Logan Garner reported that he has had several speaking engagements. Upcoming meetings are: 2 Red Gold meetings focusing on how stewardship models may be used within the corporate world, 3 additional March region meeting with SWCD supervisors and staff, and a meeting with Mary Lou Renshaw and IDEM.

VII. Conservation Partner Reports

- a. IASWCD report-
- i. Mike Starkey reported that the NACD fly-in meeting is next week. Conversations will center around reductions in crop insurance. Property tax issues are being kicked down the road. As a partnership, can we work together on a bill or something to solve the issue? Jordan commented that as a partnership it may be beneficial to engage in discussions and interact with Farm Bureau's board.
 - ii. Les Zimmerman presented an update on CCSI and handed out Vermillion Co's long-range plan. Les congratulated Ray and Robert on their appointment to the SSCB and thanked them for their service and dedication. It's been 6 years since CCSI was founded. The oversight committee continues to update the strategic plan (3 times in 6 years) and currently in the middle of restructuring. Funding has leveraged over \$2 million dollars over the 6 years and the participation of Purdue University. See power point handouts for additional details. Current transitions- Purdue has hired Ashley Hammock as a field coordinator to work with CCSI and has been hired with a 1 year commitment for now. Ray commented that Les was instrumental in forming CCSI. Jane commented that since the July NACD meeting in IN, other states are working to replicate CCSI. Les commented that the oversight committee is in discussions about forming a committee of non-agency individuals to handle corporate donations and communications.
- b. FSA- Julia Wickard reported that FSA is conducting joint trainings with NRCS to bring together everyone regarding Farm Bill programs. With the 30th anniversary of CRP coming up, success stories have been requested from National to highlight. We don't have information regarding general CRP signup. Susan is at Pathway to Water Quality meeting this morning. FSA has been in hiring freeze for past 6 months. FSA is understaffed by 25 people across the state. FSA has lost 115 positions since 2009. Nine positions have been posted. One is in the state office to work with the farm program team. Jasper Co FSA has a couple positions working with farm loans open. The Parke and Vermillion Co. office has a couple open positions. The leasing officer resigned and she is hopeful to post that position. There is a position in the state office to backfill in administration and another position in Knox Co. with the farm loan office.
- If a county office has an employee that has done exemplary work to showcase, let Julia know by March 20 to nominate for special recognition.
- It's been over 4 years since a mailed newsletter has been issued. A newsletter will be issued and should begin being received by Friday.
- c. NRCS- Jane Hardisty congratulated Ray and Robert on getting on the Board. Bear Grass Watershed was added to the NWQI program. Kevin Wickey, currently State Conservationist in Virginia, is moving to Regional Conservationist. A joint FSA/NRCS training is coming up and will give employees a consistent message and will work together for ongoing trainings. Jane is traveling with IASWCD representatives to Washington DC for NACD fly-in meeting. See written report for additional details.
- d. IDEA report- Scheryl Vaughn reported that Rose Morgan is the new NNW region Director for IDEA. At the IASWCD conference, Scheryl was approached to take over the poster contest and auxiliary auction. The proceeds fund the poster contest and Envirothon. Next IDEA

meeting is March 31st and this will be an agenda item for discussion. If IDEA takes this on, a subcommittee will be formed to oversee the auxiliary auction. Also on their agenda, some non co-located SWCDs feel they are not receiving ICP updates and information and they would like to discuss how to improve communications between stand alone SWCDs and rest of partnership.

- e. Purdue report- Gary Steinhardt reported that Ashley, the new CCSI contract employee, is from Washington State and is hitting the ground running. Walt Sell is a major thing for Extension. Diane Stott will be with NRCS and headquartered in Soil Health. Janet Ayres is retiring and will be difficult to replace. The Purdue Agronomy Farm is making a major addition, adding a tract and putting in drainage aligned with modern thought (narrower spaces between tiles). It will also include an electronic lab center connected to campus. They are encouraging the addition of various methods of on-site waste disposal for inspector trainings as well. Academically speaking- the soil judging program continues. Ball State has also started a collegiate soils judging program. Jesse Gissy, a new professor is supporting this program. Soil Classifiers is supporting the program. New 4-H soil and water curriculum is now grouped differently and has 3 divisions vs. 4. The program has been greatly modernized and updated. Indiana registry of Soil Science has authorization to promote the profession and will try to have a booth at some meetings. Jane commented that Jesse Gissy is the same professor that has 30+ students involved in PWQ and is hoping to get SWCS chapter at Ball State. Also, Jane commented that there will be a retirement reception for Janet Ayres on March 26th at Purdue University

VIII. **Public Comment-** none

IX. Next Meeting

2015 Meeting Dates

May 12, Lake Maxinkuckee Depot,
Culver, Indiana
July 14, The Nature Conservancy,
Indianapolis

September 15, The Nature Conservancy,
Indianapolis
October 27, Sugar Ridge Fish and Wildlife
Refuge, Pike County

X. Adjourn: 12Noon

Minutes Prepared by: Geneva Tyler

Approved by:
