

ICP 2012 Accomplishments

The Indiana Conservation Partnership continues to collaborate and carry out major projects each year that greatly benefit our staff and volunteers. In addition to these projects, the ICP identifies focus areas each year that we agree to work together on.

2012 Projects

The *Conservation Beyond 2016* taskforce brought together a large cross section of the partnership to look at the operational challenges of SWCDs and make recommendations to strategically plan for the future. This effort is well timed and coincides with the NRCS/NACD Field Office of the Future strategy. Meetings are currently underway throughout the state to review and discuss the recommendations of the taskforce. Watch for more!

Our *Conservation Partnership Staff Training and Certification program* has begun and will provide consistent statewide training to all partner employees to improve technical skills and help us operate more efficiently by capitalizing on all available staff.

The *Pathway to Water Quality* continues to improve each year. We focused on Soil Health this year, adding demonstrations and cover crop plots. NACD's "Soil to Spoon" educational materials went along nicely with the theme and were featured in the youth education area. Over 229 volunteers worked the 17-day event. 2013 marks the 20th anniversary for Pathway and exciting plans are underway for celebrating.

This year marked the sixth year for the *Leadership Institute* for SWCD Supervisors, employees, and ICP partner staff. Two sessions were held in 2012 with 46 participants completing the classes. Since 2006, 77 participants have completed the entire Cornerstone training series and 72 SWCDs have participated.

Focus Area: Conservation Cropping Systems Initiative (CCSI)



- The USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) and the State Soil Conservation Board (SSCB) provided funds to continue CCSI programs statewide. The Indiana Association of Soil and Water Conservation Districts administered an agreement to manage the initiative, working with all the Indiana Conservation Partners.
- New funding for CCSI was received from the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation for two years; project expansion funded with an NRCS Conservation Innovation Grant through August 2015, which includes the hiring of a statewide coordinator.
- Ensured statewide outreach through ICP organizations (website, news releases, newsletters, etc.).
- Provided on-the-ground technical training and farmer workshops.
- Mentoring program established with 16 private mentors trained to provide technical assistance to farmers.
- 59 workshops completed.
- 70 technical presentations to over 3,500 people.
- Provided technical materials SWCDs, partners, and numerous farmers. Disseminated additional materials through the website.
- Increased emphasis on technical training on CCSI for partnership employees.
- Tracked CCSI participants using programs and initiatives to assist with funding.



MISSION

The mission of the Indiana Conservation Partnership is to provide technical, financial and educational assistance needed to implement economically and environmentally compatible land and water stewardship decisions, practices and technologies.

VISION

The ICP's land and water stewardship assistance will improve the quality of Indiana's streams, rivers and lakes; protect our drinking water; and increase soil quality to boost food and fiber production.

MEMBERS

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

Conservation Cropping Systems Initiative (CCSI) continued

- Incorporated CCSI initiatives into 2012 NRCS' Environmental Quality Incentive Program (EQIP) criteria.
- Established primary email address (ccsi@iaswcd.org), Twitter account and media contact for project. A new webpage is up on the CCSI website: www.iaswcd.org/CCSI/ccsi.html.
- Ensured research and new technology development is occurring to compliment CCSI programs.
- New soil health program manager hired to coordinate the development of training hubs and the CCSI mentoring program throughout Indiana.
- Received state recognition for the CCSI from the Indiana Wildlife Federation and the Upper White River Watershed Alliance.

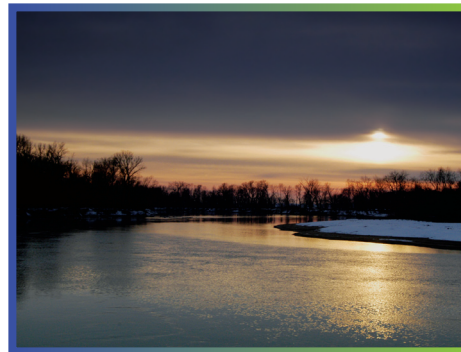


Focus Area: Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP)

- CREP and watershed information provided to all partnership offices.
- Coordinator hired in Middle Wabash-Busseron to promote CREP, Wetland Restoration Enhancement Program, and the Healthy Rivers Initiative.
- Administrative training provided to partnership staff in CREP areas.
- Communications plan is under development.

Focus Area: Watershed Initiatives

- Conducted two sessions for the Certified Livestock Producers Program and certified 70 participants. Promoted CLPP opportunities throughout the partnership.
- Coordinated ICP efforts on watershed initiative proposals.
- Conducted partner meetings on collaboration opportunities.
- Reviewed unfunded Section 319 and LARE applications as potential proposals for watershed initiative projects.
- Developed Confined Animal Feeding Operations factsheet and held training for all partnership employees.
- Progressing in development of a statewide strategy to identify high priority resource concerns.
- Maintained a map of all funded watershed projects to identify gaps in relation to resource concerns.
- Participated in Ohio River Water Quality Trading Project tour and provided overview to ICP leaders.



Focus Area: Targeting, Monitoring, Outcomes

- Promoted success of various conservation efforts, such as Bull Run, Goose Pond, and Healthy Rivers Initiative.
- Made presentations statewide about NRCS special initiatives, such as Mississippi River Basin Initiative, Great Lakes Restoration Initiative, and Western Lake Erie Basin project. Conducted visits with project managers to discuss successes and challenges.
- Developed a draft Nutrient Strategy Plan for Indiana – reports submitted to Gulf Hypoxia Taskforce annually.
- Monitored legislative initiatives such as phosphorus/lawn fertilizer.
- Participated with Indiana Conservation Alliance on Conservation Day for state legislators.
- Updating the ICP accomplishments reporting website <http://www.in.gov/isda/icpreports/>.

Focus Areas for 2013

- Watch the ICP website for the announcement of 2013 Focus Areas.

YOUR INDIANA CONSERVATION PARTNERSHIP

Indiana Conservation Partnership Website
www.iaswcd.org/icp/index.html

Indiana Conservation Partnership Reports
www.in.gov/isda/icpreports/

Pathway to Water Quality
www.pathwaytowaterquality.org