

## MONTHLY BOARD MEETING MINUTES

**I. CALL TO ORDER - On Tuesday April 17, 2018, at 7:08 pm a regular meeting of the Board of Supervisors of the St Joseph County SWCD at the Centre Township Library, South Bend, IN was called to order by John Dooms, Chairman.**

<b>PRESENT – SWCD</b>	<b>PRESENT – SWCD/NRCS</b>	<b>Present - EX-OFFICIO</b>	<b>ABSENT – SWCD</b>
John Dooms, Chair/Supervisor	Debbie Knepp, NRCS DC	N/a	Jim LaFree
Jeremy Cooper, Vice-Chair/Supervisor	Sarah Longenecker, SWCD CC	<b>PRESENT – Public</b>	Dru Wrasse
Stacey Silvers, Supervisor	Sandra Hoffarth, SWCD AA	n/a	Richard Schmidt
Mike Burkholder, Supervisor	Jane Sablich, SWCD EEC		Randy Matthys
Dave Vandewalle, Supervisor			Dale Stoner
David Straughn			Chuck Lehman
Dave Craft			

**II. ADDITIONS TO AGENDA – n/a**

**III. REGULAR BUSINESS**

- a. **Legislative Updates** – n/a
- b. **Indiana Conservation Partnership Updates** – n/a
- c. **Minutes: March 20, 2018 board meeting** – Minutes were reviewed and approved as presented by motion (Cooper/Vandewalle).
- d. **Treasurer’s Report: (3/21/2018-4/17/2018)** – The treasurer’s report was reviewed and approved as submitted by motion (Cooper, Vandewalle).
- e. **Approval of Claims (3/21/2018-4/17/2018)** –A motion (Cooper, Burkholder) was made to approve Claim Nos. 11328-11335 for a total of \$2,765.72 as presented. Motion carried.

**IV. OLD BUSINESS**

- a. **St. Joseph Co. Soil & Water Conservation Partnership Staff Written Reports**
  - i. **Field Office & Education Reports** – The field office report was presented to the board & reviewed. (Attached)
  - ii. **NRCS Talking Points** - Knepp went over the NRCS DC talking points (attached)
- b. **Committee Reports**
  - i. **Education Committee** – Best week Ever rain barrel workshop will be held on May 30<sup>th</sup> at Purple Porch. Cost is \$30/barrel. Donations are being asked to cover the cost to keep this workshop free to the participants. Hoffarth will add a pop up to the website which can connect to PayPal for credit card donations or they can mail us a check. Sablich has been in talks with the city of Lakeville to utilize their wetland area they have restored for swamp stomps. Due to time restraints, this program will get started in the 2018-2019 school year. Youth poster contest deadline is this Friday (April 20). In years past, the district has given each participant a tree. Sablich is asking for \$1/participant to purchase participation prizes (tree, seed packet, coloring books, etc.). A motion (Cooper/Silvers) was made to release \$1/participant with a max of \$200 for a prize. Motion passed.
  - ii. **Grants, marketing & Special Initiative** – Cooper reported to the board that we are in the final year of our CWI grants. The conservation grant is looking like we will be able to spend the entirety of the funds between the 3 counties. The raingarden grant is starting to get a lot of attention and applications are starting to roll in. The committee would like to apply for a CWI for 2019. A joint committee meeting with Rural and Urban Conservation will be held before the next board meeting. Sablich considered other grants besides CWI and found that most are due either at the end of the year or beginning. She will keep an eye out for grants that will further our mission and bring them to the committee and board. The committee also looked at our website and social media footprint. They decided to add LinkedIn and Instagram. Hoffarth also set up IFTT (if this than that) which will connect all platforms when posting. For example, if a picture is posted on Instagram, it will automatically be posted to Twitter and Facebook. Facebook is already set up to automatically send out a tweet. Website analytics has been recently set up. Hoffarth will send monthly analytic reports to the committee to see where improvements are needed.
  - iii. **Rural Conservation** – Burkholder reported to the board that the committee is planning a legislative field tour for the last week of June with a focus on the areas around South Bend of cover crops and no-till that was paid for through the CWI grant. They will also visit the demo raingarden(s) and hoop houses at Unity Gardens which were cost shared through NRCS. The 2019 producers meeting is in the beginning planning stages. PARP credits will be available. Topics to include will be a thorough discussion on herbicide resistant weeds and how to deal with them, a general ag topic which will help bring a wider range of

producers and a soil health topic. CCSI is going to help us bring in a bigger name key note speaker, TBA. The committee also discussed applying for a 2019 CWI grant including the same conservation practices adding in the pollinator habitat and raingardens. It was also suggested that the district add in \$5-\$10 per acre on top of the capped \$20/acre for crops to increase the cost share available to producers.

- c. **Landfill Inspection** – Silvers reported that the landfill looks good. The day they attended was very windy but the landfill staff put up a temporary fence to catch any stray trash that was being blown around. Some areas were washed out with the 14” snowmelt and heavy rain event that happened a few months ago, but noted that no sediment left the landfill or caused any major issues.
- d. **CWI grant Applications** – Longenecker informed the board that applications are now rolling in for the raingarden CWI grant cost share. We currently have 4 demo gardens and 4 residential garden applications. Each demo garden has a cap of \$5,000 and each residential garden has a cap of \$3,000 available for cost share. A motion (Cooper, Burkholder) was made to approve these 8 applications for a total maximum cost share of \$32,000. Motion passed. Due to our deadline of May 18<sup>th</sup> for our conservation CWI grant, the applicants who want to do no-till would be done by this date. A motion (Silvers, Cooper) was made to pre-approve the two applications which total 290 acres of no-till. Motion passed.
- e. **Trailblazer** – The trailblazer is back in the shop at Country Auto. The transmission is estimated to cost \$3,241.87, blower motor replacement is \$176.07, a fuel induction cleaning is \$128.34. With the 2 hours of diagnostic and labor it would total \$3,621.83 to repair. A lengthy discussion was had on options of repairing or considering a new district vehicle. Cooper will reach out to the county again about any fleet vehicles they might have or getting a new vehicle with the county’s discount. Burkholder will check on the price of a used transmission just to get the blazer running to sell. A decision will be made at the next board meeting.
- f. **2018 Budget Adjustments** – Education – Adult Education & Outreach needs to add \$26.90 for the annual meeting legal ad. Education – Youth Education needs to add in postage in the amount of \$100. A motion (Vandewalle, Silvers) was made to add these into the 2018 budget. Motion passed.

**V. NEW BUSINESS**

- a. **Schedules/ Upcoming Events / Any Related Claims** - calendars were handed out explaining upcoming special events & holiday schedules on the back of the agenda. A motion (Silvers/Cooper) was made to cancel May’s board meeting due to planting season. Motion carried.
- b. **Food Plot Seed Program** – Hoffarth informed the board that the last two years Marshall County SWCD has been able to get the food plot seeds. They have informed us that they will not be able to get it from the same place for 2019. The board is asked to talk to their seed dealers to see if they would be willing to donate a few bags. It was also proposed to find out the cost of purchasing the seed and going 50/50 with Marshall County SWCD if a donor is not available.
- c. **IASWCD & NACD Annual Reports** – Dooms passed around the annual reports.

**VI. PRIVILEGE OF FLOOR** – Dooms read a thank you letter from CCSI for our contribution (attached). He also read a thank you letter from Representative Jackie Walorski for reaching out to her about the 2018 Farm Bill (attached).


**VII. ADJOURNMENT** – The board meeting adjourned at 8:25 pm.

Respectfully submitted,  
**Sandra Hoffarth**  
Administrative Assistant  
St. Joseph County Soil & Water Conservation District  
2903 Gary Drive, Plymouth, IN 46563  
Email: Sandra.hoffarth@in.nacdnet.net  
[www.stjosephswcd.org](http://www.stjosephswcd.org)

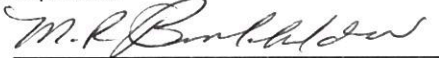
Approved by:



Supervisor



Supervisor



Supervisor





**Field Office Report**  
**March 19 – April 13, 2018**

**Field Work:**

- Monitoring – 2 (WRP)
- Grassed Waterway Inspection with contractor (CRP)
- 8 Field Visits (CREP)
- 3 plans Partially Completed (CREP)

**Environmental Quality Incentive Program (EQIP)**

- Process payments – Invasive species control
- Review contractor bids for 2 structure projects

**Wetland Reserve Program**

- Monitoring - 4

**Rule 5/Rule 13**

- 4 plan reviews

**Wetlands – 19**

- 4 potential violation requests

**Highly erodible determinations - 34**

**Tree ID**

**NRCS Mid-year review**

**Individual Development Plan**

**Watershed Leadership Academy**

**Ag Days**

**Newsletter**

**Landfill Inspection**

**Lincpass renewal – 3 of us**

**Meetings**

**Staff – 4**

**MSP**

**CCSI Teleconference**

**Herbaceous Plant ID**

**FAC meeting**

**Rural Conservation Committee**

**LaVille Jr/Sr High School**

**County Time Sheet Training**

**Jordan at Elkhart SWCD**

**Supervisor's Meeting**

**Department Head meeting**

**Marketing/Grant Committee**

**Soil health Workshop**

**City of Lakeville**

**AgLearn – Records management**

**Webinars: PSS**

**Beneficials in Vineyards**

**No-Till in High Residue**

**County Holiday: March 30**

# DC Talking Points (revised)

April 2017

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## FARM BILL

**Agricultural Conservation Easement Program (ACEP) - Easement Application Due Date Change**  
ACEP applications for the FY-2019 funding period will now be due August 17, 2018. This earlier date will allow the field staff more time to complete ranking and application follow up information. Please get the word out to potential applicants and partners.

## PROGRAM SUPPORT SPECIALIST-CONSERVATION RESERVE PROGRAM AGREEMENT

A statewide webinar is planned for April 4, 2018 at 9:30 a.m. (EDST) for all involved with the PSS-CRP agreement. The purpose of the meeting is to discuss the recently issued guidance found in Indiana Bulletin 300-18-16 that clarifies the actions required as part of the agreement. Staff and supervisors are encouraged to read the bulletin and attachment in advance of the meeting. Questions may be sent in advance of the meeting per the guidance in the bulletin. Staff can access the bulletin on the Indiana [SharePoint](#). SWCD supervisors should contact their local field office for a copy of the bulletin and/or link instructions for the webinar. As a reminder, the PSS-CRP coordinator is Whitney McGrew (812-897-2840 or [Whitney.McGrew@in.nacdnet.net](mailto:Whitney.McGrew@in.nacdnet.net)).

## UPDATING DUNS/SAM NUMBERS

USDA Secretary Perdue recently announced his goal of eliminating the need for SAM and DUNS numbers for entities. General provision in the newly signed Omnibus bill exempts assistance received by producers and landowners in NRCS conservation programs from these requirements. However, USDA must work with the Office of Management and Budget on how to implement this change. Until further guidance is received, we encourage customers to continue obtaining their SAM and DUNS numbers as required. We will keep you informed as updates are received.

## COOPERATIVE WORKING AGREEMENTS

The current partnership Cooperative Working Agreements expires on December 31, 2018. The Indiana Conservation Partnership (ICP) Leaders are currently developing the new agreements. It is their goal that SWCDs will receive the new agreements for their review in June with a return date of early September. Instructions on answering questions and where to return the SWCD signed agreements will be coming soon.

## AMERICAN FARMLAND TRUST NON-OPERATING LANDOWNER SURVEY

The ICP and many of our partners are interested in ramping up our efforts to work with non-operating landowners. There are currently many discussions and activities going on here in the Indiana. We know that if we want to see increased conservation on rented lands we must be reaching out to the landowners as well as the farmers. To accomplish this, we need more information about the non-operators who lease out their farmland.

American Farmland Trust started their non-operator landowner survey in the 10 highest farmland rental states the first week of March in Illinois, Iowa and Indiana. The purpose of the survey is to better understand land management goals and conservation practices from the perspective of the non-



operating landowner. Non-operating landowners will receive a postcard first announcing the survey, followed by the survey.

The survey results will help both AFT and the ICP in our efforts to reach this important audience. For more information contact Jennifer Filipiak, Midwest Director at [jfilipiak@farmland.org](mailto:jfilipiak@farmland.org) or (515)868-1331.

### **WORKING LANDS FOR WILDLIFE – BLANDING’S TURTLE**

With more than two-thirds of the continental United States under private ownership, wildlife depends heavily on working lands for habitat and food. Working Lands for Wildlife (WLFW) is a targeted, science-based effort to help producers restore and protect habitat for declining species on farms and forestlands. Projects focus on species that have needs compatible with agricultural practices and rural land management that can benefit from conservation on private lands. Five new projects have recently been added to WLFW. In Indiana our efforts will be focused on the Blanding’s turtle.

Farmers and forestland owners in Indiana, Illinois, Ohio and Michigan can help reverse the decline of the Blanding’s turtle by increasing available high-quality habitat to support their recovery through land protection, as well as restoration and enhancement of habitat. NRCS and conservation partnership staff will help producers with a conservation plan that benefits both the species and the agricultural operation. Examples of practices include conservation covers, riparian forested buffers, wetland creation and restoration, and management of invasive plants. Financial assistance is available to cover part of the cost of conservation practices.

We have requested more information regarding targeted watersheds and eligible counties. In the meantime, here is the initial county list: Allen, Benton, DeKalb, Delaware, Elkhart, Fulton, Jasper, Kosciusko, LaPorte, Lagrange, Lake, Marion, Marshall, Miami, Newton, Noble, Porter, Pulaski, St. Joseph, Starke, Steuben, Sullivan, Tippecanoe, Wabash, Wayne, White, and Whitley.

### **STILL TIME TO BE COUNTED IN THE 2017 CENSUS OF AGRICULTURE**

Indiana farmers still have time to be counted in the 2017 Census of Agriculture. Although the first deadline has just passed, the National Agricultural Statistics Service (NASS) will continue to accept Census information through the spring to get a more complete and accurate picture of American agriculture that represents all farmers. Census data is used to make important decisions about farming and rural communities, such as farm policy, disaster relief, insurance or loan programs, infrastructure improvements, or agribusiness setup.

Federal law mandates that everyone who received the 2017 Census of Agriculture questionnaire complete it and return it even if not currently farming. The Census can be completed online at [www.agcounts.usda.gov](http://www.agcounts.usda.gov) or returned by mail. For more information about the 2017 Census, visit [www.agcensus.usda.gov](http://www.agcensus.usda.gov). For questions or assistance filling out the Census, call toll-free (888) 424-7828.





Grants, Marketing & Special Initiatives Committee Meeting  
March 28, 2018 10am  
Farm Credit Services 5310 S Main St, South Bend, IN 46614

**In Attendance:** Sandra Hoffarth, Jane Sablich, Jeremy Cooper, Mike Burkholder, David Straughn, Chuck Lehman

### **I. 2016 CWI grants**

**Conservation grant** we have spent \$47,593.41 of \$75,000 leaving \$27,406.59 for the total grant. We have spent our first ½ (\$37,500) of the grant which was paid out to us. The remaining \$37,500 will be reimbursed when we spend it. We just requested for 2017 expenses the first reimbursement of \$9,299.41. St Joseph County has spent \$13,118.64 of our total \$25,000 leaving \$11,881.36 to be used in 2018. With the applications that are already in we have a remainder of \$5,656.36 for new applications. Marshall County has spent all of their \$25,000 and a portion of Starke County's money they didn't spend in 2016. Starke County still has the majority of their \$25,000. Application deadline is May 18<sup>th</sup> at which point as a tri county we will evaluate where we stand with applications as far as allocating to the appropriate county and/or applications.

**Raingarden Grant** we have spent \$59.00 of our \$25,000 portion. Once our sign is printed and installed that will add \$844. Goal set is to have at least 7 applications approved for installations in 2018 to help cover our portion of the grant which totals \$23,097.00. We currently have 2 applications turned in and several leads waiting for their applications to be turned in. Sarah & Jane are following up with these leads.

### **II. Future CWI grants**

Discussion was had on partnering with different counties on another conservation grant. Marshall would like us to put together a proposal she can take to her board to decide. Staff will look into partnering with LaPorte, Elkhart, Fulton or other neighboring counties before applying by ourselves. Jane is planning to apply for a CWI grant to help pay for an educational soil tunnel. Another possibility is a sustainability grant partnering with groups in South Bend/Mishawaka.

### **III. Other grants**

Jane has checked on IASWCD and other sites for possible grants. Most deadlines are either end of the year or very beginning and deadlines for 2018 have passed. These are good starting points for next year. She will continue to look for other grant opportunities that match our mission and needs and what partners we can possibly work with.

### **IV. Social Media/Website**

Currently Facebook has 422 likes/followers, Twitter has 317 followers, YouTube has 7 subscribers (only 1 video of a 2011 swamp stomp that needs updated if we are changing or continuing this program). Our website has built in SEO (search engine optimization) wizard which helps make sure all of our pages have their tags and titles which help boost our rating on google and other search engines. Hoffarth installed a free version of a visitor analytics on Tuesday. In one day there was 17 visitors with a page visit total of 41 pages! Committee

asked to set up Instagram and LinkedIn to further our social media reach. It was also suggested to consider IFTTT (if this than that) which can link all the social media platforms together with one post. Currently any Facebook post is automatically tweeted on Twitter, Hoffarth isn't sure what program is doing that as a previous admin assistant set that up. Hoffarth will look into a free Google analytics to get more details.

## Goals

- 5 more raingarden applications
- Monthly analytic reports sent to committee
- Set up Instagram & LinkedIn accounts

## Rural Conservation Committee Report

Held April 3, 2018 @ 8:30 am

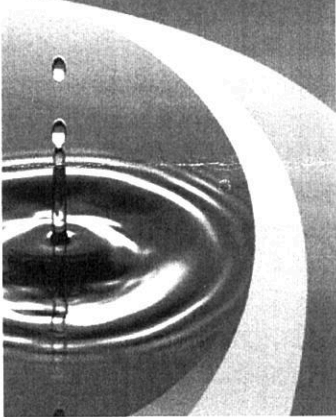
- I. Events for 2018-2019
  - a. Legislative Field Tour
    - i. looking at last week of June (Monday, Tuesday, or Wednesday)
    - ii. focus on areas around South Bend – no-till and cover crops paid for through CWI grant, raingarden demo garden (possibly multiple), hoop houses at Unity Gardens
  - b. 2019 Producer’s Meeting
    - i. PARP will be included
    - ii. Thorough discussion on herbicide resistant weeds and how to deal with them
    - iii. “General” ag topic to bring wider range of producers
    - iv. Soil health topic
  - c. 2019 CWI Grant
    - i. The committee would like to see the district apply for another CWI grant including the same practices (it has been since suggested that we include the pollinator habitat with the raingarden grant if we reapply). It has also been since suggested that the district kick in \$5-\$10 per acre on top of the capped \$20 per acre for cover crops to increase the cost share available for producers.





Indiana Association of  
Soil and Water  
Conservation Districts

Protecting and enhancing Indiana's soil  
and water resources for all Hoosiers



**IASWCD**

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**PRESIDENT:**

Jamie Scott  
Kosciusko County

**VICE PRESIDENT:**

Roger Wenning  
Decatur County

**TREASURER:**

Jeff Baker  
Warrick County

**SECRETARY:**

Kerry Ames  
Putnam County

**EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR:**

Jennifer Boyle Warner  
[Jennifer-boyle@iaswcd.org](mailto:Jennifer-boyle@iaswcd.org)

March 26, 2018

To: Indiana SWCDs

Re: 2018 Membership Dues

Dear SWCDs:

Enclosed you will find an invoice for your 2018 membership dues to the Indiana Association of Soil and Water Conservation Districts (IASWCD) and a copy of the "2017 Year in Review Summary" which details how your membership dues were utilized during 2017. We are asking each SWCD to review this information at their next monthly board meeting. Invoices are due *before* September 30, 2018 in order to be in good standing for the next annual business meeting, which will be January 15, 2019.

The IASWCD and its Board of Directors continues to be **your** statewide voice for Indiana's 92 local conservation districts. We provide SWCD representation at both the state and national levels and with various organizations. The legislative short session just ended and while we did not have any specific bills regarding SWCDs, our lobbyist did work on a bill to make sure that SWCDs still had a seat on the St. Joe River Basin Commission. Most likely we will have a very busy 2019 long session coming up.

Just this month, Jamie Scott, Sarah Delbecq, Roger Wenning, Gene Schmidt, and Jill Reinhart (NRCS) represented the SWCDs in Washington, DC. They visited with all our congressional offices and discussed important issues pertaining to the Farm Bill, Conservation Technical Assistance, and the 319 Grant Program. We encourage each District to continue to invite national and state Legislators and Legislative staff to your SWCD field days and events. This helps significantly when we visit their offices and talk about soil and water natural resource issues.

The IASWCD staff, officers and region directors are proud to serve you, our members, in these roles. We thank you for your continued commitment to promoting the wise use and management of our natural resources in the state.

Please do not hesitate to contact any of us if you have issues or concerns you would like to discuss. Thank you for supporting **your** Indiana Association of Soil and Water Conservation Districts.

Sincerely,

Jamie Scott  
President

Jeff Baker  
Treasurer

24 March 2018

St Joseph SWCD,

I just wanted to thank you for the contribution you made to CCSI. As a former SWCD employee (contractor), it means a lot to me personally.

I've heard a lot of great things about your January workshop - among other projects. It's folks like you that are making a difference. Thank you for doing great things.

Lisa Holscher

JACKIE WALORSKI  
2ND DISTRICT, INDIANA

COMMITTEE ON WAYS AND MEANS

SUBCOMMITTEE ON HUMAN  
RESOURCES

SUBCOMMITTEE ON OVERSIGHT

419 CANNON HOUSE OFFICE BUILDING  
WASHINGTON, DC 20515  
(202) 225-3915

202 LINCOLNWAY EAST  
SUITE 101  
MISHAWAKA, IN 46544  
(574) 204-2645

## Congress of the United States

House of Representatives

Washington, DC 20515-1402

March 20, 2018

John Dooms  
Chairman  
St. Joseph County Soil & Water Conservation District  
2903 Gary Dr.  
Plymouth, IN 46563-8889

Dear John:

Thank you for contacting me with regard to the 2018 Farm Bill. I appreciate your taking the time to inform me of your thoughts on this important issue.

As you may know, in the 114th Congress I served on the House Agriculture Committee and chaired the Nutrition Subcommittee. Agriculture is an important part of our economy in Indiana's 2<sup>nd</sup> District, and I remain committed to ensuring that our farmers have a voice in Congress.

That is why I recently sent a [letter](#) to Ag Committee Chairman Michael Conaway outlining these priorities for the 2018 Farm Bill, based on feedback I received from Hoosiers across the 2<sup>nd</sup> District. Among other things, we should protect crop insurance, reduce and eliminate regulatory hurdles, promote U.S. agriculture exports, ensure a strong research title, and invest in rural broadband. Additionally, I hope we can fix certain programs, including the Margin Protection Program (MPP), the Agriculture Risk Coverage (ARC), and the Price Loss Coverage (PLC) program.

Finally, as the Nutrition Subcommittee chair in the last Congress, I was dedicated to ensuring that the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) functions efficiently, maintains its integrity, and continues to help low-income households by providing assistance for food purchases. Dozens of hearings have shown that SNAP is a crucial part of the safety net, that the program works, and that improvements can be made. I look forward to discussing the 2018 Farm Bill with my colleagues, and I will be sure to keep your thoughts in mind.

Please know there is no greater honor than serving the hardworking Hoosiers of Indiana's 2<sup>nd</sup> District. If you would like updates on the actions I have taken in Congress, please visit my website at [www.walorski.house.gov](http://www.walorski.house.gov) to sign up for my e-newsletter. Thank you again for contacting me.

Sincerely,





Jackie Walorski  
Member of Congress  
Indiana Second District

JW/JW