

MONTHLY BOARD MEETING MINUTES

I. CALL TO ORDER - On Tuesday January 16, 2018, at 9:19 am a regular meeting of the Board of Supervisors of the St Joseph County SWCD at the Farm Credit Service in South Bend, IN was called to order by John Dooms, Chairman.

PRESENT – SWCD

John Dooms, Chair/Supervisor
Mike Burkholder, Supervisor
Dave Vandewalle, Supervisor
Stacey Silvers, Supervisor

PRESENT – SWCD/NRCS

Debbie Knepp, NRCS DC
Sarah Longenecker, SWCD CC
Sandra Hoffarth, SWCD AA
Jane Sablich, SWCD EEC

Present - EX-OFFICIO

N/a

PRESENT – Public

n/a

ABSENT – SWCD

Jeremy Cooper, Vice-Chair/Supervisor
Jim LaFree
Dave Craft
Dru Wrasse
Richard Schmidt
Randy Matthys
Dale Stoner
Arlene Schuchman
Chuck Lehman
Carole Riewe

II. ADDITIONS TO AGENDA – n/a

III. REGULAR BUSINESS

- a. **Legislative Updates** – n/a
- b. **Indiana Conservation Partnership Updates** – n/a
- c. **Minutes: December 19, 2017 board meeting** – Minutes were reviewed and approved as presented.
- d. **Treasurer’s Report: (12/18/2017-1/12/2018)** – The treasurer’s reports was reviewed and approved as submitted.
- e. **Approval of Claims (12/18/2017-1/12/2018)** –A motion (Silvers, Burkholder) was made to approve Claim Nos. 11289-11298 for a total of \$2,127.24 as presented. Motion carried.

IV. OLD BUSINESS

- a. **St. Joseph Co. Soil & Water Conservation Partnership Staff Written Reports**
 - i. **Field Office Report**– 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. **Annual Meeting – Entertainment** – Vandewalle reminded the board of our upcoming annual meeting next week Friday. He reminded us to collect items for the Silent Auction that you would want to bid on and get them to the office as soon as possible. Ticket numbers are due to Hoffarth on the 19th. If she doesn’t hear from someone, she will call them. Doors open at 5:45 pm, board needs to be there a little before to meet and greet.
 - ii. **Education Committee** – Sablich announced there will be an education committee meeting Wednesday January 24 at 2 pm at Farm Credit.
 1. **Science Alive** – Sablich is needing volunteers to help with the day on February 3rd from 10am-4pm. Silvers volunteered for a morning shift. Sablich will be in touch with the remaining board members. Sablich requested the approval from the board to purchase items for the display. Burkholder, Vandewalle motioned the approval to not exceed the approved budget amount (\$150) on supplies needed.
- c. **Producer’s Meeting** – Longenecker updated the board on the upcoming tri-county workshop. It will be held on February 15 at Christo’s Banquet Center in Plymouth. It was asked that we record the speakers for those who cannot attend. Checked into it, the speakers don’t mind being recorded but ask that we have a lapel microphone to have better sound quality. None of the districts or NRCS has one we can use or is modern enough to connect to a smartphone which is what we will probably use to record. Longenecker has looked into prices which vary to about \$50. We also need to send out postcards. A motion (Burkholder, Vandewalle) was made to not exceed \$200 for postcard mailings and a new lapel microphone. Motion passed. We are also in need of sponsors if anyone has dealers they talk to, Hoffarth will be mailing out flyers for sponsor requests.
- d. **Meal Policy** – (Attached). This must be reviewed each year. Vandewalle, Silvers, & Burkholder signed approving this policy for the 2018 year.
- e. **IASWCD Annual Conference Recap** – Burkholder and Dooms attended as well as Cooper, Sablich and Hoffarth. Dooms recapped on the business meeting in which the 4 resolutions were voted on (Attached). The resolution dealing with a possible name change for SWCD’s failed while the remaining 3 resolutions passed.
- f. **Designation of Depository** – A motion (Burkholder, Vandewalle) was made to keep PNC as our bank for FY2018.

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.
 - i. **Leadership Institute** – Board Development – Friday February 23, 2018 & Impacting Community – Friday November 30, 2018 both being held in Albion, IN. Cost is \$70 for each day. Those interested let Hoffarth know so she can get you registered. (**Note** Silvers & Wrasse have attended Board Development. Schuchman, Silvers, Wrasse & Hoffarth have attended Impacting Community.)
- b. **Women’s Learning Circle Workshops** – Knepp let the board know that Elkhart County would like to work with us to set a women’s workshop in our area sometime in 2018. The board agreed this is an important workshop to hold for the numerous women landowners and operators. Knepp and Longenecker will work with NRCS & Elkhart County to set up this workshop. More details to come later.
- c. **SWCD Logo attire** – tabled to February’s board meeting.

VI. PRIVILEGE OF FLOOR –

VII. ADJOURNMENT – The board meeting adjourned at 10:04 am.

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

Approved by:



Supervisor



Supervisor



Supervisor

Field Office Report
November 20, 2017 – January 12, 2018

Field Work:

- Construction check – Animal Trails/Walkway, 4 Heavy Use Areas (EQIP)
- Field review – 300 ac cover crops (EQIP)
 - 61.3 ac cover crops (CWI)
 - 100 ac cover crops (CSP)
- Field verify prep work for 90 ac monarch planting was completed
- Discussion of burn plan with biologist, NRCS forester and landowner
- Payments were processed for all practices listed above.

Environmental Quality Incentive Program (EQIP)

- Deliver engineering plans for Rock Chute structure to producer
- Process payments – Monarch habitat, Invasive Species Control/monitoring
- Contract practice letters
- 2018 application eligibility documents

Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP)

- Process payments for 12 contracts
- Work on seed mixes with biologist for 3 pollinator habitat contracts
- Obligate 2018 renewal contract
- Process/documentation for contract termination
- Contract practice letters

Conservation Reserve Program

- Completed conservation planning for 2 contracts

Rule 5/Rule 13

- Complete 1 plan review

Wetlands – 3

- Answer producer questions of wetland rules
- 10 potential violation requests

Highly erodible determinations – 8

Annual Report, SWCD Newsletter, Budget, Annual Plan of Work, Donor Program information and mailing

Mentoring Assessment

Meet with mentoree

Meetings

Staff – 7

Supervisors

IDEM Training (Sarah)

IDEA (Sandra, Jane)

MSP (Sarah)

Yellow River Steering Committee

IASWCD Annual Conference

Clean Water Indiana Grant meeting

National Conservation planning Project teleconference

Webinars: Soil Microbes

- Focus on Nutrients

- Improving Soil health Globally

Office Closed: November 23, 24

December 25, 26

January 1

DC Talking Points

January 2017

ACTING STATE CONSERVATIONIST

Effective January 4, Jill Reinhart, Assistant State Conservationist (ASTC) for Partnerships, will serve as Indiana's Acting State Conservationist. She will hold this position until May 7th. She is delegating authority for her roles as ASTC-Partnerships as followed:

- Civil Rights Committee, Equal Opportunity Liaison Officer: Jerry Roach ASTC Programs
- Conservation Innovation Grants: Jerry Roach, ASTC Programs
- Initiatives, including Regional Conservation Partnership Program, Mississippi River Basin Initiative, National Water Quality Initiative, Great Lakes Restoration Initiative & Western Lake Erie Basin Initiative: Jerry Roach, ASTC Programs
- Indiana Conservation Partnership Leaders Coordination: Becky Fletcher, State Public Affairs Officer
- Indiana Conservation Partnership Training Certification Workgroup: Stephen Ball, Cultural Resources Specialist
- Program Manager Responsibilities on Contribution Agreements and Memorandums of Understanding: Susan Meadows, CTA Program Specialist
- Water quality advisory role for partners and projects: Tony Bailey, Conservation Agronomist

FARM BILL

Agricultural Conservation Easement Program (ACEP) – Wetland Reserve Enhancements (WRE): The easement offer values (Geographic Area Rate Caps, GARC) are out for FY2018 and are the same as 2017. Interested landowners should call their local district conservationist and provide the property deed and idea of offered acreage. Now is the time to submit so that titles can be verified. The application deadline is January 12, 2018.

Conservation Reserve Program (CRP)

Conservation Reserve Program – New Enrollments

Until further notice, FSA is not able to accept any CRP offers submitted after October 1, 2017, except for Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP) offers.

Conservation Reserve Program – New Soil Rental Rates

CRP soil rental rates are reviewed and updated regularly. This past summer, the FSA national headquarters calculated soil rental rates for each county in the nation for FY18 by multiplying:

- County-average dryland rental rates (from the USDA National Agriculture Statistics Service – NASS – 2016 data)
- By a set of soil-specific productivity factors for the county (based on the NRCS National Commodity Crop Productivity Index – NCCPI)

These values were then subjected to a floor of 80% and a ceiling of 120% of the previous (FY17) CRP soil rental rates to come up with the new FY18 rates (effective October 1, 2017). FSA County Committees evaluated these new rates and if adequate justification were available to adjust them further, they submitted that justification to FSA. Information about this process is in national FSA Notice CRP 836 = https://www.fsa.usda.gov/Internet/FSA_Notice/crp_836.pdf.

PLEASE NOTE: the current CRP planning work for offers submitted between May 4, 2017 and September 30, 2017 are still subject to the FY17 rates. The new FY18 rates will only apply to offers submitted October 1,



2017 and later (until further notice, this only includes new CREP offers submitted on or after October 1, 2017).

FY18 soil rental rates are posted on the local bulletin board in the local FSA office.

FALL TRANSECT

The Indiana Conservation Partnership is gearing up for the fall/winter transect. The data collected from this effort is critical to being able to document that Indiana farmers planted over 1 million acres of true cover crops for the past two years in a row – no other state has data to make these claims! It also gives the local partnership the opportunity to see all the great conservation, and areas of need, in the county and to collaborate on the upcoming year's needs.

All local support is critical to making the data collection a success. Due to workload and deadlines, NRCS district conservationists are encouraged to participate but are not assuming the role of local coordinator for the transect. NRCS vehicles and other equipment will still be made available even if the district conservationist cannot participate. The NRCS State Office Technology staff are available to assist in any county as needed – district conservationists should coordinate State Office assistance through their area conservationist.

PSS TRAINING

There will be a PSS Training Roundtable at the IASWCD Annual Conference, January 8th at 3 pm. Topics to be included are clarified deliverables for the PSS-CRP Contribution Agreement, review of the new Contract Management Checklist, and training on assistance notes. Whitney McGrew, Coordinator is hosting the session and NRCS technical staff will be on hand to cover the assistance notes and the new checklist. SWCD supervisors and DCs are welcome to attend.

Additional training will be at each of the February area meetings for all involved to hear of these updates. A follow up PSS breakout session with the NRCS Programs staff will be held in the afternoon.

NCPP + YOU BRIEFING

The National Conservation Planning Partnership (NCPP) has been working hard to develop solutions for conservation planning staff and partners that will ensure we are able to meet the future needs of our customers. On Thursday, January 4th from 1PM-2PM (EST), NCPP will provide field staff a detailed update on the following:

- NCPP's Vision and Objective
- Roles and Responsibility
- Tools and Innovation
- Employee Engagement and Needs
- Future Direction

Conservation partnership staff can listen to the webinar here:

https://prod.nrcs.usda.gov/wps/PA_NRCSConsumption/download?cid=NRCSEPRD1372023&ext=ics

INDIANA AG NUTRIENT ALLIANCE (IANA)

Indiana agricultural, commodity and conservation organizations, academia, and local, state and federal agencies have teamed up to form the Indiana Agriculture Nutrient Alliance (IANA). The goal of the alliance is to improve soil health and nutrient management efforts. The IANA was created through an agreement between NRCS and Indiana Farm Bureau with financial contributions coming from partner organizations.

- IANA will be a standalone non-profit entity, and will bring an executive director on board to coordinate activities and leverage resources.




- IANA will promote programs and initiatives to farmers and their advisors to ensure the adoption and implementation of practices that optimize nutrient use efficiency and enhance soil health.
- The organization will:
 - support nutrient research,
 - foster collaboration among ag and conservation organizations,
 - provide information on sound nutrient management and soil health practice, and
 - allow the partner organizations to leverage their programs, funding and research.



St. Joseph County SWCD District Policy: Purchasing Meals for Activities

1. The District has the discretion to purchase meals for activities ONLY in instances where the activity/activities further the mission of the SWCD.
2. The District will adhere to statutory and prescribed procedures for the receipt and disbursement of funds.
3. District funds cannot be used for personal expenditures. So, for example, two employees cannot use District funds to pay for their personal lunches using the explanation of "discussing district business."
4. Meal costs, and what activities are eligible for the SWCD to purchase meals, will be approved in advance. Eligible activities might include the District's Annual Meeting, field days, workshops and other similar events geared to the general public. When approved, the District will clearly state in the minutes that the activity furthers the mission of the District, and state how it does so.
5. If feasible, the District may charge a registration fee to events, and/or utilize sponsors/donations (obtained without exactions or persuasions) to help defray meal costs.
6. Expenditures will be reasonable.
7. If the District provides meals at no cost to certain participants, or if different rates are charged to different classes of participants, the District will develop a written policy that includes the methodology used to determine which participants are provided meals at no cost, or are charged different rates for meals.
8. This policy will be reviewed annually during the January SWCD board meeting.


This policy was adopted on April 19th, 2016 by the St. Joseph County SWCD.



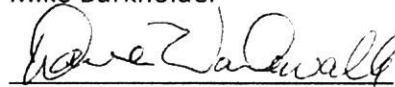
John Dooms



Mike Burkholder



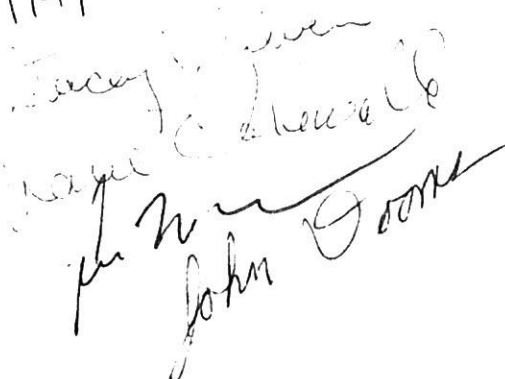
Stacey Silvers



Dave Vandewalle

It was reviewed in subsequent years on the following dates:

1-17-17


Stacey Silvers
Mike Burkholder
John Dooms

1-16-2018

CORNERSTONES OF LEADERSHIP

“Empowering Local Leadership for Indiana Soil and Water Conservation”

BIG CHANGES!

One Day Sessions! Graduate In Two Years!

There are four Cornerstones to the Indiana Leadership Institute Program. (See the other side for a brief description of each.) Leadership Cornerstones will now be offered in 1 day workshops! There will be two different workshops offered each year in Northern Indiana! That means individuals now have the opportunity to complete all four Leadership Cornerstones in two years! (The same opportunity is planned for southern Indiana.)

We now have dates for our first two in Northern Indiana:

Friday, February 23, 2018

Board Development

&

Friday, November 30, 2018

Impacting Community

BOTH WORKSHOPS IN 2018 WILL BE HELD AT THE

NOBLE COUNTY LIBRARY IN ALBION.

813 E. Main Street Albion, IN 46701

COLE ROOMS A/B

A hearty, catered meal is being planned for both events. (Catering by Nelson's.) This meal is included in your registration fee.

You can register for just one event or both events at this time. Your district staff should be able to assist you with ensuring your registration is received on time. Encourage others to attend this event with you as a group. The outcome should build or enhance your leadership skills as elected and appointed officials and staff.

Should you have any additional questions, please visit the ISDA Web site: www.in.gov/isda/2371.htm or contact Jennifer Thum at 260-341-6966.

We hope you take advantage of these new and exciting changes in the Leadership Institute Program!



INDIANA ASSOCIATION OF SOIL AND WATER CONSERVATION
DISTRICTS, INC.

failed

RESOLUTION SUBMISSION FORM (PLEASE TYPE)

Title of Resolution: SWCD Title Change

Submitted by: Knox Co. SWCD

Contact Person: Ray Chattin

Explanation of Problem(s) or Need(s): Over the past 70 years SWCDs have expanded the scope of their resource concerns far beyond the conservation of soil and water. Like the Natural Resource Conservation Service, Districts are now addressing natural resource issues as diverse as pollinator habitat, invasive species, forest health, septic systems, wildlife habitat, air quality and more. Our title does not reflect who we now are and the importance of our overall mission.

Proposed Solution: Replace the title of Soil and Water Conservation District to Natural Resource Conservation District.

Benefits Expected: Becoming Natural Resource Conservation Districts will put us in sync with our partners at NRCS and will provide an opportunity for educating the public and our elected officials, particularly state legislators, that Districts are using our delivery system, our relationship with our customer base and our credibility to achieve a much broader range of stewardship than was ever imagined even 25 years ago.

Action Requested (Please specify the action you would like the association to take if this resolution passes): Be it resolved that the Indiana Association of Soil and Water Conservation Districts, Inc. change the title, Soil and Water Conservation District, to Natural Resource Conservation District.

Supervisor Signatures (Recommend a majority of Supervisors signed): On file at IASWCD office

Date Signed: 6-21-17

passed

**INDIANA ASSOCIATION OF SOIL AND WATER CONSERVATION
DISTRICTS, INC.
RESOLUTION SUBMISSION FORM (PLEASE TYPE)**

Title of Resolution: Feral Swine Eradication

Submitted by: Natural Resources Policy Committee

Contact Person: Kenny Cain and Marc Roberts

Explanation of Problem(s) or Need(s): Feral swine cause multiple negative impacts on natural resources in the state through rooting and wallowing. Both soil and water are affected by the presence of this invasive species. They affect landowners in the form of economic loss in pasture, crop, and forestland. They also provide the potential to spread bacterial, viral, and parasitic diseases to domestic swine and cattle. It is feared that, without proper control measures, the feral swine population could drastically increase.

Proposed Solution: Indiana Association of Soil and Water Conservation Districts Inc. should partner with USDA-APHIS Wildlife Services' Feral Swine task force to keep abreast of the spread and control efforts that are in place. We should continue to provide education to districts about existing laws regarding harboring and hunting feral swine for sport and coordinate eradication efforts with neighboring districts be they local or across state lines.

Benefits Expected: Through the dissemination of educational and informational materials we could expect to see the control and decline of the feral hog herds in the state.

Action Requested: Be it resolved that the Indiana Association of Soil and Water Conservation Districts, Inc. partner with USDA-APHIS Wildlife Services and other agencies to work towards the total eradication of feral swine, and that IASWCD Regional Directors with the cooperation of local supervisors create a task force to coordinate partnership. Be it resolved that IASWCD Natural Resource Policy Committee review US statutes that regulate hunting and harboring feral swine and lobby thru NACD to fortify and or update statutes as needed.

Supervisor Signatures (Recommend a majority of Supervisors signed):

This Resolution was supported unanimously at the August 10, 2017 IASWCD Natural Resources Policy Meeting and is reflected in the minutes.

Date Signed:

passed

**INDIANA ASSOCIATION OF SOIL AND WATER CONSERVATION
DISTRICTS, INC.
RESOLUTION SUBMISSION FORM (PLEASE TYPE)**

Title of Resolution: Seeking additional annual funding avenues for SWCD's

Submitted by: Pike County SWCD

Contact Person: Norman Dillon, Pike County SWCD Chairman

Explanation of Problem(s) or Need(s):

Over the past decade, it has been documented that the Indiana Cigarette Tax fund has been declining in revenue. This is the funding pool that supports SWCD's on an annual basis. In order for SWCD's to continue to operate at the level of productivity that most are functioning on, a new source of annual funding must be found immediately.

Proposed Solution:

It is requested that the IASWCD look into annual funding for the SWCD's by assisting to establish a container tax that can be implemented on all plastic containers manufactured to hold chemical, agricultural and food grade liquid products.

Benefits Expected:

By implementing a container tax, funding is created to help fund SWCD's annually along with other water, waste water and storm water infrastructure projects across the state. This funding can then in turn help SWCD's on the local level with staffing, district operations, local conservation projects, etc to improve soil health and water quality.

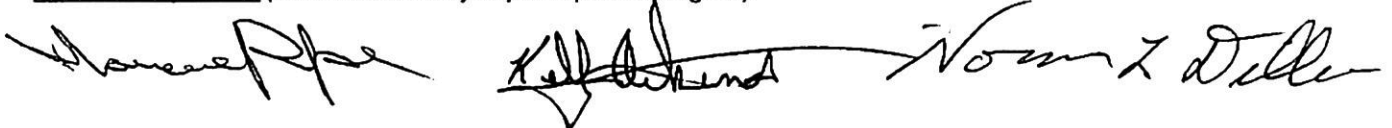
Plastic bottles of a wide variety are often found in waterways and streambanks as a result of littering and pollution. Creating a container tax can assist SWCD's with developing programs and educating the public to help promote proper recycling of plastic products and potentially curb the eye sore seen around the state in our public's drinking water before it is pulled in from the streams for processing.

Action Requested (Please specify the action you would like the association to take if this resolution passes): Be it resolved that the Indiana Association of Soil and Water Conservation Districts, Inc.

The Pike County SWCD requests that the IASWCD focus on working with legislator to create a plastic liquid container tax that would become the supporting funding pool for Indiana SWCD's by 2020. While several agencies can benefit from this tax funded pool, it should be determined that a certain percentage of revenue be dedicated to the SWCD's and split equally between all 92 Districts.

It is encouraged to see what other taxes and laws other states have in regards to a container tax or beverage container deposit laws to see if a similar tax can be mimicked in Indiana.

Supervisor Signatures (Recommend a majority of Supervisors signed):



Date Signed: 9/5/2017

passed

**INDIANA ASSOCIATION OF SOIL AND WATER CONSERVATION
DISTRICTS, INC.
RESOLUTION SUBMISSION FORM (PLEASE TYPE)**

Title of Resolution: Clean Water Indiana Funding Limitation Expansion

Submitted by: Knox County

Contact Person: Ray Chattin

Explanation of Problem(s) or Need(s) District Law Section IC 14-32-8-5 states that " the purpose of the CWI program is to provide financial assistance to:

- (1) soil and water conservation districts;
- (2) land occupiers; and
- (3) conservation groups;

To implement conservation practices to reduce nonpoint sources of water pollution through education, technical assistance, training and cost share programs.

Currently CWI funds are being spent on conservation programs that address legitimate resource concerns that have nothing to do with nonpoint source pollution. This represents a direct violation of Indiana Code.

Proposed Solution: Revise district law to allow CWI funding to address all natural resource priorities recognized by the Indiana State Soil Conservation Board.

Benefits Expected: This will provide full transparency on the part of the State Soil Conservation Board, the Indiana Division of Soil Conservation and local districts. It will also serve notice of the expanded range of natural resource concerns now being addressed by SWCDs at the local level.

Action Requested (Please specify the action you would like the association to take if this resolution passes): Be it resolved that the Indiana Association of Soil and Water Conservation Districts, Inc. sponsor legislation to revise Indiana District Law to allow Clean Water Indiana funding to be allocated in accordance with the natural resource priorities of the Indiana State Soil Conservation Board.

Supervisor Signatures (Recommend a majority of Supervisors signed): On copy at IASWCD office

Date Signed: 6-21-17