

# President's Message

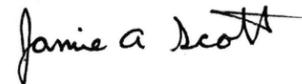
The end of one year and the beginning of another lends itself to reflecting on the past year, what has been learned and then looking forward. Strong partnerships, collaboration and outreach continue to be Indiana's strong points in the field of soil health and conservation. For that, we should all be proud!

As we began our year in 2017, the IASWCD board set priorities for efforts that would be worthwhile in supporting the Indiana Districts. As a result two task forces were developed. The Funding Task Force is working to determine the appropriate funding that should be requested for a new dedicated funding source for the Clean Water Indiana program. The Staffing Task Force is gathering information with the goal of eventually providing tools that will be able to assist Supervisors and Staff in building District capacity as well as advocating for District resources.

In March, I had the privilege of joining over 150 conservation leaders from across the nation for the National Association of Conservation District's (NACD) annual Spring Fly-In in Washington, D.C. Along with Indiana State Conservationist, Jane Hardisty, as well as Marc Roberts, Sara Delbecq, Ray McCormick and Gene Schmidt, we were able to meet with our representatives and senators to share the Story of Conservation Success in Indiana emphasizing the fact that Indiana has been proactive and is a leader in conservation and soil health.

The Conservation Cropping Systems Initiative (CCSI) continues to move forward with an updated Strategic Plan (now posted on their website). It continues to provide training, outreach, and other soil health education support for partners across Indiana including train-the-trainer events, workshops, field days, round tables and numerous presentations.

When you read this 2017 Annual Report, I think, like me, you will be proud of the conservation work being accomplished throughout the Hoosier state. Be encouraged that you are a part of this movement and great partnership. We are all A Part of This Story and together we will Discover the Next Chapter.



## 2017 IASWCD Board of Directors & Staff

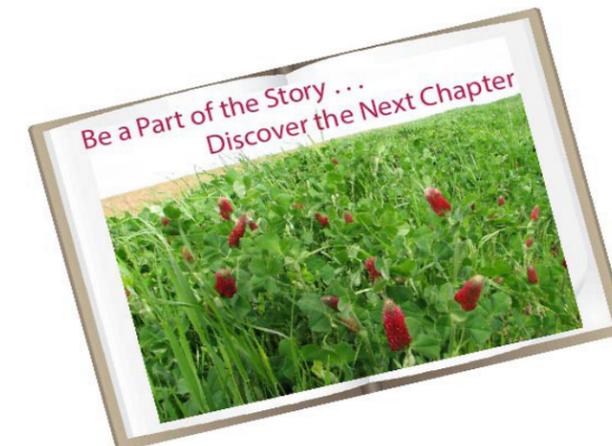
<b>Jamie Scott</b> President	<b>Roger Wenning</b> Vice President	<b>Kerry Ames</b> Secretary	<b>Jeff Baker</b> Treasurer	<b>Jeff Meinders</b> Past President
<b>Kim Peterson</b> N-NW Director	<b>Mark Lawson</b> S-NW Director	<b>Tom Crowe</b> N-NE Director	<b>Bobby Hettmansperger</b> S-NE Director	<b>Jennifer Boyle Warner</b> Executive Director
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<b>Josh Bishop</b> N-SW Director	<b>Ray Chattin</b> S-SW Director	<b>Brad Dawson</b> N-SE Director	<b>Brad Ponsler</b> S-SE Director	<b>Amy Work</b> Communications & Member Programs Manager
<b>Jame Krieger</b> N-SW Asst. Director	<b>Paula McGuire</b> S-SW Asst. Director	<b>Steve Gauck</b> N-SE Asst. Director	<b>Pat Larr</b> S-SE Asst. Director	
<b>Lisa Holscher</b> Director, Conservation Cropping Systems Initiative		<b>Ashley Brucker</b> Program Manager, Conservation Cropping Systems Initiative		

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# Indiana Association of Soil and Water Conservation Districts



## 2017 ANNUAL REPORT



The Indiana Association of Soil and Water Conservation Districts is a 501(c)(3) non-profit membership organization that supports the efforts of the soil and water conservation districts 460 supervisors and 170+ staff in 92 local offices through training, communications, contribution agreements, partnership building, and advocacy.

## IASWCD Accomplishments in 2017: *Working for our Members*

### Communications & Outreach

IASWCD used various communication tools to inform our members and the public about soil and water conservation issues. 2017 Accomplishments:

- Delivered 24 "Conservation Update" eNewsletters with timely conservation information.
- Communicated District successes and accomplishments through media and news releases.
- Continuous update of the resource-packed association website at [www.iaswcd.org](http://www.iaswcd.org).
- Promoted outstanding conservation efforts through various awards:
  - River Friendly Farmer - 49 recipients
  - Friend of Conservation Awards (3) – Ceres Solutions (Tippecanoe County); Scottsburg High School FFA (Scott County); Tim McConaha (Wayne County)
  - Conservation Farmer of the Year – Kyle Voelkel (Dubois County)
  - District Showcase Awards (4) – Boone, Pike, Randolph and Warrick County SWCDs
  - SWCD Supervisor of the Year – Announced at Awards Luncheon at Annual Conference
- Communicated news releases and other important natural resource information to a broader audience through posts on Twitter and Facebook. Increased Facebook following by 121% over past year.
- Contracted for a Coordinator for the ICP Pathway to Water Quality committee and successfully completed the 25th anniversary of PWQ at the Indiana State Fair.

- Conveyed important NRCS information to Districts through a contribution agreement for communication service.

### Policy & Advocacy

IASWCD works with legislators during session for SWCD conservation policy and funding. 2017 Accomplishments:

- Forum provided by IASWCD allows for SWCDs to present policy initiatives. One resolution was submitted and voted on by the membership in 2017. A MOU was drafted and signed by the Indiana Association of Soil and Water Conservation Districts, Purdue University Cooperative Extension, and the State Soil Conservation Board. This MOU clarifies that Purdue University's College of Agriculture does not interpret "cooperation" to require that SWCDs must include Purdue University personnel in order to engage in research or Extension teaching activities with other institutions or agencies.
- Held "Day at the Statehouse" with 10 SWCD's to learn more about the legislative process and meet with their local legislators.
- Maintained the Clean Water Indiana general fund appropriation budget at \$1 million per year (although IASWCD advocated for an increase). Updated SWCDs on a weekly basis during the 2017 legislative session.
- Four SWCD supervisors advocated for Indiana's conservation issues with all Congressional members during a visit to Washington, DC in March.
- Actively participated on the Indiana Conservation Alliance.
- Assisted with Senator Donnelly's event on the farm of Ray McCormick.
- Participated in the roundtable event with EPA Administrator Scott Pruitt.
- Participated in roundtable event with USDA Agriculture Secretary Sonny Perdue.
- Communicated with all Congressional offices on the importance and meaning of conservation technical assistance.
- Actively participated in NACD's Natural Resources Policy Committee on national issues.
- Participated in Legislator tours with conservation partners.

### Capacity Building

IASWCD works with partners to build the capacity of soil and water conservation districts to carry out locally led conservation. 2017 Accomplishments:

- Signed a three year extension of an NRCS contribution agreement for SWCDs to provide administrative and technical assistance with Farm Bill programs. This agreement is worth over \$600,000 per year to Districts and over 70 have signed contracts to do this work.
- Successfully garnered \$36,150 in sponsorships for the 2017 SWCD Annual Conference. These sponsorships help offset the cost of conference.
- Provided a Supervisor Scholarship Program, worth over \$5,300, offering assistance to supervisors to attend the 2017 SWCD Annual Conference.
- Partnered with ISDA and NRCS to provide information and training at regional meetings.
- Collaborated with NACD to implement technical assistance grant opportunities for Districts.
- Provided liability insurance coverage for Districts.

### Leadership

The IASWCD Board of Directors and its staff strive to provide consistent and quality leadership for Districts. 2017 Accomplishments:

- Continued visits with NRCS and ISDA leadership to SWCD Board meetings. Five visits were completed in 2017.
- Hosted the 74th Annual Conference of Soil and Water Conservation Districts, January 23-24, 2017 with over 350 conservationists in attendance.
- Represented SWCDs on the State Technical Committee; in the Indiana Conservation Partnership Leaders meetings, State Soil Conservation Board meetings, Indiana Family of Farmers, and other state level committees.
- Represented SWCDs at the National level on various NACD committees.
- Recommitted to an SWCD funding task force and established an SWCD staffing task force.

### Conservation Cropping Systems Initiative (CCSI)

The IASWCD helps to administer the Conservation Cropping Systems Initiative (CCSI). 2017 marked the 8th year of this program, supervised by the Oversight Committee. Highlights in 2017 include a new strategic plan, by-laws for the Oversight Committee, and a renewal of the MOU amongst the main partners including NRCS, ISDA, Purdue Extension, SSCB and IASWCD. The project's focus will be on engaging and involving farmers in the adoption and promotion of soil health management systems; recommitting CCSI to local level partnerships; effectively communicating; deciding on CCSI's role in research; and building financial stability. For an update on the CCSI Please see the separate publication or visit [www.ccsin.org](http://www.ccsin.org).



Opening Day of the 25th Year of Pathway to Water Quality

### IASWCD Fiscal Summary

