

# Indiana Association of Soil and Water Conservation Districts

## 2019 Clean Water Indiana Budget Request

### INDIANA SOIL AND WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICTS

Indiana's 92 Soil and Water Conservation Districts (SWCDs) were created in the State Code to conserve Indiana's natural resources. An example of small government at its finest, SWCDs were established during the Dust Bowl era to curb this natural resource disaster, taking federal research and information and delivering it directly to local farmers. SWCDs receive a mix of funding from federal and state grants, and staff support from county government. The main source of state funding for SWCDs, Clean Water Indiana, has been slowly decreasing over time. County financial support for SWCDs has been inconsistent, and varies across the State, and is nonexistent in some counties.

### CLEAN WATER INDIANA PROGRAM REQUEST

- ◆ We request that Legislators maintain their support of the CWI Cigarette Tax Dedicated Funds, as well as support a General Fund appropriation of \$15.2 million.
- ◆ The \$15.2 million would be allocated in the following manner:
  - A non-matched \$50,000 for each District for technical assist in the form of staffing, and up to an additional \$50,000 in staffing for each District, requiring 1:1 match (\$9.2 million),
  - An additional \$5 million for competitive CWI grants, and
  - An additional \$1 million to the ISDA Division of Soil Conservation for District Support.
- ◆ Important points to consider regarding the current status of CWI and Districts:
  - Dedicated Cigarette Tax revenue is declining and has been projected to decline 4-5% each year, and is not sustainable for Conservation.
  - While a potential increase in the Cigarette Tax in 2019 may provide a brief increase in funding, "sin taxes" are designed to curb behavior and over the long term the source of funding will continue to decline.
  - With a staff of over 200 employees statewide, Districts only receive direct State funding of \$10,000 each; other State funding comes from competitive grants.
    - ◇ Statewide, District employment is similar to a small State Agency.
    - ◇ For comparison, in the last budget cycle, IDEM and IDNR each received well over \$100 million in Dedicated and General Funds. ISDA received \$8.3 million, and Division of Soil Conservation only received \$5.2 million. These numbers do not include Federal Grant funding.
  - The \$15.2 million CWI request is only 0.09% of the total General Fund from the last budget cycle.
  - While money for implementing practices on the ground is important, and progress has been made improving soil health and water quality, it is widely known in the conservation community that adequate Technical Assistance will be needed to achieve further gains.

### CLEAN WATER INDIANA COMPETITIVE GRANT PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS

- ◆ **2019:** 22 projects granted totaling \$1,180,475; however, over \$2,000,885 requested
- ◆ **2018:** 15 projects granted totaling \$935,035; however, over \$1,999,050 requested
- ◆ **2017:** 16 projects granted totaling \$938,641; however over \$2,529,142 requested

#### Indiana's Soil and Water Conservation Districts

- ▶ ONE IN ALL 92 COUNTIES
- ▶ 460 SUPERVISORS
- ▶ OVER 200 STAFF
- ▶ \$87.6 MILLION FEDERAL DOLLARS LEVERAGED 2017
- ▶ \$3.14 MILLION STATE DOLLARS LEVERAGED 2017
- ▶ \$6.72 MILLION LOCAL DOLLARS LEVERAGED 2017



INDIANA ASSOCIATION OF  
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### For More Info

#### Indiana Association of Soil and Water Conservation Districts

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