

Indiana Association of Soil and Water Conservation Districts

2019 Legislative Talking Points

TELL YOUR DISTRICT STORY!

- ◆ If you don't know your legislator or have a new one, introduce your District and explain what you do.
- ◆ Discuss the top natural resource concerns for your region or county, and how your District is addressing those concerns.
- ◆ Talk about a successful project you've undertaken and how it has had a positive impact, including CWI, 319, LARE or other grant projects.
- ◆ Don't be afraid to discuss how there is still work to be done.
- ◆ If you have an example, talk about how you've had to deal with financial constraints on your budget and how that impacted the District.

CLEAN WATER INDIANA PROGRAM REQUEST

- ◆ Please request that Legislators maintain their support of the Cigarette Tax Dedicated Funds, plus 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 stress with Legislators regarding current CWI:
 - Dedicated Cigarette Tax revenue is declining and has been projected to decline 4-5% each year, and is not sustainable for Conservation.
 - While an increase in the Cigarette Tax in 2019 may provide a brief increase in funding, "sin taxes" are designed to curb behavior and long term the source of funding will continue to decline.
 - With a staff of over 200 employees state wide, 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 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 to put practices on the ground is important, and progress has been made, it is widely known in the conservation community that adequate Technical Assistance will be needed to achieve further gains.

CLEAN WATER INDIANA PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS

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

FOLLOW UP!

- ◆ Provide your contact information, and provide a business card if you have one
- ◆ Offer to send them ICP county level conservation investment: www.in.gov/isda/icpreports
- ◆ Offer to send them Indiana Conservation achievements: www.in.gov/isda/2991.htm
- ◆ **MOST IMPORTANTLY:** Invite them to a District Event, like your Annual Meeting or Field Day!

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



For More Info

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