2020 ANNUAL REPORT
This year has been one for the record books, but despite the challenges, our work and conservation of Indiana’s natural resources must continue. In the first quarter of the year, the Indiana Legislature convened for a short session. IASWCD continued to work hard to get districts in front of their legislators, and we provided two trainings to prepare our supervisors and staff for these legislative visits.

We also worked on the invasive species study committee resolution, working to get the invasive species topic in front of the Rural Caucus. With the onset of the pandemic, we were unsuccessful getting a study topic assigned, but will continue to raise awareness about invasives with our legislators.

This next session will be a budget session, and with looming budget cuts, we will need to protect CWI funding, and need Districts to reach out to their legislators and advocate for preserving our conservation funding. The IASWCD adapted with the need for social distancing, moving board meetings to a virtual format, and providing full online training content to member districts for the first time. In late Summer, IASWCD, along with the Indiana State Department of Agriculture, hosted three “Vir-Tuesday” online trainings for District Staff and Supervisors throughout the state with over 100 in attendance. IASWCD also held a four part October webinar series of technical topics for District staff and ICP partners, followed up by two legislative training webinars in December for District staff and supervisors. The silver lining of this pandemic may be that we have learned new ways to bring content to our membership that will outlast these trying times. This annual report will be posted on the IASWCD after the 2021 annual conference. Please contact the association with any questions.
IASWCD used various communication tools to inform members and the public about soil and water conservation issues. 2020 Accomplishments:

- Delivered 26 “Conservation INsight” eNewsletters with timely conservation information.
- Communicated District successes and accomplishments through media and news releases.
- Communicated news releases and other important natural resource information to a broader audience through Twitter and Facebook.
- Conveyed important NRCS information to Districts through a contribution agreement for communication services.
- Promoted District staff vacancies in the eNewsletters, as well as on the website.
- Promoted outstanding conservation efforts through various Conservation Awards.
- Continuous update of the resource-packed association web site at www.iaswcd.org.
- Provided registration and administrative support for all ICP partner training events in 2020, and assisted with hosting virtual events during social distancing requirements.
- Along with ICP partners, secured an Indiana American Water grant to expand the Pathway to Water Quality exhibit into the recently vacated and adjacent Boy Scout area at the State Fairgrounds.
CONSERVATION AWARDS

Conservation Farmer of the Year
Chalfant Family Farms
Randolph County

Friend of Conservation
Lake Maxinkuckee Environmental Fund
Marshall County
Cassie Hauswald and Kathleen Hagan
Washington County

District Showcase
Jennings County SWCD
Delaware County SWCD
Dubois/Martin/Daviess SWCD

River Friendly Farmer
31 recipients listed at iaswcd.org

Supervisor of the Year
announced at 2021 Annual Conference of Indiana SWCDs

President's Award
announced at 2021 Annual Conference of Indiana SWCDs
IASWCD works with legislators during session for SWCD conservation policy and funding. 2020 Accomplishments:

Maintained the Clean Water Indiana general fund appropriation budget, and elevated the work of districts through new professionally developed one-page publications.

* Updated SWCDs on a weekly basis during the 2020 legislative session.

* Participated on a working group to promote a Senate bill attempting to create a summer study committee on invasive species.

* IASWCD sponsored the Rural Caucus at the Statehouse, and the Executive Director assisted in organizing an invasive species talk for the caucus.

* Assisted Districts with Statehouse visits through our contract lobbyist, meeting one-on-one with their legislators.

* Participated in multiple conservation roundtable meetings with various state legislators to advocate for new sources of conservation funding.

Communicated with all Congressional offices on the importance and meaning of conservation technical assistance.

* IASWCD Past President and Legislative Chair represented Districts on a round table discussion with the USDA Secretary Perdue and Congresswoman Jackie Walorski.

Provided two legislative training events for Districts, including a panel of experienced lobbyists and a visit to the statehouse during session.

* Advocated for districts and Clean Water Indiana dedicated funding with the Office of Management and Budget leadership staff in two separate meetings.

* Actively participated as a steering committee member on the Indiana Conservation Alliance.
IASWCD works with partners to build the capacity of soil and water conservation districts to carry out locally led conservation.

2020 Accomplishments:

Continued the NRCS Program Support agreement for NRCS priority designated Districts to provide administrative and technical assistance with Farm Bill programs.

* Successfully garnered $13,100 in sponsorships for the 2020 SWCD Annual Conference. These sponsorships help offset the cost of conference.

* Provided a Supervisor Scholarship Program offering assistance to supervisors to attend the 2020 SWCD Annual Conference.

Partnered with ISDA to provide information and training at three summer virtual events geared toward both supervisors and staff.

* Held October weekly webinar series to bring more technical training to district staff.

IASWCD staff provided updates to Indiana District Employees Association (IDEA) at region director meetings.

* Continued to collaborate with NACD, NRCS and ISDA, to implement NACD technical assistance grant opportunities for Districts.
Continued collaboration with The Nature Conservancy to hold cross-state border meeting with Indiana and Illinois Districts in the Wabash River basin to determine barriers to soil health adoption.

* Provided liability insurance coverage for Districts that provides a savings of over $1,000 to each individual district.

With cash matching support from several districts, IASWCD secured a 5-year NRCS Contribution Agreement to develop a statewide Urban Soil Health Program, with support to hire 5 new staff. A three year CWI matching grant for the agreement was also secured. The total funding for the program over 5 years, including overall match, is approximately $2 million. The program will strive to build local capacity for districts by developing urban soil health working groups through technical assistance, education and outreach support, as well as some financial support.
IASWCD works with partners to build the capacity of soil and water conservation districts to carry out locally led conservation.

2020 Accomplishments:

- Worked with NRCS and other ICP partners on new MOA and vehicle sharing agreement language, and collected and aggregated comments from SWCDs and provided to NRCS.


- Represented SWCDs at the National level on various NACD committees, at the NACD Annual Meeting, Summer Virtual Meeting, and Executive Director’s Virtual Meeting Series.

- Represented SWCDs on the State Technical Committee, the Indiana Conservation Partnership Leaders meetings; State Soil Conservation Board meetings, Indiana Agriculture Nutrient Alliance (IANA), Indiana Family of Farmers, and other state level committees.

- Represented SWCDs on the Indiana Woodland Steward Institute.
The IASWCD helps to administer the Conservation Cropping Systems Initiative (CCSI). 2020 marked the 11th year of this program, overseen by the Oversight Committee. Highlights in 2020 include securing 5 years of funding for the Director and Agronomist through an NRCS Contribution Agreement, and securing support from Purdue University to split costs for the Agronomist position. Secured support from an NACD grant to extend funding for the CCSI Program Managers one year beyond the current funding agreement. The CCSI program was also quick to adapt to COVID pandemic requirements, bringing premium virtual training to districts and partners, as well as assisting districts with virtual meetings using their online platform.
The Indiana Association of Soil and Water Conservation Districts (IASWCD) operates at a state level, on behalf of the 92 Indiana Districts, to promote and enhance conservation. This is accomplished through legislative advocacy, public outreach, and supporting our member SWCDs in their local work.

ABOUT IASWCD

BOARD & STAFF

Joe Schmees, Executive Director

Amy Work, Communications & Member Programs Manager

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<tr>
<th>Roger Wenning</th>
<th>Bobby Hettmansperger</th>
<th>Jeff Baker</th>
<th>Marc Roberts</th>
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<td>President</td>
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<td>Mark Lawson</td>
<td>Stan Moore</td>
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