

President's Message

This year has been another one of challenge and adaptation, but our work and conservation of Indiana's natural resources must continue. In the first quarter of the year, the Indiana Legislature convened for a budget session. IASWCD met with partners and legislators, telling our conservation story and advocating for continued state CWI funding. With lingering impacts of the pandemic, the governor's budget reduced spending by 15%, impacting both dedicated and general funding for CWI. We were successful in getting the general fund line item restored, but the biennium budget did pass with the 15% reduction in dedicated Cigarette Tax funding to CWI. Fast forward to an improved economic picture, and legislators are considering how to address a state surplus in this year's short session. It is now as important as ever to tell our elected officials how we leverage the state resources we receive. IASWCD continued to make effective use of virtual technologies this year, providing legislative update and training webinars and a spring Lunch n' Learn weekly webinar series. IASWCD also partnered with the Indiana State Department of Agriculture (ISDA) to host virtual region meetings with districts and partners, as well as reviving our "Vir-Tuesday" online trainings for District Staff and Supervisors monthly through the summer. IASWCD has recognized the need for more targeted training to unique supervisor needs, and has begun a joint effort with ISDA's Division of Soil Conservation to create a hybrid, on-demand training program for supervisors. We are currently surveying needs and preferences from supervisors, so please look for those surveys and complete them so we can provide the most efficient material to you.

Bobby Hettmansperger
IASWCD Board President

This annual report will be posted on the IASWCD website (iaswcd.org) after the 2022 annual conference. Please contact the association with any questions.

2021 IASWCD Annual Report



2021 IASWCD Board of Directors & Staff

Bobby Hettmansperger President	Jeff Baker Vice President	Marc Roberts Secretary	Sarah Delbecq Treasurer	Roger Wenning Past President
Mark Kingma N-NW Director	Sherry Whetstone S-NW Director	Stan Moore N-NE Director	Troy Hattery S-NE Director	Joe Schmees Executive Director
Kim Peterson N-NW Asst. Director	Mark Lawson S-NW Asst. Director	Jamie Scott N-NE Asst. Director	Andy Ambriole S-NE Asst. Director	
Kerry Ames N-SW Director	Brad Smith S-SW Director	Cathy Becker N-SE Director	Vacant S-SE Director	Amy Work Communications & Member Programs Manager
Vacant N-SW Asst. Director	Vacant S-SW Asst. Director	Jeff Meinders N-SE Asst. Director	Vacant S-SE Asst. Director	
Lisa Holscher Director, CCSI		Sheila Shroeder Northern Program Manager, CCSI		Jessica Hoehn Southern Program Manager, CCSI
Elli Blaine Director, Urban Ag Soil Health Program	Marian Rodriguez-Soto NW Regional Soil Health Specialist	Jamie Perry NE Regional Soil Health Specialist	Casey Kennett SE Regional Soil Health Specialist	



Indiana Association of Soil and Water Conservation Districts

225 S. East St., Suite 142
Indianapolis, IN 46202
www.iaswcd.org

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 more than 200 staff in 92 local offices through training, communications, contribution agreements, partnership building, and advocacy.

IASWCD Accomplishments in 2021 - Working for our Members

Communications & Outreach

IASWCD used various communication tools to inform our members and the public about soil and water conservation issues. 2021 Accomplishments:

- Delivered 24 “Conservation Insight” eNewsletters with timely conservation information.
- Communicated District successes and accomplishments through media and news releases.
- Continued updates of the resource-packed association website at www.iaswcd.org.
- Promoted District and partner job vacancies in the eNewsletters and on the website
- Promoted outstanding conservation efforts through various awards:
 - River Friendly Farmer - 31 recipients
 - Friend of Conservation Award - Duane Hopf (Dubois County)
 - Conservation Farmer of the Year – Jim Moseley (Tippecanoe County)
 - District Showcase Awards – Decatur, Clay and Blackford 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 over 190 Facebook posts.
- Provided registration and administrative support for all ICP training events in 2021, including virtual events.
- Along with ICP partners, completed 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.

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

Policy & Advocacy

IASWCD works with legislators during session for SWCD conservation policy and funding. 2021 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 2021 legislative session.
- Participated on a working groups to discuss impacts of a Carbon Market bill and the Wetlands deregulation bill.
- Executive Director was appointed by the Governor to the Wetlands Taskforce as outlined in SEA 389.
- Sponsored the Rural Caucus, which moved to a newsletter resource for legislators.
- Actively participated as a steering committee member on the Indiana Conservation Alliance.
- 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, and Executive Director represented Districts on a field tour with Congresswoman Jackie Walorski.
- Provided two virtual legislative training events for Districts, as well as virtual mid-session and end of session updates.
- Advocated for districts and Clean Water Indiana dedicated funding with the Office of Management and Budget leadership staff in two separate meetings.

Capacity Building

IASWCD works with partners to build the capacity of soil and water conservation districts to carry out locally led conservation. 2021 Accomplishments:

- Continued the NRCS Program Support agreement for NRCS priority designated Districts to provide administrative and technical assistance with Farm Bill programs.
- Successfully garnered \$15,600 in sponsorships for the 2021 Virtual SWCD Annual Conference. These sponsorships help offset the cost of conference.
- Provided a discount for those districts that sent 5 individuals to the virtual 2021 SWCD Annual Conference.
- Partnered with ISDA to provide information and training at multiple virtual events geared toward both supervisors and staff.
- Held April weekly webinar series to bring more technical training to district staff.
- IASWCD staff provided updates to Indiana District Employees Association (IDEA) at board 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 began a 5-year NRCS Contribution Agreement to develop a statewide Urban Soil Health Program, hiring 4 new staff. A three year CWI matching grant for the agreement was also secured. 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.

Leadership

The IASWCD Board of Directors and its staff strive to provide consistent and quality leadership for Districts. 2021 Accomplishments:

- Hosted the 78th Annual Conference of Soil and Water Conservation Districts, January 11-13, 2021. Due to the pandemic, transitioned the meeting to a virtual format for the first time. Over 400 conservationists were in attendance.

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

Conservation Cropping Systems Initiative (CCSI)

The IASWCD helps to administer the Conservation Cropping Systems Initiative (CCSI). 2021 marked the 12th year of this program, overseen by the Oversight Committee. Highlights in 2021 include being an industry leader in holding virtual hybrid meetings and field days, as well as assisting districts and other partners hold virtual events. CCSI worked to secure additional private funding to assist with budget needs not covered by current agreements, including a National Wildlife Federation grant.

IASWCD Fiscal Summary

