

Conservation Cropping Systems Initiative (CCSI)
June Regional Teleconference Notes
June 28 (SE, SW) and June 30 (NE, NW) 2021

Participants

Heather Bacher, Women4theLand (SW)
Brad Smith, Pike County SWCD & TNC (SW)
Melissa Ruschau, Dubois County SWCD (SW)
Judi Brown, Dubois County SWCD (SW)
Jan Came, Vigo County SWCD (SW)
Don Donovan, Parke and Vermillion NRCS District Conservationist (SW)
Deb Barnett Parke County SWCD (SW)
Jessica Hoehn, CCSI Southern Program Manager (all)
Lisa Holscher, CCSI Director (all)
Joe Rorick, CCSI (SE, SW, NW)
Sheila Schroeder, CCSI Northern Program Manager (all)
Walt Sell, Purdue Extension Asst. Program Leader for Soil Health (all)
Jon Charlesworth, Benton & Warren County Purdue Extension (NW)
Nellie Peffley, Dekalb County SWCD (NE)
Stacy White, Randolph County SWCD (NE)
Dave Lefforge, ISDA (NE)
Kristi Todd, IDEM (NE)
Sara Day, Wells County NRCS (NE)
Kerry Nielson, NRCS DC Pulaski County (NW)
Curt Emmanuel, Boone County Purdue Extension (NW)
Marc Roberts, Montgomery County SWCD & IASWCD (NW)
Bri Ciara, Newton County SWCD (NW)

• Partner Updates

- **IASWCD**
 - **VirTuesdays** - IASWCD and ISDA are again hosting VirTuesdays – a virtual training series for Indiana SWCD Staff and Supervisors. These will be held at 7 pm on Tuesdays, July 20, August 24, September 21, and October 19. Registration is required to receive the Zoom link to join the session. These will be recorded. [For session topics and to register, visit the IASWCD website.](#)
 - **District Showcase Award** - nominations will open soon and remain open for the month of July. [Watch for details on the IASWCD website coming soon.](#)
 - **Pathway to Water Quality** - reminder that PWQ will be open at the Indiana State Fair this year and spots are still available to volunteer. [Volunteer information, including the link to sign up, is available on the icp website.](#)

- **ISDA**
 - Clean Water Indiana 2022 competitive grant guidance has been approved. Applications are due September 9. Interested SWCDs or groups can reach out to a District Support Specialist for more information, or visit: <https://www.in.gov/isda/divisions/soil-conservation/district-support/>
 - Trevor Laureys is the new director of the Soil Health Division. Jennifer Thum is the new deputy director. Katie Secrest is covering the NE DSS position. Splitting team leader from DSS position. Annette Manusevich has left ISDA.
- **NRCS**
 - Getting back into in-person training in the field (nothing inside). Nothing official when offices going to open back to public. Maybe another month or so
 - Soil Health Trailer is busy for the next 6 weeks or so; training will be held on July 12-16 for SE, NE and NW; this is hands-on training to learn how to use the trailer. Trailer will be at the State Fair next to PWQ and at Beck days and at Carroll County field day July 29. Urban run-off kit has been added to the simulator. 2 other trailers ordered; timing for delivery is completely unknown due to manufacturing issues.
 - New employees not from rural background—had farm equipment 101 session at Morgan Brothers. Video-taped most of that for future use. Conservation Agriculture Mentoring Program (CAMP) – hoping to open this up to non-NRCS staff as well.
- **Purdue**
 - County offices are gearing up for fair season
 - Purdue Ag Center field days are in the planning stages; most are in August
 - COVID restrictions are changing/easing up both on and off campus
 - Farm Management Tour will take place July 8 and 9 in SW Indiana. Showcase cutting edge Indiana farms.
 - Dan Quinn is the new Corn Specialist replacing Bob Nielson
 - Telephone interviews are complete for Organic Specialist; in-person interviews soon and hopefully position filled by this fall.
 - Carbon credit webinar was held recently. Recording will be available soon.
- **Women 4 the Land**
 - To participate in the Women4theLand survey: <https://forms.gle/eFhpo99TeiaFPZ93A>
 - Register for the “District Success with Women4theLand” Lunch ‘n Learn Zoom Webinar for July 22 at noon: <https://forms.gle/My8xvKvXQvw4w5cSA>. This session will highlight three Indiana Districts who have partnered with the W4L outreach program and successfully held events that have empowered female landowners in their land management decisions towards more sustainable conservation practices.
- **IDEM**
 - Received 28 notices of intent for the FY22 Section 319 grant; 10 of those were in the new innovation category with smaller awards
 - New WATERS tool has been released to the public. This is an interactive map tool where users can look up WMPs and TMDL reports. Can be found here: <https://www.in.gov/idem/nps/resources/total-maximum-daily-load-reports/>

- Working on a Story Map for the TMDL program. This will explain how TMDL and NPS programs work together and will highlight success stories. Not public yet but watch for this in the near future.
- Funding matrix on the IDEM website has been updated; good resource for groups to explore potential funding opportunities. Can be found here: <https://www.in.gov/idem/nps/funding/non-idem-funding/funding-matrix/>
- **Other Partner Updates & Events**
 - SH Division was filming in Indiana to use to supplement Soil Health & Sustainability for Midwestern Field Staff training. Filmed at Dan and Julie Perkins farm in Jasper County, Rick Clark's farm and Morgan Brothers. Will also be filming in Maryland and South Dakota.
 - Sustainable Ag day was held in Montgomery County for youth last month—10-12 participants. September 2 will be ACRE Crops field day. Benton County fair has cover crop plots.
 - First in person session of the Advanced Soil health training with TNC and John Pike is next month. A soil health transition pilot is being rolled out; looking for 20 producers to cost share for soil sampling etc to transition to soil health systems; roughly SW Indiana; not a hard boundary.
 - Dubois County SWCD will hold a Women4theLand learning circle in September.
 - Vigo County is launching PHISH - People Helping Improve Soil Health; teaming up with ISU community gardens
 - Newton County SWCD is organizing events to promote conservation at the county fair; filed an NOI for 319 implementation grant along with Jasper County for Lower Kankakee Watershed
 - Sina Parks has left Montgomery County SWCD for a position with Pheasants Forever; Program Coordinator Kristen Laske was promoted to that position and they are now searching for a new program coordinator
 - SW reports significant issues with slugs; considering a workshop

- **Expiring CCSI Funds**

- Purdue Ag Centers
 - Several extensive projects in the works with PACs. Directors of PACs have worked to prioritize projects. Great way to strengthen partnerships.
- PARP/Office of State Chemist
 - Bucket of funding for PARP events with caveat that a local partner must be able to do a soil health demo at the event
- Request for CCSI Funding
 - Porter County has received funding for Cover Crop Field Guides and placed them at grain elevators and seed dealerships. Have gone through 100 and will be requesting more.
 - Deadline for applications will likely be extended as there are still funds available.
 - Must target soil health on Indiana cropland.
 - Regular event support doesn't need an application, just reach out to Jessica or Sheila.

- **Virtual Farm Visits**

- Virtual Farm Visits will begin again; one per month; July 13 is the next one, with John Pike, follow up to the March 16 virtual visit that focused on bio-tilling

- **Events Updates**

- SWCS Hoosier Chapter summer meeting July 8 has been postponed; date not yet determined
- July 15 – Conservation Cookout, Vanderburg County
- July 13 & 15 [Farming for the Future Carbon Market Webinar Series](#)
- July 27 – Cover Crop Field Day, Warrick County
- July 28 – DeKalb County Agronomy Field Day
- July 29 – Conservation Tillage and Technology event Carroll County, live strip till demo; planter set up for no till and planting green
- July 29 – Purdue Extension Small Farm Field Day, 9-12 or 1-4
- July 29 – FFA student event at Clark Farms, 50 students from 41 states
- August 18 – Annual Roger Wenning Field Day
- August 24 – Parke/Vermillion Soil Health Alliance Field Day, will also offer virtual option
- September 8 – Annual Roemke Farms Field Day