



General Report February 2018

Highlights

- Non-Operating Landowner (NOLO) Soil Health Outreach Strategy
 - Strategy and package outlined, first cost estimate
 - Partners: CCSI, TNC, W4tL, USDA-NRCS, ISDA, Extension
 - Two-pronged approach:
 - Printed and electronic resources for use by Local Level Partnerships in their outreach efforts
 - Building on a prior USDA-NRCS I-state program. Target 2-3 watershed for direct outreach to Non-operating landowners.
- Events in general
 - 321 attendees
 - 13 – Field level staff from at least 15 counties involved in development of the local events
- Technical Advisory Committee and Annual Meeting – 2/26 (see attached recommendations and annual meeting notes)

G1. Farmer Engagement and Involvement

1. Innovative and Visionary Farmers

- Technical Advisory Committee Meeting (02/26) – See Annual Meeting Notes for Recommendations
- Iowa Soybean Alliance Farmer Research Conference (2/5-2/8) – listening sessions (PM, A)
- Newton County Dicamba and Soil Health Workshop (2/28) – farmer panel on Cover Cropping Woes / listening session (A)

2. Conservative and Pragmatic Farmers

- From Technical Advisory Committee – Consider developing small “support groups”.
 - Focus on *listening* to build trust.
 - Identify and celebrate victories; Capitalize on what they do well.
 - Message, Messaging, and Messenger will all be important
- TNC-Coke cover crop grant. Cameron Mills providing technical support for growers receiving cover crop cost share.
- Use of INFA meetings as listening sessions for issues, concerns, etc (D, PM, A)
- United Soybean Board – High-oleic Soybean Sustainability Program – review 2017, opportunities for 2018 enrollment with partners (D, PM)

3. Farmer Influencers

- From Technical Advisory Committee: Non-operating landowners (NOLOs), Youth (high school and 18-28 year-olds), and Ag Retailers/Lenders should be priorities.
- Ag Retailer Outreach with Indiana Ag Nutrient Alliance (IANA)
 - 2018 Expansion of Retailer Roundtables outlined
 - Adaptation of CCSI-SARE Soil Health Curricula to Ag Retailer Audience drafted.
- Non-Operating Landowner (NOLO) Soil Health Outreach Strategy

- Strategy and package outlined, first cost estimate
- Partners: CCSI, TNC, W4tL, USDA-NRCS, ISDA, Extension
- Two-pronged approach:
 1. Printed and electronic resources for use by Local Level Partnerships in their outreach efforts
 2. Building on a prior USDA-NRCS I-state program. Target 2-3 watershed for direct outreach to Non-operating landowners.

Upcoming / Work in Progress

- Draft EPA Environmental Education grant to support outreach to NOLOs
- SARE Professional Development Program grant proposal with IANA

G2. Local Level Partnership Support

1. Facilitate and Support Local Level Partnership’s efforts to deliver soil health messaging

- Local Visits (Target of 2-3 visits / month reached)
 - i. 2/20 – Delaware SWCD new and existing employees visit (PM)
 - ii. 2/28 – Warren and Benton SWCD and Extension visit (PM)
 - iii. 2/28 – Tippecanoe SWCD Annual Meeting “meet and greet” (A)
- Local Workshops
 - i. 2/1 – INFA, Camden (PM), 12 att
 - ii. 2/1 – INFA, Tipton (PM), 30 att
 - iii. 2/13 – INFA, Jasper (D), 15 est.
 - iv. 2/13 – INFA, Chrisney (D), 20 est.
 - v. 2/15 – Starke/St. Joseph/Marshall County Clean Water Indiana Soil Health Event (PM), 80 att
 1. Assist with speakers (Barry Fisher, Shalamar Armstron)
 2. Assist with day of event logistics/support/guidance to county organizers
 - vi. 2/20 – INFA, Muncie (PM), 18 att
 - vii. 2/20 – INFA, Portland (PM), 10 att
 - viii. 2/21 – INFA, Urbana (A), 19 att
 - ix. 2/21 – INFA, Bluffton (A), 10 att
 - x. 2/22 – INFA, Rochester (PM), 15 att
 - xi. 2/22 – INFA, Warsaw (PM), 11 att
 - xii. 2/23 – INFA, Frankfort (A), 15 att
 - xiii. 2/28 – Newton County Dicamba/Soil Health Workshop (A), 60 att
 1. Soil Health Presentation (A)
 - xiv. 2/28 – Benton Co / Big Pine Watershed Soil Health Event Planning Meeting (PM)

2. Consistent Soil Health Messaging

- April Core Cover Crops and Core Soil Health Systems
 - i. Trainings locations set, speakers being finalized
 - ii. 2/20 Email campaign to NRCS, SWCD staff, SWCD Supervisors, ISDA staff, ANR Extension Educators, IDEM watershed managers. Leadership emails included NRCS state office, IASWCD board members, ISDA and IDEM division heads

3. Professional Development Opportunities

- 2/2 – Hoosier Chapter SWCS Event Planning meeting (PM)

- 2/19 - Training/Research Teleconference (Fisher, Kladviko, McClain, Rorick, Sell, Holscher)
 - i. Skills assessments questions (deployed 2013/14 by NRCS) to be reviewed and updated by Fisher, Zezula, Rorick, McClain. Question phrasing to be reviewed / adjusted by Sell. Upload/platform for deployment managed by CCSI.
 - ii. Advanced Soil Health Systems training to be moved to week of July 23rd. Rafiq Islam, OSU to provide training on new soil health tool.

4. Messaging to/from Local Level Partnerships

- Monthly Webex topics and potential speakers outlined based upon interagency soil health communications plan.
- CCSI Soil Health Newsletter draft template complete (monthly, focusing on successes)

G3. General CCSI Outreach / Communication

1. Marketing Campaign / Strategies

- 2/1 – Soil Health Communications Plan draft to interagency team, roles to be filled in for each deliverable
- 2/1 NOLO Outreach strategy developed by interagency team (See Goal 1.3, above)

2. Soil Health Messaging

- 2/20 Writing Meeting for Fact Sheets and Other Publications
 - i. CCSI (A), NRCS, and Extension collaborating
 - ii. First focus will be on soil health crib notes from either landowner or farmers perspective. Target May / June completion
- Soil Health Events Newsletters
 - i. 2/7 – 1073 recipients, 23.9% open rate (20% industry average), 6% click rate (2.3% industry average)
 - ii. 2/21 – 1073 recipients, 23.1% open rate, 8.7% click rate

G4. Research

1. Current Obligations

- 2/22 – Field sampling meeting. Decision on parameters for each site (A, Kladviko)

2. Action Plan

3. Vetting System

4. Other

- Vole research email through CCSI list; Set up on-line form for researchers use (D)

G5. Funding

1. Budget Development – 2018-19 Budget in place, expenditures left for CTA agreement to be reviewed by Oversight Committee

2. Capital Structure Plan

3. Funding Model –

- 2018-19 Funding Models in place
- 2/9 – Meeting w/ IANA, Indiana Poultry, Director to discuss strategy for outreach to integrators, potential funding mechanisms.
- Draft EPA Environmental Education grant to support outreach to NOLOs
- SARE Professional Development Program grant proposal with IANA

General Organization

- Professional Development
 - 2/5-2/8 – Iowa Soybean Alliance Farmer Research Conference (A, PM). Attendance funded by ICMC and ISA
 - CCA 4R NMS Specialty Exam (A)
- 2/9 – IASWCD Board Meeting (D)
- 2/14 – Agronomy Extension Group Meeting (A)