



Next Level Conservation  
for Indiana's Working Lands

Clean Water Indiana is funded within the State Biennium Budget, indicative of the Indiana Legislature's dedication to the sustained productivity of our working lands and the general well-being of Hoosiers. We express our gratitude for the Legislature's unwavering support.

In Indiana we embrace our agricultural heritage. The working lands of Indiana, our fields and forests, comprise over three fourths of the land area of our state and represent a large component of our overall economy.

We are so fortunate to have dedicated folks across the state that are persistent in their efforts to improve the quality of our water resources, promote soil health, enhance habitats, protect the health of forests, and ensure that our precious resources remain productive for generations to come.

This is a brief summary of the organizations that are actively addressing Indiana's natural resource concerns and their impactful contributions.



- 4 Soil and Water Conservation Districts (SWCDs)
- 5 Indiana Association of Soil and Water Conservation Districts (IASWCD)
- 6 Conservation Cropping Systems Initiative (CCSI)
- 7 State of Indiana Cooperative Invasives Management (SICIM) and Cooperative Invasive Species Management Areas (CISMAs)
- 8 Urban Soil Health Program (USH)
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*Resource Concerns in Indiana:*

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- Clean Water Indiana (IC 14-32-8) is **a funding program that provides financial assistance to landowners and conservation groups throughout Indiana.**
- CWI provides local matching funds as well as grants for sediment and nutrient reduction projects through Indiana's SWCDs
- CWI is administered by the Division of Soil Conservation at the Indiana State Department of Agriculture (ISDA) with the guidance of the State Soil Conservation Board (SSCB) (IC-14-32-2)
- Indiana Conservation Partnership (ICP) is **the delivery infrastructure for conservation on working lands in Indiana**

# Soil and Water Conservation Districts (SWCDs)

- **92 SWCDs (one per county)** are a governmental subdivision of the state and are the **foundational component of the ICP**.
- SWCDs engage partners and community members to **identify and address local resource concerns** through education, technical assistance and financial incentives.
- **CWI provides \$20,000 per year to SWCDs** who provide match through county or other funding (IC 14-32-8-8).
- **SWCDs can apply for additional CWI funds** through an annual competitive grant process.
- Districts in each county are served by a **5-member Board of Supervisors** who are elected and appointed government officials.



INDIANA ASSOCIATION OF

## soil and water conservation

DISTRICTS

Empowering Each District to Lead Local Efforts  
to Conserve Natural Resources

- **Advocates** for and on behalf of all 92 SWCDs at local, state and federal levels of government.
- **Manages** multiple grant funded outreach programs and contribution agreements including CCSI, USH and Resilient Indiana, all of which provide education and technical support resources for districts.
- Serves as a **communications hub**, receiving and disseminating information and providing training, action templates and regular news updates.
- **Provides** liability insurance coverage for all districts.

# 460

Elected and Appointed  
Supervisors  
Representing 92  
Counties

# \$24.5

Federal and Local  
Dollars Leveraged  
for Every State Dollar  
Invested

# \$99.7M

Total Dollars Leveraged  
for Conservation on  
the Ground

**Contact:**

Liz Rice, Executive Director  
elizabeth-rice@iaswcd.org  
720-443-2123

[IASWCD.org](https://www.iaswcd.org)





# Conservation Cropping Systems Initiative

Improving Soil Health on Indiana Cropland

- CCSI is a program of the Indiana Conservation Partnership whose mission is to **improve soil health on Indiana's crop land**.
- CCSI partners with SWCDs to deliver **consistent, farmer-proven, science-based education and technical assistance** to farmers, their trusted advisors and other industry influencers on soil health farming practices.
- CCSI provides **resources, planning assistance and support** to districts for their outreach initiatives.

**55k**

Individuals received soil health message through field days and workshops

**1k**

Conservation staff have attended at least one soil health training

**40k**

Soil Health Podcast Downloads

**Contact:**

Lisa Holscher, Director  
lisa.holscher@in.nacdnet.net  
812-890-3631

**CCSIN.org**





## Cooperative Invasive Species Management Areas (CISMAs)

### Partnering Statewide to Protect Indiana's Lands and Waters from Invasive Species

- SICIM is a non-profit organization that **manages** staff statewide, **conducts** landowner surveys for invasive species, **provides** outreach and training opportunities to citizens and professional partners, and **facilitates** the creation of CISMAs throughout the state.
- CISMAs are grassroots, volunteer-led groups that work with local partners to **address invasive species issues on a county-wide basis**.
- **CISMAs are dependent on SWCDs** for infrastructure, program facilitation, and technical support; it is difficult to succeed without them.

**40k**

Acres with Invasive Species Management Plans

**41**

Cooperative Invasive Species Management Groups Formed

**4,975**

Volunteers Active Across the State

#### Contact:

Stephanie Schuck, Executive Director  
stephanie@sicim.info  
812-653-5563

**SICIM.info**



# URBAN SOIL HEALTH

## Vibrant Communities Through Urban & Small-Scale Agriculture

- Small and urban farms make up an important and rapidly growing segment of Indiana's producers:
  - More than **250 farmers' markets** in Indiana
  - Roughly 14% of Indiana farms operated on **less than 10 acres** (2017 Census)
  - **Vegetable operations** represent \$136 million in sales and ~1,500 operations and ~40,000 acres. (2017 Census)
- **Urban agriculture and small scale, backyard, nonprofit and market farms** contribute to healthy food access, community revitalization, education, and employment opportunities.
- **Increased soil health practices** for backyard gardens, community gardens, and small farms can **significantly reduce stormwater runoff**.
- These producers are an **important and underserved** part of our ag community.
- Many are **beginning farmers**, who care strongly about making a **positive impact** in their community and environment.

**21**

Local Urban Soil  
Health Working Groups

**10k**

People have attended  
workshops and events

**350**

Events & Workshops

### Contact:

Elli Blaine, Director  
eblaine@urbansoilhealth.org  
360-317-6752

**UrbanSoilHealth.org**







## Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP)

- The Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP) is a **federal-state natural resource conservation program** available to landowners statewide.
- **CREP pays landowners to set-aside environmentally sensitive lands** from production and to establish practices such as *filter strips, wetland restorations, and tree plantings in the floodplain* to assist in *erosion control, sediment reduction, water retention and nutrient uptake*.
- **Every CWI dollar** invested in the Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program **leverages between \$4-\$13 federal dollars** into our state.
- **SWCDs receive a minimal fee** from CWI to help administer payments to landowners enrolled in CREP.

**\$10.7M**

Total partner dollars  
invested in CREP  
since 2006

**23,527**

Acres enrolled  
in CREP across  
the state

**1M+**

Trees planted in  
bottomlands  
since 2013

**Contact:**

Julie Harrold, Program Manager, Division of Soil Conservation  
jharrold@isda.in.gov  
260-341-6698

**In.gov**

isda/divisions/soil-conservation/  
conservation-reserve-enhancement-program





## Resource Concerns in Indiana

### Water and Soil Health

- **Over 12 million acres** (half of the land area of Indiana) are devoted to production agriculture.
  - Indiana has **lost a third of our topsoil** in 100 years.
  - **Long term productivity** of our soils is threatened.
  - **Excess nutrients, pesticides, and soil in runoff** threatens the health and function of Indiana's waterways and drinking water supply as well as the Gulf of Mexico and the Great Lakes.
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- ✓ The use of **soil health practices** and intensive nutrient management in production agriculture can sustain our productivity over the long term.
  - ✓ **Wetlands and field borders** prevent runoff and help recharge aquifers.
  - ✓ Soil Health Practices **increase economic and environmental resiliency** of Indiana's farms.
  - ✓ Healthier soils **increase infiltration of precipitation**, providing a natural filter and lessening the impact of large rain events.
  - ✓ **Cover crops** safeguard our soils, anchoring them in place during the vulnerable winter months, when erosion poses the greatest threat.

## Invasive Species

- Invasive species **threaten native plant communities, wildlife, and forest health**. This affects forest regeneration and the ecosystem services these habitats provide.
- Invasive species **alter soil chemistry, hinder restoration efforts, and negatively affect recreational activities** such as fishing, boating, and hunting.
- Competition from invasive species **threatens the long term productivity of our forests**.
- ✓ **Invasive species management is imperative** to ensure Indiana maintains thriving agricultural, recreational, and manufacturing industries.
- ✓ **Indiana forests** are a major contributor to Indiana's economy.
- ✓ **Hardwoods** are the leading agricultural sector in Indiana.
- ✓ **Healthy woodlands** filter and reduce stormwater runoff.
- ✓ **Woodlands** comprise 4.9 million acres or one fifth of Indiana's land area.
- ✓ **4.1 million acres of woodlands** are privately owned with varying levels of management.

## Indiana Conservation Partnership (ICP)

The ICP is comprised of eight Indiana agencies and organizations who share a common goal of promoting conservation.

To that end, the mission of the Indiana Conservation Partnership is to provide technical, financial and educational assistance needed to implement economically and environmentally compatible land and water stewardship decisions, practices and technologies.

### **PARTNER AGENCIES:**

- Indiana Association of Soil and Water Conservation Districts and our 92 SWCDs
- Indiana Department of Environmental Management
- Indiana Department of Natural Resources
- ISDA Division of Soil Conservation
- Purdue Cooperative Extension Service
- State Soil Conservation Board
- USDA Farm Service Agency
- USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service



## Opportunities for Leveraging Federal Funding for Working Lands Conservation

- **Inflation Reduction Act** is bringing \$20 billion to conservation over 5 years
- Farm Bill extended to October 2024 – Looking at increases in federal conservation title programs
- **Southern Indiana Sentinel Landscape** — Federal money coming to 3.5 million acres
- \$600K CWI investment leveraged \$7.9M for the Kankakee Regional Conservation Partnership Project (RCPP)
- \$150K CWI investment leveraged \$13.5M over 5 years for the Western Lake Erie Basin RCPP