

**MINUTES**  
**STATE SOIL CONSERVATION BOARD MEETING**  
**9:00 a.m. Tuesday, September 8, 2009**  
**Indiana State Department of Agriculture**  
**101 West Ohio Street, Suite 1200**  
**Indianapolis, IN 46204**

**Members in Attendance:**

Nola Gentry  
Bob Eddleman  
Brett Glick  
Larry Clemens  
Bill Mann  
Warren Baird

**Others in Attendance:**

Jerod Chew, ISDA  
Kelly Gentry, ISDA  
Deb Fairhurst, ISDA  
Paul Hoffman, ISDA  
Jim Lake, ISDA  
Jennifer Pinkston, ISDA  
Jennifer Boyle, IASWCD  
Paula Baldwin, IASWCD  
Roger Kult, NRCS

**I. 9:08 AM: Call to Order**

Introductions of board members were made, including two new board member, Brett Glick and Scott Ham (not present).

**II. Draft Minutes of July 2009**

*Mann moved to approve the minutes as presented. Baird seconded and the motion carried.*

**III. Clean Water Indiana**

**a. Clean Water Indiana Update – Jerod Chew – See Attachment**

Chew reported there will be roughly \$600,000 remaining for grants. The additional \$500,000 CWI funds are not included. These funds have been appropriated, but not allotted. We can not spend funds until they are allotted to us.

Chew mentioned the CWI Grants Committee held a conference call last month and came up with a proposal for the upcoming grants program. Following their conversation we came up with a set of guidelines for those grants. This proposal will be announced later in the meeting.

**b. CREP Update – Jerod Chew – See Attachment**

Chew announced changes to CREP reporting will be taking place soon for a more accountability. We will be reporting only the contacts that have been encumbered, or have a contract signed.

Chew also reported on the approval from OMB to run CREP administration like the LARE program. The current process is not very efficient. The LARE method will allow most of the process to be run at a local level. This will allow the process to become more efficient and easier for districts to understand the CREP program. They will have more local contact with landowners. A pilot of the new process will take place in the Tippecanoe Watershed.

Chew also mentioned the process with CREP easements is being worked out with DNR. There are some landowners ready to be paid, but due to a financial shut down we are in until September 19<sup>th</sup>, those landowners will not be paid until the financial changes are made.

**c. Clean Water Indiana Grants – Paul Hoffman – See Attachment**

Clemens asked what the policy is on 2008 CMIG funds not spent. Have those funds been encumbered to that district? Hoffman replied the funds are encumbered. The contract for CMIG is over, but some districts do have funds left over.

Lake suggested setting an example for districts. We should not reward districts with more grant opportunities if they have current funds not spent.

N. Gentry suggested the remaining funds from CMIG could count against the next AFR, taking the amount they have left over and subtracting it from their \$10,000.

Chew mentioned if those funds are returned they would revert back to the general funds. We would need to spend all CWI funds before we could ask for those funds back.

Baird suggested setting guidelines for all grants. Clemens proposed having a recommendation for the next board meeting with some policies to adopt to help clean up the backlog of CWI grants. Hoffman said he would work on it for the next meeting.

**i. ECAP Status Report – Paul Hoffman – See CWI report**

Chew mentioned some districts still need to report what funds they may have leftover. With those remaining funds he suggested giving it to districts that still have projects to fund, such as Jackson County. We can look at a list to see what other districts could use ECAP funds.

Eddleman suggested the CWI Grants Committee along with Chew decide how to get remaining ECAP funds back and sent out to counties that can use the funds. Hoffman said they can send out a letter to districts, with funds remaining, asking to send the money back so other projects can be funded.

**d. Conservation Cropping Systems Initiatives – Jerod Chew**

Chew announced the CCSI contract is signed and funds have already been sent. Dan Towery and Hans Kok are the new CCSI team. They started September 1<sup>st</sup>. This coming Saturday we will be meeting with the CCSI committee, Towery and Kok to discuss creating a technical committee as well as other details associated with this initiative.

**IV. Soil and Water Conservation Districts**

**a. Supervisor Requests – Kelly Gentry – No Request**

**b. CWI Grants Requests – Paul Hoffman**

Kosciusko 2008 SNRG Request – See Attachment

Lake clarified the request stating Kosciusko County wants to use new technology with photography to test nitrate. The district will be pay 75% of the flight cost, which averages \$1.50 per acre. Baird would like Kosciusko to report back their test results using the new technology.

*Eddleman moved to approve Kosciusko's 2008 SNRG request with a final report due on the test results from the new technology. Baird seconded and the motion carried.*

Kosciusko 2009 SNRG Request – See Attachment

*Clemens moved to approve Kosciusko's 2009 SNRG request. Mann seconded and the motion carried.*

**c. SWCD Election Update – Kelly Gentry**

K. Gentry announced the SWCD elections are approaching. DSSs will be working with districts to get their forms in. The *Election Committee Appointment* and the *Recommendation for Appointment* forms will be due November 1<sup>st</sup>.

## V. SSCB Board Reports and Discussion

### a. SSCB Chairman's Report – Nola Gentry

N. Gentry announced a new Vice Chairman needs to be elected due to Jim Cherry resignation.

*Mann moved to nominated Larry Clemens as the new Vice Chair. Baird seconded. Discussion followed and the motion carried.*

### b. SSCB Sub-Committee Reports and Recommendations

#### i. Executive Committee Report and Recommendations – Nola Gentry

##### 1. Business Planning Process

N. Gentry stated after meeting with Eddleman, Chew and Cris Goode, the Executive Committee would like to add more components to the business plan. The committee decided to hold 5 listening sessions throughout the state. Dates, time and locations have not be finalized, but will be announced soon. We need to get available dates from the board members. These listening sessions will allow people to comment further from the survey. The committee would like to adopt county business plans and use them as examples when creating the SSCB business plan.

Discussion followed on how sessions will be ran and recorded.

Eddleman suggested including an email and address for people to send comments to if they can not attend a listening session.

Clemens asked what the timeframe is to complete the business plan. N. Gentry explained the end of the calendar year would be ideal. Clemens suggested having a draft in place by this coming fall, finalize it in December and decided on the final draft by the January SSCB meeting at Annual Conference.

#### ii. CWI Grants Committee Report and Recommendations – Warren Baird

##### 1. 2009-2010 CWI Grant Recommendation – See attachment

Baird reported the CWI Grant Committee held a conference all the end of July and created a recommendation for the 2010 CWI grants program. Baird read through the drafted guidelines.

Lake suggested districts should be current will all CWI reports. Any district that fails to submit reports by the application deadline will not be eligible for the 2010 grant. This will help clean up any past due grants. N. Gentry asked to include in the guidelines: Applicants must be current on all reporting.

Jerod stated the grant guidelines and applications need to be sent to SWCDs soon so we have time to get contacts back in and funds out to the districts. Chew also suggested making the grants program simpler by allowing districts more flexibility within the proposed grant. As long as districts stay within the intent of the grant, all they would need to do is notify the board when they move funds from one project to another. They could clarify they projects in their final report. N. Gentry and Baird agreed. Pinkston stated this would be easier to amend contracts if needed.

N. Gentry suggested clarifying the cost share project. We do not want funds competing with other state or federal programs. Clemens agreed funds should not be used to double dip with other programs. He suggested adding to the guidelines under Cost-Share: The board will give preference to projects that do not receive additional funding from other state or federal programs. Clemens also suggested giving examples in the guidelines.

More discussion followed on benefits and concerns on funding cost share programs in counties that already have existing cost share programs.

Lake suggested adding new innovating technology to the Cost-Share description. The board agreed.

Clemens asked if the board should decide today on amounts and dates. Chew suggested they should so we can get the application out before the next board meeting.

Baird suggested giving a maximum amount of \$6,000 to each districts. He explains every district may not request the total amount. Some districts might have a difficulty getting a 50% cash match.

Boyle asked why the 50 % match was added. Baird explained the match is so districts have to work to receive the funds. We don't want the message that the grant money is free. Boyle asked to clarify the match requirements in the guidelines. Discussion followed on types of match that would be accepted. The board decided both state and federal dollars are accepted, as well as staff time and landowner cost. Other match contributions will be accepted if it is related to the purposed project.

Clemens suggested letting districts apply up to \$7,000. It will allow more flexibility if districts don't apply for the maximum amount. The board agreed.

Chew suggested to work towards having the funds ready to go out by January 1<sup>st</sup> with a final deadline of December 31<sup>st</sup>. Districts should have applications in by November 1<sup>st</sup>. N. Gentry agreed with 2010 calendar year timeframe.

Chew asked the board how they would like to manage payments. N. Gentry suggested 50% upfront after the contract is signed. After a sixth month report is turned in the district would receive an additional 25% then the remaining 25% after the final report. Another idea would be 75% upfront and 25% after the final report. Hoffman stated this will not give them an incentive to submit a sixth month report. N. Gentry recommends going with her first suggestion with the sixth month report due by July 1<sup>st</sup>.

N. Gentry suggested clarifying the District Capacity Building guidelines. She asked if technical training is included under the Staffing category. If so, then that needs to be included. The board agreed it should. N. Gentry also suggested including technical assistance training for current staff. As long as that staff person increases technical abilities then it should be included as well. Eddleman also added it should allow current staff to upgrade to a technical level position. The board agreed on the revisions.

***Eddleman made a motion to approve the CWI Grants Committee recommendations as amended by the SSCB. Glick seconded and the motion carried.***

A final draft of the guidelines will be made to reflect the changes and the CWI Grants Committee will review before it is sent to SWCDs with the application.

### **iii. District Capacity Committee Report and Recommendations – Bob Eddleman – No Report**

## **VI. ISDA Reports**

### **a. Division of Soil Conservation Report – Jerod Chew**

Chew announced Joe Kelsay as the new ISDA Director. He will be replacing Anne Hazlett after harvest is complete. Hazlett will be going to Washington D.C. to serve as the Chief Counsel for the U.S. Senate

Agriculture Committee. We will greatly miss Hazlett, but extremely glad to have Kelsay on board. Kelsay is a dairy and grain farmer in Johnson County.

Joe Kelsay was introduced to the board and spoke briefly. Joe stated he is excited to learn more about Indiana conservation.

Anne Hazlett addressed the board as well, thanked everyone, and announced Tony Hahn as ISDA's new Deputy Director.

Tony Hahn spoke briefly to the board and specifically thanked IASWCD for co-sponsoring the FSA breakfast during the state fair.

**i. Technical Support Update**

Chew reported technical staff is short handed; however Resource Specialist have been working with over 100 landowners and 4000 acres on average each week to get more conservation on the ground based on our weekly surveys with staff.

**ii. District Support Update**

Chew reported the Division is down to 4 DSSs. Jerry Hartley will be taking a position at Muscatatuck as the new Environmental Manager. Two of the DSS positions have been submitted to the state hiring committee.

Chew also announced the next Leadership Institute workshop will be held in Nashville, IN on September 17-18. The theme for this workshop is Board Development. Currently there are 35 people registered for this workshop.

**b. Accountability, Planning and Technology Update – Deb Fairhurst**

Fairhurst reported Chew, K. Gentry and herself attended a tutorial meeting with IDEM to learn more about Adobe Connect. Adobe Connect is a software program used to create webinars, online training, presentation and other information. This program will help save cost on travel and help us communicate more with other organizations outside of Indiana. The estimated cost for ISDA would be \$12,000. With the saving from travel time and gas this software program will pay for itself.

Fairhurst also reported on SharePoint, which is a community server. This program will allow us to share and edit documents, view calendars with updates, report, track programs and funding, make announcements, etc. This program will help the Division coordinate the new CREP process with a pilot in the Tippecanoe Watershed. This will cost around \$3,000 a year, which is less then it would be to create a new server. Fairhurst gave a short demonstration on SharePoint.

Boyle asked what the \$3,000 includes. Fairhurst stated the cost pays for the SharePoint server. It would cost an extra \$2 per month for each addition gigabyte. Baldwin asked when it will be ready to use. Fairhurst replied once Slater-Atwater finalizes the new CREP process for the pilot in the Tippecanoe Watershed, we will work on getting the tracking set up on SharePoint. We will get full site access for all Division staff soon.

**c. Environmental Stewardship Update – Jerod Chew**

Chew announced Roz Leeck will be the new Environmental Stewardship Program Manager. She will be starting September 21<sup>st</sup>. This position will be responsible for implementing the Environmental Stewardship components of the ISDA Strategic Update.

**VII. Conservation Partner Reports**

- a. **DNR Report – Gary Langell – No Report**
- b. **IDEM Report – Marylou Renshaw – See Attachment**
- c. **Purdue Report – Gary Steinhardt – No Report**
- d. **IASWCD President's Report – Paula Baldwin – See Attachment**
- e. **Farm Services Agency Report – Gail Peas – No Report**

**f. NRCS State Conservationist's Report – Roger Kult – See Attachment**

**VIII. Public Comment**

Boyle asked Chew if a notice will be sent out on the new SSCB members. Chew reported a press release will go out once we have bios on the new members.

Boyle also asked the board if the ICP Leadership Workgroup could have 20 minutes during the next SSCB meeting for a presentation/proposal. N. Gentry accepted her request and will make sure it is added to the next agenda.

Eddleman also mentioned the NACD convention will be held in Orlando, FL the end of January. The board will need to decide later on which board member(s) will attend the convention.

**IX. Next Meeting: November, 10, 2009 – 1:00 PM in Indy – maybe at NRCS.**

The next SSCB meeting will take place on Tuesday, November 10<sup>th</sup> at 1:00 PM at the Indiana NRCS office in Indianapolis.

**X. Adjourn: 1:00 PM**

DRAFT