

# MEETING MINUTES

<b>Meeting/Project Name:</b>	<b>Indiana NRCS State Technical Committee</b>		
<b>Date of Meeting:</b>	March 2, 2023	<b>Time:</b>	1300-1600
<b>Minutes Prepared By:</b>	Angie Hines-Montgomery	<b>Location:</b>	NRCS Indianapolis
<b>1. Meeting Objective</b>			
Meeting to discuss current events, projects, problematic areas, and to strategize future endeavors.			
<b>2. Attendees</b>			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Dan Hovland</li> <li>• Shannon Zezula</li> <li>• Curtis Knueven</li> <li>• Josh Griffin</li> <li>• Chris Rancher</li> <li>• Ryan Owen</li> <li>• Liz Rice</li> <li>• Ginger Davis</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Joseph Schmees</li> <li>• Katie Fagan</li> <li>• Ben Wicker</li> <li>• Sam Stroebel</li> <li>• Eileen Kladvko</li> <li>• Rebecca Janoskan</li> <li>• Mike Falling</li> <li>• Beth Clarizia</li> <li>• Kris Vance</li> </ul>	
<b>3. Agenda and Notes, Decisions, Issues</b>			
<b>Topic</b>	<b>Discussion</b>		
<b>STC Comments</b> <b>Dan Hovland</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 72 Vacancies with 22 filed.</li> <li>• Filling 10 more vacancies this week.</li> <li>• 26.5 million in our EQIP backlog.</li> <li>• 225 applications with \$4.1 million.</li> <li>• Received \$2.5 million to \$2.6 million in the initial allocation for IRA.</li> <li>• March Assessment, was March 1st another request was made for another \$12 million to bring in.</li> <li>• David Doctorian onboards on 13 March.</li> </ul>		
<b>Kris Vance</b> <b>Partnership Agreements</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Updates on RCPP and a couple of updates on a few new agreements.</li> <li>• So first the RCCP. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Notice the funding still has not been set. We were anticipating January, that's been pushed continuously to March, and we may be looking at April. When that is out, we will let you know.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• There are two separate types of RCPP funding. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- There's classic and AFA which is now going to be called grants. Classic is when NRCS provides technical and financial assistance.</li> <li>- During RCPP Grants, the partner is responsible for providing the technical and financial assistance to landowners.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• We had a new proposal approved called Farmers Helping Hellbenders which is located in the southern part of the state.</li> <li>• Farmers Helping Hellbenders had a recent sign up with the deadline of March 31st.</li> <li>• There were two additional RCPP sign ups in January. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- One was for the Big Pine project, which is in the northwest area of the state.</li> <li>- One was for the WLEB tri-state.</li> <li>- Both sign-ups were January 20<sup>th</sup>.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• There are two RCPP projects going through the agreement development phase. <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Kankakee River watershed, which is in the northwest part of the state.</li> <li>2. The Grassland for Gamebirds and Songbirds which is statewide.</li> </ol> </li> <li>• The two additional agreements that should be mentioned are "Connecting BIPOC Farmers to Agriculture" and "Women4theLand." Connecting BIPOC Farmers will be responsible for this year's Black Loam Conferences. Woment4theLand will continue holding women's learning circles throughout the state.</li> </ul>		
<b>FY 23 Easement Information</b> <b>Beth Clarizia</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 1 application was received for ALE for Harrison County (153 Acre property). Working with partner for title search and documenting.</li> <li>• Increased GARC was approved Agland and Non-Ag.</li> <li>• WRE Funding- 5.1 million</li> <li>• IRA Funding and Timing- anticipating funds, accepting applications, and ranking through a national process and submit to National and wait for acceptance.</li> <li>• 960 easements at this point that are closed that we must monitor.</li> <li>• Agreement biologist hired under an ACE agreement.</li> <li>• Violations. I have around 20 violations or so at any one time that's in my sort of working box of going through contracts for resurvey and visiting with landowners and writing violation letters and working with OG C So those can be quite a bit another dickcissel taking picture taken one of our Newton County easement sites.</li> <li>• Over 500 active compatible use authorizations that are field is managing and working with landowners to Work through those approvals and make sure that they are completing those as required when they go as allowed as they go out on the monitoring and we're putting in place about 60 more than sixty of every year.</li> </ul>		

<p><b>Programs</b></p> <p><b>Katie Fagan &amp; Curtis Knueven</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There's a lot of information on here and I'm going to highlight the black first. Every person on my staff has a bolded black that's new tasks in the last just over a year. and the reason I point that out is, is we do have some people that have a little bit of experience. When I say a little bit of experience of Beth, Susan and I have been on the programs team for several years, but there's a lot of new on the programs team, the red, our new positions in the last year and Leslie Moore will help in the front office. Angela and Chris toward the bottom of the program's assistance.</li> <li>• There's a lot of behind the scenes work I'm going to mention RCPP. RCPP the obligations are like easement, it's all manual and hopefully that changes after this year. A manual obligation is subject to a lot of errors and what I mean is we submit everything in a different manner, it's not automated.</li> <li>• Special pots of money are targeted money for watersheds. We used a lot of these targeted watersheds in the act now or the faster sign up this year was a little slower than we wanted.</li> <li>• Next year we hope to be a lot quicker, but again the special projects and initiatives.</li> <li>• I requested over \$40 million in equip another \$12 million in IRA.</li> <li>• Backlog continues to grow from last year this year. We did see is a huge increase in CSP applications, the hope is that we can obligate more this year than we did last year.</li> <li>• Last year we had 163 or 164 applications, this year we had 260. Out of the 260 we only obligated 104 contracts in CSP last year through the classic sign up because a lot of them cancel.</li> <li>• EQUIP Classic, returning with 50% is targeted to wildlife, 5% is targeted to beginning farmers, 5% is targeted socially disadvantaged farmers, 10% is targeted to wildlife. If you've been keeping track, we have 70% of our equipment that has a target associated with it. That leaves us in Indiana to 30% to be able to use.</li> <li>• We need to be creative with those applications in as many as possible that can go to CSP. It is the best solution for the applicant and NRCS to rank them in CSP.</li> <li>• We got 4,000,000 targeted to CSP whereas equipped with 2.6 in the initial allocation. So, there's more money right from the start with CSP and our allocation for CSP is similar to a little bit more than last year for CSP in general or classic.</li> <li>• still pending all of our cropland and forest land preapprovals as well as any preapprovals or reallocations or funds assessments where we make receive additional dollars throughout the year left over FY 22.</li> <li>• equip, we're Indiana starting off with 2.6 million this year, next year we're slated just short of 17 now.</li> <li>• For CSP, the numbers are similar, slightly different, but similar. I mean we're starting off with 4.3 million this year. We go to six point 813.7 and twenty \$20 million and 2026.</li> <li>• EQUIP and CSP are available to an agricultural conservation practice or enhancement or bundles that directly improve carbon reduce nitrogen losses, reduce capture avoids Crestor carbon dioxide, methane, or nitrous oxide emissions sociated with agriculture production.</li> <li>• NRCS can no longer enter into an obligation for CSP, the conservation stewardship, because that's a 5-year program.</li> <li>• Proposal for this year. We're setting up a special fund pool for historically underserved, we can get the extra money. So that's one thing we did do this year, this year to make it easier and with \$2.6 million, I was going to lump the wildlife in and lump it in with the other applications. Anticipate over 10 million in applications probably closer to 20 or 25 because we have 7,000,000 in backlog.</li> <li>• IRA funds must be expended by Sept 30, 2023</li> <li>• IRA funds are focused on climate and Practice Implementation not Obligation.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Farm Service Agency</b></p> <p><b>Shannon Zezula</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Secretary has announced CRP sign-up.</li> <li>• <b>2023 CRP Cost List:</b></li> <li>• <b>Introduces grasses + Legumes:</b> Installation cost stayed the same, cost of seed decreased from \$54 to \$42.</li> <li>• <b>Native Grasses + Wildflowers:</b> Installation grass no change, seed cost increased from \$225 to \$268, Monarch Herbaceous Planting no increase.</li> <li>• <b>Tree and Shrub Planting:</b> Increase from \$398 to \$415 per acre, Windbreaks \$625 to \$735, Pollinator Planting \$494 to \$638 per acre.</li> <li>• <b>Engineered Practices:</b></li> <li>• Installation Cost = 50% of actual cost NTE NRCS design estimate/acre included site preparation, excavation, seedbed prep, spoils spreading fertilizer, erosion control blanket or no erosion control blanket, one riser per acre, endangered species erosion control erosion blanket, and edge mulching. <b>Tile:</b> (Rates include materials such as tile, animal control guards, and installation regardless of installation method. (4"-5"—50% of actual cost NTE 1.30/ft.    6"—50% of actual cost NTE \$1.60/ft    8" and up – 50% of actual cost NTE 3.13/ft increased from \$2.95)</li> <li>• <b>SAFE:</b> Installation and seed cost both increased.</li> <li>• <b>Cover Crops as Temporary Seeding/Nurse Crops:</b> Installation Cost = 50% NTE 18/acre   Seed = 50% NTE decreased to \$29 from \$34</li> </ul>

4. Action Items			
Action	Assigned	Due Date	Status
1	Follow-up on data and applications submitted over time.	Kaite Fagan	In process
2			
3			
4			
5			