

2019 ANNUAL REPORT

Indiana Natural Resources Conservation Service

INDIANA'S USDA NATURAL RESOURCES CONSERVATION SERVICE (NRCS) PROVIDES INNOVATIVE CONSERVATION SOLUTIONS TO RESTORE, ENHANCE AND PROTECT INDIANA'S LANDS.



The Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) has a long history of helping people help the land. For more than 80 years, we have worked with farmers and landowners to help them manage natural resource concerns on their land and improve the health of their communities. Whether it's on one acre or thousands of acres, our technical and financial assistance programs are designed to protect and improve our soil, water, forestry, energy and wildlife resources without sacrificing productivity, profitability or sustainability. We are proud of the work we do in partnership with local and state governments, like-minded organizations and other federal agencies to provide healthy and productive working landscapes for Indiana's residents. I am pleased to provide this report of Indiana NRCS investments and successes in fiscal year 2019.

- Jerry Raynor, State Conservationist

Voluntary Conservation Works

USDA is an equal opportunity provider, employer and lender.

FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE

AGRICULTURAL CONSERVATION EASEMENTS PROGRAM (ACEP)

Wetland Reserve Easements

<i>New Applications</i>	40 applications for 2,649 acres
<i>Closed Easements</i>	17 closed easements
<i>Restoration Completed</i>	24 easements
<i>Compatible Use Authorizations</i>	62 approved
<i>Onsite Monitoring Reviews</i>	294 easements
<i>Offsite Monitoring Reviews</i>	564 easements

CONSERVATION STEWARDSHIP PROGRAM (CSP)

Beginning Farmer	\$526,663	6,054 acres	7 contracts
General	\$3 million	34,242 acres	37 contracts
NIPF* Beginning Farmer	\$15,000	133 acres	2 contracts
NIPF* General	\$1.2 million	3,702 acres	46 contracts
Grassland Conservation	\$118,945	1,320 acres	71 contracts
TOTAL	\$4.9 million	45,452 acres	163 contracts

ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY INCENTIVES PROGRAM (EQIP)

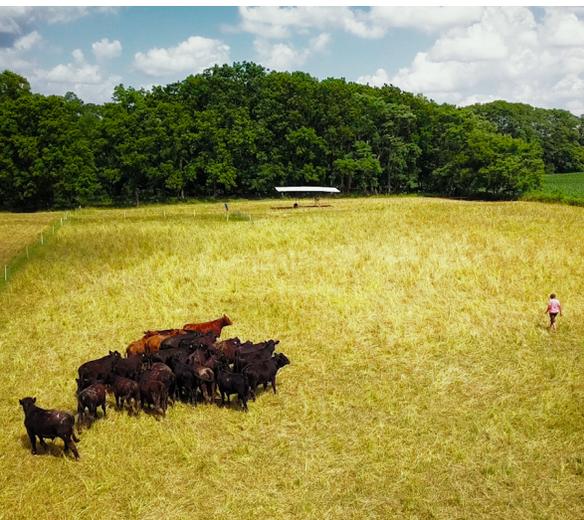
Beginning Farmer	\$3.8 million	3,975 acres	54 contracts
Disaster Recovery	\$1.6 million	58,636 acres	315 contracts
Great Lakes Restoration	\$1.4 million	30,615 acres	152 contracts
Limited Resource	\$5,106	16 acres	2 contracts
Locally Led/Planning	\$14.7 million	117,042 acres	694 contracts
Monarch Butterfly	\$40,372	91 acres	9 contracts
On-Farm Energy	\$23,056	553 acres	5 contracts
Organic	\$37,215	219 acres	7 contracts
Socially Disadvantaged	\$3,372	2 acres	1 contract
Specialty Crop	\$435,058	238 acres	52 contracts
Western Lake Erie Basin	\$749,980	8,498 acres	32 contracts
Wildlife	\$3.2 million	8,111 acres	180 contracts
TOTAL	\$23.5 million	227,996 acres	1,503 contracts

REGIONAL CONSERVATION PARTNERSHIP PROGRAM (RCPP)

Big Pine Watershed	\$156,278	2,371 acres	11 contracts
Grasslands for Game/Songbirds	\$237,615	798 acres	37 contracts
WLEB Phosphorus Reduction	\$623,681	7,484 acres	35 contracts
Monarch Butterfly	\$84,755	60 acres	4 contracts
Indiana Watershed Initiative	\$42,285	500 acres	1 contract
Soil Health on Reclaimed Mineland	\$85,159	1,055 acres	4 contracts
Southern Indiana Young Forest	\$93,817	229 acres	3 contracts
TOTAL	\$1.3 million	12,498 acres	95 contracts

*NIPF - Non-Industrial Private Forestland

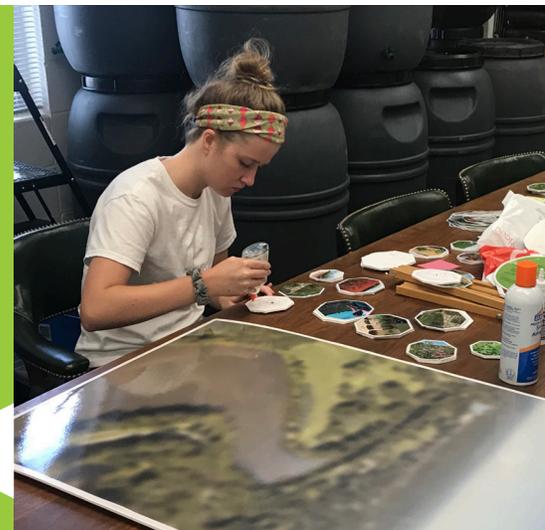
Data Source: ProTracts as of October 2019



VOLUNTEERS

NRCS is proud of the dedicated Earth Team volunteers and staff who have committed their time and talents to conserving and protecting our natural resources. During FY19, more than 2,200 volunteers donated 11,675 hours. Time dedicated by these volunteers to educational efforts, conservation planning and clerical services saved Indiana NRCS approximate \$296,895 and supported conservation in all 79 USDA Service Centers in Indiana.

Grace Cochran, Earth Team Volunteer for Hamilton County, designing education and outreach materials to be used in the classroom and during field days.





Women4theLand

Most women farmers and landowners share strong conservation values and want their land farmed sustainability into the future. Women4theLand (W4L) is a partnership of conservation and natural resource agencies and organizations working together to provide education and resources to Indiana women landowners, farmers and natural resource professionals. W4L uses the learning circle model to provide information in a comfortable, informal setting where women learn from professional conservationists as well as from each other. W4L provides education and information about conservation management practices, new technology, communicating effectively with tenants, financial assistance programs, where to find assistance and more.



22

Circles Held



391

Attendees



11

Partners



8

Topics

The primary topic for this year's circles was soil health but circle topics also included forestry, small farm diversity, organic certification, managing for pollinators and wildlife, invasive species, conservation planning, and working with your farmer on leases.

For more information on Women4theLand, visit: www.women4theland.org

WORKING WITH LANDOWNERS

Jarrod Burris, a fourth-generation farmer in southwest Indiana, has been farming with his father his whole life. But it wasn't until he built his first turkey barn that Jarrod quit his job as a certified welder to become a full-time farmer and brought his wife along for the ride. The Burris' started with three 20,000 square foot barns to house turkeys. That operation soon doubled as he added two more barns each 30,000 square feet.

The Burris' are a contract turkey producer, raising about 125,000 antibiotic-free tom turkeys per year for a large poultry company. They receive the animals at five weeks old and send them to market around twenty weeks old, when they weigh approximately forty pounds each. The turkeys are housed in one of five barns on the property and while the number of birds is substantial, the Burris' have a strong commitment to each of their birds.

Treating animals with respect means going beyond the minimum to keep animals healthy and to produce safe food. For poultry raised indoors, the Burris' use temperature-controlled housing with fresh-air ventilation and a cooling system during hot summer months. The houses protect the turkeys from the elements, disease and predators, and they are given constant access to fresh food and water, sufficient room to move around, and periods of light and darkness.

But the Burris' aren't just conscientious about how they raise their flock – they are also concerned about the welfare and health of their farm land. In addition to turkeys, the Burris' have a diverse operation that

includes hogs, cattle and 1,250 acres of row crops. Approximately 400 acres of their cropland is on reclaimed mine land.

To address these resource concerns, the Burris' are enrolled in EQIP. They've worked closely with their NRCS field staff to develop and implement a long-term conservation plan that addresses their erosion concerns and builds soil health. Practices include grassed waterways, cover crops, no till planting, water and sediment control basins (WASCOBS) and two acres of pollinator habitat.

And those turkeys – well they play an important role in the conservation efforts on the farmland as well.

The Burris' follow a nutrient management plan which includes regular soil testing, a waste storage facility and an animal mortality composting facility to properly manage their animal waste. The litter produced, like any other fertilizer, is applied to match the needs of each crop, minimizing the potential for nutrient runoff. Jarrod and Amy apply all the manure produced on their farm to their fields and rely on soil tests to tell them where to focus their manure application. Applying manure to their reclaimed land is critical in rebuilding organic matter lost during mining and acts as a valuable soil amendment which helps hold water and nutrients.

The Burris' hope to continue the tradition and hand their farm down to the next generation. Their son, currently attending college and majoring in agronomy, has expressed interest in returning to the farm.

TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE



NRCS delivers voluntary conservation technical assistance (CTA) to any group or individual interested in conserving their natural resources and sustaining agricultural production in Indiana. With the help of the Indiana Conservation Partnership staff, NRCS provides assistance which addresses natural resource concerns and helps landowners and land managers make sound management decisions on their land.

Although the CTA program does not include financial or cost-share assistance, clients may develop conservation plans, which may serve as a springboard for those interested in participating in USDA financial assistance programs.

The Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) provides assistance to eligible farmers to address soil, water, and related natural resource concerns on their lands in an environmentally beneficial and cost-effective manner. The program is funded through the Commodity Credit Corporation (CCC). The Farm Service Agency (FSA) administers CRP, and NRCS provides technical land eligibility determinations and conservation planning.

CONSERVATION RESERVE PROGRAM (CRP)*

Conservation Plans	CRP Acres
387 Written	3,934 Planned
382 Applied	11,043 Applied
769 Total Plans	14,977 Total Acres

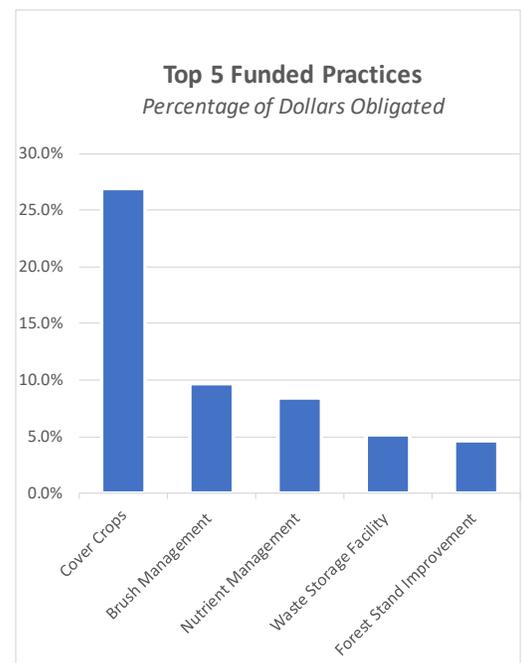
*Data Source PRS

TOP 5 EQIP & CSP PLANNED PRACTICES

Cover Crops	288,535 acres
Brush Management	18,225 acres
Nutrient Management	105,052 acres
Waste Storage Facility	33 units
Forest Stand Improvement	6,726 acres

TOP 5 EQIP & CSP APPLIED PRACTICES

Cover Crops	265,225 acres
Conservation Crop Rotation	146,178 acres
No-Till	125,824 acres
Nutrient Management	79,944 acres
Reduced Till	71,944 acres



TWITTER

495 Tweets

3,377 Followers

131 Mentions

76 Likes

77 Retweets

492 New Followers

YOU TUBE

Restoring Indiana's Wetlands - Pokagon (359 views)
<https://youtu.be/A4cxGBjFb2I>

Restoring Indiana's Wetlands - Goose Pond (565 views)
https://youtu.be/_PqY1Qy8ttQ

Return of the Least Tern (383 views)
<https://youtu.be/m5A6S8fOMSs>

Farming Opportunities for Military Veterans (27 views)
<https://youtu.be/eHGuketdfc8>

Women in Agriculture (57 views)
<https://youtu.be/wOu8m05sul8>

Advancing Conservation... (290 views)
<https://youtu.be/tcNztQqGIKA>

