The Indiana Conservation Partnership

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Indiana Conservation
Cropping Systems Initiative

- Systems approach
- Ties soil health to management and economics
- Private sector also engaged
A Little History

- Indiana Conservation Tillage Initiative
- Started as a 319 Grant in 2002 to increase no-till acres
- NRCS, Purdue Extension, Indiana Association of Indiana SWCD, leading no-till farmers
- More could be done by working together!
Indiana Conservation Tillage Initiative

- Focus was on no-till
  - Barry Fisher led this effort
  - Farmer spokespersons (>credibility)
  - But lots of support from others

- Field Days
- Winter meetings
- Farm visits, equipment demonstrations
- It actually worked!
Indiana Conservation Partnership

1. Natural Resources Conservation Service

2. Indiana Association of Soil and Water Conservation Districts

3. IN State Department of Agriculture, Division of Soil Conservation

4. State Soil Conservation Board

5. Purdue Cooperative Extension Service
Indiana Conservation Cropping Systems Initiative

- launched in 2009
- Leaders working together towards a common goal
- Funded by NRCS and Indiana State Soil Conservation Board
- Indiana Association of SWCDs administered the effort
- Oversight committee*
2012 – received grants from National Fish & Wildlife Foundation and NRCS CIG

- The CCSI for Soil Health & Productivity Project
- Established 5 Regional Hubs based on different soil types, climate, & topography
  (3 Purdue Farms, a County farm, and private college) – soil health tests, different management systems, etc.
Indiana Conservation Cropping Systems Initiative

- Established 12 “farmer” hub sites
  - Very high caliber farmers doing CCSI practices, (no-till, cover crops, precision farming) good presenters
  - Replicated strip trials with different management, soil health tests, host field days ($7,000/year payment)
CCSI Partners

1. Indiana Association of Soil and Water Conservation Districts and the 92 local SWCDs
2. USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service
3. Indiana State Department of Agriculture
4. State Soil Conservation Board
5. Indiana Soybean Alliance*
6. Indiana Corn Marketing Council*
7. Purdue University Cooperative Extension Service
8. Conservation Technology Information Center
9. National Fish and Wildlife Foundation
Cost Share Dollars

- Educational events support “how to” for cover crops, no-till, nutrient management, pest management, etc
- NRCS state staff have been great at “bundling” conservation practices and multiyear contracts
- EQIP, CSP and other programs are major programs
- Major revenue stream to Indiana growers
- NRCS State Conservationist is great at acquiring other states unused funds
  - Field staff have plans written and waiting to be funded
Conservation Cropping System - Technical Leadership

Barry Fisher – NRCS

Dan Towery & Hans Kok Contractors

Ag Conservation Solutions
INfield Advantage

- Formerly Indiana OnFarm Network
- Nitrogen efficiency
- Guided stalk sampling, N strips, Aerial imagery, basal stalk N test, yield maps
- 244 growers and 670 fields in 2014
- **Indiana Corn Marketing Council, Indiana Soybean Alliance, Indiana State Department of Agriculture, Indiana Association of Soil & Water Conservation Districts, Purdue Extension and the Indiana Conservation Partnership**
Objective – To make agriculture more productive and sustainable through Improved Soil Health.
What can we change?

- Short term
- Long term