

Highlights

Southwest Program Manager

An offer was extended to and accepted by Melissa Ruschau for the Southwest Program Manager position. She will start on May 6th. Melissa has been an employee of the Dubois Co SWCD for seven years, including management of the Vincennes University Jasper Campus' Land Stewardship Initiative. She has also served on the Jasper High School FFA Advisory and Stem Committees.

Indiana Extension Educators Association Spring Conference

- April 23-24 at Turkey Run State Park
- Both the pre-conference "Soil Health Signature Program" and the "CCSI and Purdue On The Farm" sessions were well-received by attendees.

CCSI-SARE Fundamentals of Soil Health

- April 2, 16, and 23 (virtual) and 9th (in-person)
- Registrants included:
 - 13 NRCS
 - 9 SWCD
 - 3 CTIC
 - 1 Co-op
- Final tally of course completion is in process (Not all registrants attended all sessions)

G1. Farmer Engagement and Involvement

1. Innovative and Visionary Farmers

Quarterly Target: 1 ride-a-long, shop visit, or other (Each – CCSI-POTF, Program Manager)

Listening sessions with Innovative and Visionary Farmers. Use to help identify needed field day and training topics.

- 04/05 Cameron Mills and Jamie Scott – Scout drone-seeded cover crops (A)
- 04/05 Roger Wenning (D)
- 04/09 Blake Vince (D)
- 04/10 Pat Bittner (D)
- 04/12 Allen Reese – Scout cover crop establishment issues (A)
- 04/16 Jon and Nathan Kingma – Biomass sampling of Cereal Rye (A)
- 04/18 Tom Rudolph (D)
- 04/19 Mark Kingma – Potential split field trials (A)
- 04/24 Ray McCormick (D)
- 04/26 Mark Anson (D)
- 04/26 Don Villwock (D)

2. Conservative and Pragmatic Farmers

Meetings and other opportunities for listening sessions to gain perspective on adoption

issues/concerns of soil health practices. Use to help develop outreach topics and tactics.

Quarterly Targets: 1 ride-a-long, shop visit, or other (Each – CCSI-POTF, Program Manager)

- 04/05 Joe McCutcheon – Scout cover crops (A)
- 04/11 Locust St Companies / Gray Family Farms – Discussed soil health sampling under solar panels (CSA)
- 04/22 Joe McCutchen – Scouting seed slot closure of no-till soybeans into cover crop. 2nd year of no-till (A)
- 04/22 Kyler Laird – Engaging in ION Organic research project
- 04/10, 26 Gary Hamstra – Discussed burn down options on cereal rye and oats. Sampled field for soybean cyst nematode. (AL)
- 04/26 Scott Tyson – Discussed burn down options and cover crops for next fall (A)

3. Farmer Influencers

Quarterly Targets: 1 LLP per region adding an influencer to their outreach planning team or board. (Each - NPM, SPM)

- 04/23 Noah Radde (D)
- 04/23 Betsy Bower (D)

4. Presentations

Quarterly Targets: Average of 3 soil health presentations or demonstrations. (CCSI-POTF)

- AGRY 598 Course Completion, 23 students (DA)
- 04/02 Fundamentals of Soil Health “Intro to Soil Health”, Virtual; 40 attendees (CSA)
- 04/03 – HOSTED, NOT PRESENTED – NECI Professional Development Meeting featuring Sean Parks, Virtual “Fire in the Anthropocene”; 25 attendees (CSA)
- 4/5 Hamilton County PARP “Preparing for a Successful Cover Crop”, Noblesville; 20 attendees (A)
- 04/05 – Hamilton County PARP, Noblesville, “Soil Health and Climate Smart Strategies”; 22 attendees (CSA)
- 04/09 Fundamentals of Soil Health, West Lafayette “In-Field Soil Health Diagnostics”, 31 attendees (CSA)
- 04/12 White County Ag Day UAV Demos, approximately 1000 adults and students (DA)
- 04/16 Fundamentals of Soil Health “No-till Basics” (DA)
- 04/17 Spray Drone Conference, 43 attendees (DA)
- 04/23 Fundamentals of Soil Health “How to Read Seed Tags” (A)
- 04/23 IEEA Workshop -Soil Health Signature Program, Nashville; 7 attendees (CSA, A, DA)
- 04/23 IEEA Breakout Session – CCSI and Purdue On The Farm, Nashville; 12 attendees (CSA, A, D)
- 04/29 – HOSTED, NOT PRESENTED – NC3 Webinar Series, Virtual, “Social Science and Climate Change with Nowaskie”, 190 attendees (CSA)

G2. Local Level Partnership Support

1. Facilitate and Support Local Level Partnership’s Outreach and Education

Quarterly Target: CCSI as a group materially participate in / support average of 15 LLP Outreach Efforts groups (CCSI Team Goal)

Workshops Completed

- 04/04 Mud is Fun, Rochester
- 04/05 Hamilton Co PARP, Noblesville, 22 attendees
- 04/11 UAV Class – Marshall Co, 12 attendees
- 04/17 Spray Drone Field Day
- 04/23-25 IEEA Spring Conference
 - Pre-conference Soil Health Signature Program workshop
 - Soil Health Signature Program and Purdue On The Farm breakout session

Workshops in Progress:

- 05/23 Conservation Farming Workshop, Morgan County
- 06/06 Warrick Co Cover Crop Field Day, Joseph Kerns farm
- 06/20 Pinney PAC Diagnostic Training
- 08/09-10 Manure Management Workshop
- 8/22 Regional Ag Forum, Princeton, Secured Jim Hoorman and working on RMA speaker
- 08/14-17 Successful Soil Solutions events with Ray Archuleta and Barry Fischer – Miami, Wabash, Pulaski and Fulton Counties
- 08/27 Upper Wabash Regional Watershed Biological Field Day
- 08/2024 Indiana Corn/Soy Upper White Growers Workshop
- 09/2024 Porter County Event
- 09/26 Allen SWCD Soil Health Field Day
- 10/23-25 IDEA Fall Conference, Michigan City
- November 2024 – Spencer County SWCD
- Kankakee Basin and WLEB series of events to support existing RCPP (WLEB) and proposed RCPP (Kankakee) (NPM)

2. Consistent Soil Health Messaging

Annual Target: Outlined in fall with training team.

Foundational Soil Health Trainings / Awareness, Knowledge and Understanding of Soil Health

Completed Trainings

- 04/2, 9, 16, 23 CCSI-SARE Foundations of Soil Health Systems;

Trainings in Progress:

- 06/11-13 Soil Health and Sustainability for Midwestern Field Staff
- 07/26 Agronomic Fundamentals - DTC
- Video development on collecting soils for soil health demonstrations
- Soil Health Scouting Modules
- Soil Health PARP Regulatory Topic Development

Professional Development Opportunities

Annual Target: Outlined in fall with training team.

Advanced Soil Health Trainings / Applied Soil Health Knowledge and Skills

Completed Trainings:

Trainings in Progress

- September 2024: Engaging New Audiences

4. Messaging to/from Local Level Partnerships

Monthly Targets: 2-3 LLP visits. 1 Teleconference / Region (Each - NWPM, NEPM, SWPM, SEPM)

- Mondays – US Drought Monitor Coordinating Calls (CSA)
- Mondays – Extension Field Crops Meetings (CSA, A, DA)
- 04/01 CAMF Farmer/Advisor Meeting (CSA)
- 04/01 NC3 Leadership Meeting (CSA)
- 04/02 IN CCA Conference Planning Meeting (CSA)
- 04/03 Midwest Climate Hub Action Team Meeting (CSA)
- 04/03 ANR Extension Monthly Meeting (CSA, A, DA)
- 04/03 Regional Ag Forum Planning Meeting (SEPM)
- 04/05 IASWCD Annual Conference Planning Meeting (SEPM)
- 04/05 NC3 North Central Ag Climate Conference Planning Meeting (CSA)
- 04/16 St Joseph SWCD Board Meeting (NEPM)
- 04/18 Adams SWCD Board Meeting (NEPM)
- 04/22 SWCD Staff Meeting, Jasper (SEPM)
- 04/23 SWCD Staff Meeting, Corydon (SEPM)
- 04/24 IEEA Board Meeting (A)
- 04/25 Fulton, Wabash, Pulaski, and Miami Event Planning Meeting (NWPM, NEPM)
- 04/26 Regional Soil Health Training Planning Meeting (CSA)

G3. General CCSI Outreach / Communication

1. Marketing and Messaging

Quarterly Targets: 3 Podcasts; 3-6 Blog Posts; 6 Newsletters; Use social networks and other media tools to deliver soil health messaging and information.

Completed Materials:

- Podcasts
 - One person can make a huge impact – the Legacy of Fred Woods with Barry Fisher, Fisher Soil Health (NRCS ret), and Chris Lee, SE NRCS Area Conservationist
- Social Media
 - Facebook:
 - Instagram:
 - LinkedIn:
- Website:

Completed Materials:

- Purdue Extension Soil Health Signature Series

Materials in Progress:

- Regulatory Pesticide Considerations for Soil Health Systems, by Hans Schmitz, Ann Kline, Mathias Ingle, Ashley Adair, and Matt Pearson, OISC – PARP Regulatory Topic in draft status
- Cover Crop Termination Study Materials
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G4. Research

Quarterly Targets: None

CCSI no longer leads research projects; CCSI provides connectivity between researchers and cooperators; potential research needs.

- Support – Purdue University NIFA – Empowering Indiana’s Organic Farmers – Assessing Regional and Farm Scale Soil Health with a Farmer Network (Rui)
- Purdue Weed Science / POTF – UAV Applications of Herbicides
- Support - SDSU and Pork Board – 5-year study with swine manure and effects of soil health on continuous corn

OTHER

Professional Development (*Training for CCSI Staff, Certifications*)

Other

- SEPM: Lead and Southeast Program Manager
- SWPM: Southwest Program Manager
- NWPM: Northwest Program Manager
- NEPM: Northeast Program Manager
- CSA: Soil Health/Climate Smart Ag Specialist
- A: Soil Health/Agronomic Specialist
- DA: Soil Health/Digital Ag Specialist
- D: Director