

Indiana State Tech Committee Meeting , December 18 2025
USDA NRCS Conference Room
6013 Lakeside Blvd., Indianapolis, IN

- **In Attendance:**

- **In Person (ISTC Members and Others)**

Jeff Powelson	Kristin Arnold	Mark Legan	Stacy Herr
Josh Griffin	Caleb Rennaker	Lisa Holscher	Amanda Trakas
Jason Wade	Chris Renschler	Monica Poehler	Kris Reynolds
Eileen Kladvko	Sam Stroebel	Phil Woolery	Mike Spalding
Betsy Bower	Hans Schmitz	Anthony Sipes	Julie Harrold
Jill Reinhart	Joe Rorick	Tom Crowe	Mike Warner
Ben Wicker	Josh Trenary		

- **In Person (NRCS Employees)**

Damarys Mortenson	Curtis Knueven	Jerod Chew	Kim Lampert
Cara Bergschneider	Darlene Florence	Amanda Kautz	Tony Bailey
Cindy Suseland	Mike Cox	Shannon Zezula	

- **Virtual (ISTC Members and Others)**

John Kinney	Melissa Rekeweg	Mike Dunn	Kate Hansen
Nathan Kachnavage	Nathan Shoaf	Mike Brocksmith	Henry Quesada
Stephanie Frische	Cary McElhinny	Sharmin Syed	

- **Virtual (NRCS Employees)**

Danielle Waldschmidt	Doug Walker	Keith Williams	
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- **Indiana NRCS 2025 summary- Shannon Zezula**

- Federal Employee Updates, 2025 a year in review:
 - Shannon shared a timeline of various Executive Orders and other directives that impacted federal employees and partners in 2025.
 - To date, Indiana NRCS has more than 60 fewer employees, but our commitment to quality customer service to implement conservation on the land remains steadfast.

- **Programs Topics- Curtis Knueven**

- 2025 Farm Bill Program Dollars Indiana, top funded Ranking Pools (confined livestock required to get 50% of EQIP)
 - CSP updates and funded practice types
 - Restoring Program Identity
 - EQIP – CIC will not be offered
 - CSP renewals considered with CSP classic group, and simplified with the FOTG practice codes- no enhancements
 - FY26 Ranking Pool Requirements: National Directive to have 5 ranking pools with multiple categories
 - Impacts to planners and customers to be minimal

- Easements (Cindy) –
 - FY25 ALE Accomplishments, Funded 1 new easement, onboarded IN farmland protection specialist, closed 2nd ALE – Harrison Co.
 - ACEP-ALE Ranking Updates for FY26: wording and questions, prioritizing long-term ag viability- infrastructure, structure development plans, etc.
 - WRE 2025 Accomplishments: 19 new enrollments/contracts, closed 7 easements, 18 restorations, 108 CUAs approved, onsite monitoring reviews for 391 easements, offsite monitoring reviews for 602 easements.
 - FY26 WRE: Indiana full serviced by easement acquisition branch to help with easement administration. WRE funds and Ranking updates for FY26
- **Technical Topics (Shannon)**
 - Source Water Protection Area sub-committee recommendations
 - 10% target of Farm Bill Financial Assistance funding
 - Recommendation: The Indiana State Technical Committee recommends to use the same NRCS priority Source Water Protection Area watersheds in FY26 as used in FY25 and FY24.
 - Practice User Guide Highlights
 - See the attached presentation
 - County- specific cost of living allowance rates are not applicable in FY26
 - Generalizing building costs and priorities unless otherwise noted in the practice guide.
 - Confined Livestock sub-committee recommendations- last meeting held on December 9, 2025. Summary and recommendations from meeting:
 - See the attached presentation and recommendations.
 - No dissenting comments were received from the Indiana State Technical Committee on any recommendation.
 - NRCS Recommendation: 367 Roofs and Covers - establish a priority in the practice user guide to limit the size of a roof/cover to cover manure storage industry standard sq. ft. of livestock (i.e.- 50sq.ft. per animal)