

WARRICK COUNTY SWCD

2017 - 2022

BUSINESS PLAN



# Conservation District Business Plan

## Warrick County Soil and Water Conservation District

2017 - 2022

*The greater danger for most of us lies not in setting our aim too high and falling short; but in setting our aim too low, and achieving our mark. - Michelangelo*

**Organization:** A district constitutes a governmental subdivision of the state and a public body corporate and politic exercising public powers. It is governed by five supervisors, each a resident of the county, three elected and two appointed and assisted by associate supervisors. The district received its statutory authority from Indiana District Law (Ind. Code 14-32-5).

**Function:** To provide information about soil, water and related natural resource conservation; identify and prioritize local soil and water resource concerns; and connect land users to sources of education, technical and financial assistance to implement conservation practices and technologies.

**Who We Serve:** The Warrick County SWCD serves all Warrick County landowners and landusers.

**Why:** To conserve and enhance the natural resources of Warrick County for future citizens.

**Mission Statement:** To provide educational and technical assistance to landowners and landusers as it pertains to the conservation and enhancement of the natural resources of Warrick County.

### Critical Natural Resource Issues:

- Soil Health
- Soil Erosion
- Water Quality
- Vegetative & Wildlife Management
- Urban Conservation & Education

### Critical Geographic areas:

- Reclaimed Mine Land (increasing productivity and reducing erosion)
- Highly Erodible Land (reducing soil erosion and .....
- Pigeon Creek Watershed (reduce water retention/flooding)
- Wildlife Habitat Areas (increase the availability of quality wildlife habitat throughout the county)
- Invasive Stands (reduce the population and spread of invasives)

### Statements of Intent - SWCD Goals For Each Identified Issue

***By December 2022 we will accomplish the following:***

### **Soil Health**

- 1.) Increase cover crops by 1000 acres –Continue seek funding sources for county cover crop programs and promote/educate landusers/owners on the benefits of planting cover crops.
- 2.) Increase use of no till by 500 acres and utilize the annual tillage transect to track progress.
- 3.) Provide adequate education for the operators/owners of Warrick County on appropriate soil health practices, with a special focus on operators of Highly Erodible Land.
- 4.) Increase the number of acres with nutrient management and animal waste management plans
- 5.) Promote participation in programs such as INField Advantage.
- 6.) Promote soil sampling and provide cost share as an education tool and a service to our landowners that will provide accurate nitrate nitrogen availability, ph, and other valuable soil components.

### **Soil Erosion**

- 1.) Increase enrollment in Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP), Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) and Wildlife Habitat Incentive Program (WHIP)
- 2.) Work closely with other agriculture related businesses and technical service providers to ensure quality education on best management practices and conservation planning is readily available to all Warrick County residents.
- 3.) Increase the number of number of erosion control structures implemented (WASCOB's, WW's etc.) by at least 5% each year.

### **Water Quality**

1. Increase number of acres with nutrient and pest management plans, and animal waste management plans at least 2000 acres by 2022.
2. Increase filter strips by 20 acres by 2022.
3. Utilize the soil sampling to reduce the amount of excess Nitrogen leached into Warrick County's natural water systems.
4. Provide Hoosier River Watch training and certification to interested local high schools or FFA chapters. Partner with these individuals to select local streams and conduct quarterly (at least) water testing and report results to Hoosier River Watch Program.
5. Increase the footage of livestock exclusion fencing and heavy use areas installed each year.

### **Vegetative & Wildlife Management**

1. Increase native tree canopy by 1500 trees.
2. Conduct annual or semi-annual native tree and shrub sales and provide brochures with planting information, wildlife benefits, general use and information for each species.
3. Work with DNR state nursery and district forester to provide saplings for each 3<sup>rd</sup> grader during Earth Week.
4. Investigate partnerships with local businesses and Master Gardner's to host a spring sale specializing in native pollinator and rain garden plant species.
5. Utilize the farm bill wildlife biologist to enhance at least one Warrick County business, park, or school per year with native species plantings.
6. Increase the acres of field borders, native grass and pollinator plantings through programs such as EQIP and CRP.
7. Decrease the population of invasive species throughout the county and provide educational workshops on identification and management.

### **Urban Conservation & Education**

1. Work closely with Warrick County Stormwater Department to create and implement a required training for contractors before SWPPP approval.
2. Explore and collaborate with non-traditional partners throughout the county to supply education and technical assistance to residents on urban conservation issues and programs.
3. Utilize the Urban Conservationist position to create and manage urban programs, such as the Back Yard Conservation Program and projects such as increasing the use of rain barrels and rain gardens to slow stormwater runoff.
4. Maintain current partnership with Joshua Academy with the intention of initiating a similar startup program in Warrick County School Systems.

**Additional Staffing Needs to Fulfill SWCD Business Plan:**

Urban Conservationist

**Additional Equipment Needs to Fulfill SWCD Business Plan:**

**Key Individuals/Agencies to Reach for Program Success:**

Warrick County Commissioners	Natural Resources Conservation Service
Warrick County Councilmen	Farm Service Agency
Warrick County Foundation	IN State Department of Agriculture
Local & State Legislators	IN Department of Environmental Management
Conservation Clubs	IN Department of Natural Resources
Warrick County Stormwater Department	Purdue Cooperative Extension Service
FFA	ALCOA Foundation
Joshua Academy	Local Technical Service Providers and Contractors
Vo-Ag Teachers	Quail Unlimited
Local businesses	Pheasants Forever
Local Radio Stations	Other Local SWCDs
Local Newspapers	Warrick Trails
The Nature Conservancy	IDNR Division of Fish and Wildlife
Robins Nest	Master Gardner
Warrick County Younger Farmers	Toyota
Veolia Water	

**Key Strategies**

**Information\Education**

The district will provide conservation information and education to the public by utilizing:

- Newsletters and other publications
- Website
- Technical Workshops
- Field Days related to the Critical Natural Resource Issues
- Annual Meeting
- Customer Service (daily contacts, phone calls, soil survey, tree planting information)
- FaceBook
- Placing an Annual Report in local papers
- Setup information booths at local fairs and county events
- Work with schools/libraries to setup Earth Week Activities

## **Marketing**

The district will reach out to the public through:

- Website
- Public Releases to the local media
- Public Presentation
- Newsletters and postcards
- Warrick County Fair
- Presenting business plan to the public
- Sponsorships and Contests (poster contest, Yield contest, Science fairs etc.)
- Promoting conservation programs
- FaceBook

## **Demonstrations**

- No-Till and Cover Crop demonstrations
- Nutrient and Pesticide Application
- Forage Management
- Forest Management
- Pond Management
- Urban Storm water Management
- Soil Testing
- Many more....

## **Technical Assistance**

The District can assist the public:

- One on one conservation planning and application assistance
- Survey, design and installation assistance by regional tech team
- Offering workshops where land owners can get certifications (ex. Spraying certification)
- Urban Conservation (Rule 5 & County Ordinances)

## **Financial Assistance**

- Federal conservation programs (i.e. farm bill programs)
- State conservation cost share/incentive grants
- Local (County and SWCD) funding
- Funding from Cooperate Sources (Alcoa, Toyota)

## **Funding**

- State Grants (Clean Water Indiana)
- Other grants, foundations, etc.
- NRCS (i.e. phones, computer, networking services)
- County appropriations
- Partnership Programs
- Equipment rental
- Drink machine

- Advertising

### **Accountability-Measuring Success**

- Tracking Annual Plan of Work
- Annual Report
- NRCS progress report
- Leveraging Sheet

### **Volunteers**

- Earth Team Volunteers
- Supervisors
- Associate Members
- FFA Chapters
- College Students

*This Soil and Water Conservation District Business Plan was completed by the Warrick County SWCD with the assistance of SWCD staff and supporting conservation agency partners and individuals on January, 2017.*