

SWCDs Win District Showcase Award



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When the Warrick, Vanderburgh, Posey, & Gibson County SWCDs banded together last fall to introduce a multi-county cover crop initiative, the last thing anyone thought was that their joint conservation project would be one of four recognized in the State by the Indiana Conservation Partnership (ICP) consisting of the Indiana Association Soil & Water Conservation Districts (IASWCD), Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS), Indiana Department Environmental Management (IDEM), Indiana Department Natural

Resources (IDNR), Indian State Department Agriculture (ISDA), Perdue Extension, and the Indiana Farm Bureau (IFB). When the notification came, staff members of these four Districts met to get a program ready for an official visit by the ICP.

On November 3rd approximately 40 people, mostly representatives of the ICP, paid a visit to the Ziliak Farm near Haubstadt in SW Indiana to view the project and talk to District representatives about this and future projects aimed at reducing nutrient and pesticide runoff to improve water quality.

Cost-share funds from a Clean Water Indiana grant matched with the Districts' own budgets were offered to encourage producers to have their highly erodible fields seeded from the air or conventional seeding into standing crops to prevent erosion over the winter months. Producers in all four Districts took advantage of the program and over 3,100 acres of cover crops were seeded by plane or conventional seeding, preventing about 15,000 tons of topsoil from leaving their fields after harvest.

The SWCDs' staffs would like express their sincere thanks to the ICP and to all who helped to make their visit a pleasurable one (in spite of the day-long rain!). Special thanks to the Ziliak family for the use of their farm shop and all the work they did in setting up for the event, to the Princeton media (newspaper and radio), NRCS and ISDA staff, Mr. Larry Ordner (representing Sen. Lugar's office), Warrick County Commissioner and farmer Tim Mosbey, District Supervisors from Vanderburgh, Posey, and Gibson SWCDs, and last but not least, the one and only Darrell Rice who came out of retirement to be our Master of Ceremonies.

Representatives of these four SWCDs will be presented with a beautiful plaque at the IASWCD's Annual Conference in January, which by the way, will be the second one received by this team of SWCDs since the District Showcase Award's inception in 2008. We're looking forward to our next multi-county project!