

A photograph of three men in a grassy field. The man on the left wears a white cap and a pink shirt, holding a surveying instrument. The man in the center wears a green shirt and blue jeans, looking at the instrument. The man on the right wears a grey shirt and blue jeans, holding a red bicycle. A tall surveying pole is in the center.

Indiana Conservation Partnership Training and Certification Program

Laura Fribley
District Support Specialist
Indiana State Department of Agriculture

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Indiana Conservation Partnership (ICP)

- Farm Services Agency
- Indiana Association of Soil and Water Conservation Districts
- Indiana Department of Environmental Management
- Indiana Department of Natural Resources
- Indiana State Department of Agriculture
- Natural Resources Conservation Service
- Purdue University Cooperative Extension Service
- State Soil Conservation Board



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Planting the Seed

- Summer 2009 NASCA webinar “Training and Certification Programs for Conservation District Technical Employees”
- Indiana selected as pilot state to receive assistance from NASCA to develop a similar program
- September 2009: Ray Ledgerwood facilitated a Work Session



September Work Session

- 18 individuals representing six ICP organizations
- Objective: envision, discuss, and identify needs and objectives and create a plan for partner technical employee training, certification and development
- Concept Development Group identified to create “White Paper”



White Paper Key Elements

- Description of Need and Value
- Necessary Elements
 - Evaluation of need, budget, trainers, etc.
 - Certification system, job approval authority, etc.
- Timeline
- Immediate Next Steps
 - Adoption of concept by ICP Leadership
 - Written agreement between ICP
 - Appointment of team to develop program



Written Agreement

Purpose: “This agreement provides the framework to jointly carry out a consistent training and certification program resulting in a highly skilled workforce that efficiently meets the technical assistance needs of the Indiana Conservation Partnership’s (ICP) customers based on multiple levels or “tiers” of abilities, skills and knowledge. Any ICP employee trained and certified through this program will be recognized as competent by every agency in the ICP.”



Written Agreement

Roles & Responsibilities of Partners:

- Integrate individual position descriptions with ICP abilities, skills and knowledge levels. Supervisors will ensure that their agency Position Descriptions are in place and will work with employees to ensure expected abilities, skills, and knowledge needs are identified in individual training plans.
- Ensure long term sustainability of this effort by appointing members to serve on the ICP Training and Certification Program Team
- Commit available human and financial resources to provide for individual training needs
- Develop and utilize a mutually acceptable training needs inventory system



Written Agreement

Roles & Responsibilities of Partners (continued):

- Develop and utilize individual training plans for each employee and support their participation in the training program
- Jointly develop course design and curriculum
- Jointly develop certification criteria and Job Approval Authority
- Jointly develop and maintain a database that tracks employees' identified abilities, skills and knowledge certifications



Written Agreement

Roles & Responsibilities of Partners (continued):

- Jointly provide instruction, mentoring, facilities, etc. when possible
- Develop and utilize modern training concepts- i.e. distance learning, webinars, video conferences, etc.
- Coordinate and maintain consistent communications with all ICP employees to ensure complete understanding and implementation of this initiative
- This agreement will be reviewed annually by the ICP Leaders and locally at Soil and Water Conservation District Board Meetings



Key Next Steps

- Communication
- Inventory of employee skills and needs
- Budget
- Development of core competency framework

A photograph of three men in a grassy field. The man on the left wears a white cap and a pink shirt, holding a yellow level. The man in the center wears a green shirt and is looking down at something in his hands. The man on the right wears a grey shirt and is holding a red rope. A tall surveying pole is in the center. The background is a grassy field with some trees in the distance.

Questions?

Laura Fribley
District Support Specialist
Indiana State Department of Agriculture
lfribley@isda.in.gov
(812) 752-2269 x 104