



**FIVE YEAR STRATEGIC PLAN  
2018-2022**

**Adopted July 2, 2019**

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## Message from the Board

The Clinton County Soil and Water Conservation District (CCSWCD) Board of Supervisors and staff proudly present the five-year Strategic Business Plan 2018-2022. The plan is based on the input of community leaders, partner organizations, citizens, and the Board and staff whose combined knowledge and expertise resulted in six well defined goals that will guide the Districts programs and initiatives over the next five years and well into the future. The Strategic Plan focuses on the challenges of protecting and improving water quality, soil health, habitat for wildlife and helping working lands become more productive. The plan details how the CCSWCD will work collaboratively with our partners and the stakeholders (the community) to implement sustainable solutions to conserve and enhance natural resources through technical assistance, financial assistance and education. The Strategic Plan will guide us as we engage the people of Clinton County to restore and protect our precious soil, water, wildlife and forest resources.

## Timeframe of the Plan

The timeframe for this document will be through calendar year 2022. As a general rule, comprehensive plans should be reviewed every five years. However, annual evaluations will occur to ensure that changing landscapes and resource concerns may warrant a revision to the Plan.

## The Plan

The SWCD distributed a survey to a diverse group of community members requesting assistance in the identification of local natural resource concerns in the community. This plan is representative of the resource concerns identified and it is our hope that accomplishments resulting from putting the Plan into action will result in their vision being fulfilled. The District Supervisors and Staff are equally committed to providing innovative and comprehensive programs to put voluntary conservation on the ground.

## Introduction

### Organization

The Clinton County Soil and Water Conservation District is one of 92 conservation districts in the State of Indiana. Conservation Districts are legal subdivisions of state and local government. Although they are a form of local government, they have no regulatory authority. It is a public body who exercises public powers. The district receives its statutory authority from Indiana District Law (Indiana Code 14-32-5-1).

The Clinton County Soil and Water Conservation District was organized through a public referendum held March 27, 1967.

The Clinton SWCD employs two full-time staff and one part-time staff person and are under the supervision of the District Administrator who reports to the Board of Supervisors.

### Purpose

The Soil and Water Conservation District is responsible for the leadership in conserving and protecting soil and water related resources within Clinton County. The CCSWCD provides information about soil, water and related natural resource conservation; identifies and prioritizes local soil and water resource concerns; and connects land users to sources of education, technical and financial assistance to implement conservation practices and technologies.

## **Who We Serve**

The Clinton County Soil and Water Conservation District serves county landowners and users, business, industry and local units of government. Soil and Water Conservation Districts are uniquely positioned to bring a critical environmental perspective to land use and economic development decisions. Soil and water/quality of life—they go hand-in-hand—clearly defining the health and sustainability of Indiana’s rural and urban communities. A healthy, sustainable and vibrant community begins with the wise management of natural resources.

## **Our Mission**

To create an environment through leadership, cooperation, and education, in which citizens wisely use and enhance natural resources.

## **Governance**

The official governing body of a district consists of five supervisors, each a resident of the county, three are elected at the local Annual Meeting of land occupiers and two are appointed by the State Soil Conservation Board based on recommendations from the governing board of the District. Supervisors serve as public officials responsible to the SWCD and to the State and are required to subscribe to a standard public oath of office.

Associate Supervisors are non-voting members of the District Board. They serve as advisors and representatives to the Board of Supervisors. Serving as an Associate Supervisor offers a way for individuals to become involved and learn about District operations, broaden community input to the District, and to expand District programs.

## **Geographic Area**

According to the U.S. Census Bureau, the county has a total area of 405.25 square miles {260,480 acres} of which 405.07 square miles, or 99.6% is land and 0.18 square miles , or 0.04%, is water. It is located within the glaciated portion of Indiana where advance and retreat of the glaciers deposited large amounts of pulverized rock material called drift. Clinton County soils formed mainly from till (material deposited directly by glaciers with a minimum amount of water action), outwash (material deposited by running water from melting glaciers), and loess (fine grained particles deposited by wind). Due to the processes of erosion, deposition, flooding and land management by humans Clinton County is one of the most agriculturally productive areas in the state of Indiana.

Approximately 244,813 acres or 94.4% of the area is farmland. Approximately 6,106 acres are designated wetlands according to the National Wetlands Inventory (1980). This represents about 2.3% of the total area and most wetlands are wooded.

Clinton County lies within two major watersheds of Indiana: The Wildcat Creek (HUC05120107) watershed and the Sugar Creek (HUC 05120110) watershed. Both flow into the Wabash River watershed, which is the largest watershed in Indiana. The Middle Fork of Wildcat Creek and its tributaries drain the northern section of Clinton County. The South Fork of Wildcat Creek and its tributaries, including Kilmore Creek, drain the middle section of the county. Sugar Creek and its tributary Little Potato Creek drain the southern section of the county. Approximately .18 square miles are designated water which includes perennial streams, regulated drainage, ponds and lakes. The S. Fork Wildcat has been identified by the Natural Resource Commission as a Wild and Scenic River System in the State of Indiana.

In Clinton County, 100% of the population uses ground water or water wells for drinking water. About 63% of Clinton County households use ground water supplied by public water systems.

37% use private water wells to supply their drinking water. Local ground water comes from glacial deposits of sand and gravel aquifers. Sand and gravel aquifers have relatively good potential for water yield because of the rate of water movement through these materials is relatively fast. Land use within the recharge areas can affect the quantity and quality of the well water.

The largest municipal unit is Frankfort with a population of 15,951. Other small towns include Rossville, Mulberry, Michigantown, Kirklin and Colfax with a combined population of 4,780. More than twenty unincorporated towns are scattered across the county. The total county population is 32,457. The racial makeup of the county is 97.6% white/Caucasian 0.7% black or African American, 0.3% Asian, 0.5% American Indian and 0.9% from other races. Census data indicates that 15.4% of respondents indicated that they were of Latino/Hispanic origin.

Critical Geographic Areas: Wildcat Creek Watershed HUC05120107  
Sugar Creek Watershed HUC05120110  
Groundwater  
Highly Erodible Land  
Wetlands  
Forested Acres

Resources:

[www.in.gov/dwd](http://www.in.gov/dwd)

[www.agcensus.usda.gov](http://www.agcensus.usda.gov)

<https://websoilsurvey.nrcs.usda.gov/>

## Critical Natural Resource Concerns:

### Degraded Soil Quality (low organic matter and biological activity)

- Soil erosion
- Excessive cropland tillage practices
- Lack of cover crops
- Failure to establish vegetation during construction activities
- Inadequate erosion and sediment control practices on construction sites
- Soil Productivity
- Improving soil resiliency

### Degraded Surface Water Quality (rivers, streams, lakes and ponds)

- Excessive sedimentation
- Nutrients
- Pesticides
- E. coli – high levels due to failing or non-existent septic systems and animal waste
- Surface water run-off during storm events
- Nutrient management
- Biological Impairments

## Groundwater Quality/Quantity

- Uncapped abandoned water wells
- Inadequate wellhead protection
- Failing septic systems
- Nutrient management
- Irrigation management

## Land Use Planning and Development

- Loss of prime farmland
- Loss of forested lands
- Loss of wildlife habitat
- Wind development
- Drainage Water Management

## Forest/Wildlife/Non-Cultivated Land

- Declining forest woodlots
- Pollinator species
- Invasive species
- Diversity of plant and animal species

### GOAL A. Soil Quality/Soil Health

**Soil Health - a healthy soil is fundamental to all facets of environmental quality. The CCSWCD is committed to protecting, enhancing, and restoring the biological function and physical capabilities of our soils through the use of a system of practices such as cover crops, reduced tillage, and nutrient management.**

#### Key Strategies:

- A-1** Secure funding for conservation technical assistance and conservation programs
- A-2** Collaborate with traditional and non-traditional partners to secure sources of funding to increase technical assistance to provide training, education, tools and demonstrations that lead to a better understanding of the need to control erosion and runoff while maintaining soil productivity
- A-3** Develop, publish, and/or distribute technical publications that identify and explain conservation management practices.
- A-4** Provide education and outreach programs to create landowner/operator awareness of District programs and conservation program opportunities to protect and enhance soil and water resources.

<u>Project/Activity/Who</u>	<u>Proposed Start Date</u>	<u>Proposed Completion Date</u>
Research potential sources of funding to support conservation programs. Staff/Supervisors/Partners	2018	Ongoing
Host one soil health workshop/field day annually. Staff/Partners	2018	Annually
Partner with FFA chapter, school group or private landowner to establish a demonstration plot. Staff/FFA/Agri-businesses	2018	Ongoing
Annually, increase the number of acres planted to cover crops by 500 acres.	2018	Annually

SWCD Staff/ICP

Work with 15 producers to achieve an integrated soil health system of practices.	2018	2022
Work with producers to increase “cover” including cover crops, filter strips, grassed waterways, etc. as determined by transect data. Staff/ICP	2018	Annually
Develop an education and outreach campaign to promote soil health to small farm owners and urban through demonstrations, newsletter mailings and social media posts. SWCD Staff	2018	Ongoing
Distribute quarterly newsletters featuring soil health Information. SWCD staff	2018	Ongoing
Post information on programs and services to media (ie. – Facebook, website) weekly. SWCD staff	2018	Ongoing
Bring in a soil health leader to speak at county event annually and track attendance. SWCD/NRCS/ CES/CCSI	2018	Annually
Coordinate with local media (all sources) to feature District programs, initiatives and education and outreach opportunities. SWCD staff	2018	Ongoing
Partner with Purdue Extension to host soil judging contest for high school aged students. SWCD/CES/NRCS	2018	Annually
Partner with Farm Bureau, Inc. to host Farm Ed. Cons. Camp for fourth grade students county-wide. SWCD/Farm Bureau, Inc./Agri-business	2018	Annually
Support regional and state Indiana Envirothon competition for high-school age students. SWCD Staff/Supervisors	2018	Annually
Provide 8 education and outreach programs to the public on soil related topics annually and track attendance. SWCD Staff	2018	Annually
Provide eight soils education programs to students in Grades K-12. SWCD Staff	2019	Annually

Promote the Conservation Cropping System Initiative and training opportunities. Staff/Supervisors/CCSI	2018	Ongoing
Distribute newsletters, direct mailings highlighting soil health principles to state and local elected officials. SWCD Staff/Supervisors	2019	Ongoing
Complete a spring and fall transect SWCD Staff/Supervisors/CES/ISDA/FSA	2019	Annually

**Goal B. Improve surface water quality in rivers, lakes, streams and ponds**  
**Improvement of Surface Water Quality - surface waters (e.g. streams, creeks, ponds, wetlands, etc.) provide Clinton County residents with a variety of benefits such as drainage and floodwater storage, groundwater recharge and irrigation sources, filtering of pollutants, and recreational opportunities. The CCSWCD supports the management of our surface waters based on a watershed approach that allows for continual water quality monitoring and conservation targeting based on hydrologically defined boundaries.**

**Key Strategies:**

- B-1** Strategically focus on priority watersheds and target funding sources to these areas.
- B-2** Provide education and outreach to landowners and landusers on best management practices to restore, protect and conserve soil and water resources.
- B-3** Develop watershed management plans for all sub-watersheds and implement the goals outlined in completed plans.
- B-4** Engage citizens of all ages in learning the science and importance of stewardship of community natural resources.

<b><u>Project/Activity</u></b>	<b><u>Proposed Start Date</u></b>	<b><u>Proposed Completion Date</u></b>
<b><u>Who</u></b> Submit a 319 application requesting funds to complete a watershed mgmt. plan in sub-watersheds in the Sugar Creek. SWCD/SWCD/Watershed Groups	2018	2022
Submit a LARE proposal for Land Treatment based on recommendations in the Sugar Creek LARE Diagnostic Study SWCD/Partners	2018	Annually
Secure funding to implement the goals identified in completed watershed management plans in the Sugar Creek and Wildcat sub-watersheds SWCD/IDNR/IDEM/ISDA/Watershed Groups	2018	2022
Host two workshops for rural residents on septic system SWCD/CES/Health Dept./Private Contractors	2018	2022
Support long term sampling locations for monitoring priority watersheds. SWCD/WREC/RC&D/Watershed Groups	2018	2022



Support city stormwater efforts at identifying and quantifying storm water pollutants by participating in annual MS4 permit review. SWCD/MS4 City of Frankfort	2018	2022
Host two conservation drainage workshops to highlight impact and management of intensive tiling. SWCD/Purdue/Surveyor/Contractors	2018	2022
Establish one on-farm drainage water management system. Staff/NRCS/ICP	2018	2022
Provide resources to support INfield Advantage Grower group and peer-to-peer sharing of data, information and practices to improve soil health and improve water quality. SWCD staff/ISDA/Local Producers	2018	2022
Complete one urban stormwater education event annually. SWCD staff/MS4 City of Frankfort	2018	Annually
Provide nutrient management technical assistance in critically defined watershed areas. SWCD staff/Partners/ICP	2018	2022
Provide technical assistance for soil health practices. SWCD staff/ICP/CCSI	2018	2022
Provide technical assistance to 10 livestock producers to establish vegetative treatment areas. SWCD Staff/ICP	2018	2022
Complete conservation planning with 20 producers annually. SWCD Staff/NRCS/ISDA	2018	2022
Conduct native tree and plant sale annually. SWCD Staff/Volunteers	2018	2022
Provide and/or upgrade rental equipment to improve privately and publicly owned natural resources. SWCD staff/ Supervisors/Pheasants Forever Chapter	2018	2022
Participate in 4 public events annually to increase public awareness of natural resources conservation. SWCD Staff/Supervisors	2018	2022
Collaborate and/or coordinate efforts to establish recreational corridors along waterways. SWCD staff/supervisors/City of Frankfort/County Commissioners/Land Trusts	2018	2022
Provide trained staff to review 100% of Rule 5 Plans submitted in the county. SWCD staff/Supervisors/IDEM	2018	2022



**Goal C. Protection of Groundwater**

**Groundwater Quality - abundant, fresh, clean water is necessary for all life. The CCSWCD will work to provide the information and resources to local residents and stakeholders which will allow for the protection and enhancement of our groundwater supplies.**

**Key Strategies:**

- C-1** Educate public on groundwater contamination and the benefits of identifying and decommissioning abandoned water wells.
- C-2** Provide cost-share to landowners to decommission abandoned water wells.
- C-3** Work cooperatively with Wildcat Solid Waste District, County Health Department, Farm Bureau, Inc. and Purdue Extension Service to provide public education and outreach.
- C-4** Increase awareness of soil and water conservation to students across the county.

<b><u>Project/Activity</u></b>	<b><u>Proposed Start Date</u></b>	<b><u>Proposed Completion Date</u></b>
<b><u>Who</u></b> Establish funding source to provide financial assistance program for abandoned water well decommissioning. Supervisors/Partners	2018	Ongoing
Identify and decommission five abandoned water wells annually.	2018	Annually
Develop a private water well testing program. SWCD/Ext./Farm Bureau, Inc./Health Dept.	2019	2022
Provide well testing kits for 25 rural homeowners landowners per year. SWCD/Ext./ Health Dept./Farm Bureau, Inc.	2019	2022
Educate and promote the use of cover crops around well heads in agricultural fields through publications and media releases. SWCD staff/ICP	2018	Ongoing
Create awareness of resource mgmt. of groundwater supply to county stakeholders through publications, social media and direct contacts. SWCD Staff/ICP	2018	Ongoing

Create awareness through publications and media releases on abandoned water wells and the risks to groundwater supply. 2018 Ongoing  
 SWCD staff/CES/Health Dept.

Provide two programs on groundwater protection. 2019 2022  
 SWCD Staff/Board of Health/CES

**Goal D. Increase awareness of the importance of managing natural resources during land use planning and development.**

**Land Use Planning and Development - the wise use and management of our public and private lands is essential to ensure a sustainable future for Clinton County. The CCSWCD is committed to providing technical assistance and planning support to public officials and county residents on the management of natural resources.**

**Key Strategies:**

**D-1** Work with partners to promote the development of educational materials to educate the public and those involved with development or land use planning.

**D-2** Develop a technical resource guide that addresses soils, water quality, forestry and wildlife habitat management, water (groundwater and surface water), land use planning considerations, erosion control, water management, on-site waste systems, etc. to distribute to the public.

**D-3** Work with partners to provide workshops and training experiences for those involved in or concerned with land use and/or development.

**D-4** Collaborate with WECS for future wind development in the county.

**D-5** Support the USDA- NRCS in their efforts to assist landowners with conservation needs and with meeting the provisions of the Farm Bill.

<b><u>Project/Activity</u></b> <b><u>Who</u></b>	<b><u>Proposed Start Date</u></b>	<b><u>Proposed Completion Date</u></b>
Provide Commissioners with oral presentation on landfill reviews conducted semi-annually SWCD Staff/Supervisors	2018	Annually
Develop a "drainage" handbook to educate landowners on where to go for assistance on drainage issues SWCD Staff/Surveyor	2018	2022
Cooperate with MS4 to ensure that Rule 13 plan reviews are completed. Explore further partner opportunities.	2018	Ongoing
Host one workshop for 25 landowners and public officials on wetland regulations, compliance and Farm Bill programs	2018	2022
Seek opportunities to partner with Surveyor/Drainage Board to stabilize banks of regulated drains. SWCD Staff/Surveyor/Drainage Board	2018	Ongoing
Promote the SWCD's ability to hold conservation easements through publications and direct contact. SWCD staff/Supervisors	2018	Ongoing
Host two workshops to educate public officials and landowners/landusers on how to identify and control invasive plants species.	2019	2021

SWCD Staff/CISMA/ICP

Cooperate with city and county government to incorporate conservation practices and technologies in future (re)development. Staff/Supervisors/ICP	2018	Ongoing
Conduct two tours of installed conservation practices for government officials and local citizens. SWCD Staff/Supervisors/ICP	2019	2022
Provide technical support to Plan Commission for plat reviews. SWCD Staff/APC	2018	2022

**Goal E. Provide information and assistance to increase the quantity and quality of woodlands and wildlands Forest/Wildlife/Non-Cultivated Land - a diverse and healthy landscape is one which is best suited for thriving in an ever-changing world. The CCSWCD recognizes the importance of “non-developed” land uses and will work to provide resources and assistance to support these areas.**

**Key Strategies:**

- E-1** Work with partners to plan and host field days for private landowners/landusers to demonstrate the importance of managing forest lands/woodlots/parks and the long-term benefits of forestry.
- E-2** Pursue funding sources to provide landowners/landusers technical and financial assistance to support forestry resources and urban forestry programs.
- E-3** Work with local governing bodies to promote the benefits of urban forestry.
- E-4** Promote the planting of native trees and plants and the control of invasive plants through workshops, demonstrations, and the development and distribution of educational materials.
- E-5** Collaborate with partners to increase areas that support habitat for pollinator species.

<b><u>Project/Activity</u></b>	<b><u>Proposed Start Date</u></b>	<b><u>Proposed Completion Date</u></b>
<b><u>Who</u></b> Host two demonstrations or field days to educate 100 landowners about identification of invasive plants and control methods. Staff/IDNR/TNC/Purdue Extension/CISMA	2019	2022
Host one forestry workshop to educate 50 woodland owners on management practices. SWCD/IDNR/NRCS/CES	2020	2020
Identify possible funding opportunities or initiatives to plant trees in the community SWCD/City/County/Parks Dept./IDNR	2018	Ongoing
Participate in the formation of a Cooperative Invasive Species Management Area (CISMA). SWCD/CES/RC&D's/adjacent counties	2018	Ongoing
Identify and map invasive species occurrences throughout	2018	Ongoing

Clinton County.

Staff/CES/TNC/RC&D

Increase wooded acres participating in the classified forest and wildlands program by 25% by 2022 Staff/District Forester/Private Forestry Consultants	2018	2022
Promote SWCD's ability to hold conservation easements through newsletter, publications and direct contact. SWCD Staff/Supervisors	2018	2022
Collaborate with land trusts to identify tracts of land to enroll in land trusts. Staff, TNC, NICHES	2018	2022
Support habitat enhancement projects for pollinators and wildlife. SWCD staff/ICP/Pheasants Forever Chapter	2018	2022
Conduct native tree and plant sale annually. SWCD Staff/Volunteers	2018	2022
Provide free native tree seedlings and educational materials to the public annually. SWCD staff/Volunteers	2018	Annually





**Goal F. Increase District Capacity**

**Key Strategies:**

- F-1** The CCSWCD operational and program budget will be sustainably funded from state and local government.
- F-2** Support efforts of ISDA, DSC and IASWCD to secure a dedicated source of funding for District initiatives.
- F-3** Research funding opportunities from federal, state and local and private grant programs (i.e. - LARE, 319, CWI, SARE, etc.)
- F-4** Recruit and retain qualified and well-trained supervisors and staff to work collaboratively to set policy and direction for the CCSWCD.

<u>Project/Activity</u>	<u>Proposed Start Date</u>	<u>Proposed Completion Date</u>
<u>Who</u> Host two conservation tours for elected officials to showcase conservation practices and District programs and initiatives. SWCD Staff/Supervisors/ICP	2018	2022
Attend Legislative Breakfast annually. SWCD Staff/Supervisors	2018	Annually
Contact legislators to provide comments on important important conservation issues being considered. SWCD Staff/Supervisors	2018	Ongoing
Staff will be trained in grant writing. SWCD Staff	2018	Ongoing
Draft annually a comprehensive report including an accounting of the financial, technical and educational activities of the year. SWCD Staff/Supervisors	2018	Annually

Increase capacity by showing a 5% increase in first-time adopters participating in programs annually. SWCD Staff/Supervisors/ICP	2018	2022
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**F2-1 Increase staff and/or volunteers to assist with programs administration**

<u>Project/Activity</u> <u>Who</u>	<u>Proposed Start Date</u>	<u>Proposed Completion Date</u>
Research opportunities for summer intern to assist with implementing special projects. or programs. SWCD/Ivy Tech/Purdue/Workforce Development	2018	2022
Research opportunities to enter into contribution agreements to increase District capacity. SWCD/IASWCD/NRCS/NACD	2018	2022
Recruit individuals for the Earth Team volunteer program. SWCD/NRCS	2018	Ongoing

## Adoption Statement

The 2018-2022 Strategic Business Plan was adopted by action of the Clinton County Soil and Water Conservation District on July 2, 2019.

Clint Orr, Chairman	
David Beard, Vice Chairman	
Jerry Batts, Supervisor	
Dustin Johnson, Supervisor	
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*The Clinton County Soil and Water Conservation District and our partnering organizations are equal opportunity providers and employers.*