

Fiscal Year 2025 Accomplishments Report

OCTOBER 1, 2024 TO SEPTEMBER 30, 2025





“ The Conservation of natural resources is the key to the future. It is the key to the safety and prosperity of the American people, and all the people of the world, for all time to come. The very existence of our Nation, and of all the rest, depends on conserving the resources which are the foundations of its life. ”

— From “The Birth of Conservation” in the book
Breaking New Ground by Gifford Pinchot in 1947

Executive Summary

The Southern Indiana Sentinel Landscape (SISL) is a collaborative partnership advancing the pace and scale of conservation throughout a three and a half million-acre swath of south-central Indiana to protect military missions on four critical installations and ranges.

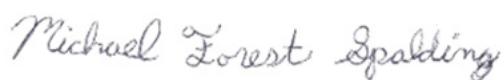
Established in 2013, the Sentinel Landscapes Partnership enhances collaboration among the Department of War, Department of Interior, the U.S. Department of Agriculture, and other government and private sector partners for measures that protect military lands and airspace from incompatible development, regulatory restrictions, and threats to military installation resilience, while also promoting conservation, agriculture, forestry, outdoor recreation, and the health of natural resources and of the rural economy.

In February 2022, the Sentinel Landscapes Partnership Federal Coordinating Committee designated SISL, at the time one of only ten in the country. This designation recognizes the significance of southern Indiana's four military installations and the landscape's rich natural and agricultural heritage.

The Southern Indiana Sentinel Landscape, coordinated by the Conservation Law Center at Indiana University's Maurer School of Law, includes federal agencies, state and local governments, and non-governmental organizations who work with private and public landowners to advance sustainable land management practices for natural resource, agricultural, and military interests.

The twelve-member Landscape Coordinating Committee (LCC) serves as the coordination and oversight body for the Southern Indiana Sentinel Landscape partnership. The LCC is composed of the following partners: Indiana Natural Resources Conservation Service, US Forest Service Hoosier National Forest, Department of Interior US Fish and Wildlife Service, Indiana National Guard, US Navy, Conservation Law Center, Indiana Association of Soil and Water Conservation Districts, Indiana State Department of Agriculture, Indiana Department of Natural Resources, Indiana Chapter of The Nature Conservancy, Sycamore Land Trust, and Central Indiana Land Trust. This LCC partnership is memorialized through a charter, which was most recently executed on February 26, 2026.

This accomplishment report for Fiscal Year 2025 (October 1, 2024 through September 30, 2025) highlights the partnership's progress towards the SISL Strategic Plan 2024-2027. We examine at length the Busseron Creek Fish and Wildlife Area and the Indiana Prescribed Fire Legislation, our two largest achievements to date. We also discuss our three most successful supported projects: Hoosiers for Native Habitat, Ready-Set-Fire in White Oak Woodlands, and Forests to Faucets. This report represents a great deal of work by our dedicated partners to achieve more together in partnership than we could have individually. Enjoy reading!



Michael Spalding

Coordinator, Southern Indiana Sentinel Landscape
Conservation Law Center

Our strategic plan outlined five goals:

Protect Military Missions

Preserve and protect mission readiness, operations, and testing/training capabilities on all military lands and ranges within the Southern Indiana Sentinel Landscape



Sustainable Farming and Forestry

Support sustainable farming and forestry practices to conserve rural working lands for environmental, ecological, and economical benefits.



Restore and Sustain Ecosystems

Restore and sustain ecosystems, improving function while preparing for ongoing and future challenges and ensuring a healthy environment and clean water.



People and Partnerships

Ensure thriving human communities within the landscape taking into account needs for access to safe and healthy food, sustainable housing and commercial development, job security, and cultural resources.



Reduce Impacts from Extreme Weather

Address weather-related impacts through built infrastructure and nature-based solutions



How does SISL operate to meet our goals?

Sentinel Driven

The coordinator or partnership leads the effort to pursue a project and leads or coordinates it through completion, or the funding source is tied to the Sentinel Landscape Partnership.

Sentinel Participated

Projects that may have happened without SISL but were bolstered by SISL's participation.

Sentinel Supported

The Sentinel Landscape Coordinator is involved in proposal drafting and reviewing. Consideration to the project approval may have been given through SISL Under Section 2693 of the Fiscal Year 2024 National Defense Authorization Act, whereby the Secretary of Agriculture, the Secretary of the Interior, and the heads of other Federal agencies which become full partners in the Sentinel Landscapes Partnership are encouraged to give any owners and managers of land within a designated sentinel landscape "priority consideration for participation in any easement, grant, or assistance program administered by that Secretary."

Sentinel Approved

Basic approval or partnering including letters of support. These are projects for which SISL did not directly help pursue or write a proposal.

Business as Usual

Those activities and accomplishments that partners are doing within SISL but are occurring without any SISL involvement.





Sentinel Driven Projects

Busseron Creek Fish and Wildlife Area Transferred to DNR and Opened to the Public



3,950 ACRES PROTECTED

In November 2022, SISL identified a real estate listing for a 191-acre property for sale in the heart of this nearly 4,000-acre contiguous land holding. If this piece had sold, the entire property would have been fractured, likely permanently. SISL swiftly engaged partners The Conservation Fund (TCF) and the Indiana Chapter of The Nature Conservancy (TNC) to assist. Indiana Department of Natural Resources Division of Fish and Wildlife (DNR) enthusiastically supported being the eventual owners of this property. Thanks to the supportive listing agent from Kurtz Auction and Realty, SISL was able to meet with key leadership from Peabody, who agreed to pull the property off the open market. This allowed time for the partnership to secure the following commitments in funding: \$910,000 from the Department of War's Readiness and Environmental Protection Integration Program (REPI) accessed through Naval Weapons Station Crane (NWS Crane); \$600,000 from Walmart's Acres for America program through the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation (NFWF); \$1,900,000 from a State of Indiana Budget Appropriation; \$9,261,750 from the US Fish and Wildlife Service's (USFWS) Wildlife and Sport Fish Restoration program (WSFR); and a \$300,000 grant from the TNC.

TCF purchased the land from Peabody (American Land Holdings of Indiana Inc.) in May 2024. This land was formerly part of the beloved DNR Minnehaha Fish and Wildlife Area. That property was available for public recreation through a lease from 1985 until 2016, when it permanently closed. These nearly 4,000 were set to be once again, and permanently this time, available for public outdoor recreation and to buffer NWS Crane's Lake Glendora Test Facility. TCF transferred the property to DNR in December 2024.

DNR officially opened the permanently protected land in Sullivan County for visitors to enjoy on April 16, 2025. Known as Busseron Creek Fish & Wildlife Area (FWA), the property includes forests, woodlands, marshes, swamps, lakes, and grasslands, all providing key habitat for a diversity of wildlife. DNR established hunting units, parking areas, and access trails and will continue adding infrastructure to improve visitor accessibility on site. The property is a prime spot for wildlife viewing, hunting, trapping, fishing, and foraging.

The property is located near the Lake Glendora Test Facility, an area of NWS Crane operated by NSWC, Crane Division. The facility's mission is to support proof of concept testing for risk reduction purposes prior to full scale or open water testing. To provide an undeveloped land buffer near the military facility, safeguard key natural resources, and ensure compatible land use near the defense operations, the U.S. Navy provided strategic support and funding for a conservation easement on the Busseron Creek watershed and surrounding lands, permanently protecting it from development. [The reference to any company, its products, or services in this document does not imply Navy endorsement.]

Here's what the partners had to say about this incredible accomplishment:

"Today's a day for the record books," said Suzanne Jaworowski, Indiana Secretary of Energy and Natural Resources. "With the addition of nearly 4,000 acres of permanently protected Indiana landscape, Hoosiers and wildlife alike gain an expansive natural place ready for exploration. I'm thankful for the many partners who came together to achieve this record achievement in conservation."

“The Conservation Law Center is excited to lead an incredible project like this through the

Southern Indiana Sentinel Landscape partnership, which brings together private, state, and federal funding to unite around a common vision of strengthening national security, enhancing conservation, and supporting thriving rural landscapes,” said Michael Spalding, coordinator of the Southern Indiana Sentinel Landscape.

“The Conservation Fund was able to act quickly to purchase this at-risk land, valued at over \$12 million, allowing critical time to secure public and private funding for permanent protection,” said Emy Brawley, vice president at The Conservation Fund. “The Busseron Creek Fish & Wildlife Area means so much to so many people, and The Conservation Fund is honored to have played a leading role alongside such great partners to ensure this land benefits communities and the environment forever.”

“The Nature Conservancy is proud to have helped set the wheels in motion for this project, and we’re honored to be here today with this fantastic group of partners,” said Larry Clemens, state director for TNC in Indiana. “As with TNC projects throughout the state, this investment in outdoor recreation and conservation will leave a permanent legacy for the natural heritage of Indiana.”

“Walmart’s Acres for America program is excited to be part of the innovative collaboration that made the Busseron Creek project possible,” said Ryan Pettigrew, senior manager, Walmart U.S. Real Estate and Acres for America. “Acres for America aims to protect vital natural habitat and provide access to outdoor recreation, and this project will do just that in southern Indiana for generations to come.”

“The tremendous collaboration between the Readiness and Environmental Protection Integration program and Southern Indiana Sentinel Landscape have allowed critical mission support and warfighter readiness to continue at Lake Glendora Test Facility while strengthening community partnerships,” said CDR Luis “Homie” Martinez, installation commanding officer of NWS Crane. “While we celebrate the opening of the Busseron Creek Fish & Wildlife area to enable military encroachment protections, none of this would have been possible without NWS Crane’s Community Planning Liaison Officer, Mark Dobbs, and countless others, who worked tirelessly to make this a reality.”

DNR Busseron Creek FWA Page Link

https://www.in.gov/dnr/fish-and-wildlife/properties/busseron-creek-fish-and-wildlife-area/?utm_source=agency-website&utm_medium=&utm_campaign=&utm_term=&utm_content=

Full History and Story of Busseron Creek FWA

<https://storymaps.arcgis.com/stories/b8e5a329faa747969107bf822c2d3986>



JOHN MAXWELL DNR



JOHN MAXWELL DNR

Indiana Prescribed Fire Legislation



LEGISLATION ENACTED

A new law to expand Indiana's prescribed fire capacity was signed by Governor Mike Braun on April 30, 2025. The bill expands a prescribed fire training program administered by the Indiana Department of Natural Resources. The bill also defines the liability for those certified through the training program.

Prescribed burning is the planned application of fire under specified weather and fuel conditions to achieve specific and clear management objectives, such as restoring wildlife habitat. Previously, Indiana was one of only a few states that did not have a certification program or liability clearly defined through legislation.

Fire has been part of Indiana's landscape for thousands of years. Native Americans purposefully and strategically used fire to shape Indiana's landscape for a variety of reasons including wildlife habitat management, vegetation regeneration, and management of oak and hickory species, all to create abundant and predictable resources.¹ Fire continued to influence Indiana's landscape following European settlement until exclusion of fire within the past century. This exclusion of fire can still be reversed with prescribed burning before it is too late.

The Indiana Prescribed Fire Council led this effort with partners over the past three years, including The Nature Conservancy in Indiana, who shepherded the bill through the legislative process. The Conservation Law Clinic of the Conservation Law Center at Indiana University's Mauer School of Law drafted the initial version of this legislation, which Representative Beau Baird introduced and championed. The Southern Indiana Sentinel Landscape helped lead the effort with the partners to support the many

overlaps in priorities, including restoration of oak-dominated ecosystems and supporting thriving rural economies. Co-authors included Representatives Michael Karickhoff, Maureen Bauer, and Mike Aylesworth. Senator Susan Glick sponsored the bill in the Senate.

Prescribed fire legislation provides the following benefits:

Supports private property rights

Enables private landowners to use an essential tool to manage their property. A lack of established liability for private landowners and their representatives has been a barrier for landowners to exercise their rights to manage their property.

Improves the market for prescribed fire liability insurance

Legislation should enable insurance companies to offer more competitive rates and expand coverage while also expanding the number of companies willing to provide this insurance in Indiana.

Increases economic opportunities for small businesses

The cost and availability of insurance for prescribed fire is a limiting factor for businesses to be able to offer this service to private landowners in Indiana. Liability protection reduces this barrier for both new and existing contractors.

Allows landowners to tap into federal funding

USDA already makes funding available to help landowners cover the cost of writing a burn plan and conducting a burn, but without liability legislation their ability to conduct a burn or hire a contractor is extremely difficult.²

Enhances the future of Indiana's hardwood Industry

Oak species are the cornerstone of Indiana's \$10 Billion hardwood industry.³ Indiana's oak forests and woodlands were born out of fire. Without widespread application of prescribed fire, our future supply of oak timber is bleak. Prescribed fire is the most effective and efficient way to begin the next crop of oaks needed to fuel this industry.

Restores and maintain wildlife habitat to protect and promote our hunting heritage

Native habitat managers throughout the eastern US are implementing more fire to restore and improve essential habitat for game and non-game species. Indiana has shown that we can be a leader in quality hunting opportunities, but Indiana needs prescribed fire as a viable tool for that trend to continue.

Bolsters a Standard of Prescribed Fire Training

Legislation will support a standardized training program for prescribed fire, incentivizing individuals to complete the training through liability protections. This will enhance the safe application of prescribed fire.

Here's what the partners had to say about this incredible accomplishment:

"This bill marks an important step forward for conservation and private land stewardship in Indiana. With clearer training standards and liability protections, prescribed fire can continue to be applied safely, effectively, and more widely across the landscape," said Jarred Brooke, chair of the Indiana Prescribed Fire Council.

"The Midwest is full of fire-dependent landscapes, and many of them depend upon fairly frequent fires, so putting fire back on the ground helps to restore these natural areas," said Stuart Orr, Fire Manager for The Nature Conservancy (TNC)

in Indiana. "For more than 40 years, TNC has worked with its conservation partners on safe, prescribed fires throughout the state, but those are only on lands we own and manage. This new legislation will facilitate private landowners to also use this essential tool to manage their property and improve habitat."

"We are grateful to the General Assembly and Gov. Braun for supporting this legislation. Indiana needs prescribed burning to restore the health of our landscape. First we must start by restoring a culture of fire. This legislation lays that foundation. Generations from now, our rural landscapes and economies will be better for it," said Michael Spalding, Coordinator for the Southern Indiana Sentinel Landscape Program at the Conservation Law Center.

1. Marsh, D. G. 2022. The Coming Out Place. Indiana Magazine of History 118:1-40.
2. <https://www.nrcs.usda.gov/sites/default/files/2024-12/FY25%20EQIP%20Practice%20User%20Guide%20for%20Indiana.docx>
3. <https://www.in.gov/isda/divisions/economic-development/hardwoods/#:~:text=Indiana's%20hardwood%20industry%20has%20an,and%2026%2C000%20in%20ancillary%20sectors>





Sentinel Supported Projects

Hoosiers for Native Habitat America the Beautiful Challenge Grant



PROGRESS AS OF FISCAL YEAR 2025:

- ▶ **85** action-oriented volunteer Weed Wrangle events with **760** volunteers contributing **2,600** hours
- ▶ **19** invasive species management workshops
- ▶ **1,125** acres enrolled into the program
- ▶ **100** landowners engaged through one-on-one trainings and meetings in addition to workshops
- ▶ Jennings County joined with Jackson County to form the **Winding Waters Cisma** in FY2024

FULL PROJECT OVERVIEW:

The State of Indiana Cooperative Invasive Species Management led this successful grant with support from SISL. Soil and Water Conservation Districts (SWCDs) in Bartholomew, Brown, Jennings, Johnson, and Sullivan Counties; Cooperative Invasive Species Management Areas (CISMAs) in Bartholomew, Brown, and Johnson County; Naval Support Activity Crane; Atterbury-Muscatatuck Training Center; and the Cordry Sweetwater Conservation District were the other key partners. The grant includes three components: invasive species control projects, establishment of two new CISMAs, and outreach and education.

Invasive plant species removal on adjacent private lands to military installations - Approximately 80 properties, encompassing approximately 1,200 acres, will receive invasive species control through a grant program managed by SICIM. This work will occur primarily on pre-identified properties near Camp Atterbury Training Center and the Muscatatuck Training Center. In addition to their locations, these properties have been selected because they are

not likely eligible to receive cost share support through existing federal programs supported by the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

Establishment of CISMAs in Sullivan and Jennings Counties - Cooperative Invasive Species Management Areas work with Indiana County SWCDs. CISMAs are instrumental in providing long-term support to landowners for invasive plant removal and invasive plant education. SICIM will establish two new CISMAs: one in Sullivan County where the Lake Glendora Test Facility is located and another in Jennings County where the Muscatatuck Training Center is located. This will put in place the infrastructure to establish long-term support for community-based invasive species management in these counties with military installations that currently do not have CISMAs. SICIM will assist, train, and facilitate leadership for these CISMAs. Sullivan and Jennings CISMAs will join with other Indiana CISMAs under the Indiana Invasives Initiative project for support and resources.

Outreach and Education - SICIM will host a minimum of forty (40) Weed Wrangles® that demonstrate how to manage invasive species to support native habitat. Weed Wrangles® often assist local parks with habitat management projects and one of the project areas will be 40 acres of the Johnson County Park which is adjacent to Camp Atterbury Training Center. Each Weed Wrangle® consists of a brief educational session and at least two hours of invasive species control activities in a local park or natural area open to the public. These events are designed to teach residents the value of native species, the impacts of invasive species, how to identify invasive species, how to manage them, as well as inspire residents to collaborate for habitat improvement in their parks and at home. In

addition to Weed Wrangles®, six workshops will be held across the project area on private lands. These workshops will be led by professionals and hosted by residents, which is key to building trust for the program. They will consist of an overview of basic ecology, species identification,

and hands-on demonstration of management techniques that address ecological issues relevant to landowners.

had not yet begun in FY2024. (SICIM, Jennings SWCD, Jackson SWCD)

Ready-Set-Fire in White Oak Woodlands Joint Chiefs' Landscape Restoration Partnership



CALENDAR YEAR 2025 TNC AND HNF:

Strike Team Accomplishments:

- ▶ **233** acres invasive species control
- ▶ **24** acres forest stand improvement

Prescribed Fire

- ▶ **4,616** acres total on 20 burns

FISCAL YEAR 2025 NRCS ENROLLMENTS:

- ▶ **2,929.5** acres Brush Management (woody invasive species control)
- ▶ **2,322.3** acres Forest Stand Improvement

FISCAL YEAR 2024 NRCS ENROLLMENTS:

- ▶ **1,698.3** acres Brush Management (woody invasive species control)
- ▶ **1,428.2** acres Forest Stand Improvement

The Joint Chiefs' Landscape Restoration partnership is a collaborative effort between USDA's Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) and the US Forest Service (USFS) that aims to work with private, state, and Tribal landowners to conserve forest and agricultural land alongside federally managed lands while safeguarding communities by reducing the impact of wildfire threats and protecting water quality and supply.

Indiana received funding for the Ready-Set-Fire in White Oak Woodlands proposal in June of 2024

with the expectation of three years of funding for NRCS and USFS totaling \$7.9 million.

The Ready-Set-Fire in White Oak Woodlands project funds prescribed fire along with numerous forest management projects across 16 counties in southern Indiana to improve habitat for at risk species and reduce wildfire risk. The combination of forest management and prescribed fire will restore and reinvigorate the declining white oak woodlands and associated fire-dependent plant communities, prepare sites to deal with future increased wildfire risk, and aid in forest health.

NRCS and USFS are partnering with TNC, SISL, the IDNR Division of Forestry, and the Central Hardwood Joint Ventures – Let the Sun Shine In (LSSI) program in Indiana to increase the amount of forest stand improvement, non-native invasive species control, and appropriate prescribed fire that is implemented in Brown, Crawford, Dubois, Floyd, Greene, Harrison, Jackson, Lawrence, Martin, Monroe, Morgan, Orange, Owen, Perry, Putnam, and Washington Counties.

The Hoosier National Forest (HNF) will be partnering with TNC to develop a prescribed fire strike team that will help increase the capacity to do appropriate prescribed burning on HNF, TNC, and other partner properties. The project includes funding for prescribed fire research in cave and karst areas, invasive species control, and prepping areas for prescribed fire.

Indiana Forests to Faucets: Native Landscapes for Clean Water USFS Landscape Scale Restoration Grant



Fiscal Year 2025 Update: Due to some delays in getting everything finalized for the grant, implementation did not begin in FY 2025. Stay tuned for updates in the FY 2026 annual report.

This funding, awarded by the U.S. Forest Service's Landscape Scale Restoration (LSR) program in May 2024 includes \$213,336 in federal funds, matched by \$213,354 in non-federal contributions. The total funds will support three vital conservation projects in the Lake Monroe watershed, located in the heart of the Southern Indiana Sentinel Landscape.

The forest cover surrounding Lake Monroe is essential for maintaining the water quality of the lake, the sole source of municipal drinking water for nearly 130,000 customers in Bloomington. The Indiana Forests to Faucets project aims to preserve and enhance watershed function through several initiatives, including invasive plant mitigation, planting native trees, educating the public, and providing technical assistance to private landowners.

Over the course of three years, the project will involve on-the-ground invasive plant mitigation on Yellowwood State Forest, conducted by the Indiana Department of Natural Resources. The

Town of Nashville will benefit from community outreach efforts, invasive tree removal from town property and rights of way, and the replacement of those trees with native species. Private landowners will receive technical assistance from a grant-funded position overseen by SICIM (State of Indiana Cooperative Invasives Management) and hosted by the Brown County Soil & Water Conservation District office.

Expected outcomes of the project include improved watershed function through invasive plant mitigation on 20,000 acres, the provision of 120 native trees and 12,000 native seedlings, engagement with 25 private landowners impacting 250 acres, and the utilization of over 800 volunteer hours for invasive Weed Wrangles®, public outreach, and tree planting and care. Partners involved in this project include the following: Indiana Department of Natural Resources - Division of Forestry, Town of Nashville, SICIM (State of Indiana Cooperative Invasives Management), Brown County Soil and Water Conservation District, The Nature Conservancy in Indiana, Southern Indiana Sentinel Landscape, Central Hardwoods Joint Venture, Let the Sun Shine In – Indiana, and MC-IRIS (Monroe County Identify and Reduce Invasive Species).

Bill and Janice Young Woods



Through the partnership with The Conservation Fund for Busseron Creek Fish and Wildlife Area, SISL learned of funding available for land protection for Indiana bat and northern long-eared bat. SISL initially explored a property in Monroe County with Sycamore Land Trust, but the project did not work out. Thankfully, when SLT brought this property into the conversation, everything lined up to protect this property.

Sycamore Land Trust recently closed on the purchase of the Bill and Janice Young Woods, adding a high-quality upland forest to the Beanblossom landscape in northeast Monroe County. This property has been a Sycamore protection priority for years due to its connectivity, frontage on Beanblossom Creek, and dense woodlands. This new preserve will contribute to

clean water, habitat for plants and animals, and quality of life for us all.

“We applaud our partner The Conservation Fund who provided major funding for the acquisition through the Range-Wide Indiana Bat and Northern Long-Eared Bat In-Lieu Fee Program, which allows developers to pay fees to protect, restore, and manage high-priority habitat for endangered bats under U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service oversight, when bat habitat is impacted by construction elsewhere.” – Tom Swinford, Land Preservation Director, Sycamore Land Trust

Read the full story here:

<https://sycamorelandtrust.org/2025/09/sycamore-land-trust-adds-102-acres-of-forested-hills-to-beanblossom-corridor/>

Dam Removals



There are two dam removals planned for the SISL geography, specifically in the larger White River basin. In partnership with the Department of War, Indiana National Guard, Purdue University, the Nature Conservancy, Sam Shine Foundation and Ecosystems Connections Institute will be using a combination of federal, state and private funds to remove the low head dam adjacent to the Muscatatuck Training Center on the Vernon Fork of the Muscatatuck River. This will reconnect 164 miles of streams and is likely to be removed in the fall of 2027. SISL initially connected the partners from Indiana National Guard, Purdue

University, and SSF to begin the conversation about removing the dam on the Muscatatuck River.

Similarly, in partnership with the City of Columbus, TNC, SSF, and Ecosystems Connections Institute are providing a mix of public and private funds to remove the low head dam in downtown Columbus, near the confluences that create the East Fork White River proper. This removal will reconnect 1,142 miles of streams and is slated for removal in the fall of 2026.

Business as usual partner accomplishments for Fiscal Year 2025

Routine partner accomplishments within the Southern Indiana Sentinel Landscape footprint, known as “Business as Usual” accomplishments, are impactful and making a difference to meet the partnership’s shared goals. The intent of calling them Business as Usual is to acknowledge that the partners are accomplishing these shared goals for the benefit of our partnership without the support of the Southern Indiana Sentinel Landscape.

Business as Usual Partner Accomplishments Towards Strategic Plan Metrics

Partners enrolled a combined **141,300.3 acres** into CRP, EQIP, CSP, CWI, CREP, and local SWCD cost-share programs for livestock and croplands.
(NRCS, IASWCD, ISDA)



Partners enrolled a combined **17,740.2 acres** into CRP, EQIP, CSP, CWI, CREP, and local SWCD cost-share programs for forest land.
(NRCS, IASWCD, ISDA)

Indiana DNR Division of Forestry enrolled **2,457 new acres** into the Classified Forest and Wildlands program.

The Nature Conservancy enrolled **120 acres** of new forest into their Forest Bank Management Agreements.

Partners improved **33,100.9 acres** of forest habitat for endangered bats on partner lands and on private lands.
(NRCS, IASWCD, ISDA, CILTI, DNR, AMTC, HNF, NWS Crane, SLT, TNC, USFWS)



Partners permanently protected **963.2 acres** of bat habitat through fee title acquisitions and conservation easements on public and private lands.
(CILTI)

Partners improved or created **43,187 acres** of forest, grassland, and wetland bird habitat on public and private lands (USDA, ISDA, IASWCD, CILTI, NWS Crane, USFWS, AMTC, SLT, HNF, TNC)



Partners permanently protected **659.5 acres** of land within the SISL (Not including REPI) through fee title acquisitions and conservation easements on public and private lands. (CILTI, DNR, NRCS, SLT)

NRCS enrolled **303.3 new acres** into Wetland Reserve Easements.

Partners reforested **334.1 acres** of bottomland hardwoods. (NRCS, ISDA)

Partners restored or maintained oak-hickory ecosystems on **4,912.8 acres**. (NRCS, CILTI, DNR, AMTC, HNF, SLT, TNC)

Partners implemented **17,232.7 acres** of invasive species control on public and private lands. (NRCS, IASWCD, AMTC, CILTI, NWS Crane, SLT, USFWS, TNC, DNR)

Partners reported over **55 outreach events** with a combined attendance of **3,047 people**. (NWS Crane, HNF, SLT, SISL)

SISL Partnership Administration Highlights

At the November 14, 2024 meeting, the SISL LCC approved **6 total co-chairs** for the three subcommittees and **2 additional subcommittee members** from 2 additional organizations.

SISL **released newsletters** on October 28, 2024; February 15, 2025; and August 4, 2025.

The SISL team participated in **23 presentations** at meetings and outreach events in FY 2025, reaching over **1,000 participants**.

Thanks to funding from REPI, SISL worked with Wildpath and talented photographer Jen Guyton for 8 days in June 2025 to capture **high quality photographs and drone videos** from throughout the landscape. These assets are available to SISL and the partnership for use.

SISL supported the **White Oak Initiative's** board meeting, which they brought to Brown County October 23 and 24, 2024. SISL planned a field day to highlight ongoing and potential work to restore our oak ecosystems. This brought a national spotlight to our landscape while attendees from around the eastern US left with a greater appreciation for southern Indiana's forests and woodlands.



WHITE OAK INITIATIVE

Partner Acronym Key

ABC

American Bird Conservancy

AMTC

Atterbury-Muscatatuck Training Center, Adjutant General's Office, Indiana National Guard

CHJV

Central Hardwoods Joint Venture

CILTI

Central Indiana Land Trust

CLC

Conservation Law Center

CRP

Conservation Reserve Program

CREP

Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program

CSP

Conservation Stewardship Program

CWI

Clean Water Indiana

DNR

Indiana Department of Natural Resources

DNR DFW

DNR Division of Fish and Wildlife

DNR DoF

DNR Division of Forestry

EQIP

Environmental Quality Incentives Program

HNF

Hoosier National Forest, United States Forest Service, United States Department of Agriculture

IASWCD

Indiana Association of Soil and Water Conservation Districts

IFWOA

Indiana Forestry and Woodland Owners Association

IPFC

Indiana Prescribed Fire Council

ISDA

Indiana State Department of Agriculture

LCC

SISL Landscape Coordinating Committee

LMWF

Lake Monroe Water Fund

LSSI

Let the Sun Shine In

Navy

NWS Crane and Lake Glendora Test Facility

NRCS

Natural Resources Conservation Service, United States Department of Agriculture

NWS Crane

Naval Weapons Station Crane

REPI

Readiness and Environmental Protection Integration

SICIM

State of Indiana Invasives Management

SIDC

Southern Indiana Development Corporation

SISL LCC

Southern Indiana Sentinel Landscape Landscape Coordinating Committee

SLT

Sycamore Land Trust

SSF

Sam Shine Foundation

SWCD

Soil and Water Conservation District

TCF

The Conservation Fund

TNC

Indiana Chapter of The Nature Conservancy

USFS

United States Forest Service

USFWS

United States Fish and Wildlife Service; Partners, Refuges, and/or Ecological Services





FOR MORE INFORMATION

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NORTHERN LEATHERFLOWER
(*CLEMATIS VIORNA*)
AT BUSSEY CREEK
JEN GUYTON, WILDPATH

