

Drainage Handbook Advisory Board Meeting

Meeting Notes

Tuesday, Dec. 17, 2024. Official Start: 10 a.m.

Indiana Farm Bureau

225 S. East Street

Indianapolis, Indiana 46202

Board members present:

- Katie Nelson – Deputy Director, ISDA
- Mike Koehne – Indiana Farmer (South)
- Brian McMorrow – Indiana Builders Association
- Scott Fetters – Acting State Coordinator, USFWS
- David Knipe – Division of Water Director, IDNR
- Jarrod Hahn – Wells County Surveyor
- Jeff Healy – Hendricks County SWCD Supervisor
- Lis McDonnel – Indiana Farmer (Central)
- Mike Fruchey – Allen County Surveyor
- Paul Higginbotham (for Martha Mettler) – Office of Water Quality Assistant Director, IDEM
- Scott Wagner – State Agricultural Engineer, NRCS
- Matt Meersman – Indiana Water Monitoring Council President

Board Introduction

Review of Indiana Code and the requirements of the board.

Christopher Burke Engineering Presentation, the firm who is contracted with ISDA to conduct the update of the Indiana Drainage Handbook.

David Eichelberger (Burke Engineering)

- Introduction of the project team
- Drainage Handbook Organization
 - o Introduction
 - What the book is and what it isn't
 - General description of federal, state and local agencies that have jurisdiction over Indiana Waterways
 - Required permits for drainage improvement activities
 - Selection guide for drainage improvement practices

- BMPs for drainage improvement projects
 - References
 - Appendices
- Reason for Advisory Board Meeting #1
 - Kickoff meeting and reason for the Advisory Board and future work
 - Stakeholder interviews/surveys
 - Advisory board email survey
 - What they think about the handbook moving forward
 - Permit processes and procedures
 - Update the processes and procedures in the book
 - Burke draft an updated process and procedures
- Advisory Board Meeting #2
 - Project status update
 - Burke will update the ISDA/board with an update of the processes and procedures
- Drainage Improvement activities
 - Update drainage improvement activities and practices
 - Burke will draft updated drainage improvement activities and practices chapter(s)
- Advisory Board meeting #3
 - Project status meeting
 - Burke will review the draft updated drainage improvement activities and practices chapter(s) with ISDA and the Board and demonstrate the navigational link feature
- Compile complete draft handbook
- Advisory board meeting #4
 - Burke will review the complete draft updated Handbook with ISDA and the Board and demonstrate the navigational link feature
- Final deliverable
 - Burke will incorporate final input from ISDA/Board into the final draft
- Outreach and presentation
 - Public presentation to ISDA/Board outlining the final draft
- Deliverable and Schedule
 - Advisory Board meeting #1 – December 17, 2024
 - Stakeholder interviews – Mid-March 2025
 - Update processes/procedures – Mid-June 2025
 - Advisory Board meeting #2 – Mid-July 2025
 - Update activities/practices – Mid-October 2025
 - Advisory Board meeting #3 – Mid-November 2025
 - Deliver draft updated Handbook – Mid-February 2026
 - Advisory Board meeting #4 – Mid-March 2026

- Deliver final updated Handbook – Mid-May 2026
- Public presentation – Mid-June 2026

Discussion and Questions

Jarrod Hahn

- Army Corps, can they be an advisor to this group?

Katie Nelson

- Their policy said they cannot serve on the board. They can still serve as an advisory role outside of the board.

David Eichelberger (Burke Engineering)

- We will interview them and will get their input

Matt Meersman

- I'm not too familiar with the handbook, are you going to highlight the major changes in the book?

David Eichelberger (Burke Engineering)

- Wouldn't be a bad idea to draw people's attention to the changes.

Katie Nelson

- Any additional thoughts or comments?

Lis McDonnel

- Quite a bit has changed and new equipment, there is a lot that can be updated in the book. I'd like to take it back to my community to get better input.

Matt Meersman

- I will be looking for where it might identify opportunities, whether it be funding watershed commission opportunities. What opportunities are available to get enhancements.

Scott Fetters

- I think this is valuable to landowners and I'm happy to be here. He has worked on cost-shared habitat enhancement projects in upper areas of regulated drain watersheds.

Scott Wagner

- I think it getting continually updated would be ideal.

Jarrold Hahn

- One place where I have used the book, what are ways to take out a logjam. Being able to show the book to landowners who are trying to do their own projects. Making it available to with problem solving techniques/practices.

Mike Fruchey

- We use it as a reference manual on how to do things the correct way. Would like it to be logical and straight forward.

Matt Meersman

- The language in the book is a little bit of a challenge, it could be helpful to help explain complex practices.

Dave Knipe

- From DNR's perspective, most important is permitting and what DNR will be involved in with the processes.

Jeff Healy

- The book needs to be more linked. SWCDs annual meeting is set, if you would like to do a presentation there.

Daivd Eichelberger (Burke Engineering)

- We're going to work with the agencies to get updates on staff and permits, and I like the idea of summary then a link to more detail.

Dave Knipe

- The agencies are always updating of their staff on the pages.

Lis McDonnel

- It's good to have updated information.

Paul Higginbotham

- I think water issues have changed in the last 20 years, so getting this book updated will be extremely helpful.

Brian McMorro

- Rule 5 program went away, the Builders association worked with IDEM. I think the work this committee does will be helpful on work that happens in and around streams.

Mike Koehne

- I think we need to keep it simple, easy to read and easy to understand. Farmers are trying to be sustainable with the land, and this book will be helpful for farmers, if it is made simple.

Jarrold Hahn

- The people at state agencies using this book are typically entry level positions. With drainage projects, every project is different. The agencies will use this manual more than the regulated. Projects may not look exactly what the book looks like, but it still works as an example.

Mike Koehne

- There are differences in the state between the northern and southern part of the state.

Katie Nelson

- How often does this need to be updated? And who should be responsible to do the update?

Mike Fruchey

- It should be updated every five years.

Jarrold Hahn

- There is an example in the book that terminology used across the state that may have changed.

David Eichelberger (Burke Engineering)

- I agree that it should be updated every five years.

Dave Knipe

- The agency (DNR) has to change the website within 90 days of a law change.

Jon Stolz (Burke Engineering)

- One point, each representations, there is a logistical standpoint that your group is providing input. Include others if you would like within your organization, but you will be the soundboard for our organization.

Jarrold Hahn

- Are there things changing in the book that are specific enough that a typical practice for MS4?

David Eichelberger (Burke Engineering)

- I think this is something that can be put in the survey.

Matt Meersman

- The purpose of the handbook is to negate wrong practices to avoid negative consequences.

Katie Nelson

- I think this is all for today. Here is the timeline, do you prefer a doodle poll to schedule the next meeting?

Jeff Healy

- The feeling of the handbook is that it's a standard handbook. I don't think it needs to be too technical, and that's where I think it can get out of date.

Mike Koehne

- Do you think it needs to be a guideline and resource book, rather than a technical/regulation book?

Jeff Healy

- I think that's a good way of putting it.

Lis McDonnel

- If we add the links to redirect to the proper place for regulatory agencies, that could be helpful.

Katie Nelson

- Thanks for coming!

End