

The logo features two stylized blue human figures with their arms raised, positioned above three horizontal wavy lines representing water. To the right of this graphic, the text "Indiana Watershed Leadership Academy" is written in a bold, blue, sans-serif font.

Indiana Watershed Leadership Academy

Annual Overview for 2016

Congratulations to our 11th class of the Indiana Watershed Leadership Academy which concluded in May 2016 and consisted of 30 participants.



2016 participant included both volunteers and professionals, including:

- watershed coordinators
- consultants
- stormwater coordinators
- undergraduate and graduate students
- Extension educators
- federal, state, county and city government representatives
- environmental educators,
- volunteers and interested citizens, and
- nonprofit representatives.

Those participants who completed all components of the face-to-face workshops and distance education received their Professional Certificate in Watershed Management.

Workshop 1

The first workshop was held at McCormick's Creek State Park, in the historic Canyon Inn. This state park provided a scenic and comfortable location for the program. Participants enjoyed a walk to the waterfalls in the mild winter weather. Highlights included the Watershed Game, an interactive tool to help individuals understand the



connection between land use and water quality, presentations and discussion activities on gathering stakeholders, conducting a watershed inventory, and how to gather social information. They learned about stream monitoring and interpreting monitoring data, and using computer tools. Excellent team leaders including Matt Meersman, Ashlee Haviland, Julie Speelman, Bryan Wallace, Natalie Johnson, and Jeremy Reiman provided guidance, energy, and the voice of experience.

Online social networking

We continued to use our online social networking component at <http://iwatersheds.net>. Using the program "Ning", which is similar to a private Facebook just for the Academy, participants shared thoughts, discussed issues, and exchanged information. The site was also used as an archive for the information provided to participants regarding face-to-face meetings. All IWLA alumni and the steering committee members were also invited to participate.

Workshop 2



The second workshop at Tecumseh Leadership provided an opportunity to reconnect. Highlights included learning about leadership, connecting best management practices and water quality, engaging volunteers, assessing stream channels, and getting out into the stream to experience Hoosier Riverwatch monitoring.

Workshop 3 - Graduation

Ted McKinney, Director of the Indiana State Department of Agriculture, inspired participants by exploring the connection between agriculture and water and charging participants to move forward with their efforts to improve Indiana's resources. Participants presented their group projects, and those who had completed all modules received a professional certificate in watershed management.

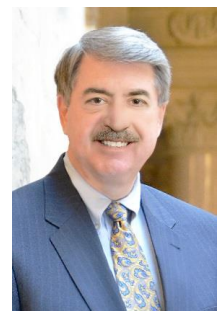


Photo courtesy Indiana State Department of Agriculture

Evaluations

The Academy has always received very strong evaluations from participants. The Academy participants found all the sessions for both workshops to be useful. Over 95% of the participants greatly appreciated the networking among Academy participants and the opportunity to work in small group activities that required critical thinking. Some specific comments regarding the most positive aspects of the Academy include:

"Best effort at networking of any conference I have ever attended. You made sure that I have human resources in this group of people before leaving. "

"Learning about new web tools - creating maps/surveys are so powerful, and keeping up to date on the latest/greatest is always super useful"

"The networking that we did will be incredibly helpful - it was great to put faces with names and to know whom I should contact for information in the future."

"The leadership discussion was great, it was very well facilitated. Overall, it was very productive and useful. I learned a lot about being a leader, speaker and listener."

"The changing of groups was a great way to force me to work closely and get to know even more people."

"This academy consists of an absolutely great group of folks that are not only willing, but excited to help and guide you to your watershed knowledge goals. I would highly recommend this academy to anyone looking for more information on watersheds."

"The homework has been helpful to pull ideas of watershed management together."

"I feel so much better connected to a group of professionals who share similar challenges. I now feel part of the my watershed and not just the lake committee chair for my portion of the watershed."