



United States Department of Agriculture



Indiana  
Invasives Initiative

# 2019 ANNUAL REPORT



**Pioneer Mothers Memorial Forest**

These 88 acres are the last original forest in the state. The site reflects how Indiana's forests have changed over time. The land was purchased through the Federal Reentry in 1941 and designated a state park through natural forces. The landmark is 1974.

As you visit, observe the changes. Some trees are slowly dying while younger trees are taking their place. The forest's youth, and forest population.



Southern Indiana Cooperative Invasives Management



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## OUR YEAR IN REVIEW

Since the beginning of 2018, the majority of SICIM's resources are directed to the Indiana Invasives Initiative (III) by way of our 5 year partnership with the USDA Natural Resource Conservation Service. Through this agreement, SICIM has committed to making a reality the goal of 60 counties in Indiana represented by a Cooperative Invasive Species Management Area (CISMA). We augment our work to involve other partners in support of the III assisted CISMA development as well as the other project deliverables, which include trainings for the Indiana Conservation Partnership, the public, and landowner technical assistance. With 2019 marking year two of the III, SICIM hired 4 Invasive Species Regional Specialists bringing their employee ranks to 5. SICIM is now actively engaged in 75% of the counties in Indiana through the benefit of the additional full-time staff. It is with great excitement that we share the story of the successes wrought by the III's contagious momentum.

The passage of the Indiana Terrestrial Plant Rule is the crowning achievement of 2019 for the Indiana Invasive Plant Advisory Committee, SICIM, and other conservation partners across the state dealing with invasive species. With the goal of cultivating sustainable support for invasive management, SICIM works to advocate for additional state-level invasive species management funding alongside

## IN MEMORIAL, SAM SHINE (1933-2019)

The SICIM Steering Committee, members and staff join conservationists everywhere in mourning the passing of Sam Shine. Sam's incredible generosity came to the aid of SICIM at a critical time for us. Were it not for him, the Indiana Invasives Initiative could not possibly have achieved its present level of success. Sam left a tremendous legacy and will be greatly missed.



Outgoing SICIM Chair Ray Chatten awards Sam Shine as Partner of the Year during 2019 SICIM Annual Meeting, photo by William Schmeltzer

many of these same partners. SICIM continues to look for grant opportunities and partnerships that will expand the capacity of the III. For potential collaborations, please reach out to our SICIM Vice Chair and Financial Committee Chair, Troy Hinkle ([troy.hinkle@in.nacdnet.net](mailto:troy.hinkle@in.nacdnet.net)).



2019 native & invasive plant ID training on Marion Day at Jackson-Schnyder Nature Preserve, Ouabache Land Conservancy, Vigo County, photo by Amber Slaughterbeck

**SOUTHERN INDIANA COOPERATIVE INVASIVES MANAGEMENT (SICIM)** is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization led by a volunteer board and committee members with the mission to protect, restore, and enhance Southern Indiana's landscapes by coordinating efforts to identify, prevent, and control invasive species.

## A MESSAGE FROM OUR SICIM CHAIR

Indiana has some gems of the finest natural and recreational areas in the Midwest. Unfortunately, invasive species threaten these areas -- their diversity, productivity -- and limit the recreational opportunities here in the state. Of my almost 4 years of involvement with SICIM, I can honestly say that 2019 was a landmark year for raising awareness about invasive species and getting local communities engaged.

We are now in full swing of the Indiana Invasives Initiative (III), the statewide initiative to create local Cooperative Invasive Species Management Areas (CISMAs) and provide invasive species technical assistance. In 2019, we became more fully staffed with 5 regional specialists on the ground in addition to our program coordinator, Dawn Slack.



In this 2019 Annual Report, you will see how far we have come in establishing local invasive species groups and raising invasive species awareness not just in Southern Indiana, but throughout the entire state. Look out for more great events, programming, and new groups to come along in 2020!

Lastly, I would like to thank all of our sponsors (see listing on the back cover) and partners in 2019. This grassroots initiative would not be possible without your support. Here's to keeping the momentum going in 2020!

Sincerely,

**Will Drews, SICIM Chair**

## A MESSAGE FROM OUR III PROJECT COORDINATOR

As our third working year advances, I continue to be humbled, impressed and inspired with the enthusiasm and energy demonstrated by our citizens (that means all of you) to participate in the Indiana Invasives Initiative project. It has already been a rewarding undertaking and based on the successes as indicted in this report, the future holds great promise. Many thanks to all (this means everyone) involved for your hard work and dedication.

Taking the message to our people through face-to-face events has been paramount in solving problems and sharing how amazing Indiana is (and therefore worth the effort to manage invasive species). This one-on-one type of communication, along with calls, texts, emails, and social media posts, is imperative and effective to preempt and solve



issues. It is this methodology of educating, engaging and empowering our citizens, that is vital for success and sustainability of the Indiana Invasives Initiative, as it is of any program.

We still have much work to do and much to celebrate as we learn about our Indiana flora, fauna, land and waters. We look forward to working with you to inspire people for nature and bring about positive impacts in Indiana. Go Weed Warriors!

Sincerely,

**Dawn Slack, III Project Coordinator**



Indiana Invasives Initiative (III) is a 5 year collaboration

between Southern Indiana Cooperative Invasives Management (SICIM) and the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) to manage invasive plants and raise public awareness of the devastation caused by these non-native pests. Through the efforts of the Project Coordinator, Dawn Slack and the Regional Specialists, the III has more than doubled the number of counties with existing CISMAs since the start of the project with another 11 CISMAs in organization.

### CISMA = COOPERATIVE INVASIVE SPECIES MANAGEMENT AREA

Local partnership organization to collectively manage invasive species CISMAs address invasive species issues across various land ownership.

**VISION** SICIM and its partners work with landowners and citizens to increase awareness of invasive species and act to reduce and prevent their spread across all landscapes to protect Indiana's lands and waters.

**MISSION** Develop local capacity by collaborating statewide to protect the health and diversity of our lands and waters by managing invasive species.

### GOALS

- ✓ Each county in Indiana served by an organized and viable CISMA
- ✓ Lead development of a statewide umbrella organization for CISMA support
- ✓ Cultivate sustainable funding

### KNOWLEDGE = ACTION

Education mixed with compassion is the vessel for change. We collaborate with partners and educate and engage our citizens through private landowner surveys and local public events.



### MILESTONES

- ✓ 125+ Landowner surveys
- ✓ 4200+ acres assessed
- ✓ 430+ outreach events
- ✓ 51,000+ people engaged

### INDIANA CISMAs

- ✓ Working in 69 Counties
- ✓ 21 established CISMAs in 23 Counties
- ✓ 11 organizing CISMAs in 15 Counties



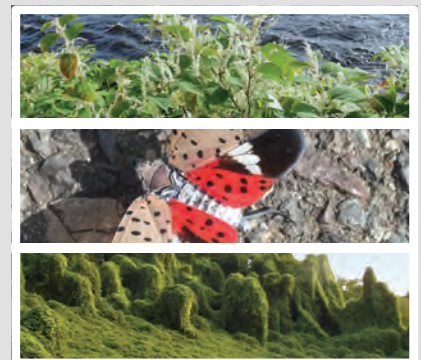
### INDIANA CISMA MAP

- Established CISMAs
- Working on CISMAs
- Others we are working with to develop CISMAs
- Active at the Watershed Level

Map updated 12/31/2019

### 2020 INDIANA CISMA CONFERENCE INVASIVE SPECIES AND WATERSHEDS

Join us Thursday, March 26th, 9 am to 5 pm at the Hamilton County, Indiana 4-H Fairgrounds & Conference Center (2003 Pleasant St, Noblesville, IN) for our Inaugural statewide CISMA Conference. This event will provide technical training, share some of the latest updates and research on invasive species, provide an overview of the Terrestrial Plant Rule and more. The goal of the conference is to build partnerships across the state to share information



and increase capacity for invasive species management. Visit our website for more details ([www.sicim.info/cismaconference](http://www.sicim.info/cismaconference)).



## MEET OUR INDIANA INVASIVES INITIATIVE TEAM



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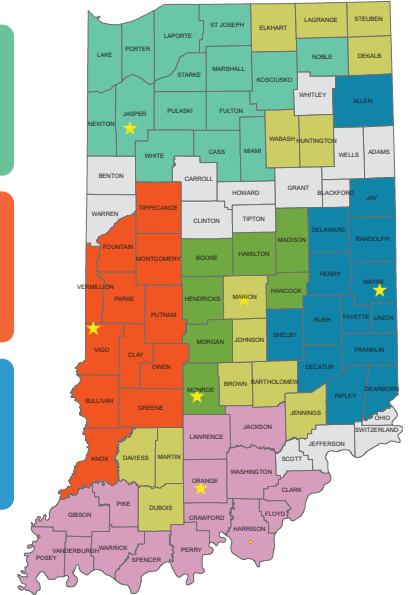
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## WEED WRANGLE® INDIANA ROUNDUP



Weed Wrangle® Indiana events are fun and interactive activities in which conservation partners and volunteers get together to control invasive plants that are negatively impacting the health of our public parks, green spaces and natural areas.



Henry County Removes Invasive Species (HC-RIPS) fall 2019 Weed Wrangle at Memorial Park in New Castle Indiana; photo by Dawn Slack

### WEED WRANGLE® INDIANA EVENTS

2018 (Spring & Fall)	<b>17</b>
2019 (Spring & Fall)	<b>38</b>
2020 (Spring alone)	<b>40+</b>

### SPRING 2020 WEED WRANGLE® INDIANA CONTEST

The Indiana Invasives Initiative is hosting the 1st state-wide Weed Wrangle® Indiana Contest in Spring 2020, from mid-March through mid-May. We created this contest to increase participation and partnerships and reward grassroots efforts. CISMAs across the state will participate by planning Weed Wrangle® Indiana events in their regions. The winning CISMA will earn \$500 for invasive species management and 4 hours of hands-on assistance from one of



Kosciusko County fall 2019 Weed Wrangle at Koinonia Environmental Center; photo by Andrea Baker from Kosciusko County SWCD

our III Regional Specialists. We will announce and award the winner(s) at the SICIM annual meeting which will be held on June 25th at the Orange County Community Center in Paoli, IN. See our website for contest details ([www.sicim.info/2020weedwrangleincontest](http://www.sicim.info/2020weedwrangleincontest)) and a complete listing of Weed Wrangle® Indiana events ([www.sicim.info/weed-wrangle-indiana](http://www.sicim.info/weed-wrangle-indiana)).

## A RECAP OF THE TERRESTRIAL PLANT RULE

Invasive plant species impact Indiana in countless ways, including loss of biodiversity, degradation of natural habitats, reduction in property values, decreased agricultural yields, and negative impacts on public utilities, recreation and tourism. After nearly 10 years of hard work and the support of a collection of partners, the great news is we will finally see the Indiana Terrestrial Plant Rule (TPR) go into effect this spring. Beginning April 18, 2020, the Indiana Terrestrial Plant Rule (312 IAC 18-3-25) will make it illegal to sell, gift, barter, exchange, distribute, transport or introduce in Indiana any of 44 invasive pest plant species without a permit.

In 2019, all the time and effort were rewarded with the signing of the TPR into law. Following the public hearing on the proposed rule at the end of 2018, it was placed on the agenda for the Natural Resource Commission (NRC) meeting on January 15th, 2019. According to the IDNR, an overwhelming majority of the 500+ submissions received during the public comment period were in favor of the rule. As such, the official recommendation of the Hearing Officer was final adoption, and during the meeting the NRC voted to ratify. The rule was signed by the Governor and published on March 18th, 2019. Officially, the rule was to go into effect in two stages, the 1st of which made it illegal to introduce any of the 44 listed plants into the state. However, by the time the rule was passed, all 44 species had already made their way into Indiana. The 2nd stage, which restricts the listed plant species already found in the state, goes into effect this April.

Only 22 of the 44 listed plants are commonly sold in the nursery trade. Examples of these include Amur honeysuckle, Asian bittersweet, blunt-leaved privet, autumn olive, common buckthorn, Japanese barberry, Japanese honeysuckle, and wintercreeper. All the species in the rule were assessed and ranked as highly invasive through a scientific and transparent system by the Invasive Plant Advisory Committee (IPAC). IPAC is a team of experts comprised of representatives from horticulture, landscape, nursery, research, conservation, Purdue Agriculture, and other universities. Callery pear and Norway maple trees are two species that were ranked high on the official list but were not included in the final draft

because the state determined that their inclusion would cause too great of an economic impact to growers of these species. These trees and other newly ranked, highly invasive species like winged burning bush could be added to the rule through an amendment process in the coming years.

The list of regulated plants under the TPR can be found on the IDNR website ([www.in.gov/dnr/6351.htm](http://www.in.gov/dnr/6351.htm)) and individual invasive plant assessments can be reviewed on the Indiana Invasive Species Council website ([www.indianainvasivespecies.org](http://www.indianainvasivespecies.org)). To learn how to report invasive species, visit the IDNR Division of Entomology and Plant Pathology, "Report A Pest" web page ([www.in.gov/dnr/entomolo/7416.htm](http://www.in.gov/dnr/entomolo/7416.htm)).

### PLANT THESE NATIVES SHRUBS

black chokeberry,  
fragrant sumac,  
new jersey tea,  
ninebark, smooth  
hydrangea, native  
spirea (steeplebush  
& sweetspire),  
winterberry

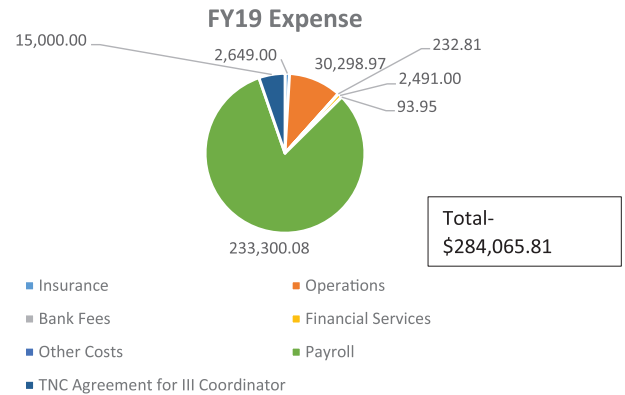
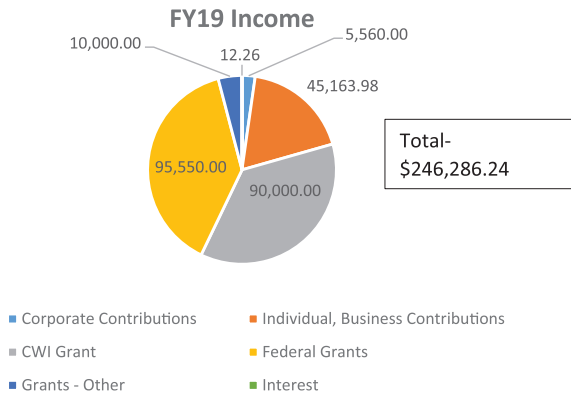


### ON THE HORIZON

There is so much in store for SICIM and the Indiana Invasives Initiative in 2020 and beyond. We encourage you to participate in our Weed Wrangle® Indiana events this spring and fall and hope you will join us for the Spring 2020 Indiana Cisma Conference on March 26th. The SICIM Annual Meeting will be hosted on June 25th at the Orange County Community Center in Paoli. As we prepare for the Terrestrial Plant Rule to go into effect in April, we will memorialize this occasion by drawing public attention to the impacts of invasives species in Indiana and beyond. This summer and fall, regional Invasive Species Training Workshops for Indiana Conservation Partners and Cismas are being planned throughout the state. Be sure to join our mailing list and visit our website ([www.sicim.info](http://www.sicim.info)) for updates.



## 2019 SICIM FINANCIAL REPORT



This Financial Statement Activity was developed by the SICIM Treasurer, Allison Shoaf, and is true to the best of her knowledge and belief.

## SUPPORT OPPORTUNITIES

We want to thank all our donors, volunteers, sponsors and members who have made it possible for SICIM to advance invasive species awareness and management across Indiana.

Our work must go on and your continued help is needed. To sustain and expand our efforts, please consider SICIM for your charitable support. The money raised goes directly to the Indiana Invasives Initiative. Please contribute today as a Student, Contributor, Patron, Bronze, Silver, or Gold Sponsor ([www.sicim.info/donate](http://www.sicim.info/donate)). In thanks for your support, SICIM and ILL merchandise will accompany each sponsorship level.



## ADDITIONAL PHOTO CREDITS

**Front cover:** Orange County Invasives Partnership Weed Wrangle® Indiana participants at Pioneer Mothers Memorial Forest, photo by Michael Wilhite with Orange County SWCD

**Back cover:** Box canyon in Perry County Indiana, photo by Dawn Slack

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 Vice Chair: Troy Hinkle  
 Treasurer: Allison Shoaf  
 Secretary: Teena Ligman

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 Janet Eger, Abby Hash,  
 Jason Larson, Hans Schmitz,  
 Mike Warner

### SICIM STAFF

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 Regional Specialists: Kaila Knies,  
 Erica Luchik, Amber Slaughterbeck,  
 Mary Welz, Liz Yetter

## THANK YOU TO OUR 2019 PARTNERS, SPONSORS, AND CONTRIBUTORS

#### CONTRIBUTING PARTNERS

Indiana Association of Soil & Water Conservation Districts  
 Indiana State Soil Board

Natural Resources Conservation Service  
 The Nature Conservancy

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 Ray Chattin  
 Roy Whistler Foundation, Inc  
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