



# 2022 ANNUAL REPORT



State of Indiana Cooperative Invasives Management

## A NEW YEAR, A NEW NRCS AGREEMENT, AND SO MUCH MORE

We really hit the ground running in 2022! So many good things happened: the total amount of Weed Wrangles® were doubled (from 200 to 400 total), landowner surveys soared, and the total number of active CISMAs reached 42. We were able to gather in-person again for the CISMA Conference, and hired a full-time Indiana Invasives Initiative (III) Project Coordinator. We also welcomed 3 new board members. Our staff represented SICIM and presented our successes with the III project at local, national, and global conferences. Along with all this excitement we signed a new agreement with the NRCS, which will help to fund our work in Indiana for the next 5 years. We will be able to use the momentum of the last few years to keep pushing forward in our efforts to address invasive species concerns in Indiana, build and

maintain our professional partnerships, and engage our citizens in being part of the solution. Along with this new NRCS agreement, we will provide more monetary support to CISMAs in Indiana by reimbursing them for conducting Weed Wrangles®, landowner surveys, and outreach events. As we build this reimbursement plan and continue to work with current CISMAs, we will also work to grow the number of CISMAs statewide. We will continue providing regional trainings on invasive species ID and management with our partners. Take a look through our 2022 Annual Report to see our progress so far, and be sure to connect with us by visiting our website and following us on social media to keep up to date on the latest and greatest happenings!

## A MESSAGE FROM OUR SICIM CHAIR

As I reflect on the past year, the level of awareness and work being accomplished on the ground to control invasive species is awe-inspiring. SICIM's staff, CISMAs, and partners were busy in 2022. The amount of invasive species removal work via Weed Wrangles® has doubled in just one year (compared to the previous years of the Indiana Invasives Initiative), and thousands of acres of public and privately owned land has been surveyed for invasive species.



In addition, SICIM is excited to be partnering again with the NRCS for another 5-year contribution agreement to keep the III going. We are grateful to the NRCS for their support, and are glad that they see the importance of protecting our natural resources from the threat of invasive species and how the III program addresses this need.

As we move forward with reaching our goal of having a CISMA to represent every county in Indiana, we appreciate the support from our

fellow friends of conservation. I would like to thank all our sponsors (listed on page 11) and partners in 2022. You make it possible for us to keep growing and continue working towards addressing invasive species statewide.

You all know that controlling invasive species is a challenging and seemingly uphill battle, but when we work together at the local level we are more successful and the work we do is more sustainable. If you are not a current sponsor, please consider supporting us and our efforts to build invasive species capacity throughout the state. We are constantly searching for grassroots support to help us provide match for our staff and provide funding to local CISMAs. On behalf of the entire SICIM Board, we are looking forward to what 2023 will bring in terms of invasive species awareness and management, and we are excited to have all of you join us in those efforts.

Sincerely,  
**Will Drews**

## A MESSAGE FROM OUR PROJECT COORDINATOR



Over the past five years many Hoosiers have taken the challenge to help develop CISMAs and increase invasive species management across Indiana. We have walked and talked with over 30,000 people about invasive species,

many of whom have decided to take the plunge with us and act for nature. Together we have completed over 400 Weed Wrangles®, and over 1,100 landowner surveys representing over 26,000 acres (see maps below).

Studies show that approximately 83% of the woody invasives in our parks come from our landscaped areas (just look at the spread of Callery Pear). Folks, this knowledge is empowering. We know what to do for healthy parks, forests, lands, and waters. Studies also

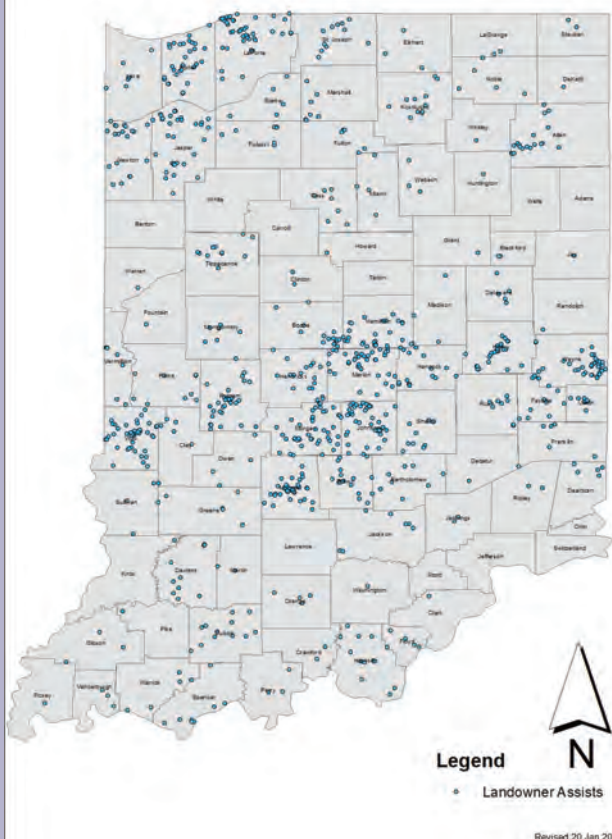
show that relationships are vital (including human relationships). Monarch butterflies aren't the only species that have a relationship with a specific plant or specific suite of plants to live, most of the organisms on this planet are like that. Let that muddle around your brain for a minute. Isn't that exciting! It makes for a diverse and beautiful world. It's exciting to know that together our invasive species work has a rippling effect for all life!

So, as we begin the next phase of the III and work side by side with you, we hope you will tell others about our work, how important it is for healthy lands, water, and wildlife, our food supply, and more. It is an honor to work with you, to grow with you, to learn with you, to find solutions with you. Here's to 2023! May it be a year to grow back (multiple meanings), and a year of healing and celebration.

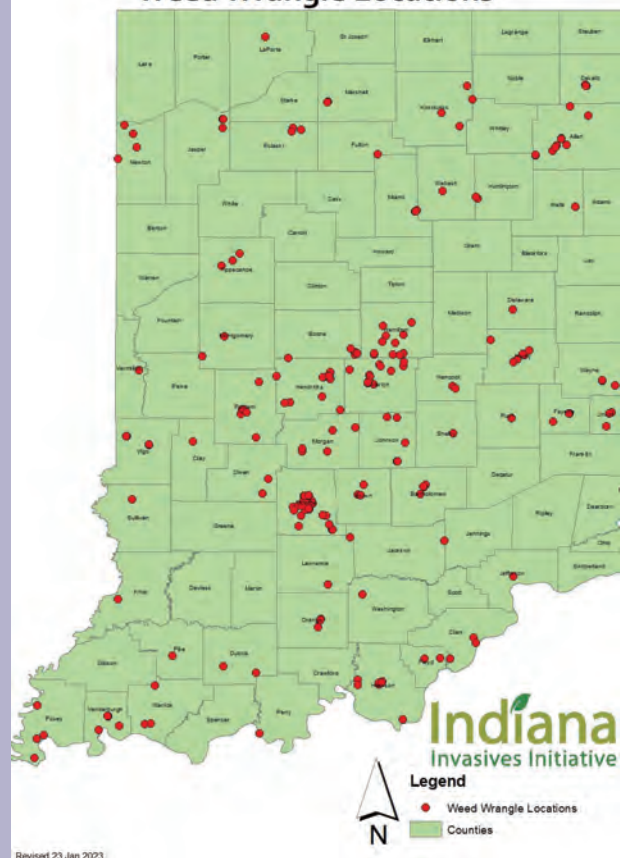
Sincerely,

**Dawn Slack**

Indiana Invasives Initiative Landowner Assists



Indiana Invasives Initiative Weed Wrangle Locations





The Indiana Invasives Initiative is a collaboration between the State of Indiana Cooperative Invasives Management and the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service to manage invasive species and raise public awareness of the devastation they cause.

### MEET THE INDIANA INVASIVES INITIATIVE TEAM



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## INDIANA INVASIVES INITIATIVE ACCOMPLISHMENTS

### OUR PROGRESS BY THE NUMBERS



**1077** Outreach Events



**1206** Property Assessments



**72** Counties we are actively working in



**36,723** Acres with Management Plans



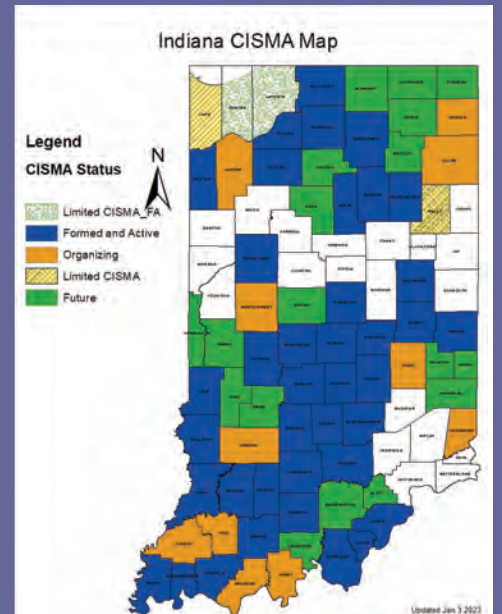
**35** Trainings Conducted



**44** established CISMAs (representing 51 counties)

Totals reflect progress of Indiana Invasives Initiative since launch in 2018 unless otherwise indicated

### INDIANA CISMA MAP



- Established CISMAs
- Organizing CISMAs
- Future CISMAs



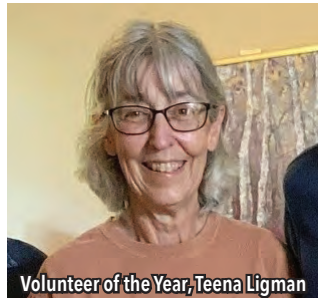
Henry County (HC-RIPS) showing their enthusiasm for removing invasive species

## 2022 SICIM ANNUAL PARTNERS MEETING

Our annual meeting was held again virtually on March 17, 2022 with over 100 participants. This year's theme was **Bugs & Fungi: A New Invasive and Native Solution**. As usual, awards were given to those who provided exceptional support to SICIM, a financial report was given, and elections were held.

### AWARDS:

Awards were given to those who have gone above and beyond in their volunteerism and partnerships with SICIM. The Chair recognized Teena Ligman as 2022 Volunteer of the Year. Teena has been involved with SICIM for many years, helping to organize the group in the early days. She joined the board again in 2019 as Secretary and continues in that role. She is also a member of the Communications and Operations/Development Committees and has contributed a significant amount of her time to SICIM!



Volunteer of the Year, Teena Ligman



The 2022 Partner of the Year Award was presented to the Indiana Society of American Foresters. They have long sponsored SICIM and have been an essential partner in the initiative to manage invasive species and educate our citizens on conservation.

The 2022 President's Award was given to the Indiana State Soil Board for their assistance in finding funding from the beginning and supporting our work. They oversee the Clean Water Indiana funding that provides support to SICIM, SWCDs, and other partners, and it is an essential program for supporting important conservation projects and staffing.

### PRESENTATIONS:

Ill Project Coordinator Dawn Slack gave an update on the continued progress of the Ill. Weed Wrangles®, landowner surveys, and outreach/training events continued to skyrocket (see most up-to-date numbers on pg. 4). She

gave an overview of the Invasive Plant Advisory Committee activities and reminded everyone to continue reporting invasive species through the EDDMapS app. She discussed that it can be easy to get mired down in the difficulty of invasive management, but she encouraged us to be inspired by the successes of others, and in turn be an inspiration to others by sharing our successes. We are part of a much bigger picture (statewide, nationwide, and worldwide) of conservation and stewardship. Celebrate that!

SICIM Regional Specialists created short videos highlighting accomplishments in their areas, which can be found on our YouTube page along with the recording of the meeting.

We had two speakers this year, Dr. Elizabeth Barnes (Purdue University, Dept. of Entomology) and Dr. Lauren Pile Knapp (US Forest Service).

Elizabeth discussed the Spotted Lanternfly, its life cycle, preferred host plants, known locations, and negative impacts associated with them. Lauren discussed her research in controlling tree-of-heaven with a native fungus (*Verticillium nonalfalfae* or Ailanthus wilt). She talked about tree-of-heaven biology, spread, and negative effects, and that this fungus can be a way to control its spread. Ailanthus wilt causes wilting leaves, vascular discoloration, and mortality. EPA registration has been delayed due to COVID, but it may be an option soon.



### CISMA GRANTS:

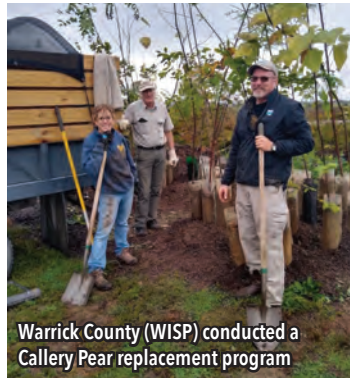
SICIM Executive Director Stephanie Schuck wrapped everything up thanking participants, sponsors, and speakers, and announced the CISMA Grant winners for 2022. CISMAs were awarded funding for projects ranging from invasive shrub buy-backs to Weed Wrangles® to native plant installations, and more. See page 8 for details on the CISMAs and projects that were funded!

## CISMA HIGHLIGHTS AND PROJECTS IN 2022

Indiana CISMAs have come so far in the last few years! There are some that have been established for years, some that are new, and many more that are organizing for the future. We currently have 42 active CISMAs working throughout the state of Indiana, and only some of their work is highlighted below. CISMAs are working with partners to conduct Weed Wrangles® and other outreach events to engage and educate the public. Some are conducting invasive species surveys for landowners. Some have applied for and received funding through our CISMA grant program and other grant programs for innovative projects. Visit our website to see our list of Indiana CISMAs: [sicim.info/cismas](http://sicim.info/cismas)

### **WE'LL TRADE YA!** *More and more CISMAs are organizing invasive trade-in programs*

If you remove that invasive burning bush in your landscaping, they'll give you a native replacement! These programs seem to be gaining in popularity both with CISMAs and with public interest. Many CISMAs that have done these programs use this as a great resource for outreach and education as well, so it is not only getting invasives out of Indiana's landscaping, but it's getting the word out more too!



### **ASSISTANCE** *Providing training to private landowners on invasive identification and management*

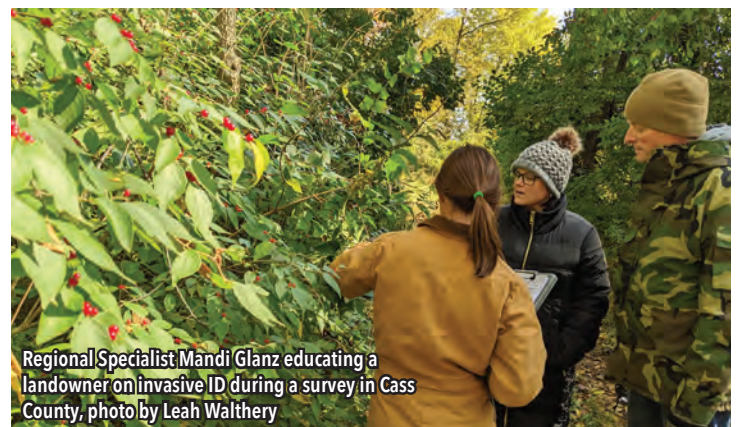
More and more private landowners are reaching out to us and CISMAs throughout the state on advice in managing invasives. SICIM Regional Specialists and some CISMAs are starting to conduct invasive species surveys and providing management plans to landowners. Some are also providing workshops on invasive identification and management.



### **WELCOME NEW CISMAs** *Say hello to our newest CISMAs*

- Shelby County: Blue River Alliance for Native Conservation & Habitats (BRANCH) has hit the ground running in 2022 with a mission, a steering committee, logo, and have hosted several Weed Wrangles®.
- Boone County: Boone County Invasives Cooperative (BCIC) formalized a mission statement, steering committee, name, and will decide on a logo in 2023. They've helped host Weed Wrangles® in Zionsville Parks in the past and are planning more for next year.
- Allen County CISMA: They've got a mission, and a vision, and a steering committee to steer them in the right direction for 2023.

We look forward to seeing how our new and already established CISMAs grow in the coming years.





Vigo Invasives Management (VIM) member treating Japanese stiltgrass at Jackson-Schnyder Nature Preserve, photo by Amber Slaughterbeck



CISMA Conference Field Day at Spring Mill State Park



Kosciusko County (KWWIP) installed a native demonstration garden at a library with part of their CISMA Grant funds and had some great help!

**GETTING THE WORD OUT** How does your CISMA get the word out about invasive species?

So much of what we do is outreach and education, engaging our citizens in Indiana to be part of the solution. Here are just a few ways CISMAs are getting the word out:

- Local events: county fairs, farmers markets, gardening and home events, HOA meetings
- Social media: Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, websites, and more! Social media can be a great way to reach folks that might not be in your bubble, and when posts are shared they can have a far reach.
- Billboards! That's right - several CISMAs have put billboards up with information on invasives such as Callery pear and burning bush.
- Weed Wrangles® and other public work days with partners: These are excellent ways to engage the public and teach them invasive identification and management techniques.
- Publications and press releases: brochures, info sheets, and flyers are a great way to reach a wider audience. Press releases provide the media an opportunity to get your story out.



Warrick Invasive Species Partnership (WISP) won Partner of the Year for 2022 at the Warrick Co SWCD Annual Meeting!

**SHOUT OUT TO OUR CISMA STRIKE TEAMS** (aka Invasive Management Teams)

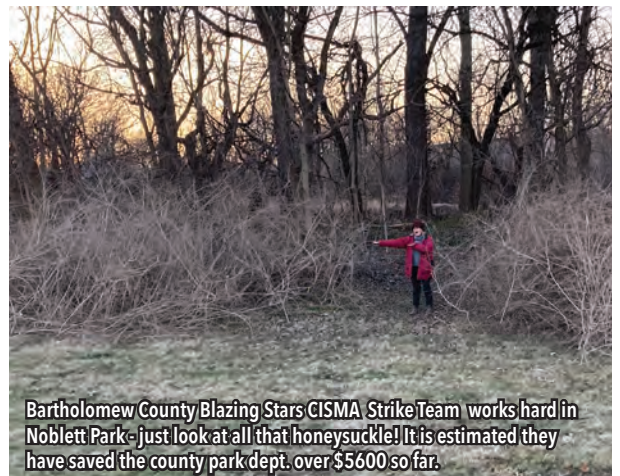
These teams instill fear in the plants they hunt. They are bad to the bone and relentless. They work with local partners in places like Deam Wilderness, Hougham Woods, Noblett Park, habitat gems in city/county parks, and even a Christian camp with a hanging fen that harbors native tall rice! They work to give native plants, insects, salamanders, birds, and all wildlife a chance to reclaim a stomping ground. Some work 100 hours or more before winter reaches halfway. One county claims the value of the team's work exceeds \$70,000. We salute you CISMA Strike Teams!



Monroe County (MC-IRIS) put up billboards educating about Callery pear



Hamilton County Invasive Partnership (HIP) partnered with a local brewery for a new brew to get the word out!



Bartholomew County Blazing Stars CISMA Strike Team works hard in Noblett Park - just look at all that honeysuckle! It is estimated they have saved the county park dept. over \$5600 so far.

## WEED WRANGLE UPDATE

**Weed Wrangle® Indiana** is part of a national movement that highlights the importance of managing invasive species and connects communities to volunteer opportunities in local natural areas. Each event is expert-led, providing hands-on guidance in invasive species identification and management. The momentum from 2021 was continued into 2022, with 200 Weed



Wrangles® held throughout Indiana, doubling the total number in just one year to 400! These events are key to the education and outreach that our CISMAs provide to their local communities, while also providing a way for citizens to get involved. Weed Wrangles® are events that are repeated in the same locations for at least three years in a row, which gives participants an opportunity to see the impact with their own eyes while bringing everyone together to see the bigger picture. They not only see the results of the first day of removal; they see and are involved in the progression of restoration over the years. Let's see if we can't double that number again in 2023! To learn more and view the calendar of all events statewide, visit our website.



## 2022 CISMA GRANT AWARDS

CISMA grants were a funding opportunity we were able to provide because of generous CISMA Conference sponsors and donors. In total, we have been able to provide \$30,000 to our CISMAs for special projects, strike teams, and other funding needs. Going forward, our CISMA grants will be on an as-needed basis, and we will entertain proposals as CISMAs request assistance. Below are the projects and CISMAs that were awarded in 2022:

- Hendricks County Invasive Management Cooperative (HC-IMC): 33 Callery pear removal/replacement, educational workshop and materials
- Henry County Removes Invasive Species (HC-RIPS): 30 Callery Pear and burning bush removal/replacement, outreach
- Warrick Invasive Species Partnership (WISP): 80 burning bush removal/replacement, educational workshop
- Lawrence County Keep Invasives in Check (KIC): 55 invasive shrub removal/replacement, educational workshop

- Tippecanoe Invasive Cooperative Taskforce (TICT): loaner tools, 3 workdays, and educational signage
- Daviess-Martin CISMA: Educational outreach, signage and boot brushes, Weed Wrangles®
- Kosciusko Water & Woodland Invasive Partnership (KWWIP): native demonstration garden at library
- Wayne County Invasive Plant Education & Removal (WIPER): 4 acre restoration/demonstration/education, invasive removal and installing 600 saplings and protectors





## 2022 CISMA CONFERENCE: INVASIVE SPECIES AND LOSS OF BIODIVERSITY

We were finally able to come back together in person this year! It sure was great to see new and familiar faces. The conference day was held at the FFA Leadership Center in Trafalgar, and several field days were held throughout the state in the days following the conference. Similar to last year, several pre-recorded sessions were made available prior to the conference and continuing education credits were offered through the Office of the State Chemist.



Pre-recorded sessions covered a range of topics including: Roundleaf Bittersweet identification, Ecology, and Management, Ron Rathfon, Extension Forester, Purdue University; Chinese silvergrass and its impacts in North Carolina, Tyler Ross, Director, Madison County SWCD; Kudzu Control Efforts and its Effect on Biodiversity, Ken Cote, Nursery Inspector & Compliance Officer, IN DNR, Dept. of Entomology & Plant Pathology; Impacts of Spotted Lanternfly, Eric Bittner, Nursery Inspector & Compliance Officer, IN DNR, Dept. of Entomology & Plant Pathology; and Wildlife in a Forest of Invasives, Marne Tichenell, Wildlife Program Specialist, OSU Extension.

During the in-person conference, Keynote Speaker Steve Manning, President of Plant Control, Inc



gave a presentation titled, "Invasives Free USA", an initiative that he is spearheading.

Other speakers that day were Eric Fisher, Aquatic Invasive Species Coordinator, IN DNR FWS, and Lenny Farlee, Sustaining Hardwood Extension Specialist, Purdue University. Eric presented on aquatic invasives and their effects on biodiversity, and Lenny gave a hands-on demonstration using tools and herbicides for invasive species treatment and management techniques. Megan Abraham, Director of the IDNR, Department of Entomology and Plant Pathology, gave department updates, and Dawn Slack, III Project Coordinator, gave an update on the Ill. 7 field day events were scattered throughout the state, providing information on plant ID and management techniques: Indiana Dunes National Park, Salamonie SRA, Munsee Woods Nature Preserve, Eagle Creek Park in Indianapolis, Grandview Lake in Columbus, Fox Ridge Nature Park, and Spring Mill State Park.

We are deeply grateful for all of our sponsors continued support of this conference. We also want to thank each attendee for your interest and engagement. It is so important to continue to work together and combine our efforts to manage invasive species in Indiana.

## WEED WRANGLER AWARDS

At each conference, we like to highlight those CISMAs, partners, and individuals that have gone above and beyond. Here are those that were awarded for their hard work and dedication to their CISMAs and communities throughout Indiana:

Friends of Nickel Plate Trail, Hendricks County Invasive Management Cooperative (HC-IMC), Johnson County Native Plant Partnership (JCNPP), Kosciusko Water and Woodland Invasive Partnership (KWWIP), Marion Mason with the Daviess-Martin Cisma, Putnam County Remove Invasive Plants (PC-RIP), and the Vanderburgh County Cisma.



## MAIN EVENTS FOR 2023

### Indiana Invasive Species Conference

Starting in 2023, the SICIM Annual Partners Meeting and CISMA Conference will be combined into one event! In the interest of bringing more people together to address invasive species issues statewide, we are combining the SICIM Annual Partners Meeting and the annual CISMA Conference into one event: the Indiana Invasive Species Conference. This one-day event will be held on June 29, 2023 at the Hamilton County Fairgrounds. We invite all partners: professionals, landowners, CISMA members, and concerned citizens to join us! There will be relative content for all, and this will be an excellent opportunity to make connections with others working on invasive species in Indiana. We are all in this together! Please contact our Executive Director at [stephanie@sicim.info](mailto:stephanie@sicim.info) with questions.

Continuing education credits will be offered. Check our website for details as they emerge: [www.sicim.info/invasivespeciesconference](http://www.sicim.info/invasivespeciesconference)

### Other events:

SICIM and CISMAs around the state host many events, both in-person and virtual, throughout the year. The National (and Indiana) Invasive Species Week is Feb. 20-26, and we will be sharing information on invasive species policy in Indiana and nationwide, and how you can get more involved. SICIM hosts Quarterly Lunch and Networking events on topics related to invasives and CISMA management and success. Dates for 2023 are: Feb. 16, May 18, Aug. 17, and Nov. 16. Additionally, CISMAs host Weed Wrangles®, educational presentations, and workshops on plant identification, invasive species, and more. Check out our website and Facebook pages!

## SPREAD THE WORD!



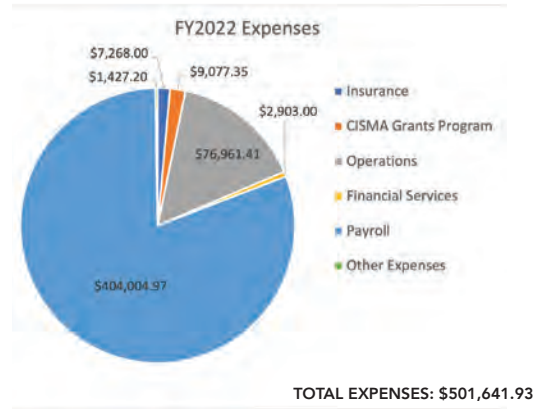
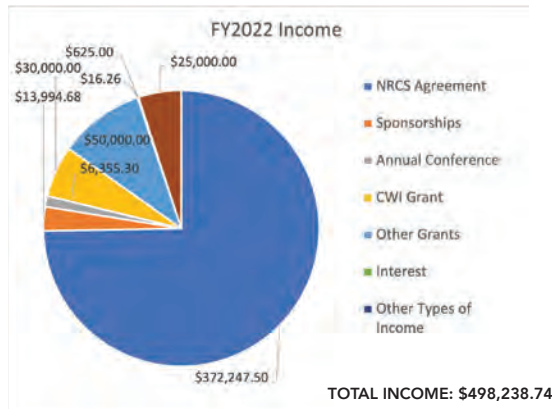
Our Indiana Invasives shirt is available again! We have many options in both long and short sleeve, color, and material. SICIM receives a portion of the sales for each shirt, so while you are spreading the word by wearing it, you are also contributing to our important work to help protect natural areas in Indiana. Visit our website for more information and to order: [www.sicim.info](http://www.sicim.info).

## LET'S COLLABORATE!

With the goal of cultivating sustainable support for invasive management, SICIM continues to advocate for state-level invasive species management funding alongside our state and local partners. We offer grant opportunities and partnerships that will expand the capacity of the Indiana Invasives Initiative. For potential collaborations, please reach out to SICIM Vice Chair and Financial Committee Chair, Troy Hinkle ([troy.hinkle@in.nacdnet.net](mailto:troy.hinkle@in.nacdnet.net)).

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

# 2022 SICIM FINANCIAL REPORT



This Financial Statement Activity was developed by SICIM Executive Director, Stephanie Schuck, and is true to the best of her knowledge and belief.

## THANK YOU TO OUR 2022 SPONSORS

### GOLD LEVEL

Arrowhead Country RC&D  
Clean Water Indiana  
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Indiana Society of American Foresters  
Ray & Susan Chattin  
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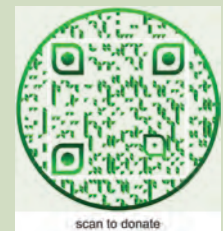
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Thanks also to our anonymous sponsors!

\*CISMA Conference Sponsor

**Become a donor today! Support SICIM and the Indiana Invasives Initiative by visiting our website ([www.sicim.info](http://www.sicim.info)) or scan the QR code:**



**ADDITIONAL PHOTO CREDITS: Front cover** - (TL) Blue River Alliance for Native Conservation and Habitats (BRANCH) Weed Wrangle®; (TR) St. Joseph and Marshall Counties Invasive Plant Partnership (SMIPP) at a Weed Wrangle® at Potato Creek SP, photo by Evan Glanz; (BL) Perry/Spencer Land and Native Species Team (PLANT) Weed Wrangle®; (BR) 2022 CISMA Conference Field Day at Indiana Dunes, photo by Mandi Glanz.

**Back cover** - 2022 CISMA Conference Field Day at Indiana Dunes, photo by Mandi Glanz



State of Indiana Cooperative Invasives Management



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 Vice Chair - Troy Hinkle  
 Treasurer - Jake Brinkman  
 Secretary - Teena Ligman

**SICIM BOARD MEMBERS**

Judi Brown, Ray Chattin, Cheryl Coon, Janet Eger, John Hazlett, Andrea Huntington, Allison Shoaf, Anthony Sipes, Phil Woolery

**SICIM STAFF**

Executive Director - Stephanie Schuck  
 III Project Coordinator - Dawn Slack  
 Regional Specialists - Mandi Glanz, Dugan Julian, Kaila Knies, Amber Slaughterbeck, Liz Yetter

**SINCE MUCH OF OUR FUNDING COMES FROM FEDERAL SOURCES THIS NON-DISCRIMINATION STATEMENT APPLIES**

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