



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: District Announces \$2.58 Million Available for Farmers

Indiana County Conservation District

CONTACT PERSON: Douglas M Beri Jr., (724) 471-4751 Ext. 4

DATE: March 7, 2023

The Indiana County Conservation District has announced that it is now accepting applications for a brand-new agricultural program. The Agricultural Conservation Assistance Program (ACAP) is a statewide cost-share program aimed to help farmers implement best management practices to conserve resources while keeping soils and waterways healthy and clean. Indiana County was awarded \$2.58 Million to be granted out to farmers over the next three years. Funding is available for cover crops, rotational grazing and watering systems, streamside buffers, livestock heavy use areas, and much more.

Through an open partnership with the Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS), ACAP will also assist farmers enrolled in NRCS's Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) to cross-fund projects and decrease the overall out-of-pocket costs to farmers. Matt Heffner, NRCS District Conservationist for Indiana County, stated in a press release "The partnership of ACAP and EQIP funding is a great opportunity to get good conservation projects on the ground here in Indiana County."

Doug Beri, Indiana County Conservation District Executive Director, stated "this is a historic investment in agriculture in Indiana County made possible through the PA State Legislature. The District is excited to work with our farming community to accomplish great projects that protect our waterways while conserving our precious soil. We will make substantial progress in addressing our county's resource concerns while helping our area farmers."

Through this program, the district will work with farmers and landowners to help design and implement soil and water conservation practices that will work best for each farm's unique circumstances. This grant program is open to any Indiana County agricultural operation or property on which an agricultural operation takes place. The program will specifically fund the implementation of best management practices included in a farms other conservation, manure, nutrient, or agriculture erosion & sedimentation plans, covering eligible project costs such as engineering and construction.

For more information about the ACAP program and to learn how to submit a grant application, contact Lexi Shank, ACAP Coordinator, at (724) 471-4751 x 3 or visit the District's website at [www.iccdpa.org/agriculture](http://www.iccdpa.org/agriculture).

\*\*\*\*\* PHOTO FOR INCLUSION WITH ARTICLE \*\*\*\*\*

Caption: An example of an eligible ACAP grant project is this farm field in Armstrong Township, Indiana County being severely eroded away by Crooked Creek.

