**Indiana NRCS Announces EQIP Application Deadline for Two Initiatives**

*Indianapolis, IN, October 4, 2018*–Jerry Raynor, State Conservationist for Indiana’s USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) announced today that NRCS is accepting producer applications for Conservation Activity Plans and the Regional Conservation Partnership Program’s Western Lake Erie Basin Phosphorus Reduction initiative. The application deadline is November 16, 2018.

“Both of these conservation projects are vital for conserving and protecting our natural resources here in Indiana,” said Raynor. “They address critical resource concerns that will impact the health of Indiana’s waterbodies.”

* **Resource Conservation Partnership Program (RCPP) Western Lake Erie Basin Phosphorus Reduction Initiative:** This project promotes coordination between NRCS and its partners to deliver conservation assistance to producers and landowners located within the Western Lake Erie basin. It is a diverse team of partners that use a targeted approach to identify high-priority sub-watersheds for phosphorus reduction and increase farmer access to public and private technical assistance. This initiative is located in Adams, Allen, DeKalb, Noble, Steuben and Wells Counties. Funding for this RCPP project comes from the Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP).
* **Conservation Activity Plans (CAP):** EQIP offers financial assistance for payment of practices and conservation activities involving the development of plans appropriate for the eligible land. A CAP is the conservation practice associated with the development of a plan by a certified technical service provider. CAPs are a tool to help producers make decisions on which conservation measures they want to implement. Examples of CAPs include Forest Management Plans, Comprehensive Nutrient Management Plans (CNMP), Nutrient Management Plans, Integrated Pest Management Plans, Fish and Wildlife Habitat Plans, Organic Transition Conservation Plans, and Agriculture Energy Management Plans, and Drainage Water Management Plans.

Through these two special initiatives, NRCS and its partners can effectively coordinate the delivery of assistance where it will have the most impact, accelerating the benefits of voluntary conservation programs, such as cleaner water and air, healthier soil and enhanced wildlife habitat. These projects will assist agricultural producers in improving the environment while maintaining productive land.

Producers interested in either of these initiatives should submit a signed application to their local NRCS field office. Applications submitted by the November 16 deadline will be evaluated for this funding period. Participants in EQIP must meet eligibility requirements. NRCS staff will work with producers to determine eligibility and complete necessary worksheets and rankings for the applicant to compete for funding.

For more information about EQIP and other technical and financial assistance available through Indiana NRCS conservation programs, visit <http://www.nrcs.usda.gov/wps/portal/nrcs/main/in/programs/financial/eqip/> or contact your county’s District Conservationist <http://www.nrcs.usda.gov/wps/portal/nrcs/main/in/contact/local/>.

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