



North Central Region One Water Action Forum

December 11– 13, 2018 • Indianapolis, Indiana



US Water
Alliance



Funded in part by the soybean checkoff.



NORTH CENTRAL REGION
WATER NETWORK

Hosts

What is One Water?

One Water is an approach developed by the US Water Alliance that envisions managing all water in an integrated, inclusive, and sustainable manner to secure a bright, prosperous future for our children, our communities, and our country.

While an integrated systems approach to water is not new, its full-scale implementation has yet to be realized.

Inspired by the One Water movement, Soil and Water Conservation Society (SWCS), North Central Region Water Network, Iowa Soybean Association, and US Water Alliance planned and executed the North Central Region One Water Action Forum.

The first of its kind, the regional One Water forum sought to bring together a diverse set of stakeholders to deepen the one water dialogue, localize lessons learned by delegates and attendees of the National 2018 One Water Summit, and take steps to put One Water to action in the Midwest.



95% were exposed to new perspectives and experts.

96% heard examples of purposeful water-related partnerships at work in the region.

Uniting Diverse Stakeholders for Action-Oriented Dialogue

The Forum sought to join a diverse set of stakeholders and topics around our world's most precious resource, water. Unlike many conventional conferences, the Forum acknowledged the expertise of the audience and facilitated dialogue among the diverse professionals in attendance.

Three workshops were held pre-forum on Great Lakes and Big Rivers Climate, Next Gen Youth Water Leadership, and Conservation Finance. The North Central Region Water Network held a pre-forum project team meeting on Harmful Algal Blooms as well.

The kickoff general session introduced attendees to the One Water concept through the lenses of conservation professionals working in the urban and rural realm, an artist and tribe.

A One Water Community Conversation set the tone for discussion among attendees about what drives their commitment to land and water stewardship, the successes they can build on, and what they hoped to come away with to strengthen their individual work and the One Water movement across the Midwest.

During the second day general session kickoff, leaders from nonprofit, for-profit, and government sectors shared specific existing and upcoming policy, programs, and project opportunities for attendees to integrate One Water approaches.

Nine working sessions were held on a variety of water-related topics from watershed management and soil health to climate change and diversity and inclusion in water management, outreach, and education. The working sessions featured panelists who shared new perspectives and knowledge on the issues, and working time for the attendees to discuss what actions would help move the issue forward in a more integrated, sustainable, and inclusive manner.

At the conclusion of the Forum, working session leaders shared highlights and actions during the general session. Those actions can be found at www.onewaternc.org/one-water-actions/

Who Came to the Forum?

173 attendees

17 States + DC and
Virgin Islands

Attendance by sector:

Extension 39%

Federal State Agency 21%

NGO 17%

Private For-Profit 9%

Ag Industry 5%

District, Other Academic,
Tribal 2% each

Farmer and Utility 1% each



Icon indicates survey results.

More than 80% agreed the forum highlighted policies and practices that are bridging traditional water management divides (83%), brought together a diverse group (85%), allowed them to form new and deepen existing relationships (84% new and 81% existing), and allowed them to share their perspectives on advancing One Water (80%).

www.onewaternc.org

presentations • pictures • actions identified • funding opportunities

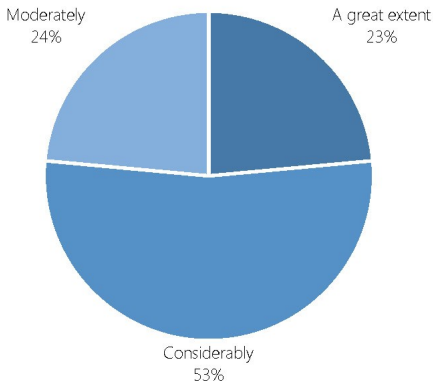


Attendees indicated how much each of the nine working session discussions helped advance actionable solutions in the survey.

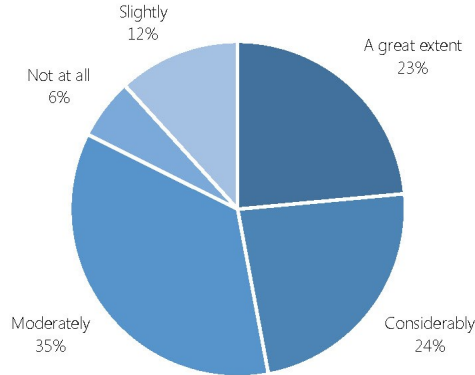
■ A great extent ■ Considerably ■ Moderately ■ Not at all ■ Slightly

46% survey response rate

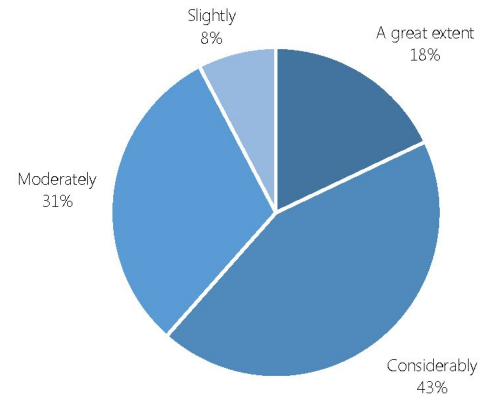
Sustainable Water Supply



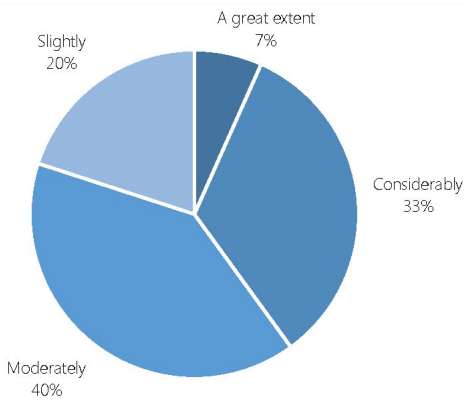
Climate



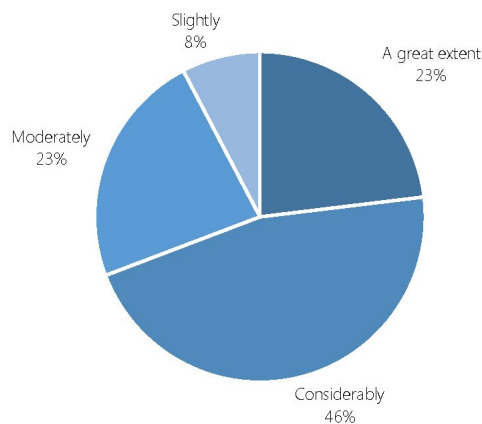
Soil Health



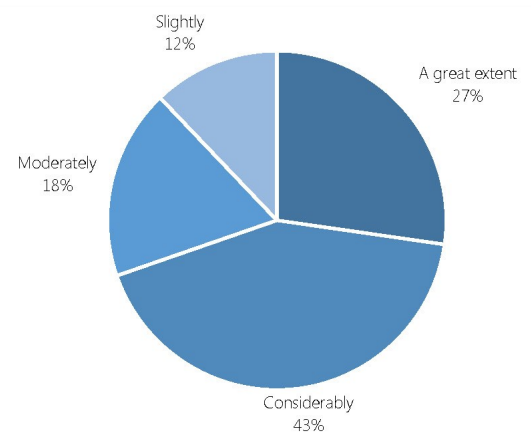
Water Infrastructure



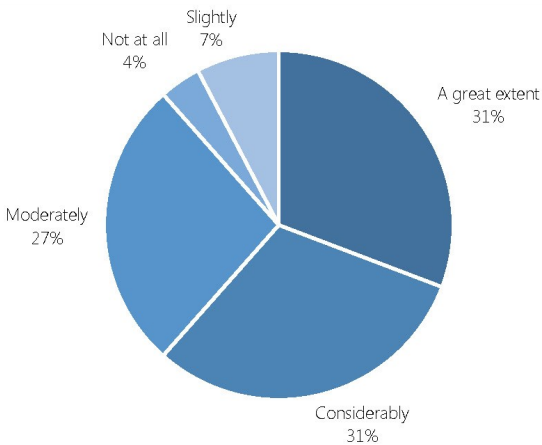
Youth



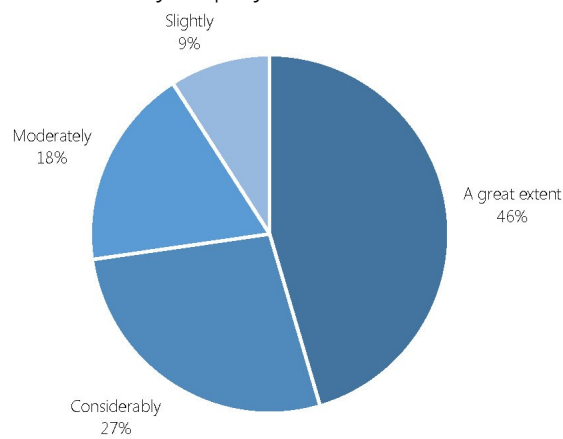
Watershed Management



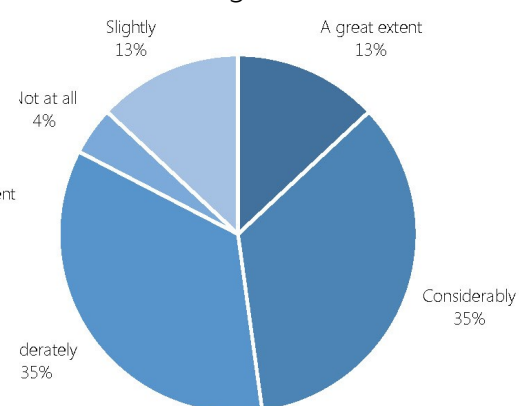
Source Water Protection



Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion



Harmful Algal Blooms



Thank you to our sponsors, 9 exhibitors, and 20 poster presenters.

Platinum: Iowa Soybean Association · **Gold:** Indiana Agriculture Nutrient Alliance, Indiana Corn Marketing Council, Indiana Soybean Alliance · **Silver:** Green Lands Blue Waters, MagneGas · **Contributors:** American Water Works Association, 12 Land Grant Universities who make up the North Central Region Water Network

Encouraging Informal Exchanges

Conservation professionals work hard, and this event sought to create a space for informal networking and creative thought among the learning and dialogue. That atmosphere was accomplished in the following ways:

Photo Booth

To spread the One Water message, a photo booth featured props for people to use in their photos and share on social media.

Conservation Trivia

The Forum kicked off with three rounds of conservation-related trivia questions, including songs and images.

Water Bar

Set up like a brewery tasting, attendees sampled water from across the region, learning about different community water sources and treatment methods.

Nutrient Reduction Game

Teams piloted a new version of the game that challenged them to work together to reduce water pollution from agricultural and urban lands with the resources allotted to them.

Art

Mark Kesling, artist, founder, and CEO of a nonprofit dedicated to connecting art, science, and community brought a creative dimension to the conference. He shared community coordination concepts integral to a local watershed project's success during the general session and organized period actors to tell the local natural history story on the tour.



SWCS Staff at photo booth



Attendees play game



SWCS staff run water bar

The Wordle to the right shows what forum attendees noted was key to One Water success.



Local Connections

The Forum enabled national SWCS staff and leadership to connect locally and engage with local chapters. Local chapters hinge around conducting and partnering to conduct events. The Forum provided an opportunity for headquarters to tap into the local connection when promoting the Forum. Involving the local chapters also assists them in raising their profile and increasing local impacts. The Hoosier Chapter co-hosted and planned the trivia, booth, and local tour.



Hoosier Chapter President touts SWCS membership at Conservation Trivia.

Next Steps for One Water and SWCS

- SWCS demonstrated some new tactics to engage conference attendees, including facilitating dialogue, expanding diversity of topics and audiences, and creating a space for informal networking and creative thought.
- The forum raised SWCS's profile among a new group of conservation professionals. For example, the AWWA has kept an ongoing dialogue with SWCS since the event.
- More events? The planning committee for the North Central One Water Action Forum agreed that we should take action on extending the One Water movement and consider another event in 2020. Through surveys, 69% of attendees indicated they were interested in attending another forum, 29% indicated maybe, and 2% indicated no. SWCS generated nearly \$17,000. Staff time exceeded that amount by double. The event was planned and executed in six months. Additional time and sponsors would allow SWCS full costs to be completely covered.
- SWCS has and will continue to utilize input solicited from conservation professionals to guide actions on water-related issues from watershed management and soil health to climate change and diversity and inclusion in water management, outreach, and education.

Membership Pitch: Action and Results

When registering for the North Central Region One Water Action Forum, attendees had the option to join at the \$99 rate.

Forty-five registrants were members, 5 joined upon registering, and 121 were nonmembers.

In an attempt to ensure the ability to join the Society was taken advantage of, SWCS touted the membership deal during the trivia, general sessions, and at an exhibitor booth in partnership with the local chapter. Two new members were brought on during the event.

An email and reminder were sent the month after the event to attendees who did not join prior to or during the event. Two new members were brought on through the email.

10 New Members

Ellen Gilinsky, Consultant · Douglas McLaughlin, Kieser & Associates · John Mundell, Mundell & Associates · Seth Harden & Karen Seidel, TNC · Melissa Miller, Iowa Water Center · Kara Salazar, Purdue University Extension · David Kringen & John McMaine, South Dakota State University