



United States
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NEWS RELEASE

Natural Resources Conservation Service
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NRCS Employees Receive Honors for Contributions to Award-Winning Campaign

Indianapolis, IN June 6, 2014—USDA’s Natural Resources Conservation Service recently honored three employees with a *Conservation Legacy Award* for their contributions to the agency’s national “Unlock the Secrets in the Soil” awareness and education campaign.

Jane Hardisty, state conservationist, Barry Fisher, state soil health specialist, and Becky Fletcher, public affairs specialist have been involved in the development of the campaign since late 2011, when NRCS prioritized soil health as a national conservation goal.

Hardisty lives in Greenfield, Indiana and has served as NRCS state conservationist since 2000. She and Fisher, who resides in Greencastle, Indiana, were instrumental in spearheading the “soil health” movement that began to spread across the country in 2011. Fletcher, of Danville, Indiana, has been a member of the national communications team charged with coming up with a marketing plan to promote the benefits of soil health.

“Promoting the benefits of soil health is what the ‘Unlock the Secrets in the Soil’ campaign does. We’re helping farmers and others private landowners understand the basics and benefits of soil health—which is leading to increased adoption of soil health management systems across the nation,” said Ron Nichols, the campaign’s national coordinator.

“As a result of the contributions made by these three employees to the campaign, an increasing number of producers are now investing in, and are harvesting a wide range of production, environmental, sustainability, and business benefits—on and off the farm,” he said.

Nichols said improving soil health is important to every U.S. consumer because cover crops and soil health management systems positively impact drinking water quality, and usability of recreational surface waters.

“Thanks to people like Jane, Barry and Becky, a growing number of Hoosier farmers and the NRCS staff in Indiana, a new legacy of conservation is being forged that will benefit generations of Americans,” Nichols said.

For more information on the Unlock the Secrets of the Soil campaign visit www.nrcs.usda.gov .

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Photo: NRCS

Left to Right: Becky Fletcher, Jane Hardisty, Barry Fisher

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