



CONSERVATION CATCHALL

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2011 ILLINOIS ENVIROTHON WINNERS



First Place Team
Taylorville High School
LUC - 9
Christian County SWCD
Pictured at left (left to right) are:
Eric Winans
Zibin Zhang,
Matthew Hooper
Skye Fisher
Louis Cella
The advisor is Ms. Mary Dawson.

Second Place Team
Triad High School
LUC - 12
Madison County SWCD
Pictured at right (left to right) are:
Zachary Hemann
Michelle Maloche
Ryan Mehallow
James Konsky
Alexandra Colombara
The advisor is Ms. Sandy Perkins.



Third Place Team
Midland High School
LUC - 2
Marshall-Putnam SWCD
Pictured at left (left to right) are:
Dan Scoon
Mitch Dunphy
Hans Vik
Evan Koehler
Carlie Toepper
The advisor is Ms. Rachel Baker-

AISWCD Staff:

Richard Nichols,
Executive Director

Jim Nelson,
Urban Stormwater Specialist

Sherry Finn,
Administrative Assistant

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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE - JAMES TODD

jtoddfarm@starband.net

On July 16th Lonnie Wilson and I will go to Washington to attend NACD's summer Board Meeting and the Annual Legislative Conference. Much of what we will be discussing at the conference will involve issues that affect soil and water conservation districts and, in some cases, nearly everyone who depends on the land and the water for their needs. The information below is one such example. NACD has taken the position that they will oppose the establishment of national numeric standards for nitrogen and phosphorous. The premise behind the opposition is that simply setting national numeric standards is not supported by science or the reality of a given local situation. The following is provided by NACD as a draft letter to USEPA Administrator Lisa Jackson and illustrates why it is so important to have someone in Washington to help tell our story.

"EPA has indicated that the Chesapeake Bay Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) and the Clean Water Act (CWA) numeric nutrient criteria (NNC) currently in its most prominent form in Florida should be used throughout the United States.

In late September, 2010, EPA released a draft Chesapeake Bay TMDL designed to restore the Chesapeake Bay and its vast network of streams, creeks and rivers. EPA plans to use the Chesapeake Bay Watershed as a model for watershed protection in the rest of the United States. At the same time EPA acknowledges that the Chesapeake Bay TMDL is the largest, most complex TMDL in the country covering 64,000 square miles in 6 states and DC. Even EPA admits that this extraordinarily complex TMDL is based on a flawed model. The model is untested and includes incomplete and incorrect information about agricultural practices in the region and their water quality performance. The model also fails to acknowledge practices employed by the agricultural community outside cost-share programs. These deficiencies have very real consequences on the livelihood of producers and landowners in the region. We fear EPA has proposed pollutant reductions that are not realistic or economically or technically feasible, and has failed to quantify the associated costs and benefits of the Bay TMDL. EPA is also exceeding its authority by proposing to establish a TMDL without first waiting for state action. The CWA requires EPA to go through a formal process to disprove a state's TMDL, and EPA has failed to do this.

EPA also is advancing the Clean Water Act (CWA) numeric nutrient criteria (NNC) most prominent in its current form in Florida, for use throughout the U.S. It is apparent that EPA's development of NNC in Florida will be established as a template for how NNC should be structured nationwide. EPA had not considered the implications and outcomes that will result if it sets the NNC for lakes and streams at standards that are far too stringent, impractical and unattainable for FL and the rest of the U.S.

Conservation Districts are strong supporters of the CWA. They support the goal of cleaner, healthier watersheds across the U.S., including the Chesapeake Bay. They are concerned however, that EPA's top-down, regulatory approach is counter-productive and fails to give locally-led efforts an opportunity to succeed. EPA's one-size fits all regulatory approach is not the appropriate way to address these water quality issues at the regional or local levels.

NACD will oppose any effort by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to use specific area Total Maximum Daily Load or other criteria throughout the United States unless a full NEPA review process is completed prior to use. Standards developed for a specific location are not appropriate to be used everywhere without modification. Locally-led involvement is needed to ensure the safety and quality of our natural resources."

It is important that all conservation districts across the nation have the opportunity to have a say and paying your NACD dues is one way to make sure that happens. NACD has stated that if it is too much to come up with the requested amount of \$775, they are willing to take whatever you can send. It is an expensive endeavor to maintain an office in Washington DC but that is where the action is and NACD needs to be there for us.

Just as NACD needs money to be able to represent you at the national level, the AISWCD needs your dues to represent you at the state level. We also need your input and support at this year's annual meeting. Our By-Laws prohibit delegates from voting at the annual meeting unless the SWCD is in good standing. If you have not brought your dues payments up to date, please consider doing so before the annual meeting. Everyone's input is important to us and we really want your input during the strategic planning session.

I look forward to seeing all of you at the annual meeting and summer conference July 25th - 27th!

James H. Todd



EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S NOTES - RICH NICHOLS

rich.nichols@aiswcd.org

Okay, its official...spring 2011 is the seventh wettest spring on record for Central Illinois and, I suspect, for most of the rest of the state as well. As with the past four years, heavy rains and saturated soils have led to significant erosion problems throughout the state. Gullies cut into already planted corn and bean fields that were tilled prior to planting will likely get worse as summer progresses into fall and we continue to receive what is expected to be above normal rainfall. That means that many producers who farm sloping land will have to be especially careful during harvest to avoid damage to equipment.

In some of my travels the past few weeks I have noticed cleanly tilled sloping fields with large gullies that have formed since planting. Some of the gullies appear to be more than ephemeral and may take significant working to erase them if, in fact, they can be erased. My guess is that some of the gullies I have noticed will require heavy equipment to repair the damage and a waterway will likely have to be installed to prevent recurring damages in the future.

In one of the worst "washouts" I have seen, I have to wonder why the producer didn't install a waterway before he had the problems he now has. I'm sure he has had erosion in that drainage way before but perhaps not as deep or wide as this year. Regardless, I imagine the soil and water conservation district will be getting a request sometime later this year for assistance in dealing with the problem.

This issue raises a larger one in my mind. It is obvious that the producer clean tilled this field. What is not so apparent is if the tillage was done this spring or last fall. Even if it was done this spring, it was unnecessary. The field is highly erosive. It is steeply sloping. The soils are lighter colored and not likely to have problems related to compaction or high clay content. So, why was the tillage done? Is it because "that's the way the producer has always done it?" Is it because the land is rented and the producer is a tenant and doesn't care about the field or maybe the landlord has decided that "conservation is too expensive?" Are we not doing our job to the extent we should? I suppose that the truth is somewhere within those questions but until someone actually sits down with the producer, we will probably never know. And if the producer has no interest in solving his problem, we probably won't have the chance to sit down with him.

It is sad to see someone who is unable or unwilling to take care of their available resources. In this case, the problems are highly visible from the highway and I'm sure I'm not the only one who has noticed. My overriding concern is that there are many travelers who will see the eroded field but won't stop to wonder why the problem exists - only wish there isn't a law to prevent it.

We have a lot of those folks who think there "ought to be a law." In some cases there probably should be but in many cases laws tend to create more problems than they solve. In the case of excess nutrients in our waters we have a large number of folks, including USEPA who think we should be setting numeric standards for nutrient loading. The problem with that is that the nutrients they want to set standards for are nitrogen and phosphorous, two of the most common fertilizer components used to grow crops and two of the most common nutrients that occur naturally in our rich highly productive soils. We have no baseline data which would give us a benchmark from which to determine if the excess nutrients in our waters are from fertilizers or from leaching of these naturally occurring nutrients from our soils brought about by the heavier than normal rainfall. There is no doubt that modern farming practices are contributing to the excess nutrients in our waters. However, there is much doubt as to how much of the excess is attributable to fertilizers. Cooler heads understand that nutrients are contributing to the Hypoxic zone in the Gulf of Mexico but they also understand that there is a need to approach setting standards for nutrient loading (contributions mostly from farm land and waste water treatment) using the more flexible approach of narrative standards. Though still enforceable, narrative standards rely more on the impacts (visual and measurable) caused by nutrient loading rather than on a specific number that may be exceeded during or immediately after an unusual rainfall event but would normally not be exceeded.

The latter is generally true of phosphorus which usually finds its way into the water through soil erosion.

That brings us back full-circle to the erosion problems prevalent during periods of higher than normal rain fall. If we hope to avoid the threat of someone other than the producer deciding when or if we can apply fertilizer to our fields, we need to install soil and water conservation practices on all lands that may be subject to erosion and, we need to get started NOW!

Rich



URBAN STORMWATER UPDATE - JIM NELSON

jim.nelson@aiswcd.org

I GET MAIL: Most of the mail and email I get is the general stuff about summer conference registration, projects I'm working on to update the Illinois Urban Manual (IUM), and how things are going down at the statehouse. However, from time to time I receive questions that help me gauge where I could do more in my effort to inform the public about water quality and stormwater issues and therefore prevent contamination through knowledge. This is great because it is like having a movie critic in my inbox telling me what I missed in the presentations I give at workshops and conferences; one who doesn't judge but just tells me where more attention is needed. In the case below I'm going to quote two emails. The first relates to finding, and finding documents on, the Illinois Urban Manual website. The other is related to a very common stormwater practice that is misused more often than not.

Question 1 (part A): When I go to the IUM website it asks me for a username and password. What are they and why did you password protect it?

Answer: If you're being asked for a username and password it's because you accidentally goggled your way to our IUM Technical Review webpage: <http://aiswcd.org/Programs/ium.html> the official IUM website address is: <http://aiswcd.org/IUM> and yes, the address is case-sensitive!

The former page (IUM Tech Review) is for use by IUM Tech Review Committee members only. This is where I post draft standards, drawings, material specifications, and construction specifications. It is password protected to prevent someone who accidentally stumbles upon it from using a standard that hasn't been reviewed and refined per our established framework. There is a lot of science that goes into a standard (Polyacrylamides for Temporary Soil Stabilization 893 for instance) and nearly every sentence must have research backing it up and agreement from many other professionals who have field tested it. This is often not the case on the first or even second draft document.

From time to time an SWCD employee finds themselves in a time crunch and requests a copy of the draft prior to its completion. On a case by case basis I have sent the drafts out but I usually do so along with a copy of comments from the committee, or myself, that clarify and improve the draft.

Question 1 (part B): Ok, now I see where the IUM is, now why can't I pull up any of the actual standards?

Answer: The reason is most likely because you went to Section 4 (which is correct) but clicked on, "[urbs1s1.pdf](#)" instead of, "[HTML](#)" which links to a pdf of the list of standards and zero linked documents. The HTML link brings you to a list of names of each standard which are clickable. Within that list it gives you the opportunity to choose from a pdf or html version of every standard. I prefer using the html version because they have hyperlinks to referenced standards, drawings, and specifications imbedded within. The html versions of IUM standards are a one stop shop for everything you'll need to see regarding that specific standard.

Question 2: There doesn't seem to be a spec for Silt Fence Ditch Checks that we can incorporate into our SWPPP and construction practices. this in the IL Urban Manual? Would you happen to know where we might find a spec for this?

Answer: The all-too common practice of installing silt fence across a concentrated flow ranks up there with the use of straw bale ditch checks and could be argued to be worse (in some cases) than not doing anything at all. In areas of concentrated flow, installing silt fence causes ponding, then swirling, and finally either piping directly below the fence or cutting around the sides of it. In cases where this doesn't happen it results in large areas of ponding that cause problems on roads, work areas, and on adjacent properties. If the fence is overburdened enough it will collapse and all the sediment initially caught by it, along with a bunch that the exaggerated ponding caused, is released causing further damage.

If the silt fence is installed on a slope it should not be done in a way which causes its own concentrated flow either. An example would be running silt fence parallel, or diagonal, to a slope instead of perpendicular. When sheet flow meets a fence running parallel to the slope it concentrates against the fabric and begins to run down the length forming a rill and then a gully. In this case, no silt fence is better than improperly installed fence. There are countless photos of improperly installed silt fence, below are two lent to me by McHenry SWCD.

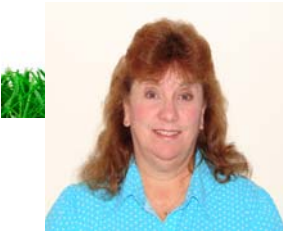


Left: Use of many rows closely spaced is an indication you should be either diverting flow or using erosion control instead of sediment control at the perimeter of the site. We can see water ponding and evidence of piping below the trenched fence (indicated by use of straw wattles as a stop-gap measure). *Courtesy of McHenry SWCD*

Right: Use in concentrated flows does not work and can lead to more problems. *Courtesy of McHenry SWCD.*



Jim



ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT'S UPDATE - *SHERRY FINN*

sherry.finn@aiswcd.org

April Activities

CREP Coordinator Grant:

- Mailed Marketing information to Jan for Districts \$100 re-imbursements for April
- Completed FY 2011 Quarterly Report (March-April-May) and forwarded to Jan Carpenter at IEPA
- Organized and mailed April CREP Coordinator Invoice with each participating Districts' vouchers and receipts
- Completed Database for FY 2011 CREP Contract with IEPA

June Quarterly Board Meeting:

- Completed QB Packet; mailed to non-e-mail Board Members; e-mailed to Board Members; sent to Jim Nelson to post to AISWCD Website
- Completed Hotel accommodations; menus; and room assignments for meetings
- Completed Financial Reports; completed expense report updates for Van Maintenance, copier, and computers.
- Compiled copies of the FY 2010 Audit Summary for AISWCD and Foundation

IL Envirothon:

- Deposited all team registration fees and sponsorship fees
- Wrote check for T-Shirt Award; cashed and gave to Co-Coordinators to present to winning team
- Completed additional information requested for Cargill grant app; FY 2011 Budget
- Worked as a volunteer-guide
- Completed payables; paid Winning Team Canon Envirothon registration fee and transportation fee

2011 Annual Meeting:

- Completed May Taskforce meeting agenda
- Confirmed menus and room assignments for contract
- Working on draft meeting agenda
- Sent Director Training Modules to Mike Rahe for volunteers from Ag to present program
- Sent reminder to Mike Hoffman about furnishing names for the Legislator of the Year Award
- Received confirmation from Jim Todd that Ron Sanert has agreed to be the backup Auctioneer.
- Completed Annual Meeting Reservation Spreadsheet; Auction item donation(s) spreadsheet; Director Service Award spreadsheet; Voting Delegate Spreadsheet; Fun Night Spreadsheet; Maintaining Awards Databases-extended deadline date (6-1-11)
- Completed Registration, Auction Item, Director Service, Voting Delegate, and Fun Night Registration forms-had posted to AISWCD website

OTHER DUTIES:

- Phone calls, mail and e-mail correspondence
- Compiled expense reports for Credit Cards
- Timesheets
- Maintain Patio Paver and Rain Barrel Database
- Maintain SWCD Dues Paid (FY '10 & FY '11) Databases
- Mailed Thank You Notes to Paid Districts
- Maintain Sponsorship Database (FY '11) & Brochure Printing Fee Database; Mailed Thank you letters to 2011 sponsors
- Sent AISWCD/SWCD Sponsors monthly CC and Legislative Newsletter

- E-mailed Monthly Financials to Officers
- Updated Records Retention, Mgmt & Destruction Folder
- Maintain a Database for computer items ordered w/ HP
- Forward to Rich the monthly SWCD/LUC agenda and meeting minutes that are e-mailed to me; file these after seen by Rich
- Proofread Conservation Catchall and Legislative Newsletter and mailed to Legislators without e-mail
- Completed Monthly Office Supply Inventory and placed order
- Sent bank balance status to Sangamon County Earth Stewardship Committee Chairman, Kristi Richards; sent invoices to Partners for Sponsorship money; maintain sponsorship database, bank balance, and budget
- Sent Invoice (5-23-11) to SWCDs for remainder of FY 2011 3rd Q and Partial 4th Q Dues payment for operating funds paid(5-18-11).
- Sent delinquent notice to District Directors for FY 2011 first half of dues; sent same notice to AISWCD Officers and Area VPs per Board request
- Completed Invitation for Latino Caucus Breakfast; compiled information for Hand out for Legislators at Breakfast; selected breakfast menu, ordered and paid for; maintained sign in sheet for attendees present; and mailed thank you letters.

FY 2010 Audit:

- Compiled information for Foundation 990

ACCOUNTING/OFFICE ADMIN:

- Completed Payroll and Payroll Taxes for May
- Reconciled all bank accounts
- Completed bookwork for All AISWCD & Insurance Accts
- Prepared Deposits for SWCD Dues and Receivables
- Completed Checks for Payables; Completed Deposits for Receivables; Completed Monthly Financials
- Filed all Completed Payables & Receivables Documentation
- Faxed Copy Count to CDS Technology
- Wrote checks for SWCD various insurance premiums; had Rich sign; mailed; e-mailed copies to Debbie Holsapple
- Completed Semi-Monthly IL Lobbyist Expenditure Data for IL Secretary of State
- Completed Deposit for CREP Coordinator February voucher; wrote checks, had Rich sign, and mailed to participating Districts for reimbursement

LOOKING AHEAD:

- Annual Meeting Taskforce Duties
- Tracking of FY 2011 Funding
- June QB Meeting-June 13-14, 2011 at Northfield Inn
- 63rd Annual Meeting-July 25-27, 2011 at Hilton Hotel

REMEMBER: When the Power of Love overpowers the Love of Power, there will be PEACE!!!

TO ACT: Decide to embrace life with Intensity!!

Sherry

ISWCDEA CORNER - MEGAN POSTEN, ISWCDEA REGION FIVE REPRESENTATIVE

website: <http://www.il.ncdea.org>



Once again, the year is racing by at an unbelievable clip. There is a lot for SWCD employees to think about this time of year. Some of those things were discussed at our last ISWCDEA meeting held 5/18/11. First of all, Summer Conference is nearly upon us. Sherry gave us an update on what to expect from this year's schedule. Monday will include the CPESC training, a director training session, and an IAAP-sponsored session. Tuesday will focus on strategic planning during the day with the auction held that evening. The board and foundation meeting will then be on Wednesday. As you can imagine, more Summer Conference details will be coming soon to an Inbox near you. In addition, the ISWCDEA will be holding a raffle at Summer Conference for an iPad, NookBook, and a River Clean Up framed print. Tickets will soon be available for the raffle.

The Transect Survey was also discussed. Alan Gulso assured employees that you can do the survey the old fashioned way- IDOA is not requiring districts to use a GPS unit to complete the survey. I don't know about field conditions where you are, but here in Randolph County Mother Nature has given us some extra time to prepare for our survey.

The Prevailing Wage Act continues to be a hot topic. In response to questions and concerns about SWCD responsibilities regarding the law, IDOA is working on getting a speaker from the Illinois Department of Labor to come and talk at Summer Conference Monday, July 25.

I know what you're thinking: "Here comes the part where Meghan tells me I need to be an ISWCDEA representative for my region." Guess what? You're right! YOU need to step up and take a place on the employee board. The best cure for the feeling of hopelessness you feel when you read about the Illinois budget situation is to GET INVOLVED. Seriously consider filling the vacancies in Regions 1, 3, 4, and 5.

2011 ILLINOIS ENVIROTHON WINNERS

(continued from page 1)

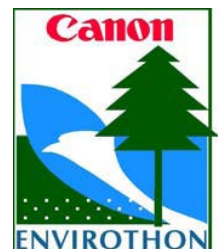


CATEGORY WINNERS:

AQUATICS	Midland H.S.
FORESTRY & CURRENT ISSUE WRITTEN TEST	Taylorville H.S.
SOILS	Shiloh H.S.
WILDLIFE	Grayville H.S.
CURRENT ISSUE ORAL PRESENTATION	Midland H.S.
TEAM SPIRIT	Midland H.S.

Congratulations to all of the winners and

Thanks to our sponsors!



Natural Area Guardians - *Tim Keller*

Tim Keller, Whiteside Co. SWCD Director

WHAT'S GOING ON WITH THE NATURAL AREA GUARDIANS?

The intent of this month's article and upcoming articles is to acquaint you with the activities of the Natural Area Guardians, a committee of the SWCD. We will start off with the Whiteside NAGs who organized in 1988.

The weather this spring has been a major factor in everyone's activities. Between temperature extremes and the resulting thunderstorms, the group was able to have some prescribed burns. Parts of the Lyndon-Agnew Prairie which parallels I-88 were burned when winds were in a favorable direction. Other areas burned were the prairie plots at Sauk Valley Community College, Thomas Park, three cemeteries and Spring Slough.

When unable to do prescribed burns, there is always brush-cutting that needs to be done, trying to rid the area of Honeysuckle and invasive trees. Another ongoing activity is the retrieval of tires and other trash that is dumped in Spring Slough.

Due to a change in land ownership adjacent to one of our prairie areas, we have been involved in building fence, as the new owner intends to have cattle.

One of our members, Char Knudten, heads up the Christmas and Spring Bird Counts in Whiteside County every year.

We awarded a \$500 scholarship to a young man from Sterling who is a student at Carthage College in Kenosha, WI. Among our efforts to raise funds is the traditional bake sale. We also sell books, note cards, prairie seed and plants.

We have monthly meetings and an occasional program. In May a fellow from Garden Plain presented pictures and commentary on his recent 6,000 mile bike trip to the West Coast and back. He saw and experienced many interesting things that were unique to traveling by bike rather than by car, train or plane.

Coming up on June 26th is the second annual tour of the Wahl Prairie south of Rock Falls near Deer Grove. The 143 acres contains a remnant sand prairie. Forty acres of former cropland is being restored to prairie. The public is invited to attend.



FORMS FOR THE 2011 AISWCD ANNUAL MEETING AND THE BLWR SUMMER CONFERENCE ARE AVAILABLE ON THE AISWCD'S WEBSITE

Awards forms for the 2011 Annual Meeting and Summer Conference are now on the AISWCDs web site at <http://aiswcd.org/Programs/awards.htm>.

Click on the name of the award you are seeking. All forms are fillable .PDF format and can be completed on line but then must be either saved on your computer or printed and mailed, faxed or e-mailed to the AISWCD.

Hotel Registration is available on the [AISWCD's web page](#) or by clicking on [Hilton Hotel](#).

The Annual Meeting Registration form will be available on the AISWCD's web page by the end of May. There has been a delay in completing the registration form due to negotiations with meal prices and menus.

We hope to see you there July 25th - 27th, 2011

2011 - INTERNATIONAL YEAR OF FORESTS



Dakar, 17 June 2011 – Over twenty-seven international, regional and sub-regional institutions and over 100 participants from around the world gathered in Dakar today for the observance of the World Day to Combat Desertification. Among the participants were members of the Collaborative Partnership on Forests (CPF), a mechanism comprising 14 global institutions and organizations dealing with forestry matters, which called for more, and urgent, investments to stem the growing degradation of natural resources, especially the forests in Africa's drylands.

Drylands make up 40% of the world's land area, cover more than 100 countries and are the basis for the livelihoods of 2 billion people. The world's largest concentration of mammals, and more than 50,000 known plant and 1,500 bird species, as well as the native habitats and wild relatives of the world's most widely consumed seeds are supported by these forests. But the long-term sustainability of the drylands forests is in jeopardy due to a shortage in the investments needed to scale up the sustainable forest management practices and to support policies to prevent and reverse land degradation in the drylands, the process commonly known as desertification.

Forests central to drylands health

The World Day to Combat Desertification, marked every 17 June since 1995 by a decision of the United Nations General Assembly, is dedicated to sensitizing the public and policy makers to the increasing global dangers of desertification, land degradation and drought. With 2011 as the International Year of Forests, this year's observance is under the theme, "Forests keep drylands working," to highlight the value of the little-known, but hugely important, drylands forests for both the local and global communities. The First Africa Drylands Week, held on 10-16 June 2011 in observance of the World Day to Combat Desertification, was an opportunity to explore these challenges drawing on Africa's experience, where 44% of the land area is drylands, in addition to its vast deserts. The field visits in Senegal, the testimonies of local populations and discussion with the policy makers, NGOs and the scientific and research community showed that the efforts to combat desertification and mitigate the effects of drought, almost inevitably, include improving forest and vegetation cover. Forests and trees improve the fertility of and organic matter in the soil, and protect the soil from erosion.

In Africa, the forestry initiatives in the drylands range from the Great Green Wall for the Sahara and Sahel Initiative and Lake Chad that is already under way in Senegal, to the community tree planting campaigns, and farmer managed natural regeneration in agro-forestry systems led by farmers and lesser known peasants. Campaigns, which in parts of the Sahel, have spread from village-to-village to rehabilitate over 5 million hectares across three states. Clearly, every effort counts.

"Environmental degradation is one of the greatest risks to local communities that depend on natural resources for their livelihoods. The GEF's (Global Environment Facility) engagement therefore is based on two overarching principles: environmental security and food security for peace in fragile regions. Environmental security includes maintaining services provided by ecosystems and their impacts on livelihood conditions. That's why in the heart of Africa, the GEF has established a program to support the Great Green Wall and Lake Chad initiatives," says Monique Barbut, Chief Executive Officer and Chairperson of the GEF.

"It's a monumental effort of 11 Sahelian countries who have collectively embraced the Great Green Wall of Sahel and Sahara Initiative as a platform to mobilize partnerships with the international community. Leaders of 11 countries in that region have committed to an environmental and development transformation in the region that will mitigate the risk of desertification while at the same time alleviating poverty. This vision is fully endorsed by

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ILLINOIS CHAPTER-IAAP - JANE BRANGENBERG, PRESIDENT

website: <http://iaap-swcd.tripod.com>

IAAP will be sponsoring a session again this year at the AISWCD Summer Conference. Our session will consist of two speakers; Matt Ryan from the Comptroller's office, will be guiding us through the Annual Financial Report and Judy Cordier, IDOA, will be speaking about the Financial Management Plan.

The tentative date and time will be Monday, July 25th from 3:00-4:30. Please contact me with any questions regarding the Annual Financial Report (Comptroller's Report) or the Financial Management Plan. I will forward your questions to the presenters and they will have answers for you at Summer Conference.

Our July meeting will be held during the Summer Conference in Springfield. Details for the meeting will be sent at a later date when the conference agenda has been finalized.

2011 - INTERNATIONAL YEAR OF FORESTS

(Continued from page 8)

the African Union, with an Action Plan for implementation. During several high level events over the last year, Ministers from the 11 countries have reaffirmed their commitment to this vision and repeatedly called for support and engagement by the international donor community, including the GEF, which we are ready to provide over the next four years," she stresses.

Increasing support needed for arid zone forests

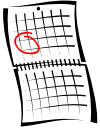
Half the world's livestock, a lot of the wildlife and a significant proportion of the drylands people highly depend on the drylands' natural resources. Drylands forests and vegetation are the source habitats of many of the seeds feeding the global population today, and provide valuable ecosystem services, not least, regulating the global climate. A number of CPF members are undertaking projects and programmes dedicated to drylands forests in Africa.

One example is Shinyanga in northern Tanzania. In 1984, then President, Julius Nyerere, described it as the 'desert of Tanzania'. Today, as a result of a comprehensive soil conservation and agroforestry project, supported by the World Agroforestry Center (ICRAF), the landscape has been rehabilitated and tens of thousands of smallholders have seen their profits rise by as much as USD 500 per year. They have planted woodlots along with grafted fruit orchards and fodder banks, and made use of nitrogen-fixing trees to increase fertility and crop yields. The ancient *ngitili* system of land management, which Sukuma pastoralists traditionally used to conserve livestock fodder for the dry season has been revived.

A project led by the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) piloted technologies for water harvesting techniques and initiated building capacity on resin and gum production as well as rehabilitation of degraded lands. By planting a local acacia species, it restored the environmental, social and economic values of the Acacia agro-sylvo-pastoral systems, while contributing to food security across six producing countries of gum and resins in Africa. Thus far, the project has already generated benefits to local communities and restored thousands of hectares across the countries.

Given the importance of forests in arid and semiarid zones for rural development and environmental protection, their development is a pressing challenge for both researchers and decision makers. "Facing global climate changes that are foreseen for the present century, including reductions in the already limited rainfall and

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MARK YOUR CALENDAR!

- National Chocolate Pudding Day - June 26
- National: Ice Cream, Grilling, Pickle, Horseradish, Hot Dog and Baked Bean Month - July
- Independence Day - Monday, July 4, 2011 (Office closed)
- AISWCD Annual Meeting and Summer Conference - July 25 - 27, 2011, Springfield Hilton Hotel
 - Conference Registration Deadline - Postmarked by July 5, 2011, last date for refunds, July 8, 2011 - NO EXCEPTIONS due to guarantees that must be made to the Hotel.
 - [Hotel Reservation](#) Deadline July 3, 2011
- Illinois State Fair - August 12 - 21, 2011, Springfield
- U of I Agronomy Day - August 18, University Farm, Urbana

2011 QUARTERLY BOARD MEETING DATES

- September 2011 Quarterly Board Meeting - Only if needed

2011 - INTERNATIONAL YEAR OF FORESTS

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variations in its seasonal distribution, this challenge becomes even stronger," says Santiago Barros Asenjo, who coordinates a working group of the International Union of Forest Research Organizations (IUFRO) on forest management in arid and semi-arid regions. Deforestation is the first step towards land degradation. A change in the spatial spread of an arid zone forest also signals the decline or recovery of degraded land. Yet, the significance of the drylands forests is not equally matched by the public discourse or investments on the issue. Few financial investments are allocated to these forests compared to other forest ecosystems. It is an underinvestment that, given the growing local conflicts over these resources, may become a liability to global peace in the long run.

The First Africa Drylands Week observed that local drylands communities contribute to the global wellbeing, but the ecosystem services they provide are inadequately compensated, if not overlooked, by the international community. The long-term sustainability now enjoyed by the temperate and moist tropical forests conservation shows that policy incentives and global cooperation are critical to the sustainable conservation and use of forests. Drylands forests are a blind-spot in the national and global policy frameworks on the sustainable management of forests.

Editor's Note: The importance of our forest resources can never be underestimated. While we may suffer from too much moisture now, the future may be greatly different. Soil and water conservation includes all aspects of conservation and conserving our forests and grasslands may provide future benefits we haven't yet envisioned.

Excerpt from: <http://www.fao.org/forestry/27846-0d0f33da95a5984d5cbaca1f4b0962670.pdf>

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