



CONSERVATION CATCHALL

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WHEN IS CONSERVATION DONE?

Never! At least that is what some folks in Phoenix might tell you. Arizona has had a pretty rough time the past two months. First, a fire set by a careless camper burned hundreds of thousands of acres of forested land in Arizona and on into New Mexico. Much of the damage was in the White Mountains, a scenic much visited area in eastern Arizona.

Unfortunately the fire was such that it completely destroyed the forest leaving little but ash covered, dried out soil. On July 5th a wind storm that started near Tucson moved northward across the burned out forested area and on its way picked up tons of ash and dust. The resulting dust storm moved on toward Phoenix and as the pictures show, blacked out the city. The picture at right shows the sixty mile wide storm passing over the city and approaching the Wild Horse Pass Casino. The picture below shows the storm as it nearly obscures the casino.



I'm sure if you ask residents of Phoenix, they will tell you that soil conservation and wind erosion control practices need to be put in place as soon as possible.

AISWCD Staff:

Richard Nichols,
Executive Director

Jim Nelson,
Urban Stormwater Specialist

Sherry Finn,
Administrative Assistant

Conservation is never "done." We will always have fires, floods, heavy rains, strong winds and other natural or man made events that will compromise the protection measures we have put in place or that may occur naturally. There will always be a need for soil and water conservation districts. No other agency or organization can do what the districts do nor can anyone else do the job more effectively or economically. Please let people know that there is a need for stable funding to assure that the SWCDs can continue to function and that SB0744 can supply that need. Then ask them to call the Governor and register their support for the bill.



63rd AISWCD ANNUAL MEETING & BLWR LAND AND WATER RESOURCES CONFERENCE

The sixty-third Annual Meeting of the Association of Illinois Soil and Water Conservation Districts and Bureau of Land and Water Resources Summer Conference was held July 25th - 27th at the Hilton Hotel in Springfield. We have included a few highlights for your information and enjoyment.



Above: Cindy Moon, Jim Todd and M.C., Terry Bogner contemplate an answer during the Family Feud Competition at Fun Night.

Below: Phyllis Mace keeps score as "Shoot 'Em Down Debi" (Slade) raises her "X" high for those who gave the wrong answer.



Facilitator Dave Dornbusch works through a series of questions during the Strategic Planning Session



The Strategic Planning Sessions held Tuesday morning and afternoon were intended to generate ideas and suggestions concerning how the SWCDs might deal with the specter of continued dwindling funding if SB744 does not become law. The good part was, there were lots of ideas. The bad part was there were too many to be able to satisfactorily condense them into a manageable number so that attendees could work through the prioritization process. The AISWCD and NRCS facilitators promised that the information would be condensed as quickly as possible and sent to the SWCDs in the form of a questionnaire for each director and staff member to prioritize. The questionnaires have been sent and will be summarized according to responses as soon as they have been returned to the AISWCD. We view this exercise as an extremely important mechanism to help determine how we proceed in the future.



The AISWCD Auxiliary learned how to decorate cup cakes.

The flowers are from a previous session where florists from Schnuck's demonstrated floral arranging.





Terry Bachtold, Livingston County, was selected as the Outstanding District Employee for 2011!

The eight nominees included: Terry Bachtold, Betty Buckert, Hancock SWCD; Debbie Gray, White SWCD; Emily Hartman, Bond SWCD; Sheila Lane, Vermillion SWCD Keith Livesay, Union SWCD; Joy Severns, Tazewell SWCD; and Debi Slade, Ford SWCD.

Congratulations to Terry and to all of the nominees!



Domminick Alber from Stephenson County was the K-1 Poster Contest Winner.



Phil Truty, Morris Community High School, Grundy County, was selected as the 2011 Teacher of the Year



The Color Guard: (From left to right) Myron Kirby, Dewitt SWCD; Terry Bogner, Marshall-Putnam SWCD, Richard Reynolds, Iroquois SWCD; Lee Bunting, Livingston SWCD and Captain, Lanny Finn, 123rd, 2nd Division (Sherry Finn's Son)



Those attending the CPESC training toured the Department of Agriculture's green roof and composting facility (left) and the site of the AISWCD's Green Infrastructure Grant Project (right) on the State Fairgrounds.





URBAN STORMWATER UPDATE - JIM NELSON

jim.nelson@aiswcd.org

For this month's article, I would like to focus on some of the latest news related to the Illinois Urban Manual (IUM), Summer Conference, and what's been happening with Illinois EPA's 319 program. First, the IUM committees recently added practice standard 861 Inlet Protection – Paved Areas to the official IUM website (<http://aiswcd.org/IUM>). We have had three additional standards make it through the public review process (one of the last steps before official incorporation into the manual) and will be sending them to EPA for final approval soon. Those standards are: Temporary Stream Diversion 976, Polyacrylamide for Temporary Soil Stabilization 893, and Polyacrylamide for Turbidity Reduction and Sediment Control 894. All are brand new standards. Standard 976 was developed by a paid consultant and 893 and 894 were developed by a consultant who is a former SWCD employee, Jonathan Koepke, pro-bono. Many sources were used in development of all three standards and I believe they will help designers and contractors get a clear understanding of these BMPs when they choose to employ them.

The second topic is the promotion of this year's Certified Professional in Erosion and Sediment Control (CPESC) workshop at Summer Conference on Monday. Thanks to Mike Rahe and Joe Bybee, the Department of Ag will be paying for the first 40 participants. The agenda includes a great presentation by Rick Macho (Madison SWCD and Regional Representative for CESSWI) on adapting traditional ag-based practices for use on construction sites. Rick will pay particular attention to stabilizing a site as a first defense to decrease erosion. Megan Andrews (Kendall SWCD) will give an update on the IEPA inspection/education program for participating SWCDs. The final presenter, Dr. Paul Walker (IL State University) will focus on development, and assessing quality of, compost for use in stormwater BMPs. This is particularly good timing as the current IUM consultant, the 2IM Group, finalizes two compost-based standards. Understanding how the compost should look and getting information on its quality will be very important for those educating contractors and designers during inspections.

The final topic for this article concerns IL EPA's section 319 nonpoint source pollution prevention grants. In previous years EPA received their grant funds from US EPA by mid-spring and was able to enter into agreements from that point on. It recently came to my attention that this has not been the case this year. They have still not received their money for FY 2011 and, as far as I know, there is no timeline for when it will come. Illinois EPA (rightly) will not sign agreements with grantees until they have money to back up their signatures. The grant that pays for my position and the updating of the IUM is to be renewed with that money. If it is not received prior to October 1 the AISWCD will lose funding for my position temporarily although, there is remaining money for actual IUM updates for a little while longer.

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Jim".



Representative Jim Sacia served as auctioneer and sold the painted rain barrel for the third straight year.



Representative Chapin Rose was selected as the Association's Legislator of the Year for 2011

2011 CONSERVATION FARM FAMILIES



Left: The Elbert Family from Odell, Livingston County



Right: The Hess Family from Bushnell, McDonough County.



Left: The Lane Family from Kirkland, DeKalb County



Right: The Tennis Family from Sumner, Lawrence County

ISWCDEA CORNER - MEGAN POLACEK, ISWCDEA REGION FIVE REPRESENTATIVE

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



If you attended Summer Conference and found yourself saying "I wish they would have had a session about ...," then be sure to talk to your ISWCDEA Representatives this month. We will be planning Winter Training at our September 8, 2011 meeting, and we welcome all ideas and suggestions for sessions.

The Farm Progress show is August 30-September 1, 2011 at Decatur. For the first time, the ISWCDEA will have a booth there. This is a great opportunity for the ISWCDEA to get the word out about Illinois SWCDs. If you would like to help or donate items for the show, contact Debi Slade at Ford County SWCD.

Please remember that we still have vacancies to fill within the ISWCDEA. All Regions but 2 are currently short one representative. On top of that, several more ISWCDEA representatives will finish their last terms this winter. Consider stepping up and serving for your region.

SUMMER CONFERENCE-ANNUAL MEETING AWARDS

(Continued)



Erin Page, daughter of Franklin County SWCD R.C. Janice Page and her husband Robert, won the ISWCDEA Scholarship .



Patrick Price was selected as the 10-12 Grade Poster Winner for his very professional looking graphic design.

There were of course many other award winners but space prohibits listing all of them and printing their pictures. Please refer to the Conference Program Booklet and congratulate all of those who put forth their best efforts to produce pictures and posters that are both beautiful and informative. All of the winning pictures and posters will be sent on to NACD to be judged at the NACD Annual Meeting next February in Reno, Neva-

Natural Area Guardians - *Tim Keller*

Tim Keller, Whiteside Co. SWCD Director

WHAT'S GOING ON WITH THE NATURAL AREA GUARDIANS?

This Month's Article was submitted by Luann Urban of the Henry County NAGs

Henry County NAGS takes care of two dedicated nature preserves, Munson Cemetery and Greenlee Cemetery. We remove wild parsnip, sweet clover, and silver poplar at those sites as well as burning these and other sites throughout the county where land owners request help. At Munson there has been ongoing research on the endangered Eastern Prairie White Fringed Orchid, where members have helped to record information on the flowering plants. Last year we helped with the Eagle Scout project of repairing fences and gates at Greenlee and Munson, which was done by a member's son and his troop. Each year we hold the Bob Rishel Memorial Prairie Walk, named in memory of an active founder, on the last Sunday of June at Munson Cemetery. Last September we helped one of our members in a Monarch butterfly tagging project, tagging 42 butterflies in two hours. We were in the right place at the right time.



Tim Keller holds an armload of sweet clover that has been removed from the Munson Cemetery.

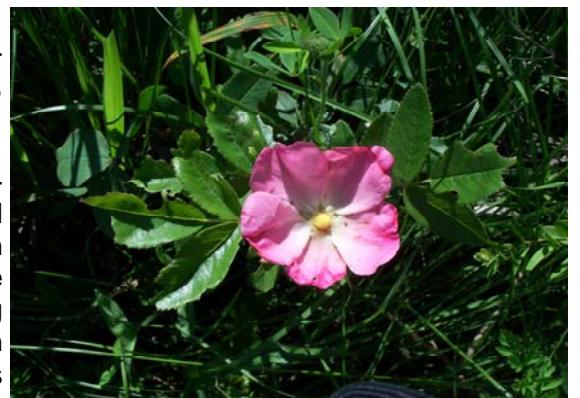
We build and sell bluebird and bat houses as a money maker. We hold workshops each March on topics of interest, such as bluebirds, bats, prairie chickens, falconry, and the early logging industry on the upper Mississippi River. For these programs, we move the location around the county to make it easier for people to attend. Our group is a member of the Volunteer Stewardship Network, coordinated by Karen Tharp, Illinois Nature Conservancy, which provides information on opportunities for training, funding through grants, and government action on related topics. At the end of June, we assist the Soil and Water District in manning the fair booth which offers educational materials to the public.

We are pleased to be able to offer the \$500 Clarence and Marie Medley Conservation Scholarship, named for two very active members, each year to a student in a conservation related major.



Purple Prairie Coneflowers bloom in Munson Cemetery.

During spring and summer our meetings and work are outdoors, but in the fall and winter we meet monthly, having programs each month in addition to our business meeting. In October we like to have a hot dog roast at a member's home. We sometimes plan tours of interesting spots in the summer. We have been able to visit sites in surrounding counties and sometimes attend programs sponsored there. In that way we keep learning more about prairie plants and the management of prairies.



This Carolina Rose was spotted during the Memorial Prairie Walk at Munson Cemetery.



Legislative Corner - Mike Hoffmann

Budget Watch

Yesterday, July 1, Governor Pat Quinn finalized the Agriculture budget that was sent to him by the General Assembly. Our allocations in the Dept. of Agriculture remain at a total of \$7,060,000 - \$2.785 million from the General Revenue Fund and \$4.275 million from the Partners for Conservation Fund. We do not know at this time what if any reserves the Governor might apply to these funds. He has stated that he viewed the budget sent to him by the G.A. as “incomplete”, meaning that social services programs were not adequately funded.

The General Assembly did meet in special session June 22 and passed an appropriations bill for capital projects, which means that state building will not come to halt in July. However, I would expect that we have not seen the final action on this year’s budget. When the G.A. returns in November for the veto session, the budget will again be reviewed. We will need to keep our ears to the ground to be sure that our budget is not adversely affected when the leaders look for revenue to fund social services.

Dedicated Funding

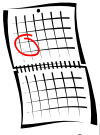
There has been a lot of talk about [SB0744](#), which authorizes slot machines at race tracks where horse racing is ongoing (including the State Fairgrounds) and allocates \$10 million of that revenue annually for grants to SWCDs. But there is not much indication from the Governor as to whether he will sign or veto the bill. The word is that it will be some time before the Governor takes any action because he intends to go over it with a fine tooth comb. Although SB 744 has passed both the House and Senate, it has not yet been sent to the Governor. Senate President John Cullerton has used a parliamentary maneuver to keep the bill in his hands until he has some indication as to where the Governor will fall.

If you have not yet contacted the Governor’s office in support of SB 744, please do so if at all possible. The funding from the bill is crucial to keeping the soil and water conservation program viable, and the Governor has indicated that he is looking very closely at how the bill affects agriculture and how much support for the bill there is among the Ag groups community.

District Consolidation

[SB0172](#) (Sen. Terry Link, D-Lake Co.) allows for the consolidation for the Lake and McHenry Co. Soil and Water Conservation Districts without referendum. This is an agreed bill that was revised at our request to make it apply narrowly to affect only this requested consolidation. SB 172 has passed both chambers and is now on the Governor’s desk. Governor Quinn has until the middle of August to take action on the bill.

KEEP YOUR STATE LEGISLATORS EDUCATED ON SWCD ACTIVITIES



MARK YOUR CALENDAR!

- Farm Progress Show - August 30 - September 1, 2011, Decatur, IL
- 13th Governor's Conference on the Management of the Illinois River System - Père Marquette Hotel, Peoria, IL October 4 - 6, 2011

2011 QUARTERLY BOARD MEETING DATES

- September 2011 Quarterly Board Meeting - Teleconference, September 13 (Executive Committee teleconference will be held September 6th.)
- December 2011 Quarterly Board Meeting - December 12th/13th, Northfield Inn - Springfield, IL

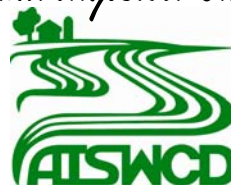
ILLINOIS 2011 CONSERVATION FARM FAMILY GOVERNOR'S AWARD WINNER



Top: Mark and Markus Tennis and James Todd, AISWCD President.
Bottom: Mackenzie, Marsha and Mara Tennis. The Tennis Family is from Sumner in Lawrence County.

AISWCD Mission: *To represent and empower Illinois' SWCDs*

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