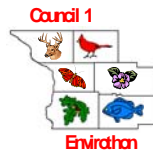


Carroll County Soil & Water Conservation District

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Land Use Council #1 Envirothon

The Carroll County Soil & Water Conservation District, along with the other five northwest Illinois Soil & Water Conservation Districts hosts an annual Envirothon competition. The Envirothon provides an opportunity for high school students to learn more about the environment by providing the students with study materials related to forestry, aquatics, wildlife, and soils, in addition to a current event topic chosen each year. Recent topics have been biodiversity in a changing world, recreational impacts on natural resources, and alternative & renewable energy. Students use the provided study materials to establish a knowledge base on each of the topics. They also listen to presentations on each topic given by area professionals on the day of the event. At the completion of the year-long learning process, the students are tested on the five subject areas. They also prepare oral presentations on the current event topic.

The 2009 Northwest Illinois Land Use Council Envirothon will be held on March 30, 2009 at Highland Community College in Freeport, Illinois. This year, there will be 175 area high school students participating in the competition. The winning students will each receive a \$400 college scholarship as well as advance to the Illinois Envirothon to be held in May. While the students are busy taking their tests and giving their oral presentations, 26 teacher advisors will be spending the day learning as well. We have prepared a Teacher Workshop on Water Quality and Quantity for this year.

The unique attribute of our event is that the area Soil & Water Conservation Districts have teamed up with various other local organizations to help fund this event. Partnering organizations include: National Wild Turkey Federation, Pheasants Forever, Northwest Illinois Forestry Association, United States Fish & Wildlife Service, Blackhawk Hills Resource Conservation & Development, Conservation Guardians of Northwest Illinois, local farm service providers, and local banks and hospitals. Due to these efforts, we have raised over \$5,500 each year to fully fund the Envirothon competition as well as the scholarship program. With Soil & Water Conservation Districts receiving decreased funding in recent years, it has taken a little ingenuity in order to generate enough money to continue educational events like this. In recent years in Illinois, environmental curriculum has greatly diminished from our public schools. This program helps to reinforce the importance of natural resources in the minds of today's youth.