

# CONSERVATION CATCHALL

## *In this issue:*

Annual Meeting Countdown	1
President's Message	2
Executive Director's Notes	3
Program Coordinator's Page	4
Administrative Assistant's Update	5
Office Assistant's Information	6
AISWCD Lobbyist Update	7
Illinois Chapter IAAP	8
ISWCDEA Corner	8
AISWCD Affiliate Membership	9
Sam's Club Offer	10
Calendar	10

## *AISWCD Staff:*

**Richard Nichols,**  
*Executive Director*

**Sherry Finn,**  
*Administrative Assistant*

**Kelly Thompson,**  
*Program Coordinator*

**Gina Bean,**  
*Office Assistant*

*CREP Resource Specialists*

**Sheryl Phillips**

**Jeremy Pruden**

**Timothy Royer**

**Dan Sahm**

**Jake Vancil**

**THE COUNTDOWN BEGINS!  
66TH ANNUAL MEETING  
JULY 28-29, 2014**



**Registration deadlines for Summer Conference are quickly approaching!**

Postmarked until June 30, 2014 = \$45/person

Postmarked July 1, 2014 to July 8, 2014 = \$55/person

No refunds will be given after July 8, 2014.

## **Other form deadlines...**

Auction Item Form = June 27, 2014 (postmarked)

Director Service Award Form = June 27, 2014 (postmarked)  
(Please do not forget to email Sherry Finn a photo of your Director)

***We Hope To See Everyone There!***



## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE - LONNIE WILSON

lonniewilson@gmail.com

Well, here we are into June already! I hope everyone's spring has gone as expected. Here on the Wilson farm things went unusually smooth for a change this year, so this kind of makes me wonder what we forgot? I would like to first touch on the accomplishments from this spring at the state level. We were able to get the Prevailing Wage Bill through both chambers this year and it will soon be on the Governor's desk awaiting his signature. This is a huge accomplishment for us in this area in my opinion and shows the change in position as an organization and how we are viewed at the Capital by Legislators and by other groups. We need to retain this respect and ability to work within the system as we move forward with other positions in the future. The 2015 Budget has passed both chambers and has also been sent to the Governor's office. SWCD funding remains level with FY 2014 - \$3 million for administration (operations) and \$4.5 million for programs (cost share). This is, in my opinion, due to two reasons we have worked hard on, 1) getting from General Revenue Funds to Special Purpose Funding, and 2) Building strong relationships with the House and Senate Committee members and Staff. Now with this budget, even though we are level and within a budget, I feel cash flow for the state will once again be an issue as we experienced a few years back. An interfund transfer bill also passed which borrows over \$650 million from other funds, but does not fund the pension liability. At this point it looks like the State will be short to upwards of \$5 billion in unpaid bills. I do however see over \$145 million in special projects just thumbing through the budget that should be, in my opinion, shifted to private sector fund raising. I don't want to become political here, but let's get serious about reform.

We would like to thank Rep. John Cavaletto for sponsoring HR1004 which proclaimed May 1<sup>st</sup> 2014 as Envirothon Day in Illinois! Too bad that politics got in the way and the resolution was not passed until May 21<sup>st</sup>. Anyway, we will count it as a half win, right? With it being an election year, not much more will be happening in my opinion till after November, then I expect there will be a lot to talk about revenue in Springfield.

One more item I would like to bring before you is the Nutrient Reduction Strategy. Information on the Statewide Draft Plan can be found at <http://www.epa.state.il.us/water/nutrient/index.html> and the plan will be posted there in early July. Please go and make your comments on this plan based on your belief that this is the best management approach to address the issue at the grass roots level. You know your district so please become involved.

On the national level, budgets are starting to be established under the new rules, so information at the district level should become more available over the next few weeks / months. It is so nice to have this Farm Bill locked in and I once again want to say a big THANK YOU to Congressman Rodney Davis and his staff for their work on the Joint Committee and their great communications with us the entire time. When we would send them messages or concerns, they would address them in minutes. It was almost as we had a seat next to the Congressman in the committee. Another issue that is currently ongoing is the USEPA rules for Waters of the USA. NACD is publishing a letter asking for an extension for comments and also on the points that are concerns to SWCDs. Please, if you have any concerns or comments on this go online and make them and then let us know at the AISWCD office. We can then forward them to our legal folks at NACD to add the concerns into the letter.

As many of you already know, the National Envirothon was not able to be held this year for many different reasons. We are working toward a regional solution here in Illinois that will allow the students to attend a Stewardship Competition at Loyola College in August. I am very proud of the staff in Springfield, Sondra Baker, Spring Duffy along with a great regional team of folks that have come together to pull off this event. You guys really will never understand how much this means to the Teams that get to experience this program first hand. You are great people and I thank you for everything you have done to support me with this project.

I hope to see everyone soon at the Summer Conference!



## EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S NOTES - *RICH NICHOLS*

[rich.nichols@aiswcd.org](mailto:rich.nichols@aiswcd.org)

May is gone and with it went the spring session of the 98<sup>th</sup> General Assembly. Before legislators left for the summer they did pass a budget. I'm not going to argue whether it is a good budget or not, but I will comment on the likelihood that what was finally passed by both chambers will not be the final word for fiscal year 2015.

The budget, as passed, adds up to more than the amount of money the state is expected to see in revenue. That is not a good thing. For one thing, it is supposed to be unconstitutional to approve a budget that exceeds the projected amount of revenue the state will take in during the budget's time frame. And for another reason, the General Assembly has all but guaranteed they will be back to either make mid-year cuts or figure a way to increase revenue. Because it is never easy to cut programs, prognosticators are predicting that legislators will return to Springfield after the November election to revisit the issue of generating additional revenue. The 5% tax is currently set to be scaled back to 3.75% January 1, 2015. However, lawmakers can come back to town in the fall Veto Session or during the Lame Duck Session in January and create some new tax with few repercussions from voters. You may recall, that is how we got 67% increase in income taxes to begin with. Lawmakers came back to Springfield after the November election in 2011 and passed a bill implementing the tax increase.

Even if voters decide to make some changes in who occupies the Governor's Mansion and other high-level elected offices, the just elected newbies won't take office until late January 2015 - well after the current administration has passed whatever legislation they choose.

I may not be the most observant person around but over the years I have learned a few things - one of which is that whenever government finds a source of money through some "temporary" revenue stream, they grow accustomed to the things that money can buy very quickly and just as quickly forget that the intent was to generate revenue for a specific purpose to take care of a specific issue for a "temporary" time frame. Bottom line - there is no such thing as a temporary tax increase. I have full confidence that lawmakers will devise some means of generating a new revenue stream to replace the expiring income tax increase.

On a somewhat more positive note, the SWCDs fared reasonably well in the FY15 budget as passed. While there were no increases, there were no decreases either. Funding remains level with FY14 with \$3 million for administration and \$4.5 million for programs. Considering the current financial condition of the state, that is not a bad thing.



Also, we did have one small victory; HB 5606 passed both chambers and is on its way to the Governor's desk for his signature. The bill does little to ease the burdens placed on SWCDs by the Prevailing Wage Act but it does relieve land-owners of the burden of proof that they paid themselves prevailing wages when they choose to do work on their own projects. It is a small victory to be sure but, just the same, it does open the door to other changes that might be able to be won in the future.

And, one last item of good news, the General Assembly passed a Capital Budget that contains \$2,615,500 for cost share.

I'll leave you with this photo that a friend sent to me. **Always check before putting on your shoes.**

*Rich*





## PROGRAM COORDINATOR'S PAGE – KELLY THOMPSON

[kelly.thompson@aiswcd.org](mailto:kelly.thompson@aiswcd.org)

### Monthly Urban and Community Conservation Webinar

**Date:** June 19, 2014

**Location:** Online

**Low Impact Development**—Presented by Northern Virginia SWCD, VA and East Multnomath SWCD, OR

*“The NACD **Urban** and Community Webinars sponsored by The Scotts Miracle-Gro Company and NACD **Urban** and Community Resource Policy Group are truly a valuable conservation resource to our SWCD. They serve as our link to NACD and connect our district to fellow conservation professionals across the nation while providing a significant educational opportunity. Importantly, the variety of natural resource information provided through monthly webinars helps our district to make a greater impact on our local communities and changing landscape.”*

*Megan Andrews, Resource Conservationist  
Kendall County Soil & Water Conservation District, IL*

**Register:** Email Deb Bogar [Deb-Bogar@nacdnet.org](mailto:Deb-Bogar@nacdnet.org)  
*Space is limited to 100 participants*

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### 2014 AISWCD Annual Meeting and Summer Conference

**Date:** July 28 –29th

**Location:** Springfield, IL at Northfield Inn and Suites

**IUM Committee Members participate in the Share Fair Session**

The session showcases various partners, of which AISWCD works closely with, and various programs they have to offer. The Illinois Urban Manual Steering Committee has been asked to participate this year. The IUM Committees are constantly updating various standards and working on other projects. Stop by to learn more about the IUM update process and talk with one or more of the committee members.

**Register:** Online at [www.aiswcd.org](http://www.aiswcd.org) on or before June 30, 2014

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### 69th SWCS International Annual Conference

*Making Waves in Conservation: Our Life on Land and its Impact on Water*

**Date:** July 27 – 30, 2014

**Location:** Lombard, IL

#### **What is this conference about?**

From the Great Lakes to the coast, our use of the land impacts major bodies of water. Whether it be the large freshwater lakes of the United States and Canada, the Atlantic or Pacific Ocean; or the other lakes, seas, and oceans of the world, these terminal waters tell the story of what is happening upstream. This year, we consider challenges and progress in nutrient management, erosion and sediment control, nonpoint source and watershed policy, and other issues influencing the health and productivity of our soils and large water bodies. We have an opportunity to reflect upon decades of hard work and to acknowledge the progress of land managers, farmers, advisors, and scientists. We can also recognize failure and emerging problems, with a focus on innovatively moving forward to develop and implement best practices and improve outcomes. Collectively we can make waves in conservation by coming together to share ideas, explore opportunities, and face the challenge of our life on land and its impact on water.

**To Register:** [www.swcs.org/14AC](http://www.swcs.org/14AC)

*Kelly Thompson, Program Coordinator*



## ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT'S UPDATE - *SHERRY FINN*

[sherry.finn@aiswcd.org](mailto:sherry.finn@aiswcd.org)

**Greetings! from Sherry**

**\*AISWCD updated Information available:**

**The June AISWCD Quarterly Board Packet is on our website at the following link:**

<http://www.aiswcd.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/05/June-2014-QB-Packet-Final.pdf>

**Employee Personnel Status Form Link-**

<http://www.aiswcd.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/11/SWCD-Personnel-Status-Form.pdf>

**Subscribe to il.all e-mail link and directions-**

[il.all-subscribe@aiswcd.org](mailto:il.all-subscribe@aiswcd.org)

When the e-mail pops up to subscribe, all you have to do is type "subscribe" in the Subject or Memo line and then send. You will receive a confirmation back from our provider, Tiger Tech that will confirm your subscription to the il.all listing.

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Follow the same directions above, but type "unsubscribe" in the Subject or Memo line.

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**FOIA/OMA link-**

<http://foia.ilattorneygeneral.net/default.aspx>

(All new Directors must complete within 90 Days of being elected to office.)

### **OTHER NEWS:**

**QuickBooks Training:** The IDOA has agreed to pay \$300 for QuickBooks Training for 20 Districts this year. I have already had 5 Districts complete the training here in Springfield with the Capital City Training Center. If you are interested in signing up, please notify me at your earliest convenience. ([sherry.finn@aiswcd.org](mailto:sherry.finn@aiswcd.org))

**66<sup>th</sup> AISWCD Annual Meeting:** The deadline date for \$45 Registration fee ends June 30, 2014 Late fee is \$55.00 from July 1, 2014–July 8, 2014;

**2014 Resolutions will be available on our website after June 10<sup>th</sup>, 2014.**

**Quote of the day:** Experience is the name everyone gives to their mistakes!

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Sherry Finn". The script is cursive and fluid, with a large, stylized 'S' at the beginning.



## Office Assistant's Information - Gina Bean

[gina.bean@aiswcd.org](mailto:gina.bean@aiswcd.org)

Summer Conference is next month and we have been busy preparing. One task I am given is to locate auction items. You are turned down often, but when a company says they will be supporting our auction, excitement fills me instantly! I have found a few new items this year and I hope everyone is as excited about them as I am.

To get everyone excited early for the auction this year, below is a list of items I have received so far.

AMC Theaters	2 Movie Passes
Springfield Park District	2 Golf Passes
The Chicago Architecture Foundation	4 Walking Tour Passes
St. Louis Cardinals	1 Marty pass for 2 seats
Chicago Zoological Society	Family Package to Brookfield Zoo
Knights Action Park (Springfield, IL)	2 Water Park Passes
Northfield Inn (Springfield, IL)	1 Night Stay in a King Jacuzzi Room Springfield, IL
Ramada Inn (Springfield, IL)	1 Night Stay in a Jacuzzi Room Springfield, IL
Museum of Science and Industry	1 Family pass good for 4 General Admission Passes
St. Louis Rams	Football signed by Scott Wells

Please consider donating an item from your District. Remember the funds raised will help support the AISWCD Auxiliary, Legislative Committee, ISWCDEA, and the Illinois State Envirothon.

Auction item forms can be found on the AISWCD website and are due to Sherry Finn by June 27, 2014.

**If you are attending Summer Conference next month, please join us at the auction.  
It is a great time for everyone.  
And don't forget your checkbooks! Its for a great cause!**



Gina Bean



## Legislative Corner - Mike Hoffmann

### ***Legislature passes budget, adjourns for the summer***

Shortly after midnight on Saturday, May 31, the Illinois Senate gaveled the spring session of the General Assembly to a close. The last item on the agenda, which kept the Senate here until the wee hours, was a small capital bill to fund road projects around the state. The House had completed its work several hours earlier. And, as I'm sure you know, the legislators left without passing an extension of the current income tax structure.

It was sort of a Goldilocks story that developed in the last 2-3 weeks of May. The House passed a budget based on the continuation of current tax rates - but that was too big because not enough legislators were prepared to vote for extending the tax. The House Appropriations Committees then put together a "doomsday" budget based on revenues available without the tax extension - but that was too small; it garnered only 5 "yes" votes out of 118 members in the House. Finally, the House approved a budget that appeared to be "just right", but cobbled together with one-time revenues and a \$650 million inter-fund borrowing scheme. The final budget passed with little more than a majority of the members and now goes to the Governor for his signature (or veto).

### ***Funding for SWCDs remains level***

The good news for us is that even though the budget is based on a lower amount of revenue, our funding remained level at \$7.5 million for state fiscal year 2015. [HB6095](#) contains two appropriations for soil and water conservation: \$3 million for grants to SWCDs; and \$4.5 million for cost share and other purposes. We will have to work with the IL Dept. of Agriculture again this year on the allocation and release of those funds.

The timing of the release of those funds could become problematic especially later in the fiscal year. Income tax rates, under the law now on the books, will go down on January 1, 2015. The General Assembly could take another stab next fall or winter at extending the income tax, but, if not, the state will begin to see revenues decline in the second half of the year. That could cause cash flow problems, which is why the General Assembly passed [SB0274](#) to give the Governor the authority to borrow up to \$650 million from the state's dedicated (non-general purpose) funds. No one knows which funds will be affected.

### ***Some relief from Prevailing Wage***

Another bit of good news is the passage of [HB5606](#). We have been working for a couple of years to get some relaxation of the prevailing wage laws as they affect SWCDs. In talks with representatives of the state's labor unions, we were able last year to forge a compromise that was finally passed this spring. [HB5606](#) stipulates that, under the Prevailing Wage Act, the term "public works" does not include work done for purposes of soil and water conservation, whether or not done under public supervision or paid for wholly or in part out of public funds, and performed directly by an owner or person who has legal control on agricultural lands. You don't usually get everything you want when you try to pass a bill in the Illinois General Assembly, and that was true in this case. But it's a start.

Please feel free to let the Governor know that we want him to sign the bill.

### ***Gaming & Ag funding***

As usual, there was a lot of talk this year about gaming expansion and how those funds might be dispersed. Rep. Bob Rita, the sponsor of the bill ([SB1739](#)), held hearings up and down the state this spring, but in the end was not able to put together a bill for a vote. He intends to continue to hold meetings with a goal of calling a bill in the fall veto session or the January lame duck session. We continue to monitor this process, and continue to stay in touch with legislators to make sure that a bill cannot pass without funding for SWCDs and Agriculture.

**REMEMBER: KEEP YOUR STATE LEGISLATORS EDUCATED ON SWCD ACTIVITIES**

Mike



## ISWCDEA CORNER - *STEPHEN MILLER* *ISWCDEA REGION FOUR REPRESENTATIVE*

website: [iswcdea.org](http://iswcdea.org)

The ISWCDEA t-shirt sale is almost here! The “Team Conservation” theme from last year’s winter training is something for SWCD employees to take to heart. SWCD’s work with a wide variety of local, state, and federal partners. That’s one of the reasons we are so valuable to our customers. We often serve as a one-stop shop for information on all the assistance that is available to people in our districts. The ISWCDEA “Team Conservation” t-shirts promote the idea that we’re all working together to get conservation on the ground. Watch your inbox for more information on the sale.

There are still a few more weeks to send in applications for the ISWCDEA scholarship. The ISWCDEA will accept applications for the annual \$500 scholarship until June 30, 2014. The scholarship is available to SWCD employees in good standing with the ISWCDEA, an employee member’s spouse, or an employee member’s legal dependents. Be sure to inform anyone who is eligible and interested. If you missed the scholarship application packet that was emailed to everyone, please contact one of your ISWCDEA reps for the information.

Don’t forget to register for Summer Conference! There are plenty of opportunities to network and share ideas and questions with other SWCD employees and ISWCDEA representatives from around the state.

As always, feel free to contact your ISWCDEA representatives any time with questions, comments, or concerns. We are always happy to hear from you!

*Stephen*



# Happy Summer!



## ILLINOIS CHAPTER - IAAP - *JANE BRANGENBURG, PRESIDENT*

AISWCD Annual Meeting/Summer Conference is coming up fast! Don’t forget to register for our two upcoming training sessions we are co-sponsoring. The Monday sessions will be Excel with Amy Stolte as the speaker Excel Training at 10:30 a.m. – Noon. Advanced QuickBooks Training 3:00 p.m. – 4:00 p.m. will be led by Sally Ferguson. If you have any questions or topics you would like addressed for either session please let me know.

*Jane*





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*For more information visit our website ~OR~ call Kelly Thompson at 217-744-3414  
[www.aiswcd.org/donate-membership/](http://www.aiswcd.org/donate-membership/)*

**Look who has already joined!**

**Affiliate Members:**

Marc Anderson  
Sheryl and Richard Philips  
Sue Davis  
Della and Charles Moen  
George and Cathy Hypke

**Lifetime Members:**

L&J Enterprises

**Corporate Members:**

Patten Cat

**District Members:**

Warren County SWCD

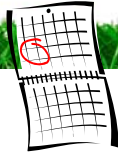
**Affiliate Membership Reminder!!!!**

Please remember that the money raised through the Conservation Partnership will go towards education activities and the Illinois State Envirothon.

Since Districts pay dues to AISWCD, they are given the discounts at cost at the rate of \$12. This \$12 is given directly to NAC who handles the discounts. AISWCD makes no profit off of a District's \$12. Once a District becomes a member, they will be able to use the discounts for office purposes.

The \$12 fee must be paid yearly to be eligible to receive discounts.

**Please consider joining today and support our Education activities!  
Thank you!**



## MARK YOUR CALENDAR!

- Fathers Day - June 15, 2014
- First Day of Summer - June 21, 2014
- Fourth of July - July 4, 2014 : AISWCD office will be closed

### 2013—2014 QUARTERLY BOARD MEETING DATES

- June 2014 Quarterly Board Meeting - June 9th & 10th - Northfield Inn - Springfield, IL
- 66th AISWCD Annual Meeting and Conference - July 28 - 29, Northfield Inn - Springfield, IL
- September 2014 Quarterly Board Meeting - Executive Committee Meeting will be on September 9, 2014 at IDOA
- December 2014 Quarterly Board Meeting - December 8 and 9, 2014
- Christmas Party - December 8, 2014



## Join or renew to receive up to a \$25 gift card\*

To take advantage simply bring this offer, along with proof of employment or membership with the Association of Illinois Soil and Water Conservation Districts, to the Member Services Desk of your local club.

Visit [SamsClub.com/clublocator](http://SamsClub.com/clublocator) to find a club near you.

\* This offer is limited and may be terminated or changed at any time. Join or renew as a Sam's Plus™ Member and receive a \$25 gift card, or join or renew as a Sam's Savings™ or Sam's Business™ Member and receive a \$10 gift card. You must be 18 or older to purchase a membership, and membership is subject to qualifications. Gift card will be provided at the time membership card is issued. This offer may not be combined with any other offer or promotion. Only one gift card per primary member. The gift card with this offer cannot be used toward membership fees and must be claimed within 30 days of membership sign-up or renewal connected with this program. Membership cards are non-transferable and are valid at all Sam's Club locations worldwide. Walmart® and Sam's Club associates are not eligible for this offer. A Sam's Plus Membership and Sam's Savings Membership include one primary card and one spouse (or other household member 18 or older) card. A Sam's Business Membership and Sam's Plus Membership for business include one primary card, one company card and one spouse (or other household member 18 or older) card. Primary memberships are valid for one year from the date of issue. Offers are not valid at [SamsClub.com](http://SamsClub.com) or by mail. Visit [SamsClub.com/privacy](http://SamsClub.com/privacy) to view our privacy policy. Offer not valid in Puerto Rico. For a limited time only. One-time use only. Only original offers accepted. Offer valid for employees and members of the Association of Illinois Soil and Water Conservation Districts, and is valid through April 30, 2014.

\$25 Gift Card: #970504    \$10 Gift Card: #263396



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

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