

AISWCD

Executive Director's Bi-Monthly Report

Monday, January 5, 2015

Greetings all!

I hope this report finds you happy and healthy. Well now that 2014 is in the rear view mirror it's time to focus on the future, one that is filled with positive change and new opportunities. My report will be somewhat shorter than usual due to my holiday schedule where I used several personal days.

AISWCD OFFICE UPDATE

I took the staff out for a Holiday Breakfast on Dec. 22nd to show my appreciation for their efforts over the past several months. Most of us were in and out of the office for the latter part of December due to the use of personal time.

Looking ahead: Gina is working on coordinating the March Quarterly Board meeting and Legislative Day for 2015. She and I also sit on the planning committee for the IL River Conference that is held every other year in Peoria, IL. Planning efforts are already underway for this event. The dates for the conference are October 27-29th, 2015 to be held in Peoria at the Pere Marquette Hotel.

Matt is on vacation this week but will return to the office on January 12, 2015.

LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

The Legislative Calendar has been posted to the General Assembly's website. Here are a few dates to be aware of:

- Jan. 13 – 98th G.A. Senate meets
- Jan. 14 – Inauguration of the 99th G.A.
- Jan. 15 – Senate & House are in Session
- Jan. 23 – House in for Perfunctory Session
- Jan. 27-29 – House is in Session
- Jan. 30 – House in for Perfunctory Session

If the calendar stays as-is, Myron and I will meet up with Mike Hoffmann at the State House to conduct legislative visits in early February.

Legislative Day 2015 is Tuesday, March 10th from 10:30am – 6:00pm. In addition to our afternoon Legislative visits, we will again have a reception at Boone's Saloon from 4:00pm-6:00pm. Last year as Legislators came into the reception the main question that was asked, "Is there someone here from my area?" While we had a fairly good turnout of participants, there were very few Legislators that were able to talk directly to their constituents due lack of SWCD representation at the reception. We would really encourage each district to have a least one representative present for the reception from 4:00pm-6:00pm. We understand that, for most, it's a long drive to and from Springfield. However, having a constituent present from the Legislator's district is key to

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having them understand what Districts do and why they are important. Please consider sending a representative to this year's event!

Legislative Book – Myself and Gina will be compiling information from districts to place in the Legislative Book which we intend to use during our 2015 Legislative Day event. The book will consist of two pages of information per district. The list below is information I will be collecting. ***Please have the information to me no later than January 20th so that we can compile the book in a timely manner.***

- Photos of BMPs (Urban & Rural) that your District helped fund or get funded
- Watershed Efforts – Does your SWCD participate in a Watershed Group? If so, give details on how long you've participated, what tasks the district is responsible for completing and so on.
- LUC/District efforts – What unique programs does your LUC or District offer, above and beyond traditional programs.
- Describe the district's involvement in the Envirothon. Send pictures of the event.
- Do you have statistics on how many tons of soil was saved due to the implementation of BMPs on farmland or urban land? If so, include that information in your report.

If you have already completed a similar report that has the above information listed, please forward it to me along with photos. A Legislative Book filled with text will not be as appealing as one filled with photos of district activities. If you have any questions on what is needed, please give me a call or send me an email!

ILLINOIS AGRICULTURE LEGISLATIVE DAY

This event has been set for March 5, 2015. Each year AISWCD donates tree saplings to place in the baskets that get distributed by FFA students to the legislators. This year we intend to do the same. If any district is interested in attending this event please contact the office. We make legislative visits, similar to the AISWCD Legislative Day. It never hurts to make multiple visits within the same month. The more they hear "SWCDs" and understand districts the more funding opportunities become available.

As always, if you have any questions or comments at all, don't hesitate to call the office! Remember, AISWCD works for Districts...without SWCDs, the Association would not exist!

Have a Healthy & Prosperous New Year!

Kelly Thompson