

Friday, November 14<sup>th</sup>, 2014

Greetings all!

Wow...where has the time gone? Just 13 days until Thanksgiving yet there is still much to be done before the conclusion of the month of November.

Over the past several weeks much has taken place. I am providing an outlined list below of important events/meetings that AISWCD has been involved with recently.

### **NEW EMPLOYEE**

AISWCD hired a new employee for the CREP Resource Specialist position. Sarah Still will be located in Brown County in Mt. Sterling, IL. She is taking the place of Jeremy Pruden. Welcome, Sarah!

### **NOVEMBER ELECTION & LEGISLATIVE UPDATE**

Many of you may have participated in the November election. What an interesting outcome, not just in Illinois but throughout the nation. Congratulations to the winning candidates. Many changes are going to take place in 2015, good changes we hope! The veto session was scheduled for the week of Nov. 17 however session has been cancelled for Nov. 21<sup>st</sup> and thus my visit has been moved from Nov. 20<sup>th</sup> to the afternoon of Dec. 2<sup>nd</sup>. My plan is to visit with key committee leadership, introduce myself as the new Executive Director and discuss new funding ideas.

Please don't forget to visit your legislators in the next several months. I can't stress how important it is that they know who SWCDs are and what they are doing for conservation!

### **FARM PROGRESS SHOW PLANNING**

The planning has begun for the 2015 Farm Progress Show. The planning committee met in Decatur on November 5<sup>th</sup> to discuss the logistics of the Partners in Conservation tent. Most partners are continuing to participate again in 2015 however several new partners plan to join the tent. More information will be provided as it becomes available.

### **ILLINOIS FUNDS FORUM**

Gina, Melissa Cauble and I participated in the IL Funds Financial Forum held in Collinsville on Nov. 12<sup>th</sup>. The forum was provided free of charge through the IL State Treasurer Dan Rutherford's office and the agenda items included a speaker from IL Department of Commerce and Opportunity as well as a speaker from Sikich to discuss fraud. The program was very informative and time worthy.

### **QUICKBOOKS REIMBURSEMENT**

I have been informed that IDOA has reimbursed SWCD employees for their QuickBooks training course that many attended this past year. We apologize for the delay in reimbursement. Paperwork has not been sent to IDOA when I took my position in September. The issue has since been resolved and all districts should have received payment. Please contact AISWCD if you have any questions.

### **ISWCDEA CONFERENCE CALL**

Myron and I participated in the ISWCDEA conference call on Nov. 13<sup>th</sup>. We gave an AISWCD update and discussed the recent personnel issue that AISWCD experienced with Ms. Sherry Finn. If anyone has additional questions regarding this situation, please contact AISWCD or Myron Kirby.

### **LUC 5 MEETING**

Gina and I attended the LUC 5 meeting in Pekin on Nov. 13<sup>th</sup>. First of all, thank you for the invitation to attend the meeting, it was much appreciated. We enjoyed meeting district directors and district employees. I gave an update on AISWCD events and happenings.

### **WOTUS UPDATE**

US EPA's deadline for collecting comments on the proposed changes to WOTUS is Nov. 14, 2014. AISWCD has collected several comments regarding these proposed changes and the position paper written by NACD. Unfortunately as this time AISWCD is not in a position to make written comments as not all of our 97 SWCDs agree on one common position. AISWCD plans to make a policy statement at the December Quarterly Board meeting on Dec. 9<sup>th</sup>. While this date is after the deadline to comment, AISWCD feels as this time a consensus is needed thus the need to wait until the meeting in December. All comments I have received will be taken into consideration.

### **ISWCDEA WINTER TRAINING**

Winter training is Dec. 2-3, 2014. AISWCD staff and CREP Specialists plan to attend the training this year. We are looking forward to meeting new and existing SWCD employees and working on strengthening our relationship. Thank you for the invitation to participate in Winter Training!

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 great November!

*Kelly Thompson*