

# CONSERVATION CATCHALL

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## AISWCD Staff:

### Kelly Thompson

*Executive Director*

### Gina Bean

*Administrative Coordinator*

### Matthew Hanauer

*IUM/Watershed Coordinator*

### Marquitta Thomas

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### CREP Resource Specialists

**Sheryl Philips**

**Richard Rappley**

**Brian Rennecker**

**Timothy Royer**

**Dan Sahm**

## Legislative Season Is Among Us

The 99th General Assembly has a schedule in place on their website. Please remember the schedule can change at anytime and should be used as a guideline of when legislators will be in Springfield. You can access the schedules at the links listed below.

### Senate Schedule:

[http://www.ilga.gov/senate/  
schedules/2016\\_Session\\_Calendar.pdf](http://www.ilga.gov/senate/schedules/2016_Session_Calendar.pdf)

### House Schedule:

[http://www.ilga.gov/house/  
schedules/2016\\_Session\\_Calendar.pdf](http://www.ilga.gov/house/schedules/2016_Session_Calendar.pdf)

## AISWCD Legislative Day—Date Set!

Please join us **March 2, 2016** in Springfield for the 2016 AISWCD Legislative Day. The day's activities will be very similar to the last couple of years.

More information on locations, times, and registration will be sent out IL ALL.

(The event flyer can be found on page 8.)

ILLINOIS



## **PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE - MYRON KIRBY**

[kirbyfarms@yahoo.com](mailto:kirbyfarms@yahoo.com)

Illinois has witnessed some weather extremes this month. I hope everyone is recovering from last months floods and didn't receive damage of great extent. Then the snows came. Everyone in Illinois should be in pretty good shape and hopefully are out and about now. If you look at the calendar, we only have about 45 days of winter left and then spring will be here.

There has been a lot of action at the Association and the Board passed a new funding concept to put before the Governor. At this time our funding is still suspended. We hope that this new idea will help the Governor see that we are changing and he will lift our suspension. There will be a Chairman's Forum on February 15, 2016 to clarify the reasoning behind this proposal. Many of our partners have been given a preview of this proposal and many have already said they will support this proposal. That is a big step forward from where we were.

Be sure to mark your calendar for Legislative Day. This year's event will take place on March 2, 2016 in Springfield. Gina Bean will be sending more information out through IL ALL as it becomes available.

Up to this time, it has been a very hectic year trying to get funds so our Districts can keep doing the conservation work. Please join us so you can tell your story in Springfield and let the SWCD voice be heard once again.

I appreciate all of the districts that had nutrient loss reduction strategy roadshows and the ones that are planning to have them In the future. That shows your commitment to conservation.

Your Association Board and your Officers work for the Districts and anything we do we try to look out for the best interest of the Districts. Without you we cease to exist. I know without the Districts conservation will not be as effective in Illinois as it is today. I thank all of the Directors, Associate Directors and the Employees for their hard work.

**The Association works for the Districts so they may do their job of conserving our soil and keeping our water and air clean.**

-Myron



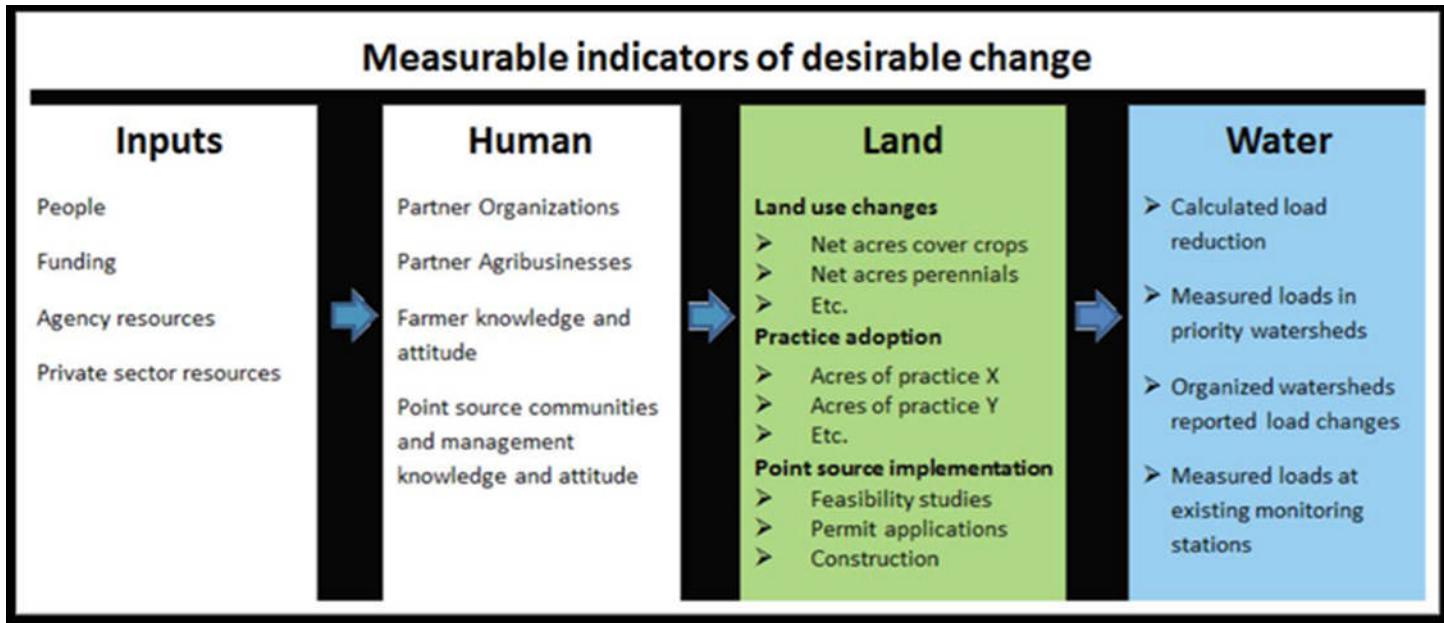
## EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S NOTES - KELLY THOMPSON

Kelly.thompson@aiswcd.org

### --Track & Record Nutrient Loss Reduction Strategy Activity In Your County--

At the 2016 Ag Legislative Roundtable meeting held by Illinois Farm Bureau in early January, it was reported that Council on Best Management Practices (CBMP) is requesting organizations to track and record activity related to Nutrient Loss Reduction Strategy (NLRS). Below is a table and concept that is being used in Iowa to track implementation activity for the nutrient strategy. The NLRS Working Groups discussed using the same "logic model" for Illinois. CBMP will be collecting information on a pre-developed spreadsheet. If your District is interested in sharing information relevant to the NLRS and within the indicators below, please let me know very soon. The information will be compiled and collected on a quarterly basis. To alleviate CBMP collecting information from 97 individual SWCDs, AISWCD will compile all information into one spreadsheet and submit to CBMP quarterly.

If your District would like to participate, the spreadsheet can be found on the AISWCD website under **Programs**. Additional instructions on how to fill out the spreadsheet along with deadline dates for reporting will all be posted on the webpage.



### - - CONSERVATION STORY MAP - -

The Alphabet Soup group started meeting in 2015. The group is made up of many organizations. The organizations all use acronyms to identify themselves so it is only natural to call the group "Alphabet Soup" as the acronyms range from A-Z.

The group is preparing a **Conservation Story Map**, to be posted on the CBMP website. The Story Map will consist of events, pictures, videos, farmer profiles, BMP project site descriptions, past event summaries, accomplishments and more all in one location. You can also share information about programs, your organization or specific projects. Currently Lyndsey Ramsey from Farm Bureau and Jim with Heartland GIS are working on gathering the information that will make up this Story Map.

If you'd like to **share information** for the **Conservation Story Map**, please email Marquitta Thomas at [ga.aiswcd@gmail.com](mailto:ga.aiswcd@gmail.com) so she can compile a list to send to Lyndsey. This information needs to be collected, compiled and emailed by February 15<sup>th</sup>. **Please send information to Marquitta on or before February 8<sup>th</sup>, 2016.**



## IUM/Watershed Coordinator—Matt Hanauer

[matt.hanauer@aiswcd.org](mailto:matt.hanauer@aiswcd.org)

Happy New Year! I hope everyone had a safe and enjoyable holiday season! I was lucky enough to take a week-long vacation to Florida with family last week but now I'm back and ready to go to work!

I will continue to have an open door policy when it comes to watershed grants, however I have added a few meetings to my agenda in order to optimize the work for the Illinois Urban Manual update initiative and to create a template for an urban nutrient loss reduction strategy meeting. First comes the IUM. In March, the technical review committee and the steering committee for the IUM will be meeting together in order to re-prioritize the needs of the IUM and what we would like to focus on for the next grant cycle, which begins in July of this year.

We've also recently begun talking about creating a template for Urban Nutrient Loss Reduction Strategy meetings. We would like these to be similar to the NLRS Roadshow meetings. The primary talks are to hold two meetings, one in Northeast Illinois and another in the Metro East area near St. Louis and to use it as a workshop for MS4 groups. The first meetings will be used to educate elected officials in the spring and then further meetings could be held in the fall as a technical workshop for engineers and planners. It was suggested that the first meetings be area-wide meetings, available in-person and webinar, in order to raise awareness and make sure a template can be put together for future use. Once a template has been created, any SWCD will be able to use the template and host their own meeting for whatever target audience they need for their area.

With these meetings to be planned, I've got a full schedule ahead of me! But if anyone has questions or is interested in starting a watershed group or grant, let me know and I'll do my best to give any assistance I can and connect you with other people that are familiar with the process. Enjoy the warm days in between the frigid cold and remember that water quality is always important!

-Matt



## ISWCDEA CORNER - STEPHEN MILLER

ISWCDEA REGION FOUR REPRESENTATIVE

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

**The Employee's Association will be meeting soon to discuss upcoming activities for 2016 and we are looking for your input.**

We will be meeting in Springfield on February 4. We have a schedule full of events being planned for the upcoming year. With the state's ongoing budget crisis, we know that SWCD employees have a lot of concerns right now. If you have anything that you would like the Employee's Association to address, please pass it along to your ISWCDEA representative and it will be brought up at the meeting.

Among other things, we will be discussing this year's Legislative Day. Please plan on taking time out of your schedule to attend this event! Many employees, directors, and others have been doing a fantastic job of keeping in touch with legislators, but it is vital that we keep our message resonating throughout Springfield! More details about the 2016 Legislative Day will be available soon.

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

-Stephen



## **Administrative Coordinator Information - Gina Bean**

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

## **SWCD Annual Meetings = A Great Opportunity To Sign Up Landowners For Client Gateway!**

I was fortunate last year to be able to attend many District Annual Meetings. While there, I noticed many landowners in one location. Please see this as a chance to sign them up for the Client Gateway to help Illinois gain the most members on the system. I know putting on an annual meeting is complex and the district staff may not have time to sign up landowners themselves, but maybe a possible announcement at the meeting stating if they would like to sign up to let the SWCD staff know would be helpful..



In 2015 NRCS unveiled a new online option for clients called Conservation Client Gateway. Conservation Client Gateway is a secure website that makes it easy for agricultural producers to receive conservation assistance from their county office. After an easy sign-up process, users can perform simple tasks and communicate with local NRCS staff to:

- Request conservation assistance or site visit
- Track payments
- Review or electronically sign documents
- View conservation plans and schedules
- Submit photos or document digitally

Conservation Client Gateway is available to individual producers right now and very soon services will be open to business entities and on mobile devices.

Conservation Client Gateway is not required but offers a new option that saves time and trips into town.

Visit [www.nrcs.usda.gov/clientgateway](http://www.nrcs.usda.gov/clientgateway) and your local Soil and Water Conservation District to learn more and open your account.



FEBRUARY

FEBRUARY

# SAVE THE DATE !

I have been contacting SWCDs and many districts have began hosting roadshows.  
If your district is hosting a roadshow please email me the date, time, and location  
and I'll be sure to share it with other SWCD's. Thank you!

## NLRS Roadshow Dates for February, 2016:

### **Whiteside County**

2/24/2016 9:00 am

Super Wash Conference Center  
703 W. Lincoln Way  
Morrison ,IL 61270

### **Stephenson County**

2/2/2016 10:00 am

Stephenson County farm Bureau  
210 W. Spring St.  
Freeport ,IL 61032

*Marquitta Thomas*[ga.aiswcd@gmail.com](mailto:ga.aiswcd@gmail.com)



## ***Legislative Corner - Mike Hoffmann***

### **General Assembly Begins New Year; Still No Budget**

The General Assembly returns to Springfield this month to begin the second year of the 99<sup>th</sup> General Assembly, which has not been very productive thus far. As everyone in Illinois knows, our State Government continues to operate without a budget. The G.A. passed a series of budget bills last spring, but only one was signed by the Governor – that for education. In the meantime, most of state government has been operating on court orders (to pay for state employees' salaries, for example), continuing appropriations (to pay for pensions and debt service), and a couple of other narrow budget bills passed during the summer to enable spending of federal funds coming to Illinois and to facilitate the payment of local governments' share of tax revenues. As we are all painfully aware, no money has been released for a number of grant programs, including soil and water conservation since the Governor's office "suspended" our funding last February.

So on January 27<sup>th</sup>, Governor Rauner is scheduled to give his state-of-the-state address in the midst of a legislative stalemate in an election year. (The Governor is not up for election, but two thirds of the Senate and all of the members of the House are.) The Governor and the presiding officers of the General Assembly – John Cullerton, President of the Senate and Mike Madigan, Speaker of the House – have not been able to reach agreement on the Governor's Turnaround Agenda, which the Governor says is necessary before discussions of state revenues and expenditures can take place. After two or three meetings in December, the state's leaders have not met to even discuss these issues. It does not appear that an end is in sight. There will be a lot of activity that day, but not much will be accomplished.

On February 17, Governor Rauner is scheduled to deliver his second budget address and reveal his revenue and spending plans for fiscal year 2017. The new budget is subject to a lot of curiosity as advocates for the various state programs are anxious to see how they might fare in the next budget. The curiosity this year is multiplied because of the prospect of presenting a budget plan for next year, when you do not have one for this year. We will all be curious to see what plan he has in mind for SWCDs.

### **Outreach**

We continue to reach out to the Rauner administration, legislators, and other interest groups to build momentum for SWCD funding. Just since the first of the year, we have had meetings with the Department of Agriculture, state legislators, the Illinois Farm Bureau, Illinois Environmental Council, and others to gauge support and discuss alternatives for funding the program. We have meetings scheduled with state legislators when they return on January 27.

I cannot stress strongly enough the need for the districts to continue to build relationships with your legislators and find allies and support among other groups. Almost all legislators and others are aware of our predicament and most are supportive. But legislators are much more engaging when I talk to them if they have already heard from you.

### **The Legislative Calendar (Key 2016 dates for the 99<sup>th</sup> General Assembly)**

- **January 27.** Governor Rauner delivers his second State-of-the-State address.
- **February 17.** The Governor presents his budget recommendations for fiscal year FY 2017, which begins on July 1. This usually marks the start of the budget process (and the day when we will see what the Governor proposes for funding SWCDs), but everyone wonders how a budget for next year will look when we don't have one for this year.
- **March 1. AISWCD Legislative Day.** Make plans to attend so that we have a strong delegation to visit with our legislators.
- **March – Primary elections for state legislators**
- **March-May.** Hearing and meetings on the budget and legislation will be held as the House and the Senate debate the many bills that are introduced.
- **May 31.** The final scheduled day of the 2015 spring session. Can the Republican Governor and Democratic legislature finally reach agreement on the budget and other issues?

Association of Illinois Soil and Water Conservation Districts & Partners Present:

# 2016 Legislative Day



**Wednesday, March 2, 2016**



- 10:00 am IL EPA—Sangamo Room**  
**(Check in with security at North Entrance)**  
*1021 N. Grand Ave East, Springfield, IL 62702*
- 11:00 am Lunch (From Poe's Catering)**  
*Price: \$13.50 (Paid for by Attendee)*  
*Includes: Pork Chop, salad, green beans, potato salad, & tea*  
*To Pay: Check or PayPal*  
*Deadline: Checks must be in the AISWCD office by February 25, 2016. Otherwise you must pay with PayPal.*
- 12:00 pm Lunch Concludes and Load Into Vehicles**  
*Parking spaces are not reserved this year.*  
*Please see the downtown parking map for options on public parking close by.*
- 12:15/30 pm Group Photo at the Capitol**
- 1:00 pm Legislator Visits at Capitol &Stratton Building**  
*Capitol Building Stratton Building*  
*401 South 2<sup>nd</sup> Street 401 South Spring Street*  
*Springfield, IL Springfield, IL*
- 4:00 pm Reception at Boone's Saloon Begins**  
*301 West Edwards*  
*Springfield, IL 62704*
- 6:00 pm Reception Concludes**

## Legislative Day Registration

Attendees must register by February 19, 2016.

A LINK TO THE ONLINE REGISTRATION FORM CAN BE FOUND AT:

<http://wwwaiswcd.org/legislative/legislative-day-2016/>



## MARK YOUR CALENDAR!

• Lincoln's Birthday	February 12, 2016	AISWCD Office Closed
• Presidents Day	February 15, 2016	AISWCD Office Closed
• Chairman Meeting	February 15, 2016	AISWCD Staff in Attendance
• Legislative Day	March 2, 2016	@ Springfield
• Quarterly Boards	March 3, 2016	@ Springfield (Northfield Inn)

\*The Executive Director, Kelly Thompson, has access to email when she is not in the office. Please be sure to email her if something comes up and the AISWCD office is closed.

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

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## IL ALL Email

It can not be stressed enough on how important it is for SWCD employees and directors to be on the Illinois All email system. Many important emails come through this system daily. We understand that directors do not want all of the emails and that is why a Director email was set up.

Please, as a courtesy, remember to not "reply all" when responding to emails on IL ALL. This email system has members from AISWCD, SWCDs, Directors, and Partners.

If you are a director please consider signing up for either email.

Please share this information with any new staff or directors that come to your SWCD.

### Benefits of IL ALL:

- Emails from ISWCDEA
- Emails from NACD forwarded by Kelly Thompson
- Dues invoices are sent out through this email and you would know when they are expected back to AISWCD.
- Annual Meeting information
- Legislative Day information
- Quarterly Board updates and board packets

### Subscribe to IL ALL email:

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

When the email pops up to subscribe, all you have to do is type "subscribe" in the subject or memo line and send. You will receive a confirmation email back from our provider.

### To Unsubscribe from IL ALL email:

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

Follow the same directions as above but in the subject line type "unsubscribe."

**Subscribe to Director Email:** [Director-subscribe@aiswcd.org](mailto:Director-subscribe@aiswcd.org)

**Unsubscribe to Director Email:** [Director-unsubscribe@aiswcd.org](mailto:Director-unsubscribe@aiswcd.org)

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

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