

AISWCD Resolution 2016-1

AISWCD Insurance Package Policy

Whereas, Soil and Water Conservation Districts need access to affordable liability, worker's compensation and equipment insurance.

Whereas, the AISWCD holds a package insurance policy with R.W. Troxell which allows SWCDs access to affordable coverage.

Whereas, AISWCD does not currently have a policy regarding how to manage or handle the coverage for up to 97 SWCDs.

Whereas, AISWCD needs to establish a policy with guidelines on the Package Insurance Policy to help guide SWCD Directors and Employees on payment deadlines and requirements that need to be met in order to keep this affordable insurance for the SWCD.

Therefore, be it resolved that the Association of Illinois Soil and Water Conservation Districts (AISWCD) shall develop a policy to list guidelines and requirements in order for SWCDs to remain on the AISWCDs Package Insurance Policy with R.W. Troxell.

Supported By: AISWCD Board of Directors 6/7/16

AISWCD Resolution 2016-2

SWCD Dedicated Funding Source

Whereas, Soil and Water Conservation Districts need a dedicated funding source to remain sustainable.

Whereas, the AISWCD Resolution 2008-1 Stable Funding states a need for SWCDs to have dedicated funds for Soil and Water Conservation Districts.

Whereas, AISWCD will seek legislation beginning in 2017 to identify a source of dedicated funding for Soil and Water Conservation Districts.

Therefore, be it resolved that the Association of Illinois Soil and Water Conservation Districts (AISWCD) shall pursue legislation to invest in Soil and Water Conservation Districts' conservation efforts and partner with natural resources and environmental organizations to protect and conserve the natural resources of Illinois with a one-tenth of one percent statewide sales tax.

Supported By: AISWCD Board of Directors 6/7/16

Resolution 2016 - 3

Resolution in support of the Bond County Soil and Water Conservation District

For the past 71 years the Bond County Soil and Water Conservation District (SWCD) has assisted Bond County with the conservation and wise use of our natural resources through education, policies, programs and actions.

Whereas, the Bond SWCD has worked together with Bond County government providing technical expertise in erosion control, wetland mapping and identification, drainage and stormwater issues, abandoned well sealings, recycling programs, environmental stewardship efforts, and water conservation & drought education programs, and;

Whereas, the Bond County SWCD also provides important services to the county by maintaining permanent conservation easements for the Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program, property that has been bequeathed to them and other covenants and titles to lands that are to remain in a protected state in perpetuity, and;

Whereas, the Bond SWCD provides soil sampling services, equipment rental programs, fish and tree sales, nutrient application recommendations, and community & school education programs, and;

Whereas, the County of Bond recognizes the importance and value that the Bond County SWCD provides through its services, expertise and dedicated Board and Staff, and;

Whereas, Illinois' Soil and Water Conservation districts are local units of government authorized by Illinois State Statue, and;

Whereas, each of the 97 Soil and Water Conservation Districts was duly created by local referendum, and;

Whereas, Soil and Water Conservation Districts were not given taxing authority but were intended to be funded by appropriations made by the Illinois General Assembly through the Partners for Conservation Program as provided to Soil and Water Conservation Districts through the Illinois Department of Agriculture, and;

Whereas, The County of Bond recognizes that the lack of fiscal year 2016 operational funding within the State budget and pending loss of employee health insurance is a significant threat to the future of the Illinois SWCD's, and;

Therefore, be it resolved that the County of Bond requests the State of Illinois to include the Illinois Soil and Water Conservation Districts in the fiscal year 2016 State budget.

Adopted by the _____ this _____ day of _____ in the year 2015.

Supported By: AISWCD Board of Directors 6/7/16

Resolution 2016 - 4
Resolution to Include Transparency Within AISWCD Policies

Whereas, Illinois Soil and Water Conservation Districts are public bodies and operate with transparency in complying with the Open Meetings Act and the Freedom of Information Act.

Whereas, The Illinois Association of Soil and Water Conservation Districts is an organization in existence to operate and function on behalf of the interests of Illinois SWCDs.

Whereas, SWCDs have an expectation that the AISWCD operate in a similar atmosphere of transparency to each of the 97 Districts.

Therefore, Be it resolved that, in the spirit of partnership, the AISWCD will structure its business conduct in the same fashion as that required by the districts.

Approved Council 16 May 26, 2016

Approved Council 8 May 27, 2016

Approved Council 4 May 31, 2016

Not Supported As Proposed: AISWCD Board of Directors 6/7/16

Resolution 2016-5
Resolution to Update AISWCD Dues Formula to Exclude
Employee Health Insurance

Whereas the Bureau of Land and Water Resources has, in the past, directly paid health insurance, basic life insurance, Worker's Compensation insurance, and long-term disability insurance premium allocations prior to disbursement of state appropriated funds to districts for operations and cost-share programs; and

Whereas the Bureau of Land and Water Resources has, in the past, sent these insurance allocations directly to the appropriate plan administrator; and

Whereas, in the past, due to this aforementioned arrangement, SWCD dues paid to the AISWCD have never included any insurance premium allocations in the dues calculation; and

Whereas the Bureau of Land and Water Resources has informed SWCDs and the plan administrators that it can no longer pay the aforementioned insurance premium allocations in this manner, but instead will now need to send the aforementioned insurance funds for SWCDs directly to SWCDs in the form of operations monies; and

Whereas the Bureau of Land and Water Resources has reassured SWCDs that any money received for operations can be used for any of the aforementioned insurance premiums; and

Whereas AISWCD's current Resolutions, Policy and Procedures Manual states under the Finances section that SWCD "Dues will be based on 3% of the SWCD operational funds received from [from] the Department of Agriculture but will not include funds used for health insurance"; and

Whereas AISWCD's current Resolutions, Policy and Procedures Manual states under the Membership section that SWCD "Dues are to be 3% of the Operations line contained in the State of Illinois Budget as approved by the General Assembly and signed by the Governor. Partners for Conservation Cost share funds may also be considered when calculating the 3% dues when those funds are designated as operational funds by the Department of Agriculture; and

Whereas for the first time, all of the aforementioned insurance premiums will be included in the operations grant agreements between the BLWR and SWCDs and, therefore, under current AISWCD ~~rules~~ Policies and Procedures some of the aforementioned insurance premium allocations would have AISWCD dues assessed on them;

Therefore, be it resolved that the AISWCD should omit any operations funds being used by SWCD boards to pay or to assist employees in paying any and all of the aforementioned insurance premiums from the dues calculation and the AISWCD will make the following Policy and Procedure Manual change, and any other necessary rule changes to reflect changes in dues calculations from the passing of this Resolution:

AISWCD Resolutions, Policy & Procedures Manual, Page 41, Finances, paragraph 2, shall now read:

"Each County SWCD dues to the AISWCD will be based on 3% of the operational funds it receives from the State of Illinois, via the Illinois Department of Agriculture, less any funds the individual County SWCD uses for employee health insurance premiums, employee basic life insurance premiums, employee Worker's Compensation insurance premiums, and employee long-term disability insurance premiums."

and AISWCD Resolutions, Policy & Procedures Manual, Page 44, Membership, paragraph 5, shall now read:

Each County SWCD dues to the AISWCD will be based on 3% of the operational funds it receives from the State of Illinois, via the Illinois Department of Agriculture, less any funds the individual County SWCD uses for employee health insurance premiums, employee basic life insurance premiums, employee Worker's Compensation insurance premiums, and employee long-term disability insurance premiums. Partners for Conservation Cost share funds may also be considered when calculating the 3% dues when those funds are designated as operational funds by the Department of Agriculture."

Approved by:

<i>Montgomery County SWCD</i>	<i>04/11/2016</i>
<i>Christian County SWCD</i>	<i>04/28/2016</i>
<i>Greene County SWCD</i>	<i>04/28/2016</i>
<i>Macoupin County SWCD</i>	<i>05/04/2016</i>
<i>Clinton County SWCD</i>	<i>05/10/2016</i>
<i>Bond County SWCD</i>	<i>05/11/2016</i>
<i>Hancock County SWCD</i>	<i>05/11/2016</i>
<i>Kane-DuPage SWCD</i>	<i>05/12/2016</i>
<i>Effingham County SWCD</i>	<i>05/17/2016</i>
<i>Land Use Council 16</i>	<i>05/26/2016</i>
<i>Land Use Council 8</i>	<i>05/27/2016</i>
<i>Land Use Council 4</i>	<i>05/31/2016</i>

Not Supported As Proposed: AISWCD Board of Directors 6/7/16

Resolution 2016-6
Resolution to Eliminate the Dues Requirement for Participation
With Contribution Sub-Agreements

Whereas Illinois' 97 Soil and Water Conservation Districts (SWCDs) have participated with the USDA/Natural Resources Conservation Service CRP Contribution Agreements and have successfully carried out those agreements

Whereas SWCD participation in the Association of Illinois Soil and Water Conservation Districts (AISWCD) Contribution Sub-Agreements has been just as successful

Whereas many SWCDs have participated to the fullest extent of their capability to use Contribution Agreement and/or Sub-Agreement funds to replace reduced levels of state operations dollars since 2008

Whereas many SWCDs are able to only write Contribution Sub-Agreements for amounts which are insufficient to pay both AISWCD dues as well as operational expenses

Whereas AISWCD is being fully compensated for their administration of Sub-Agreements by USDA/NRCS

Therefore, be it resolved that the AISWCD shall eliminate the dues requirement of SWCDs in order to participate with NRCS Contribution Sub-Agreements as it presents a financial hardship on those districts who would have minimal gain from said agreements.

Approved by:

Montgomery County SWCD	04/11/2016
Christian County SWCD	04/28/2016
Greene County SWCD	04/28/2016
Macoupin County SWCD	05/04/2016
Clinton County SWCD	05/10/2016
Bond County SWCD	05/11/2016
Hancock County SWCD	05/11/2016
Effingham County SWCD	05/17/2016
Land Use Council 16	05/26/2016

Land Use Council 8—approved with changes to wording to address the need to change Article 1, Section 5A of the by-laws to read “Districts do not need to be in good standing to participate in any agreement where the AISWCD receives funds to administer said agreement”. 05/27/2016

Land Use Council 4 05/31/2016

Not Supported As Proposed: AISWCD Board of Directors 6/7/16

Resolution 2016-7

No Confidence in the current AISWCD President and Executive Director

Whereas the Association of Illinois Soil and Water Conservation Districts (Association) is a trade organization that was formed in 1948 “to represent and empower Illinois’ Soil and Water Conservation Districts.” The Association itself is not a unit of government or even a unit of local government or political subdivision of the state as its member Soil and Water Conservation Districts (Districts) are as classified by the Illinois constitution and relevant statutes. The Association is neither a part of the formal organizational structure of any individual District nor a part of the formal organizational structure of any State of Illinois agency; and

Whereas the Association has no control over any individual member District or combination of Districts and has no authority to act on behalf of or bind any individual District. Further, the Association’s officers, board of directors and membership are not appointed by any State of Illinois agency or official, including but not limited to the Illinois Department of Agriculture (Department); and

Whereas the body of the Association of Illinois Soil and Water Conservation District Directors expect that the Association President and Executive Director would as stated in the Association Policies and Procedures:

- strengthen the basic American principle that the function of government is to serve and not to dominate or control;
- seek effective support for Soil and Water Conservation Districts wherever it may be found;
- supply reliable information concerning the purposes and activities of the Districts;
- encourage and assist Districts;
- expressly reject any and all partisan political affiliations;
- honor the principles of shared governance which require authentic opportunities for both the Association and the 97 Soil & Water Conservation Districts and their employees; and

Whereas the body of the Association expect the President and Executive Director;

- to be persons of great integrity;
- to treat (District board members, District staff and cooperating agencies) with respect and dignity;
- to be capable of putting together a team of diversified leaders, including District members and District staff, and trust them to help make decisions that are in the best interest of all 97 Soil and Water Conservation Districts;

- to have knowledge and understanding of the formation, history, and structure of the 97 Soil and Water Conservation Districts and the Illinois Soil and Water Conservation District Act;
- to believe in shared governance, seeking authentic input from not only Illinois' 97 Soil and Water Conservation Districts but also from various groups and organizations, and to use that input in the decision making process;
- to have extensive experience in working with Districts and their boards and to have the knowledge of Districts responsibilities and achievements;
- to have the communication skills to articulate the importance of Districts in the protection of the State of Illinois' natural resources to not only the Governor and Legislature but to District partners and the public as a whole; and

Whereas these aforementioned expectations are the fundamental qualities required of Association of Illinois Soil and Water Conservation Districts President and Executive Director as they are essential to the performance of their tasks at hand. However, the current President and Executive Director have shown, over the past year, that they lack these basic qualities and have repeatedly failed to live up to the most basic requirements expected of these positions; and

Therefore the members of the body of the Association of Illinois Soil and Water Conservation Districts have found no confidence in the leadership of current Association President and Executive Director and we ask that the full body of the Association of Illinois Soil and Water Conservation Districts seek new leadership for the Association of Illinois Soil and Water Conservation Districts. Furthermore this statement of resolution has been published to the full body of the Association prior to the meeting of the full body of the Association. Facts and particular actions of the President and Executive Director causing the lack of confidence are enumerated below;

- Whereas the Association of Illinois Soil and Water Conservation Districts and the 97 Illinois Soil and Water Conservation Districts as well as their employees have always had an open and effective monologue between all those involved in the decision making process, under the current leadership of the sitting Association President and Executive Director many Districts and their employees feel that over the past year they have been left out of the conversation all together. The current Association President and Executive Director have a top down management style that has led to a lack of buy-in for new initiatives and ideas. Both the current Association President and Executive Director exhibit a total lack of communication and an unwillingness to accept any criticism or critique of their decisions. These actions have taken place despite repeated attempts by District directors and their employees to communicate about, or to take part in, the decision making process; and

- Whereas it is widely known that many Districts and their employees have a lack of trust in the current Association President and Executive Director's leadership due to the repeated misinformation to its members and their partners. On numerous occasions' District directors and their employees have found themselves having to respond to Legislators, their partners and the community, in an attempt to explain the reasoning behind decisions being made by the current Association President and Executive Director. Case in point: a number of Legislators have questioned why a sitting Association President and Executive Director would devise a funding plan that was haphazardly put together by a committee restrictively organized by the President and drafted by the Executive Director, and that will reduce district funding by 33% of what was proposed in the Illinois Department of Agriculture's FY 17 Budget, and that also proposes 25% of the funding be withheld as a performance based initiative. The result of the plan proposed by the Association will diminish Districts ability to do the work mandated them within the Illinois Soil and Water Conservation District Act, directly causing reduced staffing levels and the inability to work with neighboring counties for technical or administrative support; and
- Whereas the State of Illinois' fiscal crisis has resulted in unforeseen circumstances for Illinois' 97 Soil and Water Conservation Districts, the inability to seek effective support for funding by the Association has added additional challenges for the State's 97 Soil and Water Conservation Districts. The current Association President and Executive Director have repeatedly shown that they do not have the best interest of the Districts in mind by agreeing with a new Governor that Districts are bloated and ineffective. The first priority when meeting with a newly elected Governor or his staff should have been to educate the Governor and staff as to who Soil and Water Conservation Districts are and what they do for the State of Illinois. By insisting on presenting funding scenarios that reduce employee hours, salaries, benefits, and in some scenarios eliminate staff position all together, the current Association President and Executive Director have shown they have very little understanding of the day to day functions of the Districts. Said actions of the current Association President and Executive Director have also shown how little they respect District employees by not recognizing the hardships Districts and their employees have already endured over the past several years and by not recognizing how the decision-making process of the current Association President and Executive Director have affected people's lives, not just District functions; and
- Whereas it is the duty of the Association to supply reliable information concerning the purposes and activities of the districts, the current Association President and Executive Director have continually failed to give accurate and factual information concerning the structure and the importance of the 97 Soil

and Water Conservation Districts in Illinois not only to the Illinois Governor's Office, the Governor's Office of Management and Budget, and Legislators but also to the very partners Districts work with on a daily basis. On numerous occasions the Executive Director has attended informational meetings with partners where Association representation should have been able to gather support for Districts and possible funding opportunities relating to such issues as the Nutrient Loss Reduction Strategy but due to the lack of knowledge of what Districts are and what they do, many partners have reported back to Districts that they question the Association's motives and benefit to the Districts; and

- Whereas it is the duty of the AISWCD to encourage and assist Soil and Water Conservation Districts, the current Association President and Executive Director have continually refused to work alongside the 97 Soil and Water Conservation Districts and their employees. Both continue to refuse to listen to District director and employee concerns by continually providing incorrect information and portraying District employees as argumentative and disagreeable when in fact District directors and their employees have been trying to be factual and offer helpful and precise information. Case in point: the Association's funding plan proposal was incorrect in verbiage and accuracy. It was only after the sitting Association President agreed to incorporate historic data and other facts developed by the co-chairs of the Illinois Soil and Water Conservation District Employee Association (ISWCDEA) that the Association's funding plan became a somewhat functional document; and
- Whereas it is the duty of the Association to promote Soil and Water Conservation Districts to the Governor's Office and the State Legislature, many Districts and their employees feel that the current Association President and Executive Director have stood fast with the Governor's agenda and have failed to reach out to State Legislators on both sides of the political aisle, all the while ignoring the potential aftereffect of playing partisan politics; and
- Whereas the principles of shared governance require authentic opportunities for everyone involved we feel that the current Association President and Executive Director have not been truthful and forthcoming in the manner in which they perpetuated the funding plan devised for the Governor's Office. It has been continually reported by both the current Association President and Executive Director that all special meetings held over the past year have been to inform the AISWCD board and its membership about a funding plan they were developing for the Governor's Office. However, in a letter devised by the AISWCD's Attorney and sent to the Assistant Attorney General, "the Association was merely acting as a conduit in seeking information for the Illinois Department of Agriculture". The letter further explained that, "For some time the Department had been working on a funding plan for distribution of state funding to individual soil and water conservation districts. The Department had asked

the Association to inquire with its members whether they would be supportive of the proposed funding plan. Accordingly, the Association sought opinions of its members. Regardless of the outcome or feedback from that survey, the Association has no authority to bind the individual districts as members, the individual districts have no authority to bind or compel the Department. In other words, the survey of the Association's membership was nothing more than informational. This was not the action of a public body, but that of an interest group providing feedback from its membership to a state agency that was poised to take action that could directly affect its members' interests." If that was, in fact, the case, as written by the AISWCD's Lawyer, then the current Association President should not have dictated who served on the task force to write the funding plan, should not have demanded the outcome of the contents of the written funding plan, and should not have hand delivered said funding plan to the Governor nor the Governor's Office of Management and Budget representing it as the one and only funding plan developed by the 97 Soil and Water Conservation Districts.

Therefore be it resolved that it is in the best interest of the 97 Soil and Water Conservation Districts and the Association of Illinois Soil and Water Conservation Districts that the current sitting President and Executive Director either resign from their positions or be removed from their positions by a vote of no confidence by the Association of Illinois Soil and Water Conservation Districts membership as a whole.

Approved by Greene County Soil and Water Conservation District: March 28, 2016
Approved by Christian County Soil and Water Conservation District: April 28, 2016
Approved by McHenry-Lake Counties Soil and Water Conservation District: May 3, 2016
Approved by Macoupin County Soil and Water Conservation District: May 4, 2016
Approved by Clinton County Soil and Water Conservation District: May 10, 2016
Approved by Madison County Soil and Water Conservation District: May 10, 2016
Approved by Montgomery County Soil and Water Conservation District: May 11, 2016
Approved by Hancock County Soil and Water Conservation District: May 11, 2016
Approved by Will-South Cook Soil and Water Conservation District: May 11, 2016
Approved by Winnebago County Soil and Water Conservation District: May 24, 2016
Approved by LUC 16: May 26, 2016
Approved by LUC 8: May 27, 2016

Not Supported As Proposed: AISWCD Board of Directors 6/7/16

Resolution 2016-8

Whereas, the State of Illinois has not funded SWCD's in 2016, and

Whereas, the State of Illinois swept ¼ of our 2015 funds, so

Whereas, district offices are financial strapped to pay existing bills and employees, and

Whereas paying dues is a financial hardship for many districts, but

Whereas, the association needs some leverage to give the Districts incentive to pay dues.

Therefore, be it resolved that the AISWCD shall allow ALL districts to participate in grants and programs for which the AISWCD receives administrative fees and pass through funds. The AISWCD may continue to require payment of dues for voting rights and other member benefits.

Approved by:

Effingham Co. SWCD
January 14, 2016

OKAW Valley Council 10
January 14, 2016

Resolution was not reviewed by AISWCD Board of Directors at the June Quarterly Board Meeting.