

ANNUAL REPORT



2019

**CLEAN WATER,
HEALTHY SOILS**

AISWCD

4285 N Walnut Street Road
Springfield, Illinois 62707
(217) 744 - 3414 | aiswcd.org



**"ITS AN EXCITING TIME
TO BE INVOLVED IN
CONSERVATION."**

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Dear Friends,

2019 has been an excellent year for the Association of Illinois Soil and Water Conservation Districts of Illinois (AISWCD). I am pleased to report that the affairs of the association are in excellent order. The financial standing of the organization is strong, and the Board of Directors and staff have worked in partnership to accomplish a great deal in the advancement of soil and water conservation in 2019. My sincerest thanks to both.

In the following pages, you will find an overview of key accomplishments and happenings over the course of the past year. We have much to be proud of, and I hope that you find this information useful.

I look forward to working with each of you to make 2020 just as exceptional.

Clean water, healthy soils!

Sincerely,
Steve Stierwalt | AISWCD President



**CLEAN WATER,
HEALTHY SOILS.**



ABOUT AISWCD

MISSION

**TO REPRESENT AND
EMPOWER THE SOIL
AND WATER
CONSERVATION
DISTRICTS OF ILLINOIS.**

The Association of Illinois Soil and Water Conservation Districts (AISWCD), is a 503-c4 grass roots organization formed in 1948. It is made up and serves Illinois' 97 member Soil and Water Conservation Districts (SWCDs). Soil & Water Conservation Districts work to protect Illinois' greatest assets – the rich, fertile soils and water resources of the state through strategic conservation efforts. SWCDs, working in conjunction with agricultural as well as environmental stakeholders have for decades over played a central role in efforts to protect and sustain the viability of Illinois' natural resources for future generations.

AISWCD TEAM

Grant Hammer

Executive Director

Rebecca Osland

Grants Manager

Steve Chard

Projects Manager

Alan Howard

Financial Manager

CLEAN WATER, HEALTHY SOILS.



AISWCD LEADERSHIP

ABOVE: The March meeting of the AISWCD Board of Directors.

President
Vice Pres
Secretary
Treasurer
Past Pres

Steve Stierwalt
Tom Beyers
Dale Shumaker
Dan Duval
Myron Kirby

LUC 15
LUC 16
SWCDEA
SWCDEA

Bill Littrell
Gerard Fabrizius
Terina Coffey
Rich Stewart

Area 1 VP
Area 2 VP
Area 3 VP
Area 4 VP
LUC 1
LUC 2
LUC 3
LUC 4
LUC 6
LUC 7
LUC 9
LUC 10
LUC 11
LUC 12
LUC 13
LUC 14

Jerry Snodgrass
David McCormick
Kenny Hawthorne
Steve Fulling
Barb Klinger
Josh Curry
Lee Bunting
Terry Davis
Randy Molitoris
Joe Rothermel
Jason Anderson
Daniel Doedtman
Kody Aldrich
Dallas Alley
Charles Thomas
Tom Anderson

LEADERSHIP AND SERVICE TO ADVANCE SWCDS AND CONSERVATION.



SPRING ADVOCACY

ABOVE: AISWCD lobbyist Mike Hoffman and Executive Director Grant Hammer testify in a house committee hearing.

The AISWCD was hard at work this past spring advocating on the behalf of Soil and Water Conservation Districts. With a change of administration and nearly one third of the General Assembly being freshmen legislators this spring, AISWCD fast set to work to meet with new policymakers to educate them on the work of conservation districts and share AISWCD policy goals. AISWCD engaged influential members of each legislative chamber, testified before lawmaker committees, prepared and presented policy memos with recommendations to officials, and interfaced with the Governor's Office.

The results of this spring session can be described as nothing but fantastic - lawmakers were discussing concepts such as cover crops, soil health, and nutrient loss reduction.

2019 IS THE YEAR SWCDS RECLAIMED THEIR POLICY VOICE AT THE STATE HOUSE.



ADVOCACY SCORECARD

- ✓ **\$7.5M LEVEL FUNDING**
- ✓ **\$20M CAPITAL BILL FUNDING**
- ✓ **\$300K COVER CROP INSURANCE PILOT**
- ✓ **PASSAGE OF HB2737 (SOIL HEALTH BILL)**
- ✓ **PASSAGE OF S.R. 51 (NUTRIENT LOSS)**
- ✗ **DEDICATED LINE FOR SWCD INSURANCE**

**5/6 PRIORITIES
ACCOMPLISHED**

GRADE A-

A photograph showing Grant Hammer, AISWCD Executive Director, on the left, wearing a dark suit and a name tag, and Rita Frazier, of RFD Radio, on the right, wearing a dark polo shirt and glasses. Rita is holding a microphone towards Grant. They are standing in front of an American flag and another flag.

PUBLIC RELATIONS

ABOVE: AISWCD Executive Director Grant Hammer conducts an interview with Rita Frazier of RFD Radio.

AISWCD strives to tell the story of Illinois' SWCDs, highlighting their contributions to the agricultural landscape and accomplishing conservation at the local level, and hopefully, enhancing the standing and reputation of conservation districts among stakeholder partners and the general public along the way. Importantly, effective communications and public relations can shape or influence public policy.

In 2019, AISWCD undertook great efforts to aggressively pursue opportunities to capture news coverage. AISWCD frequented radio programs, provided background and quotes for news stories, and even drafted an op-ed to highlight the success one SWCD had in building a local coalition among local partners, county officials, and state lawmakers to address a pressing natural resource concern.

AISWCD WORKS TO PROMOTE A POSITIVE IMAGE OF THE SWCDs OF ILLINOIS.



SOCIAL MEDIA

139

FACEBOOK POSTS

15%

INCREASE IN
FACEBOOK PAGE
LIKES

154

TWEETS

47

WEEKLY E-NEWS
ELECTRONIC
NEWSLETTERS

Social media is an important component of the AISWCD communications and public relations strategy. Social media allows AISWCD to highlight SWCDs in the news and share information. The Pew Research Center in 2018 determined that social media platforms have surpassed print media as the source of news for most Americans.





SPECIAL PROJECTS

Delegates to the AISWCD's 2018 Annual Meeting & Summer Training Conference tasked the staff of AISWCD with developing a logo concept that could be adopted by SWCDs to better brand SWCDs and create a more uniform look for across the state. AISWCD convened a volunteer group to help guide and inform the process, and after numerous meetings and surveying members over the course of the past year - the AISWCD unveiled a logo at this year's conference that will serve as a tool for districts who would like to adopt this new logo concept!

NEW BRANDING FOR ILLINOIS' SWCDS.





GRANT ADMIN

\$1M

APPROXIMATE AMOUNT
SWCDS BILLED FOR CSP, EQIP,
& CRP AGREEMENT IN 2019

1,500

APPROXIMATE NUMBER OF
NEW CSP & EQIP
APPLICATIONS IN 2019

COOPERATION TO REACH MUTUAL CONSERVATION GOALS.

AISWCD maintains and manages a large grant with USDA-NRCS Illinois to provide the agency with administrative and technical support for farm bill programs. This grant agreement has been beneficial to AISWCD, NRCS Illinois, and SWCDs alike. This agreement has provided an effective and efficient means to accomplish mutual goals - foremost among these, getting conservation on the ground.



S.T.A.R. PROGRAM

180

PARTICIPANTS

45

COUNTIES

438

FIELDS

27K

ACRES

Delegates to the AISWCD's 2018 Annual Meeting & Summer Training Conference tasked AISWCD via resolution to support the Saving Tomorrow's Agriculture Resources Program, known as S.T.A.R., with promotional and marketing support. AISWCD has risen to the challenge by developing a mobile friendly website at starfreetool.com and arranging for publicity with the help of a media consultant. The program, with AISWCD support, has had much success in the past year!





AISWCD EVENTS

ABOVE: AISWCD Board Members and Lobby Day attendees meet with Senator Chuck Weaver (at far right).

NACD CONFERENCE

AISWCD officers and staff represented the conservation districts of Illinois in February at the NACD Annual Meeting and Conference in San Antonio, Texas.



ABOVE: Lt. Governor Stratton speaks to AISWCD lobby day attendees in the rotunda.

LOBBY DAY AT CAPITOL

Fifty people joined AISWCD for lobby day in March. The legislative reception to follow featured 20 lawmakers, and included a visit from new Ag Director John Sullivan and senior staff.



AISWCD EVENTS

ABOVE: AISWCD President Steve Stierwalt at the Illinois Monarch Project announcement with Ag Director John Sullivan and DNR Director Colleen Callahan.

ENVIROTHON

2019 featured another great year of the Illinois Envirothon educational competition! The annual event is as robust as it has ever been, our hat is off to the organizers and volunteers!



EARTH DAY

AISWCD celebrated Earth Day with partners to announce the release of the Illinois Monarch Project, to which AISWCD contributed.



AISWCD EVENTS

ABOVE: Attendees at the 2019 Annual Meeting & Summer Training Conference.

STEWARDSHIP DAY

AISWCD is proud to serve as a sponsor and participant at the Illinois Environmental Protection Agency's annual "Earth Stewardship Day" at the Illinois State Fairgrounds.



ABOVE: Director Sullivan takes student questions at the erosion simulator table display with IDOA Regional Representative Gary Albers.



ABOVE: AISWCD Vice President Tom Beyers presents an award at conference.

SUMMER CONFERENCE

Due to new revenues from increased exhibitors, AISWCD is pleased to report that the event ended in a net positive financial position for the first time in at least seven years.



AISWCD EVENTS

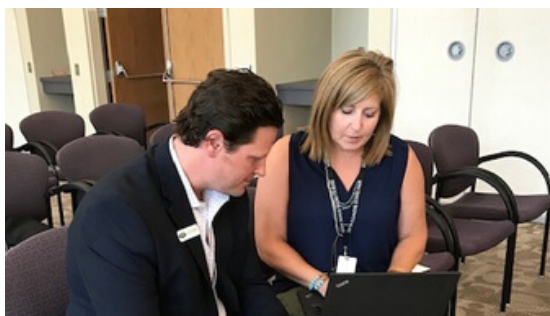
ABOVE: Senate Agriculture Chairmen Scott Bennett (center with hat) attending the Advocacy Farm Tour at President Steve Stierwalt's farm.

ADVOCACY FARM TOUR

AISWCD President Steve Stierwalt hosted Senate Ag Chairman Scott Bennett to his farm, along with partners, to brief the Chairman on current conservation issues.



ABOVE: USDA-NRCS State Conservationist Ivan Dozier listens to discussion along with Rebecca Osland of AISWCD and Erin Bush of the CCSWCD.



ABOVE: AISWCD Executive Director Hammer interviews with Holly Spangler of Prairie Farmer on a story about SWCDs.

AG MEDIA DAY

AISWCD participated in a forum to discuss the SWCD conservation delivery network at the annual event held every year at the state fairgrounds.



AISWCD EVENTS

ABOVE: Conservation Farm Families are recognized at Ag Day at the Illinois State Fair.

AG DAY AT STATE FAIR

Conservation Farm Families were honored at Ag Day at the State Fair. Additionally, Ag Director Sullivan gave SWCDs a huge shout out for their assistance to farmers this spring.



ABOVE: AISWCD's Rebecca Osland and State Rep. Charlie Meier, a downstate farmer.



FARM PROGRESS SHOW

AISWCD served as the lead organizer of the Partners for Conservation Tent at the 2019 Farm Progress Show in Decatur, Illinois.



AISWCD EVENTS

ABOVE: "Cheesing for Carbon", AISWCD staff with cover crop expert David Kleinschmidt at the Macon County SWCD Workshop in July.

SWCD WORKSHOPS

AISWCD hosted a series of four Soil Health & Cover Crop SWCD workshops during August 2019. These occurred in Sycamore, Galesburg, Decatur, and Mt. Vernon.



CREP ROUNDTABLE

AISWCD helped to facilitate an informational CREP Roundtable discussion forum with the new programmatic staff of IDNR's CREP program.



AISWCD FINANCES

REVENUES (AS OF DECEMBER 6, 2019)

Annual Meeting	\$38,553.20
Checking Interest	\$3,208.69
Envirothon	\$18,749.12
Grant Administration	\$204,113.01
Membership Dues	\$168,202.92
Miscellaneous	\$2,907.04
Pass Through	\$88,411.50
Services	\$4,000.00
<hr/>	
Total Revenues	\$528,145.48
<hr/>	

AISWCD CONVERTED TO ACCRUAL BASIS IN 2019.

ACTIVITY STATEMENT

EXPENDITURES (AS OF DECEMBER 6, 2019)

Contractual Service Expenses	\$24,000.00
Annual Meeting Expenses	\$33,768.62
Building Expenses	\$18,895.62
Employee Insurance	\$23,110.92
Envirothon Expenses	\$15,506.65
Legislative Expenses	\$2,116.51
Membership Expenses	\$650.00
NACD Expenses	\$670.00
Office Expenses	\$14,042.77
Officer Expenses	\$5,712.56
Other Expenses	\$4,844.97
Pass Through Funds	\$98,391.20
Payroll Expenses	\$182,174.07
Board Meeting Expenses	\$2,123.51
Travel Expenses	\$3,834.32
Vehicle Expenses	\$1,768.75
Workshops/Training/Conferences	\$4,458.11
Total Other Expenditures	\$3,648.43

<hr/> Total Expenditures <hr/>	<hr/> \$439,716.54 <hr/>
---------------------------------------	---------------------------------

<hr/> NET <hr/>	<hr/> \$88,428.94 <hr/>
------------------------	--------------------------------

AISWCD FINANCIAL POSITION

ASSETS (AS OF DECEMBER 6, 2019)

Total Bank Accounts	\$281,863.43
Total Accounts Receivable	\$0.00
Toatal Other Current Assets	\$0.00
<hr/>	
Total Current Assets	\$281,863.43
Total Fixed Assets	\$167,246.75
<hr/>	
Total Assets	\$449,110.18

LIABILITIES AND EQUITY

Total Current Liabilities	\$3,830.13
Total Long-Term Liabilities	\$7,056.00
<hr/>	
Total Liabilities	\$10,886.13
Total Equity	\$438,224.05
<hr/>	
Total Liabilities & Equity	\$449,110.18

94/97 DISTRICTS HAVE PAID
MEMBERSHIP DUES



BECOME A SUPPORTER

Please consider becoming a foundation supporter, and help make an investment in conservation! Please consider making a donation pledge to the AISWCD's charitable 501-(c)(3) foundation to invest in the conservation of leaders tomorrow.

Donations are tax deductible, and will be used to support the awarding of financial scholarships for students studying agriculture and conservation - the conservationists of tomorrow. Additionally, contributions will help support leadership and training opportunities for conservation professionals!

Funding for conservation is oftentimes in scarce supply, and competitive nonetheless. Moreover, funding is oftentimes geared towards programs and not those important professionals who will implement and lead programs. Here's how you can help - visit AISWCD.org to make an online pledge today!

INVEST IN THE CONSERVATION LEADERS OF TOMORROW.



MAKE A PLEDGE TODAY!

DONATION PLEDGE FORM | DETACH PAGE & RETURN

OPTION 1: RECURRING MONTHLY DONATION OF \$20

_____	Name on Card	_____	Visa
_____	Credit Card Number	_____	Mastercard
_____	Exp Date	_____	Discover
_____	CSV# (Digits on back of card)		
_____	Please sign to authorize charge		

OPTION 2: ONE TIME DONATION

_____ Name (As you would like it to appear)
_____ Street Address
_____ City | State | Zip Code
_____ Email Address

_____ Conservation Champion | \$1,000
_____ Conservation Benefactor | \$500
_____ Conservation Sponsor | \$250
_____ Conservation Family | \$100
_____ Conservation Friend | \$50

Donations may also be made online at aiswcd.org. Please complete and return this form, along with your donation payment to:

AISWCD, Attention: AISWCD Foundation
4285 N Walnut Street Road
Springfield, Illinois 62707.

