



# CONSERVATION CATCHALL

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## *AISWCD Staff:*

**Richard Nichols,**  
Executive Director

**Sherry Finn,**  
Administrative Assistant

## *AS CROP PRICES SOAR, IOWA FARMS ADD ACREAGE*

By A. G. SULZBERGER

Published in the New York Times December 30, 2011



Photo by Eric Thayer for The New York Times

Mark and Janet Laddusaw standing at the site of a former golf course. On another part of the land, they are converting the clubhouse into their home.

WHITEMORE, Iowa — A splash of green on a solid beige horizon, the golf course at the edge of this tiny town promised residents nine modest holes of refuge from corn country. Decades earlier the spot had been farmed, too, but the rocky soil was so poor, the saying went, that you couldn't raise hell there with a fifth of whiskey.

"The rottenest piece of land there is," said Mick Elbert, a local car dealer who served on the golf association board. "All it is good for is a golf course. That's why we built it there."

But this year, over a chorus of objections, the greens and fairways were plowed under. The course had been losing money, and crop prices had been breaking records, so the new owner did the type of quick calculation that is quietly reshaping the region and determined that it was more valuable as farmland. The first harvest took place this fall.

Across much of the Midwest the sharp increase in farm earnings has driven the price of farmland to previously unimaginable — and, some say, unsustainable — levels. But in the process, to much less fanfare, the financial rewards have also encouraged farmers to put ever more land into production, including parcels that until recently were too small or too poor in quality to warrant a second glance.

As Iowa marches toward the Republican caucuses, much of the politicking has been set against the timeless backdrop of open farmland. These agricultural vistas are expanding across the Corn Belt, where the fertile and increasingly profitable soil has helped this state weather the nation's economic storms.

Farmers are taking down the old barn or the grove of trees that shaded a corner of the family farm to squeeze in a few more rows of crops. They are plowing up areas previously used for grazing cattle or set aside for conservation because they had been deemed too wet, too sandy or too hilly for farming.

And they are returning crops to places that had been reserved for ostensibly more lucrative purposes like strip malls, housing developments or, in several cases, struggling small-town golf courses.

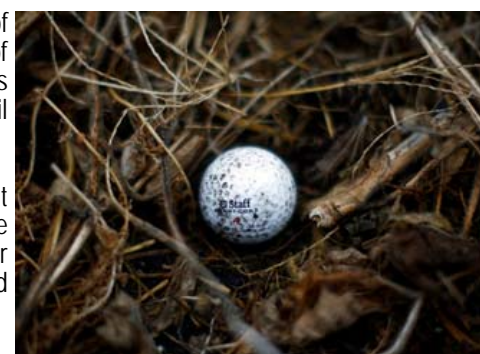


Photo by Eric Thayer for The New York Times

A golf ball is evidence that an Iowan farm was until recently a golf course.

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## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE - JAMES TODD

[jtoddfarm@gmail.com](mailto:jtoddfarm@gmail.com)

President Todd is recovering from knee surgery and will not have a report this month.

### *AS CROP PRICES SOAR, IOWA FARMS ADD ACREAGE*

(Continued from Page 1)

"One day it's grassland, and the next day it's black dirt," said Jim Ringelman, the North Dakota-based director of conservation programs for Ducks Unlimited, a hunting and conservation group worried about the trend. "It's that quick."

There are no encompassing statistics about how much land is being cleared, but farmers and environmentalists around the region agree that the available figures and anecdotal evidence suggest a significant increase in the amount of dormant land going back into production. There is debate over whether this should be a source of concern.

Craig Cox, the head of the Midwest office of the Environmental Working Group, which has released a report warning about farmland erosion, stressed that the more aggressive farming tactics, like removing trees that act as windbreaks or buffer areas that surround streams, put both land and water at risk.

"It's really disturbing," Mr. Cox said. "Farmers are pushing as hard as possible to get every last bushel out of every last acre."

In Iowa, the nation's biggest producer of corn and soybeans, farmers insist that they are simply getting more value from their land. Darrell Coddington, a farmer who runs an excavation business, has spent much of the past year clearing additional land in the hilly and wooded southern part of the state, including places that used to be left alone and derided as a "cocklebur farm," referring to the thorny weed.

While working one overgrown parcel for a neighbor, Mr. Coddington discovered a rusting horse-drawn plow buried beneath a foot of earth, a find that suggested the land had not been farmed in a century. And while expanding his own cropland he decided to tear down the empty family homestead, an action that he described as sad but economically justified.

"Hey," he said, "it was farm ground before they built it."

The force pushing more land into production is the rise in crop prices: in the past five years corn prices tripled and those for soybeans doubled because of swelling worldwide demand, including demand for ethanol production. At the same time yields have spiked because of genetically engineered crops and improvements in farming technology, which are also allowing farmers to grow in previously inhospitable areas.

In turn farmers, flush from the most profitable years in decades and looking for better places to store money than low-interest savings accounts or a turbulent stock market, are putting their money in land.

In Iowa, the state with the highest gains in the Midwest, the average price of farmland grew a record 32 percent last year to \$6,700 an acre, according to a study released last week by Iowa State University. This month a land auction in the northwest corner of the state shattered records when one farm sold for \$20,000 an acre, prompting another round of warnings of a real estate bubble.

Many of those not buying new land are instead putting money into their operations by buying new equipment or undertaking long-planned projects for their property like tearing down trees, buildings or fence rows to make more room for crops.

Others are pulling land out of the federal Conservation Reserve Program, which pays a per acre fee to farmers who agree to leave their land idle for a decade or more. Enrollment in the program, praised by environmentalists and hunters for improving water quality and wildlife habitat, peaked at 36.8 million acres in 2007 and dropped to 29.6 million acres last month, in part because farmers believed they could make more by farming than the \$53 per acre average paid for conservation.

In Iowa, just 9 percent of farmers with expiring contracts in the program renewed them in 2009. With a spike in expiring contracts next year and Congress considering scaling back the program, which has paid out more than \$1.7 billion so far this year, significantly more marginal land could return to production.

It is not just land in the country that is being returned to production. In the Des Moines area, farms that were bought for development — even parcels that were cleared and graded — are being tilled and planted again, some rented as a stopgap measure and some perma-

(Continued on Page 6)



## EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S NOTES - *RICH NICHOLS*

[rich.nichols@aiswcd.org](mailto:rich.nichols@aiswcd.org)

This issue is later than usual so my article is being written the first week of February.

The circus came to town Tuesday for the regular installment of what we call the spring session of the General Assembly. There wasn't much work done since the primary reason they came back was to hear the Governor's State Of The State message which was given at noon on February 1st. I didn't get to hear the speech but after reading all of the reports from the political reporters and pundits it appears I didn't miss much.

The Governor is proposing some tax cuts and some other initiatives and incentives to promote jobs and help strengthen the economy. The problem with the tax cuts and incentives is that the Governor offered up no way to replace the revenue that will be lost with the tax cuts. Neither did he propose anything that would generate the necessary revenue to pay for the incentives. I realize that this was his State Of The State message and as such should not be expected to lay out the nuts and bolts of how he will carry out his proposals. His budget message will be the 15th of February and maybe he will have more details then as to how he proposes to reduce existing debt, pay off the huge backlog of bills and generate enough revenue to pay for his new initiatives. I guess I will just have to wait till then to find out what he is proposing.

In the meantime, I, along with AISWCD leadership, will be working to do what we can to move the gaming bill or some other means of providing a more stable source of funding for SWCDs. Since it is unlikely that whatever method of funding we can obtain will provide any amount of money in FY13, we will also be working very hard to assure that the SWCDs will continue to have operational funding for FY13 from general revenue sources or whatever else we may be able to find.

It is frustrating for me and I'm sure for SWCD directors and staff to continue day after day to contact legislators or their staff to remind them that the SWCDs need a stable funding source and that we are doing everything we can to try to locate such a source.

I also find it aggravating that we have nothing tangible to pursue right now whether it be the compromise ver-

sion of the gaming bill, a sales tax initiative, an as yet untapped fund, a grant, a new legislative effort, a new state program or whatever. There are rumors and innuendos floating around that this person or that legislator has big plans for a major source of funds that will help put the state back on its economic feet and fund the SWCDs and a host of other underfunded programs in the process. Unfortunately, so far, the rumors are just that - rumors. There is no bill number, no program title, no sponsor name, nothing that we can physically get behind and support.

The Gaming bill is still being debated by the group that was formed to reach a compromise that the legislature and governor could all support and it appears that they will continue debating at least until the March 20th primary election is over. Even if the group does reach a compromise, it is likely that it will be late April or May before something of note will be accomplished by the House and Senate. Typically, neither chamber gets serious about meaningful legislation until near the final days of the session which this year is scheduled for May 31st.

I'm sure it will be an interesting spring session and I'm sure we will be in touch with SWCDs on a regular basis asking for your support in some form or another.

We do plan to have a legislative day for directors and staff to come to Springfield this year and we hope you will participate. The initial plan is to schedule the day during the week of March 26th. We will not schedule our legislative day on the 28th which is the same day as the Illinois Ag Legislative Day event. Though directors and staff are welcome to come to Springfield on the 28th, there is just too much going on and we are concerned that we will be just another face in the crowd. The House and Senate are both scheduled to be in session all five days so we do have other days to choose from that week. We will inform everyone of the selected date as soon as we have one.

In the meantime, spring seems to have come a bit early in February so enjoy it while you can.

*Rich*





## ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT'S UPDATE - *SHERRY FINN*

[sherry.finn@aiswcd.org](mailto:sherry.finn@aiswcd.org)

### December and January Activities

#### EP Coordinator Grant:

- Organized and mailed November and December CREP Coordinator Invoices with each participating Districts' vouchers and receipts
- Sent database showing funds used to IEPA for update
- Completed amended CREP Coordinator Contracts for FY 2012 participating Districts.

#### December Quarterly Board Meeting:

- Compiled FAC and taskforce meeting minutes; compiled and completed AISWCD & Foundation meeting minutes
- Following up on Action items from FAC, taskforces, and AISWCD & Foundation meetings
- Compiling District Media contact information for future media saturation for Gaming Bill.

#### OTHER DUTIES:

- Phone calls, mail and e-mail correspondence
- Compiled expense reports for Credit Cards
- Timesheets
- Maintain Patio Paver and Rain Barrel Database
- Maintain SWCD Dues Paid (FY '11 & FY '12 Databases)
- Completed SWCD Dues Database for FY 2012
- E-mailed 1st Half FY 2012 Dues Invoice to Districts
- Mailed Thank You Notes to Paid Districts
- Sent AISWCD/SWCD Sponsors monthly CC and Legislative Newsletter for December
- E-mailed Monthly Financials to Officers and other requesters
- Updated Records Retention, Mgmt & Destruction Folder
- Forward to Rich the monthly SWCD/LUC agenda and meeting minutes that are e-mailed to me; file these after seen by Rich
- Proofread Conservation Catchall and Legislative Newsletter; made changes and posted to website; copied link and forwarded to il.all.
- Completed Monthly Office Supply Inventory and placed order
- Maintaining Earth Stewardship Bank Account.
- Sent updated delinquent notice to District Directors for FY 2011 dues; sent same notice to AISWCD Officers, Area VPs, and SWCD Districts per Board request
- Sent e-mail notice to all Districts requesting LUC articles for upcoming Legislative Newsletters.
- Sent e-mail to Districts clarifying Partial 3rd Quarter Operating Funds payment; e-mailed Partial 3rd Quarter FY 2012 Dues Invoice to Districts
- Mailed Thank you Notes to Paid Districts for P 3rd Q Payment

- E-mailed link to Districts & Board Members for Legislative and CC newsletters; mailed copies to non-email participants
- Completed all File Folders for 2012 Payables; set up IUM and CREP Grant folders, Earth Stewardship Folder, Envirothon Folders
- Set up IL Envirothon Meeting Wizard for February 1, 2012 Teleconference Call and notified participants of date selected
- Compiled AC Job Description ads from Districts to forward to several Districts requesting information
- Updating Annual Meeting Award applications to send out to Districts

#### FY 2012 Audit:

- Contacted Auditor to setup date for FY 2011 Audit.

#### ACCOUNTING/OFFICE ADMIN:

- Completed Payroll and Payroll Taxes for December and end of year (quarterly); completed 1099s and W-2s; mailed items.
- Reconciled all bank accounts for December & January
- Completed bookwork for All AISWCD & Insurance Accts
- Prepared Deposits for SWCD Dues and Receivables
- Completed Checks for Payables; Completed Deposits for Receivables; Completed Monthly Financials
- Filed all Completed Payables & Receivables Documentation
- Wrote checks for SWCD various insurance premiums; had Rich sign; mailed; e-mailed copies to Debbie Holsapple
- Completed Semi-Monthly IL Lobbyist Expenditure Data for Illinois Secretary of State for December & January; did 2012 registration for AISWCD lobbyist information.
- Completed Deposit for CREP Coordinator October voucher; wrote checks, had Rich sign, and mailed to participating Districts for reimbursement

#### LOOKING AHEAD:

- 2011 AISWCD & Foundation Audit
- Preparing & Compiling FY 2012 Files and Data
- March QB Meeting
- Annual Meeting Initial Prep work

**REMEMBER: Be always at war with your vices, at peace with your neighbors and let each New Year find you a better person!!!**

**TO ACT: Look for an opportunity to make a positive difference!!!!**

*Sherry*

## Montgomery County Natural Area Guardians – Route 66 Prairie



In the December issue of the *Conservation Catchall* the Natural Area Guardians article was about the Montgomery County NAGs and some of the projects they were working on. One of those projects was the Route 66 Prairie and it will be highlighted in this issue of the *Catchall*.

Three who made Rt 66 Prairie a reality, Ken Schaal, left, President of Montgomery County Natural Area Guardians, Henry Eilers, member of MCNAGs and former Illinois State Senator Deanna Demuzio.

### A Great Stop on a Great Road

Route 66 is one of the great roads of the world as celebrated in poetry and songs. One author [Ian Frazier; *Travels in Siberia*; 2010] lists it with the Sibirskii Tract of his book, as well as Rome's Via Appia and the famed Silk Road. He might have also added the Camino Real that stretched from Albuquerque to Mexico City. Of all of these it was the most democratic of highways. It reflected the spirit of its people, their urge for new beginnings, the pot of gold at the end of the rainbow and also a sense of adventure and restlessness.

For much of its length Route 66 was a road of the wide open spaces. Only a few generations ago, it was a landscape of immense grasslands that seemed to stretch on forever. It began in the tall-grass prairies of Illinois and continued through the savannas of Missouri and Oklahoma to the vast desert grasslands of our South-west. To quote in part Doug Ladd, *Missouri Prairie Journal*, #2, 2011, 'grasslands have disproportionately shaped our history and prosperity as a culture, becoming victims of their own success as society exploited the fertile prairie soils. As one of the most productive and diverse of the planet's temperate grasslands was vanquished, America became the world's breadbasket, reaping the accumulated subterranean wealth of our grassland heritage. As a result, temperate grasslands are today the most endangered, least conserved of any terrestrial habitat on earth – and no temperate grasslands are more endangered than our tallgrass prairies.'

A tiny remnant of this tallgrass prairie that survived, a few miles north of Litchfield, Illinois, is today the beginning of the 8 acre Old Route 66 Prairie restoration. It is a home not only to rare plants, including several orchids but also to equally rare insects and numerous reptiles.

It is located along 'Historic Old Route 66' just north of the I-55 IDOT weigh station. A small unmarked parking area is located 200' to the south of the prairie. At this time no infrastructure exists. Adventurous individuals may explore on their own.

Thanks to Melissa Cauble, AC for the Montgomery County SWCD for providing the link to this information.

## ISWCDEA CORNER - MEGAN POLACEK, ISWCDEA REGION FIVE REPRESENTATIVE

website: <http://www.il.ncdea.org>



The first meeting of the 2012 ISWCDEA Board will be held February 9<sup>th</sup> in Springfield. The agenda will undoubtedly be full as there is much to cover the first meeting of the year. We will evaluate the Winter Training that was just held in December in order to make improvements for the next one. We will also update the 2012 ISWCDEA Annual Plan of Work and the 2012 Budget. Last but not least, we will start planning Summer Conference. If you have any ideas or suggestions for Summer Conference, please send them to your regional representatives. In addition, send any problems or questions you would like the ISWCDEA to address to your regional representative.

## AS CROP PRICES SOAR, IOWA FARMS ADD ACREAGE

(Continued from Page 2)

nently sold off. "It may be worth almost as much now as farm ground as it was for development," said Bill Northey, the state agriculture secretary.

Todd Volz, a farmer who pays to grow hay on these vacant properties in urban areas, said more developers are using this income until the housing market recovers. "I can't handle all the work," Mr. Volz said.

Another casualty has been small-town golf courses, many of which were already struggling. In Rockford, about a two-hour drive east of here, Jim Dow, the owner and manager of a 78-acre course, has been turning over the land, removing 750 trees in the process. Though he has never farmed, he believes he could turn a profit with the current prices. Better yet he might be able to sell a property that had been languishing without bidders.

"Maybe once people see it's plowed," he said, "someone will make an offer."

**Editors Note:** The following tables provide a snapshot of the changes in land values for Illinois in 2010 and the change in crop prices from 2010 to 2011. While there can be not direct comparison between Illinois and Iowa with this information, I think it is safe to say that land values in Illinois have risen substantially over the past year and likely have kept pace with the increase in corn and bean prices.

With the rise in land values, I would expect to see expansion efforts on Illinois farms to clear marginal land and to plow up conservation cover implemented through programs like CRP when contracts expire. While I can't really blame the farmer for taking advantage of high commodity prices, it is a concern that success in controlling soil erosion that we have worked so hard to attain may be sacrificed for the sake of gaining a few dollars from land that is erosive and generally will provide lower productivity rates.

### Illinois Farmland Prices

<u>Land Quality</u>	<u>Jan 1, 2010</u>	<u>Dec 31, 2010</u>	<u>Change</u>
Excellent	\$7,050	\$8,310	15%
Good	\$6,200	\$7,220	17%
Fair	\$5,420	\$6,230	15%
Poor	\$4,310	\$4,930	14%

### Comparisons...

	<u>March 2010</u>	<u>March 2011</u>	<u>Change</u>
Cash Corn	\$3.30/bu	\$7.00/bu	Up 112%
Cash Soybeans	\$9.20/bu	\$13.40/bu	Up 46%
New Crop Corn	\$3.50/bu	\$5.70/bu	Up 63%
New Crop Soybeans	\$8.90/bu	\$12.80/bu	Up 44%





## ILLINOIS CHAPTER-IAAP - JANE BRANGENBERG, PRESIDENT

website: <http://iaap-swcd.tripod.com>

The IL SWCD Chapter of IAAP wishes to thank everyone who supported our Basket Raffle fundraiser. Three "themed" baskets were awarded to lucky winners at the Employee Luncheon during Winter Training. The winners were RJ Alier, RC from Coles Co, "Outdoor Fun" basket; Tony Pals, RC from Fayette Co, "Puzzles & More" basket; and Joan Whitney, AC from Knox Co., "Holiday Toss" basket. Congratulations to all the winners! What does our chapter do with the income gained by a fundraiser? We try to filter it back to our members in various ways. If a member chooses to attend an IAAP sponsored event, such as a conference or seminar, or annual meetings at the division or international level, we will provide assistance with her travel expenses and conference fees. Educational materials are provided if a member chooses to study for the CPS/CAP exam. Funds are also used to sponsor educational training at the AISWCD Annual Meeting/Summer Conference and at the ISWCDEA Winter Training.

We would also thank those that came to the IAAP "Meet & Greet" at Winter Training. Sixteen attended; eleven are present members. Two new employees Becky Steele, St. Clair Co. and Jami Mowen, Schuyler Co. joined us along with Jodi Hawkins, Williamson Co., Jeannie Millikin, Perry Co. and Joan Whitney, Knox Co. Two Wal-Mart gift cards were given away as door prizes, Tammy Byrnes and Donna Roads were the lucky winners!

The IL SWCD Chapter would like to welcome our newest member, Jami Mowen.

Please consider attending a chapter meeting as a guest. The next chapter meeting will be held on April 18, 2012 at the IDOA Building in Springfield, in the G.O. room at 10:00 a.m. If you would like any information regarding this or any other meeting please feel free to e-mail me.

## NACD PHOTO AND POSTER CONTEST WINNERS

Poster Contest Winners Page 9

### CONGRATULATIONS!

A photo submitted by Debbie Slade and a Poster submitted by Dominick Albers took first place honors at the NACD Annual Meeting in Las Vegas.



Conservation Practices: Adult  
First Place: Debra Slade,  
Ford County SWCD

K-1  
First Place:  
Domminick Alber,  
Stephenson County SWCD





## Legislative Corner - Mike Hoffmann

### Gaming Legislation

The saga continues. We have been involved in meetings on the gaming bill ever since the General Assembly adjourned the veto session in December. **Rep. Lou Lang** (D-Cook Co), **Sen. Terry Link** (D-Lake Co.), and Governor Quinn's legislative director, **former Rep. Gary Hannig** have brought all interested parties – casinos, racetracks, horsemen, the City of Chicago – together in an attempt to come together on an agreed bill. Whether the groups can agree only time will tell; so far there is not much movement: the tracks want slot machines to support their purses, the casinos believe that will damage their business; and the Governor agrees with the casinos that there should be no slots at racetracks. However, for the first time the groups are talking and beginning to put their cards on the table.

Let's review the bill briefly. SB 1849 contained \$46 million for Agriculture-related programs, including \$12.5 million for SWCDs. We believe the funding is as secure as it can be legislatively. Remember, the bill says that the fund can be use "solely" for grants to SWCDs and must supplement other funding. Of course, state funds must be appropriated; otherwise there would be no accountability. But they will be appropriated if our legislative supporters stick with us. (At the end of this write-up is a full list of the Ag funding that was in SB 1849.)

What should we be doing? I would suggest the following:

- We need to keep the heat on legislators and stay in contact with them.
- Remind them that there is \$46 million in **SB 1849** for agriculture, including \$12.5 million for soil and water conservation districts. There is no other conceivable way that agricultural programs will ever find that kind of money. And this budget year does not look to be pretty.
- When legislators tell us that we will never see the money, we need to stand up them (politely, of course) and tell them the money will come if they stick with us. If downstate legislators stick together like they did on the gaming bill last spring – and like they have on downstate transit and other budget issues in the past – then the funding will come.

This is a terrific opportunity for the agriculture community to benefit and keep these programs alive. **It is my understanding that all agree that the Ag funding that was in SB 744 (which passed last spring, but was never sent to the Governor) and SB 1849 (which failed in the House in November) should be part of the bill.**

### 2012 Session/Fiscal Year 2013 budget

Legislative dates to remember:

- January 31 - the General Assembly begins the 2012 legislative session
- February 10 & 16 – last days to introduce bills in the Senate and House, respectively
- February 22 – Governor Quinn unveils his FY 2013 budget
- May 31 – the General Assembly adjournment deadline

**REMBER: KEEP YOUR STATE LEGISLATORS EDUCATED ON SWCD ACTIVITIES**

### **Downstate Budget Initiatives in SB 1849** (House Amendment #2, November 7, 2011)

Transfer to the Partners for Conservation Fund for Soil and Water Conservation Program	\$12.5m
State Fairgrounds Infrastructure Improvement Fund	\$10.0m
County Fairs funding	\$6.0m
Cooperative Extension: match 100% of local funds	\$5.0m
Future of Agriculture Fund (for county fairs, FFA, extension)	\$5.0m
Transfers to Parks and Conservation Fund for operations and grants	\$3.0m
IL Historical Sites Fund	\$3.0m
IL Forestry Fund	<u>\$1.5m</u>
Total	\$46.0m





## *Illinois Envirothon*

### *2012 Current Issue Information Available*

The 2012 Current Issue - "**Nonpoint Source Pollution/Low Impact Development**" study packet is posted on the AISWCD web site. Please access the information and distribute it to teachers in your district/Land Use Council who are interested in participating in the Envirothon.

Special thanks to the staff at the Illinois Environmental Protection Agency for their assistance in developing this material.

Date: May 10 & 11

Location: Allerton Park, Monticello, IL

Study Packet Information: [www.aiswcd.org/programs/envirothon.htm](http://www.aiswcd.org/programs/envirothon.htm)



## **2012 NACD Annual Meeting**

Cosmopolitan Hotel • January 29 - February 1, 2012 • Las Vegas, NV

Based on theme, "Conservation: We're All In!" the 66th Annual Meeting will showcase a variety of partners in conservation and projects on the ground, demonstrating that we can do more for conservation when we all work together.

The conference will offer a wide range of informative sessions and networking opportunities, in addition to a Conservation Expo showcasing the latest products and technologies in conservation from partners across the country.



Illinois has been invited to provide part of a session on the Illinois Urban Manual. This is a similar presentation that was given last year at the NACD Annual Meeting. It was received so well that we have been asked to repeat the session. Neil Pellmann, North Cook SWCD, RC, will be making the presentation. Congratulations Neil!

*Tuesday, January 31*

*3:00 - 4:30 p.m.*

**Stormwater Management, Urban Conservation and Source Water Protection** As districts shift from rural to urban, it's important to keep up with the times and practices. Hear how conservation districts across the country are developing creative ways to manage stormwater issues. Also learn more about the Source Water Collaborative and how to get involved!

## ***NACD PHOTO AND POSTER CONTEST WINNERS***

Illinois also had an Honorable Mention in the photo contest and an Honorable Mention in the poster contest. Congratulations to Mary Kate Harrod and Patrick Price for their entries!

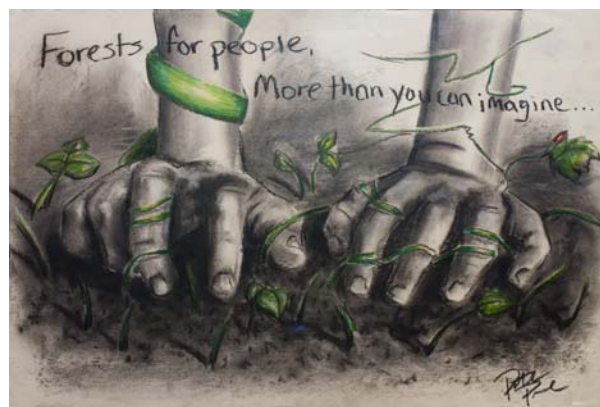


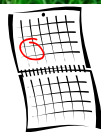
Close up Conservation:  
Youth

Honorable Mention:  
Mary Kate Harrod,  
DeKalb County SWCD

10-12

Honorable Mention:  
Patrick Price,  
DeKalb County SWCD





## MARK YOUR CALENDAR!

- Abraham Lincoln's Birthday - February 12 - Office Closed Monday, February 13
- Valentines Day - February 14
- President's Day - February 20, Office Closed
- George Washington's Birthday - February 22



### 2012 QUARTERLY BOARD MEETING DATES

- March 2012 Executive Committee Meeting - March 6, Teleconference 8:00 am
- March 2012 Quarterly Board & FAC Meeting - March 13th, Northfield Inn - Springfield, IL
- June 2012 Quarterly Board Meeting - June 11th/12th, Northfield Inn - Springfield, IL
- September 2012 Quarterly Board Meeting - September 11th, Teleconference 8:00 am (Only if Needed)
- December 2012 Quarterly Board Meeting - December 10th/11th, Northfield Inn - Springfield, IL

### January is:

- National Blood Donor Month
- National Braille Literacy Month
- Hot Tea Month
- National Oatmeal Month
- National Soup Month

### January dates of note

- January 21 - National Hugging Day
- January 24 - Complement Day
- January 29 - National Corn Chip Day



### February is:

- Black History Month
- Great American Pie Month
- National Cherry Month
- National Grapefruit Month
- American Heart Month

### February dates of note

- February 1 - National Freedom Day, (Illinois is the first state to ratify the 13th Amendment to the US Constitution, 1865)
- February 2 - Groundhog Day
- February 5 - Super Bowl Sunday
- February 8 - Boy Scout Day (Scouting's Birthday)
- February 17 - Random Acts of Kindness Day
- February 19 - National Chocolate Mint Day
- February 28 - University of Illinois (Illinois Industrial University) established 1867
- February 29 - Leap Day



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

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