



# CONSERVATION CATCHALL

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## *AISWCD Staff:*

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**Kelly Thompson,**  
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## **NO-TILL FARMING HELPS CAPTURE SNOW AND SOIL WATER**

Of course we as conservationists already know what the research explained in this article proves but there are still a lot of folks who just can't quite wean themselves from their tillage equipment. In most parts of the state, it really showed where a producer has been using no-till for some time. Those fields typically yielded quite a bit better than the field where tillage practices had been used. While there is a need for light tillage on occasion to repair damages or to incorporate surface applied materials into the soil, most of the time, no-till can be done with better management for improved future crops as the result.



Wheat stubble left standing by no-till management helps generate a smoother snow cover, which boosts dryland crop productivity in the summer, according to new ARS research. (Credit: Photo courtesy of Exactrix™ Global Systems)

A smooth blanket of snow in the winter can help boost dryland crop productivity in the summer, and no-till management is one way to ensure that blanket coverage, according to U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) research.

Agricultural Research Service (ARS) soil scientist David Huggins conducted studies to determine how standing crop residues affect snow accumulation and soil water levels across entire fields. ARS is USDA's chief intramural scientific research agency, and this work supports the USDA priority of responding to climate change.

Huggins, who works at the ARS Land Management and Water Conservation Research Unit in Pullman, Wash., carried out this investigation on two neighboring farms. Both farms have the hilly topography typical of the Palouse region in eastern Washington. But much of one farm has been under continuous no-till management since 1999, while the fields on the other farm were conventionally tilled.

For two years, snow depths, density and soil water storage were measured manually at hundreds of points across the fields on both farms. Residue height at data collection points was also measured on the no-till fields.

Huggins found that standing wheat residue on the no-till farm significantly increased

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## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE - LONNIE WILSON

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### PROTECTING ECOSYSTEMS BRINGS BENEFITS TO SOCIETY

Ecosystems are essential to our well-being and prosperity as they provide us with food, clean air and fresh water. Ecosystems also represent an exceptional source of outdoor recreation opportunities. The functions performed by ecosystems that increase our well-being are called ecosystem services. The PEER Research on EcoSystem Services (PRESS) initiative describes how different EU policies can help to increase the services and benefits provided by ecosystems, and calls for the inclusion of the ecosystem services approach into European policy measures affecting the use or state of natural resources.

The results of this research initiative were presented in Brussels on 13 September to an international panel of experts which helps DG Environment of the European Commission with the implementation of the EU Biodiversity Strategy to 2020. The report prepared to describe these results outlines a strategy which aims to promote a better understanding of how ecosystems and biodiversity provide essential benefits to our society. Launched in 2010, the PRESS initiative demonstrated how European researchers, including social scientists, economists, and ecologists, can combine their expertise to map and assess the natural, social and economic values of ecosystem services.

The first phase of the study, which was concluded in September 2011 with the publication of a first PRESS report, demonstrated methodologies to map the role of ecosystems as providers of clean water and recreation and investigated how ecosystem services can be mainstreamed into agriculture, fisheries or forestry policies. The second and final phase of the study consisted of case studies carried out on pollination, recreation and water purification to explore how assessment methods to measure and map ecosystem services might be developed at multiple spatial scales.

A spatial assessment of ecosystem services in Europe: Methods, case studies and policy analysis -- phase 2. Synthesis report is intended to convey four main policy messages: The capacity of wetlands, rivers, streams and lakes to remove or immobilize pollutants is essential to the provision of clean water for multiple uses and decreases costs of wastewater treatment based on technological solutions only. New proposals of the European Commission to green the Common Agricultural Policy and to restore wetland ecosystems are predicted to have positive effects on water purification services, thereby improving water quality and increasing the economic benefits to society.

Outdoor recreation services are one of the most immediate perceived benefits of ecosystems to people. The PRESS study presents evidence of high visitation rates to natural areas, in particular forests. Surveys show that citizens are willing to pay for continued access to forest ecosystems for recreation purposes. On a national scale, the value of forests for recreation may be in a range of billions of Euros. This value increases when we consider the avoided cost for health care due to the restorative and stress reduction capacity of recreational activities. Green urban areas such as city parks also have high recreational potential. The PRESS study report describes spatial methods to identify where investments in green urban areas reach their highest potential.

Insects such as bees and bumblebees are key actors in providing pollination services to maintain Europe's crop production, in particular of fruit and vegetables. High resolution data of forests and riparian areas were used to map the ecosystems in which bees and bumblebees build nests and find nectar-carrying flowers. Such information is important to convince farmers to help manage and protect these habitats as they increase their agricultural output.

The mapping, assessment and valuation of ecosystem services are necessary but not sufficient steps in achieving the ecosystem services targets of the EU Biodiversity Strategy. We need to develop a thorough understanding of how we determine the levels of the various ecosystem services and the impacts of current policies on ecosystems.

Sound and cost-effective management of ecosystems should also take into account those EU policies that directly and indirectly influence ecosystems and the services they provide, e.g. policies designed to bring about social and economic changes, such as those on international trade, agriculture, land use, and nature conservation.

Including the ecosystem services concept in all social and economic policies would allow for a systematic review of their impacts on services, beyond conventional environmental assessments. The PRESS initiative recommends that new policies should be flexible in design and continuously monitored in order to be able to react and adapt to new circumstances, and that baseline levels and goals should be quantified in order to be able to measure progress. It calls for the broad collaboration of stakeholders at all levels, including researchers, policy makers, and citizens.

Source: *ScienceDaily* (Sep. 17, 2012)

Editor's Note: AISWCD President Lonnie Wilson is busy with the fall harvest. The *President's Message* will return for the November issue.





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

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Autumn has arrived and with it some relief from the hot dry weather this past spring and summer. Unfortunately the legacy of summer's drought lingers. I have heard reports of harvested corn yielding as little as 1.5 bushels / acre to as high as 230 bushels per acre; the latter being in one of the few small areas of the state that had rain when it was needed. The high yield is also a rare exception to the vast majority of reported yields throughout the state. I have heard little about soybean yields thus far but expect they will be down quite a bit from past years. The remnants of Hurricane Isaac came at a time when the rains were able to help bean yields in parts of the state but it remains to be seen just how much help the storm provided. All-in-all, it has not been a good year for farmers from north to south and from east to west.

Though there is no reason to celebrate, Illinois has not fared any worse (or any better) than most of the rest of the nation. The 2012 Drought was widespread and damaged crops throughout most of the country. I had the chance to compare notes with several of my counterparts at a recent conference for State Conservation District Association Executive Directors in Maine. There were representatives from across the nation in attendance and all of them shared information of how the Drought had affected agriculture in their respective states. For the most part, the western states are having problems finding enough feed for their livestock operations, southern states reported that their crops, livestock and forests were significantly affected. Central states reported that crops were failing and eastern states were concerned about having enough feed to carry their livestock over the winter. I would imagine we will see the effects of the drought in our grocery stores for some time to come.

The Conference provided a great opportunity to share information about what soil and water conservation districts in each of our states were doing to help address local issues.

Lynn Hoot, Executive Director for Maryland, told us about the regulations imposed by USEPA in the Chesapeake Bay states and how they were affecting Maryland's twenty-four Soil Conservation Districts. Maryland's Conservation Districts are more important to the agricultural sector in Maryland than they have ever been, primarily because of the regulations. The CDs assist farmers with nutrient management plans, cover crop establishment and with installing livestock waste facilities. The regulations require that any agricultural operation or municipality, that generates manure or sewage waste, even if treated, must have sufficient storage to last the entire winter. The regulations also prohibit fall application of fertilizer or chemicals on agricultural land. Lynn told us the regulations are so onerous and the fines so steep that a growing number of agricultural producers are selling out and either retiring or moving outside the Chesapeake Bay watershed.

I fear that Illinois and the other Central US crop producing states may face similar regulations if we do not reduce nutrient contributions to our rivers, lakes and ultimately to the Gulf of Mexico. While it may be a good thing for the Conservation Districts in Maryland to be sought after for assistance, it is another thing altogether to have to go to the expense of creating over winter storage facilities and to find sufficient resources to allow for all agricultural fertilization to be applied in the spring. Maryland's agricultural producers will also have to apply 540,000 acres of conservation practices by December 2013. Let's hope we can avoid those kinds of regulatory programs here in Illinois.

Among other topics that our group discussed were funding for districts and survival of the district model.

In Maine, the sixteen soil and water conservation districts each receive \$17,500 from the state and an additional amount from municipal government, barely enough to sustain one employee. The Cumberland SWCD, which contains the City of Portland where we were meeting, has an



Executive Directors touring one of the MS4 water quality improvement projects in Portland, ME

agreement with the city to help with MS4 regulations. The SWCD has been able to generate more than \$2.4 million in annual revenues because of that agreement and now has nine employees.

In Ohio, the state's new Governor ordered a study to determine which local governments could be consolidated or eliminated. The soil and water conservation districts proved beyond doubt that they are a true asset, being able to do needed work at a cost much lower than what could be done by any other unit of government – state or local. The study didn't result in any more money from the state but it did remove the SWCDs from the Governor's elimination crosshairs.

I hope when the time comes, and it will soon enough (when the local governmental unit consolidation study is done), that Illinois' SWCDs will be able to prove that they too can do the job more effectively and efficiently than any other unit of government. That determination will be entirely up to you, the SWCDs, and what you do with the resources provided. Let's make sure that everyone knows what we do!

*Rich*



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

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### September Activities

#### 319 PARTNERS FOR CONSERVATION GRANT:

- Have contacted several LUC areas to place employees
- Received Grant Agreement from IEPA; Rich signed; returned and everything is a go
- Sent e-mails to 17 potential employees to setup interview times
- Completed interview questions and format
- Completed employee hire packets which includes personnel policy, insurance forms, and tax documents
- Sent interview dates and times with candidates names to IDNR, IEPA, and Rich

#### OTHER DUTIES:

- Phone calls, mail and e-mail correspondence
- Compiled expense reports for Credit Cards
- Compiled Timesheets
- Maintain Patio Paver and Rain Barrel Database
- 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
- Completed Monthly Office Supply Inventory and placed order
- Maintaining Earth Stewardship Bank Account
- Maintaining IL Envirothon Bank Account; redid Income & Expense Statement
- Working with IT to confirm ability to use Swizznet
- Met with 2 Web design companies regarding updating our website
- Completed all Annual Meeting Thank you Notes, billings invoices, and award invoices
- Updating Annual Meeting Award Applications for 2013 to have ready for website access
- Took meeting minutes for September Executive Committee meeting; recorded minutes and sent out draft copy to il.all; sent dot point high lights to AISWCD Board Members
- Compiling auditor bid requests for December QB meeting
- Setting up appointment times for part-time employee interviews; completing employment packet information for new hire

- Fall cleaning office; preparing office rooms for new staff

#### IL Envirothon:

- Participated in Envirothon Taskforce Teleconference call regarding 2013 IL Envirothon
- Applied to Envirothon account payments made to Grundy County regarding sponsorship and IL Envirothon meal reimbursement
- Updated database and account information to prepare for new contract agreement and Co-ordinators (Grundy County) monthly payments for services

#### ACCOUNTING/OFFICE ADMIN:

- Completed Payroll and Payroll Taxes for September
- Reconciled all bank accounts for August
- Completed bookwork for All AISWCD & Insurance Accts
- 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 IL Secretary of State for September.

#### LOOKING AHEAD:

- Implementation of 319 Partners for Conservation Grant
- Training new part-time employee
- Updating Website
- December QB Meeting/Christmas Party

**REMEMBER:** Sorrow looks back, worry looks around, but faith looks up!!

**TO ACT:** Waste not fresh tears over old worries.

**HAVE A SAFE AND PRODUCTIVE HARVEST SEASON!!!!**

*Sherry*



## PROGRAM COORDINATOR'S PAGE - KELLY THOMPSON

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This month I'd like to focus on the Post Development Stormwater Runoff Standards (PDSWRS) Work Group. I'm sure many of you have seen the acronym PDSWRS a time or two. I'd like to give you a bit of background information that includes the following:

How was the Work Group Formed?

Why was the Work Group Formed?

Why develop Performance Standards?

Who are the participating Work Group members?

How can I become involved?

### How was the Work Group formed?

The PDSWRS Work Group was formed through the 319 Grant that AISWCD has with IEPA, better known as the IUM Grant. Stakeholders were asked to participate in an effort to develop one to four stormwater performance standards for the state of Illinois and separate associated standards for Department of Transportation or Illinois Toll Authority, if required by the Illinois EPA.

### Why was the Work Group formed?

The performance standards will be associated with Illinois EPA's National Pollution Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permit and Construction permit. The idea is that when these permits come up for renewal and revision in 2013 the performance standards will be inserted as minimum requirements for both permits.

### Why develop Performance Standards?

For the purpose of this effort, the stormwater performance standards are being used as a surrogate for water quality improvement through management of stormwater. As stormwater is retained, evaporated or infiltrated it holds contaminants back to settle out and reduce flashiness of receiving water bodies resulting in less soil erosion and improved water quality. Performance standards for individual best management practices (BMPs) or pollutants will not be included as a discussion topic for this Work Group.

### Who are the participating Work Group members?

The Work Group was deliberately comprised of a balanced representation of individuals from a wide-array of entities. Over twenty entities were invited to participate in this year-long effort; which began in March 2012 and will conclude March 2013. The selection of entities was based primarily on their expertise and how likely their constituents would be impacted by potential new regulations. The following organizations were extended an opportunity to participate:

|   |   |
|---|---|
| <b>Government Organizations</b><br>Illinois Environmental Protection Agency<br>U S Environmental Protection Agency<br>Illinois Department of Transportation<br>U S Army Corps of Engineers  | <b>Consulting Firms</b><br>Geosytec<br>American Council of Engineering Companies – IL<br>(represented by Crawford, Murphy & Tilly)  |
| <b>Environmental Policy</b><br>Sierra Club – Illinois Chapter<br>Prairie Rivers Network<br>Metropolitan Planning Council<br>Local Environmental Non Profit Organizations<br>Openlands<br>Center for Neighborhood Technology<br>Association of Illinois Soil & Water Conservation<br>Districts | <b>User Community</b><br>Home Builders Association of Illinois<br>Illinois Association of Realtors<br>City of Aurora<br>City of Peoria - Engineering Division<br>Madison County Stormwater Office<br>Lake County Stormwater Commission<br>Metropolitan Water Reclamation District of Chicago<br>Illinois Municipal League |

If you are interested in the participating groups, go to the web link listed at the bottom of the article and select MEMBERS from the left side of the page. Click on the member you are most interested in and the link will connect you to the group's website. \*\*\*Please note that not all 20 groups asked to participate have been active with the Work Group's efforts in creating the draft stormwater performance standard recommendations document.

### How can I become involved?

The Work Group is holding two public meetings in October to inform the user community and others who will possibly be effected by the draft performance standard recommendations developed by the Work Group, if the recommendations are considered and adopted into law by Illinois EPA.

### Review PDSWRS Work Group Website

The Work Group has a website that contains information on past meeting agendas and minutes, group research, presentations and team information which depicts how the draft performance standard recommendations have been developed over the past several months.

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## ISWCDEA CORNER - *KARA DOWNIN, ISWCDEA RC VICE CO-CHAIR AND REGION ONE REPRESENTATIVE*

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

The October 19<sup>th</sup> deadline is fast approaching for Regional Employee Association elections. Regions 2 and 4 are in need of replacing members who have served their full terms. Regions 3 and 5 also have vacancies that need filled. To repeat what I covered last month, many hands make light work. Nothing shows that better than the Winter Training duties that the entire board shares. If you'd like to see Debi Slade's color-coded spreadsheet, just ask! 😊 There's a lot to be said for achieving teamwork. If you are in these regions, please consider joining.

Planning for Winter Training 2012 is in full effect! Building “-ships” is the theme and we are excited to be offering several quality sessions for Illinois' SWCD employees that stemmed from suggestions across the state. Thank you for all of your input to your EA Reps and feedback from last year! Registration forms were recently sent via email and an agenda will be sent out soon.

Some session highlights include;

- Stress Management, back by popular demand
- Cross training job duties
- Guiding our leader“ship”

Chair massages in Hospitality Room!

We hope to see you there this December 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup>!



## ILLINOIS CHAPTER - IAAP - *DEBBIE HOLSAPPLE, PRESIDENT*

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

The IL SWCD IAAP Chapter would like to thank everyone for their support of our “Partners for Conservation” apparel fundraiser. The funds from this project will be used to provide speakers at our meetings and annual training events. Your support was greatly appreciated and we hope you proudly wear the apparel to promote our wonderful conservation partnerships!

Many of us probably can remember the old commercial touting, “Membership has its Advantages.” This saying holds so true for the IL SWCD Chapter of International Association of Administrative Professionals. Membership truly does have benefits for the employee. Districts who support the career development of their administrative professionals will find membership in IAAP provides them with many benefits as well.

Progressive soil and water conservation districts realize they need to support staff development regardless of the title. Well-trained employees who are given the opportunity to expand their skill sets will return that investment with increased productivity and efficiency. We encourage all districts and administrative professionals to consider membership in the IL SWCD Chapter especially during the 70<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the International Association of Administrative Professionals. New members can join for a special rate of \$70 with a \$15 registration fee until December 2012. We really hope you will take advantage of this opportunity and give us a try!

And we encourage you to try and join us for our next meeting on October 17<sup>th</sup>. The meeting will be a conference call/webinar meeting so no travel will be involved. Links to the webinar and the agenda will be posted soon on our webpage at <http://iaap-swcd.tripod.com>. We'll look forward to “seeing” you at the meeting!





## Natural Area Guardians - Debra Carey

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### **BUTTONBUSH - A HOME FOR THE PROMETHEA MOTH**

Suspended cocoons of the Prometheus moth sway gently in the autumn breezes. And what are they suspended from? If you are hiking in a high quality wetland, the cocoons are most likely attached to the slender branches of buttonbush whose proper name is *Cephalanthus occidentalis*.

Buttonbush is a large shrub that grows in wetlands, along stream margins and in swamps. This shrub does not normally grow in standing water but can survive in shallow flooded places by putting out adventitious roots on its stems. This shrub also tolerates varying pH levels so may be found growing in numerous soil types. Its shiny whorled leaves are somewhat leathery and its closely packed flower heads resemble little balls – thus one of its many common names. You may have grown up calling this shrub by the following names: pond dogwood; little snowball; knuckle brush; honey balls; crane-willow; globe-flower; the list is about endless of common names which means it's always a good idea to know the correct scientific name to limit confusion.

The flowers are highly fragrant and filled with nectar. In late summer the caterpillar of the Prometheus moth feeds heavily on buttonbush foliage and the resulting cocoons add interest to our wetlands travels.

The spherical seed heads turn brown this time of year and are rather firmly attached to the shrub. This is a boon for wildlife since this food source remains visible and accessible throughout late fall and winter when food stores may be meager. Ducks are prime candidates for foraging on fallen seed heads, but bitterns and rails and even quail eat the seeds. Beavers and muskrats and deer nibble the stems and foliage.

Since buttonbush is a wetland plant, the lightweight seed heads often are found floating on the surface of a stream or marsh. Henry David Thoreau once commented on a "mass transportation" of buttonbush on the Sudbury River in 1859.

Native Americans utilized the medicinal qualities of buttonbush in various ways – the tannic properties provided an ingredient for astringents and washes; tea brewed from buttonbush claimed to relieve coughs and kidney stones. But beware, the plant contains glucosides (cephalathin and cephalin) that can cause serious illness and have been known to poison livestock that consume buttonbush.

If you don't own a copy of the excellent Field Guide to the SilkMoths of Illinois by the late John Bouseman and James Sternburg, please contact the Illinois Natural History Survey and purchase this informative and colorful book. The life history of the Prometheus moth is documented in detail. This large - 3 ¾ inch wingspan – moth is colorful with both males and females vividly marked. Males are diurnal, flying on the trails of pheromone released by the females who do not fly during daylight hours. Couples stay together until evening when the female leaves to begin laying eggs. Males are inactive at night.

The Prometheus cocoon is double-walled and is enclosed within a rolled leaf. But silk spun by the larva along the leaf stem and nearby twig prevents the cocoon from falling to the ground when the bush sheds its leaves. Thus you can easily see cocoons suspended in buttonbush shrubs.

And other insects utilize buttonbush; Smeared dagger moths (who thinks of these names!) feed on buttonbush foliage as caterpillars. The larvae of the gall gnat invade the stems and the result is a swollen knob. And many pollinators visit the sweet and fragrant flowers. Buttonbush, like many of our native plants, is a bountiful host to many species of wildlife.

As you ponder the uneven vees of flying fowl overhead, take time to search for cocoons on buttonbush during your autumn wetland walk.



## **RESEARCHERS USE 'BANKER PLANTS' TO HELP BATTLE WHITEFLY PESTS**

A U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) scientist is showing growers how to combat whiteflies and other crop pests by using plants as storehouses for predatory insects that can migrate to cash crops and feed on the pests attacking those crops.

Cindy L. McKenzie, an entomologist in the Agricultural Research Service (ARS) Subtropical Insects Research Unit at Fort Pierce, Fla., has done extensive work showing how papaya, corn and ornamental peppers can serve as "banker plants" for a range of insect parasitoids and predators. ARS is USDA's principal intramural scientific research agency, and this research supports the USDA priority of promoting international food security.

Banker plants are considered environmentally friendly because they reduce insecticide use and offer a low-cost, self-perpetuating alternative. The predators eat what they find on the banker plants and then disperse to find targeted pests on cash crops. Before they leave the banker plants, most of the predators will lay eggs on them, which extends the effect into subsequent generations. Lower pesticide use also means pests like spider mites, thrips, and whiteflies are less likely to develop resistance to the pesticides.

Using banker plants is a balancing act. Researchers must select not only the insect predators themselves, but also alternative prey that will keep the predators fed, but won't damage the cash crops. They also need banker plants and predators that will not host or spread diseases to the cash crops.

In a study designed for Florida's greenhouse poinsettia operations, McKenzie worked with entomologist Lance S. Osborne and postdoctoral researcher Yingfang Xiao, both at the University of Florida Mid-Florida Research and Education Center in Apopka. They chose papaya (*Carica papaya*) for their banker plant, and the tiny non-stinging wasp *Encarsia sophia* as the predator. The larvae of *E. sophia* feed on the silverleaf whitefly (*Bemisia tabaci*), the targeted pest. *E. sophia* is native to Florida and poses no threat to the state's habitats.

In one set of experiments, they forced the wasps to eat the targeted silverleaf whitefly pest to make sure the wasps would control it. In another, they gave the wasps a choice between the papaya whitefly they supplied as a food source and the targeted silverleaf whitefly they want to eradicate. The results, published in *Biological Control*, show that *E. sophia* has an appetite for both the alternative food source and the silverleaf whitefly, and that it effectively wipes out any silverleaf whiteflies on crops near the banker plants. The system is now being tested in commercial greenhouses.

The researchers have also shown that corn can serve as a banker plant for a gall midge that controls the two-spotted spider mite, and they are studying whether ornamental peppers can bank a predatory mite, *Amblyseius swirskii*, which is effective at controlling whiteflies and thrips. Results so far are extremely promising, and the concept is catching on among growers.

The above story is reprinted from materials provided by United States Department of Agriculture - Research, Education and Economics. The original article was written by Dennis O'Brien.





## ***NO-TILL FARMING HELPS CAPTURE SNOW AND SOIL WATER***

*Continued from front page*

the amount and uniformity of snow cover across the entire field. Snow depths on the no-till field ranged from 4 to 39 inches, with an average depth of 11 inches, while snow depths on the conventionally tilled field ranged from 0 to 56 inches, with an average depth of 8.5 inches.

The snow distribution pattern on the no-till farm made soil water distribution more uniform and increased soil water recharge rates there. The more uniform snow distribution under no-till was particularly apparent for ridge tops and steep south-facing slopes where there was typically 4 to 8 inches more snow than on conventionally tilled fields.

Huggins calculated that the greater storage of soil water in no-till systems could increase winter wheat yield potential by 13 bushels per acre on ridge tops, six bushels per acre on south facing slopes, and three bushels per acre in valleys. As a result, regional farmers could increase their winter wheat profits by an average of \$30 per acre and as much as \$54 per ridge-top acre.

Producers affected by the 2012 drought might also benefit from using no-till to increase the amount and uniformity of snow cover on their fields. This would increase soil water recharge rates and soil moisture storage, which would facilitate the return of drought-stricken fields to their former productivity.

The above story is reprinted from materials provided by United States Department of Agriculture - Research, Education and Economics. The original article was written by Ann Perry.

*Source: ScienceDaily (Aug. 30, 2012)*

## ***PROGRAM COORDINATOR'S PAGE***

*Continued from page 5*

### **Review Draft Performance Standard Recommendations**

Familiarize yourself and your constituents with the draft performance standard recommendations found on the PDSWRS Work Group website  
[http://aiswcd.org/PDSWRS\\_WorkGroup/PDSWRS\\_Table\\_Contents/Performance\\_Standards.html](http://aiswcd.org/PDSWRS_WorkGroup/PDSWRS_Table_Contents/Performance_Standards.html)

### **Choose a Public Meeting to attend**

**Thursday, October 18** from 1:00 pm until 4:00 pm in the Sangamo Room, Illinois Environmental Protection Agency, 1021 N. Grand Ave., Springfield, IL 62794

Or

**Tuesday, October 23** from 1:00 pm until 4:00 pm at North Island Center, Copley Theater, 8 East Galena Blvd., Aurora, IL 60506

The public meetings' format will include a presentation by Illinois EPA Representatives and several Work Group members; Q & A open forum; and Open House which allows the public to ask Work Group members' detailed questions.

### **Submit Comments**

If you cannot attend the public meetings or if you plan to attend and would still like the opportunity to comment, fill-out the comment form and submit to AISWCD by November 23, 2012. Click on the link below to find the comment document and instructions on how to submit comments to AISWCD.

[http://aiswcd.org/PDSWRS\\_WorkGroup/PDSWRS\\_Table\\_Contents/Public\\_Review.html](http://aiswcd.org/PDSWRS_WorkGroup/PDSWRS_Table_Contents/Public_Review.html)

Do you have questions or comments about the information above?

Contact:

Kelly Thompson, Program Coordinator

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

(217) 744-3414

PDSWRS Work Group Webpage: [http://aiswcd.org/Programs/PDSWRS\\_WorkGroup.html](http://aiswcd.org/Programs/PDSWRS_WorkGroup.html)

I hope to see you at the Public Meetings in October!



## MARK YOUR CALENDAR!

- **Columbus Day** - Monday October 8, 2012 - Office Closed
- **General Election Day** - Tuesday November 6 - State Holiday, Office Closed
- **Veteran's Day** - Monday November 12 - Office Closed
- **Rural Landscapes Workshop** - November 13 - 14, The Chateau Hotel and Conference Center, Bloomington, IL

### 2012 QUARTERLY BOARD MEETING DATES

- **December 2012 Quarterly Board Meeting** - December 10th/11th - Christmas Party, Northfield Inn - Springfield, IL

### september is:

- Hispanic Heritage Month
- National Courtesy Month
- Honey Month
- Self Improvement Month
- Better Breakfast Month

### september dates of note:

- Treaty of Chicago - last of Indian treaties ceding land to Illinois - September 26, 1833
- Native American Day - 28th
- National Mud Pack Day - 30th

### october is:

- Breast Cancer Awareness Month
- Cookie Month
- Domestic Violence Awareness Month
- Eat Country Ham Month
- National Pizza Month
- National Popcorn Popping Month

### october dates of note:

- World Vegetarian Day - 1st
- Do Something Nice Day - 5th
- World Smile Day - 7th
- Fire Prevention Day - 9th
- National Angel Food Cake Day - 10th
- Old Farmer's Day - 12th
- National Dessert Day - take an extra helping, or two - 14th
- Bosses Day - 16th
- Wear Something Gaudy Day - 17th
- Sweetest Day Third Saturday of month - 20th
- National Nut Day - 22nd
- United Nations Day - 24th
- Make a Difference Day- fourth Saturday of the month, an opportunity for neighbors to help neighbors. - 27th
- Navy Day - 27th
- National Candy Corn Day - 30th
- Halloween - 31st

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

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