

**Association of Illinois Soil and Water Conservation Districts
Education Focus Committee
Tuesday, March 12, 2013
Northfield Inn Conference Center – Springfield, IL**

Members Present

Jerry Snodgrass, FAC Chair
Don Beisiegel
Terry Bogner, Envirothon Chair
Gerard Fabrizio
Barb Klinger
Lee Bunting

Advisors Present

Dave Dornbusch, NRCS
Marty McManus, IDoA
Valerie Keener, IDNR
Debbie Ruff, EC
Rich Nichols, AISWCD
Tom Beyers, AISWCD Officer

#1 – Call to Order - Chairman Jerry Snodgrass called the meeting to order at 9:00am on March 12, 2013.

#2 – Roll Call – All in attendance introduced themselves and their affiliation.

#3 – Approve Agenda – A motion was made by Don Beisiegel, with second by Barb Klinger to approve the agenda as written. MCVV.

#4- Approve Minutes – Motion by Terry Bogner. Second by Don Beisiegel. MCVV.

#5 – IDNR Report - Valerie Keener reported the following items:

- \$19,000 has been awarded in Schoolyard Habitat Grants.
- Biodiversity Field Trip grants were awarded last week. This year, there were 95 grants awarded in the amount of over \$77,000. Valerie believes that this program will continue to see more applicants with the reduction in school transportation budgets.
- The AISWCD Teacher of the Year information was sent out on the IDNR list-serve on February 20, 2013. Information from this list-serve is picked up by other groups and organizations. Valerie will continue to promote this contest.

#6 – IDOA Report - Marty McManus reported the following items:

- Director Training for Region 1 and Region 2 will be March 22 in Princeton. Training for the Open Meetings Act will be provided. Directors from other regions are welcome to attend.
- Cover Crop Initiative – 15 sites have been selected to have signs along major roadways.
- Elliot Legacy and Randy Grove continue to split the Regional Representative duties for Region 5. There is currently a hiring freeze, so there is no timetable for a replacement.

#7 – NRCS Report – Dave Dornbusch cited the following:

- Soil Health is the primary media promotion for the Public Affairs division.
- New nutrient management standards are expected to come out this spring.

#8 - Old Business

Envirothon Task Force – Terry Bogner provided highlights from the report that was submitted by the IL. Envirothon Coordinators. Dates to remember:

- April 10 – Last day that a LUC can hold a competition
- April 12 – Registration deadline
- May 1 & 2 – IL. Envirothon
- August 4-9 – North America Envirothon at Montana State University
- One major concern is the funding for future North American Envirothons. Canon has been the major sponsor and is reducing their sponsorship by at least half this year. There are no promises for funding beyond this year. Lee Bunting gave a report on what actions are being taken at the national level to find new funding. Tom Byers discussed some of the possible actions that were discussed at the North Central Region meeting. One thought was to have each student who participates in the North American Envirothon at the local level pay a \$1 entry fee which will be used for the North American Envirothon. If every student were to do so, approximately \$500,000 could be raised annually.

- A motion was made by Gerard Fabrizius, with a second by Terry Bogner to state that Illinois supports the \$1 per student entry fee to help support the North American Envirothon. MCVV.
- Teacher of the Year – This was discussed as part of Valerie Keener's report. In addition, a mailing from the AISWCD was sent to all SWCD chairs to encourage more participation in this contest. An e-notice was also sent out to all on the Il.all-subscribe@aiswcd.org list serve.
- The discussion about the list-serve followed. It was brought up that very few Directors are currently subscribed.
- A motion was made by Lee Bunting, with a second by Tom Byers to "Direct the AISWCD to contact all SWCD Chairs to secure e-mail addresses for the purpose of keeping Directors and Boards informed of AISWCD activities and issues. MCVV.

#9 - New Business

- Envirothon Sponsorships – Discussed as part of Old Business
- McKibben Scholarship Review Committee – No review committee was appointed. The winner will be decided at the June Quarterly Board meeting. If more than 5 applications are received by the AISWCD, the committee requested that they be sent to all committee members prior to the June meeting.
- 2013 AISWCD Annual Meeting Photo and Poster Contest – No action was taken as this project is done by the AISWCD Auxiliary.
- 2013 Annual Meeting Director Training Session – Lee Bunting and Jerry Snodgrass will be conducting sessions during the Annual Meeting.

#12 - Adjournment - A motion to adjourn was made by Barb Klinger; second by Don Beisiegel; MCVV.
Meeting adjourned at 9:55 p.m.

Meeting Minutes taken by: Debbie Ruff, AC Livingston County SWCD