

Soil & Water Conservation Districts (SWCDs)

There are 97 soil and water conservation districts making a difference in your community. No matter how big or small, each of the 102 counties has the services of a SWCD. From educating homeowners on practical utilization of water to helping rural landowners save soil and improve water quality; it takes everyone working together to protect our soil and water! Without these vital resources our communities cannot thrive!



SWCD Importance

SWCDs are an important link to deliver federal source funds that directly benefit the local and state economy. The economic benefit that SWCDs provide is far greater than the amount of money that is appropriated for their use by the General Assembly. Please support the governor's proposed funding levels for the SWCDs for FY2014.



ILLINOIS ENVIROTHON SPOTLIGHTS TOMORROW'S NATURAL RESOURCE PROFESSIONALS

The 17th annual Illinois Envirothon was held May 1st and 2nd at the Allerton 4-H Memorial Campground near Monticello, Illinois.

Sixteen teams from throughout the state competed for the opportunity to represent Illinois at the North American Envirothon that will be held at Montana State University at Bozeman, MT, August 4 - 9, 2013.

Illinois' representative for 2013 is Triad High School, Troy, IL located in south-central Madison County.

To prepare for the state competition, Triad students combined classroom learning with hands-on field experiences focusing on five major topics - Aquatics, Forestry, Soils, Wildlife and a Current Environmental Issue.

During the state competition the sixteen five-member teams rotated through five outdoor testing stations, where their knowledge was evaluated and scored through written examination. Additionally, the competition included an oral presentation component that challenged students to effectively apply and communicate a solution to a complex environmental issue. This year the Environmental issue was "*Sustainable Rangeland Management: Achieving a balance between Traditional Agricultural Uses with Non-Agricultural uses on Montana Rangelands*", a difficult topic for students who have not been exposed to

rangeland practices. Even so, the Triad team did very well, and we wish them continued success in Bozeman.

To earn a spot at the Illinois Envirothon each of the sixteen teams competed at a local event organized by the SWCDs and Land Use Councils (LUCs), in conjunction with partnership organizations and educators. These local events occur in late March to mid April and reach between 1,700 - 2,200 students. The highest scoring team from each of the 16 LUCs (each council is made up of 5-8 SWCDs) advances to the state competition in May.

The mission of the Envirothon program is to:

- enhance students' critical thinking and problem solving skills.
- allow students to expand their knowledge concerning current environmental issues, and explain the impact individual actions can have on various environmental resources.
- help students become tomorrow's leaders, workers, and consumers who will make informed decisions regarding their actions and the potential impacts to our natural resources.
- give students valuable exposure to careers in environmental science and natural resource management.
- teach students to become environmentally aware, action-oriented adults.

Congratulations to Triad High School students; our future leaders in conserving, protecting and enhancing our important and highly valued natural resources!

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Soil and Water Conservation Districts Provide Many Kinds of Services and Assistance.

- The 97 SWCDs are continually involved in implementing the most up-to-date conservation practices to maximize use of available resources while also protecting these essential environmental resources.
- SWCDs provide educational assistance to urban and rural decision makers so that they can make wise choices that will protect people and property in the future
- Through education and the various programs they administer, such as the Envirothon, and the technical assistance they provide, SWCD's encourage the protection, conservation and wise use of our environmental resources to assure sustainability for future generations.



NOTE: SWCDs DO NOT have taxing authority and must rely on state source funding to employ staff to administer programs.

There is an urgent need to develop a funding source to help Illinois SWCDs retain staff and provide services. Without additional revenue environmental problems can not be adequately addressed.

Your support for SB1739 will be appreciated.

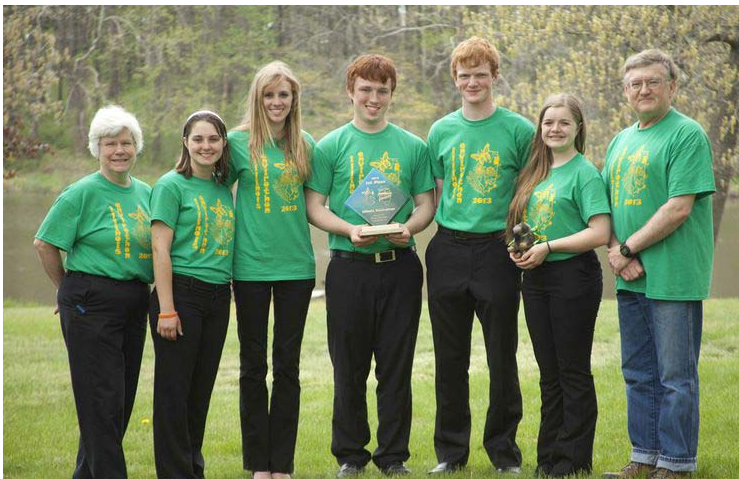
PROTECT & CONSERVE

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Districts' Spotlight

Madison County: The Madison County Soil and Water Conservation District works with county high schools to help teachers train students to be aware of the impacts of our actions on the environment and natural resources that we depend on for food production, clean drinking water, safe transportation, stable building sites, wildlife enhancement and all forms of outdoor recreation.



Triad High School represented Madison and the four other counties in their Land Use Council at the Illinois State Envirothon where they finished first among the sixteen competing teams. The team also finished first in the Forestry and Oral Presentation testing areas.

Congratulations to the students and their teachers!

Cook County: The North Cook Soil and Water Conservation District helped host a two-day competition at which more than 30 high schools from northern Cook County and the surrounding nine county area competed to represent their Land Use Council at the Illinois State Envirothon. Glenbrook South High School, Glenview, IL won that opportunity.

The team placed second overall at the state competition receiving the high score in the Aquatics testing area and finishing a close second to Triad High School in the Oral Presentation testing area.



Congratulations to the Glenbrook students and their teachers for a job well done!

Legislators, want to learn more about how conservation practices can help control flooding and reduce flood damages?

*** Mark your calendars! On August 22, 2013 the Association of Illinois Soil and Water Conservation Districts, in conjunction with the Illinois Stewardship Alliance, the Illinois Land Implement Contractor's Association, Caterpillar, Trees Forever and several soil and water conservation districts, is hosting a summer legislator conservation tour and luncheon near Edwards, Illinois, just west of Peoria. Transportation will be provided from the Chicago area.

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YOUR LAND, YOUR WATER, YOUR ILLINOIS

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**SOIL &
WATER**

conservation districts

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