

**Executive Committee Meeting
February 12, 2014 at 6:00 p.m.
Teleconference Call-(800) 944-8766/24384(#)**

Present

Lonnie Wilson, President
Tom Beyers, Vice President
Kenny Vosholler, Treasurer
Jerry Snodgrass, Area I V P
Steve Stierwalt, Area III V P
Rich Nichols, AISWCD
Sherry Finn, AISWCD
Kelly Thompson, AISWCD

Absent

Van Bitner, Secretary
James Todd, Past President
David McCormick, Area II V P
Carlyn Light, Area IV V P

Call to order:

President Lonnie Wilson called the meeting to order at 6:06 p.m.

Roll Call:

Sherry Finn reported the following on the call: Lonnie Wilson, Tom Beyers, Kenny Vosholler, Jerry Snodgrass, Steve Stierwalt, Rich Nichols, Sherry Finn and Kelly Thompson.

National Envirothon:

Lonnie Wilson reported he and Tom Beyers had learned that the 2014 NACD National Envirothon has been cancelled due to lack of funding through the National Envirothon and the NACD Foundation. Lonnie Wilson informed the committee that he has been appointed the Chairman for the North Central Region-NACD and there are eight (8) states that plan to send teams (students) to the Regional Envirothon. These states are working on restoring the National Envirothon. Possible location is the University of Illinois-Champaign. The following states are working with Tom Beyers and Lonnie Wilson:

Iowa-Tim Palmer

Michigan-Art Pelon

Illinois-Spring Duffey, McHenry-Lake SWCD & Gerard Fabrizius, Kane-DuPage SWCD

Wisconsin-Tom Randolph

- **Funding Sources:** Rich Nichols has been helping with this project and Kelly Thompson has been working with some sponsors.

Discussion followed with Lonnie Wilson asking Tom Beyers to update everyone on his progress.

Tom Beyers reported what a tragedy on behalf of students and teachers participating for the last some 20 years in the National Envirothon. Tom pointed out there are two main issues:

1. **Funding:** It takes approximately \$300,000 to operate the National Envirothon from the NACD standpoint; Illinois did not find out about the 2014 cancellation until they were informed at the NACD Annual Meeting in Anaheim, CA the first week in February. Tom made note the drop dead deadline will be the middle of March 2014 to secure funding for a National event.
2. **Location to Host Event:** Tom Beyers informed the committee there would be approximately 50-57 teams (350 people) that would need room and board accommodations; he had spoken with U of IL at Champaign and also had thoughts about Allerton Park in Monticello (where the IL Envirothon is held) only about 15-20 minutes' drive from Champaign as hosting part of the event. The IL Land Improvement Council has a good relationship with Barry Dickinson, the head of the Ag College of Environmental Sciences; Tom contacted Mr. Dickinson and he agreed this is a viable issue and asked Tom to send a letter to the Chancellor of the University of IL; Tom sent the letter.

Location (continued): Tom Beyers also contacted another University as an alternate Site, SIU-Carbondale location. Tom contacted Peggy Lemons from Missouri, an Active member of the NACD National Envirothon Committee to ask if what IL was requesting fit with what is needed by the National Committee. Peggy thinks IL is on track; Missouri is scheduled to host the 2015 National Envirothon event.

Discussion then followed with Lonnie Wilson reporting that he had talked with Rich Duesterhaus, the NACD National Conservation Foundation and their group is committed to resources and sanctioning the event. Tom Beyers reported that Peggy Lemons said that the Georgia issues have been addressed since there were some liability issues. Tom noted on the ground level SWCDs in IL and the IL Farm Bureau need to be contacted to buy into the urgency and need for assistance and support. The AISWCD is not looking for financial support; just a "PUSH" for the issue to maintain the event. Lonnie Wilson reported he has a meeting with the Farm Bureau President in the next few days. Tom Beyers noted that the priority efforts at this time are securing funding! Lonnie Wilson stated that Rich Nichols was taking the lead on one funding issue; Rich Nichols reported he had been in contact with Dick Breckenridge at the IL EPA about contacting Howard Buffet-Rich has not heard anything back from Dick so will contact him on Friday to follow up. Tom Beyers noted that he had asked Peggy Lemons if Mr. Buffet had ever been contacted about sponsorship of the National Event and, she said he had not been approached.

Tom Beyers also reported the National Envirothon website will be left up and running; the Foundation is taking care of this; Lonnie Wilson reported Rich Duesterhaus confirmed that the Foundation was maintaining the website.

Jerry Snodgrass asked about the 350 participants; this is a National Event; the numbers would be smaller for a North Central Regional Event. Lonnie Wilson noted they were also looking into having a North Central Regional Event if they can't meet the March deadline date. Jerry Snodgrass noted he is in favor of one or both and committed the AISWCD Education Committee's support. Kenny Vosholler asked if there were other Regions and how many and were they interested in hosting events? Lonnie noted there are seven (7) other Regions and Lonnie has been in contact with two (2) of them, but those Regions do not know how to go about planning or establishing an event. Lonnie told them the North Central Region would be happy to share their plans. There is the possibility of having every Region sponsoring an event and having a Grand Champion event that afterwards brings all the Regions together. The North East Region and the South East Region both want to model something out of the North Central Regions' plans.

Lonnie Wilson then informed the committee the treasurer, Clay Burns, from Jackson, MS never received the Envirothon Bridge Fund money, so Lonnie wants to use these funds to help with the new planned event. This will need to be discussed with the full board and the sponsors of funds.

Steve Stierwalt suggested contacting the FFA to step up and help to host this event since they participate at the IL Envirothon in Monticello. Steve will also contact Kevin Daugherty, a member of the IL Ag in the Classroom (IL Farm Bureau) and see if they can help provide to this program.

Tom Beyers asked if Tim Palmer was on the call and Lonnie Wilson noted he had been working with Tim and had 6-7 calls with him since Anaheim, but he was not on today's call; he would be on Friday's (2-14-14 at 1:00 p.m.) Envirothon Planning teleconference call.

Jerry Snodgrass said the Area VPs would promote the issue with the Land Use Councils and get the AISWCD Board to approve everything. Jerry asked Lonnie Wilson if Rich Nichols and the state office could send out updated information to the Districts through il.all. Lonnie Wilson stated he wants to wait until this Friday after the teleconference call with the Region team (consisting of approximately 20 people) to report their findings. Then, Lonnie will have Rich send out a status report.

Lonnie Wilson asked if Kelly Thompson had anything to report. Kelly made note that she had contacted her mom (employee with Meijer) and asked about some type of funding; Meijer's home office is in Michigan and thought they might like to contribute; Kelly said the local Meijer could possibly help with supplies and gift cards, but not an actual sponsorship of funds. She will get more information by next week and report.

Lonnie Wilson asked Kelly Thompson to look into other sponsorship openings and make contact; Jerry Snodgrass said he has a contact with ADM and will contact Mr. Martin Andreas. Jerry would like some background information on the National Envirothon to present to him. Lonnie Wilson said he has some National Envirothon Brochures and Surveys from students that have attended and will get that information to Jerry.

Lonnie Wilson thanked everyone for being on the call and said he had to attend another meeting so he went off the call at 6:38 p.m.

Tom Beyers took over the call and noted Peggy Lemons from Missouri had noted that part of the reason Georgia's proposal was revoked was that they were not able to adhere to the match of funds they need to provide to have the National Event. Missouri is working on their funding for the 2015 National Event, if it occurs and the National Conservation Foundation is to secure the rest of the funding for 2015. For the 2014 event, Illinois needs to procure all the funding necessary for the National Event.

Steve Stierwalt asked if we found a sponsor of the event, would they have Naming Rights? Rich Nichols said he would have to check into this with the NACD Envirothon Committee and the Foundation. Steve gave an example such as Monsanto; giving them naming rights might entice a sponsor. Rich asked Steve if he had a contact; Steve said no, it was just a suggestion. Rich noted that Lonnie Wilson had contact with Rose Stone out of Springfield, IL and she is part of Monsanto and their group has participated and helped with the IL Envirothon in the past. Rich will check with Lonnie on this matter.

Tom Beyers asked if there were any other questions or discussion; since there was none, he thanked everyone for their time and ended the call at 6:43 p.m.

Minutes taken and submitted by:

Sherry Finn, AISWCD Administrative Assistant

Approved by:

Signature

Date