

**Association of Illinois Soil and Water Conservation Districts**  
**Education Focus Committee**  
**Wednesday, February 26, 2014**  
**Northfield Inn Conference Center – Springfield, IL**

**Members Present**

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

**Advisors Present**

Marty McMannus, IDoA  
Valerie Keener, IDNR  
Debbie Ruff, EC  
Rich Nichols, AISWCD Exec. Director  
Kelly Thompson, AISWCD  
Lonnie Wilson, AISWCD Officer  
Tom Byers, AISWCD Officer  
Sondra Baker, ISWCDEA

**#1 – Call to Order** – Chairman Jerry Snodgrass, called the meeting to order at 9:05 am on February 26, 2014.

**#2 – Roll Call** – All in attendance introduced themselves.

**#3 – Approve Agenda** – A motion was made by Don Beisiegel, with second by Barb Klinger to amend the agenda to include the Bridge Fund under new business. MCVV.

**#4 – Approve Minutes** – A motion was made by Lee Bunting, with second by Don Beisiegel to approve the December 2013 FAC meeting minutes. MCVV

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

- *Schoolyard Habitat Action Grant*: Seventy-seven applications (new record) requesting a total of \$62,422.26 (new record) were received for the 2014 grant award period. The reviewers recommended 32 projects (new record) for funding for a total distribution of \$24,115.25 (new record) affecting 5,553 students (new record).
- *Illinois Biodiversity Field Trip Grant*: One hundred fifty-six applications (new record) were received requesting a total of \$146,607.98 (new record). Judges recommended that 103 field trips (new record) affecting 7,951 students (new record) be funded.
- *Earth Day in the Parks*: Twenty-three events are scheduled at 19 state parks. Events will be held in April and May.
- *ENTICE*: The ENTICE (Environment and Nature Training Institute for Conservation Education) educator workshop schedule for fiscal year 2015 has been released. Twenty-five workshops are being offered.
- *National Science Teachers' Association Meeting in Chicago*: The dates have been changed to March 12-15, 2015.
- *Illinois Rain Garden Initiative Demonstration Project* at AISWCD Headquarters: The Environmental Club of Lanphier High School in Springfield will be planting the rain garden in April.

**#6 – IDOA Report** – Marty McMannus reported the following items:

- New Director Training is planned for March.
- Conservation Cropping Systems Workshops – The Mendota Workshop was attended by approximately 150 people. The Mt. Vernon and Heartland Workshops still to be held.
- Interstate Cover Crop signs will continue as a program.

**#7 – NRCS Report** – No report was provided.

## #8 – Old Business

- **IL. Envirothon Update** – Sondra Baker provided a written report of Dewitt County’s activities as the IL. Envirothon Coordinator. Additional items and discussions included:
  - Ice cream is being donated by Prairie Farms.
  - Pheasants Forever and Quail Unlimited have been contacted to be sponsors.
  - Sondra provided phone numbers for the Dewitt SWCD, as well as her cell number for members to contact her with any questions. Board members requested that the new contact information be added to the Illinois Envirothon letterhead.
  - Sondra stated that a team mixer of Glow In The Dark Kickball will be used this year rather than the Minute To Win It competition.
  - Google calendar will be implemented to track event planning progress.
  - Sondra stated that she is developing an Excel document to track fundraising and sponsorships.
  - A discussion was held on what are the long term goals for the Illinois Envirothon. Items discussed included: making the contract for the IL. Envirothon Coordinator be a multi-year contract; yearly evaluation of the event; sustainable funding; and tracking of hours expended to plan and implement.
- **FFA MOU** – A discussion on the North East Regional Envirothon was tabled until it becomes clear whether there will be a North American Envirothon in Georgia.
- **FFA Guidelines** – Sondra will develop a set of guidelines that will go out to all SWCDs and to all Education FAC members.
  - It was once again stated that the FFA will have a seat at the IL. Envirothon planning table.
  - Rich will call and set up a meeting for Sondra, Rich and FFA leader to discuss FFA participation on the planning committee.
- **Teacher of the Year Award** – Chairman Snodgrass stated that the Teacher of the Year Award will be presented during the Education Luncheon. He encouraged all in attendance to submit entries for this award.
- **Ag Day Recognition** – This is being worked on and looks like it will happen. A motion was made by Lee Bunting with second by Terry Bogner to allow the AISWCD to spend up to \$150 to provide the appropriate award for the teacher(s) at the State Fair. MCVV
  - A discussion followed on the lack of participation for this award. To give SWCDs more time to prepare and award, a motion was made by Lee Bunting, with second by Terry Bogner to move the date to May 16<sup>th</sup> for the Teacher of the Year application to be submitted to the Land Use Councils. The LUC winners must be submitted to the AISWCD by June 5<sup>th</sup>. MCVV
- **Bridge Fund** – A motion was made by Gerard Fabrizius, with second by Lee Bunting to hold on to the Bridge Funds that were to go for a North American Envirothon. MCVV

**#9 –New Business** – Items in the agenda concerning the North American and Illinois Envirothon had been discussed during the Old Business section of the meeting. The McKibben Scholarship committee assignments were not discussed.

**#10 - Adjournment** - A motion to adjourn was made by Barb Klinger. Second by Don Beisiegel. MCVV.  
Meeting adjourned at 10:30am.

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

Approved by:

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Signature

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Date