

AISWCD

Executive Director's Bi-Monthly Report

Monday, May 4, 2015

Welcome May! Warmer weather is finally here to stay. With that, summer will be here in just a month and the 2015 Legislative Session will be wrapping up or at least we hope so. AISWCD is still fighting for the remaining operations allocation for FY15. As you all know there are no guarantees SWCDs will receive it but AISWCD will fight until the legislators leave for their summer break. Even if your district is not in dire straits (currently) we would ask everyone to please continue to reach out to your legislators and express the importance of SWCDs receiving the final operations allocation. AISWCD will be sending a letter to Governor Rauner, Director Nelson, Chief of GOMB and other legislators this week. The letter has testimony from a few SWCDs expressing how important the grant money they receive from IDOA is to the SWCDs daily operations.

SWCDs keep up the good work. I know the current situation is a struggle for many but AISWCD is here to help and to make your job a little easier. Please let us know how we can help and where to improve. After all, AISWCD works for Soil and Water Conservation Districts...without SWCDs there is no AISWCD!

NLRS ROADSHOW

The Nutrient Loss Reduction Strategy Roadshow will be ramping up in about 30 days. Illinois Council on Best Management Practices (IL C-BMP) along with Illinois Farm Bureau will be traveling around the state to present information on the Strategy document that was developed in 2014. The information provided at each meeting will include but not limited to the following:

- Background information on the NLRS
- Summary of the science in each region/watershed
- Information on implementation of the strategy
- Toolbox of best management practices to use on farmland
- Presentations to local stakeholders
- Individual on site water sampling and results
- Meal is provided

We are asking each SWCD (employees and directors) to attend at least one of the 11 meetings taking place throughout the state. If you sign-up to attend your name will be entered into a drawing for a free Summer Conference/Annual Meeting registration. Please note, you need to sign-up no later than May 15th. We are also asking that two group leaders be identified for each meeting. There will be an opportunity for SWCDs to give a brief/informal presentation and the group leaders will be the one responsible for this task.

The more SWCD staff and directors know about the NLRS the greater opportunity SWCDs have in obtaining funds to complete the implementation portion of the strategy. Knowledge is key and it will set SWCDs apart and show other organizations that SWCDs are here to stay and are best suited for this job. Please consider attending one of the Roadshows. The schedule can be accessed via AISWCD website: <http://www.aiswcd.org/nutrient-loss-reduction-strategy-roadshow/>

AISWCD

Executive Director's Bi-Monthly Report

Please email either Gina, Abbie Sperry or I by May 15th if you plan to attend one of the Roadshow presentations. Again, you will be entered to win a FREE Summer Conference Registration!

AISWCD INTERNSHIP

AISWCD is still accepting resumes for the unpaid internship this summer. Please share the job announcement as you see fit.

http://www.aiswcd.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/04/AISWCD-Internship_Job-Description_2015.pdf

CDSI – CLIENT GATEWAY – CONTRIBUTION AGREEMENTS

AISWCD is having the Agreement reviewed at this time. Stay tuned as more information will be available in the May 15th report.

LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

PLEASE CONTINUE TO COMMUNICATE WITH YOUR LEGISLATORS!

Discuss with them ***how will funding cuts will and are affecting their legislative district and the state as a whole.*** Keep reminding them throughout the legislative session on how important Soil and Water Conservation is to Illinois. Legislators need to hear from their constituents. One last time, **I can't stress how important it is to call your legislator to let them know how a cut in funding will not only affect SWCDs but their legislative district as well.** Please continue to carry this message throughout the year as it is imperative that we are all carrying a clear and concise message.

Letter to Governor and more... I will be compiling SWCD testimony that was submitted to me last week from a few SWCDs explaining how the budget cuts will affect their county. This letter will be sent to the Governor, Director Nelson, Chief of GOMB and key legislators. Stay tuned for the response.

ILLINOIS RIVER CONFERENCE

This year the 15th Biennial Governor's Conference on the Management of the Illinois River System is being held October 27-29, 2015 in Peoria at the Marriott Pere Marquette. SWCD employees and directors have a unique opportunity to attend the Tuesday Watershed Tour plus afternoon CPESC workshop and a one-day conference pass for Wednesday at the cost of \$100 plus room and travel. Please contact me if you are interested in attending either Tuesday/Wednesday or just Tuesday. Below is a brief description of the Watershed Tour. The CPESC workshop agenda is being developed.

A Watershed Tour will take place on Tuesday, October 27, 2015 | 9:00 AM – 12:30 PM

Overview: Infiltrate the green infrastructure movement within the Greater Metropolitan Peoria Area! This tour will reveal the urban side of our theme The Illinois River: A Watershed Partnership by visiting project sites to see the practices and to hear from the partners who did the work. The tour will be by charter bus and will include stops at a variety of locations to let

AISWCD

Executive Director's Bi-Monthly Report

you investigate stormwater runoff control efforts for both public and private land. Lunch and refreshments will be provided.

AISWCD ANNUAL MEETING

The new schedule and registration forms will be posted to the AISWCD website next week so be looking for an email via IL.ALL with that information.

NEW THIS YEAR ...

An **Exhibit Hall** will feature partners and products. We have several exhibitors already signed up and confirmed. If you know of someone who might be a good fit please contact us ASAP as space is limited and filling up quickly. We have 5 spaces remaining! If you know of a vendor who might like to purchase a booth please forward the exhibit form to them today...http://www.aiswcd.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/03/Exhibitor-Form_2015.pdf

A **Sunday Tour** will be offered for those who like to travel to Springfield a day early. You don't want to miss out on this tour...on the agenda is a visit to a local restaurant with a roof-top garden, a local brewery complete with beverage samples and much more! Be sure to sign-up early as space is limited! Check the "Sunday Tour" on your registration form...<http://www.aiswcd.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/04/Registration-Forms.pdf>

Live Auction is unique this year in that we will have 10 large ticket items to bid on during the Live Auction. We need a list of all items no later than June 1st so we can advertise on the website and in the auction booklet. If your district is interested in donating \$25-50 to help purchase these large ticketed items please let either Gina or I know ASAP.

Please note: the auction is a money-maker for education programs. Our partners: Auxiliary, Envirothon, ISWCDEA all hope to receive a portion of the money raised to help fund their individual education/outreach needs.

Bring your spouse and family to this year's Annual Meeting & Summer Conference. There will be plenty of activities for the whole family!

SERVICES PROVIDED BY AISWCD

AISWCD is grateful for Soil and Water Conservation Districts! We'd like to provide a list of services that we currently offer to our SWCD members.

- ❖ **Lobbying** for SWCD funds
- ❖ Registered **Lobbyist**
- ❖ **Discounted Insurance Premiums** (AISWCD holds the master policy and gets reimbursed by IDOA)
 - Directors and Officers Liability
 - Business Auto
 - Package Policy (property, inland marine and general liability)
 - Umbrella Policy

AISWCD

Executive Director's Bi-Monthly Report

- Workers Compensation
- ❖ **Program & Grant Opportunities** – Contribution Agreements
- ❖ State Envirothon Competition
- ❖ Illinois Urban Manual – coordination & update
- ❖ Informational material – email based (il.all subscription)
- ❖ Conservation Catchall publication
- ❖ Legislative Day Reception
- ❖ Tech Soup – technology discounts

We greatly appreciate your membership! Please let us know how we can better serve your district by submitting comments to Kelly.thompson@aiswcd.org. I will direct any comments or question to the AISWCD Executive Board members.

As always, if you have any questions or comments at all, don't hesitate to call the office! Remember, AISWCD works for Districts...without SWCDs, the Association would not exist!

Remember to **INFORM** your Legislators!

You can never send them enough information on activities taking place in your district!

Harmony with land is like harmony with a friend; you cannot cherish his right hand and chop off his left. ~ Aldo Leopold



Kelly Thompson

AISWCD

Executive Director's Bi-Monthly Report

AISWCD is currently drafting the contract agreement language for the CDSI-Client Gateway/Contribution Agreement with SWCDs. The contract language will not be finalized until the middle of May. SWCDs will have the opportunity to sign-up to complete the work once the agreement is finalized. Below, I have listed a few Frequently Asked Questions pertaining to both programs and overall program questions.

CDSI-Client Gateway F.A.Q.

Q: *Can my District sign-up for the Admin portion of the contract only?*

A: Yes, the contract language will read so that your District has the option to participate in either the CRP Contribution Agreement & CDSI-Client Gateway or both.

Q: *Will Training be provided for District staff to complete the CDSI-Client Gateway option?*

A: Yes, training has been set by NRCS. The first training will take place on Thursday, April 30th – each district should have received two emails regarding this training. The next training will take place in early June. The details are still being decided upon.

CRP Contribution Agreements

Q: *In the past, my District could not meet the minimum requirement to fulfill the Contribution Agreement. Will there be a minimum requirement with this contract?*

A: There will not be a minimum requirement for the Contribution Agreement plan of work; however, there will still be a maximum.

General Questions

Q: *My District did not pay their dues for calendar year 2014. Can we pay the last calendar year dues and still be considered in good standing?*

A: If your District wishes to pay all of last calendar year dues, in the amount of \$1530.33, your District will be considered in good standing with AISWCD, as per President Myron Kirby and the Executive Committee.

Q: *My District did not pay their dues for calendar year 2014 and are having financial hardship. My District would like to participate in the upcoming CDSI-Client Gateway/CRP Contribution Agreement program. Can we still participate if we are unable to pay our dues?*

A: If your District is experiencing financial hardship and is unable to pay the full amount of past-owed dues (\$1530.33), please contact the AISWCD office or President Myron Kirby to discuss options.

Q: *I don't understand how AISWCD came up with \$1530.33 for calendar year 2014 dues. Can you please explain?*

A: Districts receive their allocation on a fiscal year basis – beginning July 1 and ending June 30. AISWCD runs off a calendar year – beginning January 1 and ending December 31. The dues are invoiced after the SWCD receives its allocation from IDOA. All invoices within the calendar year must be paid by January 1st/ 30 days after invoiced. Here are the invoices each District received from AISWCD in calendar year 2014:

AISWCD

Executive Director's Bi-Monthly Report

March 27, 2014 \$764.55

December 16, 2014 \$765.78 TOTAL \$1530.33

The total amount that needs to be paid, in order to be in good standing, is \$1530.33. If your District has not paid they have an opportunity to do so at this time.

AISWCD is doing all we can do to keep SWCDs alive and prospering. Should your District have any questions regarding the upcoming CDSI-Client Gateway/CRP Contribution Agreement please do not hesitate to call or email.

AISWCD truly appreciates the work SWCDs are doing and we look forward to building a stronger relationship!

