

# AISWCD

## Executive Director's Bi-Monthly Report

Friday, May 29, 2015

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### NLRS ROADSHOW

The first Nutrient Loss Reduction Strategy Roadshow meeting will take place on Tuesday, June 2 in Carterville. Illinois Council on Best Management Practices (IL C-BMP) along with Illinois Farm Bureau and IEPA will be traveling around the state to present information on the Strategy document that was developed in 2014. The final Strategy is expected to be released late summer/early fall. 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

If you haven't done so yet, please sign up to attend at least one Roadshow Meeting. Please contact the County Farm Bureau office, where the meeting is to be held, to sign-up. AISWCD has offered 5 free Summer Conference Registrations to those who signed-up before May 15<sup>th</sup>.

***We have 5 winners that we'd like to announce ... Drum Roll.....***

- Denise Willenborg, AC – Effingham Co.
- Kara Downin, AC – Knox Co.
- Ken Suslee, Director – Montgomery Co.
- Ryan Arch, RC – Henry Co.
- Jami Mowen, AC – Schuyler Co.



Congratulations to all the winners! Gina Bean will contact you with instructions on how to proceed with your free Summer Conference Registration.

**It is imperative that SWCD Directors and Staff attend one of the 11 meetings being held during the month of June.** 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/>

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### CDSI – CLIENT GATEWAY/CRP SUB-AGREEMENTS

Great news ... The Sub-Agreements were emailed through IL.ALL on Tuesday, May 26<sup>th</sup>. If you District is interested in participating there several key dates that will require action.

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**June 1<sup>st</sup>** – Notify AISWCD if your District is interested in participating in the Sub-agreement. AISWCD will forward the workable documents associated with the Sub-agreement.

**June 8<sup>th</sup>** – Attachment C-Plan of Work (Admin & CRP) is due to AISWCD.

**June 11<sup>th</sup> - Mark your Calendars! CDSI-Client Gateway TRAINING** - NRCS will be hosting webinar training on **June 11<sup>th</sup> from 9am-12pm**. This is a webinar so it is likely that you will not need to leave your office to attend. If your District is unable to participate in this training, the training webinars are recorded and can be viewed at a later date/time.

**June 15<sup>th</sup>** – Sub-agreement and required attachments needs to be signed and submitted to AISWCD by COB.

***Contact me directly if you have a conflict with any of the bold dates listed above.***

I have received numerous questions regarding the agreement...all of which are excellent questions to ask. The CDSI portion is new to AISWCD, SWCDs and NRCS so the workload is not certain. Please see the attachment for a list of Q/A regarding the Sub-agreement.

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### LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

Unfortunately I have some disappointing news regarding funding, of which most Districts suspected for some time. The remaining FY15 funds for District Operations will not be released. The amount was approximately \$18,000 per District. Myron Kirby sent a letter, via IL.ALL, early last week explaining the funding situation. Both the House and Senate have passed a budget ([HB4158](#)) which leaves SWCDs at \$7.5 million. While this seems like a great move on their part, there is a catch. The House and Senate are not sending the budget bills to the Governor as usual. The bills will be held until both the Senate and House reach a budget deal with the Governor. The Governor would like to see his "Turnaround Agenda" items passed before discussing the budget. The House and Senate will keep summer hours to allow time to work on both the budget and the Turnaround Agenda items. The House is back in session on Thursday, June 4<sup>th</sup> and the Senate is back on Tuesday, June 9<sup>th</sup>.

PLEASE CONTINUE TO COMMUNICATE WITH YOUR LEGISLATORS!

Discuss with them ***how funding cuts from FY15 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 the FY15 funding cuts have not only affected 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.

### SB0543 – EPA-Coal Combustion By-Product

Passed both the House and Senate. The bill does as follows –

Provides that "coal combustion by-product" means coal combustion waste when used as a functionally equivalent substitute for agricultural lime or mined gypsum (calcium sulfate dihydrate) as a soil conditioner, amendment, fertilizer, or other agricultural purposes when using appropriate agronomic rates.

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AISWCD supported this Bill

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### ILLINOIS RIVER CONFERENCE

This year the 15<sup>th</sup> 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. The **Tuesday tour** is just **\$30** to attend with **lunch included**. Below is a brief description of the Watershed Tour. The CPESC workshop agenda is being developed. If you have suggestions for the workshop please let me know.



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

Please email me by August 1<sup>st</sup> if you are planning to attend.

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### AISWCD ANNUAL MEETING



#### 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](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** – **AISWCD is still accepting Live and Silent Auction Items!** Please email either **Gina or I no later than June 15<sup>th</sup> with your auction item form**. We are accepting large and small auction items. No auction item will be turned away!!!

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

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### SOIL HEALTH CHAMPION NOMINATIONS

The National Association of Conservation Districts is asking each state to nominate several farmers who would consider being soil health champions. Here is what Soil Health Champions would do with the assistance of their soil and water conservation districts and NRCS district staff:

### SOIL HEALTH CHAMPION...THE RESPONSIBILITIES

The Soil Health Champions will be asked to conduct outreach efforts. More specifically, the Champions will be asked to do some of the following types of activities in cooperation with SWCD, LUC and local NRCS staff...

- ✓ use and promote soil health practices,
- ✓ build peer-to-peer relationships,
- ✓ host field days and demonstrations, if appropriate,
- ✓ speak at public events as opportunities are developed,
- ✓ participate in sharing their story with print, broadcast, and social media outlets,
- ✓ provide information or examples of what they have found works to key stakeholders, and members of the national Network.

The Conservation Innovation Grant funded program has the goal of increasing awareness of soil health concepts and increasing the acreage under soil health management. While some of the items listed above are already taking place within your SWCD, we don't want those local efforts and leaders to go unrecognized. Please nominate today!

Contact AISWCD for a description of the program. I hope you will consider discussing this program with your District board, landowners and partners. Please nominate anyone that you think would be great advocate of soil health. To recommend a candidate for Soil Health Champion, **please forward the person's name and contact information to me no later than July 1st.** AISWCD would like to honor the Soil Health Champions during Summer Conference.

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### 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

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- Package Policy (property, inland marine and general liability)
- Umbrella Policy
- 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](mailto:Kelly.thompson@aiswcd.org). I will direct any comments or question to the AISWCD Executive Board members.

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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!

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"The soil is the great connector of our lives, the source and destination of all."  
– Wendell Berry

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*Have a great month of June!*  
*Kelly Thompson*