

# AISWCD

## Executive Director's Bi-Monthly Report

Wednesday, July 15, 2015

Greetings All! I apologize for the lack of a bi-monthly report for mid-June and early July. It is an understatement to say things at AISWCD have been hectic. Between finalizing the Sub-agreements, preparing for Summer Conference, meeting with partners to discuss future projects it's been a bit crazy. However, the good news is I will have a lot of new information available in this report.



### AISWCD ANNUAL MEETING

The Annual meeting and Summer Conference is just a few short weeks away! Below are a list of updates. Gina will also be sending more information via IL.ALL.

### UPDATES! ...

An **Exhibit Hall** will feature partners and products. I am excited to report that all spaces have been filled and additional spaces have been added (and filled) to the hallway outside the Exhibit Hall room. Thank you all for spreading the word about the new addition this year. To make the Exhibit Hall even more appealing ... play the Exhibit Hall Bingo to win a 32" Flat Screen LED TV! All BINGO spaces must be checked by the Exhibitors in order to be eligible to win. Be sure to turn your cards in no later than Tuesday, July 28<sup>th</sup> at 12:55pm to the Registration Table. Good luck and enjoy the Exhibit Hall!

The **Sunday Tour** is full with 25+ attendees registered this year. Transportation will be provided for this tour. Change of plans for the initial meeting location ... **Meeting location has changed** from AISWCD to the **Northfield Inn and Suites parking lot**. Please arrive 15 minutes before the scheduled departure time. Transportation will leave at 10:30am. If you are running late please make arrangements to meet up with the tour at an alternate location.

**Live Auction** – Thank you to all of the Districts that donated items for the Live and Silent Auctions. We have a wide array of items this year and a new approach to the auction. We will also be offering winning bidders to pay by credit card through the PayPal Here card reader. Please note, there will be a 2.7% charge for each transaction. If you do not have a credit card or wish to pay by check that is still an option.

Popcorn, snacks, and beverages (for purchase via cash bar) will be available at the Auction along with live entertainment. We hope to see everyone on Monday night for this social event of the year ... it's fun for the whole family!!!

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### SUB-AGREEMENTS

Thank you all for your cooperation and understanding over the past month with the roll-out of the Sub-agreement contracts. This process is new for both AISWCD, SWCDs and NRCS.

Here are a few updates ...

Currently all counties except two are covered for the Client Gateway-CDSI portion of the agreement. AISWCD is required to have all counties covered. We have asked all neighboring counties and counties within the Land Use Council. The next step is to offer the work to Districts around the state. I

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realize the summer is when many employees take vacation, but please be aware that we need a response by Thursday, July 23<sup>rd</sup>. We realize this may leave some Districts at a disadvantage. Unfortunately, we cannot control the timeframe at this point –these counties have to be covered.

The counties up for grab are Champaign and Vermilion. If selected to complete the CDSI-Client Gateway work, your District is responsible for contacting the NRCS DC in that county to coordinate the workload for the agreement. **In order to be entered into the drawing to take on the additional county you MUST take the survey monkey survey by 12:00pm on July 23<sup>rd</sup> – Click this link <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/82MN32F>. Email entries WILL NOT BE ACCEPTED – you must take the survey to be in the drawing.** All names will go into a drawing and two Districts will be selected and notified by Friday, July 24<sup>th</sup>.

Additionally, AISWCD is still looking for an intern to help with the workload this fall. There has also been discussion about whether or not to hire a part-time employee to help with the Administrative duties associated with the new Sub-agreements. More information to come regarding a part-time employee.

Just a couple more things to mention. Gina is going to be (for now) the contact for all things administrative. So any questions as it relates to invoicing, monthly and quarterly reports, payments, etc. she will be the one to contact. Gina will also be collecting all monthly and quarterly reports. If you send the reports to my email I will forward them to Gina. All technical questions that cannot be answered by your NRCS staff or at your local office should be directed to me. Please direct any logistical questions to me as well as any local level concerns, if any arise.

Please keep in close contact with your District's NRCS staff personnel. SWCDs and NRCS are partners and to make this project work we must all communicate and work together. Should your District have any trouble completing the work outlined in the Sub-agreement please notify me immediately! AISWCD and the SWCD are the agreement holders. We must communicate if ANY problems arise.

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### LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

Well, unfortunately nothing new to report on the legislative front. A budget has still not been passed. SWCD funds along with all other state spending has been suspended or delayed. The House and Senate continue to meet at least once and maybe twice per week.

In preparation for next year's Legislative session, I'd like to compile a list of concerns from the Districts. While I know each year funding is the number one priority and will continue to be for the next several years. However, AISWCD would like to have a list of District concerns to be discussed and voted on at the upcoming Quarterly AISWCD Board meetings in September and December. Please be thinking about these and if you'd like visit the Survey Monkey link here ... <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/LWLPK2W> to document your Districts immediate and future concerns.

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### **IL.ALL UPDATE**

The IL.ALL listserv is a benefit that AISWCD provides to Districts for communication purposes. In the past any District employee or subscriber (i.e. Partners and Agency folks) could post to the listserv without first being verified. The protocol for posting on IL.ALL has now changed. All postings must first be approved by AISWCD staff. In order to send an IL.ALL email you must first notify Gina and I via email with the information before it will be accepted and posted on the listserv. If the information in the posting is time sensitive then please call the AISWCD office so we know the email needs to be sent out immediately. We understand this may be an inconvenience to some, however this service is paid for by AISWCD and shared with partners. AISWCD needs to verify that information being shared is both professional and relevant. There are other media outlets that Districts have set-up to voice SWCD concerns but the listserv is not to be used for that purpose. It is our goal that the listserv is used for educational purposes, current topics and information that is time sensitive and important for SWCD employees, District Directors and our Partners. Should you have any questions on what might be shared via the listserv, please contact our office.

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### **PERCISION CONSERVATION MANAGEMENT (PCM) PROJECT**

**BACKGROUND INFORMATION** – The PCM project is one that has been developed by the Illinois Corn Growers Association along with Farm Business Farm Management. This program is being supported by Illinois Corn. As part of the NLRS Taskforce, appointed by the AISWCD Board, it was a goal to develop a plan on how the SWCDs would be involved in the implementation of the NLRS. The Taskforce developed a project concept similar, but with less detail, to the PCM project. AISWCD approached IL Corn to see if they would be interested in partnering. At that time, several months ago, AISWCD began to learn more about PCM and has since found it would be a good fit with SWCDs.

The PCM Pilot Project will be rolled-out in three regions within central Illinois this fall. SWCDs in this 11 county area will be contacted by AISWCD and Illinois Corn to further discuss participation, project details, etc. AISWCD, NRCS and Illinois Corn Growers met today in Champaign to discuss this project in more detail. More discussion, along with a full description of the project, will take place during Summer Conference. Stay tuned!

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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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### 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
  - Workers Compensation
- ❖ **Program & Grant Opportunities** – Contribution Agreements
- ❖ State Envirothon Competition
- ❖ Illinois Urban Manual – coordination & update
- ❖ Watershed Development Coordinator
- ❖ Informational material – email based (IL.ALL listserv)
- ❖ 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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AISWCD continues to work to find dedicated sources of funding for SWCDs. 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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*"Society is defined not only by what it creates, but by what it refuses to destroy."*  
– John Sawhill

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ENJOY YOUR SUMMER!



Kelly Thompson