

AISWCD

Executive Director's Bi-Monthly Report

Tuesday, August 4, 2015

Well, another Summer Conference and Annual Meeting are behind us. I hope everyone who attended enjoyed two fun-filled days of sessions, net-working and of course fun and laughter! Photos and meeting minutes will soon be posted from the conference.



AISWCD ANNUAL MEETING

The Annual meeting and Summer Conference is now complete. Gina will be sending out the attendance statistics within a month.

The **Exhibit Hall** was a success this year. Thank you to Illinois Stewardship Alliance for donating the Exhibit Hall Bingo giveaway item...32" Flat Screen TV! We hope to bring the Exhibit Hall back for the 2016 Conference.

The **Sunday Tour** went off without a hitch! Thank you to all who could join us on Sunday morning/afternoon for a fun-filled day. Should you have any suggestions for next year's Sunday tour please contact Gina Bean.

The **Live and Silent Auction** was a success yet again this year. We hope everyone enjoyed the event, following the Farm Family Banquet. Please don't hesitate to make comments or suggestions on the overall auction.

Thank you to everyone for attending the 67th Summer Conference! Thank you also to our sponsors ... we truly could not have made this conference more of a success without your dedicated efforts!

SUB-AGREEMENTS

I attended the Employee Forum at Summer Conference and gave a brief explanation to a list of questions I had received, via the ISWCDEA co-chairs. Thank you to the ISWCDEA for inviting Gina and I to attend your forum and allowing us time to address Sub-agreement questions and concerns.

I would like to say during the first year there will be bumps along the way. The administrative process of the agreement is new to everyone – NRCS, AISWCD and SWCDs.

The overall goal is to have more farmers/landowners enrolled in NRCS conservation programs and provide technical and administrative assistance to NRCS staff all while working together. NRCS and SWCDs are a team. We all need to work together to achieve success.

Client Gateway/CDSI – ProTracts Permissions Update

AISWCD will be contacting each employee, who has submitted an AD-1143 form to gain access to the NRCS program ProTracts, with either a notification stating you have been granted access or asking you to provide additional information in order to granted access.

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Client Gateway/CDSI – Payments

The payments will be issued via check from AISWCD to your District. Gina will be writing and issuing checks for the June 15 – July 15 period during the week of August 10th. At this time we are not issuing payments electronically. Electronic payments will be discussed for future grants.

LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

Well, again there is 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.

Please continue to contact your legislators. I have included, **see attachment**, a **Call-To-Action memo** that outlines a list of talking points to assist your District when reaching out to its local legislators.

IL.ALL UPDATE

REMINDER....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.

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. Please stay tuned for more information on this exciting new project!

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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. 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 1st if you are planning to attend.

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. I will direct any comments or question to the AISWCD Executive Board members.

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FINAL THOUGHTS

As we head into fall there will be much emphasis on the NLRS document and how measurable success can be achieved. AISWCD is developing a NLRS White Paper per the AISWCD NLRS Taskforce. It is the Taskforce's hopes to share this paper with Districts and Partners to showcase the grassroots efforts of Districts from the beginning to present. It is also their hope that this paper will also be a guide to show Districts how they might develop their own plan, for their own county, in the future. Please note that AISWCD is not telling your District what should be done but giving you the tools to achieve measurable success.

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!

ENJOY!

Kelly Thompson

AISWCD