

IROQUOIS COUNTY SOIL AND WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT
1001 E GRANT ST., STE A
WATSEKA, IL 60970

To whom it may concern,

Enclosed are two items for your consideration. One item is my philosophy on my farming career plus my feelings on no-till, strip-till, and the use of cover crops. The other item is our proposed resolution for the Association of Illinois Soil and Water Conservation Districts to consider at the annual conference in July.

I am presently the Secretary/Treasurer of the Iroquois County Soil and Water Conservation District and have been a board member for twenty years. I am a recent retired farmer with my son taking my place on the centennial family farm.

Our family has used no-till for thirty years as well as strip-till and cover crops for fifteen years. Over the years we have seen the benefits of these practices on our soils. We would appreciate your consideration and approval of the proposed resolution.

Please call our office with any questions or concerns you may have.

Sincerely,

Richard Reynolds

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TO ALL LANDOWNERS, FARMERS AND CONCERNED CITIZENS:

As I am presently winding down my 40 year farming career and turning it over to my son I have these thoughts. My brother/partner and I have been no-till farming for over 30 years and have been totally no-till farming for 27 years and using cover crops for 10 years. On January 8, 2019 we attended the National No-Till Conference in Indianapolis . We learned a lot and had our farming practices reinforced. In that both cover crops and no-till farming are the most important environmentally, sustainably and economically ways to farm. I say this with some authority having been on the Iroquois County Soil and Water Conservation Board for 20 years. I am also well aware of all the programs the National Resource Conservation Service(NRCS) has to do with these practices.

The longer I serve on the Iroquois Conservation Board the more passion I have for saving and protecting our soils and the environment. This passion has at times given my neighbors and local landowners some aggravation when I tell about our farming practices. Some do not want to hear or even consider them.

When we started no-till farming 30 years ago we practiced on our own acres until we felt comfortable expanding to other acres. Now we feel this is the only way to farm(no-till and cover crops). The longer we have used these conservation practices the more the soil's texture and structure have improved to the point of being more near their original state.

The use of cover crops and no-tillage are the one-two punch for better soil health and a better environment. The cover crops feeds the earthworms , microbes and other critters in the soil but it also sequesters carbon dioxide from the air and puts into the soil as organic matter. We hear all the time that climate change is happening and there is nothing that can be done. **BALONEY!!** Using cover crops and no-tillage pulls carbon dioxide from the air and puts it into the soil where it is good for the environment and for the growing of cash crops.

What all this boils down to is that keeping the soil covered for as long as possible in the form of cover crops and using no-till not only slows or stops wind and soil erosion but it is also good for soil health. Think of it this way, how did our soils become so productive? It was the 12,000 years, since the last ice age, that Mother Nature did her thing in a natural way and did not till once.

I challenge all farmers, landowners and concerned citizens to seriously look at cover crops and no-tillage as a goal to strive for. It not only makes good business sense but it is good for our country, our world and the environment.

Thank-you

Richard Reynolds

Iroquois County Soil and Water Conservation Board Secretary/Treasurer

ASSOCIATION OF ILLINOIS SOIL AND WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICTS Resolution for 2019

The ultimate goal of the ASSOCIATION OF ILLINOIS SOIL AND WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICTS will be to use no-till, strip-till and cover crops on all Illinois row crop farmland.

WHEREAS, using no-till, strip-till and cover crops are the most effective ways to protect soil and water quality presently known,

WHEREAS, using these farming practices not only protects soil and water quality but also improves soil health, structure, texture and increases soil organic matter,

WHEREAS, tilling every acre every year twice is not sustainable economically, agronomically and environmentally but also degrades soil health in promoting wind and water erosion,

WHEREAS, using no-till, strip-till and cover crops provides some habitat for wildlife,

WHEREAS, using no-till, strip-till and cover crops not only uses less fossil fuels compared to conventional farming practices but also improves the environment by sequestering carbon from the air by the growing of cover and cash crops,

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the ASSOCIATION OF ILLINOIS SOIL AND WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICTS will strongly urge, promote, encourage and support the use of no-till, strip-till and cover crops as a way to protect soil and water quality in our use of conservation practices to improve our environment, our country and our world.

In order to monitor the progress, the ILLINOIS DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE biannual transect survey will be used. A report of this survey will be given and discussed biannually at the ASSOCIATION OF ILLINOIS SOIL AND WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICTS Summer Conference.

Submitted and approved by the Iroquois County Soil and Water Conservation District

Approved by the Kankakee River Basin Commission

Potential Resolution Idea #1

WHEREAS, the Association of Illinois Soil and Water Conservation Districts each summer hosts an annual meeting for purposes of conducting association business, providing opportunities for education, training, and fellowship amongst conservationist,

WHEREAS, the Association of Illinois Soil and Water Conservation Districts has held such a meeting for more than seven decades,

WHEREAS, the Association of Illinois Soil and Water Conservation Districts has historically held this meeting in the central area of the state in hopes of making the event regionally accessible to all,

WHEREAS, the Association of Illinois Soil and Water Conservation Districts holds this meeting in the highest regard as its most important annual event,

WHEREAS, the Association of Illinois Soil and Water Conservation Districts recognizes the value of this annual event for purposes of conferring special honors and recognition for good works in the realm of conservation,

WHEREAS, the Association of Illinois Soil and Water Conservation Districts recognizes the value of this annual event for purposes of providing opportunities for education and training to further advance conservation,

WHEREAS, the Association of Illinois Soil and Water Conservation Districts recognizes the value of this annual event for the opportunities presented for engagement with conservation stakeholders that includes policymakers, news media, and the greater public for purposes of raising the reputation of Soil and Water Conservation Districts as the premier conduit for accomplishing conservation within the state,

WHEREAS, the Association of Illinois Soil and Water Conservation Districts recognizes that hosting this event during summer months presents certain limitations in engaging Illinois policymakers whose familiarity with and support is critical and intrinsically linked to the Soil and Water Conservation Districts of the state,

WHEREAS, the Association of Illinois Soil and Water Conservation Districts recognizes that hosting this event during winter months could provide for more opportunities to engage Illinois policymakers, as well as more SWCD Directors,

WHEREAS, the Association of Illinois Soil and Water Conservation Districts should always seek to explore ways in which to do things better, and strengthen relationships with stakeholder groups and policy makers, and

THEREFORE, be it resolved, the membership of the Association of Illinois Soil and Water Conservation Districts tasks the staff of the Association to explore through survey and other means the viability and desire to move the Annual Meeting & Summer Training Conference to a winter date, and present the governing Board of Directors with findings for potential implementation in the 2021 calendar year.

Potential Resolution Idea #2

WHEREAS, the Association of Illinois Soil and Water Conservation Districts has created a document that serves as a guide for Association governance and policies,

WHEREAS, the Association of Illinois Soil and Water Conservation Districts refers to this document as the Resolutions, Policy and Procedures Manual,

WHEREAS, the Association of Illinois Soil and Water Conservation Districts recognizes that this document is subordinate to the by-laws of the Association,

WHEREAS, the Association of Illinois Soil and Water Conservation Districts in creating this document has provided a guide to define the best practices, policies, and procedures of the Association,

WHEREAS, the Association of Illinois Soil and Water Conservation Districts realizes that this document can serve as an important guide to carry out the mission of the Association,

WHEREAS, the Association of Illinois Soil and Water Conservation Districts has over the course of time offered numerous additions and revisions to this document,

WHEREAS, the Association of Illinois Soil and Water Conservation Districts recognizes that in doing so, the document in present form contains numerous inconsistencies in matters of governance and policy,

WHEREAS, the Association of Illinois Soil and Water Conservation Districts recognizes the need to remove portions of the document no longer useful to the governance of the Association or its operations, and

THEREFORE, be it resolved, the membership of the Association of Illinois Soil and Water Conservation Districts tasks the staff of the Association to assess and provide a draft of the Resolutions, Policy, and Procedures Manual to the Board of Directors for possible adoption prior to the 2020 annual meeting of the Association.

Potential Resolution Idea #3

WHEREAS, the Association of Illinois Soil and Water Conservation Districts is a membership led organization charged with advocating and empowering its Soil and Water Conservation District members,

WHEREAS, the Association of Illinois Soil and Water Conservation Districts recognizes the individual county as the base unit of its governmental structure,

WHEREAS, the Association of Illinois Soil and Water Conservation Districts recognizes the Land Use Council, comprised of multiple counties, as another unit of its governmental structure,

WHEREAS, the Association of Illinois Soil and Water Conservation Districts recognizes regional Areas as yet another unit of its governmental structure,

WHEREAS, the Association of Illinois Soil and Water Conservation Districts is led by the locally elected leaders within these units of its governmental structure,

WHEREAS, the Association of Illinois Soil and Water Conservation Districts recognizes the need to appropriately document leadership changes resulting from elections and transitions, and

THEREFORE, be it resolved, the membership of the Association of Illinois Soil and Water Conservation Districts will require member districts to notify and transmit the results of council-level elections to the Association for purposes of documentation and outreach to new leaders.