



# MAGIC OF CONSERVATION

2024 Association of Illinois Soil and Water Conservation Districts  
*Annual Meeting & Summer Training Conference*

**July 14-16, 2024 | Springfield, IL**

At this year's event, we will celebrate the **MAGIC of Conservation** by sharing successes and embrace lessons learned so that we can move toward our shared goals of protecting Illinois' greatest assets—the rich, fertile soils and water resources of the state by making a greater individual commitment to the capacity, innovation, and partnerships needed to regenerate our land, water, and other natural resources.

The agenda will feature the latest ideas, technologies, practices, and foster a dialogue around their adoption. Scientists and practitioners will present their work at the field, farm, and watershed scales across an array of private and public arenas. Applications of social theories and examples of successful outreach and education will enable you to identify ways to scale up the magic of localized successes. As an attendee, you will also hear about policy and economic developments that build a framework to increase conservation adoption and support future generations.

Ample time will be provided outside of the formal program, for you to reconnect with colleagues and engage discussions!

**Sunday, July 14 (starting at 5:00 pm at the Crowne Plaza)**

The AISWCD Summer Training and Conference will kick off with a good old fashion shindig often celebrated in rural communities. Your evening will resemble a small-town celebration in which guests can reconnect with friends, enjoy drinks, and boogie on the dance floor with Sista & The Mistres while building up an appetite for the delights of the Pork Pop-Up buffet. Perhaps we Conservationists are just a big bunch of dreamers who have created something unique — a gathering that celebrates

***Making A Greater Individual Commitment to Conservation!***

Our MAGIC welcoming celebration will highlight the Illinois Leopold Conservation Award and its 2024 finalists. The Illinois Leopold Conservation Award is an award program that recognizes private landowners in Illinois for their voluntary conservation efforts. The award is named after Aldo Leopold, a well-known conservationist who wrote about land ethics in his 1949 book, *A Sand County Almanac*. The award recognizes landowners who:

- Demonstrate how to improve land health while still producing food and fiber
- Inspire others with their dedication to environmental improvement
- Manage soil health, water quality, and wildlife habitat on their working land

***Presenting Partners include Illinois Pork Association, AFT, NREC Working Agenda***

Monday, July 15	Time	Location	Speaker
<b>Conference Registration</b>	7:00 am -	Lobby Level	
<b>Breakfast and Morning Vespers</b> Presenting Partners: IL Soybean Assoc. and IL Corn Growers Assoc.	7:00 am - 8:30 am	Plaza E & F	
<b>Partner Exhibition Showcase</b>	8:00 am -	Plaza G & H Foyer	
<b>Opening Ceremony: Magic of Conservation</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Presentation of Colors</li> <li>National Anthem/Pledge</li> <li>Blessing of Conservation</li> <li>President Welcome</li> <li>Conference Chair Welcome</li> <li>Keynote Address: <i>The Magic of Inspiration</i></li> <li>MAGIC of Partnerships: Partner Greetings</li> <li>Exhibitor Introduction</li> </ul>	8:30 am - 10:00 am	Plaza G & H	Keynote: Mitch Williams
<b>Auxiliary Snack Shop and Coffee/Beverage Center Open</b>		Plaza G & H Foyer	
<b>MAGIC Talks: Climate Conversations Pathways to Action</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Shifting Climate across Illinois</li> <li>Extensions new climate initiative: Engaging Communities</li> </ul>	10:00 am – 11:00 am	Plaza G & H	Dr. Trent Ford Duane Friend
<b>Auxiliary Snack Shop and Coffee/Beverage Center Open</b> <b>Presenting Partners: Auxiliary, NREC, IEC, AFT</b>		Plaza G & H Foyer	
<b>Breakout Session: Stakeholder MAGIC (Choose two of four to attend)</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Producer Led Watershed Programming</li> <li>Conservation Practice Financial Incentive Program Panel</li> <li>Smart Solar</li> <li>Community Based Farming and NACD Urban Ag Grant Program</li> </ul>	11:00 am – 11:25 am  11:30 am - noon	Plaza A Plaza B Plaza C Plaza D	AFT Team TBA TBA District Panel
<b>Award Luncheon: Hosted by Rita Frazer</b> <b>Presenting Partner: IL Dept of Agriculture, IL Farm Bureau, NREC</b>	Noon – 1:30 pm	Plaza E & F	
<b>Breakout Sessions: District MAGIC (Choose two of four to attend)</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Expanding SWCD Audiences and Funding</li> <li>The MAGIC of Grassroots &amp; Grassstops Building</li> <li>Communicating the MAGIC of Conservation</li> <li>Attracting, training and retaining the MAGIC of Staff</li> </ul>	1:30 pm – 2:10 pm  2:15 pm – 2:55 pm	Plaza A Plaza B Plaza C Plaza D	Michael Woods Liz Rupel/Liz Stelk TBA TBA
<b>Auxiliary Snack Shop and Coffee/Beverage Center Open</b> <b>Presenting Partners: Auxiliary, NREC, AFT</b>		Plaza G & H Foyer	
<b>MAGIC Talks: New Crops, New Uses, New Markets</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Kegs4Conservation</li> <li>From Field to Keg</li> </ul>	3:00 pm - 4:00 pm	Plaza E & F	Charlie Cole Matt Riggs
<b>Cocktail Reception</b> Presenting partner: Illinois Sustainable Ag Partnership	4:00 pm - 5:30 pm	Plaza E & F and Plaza G & H Foyer	
<b>Conservation Farm Family Banquet</b> Presenting Partners: Illinois Beef Association, NREC, NRCS	5:30 pm	Plaza G & H	Hosted by Cindy Young
<b>Auction and Fellowship</b>	Following Banquet	Plaza G & H	Brent Miller

Tuesday, July 16	Time	Location
Conference Registration	7:00 am -	Conference Registration Desk Lobby Level
Breakfast Presenting Partners: IL Soybean Assoc. and IL Corn Growers Assoc.	7:00 am - 8:30 am	Plaza E & F
Partner Exhibition Showcase	Opens at 8:00 am	Plaza G & H Foyer
Director Forum/Resolution Committee Meeting	8:30 am - 10:00 am	Plaza G & H
Employee Forum and ISWCDEA meeting	8:30 am - noon	Plaza A & B
Illinois NRCS Leadership Meeting	8:30 am – Noon	Plaza C & D
<b>Beverage Center Open</b> <b>Presenting Partner: Toxell and Marathon Petroleum</b>	8:00 am – Noon	Plaza G & H Foyer
76 <sup>th</sup> Annual Business Meeting	10:00 am - Noon	Plaza G & H
Foundation Board Meeting	Immediately following board meeting	Plaza G & H
Depart		