STATE of ILLINOIS

PAT QUINN, GOVERNOR

DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

THOMAS E. JENNINGS, DIRECTOR

ILLINOIS CONSERVATION PARTNERSHIP ANNUAL REPORT 2009

Illinois Department of Agriculture

BUREAU OF LAND AND WATER RESOURCES

Illinois Department of Agriculture

Pat Quinn, Governor
Thomas E. Jennings, Director

Office of the Director
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Dear Friend:

In challenging times it is even more important to work as a team to accomplish our goals. This is especially true when it comes to protecting our soil and water resources. A strong agriculture in Illinois has always depended upon caring for the resource base, our land and water.

When it comes to a partnership working together to achieve the common goal of soil and water conservation, there is no other state that can match the partnership here in Illinois. The dedicated staff of all our partners, as well as the dedicated landowners/farmers who implement the conservation practices on their farms, are the reasons Illinois remains one of the top producers of food and fiber in the United States.

Illinois' 98 Soil and Water Conservation Districts play a key role in the delivery of the Department's conservation programs to Illinois' agricultural and urban communities. Working in partnership with federal agency staff, local governments, universities, private industry and conservation organizations, the Department will continue its partnership with Soil and Water Conservation Districts and the vital work they do to put conservation practices on the ground.

This report provides a snapshot of the soil and water conservation program accomplishments of our partners over the past year. I urge you to read about the tremendous diversity and scope of work being done and encourage you to take an active role in supporting these efforts.

If you have the occasion to work with your conservation professionals this coming year, please extend a thank you for the important role they play in protecting our natural resources. As Director of the Illinois Department of Agriculture, I am looking forward to strengthening the partnership we have as we address the funding challenges and opportunities this coming year will bring.

Very truly yours,

ILLINOIS DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Thomas E. Jennings
Director

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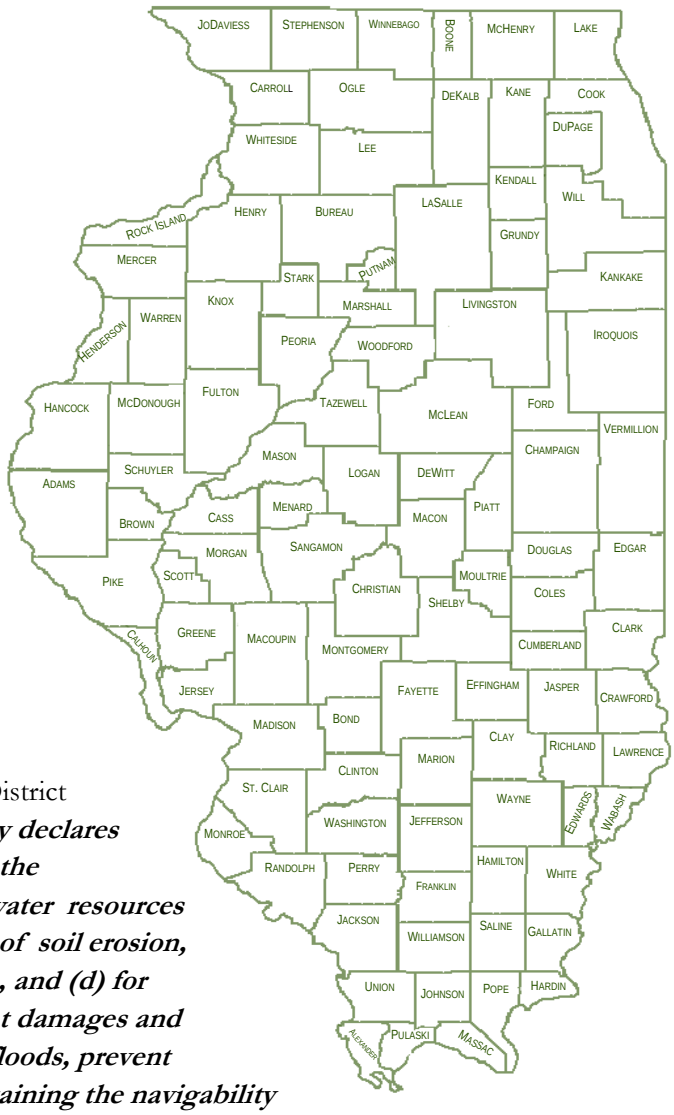
WELCOME / INTRODUCTION

Information has been compiled for the Illinois Conservation Partnership Annual Report from programs carried out in 2009. Partners include the Illinois Department of Agriculture, Bureau of Land and Water Resources, Association of Illinois Soil and Water Conservation Districts, 98 county soil and water conservation districts, USDA – Natural Resources Conservation Service, Illinois Department of Natural Resources, Illinois Environmental Protection Agency and U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

Partner programs provide benefits in the areas of soil conservation and water quality in rural and urban communities, agricultural nutrient management, farmland protection, sustainable agriculture, carbon sequestration, wildlife habitat, and watershed planning and protection. Efforts also provide youth and adult environmental education and outreach, research and demonstration, and public information. Programs are generally directed to landowners and land managers using incentive based, voluntary approaches.

For more information on conservation programs and activities, contact your local soil and water conservation district.



> *"The wealth of Illinois lies in her soil and her future in its intelligent development"*
>
> *- Andrew S. Draper*

In 1937, the Illinois Soil and Water Conservation District Act was passed. It states, ***"The General Assembly declares it to be in the public interest to provide (a) for the conservation of soil, soil resources, water and water resources of this State, (b) for the control and prevention of soil erosion, (c) for the prevention of air and water pollution, and (d) for prevention of erosion, flood water and sediment damages and thereby to conserve natural resources, control floods, prevent impairment of dams, reservoirs, assist in maintaining the navigability of rivers and harbors, conserve wildlife and forests, protect the tax base, protect public lands and protect and promote the health, safety, and general welfare of the people of this State."***

ILLINOIS DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
BUREAU OF LAND AND WATER RESOURCES

The Bureau of Land and Water Resources implements the Department's natural resource conservation programs, including the Erosion and Sediment Control Program, the Soil and Water Conservation Districts Grants-In-Aid Program, the Partners for Conservation Fund (PFC) Program (formerly the Conservation-2000 Program), the Farmland Protection Program and the Mined Land Reclamation Program.

SWCD GRANTS-IN-AID

In Fiscal Year 2009, the BLWR distributed a little over $11 million in funds to Illinois' 98 Soil and Water Conservation Districts (SWCDs) for programs aimed at reducing soil loss, enhancing agricultural productivity and protecting water quality. The SWCDs provide valuable technical assistance to rural and urban customers on a variety of natural resource issues, such as soil conservation, water quality protection, nutrient management, wetlands management, flood control, soil erosion control at urban construction sites, stream bank stabilization, land use, site suitability, sustainable agriculture and conservation education.

PARTNERS FOR CONSERVATION

The Partners for Conservation Fund Program is a long-term, state-supported initiative to protect natural resources and enhance outdoor recreational opportunities throughout Illinois. Several state agencies share responsibility for the administration of the PFC. The Illinois Department of Agriculture oversees the agriculture resource enhancement portion of the program, consisting of sustainable agriculture grants, conservation practices cost-share, stream bank stabilization and restoration, water well decommissioning and nutrient management.

The following conservation projects were completed under the PFC in Fiscal Year 2009:

- *868 Conservation Structures*
- *44,874 Linear Feet of Stream Bank Stabilization*
- *16 Sustainable Agriculture Projects*
- *169 Water Well Decommissioning Projects*
- *107 Nutrient Management Plans Written*
- *89 Nutrient Management Plans Implemented*

The Department's nutrient management program provides incentives to eligible land users for implementing plans that help to minimize the transport of nutrients loads into surface and groundwater resources from agricultural practices. In addition, the BLWR used the services of SWCD employees certified for developing nutrient management plans, thereby saving taxpayer dollars.

FARMLAND PROTECTION

The BLWR also administers Illinois' farmland protection program under the auspices of the Illinois Farmland Preservation Act. In accordance with the Act, when state agency development projects (e.g., highways, airports, facility planning areas, enterprise zones, and wildlife habitat acquisition proposals) will lead to the conversion of farmland to non agricultural uses, the sponsoring agency is required to provide written notice to the Department of Agriculture.

The Department works with the sponsoring agency to minimize the anticipated farmland conversion impacts that will be generated by the proposed project. During the year, 315 projects were reviewed for compliance with the Farmland Preservation Act.

The BLWR continued to work with various utility companies on large pipelines that affected agricultural land. Specifically, the BLWR worked with Rockies Express Pipeline LLC and assisted landowners regarding the restoration of agricultural land impacted by the construction of a 42-inch natural gas pipeline project across Illinois. The new pipeline, in its entirety, was constructed across Missouri, Illinois, Indiana and Ohio and went into service in late 2009, but post-construction activities relating to land restoration continued. The BLWR also continued to work with Enbridge Pipeline LLC on mitigating impacts to agriculture on the construction of a new 38-inch crude oil pipeline across Illinois.

The BLWR also provided technical assistance to landowners and local units of government wishing to develop farmland protection programs. Since most projects that convert agricultural land constitute private sector actions, local farmland protection programs are critical to farmland protection success across Illinois. Specifically, the Department assists with the development of Land Evaluation and Site Assessment Systems (LESA) and Agricultural Areas under the Agricultural Areas Conservation and Protection Act, both of which can help to guide non agricultural development in a manner that protects farmland from needless conversion. There are a total of 38 approved county LESA Systems and 57 Agricultural Areas in 23 counties throughout Illinois with 118,539 acres.

MINED LAND RECLAMATION

As provided by an agreement with the Illinois Department of Natural Resources-Office of Mines and Minerals, the BLWR reviews coal mining permit applications to help facilitate the reclamation of agricultural land affected by coal mining operations. The Department also tests crop yields at reclaimed agricultural land sites to ensure that pre-mining productivity levels have been restored. A total of 8 coal mine permit applications were reviewed and 4,397 acres of reclaimed ground were tested for crop yield success.

COMMUNITY GARDEN

The Community Garden was sponsored by the Illinois Department of Agriculture, University of Illinois Extension, Illinois State University, Komnick Excavating, Jacksonville FFA and Walmart. It was located in the interior of the mile race track on the state fairgrounds. The Department initially offered the opportunity for gardeners to obtain up to two 12 foot x 12 foot plots for $10 each to use for the season. The Department supplied over 2,000 seed samples for gardeners' use, the needed water, 25 tons of compost, straw for mulch and hand tools to help contribute to the success of the garden.

The Community Garden officially opened on May 19, 2009. There were a total of 121 plots requested by 84 gardeners. Many of the gardeners signed up for the Plant a Row for the Hungry Program. The most exciting aspect of the garden has been the community spirit and cooperation demonstrated by many of the gardeners sharing seeds and tools, helping others with their plots when they experienced physical problems, and teaching and information sharing from Master Gardeners and other experienced gardeners. Another inspiring outcome was multiple generations of families working and learning together for a positive outcome and seeing the rewards of their efforts in the food that was produced. The Community Garden had many visitors throughout the year from individuals and groups including high school agriculture teachers, FFA groups, America in Bloom, Springfield Visitors Bureau, Springfield Channel 20, the Master Gardener's Garden Walk and participants of the 5th National Small Farm Conference.

EDUCATION

Education is an important component of all of the Department's programs and the services offered to constituents. When discussing education, it is often assumed that educational programs are designed exclusively for youth. Actually, the Department offers programs to all Illinois citizens.

The Department's Henry White Experimental Farm, near Belleville, offers numerous education opportunities. The farm essentially serves as an outdoor laboratory for sustainable agriculture and the conservation of natural resources in general. The farm has 94 acres containing agricultural crops, wetlands, evergreen and deciduous groves, restored prairie and wildlife habitat. Research conducted on the farm involves conservation projects for corn and soybeans, prairie, wetlands and woodlands. Sixty-five of the farm's 94 acres are devoted to the cultivation of crops, mainly corn and soybeans, which demonstrate various sustainable agriculture practices. In addition to providing valuable research information for farmers, the site also hosts an annual field day event where specialists explain how practices showcased at the farm benefit the environment. At the September 12, 2009 annual field day, roughly 178 individuals attended the event.

The Bureau provides public educational opportunities at Watershed Park, located at the Illinois State Fairgrounds. Watershed Park is an interactive educational exhibit on water quality protection. Featured in the park are numerous exhibit stations where the public learns about water quality issues in a watershed. Watershed Park is open during the Illinois State Fair and by appointment at other times during the year. In 2009 there were 2,969 individuals that visited Watershed Park.

In February of 2009, the Department conducted three Regional Conservation Tillage Seminars around Illinois in cooperation with the 98 local Soil and Water Conservation Districts, University of Illinois Extension and the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service. These seminars provide practical information that farmers can apply to farming practices to not only protect the environment, but to also enhance profitability.

ILLINOIS SOIL CONSERVATION TRANSECT SURVEY SUMMARY

Results of the 12th statewide Soil Conservation Transect Survey conducted in the spring and early summer of 2009 indicate Illinois producers are continuing to manage their cropland to minimize soil erosion. The survey, initiated by the Illinois Department of Agriculture (IDOA), involved Illinois' 98 Soil and Water Conservation Districts (SWCDs), and the U.S. Department of Agriculture Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS). The survey measures progress in reducing soil erosion to "T" or tolerable soil loss levels statewide. The tolerable soil loss for most soils is between 3 and 5 tons per acre per year. This is the amount of soil loss that can theoretically occur and be replaced by natural soil-building processes. Reducing soil loss to "T" is essential to maintaining the long-term agricultural productivity of the soil and to protecting water resources from sedimentation due to soil erosion.

The Transect Survey provides a snapshot of the current status of soil conservation efforts in Illinois. Survey results provide data on the presence of conservation practices in each county and an estimate of remaining land treatment needs. Information on tillage systems and crop residue amounts is collected at more than 50,000 points across the state. Surveyors collect data on sheet/rill and ephemeral soil erosion.

After the survey is completed for each of the 100 counties in Illinois that conduct a cropland survey, the data is sent to the IDOA for analysis. Data for each county and the entire state is available on soil loss relative to "T", the presence of ephemeral erosion and tillage systems used to plant crops.

2009 Transect Survey results show 85.4% of the points surveyed were at or below "T" and also show a positive trend in reducing soil erosion on cropland to "T" levels. The first Transect Survey in 1994 estimated 74.1% of the points surveyed were meeting "T". The 2009 results indicate that 14.6% of the points surveyed were exceeding "T" levels, about the same result as the 2000 survey, see Table 1.

TABLE 1

RELATIVE SOIL LOSS BY "T" VALUE

YEAR	< "T"	1-2 "T"	>2 "T"	UNKNOWN
2009	85.4	10.2	4.4	0
2006*	85.8	10.2	4.0	0
2004*	84.9	10.7	4.4	0
2002*	85.0	10.8	4.2	0
2001*	85.0	10.6	4.1	0.3
2000*	85.7	10.4	3.6	0.3
1999*	85.7	10.5	3.6	0.2
1998*	86.5	9.9	3.4	0.2
1997*	86.2	9.8	3.7	0.3
1996	76.2	14.8	6.4	2.6
1995	76.7	15.3	6.3	1.7
1994	74.1	16.7	7.1	2.1

PERCENT OF POINTS SURVEYED WITH RELATIVE SOIL LOSS BY "T" VALUES FROM 1994 THRU 2009.

*THE REVISED UNIVERSAL SOIL LOSS EQUATION (RUSLE) WAS USED TO ESTIMATE SOIL LOSS.

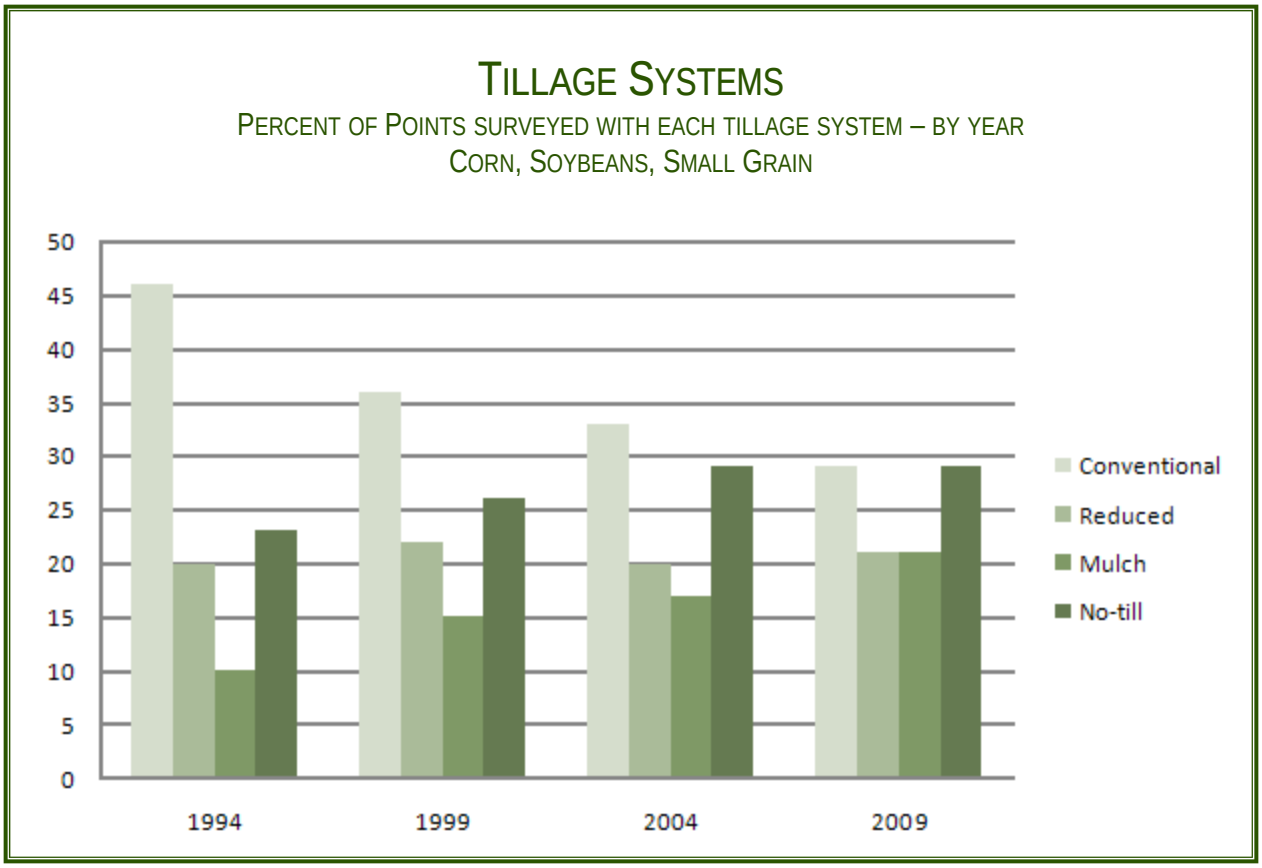
The survey also provides information on tillage systems used in planting corn and soybean crops in the spring and small grain crops in the fall.

Although the amount of no-till soybeans decreased for the first year since the survey was conducted in 1994, like corn, more soybeans were planted by mulch till than in 2006. When the acres of mulch and no-till are added together, a total 71% of the beans in 2009 were planted to a tillage system that leaves more than 30% residue, which is the definition of a conservation tillage system.

Since 1995, surveyors have collected data on ephemeral or gully erosion in surveyed fields. Surveyors identify fields in which ephemeral erosion has occurred or is likely to occur in areas of concentrated surface water flow. This type of erosion requires structural conservation practices, such as grassed waterways, in addition to tillage or other cultural erosion control practices. The 2009 survey recorded 20.6% of the fields experiencing ephemeral erosion, which was 4% less than the 2006.

Summary

Data received from this survey will assist in planning future conservation efforts. This information will be vital in helping Illinois' goal of reducing soil erosion and sedimentation and improving water quality to the extent possible. Additional information can be obtained by contacting the Illinois Department of Agriculture Bureau of Land and Water Resources or the local Soil and Water Conservation District.



PARTNERS FOR CONSERVATION FUND PROGRAM

The Partners for Conservation Fund Program (PFC) is a long-term, state-supported initiative to protect natural resources and enhance outdoor recreational opportunities throughout Illinois. Several state agencies share responsibility for the administration of the PFC. The Illinois Department of Agriculture oversees the agriculture resource enhancement portion of the program, consisting of sustainable agriculture grants, conservation practices cost-share, stream bank stabilization and restoration, water well decommissioning and nutrient management.

The Legislature appropriated $7,212,500 in FY 2007 for the Agriculture Resource Enhancement component of C-2000. These funds are allocated to SWCDs through the Illinois Department of Agriculture's Bureau of Land and Water Resources. SWCDs promote the cost share programs and along with the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) staff, provide technical assistance to landowners and managers. Assistance includes site inventorying, conservation planning, surveying, as well as design and practice layout. SWCDs prioritize cost share applications based on conservation benefits to include cost/benefit considerations. The following provides a description of the PFC components.

The **Conservation Practices Program** assists land users with sheet and rill erosion exceeding "T" (tolerable soil loss level) or with ephemeral/gully erosion with the construction of conservation practices which help conserve soil, protect water quality and reduce flooding. Practices eligible include No-Till / Strip-Till, Contour Farming Establishment, Contour Buffer Strip Establishment, Cover Crops, Temporary Cover, Critical Area Planting, Filter Strips, Diversion, Grade Stabilization Structures, Grassed Waterways, Pasture and Hayland Planting, Contour Strip Cropping, Terraces, and Water and Sediment Control Basins. Structural practices have a cost share rate of 60%, with agronomic practices cost shared on a cost per acre basis. Local SWCDs may have varying priorities and rates for certain practices.

130,780 TONS =
5,200 LOADED SEMI TRACTOR TRAILERS

130,780 tons is the amount of soil that was saved in 2007 from the assistance of the ESC program. This soil savings will continue in the future.

The **Nutrient Management Program** (NMP) provides incentives to eligible land users for nutrient management projects that minimize the transport of nutrient and pollutant load to surface and groundwater. Projects include soil testing, developing a nutrient management plan and implementing the plan for four years. SWCDs prioritize applications while considering geographic location, watersheds and soils. Technical Service Providers or SWCD staff may write the plans. Benefits may include a reduction in nutrients leaving the farm into nearby waters, better utilization of nutrients, a reduction in input costs and, in some cases, increased yields.

The **Well Decommissioning Program** (WDP) provides incentives to owners of abandoned water wells to properly decommission and seal the wells to reduce or eliminate the potential for groundwater pollution. Abandoned wells also pose health and safety concerns. Cost share dollars are available at a 60% cost share rate, not to exceed $400 per well. SWCDs prioritize applications based on the risk potential posed by the well. Wells must be sealed according to applicable standards set forth by the local health department.

SUMMARY OF ACCOMPLISHMENTS

A total of $3,821,810.92 from the PFC program was spent on ESC, NMP and WDP during July 1, 2007 through December 31, 2009. The accomplishments for these components of the PFC Program are shown in Table 2. In addition to the state's cost for installing these practices, the remaining 40% of the cost of most practices were provided by the landowner. Projects were completed in 95 Illinois counties.

The practices installed through the ESC benefited a total of 15,424 acres. Soil loss on these acres has been reduced to the tolerable soil loss level, saving soil productivity and protecting water quality. The average soil loss reduction per project was 7.48 tons/acre/year. The average cost to the state for reducing soil loss to tolerable levels was $225.13/acre. The cost to the state for soil saved was $28.90/ton.

Through the NMP, a total of $11,376.86 of PFC funding was distributed to Technical Service Providers for developing 126 nutrient management plans covering more than 5,777 acres. In addition to the new plans that were written, a total of 123 plans were implemented by producers on 5,488 acres. The total incentive payments paid to producers for implementing these plans was $43,271.32

The producers that implemented these plans reduced their average per acre application of fertilizer by 30 pounds of nitrogen, 28 pounds of phosphorous and 26 pounds of potassium. While the reductions in fertilizer applied to the land saved the producer an average of $36 per acre, the pollutant loading in waterbodies was also reduced.

PARTNERS FOR CONSERVATION FUND PROGRAM RESOURCE ENHANCEMENT COMPONENTS	FY2007 DOLLARS
Erosion & Sediment Control, Nutrient Management and Well Decommissioning Programs	3,821,810
Soil and Water Conservation District Grants	2,340,823
Sustainable Agriculture Grant Program	287,500
Streambank Stabilization and Restoration Program	762,367
TOTAL	***7,212,500***

TABLE 2

FY 2007
Partners for Conservation Fund Program

July 1, 2007– Dec 31, 2009

CONSERVATION PRACTICE	PROJECTS	ACRES BENEFITED	TONS SAVED	SEDIMENT REDUCTION	$/ACRE	$/TONS	CLAIMS SUMMARY *
COVER & GREEN MANURE CROP	6	130	954	255	9.01	1.23	1,172.00
CRITICAL AREA PLANTING	27	226	1,552	426	101.67	14.80	22,978.41
DIVERSION	23	324	411	110	71.75	56.56	23,248.50
GRADE STABILIZATION STRUCTURE	202	5120	6,426	1,729	80.42	60.57	411,770.97
GRASSED WATERWAY	477	20,530	36,723	10,007	61.77	34.53	1,268,167.26
RESIDUE MANAGEMENT	153	7,595	34,419	9,423	4.14	0.91	31,459.76
PASTURELAND AND HAYLAND PLANTING	100	1246	11,894	3,290	147.40	12.97	154,333.11
TEMPORARY COVER	28	93	320	87	144.22	41.91	13,412.46
TERRACES (VEGETATIVE OUTLET)	126	6,837	9,444	3,336	61.98	44.87	423,787.87
WATER & SEDIMENT CONTROL BASINS	463	13,250	28,637	8,723	102.69	47.51	1,360,634.03
TOTAL	1,605	55,351	130,780	37,386	$67.04	$28.37	$3,710,964.37

*** The Claims Summary** represents total cost share dollars spent for practices.

Additionally, for most practices landowners contribute a minimum of 40% of the total cost of projects.

STREAMBANK STABILIZATION & RESORATION PROGRAM

Streambank erosion is a natural process in all streams as water wears away the soil and rock that form their banks. Streams naturally and slowly establish a meandering course. Streambank erosion in Illinois has, however, been accelerated by land altering activities such as stream channelization and straightening, removal of stream side vegetation, construction of impervious surfaces and other activities that increase water flow and water velocity.

Streambank erosion is a serious threat to the land, water, plant and animal resources along many streams in Illinois. Streambank erosion can be contributed to loss or damage to valuable farmland, wildlife habitat, buildings, roads, bridges and other public and private structures and property. Streambank erosion is a major source of sediments deposited in Illinois lakes, streams and backwater areas. It may contribute to as much as 30-60% of the downstream sediment load. Sediment reduces stream channel capacity which may increase flooding and streambank erosion and reduce the depth and holding capacity of lakes and reservoirs.

The Streambank Stabilization and Restoration Program (SSRP) has three primary objectives.

1. *Distribute education materials on the affects of streambank erosion along with the practices available to stabilize the erosion through SSRP.*
2. *Provide funding to construct effective, low-cost practices, such as rock riffles, stream barbs or stone toe protection at suitable locations.*
3. *Provide technical assistance to landowners interested in stabilizing an eroding streambank*.

The program provided cost-share funding assistance to qualified Illinois landowners for stabilizing or restoring severely eroding streambanks.

In FY 2007, $726,000 was appropriated through the Illinois Department of Agriculture (IDOA) for SSRP. Streambank stabilization practices constructed with FY 2007 cost-share funds included bendway weirs, rock riffles, stream barbs, stone toe protection and vegetative techniques.

Cost-sharing for all eligible and approved construction expenses was 75%. The remaining 25% was the obligation of the landowner. Table 3, on pages 14 through 16 shows a summary of streambank projects completed with FY 2007 funds.

THESE ARE BEFORE AND AFTER PHOTOS OF AN ADAMS COUNTY STREAMBANK STABILIZATION PROJECT.

The photo above shows major erosion along the bank resulting in loss of valuable land.

The photo above shows the same site after stone toe protection was installed for bank stabilization.

TABLE 3

STREAMBANK STABILIZATION & RESTORATION PROGRAM

SUMMARY OF PROJECTS COMPLETED

COUNTY SWCD	STREAM SEGMENT	COST-SHARE	LINEAR FT OF BANK TREATED	SEDIMENT (Tons)	NITROGEN (lbs.)	PHOSPHORUS (lbs.)
Adams	Beebe Creek	$4,245	250	85	170	85
Adams	Beebe Creek	$2,208	110	28	56	28
Adams	Tributary Pigeon Creek	$6,098	360	168	337	167
Adams	Tributary McCraney Creek	$3,116	157	45	90	45
Adams	Mill Creek	$8,745	1200	567	964	482
Adams	Walker Branch	$3,473	350	119	238	119
Adams	Mill Creek	$4,755	500	85	170	85
Bond	Hurricane Creek	$3,622	175	16	33	16
Brown	Keyes Creek	$3,471	230	16	31	16
Bureau	Master Creek	$12,735	550	58	117	58
Bureau	Dugosh Creek	$6,265	360	61	122	61
Bureau	East Bureau Creek	$3,952	250	16	27	13
Bureau	Crow Creek West	$5,079	220	5	9	5
Calhoun	Kampsville Hollow Drainage	$4,959	900	34	69	34
Clark	Tributary Mill Creek	$13,698	760	39	78	39
Cumberland	Webster Creek	$7,087	400	48	95	48
Douglas	N/A	$2,704	125	13	26	13
Edwards	French Creek	$21,736	2000	213	425	215
Effingham	Salt Creek	$16,748	925	27	54	27
Fulton	Stuart Creek	$3,386	175	48	95	48
Fulton	Stuart Creek	$2,539	100	27	54	27
Gallatin	Weber Creek	$5,250	300	80	153	80
Henderson	Ellison Creek	$16,995	500	3000	6000	3000
Jackson	Cox Creek	$14,906	1818	139	278	139

CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE

COUNTY SWCD	STREAM SEGMENT	COST-SHARE	LINEAR FT OF BANK TREATED	SEDIMENT (Tons)	NITROGEN (lbs.)	PHOSPHORUS (lbs.)
Jackson	Cox Creek	$7,584	475	202	404	202
Jasper	Embarrass Tributary	$6,866	162	79	181	90
JoDaviess	Plum River	$18,734	775	148	296	148
JoDaviess	Irish Hollow Creek	$6,562	250	32	64	32
JoDaviess	Unnamed	$4,936.00	450	57	115	57
JoDaviess	Davis Creek	$25,805	2750	146	292	146
JoDaviess	Fork Plum River	$4,213	175	56	112	56
JoDaviess	Little Rush Creek	$9,159	686	93	187	93
JoDaviess	Plum River	$6,051	388	33	66	33
JoDaviess	Plum River	$2,922	187	16	32	16
JoDaviess	Tributary of Hells Creek	$5,400	750	32	64	32
JoDaviess	Irish Hollow Creek	$16,853	2275	232	464	232
JoDaviess	Tributary Rush Creek	$3,265	300	19	38	19
JoDaviess	Mud Run Creek	$16,504	2816	239	479	239
JoDaviess	Tributary E Frk Galen	$4,273	525	56	112	56
JoDaviess	Rush Creek	$23,012	1475	157	313	157
JoDaviess	Rush Creek	$0.00	240	41	82	41
JoDaviess	Camp Creek	$10,633	165	11	21	11
JoDaviess	Camp Creek	$0.00	365	39	78	39
Kane-DuPage	Ferson Creek	$1,780	40	5	9	5
Kendall	N/A	$1,589	100	5	9	5
LaSalle	Little Indian Creek	$4,687	250	15	29	15
Macoupin	Wood River Creek	$6,435	300	249	497	249
Madison	N/A	$4,515	172	197	395	197
Madison	Rocky Branch	$4,849	275	35	70	35
Massac	Clifty Creek Ditch	$9,444	1571	60	120	60
Massac	Clifty Creek Ditch	$9,148	1571	60	120	60
Massac	Weaver Creek	$4,473	250	19	37	19
McDonough	E Fork Lamoine	$9,428	600	71	143	71
McDonough	Kepple Creek	$23,231	4200	166	322	166

CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE

COUNTY SWCD	STREAM SEGMENT	COST-SHARE	LINEAR FT OF BANK TREATED	SEDIMENT (Tons)	NITROGEN (lbs.)	PHOSPHORUS (lbs.)
McLean	Sugar Creek	$30,377	1200	1530	3060	1530
Menard	Rock Creek	$12,002	1030	175	350	175
Peoria	Kickapoo Creek	$9,810	450	96	191	96
Pike	Spring Creek	$2,235	270	20	40	20
Pike	Blue Creek	$3,900	700	180	361	180
Pulaski-Alexander	Sexton Creek	$9,047	500	638	1275	638
Randolph	Dry Creek	$5,158	300	26	51	26
Richland	Tributary to Bonpas	$4,049	220	7	14	7
Richland	N/A	$3,778	578	18	37	18
Rock Island	Hills Creek	$1,968	75	5	10	5
Rock Island	Fancy Creek	$5,991	4625	59	118	59
Rock Island	Marty Creek	$11,987	560	167	333	167
Rock Island	Coal Creek	$5,200	200	136	272	136
Rock Island	Copperas Creek	$3,814	85	33	65	33
Rock Island	Copperas Creek	$11,444	2000	298	595	298
Saline	Long Branch	$22,987	2600	416	832	416
Shelby	Richland Creek	$19,060	1100	187	374	187
Stark	Indian Creek	$7,875	350	56	112	56
Stephenson	Rock Run Creek	$5,400	300	51	102	51
Stephenson	Honey Creek	$17,114	950	129	258	129
Tazewell	Mackinaw River	$9,257	0	0	0	0
Tazewell	Mackinaw River	$6,925	900	344	689	344
Tazewell	Mackinaw River	$15,780	700	238	476	238
Tazewell	Mackinaw River	$8,355	466	100	200	100
Union	Big Creek	$12,772	750	77	153	77
Union	Big Creek	$22,228	850	173	347	173
Union	Dutch Creek	$5,206	450	18	36	18
Union	Dutch Creek	$5,206	450	18	36	18
Warren	S Henderson Creek	$4,814	350	12	23	12
Warren	S Henderson Creek	$5,777	400	13	27	13
Whiteside	Woodland Creek	$6,525	400	9	18	9
Williamson	Little Saline Creek	$10,944	750	128	255	128
Williamson	Tributary South Fork	$5,625	325	24	32	24
TOTAL			63,967	10,870	21,678	10,870

WATERSHED PARK

Watershed Park is an interactive and educational exhibit on water protection. Approximately one acre in size, Watershed Park is located on the Illinois State Fairgrounds.

Featured in the park are thirteen exhibit stations where the public can learn about water quality issues in a watershed. Soil conservation, urban stormwater management, farm and home health and safety, integrated pest management, streambank protection, pasture management, wetlands and wildlife are among the topics covered.

As visitors walk through the exhibits, they can enjoy the flowing stream, benches and drinking water. The park is open during the State Fair, during special events such as Earth Stewardship Day and to school groups during the year.

In 2009, Watershed Park was closed for part of the summer undergoing stream repair and maintenance. It was reopened for 8 days and we hosted 2,969 visitors during the Illinois State Fair. During the Fair additional activities are set up and volunteers from SWCDs, NRCS, IEPA, U of I and others generously donate their time and expertise to help educate the public on protecting water quality.

One of the new additions to the Park during 2009 was the installation of a pervious pavement area. Pervious pavement is used on sidewalks, parking lots and other areas to allow water to soak into the ground through the pavement. This helps to reduce runoff into storm drains and reduce potential flooding.

The Department broke ground on May 3, 2001 to build Watershed Park. The Park opened on August 10, during the Illinois State Fair. The project is a cooperative effort between the ***Illinois Department of Agriculture*** and the ***Illinois Environmental Protection Agency***. Additional major sponsors of the project include: the ***University of Illinois, Illinois Soil and Water Conservation Districts, Partners for Agricultural Literacy, Archer Daniels Midland, Caterpillar, Monsanto and Syngenta.***

ILLINOIS URBAN PROJECT

The USEPA and the Illinois EPA have awarded the AISWCD a grant to update the Illinois Urban Manual (IUM). This award provides financial assistance to update, or build from scratch, 29 practice standards designed to protect water quality and natural resources in urban areas.

The Illinois Urban Manual provides developers, engineers, and contractors guidance on how to best protect the environment during and after construction. The transformation of land from open areas to an urban landscape carries with it many environmental challenges. Among these challenges, soil erosion and increased impervious surfaces are two of the major concerns. The Illinois Urban Manual is the most widely used document to address these issues in the State. Since National Pollutant Discharge and Elimination System (NPDES) Phase II went into effect in 2003, requiring construction sites of 1 acre or more to have permitted erosion and sediment controls, conservation professionals have seen many successes and failures. The experience gained over time has led to the realization that the current version of the Illinois Urban Manual must be updated to include lessons learned and to develop standards for products that have recently been produced. It is the goal of the Illinois Urban Manual Steering Committee to address these issues and include standards that allow the use of new products without giving preference to specific brands. The broad range of organizations represented by the Illinois Urban Manual Technical and Steering Committees will bring about the fair consideration of these issues and technical accuracy of each standard. A key component of this process will be the coordination of these many professionals and the update process.

To aid the AISWCD with this project, EPA provided funding for one full time Urban Stormwater Specialist position. In addition to guiding and administrating the project, the Urban Stormwater Specialist provided other nonpoint source pollution prevention awareness activities. The Illinois Urban Manual update has been progressing and in the summer of 2010 the manual will see approximately four to six additional standards officially added.

Urban Erosion Control

Pictured above contractors install a turf reinforcement mat to prevent erosion in a concentrated flow area and improve the sheer stress of vegetation as it is established. Erosion control blankets can prevent erosion on steep slopes where high sheer stress is not a problem. Proper application of hydromulch means the difference between success and failure. The IUM lists specific criteria to prevent practices of all kinds from of being installed improperly.

MINED LAND RECLAMATION PROGRAM

Under the Surface Mining Control and Reclamation Act of 1977, the coal mining industry is required to replace prime farmland soils to their pre-mining productivity levels. The Illinois Department of Agriculture is responsible for assessing the productivity capacity of reclaimed mine land.

The Agricultural Lands Productivity Formula was adopted in 1986. The formula is used on prime farmland soils, high capability land soils and soils that do not meet the criteria for either prime or high capability lands. The formula produces a yield standard that coal mine operators must achieve as evidence that mined land has been restored to pre-mining productivity levels.

In 2009, IDOA, in cooperation with enumerators from the Illinois Agricultural Statistics Service, sampled 68 corn fields (1,587 acres), 39 soybean fields (733 acres), 54 wheat fields (965 acres) and 101 hay fields (1,041 acres) for a total of 4,326 acres sampled as part of the proof of pre-mining productivity process. Hay fields are normally sampled multiple times during the growing season, thus each hay cutting is not counted as additional acres.

IDOA also reviews new mine permit applications and revisions to existing permit applications that affect agriculture. Four permit applications and 5 permit revisions were reviewed in 2009.

Map highlights those counties that have mined land reclamation activities for fiscal year 2009.

Illinois Counties With Mined Land Reclamation Activities for 2009

FARMLAND CONVERSION REPORT

> *"The natural resources of Illinois - land, minerals, water and air – are both finite and fragile. In the absence of wise use and consistent management practices, these resources are threatened by irreversible damage or loss. Protection of Illinois' natural resources is essential to guard the public health, safety, and welfare, and to assure an adequate natural resources supply and quality for use and enjoyment by future generations."*
>
> Farmland Preservation Act, P.A. 82-945, § 5, effective August 19, 1982

Table 4 contains the Illinois Department of Agriculture's Fiscal Year 2009 Farmland Conversion Annual Report as mandated by the Farmland Preservation Act (505 ILCS 75/1 et seq.). The Farmland Preservation Act requires state agencies to consider farmland conversion in the planning and execution of their programs and projects.

The Illinois Department of Agriculture (IDOA) is authorized to administer this Act and to report annually to the Governor and General Assembly on the amount of farmland converted to non-agricultural uses as a result of state action. The Farmland Conversion Annual Report identifies the number of acres of land purchased, converted or possessing the potential to be converted from agricultural uses on a fiscal year basis.

This report does not reflect the total land converted by actions of state agencies during that fiscal year. Certain activities that converted agricultural land are exempt from the IDOA's review and, therefore, are exempt from farmland conversion reporting for purposes of the Farmland Preservation Act. The actual timing of the conversion is at the discretion of the state agency that has acquired the land or it may indirectly occur as a result of state agency regulatory functions.

Farmland Conversion

Copies of the Farmland Conversion Annual Report can be found on the IDOA website at www.agr.state.il.us/Environment/LandWater or for additional information, call the Bureau of Land and Water Resources at 217-782-6297.

TABLE 4

FY 2009 FARMLAND CONVERSION ANNUAL REPORT

Land Purchased or Affected Due to Actions of State Agencies

STATE AGENCY	TOTAL ACRES	CROPLAND	PATURE LAND	FOREST LAND	OTHER
CAPITAL DEVELOPMENT BOARD					
A. Schools	0				
B. Prisons	0				
COMMERCE AND ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITY					
A. DCEO/Community Development Grants	11 **	11 **			
B. Enterprise Zones	8,185	674	1,655	90	5,766
C. ILLINOIS *Opportunity Returns*	0				
ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY					
A. Facility Planning Area Boundary Changes	14,446**	14,446 **			
DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES					
A. Office of Mines and Minerals	0				
B. Office of Realty & Environmental Planning	1,635	398	247	407	583
C. Division of Grant Administration	964	503	63	254	144
DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION					
A. Division of Aeronautics	239 + (45)	156 + (37)		50	33 + (8)
B. Division of Highways	171	145	10	9	7
GOVERNOR'S OFFICE OF MANAGEMENT AND BUDGET	0				
ILLINOIS COMMERCE COMMISSION	879	729			150
DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE	0				
TOTAL ACRES	26,530 + (45)	17,062 + (37)	1,975	810	6,683 + (8)

( ) *Indicates acres of land purchased as permanent easements.*

* *Other includes old fields, urban land, water bodies, wetlands, brushland, prairie, farmsteads, mined land, abandoned railroad, embankments and ditches; use can be residential, commercial or industrial, etc.*

** *A break down by acres of cropland, pastureland, forestland and other land was not provided for this report.*

AGRICULTURAL AREAS SUMMARY

The Illinois Department of Agriculture is required to prepare an annual report on the location and size of all agricultural areas (also known as ag areas) created, modified or dissolved during the past year under the Agricultural Areas Conservation and Protection Act (505 ILCS 5/1).

There was a 120 acre decrease in ag areas as shown by the 2009 Summary of Agricultural Areas total acres in Table 5 below. The Putnam County Board was petitioned by landowners to remove one parcel from two separate ag areas. Their petitions were accepted.

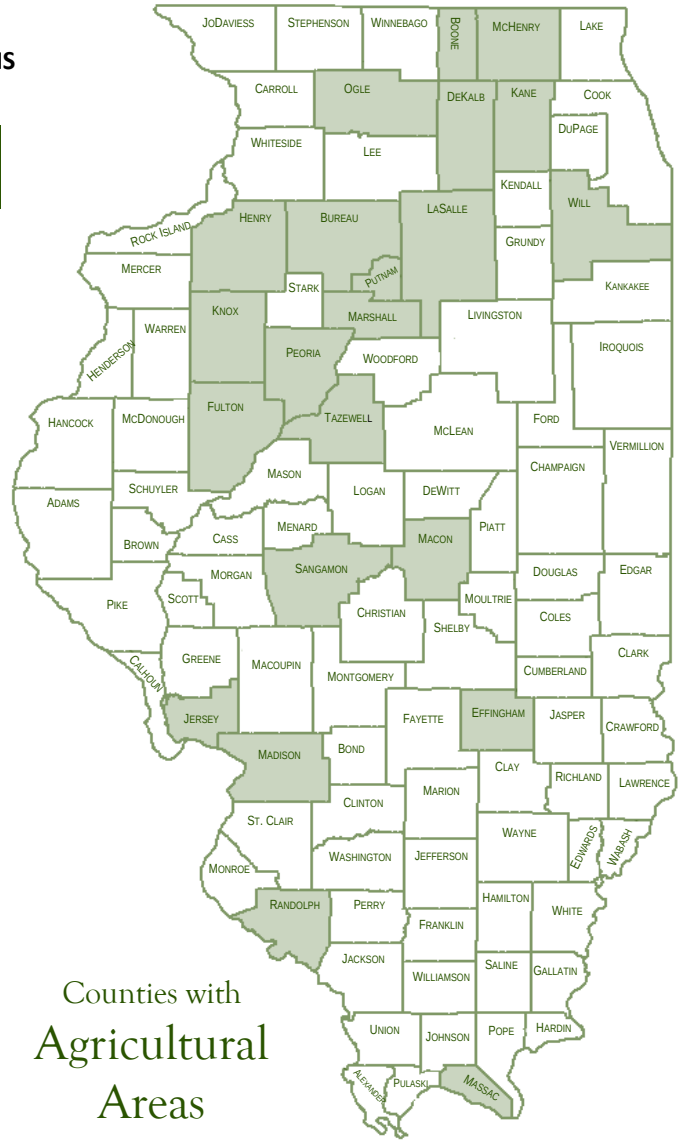
The Agricultural Areas Summary below lists the 22 counties with local county board approved ag areas. Table 5 itemizes the number of agricultural areas in participating counties, respective acres, and the total number of acres in approved ag areas throughout the state. Maps delineating the 55 ag areas can be obtained at IDOA's website www.agr.state.il.us/ Environment/LandWater

TABLE 5

SUMMARY OF AGRICULTURAL AREAS IN ILLINOIS

Calendar 2009

COUNTY	# OF AG AREAS	TOTAL ACRES
Boone	2	7,263
Bureau	2	3,931
DeKalb	1	710
Effingham	1	561
Fulton	1	1,915
Henry	8	22,735
Jersey	3	14,279
Kane	1	600
Knox	1	1,735
LaSalle	5	5,396
Macon	1	1,693
Madison	2	2,677
Marshall	5	5,414
Massac	2	3,699
McHenry	9	20,796
Ogle	1	429
Peoria	3	2,549
Putnam	3	7,208
Randolph	1	6,903
Sangamon	1	377
Tazewell	1	3,620
Will	1	469
Total	**55**	**114,959**



VEGETATIVE FILTER STRIP ASSESSMENT LAW

On January 1, 1997, the Vegetative Filter Strip Assessment Law (35 ILCS 200/10-152) gave Soil and Water Conservation Districts (SWCDs) the authority to certify property that meets the law requirements and to create a conservation plan for the strip area. These parcels are then eligible for a property tax reduction.

This report summarizes activities for calendar year 2009 and the period 1997-2009 as reported by SWCDs. It includes information reported to the General Assembly by March 1, 2010, as directed by the Act.

2009 Activities:

- 21 SWCDs providing Certification
- 157 Landowners Certified
- 207 Vegetative Filter Strips Certified
- 1322.8 Acres of Strips installed

SWCDs reported advertising the Act to landowners in one or more of the following ways:

- District Newsletter – 28 SWCDs
- Direct Mailings to Landowners - 10 SWCDs
- Media Promotion – 13 SWCDs
- One-On-One Landowner Contact - 52 SWCDs
- Other (listed below) – 9 SWCDs
  - *Website, GIS, Farm Service Agency*
  - *CRP Technicians Handout during enrollment*
  - *Gave information when enrolling filter strips*

ESTABLISHMENT OF VEGETATIVE FILTER STRIPS – PUBLIC ACT 89-606 1997-2009

	2009	2008	2007	2006	2005	2004	2003	2002-1997	TOTAL
SWCD CERTIFIED	21	20	24	28	33	48	51	356	581
OWNER CERTIFIED	157	318	143	236	554	740	496	5.627	8,627
FILTER STRIPS INSTALLED	207	317	280	361	672	990	758	8,704	12,289
ACRES INSTALLED	1,322.8	1,420.66	1,536.5	1,848.30	3,791.20	3,772.7	5711.3	54,213.3	73,619.76

VEGETATIVE FILTER STRIPS UNDER PUBLIC ACT 89-606 2009

SWCD	# of Landowners	# of Filter Strips	Acres	SWCD	# of Landowners	# of Filter Strips	Acres
Bureau	2	2	13.6	Knox	1	6	141.6
Calhoun	2	2	7.4	LaSalle	51	51	130
Clark	2	2	4.7	Logan	18	19	160.7
Coles	2	2	8	McLean	3	4	21.3
DeKalb	1	1	13.7	Sangamon	1	1	2
Ford	19	24	184	Stark	7	9	56.8
Franklin	1	2	28	Tazewell	2	4	13
Gallatin	4	4	25	Union	1	3	40.1
Grundy	19	44	111.7	Whiteside	1	3	18.3
Iroquois	10	11	21.7	Will-S. Cook	3	4	21.4
Johnson	7	9	299.8	**Grand Total**	**157**	**207**	**1322.8**

SUSTAINABLE AGRICULTURE PROGRAM

The purposes of the Illinois Sustainable Agriculture program listed in the 1990 Sustainable Agriculture Act:

"to identify Ag practices that maintain productivity and minimize environmental degradation; relate overland runoff, sediment transport, stream flow quality and quantity, and groundwater quality and quantity to specific Ag practices; integrate and coordinate experimental field and on -farm research and educational efforts of cooperating individuals, agencies, institutions, and organizations; test and refine alternative approaches to organizing and conducting on-farm research and demonstration projects; test the organizational approach of joint farmer specialist development of a computerized decision support system as an approach to fostering sustainable agriculture; Develop an expert system to identify what tillage and crop management system should be used in a particular field; test the usefulness of the existing conservation tillage knowledge base in making tillage system selection, implementation, and management decisions, and to identify the most critical needs for research and education programs related to sustainable agriculture. "

Sustainable Agriculture Grants funded the following competitive projects in FY09 totaling $218,875.

On-Farm Research and Demonstration

Growing Home's Urban Organic Garden; and Fuels and Power from Miscanthus.

Education/Outreach

Central Illinois Farm Beginnings; Stateline Farm Beginnings; Sustainable Agriculture For K–12th Grade Teachers; Farm Connections-Community Gardens in the St Louis Area; and Ag in the Classroom.

University Research

Sustainable Vegetable Crop Production Using Earthworm Castings and Animal Manure Composts; Environmental Effects of Liquid Swine Manure Applications to Non-Corn Crops; and Use of Biochar as a Soil Amendment.

The Sustainable Agriculture Program was a co-sponsor and served on planning committees for the 5th National Small Farm Conference in Springfield; the Illinois Vermicomposting Symposium held in Springfield; Earth Stewardship Day held in Springfield; and the Ag Day Awards luncheon held during the Illinois State Fair. Funding was provided to establish a community garden on the State Fairgrounds which hosted 84 gardeners and 121 garden plots in the first year.

BLWR staff served on the University of Illinois Sustainable Agricultural Research and Education (SARE) Professional Development Program Advisory Committee; the Agro-Ecology Sustainable Agriculture Program Advisory Committee; the Illinois Sustainable Agriculture Committee, Sustainable Agriculture Grant Review Committee, Agri-Tourism Partners of Illinois Board, Illinois Forestry Development Council, Illinois Grassland Conservation Initiative Board, Natural Resources Conservation Service State Technical Committee, and the Soil & Water Conservation District Advisory Board.

R.J. VOLLMER SUSTAINABLE AGRICULTURE AWARD

Henry Brockman was the Illinois Department of Agriculture R. J. Vollmer Sustainable Agriculture Farmer for 2009 for his outstanding efforts in implementing and promoting sustainable agriculture systems in Illinois.

Henry raises vegetables on about 12 acres nestled between Kinder Creek and Walnut Creek, in the Mackinaw River valley near Congerville, Illinois in Woodford County. There, he and his family have bucked the traditional agribusiness conventional wisdom by farming using organic production methods in a way that is sustainable with a focus on producing healthy, nutritious food for the local community.

From the age of 17, Henry spent most of the next 10 years studying, working, and living with families in Israel, Japan and Nepal. He returned home in 1991 as a new husband and father, thinking about what to do with the rest of his life. Henry's sister, Terra, was living in New York City at the time, told Henry about the farmers market at Union Square and the organic farmers she met there. Henry went out and talked to the growers and ended up spending a year working on John Gorzinski's organic farm. In the spring of 1993, Henry came back to central Illinois to start his own operation on the family property.

Henry now plants over 600 varieties of about 100 different types of vegetables, all with organic production methods. He does this with the help of three generations of his family, one farmhand, one or two apprentices, and a few small pieces of equipment. Once weekly, Henry drives his vegetables to the Evanston farmers market, where thousands of customers and a handful of chefs shop each week. He also markets through his local CSA (Community Supported Agriculture) which has 200 members in the Eureka-Morton-Bloomington-Normal area. His growing season starts in the greenhouse at the end of February and goes until right before Thanksgiving.

In 2001, Brockman wrote *Organic Matters*, a book now included in curricula at Illinois Wesleyan University and at Arizona's Prescott University. Fifteen hundred copies were also purchased by the Bon Appétit Management Company.

Henry Brockman won the 2008 USDA-SARE's Patrick Madden Award for Sustainable Agriculture in the North Central Region of the country. The award recognizes farmers or farm families who advance sustainable agriculture through innovation, leadership and good stewardship. He accepted the award on March 26th at SARE's 20th Anniversary New American Farm Conference in Kansas City, Missouri.

A new book, "The Seasons on Henry's Farm"', by his sister Terra Brockman, tells the story of life on the farm in the form of a year-long memoir that takes readers through each season on the farm.

Henry's farming demonstrates the cyclical rhythms of sustainable agriculture that mimic nature. He not only believes in the importance of stewardship of the land; he lives it every day.

HENRY WHITE EXPERIMENTAL FARM

The 94- acre Henry White Farm, 4 miles southwest of Belleville, was bequeathed to the Illinois Department of Agriculture in 1985 when the last ancestor of Henry White passed away. The will stipulates the land be used for agricultural experiments.

In 2009, approximately 4,300 people were provided educational presentations or visited the farm to view the crop research, tree research, wetlands, prairie, forests, conservation practices, herb garden, vegetable garden, children's garden, and farmstead and field windbreaks. Ecology students come to learn about agriculture and scouts can earn merit badges. Randy Meyer is the contract farmer. Dr. Bill Becker is conducting cropping research for the IDOA. A total of 65 of the farm's 94 acres are devoted to mainly corn and soybeans. Farming provides research opportunities and revenue to offset operating expenses.

Prairie plants, such as black-eyed susan, rattlesnake master, alumroot and blazing star, are interspersed with several kinds of grass, including big and little bluestem, indian grass, side-oats grama, and switch grass, on 4.3 acres of restored prairie.

The farm's 6.3 acres in three wetland impoundments support fish, amphibians and a variety of plants. A dock extends over the largest impoundment so plant and animal life at various depths may be observed. Research into the growth and reproductive rates of fish will assist aquaculturalists in estimating the length of time needed to achieve optimum populations.

Planted in 1994, the 4.4 acre deciduous woods contain oak, maple, pecan, dogwood and other species of trees and shrubs. White pine, spruce and other evergreens grow in the 1.1 acre evergreen grove. As the wooded areas mature, they offer researchers a unique opportunity to observe the natural succession of plant and animal life.

Master Gardeners from the Madison – St. Clair Unit of the University of Illinois Extension have gardens for every age group to use for field day activities and trials. Types of gardens include Kids Garden, Prairie Garden, Native Plant Garden, Butterfly Garden, Ornamental Grass Plot, Herb Garden, Kitchen Garden and Small Fruits. In 2009, all 3,730 pounds of fresh produce were donated to local food pantries.

ILLINOIS DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE - ZELL FARM

Jack Zell bequeathed 240 acres in Effingham and Fayette counties to the Illinois Department of Agriculture so it would remain in agriculture. The Department plans to develop these two tracts into educational and research labs to demonstrate good land stewardship practices.

The Effingham County parcel is 145 acres of cropland with 15 acres of trees. The Fayette County parcel has 48 acres of cropland with the remaining 72 acres in trees and grass. There are 5 active oil wells on the property.

The unfavorable weather in 2009 prevented construction of the surveyed waterways. Crops were planted later that normal and harvest was delayed. Corn yields for the Effingham tract averaged 171 bushel per acre, while the soybean yield averaged 30.5 bushel per acre. The Fayette tract soybean yield averaged 20.6 bushel per acre. The Forestry Management Plan developed by IDNR was implemented the with removal of invasive, non-native shrub species such as autumn olive and multiflora rose on a 4.8 acre tract on the south east corner of the Fayette property. Spraying and mowing was used in removal of the invasive plants. A loader was used to remove the larger autumn olive plants. Mowing and spraying took place in order to maintain the new fence.

PROTECTING WATER QUALITY GRANT PROGRAM

PROTECTING WATER QUALITY IN URBAN CENTERS PHASE II MINI GRANT PROGRAM

In cooperation with the Illinois Environmental Protection Agency, the AISWCD was able to offer mini grants of up to $10,000 each to soil and water conservation districts to enable them to conduct activities in urban areas that promote water quality protection or improvement. The Phase II Mini Grant period began in August 2007 and ended June 30, 2009. A total of fourteen applications were received for the Phase II mini Grant program. Of those, ten were approved for funding and seven completed their projects.

Completed projects are briefly summarized in the table below.

The following table is a summary of the projects that were approved and completed for the Phase-2 project.

APPLICANT	PROJECT PROPOSAL	PROJECT TYPE	SWCD SHARE	IEPA SHARE	PROJECT COST
Kendall & DeKalb SWCDs	Host two rain garden workshops, one in each SWCD.	Education	$ 2,052.70	$ 3,079.06	$ 5,131.76
Lake SWCD	Construct a rain garden in the Village of Long Grove.	Demonstration	$ 1,334.34	$ 1,850.00	$ 3,184.34
Lee SWCD	Distribute rain barrels and rain garden materials	Education	$ 3,549.34	$ 5,324.01	$ 8,873.35
Sangamon SWCD	Conduct educational tour for local officials	Education	$ 1,287.50	$ 1,610.17	$ 2,897.67
Stephenson SWCD	Distribute rain barrels and rain garden materials	Education	$ 3,481.73	$ 5,222.59	$ 8,704.32
Vermilion SWCD	Conduct two workshops for local leaders	Education/ Demonstration	$ 2,266.48	$ 3,100.00	$ 5,366.48
Winnebago SWCD	Distribute rain barrels and materials on lawn & tree care and urban BMPs	Education	$ 4,833.61	$ 6,000.00	$10,833.61
		TOTALS	$ 18,805.70	$ 26,185.83	$ 44,991.53
		PERCENTAGE	**41.80%**	**58.20%**	**100%**

- AISWCD Rain Garden – This was a demonstration project to construct 300 square foot rain garden at the AISWCD building site to provide a visual demonstration of a functional urban nonpoint source pollution management practice. The project is competed and was highlighted at a media day event on June 30, 2009. There were approximately twenty-five people in attendance including IEPA Director Doug Scott, IDNR Director Marc Miller, IDOA Director Tom Jennings and USEPA Regions 5 Agricultural Advisor Tom Davenport.
- The Grove Live Plant Installation – This was a demonstration project to install hydrophytic plants in a depressional area to provide a visual demonstration utilizing vegetative materials as a water quality improvement practice. Approximately 10 people planted more than 1,400 plants in the wetland area.
- Reprinted "A Landowner's Guide to Forest Management on the Illinois River Bluffs" – This brochure was originally developed and printed under the Protecting Water Quality in Urban Centers (Phase 1) Section 319 grant by the Peoria, Tazewell and Woodford County SWCDs. The brochure has been used extensively in the area and is currently out of print. Five thousand copies were printed and will be distributed to the three counties and other areas upon request.
- "Urban Soil Erosion and Sediment Control" – This full color, multi page document developed by NRCS was distributed on the NRCS website. The document is an excellent tool for use by SWCDs and others to provide visual representation of various urban nonpoint source pollution control practices. Fifteen thousand copies of the booklet were printed and will be distributed to soil and water conservation districts and NRCS field offices. A copy is attached to this report.
- AISWCD Water Quality Tour – This was an educational project designed to expose attendees to urban best management practices that have been installed to reduce soil erosion and provide for water quality improvement in the Lake Springfield Watershed. The project has been successfully completed and was held in conjunction with the AISWCD Annual Meeting and IDOA's Bureau of Land and Water Resources Summer Conference. The tour focused on residential construction and streambank BMPs in the Lake Springfield Watershed. The tour was held July 22, 2009 with approximately 50 people in attendance.

The AISWCD is pleased with the outcomes of the grant. Though the AISWCD's Protecting Water Quality in Urban Centers project was not completed as originally envisioned, the outcomes have served to educate through workshops, tours, printed materials and demonstrations, many citizens and decision makers in many urban areas within the state. The AISWCD believes that these projects conduced by the SWCDs will have positive, lasting effects in guiding decisions to improve water quality for some time to come.

ILLINOIS NATURAL RESOURCES CONSERVATION SERVICE

NRCS Natural Resources Conservation Service Illinois

CONSERVATIONISTS WEATHERED THE YEAR TOGETHER

Once again, another year of unusual weather patterns. With unseasonable cool temperatures, some places experienced their coolest July on record since 1924. Heavy rains brought many areas their annual average rainfall by mid-summer. It has been a challenge for any landowner to get planting and harvesting done in a timely manner. Yet, these are the years that show whether landowners are protecting their investment with good conservation practices or if there is a need to consider changing or including other activities. The new Farm Bill offers technical and financial assistance from NRCS to help protect those natural resources.

ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY INCENTIVES PROGRAM

This year, Illinois Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) cost-share funds totaled more than $11.3 million, which was awarded to EQIP applicants through 1,041 contracts. With strong interest and activity in all three EQIP areas--general conservation, grazing livestock and confined livestock--nearly every Illinois applicant with a resource problem was able to tap into EQIP funds and NRCS technical assistance for solutions.

NRCS also focused on developing and implementing 81 Comprehensive Nutrient Management Plans, or CNMPs. In 2009, EQIP embraced the natural resource protection needs of organic producers, introducing NRCS and our Conservation Technical Assistance to a new agricultural audience. Visit www.il.nrcs.usda.gov to learn more.

WETLANDS RESERVE PROGRAM

The new Farm Bill had changes to Wetlands Reserve Program (WRP) that will impact the application process. First, the new Geographic Area Rate Caps simplified and sped up WRP project schedules tremendously.

While new policy constraints that require land ownership for a 7-year period have impacted program sign-up rates, recent weather patterns make it clear which fields no longer lend themselves to profitable agricultural production.

For FY '09, NRCS obligated about $3 million for WRP applicants. Funds to be obligated in 2010 are about $9 million. NRCS expects to see a renewed interest in the Wetlands Reserve Program and will particularly reach out to private landowners with small- to medium-sized wetland projects in 2010.

FLOODPLAIN EASEMENT PROGRAM

USDA-NRCS announced the Floodplain Easement Program sign-up in May 2009 as part of the new Administration's American Reinvestment and Recovery Act (ARRA). Nationwide, $145 million was made available - Illinois received more than $5.9 million to restore nearly 864 acres on eight sites.

These permanent conservation easements were offered voluntarily by landowners for purchase by USDA-NRCS. These acres will be restored back to functioning wetlands to hold floodwaters, protect crops further inland, filter out pollutants, and create quality wildlife habitats. Practices planned include tree planting and establishing vegetation, debris and tree removal, natural regeneration of plants, and seeding of prairie plants

The easements are located in the Embarras/Middle Wabash Watershed; Pecatonica Watershed; Bear Creek, Mississippi Central River Watershed; Bear/Sny/Lower Illinois/LaMoine Watershed; Lower Fox/Upper Illinois Watershed; and the Saline/Lower Ohio Bay Watershed.

Wildlife Habitat Incentive Program

Program changes in 2009 eliminated Wildlife Habitat Incentive Program (WHIP) access for public owned land or communities. This new reality resulted in fewer applications statewide. While WHIP formerly allowed communities and public sites access to NRCS cost-share and technical assistance, it now targets only private landowners and private land with need for wildlife habitat improvements.

Conservation Stewardship Program

The new Conservation Stewardship Program, like the former CSP, is a voluntary program that provides financial and technical assistance to promote the conservation and improvement of soil, water, air, energy, plant and animal life, and other conservation purposes on private working lands. The new CSP has a continuous sign-up with scheduled cut-off times during the year for application selections. The first cut-off ended September 30. Illinois received more than 300 applications. Applications are scheduled to be ranked by November 27 and field verifications, contract development and funds obligated by December 30, 2009.

In 2009, Illinois NRCS held three public meetings to introduce details of the re-vamped program to private landowners. Staff from the Illinois Stewardship Alliance coordinated and supported the meetings. More interest and plenty of sign-up time are in store for the 2010 calendar.

Mississippi River Basin Initiative

The U.S. Secretary of Agriculture announced the Mississippi River Basin Healthy Watersheds Initiative (MRBI), which will provide approximately $320 million over the next four years for voluntary projects in priority watersheds located in 12 key states. This new initiative targets improving water quality and the overall health of the Mississippi River. Participation in this initiative, managed by USDA NRCS, will be made available through a competitive process for potential partners at the local, state and national levels. Illinois NRCS and partners will select participating watersheds and begin taking action and monitoring results.

Through NRCS, MRBI will use other federal, state, and partner funding to target $80 million annually over the next four years through Cooperative Conservation Partnership Initiative, Conservation Innovation Grants, and the Wetlands Reserve Enhancement Program.

States participating in the MRBI include Arkansas, Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Kentucky, Louisiana, Minnesota, Mississippi, Missouri, Ohio, Tennessee, and Wisconsin. All work in the region will positively impact water quality issues in the Gulf.

Soil Survey

Illinois soils mapping data is now100% available digitally and can be accessed online for use with GPS technology tools. More and more engineers, developers, builders, farmers and community officials make sound decisions and rely on NRCS soils data to conduct business and manage natural resources. To experience how the national electronic Web Soil Survey works, visit www.websoilsurvey.nrcs.usda.gov.

Also in 2009, as part of the NRCS National reorganization of Major land Resource Area (MLRA) soil survey offices, Illinois NRCS closed two MLRA offices - in Rock Falls and Charleston - and re-assigned staff to remaining three offices.

Nationwide, Illinois maintains one of the most progressive digital soils database. Visit www.soils.usda.gov

Local Work Groups -- More Critical Than Ever

Conservation happens best on private lands. The best conservation solutions address local realities and natural resource problems that cause real problems--erosion, flooding, degraded water quality, or crop loss. These costs are unique to each farm, each community, and each watershed. Whether answers are found with a county or state options, federal programs, or with other conservation partners, the key to true success lies in collaborating with our friends and neighbors; approaching the issue TOGETHER. When County-level or watershed-based stakeholders meet, identify natural resource priorities and create a workable plan of action, it provides a solid way to achieve success that's good for everyone. Are you involved in your county's local work group? If not, get involved. If your local work group needs to meet again and recharge its quest, contact your local Soil and Water Conservation District Board and get the process moving. Do it today!

Resource Conservation & Development

In 2009, NRCS Illinois' 10 authorized Resource Conservation & Development (RC&D) areas remained vigilant in support of mainstream NRCS conservation programs. The RC&D program assisted 1.3 million citizens through the creation of 297 jobs and 45 new businesses, 48 business expansions, and 552 businesses were retained. The RC&D's held 130 community events, 80 workshops, tours and seminars, and 60 training sessions. They also developed 11 area-wide watershed plans and have 195 active projects.

The RC&D program objectives focus on "quality of life" improvements achieved through natural resource conservation and community development. Approved projects lead to sustainable communities, prudent land use, and sound conservation of natural resources. RC&D priorities are established by area residents and are implemented through the RC&D Area Long-Range Plan and Annual Plans of Work.

Farm and Ranchland Protection Progam

Kane County saved more valuable sections of land from development through the Farm and Ranchland Protection Program (FRPP). With this conservation easement program, these highly productive agricultural acres will remain as such. More counties in Illinois still seek revenue sources to mirror Kane County's success. Visit www.nrcs.usda.gov/programs for more facts, FRPP goals and requirements.

'09 Successes

NRCS specialists have been busy meeting the demands of Illinois' conservation-mined landowners. *Here is a snapshop of a few accomplishments.*

CNMPs written	27	plans
CNMPs applied	71	plans
Conservation Plans written	379,074	acres
Conservation Crop Rotation	243,263	acres
Contour Farming	1,918	acres
Dikes	2,275	feet
Drainage Water Management	171	acres
Early Successional Habitat Dev.	1,344	acres
Fence planned and established	478,278	feet
Field Border established	3,912	feet
Firebreaks established	75,705	feet
Forest Stand Improvement	6,164	acres
Grassed Waterways	1,278	acres
Hedgerows Planted	3,400	feet
Irrigation Water Management	1,036	acres
Manure Transfer Systems	26	systems
Mulch-Till Residue Management	101,218	acres
No-till or Strip-till Systems	80,770	acres
Nutrient Management	38,922	acres
Pasture & Hay Plantings	4,254	acres
Pest Management	1,789	acres
Prescribed Burning	772	acres
Prescribed Grazing	6,912	acres
Riparian Forrest Buffers	1,204	acres
Streambanks protected	31,945	feet
Stream Crossings	20	crossings
Terraces	327,068	feet

LANDOWNER INCENTIVE PROGRAM

The Landowner Incentive Program (LIP) is a U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Program administered by local SWCDs with goals to protect and restore habitats on private lands, to benefit federally listed, proposed or candidate species, or other species determined to be at-risk, and to provide technical and financial assistance to private landowners for habitat protection and restoration.

The LIP Coordinator and LIP Resource Specialist are employees of the Sangamon County SWCD and work with the Illinois Department of Natural Resources Farm Programs Manager and 23 SWCDs in the LIP areas to find willing landowners with projects. There were 46 projects underway or completed in the Lower Sangamon River Watershed including: hill prairie restoration, wetland enhancement, oak/hickory forest enhancement, sand prairie restoration and sand forest enhancement. These projects enhanced or restored over 2500 acres of unique habitats.

The Alton Bluffs LIP area, an 11-county area along the Mississippi River from Adams County to Alexander County, hosts many unique habitats including hill prairies, barrens, glades, quality oak/hickory timber in the uplands and bottomlands, and a variety of wetland habitats along the Mississippi River and its tributaries. There are 15 projects underway in this area to restore or enhance over 900 acres.

LANDOWNER INCENTIVE PROGRAM TARGETED AREAS

ILLINOIS CONSERVATION & CLIMATE INITIATIVE (ICCI)

The Association of Illinois Soil and Water Conservation Districts (AISWCD), as a registered verifier for the Chicago Climate Exchange, worked with 32 SWCDs to conduct compliance verification for 62 contracts for producers enrolled in Pools I, II, III and V as carbon credit providers through the Illinois Conservation and Climate Initiative (ICCI). These producers have agreed to use continuous no-till or grass management practices to sequester carbon dioxide. The verification program conducts desk audits and field inspections of selected contracts equal to at least 10% of the acres in a given pool to verify that the contracted carbon sequestering practices have been implemented and to confirm the acreage enrolled in the program. Each verification investigator has been trained and is experienced in planning, designing and monitoring installation of the practices being verified. Field verification procedures included;

A. Confirmation of contracted acreage.
B. Confirmation of vegetative condition and affirm crop type.
C. Assess evidence of field tillage practices including the following;
   - Indications of soil disturbance, including "clean" or bare soil, broken surface, ridges, and/or furrows.
   - Presence of surface vegetation litter from previous seasons/years.
   - Soil condition.
D. Take digital photographs of field conditions to document compliance or noncompliance.
E. Maintain a record of all field observations and measurements with comparison of recorded data to contract information to assure consistency.

Of 28 contracts aggregated by the Delta Institute for the ICCI Pool V during FY 2009, 5 contracts were selected for verification. These contracts represented slightly more than 16% of the contracted acres. SWCDs working with the AISWCD verified 1,105.1 no-till acres and 107.45 grassland acres.

TABLE 7
ICCI PROGRAM ENROLLEMENT INFORMATION
AS OF DECEMBER 2009

ACRES	ALL	POOL I END DEC 06	POOL II END MAY 07	POOL III END DEC 07	POOL IV END MAY 08	POOL V END DEC 08
TOTAL	169,826	52,394	60,044	30,399	15,628	9,634
GRASS ACREAGE	27,070	4,441	14,155	4,047	3,337	954
TILLAGE ACREAGE	124,532	44,968	40,197	20,499	11,090	7,591
FORESTRY ACREAGE	16,923	2,985	5,692	5,853	1,201	1,089
CONTRACTS SUBMITTED	**ALL**	**POOL 1 END DEC 06**	**POOL II END MAY 07**	**POOL III END DEC 07**	**POOL IV END MAY 08**	**POOL V END DEC 08**
POOL TOTAL	875	165	385	166	96	50
SOIL OFFSETS TOTAL	538	123	240	77	65	28
GRASS	312	60	155	40	42	13
TILLAGE	87	36	24	14	9	2
GRASS & TILLAGE	139	27	61	23	14	13
FORESTRY TOTAL	332	42	145	89	31	22

* Acres and contracts are undergoing reconciliation. Information is expected to be available in January.

ILLINOIS ENVIROTHON

Envirothon program combines classroom learning with hands-on field experiences focused around five major topics - Aquatics, Forestry, Soils, Wildlife and a Current Environmental Issue. The five member teams rotate through five outdoor testing stations, where their knowledge is evaluated and scored through written examination. Additionally, the competition includes an oral presentation component that challenges students to effectively apply and communicate a solution to a complex environmental issue.

The Illinois SWCDs, Association of Illinois SWCDs, the Illinois Farm Bureau, Illinois SWCD Employees' Association, Illinois Environmental Protection Agency, Monsanto, and Canon sponsored the 15th Illinois Envirothon, a high school competition consisting of testing on aquatics, forestry, soils, wildlife and a current environmental topic. This year's topic was "Biodiversity in a Changing World". High schools throughout the state compete within their Land Use Council (5-7 SWCDs) the Land Use Council (LUC) winners compete in the statewide contest.

2009 Illinois Envirothon Participants

STATE WINNERS

Woodstock High School in McHenry Co SWCD, LUC 16

Advisor - Bill Donato

Student Team

Kim Lucke
Jon Peschke
Anna Woodruff
Chelsey Belt
Brian Clow

Winners

Second place team came from Triad High School in Madison Co SWCD, LUC 12. Their advisor was Sandy Perkins, the student team consisted of Brianne Haggard, Clayton Sharp, Ryan Young, Jimmy Konsky, and Jessie Thompson.

Third place team and high scorer in the Current Issue and Forestry categories was from Prairie Central High School in Livingston Co SWCD, LUC 3. Their advisor was Darren Ropp, the student team was Jacob Huber, Adam Roberts, Will Travis, Rollin Wenger, and Riley Parmenter.

Aquatics category winner was Shiloh High School in Edgar Co SWCD, LUC 7. Their advisor was Kendra Carroll and the student team was Nelson Starkey, Jacob Henry, Stevi Davis, Victoria Wax and Kolton Hodgson.

Soils category winner was Morrison High School from Whiteside Co SWCD, LUC 1. The team advisor was Gregg Dolan, the student team members were Conner Bealer, Mitch Stichter, Luke Barry, Steve Karvelius and Nick Anderson.

Winners of the," Biodiversity in a Changing World", category was Spoon River High School from Fulton Co SWCD, LUC 4. Their advisor was Radine Kellogg, the student team consisted of Daniel Lefler, Vicki Smallegan, MiKayla Evans, Kialee Bowles, and Hannah Cecil.

Team Spirit Award
Auburn High School
LUC 9 - Sangamon County

Best T-Shirt Award
Murphysboro High School
LUC 15 - Jackson County

OTHER HIGH SCHOOLS REPRESENTING THEIR LAND USE COUNCILS

Midland HS from Marshall-Putnam SWCD
LUC 2

El Paso-Gridley HS from Woodford Co SWCD
LUC 5

Monticello HS from Piatt Co SWCD
LUC 6

AC Central HS from Cass Co SWCD
LUC 8

Auburn HS from Sangamon Co SWCD
LUC 9

Newton HS from Jasper Co SWCD
LUC 10

Edwards HS from Edwards Co SWCD
LUC 11

Flora HS from Clay Co SWCD
LUC 13

Grayville HS from Whiteside Co SWCD
LUC 14

Murphysboro HS from Jackson Co SWCD
LUC 15

2009 Conservation Farm Family Winners

Special Thanks to our Sponsors

Jerry Misek Family
LUC 1 - Carroll County

Spence Farm
LUC 3 - Livingston County

Hardimon Farms
LUC 10 - Fayette County

Schrumpf Family Farms
LUC 12 - Madison County

Meier Family Farm
Governor's Award Winner
LUC 13 - Washington County

Cowan Farm Family
LUC 16 - DeKalb County

AISWCD Awards

The Association of Illinois Soil & Water Conservation Districts recognizes individuals and organizations for their continued efforts in supporting conservation and preserving our natural resources. The following are the awards that were given out at the 61th Annual Meeting 2009.

Outstanding Forestry Contribution Award

Mark Carr of Greenville, Illinois in Bond County is the 2009 Outstanding Forestry Contribution winner. He is a lifelong resident of Illinois and worked as a biologist with the Illinois Department of Public Health until his retirement. Mark is an avid outdoorsman and wildlife enthusiast. His love for the environment is what led him to improve the timer on his own property. Mark began his timber stand improvement project in January 2008. He owns 20 acres of timber and wanted to concentrate on increasing his white oak population and improving the wildlife habitat. Mark removed the bush honeysuckle, reduced the grapevines, and thinned the timber canopy in order to improve the environment for the white oaks. He left the den trees, and rather than burn the brush piles, he chose to pile them up in random areas of the timber to provide habitat for the wildlife. From January through April of 2008, Mark kept a log of the time he devoted to his project and he logged 168 hours of chainsaw time in improving his timber.

Mark and his wife, Linda, hosted the Bond County Soil and Water Conservation District's Wildlife Conservation Tour in September 2008. He has been very willing to share his knowledge and experience with anyone interested in implementing a timber stand improvement plan.

Legislative Awards

Friend of Conservation

Representative Chapin Rose
(R) 110th District

Legislator of the Year

Representative Frank Mautino
(D) 76th District

George McKibben Memorial Scholarship

Amy Davis from Odell, Illinois in Livingston County is this year's winner of the $500 scholarship. Amy is currently enrolled at the University of Illinois and plans to graduate in 2011 with a bachelor of Science degree and continue her education in graduate school. She has significant interest to study abroad for a more extensive academic program. Five years from now, Amy plans to be done with graduate school and will pursue a career in the area of animal science nutrition or conservation in the poultry area.

Being from a soil & water conservation award family, Amy is aware of the importance of the stewardship between conservation, land and livestock. In any industry with confinement operations, there is a great need to be conscious of the environment and how our livestock are influencing it. Amy intends to stress avoiding improper feed diets. Excess amounts of nitrogen if given off can eventually reach our water supply. Her goal is to use her animal science biotechnology degree to answer some of the misconceptions within the industry. Amy is involved with the 4-H House (Sorority) Collegiate FFA, FFA Alumni, Hoof & Horn Club, Collegiate 4-H, Student Advancement Committee, College Honors, ACES Student Council, James Scholar Media Team, and the Alpha Zeta - Ag Honor Fraternity.

Poster Contest Winners

Grade K-1 Winner
Carly Neubauer,
Stephenson County

Grade 2-3 Winner
Rachel Day
DeKalb County

Grade 4-6 Winner
Karrah Mangan
Mason County

Grade 7-9 Winner
Corban Plenert
Livingston County

Outstanding District Employee Award

Gary Bruch from Magnolia, Illinois in Marshall-Putnam County is this year's "District Employee" award winner. Gary has been an enthusiastic and dedicated employee of the District for eight years. Prior to his employment, he served as Chairman of the SWCD Board and held important positions in the Association.

Gary's job classification is District Technician. Listed under his major job duties are maintaining all technical case files for cost share programs; assisting landowners and occupiers through planning, surveying, designing, and reporting of conservation practices; assisting with Erosion and Sediment Control, EQIP, Transect Survey, Farmland Protection, Cost-Share, CRP/CREP, special grant, and any other Federal, State, or Local programs delegated to the District; and assisting watershed committees by identifying concerns and implementing solutions.

Gary's service in conservation and action groups along with many community activities has led to many honors and awards in his lifetime. As a landowner, farmer, and employee of the District, Gary has established an excellent rapport with customers and co-workers, along with a great working relationship with the District Board and other partners in conservation including NRCS and FSA. Gary's commitment to his family, community, and District, have made him an excellent choice for the 2009 Outstanding District Employee Award.

PHOTO CONTEST WINNERS - 2009

Auxiliary Photo Contest Winners

Close Up Conservation
Richard Funk, Coles County
"DRAGONFLY"

Ag/Conservation Across America
Annette Hillard, Vermilion County
"ROOM WITH A VIEW"

Conservation in Action
Marilyn Kelton, Menard County
"WANNA KNOW MORE! EROSION OF SOIL, HERE IT GOES. . ."

Youth
Charlie Koeppen, DeKalb Co.
"WHO'S THERE?"

Conservation Practices **Rhonda Holliday,** Menard County
"PRAIRIE RENEWAL"

Sponsored by AISWCD Auxiliary

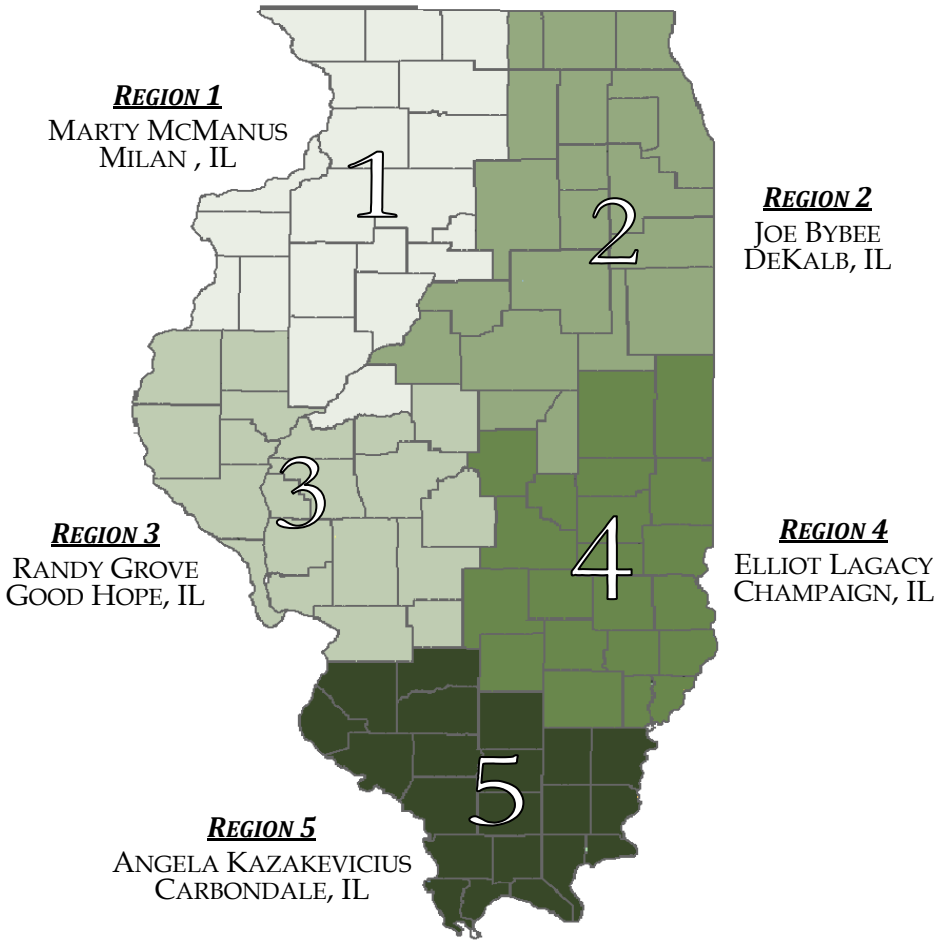
PARTNERSHIP ACTIVITIES

Information has been compiled for the Illinois Conservation Partnership Annual Report from programs carried out in 2009. Partners include the Illinois Department of Agriculture, Bureau of Land and Water Resources, Association of Illinois Soil and Water Conservation Districts, 98 county Soil and Water Conservation Districts, USDA – Natural Resources Conservation Service, Illinois Department of Natural Resources, Illinois Environmental Protection Agency and U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

Partner programs provide benefits in the areas of soil conservation and water quality in rural and urban communities, agricultural nutrient management, farmland protection, sustainable agriculture, carbon sequestration, wildlife habitat, and watershed planning and protection. Efforts also provide youth and adult environmental education and outreach, research and demonstration, and public information. Programs are generally directed to landowners and land managers using incentive based, voluntary approaches. The chart located on the next page summarizes the outreach and education efforts for all 98 SWCDs reaching both rural and urban communities.

For more information on local programs and activities, contact your local Soil and Water Conservation District.

THE BUREAU OF LAND AND WATER RESOURCES HAS DIVIDED THE STATE INTO 5 REGIONS FOR ADMINISTRATIVE PURPOSES. EVERY REGION HAS AN ASSIGNED BUREAU REGIONAL REPRESENTATIVE THAT WORKS WITH EACH SWCD LOCALLY TO IMPLEMENT THE STATE SOIL CONSERVATION PROGRAMS.



OUTREACH AND EDUCATION EFFORTS

Conservation Information Education Outreach	# Activities	# Participants
Conservation Tours for Adults	48	3,755
Conservation Tours for Students (K-12)	62	6,379
Conservation Tillage Meetings	28	1,312
Watershed Meetings	158	3,141
TMDL Meetings	3	252
Watershed Tours	8	595
Annual Meetings		6,541
Forage/Pasture Demo	10	551
Woodland/Windbreak Wildlife Demo	19	866
Soil Stewardship Meetings/Programs	170	17,552
Lady Landowner Meetings/Tours	32	1,250
Meetings with Special Interest Groups	211	4,145
Agronomy Days	14	2,535
Contractor Workshop	23	798
Displays at Fairs, Banks, etc	122	154,949
Field demonstrations plots *(number of plots)*	20	-
Classroom Presentations		
K-8 Grade	4,622	103,768
9-12 Grade	123	4,826
College	23	1,046
Educator Workshops	79	2,848
Conservation Education Days	175	30,715
Arbor Day Programs	230	15,402
Earth Day Programs	99	9,189
Conservation Education Contest		
Poster	90	8,055
Photo	6	560
Other	1,915	1,883
Provide Scholarships	47	
FFA Soils Judging Contest	44	2,545
Other	750	33,782
	# of Schools	# of Participants
Envirothon	293	2,665
Provide School Projects	100	-
TOTAL OUTREACH		**421,905**

Public Relations	#	Distribution
Newsletters	198	191,726
Teacher Newsletters	65	8,427
		# Papers
Newspaper Articles	722	106,695
		Stations
Radio Spots	186	63
T.V. Spots	23	13
		# of Hits
Websites	37	108,855
		# Attendees
Conservation Speaking Engagements	97	6,191
Products and Services		**Customers**
Tree Sales	96	5,332
Plant Sales	30	821
Fish Sales *(# of annual sales)*	146	3,821
Conservation Seed *(report in acres)*	5,202	3,880
Equipment Rental		
Drill/Planter/Seeder (report in acres)	43,720	4,021
Scraper	-	105
Tree Planter (report in acres)	1,961	363
Other	10,055	1,252
Used Oil Collection *(report in gallons)*	3,002	4,205
Used Tire Collection *(report in tires)*	16,583	803
Aerial & GIS Maps / Plat Books	6,512	5,546
Other	18,057	2,936
Land Use Activities	**Number**	**Acres**
Natural Resource Reports	702	20,295
Land Evaluation Site Assessments (LESA)	187	17,919
Soil Erosion Sediment Control Plan Reviews	257	2,935
Soil Erosion Sediment Control Inspections	1619	-
Soil Borings/Mapping	284	255
Facility Planning Area Reviews	24	-
Flood Related Reviews	279	-
Mining Activities	13	-
Pipeline/Utilities Activities	26	-
Other	135	-
	# of Activities	# of Attendees
SESC Tours/Workshops	18	1,450
Land Use Meetings/Hearings	253	2,324
Farmland Protection Events	26	362
Ag Areas Meetings	8	63
Flood Related Meetings	31	457

SWCD Program Highlights

ILLINOIS SOIL AND WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICTS (SWCDS) EACH HAVE A UNIQUE PROGRAM TO MEET THE CONSERVATION NEEDS OF THE PEOPLE AND NATURAL RESOURCES IN THEIR DISTRICT. THESE ARE ONLY A FEW OF THE DIVERSE ACTIVITIES CARRIED OUT BY THE SWCDS AND THEIR MANY LOCAL PARTNERS.

REGION 1

BUREAU, CARROLL, FULTON, HENDERSON, HENRY, JODAVIESS, KNOX, LEE, MARSHALL-PUTNAM, MASON, MERCER, OGLE, PEORIA, ROCK ISLAND, STARK, STEPHENSON, WARREN, WHITESIDE AND WINNEBAGO COUNTIES

Bureau County SWCD held a Contractors' Meeting for fifteen contactors to provide the latest information on federal and state cost chare programs. Marlyn Schafer with the U.S. Army Corp of Engineers talked about obtaining permits for work in waters of the U.S., stream regulations, and wetland regulations. Scott Wright, Conservation Police Officer with the Illinois Department of Natural Resources spoke on the sightings of the unusual wildlife in the Bureau County area, what to do about beavers in streams and obtaining trapping permits.

The Bureau County SWCD hosted a "Crossing the Prairie" event at the Center Prairie Natural Area. Attendees imitated local settlers jostled along the rutted trail in a covered wagon pulled by Percheron horses through the tall bluestem and prairie dock. They heard about the history of the pioneer settler's journeys and about the prairie with its native flowers and grasses. Folks were treated to re-enactments of frontier life, including a fur trapper, tonic salesman, a calf roper, a circuit rider preacher, a wagon wheel craftsman, a frontier school, and various costumed players.

Bureau County SWCD hosted 500 fifth graders and sponsors from Bureau County schools and Annawan School in Henry County to Conservation Day at Warnecke Woods, one the District's fourteen Natural Areas. Each class participated in nine of the seventeen stations available. Topics included Fish, Trees, Prairies, Bees, Erosion, American Indians, Wild Things, Birds, Conservation Jeopardy, Activity, Wildlife Rehab, Recycling, Streams, Scavenger Hunt, Soils, and Electrical Safety.

Carroll County SWCD increased assistance to the county livestock producers with several mailings and public meetings providing current industry information. SWCD staff conducted over 50 livestock facility field visits to give general conservation guidance on how operators could more effectively manage their livestock waste in an environmentally friendly manner. This effort resulted in more than 80 livestock producers contacting the SWCD office for guidance and/or assistance in the past year.

Henderson County SWCD was a book drop off site for the R.E.A.D.Y. Bus. This reading program takes the R.E.A.D.Y bus to schools to read books with students and helps the students pick a book of their own.

Henderson County SWCD participated in the planning and implementation of the Progressive Agricultural Foundation Safety Day. Approximately 600 5th and 7th grade students from area schools learned about railroad, water, and grain/grain bin, animal, ATV, weather, fire, Internet, first aid and lawn mower safety. The days also included information on knowing the signs of meth production and a live electric line safety demonstration.

Henry County SWCD has published a bi-monthly conservation education newsletter for 4100 teachers and students in the kindergarten through sixth grades. *Conservation Trail* educates on the subjects of soil, water, trees, birds, fish, mammals and other agriculture, conservation and environmental topics.

Henry County SWCD held a spring rain barrel sale to promote water conservation and reduce runoff. Due to the success of the spring sale, the SWCD will have another sale in the fall.

Henry County SWCD donated a 60-gallon rain barrel as a door prize at their booth during the Henry County Fair. The rain barrel raised awareness about water conservation in urban and rural communities

Henry County SWCD operated a booth at the Henry County Fair, with a *Conservation Kids* section with soil and water stewardship themed activities. Kids learned about soil texture, structure and color by using activities from the "2009 Dig It! The Secrets of Soil", learning unit. Kids (and some adults) learned about different soil types in Henry County and the US by using paints made from different soil types that were dried, finely ground and mixed with water. Kids learned about soil horizons by assembling edible soil profiles made from a whole Oreo cookie, chocolate pudding, and crushed Oreo cookies for soil, and a gummy worm as a soil organism. Brochures, activity books, activity sheets, and bookmarks were distributed.

JoDaviess County and Carroll Co SWCDs, Illinois Forage and Grassland Council, Blackhawk Hill Resource Conservation and Development, JoDaviess Co and Carroll Co University of Illinois Extension, Stevenson Co Farm Bureau and USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service held a Grazing Conference for approximately 50 producers. Speakers included: Jim Gerrish, national known grazing specialist on how grazing competes with high commodity and energy prices; Dave Forgey, who grazes 250 dairy cows on 350 acres near Logansport, Indiana; and Dr. Allan Miller, University of Illinois Beef Cattle Specialist, whose family operates a 140 cow purebred Angus beef operation on 90 rotational grazed acres near Gridley, Illinois. Conference topics included a virtual tour and discussion of each guest presenters' farming operations; dollars and sense of feed resources; how to manage legumes and residual grazing heights; and lessons learned in grazing. Eight commercial exhibitor and various agency representatives shared information about programs, products and services targeted to livestock grazers in Northwest Illinois and the greater Tri-State area.

JoDaviess County SWCD hosted a one day forest management workshop for 50 landowners who learned strategies and tools to maximize the economic value of conservation-based forest management. Representatives of organizations and companies spoke on forestry management and markets and answered questions.

Knox County SWCD held a Well Sealing Demonstration at the Moffitt Farm for 16 attendees, which included presentations by the Knox County Health Department, University of Illinois Extension, and Natural Resources Conservation Service and two wells were sealed. Landowners' questions were answered and interest was generated for others to seal abandoned wells. Knox County SWCD provides 60% cost-share, not to exceed $400, for each well sealing project.

Knox County SWCD and the Galesburg Chamber of Commerce Environmental Task Force sponsored and participated in the Cedar Creek Clean-up. A total of 49 men, women and children volunteered their time to clean up over 2200 lbs of trash from Cedar Creek and its banks.

Lee County SWCD and the Illinois Agriculture in the Classroom of Lee County provided agriculture and conservation related classroom presentations in schools throughout the county. Lindsey Senn is the SWCD Administrative Coordinator and the Ag Literacy Coordinator.

Marshall-Putnam SWCD held a Lady Landowner tour for 55 ladies. Stops included the Patriot Renewable Fuels Ethanol Plant in Annawan where the attendees saw how the ethanol process works and what they do with the by-products; the Butterworth Mansion in Moline that was built by Charles and Mary Deere for their daughter Katherine Deere, the granddaughter of John Deere, and inventor of the first successful, self-scouring steel plow. After lunch at The River House in Moline, the women visited the John Deere Store, Isabelle Bloom, Watermark Corner and the John Deere pavilion. The last stop was the Quad City Botanical Center where the women took a self-guided tour of the memorial butterfly garden, native wildflower garden, sun garden and patio garden.

Marshall-Putnam SWCD and the Marshall Putnam University of Illinois Extension hosted an Annie's Project seminar for farm women wishing to learn more about farm management and enhance their overall management skills. Women were taught the basics of managing money, examining how property is titled, setting up farm leases, basic grain marketing, deciding on insurance products, and putting together a business plan which includes financial documents like balance sheets, income statements and cash flows. Annie's Project taught farm women the basics of using spreadsheets and internet websites for information organization and retrieval.

Mason County SWCD hosted the 8th Annual Mason County Discovery Day for over 260 third graders who learned about topics including conservation, ecology, natural and cultural history through demonstrations and hands on projects. Many teachers are limited to one field trip per year and they choose this event because of the fun and educational value.

The Mason County SWCD, as members of the Central Regional Groundwater Authority, hosted two drug collection events. The public brought their unused and/or unwanted medications, including over-the-counter medicines, for proper disposal. The public was informed of the water quality effects of improperly disposing of medications and how to dispose of medicines when collection events are not available.

Mercer County SWCD received a federal grant for the SAFE-CRP Program that enabled them to enroll 500 acres of native grass plantings. The SWCD also enrolled 122 additional acres in SAFE-CRP through its membership in the Western Big 5 Eco-System Partnership.

Rock Island SWCD held a three part Winter Ecology Series titled "Insect Lore and Native Plants Galore" with 50 adult and children at each session. Session one, "Flying Flowers," focused on the butterflies and how to design gardens to attract our "flying flowers." Session two, "Insect Friends or Foes," was a two part talk on bees and the Emerald Ash Borer. Session three, "Green Gardening," featured Back Yard Conservation and ideas and techniques to incorporate native plants into home landscaping.

The Rock Island SWCD**,** the Illinois Nature Preserve Commission and Augustana College held the 2nd Illinois Hill Prairie Conference theme was "Slash, Burn and Graze: Is That Any Way to Treat a Hill Prairie?" The two day conference covered information on the management and restoration of Illinois Hill Prairies.

Stark County SWCD held its annual Summer Prairie Walk. Participants walked through the prairie, snapped photographs, and identified a variety of native plants under the guidance of the Illinois Department of Transportation's Landscape Architect. Prairie walkers are provided with a plant checklist and photos of plants that can be found on the IDOT site. The Stark County SWCD offers refreshments, door prizes, field guides and native plants for sale, and provides educational displays. The participants learned about products and services offered by the SWCD.

The Stark County SWCD and the Stark Co Farm Bureau held their annual Women in Agriculture and Conservation Seminar. The Seminar is held in different parts of the county each year and covers such topics as: rain gardens, soil testing, native plants, herbs, SWCD programs, gardening, and other topics that are popular, educational, and appeal to rural women. Survey responses are used to plan each year's seminar.

Stephenson County SWCD donated "Farmer George Plants a Nation," a book about how George Washington built his Mt. Vernon estate to all public and private grade schools in the county.

Whiteside County SWCD held its Conservation Days for 500-600 4th grade students from Carroll, Jo Davies, and Whiteside counties at Mississippi Palisades State Park. Students visit a variety of stations learning about natural resources and agriculture of Illinois.

Whiteside County SWCD**,** USDA Farm Services Agency, Illinois Department of Natural Resources, US Fish and Wildlife Service, and UDSA Natural Resources Conservation Service worked together to enroll over 600 acres of marginal crop fields in the Conservation Reserve Program wetland program. These fields were a problem to farm. In return for a rental payment, land owners return these areas to wildlife habitat while improving water quality and reducing non point source pollution.

Warren County SWCD and University of Illinois Extension sponsored the Warren-Henderson Counties' 25th Conservation Day. The sixth graders covered eight conservation topics: fish biology, forestry, erosion & conservation, conservation officers, soil, backyard conservation, recycling and wildlife biology. The SWCD made 2 presentations. One was on backyard conservation where students learned and made a model of the basics of wildlife survival and the kinds of practices, which can be used in their own backyards. At the Erosion and Conservation session the SWCD demonstrated with how little of the earth's surface is farmable and how important it is to take care of that soil. An erosion control table demonstrated different kinds of erosion and some of the practices used to control it.

Winnebago County SWCD held a 2 hour workshop for 13 individuals from Durand Township, the State's Attorney's Office, the County Zoning Board of Appeals, County Planning and Zoning, City of Loves Park, the City of Rockford and the Village of Machesney Park to explain when, where, why and how Natural Resource Information reports (NRI) are completed. The first part of the workshop described the SWCD Act and the two different types of reports that the SWCD office completed due to a zoning changes on agricultural land. Each of the 9 core components of a N.R.I. report was discussed in detail. The second part of the workshop was an open discussion on the report process and components. Participants discussed how the reports could be improved so that material is easily understood and evaluated by zoning officials and petitioners.

Winnebago County SWCD had over 70 people, including engineers, developers, homebuilders and construction companies, and municipal/county employees attended a Sediment and Erosion Control workshop at Klehm Arboretum. The morning sessions focused on the EPA ILR10 permit regulations; proper site planning of a construction site; the proper implementation of a Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan, including what to look for when conducting routine inspections; and proper seeding and mulching specifications. The afternoon program covered the proper selection and use of the wide variety of Best Management Practices used on a job site, including curb inlet protection options, the different Erosion Control Netting and Turf Reinforcement Mats available, and the proper ways to stabilize areas of storm water conveyance. Education packets were provided to the participants. Product vendors and environmental consultants discussed their products, services, and other information

REGION 2

BOONE, DEKALB, DEWITT, FORD, GRUNDY, IROQUOIS, KANE-DUPAGE, KANKAKEE, KENDALL, LAKE, LASALLE, LIVINGSTON, MCHENRY, MCLEAN, NORTH COOK, PIATT, TAZEWELL, WILL-SOUTH COOK, AND WOODFORD COUNTIES

Boone County SWCD, the Boone County Agricultural Preservation Committee and other local agencies accepted its first agricultural easement on 260 acres.

DeKalb County SWCD and Kendall Co SWCD hosted a Rain Garden Seminar for 40 people. Roger Bannerman from Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources was the featured speaker. Approximately 40 people attended the DeKalb event. The seminar was partial funded with grant funds from the IEPA Protecting Water Quality in Urban Centers of Illinois.

The DeKalb County SWCD completed the natural resources report, worked with the environmental group for the wind farm, protected wetland areas and conducted IEPA inspections for stormwater runoff during construction of the Florida Power and Light wind farm located in DeKalb County

Ford County SWCD held Strip-till Workshop and Demo Day, an advanced workshop for 90 operators currently doing this practice but wanting to improve. Dr. Tony Vyn, Professor of Agronomy from Purdue University. Cyndi Punke, with Case International Harvestor, spoke about precision steering guidance system equipment. The group visited the Larry Thorndyke farm to see the dealer's equipment perform in the field. Eight dealers discussed and demonstrated their various sized equipment.

Ford County SWCD completed their first Wind Farm Natural Resource Inventory report for a 96-tower farm spanning 15,360 acres. The project is part of a multi-county 308-tower wind farm. This report was provided to the wind farm developer, zoning and county boards, and the landowners. The report contained information and made recommendations regarding the properties of the soils, conservation practices such as waterways and terraces in the development area and erosion prevention during and after development.

Ford County SWCD staff along with other SWCD staff developed Wind Farm Natural Resource Inventory guidelines and forms to be used statewide.

Ford County SWCD hosted two Woodland Management and Spring Wildflowers tours for 35 people from Ford, Iroquois, and Champaign counties. Dr. Robert Reber, steward of the grove and co-managing editor of The Illinois Steward, spoke on prairie grove remnant and Dr. Reber spoke on the cultural and natural history of the grove; explained woodland management techniques; and pointed out the diversity of the plants present.

The ***Grundy County SWCD*** completed a stone toe protection streambank stabilization project. The installed practice protected 350 feet of streambank and will save 3 tons of soil per year.

Grundy County SWCD hosted a Lady Landowner Day to provide information about conservation programs and activities. Several speakers from various organizations from throughout the county presented their information and what services they provide to the landowners. A hands-on activity, lunch, and an Expo area were also included in the program.

Grundy County SWCD, Grundy County Farm Bureau and Goose Lake Prairie State Natural Area hosted a 3 day Natural Resources Tour for 800 5th grade students, teachers, and parents in the county. Each class visited ten learning stations dealing with various natural resources such as forestry, entomology, and Build Illinois.

Grundy County SWCD hosted quarterly Ag Breakfasts where everyone was invited to listen to the ag organizations and businesses announce their upcoming events. Guest speakers introduced themselves, products and services.

Iroquois County SWCD staff provided Arbor Day presentations about the value of trees, species description, location, planting and tree care to 3rd grade students, who then received their own pine seedling.

Iroquois County SWCD board and staff and USDA NRCS staff convened a Local Work Group to hear concerns and priorities from new customers (town mayors, county board members). Flooding from 2008 made flood prevention the number one priority; soil erosion and water pollution also ranked high on the priority list.

Kane-DuPage SWCD held two Stream and River Systems Seminars - The first seminar focused on the fundamental principles of river systems; the evolution of a channel; aquatic ecosystems, and stream application practices. Speakers included Streambank Specialist, Wayne Kinney and Illinois Department of Natural Resources Fisheries Biologist, Steve Pescitelli. The second seminar centered on the human impacts on streams, 303d and TMDLs, and highlighted many restoration principles. Speakers included, John Hartness from the Geological Survey.

Kane-DuPage SWCD held 1/2/ day Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPS) seminars for municipal staff, contractors, designers, consultants, and landowners about the National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) requirements for the IEPA Stormwater Permit for Construction Sites; forming and implementing

implementing Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plans (SWPPPs); the newest NPDES regulations; components of a SWPPP; how to conduct weekly site inspections; handling non-compliance; case studies involving regulations; and Best Management Practice maintenance.

The ***Kankakee County SWCD*** Board and staff, as founding members of the Kankakee Ag Expo Committee, sponsored the Annual Kids Day at the Farm, an educational opportunity for every fourth grader in the county to learn about agriculture and the environment. The SWCD presented on the importance of soil, how to reduce water use and what trees do for our environment and us.

Kendall County SWCD, Kendall County Forest Preserve, Health Department, and Outdoor Education Center hosted a 2 day natural resources tour for 400 4th-5th grade students in the county. Students visited 9 stations where they learned about soil science, aquatic habitats, recycling, interpretative hiking, water conservation, animal habitats, native plant species, and prairie eco-systems.

The Kendall County SWCD received funds through the Partners for Conservation Program Special Projects to construct a community rain garden demonstration at their office. Office staff designed and constructed the 150 square foot, kidney bean shaped rain garden with over 70 native plants. A rain garden is a shallow depression, planted with native plants, that absorbs rain water (runoff) from impervious surfaces, mainly the roof of a house or commercial building. This best management practice serves as a stewardship tool that can reduce runoff by allowing for approximately 30% more water to infiltrate into the ground compared to conventional lawns. A rain garden can reduce flooding, absorb pollutants, recharge aquifers and sustain wildlife by providing habitat.

Kendall County SWCD provided activities for over 500 visitors at the Family Fun Tent during the Kendall County Fair. The SWCD created a soil exploration lab for children and adults to feel the different mineral materials in soil, create their own soil profiles, and compare soils from different states in our country. Visitors played an agriculture and conservation version of “Are You Smarter than a Fifth Grader?” game. Questions in this game covered the topics of plants, animals, soil, and water.

Kendall County SWCD and Will-South Cook SWCD co-hosted a "Soil Erosion Sediment Control Workshop: Understanding the Regulations, Practices and Products”. The workshop provided contractors, developers, engineers and site inspectors with the tools necessary to comprehensively address soil erosion and sediment control on construction sites. The sessions provided information on: current regulations; principles governing soil erosion and sediment control; how to select, install and maintain best management practices on a construction site; and interactive evaluation of a Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP) and installed practices. The workshop featured 12 speakers, several erosion and sediment control practice/product vendors and was attended by over 65 people.

The ***Lake County SWCD***, Lake County Forest Preserve District, Lake County Stormwater Management Commission and Land Conservancy of McHenry County held their largest Annual Rain Barrel Event. 1,300 55-gallon barrels and 130 tumbling composters were distributed.

The Lake County SWCD, the Association of Soil and Water Conservation Districts, the Illinois Environmental Protection Agency, Illinois Department of Agriculture, and the Village of Long Grove installed three rain gardens in downtown Long Grove that will absorb 97,000 gallons of water annually instead of flowing into the storm sewers and discharging into Buffalo Creek. This will help reduce the effects of numerous flash floods caused by an abundance of urban related runoff.

LaSalle County SWCD, Trinity Lutheran Church and several other churches hosted a Foods Resource Bank, "Tour de Farm" fundraiser for hunger programs in Africa. Using the main mode of transportation in Africa, participants rode bicycles to a wind turbine farm to see how they worked and to see a livestock farm, machinery, and various conservation practices that help prevent erosion and protect water quality.

The LaSalle County SWCD held their Annual Ladies Day Program. The ladies toured recently installed wind turbines. Paul Youngstrum with Trinity Lutheran Church spoke about the Foods Resource Bank Program; the project location in Africa; and how the money is used to feed the hungry in the farming community. The last speaker spoke on the benefits of rain gardens in urban settings.

The ***Livingston County SWCD*** held a Conservation and Ag Expo for 1,300 students from 72 classrooms. 80 FFA students and 80 adults helped with this event. Special activities/programs included: My Little Petting Farm (1st Grade); Pontiac Fire Safety House (2nd Grade); Soils Adventure Mobile (4th Grade); Live Line Demonstration (Grades 4 & 5); IDNR Rock Box (5th Grade); and IDNR Conservation Police (5th Grade). All grades heard David Stokes, natural science song and dance man. Presenters included: FFA students from Pontiac, Flanagan, Woodland and Prairie Central; Ecology students from Pontiac, Pontiac FSA & NRCS employees, SWCD employees (Ford, Grundy, LaSalle, McLean, & Kendall); FB employees (Grundy & Kankakee); retired teachers; agency professionals from Extension, IL. American Water, IDoA, IEPA, IDNR, FCAE; AISWCD; IL. Trapper's Assn.; and Chuck Collins from WMBD TV. State Representative Shane Cultra was also in attendance.

Livingston County Soil and Water Conservation District hosted the "Ag and Conservation Experience" bus tour for the county board and public to highlight the agricultural diversity in the county. Stops included Kilgus Dairy; the John and Dede Traub Terrace Project; and the Living Water Farm, which includes over 6,000 square feet of greenhouse growing space. Lunch speakers included Marty Travis, who operates the Spence Farm and Art Lehman, former president of the Illinois Pork Producers.

The Livingston County SWCD continued its promotion of the P2D2 program that promotes proper disposal of unused prescription medicines to protect watersheds from contamination.

Livingston County SWCD Education Coordinator helped develop seven 'mAGic Kits' to loan to schools to help educators teach the importance of agriculture. The seven kits are: Insect, Plant, Poultry, Soil, Dairy, Illinois, and Machine. Kit lessons include exercises in: mapping, graphing, sequencing, reading, writing, critical thinking problems, math logic puzzles, experimentation, research, and much more. "Seasons" and "Adventures Around the Farm" are the newest two kits for grades Pre K-3.

McHenry County SWCD and the Illinois EPA in educated 80 contractors, consultants, and permit holders on the NPDES permit modifications, erosion and sediment control best management practices, and techniques.

McLean County SWCD hosted an aquatic workshop at the Illinois State University Farm. IDNR's fish biologist, Mike Garthaus evaluated the pond and offered recommendations for improvement.

McLean County SWCD sponsored a breakfast meeting with local land improvement contractors to discuss use of erosion fabrics in waterway construction.

McLean Co SWCD and Woodford County co-sponsored an outdoor educational experience for 6-8th grade students. Topics covered included prairie, woodland, wetlands and river ecology.

North Cook SWCD held its Annual Soil & Water Quality Luncheon entitled "Best Management Practices for Underground Stormwater Storage" for municipal engineers, public works staff, road department personnel and conservation partners to meet the District Board, enjoy a hot lunch, listen to presentations, receive Professional Development Hours, and discuss soil and water quality issues in a relaxed environment. Participants comment on future education/outreach programming. Brian Stahl; P.E. with StormTrap addressed the unique water quality protection challenges associated with underground stormwater storage. Examples of best management practices that may be incorporated with vault detention systems to address water quality concerns were presented during lunch. Attendees toured the newly remodeled Oak Park Public Works facility.

North Cook County SWCD's Woodstock High School Envirothon team won first place in the Northwestern Illinois Envirothon Competition, which made them eligible to compete in the statewide competition, where they also won first place. The students, along with their advisor Bill Donato, traveled to Asheville, North Carolina to compete in the national 2009 Canon Envirothon. They faced 45 teams from the United States and 7 Canadian Providences. The team tied for 9th place overall and received a plaque, each student received a $1,100 college scholarship, their advisor received a video camera, and the sponsoring agency received a color printer.

The ***Piatt County SWCD***, Central Illinois Ag, Heath's INC, and Jennings Implement Co. held a Conservation Tillage Day for 45 local farmers. Each dealer demonstrated a variety of different implements, giving farmers a great opportunity to get up close and look at the equipment as it operated.

Piatt County SWCD and the Lincoln Heritage RC&D hosted a E-waste collection trailer each Wednesday. 1,500 lbs of e-waste was brought in per month and kept out of the local landfills and road ditches.

Piatt County SWCD launched a web site at www.piattcountyswcd.com. Visitors can learn about the SWCD and its services.

Tazewell County SWCD and the Tazewell County, University of Illinois Extension Service sponsored a pond management demonstration for 55 people. The attendees learned about pond management, aquatic weed control, and conservation programs. The Illinois Department of Natural Resources Fisheries biologist demonstrated a pond shocking. Tazewell County SWCD installed 6 stream barbs on the Mackinaw River. The barbs were 70-75 feet long with a bank height of 8 foot, 1900 tons of rock gradation. The barbs were funded through the SWCD's SSRP funds and the NRCS EQIP funds.

Will-South Cook SWCD Farm Tour for over 100 attendees included a grain bin rescue simulation by members of the Elwood, Manhattan, Peotone, and Wilmington fire departments in conjunction with GSI (Grain Systems). The simulation, served as a training session for the firefighters, demonstrated farm safety precautions and proper rescue procedures in the event of a grain engulfment accident. Other presenters included University of Illinois Extension Educator, Russ Higgins, who discussed the status and concerns of this season's corn and soybean crop; Burton Barr, Associate Director with Will-South Cook SWCD, Bob Jankowski, District Conservationist with NRCS, Steve Rustman, County Executive Director with FSA, and Neil Pellmann, Resource Conservationist with Will-South Cook SWCD.

Will-South Cook SWCD installed one large waterway using Partners for Conservation funds that directly benefitted 6 property owners who share a common drainage way for the disposal of runoff from a 174 acre area. All landowners (or their operators) are in a conservation crop rotation with either residue management – mulch till or no till. 15 downstream landowners benefit from reduced flooding and sedimentation on 200 acres as a result of this grassed waterway.

Will-South Cook SWCD Associate Director George Johnson held a prairie and savanna restoration tour for few dozen individuals. After he gave an introduction, NRCS Area Biologist, Ellen Starr gave a presentation on the restoration of Illinois savannas and prairies, followed by a tour of the property, identifying the grasses and forbs chosen for the project.

Will-South Cook SWCD staff helped develop wording for the Will County Board's Conservation Subdivision Design ordinance that will assist in the management of soil erosion and flooding issues of on-going residential and commercial development. Conservation Design calls for increased open space and natural areas within the developing lands of unincorporated Will County.

REGION 3

Adams, Bond, Brown, Calhoun, Cass, Christian, Greene, Hancock, Jersey, Logan, Macoupin, Madison, McDonough, Menard, Montgomery, Morgan, Pike, Sangamon, Schuyler, and Scott Counties

Adams, Brown & Pike County SWCDs, University of Illinois Extension, and volunteers held the 7th Annual Conservation Day at Upper Moorman Park for over 130 clients of Transitions/CRC Industries, a facility for mentally and physically challenged adults. The clients participated in four different conservation activities and enjoyed a picnic lunch.

Adams and Hancock SWCDs continue watershed planning activities through the Bear Creek Watershed Planning Committee for the Break Creek Area Watershed stakeholders.

The ***Bond County SWCD*** Ag in the Classroom for Bond County, local Future Farmers of American chapters, and Bond County University of Illinois Extension developed a "Book Barn", a mobile Agricultural and Natural Resources Educational trailer that is utilized at fairs, festivals, schools and other public events. Grants from Monsanto, Southwestern Electric and fundraising projects paid to purchase the Barn and books, educational resource kits, agricultural equipment, and other educational materials that teachers check out for use in their classrooms.

The ***Brown County SWCD*** sponsored an Arbor Day Celebration at the Moore Memorial Park for county third graders. The students spent the day learning how to plant a tree properly, about tree characteristics and tree layers. They made tree cookies and peanut butter pinecone birdfeeders, and participated in the Arbor Day Olympics. The day ended with a game of Arbor Day soccer.

Brown County 6th Graders participated in a scavenger hunt at Moore Memorial Park sponsored by the Brown County Soil and Water Conservation District**.** Teams were given a set of clues centered on the State Symbols and conservation measures in the Park.

Brown County SWCD directors and staff from U.S. Department of Agriculture Natural Resources Conservation Service and Farm Services Agency, Brown County Farm Bureau, Brown County Future Farmers of American and University of Illinois Extension participated in the Ag Awareness Dr. Suess Days. Presenters read a book from the Dr. Suess library and then related it to agriculture. Brown County Soil and Water Conservation District Directors Bruce Yingling and Curt Boylen read "The Cat in the Hat" and discussed the various "hats" a farmer must wear. Administrative Coordinator Charla Meyers shared "Oh Say, Can You Seed" and had the students each make a Garden in a Glove or the Bean Book which depicts the layers of the bean seed. She also read "The Lorax" and demonstrated the Enviroscape model.

Calhoun and Jersey County SWCD and the University of Illinois Extension, Calhoun Unit, sponsored a Pond Management Workshop/Demonstration at the McCully Heritage Project for 32 landowners. Presenters were Fisheries Biologists from Illinois Department of Natural Resources and Jersey County Soil and Water Conservation District Resource Conservationist. Topics that were covered include: Pond Shocking and Fish Inventory; Fluctuations in Temperatures and Oxygen Levels, Aquatic Plant Identification and Control, Dam Permits and Construction, and Stocking for New and Existing Ponds.

The Calhoun County Soil and Water Conservation District guided 687 elementary students through "Water Wise Bingo", a fun game to learn about water conservation, at Stewardship Days and Conservation Day.

The ***Cass County SWCD*** and the Lower Sangamon River Resource Conservation and Development co-sponsored a Waste Water Management Composting Tour at Cargill Meat Solutions in Beardstown, IL. Approximately 25 people visited the lab where everything involved with the waste water composting facility is monitored, the big water tanks, and the fields where the compost dries. Some of the tour group took samples of the finished compost to put on their gardens.

The ***Christian County SWCD,*** University of Illinois Extension-Christian County and the Christian County Farm Bureau co- sponsor the Christian County Agricultural Literacy Program through Ag in the Classroom. The Soil and Water Conservation District staff worked at a pancake and sausage breakfast to raise funds to implement agricultural based education in county classrooms. The Ag in the Classroom coordinator utilized the Christian County Soil and Water Conservation District's Enviroscape and Groundwater Model for classroom activities.

The Christian County Soil and Water Conservation District participated in a University of Illinois's Dudley Smith Cow-Calf Day Field Day about Management in Rotational Grazing and Forage Selection. This 226 acre field-scale research site is located in Christian County near Pana.

The ***Hancock County SWCD,*** Ag Literacy Coordinator and area teachers celebrated Arbor Day with presentations and activities to teach county third grader the many benefits derived from trees, such as: erosion control; reductions in air pollution; cooling effects on our home; reduced heating bills; reduction in carbon dioxide levels; habitat for wildlife; wood products - paper, lumber, beauty and much more . Each student received a tree seeding in hopes that the planting of these trees will be the beginning of a learning experience that lasts throughout their lifetime.

The Hancock County SWCD awarded the 2009 Glen Smiddy Memorial Scholarships to Richlyn Mulch, Sutter, IL, Mariah Myers, LaHarpe, IL, and Katie Roskamp, Sutter, IL. Recipients were Hancock County students/residents majoring in agriculture, agri-business, conservation, natural resources or agricultural related course offerings. The Glen Smiddy Memorial Scholarship is in honor of Glen's contributions to soil conservation. Recipients were Hancock County students/residents majoring in agriculture, agri-business, conservation, natural resources or agricultural related course offerings with exceptional scholastic ability and/or financial need. The applicants' character and personality traits such as: maturity, industriousness, motivation, intellectual interest, moral character, and demonstrated leadership, are additionally taken into consideration for the award.

The Hancock County SWCD held their first Residue Management Field Day to promote understanding and encourage increased utilization of conservation tillage and residue management. Proper residue management reduces soil erosion, maintains soil health, conserves soil moisture, manages snow, improves water quality, provides wildlife habitat, and improves profits. If properly managed, crop rotation, soil conditions, equipment selection, and weed control will improve yields and soil productivity. Over 200 attendees heard discussions and watched field demonstrations of ten pieces of conservation tillage equipment. Natural Resources Conservation Service staff measured crop residue after tillage, discussed requirements for compliance, demonstrated how to measure residue, and discussed equipment usage and timing. Guest speakers covered topics such as: residue management, tillage options, nutrient placement, and carbon credits.

The Hancock County SWCD Resource Conservationist, Abbie Sperry, demonstrated the movement of water and pollutants through a watershed to 300 area 5th graders at the Kids' Conservation Day. Nonpoint sources (residential area, storm water, forestry areas, transportation, recreation, agriculture, and construction) contribute a great deal to water pollution.

Jersey County SWCD signed a memorandum of understanding with the Jersey County Board designed to improve compliance with storm water, erosion and sediment control ordinances and regulations. The SWCD will be in charge of reviewing storm water plans and ensuring that the builders implement these plans. The agreement also formalizes the SWCD's role in Agricultural Areas Protection Work and Natural Resource Inventories for the county's subdivision committee.

The ***Macoupin County SWCD*** led conservation related activities and presentations to sixth graders from all the county's 14 elementary schools during Conservation Week at Beaver Dam State Park.

More than 40 people attended a Prescribed Fire Workshop offered by Macoupin County SWCD, and The Sangamon County SWCD, the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, the Illinois Department of Natural Resources, Pheasants Forever and the Landowner Incentive Program. The morning classroom sessions were held at the Otter Lake Water Commission Maintenance Office Building. Many of the attendees present witnessed their first summer burn.

The ***Madison, St. Clair***, and ***Monroe County SWCDs*** held their annual erosion and sediment control field day at Southern Illinois University at Edwardsville Campus. Approximately 210 engineers, public works directors, developers, municipal inspectors and contractors learned about the latest post construction erosion and sediment control technologies and products. The event showcased a staged flocculent sediment control demonstration and the installation of a large permanent rain garden.

The ***McDonough County SWCD*** completed a successful watershed based planning initiative. The final plan was approved, published, posted at www.springlakewatershed.org.

The ***Menard County SWCD,*** the Menard County Farm Bureau, University of Illinois Extension-Sangamon/Menard Unit, and the Sangamon/Menard Ag Education Partnership sponsored an Ag Discovery Day for 174 fifth grade students to develop a deeper understanding the important role agriculture and conservation plays everyday life.

The ***Montgomery County SWCD*** hosted a Conservation Field Day for 300 local fifth-grade students in conjunction with the University of Illinois Extension. Hands-on learning experiences where the students see, feel and do new and exciting things pertaining to conservation of land, water, air, plants and animals were given by SWCD staff, USDA Natural Resource Conservation Service, Illinois Department Natural Resources, University of Illinois Extension and Illinois Environmental Protection Agency officials.

The Montgomery County SWCD hosted a tour of local conservation practices for approximately 20 attendees including its directors, associate directors, legislators, county and city officials and the media. The tour highlighted such projects as a newly constructed terrace system, a wetland restoration, riparian buffers, waterways, and several other practices completed with state and federal cost share dollars.

The ***Sangamon County SWCD*** hosted an Urban Water Quality Best Management Practices tour for city and county zoning and planning officials and Quantum 5 Initiative members. The focus of the tour was the National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) rules and regulations. Key people from the Springfield/Sangamon County Regional Planning Commission, Sangamon County Health Department, Sangamon County Zoning and Building Department, Springfield City Water, Light and Power, Springfield Area Home Builders Association, Crawford, Murphy & Tilly, Inc., Natural Resources Conservation Service and SWCD Directors and staff attended. Certified Professional Erosion Sediment Control Specialist, Don Thieman from ASP Enterprises, discussed proper installation of best management practices (BMPs) at three urban construction sites: South Wind Park (former 80-acre agricultural field), Gander Mountain store site under construction and a residential subdivision on Springfield's west side. The final stop was the new Wal-mart, an excellent example of correctly installed BMPs to control erosion, sedimentation and storm water runoff through a wetland, with overflow water going into a large aerated retention pond.

The Springfield Area Home Builders Association and Sangamon County SWCD hosted a meeting of 60+ contractors and developers to provide information about the National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) regulations, Sangamon County's newly adopted Storm Water and Erosion Control Ordinance, and contractors and developers responsible to be compliant. Also in attendance were representatives from the city of Springfield and Sangamon County, who will be responsible for enforcement, and Sangamon County SWCD Resource Conservationist Terry Nichols. Shannon Allen, watershed specialist and Certified Professional Erosion Sediment Control Specialist from Macon County Soil and Water Conservation District, was the keynote speaker. Allen explained how the NPDES regulations are addressed in Macon County. Allen and Nichols fielded questions from the area contractors and developers on proper installation of NPDES best management practices. Copies of the "Field Manual on Sediment and Erosion Control Best Management Practices for Contractors and Inspectors", written by Jerald S. Fifield, Ph.D., CPESC, were available for review.

The ***Scott County SWCD*** and a 4-H chapter started a community garden at the Scott County Nursing Home located next door to the SWCD office. The staff tilled the garden with a tiller, purchased with a Turkey Federation, grant that is usually rented to county landowners to prepare wildlife food plots. This unique opportunity shows the involvement of nontraditional services that a SWCD district can provide utilizing private, state and county resources**.**

REGION 4

CHAMPAIGN, CLARK, CLAY, COLES, CRAWFORD, CUMBERLAND, DOUGLAS, EDGAR, EDWARDS, EFFINGHAM, FAYETTE, JASPER, LAWRENCE, MACON, MARION, MOULTRIE, RICHLAND, SHELBY, VERMILION, WABASH AND WAYNE COUNTIES

The ***Champaign County SWCD*** organized efforts of the Salt Fork Watershed group. The SWCD received funding from the City of Champaign, the City of Urbana, the Champaign Co SWCD and the Champaign Urbana Sanitary District to keep a US Geological Survey gauging station operational that was slated for closure. Other water monitoring efforts were organized with the University of Illinois and the Champaign Urbana Sanitary District. The SWCD supported a $660,000 grant proposal by the University of Illinois that was funded to study nutrient runoff and the social factors affecting implementation of best management practices to protect water quality. An application was submitted to the Illinois Environmental Protection Agency for a section 319 grant to implement strip-till and other practices to improve water quality that were identified in the Salt Fork Watershed plan.

The Champaign County SWCD was awarded a $132,225 Conservation Innovation Grant from the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service to improve fertilizer recommendations for strip-till. New equipment will be made available to band fertilizer for strip-till applications in corn. The fertilizer can be injected in the soil to limit phosphorus movement into streams and rivers. The SWCD involved the University of Illinois, Extension, producers, fertilizer dealers, equipment companies and international fertilizer groups to organize the project. Intense soil testing and root development analysis will determine where fertilizer moves in the soil and where the root systems develop in this environment. It will be determined if yields can be maintained if the row middles are not fertilized. The study has the potential to improve water quality and reduce the hypoxic zone in the Gulf of Mexico as the new practices are widely adopted in the Midwest.

Clark County SWCD held a Fifth Grade Ag/Conservation Expo at Murphy Farms. Hands on activities are presented on agriculture and conservation topics including water quality, forestry, wildlife, crop production, livestock production, farm safety and the SWCD's poster contest.

The ***Clay County SWCD*** provided a custom seeding service for 22 landowners and established 125 acres of Conservation Reserve Program field border strips.

The ***Coles County SWCD***, local Pheasants Forever, Quail Unlimited, Turkey Federation, Higgins Tree Farm and Robert Hemingway Contractors completed an erosion and flood control project at a local nature center that had flooding problems on the paths around the pond, wetland and crop land. A waterway and diversion were built with Illinois Department of Agriculture Partner's for Conservation funds to fix a large gully in the cropland. A series of emergency spillways were connected to the waterway from the wetland and a principle spillway was built connecting the pond to the wetland. The paths were built up and all areas are scheduled for a frost seeding of native species early 2010. These were funded with $12,000 in donations.

The ***Crawford County SWCD,*** University of Illinois Extension, Illinois Department of Natural Resources and Marathon Oil Company-Robinson Refining Division, held Conservation Field Day for every 5th grade student in the county. Topics covered at the learning stations included: aquatics, soil erosion and wildlife management; games such as "conservation jeopardy", "oh deer"; the rainfall simulator; and the Birds of Prey.

The ***Cumberland County SWCD*** assisted the Lincoln Heritage Resource Conservation Development with a semi-monthly electronics recycling program. The collected items were repaired and reused, or, broken down and the parts recycled.
The Cumberland County SWCD held a Pond Management Seminar covering the following topics: proper maintenance of the pond structure; how ponds control certain erosion problems; proper pond stocking; stocking recommendations for various pond size, and how to manage aquatic vegetation is its proper balance. Illinois Department of Natural Resources Fisheries Biologist shocked the pond to show fish species, size, and variety.

The Cumberland County SWCD and USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service conducted a Conservation Field Trip for county 4th grade students. The students took a bus to see actual conservation practices and tillage methods being used to protect natural resources. Students saw a rainfall simulator demonstration on how conservation tillage protects our streams, lakes and rivers.

The ***Douglas County SWCD's*** Resource Conservationist, Butch Fisher and the Embarras River Management Association were awarded the 2008 No-Till Innovator Award for an Organization at the 2009 National No-Till Conference in Indianapolis, IN. One of the main projects to promote no-till in the watershed was the construction of 6 Rainfall Simulator Units to demonstrate the benefits of no-till crop residue in reducing soil erosion and nutrient runoff.

The Douglas County SWCD displayed their rainfall simulator unit at the Association of Illinois Soil and Water Conservation Districts Media Day. In addition to demonstrating the effects of plant cover on water erosion control, this rainfall simulator unit shows the benefits of pervious concrete on water runoff.

The Douglas County SWCD and Representative Chapin Rose sought legislation to establish a SWCD license plate for the State of Illinois. SWCD Chairman Doug Rund and Resource Conservationist Butch Fisher provided testimony. The House approved HB0228, but it did not pass the Senate.

The ***Edgar County SWCD*** displayed information for landowners at the Kansas (Illinois) High School Job Fair. Survey instruments used to design conservation practices were demonstrated. Students were quizzed about each booth at the Fair.

Edgar County SWCD presented a Power Point slide show on the benefits of a rain garden and how and where they should be built to students at Shiloh High School. The students were shown a worm bin that recycled old foods, coffee grounds, and coffee filters into humus for soil improvement.

The Edgar County SWCD presented the benefits of sealing an abandoned water well, how to properly seal a well, who to contact to seal a well, cost-share from the local SWCD to seal a well, to the Kansas (Illinois) High School Agriculture Class

The ***Effingham SWCD*** collected close to 7 tons of unwanted electronic items at their first electronic recycling day.

The Effingham SWCD was awarded a grant for $158,046.00 to fund their C-2000 Restore Our Forest Communities program which helped 78 landowners do timber stand improvement, prescribed burns, rare and declining habitat improvement, and invasive plant species control projects in their forest.

Fayette County SWCD and the US Army Corps of Engineers co-sponsored the Kaskaskia Watershed Summit. In the morning, the 200 attendees were given informative presentations on natural resource issues in the Kaskaskia River Watershed and in the afternoon they toured the Old State Capitol and an area developed to attract wildlife.

The ***Jasper County SWCD*** spring 2009 Quail Buffer Seeding Program was again a success for the SWCD and landowners. The SWCD purchased seed, leased a tractor and hired part-time help to seed over 250 acres of CP33 on 33 landowners throughout the county. Another 100 acres of seed was sold to customers planting their own. This program has allowed the SWCD to maintain its financial stability and another seeding program is planned for 2010.

Over 20 people brought in 7340 pounds of electronic items to be recycled at the Jasper County SWCD and Lincoln Heritage Resource Conservation and Development E-Recycling Day. The SWCD coordinated with a local school district to pick up computer equipment. Approximately 50 CPU's were collected from one site.

The Jasper County SWCD awarded two scholarships: a $500.00 scholarship to a graduating senior at Newton Community High School; and a $1000.00 scholarship to a current college student majoring in a natural resource or agriculture related field.

Lawrence County SWCD hosted an Irrigation Field Day for over 100 farmers and landowners in southeastern Illinois at JMR farms. Dr. Lyndon Kelley, Purdue University Extension Irrigation Specialist was the featured speaker. Commercial exhibitors were also on hand to show their irrigation products and services. Topics covered included: uniform water application, uniform water application assessments, trickle irrigation, irrigation scheduling, tools, and techniques, chemigation, fertigation, backflow prevention and safety.

The ***Macon County SWCD*** used their watershed model to demonstrate soil erosion to students attending the Science Career Fair and at the AgUcation event. A GPS presentation was given to 2,100 fifth and sixth Grade students. At the ADM Earth Day and at the Rock Springs Nature Center Conservation Days, the SWCD displayed conservation practices in the county.

The ***Marion County SWCD*** participated in a Farm Safety Event sponsored by the Marion County Ag Literacy Coalition and over 70 volunteers and sponsors. 250 6th grade students rotated between stations learning about: grain bin safety, ATV safety, disability stations, power take off safety, gun safety, and electrical safety.

Marion Co SWCD assisted the Centralia Waste Water Treatment Plant in finding an alternative use for the only by product - dried sludge. Instead of paying for the disposal of the dried sludge, the SWCD is working with plant to find beneficial alternative uses.

The ***Vermilion County SWCD,*** the USDA Natural Resource Conservation Service, Vermilion County Conservation District, and the Lake Vermilion Water Quality Coalition hosted an Agriculture Day Workshop and Conservation Tour for 20 emerging community leaders enrolled in the Vermilion Advantage Leadership Tomorrow Program

The Vermilion County SWCD hosted a Contractor's Workshop for 15 earthwork and tiling contractors that work within the county. Highlights of the workshop included the availability of funding for projects, program guidelines, project designs, and practice checkout.

The Vermilion County SWCD provided 1000 seedlings to county students to celebrate Earth Day and Arbor Day.

The Vermilion County SWCD and the City of Danville Public Works Department hosted a Storm water Management and Planning Workshop to provide information to those individuals throughout the county that deal with storm water management, infrastructure, and planning.

Wayne County SWCD completed the following educational activities: presented over 600 elementary students with a tree seedling and instructed them on proper tree planting; participated in Conservation Days and Illinois Envirothon; awarded a scholarship to a SWCD high school senior; held a conservation air tour; and sponsored cover crop field day.

REGION 5

CLINTON, FRANKLIN, GALLATIN, HAMILTON, JACKSON, JEFFERSON, JOHNSON, MASSAC, MONROE, PERRY, POPE-HARDIN, PULASKI-ALEXANDER, RANDOLPH, ST. CLAIR, SALINE, UNION, WASHINGTON, WHITE AND WILLIAMSON COUNTIES

Jefferson County SWCD and ASP Enterprises sponsored an urban erosion control workshop for over 100 area engineers, Illinois Department of Transportation staff, contractors, SWCD staffs, and public officials on the current Illinois Environmental Protection Agency erosion and sediment control guidelines, plans, inspections, best management practices and products. Input from this meeting set the agenda for the outdoor workshop in October at Southern Illinois University at Carbondale

Johnson County SWCD along with IDNR sponsored its annual Ecology Day Program at Ferne Clyffe State Park were 126 - 7th grade students attended this years program. Six different stations were set up where subjects pertaining to Forestry, Wildlife and Wetlands were covered.

Johnson County SWCD offers a rental program where landowners in Johnson County can rent a 15', 10' or 7' No-Till drill, Aerway or Strawmulcher. The district also offers a gator seeding program.

Perry Co SWCD and the Illinois Forestry Association held a timber seminar entitled, "Money Does Grow on Trees," for 53 attendees. Topics included: how to maintain your trees; how to use your forestry plan effectively; and the new property tax laws that affect forest owners.

Perry Co SWCD hosted a zoning retreat for the Perry County Zoning Board to review and discuss the year's zoning changes and make any changes to the zoning maps.

Randolph County SWCD hosted and presented conservation related activities at its annual Conservation Day for county 5th graders.

Randolph Co SWCD, Illinois Department of Natural Resources, and the US Fish and Wildlife Service managed an invasive plant species control project in the Mississippi River Bluff Area surrounding the Prairie of the Rock Nature Preserve. 17 acres of hill prairie were restored.

St. Clair County SWCD entered into an agreement with St. Clair County government to review storm water management plans for construction projects in the county.

Saline County SWCD made Arbor Day presentations to all county third graders. Each 3rd grader and each school receive a tree to plant.

Saline Co SWCD awarded prizes for their annual poster contest, essay contest, conservation farm family at their Annual Meeting in front of 160 attendees from the county.

Saline Co SWCD awarded two scholarships to county high school seniors or local community college students studying agriculture or natural resources.

Saline Co SWCD rents a 7 foot no-till drill, a fabric plow, and a tree planter. They hold a spring and fall fish sale to stock landowners' ponds. They also sell agricultural filter fabric, survey/marking flags, and bluebird houses.

Union County SWCD hosted its first Union County Agriculture Appreciation Day for 78 landowners and farmers. The program topics ranged from, "Backyard Conservation," to "Increasing Corn Yields in Tough Economic Times". Education materials were displayed and attendees judged the 5th grade poster contest.

Union Co SWCD hosted its first Conservation Day and tree sale at Lotus Naturescapes, a local landscape business. The SWCD and Future Farmers of America sold trees through Lotus. Backyard Conservation booklets were distributed and BBQ sandwiches were sold.

Washington Co SWCD prepared the winning application for the Illinois Farm Family of the Year contest. The Meier family was recognized at the Association of Illinois Soil and Water Conservation Districts Annual Meeting, at the Illinois State Fair, and appeared on a float at the Addieville Wheat Festival Parade.

White County SWCD and the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service provided technical and administrative assistance to landowners using cost share funds from the Illinois Department of Agriculture's Partners in Conservation Streambank Stabilization Program, Conservation Practice Program and Total Maximum Daily Load Program. The SWCD assisted 19 landowners to prepare Illinois Conservation and Climate Initiative contracts to sequester carbon on 1,250 acres.

White Co SWCD, Illinois Department of Natural Resources, University of Illinois Extension Service and the Wayne-White Electric Coop held a Conservation Day for all 165 fourth graders and the Hamilton County Fish and Wildlife Area. Students learned about forestry, entomology, wildlife, fish, and electric safety, decorated tree cookie pendants, and signed greeting cards for county nursing home residents.

Franklin, Jackson, Perry, Randolph, Washington, and Williamson Co SWCDs held its 3 day, 19th Conservation Fair at the DuQuoin Fairgrounds for over 3,100 kindergarten through 6th grade students from those counties. Topics included soils, soil erosion and conservation, wildlife, snakes, bees, gun safety, electric safety, bugs, Illinois symbols, cow milking, forestry, fisheries, farm animals, aquatic macroinvertebrates, secchi disk reading, and fire prevention with Smokey the Bear. 81 classes made Christmas cards to be distributed at the Veteran's Administration Nursing Home in Marion, IL by the Gallatin Co SWCD staff and directors.

Region 5 SWCD staffs made presentations and led activities for the 4 days of the 20th Stewardship Week at the Dixon Springs Agriculture Center for 2,600 kindergarten through 6th grades students in extreme southern Illinois. Topics included soils, soil erosion and conservation, water quality, wildlife, forestry, fish, nature walks, habitat, and electric safety. Natural resource agencies, organizations, and individuals all cooperated in holding this event.

Under the leadership of Perry Co SWCD, the Region 5 SWCDs received a Sustainable Agriculture Mini-grant to provide training to the Region 5 SWCD staffs. The first training covered current programs that would benefit specialty crop producers. Each attendee received a 3-ring binder of information on various programs and marketing opportunities.

Region 5 SWCD started a website www.siswcds.webs.com to post their activities, events, and sales. A farmers' market survey, contact information, SWCD history, and a "Working Together" Power Point, articles, and links were also posted. Registration and rain date of the Urban Erosion and Sediment Control Workshop was available from the website.

Region 5 SWCD employees' held a bake sale at the statewide Winter Training. Proceeds from the sale went to adding to Christmas gift bags distributed at the Veteran's Administration Nursing Home in Marion, IL.

Several Region 5 Soil and Water Conservation Districts have websites available to increase contact with the people in their communities. They are:

Franklin Co SWCD - *www.franklincountyswcd.webs.com*

Massac Co SWCD - *www.massacaclue.org*
(With Farm Bureau and U of I Extension)

Monroe Co SWCD - *www.mocoswcd.com*

Pulaski-Alexander SWCD - *www.pulaskialexander.webs.com*

Randolph Co SWCD - *www.freewebs.com/randolphswcd*

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The information in this report was complied by the Illinois Department of Agriculture, Bureau of Land and Water Resources along with the Association of Illinois Soil and Water Conservation Districts highlighting the work SWCDs have done for fiscal year 2009.

Illinois Department of Agriculture
Bureau of Land and Water Resources
217/782-6297
www.agr.state.il.us

Association of Illinois Soil and Water
Conservation Districts
217/744-3414
www.aiswcd.org

In compiling this report, information was provided by the following agencies that work through or in conjunction with soil and water conservation districts.

Illinois Department of
Natural Resources
217/782-7454
www.dnr.state.il.us

USDA- Natural Resources
Conservation Service, Illinois
217/353-6600
www.il.nrcs.usda.gov

Illinois Environmental
Protection Agency
217/524-2743
www.epa.state.il.us

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