

STATE of ILLINOIS
DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
THOMAS E. JENNINGS, DIRECTOR



ILLINOIS
CONSERVATION PARTNERSHIP
ANNUAL REPORT
2010



Illinois
Department of
Agriculture

BUREAU OF LAND AND
WATER RESOURCES



Pat Quinn, Governor
Thomas E. Jennings, Director

Office of the Director

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Dear Friend:

The conservation of our soil and water resources continues to be a high priority of the Illinois Department of Agriculture, regardless of the very challenging budget times all of us are experiencing. Protecting the integrity of our agricultural land base is vital to our food production capabilities and Illinois' economy.

Illinois landowners in rural and urban areas are making excellent progress in environmental protection, but much more work needs to be carried out. For example, the severe weather events that are seemingly becoming more commonplace can cause extensive soil erosion and water quality problems. Also, some federal agencies are placing a stronger emphasis on reducing the amount of nutrients, such as nitrogen and phosphorus, that are entering water bodies from lawns, municipal wastewater treatment facilities and farm fields to help protect water quality. Further, prime farmland resources are being converted to nonagricultural purposes at a rapid rate. These examples illustrate the continuing critical need for comprehensive conservation programs to be implemented in Illinois and on the national level. The important educational and technical assistance provided to agricultural and urban communities by the Illinois conservation partnership is essential for Illinoisans to realize true success in meeting their environmental protection goals.

This report highlights the soil and water conservation accomplishments achieved throughout Illinois over the past year. I encourage you to review this report to discover the tremendous diversity and scope of work being done to protect our natural resources. I also invite you to contact your local Soil and Water Conservation District office to learn what you can do individually to contribute to the proper management of our sensitive natural resources.

Very truly yours,

ILLINOIS DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

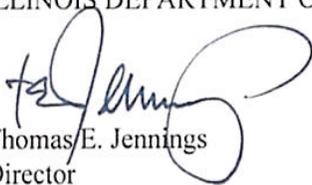

Thomas E. Jennings
Director

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WELCOME / INTRODUCTION

Information has been compiled for the Illinois Conservation Partnership Annual Report from programs carried out in 2010. 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.

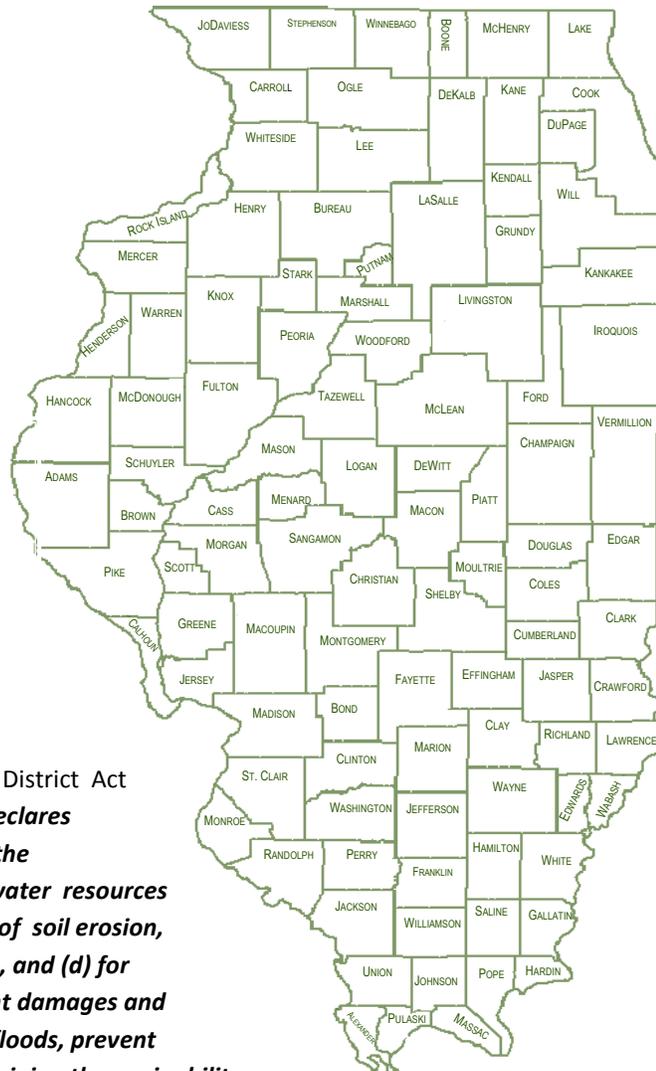
Partner programs provide benefits in the areas of soil conservation and water quality in rural and urban communities, agricultural nutrient management, farmland protection, sustainable agriculture, wildlife habitat, and watershed planning and protection. Efforts also provide youth and adult environmental 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.

“National action may be led and aided by government, but the soil must be conserved ultimately by those who till the land and live by its products.”

-Hugh Hammond Bennett

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 (BLWR) 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 2010, the BLWR distributed over \$12.5 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 for various land uses 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 Program. 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 across Illinois under the PFC Program in Fiscal Year 2010:

- ◆ 779 Conservation Structures
- ◆ 19 Sustainable Agriculture Projects
- ◆ 148 Water Well Decommissioning Projects
- ◆ 24 Nutrient Management Plans Written
- ◆ 91 Nutrient Management Plans Implemented
- ◆ 22,091 Linear Feet of Stream Bank Stabilization

The Department's nutrient management program provides incentives to eligible land users for implementing plans that help to minimize the transport of nutrient loads into surface and groundwater resources from agricultural practices.

In February of 2010, the Department conducted a Statewide Conservation Tillage Seminar in cooperation with the 98 local Soil and Water Conservation Districts, University of Illinois Extension and the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service. The seminar provided practical information that producers can apply to farming practices to not only protect the environment, but to also enhance profitability.

FARMLAND PROTECTION

The BLWR also administers Illinois' Farmland Protection Program under the auspices of the Illinois Farmland Preservation Act. The Act requires state agencies to provide written notice to the Department of Agriculture of development projects (e.g., highways, airports, facility planning areas, enterprise zones, and wildlife habitat acquisition proposals) that will lead to farmland conversion. The Department works with the sponsoring agency to minimize the anticipated farmland conversion impacts. During the year, 255 projects were reviewed for compliance with the Farmland Preservation Act.

The BLWR continued to work with various utility companies on large pipeline construction projects that affected agricultural land. Specifically, the BLWR worked with Northern Border Pipeline Company in the development of plans to minimize adverse impacts to agricultural land and farm operations associated with the future construction of the company's 16-inch natural gas pipeline in Bureau County. The BLWR also negotiated an Agricultural Impact Mitigation Agreement with Denbury Resources, Inc. regarding the future construction of a 23-inch carbon dioxide pipeline in Illinois. Further, the BLWR worked with the US Department of Energy on the development of a Draft Environmental Impact Statement for the proposed construction of the Taylorville Energy Center (clean coal facility).

The BLWR also provided technical assistance to landowners and local units of government wishing to develop farmland protection programs. Local farmland protection programs are critical to farmland protection success across Illinois. Specifically, the Department assisted 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 54 Agricultural Areas in 22 counties throughout Illinois comprising 114,976 acres.

MINED LAND RECLAMATION

As provided by an agreement with the Illinois Department of Natural Resources-Office of Mines and Minerals, the BLWR reviewed coal mining permit applications to help facilitate the reclamation of agricultural land affected by coal mining operations. The Department also tested crop yields at reclaimed agricultural land sites to ensure that pre-mining productivity levels have been restored. A total of 7 coal mine permit applications were reviewed and 237 fields covering 4,089 acres of reclaimed ground were tested for crop yield success during the year.

COMMUNITY GARDEN

The Community Garden, located in the interior of the State Fairgrounds' mile race track, continued to be a major success in 2010. The Garden was sponsored by the Illinois Department of Agriculture, University of Illinois Extension, Illinois State University, Komnick Excavating, Jacksonville FFA and the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service. The Department offered the opportunity for gardeners to obtain up to two 15 foot x 12 foot plots for \$10 each to use for the season. The Department supplied tomato, pepper, cabbage and broccoli plants, approximately 2,000 seed samples for gardeners' use, the needed water, 30 tons of compost, straw for mulch and hand tools to help contribute to the success of the garden.

The Community Garden opened again on April 12, 2010. There were a total of 170 plots requested by 104 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 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 Department also began a large scale composting project in 2010 adjacent to the Community Garden. Over 500 tons of manure from the animal stables and livestock shows held on the Fairgrounds throughout the year were composted. Compost material will be used in the Community Garden, the Farmer's Little Helper area and the various flower gardens on the Fairgrounds. The composting project is a cooperative effort with Illinois State University, University of Illinois Extension and the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service. The compost will recycle valuable nutrients and improve soil tilth/organic matter in the Community Garden plots. Additionally, money was saved by reducing the amount of manure transported off the Fairgrounds for disposal.

The Community Garden had many visitors throughout the year from individuals and groups including high school agriculture teachers, FFA groups, Springfield Channel 20, the Master Gardener's Garden Walk and participants of a composting workshop.

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 Illinois citizens of all ages.

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 involved 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 hosted an annual field day event where specialists explained how practices showcased at the farm benefit the environment. Over 200 individuals attended the September 11, 2010 field day event.

The Bureau provided 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 was open during the Illinois State Fair and by appointment at other times during the year. In 2010, 5,166 individuals visited Watershed Park.

ILLINOIS SOIL CONSERVATION TRANSECT SURVEY SUMMARY

Results of the 13th statewide Soil Conservation Transect Survey conducted in the spring and early summer of 2011 indicate Illinois producers performed more tillage to plant their corn and soybean crops than in 2009 which was the last year the survey was conducted. Intensive tillage practices can bury crop residue and leave the soil surface more susceptible to 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 tillage trends that correlate to 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 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 97 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.

The 2011 Transect Survey results show 84.2% of the points surveyed were at or below "T". Although the 2011 results show less acres are being farmed below "T" than in 2009, this is only about 2% below the highest level of 86.5% recorded in 1998.

YEAR	< "T"	1-2 "T"	>2 "T"	UNKNOWN
2010	84.2	10.9	4.9	0
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 2010.

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

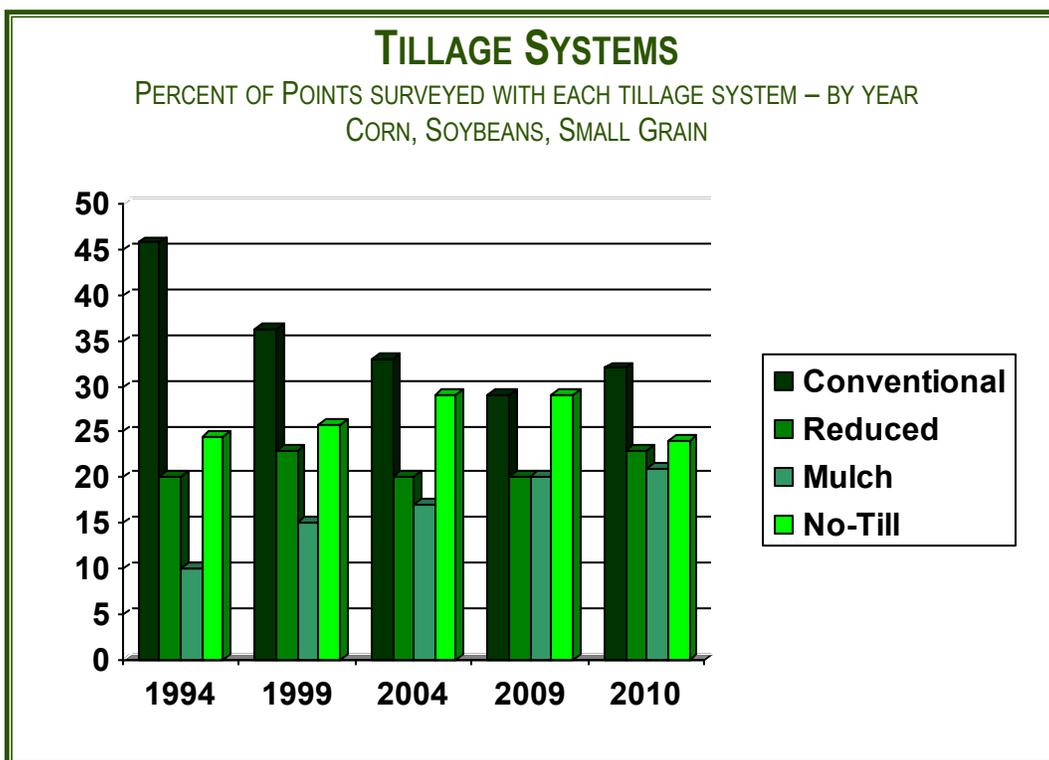
As previously mentioned, farmers did more intensive tillage this past year than in 2009 and in 2006, the last two years the survey was conducted. This increase may be a result of wet planting seasons over the past couple of survey years that have resulted in producers making extra tillage trips across their fields to prepare them for planting.

The percent of soybean fields planted by no-till had increased every year from 28% in 1994 to 51% in 2006. Although the number of no-till soybean fields had declined 10% to 41% in 2011, it appears a large percentage of this reduction was attributed to a switch to mulch-till as there was a 6% gain from 19% in 2006 to 25% in 2011. Still, when the acres of mulch and no-till are added together, two-thirds of all soybean fields in 2011 were planted to a tillage system that leaves more than 30% residue, which is the definition of a conservation tillage system.

Surveyors also identify fields in which ephemeral (gully) erosion has been observed in areas of concentrated surface water flow. Controlling this type of erosion requires structural conservation practices, such as grassed waterways or sediment retention basins in addition to conservation tillage. The 2011 survey recorded 19.7% of the fields experiencing ephemeral erosion, which was 1% less than amount observed in 2009.

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 Bureau of Land and Water Resources or the local SWCD.



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 Program. 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 Illinois General Assembly appropriated \$6,000,000 in FY 2008 and \$4,146,750 in 2009 for the Agriculture Resource Enhancement component of the PFC (SWCDs have 2 years to complete the installation of conservation practices). 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 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 (CPP)** assists land users experiencing 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.



143,907 tons is the amount of soil that was saved from the assistance of the PFC Program. That's 5,756 loaded semi tractor-trailers!!

The **Nutrient Management Program (NMP)** provides incentives to eligible land users for nutrient management projects that minimize the transport of nutrient and pollutant loads 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 residential well and \$750 for a high capacity 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 \$5,803,616 from the PFC program was spent on CPP, NMP and WDP during July 1, 2008 through December 31, 2010. The accomplishments for these components of the PFC Program are shown in Table 2A and 2B. In addition to the state's cost for installing these practices, the remaining 40% of the cost of most practices was incurred by the landowner. Projects were completed in 95 Illinois Soil and Water Conservation Districts.

The practices installed from FY 2008 and FY 2009 funding through the CPP benefited a total of 61,232 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 2.4 tons/acre/year. The average cost to the state for reducing or maintaining soil loss to tolerable levels was \$78.91/acre. The cost to the state for soil saved was \$33.58/ton.

Through the NMP, a total of \$22,508 of PFC funding was distributed during FY 2008 and 2009 to Technical Service Providers for developing 183 nutrient management plans covering more than 9,314 acres. In addition to the new plans that were written, a total of 196 plans were implemented by producers on 10,105 acres. The total incentive payments paid to producers for implementing these plans was \$87,973.

The producers that implemented these plans reduced their average per acre application of fertilizer by 29 pounds of nitrogen, 10 pounds of phosphorous and 23 pounds of potassium. While the reductions in fertilizer applied to the land saved the producer an average of \$40 per acre, the pollutant loading in waterbodies was also reduced.

PARTNERS FOR CONSERVATION FUND PROGRAM RESOURCE ENHANCEMENT COMPONENTS	FY 2008 DOLLARS	FY 2009 DOLLARS
Conservation Practice Program	3,229,949	2,573,667
Soil and Water Conservation District Grants	1,725,000	859,399
Sustainable Agriculture Grant Program	287,500	243,875
Streambank Stabilization and Restoration Program	757,551	469,809
<i>TOTAL</i>	<i>6,000,000</i>	<i>4,146,750</i>

TABLE 2A

FY 2008 Partners for Conservation Fund Program

July 1, 2007– Dec 31, 2010

CONSERVATION PRACTICE	PROJECTS	ACRES BENEFITED	TONS SAVED	SEDIMENT REDUCTION	\$/ACRE	\$/TONS	CLAIMS SUMMARY *
COVER & GREEN MANURE CROP	8	390	1,235	272	11.60	3.66	4,526.00
CRITICAL AREA PLANTING	24	151	1,225	340	281.95	34.74	42,591.71
DIVERSION	6	211	83	22	43.34	109.77	9,154.57
GRADE STABILIZATION STRUCTURE	106	3,509	3,114	871	70.49	79.44	247,411.13
GRASSED WATERWAY	363	16,787	37,968	10,296	57.60	25.47	967,034.49
RESIDUE MANAGEMENT	72	3,677	12,903	3,511	1.51	0.51	4,419.99
PASTURELAND AND HAYLAND PLANTING	82	1,527	11,457	3,182	126.08	16.81	192,547.73
TEMPORARY COVER	19	29	241	61	160.24	24.14	5,834.78
TERRACES (VEGETATIVE OUTLET)	67	2,905	4,417	1,702	92.20	60.64	267,894.14
WATER & SEDIMENT CONTROL BASINS	309	10,168	15,765	5,183	105.81	68.25	1,075,938.45
TOTAL	1,056	39,354	88,408	25,440	\$71.64	\$31.87	\$2,817,707.99

* 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.

TABLE 2B**FY 2009
Partners for Conservation Fund Program**

July 1, 2008– Dec 31, 2010

CONSERVATION PRACTICE	PROJECTS	ACRES BENEFITED	TONS SAVED	SEDIMENT REDUCTION	\$/ACRE	\$/TONS	CLAIMS SUMMARY *
COVER & GREEN MANURE CROP	6	171	916	244	21.87	4.09	3,750.00
CRITICAL AREA PLANTING	33	192	3,009	822	249.34	15.95	47,997.97
DIVERSION	4	24	49	13	176.98	86.00	4,282.80
GRADE STABILIZATION STRUCTURE	65	1,392	2,098	588	119.83	79.52	166,911.61
GRASSED WATERWAY	237	10,905	21,395	6,429	65.83	33.55	717,898.71
RESIDUE MANAGEMENT	44	1,759	9,184	2,515	1.41	0.35	2,384.48
PASTURELAND AND HAYLAND PLANTING	20	424	5,242	1,473	113.77	9.21	48,284.78
TEMPORARY COVER	27	24	121	32	310.46	62.35	7,575.23
TERRACES (VEGETATIVE OUTLET)	43	1,095	3,062	1,033	134.62	48.18	147,525.23
WATER & SEDIMENT CONTROL BASINS	229	5,892	10,423	3,536	147.25	83.24	867,592.03
TOTAL	708	21,878	55,499	16,685	\$92.04	\$36.29	\$2,014,202.84

* **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.

Partners For Conservation

Special Projects



The Special Project component of the Partners for Conservation Program was first made available to Districts in FY2008. This initiative was created for Districts to be able to cost-share projects unique to a limited area or region of the state that would either provide for piloting new practices not on the Department's state-wide docket or target specific practices or initiatives that are local priorities.

The Special Project funding allows the Department and Districts to address these needs without adding a long list of practices to the statewide docket that may only be used by a few Districts. Urbanizing Districts have emerging issues they deal with on a regular basis that are not addressed by the existing regular program which addresses rural soil erosion needs.

The cost-share rate for most Special Projects is 60%, unless the sheet and rill erosion is greater than twice the tolerable soil loss for the land on which a project has been installed. Projects installed on these higher soil loss sites could receive up to 70% cost-share. The maximum total cost-share amount available for an individual project is \$10,000. However, there is no limit on the number of individual projects that Districts could apply for in a fiscal year.

Examples of potential pilot projects that Districts could apply for include, but are not limited to: stream crossings, shelterbelts, windbreaks, ecologically sensitive area protection – karst, urban gully restoration, retention pond buffers, rain gardens for storm water control, shoreline protection/restoration/stabilization, and heavy livestock use area protection.

In FY2008, 24 projects were constructed with cost-share assistance totaling \$95,608. There were 7 projects constructed in FY2009. Total cost-share provided for these projects was \$43,883. The approved projects and the amount of cost-share provided for FY2008 and FY2009 are listed in the following tables.

TABLE 4
FY2008—Special Projects

SWCD	Type of Project	Cost-share Dollars
Boone	Livestock Stream Crossing & Filter Strip	\$4,981
Cass	Abandon Well Sealing	\$6,000
Champaign (3)	Stormwater Control, Rain Gardens, Strip-till	\$17,204
Cumberland (2)	Shoreline Protection, Critical Area Planting	\$3,194
Effingham	Shoreline Protection	\$10,000
Jefferson	Livestock Stream Crossing	\$2,489
JoDavies (3)	Strip-till, Grazing Plans, Turbidity Curtain	\$3,530
Kane-Dupage (2)	Rain Garden, Shoreline Protection	\$3,077
Kankakee	Shoreline Protection	\$9,600
Kendall	Rain Gardens	\$783
Lake	Rain Gardens	\$3,850
Logan	Solar Livestock Watering-Intensive Grazing System	\$2,440
Macon	Strom Water Detention Ponds	\$8,392
McLean (3)	Cover Crop Initiative, Sediment Basin, Bio-filter	\$18,833
Mercer	Windbreaks	\$650
Montgomery	Targeted Well Sealing	\$585

Note: Number of projects completed in parenthesis when greater than one project

TABLE 5
FY2009—Special Projects

SWCD	Type of Project	Cost-share Dollars
Effingham	Urban Critical Area Erosion Treatment	\$10,000
Grundy	Rain Gardens	\$2,056
Jefferson	Livestock Stream Crossing	\$7,797
Knox	Shoreline Protection, Floating Island	\$5,281
Piatt	Shoreline Protection	\$6,905
Union (2)	Livestock Stream Crossing	\$11,844

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 contribute 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 effects of streambank erosion along with the practices available to stabilize the erosion through SSRP.*
2. *Provide cost share 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 Fiscal Years 2008 and 2009, \$757,511 and \$469,809 respectively, was appropriated through the Illinois Department of Agriculture (IDOA) for SSRP. Streambank stabilization practices constructed with 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 shows a summary of streambank projects completed.



Rock Riffle and Stream Barb



Stone Toe Protection with Extended Keys

TABLE 3

**STREAMBANK STABILIZATION & RESTORATION PROGRAM
SUMMARY OF PROJECTS COMPLETED**

SWCD	Number Projects	Sediment Reduction	Nitrogen Reduction	Phosphorus Reduction	Feet of Bank	FY 2008 Cost-Share	FY 2009 Cost-Share
Adams	11	1,277	2,554	1,277	3,032	\$48,687	\$12,194
Boone	2	128	256	128	600	\$4,350	\$10,500
Brown	2	163	326	163	480	\$9,721	
Calhoun	4	98	196	98	1,390		\$18,834
Carroll	1	38	76	38	500	\$13,050	
Christian	1	33	66	33	262	\$5,737	
Clark	6	640	1,280	640	1,325	\$31,741	\$3,937
Cumberland	1	21	42	21	200	\$5,575	
DeKalb	3	192	384	192	2,250	\$2,231	\$33,055
Edwards	1	29	58	29	270		\$4,982
Fulton	3	112	224	112	500	\$10,849	\$6,623
Grundy	4	164	328	164	900	\$32,899	\$1,109
Henderson	2	682	1,364	682	1,020	\$19,632	
Jackson	2	223	446	223	1,310	\$24,482	
Jefferson	1	11	22	11	50	\$2,833	
JoDaviess	12	832	1,664	832	9,147	\$47,892	\$50,507
Kane-DuPage	4	306	612	306	2,285	\$40,160	
Kendall	1	30	60	30	150		\$7,165
Lake	3	41	82	41	616	\$12,707	
LaSalle	1	44	88	44	433	\$10,125	
Logan	1	135	270	135	800	\$3,796	
Macoupin	1	134	268	134	400		\$14,421
Marshall-Putnam	4	373	746	343	2,175	\$30,954	\$20,520
Massac	3	361	722	361	800	\$3,477	\$13,678
McLean	3	484	968	484	4,465	\$68,407	
McHenry	1	274	548	274	2,306		\$30,000
Menard	1	28	56	28	553	\$3,000	
Mercer	1	78	156	78	725	\$14,333	
Montgomery	2	154	308	154	725	\$6,121	\$12,469
Morgan	1	45	90	45	175		\$6,078
Moultrie	1	400	800	400	2,100	\$31,203	
Peoria	2	594	1188	594	1100	25201	

TABLE CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE

TABLE 3 (continued)

**STREAMBANK STABILIZATION & RESTORATION PROGRAM
SUMMARY OF PROJECTS COMPLETED**

SWCD	Number Projects	Sediment Reduction	Nitrogen Reduction	Phosphorus Reduction	Feet of Bank	FY 2008 Cost-Share	FY 2009 Cost-Share
Pike	6	322	644	322	2,650	\$28,501	\$21,778
Pope-Hardin	4	773	1,546	773	2,342	\$38,114	\$5,013
Pulaski-Alexander	2	248	496	248	3,275	\$8,696	\$4,453
Randolph	2	557	1,114	557	1,425	\$21,927	
Rock Island	4	124	248	124	490	\$4,722	\$7,050
Sangamon	1	52	104	52	1,000		\$6,120
Stark	2	137	274	137	730	\$19,755	
Tazewell	6	568	1,136	568	3,235	\$35,167	\$31,049
Union	4	459	918	459	1,575	\$20,045	\$12,953
Vermilion	4	923	1,846	923	2,520	\$24,937	\$42,367
Washington	1	203	406	203	1,650		\$6,450
White	2	116	232	116	650		\$14,848
Will-South Cook	2	25	50	25	330	\$6,116	
Williamson	1	82	164	82	550		\$9,951
Winnebago	1	7	14	7	160	\$4,125	
Woodford	2	198	396	198	1,500	\$28,363	



PICTURED ARE 3 MATURE SSRP STONE TOE PROTECTION PROJECTS IN WARREN COUNTY

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. The Department broke ground on May 3, 2001 to build Watershed Park. The Park opened on August 10, 2001 during the Illinois State Fair.

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

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

In 2009 and 2010, Watershed Park underwent stream repair and maintenance. In 2010, it was open for 9 days and hosted 5,166 visitors during the Illinois State Fair. During the Fair additional activities are set up and volunteers from SWCDs, NRCS Natural Resources Conservation Service, Illinois Environmental Protection Agency, University of Illinois and others generously donate their time and expertise to help educate the public on protecting water quality. In addition, two elementary schools with 63 students visited Watershed Park. Further, during Earth Stewardship Day on May 4, 2010 there were over 900 students participating in 6 interactive educational sessions throughout the day.

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**.



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 2010, IDOA, in cooperation with enumerators from the Illinois Agricultural Statistics Service, sampled 50 corn fields (1,338 acres), 34 soybean fields (806 acres), 31 wheat fields (342 acres) and 122 hay fields (1,603 acres) for a total of 237 fields (4,089 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. Two permit applications and 5 permit revisions were reviewed in 2010.

Map highlights those counties that have mined land reclamation activities for calendar year 2010.

**Illinois Counties
With Mined Land Reclamation
Activities for 2010**



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 2010 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 2010 FARMLAND CONVERSION ANNUAL REPORT

Land Purchased or Affected Due to Actions of State Agencies
July 1, 2009—June 30,2010

STATE AGENCY	TOTAL ACRES	CROPLAND	PATURE LAND	FOREST LAND	OTHER*
CAPITAL DEVELOPMENT BOARD					
A. Schools	130	126			4
COMMERCE AND ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITY					
A. DCEO/Com. Development Grants	0				
B. Enterprise Zones	1,394	191	5	8	1,190
C. HIB Wind Energy	315	315			
D. "Illinois Jobs Now"	0				
ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY					
A. Facility Planning Area Boundary	8,571**	8,571**			
DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES					
A. Office of Mines and Minerals	0				
B. Office of Realty & Environmental	1,975		24	1,775	176
C. Division of Grant Administration	8				8
DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION					
A. Division of Aeronautics	360 + (17)	310 + (12)	5+(5)	3	42
B. Division of Highways	282	231	7	43	1
GOVERNOR'S OFFICE OF					
	0				
ILLINOIS COMMERCE COMMISSION					
	23,782	20,717		1,343	1,722
DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE					
	0				
TOTAL ACRES	36,817 + (17)	30,461 + (12)	41+(5)	3,172	3,143

() Indicates total 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 (IDOA), pursuant to the *Agricultural Areas Conservation and Protection Act (505 ILCS 5/20.1)*, is required to prepare an annual report to the Illinois General Assembly on the location and size of all agricultural areas (also known as ag areas) created, modified, or dissolved during the past year. A copy of the complete Act is available at our web site listed below.

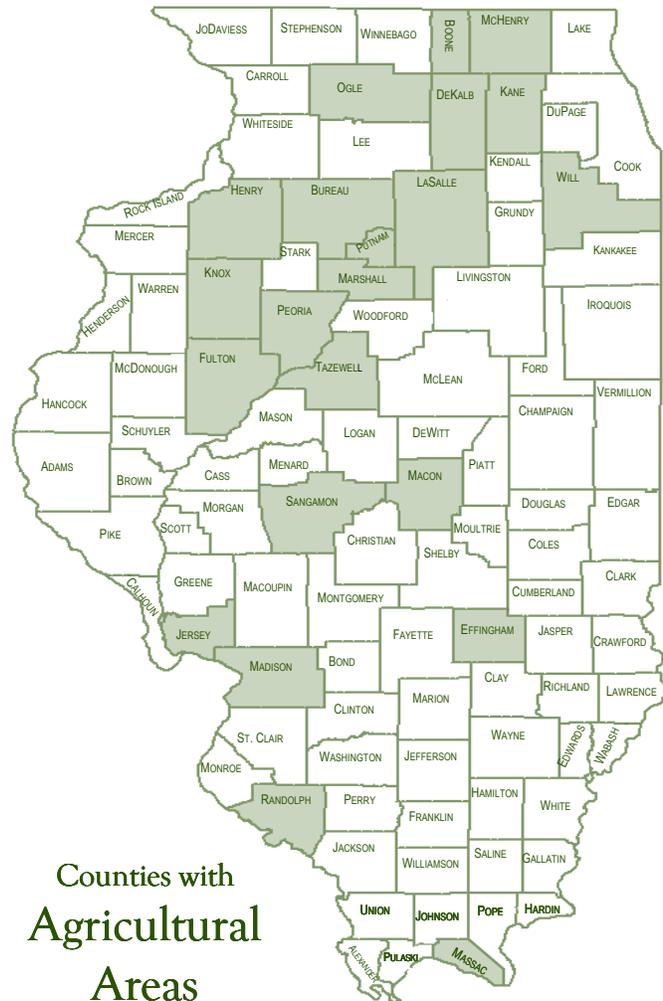
The Agricultural Areas Summary lists the 22 counties with local county board approved ag areas. This chart itemizes the total number of agricultural areas in participating counties, along with their respective acres, and summarizes the total number of acres in approved ag areas throughout the state.

There was an addition to one of the two ag areas in Boone County. The Ramsey Ag Area, established in 1992, added 17 acres, thus bringing its total to 2,537 acres.

Currently, a total of 114,976 acres are enrolled in 55 ag areas in Illinois. A compilation of maps delineating the 55 ag areas in the 22 counties can be obtained by referring to the IDOA's Agricultural Areas Annual Reports, available from the IDOA website at www.agr.state.il.us/Environment/LandWater.

TABLE 5
SUMMARY OF AGRICULTURAL AREAS IN ILLINOIS
Calendar 2010

COUNTY	# OF AG AREAS	TOTAL ACRES
Boone	2	7,280
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	114,976



VEGETATIVE FILTER STRIP ASSESSMENT LAW

CALENDAR YEAR 2010 REPORT

The Vegetative Filter Strip Assessment Law (35 ILCS 200/10-152), became effective on January 1, 1997. Under the law, qualifying property used as a vegetative filter strip is eligible to be assessed at a reduced rate. Soil and Water Conservation Districts (SWCDs) have been given the authority for certifying that a parcel of property meets the requirements for a vegetative filter strip established under the law, for determining the size of the vegetative filter strip and for creating a conservation plan for the area occupied by the strip.

This report summarizes activities for calendar year 2010 related to implementation of the Vegetative Filter Strip Assessment Law, as reported by SWCDs, as well as the period for 1997 through 2010. It includes information that represents the final report submitted to the Illinois General Assembly by March 1, 2011, as directed by the Act.

- ◆ 85 Landowners Certified
- ◆ 15 SWCDs providing Certification
- ◆ 142 Vegetative Filter Strips Certified
- ◆ 415.84 Acres of Vegetative Filter Strips Installed

2010 Activities

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

- ◆ District Newsletter – 28 SWCDs
- ◆ Direct Mailings to Landowners - 6 SWCDs
- ◆ Media Promotion – 11 SWCDs
- ◆ One-On-One Landowner Contact - 57 SWCDs
- ◆ Other - 8 SWCDs

The following table provides a comprehensive overview of activities for the establishment of vegetative filter strips under Public Act 89-606.

ESTABLISHMENT OF VEGETATIVE FILTER STRIPS – PUBLIC ACT 89-606 1997-2010										
	2010	2009	2008	2007	2006	2005	2004	2003	2002-1997	TOTAL
SWCD										
CERTIFIED	15	21	20	24	28	33	48	51	356	596
OWNER										
CERTIFIED	85	157	318	142	236	554	740	496	5983	8,711
FILTER STRIPS										
INSTALLED	142	207	317	280	361	672	990	758	8,704	12,431
ACRES										
INSTALLED	415.84	1,322.8	1,420.66	1,536.5	1,848.3	3,791.2	3,772.7	5711.3	54,216.3	74,035.6

SUSTAINABLE AGRICULTURE PROGRAM

The purposes of 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. “

The Sustainable Agriculture Grant Program funded the following competitive projects in FY10 totaling \$279,551.

◆ **On-Farm Research and Demonstration**

Potential For Fuels and Power From Miscanthus and Balancing Plant Nutrients

◆ **Education/Outreach**

Veterinary Education Conference; Southern Illinois Farm Beginnings; Central Illinois CRAFT; Celebrate Local Foods and Forestry; Stateline Farm Beginnings; Access Illinois Outdoors; Transferring On-Farm Composting Technology and Manure Nutrient Management Training.

◆ **University Research**

Farmer to Farmer Network Vegetable Production; Environmental Effects of Liquid Swine Manure; Transport and Processing of Biomass Materials and Vermi-Compost For Sustainable Vegetable Production.

The Sustainable Agriculture Program was a co-sponsor and served on planning committees for the Illinois Composting 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 support the Community Garden on the Illinois State Fairgrounds which hosted 104 gardeners and 170 garden plots in the second year. The Department also started large scale composting on the State Fairgrounds and composted over 500 tons of manure generated on the grounds which is being used in the community garden.

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

The Illinois Department of Agriculture R.J. Vollmer Sustainable Agriculture award is presented annually to farmers who demonstrate outstanding efforts in implementing and promoting sustainable agriculture systems in Illinois.



The 2010 winner of the R.J. Vollmer Sustainable Agriculture Farmer is Awarded to **Chad Wallace** with Oak Tree Organics of Ashland, IL.

Oak Tree Organics is a family owned and operated farm offering a wide variety of fresh produce, fruits and eggs. They have been providing naturally grown produce to the local Farmers Market for the past 6 years. They supply fresh products via online service and farmers markets.

While Chad was growing up, the farm was a conventional corn and bean operation of several hundred acres. Chad embarked on a different path, converting 18 acres of the farm to chemical-free fruit and vegetable production to be direct marketed. Chad's secret to success is to not be afraid to try something different. He is sustaining the farm on a small scale through production of high quality fresh food, sold directly to a growing customer base. Congratulations Chad Wallace 2010 Sustainable Ag Farmer of the Year!

HENRY WHITE EXPERIMENTAL FARM & ILLINOIS DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE - ZELL FARM



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. Mr. White's wishes were that the land be used for agricultural experiments.



In 2010, approximately 3782 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.

In February, a two day workshop on drainage water management was held at the Farm. The workshop included field survey sessions followed by a classroom session on system design. The program was sponsored by the Illinois Land Improvement Contractors Association (ILICA) and presented by Dr. Richard Cooke from the University of Illinois.



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. A controlled prairie burn was held in March. The burn was observed by landowners who wanted to learn more about burning their own fields.

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. Classes were held to train University of Illinois Master Naturalists about the wetlands.

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. A Master Naturalist from the University of Illinois Extension is working on a Tree Identification program on the Farm.

Master Gardeners from the Madison – St. Clair Unit of the University of Illinois Extension manage and tend 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 2010, a total Of 3,925 lbs of produce were donated to local food pantries.



ILLINOIS DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE - JACK ZELL FARM

In 1999, Jack Zell bequeathed 240 acres in Effingham and Fayette Counties to the Illinois Department of Agriculture so it would remain in agricultural land, and not be developed for other purposes. The Department’s long term plans are to develop these two tracts into educational and research labs with the primary goal toward maintaining good stewardship of the land through conservation and other related means.

The farm consists of two parcels. The 160 acre parcel in Effingham County is mostly cropland and relatively flat with 15 acres of trees.

The Fayette County parcel offers many opportunities in the future for outdoor education and training purposes in areas of agriculture research, forestry management, and wildlife habit. The 120 acre parcel in Fayette County is very rolling to relatively flat in areas. On this site, there are 48 acres of cropland with the remaining 72 acres in trees and grass areas. There are now 5 active oil wells on the property. There is a small area that has brine damage from previous oil activities (less than an acre).

The Effingham County tract also will provide opportunities for demonstration and research on a relatively large acreage to promote conservation practices and to generate income for both parcels.

A wet spring and favorable weather contributed to good corn yields in 2010 that averaged 150 bushel’s per acre, while a warm and dry August helped push the soybean average to 54 bushel per acre.



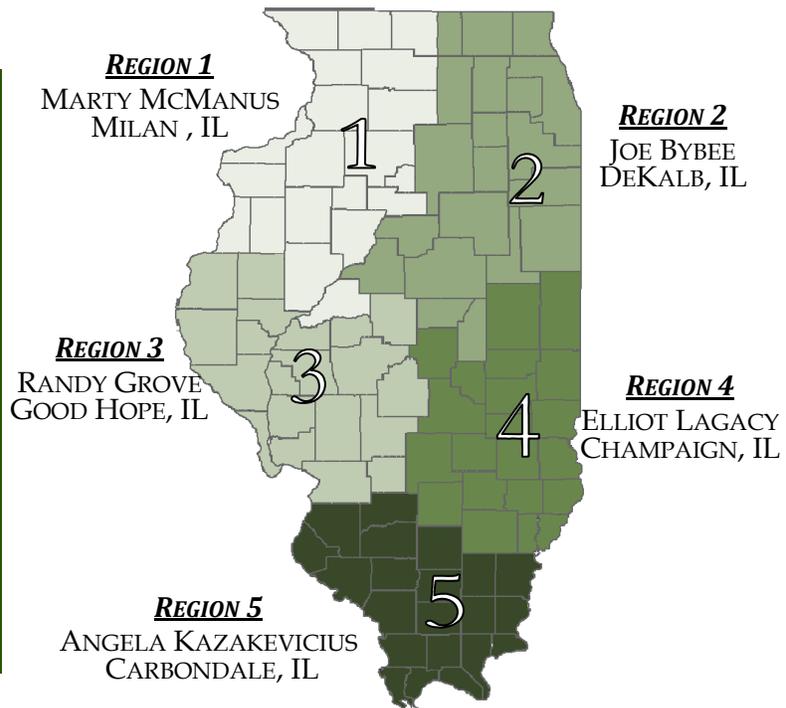
PARTNERSHIP ACTIVITIES

The success of the soil and water conservation programs in Illinois results from the close working relationship of all partners. Illinois has a strong history and legacy of soil and water conservation. Numerous local, state and federal agencies have conservation program responsibilities that complement each other to collectively achieve the goal of protecting/conserving our soil and water resources. Other program benefits also include areas of farmland protection, sustainable agriculture, nutrient management, watershed planning and protection, forest management, wildlife habitat protection and environmental education. Partnership activities summarized in the report can only be achieved through cooperative efforts of all the conservation partners.

The chart located on the next page provides a snapshot of outreach and education efforts for the 98 SWCDs reaching both rural and urban constituents. Additional pages follow outlining program accomplishments from other partners including county Soil and Water Conservation Districts, Association of Illinois Soil and Water Conservation Districts, USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service, U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Illinois Environmental Protection Agency and the Illinois Department of Natural Resources.

For more information on local programs and activities or technical assistance, contact your local Soil and Water Conservation District. If you have an opportunity please thank these partners for all their dedication and hard work!

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	Public Relations	#	Distribution
Conservation Tours for Adults	29	2,937	Newsletters	188	207,118
Conservation Tours for Students (K-12)	45	4,816	Teacher Newsletters	50	5,993
Conservation Tillage Meetings	21	921	# Papers		
Watershed Meetings	87	2,086	Newspaper Articles	604	90,142
TMDL Meetings	4	60	Stations		
Watershed Tours	14	344	Radio Spots	213	62
Annual Meetings		6,024	T.V. Spots	23	27
Forage/Pasture Demo	1	9	# of Hits		
Woodland/Windbreak Wildlife Demo	17	941	Websites	38	107,506
Soil Stewardship Meetings/Programs	156	13,075	# Attendees		
Lady Landowner Meetings/Tours	23	1,052	Conservation Speaking Engagements	81	2743
Meetings with Special Interest Groups	193	3,961	Customers		
Agronomy Days	11	1,475	Tree Sales	88	4,522
Contractor Workshop	27	720	Plant Sales	126	552
Displays at Fairs, Banks, etc	80	105,099	Fish Sales (<i># of annual sales</i>)	144	3,397
Field demonstrations plots (<i>number of plots</i>)	11	-	Conservation Seed (<i>report in acres</i>)	4,726	2,148
Classroom Presentations			Equipment Rental		
<i>K-8 Grade</i>	3,778	90,254	<i>Drill/Planter/Seeder (report in acres)</i>	36,985	4,412
<i>9-12 Grade</i>	109	3,109	<i>Scraper</i>	-	90
<i>College</i>	26	1,010	<i>Tree Planter (report in acres)</i>	3,137	200
Educator Workshops	45	2,236	<i>Other</i>	30,516	427
Conservation Education Days	179	25,695	Used Oil Collection (<i>report in gallons</i>)	5,536	2,043
Arbor Day Programs	228	15,960	Used Tire Collection (<i>report in tires</i>)	16,583	803
Earth Day Programs	123	68,722	Aerial & GIS Maps / Plat Books	5,503	4,020
Conservation Education Contest			Other	83,438	2,289
<i>Poster</i>	113	6,708	Land Use Activities		
<i>Photo</i>	7	97	Natural Resource Reports	465	5,731
<i>Other</i>	1,632	1,611	Land Evaluation Site Assessments (LESA)	185	4,095
Provide Scholarships	41		Soil Erosion Sediment Control Plan Reviews	210	3,004
FFA Soils Judging Contest	50	3,047	Soil Erosion Sediment Control Inspections	1,128	-
Other	742	17,225	Soil Borings/Mapping	226	451
	# of Schools	# of Participants	Facility Planning Area Reviews	11	-
Envirothon	317	3,399	Flood Related Reviews	57	-
Provide School Projects	116	-	Mining Activities	7	-
			Pipeline/Utilities Activities	13	-
			Other	416	-
				# of Activities	# of Attendees
			SESC Tours/Workshops	12	905
			Land Use Meetings/Hearings	130	1,965
			Farmland Protection Events	28	476
			Ag Areas Meetings	9	117
			Flood Related Meetings	30	202
TOTAL OUTREACH		382,593			

ILLINOIS NATURAL RESOURCES CONSERVATION SERVICE



[Agriculture & Conservation Stay Strong](#)

Though 2010, NRCS programs and funding were fully utilized; the need for continued support with conservation on private lands remained a priority. Most aspects of NRCS program options remained the same; however, new avenues, new practices, and new funding sources were made available. The American Reinvestment and Recovery Act presented new ways to restore flooded lands and both USDA and NRCS embraced the contributions and activities of smaller growers, locally grown food initiatives, invited more partner involvement, and sought out new, innovative conservation strategies.

[Environmental Quality Incentives Program \(EQIP\)](#)

This year, Illinois EQIP cost-share funds totaled more than \$11.3 million, awarded to applicants through more than 900 contracts. Strong interest and activity was seen 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. EQIP assistance and funds were made available to organic producers; however, initial interest in this new program option has been slow to form--only 4 such contracts were funded for \$21,000.

NRCS funded 117 Comprehensive Nutrient Management Plans, or CNMPs, updated fencing standards, encouraged grazing management, and investigated new livestock mortality management tools.

[Wetlands Reserve Program \(WRP\)](#)

New Geographic Area Rate Caps simplified and sped up Wetland Reserve Program activity. During 2010, 17 new WRP easements were secured for \$8 million, including those in the Wetland Reserve Enhancement Program, or WREP. Flooding problems required NRCS use of WREP to quickly respond to needs of Illinois private landowners.

Policy changes from 2009 requiring land ownership for a 7-year period still impacted 2010 sign-ups and beyond. Newly established rate caps distinguish land value differences for cropland and non-cropland. See map at right to verify values and confirm county and regional differences.

[Floodplain Easement Program](#)

USDA-NRCS completed all planning, design and construction work on a number of Floodplain Easement projects during 2010. Many sites will be seeded for proper vegetative cover this spring. This program was part of the Administration's American Reinvestment and Recovery Act (ARRA). In Illinois more than \$5 million restored nearly 1,615 acres on 11 Illinois sites.

All project sites are restored permanently as functional wetlands that hold floodwaters, protect crops further inland, filter out pollutants, and create quality wildlife habitats. The ultimate outcomes for FPE and WRP benefit more than just the landowner. All residents and inhabitants of the local watershed benefit from reduced soil erosion, crop loss, and water quality degradation when valuable habitat is restored. It's a win-win for the owner, the public, and the environment!

Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP)

The Conservation Stewardship Program continues to find new program participants, or rather, new applicants continue to find CSP! Because so many conservation-minded landowners in Illinois have a history of protecting soil and water, CSP is a good fit. CSP applicants document all they've done, continue maintenance of practices or management techniques, and agree to put even more conservation on their operation.

For CSP clients, qualifying for the program and documenting achievements is easy because for most, it's their standard approach to farming. Finding a new conservation solution to take on is never hard -- they're always looking for new ways to save fuel, time, or money and create better wildlife habitat.

For 2010, 542 CSP contracts were developed on 402,697 acres statewide. Nationwide, more than 12 million acres were enrolled on cropland, pasture and range land, and non-industrial private forestland.

Mississippi River Basin Initiative

The MRBI offered a new way to engage voluntary conservation activity for projects in priority watersheds in Illinois and 11 key states. This initiative targets improving water quality and managing nutrients to improve the health of the Mississippi River. Through MRBI, participants can use programs with EQIP, WREP, CCPI or CIG.

NRCS accepted applications from 4 watersheds:

- Lower Illinois-Senachwine Lake
- Upper Illinois
- Vermilion River (Upper Mississippi River sub-basin)
- Vermilion (Upper Ohio River sub-basin)

Key to this effort is emphasis on monitoring data to track and quantify positive program outcomes and benefits. These projects will require some time for planning, installation, use, and results. NRCS expects positive results for this valuable investment.

Soil Survey

The extensive update of Cook County's Soil Survey finished its second field season. The project is 60 percent complete with 180,000 acres mapped. The project is on target to be complete by June 30, 2011 as our agreement with Cook County dictates. The City is eager to have our data to initiate better storm water management planning.

The Rapid Carbon Assessment is underway and is the top priority for our Springfield and Carbondale MLRA offices. Illinois has 148 carbon sites to sample; 42 sites (30 percent) were completed in 2010. Remaining sites will be finished before the end of FY2011.

Illinois soils information is 100 percent digitally available. We continue to update our spatial and tabular data.

For the latest soil survey data, visit the Web Soil Survey: <http://websoilsurvey.nrcs.usda.gov/>

Wildlife Habitat Incentive Program (WHIP)

Program funds for the Wildlife Habitat Incentive Program in Illinois remain low. During 2010, we received 17 applications and developed all 17 contracts to restore and enhance habitat on many acres. WHIP is not the only program that supports wildlife habitat, however, with such limited funds, most Illinois landowners use funds and assistance from a number of other environmental organizations, including Pheasants Forever, Ducks Unlimited, The Nature Conservancy, Quail Unlimited, the National Wild turkey Federation, and others.

Grass Land Reserve Program (GRP)

For the Grass Land Reserve Program, NRCS obligated approximately \$819,000 on 2 rental agreements, and 3 permanent easements.

Know Your DIRT!

On the national front, USDA and NRCS are keeping up with the times and now have conservation information available on You Tube, Twitter and other electronic and digital avenues. Here in Illinois, we teamed up with the Association of Soil and Water Conservation Districts, the Illinois Department of Agriculture, and Illinois EPA to create a short video on the importance of soil. Narrated by a real NRCS soil scientist, it offers a fun 'crash course' that summarizes why "dirt" is so important to all of us. View the video at <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lxUtkVaJXrk>. Remember, DIRT definitely does more than get your dirty.

Resource Conservation & Development (RC&D)

In 2010, NRCS Illinois' 10 authorized RC&D areas remained vigilant in support of mainstream NRCS conservation programs. The RC&D program assisted more than one million citizens:

- ◆ Created 222 new jobs; 122 seasonal jobs
- ◆ Organized 57 agriculture workshops
- ◆ Organized 31 forestry workshops
- ◆ Coordinated 20 wildlife workshops
- ◆ Created 3 new recreational facilities
- ◆ Protected 2,368 acres of fish & wildlife habitat
- ◆ Held 142 community events
- ◆ Sponsored 45 Leadership Development training sessions
- ◆ Developed 23 Area-wide conservation plans on 3.6 million acres

The RC&D program objectives focus on "quality of life" improvements achieved through natural resource conservation and community development.

Farm and Ranchland Protection Program (FRPP)

If protecting and preserving agriculture in your developing communities is a resource concern, the FRPP may be a way to solve the problem--long-term. To learn more, visit www.nrcs.usda.gov/programs/frpp/

For FY 2011, NRCS received \$1.3 million for FRPP in Illinois. This program requires a local sponsor and matching funds. To keep these funds in Illinois and to protect our rural agriculture landscape, county and community level governments need to join forces and take action today!

NRCS specialists have been busy meeting the demands of Illinois' conservation-minded landowners. *Here's a snapshot of a few accomplishments.*



2010 ACCOMPLISHMENTS

COMPOSTING FACILITIES BUILT	23 PROJECTS	INTEGRATED PEST MGT ESTABLISHED	5,272 ACRES
CNMPs WRITTEN	42 PLANS	IRRIGATION SPRINKLER INSTALLED	585 ACRES
CNMPs APPLIED	57 PLANS	IRRIGATION WATER MANAGEMENT	875 ACRES
CONSERVATION CROP ROTATION	250,175 ACRES	MULCH-TILL RESIDUE MANAGEMENT	126,611 ACRES
CONTOUR FARMING	630 ACRES	NO-TILL OR STRIP-TILL SYSTEMS	82,640 ACRES
COVER CROPS ESTABLISHED	1,132 ACRES	NUTRIENT MANAGEMENT	29,012 ACRES
DIKES CREATED	5,531 FEET	PASTURE & HAY PLANTINGS	4,254 ACRES
DIVERSIONS BUILT	5,900 ACRES	PEST MANAGEMENT USED ON	1,789 ACRES
DRAINAGE WATER MANAGEMENT	91 ACRES	PRESCRIBED FORESTRY USED ON	6,392 ACRES
EARLY SUCCESSIONAL HABITAT DEV.	4,159 ACRES	PRESCRIBED GRAZING USED ON	7,189 ACRES
FENCE PLANNED AND ESTABLISHED	593,125 FEET	RIPARIAN FORREST BUFFERS	1,666 ACRES
FIELD BORDER ESTABLISHED	6,551 FEET	SEASONAL HIGH TUNNELS BUILT	42,454 SQ/FT
FIREBREAKS ESTABLISHED	43,080 FEET	STREAMBANKS /SHORELINE PROTECTED	9,752 FEET
FOREST STAND IMPROVEMENT	11,253 ACRES	TERRACES	212,985 FEET
FORAGE & BIOMASS PLANTING	2,866 FEET	TREES & SHRUBS ESTABLISHED	3,442 ACRES
FOREST MANAGEMENT PLANS WRITTEN	188 PLANS	UPLAND HABITAT MANAGEMENT	26,791 ACRES
GRADE STABILIZATION STRUCTURES	179 SITES	WASCOB'S BUILT	1,718 BASINS
FOREST STAND IMPROVEMENTS	11,253 ACRES	WETLANDS CREATED	950 ACRES
GRASSED WATERWAYS	2,026 ACRES	WETLANDS ENHANCED	2,377 ACRES
HEDGEROWS PLANTED	3,815 FEET	WETLANDS RESTORED	5,406 ACRES
		WINDBREAKS ESTABLISHED	15,457 FEET

ILLINOIS URBAN PROJECT

The Association of Illinois Soil and Water Conservation Districts (AISWCD) has been leading the effort to update the Illinois Urban Manual (“IUM”) with assistance from Illinois Environmental Protection Agency’s Section 319 funding and funding from Grand Victoria Foundation of Elgin, IL.

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 which can increase flooding 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.

The update process has garnered much interest in Illinois and from the National Association of Conservation Districts (NACD). The IUM Coordinator was recently asked to present at NACD’s annual meeting in Nashville, TN. A two-person team including Jim Nelson (IUM coordinator) and Kelsey Musich (Kane-DuPage SWCD) presented the need for, history, process, and progress of the IUM update initiative to an attentive crowd on the last day of the conference. The participants mentioned their interest in having AISWCD present again next year.

The standards in need of updating and development (from scratch) are slowly but surely being marked off the list as completed. There are officially three brand new and 4 revised standards currently in the IUM with four old standards that have been deleted due to advancements in erosion and sediment control since the last version of the IUM was published. Following is a outline describing the current status of all standards under development:

IUM STANDARDS UNDER DEVELOPMENT—2010 STATUS REPORT

◆ Completed and Added to Illinois Urban Manual

- Erosion Control Blanket 830
- Temporary Concrete Washout 954
- Stabilized Construction Entrance 930
- Dewatering 813
- Mulching for Seeding and Soil Stabilization 875
- Erosion Blanket: Turf Reinforcement 831
- Material Specifications 85
- Inlet Protection Impervious Areas 861

◆ Near Completion

- PAM for Soil Stabilization 893— Public Review—Awaiting Steering Approval
- PAM for Sediment 894—Public Review Complete—Awaiting Steering Approval
- Temp. Stream Diversion 976—Public Review Complete—Awaiting Steering Approval
- Ditch Check (Manufactured) 814— Draft
- Compost Blanket 804—2nd Draft
- Compost Filter Sock 805—2nd Draft
- Silt Fence 920—4th Draft
- Temporary Sediment Basin 957—3rd Draft
- Coffer Dam 803—4th Draft

◆ Status of Draft Documents

- Bioretention Facility 800—1st Draft
- Dry Detention Basin 809—1st Draft
- Extended Detention Basin 810—1st Draft
- Silt Curtain 917—2nd Draft
- Permeable Pavement 890—1st Draft
- Open Channel 878—1st Draft
- Stone Lined Vegetated Channel 931—1st Draft
- Soil Bioengineering 926—1st Draft
- Lined Channel or Outlet 872—1st Draft



DEWATERING FILTER BAG filters sediment laden water from a dammed-off work site prior to the water discharging back into the stream.



WETLAND DETENTION AREA collects and filters runoff water. EROSION CONTROL BLANKETS prevent erosion of earth berms until vegetation can be established.

Urban Erosion Control

ILLINOIS ENVIROTHON

The Illinois Envirothon program combines classroom learning with hands-on field experiences focused around five major topics—Aquatics, Forestry, Soils, Wildlife and a Current Environmental Issue. 2010's current issue was "Protection of Groundwater Through Urban, Agricultural and Environmental Planning". The five member student 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 SWCD's, Association of Illinois SWCD's, the Illinois Farm Bureau, Illinois SWCD Employees' Association, Illinois Department of Agriculture and the Illinois Environmental Protection Agency are instrumental in compiling the written examination and conducting the statewide contest.

2010 Illinois Envirothon State Winners



Taylorville High School, LUC 9 -Christian County

Student Team

Mark Podeschi
Sam Spurling
Kyle Hadden
Matt Hooper
Jessica Krueger
Advisor Mary Dawson





2nd Place

Cissna Park High School
LUC 3 - Iroquois Co.

L to R - Clayton Carley, Kelsy McConnell, Bryan Yergler, Lexie Schuldt and Dane Hasselbring



3rd Place

Triad High School
LUC 12 - Madison Co.

L to R - Michelle Meloche, James Konsky, Brianne Haggard, Alex Colombara and Ryan Mehallow

Teams Participating in the 2010 Illinois State Envirothon

LUC 1 - Lee SWCD
 Dixon HS

LUC 2 - Marshall-Putnam SWCD
 Midland HS

LUC 3 - Iroquois SWCD
 Cissna Park HS

LUC 4 - McDonough SWCD
 West Prairie HS

LUC 5 - Woodford SWCD
 El Paso-Gridley HS

LUC 6 - Piatt SWCD
 Monticello HS

LUC 7 - Edgar SWCD
 Shiloh HS

LUC 8 - Cass
 AC Central HS

LUC 9 - Christian SWCD
 Taylorville HS

LUC 10 - Effingham SWCD
 Altamont HS

LUC 11 - Edwards SWCD
 Edwards County HS

LUC 12 - Madison SWCD
 Triad HS

LUC 13 - Clay SWCD
 Clay City HS

LUC 14 - White SWCD
 Grayville HS

LUC 15 - Jackson SWCD
 Murphysboro HS

LUC 16 - McHenry SWCD
 Woodstock HS

CATEGORY WINNERS:

SOILS & CURRENT ISSUE WRITTEN TEST: Triad High School

FORESTRY: Monticello High School

AQUATICS TIE: Shiloh High School
 Monticello High School

WILDLIFE: Woodstock High School

CURRENT ISSUE ORAL PRESENTATION: Dixon High School

TEAM SPIRIT: AC Central High School

BEST T-SHIRT: Murphysboro High School

The 2010 current issue was:
**Protection of Groundwater
 Through Urban, Agricultural and
 Environmental Planning**

2010 CONSERVATION FARM FAMILY WINNERS



Governor's Award Winner
L. Gerald Sanderson & Sons
 LUC 16, DeKalb County



Jessen Family Farm
 LUC 2, Marshall-Putnam SWCD



Diel Farms
 LUC 11, Richland SWCD.



Tischhauser Farm Family
 LUC 9, Bond SWCD.



Traub Farms
 LUC 3, Livingston SWCD

***Special Thanks to our
 Conservation Farm Family
 Sponsors.***



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 62TH ANNUAL MEETING IN 2010.

Outstanding District Employee Award



Megan Andrews
Resource Conservationist
Kendall County SWCD

The ISWCDEA awarded Megan Andrews, Resource Conservationist, with the Kendall County SWCD, a framed certificate for being chosen Outstanding SWCD Employee. Megan was nominated by her peers as a person who goes above and beyond to perform their job, produces high quality work, volunteers for and works on special projects, provides creative suggestions, creates a positive work environment and enhances the image of the SWCD.

Legislative Awards

*FRIEND OF
CONSERVATION*

*LEGISLATOR OF
THE YEAR*



Senator
Susan Garrett
(D) 29th District

Senator
Michael Frerichs
(D) 52nd District

Poster Contest Winners - Sponsored by AISWCD Auxiliary



Grade K-1 Winner
McKenna Downing
DeKalb County



Grade 2-3 Winner
Eunice Yoon
Whiteside County



Grade 4-6 Winner
Brianna Turner
Mason County

Grade 7-9 Winner
Jonah Somers
Livingston County



Grade 10-12 Winner
Loren Ozoco
DeKalb County

Conservation Teacher of the Year

Jennifer Waters is a teacher at AC Central High School in Ashland, located in Cass County. Jennifer teaches introduction to agriculture, ag business, horticulture science, greenhouse production and management, junior high ag, ag operations and is a yearbook sponsor.

Her education philosophy has always been, “students learn the best when they are able to see the lesson at work, learn more about it from an expert, and then have a hands-on experience with the content.”

Jennifer stated, “Education doesn’t just happen in the classroom. My students’ experiences in teaching others allows them to network and make connections while also learning more about agricultural and environmental sciences and themselves. When the students become the teachers it makes me proud to see how they have grown since entering my classroom as seventh grade students.”



George McKibben Scholarship Winner



This year’s George McKibben Memorial Scholarship recipient is **Jason Barker** from Shelbyville, in Shelby County. Jason graduated this past May from Lake Land College and was accepted to Southern Illinois University-Carbondale where he will attend classes starting this fall to continue his education in the field of Agriculture majoring in Ag Systems Technology with a minor in Agribusiness. Jason plans to return to the family farm to continue that great heritage and carry on his father’s legacy. While attending school full time, Jason assumed the responsibilities of operating the family farm along with his brother and mother due to his father passing away. All of this and Jason, was still able to maintain a 4.0 GPA!!! Amazing!!!

PHOTO CONTEST WINNERS - 2010

Auxiliary Photo Contest Winners



Close Up Conservation: Youth

Charlie Koeppen, DeKalb County
"DAY'S JOURNEY"



Close Up Conservation: Youth

Rachel Younker, DeKalb County
"PEEK A BOO"



Close Up Conservation

Fred Delcomyn, Champaign County
"LEAVES OF GRASS"



Ag/Conservation Across America

Lindsay Wilken, Menard County
"SPRING MORNING"



Ag/Conservation Across America: Youth

Charlie Koeppen, DeKalb County
"HARVEST TIME"



Conservation Practices

Jeanine Laroe, Champaign County
"BETTER THAN A POT OF GOLD"



Conservation in Action

Dean Johnson, DeKalb Co.
"WIND ENERGY"

Sponsored by AISWCD Auxiliary

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, JO DAVIESS, KNOX, LEE, MARSHALL-PUTNAM,
MASON, MERCER, OGLE, PEORIA, ROCK ISLAND, STARK, STEPHENSON, WARREN,
WHITESIDE AND WINNEBAGO COUNTIES

The **Bureau County SWCD** had a Fifth Grade Conservation Day at Warnecke Woods Natural Area for 480 students from Bureau County schools and one Henry County school. The speakers gave presentations on a wide variety of conservation topics.

The **Bureau County SWCD** and **Marshall-Putnam SWCD** held a joint Contractors' Meeting. The main speaker was Ed Toews, Engineer from TransCanada, ANR Pipeline who spoke on pipeline safety.

Carroll County SWCD held their Annual Meeting and Tour at the Woessner Farm. The event was attended by State Representative Jim Sacia. Those in attendance were informed about livestock waste management practices, general feedlot runoff reduction strategies, general manure application requirements, and financial assistance available to implement conservation practices. Attendees toured the installed practices on the Farm.

Fulton County SWCD, Two Rivers Resource Conservation and Development, and the Illinois Environmental Protection Agency are partnering in a gully control practice study. A total of 18 water and sediment control structures will be installed in a small watershed.

The **Henderson County SWCD** responded to a request for flood control assistance from one of their villages. The SWCD and USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service reviewed the flooding concerns and looked for ways to help 30 landowners address flooding on 1,500 acres.

The **Henderson County SWCD** and the County Farm Bureau held a Farm Safety Day for approximately 800 5th and 7th grade students from Henderson and Warren Counties. To demonstrate potential dangers on the farm, students attended safety learning stations that covered topics: Water, Grain, Weather, Fire, Internet, ATV, Seat Belts, Meth, Lawn Mower, First Aid, and Rail Road Safety. All the students witnessed a Live Electrical Safety Demonstration.

The **Henry County SWCD** held its annual meeting with over 101 landowners, occupiers, and operators in attendance. Awards were presented to student poster contest winners and Envirothon winners. Presentations were made by the SWCD on the conservation practices

installed around the county and by Illinois Department of Natural Resources Conservation Police.

Henry County SWCD celebrated Arbor Day by bagging and distributing over 700 white pine seedlings to county students.

Knox County SWCD hosted a pond clinic and annual meeting at Steve Franklin's pond for approximately 100 people. Staff provided information on Pond Site Selection Watershed Management and fisheries management. Following the presentations, the fish were "stunned" so they could be measured and weighed.

Knox County SWCD held a Well Sealing Workshop at the Moffitt Farm that included a demonstration on the proper method to seal an abandoned well and presentations by: the County Health Department; University of Illinois Extension; USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service; SWCD; and Justin Moffitt, well owner.

Knox County SWCD reinstated a recycling program at the USDA building. After the original collection company went out of business, the SWCD contracted with a new collection company. The recyclables are mostly paper products, shredded material and corrugated boxes.

Marshall-Putnam SWCD hosted a pond clinic for 45 people. IDNR personnel shocked the pond, discussed fish and plant species, and proper care and maintenance plans. All attendees got hand outs on the pond management topics and information on available SWCD programs.

The **Mason County SWCD**, as a member of the Regional Groundwater Authority, provided a free well water screening to check for arsenic and nitrates for over 30 people at the October Fest in Havana. Mason County's water source is the Mahomet Aquifer and due to the sandy soil, many wells are less than 25 feet deep making them easily impacted. Only two samples tested for high for nitrates and one sample tested high for arsenic. Those participants were encouraged to have their water tested by a certified laboratory and were given contact information. Festival attendees were provided information about the possible dangers of arsenic and nitrates in well water and were encouraged to have their wells screened annually.

The **Mason County SWCD** hosted their annual Discovery Day for 279 3rd graders. Students learned about topics including conservation, ecology, natural and cultural history. This program remains available through grants received from Lower Sangamon River Resource Conservation and Development, Illinois Farm Service Agency and Dynegy Midwest Generation.

The **Mason County SWCD** continued to provide irrigation evaluations for producers in Mason, Tazewell, Cass, Menard and Logan Counties. Water distribution information was provided to farmers to determine the efficiency of an irrigation system. Based upon recommendations, producers made repairs and upgrades resulting in water and energy savings. The District also provided training and guidance for Henderson County SWCD to provide irrigation system evaluations for their producers.

The **Ogle County SWCD** spring tree sale event sold 25,000 trees for conservation purposes.

Ogle County SWCD and **Lee County SWCD** held Outdoor Stewardship Days for 1,250 3rd grade students to attend conservation education sessions at a local park.

Rock Island County SWCD, with help from the Interstate Resource Conservation and Development Council, was awarded a \$120,000 grant from the Northeastern Area USDA Forest Service to conduct mitigation of hazardous fuels on over 300 acres at three wildland-urban interface (WUI) sites in the Quad Cities. The grant, which was funded through the Healthy Forests Act, addressed hazardous wildland fuels and ecological restoration at Blackhawk State Historic Site/Blackhawk Woods Nature Preserve in Rock Island, Collinson-Lindahl Ecological Preserve in Milan and West Lake Park in Davenport, Iowa. Additional partners included Scott County Conservation Board, Iowa and the IDNR, Illinois Nature Preserves Commission, Western Illinois University, and Augustana College. In addition to hiring local staff and interns, the SWCD volunteer stewardship corps and the Quad Cities Natural Areas Guardians completed some of the prescribed fire and fuels mitigation work.

Rock Island County SWCD hosted or co-hosted educational opportunities for the Quad Cities region: Winter Ecological Series; the Illinois Master Naturalists (with University of Illinois Extension) and an annual forestry workshop (with Interstate Resource Conservation and Development and USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service).

Building on their success from 2007 to 2009, **Rock Island County SWCD**, their volunteer stewardship corps and the Quad Cities Natural Areas Guardians conducted prescribed burns on 15 sites on over 150 acres during 2010. The sites managed by the SWCD included both prairies and woodlands for both public and private landowners. Based on their efforts to promote prescribed burning as a conservation management tool and their sustained support of local conservation education and ecological restoration efforts, the Quad Cities Natural Area Guardians were recognized as an "Outstanding Volunteer Organization of the Year" for 2010 by the IDNR.

The **Stark County SWCD**, with the help of local agribusiness, held a Land Improvement Contractor Seminar that covered: conservation programs, billing issues, standard design questions, and new surveying technology, including GPS/GIS. Contractors were able to visit with SWCD and USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service staff.

The **Stark County SWCD** held an annual "Women in Conservation Seminar" with a Soil and Water Stewardship Week theme. The agenda included a variety of presentations, hands on activities and a tour.

Stephenson County SWCD Yellow Creek Watershed Partnership completed a watershed study for dam removal and fish ladder construction in Krape Park.

Stephenson County SWCD provided rain barrels and composters at the University of Illinois Extension's Joys of Gardening event.

Warren County SWCD produced Geographic Information System (GIS) maps for producers, landowners, schools and other government agencies. These maps include soils, field borders, topography, tile lines, boundaries and other geo-referenced items.

Two stops on the Conservation Technical Information Center Conservation Practice Tour were hosted by the **Warren County SWCD**. The landowners were selected for using innovation in their farming practices. SWCD staff provided landowner information for promotional and tour materials, developed driving route and times, and refreshments.

The **Winnebago County SWCD** held their 69th Annual Meeting and silent auction to benefit the Land Use Council 16 Envirothon. Over 30 local businesses, organizations and individuals donated gift cards, golf packages, one of-a-kind prints and other items. The silent auction made \$1,300 for the Northeastern Illinois Envirothon.

To protect, preserve and provide for the continued use of the unique and diverse agricultural and natural area, the **Winnebago County SWCD** created a policy for accepting, managing and monitoring agricultural easements. The easement allows landowners to preserve the existing agricultural or conservation uses of their property by conveying an easement to the SWCD.

Winnebago County SWCD and the City of Rockford joined the Healthy Community Project to promote access to fresh food; nutritious food; neighborhood revitalization and beautification; and storm water management. The Healthy Community Project and neighborhood groups created 40 community gardens and the SWCD provided 33 rain barrels to most of them to lower water costs and capture runoff.

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

The **Boone County SWCD**, local townships and merchants organized a medication collection event. Proper disposal prevented medications from being flushed into toilets or drains. This helps protect groundwater. The **Boone County SWCD** also accepted its second Agricultural Conservation Easement of 260 acres in the northern part of the county.

The **DeKalb County SWCD** provided educational speakers for the Northern Illinois Farm Show held at Northern Illinois University in DeKalb. The show draws an estimated 6,000 people from northern Illinois and southern Wisconsin. The SWCD and USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service also provided a booth with a variety of conservation information and activities.

DeKalb County SWCD became the first SWCD in Illinois to provide the county with a Natural Resource Inventory Report for a proposed wind farm. The SWCD used information in the report to better site roads and turbines. DeKalb County requested the SWCD review all development permits. **DeKalb County SWCD** presented information on natural resource inventories and how they are used to select proper wind farm sites to approximately 50 members of the Northern Illinois Land Brokers Association and Genoa Lions Club.

DeKalb County SWCD conducted sediment and erosion control inspections on construction sites under an agreement with the Illinois Environmental Protection Agency.

DeWitt County SWCD held a Pond Management Workshop for 62 people at Arrowhead Acres in Clinton. The Illinois Department of Natural Resources fisheries Biologist was the speaker.

Ford County SWCD completed their second Wind Farm Natural Resource Inventory report for a 67-tower farm spanning 16,640 acres. The construction area is 235.5 acres. The report contained site specific natural resource information and recommendations. Presentations were provided to the wind farm developer, zoning and county boards, and the landowners.

Ford County SWCD staff made local natural resource related presentations to: McLean Conservation Day; Land Use Council and State Envirothon; Ford, Champaign, and Piatt County School Districts; Water Stewardship Day; Parkland Teacher's Education Workshop; Summer Conference and Winter Training; and wind farm hearings.

Ford County SWCD participated in: Cover Crop Meeting and Demo Day; Contractors' meeting; Resource Conservation and Development Council tour; Illinois Soil and Water Conservation District Employee Association and Association of Illinois Soil and Water Conservation Districts board meetings; Mahomet Aquifer Consortium; Buy Fresh/Buy Local Committee; Lady Landowners meetings and tours.

Ford County SWCD developed and submitted a grant proposal to fund the grass establishment of the Ryan Coe Memorial Youth Conservation and Hunting Area. If funded, this project will involve a partnership of 17 professionals representing Pheasants Forever, IDNR, SWCDs, NRCS, University of Illinois, Illinois Conservation Police, local sheriff and fire departments. The project will serve 300 youth active in the local Pheasants Forever Chapter.

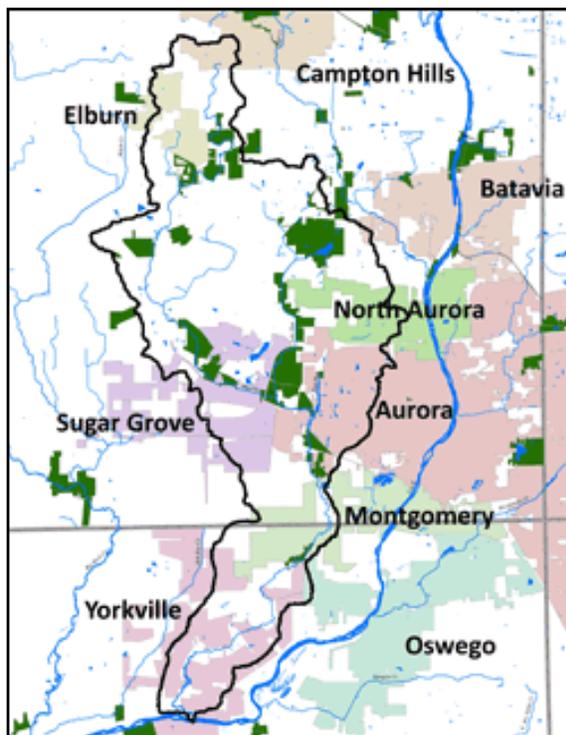
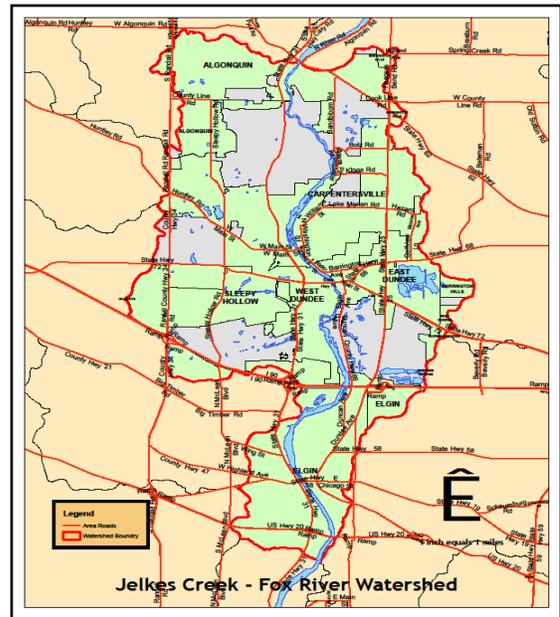
Grundy County SWCD installed six rain gardens in four various shapes for a total of 952 square feet through the Illinois Department of Agriculture, Bureau of Land and Water Special Projects Program.

Grundy County SWCD's Lady Landowner Day focused on alternative energy sources. Participants toured North American Hydro in Dayton, Horizon's Wind Energy Farm, and Topcrop in the southwest part of the county. A local restaurateur spoke on how he provides power to two of his restaurants and his home using solar energy panels.

Iroquois County SWCD hosted an EQIP Local Led Work Group Planning Meeting for agribusiness/non-agribusiness companies, villages, county board members, and other interested parties to determine local natural resource concerns. Flooding, energy conservation and soil and water conservation were the top concerns. Some of these concerns were used for USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service EQIP funding applications.

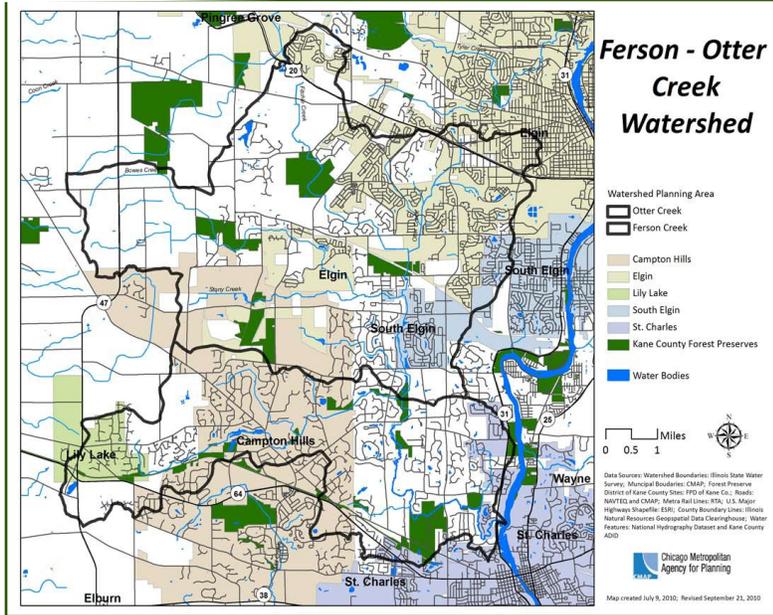
Kane DuPage SWCD is working in the following watersheds;

Jelkes Creek watershed (pictured right) includes portions of the Fox River. The approximately 39 square mile watershed includes the Villages of Algonquin, Carpentersville, Elgin, East Dundee, West Dundee, and Sleepy Hollow. A draft mission statement and goals have been created by the Steering Committee.



The Blackberry Creek watershed is located in southwest Kane and northwest Kendall counties and has a drainage area of approximately 75 square miles. The watershed covers portions of the Cities of Aurora, Batavia and Yorkville, and the Villages of Campton Hills, Elburn, Montgomery, North Aurora, Oswego and Sugar Grove. The watershed is located on the urban fringe of the Chicago metropolitan area. Approximately 56% of the watershed land use is agricultural. Kane and Kendall counties are two of the fastest growing counties in Illinois (Kendall #1 and Kane #5). The total population in Blackberry Creek watershed is approximately 25,374.

<http://foxriverecosystem.org/blackberry.html>



The Ferson-Otter Creek watershed has a drainage area of approximately 54 square miles, with 29% of the land area developed. It is located on the urban edge of the Chicago metropolitan area in Kane County, the 5th fastest growing county in Illinois and covers portions of the cities of Elgin and St. Charles and the villages of Campton Hills, South Elgin, and Lily Lake. The total population in Ferson-Otter Creek watershed is approximately 32,515. The watershed goals are to 1) Reduce fecal coliform contributions to Ferson and Otter

Creek. 2) Reduce nutrients, sediments, and other pollutant contributions to the creeks. 3) Raise stakeholder (residents, public officials, etc.) awareness about the importance and best management practices of proper watershed stewardship. 4) Promote land use and best management practices that minimize increases in the volume of stormwater runoff and reduce the risk of flood damage. 5) Protect the quality and quantity of our water supplies. 6) Improve the physical condition of the waterways. 7) Develop an effective and lasting Watershed Stakeholder Coalition to foster continuing stewardship efforts in the watershed. http://foxriverecosystem.org/ferson_otter.htm.

The **Kendall County SWCD** held a Rain Barrel Design Competition for local artists to transfer their environmental themes onto a rain barrel provided by the SWCD. The painted barrels were on display at the County Fair, at State Representative Kay Hatcher's Open House, the Forest Preserve, the City of Plano municipal building, the Health Department and at the SWCD Office. An overall design winner was chosen and a silent auction was held for each of the barrels at the SWCD's annual meeting. Proceeds were donated to the **Kendall County SWCD** Education Program.

The **Kendall County SWCD** Education Program created a new teachers' group called Agriculture Literacy Ambassadors. This group of fourteen teachers from all four major school districts in Kendall County received training, curriculum, and resource materials to teach their students (and other teachers at their schools) about agriculture and natural resources. These teachers serve as an advisory panel to the Education Program. The Education Program, the Forest Preserve, Outdoor Education Program, and Oswego Community School District Hands-on Science program hosted a free, environmental education workshop for county teachers. Teachers learned about available curriculum and resource materials about soil, water, composting, and plants. Teachers received two continuing Professional Development Units for their participation.

The **Kendall County SWCD** is a member of the Stormwater Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) with representatives from Kendall County, Village of Oswego, United City of Yorkville, Village of Plainfield, City of Plano, Village of Newark, Farm Bureau, Oswego Township, The Conservation Foundation and the development community. The TAC meets monthly to provide technical recommendations to the Kendall County Stormwater Planning Committee (KCSPC). The TAC authored the Stormwater Management Plan which was approved by the KCSPC and the County Board. The TAC is now drafting the corresponding Stormwater Management Ordinance. This water quality effort was made possible because of state legislation granting stormwater management authority to some counties.

Livingston County SWCD held a "Conservation Experience Tour" for approximately 60 people to tour local agricultural businesses and conservation construction sites. The group visited Kilgus Farmstead, a locally owned and operated dairy that bottle their own milk and produce ice cream for sale; a waterway project under construction; the Spence Farm, the oldest farm in Livingston County and is being restored by Marty and Kris Travis. They spoke about a group they founded, Stewards of the Land, a consortium of local producers that have banded together to sell their products to local and statewide grocers and restaurants. The attendees also saw a completed waterway and an EQIP funded stream crossing for cattle. Lunch highlighted locally grown food served at a local hunting lodge, "Rooster Heaven". A local grocer spoke of their commitment to locally grown food and a Good Neighbor award was presented to a family-owned seed company.

The Delta Institute asked the **McHenry County SWCD** to develop a county-wide map to show natural resource areas that are threatened by highway projects. County natural resource professionals reviewed existing resource maps and combined the best resources into one layer to show those areas where new highways would have the highest negative impact to natural resources. The group will use the map/resource when new projects are proposed.

The **McHenry County SWCD** hosted a drainage workshop to bring together a variety of disciplines that often deal with the complex drainage laws. Consultants, engineers, drainage district officials, municipalities and farmers were in attendance to learn about (1) the history of drainage in Illinois, (2) Illinois drainage laws, (3) drainage districts, (4) residential drainage programs in Kane Co., (5) impacts of urban development on agricultural drainage, (6) storm water drainage, (7) and water quality and drainage.

The **Piatt County SWCD** and the Lincoln Heritage Resource Conservation and Development hosted an E-Waste collection trailer on Wednesdays at the District office. An average of 2,500 pounds of E-Waste is collected each month. The District now has daily collections.

The **Piatt Co SWCD** maintains a website to keep the public informed of programs, activities and events of the SWCD: www.piattcountyswcd.com.

The **Piatt County SWCD**, University of Illinois Extension and the Heart of Sangamon Resource Conservation and Development held a Horse Management Workshop that covered the care of horses and the need to properly handle waste. Participants also received a binder of related information.

The **Piatt County SWCD** contracted with **Champaign County SWCD** to share staff resources. The SWCD also entered into an agreement with USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service to provide program assistance.

The **Will-South Cook SWCD** held a tour for over 75 attendees at the site of their 2010 Conservation Farm Family nominee, the Toepper Family Farm. Jim Toepper, who has farmed since 1964, was recognized by the SWCD for his efforts to reduce soil erosion, improve water quality, and provide wildlife habitat. The tour included a grain bin rescue simulation performed by members of the Elwood, Manhattan, Peotone, and Wilmington fire departments and GSI (Grain Systems Incorporated). The simulation was a training session for the firefighters and demonstrated farm safety precautions and proper rescue procedures in the event of a grain engulfment accident.

The **Will-South Cook SWCD** provided input and support to the Conservation Subdivision Design Ordinance that encourages subdivision designs that are more efficient, more compact with less costly networks of streets and utilities; provide more open space; help preserve and improve aquifer re-charge; reduce stormwater runoff; reduce non-point source pollutant loading rates; increase recreational amenities; improve natural resource protection; and preserve the area's semi-rural character.

Will County SWCD and Will County drafted a Natural Plantings Ordinance to provide encouragement and support for public and private land owners who recognize the environmental benefit of native plant use in landscaping and gardening. The proposed ordinance will establish minimum standards for the design, installation, and maintenance of landscaped areas that require the use of appropriate native vegetation and to promote the preservation of indigenous plant communities on site in order to promote the public health, safety and welfare of its residents.

Woodford County SWCD participated in the Farm Bureau Ag Day by presenting a Conservation Jeopardy game they developed that tested approximately 500 students' knowledge of soil erosion, farm conservation, and water conservation.

Woodford County SWCD participated in the County Comprehensive Plan update efforts by representing the agriculture community and the erosion control and water quality concerns.

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 County SWCD, John Wood Community College, University of Illinois Extension, **Pike County SWCD** and **Brown County SWCD** held an Earth Day celebration for over 700 5th grade students. Students participated in activities about Soils, Wildlife Winter Survival, and participated in a Recycling Relay.

Adams County SWCD assisted with the Annual Western Illinois/ Northeast Missouri No-Till Seminar. More than 150 people attended the event.

The **Bond County SWCD** donated trees to staff and students at four elementary schools to celebrate Arbor Day. The entire Mulberry Grove Elementary School celebrated Arbor Day by planting a tulip tree, donated by the SWCD, on the school grounds. While the principal and two students planted the tree, other students read a history of Arbor Day.

The **Bond County SWCD** held a Soil & Water Conservation Day for over 200 5th grade students. IDNR, Agriculture in the Classroom University of Illinois Extension and the SWCD gave eight different presentations on conservation, fish, wildlife, water, lakes, streams and other natural resource topics.

Brown County SWCD staff, volunteers, and USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service staff provided State of Illinois symbols and conservation measure clues for a scavenger hunt at Moore Memorial Park for teams of 6th graders.

Brown County SWCD directors and staff, staff from the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service, USDA Farm Service Agency, Farm Bureau, Brown County FFA Chapter, and U of I Extension held the Agriculture Awareness Dr. Seuss Days for county elementary students. SWCD Directors read, "The Cat in the Hat", and discussed the various "hats" a farmer must wear for his farming operation. The Administrative Coordinator (AC) read, "Oh Say, Can you Seed", and each child made a, "Garden in a Glove", or, "The Bean Book", which shows the layers of the bean seed. The AC also read, "The Lorax" and demonstrated the Enviroscape model.

Brown County SWCD moved their Arbor Day celebration indoors due to rain, but students still learned how to plant a tree properly and about tree characteristics and tree layers, made tree cookie necklaces and pinecone birdfeeders, participated in Arbor Day Olympics in the gym and played Arbor Day soccer.

The **Calhoun County SWCD** and Farm Bureau held a Farm Safety Day Camp for 123 5th and 6th grade students and 5 teachers from four elementary schools. Students attended sessions on: Electrical Hazards on the Farm, PTO Shaft/ Farm Equipment Safety, Water Safety, including safety around farm ponds, Gun Safety, and What to Do in Emergency Situations.

Calhoun County SWCD, Farm Bureau and the McCully Heritage Project held a Forestry Field Day for more than 130 6th graders and 6 teachers from 6 county schools with funding from the Illinois Department of Agriculture Sustainable Agriculture Grant Program. The students participated in sessions with the Conservation Police Wildlife Trailer, Tree ID, Tree Rings, and

Wetland Walk. The International Wood Collectors Society brought samples of 50 woods to view and students made leaf rubbings.

Christian County SWCD and the University of Illinois hosted the Dudley Smith Cow-Calf Field Day. The topic of this meeting was "Mixed Animal Species Grazing in Pasture Settings and the Potential Benefits in Exploring This Option". This 226 acre research site is a field-scale research site used for work done through the Dudley Smith Initiative.

The **Hancock County SWCD** demonstrated the movement of water through a watershed and the pollution that runoff may cause to 300 5th graders at the Kid's Conservation Day. The combined effect of pollution from many small sources: residential areas; storm water; forestry areas; transportation; recreation; agriculture; and construction, were shown to impact the quality of shared water.

The **Hancock County SWCD** held a Conservation Tillage Field Day to promote reduced 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. When properly managed, crop rotation, soil conditions, equipment selection, and weed control will improve yield and soil productivity. Over 200 attendees heard discussions and watched field demonstrations of twelve pieces of conservation tillage equipment. USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service measured the remaining crop residue after tillage equipment passes, then discussed what is required for compliance, how to measure residue, and equipment usage and timing. The guest speaker addressed fall soil and residue preparation which helps to ensure a successful spring planting season.

The **Hancock County SWCD** awarded two \$500 Glen Smiddy Memorial Scholarships to Amanda Rosendale of Augusta and Andrew Boyer of Carthage. The Glen Smiddy Memorial Scholarship, in honor of Glen's contributions to soil conservation, is awarded to students or residents majoring in agriculture, agri-business, conservation, natural resources, or other agricultural related courses. The scholarship is awarded on the basis of exceptional scholastic ability and/or financial need, maturity, industriousness, motivation, intellectual interest, moral character, and demonstrated leadership.

Hancock County SWCD and Agriculture in the Classroom celebrated Arbor Day by providing tree related presentations and classroom activities and distributing 300 white pine seedlings to 3rd graders. The purpose of this program is to give students the experience of planting a tree and learning of its importance to our environment: erosion control; reductions in air pollution; cooling effects on our home; reduced heating bills; reduction in carbon dioxide levels; habitat for wildlife; wood products and beauty.

Jersey County SWCD and the County Board continued their Memorandum of Understanding to improve compliance with storm water, erosion and sediment control ordinances and regulations. The SWCD reviewed storm water plans and made sure the plans were

implemented by the builders. The Memorandum of Understanding included the SWCD's role in agricultural area protection work and natural resource reports for the subdivision committee. The **Jersey County SWCD** continued to do field inspections on new construction sites for the Illinois Environmental Protection Agency.

Madison County SWCD, St. Clair County SWCD, Monroe County SWCD and Jersey County SWCD, held the 8th annual erosion and sediment control seminar for approximately 225 developers, contractors, public works officials, village inspectors, professional engineers and IDOT inspectors. The purpose of these events is to provide information and education concerning proper erosion and sediment control methods, and products available for use on urbanizing/developing sites, reducing on-site erosion.

McDonough County SWCD and **Fulton County SWCD** entered into an agreement with Prairie Rivers Resource Conservation and Development Council, through IEPA to deliver a cost-share program for gully erosion control practices.

McDonough County SWCD entered into a two year 319 Grant Agreement with the IEPA to cost share on erosion and sediment control practices and conduct a phosphorus study for the Spring Lake Watershed initiative.

The **Menard County SWCD**, University of Illinois Extension, Sangamon-Menard Agriculture Education Partnership, and the Farm Bureau held Agriculture Discovery Day for approximately 200 fifth grade students from the three school districts in the County, with each class visiting eight different conservation-related stations. The classes were given a trivia "test" to see what facts they learned during the day, and the classroom with the most correct answers won the "Trivia Tournament." The top scoring classroom from each school district was awarded a potted tree and bragging rights for the year.

Montgomery County SWCD directors and associate directors toured reclaimed long wall coal mined ground in Macoupin County to better understand the effects on farm ground. The tour was hosted by Macoupin Energy and contractor Gerry Spinner. The tour showed how to reclaim farm ground after long-wall mining. With a long-wall mine opening in Montgomery County, the directors have a better understanding of the reclamation process and will be able to offer suggestions for improved methods of reclamation.

Montgomery County SWCD and the U of I Extension hosted a Conservation Field Day for approximately 300 5th-grade students. The SWCD, USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service, IDNR, University of Illinois Extension and IEPA staff presented hands-on learning experiences where the kids got to see, feel, and do, new and exciting activities on topics on conservation of the land, water, air, plants and animals.

The **Sangamon County SWCD** and the City of Springfield worked to protect the water quality of Lake Springfield, the public water supply for the City of Springfield and several surrounding

communities. The lake is fed by two major tributaries in a 170,000 acre, primarily agricultural watershed, covering 265 square miles. The SWCD, Illinois Department of Agriculture and Springfield City Water, Light and Power (CWLP) solved a streambank erosion problem by strategically placing 300 feet of stone toe protection and rock riffles throughout the stream to stabilize this area. Since 1983, CWLP has provided over \$450,000 in cost-share assistance to the SWCD to address water quality issues in this watershed.



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** and the Champaign County Planning and Zoning Department developed a Land Resource Management Plan that was adopted by the County Board. The SWCD provided natural resource information and concerns to the Technical Committee. The SWCD helped the county develop a new wind farm ordinance to add to their zoning ordinances.

Champaign County SWCD received a Conservation Innovation Grant through USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service to improve fertilizer rate and application method recommendations for corn in strip-till situations. The findings may increase yields and therefore increase the number of farmers using strip till and may decrease the amount of phosphorus (P) and potassium (K) unused by the plant and available to run off into the water. Soil erosion may be reduced by more acres in strip till and water quality may be protected by less fertilizer being unused and entering the water.

Champaign County SWCD was awarded funds through the USDA NRCS Mississippi River Basin Initiative to use the Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) payments for producers to implement nutrient management and cover crop strategies that improve fertilizer efficiency. Over 6,000 acres have been enrolled. The American Farmland Trust and the SWCD received grants from the Walton Foundation and McKnight foundation to support the project.



Three commercial farm field demonstrations were funded to show the change in soil fertility and yields under several P and K fertilizer rates and application methods in conventional tillage, no-till and strip-till systems. The information may help determine the best soil sampling methods for these cropping systems.

The **Clark County SWCD**, city councils, and tree commissions celebrated Arbor Day by giving presentations on the importance of trees and how to properly plant a tree; and by distributing white pine and bald cypress trees to third graders. The SWCD provided a larger tree that was planted on the schools grounds by the students with assistance from a local nursery.

Clark County SWCD and the local Conservancy District held a Water Quality Workshop/Tour for local high school science students and teachers. They toured a variety of mechanical erosion control practices and heard each one explained by USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service staff. They heard about local water quality issues and performed water testing for nitrates, phosphates, ammonia, dissolved oxygen, turbidity and pH.

Clay County SWCD created the Jake Klein Memorial Scholarship after the death of their board chairman who was a 35 year member of the SWCD board. The SWCD gave out three \$500 dollar scholarships to county high school seniors.

The **Clay County SWCD** ordered seed, leased a tractor, and provided the drill and labor to seed 400 acres of native warm season grasses for 43 individuals. Since the program's inception in 2008, over 1,000 acres of field border strips have been established providing quail and rabbit habitat and reduced soil erosion.

The **Coles County SWCD**, The Lumpkin Family Foundation, Lincoln Heritage Pheasants Forever, USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service, IDNR, Woodyard Farm, Fritts Fertilizer, Embarras Valley Quail Unlimited, National Wild Turkey Federation, Embarras Volunteer Stewards, Illinois Forestry Association, Journal Gazette, US Fish and Wildlife Service, River to River Cooperative Weed Management Area and Eastern Illinois University launched the Partnership for Healthy Forests Program, designed to address the health of our county forests. Landowners received site visits from the Woodland Invasive Specialist (WIS) and received information on invasive species removal and beneficial native woodland species. To date, the Woodland Invasive Specialist and 2 summer interns evaluated 26 forest sites totaling 1,179 acres and 22 sites. A total of 404 acres were cleared of invasive plants. Our WIS provided presentations to 10 classes ranging from kindergarten to college level with a total of 225 students.

The **Crawford County SWCD** and LaMotte Creek Watershed Planning Committee held a workshop with an University of Illinois Extension Educator that spoke about legislative

activities; tillage systems and cropping rotation; cover crops and yield performance data.

The **Crawford County SWCD** distributed soils educational materials to all the county elementary school libraries for teacher resources. The SWCD staffed a booth with the Rainfall Simulator at the Oblong FFA Ag Day. The SWCD provided Arbor Day, Earth Day and Conservation Field Days activities to several elementary school classes and soils training and material review for the Envirothon competition to high schools classes.

The **Cumberland County SWCD** and the Lincoln Heritage Resource Conservation and Development established a semi-monthly electronic recycling program for computers, printers, TV's, microwaves, copiers, typewriters and other electronics. The equipment is donated to schools or broken down for parts.

The **Cumberland County SWCD** provided a presentation and a free tree to all 3rd graders for Arbor Day. A tree sale was held last spring to promote windbreaks and erosion prevention. The SWCD rented out the following equipment - no-till drills for soybeans and wheat, a Great Plains no-till drill for prairie grass and pasture seeding, a fabric plow to use in waterways, a root plow and a tree planter.

Cumberland County SWCD and USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service hosted a conservation field trip for the 4th grade students to see installed conservation practices and tillage method used to protect natural resources. The rainfall simulator was used to show how conservation tillage protects our natural resources locally and all the way down to the Mississippi River Delta at the Gulf of Mexico. It protects streams, lakes and rivers and drinking supplies for the rural and urban communities.

Douglas County SWCD displayed the Rainfall Simulator Unit to 40,000 people at the Arthur Cheese Days.

Douglas County SWCD promoted their 6 foot no-till drill and forecart for horse farming at the 2010 Arthur Dairy day at the Otto Center, where more than 110 Amish Dairy farmers attended the event.

Edgar County SWCD and Pheasants' Forever held a Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) Mid-Management informational meeting for all contract holders to inform them of options of mid-management and that mid-management is requirement to fulfill their CRP contracts.

The **Edwards County SWCD** held a meet and greet with Brady Wooten, new Illinois Farm Bill Biologist. Other speakers included the Wayne/Edwards District Conservationist, Wayne/Edwards CED, Wabash Valley RC&D Coordinator, Forestry Biologist, Resource Conservationist and the Pheasant & Quail personnel.

Edwards County SWCD held a Forestry and Wildlife Workshop at the Tom Hortin Farm. Participants were able to view a "controlled burn" to suppress non-vital species in the woods

so oaks and other hardwoods would regenerate. Presenters were from the District, IDNR, National Wild Turkey Federation, Pheasants Forever & Quails Unlimited, Local Logger & Timber Consultant and Wabash Valley RC&D.

Jasper County SWCD and Lincoln Heritage Resource Conservation and Development held 2, two day recycling collection events. At both events area residents provided enough recyclable commodities to fill an 8'x24' trailer.

The **Jasper County SWCD** purchased seed, leased a tractor and hired part-time help to seed 200 acres of native warm season grasses on 39 tracts. An additional 110 acres of seed was sold to customers who planted their own.

The **Jasper County SWCD** awarded a \$500 scholarship to a graduating senior at Newton Community High School and a \$1000 scholarship to a current college student.

Jasper County SWCD rented a fabric plow to enable landowners to install fabric checks on their newly constructed waterways. Fabric checks reduce erosion until sod is established in the waterway.

The **Marion County SWCD** and the George P. Irwin Conservation Education Station (GPICES) expanded its conservation education through tours and training. The District and the National Wild Turkey Federation held the first public Wildlife/Woodland tour. Professionals from different disciplines discussed the mutual benefits with proper wildlife and woodland management.

The **Marion County SWCD** installed the first Streambank Stabilization and Restoration Practice (SSRP) in Marion County at the GPICES. The SSRP practices installed will be used for demonstration and training.

Marion County SWCD continued to bring together local landowners enrolled in the Conservation Reserve Program with warm season grass plantings and the Kell Fire Department to schedule prescribed burns. Since the start of this association in 2006, the Fire Department has assisted 20 producers to complete prescribed burns on 838 acres.

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

Gallatin County SWCD held a Conservation Mini Fair at Ridgway Park for 350 students, teachers and chaperones. 10 presenters talked to 10 classes of students on soil erosion, coal mined land reclamation, and other conservation related topics.

Jackson County SWCD and **Perry County SWCD** on behalf of the Region 5 **SWCDs** received a Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education (SARE) mini grant to provide Region 5 SWCD personnel with training and resource material on Programs/Marketing Opportunities; Nutrient Management; and Livestock/Pasture/Hay/Grazing for specialty crops and livestock; and Energy Conservation/Alternatives for the farm. Two training sessions were held, each SWCD received a 3 ring binder of materials, and web resources were posted on the Region 5 SWCD website: www.siswcd.webs.com.

Jefferson County SWCD and Region 5 **SWCDs** held a Southern Illinois Urban Erosion Control Field Day at Southern Illinois University at Carbondale for approximately 60 county engineers, construction contractors, USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service staff, Southern Illinois University Carbondale students, and developers. Topics included:

“The need to control erosion and where you can get help before you start”, “Call JULIE”, “Know Your Soil”, “Improving Your Soil”, “Erosion Control BMPs”, “Culvert/Ideas for Outlets”.

Vendors of urban erosion control products also demonstrated and explained their products.



Perry County SWCD held a meeting of local landowners to identify the natural resource priority concerns and develop local programming.

Pulaski-Alexander SWCD and the City of Tamms worked on installing a rain garden and starting a farmers’ market in their community park.

Randolph County SWCD held a Conservation Day for 5th grade students to learn about conservation topics and the outdoors.

Randolph County SWCD, IDNR, and the US Fish and Wildlife Service completed invasive species eradication and hill prairie restoration on 12 acres in the Mississippi River Bluff area surrounding Prairie of the Rock Nature Preserve through the Landowner Incentive Program.

Saline County SWCD and local business held a poster contest for the 5th graders in the 4 elementary schools. SWCD staff presented a topic in each of the classrooms and the students made a poster to reflect that theme. The District and local businesses also held an essay contest for the high schools. SWCD staff and volunteers presented a topic and demonstration and the students wrote an essay to reflect that demonstration. Monetary awards and certificates for both the poster and essay contests were presented at the Annual Meeting.

Saline County SWCD presented a program and distributed a tree to each 3rd grader in the 4 elementary schools to celebrate Soil Stewardship Week and Arbor Day.

Union County SWCD developed, with approval from the Illinois Department of Agriculture Bureau of Land and Water Resources, a pilot project, “Economic Stimulus Project” that allowed the use of state cost share monies and federal monies to be used on soil erosion control projects. By being able to use both programs on the same project, landowners knew the exact percentage of cost share they would receive. This made it easier for them to determine their cost and make a decision and reduced the amount of state cost share dollars needed.

Union County SWCD awarded a \$500 grant to a resident to implement a backyard conservation plan. The District accepted proposals that included detailed plans and budgets. The applications were judged by a volunteer panel. This project allowed the SWCD to reach new customers about all sources of soil erosion and water quality issues.

Union County SWCD, USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service and the USDA Forest Service held a Sustainable Wildlife Bus Tour to show how wildlife habitat can be managed on public and private lands and to discuss assistance that is available to landowners. The attendees visited a Forest Service managed site, a private rice field, a private hunt club, and a state refuge.

Washington County SWCD mailed an annual report and request for contributions to their landowners. They received approximately \$5,000 in donations.

White County SWCD held a forestry workshop to inform landowners about state and federal forestry assistance programs, woodland assessments, and real estate taxation on wooded acres.

White County SWCD held a Conservation Day for 200 4th graders. Staff from the SWCD, IDNR, Egyptian Public Health Department and the Farm Bureau Agriculture Literacy program presented the Enviroscape, forestry, wildlife, recycling, played, “Quick Frozen Critters”, and decorated tree cookies. Students also decorated holiday cards for nursing home residents.

Franklin, Jackson, Perry, Randolph and **Washington County SWCDs** held “Conservation Fair”, a 3 day, outdoor conservation day for approximately 1,800 kindergarten through 6th grade students. Topics such as electric safety, gun safety, farm safety, soil erosion, water quality, forestry, tree identification, wild horses, streambank stabilization, soils, bug bingo, and many others were presented by SWCD, USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service, IDNR, IEPA, local Farm Bureaus and many other volunteers.

The **Massac, Johnson, Williamson, Saline, White County SWCDs**, Illinois Forest Resource Center, US Forest Service, IDNR, IEPA, Electric Cooperatives, Master Gardeners and other volunteers held Stewardship Week, a 4 day outdoor conservation education day for kindergarten through 6th grade students.

Region 5 **SWCDs** maintain a regional website to promote the activities and events in the region – www.siswcds.webs.com.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The information in this report was compiled by the Illinois Department of Agriculture, Bureau of Land and Water Resources along with our conservation partners highlighting the conservation accomplishments for fiscal year 2010.

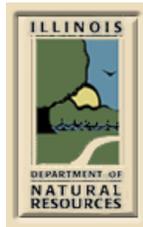


Illinois Department of Agriculture
Bureau of Land and Water Resources
217/782-6297
www.agr.state.il.us

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



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



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