



CONSERVATION CATCHALL

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VERMILION FIELD OFFICE CHOSEN AS THE 2010 OFFICE OF THE YEAR

CONGRATULATIONS!



The Vermilion County NRCS Field Office Team includes Glen Franke, Sheila Lane, Cindy Johnston, and Kelly German.

Each year Illinois Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) selects one county Field Office as the "Team of the Year. For 2010, the Vermilion County Team in Danville, Illinois claims the prize. The winning Team is recognized for their hard work and accomplishments at the local level where they serve Vermilion County's private landowners and help them protect their resource base.

The Vermilion County team had a busy year. Among their accomplishments were:

- 7 new CSP contracts covering 7,120 acres--6 on Agricultural Land and 1 on Non-Industrial Forest Land;
- 8 new EQIP contracts, covering 451 acres - including 2 contracts on Seasonal High Tunnels;
- 2 new Wildlife Habitat Incentive Program (WHIP) contracts, covering another 202 acres;
- Conservation plans developed on 17,400 acres with plans applied on the land in 14,900 acres;
- 33 acres of new grassed waterways;
- 5 new grade stabilization structures installed;
- 7 water and sediment control basins constructed;
- 2,000 feet of terraces constructed; and
- 66 acres of filter strips seeded.

The Team did so well that several of the members have been tapped to help others. Glen Franke is now a Resource Conservationist in the State Office, Kelly German is a District Conservationist and Cindy Johnston has been employed by NRCS. Sheila Lane remains as the Vermilion SWCD's AC and will soon be helping to train a new high production team for the field office.

Congratulations to the Vermilion County, Danville Field Office for a job well done!

Source, Paige Buck, Illinois NRCS Public Information Officer

AISWCD Staff:

Richard Nichols,
Executive Director

Jim Nelson,
Urban Stormwater Specialist

Sherry Finn,
Administrative Assistant





PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE - JAMES TODD

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I had the opportunity to represent Illinois at the recent NACD North Central Region Meeting in Schiller Park. This is an annual event where representatives from Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri, Ohio and Wisconsin meet prior to the NACD annual meeting to discuss issues of regional significance that we may want to take forward to the NACD Annual Meeting.

This year, nutrient management and agricultural contributions to water quality problems were the hot topics. We discussed the difficulties for agriculture in the Chesapeake Bay area brought on by USEPA's implementation of load limits to waters that empty into the Bay. Since this meeting, the American Farm Bureau Federation has filed a law suit challenging USEPA's standards and the data that were used to develop them.

Tom Davenport with USEPA Region Five spoke to the group about nutrient reduction and the need for the states to set standards for N and P. He said the implementation of the Chesapeake Bay program was mandated by a federal lawsuit that required USEPA to follow the guidance of the Clean Water Act. He made the statement that the states that had nutrient reduction strategies in place by 2012 would likely be rewarded in the form of federal implementation dollars.

Illinois brought forth a resolution that was passed by the state representatives in attendance and will now be taken to NACD. The resolution called for NACD to work with congress to remove authority for USEPA to issue NPDES permits for agricultural chemical application to water and leave administration of the regulation under the Federal Insecticide, Fungicide and Rodenticide Act (FIFRA) where it has been for the past 40 years. The issue in Illinois is not so much the issuance of NPDES permits as it is with the definition of Illinois' waters.

The Federal Clean Water Act currently defines Waters of the United States as those waters that are navigable. States have the authority to implement more restrictive standards and Illinois has chosen to do that. In Illinois, waters of the state is defined as "... all accumulations of water, surface and underground, natural, and artificial, public and private, or parts thereof, which are wholly or partially within, flow through, or border upon the State of Illinois..." Under that broad definition, the glass of water on your dinner table is a water of the state as is the water in the spray tank to which you are adding chemicals.

Without a change in IEPA's draft NPDES permit rules for application of pesticides, it appears that anyone who wishes to apply pesticides may be in violation of the law under the current definition of Water of the State. That was the reasoning behind the resolution to limit pesticide regulations only to FIFRA. (Refer to Jim Nelson's Report on page 4.)

Other resolutions that were brought forth and passed included the following:

- Iowa requested a change in CRP rules to allow 60 to 120 feet wide buffers to be installed to replace end rows on slopes of more than 5%.
- Minnesota requested that FSA consider giving a 20% incentive payment for CPR land that has practice CP17 – Living Show Fence, installed.
- Minnesota requested NACD to work with Farm Bill sponsors to require that that buffers and filter strips be installed and maintained where needed to enable receipt of government subsidy payments.
- Minnesota requested that NRCS release updated EQIP docket prior to Local Work Group Meetings.
- Minnesota requested amended language in the 2008 and subsequent Farm Bills that would allow NRCS to reimburse SWCDs for technical services when landowners are not funded or cancel their agreements prior to construction of a practice.
- Ohio requested that NACD explore changes in the 2012 Farm Bill that would clarify section 1619 to allow better sharing of information between NRCS and SWCDs.
- Minnesota requested NACD to support legislation and appropriations for increased state and federal funding for the forest stewardship program.
- Wisconsin requested NACD to urge congress to take any and all necessary actions to prevent Asian Carp from entering the Great Lakes.

All of these resolutions along with others from across the nation will now go before the NACD board of directors for final action in Nashville at the January 28 – February 3 Annual Meeting. I plan to attend the meeting and should have more to report when I return.

James H. Todd



EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S NOTES - RICH NICHOLS

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The 96th General Assembly has ended and the 97th is now facing the long tortuous task of developing long term solutions to further address Illinois' financial problems. The tax increase will make some difference but the failure to pass a bonding or borrowing measure, the cigarette tax and other revenue enhancements that were under consideration during the last hours of the 96th General Assembly will mean that there will be flat funding or even a reduction for most programs in the FY12 budget and most likely in subsequent budgets for the next four years.

Even though the Democrats have a majority in both chambers, they no longer have a super majority making it more difficult to pass bills dealing with bonding or borrowing without Republican support. It will be interesting to see how leadership in the new legislature deals with the changes and the continuing revenue issues.

As far as district funding is concerned, we will have to wait for the Governor's FY12 budget message to gain some insight into our fate. The budget address is scheduled for February 16th. On a somewhat better note, the tax increase should provide some relief for the backlog of FY11 bills that are currently more than 180 days in arrears. It is hoped that we can have some influence in getting allocations for the districts released in the near future.

On a different subject, IDOA's legal staff has determined that the responsibility to notify contractors that they must pay prevailing wages to employees on jobs that utilize state dollars is the sole responsibility of the Illinois Department of Labor. While that should absolve the SWCD and the landowner of the onerous task of notifying contractors, it doesn't address the issue of landowners having to pay more for their share of the project. It also doesn't address the issue of contractors being less willing to do state cost share funded projects because of the extra paperwork and expense of documenting that they paid prevailing wages as well as the extra expense of actually having to pay prevailing wages.

The Illinois Department of Labor's website contains a county by county list of the prevailing wages that are required to be paid when state money is involved with a project. Prevailing wages will vary from county to county by job title and within the same or similar job title.

Another issue that districts need to be aware of is the need for all FOIA officers and backups to take the FOIA training. The training must be completed each year by persons who are designated as the district's FOIA Officer or backup. Training can be accessed at the Attorney General's web site; www.illinoisattorneygeneral.gov. Once on the web page click on the box titled "Public Access Counselor" to register (if you are not already registered) and to take the training. Even if you have already taken the training for 2011, it is a good idea to refer to the site on a regular basis, especially if you have a FOIA request. The letters and information contained on the site are updated often and may change when a FOIA request has been received by a governmental entity that may have a unique twist to it.

As always, a slow economy leads unscrupulous people to devise ways to make money. Often they want access to mailing addresses, e-mail or phone numbers and may use a FOIA request to get that information. Be wary of such requests and check them out with the Attorney General's Office or with the Federal FOIA Officer for NRCS or FSA. Generally, the district does not own that information and will not be responsible for providing it. However, if you receive a FOIA request, you will still need to contact the AG's office for guidance and write a letter of denial within the five day period.

Best wishes in the New Year!

Rich



URBAN STORMWATER UPDATE - JIM NELSON

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GENERAL NATIONAL POLLUTANT DISCHARGE AND ELIMINATION SYSTEM (NPDES) PERMIT FOR PESTICIDE APPLICATION POINT SOURCE DISCHARGES

The title is a little misleading as it suggests that anyone applying pesticide will require a permit to do so. A hot topic these days, the June 2010 USEPA public notice regarding NPDES permits for applying pesticides raised the attention of the agricultural community. USEPA plans to implement their general permit in February with the IEPA to issue their permit by the end of the same month. By April 9, 2011 anyone planning to use pesticides *over or in water* must submit a Notice of Intent (NOI) 14 days prior to applying the pesticide. They will be allowed to apply the pesticide over or in water 14 days after their NOI is posted to IEPA's website. Fees will begin being collected in July of 2011. Those are the general facts of the permit.

The important aspects of this permit to the agricultural community are as follows: IEPA's draft permit refers to the application of pesticide as a point source discharge. Interestingly enough the definition they use in the permit is as follows:

"Point Source – any discernible, confined, and discrete conveyance, including but not limited to any pipe, ditch, channel, tunnel, conduit, well, discrete fissure, container, rolling stock, concentrated animal feeding operation, landfill leachate collection system, vessel, or other floating craft from which pollutants are or may be discharged. This term does not include return flows from irrigated agriculture or agricultural stormwater runoff. [40 CFR 122.2]"

Note the last sentence; this excludes agricultural stormwater runoff and return flows from irrigated agriculture. This is not IEPA's wording but is from the federal clean water act. This statement being in the permit is very important to agricultural producers because it indicates applying a terrestrial pesticide to water is in violation of FIFRA and therefore not eligible for an NPDES permit, general or individual (2011, IEPA). If you as an agricultural producer accidentally applied a pesticide (with a label prohibiting its use in water) over a ditch, river, stream, pond, or even a wet spot in your field you would have violated FIFRA but would not need an NPDES permit since it would be illegal for IEPA to allow you to do anything against the label of the product you are using. Therefore, if you attempt to file an NOI for application of a non-aquatic approved pesticide over the land and according to the label, IEPA would not issue a permit. If you plan to use an aquatic herbicide in a grassed waterway or over water however, you, or whomever you hire will need to file a notice of intent (NOI) and pay the fee (probably \$250 for a five year permit).

2011, personal discussion with IEPA permit section, January 25th.
<http://www.epa.state.il.us/water/permits/pesticide/draft-general-permit.pdf>

JANUARY

IS NATIONAL "THANK YOU" MONTH!



ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT'S UPDATE - *SHERRY FINN*

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December - January Activities

CREP Coordinator Grant:

- Obtained 3 quotes for printing of CREP Marketing Postcards; ordered postcards after selection of printing company
- Purchased postage stamps for Districts to mail postcards
- Completed Sept CREP Deposit and paid Districts
- Attended all informational meetings and distributed postage stamps
- Sent CREP Coordinator Sub-Agreement Contracts to several Kaskaskia River Basin Districts

December Quarterly Board Meeting:

- Notified Districts of Annual Meeting Date, Dates of 2011 QB Meetings, and made request for Annual Meeting Taskforce Committee Members
- Updated AISWCD Officers and Area VPs Map and Information Listing
- Completed Executive Committee Meeting, Foundation, and Association Meetings Minutes; compiled all meetings minutes
- Mailed thank you letters to Northfield Inn and Chesapeake Bay Seafood

IL Envirothon:

- Updated Association Website for II Envirothon Registration Packet
- Completed Canon Envirothon "Intent to Participate" form; completed Winter Training Proxy
- Notified Canon Envirothon of new II Envirothon Co-Coordinators

CREP Marketing:

- Handling request for \$100 Miscellaneous reimbursements; forwarding to IEPA
- Attended CREP Coordinator Training sessions
- Completed Disbursement of Postage Stamps for Marketing Postcards

March QB Meeting:

- Confirmed schedule date with Northfield Inn
- Started prep work on QB Packet

2011 Annual Meeting:

- Started prep for Association Website update for all 2011 Annual Meeting dates and awards
- Contacted IDOA and set schedule for programs and ticket printing
- Contacted all award sponsors to confirm for 2011
- Confirmed Parliamentarian
- Met with Lonnie Wilson and scheduled Annual Meeting Taskforce tele-conference call

OTHER DUTIES:

- Phone calls, mail and e-mail correspondence
- Compiled expense report for Credit Card
- Timesheets
- Organized November & December CREP Vouchers & sent to IEPA for payment
- Maintain Patio Paver and Rain Barrel Database
- Maintain SWCD Dues Paid (FY '10 & FY '11) Databases
- Mailed Thank You Notes to Paid Districts
- Compiled Delinquent Dues Notices-e-mailed to Districts and sent to Area VPs as well as officers

- Mailed Sponsorship renewal requests to 2010 sponsors; Maintain Sponsorship Database (FY '11) & Brochure Printing Fee Database
- Sent AISWCD/SWCD Sponsors monthly CC and Legislative Newsletter
- E-mailed Monthly Financials to Officers; sent Dec QB FAC meeting minutes to Chairman
- Updated Records Retention, Mgmt & Destruction Folder
- Maintain a Database for computer items ordered w/ HP; contacted HP with new purchase orders for Districts
- Forward to Rich the monthly SWCD/LUC agenda and meeting minutes that are e-mailed to me; file these after seen by Rich
- Proofread Conservation Catchall and Legislative Newsletter and e-mailed and mailed to Legislators
- Prepared FY 2011 File Folders for Payables; filed FY 2010 in file cabinets for audit
- Completed Monthly Office Supply Inventory and placed order
- Updated info to NACD for 2010 Annual Meeting Poster and Photo Contest Winners and supplied release forms

ACCOUNTING/OFFICE ADMIN:

- Completed Payroll and Payroll Taxes for December & January
- Reconciled all bank accounts
- Completed bookwork for All AISWCD & Insurance Accts
- Prepared Deposits for SWCD Dues and Receivables
- Completed Checks for Payables; Completed Deposits for Receivables; Completed Monthly Financials
- Filed all Completed Payables & Receivables Documentation
- Faxed Copy Count to CDS Technology
- Received CREP Payment for October & November; Completed Deposits; Paid CREP Districts for CREP Coordinator reimbursements for Oct & Nov
- Wrote checks for SWCD various insurance premiums; had Rich sign; mailed; e-mailed copies to Debbie Holsapple
- Posted Memorial Gift Contributions paid to George McKibben Scholarship fund after the passing of Ruth McKibben; sent thank you letters to all contributors and McKibben family

LOOKING AHEAD:

- CREP Program Training/CREP Marketing
- Annual Meeting Taskforce Organization
- Tracking of FY 2011 Funding
- March QB Meeting

REMEMBER: Be willing to give of yourself, and there will be new life for you I this New Year and in every year. - Dr. Norman Vincent Peale

TO ACT: Contemplate new ways to extend your voice and bring beauty to the world!

HAPPY NEW YEAR EVERYONE!!!!

Sherry

ISWCDEA CORNER - DEBI SLADE, AC CO-CHAIR & PHYLLIS MACE, RC CO-CHAIR

website: <http://www.il.ncdea.org>



Hello 2011! The beginning of not only a new year but a new decade is a good time to consider what we want to accomplish both personally and professionally. Of course, the main goal for SWCD's is to establish a permanent source of funding. Please contact your legislators, especially the new ones, to get them up-to-date on our proposal to achieve this goal.

As for the ISWCDEA, we continue to strive for our mission of providing the employees with quality information, communication, education, training, and representation. Please contact any of the reps if you have a concern you would like us to address.

We would like to welcome and thank the new members of the ISWCDEA for committing to serve on our team. We still need reps for several regions, so if you are able to serve, please contact us.

February 10 we will hold our first ISWCDEA meeting of the year. The schedule for meetings the rest of the year will be as follows: May 19, July 14, Summer Conference July 25 through 27, September 8, November 3, Winter Training December 6 & 7.

If it's been ages since you built a snowman, made a snow angel, threw a snowball, went ice-skating, snowshoeing, skiing or any other winter outdoor sport, promise yourself you'll find the time to do so this winter. Give yourself a physical and mental boost disguised as fun!

Happy New Year!

Debi

Here Comes Santa Claus

December the 16th was an exciting day at the Veteran's Rehab Center in Marion. Santa Claus and his helpers had come to say "thank you" to the many Veterans who served our country. After Santa handed out goodies and visited with the patients, he and his helpers wished everyone a Merry Christmas.



The Gallatin County Soil and Water Conservation District would like to thank the following for their preparation and hard work in making this visit a special one: Ridgway Ladies Club, Natural Resource Conservation Service, Lucinda's Quilt's, Region #5 Soil & Water Conservation District Employees, Illinois Soil & Water Conservation District Employees Association, Gallatin/Hardin Farm Service Agency, and the Illinois Department of Agriculture

THANK YOU!

Phyllis



Siting, Zoning & Taxing Wind Farms in Illinois

Presented by the Illinois Wind Working Group

The conference is scheduled for February 9, 2011 at the Marriott Hotel and Conference Center in Normal, IL. An agenda is included below. For more information on the conference and to register, please go to the [conference web site](http://www.renewableenergy.illinoisstate.edu) or paste the following URL in your web browser www.renewableenergy.illinoisstate.edu.

Agenda

7:30 AM – Registration & Continental Breakfast

8:00 AM – Wind Energy 101 Pre-session

(Pre-session for those new to wind farm projects)

- General overview
- Economic impact
- Indiana bat and other wildlife issues
- Sound and setback requirements
- Anticipated trends
- Speakers:
 - Dr. David Loomis - Center for Renewable Energy, Illinois State University
 - Dr. Karen Tyrell - BHE Environmental, Inc.

9:00 AM – Welcome & Overview of County Wind Farm Activity

- Speaker: Dr. David G. Loomis - Center for Renewable Energy, Illinois State University

9:30 AM – Keynote Address

- Speaker: Neil Palmer, Neil Palmer & Associates

10:00 AM – Panel Discussion of Best Practices of County Boards and Zoning Boards

- Fair and reasonable processes that are not interminable
- Practical application without lawsuits and without sacrificing valuable content
- Moderator: Kyle Barry, McGuire Woods LLP
- Speakers include:
 - Dwight Farber - Horizon Wind Energy
 - Phil Dick - McLean County Department of Building and Zoning;
 - George Gordon - McLean County Board

11:00 AM – Break - Exhibits and Networking

11:30 AM – Roads and School District Taxation

- Best practices to minimize road impacts
- Agreements between wind developers and road commissioners

- School district tax revenue from wind farms
- Impact of wind Western Illinois University
- Moderator: Jolene Willis, Illinois Institute for Rural Affairs, Western Illinois University
- Speakers include:
 - Dr. Larry Dodds - Ridgeview School District 19
 - Jim Mathes - Illinois State Board of Education
 - David Winters - Livingston County Engineer

12:30 PM – Lunch and Exhibits

1:30 PM – County Ordinance Revisions

- Pros and cons of wind farm moratoriums
- Setbacks and sound issues
- How much wind development is enough for a county
- Timing of changes to county ordinances
- Moderator: Dr. Karen Tyrell, BHE Environmental, Inc.
- Speakers include:
 - James Griffin - Schain, Burney, Banks & Kenny
 - Matt Boss - Mainstream Renewable Power
 - Chris Howell - Burns & McDonnell

3:00 PM – Break - Exhibits and Networking

3:15 PM – Property Value Guarantees & Decommissioning Costs

- Do wind farms impact property values?
- Property value guarantees
- Good neighbor payments
- Costs of decommissioning
- Best practices for letters of credit, bonds and escrow accounts
- Moderator: Jeffrey Nemeth, Horizon Wind Energy
- Speakers include:
 - Pete Poletti - Poletti and Associates
 - Paul Miller - DeKalb County
 - Mark Pierson - Bureau County

4:00 PM – Adjourn

*Agenda and speakers subject to change

Time to Renew SWCDs Sponsorships

The first sponsorships are expiring but you can help your district and the AISWCD by encouraging those sponsors to renew! The AISWCD will contact those persons and businesses who subscribed to a sponsorship in 2010 asking for their renewals. Your encouragement may help make the difference.

Sponsorship brochures can be obtained by contacting the AISWCD office. To help defray printing expense, we are asking that each SWCD pay \$10.00 for 50 copies of the brochure. To make sure all 98 SWCDs have the opportunity to receive their 50 copies we are only giving out one packet (50 copies) per SWCD.

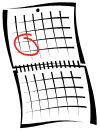
When an individual/company signs up to become a sponsor the checks are to be made out to the AISWCD. To make it easier, please feel free to send sponsors checks all at once or as you see fit. Keep in mind that individuals/companies can mail the sponsorships directly to us. For those of you that have not seen the brochure, there is a line for them to fill in their county name, to assure that SWCDs will receive 50% of the donations made in their county. Checks from the AISWCD to the SWCDs will be issued on a quarterly basis (March, June, September and December).

Take advantage of your annual meeting to hand out sponsorship brochures. Every sponsorship helps you and makes it possible for the AISWCD to continue our efforts to obtain a stable funding source for Illinois' Soil and Water Conservation Districts.



Fun Food Facts

- The same chemicals that give tart cherries their color may relieve pain better than aspirin and ibuprofen in humans.
- Eating about 20 tart cherries a day could reduce inflammatory pain and headache pain.
- There are about 7,000 cherries on an average tart cherry tree (the number varies depending on the age of the tree, weather and growing conditions). It takes about 250 cherries to make a cherry pie, so each tree could produce enough cherries for 28 pies!
- Today, in Michigan, there are almost 4 million cherry trees which annually produce 150 to 200 pounds of tart cherries.
- The plant pigment that gives carrots and other vegetables their vivid orange color is Beta-Carotene. Fruits and Vegetables that are yellow/orange in color contain Beta-Carotene and carrots are one of the richest in this nutrient. Our bodies convert Beta-Carotene into Vitamin A.
- The bright orange color of carrots tell you they're an excellent source of Vitamin A which is important for good eyesight, especially at night. Vitamin A helps your body fight infection, and keeps your skin and hair healthy!
- Pumpkins were once recommended for removing freckles and curing snake bites!
- Pumpkin flowers are edible.
- Pumpkins are 90% water.
- Pumpkins are used for feed for animals.
- Pumpkin seeds can be roasted as a snack.
- Native Americans used pumpkin seeds for food and medicine.
- In early colonial times, pumpkins were used as an ingredient for the crust of pies, not the filling.
- The name "pumpkin" originated from "pepon", the Greek word for "large melon."
- Pumpkins contain potassium and Vitamin A.
- Illinois produces more pumpkins than any other state.



MARK YOUR CALENDAR!

- **2011 Regional Tillage Seminars - Champaign**, Parkland College, January 25th - **Milan**, Milan Community College, January 27th - **Joliet**, Weidorf Ag Center, Joliet Junoir College, January 28th
- **NACD Annual Meeting** - January 28 - February 3, Nashville, TN
- **Siting, Zoning & Taxing Wind Farms in Illinois** - February 9 - Marriott Hotel & Conference Center, Normal, IL
- **Lincoln's Birthday** - February 12, Office Closed February 11, State Holiday
- **President's Day** - February 21st, Office Closed, State and Federal Holiday
- **Illinois Ag Legislative Day** - March 9 Springfield
- **2011 Illinois Envirothon** - May 12th-13th at 4-H Camp, Monticello, IL

2011 QUARTERLY BOARD MEETING DATES

- **March 2011 Quarterly Board Meeting (1 day)** - March 15th (**Note date change**), Northfield Inn - Springfield, IL
- **June 2011 Quarterly Board Meeting** - June 13th/14th, Northfield Inn - Springfield, IL
- **September 2011 Quarterly Board Meeting** - Only if needed
- **December 2011 Quarterly Board Meeting** - December 12th/13th, Northfield Inn - Springfield, IL

2011 ENVIROTHON DATES

5th Category Topic: Salt & Freshwater Estuaries



ILLINOIS ENVIROTHON

May 12th - 13th
4-H Memorial Camp - Allerton Park
Monticello, Illinois

April 20th -
Last day for
LUC competitions

April 22nd - Last day
to register for Illinois
Envirothon

CANON ENVIROTHON

July 24th - 29th
Mount Allison University
Sackville, New Brunswick

Envirothon Update:

2011 5th category materials were posted to the AISWCD web site January 3rd. We have contracted with the Grundy County SWCD to serve as the Envirothon Coordinator for the AISWCD. Please feel free to contact Brooke Baker or Natalie Mahler if you have questions about the Envirothon.

AISWCD Mission: *To represent and empower Illinois' SWCDs*

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