

SOIL AND WATER CONSERVATION SOCIETY
ROLES, RESPONSIBILITIES, AND EXPECTATIONS OF DIRECTORS
May 2011

This document outlines the roles, responsibilities, and expectations of a member elected to serve on the SWCS Board of Directors as a Regional, At-large, or Student Director. All directors share a common and fundamental responsibility of governance for the Society as a whole. In addition, Regional, At-large, and Student Directors are asked to fulfill specific duties unique to their position.

PRIMARY RESPONSIBILITIES OF ALL DIRECTORS

All Directors are expected to assist in the overall governance of the Society by fulfilling the following responsibilities:

1. Determine and advance the Society's mission, goals, and activities.
 - a. Identify important soil, water, and related natural resource issues to be addressed by the Society and oversee the development and implementation of plans to address these issues.
 - b. Enhance the Society's public standing by promotion of the Society's mission, goals, and accomplishments to the public.
 - c. Develop support on behalf of the Society (financial and staff resources) to accomplish the Society's goals.
 - d. Suggest and/or appoint individuals to the Society's standing committees and oversee their work by serving as Board Liaisons to those committees.

Society Standing Committees:

- Leadership Development Committee
- Professional Development Committee
- Awards Committee
- Annual Conference Program Committee
- Science and Policy committee
- International Committee

- e. Fill until the next annual election any vacancies in board membership
2. Select and oversee the activities of the Executive Director and execution of the Society's mission
 - a. Prepare and adopt a Strategic Plan
 - b. Prepare and adopt an Annual Plan of Work
 - c. Review the progress of the Society in reaching goals and objectives established in the Society's Annual Plan of Work
 - d. Serve on one or more of the Board of Director's standing committees

Board of Director's Standing Committees

- Finance Committee
- Fundraising Committee
- Generational Committee
- Board Development Committee
- Membership Development Committee
- Bylaws Committee
- Strategic Planning and Assessment Committee

- e. Approve position papers and other major Society publications

3. Ensure the legal, financial, and ethical integrity of the Society and maintain accountability.
 - a. Monitor the Society's finances and provide proper financial oversight.
 - b. Assist in developing the annual budget and ensure that proper financial controls are in place.
4. Perform the following duties of a Director:
 - a. Participate in monthly board meetings by reviewing monthly meeting agendas and supporting material prior to board meetings and teleconferences.
 - b. Provide annual director report at the summer board meeting in conjunction with the annual conference.
 - c. Assist and help orient new board members
 - d. Assess performance of the Board of Directors
 - e. Join the President's Club membership level when elected to the Board.

RESPONSIBILITIES UNIQUE TO REGIONAL DIRECTORS

The Society Bylaws state, "Regional Directors shall represent the interests of all members of the Society, with specific responsibilities to the members and chapters within their respective regions as required by the Board." Regional Directors are asked to take on the following tasks, in addition to their overall responsibilities described above, to meet responsibilities specific to their region.

1. Act as a liaison to transmit knowledge, concerns, and requests among Board of Directors, SWCS headquarters staff, and members
2. Establish regular communication with Chapter leaders, Student Chapter Advisors, and corporate members in your region.
3. Identify and nominate regional representatives to the following Society standing committees:

Society Standing Committees:

- Leadership Development Committee
- Professional Development Committee
- Awards Committee

4. Form and chair a regional leadership team comprised of representatives of the Society's standing committees. Ensure effective communication between the regional team and the Board of Directors.
5. Work with chapter leaders to develop a strategy to contact members whose membership is about to expire or has expired and also to attract new members. Contact new members to welcome them to the Society.
6. Call or email new Chapter President's in your region to establish communications; and inform them of resources available to them.
7. Identify and mentor potential Society leaders in your region.

RESPONSIBILITIES UNIQUE TO AT-LARGE DIRECTORS

The Soil and Water Conservation Society By-Laws state, "At-large Directors should assure that the Board represents public policy, advocacy, natural resource knowledge, and maintains contact with national and state agencies, other societies, environmental, agricultural, conservation, and other groups." At-large Directors are asked to assume the following additional responsibilities to meet the obligations outlined in the By-laws.

1. Undertake special assignments and tasks that lead to the development of the SWCS policy statements, comments on proposed rules, regulations, or policy, and/or engage in activities that help the SWCS achieve its mission at a national and international level.
2. Serve as liaison to organizations whose mission and goals align with the Society's as appointed by the SWCS President. Assume leadership role for joint activities with these groups.
3. Assist the SWCS President in inter-regional Society and Chapter activities as requested and report on these activities at each Board meeting as appropriate.
4. Once during the three-year term, provide leadership for organizing an activity or event that addresses an issue or opportunity that crosses regional boundaries and/or is national or international in scope. For example, inter-regional conferences, development of a special project proposal for funding, organizing retirees, fellows, life members, or other groups to work on a special project. Promote/facilitate reporting of these activities in Society's communication vehicles.
5. Nominate outstanding members of Society's committees/task forces meriting awards.

RESPONSIBILITIES UNIQUE TO STUDENT DIRECTORS

The Soil and Water Conservation Society By-Laws state, "The Student Director shall represent the interest of all members with specific responsibilities to student members and student chapters on affairs of the Society." Student Directors are asked to take on the following additional responsibilities in service to student members.

1. Maintain an email network among student chapter officers and faculty advisors to enhance communication among students and student chapters.
2. Organize and participate in student activities at the Society's annual conference.
3. Inform student chapter officers of Society affairs and Board decisions.
4. Lead efforts to recruit and retain student members.
5. Encourage student transition to full membership following graduation.
6. Encourage student members to work with local chapters.