



SOIL AND WATER CONSERVATION SOCIETY

Healthy Land
Clean Water
For Life

CONSERVOGRAM

The newsletter of the Soil and Water Conservation Society

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2018 International Annual Conference

Albuquerque Convention Center
Albuquerque, New Mexico
July 29 to August 1, 2018
www.swcs.org/18AC

Culture, Climate, and Conservation

Registration for the 73rd SWCS International Annual Conference is now OPEN, and we can't wait to see you in Albuquerque! Take advantage of the opportunity to learn about the latest research, policies, and practices in natural resource conservation as well as network and connect with the world's leaders in environmental affairs. This year's conference will feature workshops, breakout sessions, symposia sessions, poster presentations, plenary sessions, and tours designed to raise awareness of recent developments in the science and art of natural resource conservation and environmental management.

Register today at www.swcs.org/18AC to receive the \$100 early registration discount.

Preliminary Program Now Available

Want a sneak peek at the great topics and presentations being offered at this year's Annual Conference? Check out the [online Preliminary Program](#).



We would also like to take an opportunity to thank our Presenting Sponsor, Syngenta, as well as all of this year's conference sponsors. Your support is critical to the success of our event. Thank you!



945 SW Ankeny Road, Ankeny, IA 50023

P: 515-289-2331 | F: 515-289-1227 | pubs@swcs.org

Join Give Journal



Career Profile: Gary Steinhardt

Last month we unveiled our plan to publish career profiles on the SWCS website. As a Society member, you got a first look in the March *Conservogram* at our first profile, USDA NRCS Acting Chief Leonard Jordan. This month we are moving from the public sector to academia. We hope you enjoy these previews of profiles that will eventually be collected and published on our website.



Gary Steinhardt, Professor of Agronomy and Extension Specialist
Career Sector: Academia
Degrees: BS in Agricultural Science from Michigan State University, MS in Soil Science from MSU, PhD in Agronomy from Purdue University

What is academic life like? Well, there's lots of juggling. In order to get tenure now you really have to demonstrate your ability in research and writing and managing grants. It's very difficult to get tenure. You've got to be like Mary Poppins—nearly perfect in every way.

As you go along, you get arguably better at juggling several balls in the air at the same time. When you have a three-way appointment in the land grant system—research, teaching, and extension—you're trying to get all those balls juggled... It's a challenge, but if you love it, it can be very satisfying.

What changes in required skill sets do you anticipate in your current position? If you go into extension, there's a lot that they don't teach you in graduate school in terms of interacting with people, planning things, and planning educational programs. You're not always prepared for the complexities of putting together an extension program and coordinating with people. The people part of it is the most important.

The way to hone those people skills is just through doing. Joining a service club, like your local SWCS chapter, is a great way to get people skills. You're interacting on projects, and the pressure isn't as great as it will be later. If you're thoughtful, you can learn an awful lot. It doesn't matter what that experience is—designing the homecoming float, raising money for breast cancer, arranging a trip for the ski club—it can all help you understand what the real world is all about.

How has SWCS impacted your career or contributed to your continued education and/or personal development? Well, it's been very, very important. The Hoosier Chapter of SWCS has been an exceptional group. It's been valuable in providing an opportunity for networking and a model for partnership. In Indiana we have developed a conservation partnership between the land grant university and the extension service, and the Hoosier Chapter has been a real factor in that. The international meetings are just exceptional because you have a chance to talk to the researchers and the program leaders. If you're a conservation practitioner, this is an invaluable opportunity.

New Conservation Career Center

Are you or someone you know looking for a new direction in your career? We have just the tool to help change that job search from a time-consuming chore to a time of exploring new and exciting opportunities. Our newly relaunched [Conservation Career Center](#) has all the resources you need to connect with employers who are looking for someone like you. We're here to build a community of active, passionate conservation professionals, and we want to help you thrive in that community in any way we can. Our Career Center is



intended to provide you with an improved overall experience through an updated design and easy-to-use interface. You will be able to access the Career Center through your smartphone, tablet, or desktop device.

The following functions will help professional conservationists manage their careers:

- Search and apply to a range of conservation jobs at organizations that value your credentials.
- Upload your anonymous resume so employers can contact you, but you maintain control of your information and choose to whom you release your information.
- Receive an email alert every time a job becomes available that matches your personal profile, skills, interests, and preferred locations.
- Access career resources and job searching tips and tools.

For employers with open positions to fill, the Career Center offers the following features:

- Post your jobs, or your organization's jobs, where the most qualified conservation professionals will find and apply to them.
- Search the resume database and contact qualified candidates proactively.
- Expose your job postings to a larger, more diverse audience through our social networks.
- Post internship openings for free!

As we launch the Conservation Career Center, we are offering a special introductory discount to all employers that are looking to hire. **Enter the code SWJOBS18 to receive a 33% discount off of [all job posting packages through August 1, 2018](#).** We hope this newly-designed career center will make a difference for our members as they navigate their career paths.

Election for North Central Region Director

The 2018 SWCS Board director election for the North Central Region will be held this month. Members in [this region](#) should watch their emails for the election ballot (mailed to members without an email address). The email will come from “electionbuddy.” (Remember to check your spam folder.) Your ballot must be received on or before May 11, 2018, to be counted.

To find your region, [click here](#). Candidate bios and platforms can be found [here](#).



Harold Thompson



Jamie Patton



Jim Boak



Rebecca Power



Todd Higgins

North Dakota Chapter Meeting Recap

Courtesy of SWCS North Dakota Chapter

This year’s program was titled “Farming for Sustainability: Back to the Roots,” with conservation topics including integrated livestock, holistic management, cover crops, biological farming, and soil health. The conference had 119 total attendees, 68 of whom were students and 15 attendees who were SWCS members. Professionals from all across the scope of conservation attended the meeting: researchers, consultants, agronomists, conservation planners, soil scientists, educators, and students. In addition to notable researchers and innovators from around North Dakota, the event allowed the local chapter to showcase some of its officers as guest lecturers. Having the opportunity to share their expertise and passion for sustainability strengthened the integrity and credibility of the chapter and its membership.

The program explored the direction of modern agriculture, from “our roots” to where our efforts today will lead sustainable agriculture in the future. One memorable quote from Darrell Oswald, a presenter and an innovative rancher from Wing, North Dakota, stated, **“There is no era of agricultural ‘greatness’ to which we must return. The best of American agriculture is still to come.”** This quote resonated through the entirety of the conference.

A panel comprised of Bismarck State College students and faculty was organized for the end of the conference; these students are the future of agriculture. This unique panel facilitated discussion about current issue topics, supported learning for the students, and fostered communication between these future agriculturalists and the resource professionals in attendance. Audience members asked a wide array of questions, ranging from students’ farming backgrounds to career aspirations, struggles they face to outlook on the future.



Panel of students and faculty from Bismarck State College.

Upcoming Events

[Firman E. Bear Chapter Meeting and Tour](#)

TBD, New Jersey
April 20, 2018

[Oklahoma Chapter Annual Conference](#)

Grove, Oklahoma
June 7-8, 2018

[Nebraska Chapter Annual Meeting](#)

Gering, Nebraska
June 21-23, 2018

[SWCS 73rd International Annual Conference](#)

Albuquerque, New Mexico
July 29-August 1, 2018

News from DC

Courtesy of SWCS DC Representative John Peterson

- House farm bill was [released](#) on April 12 by House Agriculture Chairman Mike Conaway. Changes include increasing conservation rental rates, increasing the Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) cap from 24 to 29 million acres, eliminating the Conservation Stewardship Program and consolidating it under the Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP). A timeline on the farm bill is still speculative as lawmakers clash over the future of food stamps.
- The divide between the humid eastern part of the North American continent and the more arid western plains has shifted 140 miles east due to global warming. The divide, which previously ran longitudinally between Texas and the Dakotas, has shifted east according to [new research](#) published in the journal *Earth Interactions* and will impact agricultural production in those areas.
- A coalition of farm organizations sent a [letter](#) to congressional Ag committee leaders, asking them to oppose increasing Farm Service Agency (FSA) loan limits in the farm bill, saying that doing so would restrict beginning farmers' access to FSA loans.
- Over 25,000 acres will remain [undeveloped](#) in Tennessee, Virginia, and eastern Kentucky through a \$4.9 million grant awarded to The Nature Conservancy (TNC) of Kentucky from the NRCS. TNC will sell the high-quality carbon offsets stored by these forests to BlueSource—a California company that provides capital for environmental markets.
- Florida Sen. Marco Rubio called on the Army Corps of Engineers to [prioritize water projects](#) in the state, and allocate money included in the new federal budget to them. The projects seek to address pollution and flooding, restore ecosystems, and maintain coastal navigation.
- With participation lagging, the National Agricultural Statistics Service is redoubling its efforts to encourage farmers and ranchers to answer questions for the [2017 Agricultural Census](#).
- Rhode Island is [launching a program](#) to buy farms and sell them to new farmers for “dirt cheap.”
- Arkansas judge [rules](#) six farmers can spray controversial weed killer made by Monsanto and BASF.
- The National Fish and Wildlife Foundation [announced](#) \$2.81 million in grants to maintain or improve nearly 65,000 acres of interconnected, native grasslands in Nebraska, North Dakota, South Dakota, Montana, and Wyoming.
- Agriculture producers to get \$2.36 billion for [Hurricane Irma recovery](#).

Conservation NewsBriefs: Popular Articles from March



Are you up-to-date with news about soil and water conservation research and policy? *Conservation NewsBriefs* is a highly informative e-news brief that delivers the most relevant content to your inbox each and every Thursday. Below are links to some of the most read articles from over the past month:

- [Worldwide degradation of land and nature threatens prosperity and wellbeing](#) (University of Twente via Phys.org)
- [UN report: Water shortages could affect 5 billion people by 2050](#) (The Guardian)
- [Study shows most farmers are in compliance with fertilizer recommendations in Western Lake Erie region](#) (Ohio's Country Journal)
- [Ag Data Act helps farmers secure value from USDA data](#) (Feedstuffs)
- [How to win a fight against soil erosion: Nuclear science helps farmers in Morocco](#) (International Atomic Energy Agency)

[Click here](#) to sign up and start receiving your weekly *Conservation NewsBriefs* today!



New Members

Welcome members who joined in March!

Georgia

Mac Callaham

Iowa

Randi Prichard

Idaho

Mark Olson

Illinois

Ben Gramig

Indiana—Purdue University Student Chapter

Robbie Armstrong

Chelsea Emenhiser

Lauren Jacobs

Alyssa Kuhn

Michigan

Colleen Forestieri

North Carolina—Hugh Hammond Bennett

Franklin Williams

New Mexico

Kevin Boyko

Corporate Members

Please contact corporate.info@swcs.org for more details.

Gold



Silver



Bronze

