

CONSERVOGRAM

The newsletter of the Soil and Water Conservation Society

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74th SWCS International Annual Conference

Wyndham Grand Downtown
Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania
July 28–31, 2019

www.swcs.org/19AC



Another successful year is in the books! SWCS would like to extend our most sincere thank you to the sponsors, exhibitors, presenters, session organizers, tour coordinators, volunteers, and participants who made the 74th SWCS International Annual Conference a success! There is a tremendous amount of time and energy that goes into planning behind the scenes that makes this conference possible, and we would like to recognize the efforts of the Keystone Chapter along with our Program Planning Committee for their countless volunteer hours to help plan, organize, and coordinate this year's event. We truly could not have brought our participants such a quality program without the help of all involved.



We would also like to recognize this year's group of student moderators. Each year, SWCS provides registration and hotel assistance to a group of SWCS student members who are able to experience the conference from an insider perspective. These students provide volunteer support at the conference but also have the opportunity to attend sessions and network. This year, we would like to thank Alexa Davis (University of Nebraska-Lincoln), Gaurav Jha (New Mexico State University), Chris Morris (Iowa State University), Maggie Norton (Iowa State University), Matt Nowatzke (Iowa State University), Judy Smith (Heidelberg University), and Han Zhang (University at Buffalo).

The 2019 conference brought together more than 415 conservationists, representing 7 countries and 48 states. The conference program included 125 oral presentations and symposia and 60 poster presentations. This year's specialty topics included Adapting Landscapes to Climate Change, Engaging the Private Sector in Conservation, and Watershed Conservation to Unify Urban and Rural Communities. The conference program, photos, and presentations will be available at www.swcs.org/19AC.

Mark your calendars for the 75th SWCS International Annual Conference, July 26-29, 2020, in Des Moines, Iowa!

SAVE THE DATE

JULY 26-29, 2020
DES MOINES, IOWA

COMMUNITY CHOICE CREDIT
UNION CONVENTION CENTER



75TH SWCS INTERNATIONAL ANNUAL CONFERENCE

THE SOIL AND WATER CONSERVATION SOCIETY IS HEADING TO DES MOINES, IOWA, IN 2020 TO CELEBRATE ITS 75TH ANNIVERSARY.

See you there!

WWW.SWCS.ORG



Annual Conference Twitter Highlights



Linda Prokopy
@lprokopy

Fantastic @SWCSNews annual conference in Pittsburgh - hats off to all the staff and planners! If you missed it, follow @hannatbates who live-tweeted virtually everything! #swcs19



NRCS_Kansas
@NRCS_Kansas

Kansas NRCS employees learning more about innovations in conservation with NRCS Chief Lohr at the 74th Soil & Water Conservation Society Meeting in Pittsburgh. #swcs19



John Piotti
@JohnPiottiAFT

Farmers across the country can now embrace these practices and, with help from @farmland and @USDA_NRCS staffers, put them into practice with greater confidence and profitability. #swcs19



Clare Lindahl
@Clare4soilnH2O

Full house at the Women in Conservation Leadership panel! @SWCSNews #swcs19



Photo Contest Winners Announced

Attendees at the 74th SWCS International Annual Conference had the opportunity to vote in the 4th SWCS Annual Photo Contest. A panel of judges narrowed the submissions down to the top 12 photos, which were then put on display and voted on at the conference in Pittsburgh. The 2019 People's Choice winner was Lynn Betts!



Elegant contour prairie strips grace the landscape, increase biodiversity, and improve the environment in a productive crop field in east-central Iowa. The strips will turn bright yellow with blooming prairie plants in late summer, attracting butterflies and other pollinators. This system of native prairie strips, which includes a field border, is expected to reduce sediment movement off the field by 95% and total phosphorus and nitrogen lost through runoff by more than 85%.

In addition to the People's Choice, which is chosen by conference attendees, a panel of judges voted the following submission from Katelyn Valdinger as the photo that most represented the conference theme "Bridging the Divide: Uniting Rural and Urban Landscapes for Conservation." Congratulations to both of our winners!



The community garden at the Carroll County Fairgrounds, which was created and is maintained by Carroll SWCD, shows pollinator gardens and habitat to fair goers along the busy midway.

Two Short Films Honor Soil Health Advocate Mike Collins



Mike Collins was a long-time member of the Soil and Water Conservation Society, serving the Society in a variety of capacities for nearly 30 years. During his membership he served as President of the Wyoming Chapter, Fundraising Chair for the North Dakota Chapter, and eventually became an active member of the Colorado and New Mexico chapters. He was elected to the SWCS Board of Directors

in 2013, serving as the Southwest Region Director. Mike's term ended unexpectedly in 2016 when he was involved in a snowmobile accident that took his life.

As a career USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) employee and overall steward of the land, Mike was passionate about helping farmers and ranchers use soil health to gain sustainability in an uncertain market. As a member of SWCS, Mike wanted to build strong local chapters and deliver regional programs that could reach as many people as possible. He believed in leveraging new technologies to bring SWCS events and conservation research to members and partners in more accessible ways. Whether he was uploading videos to YouTube or streaming live meetings online, Mike was at the forefront of using visual media to engage conservationists in his region and around the country.

To honor Mike's memory, SWCS staff traveled to Alamosa, Colorado, to produce a set of short films that could tell the story of soil health in a region facing challenges such as water shortages, wind erosion, and high soil salinity, as well as showcase the value of creating a community where conservation professionals work together to overcome these challenges. The farmers, ranchers, and conservationists featured in the films all worked with Mike at various points in their careers, and it was an honor to listen to their stories.

We hope you find these films to be both informative and inspirational, and are reminded that soil and water conservation challenges look different all around the world; it is through building a diverse network of researchers, planners, policymakers, technical advisors, teachers, students, farmers, and ranchers that we find solutions. Through the sharing of experiences, skills, and knowledge, we can leave a legacy of land stewardship that will continue to benefit generations to come, just as Mike Collins' work in the West continues to inspire and impact the conservation community today.

Visit www.swcs.org/watch to view both films. We encourage you to share them with friends and colleagues, and to tag @SWCSnews when sharing on social media.

2019-2020 Board of Directors

Following the 74th Annual Conference, SWCS transitioned to the 2019-2020 Board of Directors. Each of the Society's five regions is represented by one elected director. Four at-large directors also currently serve on the Board. For additional Board member photos and bios, visit the [SWCS website](#).



2019-2020 Board of Directors

- Rex Martin, Chair and At-Large Director
- Wendi Goldsmith, Vice-Chair and Northeast Region Director
- Dale Threatt-Taylor, Secretary and Southeast Region Director
- Don Wysocki, Treasurer and Northwest Region Director
- Jane Hardisty, At-Large Director
- Steve Kadas, Southwest Region Director
- Bruce Knight, At-Large Director
- Rebecca Power, North Central Region Director
- Jason Weller, At-Large Director

Upcoming Events

[Nebraska Chapter Annual Meeting/Technical Workshop](#)

Lincoln, Nebraska
August 29, 2019

[Iowa Chapter Fall Meeting](#)

Ames, Iowa
September 13, 2019

[North Dakota Chapter Soil Summit](#)

Medora, North Dakota
September 18-19, 2019

[SWCS Razorback Chapter Fall Meeting](#)

Greenbrier, Arkansas
October 10, 2019

Science and Policy News

Below you will find a list of some of the latest conservation science and policy news. Links to full articles on the different subjects are included.

- [Inspector general](#): USDA may have broken law in moving Economic Research Service (ERS) and the National Institute of Food & Agriculture (NIFA)
- Pair of GOP senators propose easing Obama era changes to [WOTUS](#)
- Farmers continue to invest in [tile](#) despite tough finances
- Commentary: United States needs more than [levees](#) to address river flooding
- The great land robbery: The shameful story of how 1 million [black families](#) have been ripped from their farms
- Trump administration eases [endangered species](#) rule
- Opinion: Realigning the value of the [dollar](#) will help US family farmers and ranchers
- Six states sue US Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA) over [chlorpyrifos](#), pesticide tied to brain damage
- New concentrated animal feeding operation ([CAFO](#)) law divides farmers over future of agriculture, environment in Missouri
- Conservation groups sue to block road in [Alaska](#) refuge
- More than 500,000 acres enrolled in the [Minnesota](#) Agricultural Water Quality Certification Program
- The US Forest Service is about to change [sage grouse](#) protections to conserve habitat while allowing greater local control
- Trump's USEPA grants 31 small refinery waivers from [biofuel](#) laws, angering corn lobby
- US Presidential Candidate [Buttigieg](#) releases new policy to help rural America including through conservation funding
- US Presidential Candidate [Booker](#) eyes farm conservation, reforestation, and wetlands restoration in climate plan
- Research on [solar panel](#) placement finds that farmlands are the most productive
- Is [grass-fed](#) beef really better for the planet? Here's the science.
- 2°C beyond the limit: Extreme [climate change](#) has arrived in America
- Asia has now lost nearly 5 million pigs to [African swine fever](#)

The opinions expressed in these articles are meant to keep SWCS members informed of current conservation conversations and do not necessarily represent the views of SWCS.

New Members

Welcome members who joined in July!

International

Effi Tripler

Connecticut/Massachusetts/Rhode Island—Southern

New England Chapter

Tim Tensen

DC—National Capital Chapter

Shawn Kelly

Nancy Somerville

Neil Weinstein

Hawaii—Hawaii and Pacific Basin

Genoa Starrs

Iowa

T.J. Lynn

Kay Stefanik

Iowa—Iowa State University Student Chapter

Jessica Nelson

Indiana—Hoosier Chapter

Meg Leader

Stan Livingston

David Smith

Michigan

Ehsan Ghane

North Carolina—Hugh Hammond Bennett

Kevin Ogles

North Dakota

Heather Husband

New Jersey—Firman E. Bear

Jordan Salama

Oklahoma

Eric Shaw

Oregon

Lizzie Marsters

Pennsylvania—Keystone

Eric Chase

Zachary Cowell

Amanda Grube

Jared Prokopchak

Bill Ryan

Riley Sunday

Allyson Ulsh

Sarah Xenophon

Virginia

Lisa Powell

Corporate Partners

Please contact memberservices@swcs.org or visit swcs.org/corporatepartner for more details.

Gold



Silver

