



CONSERVOGRAM

The newsletter of the Soil and Water Conservation Society

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72nd SWCS International Annual Conference

Monona Terrace Convention Center
Madison, Wisconsin
July 30 to August 2, 2017
www.swcs.org/17AC

Pritchard Lecturer

This year's Pritchard Lecture speaker has been selected, and SWCS is excited to announce John Piotti, president of American Farmland Trust (AFT), will be kicking off the 72nd SWCS International Annual Conference.



John Piotti joined AFT as president in July of 2016. He holds three degrees from MIT, helped found Maine Farmland Trust in 1999, and served in Maine's state legislature from 2002 to 2012, where he chaired the Committee on Agriculture, Conservation, and Forestry, and

later served as House Majority Leader. He managed all farm programs for Coastal Enterprises, Inc., a community development organization in Maine until 2006 when he became President of Maine Farmland Trust. Piotti is a compelling, charismatic speaker with a series of Ted Talks under his belt.



CONSERVATION CONNECTIONS

Creating Pathways to Sustainability



Pritchard Lecture

America is at a critical inflection point. With a growing world population, there is an intense competition for land and water resources in an uncertain environment of a changing climate. We need to produce more with less, which makes protecting our most valuable land and building soil health imperative. Despite having more arable and productive farmland than any other nation, the United States continues to lose this land as a result of development and soil erosion.

We need a catalyst to generate awareness of the insidious loss of our most precious agricultural lands and build momentum and urgency nationwide to spur people and policymakers to protect them. Piotti will speak about the results of AFT's State of America's Farmland Initiative, an analysis of the current and future threats to America's remaining farm and ranch lands. The USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service serves as a key partner in this effort to document the loss of agricultural lands over the past decades and identify our most valuable and vulnerable agricultural lands. Piotti will also speak to where state policies are working and what can be done to accelerate the pace of protection.

Call for Presentations Poster Deadline: March 10, 2017

Posters may still be submitted through the online submission system. Details regarding submissions may be found at www.swcs.org/17ac.

Individual Awards and Scholarships

April 17, 2017, is the last day for award nominations and scholarship applications. Log onto www.swcs.org/awards or www.swcs.org/scholarships for details.

Awards are available for both members and nonmembers and are a great way to honor nominees for their work, dedication, research, and efforts to protect natural resources and educate the community. Scholarships are open to all members who have been with the Society for at least one year prior to the application deadline.

SWCS Chapter Awards

There is still time for your SWCS chapter to apply for a Chapter Award! The deadline to submit your application is March 31, 2017. The following four awards will be given this year:

Chapter Achievement

The SWCS Chapter Achievement Award recognizes up to five chapters for significant achievement through a single activity conducted during the year. No chapter can be recognized more than once during a 10-year period for the same basic activity.

Chapter Sustained Performance

The Sustained Performance Award recognizes one chapter for continuing excellence and overall programming over a period of more than two years.

Outstanding Chapter

The Outstanding Chapter Award recognizes one chapter from each region for its success in carrying out its overall program during the past year.

Professional Development Chapter

The Professional Development Award recognizes two chapters (determined by membership size) for their efforts in conducting and/or sponsoring professional development programs during the past year. The awards will be based on quality of the program/event rather than on quantity. The program, activities, or curriculum should be focused on SWCS chapter members as organizers and/or as participants. One award will be selected from those chapters which have fewer than 75 members, and one award will be selected for those chapters who have over 75 members.

Full criteria for all of these awards can be found [here](#). All chapter award nominations can be made through the [Annual Chapter Activity Report](#).

Have questions? Contact your chapter leader or awards@swcs.org.

Upcoming Events

[Southern New England Chapter 2017
Winter Conference](#)
Berlin, Connecticut
February 24, 2017

[Michigan Chapter ANR Seminar](#)
East Lansing, Michigan
March 3, 2017

 Find us on
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facebook.com/soilandwaterconservation

Conservation NewsBriefs: Popular Articles from January



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:

- [Commentary: Choice for Ag Secretary “not an obvious champion for sustainable agriculture”](#) (National Resources Defense Council)
- [Adaptive management of soil conservation is essential to improving water quality](#) (Centre for Ecology and Hydrology via ScienceDaily)
- [Cover crops turn up cow condition](#) (High Plains Journal)
- [Nitrogen pollution: The forgotten element of climate change](#) (EconoTimes)

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

News from DC

Courtesy of SWCS DC Representative John Peterson

- In late January, the Natural Resources Conservation Service announced \$252 million will be made available for voluntary conservation through the Regional Conservation Partnership Program (RCPP) in 2018. Preproposals for funding are due April 21.
- Sonny Perdue has been nominated to lead the USDA. The Senate Agriculture Committee still has not yet set a date for the confirmation hearing on Perdue, a former Georgia governor. Trump has announced Sam Clovis, the top farm policy advisor to his campaign, will lead the USDA transition.
- President Trump has [signed a pair of executive actions](#) to move forward on the federal government's permitting process for the controversial Keystone XL and Dakota Access pipelines. Federal officials have since [granted the final easement](#) for the Dakota Access pipeline.
- The first farm bill field hearing is scheduled for February 23 in Manhattan, Kansas, to be followed by another one in Michigan, with no date announced yet. However, policy analysts don't expect quick action on the bill, which is due in 2018.
- In sharp contrast to Obama administration energy plans, the Trump energy plan commits to “eliminating” Obama's court-stayed Clean Power Plan that was designed to limit power plant carbon emissions. Trump's plan also commits his administration to “embrace the shale oil and gas revolution to bring jobs and prosperity to millions of Americans.” During his campaign, Trump promised to support ethanol and other renewable energy development. However, his new energy plan never mentions either renewable energy or climate change.
- [The Washington Examiner](#) reports, “The House on Wednesday passed two Republican-backed resolutions to repeal Obama-era energy regulations blamed for unnecessarily curtailing coal mining and burdening the oil industry by directing companies to disclose dealings with foreign countries.”
- Republicans on a Senate committee suspended panel rules to force a vote on President Trump's Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) nominee over a Democratic protest. [Read the full story here.](#)

*Out of the long list of
nature's gifts to man,
none is perhaps so
utterly essential to
human life as soil.*

HUGH HAMMOND
BENNETT, 1939

New Members

Welcome members who joined in January!

Alaska

Laona DeWilde

Alabama

Bart Taft

Arkansas—Razorback

James Burke

Connecticut/Massachusetts/Rhode

Island—Southern New England

John Weedon

DC—National Capital Chapter

Shelby Callaway

Georgia

Kim Metcalf

Iowa

Rubyana Neely

John Rathbun

Illinois

Kris Reynolds

Caitlin Saville

Illinois—University of Illinois Champaign

Student Chapter

Mary Gelder

Kansas

HT Hightower

Michigan

Amber Dunn

Jim Rasmussen

Robert Roose

Katie Walters

Minnesota

Myles Elsen

Missouri—Show Me

Tammy Cody

Missouri—University of Missouri

Student Chapter

Salah Alagele

North Carolina—Hugh Hammond Bennett

Daniel McClellan

Nebraska

Virginia Deam Nein

New Jersey—Firman E. Bear

Frank Pinto

New York—Empire State

Bruce Natale

Eric Rosenzweig

Ohio—All Ohio

Martha Joseph

Texas—Riviera

Casey Stevens

Corporate Members

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

Gold



Hickenbottom Inc.

Look for the bright orange inlet - Hickenbottom's Trademark®

Silver



The **Fertilizer Institute**



DAIRY MANAGEMENT INC.™

Bronze

