



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

Exhibitor/Sponsor Opportunities

SWCS is pleased to announce that we will be partnering with presenting sponsor Syngenta to bring you the 72nd SWCS International Annual Conference. To keep up to date on all annual conference news, visit our website at www.swcs.org/17AC.

How Can Sponsoring and Exhibiting Benefit You?

Sponsorship and exhibitor opportunities are now available for the 72nd SWCS International Annual Conference, "Conservation Connections." This is a one-of-a-kind opportunity to connect with a uniquely targeted group of conservation and environmental professionals. Becoming an exhibitor gives you an affordable opportunity to market your products and services to a key audience and maximize your company's exposure. Don't miss this opportunity to put your brand in front of those who are directly involved in the decision-making process of purchasing products or those who influence prospective buyers and conservationists.

Allow us to help connect your organization with our audience of more than 400 conservation professionals! [Click here](#) for the 2017 Exhibitor and Sponsor Guide. If you would like to work on a custom package, or if you have an exhibitor or a sponsor referral, please contact Jamie Nieman at jamie.nieman@swcs.org or 1-515-289-2331 ext. 114.

Make sure to continue to watch the conference website, www.swcs.org/17ac, for all the latest conference news and updates!

Remember, the deadline for symposium and oral presentation submissions is this **Tuesday, January 17**. [Click here](#) for details.



New Date for the National Conference on Cover Crops and Soil Health

Sheraton Indianapolis Hotel at Keystone Crossing
Indianapolis, Indiana
December 7-8, 2017

In the October 2016 issue of the *Conservogram*, we announced the date for the National Conference on Cover Crops and Soil Health, which will be taking place in Indianapolis later this year. However, the date of the conference has changed since our October announcement! Please mark your calendars for the new date of the conference, **December 7-8, 2017**.

Whether you're brand new to cover crops, no-till, and soil health, or you're an expert in the field, we invite you to join the conversation at the conference this December. Learn what works and how it can work for you through a variety of educational sessions presented by farmers and conservationists. Watch for details soon on our [website](#).

Conference sponsored by the Howard G. Buffett Foundation and SWCS.



Awards and Scholarships Deadline: April 17, 2017

Recognize your colleagues by nominating them for an award from the Soil and Water Conservation Society (SWCS). It is simple, easy, and shows someone they are honored for their commitment to conservation. Log onto www.swcs.org/awards for details.

Looking for funds to help support your education in conservation? Check out scholarships through SWCS. There are three national scholarships for SWCS student members. Log onto www.swcs.org/scholarships for details.

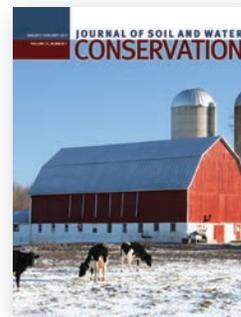
Submission deadline for individual awards and scholarships is April 17, 2017.

SWCS Chapters, It's Time to Brag!

Show off your chapter's achievements and conservation efforts through an SWCS Chapter Award. Our streamlined chapter awards nomination form is combined with the [chapter activity report](#). This will allow chapters to simply apply for an award while filling out the mandatory chapter report! This report can be filled out, saved, and continued at a later time as well.

[Click here](#) for further details on the 2016 Chapter Activity Report and Awards Nomination Form. The deadline is March 31, 2017. Questions? Contact your chapter leader or awards@swcs.org.

January/February Journal Highlights



Research published in the January/February issue of the *Journal of Soil and Water Conservation* includes an assessment of nutrient mass balance changes from 2004 to 2013 on dairy farms in the Upper Susquehanna watershed by Cela et al., examination of turbidity in runoff from construction sites in Minnesota to estimate eroded sediment by Perkins et al., and work by Van Esbroeck et al. to

quantify phosphorus loss from fields during peak flow events in the nongrowing season in Ontario, Canada. Also, don't miss two feature articles in this issue: a discussion of fluffy soil syndrome—poor crop growth due to inadequate soil particle-to-particle contact following tillage—by Daigh and DeJong-Hughes, and an article by Reimer et al. that analyzes findings from a stakeholder roundtable on nitrogen management in order to offer recommendations for developing and distributing best practice information and resources for farmers. Find these and many more articles in the [online Journal](#) or your print copy.

Upcoming Events

[34th Annual Nebraska Chapter Legislative Breakfast](#)
Lincoln, Nebraska
January 27, 2017

[Missouri Natural Resources Conference and Show-Me Chapter Annual Meeting](#)
Osage Beach, Missouri
February 1-3, 2017

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

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

News from DC

Courtesy of SWCS DC Representative John Peterson

- The farm bill coalition is in the process of setting priorities for the upcoming farm bill debate, but some are wondering who decides the members of the coalition. Listen to [a discussion on AgriPulse](#).
- In his [latest blog](#) Bruce Knight reminds us that those best equipped to address the environmental problems we face as a nation are the landowners with a commitment to stewardship.
- Current Oklahoma Attorney General Scott Pruitt has been nominated by the President-Elect to head the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). Because Trump has promised to roll back many EPA-led initiatives, Washington, DC, will be watching this appointment closely over the coming months. The USDA secretary and other top USDA officials, such as the chief of the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS), have not been announced.
- In December, the Joint Chiefs' Landscape Restoration Partnership—an initiative led by NRCS and the US Forest Service—announced it would make an investment of \$32 million to improve the health and resiliency of forests and grasslands where public and private lands meet through 10 new and 26 existing partnership projects.
- [The Washington Post](#) reports, "President Obama moved to solidify his environmental legacy... by withdrawing hundreds of millions of acres of federally owned land in the Arctic and Atlantic Ocean from new offshore oil and gas drilling. Obama used a little-known law called the Outer Continental Shelf Lands Act to protect large portions of the Chukchi and Beaufort seas in the Arctic and a string of canyons in the Atlantic stretching from Massachusetts to Virginia."
- Over \$46 million in federal funds will be awarded to 25 district-led conservation projects through the USDA Regional Conservation Partnership Program (RCPP) in 2017, setting a program record for conservation district leadership. This [press release](#) provides snapshots of four 2017 RCPP projects led by conservation districts.
- President Obama recently signed a \$10 billion bill that authorizes various water projects across the country. Two that have gotten the most attention are helping Flint, Michigan, recover from the lead-tainted drinking water debacle earlier this year (\$170 million authorized), and providing relief to some of the people affected by the California drought (\$558 million).
- Beginning on March 20, 2017, the USDA will accept applications for financial assistance from farmers transitioning to or maintaining organic certification, the [agency announced](#) this week.

SWCS IN 2016

The Soil and Water Conservation Society has had a great year. Take a look below to see what's been going on!



In January we received a \$1.5 million grant for our wetlands water quality project.



We published Volume 71 of the *Journal of Soil and Water Conservation*. That's over 65 articles!



In July we flew to Louisville, Kentucky, for our 71st International Annual Conference.



We continued our work with NRCS developing a conservation media library.



In September we published our newest book, *Managing Mississippi and Ohio River Landscapes*.



SWCS chapters held numerous conferences, seminars, workshops, and training events throughout the year.

"You can join too!"



329 people became members of the Society in 2016.

There is no limit to what we can do for soil and water conservation when we work together to promote healthy land and clean water for life. Thank you for supporting SWCS this year!



New Members

Welcome members who joined in December!

International

Muruganandam Muthiah

Connecticut—University of Connecticut

Student Chapter

Antonio Federici

Iowa

Matthew Allen
Nancy Antisdell
Josh Balk
Hanna Bates
Jamie Benning
Amanda Brown
Kate Bussanmas
Tracy Church
Rose Danaher
Catherine DeLong
Zach DeYoung
Clint Hain
Kayla Hasper
Charlotte Head
Jodi Hitz
Steve Hopkins
Adam Kiel
Jordan Kolarik
Nicholas Livermore
James Martin
Shannon Moeller
Will Myers
Ramona Nitz
Erin Ogle
Chrissy Rhodes
Anthony Seeman
Thomas Shileny
Courtney Slagle
Bruce Voigts
Megan Waechter
Alexa Wahl
Alan Wedemeyer
Adam Wilke
Shelby Williams
Laurie Wissler Nowatzke
Shane Wulf

Iowa—Iowa State University

Student Chapter

Julia Edlefsen
Eric Engh

Indiana—Hoosier

Sara Alford
Kevin Allison
Sarah Bailey
Valerie Baird
Courtney Bir
Ashley Brucker
Nicholas Burgmeier
Sarah Dominick
Abby Donnelly
Andrea Gogel
Cindy Johnston
Debra Lane
Meg Leader
Troy Manges
Mitch Marcus
Brianna Ollier
Walt Sell
Brandon Swihart
Geneva Tyler
Haley Waldkoetter
Daniel Welage
Gwen White
Matt Williams

Michigan

Karen Riley

Wisconsin

Ekrem Ozlu

Corporate Members

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

Gold




Silver




Bronze



Find us on
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facebook.com/soilandwaterconservation

From the Leadership: A Time of Changes and Challenges

By Jim Gulliford, SWCS Executive Director



As we enter 2017, we immediately recognize that this will be a year of changes and challenges. With a new administration taking office, we wait to learn whom President-Elect Trump will nominate to be Secretary of Agriculture and how the USDA staff will be assembled. Key appointees in the Secretary's office will be responsible for policy decisions that shape natural resource, research, food and

nutrition, and rural development programs. We wait to hear who will be named Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) Chief.

These new appointees will bring their ideas, energy, and leadership to the more than 100,000 USDA employees who not only serve US agriculture, but also the people of this country and the world who rely on the food, fiber, and fuel that is produced by the nation's farmers, ranchers, and foresters. As it has been for every administration change, things will be different. However, their work will build on the work of administrations past. They will be informed by science, formulate policy, and develop programs to address the challenges of food, agriculture, and natural resource conservation issues.

Did I just mention challenges? Several come immediately to mind.

We must continue the public and private research partnership that seeks to understand the science of soil health. It is no longer enough to prevent erosion and soil loss from agricultural lands. We share a responsibility to restore depleted soils and recover their productive potential. A better understanding of soil physics, chemistry, and biology can provide a pathway to conservation systems that improve soil health and agricultural productivity. I wish I knew who said it first, but it's true: production agriculture is not rocket science—it's more complicated. To that end, the Soil and Water Conservation Society (SWCS) will be hosting a [national conference on cover crops and soil health](#), December 7-8, in Indianapolis.

As important as it is to protect and restore agricultural soils, it is equally important to reduce the environmental consequences of agricultural production. We need to strengthen water quality protection practices and programs that assist farmers and ranchers to address agricultural water quality concerns. Saturated buffers, targeted wetlands, drainage water management, and prairie strips need to become practices as common as nutrient management plans, terraces, erosion control structures, and buffer strips. Again, production agriculture continues to become a greater management challenge for producers.

Finally, 2017 will see the beginning of the process to craft the next farm bill. Food, commodity production, and resource conservation interests are beginning to formulate their priorities. Important issues for us are natural resources research, conservation programs, technical assistance, conservation compliance, and the biggest challenge: funding. We will continue to work with colleague organizations to be sure that our research and conservation interests are heard as this legislation moves forward. Join us in Madison at our [International Annual Conference](#) July 30 through August 2, and I promise you a compelling farm bill discussion in plenary and symposia sessions.

It is important that in the face of change and challenges, we clearly see our path forward and the role SWCS can play to shape the future of agriculture and conservation.