

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

Call for Presentations Extended

Abstract submissions for the 74th SWCS International Annual Conference will continue to be accepted through **Wednesday, January 23, 2019.**

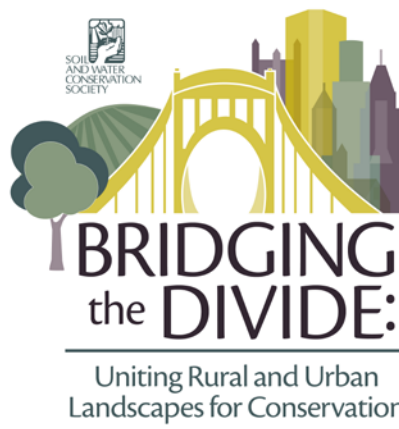
The poster submission deadline will remain open through March 6, but please note that poster submissions received after the January 23 deadline will not be included in the Preliminary Program.

For details on abstract submission categories, download the [Call for Presentations](#), or visit www.swcs.org/19AC.

Exhibitor and Sponsorship Opportunities

Exhibitor and sponsorship opportunities are now available for the 74th SWCS International Annual Conference, "Bridging the Divide: Uniting Rural and Urban Landscapes for Conservation."

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 organization's exposure. Sponsors are vital to ensuring the success of the SWCS International Annual Conference.



945 SW Ankeny Road, Ankeny, IA 50023

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Join Give Journal



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 500 conservation professionals!

Become an exhibitor or sponsor today! View the [Exhibitor and Sponsor Guide](#) for more information.



North Central Region One Water Action Forum Recap

The Soil and Water Conservation Society, North Central Region Water Network, Iowa Soybean Association, and US Water Alliance teamed up for the North Central Region One Water Action Forum held December 11-13, 2018, in Indianapolis, Indiana. The forum brought together over 170 researchers, educators, practitioners, and policy-makers to advance more connected and cohesive approaches to water and watershed management in the North Central Region.



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 event a success!

The North Central Region One Water Action Forum presentations, notes, photos, and final forum program are now available at www.onewaternc.org!

January/February Issue of the Journal



The first issue of volume 74 of the *Journal of Soil and Water Conservation* is here! View the [full table of contents](#) in the online journal.

Feature articles in this issue include an overview of the Ohio River's historical impacts and current concerns by Morton and Olson as well as a discussion by Kladienko et al. of lessons learned

through the Indiana Conservation Cropping Systems Initiative soil health project. The experiences shared and partner recommendations will be valuable to those implementing future on-farm studies.

In the research section, Soto et al. assess the extent of soil degradation caused by industrial tree plantations in south-central Chile, and Siegfried et al. evaluate the potential use of multispectral satellite imagery to characterize in-field soil moisture variability in order to improve precision irrigation. Additionally, two research briefs share findings on the short-term impacts of winter cover crops within a long-term no-till system (Aldridge et al.) and on the runoff reduction benefits of interseeding alfalfa into silage corn (Osterholz et al.). Find these and many more articles in your print or [online journal](#).

Upcoming Events

[Montana Chapter Ag Business Strategies Workshop](#)

Billings, Montana
February 5-6, 2019

[Illinois Chapter Prescribed Fire Workshop](#)

Hillsboro, Illinois
February 22, 2019

[Southern New England Chapter Annual Winter Conference](#)

Berlin, Connecticut
March 22, 2019

[SWCS 74th International Annual Conference](#)

Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania
July 28-31, 2019

“Reimagining Your Chapter” Webinar

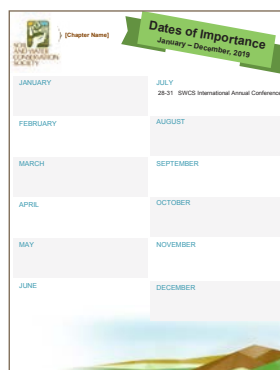
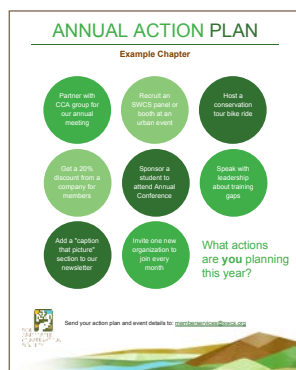
Thank you to those who participated in our webinar, “Reimagining your Chapter,” on Friday, January 4th. Our records showed that 61 participants from 26 different states and 2 countries tuned in!

Our pre- and post-webinar polls showed that the majority of viewers moved up a level in how comfortable they felt implementing new actions in their chapters as a result of the webinar, with the majority indicating the highest level of comfort after the webinar.

Miss the webinar? No worries! Visit the [SWCS website](http://swcs.org) and find the following resources:

- A video of the webinar
- The webinar PowerPoint presentation
- “About Chapters” document
- Bylaw review and revamp guidance document
- Fillable chapter action plan with example
- Fillable chapter calendar
- Fillable decision diagram with example

Chapter leaders, remember to send your action plans and upcoming event details to memberservices@swcs.org.



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.

- Oceans are heating up 40% faster than originally estimated according to a [new study](#) in the journal *Science*
- A strain of [bovine tuberculosis](#) never seen in Canada or the United States was detected in a cow in British Columbia
- US House passes [bills](#) to fund Transportation Department, Housing and Urban Development, and Agriculture
- President Trump formally [nominates Andrew Wheeler](#) to head US Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA)
- [Monarch butterfly](#) numbers plummet 86% in California from one year ago
- Iowa “[ag gag](#)” law ruled unconstitutional and struck down by federal judge
- [Native American](#) leaders say a coordinated lobbying effort on the 2018 farm bill has paid off, with unprecedented provisions that will benefit tribal nations across the country
- Farmers fear another hit as shutdown threatens Trump [ethanol](#) vow
- New US farm bill does not mean just anyone can go out and start growing industrial [hemp](#)
- How the [government shutdown](#) affects agriculture
- [Farm Service Agency](#) offices are closed until an agreement is reached to end the government shutdown
- Michigan Governor Rick Snyder gets bill to lift protection on small [wetlands](#)
- China will allow US [rice imports](#) for the first time ever
- American goods such as cherries, oranges, and calf skins have encountered [heightened customs reviews](#) at Chinese ports this year
- After Hurricane Florence, some farmers in North Carolina are considering moving their pigs from concentrated animal feeding operations (CAFOs) to [pasture-raised](#)
- [Colorado's farming and ranching communities](#) are facing a season of economic losses after a summer drought
- Elimination of federal price supports pushed small [tobacco](#) farmers out of business
- In California, a growing number of local [dairy farms](#) are shutting down

Looking Back on a Great Year

As we begin the new year, we thought it would be fun to take a look back at the Society's changes and accomplishments in 2018. Below are just a few highlights!

1. **Journal of Soil and Water Conservation.** We published volume 73 of the JSWC, a total of 90 articles, including a special issue on Edge-of-Field Monitoring for Nutrient Losses. The JSWC ended the year with an impressive impact factor of 2.258.



2. **Annual Conference.** The 73rd SWCS International Annual Conference was held in Albuquerque, New Mexico. There were over 440 attendees representing four countries and 48 states. Thank you to the SWCS New Mexico Chapter for all the work they put in to help make the event a success!

3. **One Water Action Forum.** SWCS, North Central Region Water Network, Iowa Soybean Association, and US Water Alliance teamed up for the North Central Region One Water Action Forum, held in Indianapolis, Indiana. The forum brought together over 170 researchers, educators, practitioners, and policymakers to advance more connected and cohesive approaches to water and watershed management in the North Central Region.

4. **Conservation Media Library.** We partnered with the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) to successfully complete the Conservation Media Library, a multimedia storing house for conservation photos, videos, and other resources. Thousands have already



viewed the website, downloaded photos, and accessed other Library resources. You can, too, by clicking [here!](#)

5. **New Report.** SWCS and Resolve released a report entitled *Study on the Adoption of Edge of Field Practices*. The report is the product of interviews with a cross-section of conservation professionals and synthesizes their thoughts on how to scale up edge-of-field practice adoption.

6. **Watershed Academy.** We worked with partners at Iowa State University Extension and Outreach and the USDA NRCS to fund the third year of the Watershed Academy, a free training program for watershed coordinators in the state of Iowa.

7. **New Faces.** SWCS welcomed two new employees to headquarters – Special Projects Director Catherine DeLong and Event and Professional Development Director/Executive Assistant to the CEO Courtney Allen. We also had the pleasure of hiring Megan Koppenhafer as an intern for the summer. Rebecca Power joined the

Board of Directors in August as the newest North Central Region Director. Lastly, John Peterson served his final year as the SWCS DC Representative. We are grateful for his service and look forward to his ongoing commitment as a member and friend to the Society.



Catherine DeLong



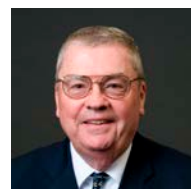
Courtney Allen



Megan Koppenhafer



Rebecca Power



John Peterson

8. **Career Center.** In 2018, SWCS unveiled a new [career center](#) that offers an array of job postings and other services to members. We also began unveiling career profiles of conservation professionals.

9. **Reaching the Next Generation.** In July we released the online [SWCS Guide for Students and Early Career Professionals in Conservation](#). We also enhanced the Annual Conference experience of our student attendees through various activities, including pairing them with mentors in their desired future fields. CEO Clare Lindahl celebrated Earth Day by [educating kids](#) on soil and water.

10. **Connecting with Chapters.** SWCS CEO and staff visited with members across the nation in 10 states. We have been utilizing feedback from chapters to simplify annual reporting and reinvigorate offerings at the Annual Conference.

11. **The Flood.** When the levee breaks...we get back to work the next day! The SWCS Headquarters office experienced devastating flooding to the tune of six feet of water in the building basement this past spring, but staff pulled together as a team, and repairs are almost concluded!

12. **New Members.** Three hundred fifty-one people became new members of SWCS in 2018. (Remember to renew your membership [here!](#))

13. **Advocacy.** In 2018 we signed on to policy and funding documents that call for increases in support for conservation programming, research, and technical assistance.

14. **Looking Ahead.** SWCS staff worked together to develop goals around the initiatives of members matter, championing chapters, enhancing events, communication conservation, productive projects, and policy and order in the organization. In the coming year, staff will take actions and report on the statuses of these goals.

Career Profile: Alyssa Charney

For our latest career profile we sat down with Alyssa Charney to learn more about her career as a senior policy specialist at the National Sustainable Agriculture Coalition. Her full profile is available to read [online](#).



Alyssa Charney, Senior Policy Specialist, National Sustainable Agriculture Coalition

Career Sector: Policy

Degrees: BA in Environmental Studies from Vassar College, MS in Agriculture and Food Policy and Master of Public

Health from Tufts University (dual program)

What has your career path looked like from college until today?

After I graduated from college, I had two primary jobs that shaped my career. The first was moving to Lyons, Nebraska, to do an internship with the Center for Rural Affairs working on rural policy issues. From there I went further west to Montana and did two years of a program called FoodCorps, a national service program to connect kids to healthy food in school. Both of those opportunities were a chance to see the on-the-ground challenges and opportunities when it comes to rural communities, agriculture, and conservation issues. These experiences helped shape and solidify my desire to work on federal agricultural policy, and after two years in Montana I came back east to Boston for the master's program at Tufts. In between my first and second year, I interned at the National Sustainable Agriculture Coalition (NSAC). When I finished up at Tufts in 2015, I was hired by NSAC to do policy work on farm conservation.

What was the best advice you received regarding your career?

I got two really great pieces of advice. The first was to take that time between undergrad and graduate school to explore a little more, and figure out what I really wanted to do. Working at the Center for Rural Affairs was a turning point for me, in the sense that it helped me understand more about the communities I ultimately wanted to work to support. I was taking a risk, having grown up and gone to school on the east coast, by moving to rural Nebraska, and I would say that experience was really helpful in digging in on new issues. If I had immediately launched into graduate school from undergrad I don't think I would have had the same trajectory I did.

Secondly, getting that on the ground experience was really valuable advice—even though I knew I wanted to work on policy, getting a strong understanding of what's happening on-the-ground. Whether we are talking about food access or conservation—understanding what that really looks like and how does that impact real people's lives. I think it's really important to have that understanding and

grounding to do the policy work. I also gained a valuable skill in learning to work well with folks who have different opinions and backgrounds than me. Working at the community level helped me see the necessity of taking that approach, and I think that's something that is very much valuable in the policy work I do today.

How has SWCS impacted your career, or contributed to your continued education and/or professional development?

This past year was my third year as a member and my third year attending and presenting at the annual meeting, all of which have been wonderful. Especially for me it's a chance to interact with a different audience than I generally do. It's really valuable to be able to connect directly with USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) staff who are implementing and managing the programs we are advocating for on a daily basis. Making those connections that are useful moving forward—knowing individuals in states across the country, who I can reach out to and get a first-hand account on program implementation, that's been really great in terms of those connections, and the exposure to those perspectives.

What changes in required skillsets do you foresee?

I think it's really important to have a combination of skills—both having an understanding of the issues from on-the-ground policy experience whether that is on the Hill or even at the state level. Being in Washington, DC and seeing how Congress works is also a really valuable experience. I think policy and issue area expertise is really important, but I continue to see the need for a combination of skillsets. I don't think there's any one set formula for success.

What advice would you give to college students who want to go into policy?

Make sure you try it out. Washington, DC, and working in policy, especially currently where unfortunately we do have a lot of polarization, can feel draining and exhausting and frustrating. Giving that a test run and seeing if it's the right fit is really important, because you have to enjoy the process. I like the process. I enjoy being in DC and digging into the weeds in terms of policy work. I also stay motivated by engaging with our members who are organizations, farmers, and ranchers all around the country, who are out in the field doing this work. I appreciate them and am grateful that they keep me rooted to what is happening on-the-ground, while engaging on the nitty gritty (and oftentimes frustrating!) policy process here in DC.

New Members

Welcome members who joined in December!

Arkansas—Razorback

Morgan Watson

Colorado

Rudy Garcia

Erin Nissen

Lyle Nissen

George Whitten

DC—National Capital Chapter

Ellen Gilinsky

Iowa

Jessica Beske

Linda Binder

Tyler Godin

Kristine Labertew

Ben Maas

Colton Meyer

Joe Moore

Joel Moser

Grant Parman

Christina Rhodes

Jim Sholly

Kristi Silverthorn

Kristina TeBockhorst

Jon Tesdell

Jeremy Thilges

Erin Thomas

John Willeford

Michigan

Diane Bromelmeier

New Jersey—Firman E. Bear

Lisa Quirk

Ohio—All Ohio

Katelyn Valdinger

South Dakota

David Kringen

Corporate Members

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

Gold



Silver



Bronze

