

State of Illinois  
Rod R. Blagojevich, Governor

Department of Agriculture  
Thomas E. Jennings, Acting Director



# Illinois Conservation Partnership Annual Report 2007



*Protecting Our Natural  
Resources To Sustain Life  
For Future Generations*

**Illinois Department of Agriculture  
Bureau of Land & Water Resources**

**In cooperation with the  
Association of Illinois Soil & Water  
Conservation Districts**







Rod R. Blagojevich, Governor  
Thomas E. Jennings, Acting Director

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**Office of the Director**

State Fairgrounds • P.O. Box 19281 • Springfield, IL 62794-9281 • 217/782-2172 • TDD 217/524-6858 • Fax 217/785-4505

Dear Friend:

Agriculture remains Illinois' #1 industry in terms of economic impact and 2007 proved to be no different as it was a record breaking year for Illinois farmers. Technological advances, improvements to efficiency and ideal growing conditions throughout a significant portion of the state helped Illinois farmers harvest the largest corn crop on record from the state's 27.3 million acres of farmland.

I am proud of the commitment and technical assistance provided during the last few years to implement new conservation practices. The Department's Bureau of Land and Water Resources acts as a liaison with soil and water conservation districts and federal agency staff, as well as University and private industry, to provide Illinois landowners with conservation technical assistance. This document provides a synopsis of current work being implemented and highlights the progress Illinois landowners have made in preserving the state's valuable natural resources.

As you know, cooperation among stakeholders is essential to building on the progress we have made in conservation preservation in Illinois. I look forward to continuing the relationship in 2008.

Very truly yours,

ILLINOIS DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "T. Jennings", is written over the printed name and title.

Thomas E. Jennings  
Acting Director

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# WELCOME/INTRODUCTION

Information has been compiled for the Illinois Conservation Partnership Annual Report from programs carried out in 2007. Partners include the Illinois Department of Agriculture, Bureau of Land and Water Resources, Association of Illinois Soil and Water Conservation Districts, 98 county soil and water conservation districts, USDA – Natural Resources Conservation Service, Illinois Department of Natural Resources, Illinois Environmental Protection Agency and U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

Partner programs provide benefits in the areas of soil conservation and water quality in rural and urban communities, agricultural nutrient management, farmland protection, sustainable agriculture, carbon sequestration, wildlife habitat, and watershed planning and protection. Efforts also provide youth and adult environmental education and outreach, research and demonstration, and public information. Programs are generally directed to landowners and land managers using incentive based, voluntary approaches.

For more information on conservation programs and activities, contact your local soil and water conservation district.

*"The wealth of Illinois lies in her soil and her future in its intelligent development"*

*- Andrew S. Draper*

In 1937, the Illinois Soil and Water Conservation District Act was passed. It states, *"The General Assembly declares it to be in the public interest to provide (a) for the conservation of soil, soil resources, water and water resources of this State, (b) for the control and prevention of soil erosion, (c) for the prevention of air and water pollution, and (d) for the prevention of erosion, flood water and sediment damages and thereby to conserve natural resources, control floods, prevent impairment of dams, reservoirs, assist in maintaining the navigability of rivers and harbors, conserve wildlife and forests, protect the tax base, protect public lands and protect and promote the health, safety, and general welfare of the people of this State."*



# ILLINOIS DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE - BLWR

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The Bureau of Land and Water Resources (BLWR), within the Illinois Department of Agriculture, is assigned certain powers and duties to assist Soil and Water Conservation Districts (SWCDs) in carrying out their legally mandated responsibilities from the Illinois Soil and Water Conservation District (Act). The following is the assistance that has been provided to the 98 Illinois Soil and Water Conservation District boards of directors, staff and partners by BLWR staff.

## *Training*

BLWR staff conducted orientation for new District employees, as well as a 2-day New Director Training session in Springfield. Training was also provided to directors and staff during the 3-day annual Summer Conference. Additional training was held for District employees during a 2-day Winter Training event.

The BLWR provided funding for District employee technical training through NRCS as well as for QuickBooks training and testing costs for Certified Professionals in Erosion and Sediment Control (CPESC).



*Director Chuck Hartke (left) presented a certificate to John Begun, DeKalb County Director and other newly elected soil and water conservation district directors who attended training.*

## *Meetings*

SWCD board meetings, annual meetings and special events are regularly attended by BLWR staff along with the quarterly Association of Illinois Soil and Water Conservation Districts (AISWCD) Council meetings and Board meetings. BLWR staff are represented on more than 25 Statewide and regional partner committees. Staff provide reports, updates and share program and policy information at each of the preceding events listed.

## *Administration*

The Illinois Department of Agriculture is responsible for providing oversight regarding certain SWCD programs and activities through State law and grant agreements. BLWR staff reviewed and certified 1,910 cost-share claims through the Conservation 2000 Program along with training and general assistance on these programs. Additionally, review and collection of documents regarding SWCD elections, financial reporting, plans of work and other program areas were carried out by the BLWR.

## *Education and Outreach*

Resource conservation awareness activities were provided in 2007 at the Illinois State Fair, DuQuoin State Fair, Farm Progress Show, Illinois Land Improvement Contractors Show and Earth Stewardship Day held at the State Fairgrounds in Springfield. BLWR staff participated in the State and Council level Envirothons and in other local District educational events.



*BLWR Staff provided an introduction to measuring slopes to students who attended Earth Stewardship Day.*

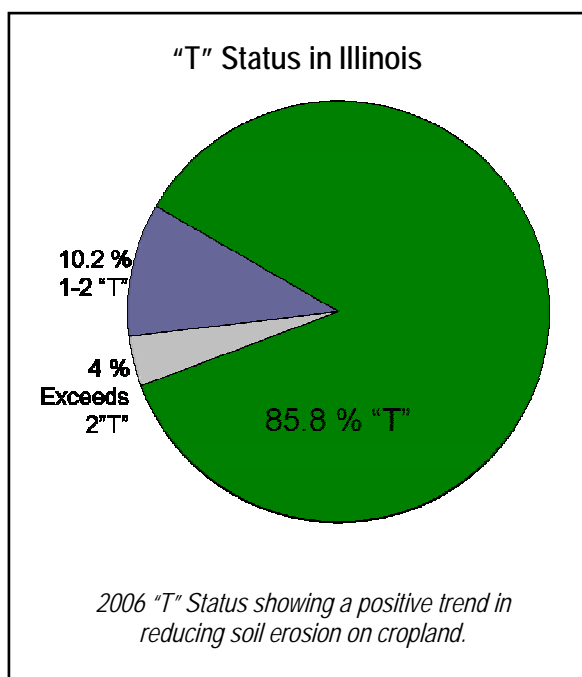
# ILLINOIS SOIL CONSERVATION TRANSECT SURVEY SUMMARY

Results of the 11<sup>th</sup> statewide Soil Conservation Transect Survey conducted in the spring and early summer of 2006 indicate Illinois producers are continuing to manage their cropland to minimize soil erosion. The survey, initiated by the Illinois Department of Agriculture (IDOA), involved Illinois' 98 Soil and Water Conservation Districts (SWCD), and the U.S. Department of Agriculture Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS). The biennial survey measures progress in reducing soil erosion to "T" or tolerable soil loss levels statewide. The tolerable soil loss for most soils is between 3 and 5 tons per acre per year. This is the amount of soil loss that can theoretically occur and be replaced by natural soil-building processes. Reducing soil loss to "T" is essential to maintaining the long-term agricultural productivity of the soil and to protecting water resources from sedimentation due to soil erosion.

The Transect Survey provides a snapshot of the current status of soil conservation efforts in Illinois. Survey results provide data on the presence of conservation practices in each county and an estimate of remaining land treatment needs.

Information on tillage systems and crop residue amounts is collected at more than 50,000 points across the state. Surveyors collect data on sheet/rill and ephemeral soil erosion. After the survey is completed for each of the 100 counties in Illinois that conduct a cropland survey, the data is sent to the IDOA for analysis. Data for each county and the entire state is available on soil loss relative to "T", the presence of ephemeral erosion and tillage systems used to plant crops.

2006 Transect Survey results show 85.8% of the points surveyed were at or below "T" and also show a positive trend in reducing soil erosion on cropland to "T" levels. The first Transect Survey in 1994 estimated 74.1% of the points surveyed were meeting "T". The 2006 results indicate that 14.2% of the points surveyed were exceeding "T" levels, about the same result as the 2000 survey, see Table 1, below. Table 3, located on pages 7 and 8, provides soil loss pertaining to "T" by county.



**TABLE 1**  
RELATIVE SOIL LOSS BY "T" VALUE

Year	< "T"	1-2 "T"	>2 "T"	Unknown
2006*	85.8	10.2	4	0
2004*	84.9	10.7	4.4	0
2002*	85	10.8	4.2	0
2001*	85	10.6	4.1	0.3
2000*	85.7	10.4	3.6	0.3
1999*	85.7	10.5	3.6	0.2
1998*	86.5	9.9	3.4	0.2
1997*	86.2	9.8	3.7	0.3
1996	76.2	14.8	6.4	2.6
1995	76.7	15.3	6.3	1.7
1994	74.1	16.7	7.1	2.1

*Percent of points surveyed with relative soil loss by "T" values from 1994 thru 2006.*

*\*The Revised Universal Soil Loss Equation (RUSLE) was used to estimate soil loss.*

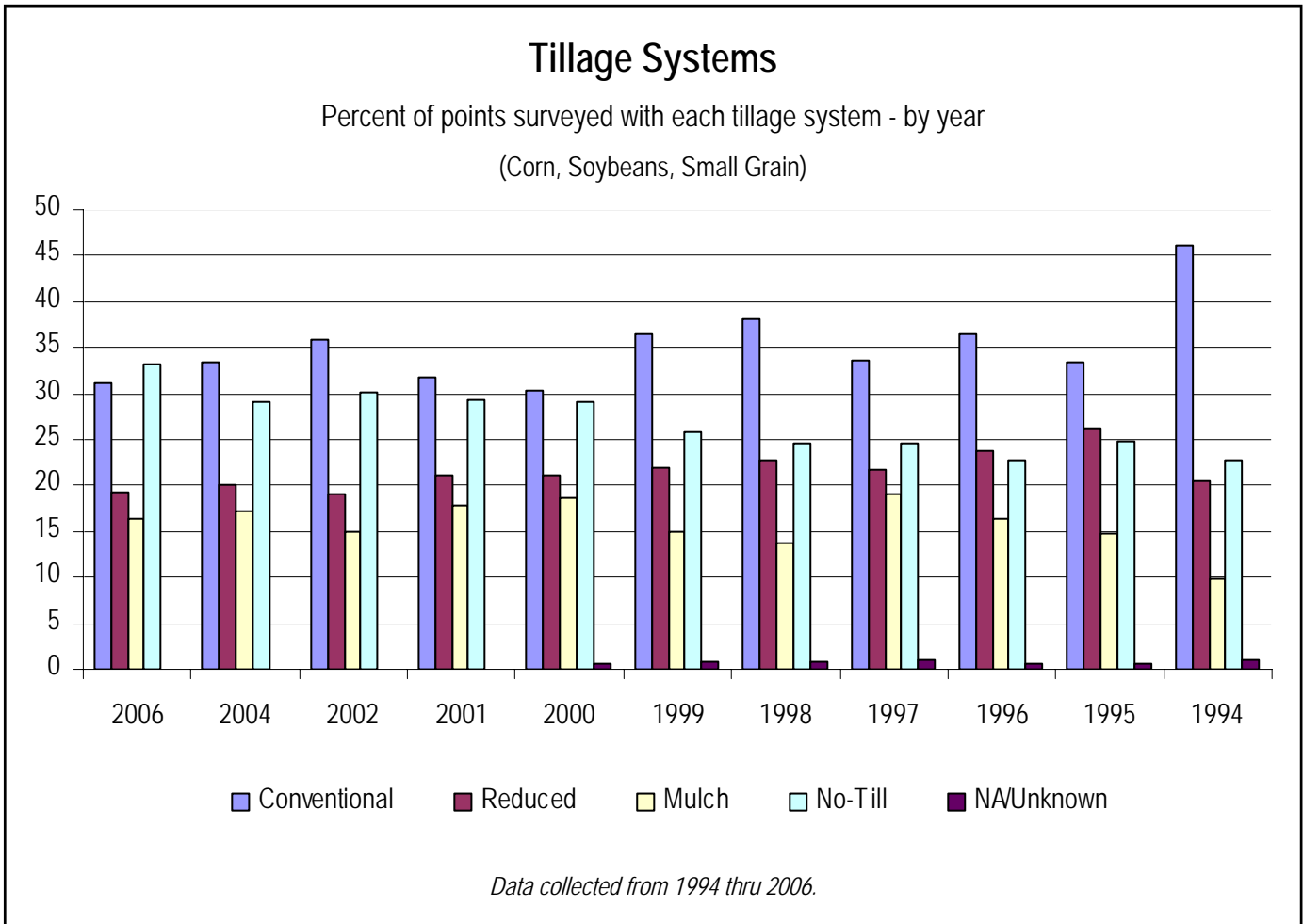
The survey also provides information on tillage systems used in planting corn and soybean crops in the spring and small grain crops in the fall, (see Tillage Systems chart below).

Statewide, the survey shows 33.1% of corn, soybean and small grain fields surveyed in 2006 were farmed using no-till practices, which leave the soil virtually undisturbed from harvest through planting. This is a 4% increase over no-till in 2004, and represents the biggest increase from a previous survey since it was first conducted in 1994. The large increase means, for the first-time, no-till is now used to plant more fields than any of the other tillage systems that the survey tracks (conventional, reduced-till or mulch-till). See Tillage Systems - All Crops chart on page 7.

Another first for the survey results is that no-till soybeans were planted on a majority of the state's

acres in 2006. Soybean fields planted by no-till increased from 45.6% in 2004 to 51%. This continues an upward trend in no-till planted soybeans that has continued to grow from the 28.6% first recorded in 1994.

Since 1995, surveyors have collected data on ephemeral or gully erosion in surveyed fields. Surveyors identify fields in which ephemeral erosion has occurred or is likely to occur in areas of concentrated surface water flow. This type of erosion requires structural conservation practices, such as grassed waterways, in addition to tillage or other cultural erosion control practices. The 2006 survey recorded 24.9% of the fields experiencing ephemeral erosion, which was 1% less than 2004. See table 2 on page 7, Percent of Ephemeral Erosion Indicated.

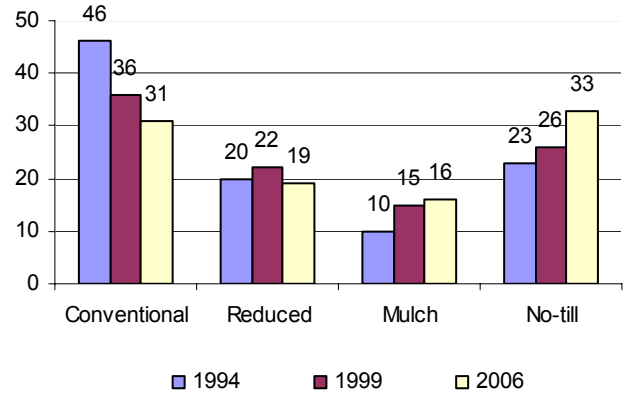




**TABLE 2**  
PERCENT OF EPHEMERAL  
EROSION INDICATED  
IN YEARS 1995 THRU 2006

1995	14%
1996	14%
1997	16%
1998	22%
1999	18%
2000	22%
2001	23.6%
2002	25.1%
2004	25.9%
2006	24.9%

**Tillage Systems - All Crops**



*Increase in conservation tillage from 1994 to 2006*

**TABLE 3**

Soil Loss Relative to "T" - Percent and Total Number of Point Surveyed

COUNTY	<"T" %	1-2 "T" %	>2 "T" %	Total Points
Adams	85	12	3	738
Alexander	87	8	6	143
Bond	63	26	11	444
Boone	91	6	2	502
Brown	75	17	8	543
Bureau	99	1	0	541
Calhoun	86	6	9	249
Carroll	84	12	4	567
Cass	96	3	1	632
Champaign	96	3	1	606
Christian	88	10	3	542
Clark	89	9	2	499
Clay	79	14	6	705
Clinton	87	11	2	708
Coles	92	7	0	467
Crawford	57	27	16	609
Cumberland	86	11	3	663

COUNTY	<"T" %	1-2 "T" %	>2 "T" %	Total Points
DeKalb	94	6	0	482
DeWitt	89	8	3	609
Douglas	95	5	0	510
Edgar	93	6	1	477
Edwards	75	18	8	449
Effingham	91	5	4	616
Fayette	89	9	2	787
Ford	88	8	4	639
Franklin	64	22	14	521
Fulton	91	8	2	622
Gallatin	73	17	10	440
Greene	80	17	2	670
Grundy	97	3	1	493
Hamilton	78	14	8	490
Hancock	91	6	3	529
Hardin	90	2	7	128
Henderson	91	7	2	463

Table 3 - Continued

COUNTY	<"T" %	1-2 "T" %	>2 "T" %	Total Points
Henry	83	10	6	622
Iroquois	96	3	1	456
Jackson	72	17	10	593
Jasper	79	15	5	621
Jefferson	62	22	16	573
Jersey	80	16	4	449
JoDaviess	83	12	5	467
Johnson	55	25	19	191
Kane	98	2	0	428
Kankakee	99	1	0	502
Kendall	97	2	0	518
Knox	89	9	2	402
Lake	0	0	0	0
LaSalle	97	3	0	456
Lawrence	85	11	4	598
Lee	97	2	0	540
Livingston	90	7	3	464
Logan	96	4	1	583
McDonough	85	12	3	508
McHenry	93	6	1	439
McLean	87	13	0	491
Macon	84	14	3	560
Macoupin	86	11	3	507
Madison	71	16	13	396
Marion	81	13	7	537
Marshall	97	3	1	564
Mason	98	1	0	660
Massac	89	7	4	333
Menard	85	14	1	476
Mercer	89	8	3	460
Monroe	67	15	18	354
Montgomery	86	9	4	468
Morgan	85	11	3	790
Moultrie	94	4	2	528
Ogle	88	11	1	600
Peoria	96	3	1	598
Perry	82	12	5	487
Piatt	93	7	0	622

COUNTY	<"T" %	1-2 "T" %	>2 "T" %	Total Points
Pike	70	18	11	520
Pope	91	6	3	353
Pulaski	61	14	25	205
Putnam	95	5	0	235
Randolph	61	20	19	616
Richland	77	14	9	550
Rock Island	80	16	4	476
St. Clair	79	14	7	335
Saline	84	12	4	462
Sangamon	88	10	3	505
Schuyler	83	13	4	783
Scott	95	4	1	459
Shelby	77	17	5	883
Stark	95	5	0	594
Stephenson	87	11	3	638
Tazewell	95	4	1	497
Union	85	8	7	476
Vermilion	86	12	2	475
Wabash	67	24	9	511
Warren	95	4	1	465
Washington	78	18	3	720
Wayne	88	8	4	462
White	87	10	4	492
Whiteside	92	6	2	514
Will	95	4	1	341
Williamson	84	10	6	319
Winnebago	93	6	1	751
Woodford	94	5	1	452
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>85.80%</b>	<b>10.20%</b>	<b>4.00%</b>	<b>51,013</b>

**Summary**

Data received from this survey will assist in planning future conservation efforts. This information will be vital in helping Illinois' goal of reducing soil erosion and sedimentation and improving water quality to the extent possible.

The entire 2006 report can be found at <http://agr.state.il.us/Environment/LandWater>.

# CONSERVATION 2000 PROGRAM

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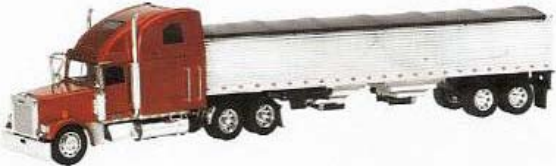
In 1995, the Illinois General Assembly passed a bill establishing Conservation 2000, a program intended for the development of a comprehensive and long-term approach to conserving, protecting and managing Illinois' natural resources. During the 1999 Legislative Session, the General Assembly authorized the continuation of the Conservation 2000 program through June 30, 2009.

The Legislature appropriated \$6,612,500 in the FY 2006 for the Agriculture Resource Enhancement component of Conservation 2000. These funds are allocated to SWCDs through the Illinois Department of Agriculture's Bureau of Land and Water Resources. SWCDs promote the cost share programs and along with the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) staff, provide technical assistance to landowners and managers. Assistance includes site inventorying, conservation planning, surveying, as well as design and practice layout. SWCDs prioritize cost share applications based on conservation benefits to include cost/benefit considerations. Following is the total statewide allocation in the four program areas.

Conservation 2000 Agriculture Resource Programs	FY 2006 Dollars
Erosion & Sediment Control, Nutrient Management and Well Decommissioning Programs	\$4,441,569
Soil and Water Conservation District Grants	\$1,500,000
Sustainable Agriculture Grant Program	\$250,000
Streambank Stabilization and Restoration Program	\$420,931
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$6,612,500</b>

***Erosion and Sediment Control Program,  
Nutrient Management Program and  
Well Decommissioning Program***

The Erosion and Sediment Control Program (ESC) assists landusers with sheet and rill erosion exceeding "T" (tolerable soil loss level), or with ephemeral/gully erosion with the construction of



120,529 tons =  
4,464 loaded semi tractor trailers

120,529 tons is the amount of soil that was saved in 2006 from the assistance of the ESC program. This soil savings will continue in the future.

conservation practices which help conserve soil, protect water quality and reduce flooding. Practices eligible include: No-Till / Strip-Till, Contour Farming Establishment, Contour Buffer Strip Establishment, Cover Crops, Temporary Cover, Critical Area Planting, Filter Strips, Diversion, Grade Stabilization Structures, Grassed Waterways, Pasture and Hayland Planting, Contour Strip Cropping, Terraces, and Water and Sediment Control Basins. Structural practices have a cost share rate of 60%, with agronomic type practices cost shared on a cost per acre basis. Local SWCDs may have varying priorities and rates for certain practices.

The Nutrient Management Program (NMP) provides incentives to eligible landusers for nutrient management projects that minimize the transport of nutrients and pollutant load to surface and groundwater. Projects include soil testing, developing a nutrient management plan and implementing the plan for four years. SWCDs prioritize applications while considering geographic location, watersheds and soils. Technical Service Providers or SWCD staff may write plans. Benefits may include a reduction in nutrients leaving the farm and into nearby waters, better utilization of nutrients, a reduction in input costs and, in some cases, increased yields.

The Well Decommissioning Program (WDP) provides incentives to owners of abandoned water wells to properly decommission and seal the wells to reduce

## FY 2006 Well Decommissioning Program Summary

108 Total Projects Completed  
 Claims Summary - \$16,704.25



*Well Decommissioning Field Day held in Livingston County educating citizens on the importance of this program.*

or eliminate the potential for groundwater pollution. Abandoned wells also pose health and safety concerns. Cost share dollars are available at a 60% cost share rate, not to exceed \$400 per well. SWCDs prioritize applications based on the risk potential posed by the well. Wells must be sealed according to applicable standards set forth by the local health department.

### **Summary of Accomplishments**

A total of \$3,559,417.21 from the C-2000 program was spent on ESC, NMP and WDP. The accomplishments for these components of the C-2000 program are shown on the pie chart to the right and Table 4. In addition to the state's cost for installing these practices, the remaining 40% of the cost of most practices were provided by the landowner. Projects were completed in 95 Illinois counties.

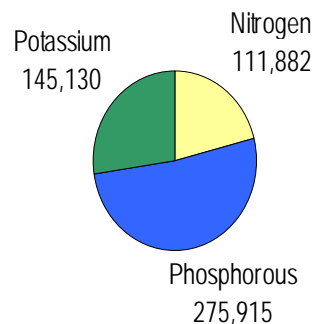
The practices installed through the ESC benefited a total of 15,475 acres. Soil loss on these acres has been reduced to the tolerable soil loss level, saving

soil productivity and protecting water quality. The average soil loss reduction per project was 7.48 tons/acre/year. The average cost to the state for reducing soil loss to tolerable levels was \$225.13/acre. The cost to the state of soil saved was \$28.90/ton.

Through the NMP, a total of \$12,604 of C-2000 funding was distributed to Technical Service Providers for developing 125 nutrient management plans covering more than 5,000 acres. In addition to the new plans that were written, a total of 157 plans were implemented by producers on 6,778 acres. The total incentive payments paid to producers for implementing these plans was \$46,248.89.

The producers that implemented these plans reduced their average per acre application of fertilizer by 17 pounds of nitrogen, 41 pounds of phosphorous and 21 pounds of potassium. While the reductions in fertilizer applied to the land saved the producer an average of \$20 per acre, the pollutant loading in waterbodies was reduced by the following amounts located in the chart below.

### Total Pounds of Nutrient Load Reductions 157 NMP Plans Implemented on 6,778 Acres



*Total pounds of nutrient load reduction that occurred during 2007 with the Nutrient Management Program.*

**TABLE 4**

## CONSERVATION 2000 PRACTICE SUMMARY FY 2006

July 1, 2006 - February 1, 2008

Conservation Practice	Projects	Acres Benefited	Tons Saved	Sediment Reduction	\$/Acre	\$/tons	Claims Summary *
Contour farming est.	8	10	79	0	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
Cover & green manure crop	1	17	91	23	\$20.00	\$3.75	\$340.00
Critical area planting	25	31	2,053	553	\$386.78	\$5.84	\$11,990.26
Diversion	29	0	795	220	\$0.00	\$40.10	\$31,872.79
Filter Strips	2	16	18	5	\$44.00	\$39.12	\$704.14
Grade stabilization structure	209	96	7,805	2,119	\$4,984.13	\$63.30	\$478,476.58
Grassed waterway	499	490	48,817	13,194	\$2,492.08	\$25.01	\$1,221,124.06
No-till/strip-till planting	112	4,417	23,041	6,274	\$5.38	\$1.03	\$23,797.02
Pastureland and Hayland planting	45	647	4,194	1,202	\$98.80	\$15.24	\$63,925.18
Temporary cover	8	0	0	0	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$4,355.09
Terraces (Underground Outlet)	119	3,375	11,743	4,330	\$125.08	\$35.95	\$422,154.26
Terraces (Vegetative Outlet)	1	20	112	29	\$82.36	\$14.71	\$1,647.11
Water & sediment control basins	412	6,356	21,781	7,526	\$192.50	\$56.17	\$1,223,473.29
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,470</b>	<b>15,475</b>	<b>120,529</b>	<b>35,475</b>	<b>\$225.13</b>	<b>\$28.90</b>	<b>\$3,483,859.78</b>

*\* The Claims Summary represents total cost share dollars spent for practices. Additionally, landowners contribute a minimum of 30% of the total cost of projects.*

*Number of projects completed, acres benefited, tons of soil saved and the total number of units of conservation practices applied statewide as of February 1, 2008.*

# STREAMBANK STABILIZATION & RESORATION PROGRAM - SSRP

Streambank erosion is a natural process in all streams as water wears away the soil and rock that form their banks. Streams naturally and slowly establish a meandering course. Streambank erosion in Illinois has, however, been accelerated by land altering activities such as stream channelization and straightening, removal of stream side vegetation, construction of impervious surfaces and other activities that increase water flow and water velocity.

Streambank erosion is a serious threat to the land, water, plant and animal resources along many streams in Illinois. Streambank erosion can be responsible for the loss or damage to valuable farmland, wildlife habitat, buildings, roads, bridges and other public and private structures and property. Streambank erosion is a major source of sediments deposited in Illinois lakes, streams and backwater areas. It may contribute to as much as 30-60% of the downstream sediment load. Sediment reduces stream channel capacity which may increase flooding and streambank erosion and reduces the depth and holding capacity of lakes and reservoirs.

The SSRP has three primary objectives.

1. Distribute education materials on the affects of streambank erosion along with the practices available to stabilize the erosion through SSRP.
2. Provide funding to construct effective, low-cost practices, such as rock riffles, stream barbs or stone toe protection at suitable locations.
3. Provide technical assistance to landowners interested in stabilizing an eroding streambank.

The program provided cost-share funding assistance to Illinois landowners for stabilizing or restoring severely eroding streambanks that qualified.

In FY 2006, \$420,931 was appropriated to the Illinois Department of Agriculture (IDOA) for SSRP. Streambank stabilization practices constructed with FY 2006 cost-share funds included bendway weirs,

rock riffles, stream barbs, stone toe protection, and vegetative techniques. Cost-sharing for all eligible and approved construction expenses was 75%. The remaining 25% was the obligation of the landowner. Table 5, on pages 13 and 14 shows a summary of streambank projects completed with FY 2006 funds.

## Streambank Stabilization Project



*These are before and after photos of a streambank stabilization project. The photo above shows major erosion along the bank resulting in loss of valuable farmland.*

*The photo below shows the same site after stone toe protection and stream barbs where placed in designated locations to control the amount of sediment entering Illinois' lakes, streams and backwater areas.*



Table summarizes the SSRP accomplishments with FY 2006 program funds. In addition to the cost-share funds listed below, \$58,358 was used to provide technical assistance for the design and installation of SSRP practices.

**TABLE 5**

**STREAMBANK STABILIZATION & RESTORATION PROGRAM**  
Summary of Projects Completed

COUNTY SWCD	STREAM SEGMENT	COST-SHARE	LINEAR FT OF BANK TREATED	SEDIMENT (Tons)	NITROGEN (lbs.)	PHOSPHORUS (lbs.)
Adams	McKee Creek	\$4,396	300	281	561	281
Adams	Beebe Creek	\$481	2,000	255	510	255
Adams	Mill Creek Tributary	\$987	100	17	34	17
Adams	McCraney Creek	\$3,497	300	122	245	122
Adams	Honey Creek	\$20,200	1,380	645	1,290	645
Adams	Beebe Creek	\$9,923	2,000	255	510	255
Brown	Little Missouri Creek	\$6,879	250	30	60	30
Bureau	Crow Creek West	\$8,715	400	56	112	56
Bureau	West Fork of Spoon River	\$6,473	425	72	145	72
Bureau	East Bureau Creek	\$10,957	460	37	63	32
Champaign	Vermillion River	\$16,702	1,650	126	252	126
Clark	Clear Creek	\$5,552	300	135	230	115
Effingham	Second Creek	\$4,072.77	250	35	60	30
Hamilton	Beaver Creek Tributary	\$5,710	600	26	51	26
Hancock	Baptist Creek	\$5,257	300	5	10	5
Henderson	Honey Creek	\$6,176	3,575	145	246	123
Jackson	Cox Creek Tributary	\$13,781	2,100	286	571	286
Jasper	Big Muddy Creek Tributary	\$12,179	1,130	98	226	113
JoDaviess	Miller Creek Tributary	\$14,768	1,050	107	214	107
JoDaviess	Apple River Tributary	\$16,350	1,500	96	191	96
JoDaviess	Unnamed	\$9,097.49	970	99	198	99
JoDaviess	Honey Creek	\$5,611	500	26	52	26
JoDaviess	Unnamed	\$4,689	473	20	40	20
Knox	Hermon Creek	\$11,616	510	69	139	69

Table 5 - Continued

COUNTY SWCD	STREAM SEGMENT	COST-SHARE	LINEAR FT OF BANK TREATED	SEDIMENT (Tons)	NITROGEN (lbs.)	PHOSPHORUS (lbs.)
LaSalle	Bailey Creek	\$7,678	320	41	82	41
Lawrence	Little Bonpas Creek	\$8,043	325	249	497	249
Logan	Kickapoo Creek	\$8,092	432	78	156	78
Marshall-Putnam	Thenius Creek	\$1,418	80	24	48	24
Mercer	Pope Creek	\$16,754	800	221	442	221
Montgomery	East Fork	\$6,536	330	42	84	42
Montgomery	Shoal Creek	\$8,715	420	50	100	50
Montgomery	Shoal Creek	\$7,316	480	61	123	61
Peoria	Senachwine Creek	\$9,900	275	28	56	28
Peoria	Senachwine Creek	\$1,716	220	28	56	28
Pike	Bay Creek	\$6,356	600	77	153	77
Pike	Bay Creek	\$5,805	500	106	213	106
Pike	Honey Creek	\$4,734	400	48	95	48
Pike	Middle Fork McKee	\$6,070	500	64	128	64
Pike	Spring Creek	\$221	30	3	6	3
Richland	Paul Creek	\$6,000	400	24	49	24
Rock Island	Unnamed	\$17,752	2,000	459	918	459
Schuyler	Unnamed	\$3,219	270	33	65	33
Stephenson	Unnamed	\$6,000	580	51	117	58
Tazewell	Mackinaw River	\$4,000	500	51	102	51
Union	Big Creek	\$18,000	1,870	596	1,192	596
Union	Big Creek	\$7,425	770	245	491	245
Union	Big Creek	\$10,575	1,098	350	700	350
Warren	Cedar Creek	\$3,780	455	54	108	54
White	Sandy Creek	\$2,658	100	9	18	9
Whiteside	Otter Creek	\$2,400	160	61	122	61
<b>Total</b>			<b>36,438</b>	<b>6,096</b>	<b>12,131</b>	<b>6,066</b>



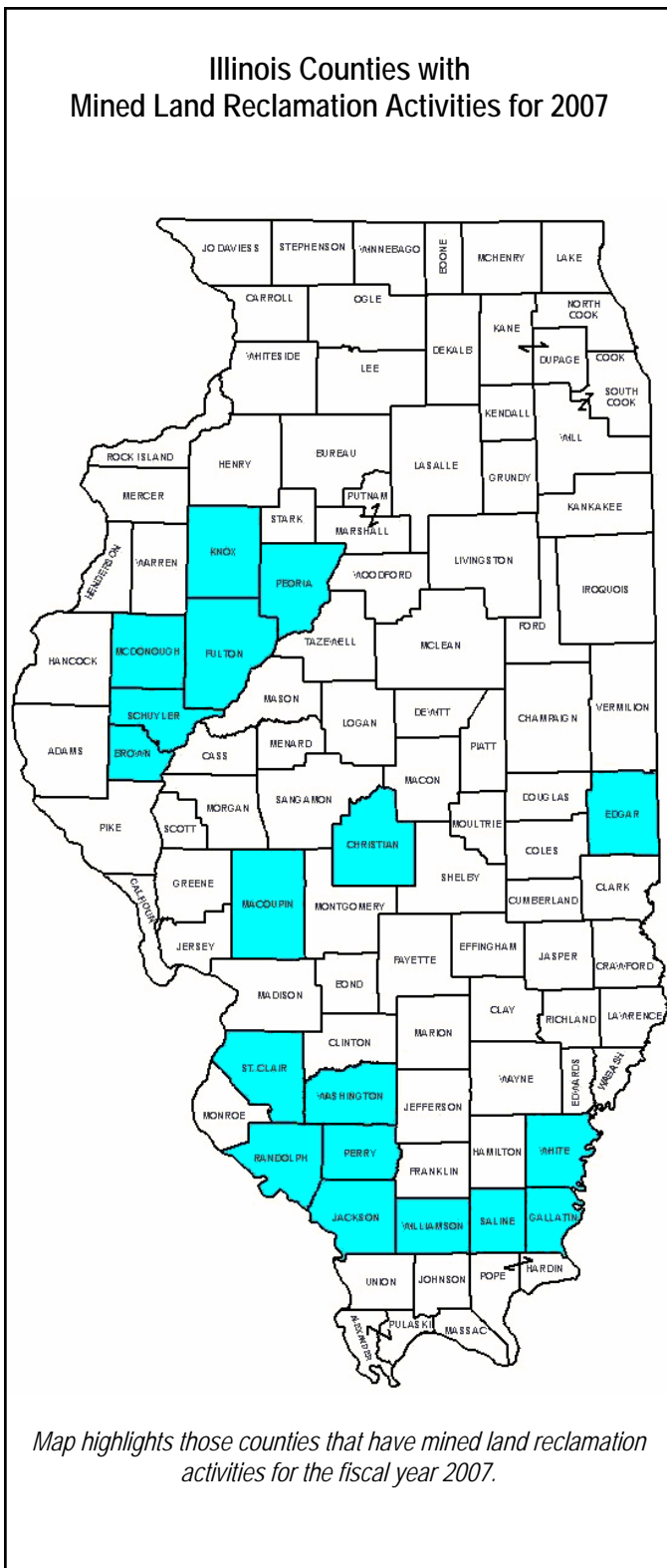
# MINED LAND RECLAMATION PROGRAM

Under the Surface Mining Control and Reclamation Act of 1977, the coal mining industry is required to replace prime farmland soils to their pre-mining productivity levels. The Illinois Department of Agriculture is responsible for assessing the productivity capacity of reclaimed mine land.

The Agricultural Lands Productivity Formula was adopted in 1986. The formula is used on prime farmland soils, high capability land soils and soils that do not meet the criteria for either prime or high capability lands. The formula produces a yield standard that coal mine operators must achieve as evidence that mined land has been restored to pre-mining productivity levels.

In 2007, IDOA, in cooperation with enumerators from the Illinois Agricultural Statistics Service, sampled 38 corn fields (1,138 acres), 33 soybean fields (1,207 acres), 8 wheat fields (132 acres) and 113 hay fields (1,311 acres) for a total of 3,788 acres sampled. Hay fields are normally sampled multiple times during the growing season, thus each hay cutting is not counted as additional acres.

The other part of the mining program enables IDOA to review new permits and revisions to existing permits for new information or changes in the mine plan that pertain to the agricultural community. As a result of this activity, a total of 8 permits and 10 revisions were reviewed in 2007.



# FARMLAND CONVERSION REPORT

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The Farmland Preservation Act, P.A. 82-945, § 5 states, *“The natural resources of Illinois - land, minerals, water and air – are both finite and fragile. In the absence of wise use and consistent management practices, these resources are threatened by irreversible damage or loss. Protection of Illinois’ natural resources is essential to guard the public health, safety, and welfare, and to assure an adequate natural resources supply and quality for use and enjoyment by future generations.”*

The IDOA reviews and reports the amount of farmland converted to non-agricultural uses as a result of state action. The Farmland Conversion Annual Report identifies the number of acres of land purchased, converted or possessing the potential to be converted from agricultural uses. The report does not reflect acres converted by exempted actions of state agencies. A summary of the amount of farmland affected by state agency projects in FY 2007 is shown on Table 6, page 17. The IDOA Farmland Conversion Reports can also be found at [www.agr.state.il.us/Environment/LandWater](http://www.agr.state.il.us/Environment/LandWater).

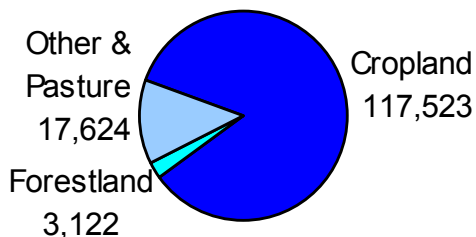
## Farmland Conversion in Illinois



*This picture taken in early 2007 shows productive farm ground located next to a subdivision in Northern Illinois that has since been converted into a new retail home center.*

### Land Affected by State Agency Action

(reported in acres)



*Chart shows the breakdown of the 138,269 acres that were affected in FY 2007.*



*This formerly productive Central Illinois Farmland is now the location of a new subdivision.*

**TABLE 6**

FY 2007 FARMLAND CONVERSION ANNUAL REPORT  
Land Purchased or Affected Due to Actions of State Agencies

STATE AGENCY	TOTAL ACRES	CROPLAND	PASTURE-LAND	FOREST-LAND	OTHER*
<b>CAPITAL DEVELOPMENT BOARD</b>					
A. Schools	0				
B. Prisons	0				
<b>COMMERCE AND ECONOMIC OPPONTUINTY</b>					
A. DCEO/Community Development Grants	63**	63**			
B. Enterprise Zones	13,762	2,491		23	11,248
C. ILLINOIS <i>Opportunity Returns</i>	0				
<b>ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY</b>					
A. Facility Planning Area Boundary Changes	71,906**	71,906**			
<b>DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES</b>					
A. Office of Mines and Minerals	0				
B. Office of Realty and Environmental Planning	8,410	4,798	263	2,694	655
C. Division of Grant Administration	675	305		298	72
<b>DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION</b>					
A. Division of Aeronautics	302 +(11)	284			18 + (11)
B. Division of Highways	199 +(03)	181 +(03)	7	6	5
<b>GOVERNOR'S OFFICE OF MANAGEMENT &amp; BUDGET</b>					
	0				
<b>ILLINOIS COMMERCE COMMISSION</b>	34,338	29,254	15	101	4,968
<b>DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE</b>	0				
<b>TOTAL ACRES</b>	<b>129,655+(14)</b>	<b>109,282+(3)</b>	<b>285</b>	<b>3,122</b>	<b>16,966+(11)</b>

( ) Indicates acres of land purchased as permanent easements.

\* Other includes old fields, urban land, water bodies, wetlands, brushland, prairie, farmsteads, mined land, abandoned railroad, embankments and ditches; use can be residential, commercial or industrial, etc.

\*\* Acreage figures were not further broken down into acres of cropland, pastureland, forestland and other.

# AGRICULTURAL AREAS SUMMARY

The Illinois Department of Agriculture is required to prepare an annual report on the location and size of all agricultural areas (also known as ag areas) created, modified or dissolved during the past year under the Agricultural Areas Conservation and Protection Act.

Table 7 itemizes the number of agricultural areas in participating counties, respective acres, and the total number of acres in approved ag areas throughout the state. Maps delineating the 57 ag areas can be obtained at IDOA's website <http://www.agr.state.il.us/Environment/LandWater>

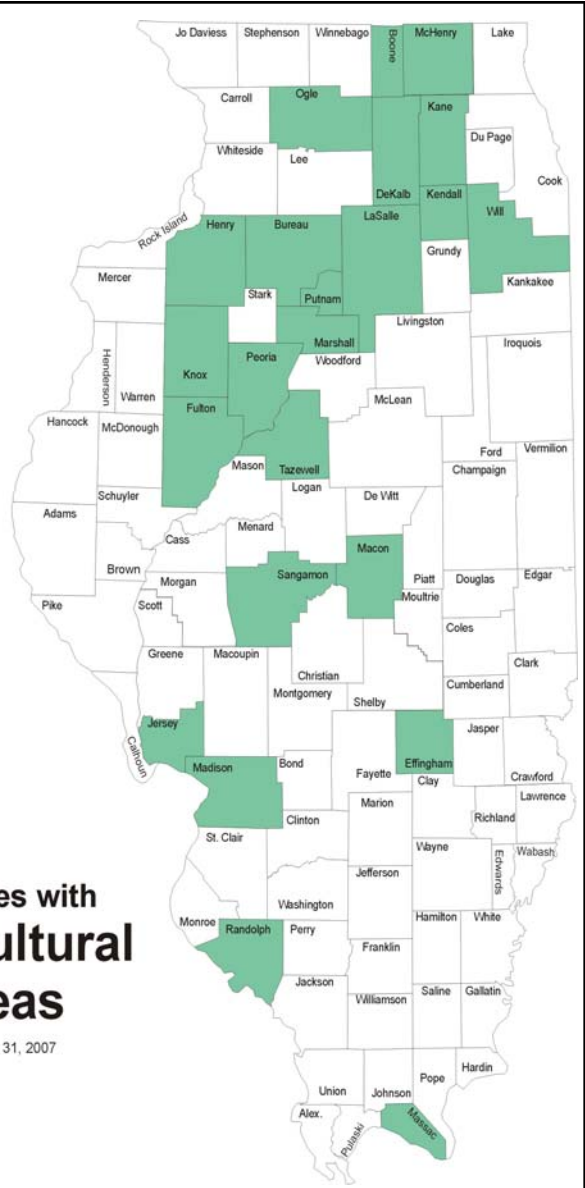
The Agricultural Areas Summary below lists the 23 counties with local county board approved ag areas.

**TABLE 7**

**SUMMARY OF AGRICULTURAL AREAS IN ILLINOIS**

Calendar 2007

County	# of Ag Areas	Total Acres
Boone	2	7,263
Bureau	2	3,931
DeKalb	1	710
Effingham	1	561
Fulton	1	1,915
Henry	8	22,735
Jersey	3	14,279
Kane	1	600
Kendall	2	760
Knox	1	1,735
LaSalle	5	5,396
Macon	1	1,693
Madison	2	2,677
Marshall	5	5,414
Massac	2	3,699
McHenry	9	20,796
Ogle	1	429
Peoria	3	2,549
Putnam	3	7,328
Randolph	1	6,903
Sangamon	1	377
Tazewell	1	3,620
Will	1	469
<b>Total</b>	<b>57</b>	<b>115,839</b>



# VEGETATIVE FILTER STRIP ASSESSMENT REPORT

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The Vegetative Filter Strip Assessment Law (35 ILCS 200/10-152), became effective on January 1, 1997. Soil and Water Conservation Districts certify property that meets the requirements for vegetative filter strips to qualify the landowner for reduced property tax assessments.

For calendar year 2007, Soil and Water Conservation Districts reported the following new vegetative filter strip acres eligible for the reduced tax assessment.

### ***2007 Activities:***

- 28 SWCDs providing Certification
- 143 Landowners Certified
- 280 Vegetative Filter Strips Certified
- 1,536.5 acres of installed Vegetative Filter Strips

### ***SWCDs reported advertising the Act to landowners in one or more of the following ways:***

- District Newsletter - 33 SWCDs
- Direct Mailings to Landowners - 13 SWCDs
- Media Promotion - 12 SWCDs
- One-On-One Landowner Contact - 49 SWCD

SWCDs also used websites, fair booth displays, annual report as other means of letting landowners in their county know about the Vegetative Filter Strip Assessment. The table below, summarizes filter strips established between 1997 and 2007.

## TABLE 8

### ESTABLISHMENT OF VEGETATIVE FILTER STRIPS - PUBLIC ACT 89-606 Overview of Activities

	2007	2006	2005	2004	2003	2002	2001-1997	TOTAL
Certifying SWCDs	28	28	33	48	51	53	303	540
Landowners Certified	143	236	554	740	496	635	5,348	8,009
Vegetative Filter Strips Installed	280	361	672	990	758	1,006	7,698	11,485
Acres of Vegetative Filter Strips	1,536.5	1,848.30	3,791.20	3772.7	5,711.3	6,030.40	48,185.90	69,339.8

*Overview of activities for the establishment of vegetative filter strips under 35 ILCS 200/10-152.*

# SUSTAINABLE AGRICULTURE PROGRAM

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The purposes of the Illinois Sustainable Agriculture program listed in the 1990 Sustainable Agriculture Act:

- 1) *to identify Ag practices that maintain productivity and minimize environmental degradation;*
- 2) *relate overland runoff, sediment transport, stream flow quality and quantity, and groundwater quality and quantity to specific Ag practices;*
- 3) *integrate and coordinate experimental field and on-farm research and educational efforts of cooperating individuals, agencies, institutions, and organizations;*
- 4) *test and refine alternative approaches to organizing and conducting on-farm research and demonstration projects;*
- 5) *test the organizational approach of joint farmer specialist development of a computerized decision support system as an approach to fostering sustainable agriculture;*
- 6) *Develop an expert system to identify what tillage and crop management system should be used in a particular field;*
- 7) *test the usefulness of the existing conservation tillage knowledge base in making tillage system selection, implementation, and management decisions, and*
- 8) *to identify the most critical needs for research and education programs related to sustainable agriculture.*

Sustainable Agriculture Grants funded \$275,000 in competitive projects in FY07. A list of projects follows.

## Education/Outreach

- A Research Based Program to Sustain Organic Farms
- Heart of America Grazing Conference
- Heartland Graziers-Network of Resources Among Producers

Initiative for the Development of Entrepreneurs in Agriculture

Illinois Farm Beginnings: Preparing Farmers for a New Illinois Food System

Sustainable Agriculture 101

Integrating Beef Cattle and Grain Crops

Making A Positive Impact on Our Environment and Lives Workshop for K-12th Grade Teachers

Illinois Organic Conference

Illinois Vermicomposting Symposium

## University Research

Transition to Organic Systems: How to Improve the Use of Winter Cover Crops to Enhance Nitrogen Cycling

Biocontrol of Internal Discoloration of Horseradish Root

Using Compost and Lake Sediment as a Soil Amendment

Comparing Wheat, Soybean, Tomato, and Pumpkin in Conventional, BMP and Organic Systems

Effects of Sustainable Management Practices on Microbial Populations Influencing Nutrient Cycling

Cover Crops for Sustainable Pumpkin Production in Northern Illinois

## On-Farm Research and Demonstration

Four Seasons Food Growing Project

Biomass Crops for Use in Sustainable Agriculture

The Sustainable Agriculture Program was a co-sponsor and serves on planning committees for the Illinois Organic Production Conference held in Bloomington, the Illinois Vermicomposting Symposium held in Springfield and the Ag Day Awards luncheon held during the Illinois State Fair.

BLWR staff served on the University of Illinois Sustainable Agricultural Research and Education (SARE) Professional Development Program Advisory Committee and the Agro-Ecology Sustainable Agriculture Program Advisory Committee. In addition, staff representatives serve on the Illinois Sustainable Agriculture Committee, Sustainable Agriculture Grant Review Committee, Agri-Tourism Partners of Illinois Board, Illinois Forestry Development Council, Illinois Grassland Conservation Initiative Board, Earth Stewardship Day Committee, Natural Resources Conservation Service State Technical Committee, Illinois Department of Natural Resources Landowner Incentive Program Advisory Committee and the Soil & Water Conservation District Advisory Board.

### ***R.J. Vollmer Sustainable Agricultural Award***

Don and Enid Shepherd of Kirkland, Illinois in DeKalb County were honored as the 2007 R.J.Vollmer Sustainable Ag Farmer of the Year recipient. This award recognizes leaders and innovators involved in sustainable agricultural production in Illinois.

Don and Enid became involved in farming in 1993 when they were "looking for a change in lifestyle and wanted to try their hand at farming." The Shepherd Farm consists of 81 acres.

This sustainable farm includes a prosperous agritourism operation known as Shepherd's Carriage Livery. They have 5 Belgian horses that are used to pull 2 carriages, a covered wagon and a bobsled for weddings, parades, reunions, funerals, and hay rides on 5 miles of established trails, which Enid grooms, that meander along the creeks, wildlife food plots and wetlands. Don has been doing on-farm trails/research with nitrogen rate studies on smooth brome grass.

He is a member of the Carriage Operators of North America (CONA) and the Illinois Forage and Grassland Council. They also host an annual CONA farm tour to promote the carriage industry and have hosted wildlife tours in cooperation with the DeKalb County SWCD.



*Central Illinois Farm Beginnings® co-facilitator Leslie Cooperband (right) looks on as 2nd year students Freddie Jones and Devon Dempsey inhale to learn about the smell of "live" vs "dead" soils at the Soil Science working field day held at Prairie Fruits Farm in June 2007.*



*Don and Enid Shepherd of Kirkland receiving the 2007 R.J. Vollmer Sustainable Ag Farmer of the Year honored during the Illinois State Fair.*

# HENRY WHITE EXPERIMENTAL FARM

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*A "favorite place" to rest and view the beautiful gardens.*

The 94-acre Henry White Experimental Farm is located 4 miles southwest of Belleville, Illinois. The farm was bequeathed to the Illinois Department of Agriculture in 1985 when the last ancestor of Henry White passed away. The will stipulates the land be used for agricultural experiments.

In 2007, approximately 8,700 people were provided educational presentations or visited the farm to view the crop research, tree research, wetlands, prairie, forests, conservation practices, herb garden, vegetable garden, children's garden, and farmstead and field windbreaks. Ecology students come to learn about agriculture, while scouts can earn merit badges.

Randy Meyer is the contract farmer. Dr. Bill Becker is conducting cropping research for the IDOA. A total of 65 of the farm's 94 acres are devoted to mainly corn and soybeans. Farming provides research opportunities and revenue to offset operating expenses.

Prairie plants, such as black-eyed susan, rattlesnake master, alumroot and blazing star, are interspersed with several kinds of grass, including big and little bluestem, indian grass, side-oats grama, and switch grass, on 4.3 acres of restored prairie.

The farm's 6.3 acres in three wetland impoundments support fish, amphibians and a variety of plants. A dock extends over the largest impoundment so plant and animal life at various depths may be observed. Research into the growth and reproductive rates of fish will assist aquaculturalists in estimating the length of time needed to achieve optimum populations.

Planted in 1994, the 4.4 acre deciduous woods contain oak, maple, pecan, dogwood and other species of trees and shrubs. White pine, spruce and other evergreens grow in the 1.1 acre evergreen grove. As the wooded areas mature, they offer researchers a unique opportunity to observe the natural succession of plant and animal life.

Master Gardeners from the Madison – St. Clair Unit of the University of Illinois Extension have gardens for every age group to use for field day activities and trials. Types of gardens include Kids Garden, Prairie Garden, Native Plant Garden, Butterfly Garden, Ornamental Grass Plot, Herb Garden, Kitchen Garden and Small Fruits. All produce from these gardens is donated to a local food bank. In 2007, more than 3,400 pounds of fresh produce were donated to local food pantries.



*A variety of flowers provide for an attractive entrance to the farm throughout the spring and summer.*



# ILLINOIS DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE - ZELL FARM

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*There are five active oil wells on the farm.*

In 1999, Jack Zell bequeathed 240 acres in Effingham and Fayette counties to the Illinois Department of Agriculture so it would remain as agricultural land; and not be developed for other purposes. The Department long-term plans are to develop these two tracts into educational and research labs with the primary goal toward maintaining good stewardship of the land through conservation and other means possible.

The farm consists of two parcels. The 160 acre parcel in Effingham County is mostly cropland and relatively flat with 15 acres of trees. The 120 acre parcel in Fayette County is very rolling to relatively flat in areas. On this site, there are 48 acres of cropland with the remaining 72 acres in trees and grass areas. There are now 5 active oil wells on the property.

The Fayette County parcel offers many opportunities in the future for outdoor education and training purposes in areas of agriculture research, forestry management, and wildlife habit. There is a small area that has brine damage from previous oil activities (less than an acre).

The Effingham County tract also will provide opportunities for demonstration and research on a

relatively large acreage to promote conservation practices and to generate income for both parcels. In 2007, the farm generated approximately \$18,700 of farm income that will go into the development and maintenance of both tracts.

In 2007, a steering committee of local residents provided recommendations and proposals to the Department of Agriculture to further utilize the Fayette tract. Other activities included posting signage around the perimeter to limit trespassing and Vandalia State Prison help in cleaning up trash dumped on the Fayette County property. Work Camp Workers gathered approximately 17 cubic yards of trash and debris. Also, 4 old oil wells were officially closed after attempts to bring them back into production failed.

Favorable weather contributed to average corn yields in 2007 with an average of 153 bushels per acre while an August dry spell limited the soybean average to 36 bushels per acre.



*Old mature "hedge rows" provide wildlife habitat and protection from winter winds.*

# WATERSHED PARK



Watershed Park is an interactive and educational exhibit on water protection. Approximately one acre in size, Watershed Park is located on the Illinois State Fairgrounds.

Featured in the park are thirteen exhibit stations where the public can learn about water quality issues in a watershed. Soil conservation, urban stormwater management, farm and home health and safety, integrated pest management, streambank protection, pasture management, wetlands and wildlife are among the topics covered.

As visitors walk through the exhibits, they can enjoy the flowing stream, benches and drinking water. The park is open during the State Fair, during special events such as Earth Stewardship Day and to school groups during the year.



*Aerial photo of Watershed Park.*

In 2007, Watershed Park hosted 4,841 visitors which included four school and organizational groups, as well as special needs children.

On May 3, 2001 the Department broke ground to build Watershed Park. The Park opened to the public on August 10, 2001 during the Illinois State Fair. The project is a cooperative effort between the Illinois Department of Agriculture and the Illinois Environmental Protection Agency. Additional sponsors included the University of Illinois, Illinois Soil and Water Conservation Districts, Partners for Agricultural Literacy, Archer Daniels Midland, Caterpillar, Monsanto and Syngenta. The AISWCD and SWCD Directors and Employees assist in Watershed Park education activities.



*Members from United Cerebral Palsy work on creating their "beneficial bug" after learning about how insects such as the Praying Mantis and lady bug are beneficial to plants and agriculture by preying on crop pests.*

# WATERSHEDS

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Over the years, the quality of some Illinois lakes, rivers and streams has been impaired by pollutants from a variety of sources. Since the signing of the federal Clean Water Act (CWA) in 1972, water quality has improved primarily through the regulation of point source discharges. Restoring the quality of water bodies that are still impaired involves maintaining a healthy environment and ensuring the sustainability of these waters.

The Illinois Environmental Protection Agency (IEPA) Total Daily Maximum Load (TMDL) Program sets the pollutant reduction goals necessary to improve impaired waters. It determines the amount of a particular pollutant that can be allowed in a specific water body.

Water quality can best be improved on a watershed level. A watershed is all of the area above and below the surface of the landscape that drains into bodies of water (lakes, rivers, streams, wetlands) and groundwater. Activities in a watershed directly affect the quality of the water resources. Understanding the sources of a pollutant in the water and developing best management practices to implement in the watershed to reduce that pollutant can improve the water quality in that water body.

Currently, eight watershed plans are being developed through the IEPA and the Association of Illinois Soil and Water Conservation Districts (AISWCD) joint effort. Salt Fork Vermillion of Champaign County and Clinton Lake of DeWitt County watershed planning committees have successfully completed their plans and will soon be receiving approval from Illinois EPA. The remaining eight watershed planning groups (Lower Part of the Upper Sangamon River of Macon County, Evergreen Lake of McLean, Bear Creek of Adams, Big Bureau Creek of Bureau, Eagle Creek of Gallatin, Lake Bloomington of McLean, North Fork Vermillion of Vermillion, and Spring Lake of McDonough County) have nearly finished their draft plans.

Each planning group has relied heavily on data collected to form their resource inventories. This section of the plan spells out all of the science

related to water quality for each watershed. Several of the watershed planning committees used grant funds to hire subcontractors to complete inventories. Other groups used their money to update existing inventories. All watershed planning grants will be completed by June 2008.



*Above: Rick Twait (City of Bloomington/Lake Bloomington Watershed) demonstrates lake water quality sampling techniques during a tour of Lake Bloomington in McLean County.*



*Below: Members of the Lake Bloomington Watershed Planning Committee get a close up look at the issues facing their public water supply. This site is experiencing high rates of shoreline erosion due to wave action and soil type.*

# PROTECTING WATER QUALITY GRANT PROGRAM

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The Association of Illinois Soil and Water Conservation Districts (AISWCD) applied for and received a Section 319 Grant from the Illinois Environmental Protection Agency (IEPA). The proposal was for the creation of a new program for Illinois Soil and Water Conservation Districts (SWCDs), entitled "Protecting Water Quality In Urban Centers of Illinois." The program provides grant funds to eligible SWCDs for the development and implementation of programs or projects that address nonpoint source water quality issues in urban centers of Illinois.

A total of 28 SWCDs, covering 29 Illinois counties, were eligible to participate in the program and apply for mini-grant funds. Below are some highlights of grants received.

**Macon County SWCD** held a bus tour where participants went to multiple sites on a property that showed inlet protection around stormwater drains on the site, a bio berm, silt fence installed by a silt plow, eco sock, straw waddles, triangular silt dikes, geo berm, rolled matting, compost blanket applied to slope and hydro seeder application. This tour provided information on proper installation of the top five best management practices in central Illinois.



*A hydro seeder can quickly establish cover to a newly developed site to reduce soil erosion and improve water quality.*

**Rock Island County SWCD** held an Urban Soil Erosion and Sediment Control (SESC) workshop where participants included private engineers, soil and water conservation districts, county highway departments and the Illinois Department of Transportation. The workshop included SESC regulations on National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) and local ordinances followed by components of an effective SESC plan and a case study of a successful SESC plan.

**Kankakee County SWCD** completed a reference manual entitled "*Kankakee County Stormwater Technical Reference Manual*" to assist developers in meeting requirements of local ordinances in the reduction of nonpoint source pollutants leaving construction sites and developments.

**Adams County SWCD** completed the "*Citizen Guide to Riparian Corridor Management*" publication through a collaborative effort between the SWCD, the City of Quincy Engineer and Planner, the Adams County Highway Department Engineer and students in an agriculture/horticulture class at John Wood Community College. This document can be viewed on Adams County SWCD website at [www.adamsswcd.org](http://www.adamsswcd.org).

The final report can be viewed in full on the AISWCD website at [www.aiswcd.org/Programs/waterqualitygrants.htm](http://www.aiswcd.org/Programs/waterqualitygrants.htm).

# CONSERVATION RESERVE ENHANCEMENT PROGRAM (CREP)



Commodity Credit Corporation and the State of Illinois in March 1998. The implementing agencies are the USDA Farm Service Agency (FSA), USDA Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS), the Illinois Department of Agriculture (IDOA), the Illinois Environmental Protection Agency (IEPA), the Illinois Department of Natural Resources (IDNR), Soil and Water Conservation Districts (SWCDs) in the eligible area and the Association of Illinois Soil and Water Conservation Districts (AISWCD).

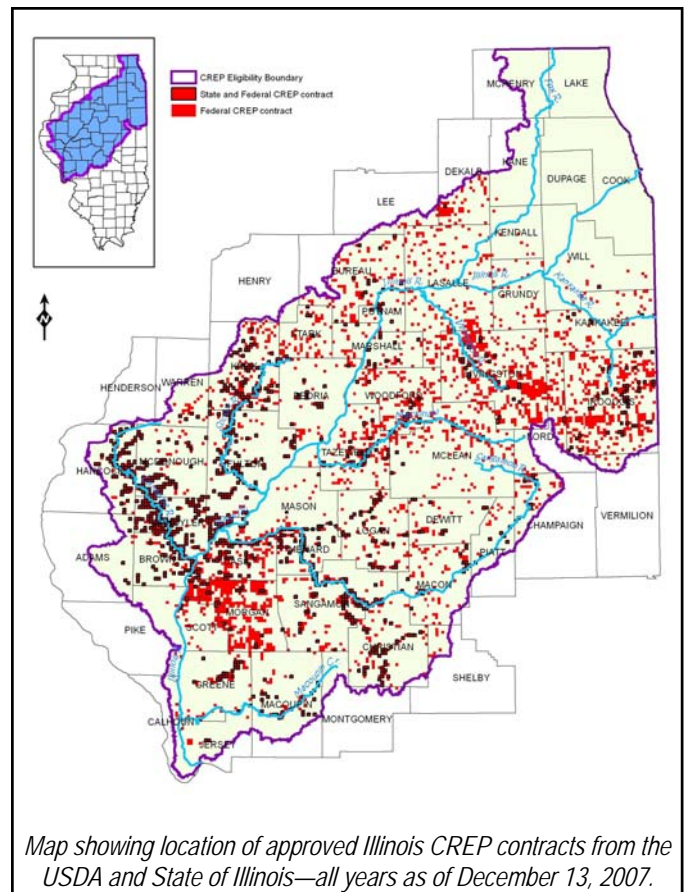
The complete 2007 CREP Annual Report can be viewed in full at [www.ilcrep.org](http://www.ilcrep.org).

The Illinois Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP) is restoring and protecting large stretches of floodplain corridors both on the main stem of the Illinois River and along its major tributaries. It is also helping landowners who have only been able to produce crops in the area once or twice in the last decade to retire these lands from agricultural production.

This past reporting period (October 1, 2006 through September 30, 2007), the federal CREP Program enrolled 675 new contracts. Since the beginning of the CREP program on May 1, 1998 through the end of the current reporting period (September 30, 2007), CREP has restored and/or protected 126,016.7 acres of land either in existing native vegetation or in a previous CRP sign-up (See map on the right.)

Of the 47,592.98 federal acres enrolled in the state option, 9% selected the 15-year extension, 5% selected the 35-year extension and 86% selected the permanent easement option. In Illinois, 37.8% of the 126,016.7 acres enrolling in the federal CREP Program also enrolled in the state enhanced option.

CREP is a local/state/federal program created between the U.S. Department of Agriculture, the



# ILLINOIS NATURAL RESOURCES CONSERVATION SERVICE



United States Department of Agriculture – Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) Report.

The year 2007 was the final year of the 2002 Farm Bill. NRCS programs were once again successful in helping get conservation on the land.

## *Environmental Quality Incentives Program*

Illinois NRCS obligated nearly \$12.6 million into more than 1,550 contracts. NRCS maintained 3 major funding pools (General EQIP, Grazingland and Confined livestock) for EQIP resource concerns, continued the Spoon River streambank special project, and added a new Forestry Management Plan incentive. This total included 51 contracts for special funds dedicated to ground and surface water conservation; 314 of the contracts were for general EQIP; 90 new contracts addressed confined livestock concerns and 66 new grazing contracts were initiated.

NRCS also funded another 25 projects in the Spoon River streambank stabilization special project area. In total, more than \$785,000 was dedicated to repairing heavily eroded streambanks in that area. More than 1,000 people were approved for the new forestry management incentive contracts.



*Streambank protection*

## *Wetlands Reserve Program*

In 2007, Illinois NRCS still committed more than \$5 million toward 18 new permanent wetland easements and completed restoration on 8,200 acres of wetlands under prior year easements.



*Wetland in field*

## *Wildlife Habitat Incentives Program*

Illinois NRCS funded 26 new applications for a total of over \$316,000. These funds were distributed in

two pools of money, one for general wildlife and one for rare and declining habitats.

## *Grassland Reserve Program*

There was no new GRP signup for 2007, but NRCS did finalize 3 easements for approximately 180 acres from previous years' signups.

## *Farm and Ranchland Protection Program*

NRCS obligated \$2.6 million in new contracts on 5 farms to protect 703 acres of farmland.

## *Contribution Agreements*

Illinois NRCS entered into contribution agreements with 49 individual Soil and Water Conservation Districts. These 50/50 agreements allowed NRCS to pay these Districts over \$630,000 for their technical assistance with the Conservation Reserve Program.

## *Conservation Security Program*

There was no sign-up for CSP funding in 2007. However, NRCS made payments and conducted maintenance activity on more than 700 existing contracts in the previously funded Kishwaukee, Middle Wabash, Lower Kaskaskia, and Upper Sangamon River watersheds. Tentative plans in 2008 are to offer a sign-up in the Lower Cache River Watershed. The watershed includes portions of Alexander, Johnson, Pulaski and Union Counties. The area is rich with resources, biodiversity and wildlife habitat and is bordered on the south by the Ohio River.



*2006 CSP Participant*

## *Resource Conservation & Development*

RC&Ds in Illinois completed 186 projects. Highlighted benefits of these projects include the creation of 31 businesses that brought about nearly 107 new jobs in our ten RC&D areas. There were 33 agritourism projects. Overall, our RC&Ds served a total of 2.4 million citizens.

## *Additional NRCS Highlights*

With cost-share, incentives and easement payments from our conservation programs, planning and leveraging of funds by RC&Ds and direct technical assistance, Illinois NRCS was able to accomplish great strides in writing plans for the future conservation of our resources and implement many conservation practices.



### Highlights include:

- 125 CNMPs written and 69 CNMP applied
- More than 389,000 acres of crop rotation planned and 324,000 acres applied
- 3,590 acres of vegetative filter strips planned and applied
- 100 acres of waterways planned and 2,220 acres of new waterways applied
- 5,800 acres of irrigation water management planned and 1,760 acres of IWM applied
- 160,700 acres of nutrient management planned and 88,200 acres applied
- 7,100 acres of pasture and hayland planting planned and 5,490 applied
- 213,600 acres of mulch till planned and 141,200 of mulch till applied
- 157,200 acres of strip till/no-till planned and 124,400 acres applied
- 2,920 acres planned for rare and declining habitat and 1,800 acres applied
- 5,000 acres of riparian forest buffer planned and 4,150 acres applied
- 65,700 feet of streambank protection planned and 32,800 feet of streambank protection applied
- 446,200 feet of terraces planned and 411,400 feet of terraces installed
- 183,300 acres of upland wildlife habitat planned and 142,500 acres of upland wildlife habitat management applied
- 34,700 acres of waste utilization planned and waste utilization applied on 4,300 acres
- 5,000 water and sediment control basins planned and 2,050 installed
- 12,000 acres planned to create, enhance, or restore wetlands and 15,000 acres of wetlands created, enhanced and restored
- 196,500 feet of field and farmstead windbreaks planned and 408,900 feet of windbreaks applied
- 3,040 determinations for CRP

# LANDOWNER INCENTIVE PROGRAM (LIP)

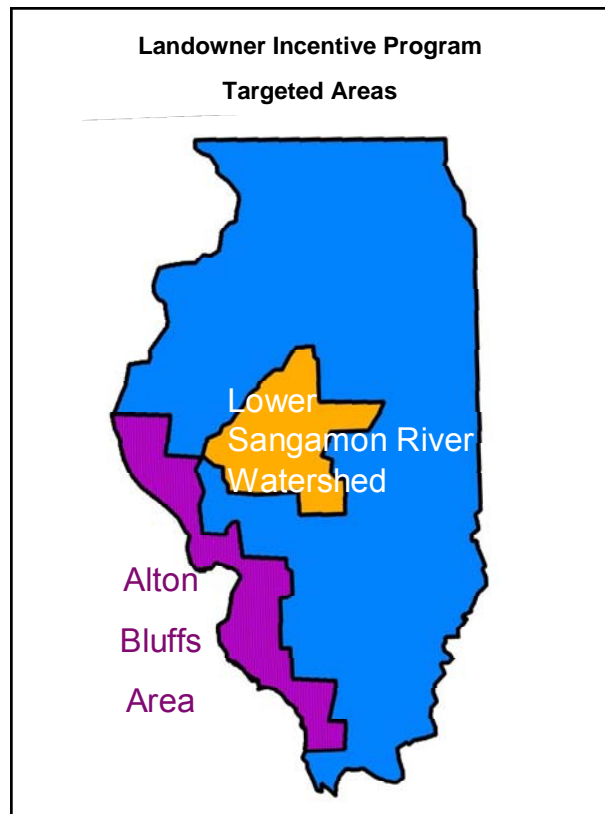
The Landowner Incentive Program (LIP) is a U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Program that first received funding from Congress in 2002. The purpose of LIP as posted on the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service web site is "... to protect and restore habitats on private lands, to benefit federally listed, proposed or candidate species or other species determined to be at-risk, and provide technical and financial assistance to private landowners for habitat protection and restoration." Illinois received its first grant (\$180,000) in 2004 to develop a LIP program and hire a LIP coordinator and LIP Resource Specialist. In 2005, Illinois was awarded \$705,000 to solicit project proposals that would help implement the state Wildlife Action Plan (WAP) that highlights species at risk and the habitat enhancements needed to benefit these species.

The Lower Sangamon River Watershed was selected as the pilot area for the program due to its diversity of natural resources and the need for restoration and enhancement in much of the project area. Currently, there are 18 projects underway in this watershed including: hill prairie restoration, wetland enhancement, oak/hickory forest enhancement, sand prairie and sand forest enhancement. Management practices for these projects include brush clearing, non-native/invasive species removal, forest stand enhancement, prescribed fire and supplemental seeding/stocking with native plant material. These projects will enhance or restore over 600 acres of unique habitats in this watershed. There are also 17 approved projects in the Lower Sangamon River that are being developed by IDNR and LIP staff. Management is scheduled to begin in the spring and summer of 2008.

The Landowner Incentive Program was recently awarded additional funding (\$767,000) when a grant proposal was approved by the Fish and Wildlife Service in August 2007. This grant will be used to fund projects in the Lower Sangamon River Watershed as well as expand the program into the Alton Bluffs area. The "Alton Bluffs" area is an 11 county area that stretches along the Mississippi River from Adams County in the north to Alexander County in the south. The expansion area hosts many unique

habitats including hill prairies, barrens, glades, quality oak/hickory timber in the uplands and bottomlands, as well as a variety of wetland habitats along the Mississippi River and its tributaries.

Landowner Incentive Program staff currently includes three positions: program manager, coordinator and resource specialist. The program manager works in the IDNR office in Springfield and the coordinator and resource specialist work through the Sangamon County Soil and Water Conservation District, also located in Springfield. The program works through the local soil and water conservation districts to find willing landowners with potential projects. Projects are then developed and ranked by the LIP Technical Committee consisting of IDNR and LIP staff. Projects are approved by the LIP Advisory Committee which is made up of representatives from various agencies, conservation groups and the agricultural community. LIP promises to be a powerful tool for engineering and funding habitat enhancement and for restoration on private lands in Illinois.





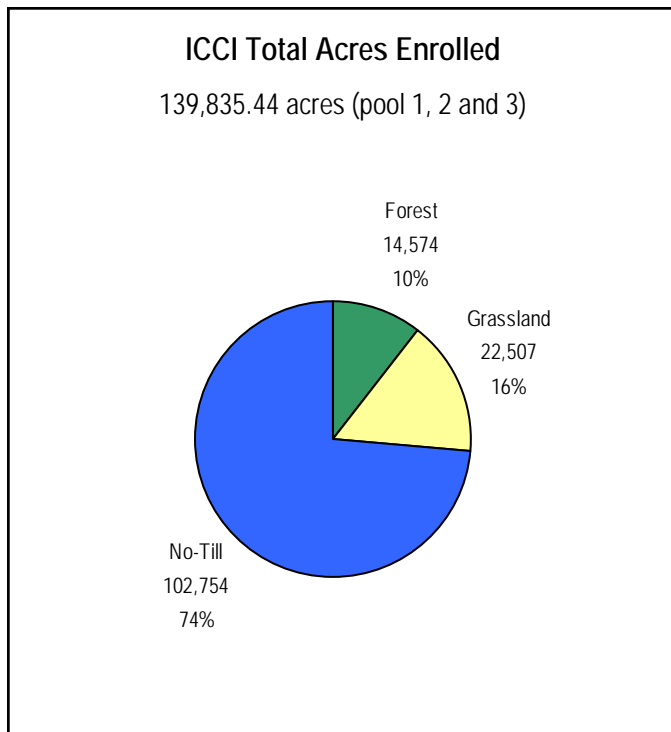
# ILLINOIS CONSERVATION & CLIMATE INITIATIVE (ICCI)

The Association of Illinois Soil and Water Conservation Districts (AISWCD), as one of four registered verifiers for the Chicago Climate Exchange, conducted verification of 34 contracts in 13 Soil and Water Conservation Districts for producers enrolled as carbon credit providers through the Illinois Conservation and Climate Initiative (ICCI). These producers have agreed to use continuous no-till or grass management practices to sequester carbon dioxide. The verification program conducts desk audits and field inspections of selected contracts equal to at least 10% of the acres in a given pool to verify that the contracted carbon sequestering practices have been implemented and to confirm the acreage enrolled in the program.

Each verification investigator has been trained and is experienced in planning, designing and monitoring installation of the practices being verified. Field verification procedures included:

- a. Confirmation of contracted acreage.
- b. Confirmation of vegetative condition and affirm crop type.
- c. Assess evidence of field tillage practices including the following.
  - Indications of soil disturbance, including "clean" or bare soil, broken surface, ridges, and/or furrows
  - Presence of surface vegetation litter from previous seasons/years
  - Soil condition
- d. Take digital photographs of field conditions.
- e. Maintain a record of all field observations and measurements with comparison to recorded data to appropriate contract information to assure consistency.

Of 388 contracts aggregated by the Delta Institute for the ICCI, 34 contracts were selected for verification, slightly more than 10% of the contracted acres. The AISWCD verified 6,531.44 no-till acres and 640 grassland acres as being in compliance with contract requirements.



**TABLE 9**

## ICCI PROGRAM ENROLLEMENT INFORMATION

Acres	ALL	Pool I (end Dec. '06)	Pool II (end May '07)	Pool III (end Dec. '07)
Total	139,835.44	48,736.05	60,044.15	31,055.24
Grass Acreage	22,506.77	4,305.43	14,154.68	4,046.66
Tillage Acreage	102,754.27	42,057.47	40,197.42	20,499.38
Forestry Acreage	14,574.40	2,373.15	5,692.05	6,509.20

Contracts Submitted	ALL	Pool I (end Dec. '06)	Pool II (end May '07)	Pool III (end Dec. '07)
Total	718	165	385	168
Soil	440	123	240	77
Grass	255	60	155	40
Tillage	74	36	24	14
Grass & Tillage	111	27	61	23
Forestry	278	42	145	91

*Table showing information on acreage and contract numbers for all pools open as of December 2007.*

# ILLINOIS ENVIROTHON

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The 13th Illinois Envirothon was held May 2-3, 2007 at the 4-H Memorial Camp (Allerton Park) in Monticello, Illinois. Eighty students and over 25 advisors came from across the state to participate at the Illinois Envirothon for the chance to represent Illinois at the Canon

Envirothon in Geneva, New York, July 29th - August 4th, 2007 where they competed against more than 45 teams from the U.S. and Canadian provinces.

The first day of the Illinois Envirothon competition the five-member teams listened to resource professionals speak on the 4 major category areas: soils, forestry, wildlife, aquatics and on the 5th category, "Alternative/Renewable Energy." After testing, students received the scenario for the oral presentation and worked together the rest of the

evening preparing for this section of the competition. Wednesday night students had the opportunity to meet other students during an ice cream social and mixed-up trivia night, which was enjoyed by all. Thursday morning, the teams finished the competition by presenting their oral presentation to a panel of judges.

Financial sponsors of the Illinois Envirothon include: Canon Envirothon, Natural Resources Conservation Service, Illinois Farm Bureau, Illinois Soil and Water Conservation Districts Employee's Association, the Association of Illinois Soil and Water Conservation Districts and Auxiliary along with various individual Soil and Water Conservation Districts.



*Team members include (picture on left of team at Niagara Falls, left to right) Abby Middleton, Sandy Perkins (advisor), Ryan Young, Jessie Thompson, Ryan Schutte, and Bethany Rosenthal.*



The Canon Envirothon continues to be a dynamic force within the Environmental Education arena. Envirothon's hands-on, team-based approach and combination of in-class curricula and outdoor training make it unique. Since its inception, the Envirothon program has reached millions of high school students (grades 9 through 12) across North America with unbiased, science-based natural resource and environmental education that's relevant and fun.

The Canon Envirothon hosts the winners of state and provincial Envirothon competitions at a weeklong North America-wide event. The 2007 Illinois Envirothon Team, Triad High School (Madison Co.), represented Illinois this past year in Geneva, New York. Illinois was one of 53 teams, 45 from the U.S. and 8 Canadian Provinces, involving more than 250 students. The team placed 23rd at the Canon Envirothon competition. Travel expenses and registration was sponsored by the Illinois Envirothon.

# 2007 Competition Results

## 1st Place Team



### Forestry, Wildlife & Aquatics High Placing Team

Triad High School  
LUC 12 - Madison Co.

L to R - Ryan Young, Abby Middleton, Mark Liszewski, Ryan Schutte and Bethany Rosenthal.

## 2nd Place Team



### 5th Category High Placing Team

Murphysboro High School  
LUC 15 - Jackson Co.

L to R: Megan Blackwell, Bryce Schumacher, Kelsey Mileur, Ben McConnell and Alex Barger.

## 3rd Place Team



### Oral Presentation High Placing Team

Morris Community High School  
LUC 3 - Grundy Co.

L to R - Alex Kreig, Eric Verdeyen, Rachel Higgins, Linnea Sailor and Race Higgins.



### Soils High Placing Team and Best T-Shirt Award

Rochester High School  
LUC 9 - Sangamon Co.

L to R - Jennifer Wyatt, Advisor Don Wohlers, Ann Egan, Greg Coultas, Anna Czapar, Advisor Molly Godar and Chelsea Hartwig.



### Team Spirit Award

Paxton Buckley Loda High School  
LUC 6 - Ford Co.

L to R - Victor Johnson, Shane Ritter, Jacob Wise, Zach Hari and Will Glazik.

## Participant Listing

*(Winning LUC Teams)*

LUC	COUNTY	HIGH SCHOOL
12	Madison	Triad HS
15	Jackson	Murphysboro HS
3	Grundy	Morris Community HS
9	Sangamon	Rochester HS
2	Rock Island	Rock Island HS
16	McHenry	Woodstock HS
1	Whiteside	Morrison HS
7	Edgar	Paris HS
13	Clay	Clay City HS
6	Ford	PBL HS
4	Hancock	Carthage HS
11	Edwards	Edwards Co. HS
8	Brown	Brown Co. HS
5	Woodford	El-Paso Gridley HS
14	Johnson	Vienna HS
10	Fayette	Vandalia HS

## SPECIAL RECOGNITION

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The Association of Illinois Soil & Water Conservation Districts recognizes individuals and organizations for their continued efforts in supporting conservation and preserving our natural resources. The following are the awards that were given out in 2007.

### Photo Contest Winners

**Conservation** - Anne Rollins, Knox Co.

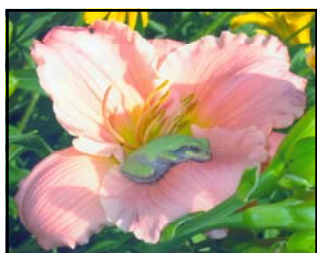
**Trees & Plants** - Anne Rollins, Knox Co.

**Landscapes** - Amy Lovekamp, Menard Co.

**Education** - Emily Groezinger, DeKalb Co.

**Youth** - Anne Laborde, Edgar Co.

**Wildlife & Overall** - Cathy Jennings, Vermillion Co.



**Overall Winner**  
**“Comfy Little Frog”**

### Poster Contest Winners

**Grade K-1** - Conrad Milton, DeKalb Co.

**Grade 2-3** - Anneka Carlson, Livingston Co.

**Grade 4-6** - Hannah Mangan, Mason Co.

**Grade 7-9** - Rachel Wilson, Whiteside Co.

**Grade 10-12** - Laura Devine, DeKalb Co.



**Contest Theme:**  
**Conservation's Power**

### Governor's Award Winner

#### *Dehlinger Farm Family*

*L to R Front Row: Lauren Daugherty and Jacob Daugherty 2nd Row: Nichole Daugherty, Brenda Dehlinger, Joyce Anderson, Jeanne Dehlinger, Amy Daugherty, Karen Dehlinger, and Stacey Dehlinger. Back row: Matthew Dehlinger, David Dehlinger, Lee Anderson, Mike Daugherty, John Dehlinger, Mitchell Daugherty, and Mason Dehlinger.*



### *2007 Conservation Farm Family Winners*

**LUC 1 - Lee Co.**  
Don & John Kennay

**LUC 10 - Fayette Co.**  
Snow Farm Family

**LUC 2 - Bureau Co.**  
Fredenhagen Farm Family

**LUC 11 - Richland Co.**  
Dehlinger Farm Family

**LUC 3 - Livingston Co.**  
Lehmann Brothers Farm

**LUC 15 - Union Co.**  
Bass Family Farm

**LUC 4 - Warren Co.**  
W. Donald & Harriet Ray

**LUC 16 - Will/South Cook Co.**  
Meadow Lawn Farm



**George McKibben  
Memorial Scholarship**

Jacob Mitchell,  
McDonough Co.

**Outstanding District  
Employee**

Sharon Matson, Henry Co.



**Distinguished Merit Award**

Steve Higgins, Warren Co.  
and  
Jim King, Henry Co.

**Outstanding Forestry Contribution Award**

Sugar Grove Nature Center



**Secondary  
Conservation  
Teacher of the Year**

David Rigby,  
Johnsburg Jr. High School

**Outstanding  
District Directors**

Stephen Owens,  
Henry Co.  
and  
Gary Jensen,  
Warren Co.



**Legislator of the Year**

State Representative  
Dan Reitz

**Friend of Conservation**

State Representative  
Brent Hassert



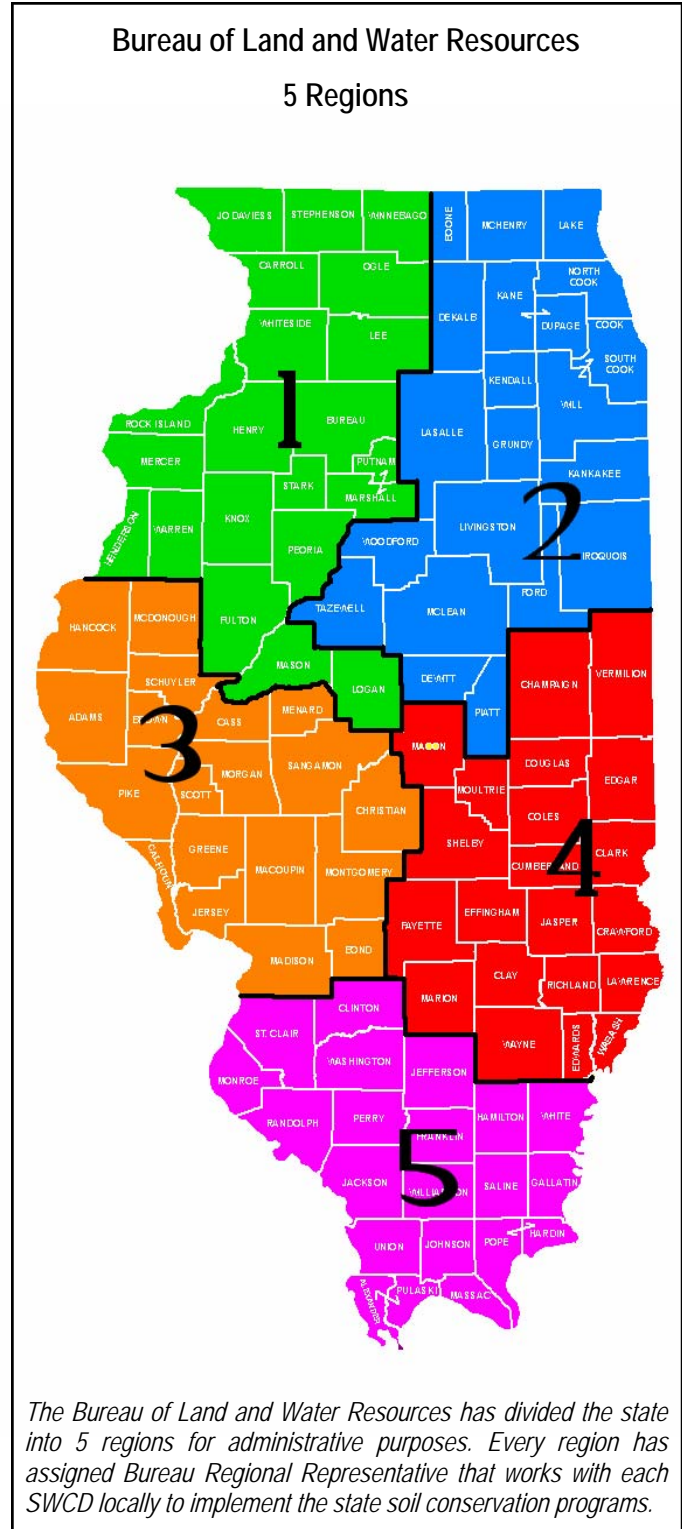
# PARTNERSHIP ACTIVITIES

Information has been compiled for the Illinois Conservation Partnership Annual Report from programs carried out in 2007. Partners include the Illinois Department of Agriculture, Bureau of Land and Water Resources, Association of Illinois Soil and Water Conservation Districts, 98 county Soil and Water Conservation Districts, USDA – Natural Resources Conservation Service, Illinois Department of Natural Resources, Illinois Environmental Protection Agency and U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

Partner programs provide benefits in the areas of soil conservation and water quality in rural and urban communities, agricultural nutrient management, farmland protection, sustainable agriculture, carbon sequestration, wildlife habitat, and watershed planning and protection. Efforts also provide youth and adult environmental education and outreach, research and demonstration, and public information. Programs are generally directed to landowners and land managers using incentive based, voluntary approaches.

The chart located on the next page summarizes the outreach and education efforts for all 98 SWCDs reaching both rural and urban communities.

For more information on local programs and activities, contact your local Soil and Water Conservation District.



## Outreach and Education Efforts

Conservation Information/ Education Outreach		# Activities	# Participants	Public Relations	#	Distribution
Conservation Tours for Adults	55	2,112	Newsletters	254	271,247	
Conservation Tours for Students (K-12)	52	5,790	Teacher Newsletters	58	12,057	
Conservation Tillage Meetings	17	1,096		#	# Papers	
Watershed Meetings	243	2,955	Newspaper Articles	563	41,740	
Watershed Tours	7	697		#	Stations	
Annual Meetings	-	7,765	Radio Spots	259	60	
Forage/Pasture Demo	10	305	T.V. Spots	24	8	
Woodland/Windbreak/Wildlife Demo	15	945		Yes/No	# of Hits	
Soil Stewardship Meetings/ Programs	85	13,385	Websites	29	108,431	
Lady Landowner Meetings/ Tours	30	740		#	# Attendees	
Meetings with Special Interest Groups	316	4,053	Conservation Speaking Engagements	107	5,960	
Agronomy Days	16	1,065	<b>Products and Services</b>	#	Customers	
Contractor Workshop	24	932	Tree Sales	95	5,705	
Displays at Fairs, Banks, etc	96	25,6291	Plant Sales	30	950	
Field demonstrations plots (number of plots)	16	-	Fish Sales (# of annual sales)	148	3,702	
Classroom Presentations	-	-	Conservation Seed - report in acres	5,342	1,394	
K-8 Grade	4,563	95,494	Equipment Rental	-	-	
9-12 Grade	580	3352	Drill/Planter/Seeder - report in acres	55,167	8,636	
College	28	643	Scraper	-	124	
Educator Workshops	96	2,350	Tree Planter - report in acres	1,057	458	
Conservation Education Days	133	31,240	Other	13,439	2,616	
Arbor Day Programs	237	16,070	Used Oil Collection - report in gallons	13,110	435	
Earth Day Programs	143	11,605	Used Tire Collection - report in tires	39,838	6,215	
Conservation Education Contest	-	-	Aerial & GIS Maps / Plat Books	7,307	4,986	
Poster	70	6,234	Other	25,401	4,913	
Photo	5	210	<b>Land Use Activities</b>	Number	Acres	
Other	19	1,290	Natural Resource Reports	1,008	20,316	
Provide Scholarships	51	-	Land Evaluation Site Assessments (LESA)	1,744	9,206	
FFA Soils Judging Contest	43	2,239	Soil Erosion Sediment Control Plan Reviews	477	14,815	
Other	470	16,433	Soil Erosion Sediment Control Inspections	1,848	-	
	# of Schools	# of Participants	Soil Borings/Mapping	574	952	
Envirothon	275	2,475	Facility Planning Area Reviews	20	-	
Provide School Projects	39	-	Flood Related Reviews	54	-	
<b>OUTREACH TOTAL</b>		<b>487,766</b>	Mining Activities	10	-	
			Pipeline/Utilities Activities	140	-	
			Other	135	-	
				# of Activities	# Attendees	
			SESC Tours/Workshops	14	887	
			Land Use Meetings/Hearings	139	2,596	
			Farmland Protection Events	38	334	
			Ag Areas Meetings	7	182	
			Flood Related Meetings	25	133	

# SWCD PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS

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Illinois Soil and Water Conservation Districts (SWCDs) each have a unique program to meet the needs of the people and natural resources in their district. These are only a few of the diverse activities carried out by the SWCDs and their many local partners.

## *Region 1*

***Bureau, Carroll, Fulton, Henderson, Henry, JoDaviess, Knox, Lee, Marshall-Putnam, Mason, Mercer, Ogle, Peoria, Rock Island, Stark, Stephenson, Warren, Whiteside and Winnebago***

The Big Bureau Creek Watershed Group Planning and Technical Committee was formed. It is made up of volunteer farmers and non-farmers, community and faith-based leaders, and local government representatives. The formal organization of the group followed a 3-year planning initiative that included an inventory and evaluation of the 499 square mile watershed. The majority of the watershed is located in Bureau County, with parts in both Lee and LaSalle Counties. The Watershed Based Plan is being funded by an Illinois Environmental Protection Agency grant and supported by the **Bureau, LaSalle, and Lee County SWCDs**.

The **Bureau County SWCD** hosted its 25th Agronomy Field Day. Approximately 80 people attended. Dr. Richard Cooke, University of Illinois, discussed "Reducing Nitrogen and Improving Water Quality." Roger Brown, Illinois Institute for Rural Affairs, Western Illinois University, talked about "Site Selection and Economic Impact for Alternative Energy." Bridget Holcomb, Agricultural Policy Director for the Illinois Stewardship Alliance, informed us about "Conservation Programs in the New Farm Bill." Ken Meter, University of Minnesota, talked about "Finding Food in Farm Country." CCA and CPDU education credits were offered.

The **Bureau County SWCD** hosted a Fifth Grade Conservation Day at Warnecke Woods. Over 500 students and sponsors from Bureau County and Henry County schools attended. Students participated in 30-minute hands on activities about nature.

**Carroll County SWCD** provided application assistance to landowners for the Illinois Conservation and Climate Initiative. Four conservation tillage contracts were approved for 1,000 acres; 28 grass contracts were approved for 1,400 acres; and, 24 forestry contracts were approved for 420 acres.

**Henderson County SWCD** held a pond tour for more than 30 landowners. Staff explained site selection and basic pond designs. USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service staff re-capped the Honey Creek Watershed Project. It included how ponds are cost shared through the EQIP Program; how to extend the life of a pond; and how water and sediment control basins, grass buffers, and waterways reduce sedimentation into the pond. Illinois Department of Natural Resources staff demonstrated a fish count and how to manage a pond.

**Henderson and Warren County SWCDs** and the University of Illinois Extension, along with other agricultural organizations, funded an Agricultural Educator to present "Ag in the Classroom" activities for the schools and other organizations in the two counties.





**Jo Daviess County SWCD** implemented a grant from the Illinois Department of Natural Resources C-2000 Driftless Area Ecosystem program to preserve and provide public access to historic aerial photography. Technical work was performed by the Illinois State Geologic Survey to scan, mosaic and orthorectify aerial photos of the county from 1946/1947. The scanned images were placed on the Illinois Geospatial Data Clearinghouse Internet site. Low altitude aerial photographs of the Mississippi River from 1927 were scanned and preserved. The Mississippi River photos are from the US Army Corps of Engineers archives and represent some of the earliest stereoscopic aerial images in the world. These historic photos extend the length of the Upper Mississippi River and predate the installation of the lock and dam system. The SWCD and ISGS are seeking partners to continue the preservation of the historic Mississippi River imagery.

The **Knox County SWCD**, University of Illinois Extension, and Knox County Public Health Department held an abandoned water well sealing demonstration. Short presentations were given on abandoned well risks, proper sealing procedure, and available cost-share assistance.

**Marshall-Putnam SWCD** held a Lady Landowner Tour for 55 ladies. The group viewed antique farm equipment, a complete old school room, and kitchen at the Putnam Co. Ag Museum in Hennepin. They toured the Hegeler-Carus Mansion in LaSalle, and lunched at the Canal Port Restaurant in Utica. Eric Luce, plant manager, gave a brief overview and showed a video of the Pioneer Seed Plant operations. The ladies then toured the plant. The day ended with a stop at Boggio's Orchard.

**Marshall-Putnam SWCD** received a C-2000 Ecosystem Grant for a Great Plains No-Till 7 foot Drill to replace the 8 foot Truax Drill. The drill is available to establish or enhance wildlife habitat with cool or warm season seeding, establish Native Grasses and Forbs, and seeding for erosion control and sediment control. There is a fee of \$25.00 for hook-up, plus \$2.00/acre. The drill planted a record 425.6 acres.

The **Marshall-Putnam SWCD** owns and manages a 28-acre timber tract called James Hall Woods.

The **Mason County SWCD** sponsored its annual outdoor learning day, called Discover Day, with 250 third graders, teachers, and chaperones. They learned about conservation, ecology, natural and cultural history through demonstrations and hands on projects the from U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, Illinois Department of Natural Resources, and Illinois Environmental Protection Agency. Illinois Natural History Survey, **Menard County SWCD** and the University of Illinois Extension, Mason Unit personnel.

The **Mason County SWCD** is currently the only district in Illinois that performs evaluations for crop irrigation systems. In 2007, the District evaluated 65 systems on 5,742 cropland acres.

The **Mercer County SWCD** concluded 9 years of a 319 EPA watershed project. \$700,000 in cost share was used for the installation of 90 land improvement practices. Annual soil savings of 2,691 tons occurred and sediment load was reduced by 1,108 tons per year in the New Boston Bay and Bay Island Drainage Districts.

The **Mercer County SWCD** took part in the creation of the Renewable Fuels Council. The Council worked with the Mercer County Board and Aledo School District to construct a wind turbine to supply electricity to 6 public buildings making a significant reduction in utilities costs for the taxpayers of the county. The District received a \$14,000 grant from the Clean Energy Foundation and completed a feasibility study. They contracted an onsite wind monitoring tower and is now receiving bids from 4 engineering firms for construction of a single 1.5 MW turbine.

*Some SWCDs host activities for women such as this, Ladies Active in Agriculture and Conservation Dinner.*



**Rock Island County SWCD** organized the Copperas Creek Watershed Planning Committee. The watershed, located in the southwest corner of the county, is primarily agricultural land. The leading natural resource concern was streambank erosion. An organizational meeting and election of officers was held, followed by a stream bank overview meeting along with our summer conservation tour.

**Rock Island County SWCD** education coordinator Marilyn Andress organized a Natural Area Guardians group with 20 charter members. The group focused on restoring prairie plants and worked with local parks and public lands to further conservation planting. The NAGS have also been trained and are taking charge of the prescribed burn program.

The **Whiteside County SWCD** is fortunate to have kind hearted, conservation minded people that have volunteered their time and expertise for many years. These people help with newsletters, Envirothon, Annual Meetings, Conservation Days, prescribed burns, invasive weed removal, Bald Eagle Days, and NAG activities. Everyday these people practice conservation, trying to improve our environment

**Winnebago County SWCD** participated in the Winnebago County 2030 Land Resource Management Plan Process. Planning for the Comprehensive Land Use Plan started with the formation of a Community Focus Group. The large groups were broken down into eight different Focus Groups. The District, along with NRCS personnel, were key members of the "Agriculture" focus group. They also involved with some of the other focus groups, including the "Natural Resources and Environment" and "Public Facilities" focus groups. Objectives and Policies were developed for the County Steering Committee to review and adopt. The District was also involved in the interview and selection process for the County's planned Natural Resource Inventory.

**Winnebago County SWCD** and the local Pheasant's Forever Chapter hosted a controlled burn workshop to educate landowners on the proper way to conduct a prescribed burn on their Conservation Reserve Program acres.

## *Region 2*

*Boone, DeKalb, Dewitt, Ford, Grundy, Iroquois, Kane-DuPage, Kankakee, Kendall, Lake, LaSalle, Livingston, McHenry, McLean, North Cook, Piatt, Tazewell, Will-South Cook, Woodford*

**Boone County SWCD** hosted the Soil Judging Contest for 60 high school students from 14 schools in a four county area at its Mosquito Creek Site.

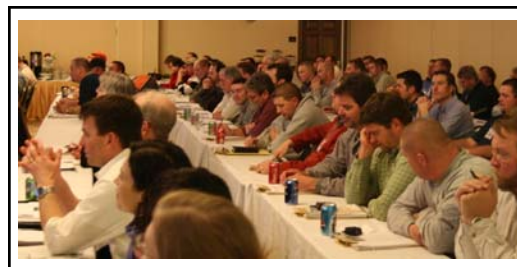
The **DeKalb County SWCD**, the University of Illinois Extension, and the DeKalb County Farm Bureau provided conservation educational seminars at the Northern Illinois Farm Show. More than 7,000 people attended the show.

The **DeKalb County SWCD** and the Illinois Department of Natural Resources provided a grant to the Wright Elementary school to establish a 40'x50' prairie. More than 250 students helped plant the prairie plants.

The **DeKalb County SWCD** matched funds raised by the 4<sup>th</sup> graders at Lincoln Elementary School in DeKalb through their recycling efforts. The funds purchased 3 native trees for their school grounds. More than 300 students participated in the Arbor Day program to celebrate the planting of the trees.

The **DeKalb County SWCD**, Campaign for Sensible Growth, the Metropolitan Planning Council, and the DeKalb County Regional Planning Commission offered a Development Review Seminar to planners within DeKalb County. Approximately 50 people attended the seminar focused on conservation planning.

The **DeKalb County SWCD** created a Conservation Tillage Initiative Program. The program paid producers up to \$5.00 per acre or a \$200.00 maximum to the 16 first time users of a specified list of conservation tillage tools. Residue levels were measured and recorded by the staff on 1,200 acres.



*Conference on Erosion Control Practices for Urban Construction Sites.*

The **Ford County SWCD** sponsored a conservation day for 200 third graders from Gibson City-Melvin-Sibley, Paxton-Buckley-Loda, and St. John's Lutheran Schools. Volunteers from the University of Illinois Extension, Illinois Department of Natural Resources, and neighboring soil and water conservation districts presented on a variety of topics including a rainfall simulator, the bear game, and skins and skulls. 3rd graders receive a special invitation to Conservation Day. These students are presented with a tree to take home and plant in their back yard.

The **Ford County SWCD** published a quarterly newsletter that was sent to 2,000 landowners, land operators and supporters. Articles were gathered from experts in conservation. Tree, fish and plant sales are advertised. Local youth who were successful in their environmental endeavors were recognized.

The **Ford County SWCD** sponsored the Paxton-Buckley-Loda FFA chapter as the Illinois representative to the National FFA Environment and Natural Resources Career Development Event. Krista Builta, Resource Conservationist, coached the team and accompanied them to the National FFA Convention in Indianapolis. They participated in a team activity, personal interview, GPS activity, tool and wildlife identification, press release writing, soils testing, water testing and environmental analysis. The team placed 10th at the national level with all members receiving a gold or silver ranking.

Ford County students start learning their tree identification at an early age. The 1st graders take a Tree Walk through Pells Park. The first grade teachers and the **Ford County SWCD** Resource Conservationist point out the different identifying factors of the tree and the students collect seeds, bark and leaves from the trees to make a book.

The **Grundy County SWCD** and the Grundy County Farm Bureau held a Natural Resources Tour at Goose Lake Prairie for more than 650 fifth grade students from Grundy County schools. Students participated in ten learning stations covering topics on forestry, groundwater, watersheds, entomology, prairie plants, Build Illinois, web of life, conservation police, Traveling Science Center, and local history.

The **Grundy County SWCD**, members of the Morris Community Foundation's Land Use and Protection team, and area volunteers organized and participated in the 1st Annual Grundy County Growth Conference (GC2). The theme of the conference was "Exploring a County-Wide Stormwater Management Ordinance." Seventy-five participants attended the conference. Speakers at the conference included Lenore Beyer-Clow of Openlands, Ken Anderson from Kane County, Jim Patchett and Jason Navota of the Conservation Design Forum, Michael Warner of the Lake County Stormwater Commission, and Kay Whitlock of Christopher B. Burke Engineering.

The **Iroquois County SWCD** River Watershed Flow Obstruction Removal Project concluded with a total of 9 flow obstructions removed at a cost of \$47,817. Funding for the project was obtained from Senator Dick Durbin and USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service through the Iroquois River Watershed Work Group.

**Iroquois County SWCD** has assisted landowners in developing 67 Illinois Conservation Climate Initiative contracts for a total of 4,750 acres: 2,420 acres of grasses; 1,430 acres of conservation tillage (no-till); and 900 acres of CRP tree plantings have been enrolled.

**Kane-DuPage SWCD** held a series of 1/2 day seminars addressing 3 topics: Regulatory and Permitting, Erosion Control Information & Products, Sediment Control Practices & Products. An additional full day seminar was held to re-cap the series.

The **Kane-DuPage SWCD** has an agreement with the Chicago District of the Army Corps of Engineers to participate in meetings and weekly inspections at the O'Hare Modernization Project and Construction.

The **Kane-DuPage SWCD** held meetings with 5 municipalities in Kane County to strengthen the Memoranda of Understanding to review and inspect all construction sites greater than 1 acre for erosion control measures.

**Kankakee County SWCD**, local engineers, USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service, and interested citizens completed a Stormwater and Sediment Control ordinance. The District will be developing erosion and sediment control plans for any site disturbing more than 500 square feet.

**Kankakee County SWCD** staff and the University of Illinois Extension staff developed the Kankakee Naturalist program modeled after the Master Gardener program. The purpose of the program is to expand people's knowledge of local natural resources to ensure that proposed land use changes are evaluated on how they might impact the resource base. The first 15 participants in the Naturalist program attended 12 sessions covering soils, geology, birds, fisheries and local resources issues. They went on field trips to unique local areas including the Kankakee Sands in Indiana and the Mومence wetlands

The **Kendall County SWCD**, representatives from the Kendall County Farm Bureau, Aux Sable Creek Watershed Coalition, Mazon River Watershed, Kendall County, Village of Plainfield, University of Illinois Extension, and Plano Economic Development Corporation planned and implemented The Conservation Foundation's 6th Annual Kendall Growth Conference entitled, "Healthy Environments, Healthy Communities, Healthy People." The conference presenters provided information to 30 local residents, officials and professionals on how building smarter promotes the health and well being of future generations and the environment.

The **Kendall County SWCD**, the Delta Institute, and the Chicago Wilderness co-sponsored a local workshop for 25 local consultants, municipal and county staffs, developers, and conservation agencies, entitled, "Stormwater Best Management Practices for Northeastern Illinois." It featured information on hydrology, cost and regulatory considerations, best management practice implementation strategies, and local case studies.

The **Kendall County SWCD**, Kendall County, Village of Oswego, United City of Yorkville, and City of Plano make up the Kendall County Stormwater Technical Committee (SWTAC). The purpose of the SWTAC is to address countywide stormwater management. The SWTAC, the Conservation Foundation, Kendall County, The Campaign for Sensible Growth, and Strand Associates, Inc. held two stormwater management workshops for 45 attendees that provided information on the Stormwater Management Act, establishing a commission, and developing a plan.

**Lake County SWCD** held their 50th Anniversary Annual Meeting where they reported on many of their activities during the year. Activities included conducting 89 soil tests; performing GIS and tax assessment mapping; providing soil borings on 37 sites; and assisting 467 walk-in customers. Peter Annin was the featured speaker.

The **North Cook SWCD** cultivated a more meaningful and lasting interaction with its constituents by hosting its annual luncheon for municipal engineers, public works staff, road department personnel and conservation partners free of charge. Participants meet the District Board, enjoy a hot lunch, listen to presentations and discuss soil and water quality issues in a relaxed environment. Attendees receive programs including a highlighted copy of the District's mission statement linking the presentation topic to specific items within the District's mission. To allow for increased attendance during regular working hours, all luncheons are held between 11 a.m. and 1:30 p.m. and offer Professional Development Hours. The luncheons have been well received and appreciated. Information gathered during discussion and event survey will be instrumental in guiding future education/outreach programming. The 4th Annual Soil & Water Quality Luncheon entitled "Best Management Practices for Construction Site Dewatering" North Cook Soil and Water Conservation District Resource Conservationist Rick McAndless presented on erosion control planning considerations and inspections. Dan Salsinger of Ero-Tex followed with a presentation of best management practices for construction site dewatering.



*Well Sealing Demonstration hosted by many SWCDs throughout the state.*

**Piatt County SWCD** held two pond workshops to help people learn about proper pond design and stocking of fish. Guest speakers were invited and each workshop was attended by 30 people.

**Piatt County SWCD** and Piatt County Farm Bureau held a pipeline construction meeting to help inform people about their rights as landowners. Guest speakers were Terry Savko from the Illinois Department of Agriculture, Office of Farmland Protection and Mined Land Reclamation and Rae Payne, Attorney from the Illinois Farm Bureau.

### *Region 3*

*Adams, Bond, Brown, Calhoun, Cass, Christian, Greene, Hancock, Jersey, Logan, Macoupin, Madison, McDonough, Menard, Montgomery, Morgan, Pike, Sangamon, Schuyler, Scott*

**Adams, Brown and Pike County SWCDs**, University of Illinois Extension, and volunteers held its 6<sup>th</sup> Annual Conservation Day for clients of Transitions/CRC Industries, a facility for mentally and physically challenged adults. Over 130 clients participated in four different activities and then stayed for a picnic at Upper Moorman Park.

**Adams County SWCD's** Resource Conservationist assisted John Wood Community College with a Natural Resources Management class. Students were required to write a conservation plan for a tract of land that included all resources (cropland, timber land, pasture, wildlife habitat, nutrient management, soil erosion, etc). The plans needed to be practical and implementable on the tract of land. This class has been offered by JWCC for over 20 years, and many good conservation plans have been written by the students.

**Bond County SWCD**, Illinois Agriculture in the Classroom for Bond County, University of Illinois Extension, Illinois Department of Natural Resources - Divisions of Wildlife and Fisheries, the American Lung Association, Southwestern Electric Cooperative and local FFA Chapters sponsored and coordinated the Third Annual 5<sup>th</sup> Grade Conservation Day. Some of this year's topics included water safety, identifying and conserving natural resources like fish and wildlife, and new technologies like Ethanol production.

The **Brown County SWCD** and the Brown County Agriculture Awareness program, sponsored and participated in an agriculture education day centered on youth pre-K through 4th grades. The day was filled with hands-on learning activities related to agriculture and the farming community. This year participants watched the shearing of sheep. A petting zoo and common farm equipment were displayed. Brown County is considered a rural area, but most of its young people have not seen live farm animals or learned about common farm equipment.

Brown County sixth graders were invited to attend a scavenger hunt at the **Brown County SWCD's** Moore Memorial Park. They learned about nature and agricultural practices and had fun competing in a scavenger hunt along the way.

The **Calhoun County SWCD** co-sponsored a Forestry Field Day for county landowners. Thirty minute concurrent sessions were available to the 115 attendees on Alternative Uses of Hardwoods; How to Increase Wildlife & Songbirds Numbers; Timber Harvests; GPS Applications in Woodland; Timber Stand improvement; Forestland Tax Issues; Pruning; and a Lumber Sawing Demonstration.

**Calhoun County SWCD**, Farm Bureau, Farm Service Agency, Forest Land Enhancement Program, Illinois Department of Agriculture, Illinois Farm Bureau, Illini Valley RC&D, Illinois Department of Natural Resources, Illinois Forestry Association, Illinois Forestry Development Council, Illinois Wood Products Association, Natural Resources Conservation Service, McCully Heritage Project, Paul Tree Farm, Trees Forever, Two Rivers RC&D, University of Illinois Extension, and U.S. Forest Service provided instruction on Tree Identification, Seed Identification, Tree Measurement and Timber Stand Improvement to its students ages 10-18. A Forestry Judging contest was also a part of the youth activities.

The **Cass County SWCD** celebrated its 60<sup>th</sup> Anniversary by honoring all current and past Directors. A special ribbon was provided to all past directors attending. The 140 attendees enjoyed eating cake and listening to Joe Crain, weatherman from Channel 20 TV in Springfield.

The **Cass County SWCD** sponsored Ag Days for Cass County kindergarten through fifth graders. 397 children from six county schools visited 13 stations, addressing agricultural and/or conservation activities, recycling, water and resource conservation issues. The Illinois Department of Natural Resources presented "Minerals in Illinois" and the Illinois State Police's demonstrated the results of not wearing seatbelts in cars and trucks.

The **Hancock County SWCD** received a Tecomate Plotmaster 400 (with 4' disk, chisel, seeder, roller combination) and utility trailer from the Hancock Jakes and Longbeards Chapter of the National Wild Turkey Federation and Illinois Department of Natural Resources through the Habitat Stamp Fund, which is supported by contributions from Illinois hunters, to help benefit wildlife habitat preservation. The PLOTMASTER 400 makes planting food plots easy, fun, and allows planting on previously difficult areas.

The **Hancock County SWCD**, University of Illinois Extension, Hancock County Farm Bureau, and the Illinois Environmental Protection Agency sponsored a free tire collection. Only truck, tractor, and passenger car tires and tubes from private individuals were accepted. The team effort collected 7,100 unwanted tires which reduced habitat for disease-carrying vectors, like rats and mosquitoes, and reduced pollutants from leaching into ground water.

The **Hancock County SWCD**, area teachers, and the Ag Awareness Program Coordinator had 275 third grade students experience planting trees and learning the benefits obtained from trees including erosion control; reductions in air pollution; cooling effects; reduced heating bills; reduction in carbon dioxide levels; habitat for wildlife; wood products – paper, lumber, etc., beauty and much more. Each student received their own tree to take home.

The **Hancock County SWCD** awarded three \$500 Glen Smiddy Memorial Scholarships to Alex Denny of Augusta, Todd Hurt of Basco, Jacob Newton of Burnside, and Todd Schmitz of Nauvoo. The Glen Smiddy Memorial Scholarship honors Glen's contributions to soil conservation, is awarded to Hancock County students or residents majoring in agriculture, agri-business, conservation, natural resources, or other agriculture related courses

The **Macoupin County SWCD** conducted a weeklong series of educational sessions on environmental and conservation topics for the county's 6<sup>th</sup> graders, students. Six groups per day for one week participated in the event.

The **Madison County, Monroe County, and St. Clair County SWCDs** held a Erosion & Sediment Control Field Day at the Southern Illinois University at Edwardsville for 170 attendees, mostly developers, engineers, contractors and municipal inspectors, to see new products, techniques and demonstrations of erosion and sediment control on urbanizing sites. Professional engineers were offered 4 PDUs to attend. CPESCs attending received 4 PDUs.

The **Menard County SWCD** held a Legislative Discussion with Illinois State Senator Larry K. Bomke and Illinois State Representative Rich Brauer on topics relating to agriculture and current legislative bill proposals. Menard County State's Attorney Ken Baumgarten served as moderator. Attendees had the opportunity to ask questions of the local legislatures. Topics generating the most interest were utility rate increases, alternative and bio-energy resources, property tax issues for areas enrolled in conservation programs, and the reduction in methamphetamine production.

The **Menard County SWCD** held its first annual Photo Contest. The top county photo by Amy Lovekamp, was entered in the competition in the national Canon Envirothon Photo Contest. Menard Soil and Water Conservation District's winner took first place in its category during the national competition. The same photo received first place honors in the Association of Illinois Soil & Water Conservation Districts Photo Contest as well.

The **Menard County SWCD** held its annual Ladies Active in Agriculture and Conservation dinner. Cindy Spillman, from Women in the Outdoors, and Gail Adamski, of The Farm, spoke at the event that was held for 40 attendees.

The **Menard County SWCD**, the Menard County Farm Bureau, University of Illinois Extension-Sangamon/Menard Unit, and the Sangamon/Menard Ag Education Partnership provided an understanding of the importance of agriculture in every day life to 200 fifth graders at Discovery Day.

**Pike County SWCD** sponsored the local competition for Envirothon, a problem-solving natural resource competition for high school students. Nine teams of 5 high school students tested their knowledge in aquatics, forestry, soils, wildlife and current environmental issues. Barry High School was the county winner.

The **Schuyler County SWCD**, Schuyler/Brown County Unit of the University of Illinois Extension, and Schuyler County Farm Bureau co-sponsored Ag Day on the Square, celebrating agriculture in the county. Educational agricultural/conservation presentations are given to K-6 grades, with the District focusing on first and second graders. A Young Farmer, Master Farmer and Patron of Agriculture, poster and essay contest award recipients, are announced at the free breakfast.

### *Region 4*

*Champaign, Clark, Clay, Coles, Crawford, Cumberland, Douglas, Edgar, Edwards, Effingham, Fayette, Jasper, Lawrence, Macon, Marion, Moultrie, Richland, Shelby, Vermillion, Wabash, Wayne*

**Clark County SWCD** provided 250 white pine seedlings for the county's 3rd grade students in conjunction with Arbor Day presentations and a tree planting ceremony.

The **Clark County SWCD**, North Fork Conservation District, and the Illinois Environmental Protection Agency sponsored a water quality workshop for county high school science students. They learned about local water quality issues and performed water tests for nitrates, phosphates ammonia, dissolved oxygen, turbidity and pH. Students performed stream sampling in the North Fork River and participated in a stream site scavenger hunt.



*Informational meeting held on wetlands for residents of a newly developed subdivision.*

The **Clark County SWCD**, Clark County Farm Bureau, University of Illinois Extension, and Natural Resources Conservation Service sponsored an Agriculture/Conservation Expo for all fifth graders in the county. Students participated in hands on activities on various topics relating to agriculture and conservation, including water quality, forestry, wildlife, crop production, and livestock production, and wildlife and farm safety.

The **Clark County SWCD**, Clark County Farm Bureau, University of Illinois Extension, and Natural Resources Conservation Service sponsored a workshop for county sixth grader students - "Connecting to Agriculture". This workshop introduced students to the various careers in agriculture such as conservation, agricultural tourism, finance, marketing and agricultural education.

The **Crawford County SWCD** held their Conservation Field Days for approximately 300 fifth grader students and teachers in the county.

The **Crawford County SWCD** and the LaMotte Creek Watershed Committee showcased a strip-till field, a farm with an active forestry management plan, and a grass fed beef operation to approximately 80 local landowners.

**Edgar County SWCD** assisted in the completion of 16 Illinois Carbon Credit Initiative applications in the county. The District's Resource Conservationist reviewed and verified 2 applications in Edgar County and 6 applications in Indiana.

**Edgar, Coles, and Douglas County SWCDs** hosted a land use meeting for approximately 100 producers and landowners in the three counties concerned with a proposed long-wall mine operation.

The **Edwards County SWCD** and Edwards County Farm Bureau provide agriculture education through their Ag in the Classroom program to schools in Albion, West Salem, and Grayville. The District also provides conservation education grant information and assistance to the teachers.

**Edwards County SWCD** and 4H sponsored several events together and beautified the Edwards County Fairgrounds as 4-H projects.

The **Edwards County SWCD's** Resource Conservationist is on the board of directors for the Edwards County Project Success which provides drug awareness programs and services. Resource Conservationist works with local schoolteachers in finding avenues for educational grants for use in their classrooms.

The **Lawrence County SWCD** held its annual no-till meeting. University of Illinois Extension provided a speaker and Farm Credit provided funding for the meal. The latest topics of no-till are shared and discussed. The latest residue transect survey information, and District programs and services information was shared.

The **Lawrence County SWCD** held its annual contractor and road commissioner breakfast. Attendees were given vital safety information from the JULIE representative. Upcoming conservation practice construction programs were discussed. Road commissioners were updated to tiles outlets from terrace systems. The pipeline companies and utility companies shared their concerns about excavating over, around, or near any of their services.

**Lawrence County SWCD** received grants from the Maxine Spiller Foundation, Toyota, and Pioneer Seed to present agricultural lessons in the Lawrence County schools. These students then learned the importance of agriculture and the need to protect the soil and water resources.

**Marion County SWCD** contributed to the Marion County Ag Literacy Coalition. One district director, one associate director, and one employee are board members of the group. The Ag Literacy training is also provided at Ag Day during the Marion Fair. This year four lesson plans were provided to local schools. A total of 540 teachers and 3,749 students were reached by the Ag Literacy coalitions.

**Marion County SWCD** assisted landowners with submitting 100 Illinois Conservation Climate Initiative applications. 68 contracts, approved for a total of 4,920.2 acres, included planting 2,868.8 acres of grassland; 1,367.5 acres of trees; and enrolled 683.9 acres into continuous no-till.

Through Upper Little Wabash Ecosystem Partnership, the **Marion County SWCD** has been awarded three C2000 Ecosystem grant totaling \$183,430 for the three projects with local matching funds of \$149,551. Habitat restoration and enhancement will be done on 800 acres of prairie, 132 acre of forest, 85 acres of riparian buffer, and 45 of wetlands. Soil saving is calculated to be 10 ton of soil/acre/year.

The **Marion County SWCD's** 385-acre learning center was the training site for the National Wild Land Fire Fighter II Certification. Four instructors from the Illinois Fire Service Institute conducted the training to 17 volunteer firemen from 5 Illinois counties. The training certifies the firemen in conducting prescribed burns. Because of this training, the Kell Fire Dept conducts prescribed control burns for 10 producers on 215 acres of CRP ground in the county. These firemen are now also trained and certified to fight wild fires throughout the United States.

### *Region 5*

*Clinton, Franklin, Gallatin, Hamilton, Jackson, Jefferson, Johnson, Massac, Monroe, Perry, Pope-Hardin, Pulaski-Alexander, Randolph, St. Clair, Saline, Union, Washington, White, Williamson*

The **Gallatin County SWCD** arranged for Santa Claus (Gallatin County Soil and Water Conservation District director, Norbert Rider) to deliver Christmas goody bags to residents at the Veteran's Administration nursing home facility in Marion, Illinois. This year, the SWCDs in southern Illinois had a bake sale to add to the goodies already provided by the local organizations.

The **Jackson County SWCD** and Natural Resource Conservation Service hosted a two day Prescribed Burn Training. Attendees learned how to write a burn plan on the first day and participated in a prescribed burn on the second day. Dr. Charles Ruffner from Southern Illinois University at Carbondale and the Illinois Fire Dogs helped with the training and demonstration.



The **Perry County SWCD** and the Perry County Board of Commissioners established a land use protection committee two years ago to develop a zoning ordinance to protect agricultural land. With the help of the Natural Resources Conservation Service Geographic Information Specialist, land use and zoning maps were developed. After 3 public hearings and some revisions, the Perry County Board of Commissioner adopted their first zoning ordinance. The committee is now working on revising the Perry County Comprehensive Land Use Plan to reflect the new ordinance.

The **Perry County SWCD** and the Family Tree Nursery created a display of wetland plants, pond, and fountain at the 11 day DuQuoin State Fair. The display attracted fairgoers to the information display and soil and water conservation related brochures.

The **Perry County SWCD** staff sits on the DuQuoin Farmers Market Board and provides support to the Pinckneyville Farmers Market.

The **Perry County SWCD** hosted a mine reclamation tour. The busload of attendees visited 3 above ground and one underground Carter Coal Company mine sites. Two Perry County commissioners, county assessor, county highway engineer, county clerk, and county treasurer attended the tour in addition to the Soil and Water Conservation District Directors, Natural Resource Conservation Service staff and Illinois Department of Agriculture staff.

**Randolph County SWCD** helped put on the Randolph County 5<sup>th</sup> Grade Conservation Fair, the multi-county Conservation Fair for kindergarten through 6<sup>th</sup> grade students at the DuQuoin Fairgrounds, and the Farm and Home Safety Day Camp for 6<sup>th</sup> graders. These events provide natural resource education by professionals and volunteers.

**Saline County SWCD** hosted its annual Conservation Day. In addition to the Natural Resource Conservation Service and Farm Service Agency presentation of current federal programs, their Resource Conservationist reported on local conservation practice options. Other topics covered included quail habitat, invasive species, carbon credits, prescribed burns, and staying compliant with US Army Corps of Engineers regulations.

The **Washington County SWCD** has annually received grants from the Illinois Department Natural Resources to control garlic mustard in the Kaskaskia River corridor. Since 2003, they have received \$54,656 for land treatment.

The **White County SWCD** and the local National Wild Turkey Federation hosted the 4<sup>th</sup> Annual Women in the Outdoors event. Approximately 30 women enjoyed instruction in archery, shot guns, outdoor cooking, canoeing, self-defense, nature photography, and other nature related topics. Proceeds from the event funded a local scholarship.

**Conservation Fair** is a 3-day, outdoor conservation education event held at the DuQuoin Fairgrounds for over 3,000 kindergarten through 6<sup>th</sup> graders from **Franklin, Jackson, Perry, Randolph, Washington, and Williamson** counties. For 17 years, (over 51,000 students), the SWCDs have developed and taught many of the activities, registered and scheduled the classes, recruited presenters, and raised the funds to hold this event. The SWCDs currently offer this program at no cost to the schools.

### *All Regions*

**Fourteen SWCDs** currently have agreements with the Illinois Environmental Protection Agency to improve erosion and sediment control on urban construction sites. The districts have staffs that are Certified Professionals in Erosion and Sediment Control. They reviewed sites for compliance with National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) stormwater permits. They are educating developers and contractors about why and how to install and maintain best management practices. "We're very happy with the direction this program has gone," says Tim Kluge, field operations manager with the IEPA. "We've seen a tremendous improvement in the awareness and understanding among developers and contractors of NPDES permit requirements." *From Erosion Control Magazine.*

# ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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**Illinois Department of Agriculture**  
Bureau of Land and Water Resources  
217/782-6297  
[www.agr.state.il.us](http://www.agr.state.il.us)



**Association of Illinois Soil and Water Conservation Districts**  
217/744-3414  
[www.aiswcd.org](http://www.aiswcd.org)

In compiling this report, information was provided by the following agencies that work through or in conjunction with soil and water conservation districts.



**Illinois Department of Natural Resources**  
217/782-7454  
[www.dnr.state.il.us](http://www.dnr.state.il.us)



**USDA—Natural Resources Conservation Service, Illinois**  
217/353-6600  
[www.il.nrcs.usda.gov](http://www.il.nrcs.usda.gov)



**Illinois Environmental Protection Agency**  
217/524-2743  
[www.epa.state.il.us](http://www.epa.state.il.us)