

Volume 15 Number 2 December 2005

Chapter Officials:

Cal Thorson, President

Jennifer Hegge, President-Elect

Jackie Henderson, Past President

Bob Bird, Secretary-Treasurer

Lena Bohm, Council Representative

Russ Jordre, Council Representative

Myron Senechal, Professional Erosion and Sediment Control Liaison

Committee Chairs:

Nominations – Todd Solem

Legislative – Mark Anderson

History – Fred Aziz

Membership – Jennifer Hegge

Fundraising - Rodney O'Clair

Environmental Education – Pam Copenhaver

Student Chapter – Jennifer Hegge

Awards – Dr. Stephan Schroeder

Newsletter – Jill Howard

Webmaster – Jon Stika

Publicity – Lena Bohm

NDSWCS Foundation- David Hopkins

North Dakota Soil and Water Conservation Society

Annual Meeting

Tuesday, January 10th 10:00 – 6:00pm
Ionian Room
Holiday Inn Riverside, Minot ND

DEVELOPING BETTER SKILLS TO MAKE US BETTER LEADERS

Marie Hvidsten, Rural Leadership Specialist, NDSU Extension Service

9:30 – 10:00 Registration & Introductions

10:00 – 12:00 Ethical Leadership -- The ability to do the right thing has a significant impact on everyone around us and is key to an individual's development as a leader. Discussion of ethical challenges will deepen a participants' ability to recognize ethical problems and find solutions.

12:00 – 1:00 Lunch – On your own

1:00 – 2:30 Boards, Councils & Committees -- Encouraging groups to work efficiently to make a more productive board, council or committee to move from talk to action. Learning how to manage conflict could be key in increasing board, council or committee production, as well as in the workplace.

2:30 – 2:45 Break

2:45 – 4:30 Leadership Development – How to enhance your communication skills with clients and the public.

4:30 – 4:45 SWCS Awards

4:45 – 6:00 2005 Annual Business Meeting

2006 ND Chapter Nominee Biographies

Council Representative Nominees:

Richard Webb is the District Conservationist in Langdon, ND and has been a member of SWCS since 2003. He has served in this position since September of 2003. He has also served 15 months as a Soil Conservationist in New Rockford, ND and three years as a Watershed Coordinator with the Pembina County Soil Conservation District. Richard is a 1999 graduate of North Dakota State University with a Bachelor's degree in Agricultural Systems Management and a minor in Agricultural Economics. Richard has been active within NRCS; assisting with Conservation System/Conservation System Guide development, Toolkit 2004 training, and currently serves on the ND NRCS Marketing Committee.

Rodney O'Clair is employed by NRCS and stationed at the Bismarck State Office. Rodney has been a member of SWCS since 1973, and has held chapter positions of fundraising chair, membership chair, and director. He has attended four SWCS Regional leadership training

meetings and is the recipient of the 2005 Commendation Award from SWCS.

Rodney is a graduate of Tolley High School and North Dakota State University. He is married and has two daughters. Rodney held NRCS positions in Bottineau, Grand Forks, Fessenden, New Rockford and Jamestown. He has multi state experience from his duties as a biologist on the Prairie Pothole Regional Technical Team. He served on several committees put together to improve services of NRCS to its clients. Rodney is also a graduate of the Northern Great Plains NRCS Leadership Training Course and is a Total Quality Management Instructor.

Rodney is a hunter education instructor (current President of NDHEA), exhausted rooster (Jaycees) (Senator and Roughrider awards), and a member of Eagles and The Wildlife Society. His hobbies include, teaching young people, hunting, fishing, and story telling.

Secretary/Treasurer Nominee:

Bob Bird is a retired Civil Engineer from SCS/NRCS after almost 34 years of federal service in ND, IL, and MN. He received a B.S. degree in Agricultural Engineering from NDSU. Bob is a veteran of the US Army and served in Vietnam. He is a member of the VFW, American Legion, and Vietnam Veterans of America. He was an All-State VFW Post Commander three times in MN and this past year was an All-American VFW Post Commander at Bismarck VFW. This year he is the ND VFW 4th District Commander. He was Americanism Chairman for ND VFW 4th District for two years and State Americanism Chairman last year. Bob is a past section chairman for IL SWCS, past scholarship and awards chairman for MN SWCS, currently Co-Chair ND SWCS Awards Committee, Secretary-Treasurer of NDSWCS for the last two years, past Secretary-Treasurer of Central IL ASAE, past Vice Chair(Awards) for MN ASAE, and past Chairman of MN ASCE History and Heritage Committee. He is a Fellow in ASCE. He has been a member of SCSA/SWCS for over 30 years and received the MN SWCS Outstanding Service Award in 2000. Bob is active in ASAE, ASCE, NDSPE, SWCS, and AWRA professionally and is a registered Professional Engineer in MN. He does volunteer work for the VFW, ND Historical Archives Research Library, and MN Earth Team. He was instrumental in the successful nomination of the Spiral Bridge in St. Paul, MN, as an ASCE National Historic Landmark in 2001 and was the author of the successful nomination of the Skid-Steer Loader as an ASAE National Historic Landmark in 2003. Mr. Bird is the current Secretary-Treasurer of ND SWCS and Co-Chair of ND SWCS Awards Committee.

2006 NDSWCS Ballot

1. Vote for one Council Representative.

Your answer:

- Richard Webb
- Rodney O'Clair

2. Vote for one Secretary-Treasurer.

Your answer:

- Bob Bird
- Other _____

Either vote online or mail a hard copy of the ballot to: Todd Solem, 2493

4th Ave West, Room C, Dickinson, ND 58601 by January 8th.

Vote Online!

Now you can participate in chapter elections by voting online. An online ballot has been set up at:

<http://school.discovery.com/quizzes26/physicus/NDSWCSBallot.html>

Simply click on the link above and enter **NDSWCS** for the Group name, **ballot** for the password, and click "Submit" to access the ballot.

Graduate Students and Professionals

Do you need financial assistance to continue your education or update your skills?

Check out these

SWCS Scholarships

The Soil & Water Conservation Society will offer two scholarships in 2006 to graduate students and professional conservationists who have been members of SWCS for at least one year.

Kenneth E. Grant Research Scholarship

The Kenneth E. Grant Research Scholarship provides financial aid to members of SWCS for graduate-level research on a specific conservation topic that will extend the SWCS mission of fostering the science and the art of soil, water, and related natural resource management to achieve sustainability. *One research grant of \$1,300* will be awarded in 2006 for an interdisciplinary investigation that examines:

- ◆ Managing land uses for sustainability; or
- ◆ Measuring impacts of conservation practices.

Research proposals should use an investigative methodology that demonstrates an understanding of the relationships between various disciplines and suggests an approach for integrating this knowledge into action. A reasonable need for financial assistance is required.

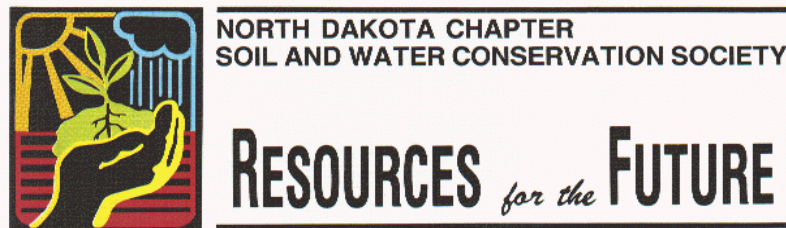
Donald A. Williams Soil Conservation Scholarship

The Donald A. Williams Soil Conservation Scholarship provides financial assistance to members of SWCS who are currently employed but wish to improve their technical or administrative competence in a conservation-related field through course work at an accredited college or through a program of special study. *One scholarship, up to \$1,500*, is available in 2006 for SWCS members who have completed at least one year of full-time employment in a natural resource field. Financial need is considered.

Three ways to get an application or more information:

- ✳ Visit www.swcs.org and search for scholarships;
- ✳ Contact a member of the SWCS Professional Development Committee (contact information available on www.swcs.org); or
- ✳ Call SWCS Headquarters (515-289-2331).

The **deadline** for submitting applications is **February 13, 2006**. Applications may be sent to sueann.lynes@swcs.org or SWCS, 945 SW Ankeny Road, Ankeny, Iowa 50023. Recipients will be recognized at the SWSC annual conference, July 22 - 26, 2006, in Keystone, Colorado.



Volume 15 Number 1 July 2005

Webmaster Report By Jon Stika

The web host is paid up through the end of the year and the domain name registration is due to be renewed in October. I have updated the web site by putting the information about awards on it's own page at <http://www.ndswcs.org/awards.htm> I have been posting the minutes of the latest meetings and doing my best to keep the members list current. We recently exceeded the 3100 mark of hits on the web site since it's inception. Nearly all the information members would want to know or reference about the ND chapter is on the web site. I would like to add more information and user options to the Foundation page in the future. I welcome any ideas or constructive criticism that members have regarding the content and functionality of the web site.

"YEAR OF THE COW"

The Northern Great Plains Research Laboratory at Mandan, ND will be hosting their 2005 Friends & Neighbors Day at 4 PM on July 21st.

The Mandan USDA Agricultural Research Service research facility will highlight many research efforts in support of the cattle industry this year. This will include the grand opening of the USDA's newest beef cattle

research facility. The USDA scientists will also provide tours of their scientific campus, carbon sequestration research, innovative forage breeding, grazing lands renovation, cropping systems and more.

In addition to tours of the USDA laboratory, NDSU will be showcasing their rapid response beef animal bio-security system, there will be exhibits on biofuel production, and the USDA-ARS Grand Forks Human Nutrition Center will provide tours of their Mobile Human Health Laboratory.

A complementary beef barbecue and entertainment by Ben Suchy will conclude the evening.

The Northern Great Plains Research Laboratory is located on Highway 6 South, just south of the Heart River in Mandan.

For more information, call the lab at 667.3000 or go to: www.mandan.ars.usda.gov.

WANTED: COMMITTEE MEMBERS!

Active participation in SWCS allows members the opportunity to have personal impact on conservation issues beyond the constraints of employment and the opportunity to develop social relationships with others who value our natural resources. Increased involvement is now needed to "beef up" the activity levels of our committees.

A committee of at least 2 or 3 members will allow each committee to be more active, more effective, and more fun!

Society leadership can provide our members valuable experience, recognition, and networking opportunities that could be the edge needed when promotions present themselves.

Current committees being formed with some chairs and committee members so far:

Membership – Available

Legislative – Mark Anderson, Chair, Steve Merrill, Andy Wingenbach

Environmental Education – Pam Copenhaver, Chair, Alan Ness, Lena Bohm

Newsletter – Jill Howard, Editor

Webmaster – Jon Stika

Fundraising – Rod O'Clair, Chair

Awards – Stephan Schroeder, Chair, Bob Bird

Cert. Prof. Erosion & Sediment Control Liaison – Myron Senechal

Historian – Fred Aziz

Nominations – Todd Solem

Publicity – Available

Student Chapter – Available

We invite you to step-up and help your Society better serve your needs. As the saying goes, "many hands make short work". All of us together can accomplish much more than a few. Please consider increasing your involvement with your professional society and help develop the direction. Contact the committee chairman or Cal Thorson at: (thorsonC@mandan.ars.usda.gov or 701. 667-3018) if you can help.

National SWCS Meeting 2004

I attended, along with other chapter members, the National SWCS meeting in St Paul, MN from July 24-July 28 2004. The Minnesota SWCS Chapter did a great job of putting the conference together!

It was an excellent networking experience, as well as a very informative conference. The North Dakota chapter is working on holding educational opportunities which include the Soil and Water Summit on August 10 in Jamestown, and a Bismarck Ranchette meeting on September 17. Watch for the brochures on what information will be presented. Please take advantage of these learning opportunities and support them by your presence!

Pam Copenhaver

Environmental Education Committee Chairman

NORTH DAKOTA CHAPTER MEMBER NEWS By Bob Bird

The Soil Science Society of America has recognized Mark Liebig with the 2004 Young Scientist Achievement Award. Mark is a soil scientist at the USDA-ARS Northern Great Plains Research Laboratory at Mandan.

The Manitoba-North Dakota Zero Till Association has given Alan Ness their Annual Non-Farmer of the Year Award. Alan is an agronomist with USDA-NRCS in Bismarck and has been very active in environmental education with the North Dakota Chapter of SWCS and the MB-ND Zero Till Assn. At the same meeting NDSWCS President Cal Thorson was elected Vice President of the MB-ND Zero Till Assn. Cal has been very active in many organizations and works at the USDA-ARS Northern Great Plains Research Laboratory at Mandan.

SWC FOUNDATION IS BACK! By Bob Bird and Myron Senechal

The North Dakota Soil and Water Conservation Foundation was started in 1994 for educational and charitable purposes. In recent years directors terms have expired without the NDSWCS (Society) Board of Directors (BOD) appointing replacements. Part of this was because new Society officers did not realize their responsibility to fill a director's position on the Foundation each year as terms expired. The Society's BOD and the Foundation's BOD need to work together to complement each other and make both Boards better.

Thanks to Ron Luethe who kept the Foundation viable during the inactive period and will be crucial to rejuvenating it in the future. Let's give them our support! At the Society's Feb. 3, 2005 BOD meeting, five new Foundation Directors were appointed to staggered terms of 1,2,3,4, and 5 years. In subsequent years new appointments will be for 5 year terms. Future appointments will be made at the first Society BOD meeting after the annual meeting. Newly appointed Foundation Directors for 2005 are:

1 year term – Ron Luethe, Bismarck, ND (NRCS)

2 year term – Steve Morris, New Salem, ND (Consultant)

3 year term – Dr. David Hopkins, Fargo, ND (NDSU)

4 year term – Myron Senechal, Bismarck, ND (Consultant)

5 year term – Jon Stika, Dickinson, ND (NRCS)

Ex-officio members of the Foundation are the Past President of NDSWCS, Jackie Henderson, Bismarck, ND, and the current President of NDSWCS Cal Thorson, Bismarck, ND.

FOUNDATION FUNDS NEEDED

Over the last ten years, the Foundation has accumulated funds to start work with. More funds are needed. ND Chapter members must help find ways to generate funds for such things as scholarships, demonstration projects, educational pursuits, training opportunities, etc. If you have expertise in these areas or have an idea, contact one of the Foundation Board members.

Donations and/or memorials to the Foundation are tax deductible as a contribution if you itemize. Check with your accountant or tax preparer for guidance.

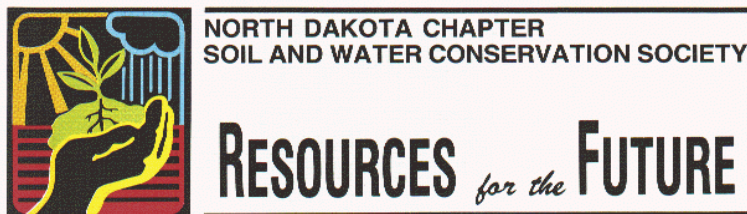
Donations, Memorials or Contributions can be sent to:

North Dakota Soil & Water Conservation Foundation
P.O. Box 2241
Bismarck, ND 58502-2241

Recent memorials received were for:

Howard Stout, Ralph Turman, Willis Demke

All Foundation contributions will be acknowledged. New Foundation officers will be established in the near future. At present Dr. David Hopkins is facilitating this process of reorganization.



Volume 14 Number 2 October 2004
**North Dakota Chapter of the Soil and Water
Conservation Society 2004 Annual Meeting**

Tuesday, November 9th 2004, 11:00am – 3:30pm

Best Western Ramkota Hotel, Bismarck ND

11:00 - 12:00 Lunch

Seasons Café, Ramkota Hotel (Cost on your own)

12:00 – 12:15 Awards Presentation

12:25 - 12:55 Conservation Agriculture

Sharon Clancy, Coordinator of Conservation Agriculture Program; North Dakota Natural Resources Trust

1:05 - 1:35 How Does Soil Scum (Glomalin) Improve Soil Health?

Dr. Kris Nichols, Northern Great Plains Research Laboratory, USDA Agriculture Research Service

1:45 – 2:15 Soil Health and Cropping Systems

Jay Fuhrer, Natural Resources Conservation Service; Bismarck ND

2:25 – 2:45 Envirothon

Diane Olson, North Dakota Envirothon Coordinator; Coalition for Conservation and Environmental Education

2:45 - 3:30 2004 Business Meeting

Awards, presentations, and business meeting will be held in the

Heart Room, Ramkota Hotel

If you have questions, please contact Jennifer Hegge at (701) 265-3131.

The Soil and Water Conservation Society fosters the science and the art of soil, water and related natural resource management to achieve sustainability. We promote and practice an ethic recognizing the interdependence of people and the environment.

Dear ND Chapter SWCS member,

Below is the ballot to elect a director, secretary-treasurer and a president-elect to take office immediately following the annual meeting. Thanks to Bob, Jennifer, Jill and Dan, for their willingness to run for these positions of service to our chapter. Some information about the candidates is attached.

You can vote by one of two ways:

Print out this page ([click on "2005 Ballot" at the top of the page for a printable copy](#)), mark the ballot with your choices, and turn in your ballot at the annual meeting on November 9, 2004.

Reply via e-mail to: todd.solem@nd.usda.gov.*

(Replying via e-mail will not be a "secret" ballot, but will be kept confidential)

*** If e-mailing ballot, it has to be received by close of business on November 5, 2004.**

If you have any questions regarding the ballot or voting procedure please contact Todd Solem at the e-mail address above or call (701) 873-2101 (work) or (701) 873-2268 (home).

Thank you. Todd Solem - Nomination Committee

North Dakota Chapter SWCS Ballot for 2004 expiring positions

Director for a 2-year term (vote for one)

_____ Jill Haakenson _____ Dan Wingenbach

_____ (Write-in candidate) _____

Secretary-Treasurer for a 1-year term (vote for one)

_____ Bob bird

_____ (Write-in candidate) _____

President Elect for a 1-year term (vote for one)

_____ Jennifer Hegge

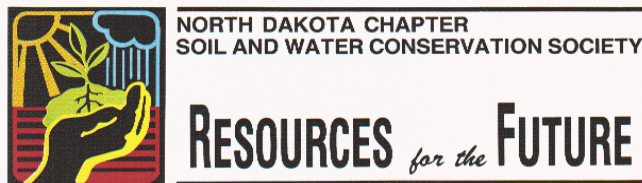
_____ (Write-in candidate) _____

Jill Haakenson is the District Conservationist with the Natural Resources Conservation Service in Finley, ND. She has served in this position since February of 2001. Prior to this she was the DC in New Rockford, ND for two years. Jill currently serves as the Membership Chair for the North Dakota Chapter of the Soil and Water Conservation Society. She and her husband, Tim operates a 4,000 acre small grain farm north of Aneta, ND.

Dan Wingenbach began his career with the Natural Resources Conservation Service in 2002 and has served as a Soil Conservationist in Mott, ND and Fargo, ND. Dan has recently accepted the position of District Conservationist in Ellendale, ND. Prior to his career with the NRCS Dan served as an Environmental Scientist for the North Dakota Department of Health in Bismarck, ND for 7 years. In this capacity Dan was a member of several professional organizations which dealt with water and wastewater issues facing North Dakota.

Bob Bird is a retired Civil Engineer from SCS/NRCS after almost 34 years of federal service in ND, IL, and MN. He received a Bachelor of Science degree in Agricultural Engineering from NDSU. Bob is a veteran of the US Army and served in Vietnam. He is a life member of both the American Legion and the Veterans of Foreign Wars. He is currently Junior Vice Commander of the Bismarck VFW and a three-time All-State Commander of Woodbury, MN VFW from 1998-2001. He has also been Americanism Chairman for ND VFW District 4 for 2 years. Bob is a past section chairman for IL SWCS, past scholarship and awards chairman for MN SWCS, currently Co-Chair ND SWCS Awards Committee, past Secretary-Treasurer of Central IL ASAE, past Vice Chair (Awards) for MN ASAE, and past Chairman of MN ASCE History and Heritage Committee. He has been a member of SCSA/SWCS for 29 years and received the MN SWCS Outstanding Service Award in 2000. Bob is active in ASAE, ASCE, NDSPE, SWCS, and AWRA professionally and is a registered Professional Engineer in MN. He does volunteer work for VFW, ND Historical Archives Research Library, MN Earth Team, and a Rube Goldberg contest for high school students during Engineers Week through Chapter 3 NDSPE and Gateway to Science. He was instrumental in the successful nomination of the Spiral Bridge in St. Paul, MN, as an ASCE National Historic Landmark in 2001 and was the author of the nomination of the Skid-Steer Loader as an ASAE National Historic Landmark in 2003. Currently Co-Chair of ND SWCS Awards Committee and Secretary-treasurer.

Jennifer Hegge has been a member of SWCS since 1999. She served as the Treasurer, Vice President, and President from 2000-02 respectively for the SWCS Student Chapter - Stevens Point, Wisconsin. During her time as President, the student chapter received two national SWCS awards. In 2003, she was elected Council Representative for the ND Chapter SWCS. Since, she has planned and assisted with the 2003 Cookout and Mandan ARS tour (following the NRCS Conservation Planning Course), 2003 Renewable Energy Symposium and annual meeting, 2004 Regional SWCS Workshop, SWCS display update, fundraisers planning, and 2004 Annual Meeting.



Volume 14 Number 1 March 2004

Northern Plains Leadership Development Workshop

March 25-26, 2004 - Medora, North Dakota

"The Northern Plains (NP) Chapters of the Soil and Water Conservation Society are planning a leadership development workshop in Medora, North Dakota beginning at 12:30 p.m., (mountain time) Thursday, March 25, through, Friday, March 26, 2004 in the AmericInn (phone: 701-623-4800) hotel," according to Myron Senechal, Director SWCS, NP, Bismarck, ND. A SWCS block of rooms has been reserved at the Motel for \$55.75 per night plus tax. A fee of \$25.00 will be charged on arrival to attend or you can register on-line at www.ndswcs.org. "A fun leadership 'Conservation Fair' environment is promised by the leadership team" according to Senechal.

The Northern Plains leadership team consists of John Knapp from Colorado who is the Northern Plains representative to the Society's Chapter Development Committee; Robin Foulk, Northern Plains representative to the Membership Committee, and Anita Nein, Northern Plains representative to the Professional Development Committee, both from Nebraska; and Mike Collins from Wyoming, Northern Plains representative to the Society's Awards Committee, says Senechal. The Northern Plains leadership team will have committee interesting ideas and informative discussions for your use in your local chapter. An agenda is being developed by the leadership team and is included.

Each Northern Plains chapter's president or their representative will make a brief 2003 report on activities and identify 2004 needs. Attendees are requested to bring 40 handouts to share with participants. Thanks to Cal Thorson, PAS, USDA-ARS, Bismarck, North Dakota and Heidi Brewer, PAS, USDA-FSA, Bozeman, Montana for hosting and local arrangements for the Northern Plains chapters Development/leadership workshop. Please contact John Knapp (719-384-5408) at John.Knapp@co.usda.gov or Myron Senechal (701-258-1463) or SWCSsenechal@bis.midco.net with comments, agenda items, special needs or questions.

SWCS HAS SOIL MOISTURE PROBES AVAILABLE

As a service to members, crop advisors and Conservation districts, the ND chapter of SWCS voted to obtain soil moisture probes. This device has been around for many years but there appeared to be no supplier and yet the demand for the probe appeared to be steady. The chapter contacted a machine shop and had a supply custom built.

The probes are used to determine soil moisture in fields, yards and gardens. The design allows the probe to be easily pushed into the soil to about the depth of adequate soil moisture for plant growth. Use of the probe will help determine when to irrigate crops, when to water yards and gardens, and can help a farmer make spring or fall planting decisions regarding soil moisture. Adequate soil moisture is needed to help germinate seed, make fertilizers available, and keep plants growing.

The probes will sell for \$15.00 each. If Conservation Districts would like to purchase the probes, they will be offered a bulk discount in lots of 5 each.

Annual report and plea for contribution

Northern Plains Director, Myron Senechal, Bismarck, ND wants to let all members

know they will soon be receiving by mail the Soil and Water Conservation Society's (SWCS) 2002-2003 annual report highlighting accomplishments over the last year. You may have received it already. Included in the mailing is a plea for members to consider making a contribution to SWCS's new Program Development Fund.

The Board of Directors lead by Deborah Grant, U of Ill, says "we have learned we can't rely on membership dues to provide enough income to achieve our mission. Close to three-quarters of the basic dues members send in with your renewal form pays for the nuts and bolts of a our organization. We can't primarily depend on membership dues to build the financial strength we need to aggressively pursue our mission.

Read the Sept-Oct 2003 Home Front column by Craig Cox on the subject: <http://www.swcs.org/docs/Home%20Front-prog%20dev.pdf>

All your contributions will be used for program development—seed money to help us develop new projects and initiatives to support the conservation profession and conservation movement. More and more we depend on raising funds from foundations and agencies to pursue our mission. But it takes money and time to put together proposals and secure funding. Our goal is to raise \$40,000 each year through contributions to support this critical part of our work. We need your help. Anyone can contribute via the SWCS website at: http://www.swcs.org/t_contributor_front.htm

Your Board of Directors recently made building our Society's capacity to develop new programs its highest priority. Please help get this important work started by contributing to the Program Development Fund. Contact Myron Senechal, Director, Northern Plains, Soil and Water Conservation Society for additional background at SWCSsenechal@bis.midco.net

Certified Professional in Erosion and Sediment Control, Inc.

"In the Northern Plains, a certification program is available for members, sponsored by the Soil and Water Conservation Society and the International Erosion Control Association, according," to Myron Senechal, CPESC certification #000259. In ND area contact Senechal at phone: 701-258-1463 or email SWCSsenechal@bis.midco.net

Program Purposes

The public demands evidence of professional competence from persons whose activities affect the physical and economic well being of people throughout the world. This need has been recognized in such professions as medicine, law, and engineering. Laws governing misuse of land and water resources and damages inflicted on others by erosion and sediment have been passed in many countries by their states and provinces. These laws create a need for the services of professionals trained in proper erosion and sediment control methods. Such professionals increasingly must be able to show evidence of their qualifications.

A certification program identifying professionals qualified for educational, scientific, and service activities with public and private agencies in the erosion and sediment field is in the public interest. See <http://www.cpesec.net/> for the certification web site. Through the SWCS and IECA, professionals in this field have developed standards and procedures for certifying persons qualified in erosion and sediment control. This brochure explains the program, standards, and

procedures; contains a code of ethics for those professionals; and includes an application for persons interested in certification.

Certification

Certification is based upon scholarly preparation, knowledge, and experience. Professionals listed on the registry will (a) meet the educational and practical experience standards, (b) subscribe to the code of ethics, (c) qualify for particular identification of special abilities, and (d) pass a qualifying examination. A Certification Review Committee (CRC) passes on the credentials of each applicant for certification. All decisions of the CRC pertaining to eligibility for certification and inclusion on the registry must be considered final after an appeal. ND area contacts is Senechal; in Nebraska David Lightle, phone: 402-437-4008 or email Dave.Lightle@nssc.nrcs.usda.gov; in

South Dakota, contact Yvonne Haefner, at phone 605-669-2302 or email yhaefner@wccenet.com; in Colorado contact is Bill Hansen, at phone 907-225-3532 or email Bill_Hansen@nps.gov ; in Montana, contact Dale Miller, Bozeman at phone 406-586-6926; or in Wyoming contact Kevin Powell at phone 307-777-3997 or email kevin.powell@dot.state.wy.us .

North Dakota Soil & Water Conservation Society

Presents

Wind and Water Erosion

Prediction and Control Workshop

for

Technical Service Providers

Certified Crop Advisors

Conservation Professionals

Farm Managers

Knights of Columbus Hall

Jamestown, North Dakota

March 9 – 10, 2004

You will learn:

Why soil erosion occurs

The effects of soil erosion

How to predict soil erosion

Practices to reduce soil erosion

How to quantify the effects of soil erosion

If you have a laptop computer, bring it for use on Day 2 for Erosion Calculations. IBM compatible software will be provided.

Seven Continuing Education Units (CEU) in the Soil & Water Category for Certified Crop Advisors (CCA) each day (maximum of 14 CEUs available).

Registration prior to March 3rd: Day 1 Only Both Days

SWCS Members \$15 \$30

NON-SWCS Members \$50 \$120

Registration after March 3rd: Day 1 Only Both Days

SWCS Members \$45 \$60

NON-SWCS Members \$75 \$150

Registration forms can be found at www.ndswcs.org or by calling

Jackie Henderson at 701.250.4242 ext. 3304

Mail checks to:

NDSWCS

402 East Denver Avenue

Bismarck, ND 59504

Conservation Security Program Enhancements

by Mark A. Anderson, Legislative Committee Chairman

Background: The Conservation Security Program (CSP) was enacted as part of the 2002 Farm Bill. As an alternative to traditional farm commodity programs that fail to benefit taxpayers and fail to solve any long-term problems, CSP is envisioned as an incentive for farmers and ranchers to apply optimum conservation treatments. CSP has been funded for the first time in fiscal year 2004. Since the low funding level this year is insufficient to offer it nation-wide, CSP will be targeted to certain watersheds not yet identified. North Dakota could have zero, one, or possibly several watersheds selected for funding this year. Higher funding levels and nation-wide availability of CSP in future years is likely.

NRCS is currently working to select and define CSP enhancements. Enhancements are the high-level conservation treatments that will be eligible for CSP incentive payments. CSP incentive payments will be tiered. Greater enhancement application – quantity and/or quality – will earn greater CSP incentive payments.

Deciding what land and water treatments should be approved as CSP enhancements will be a complex task. Following are some potential enhancements and example drawbacks to consider:

Should no-till cropping be a CSP enhancement? (Organic farmers that utilize tillage for weed control might prefer alfalfa in rotation or field windbreaks as CSP enhancements.)

If field windbreaks are selected as an enhancement, what should the maximum interval between windbreaks be? Should there be a higher incentive for multi-row windbreaks, to provide greater wildlife benefit?

Should a cropland management system with a predicted erosion rate less than 2 tons per acre per year be an enhancement, regardless of the combination of practices applied to achieve it? Even if it is dominated by low-residue crops and results in low soil organic matter?

Should a management system that rests grazing land for more than 80% of the growing season be an enhancement? Or, some lower or higher %?

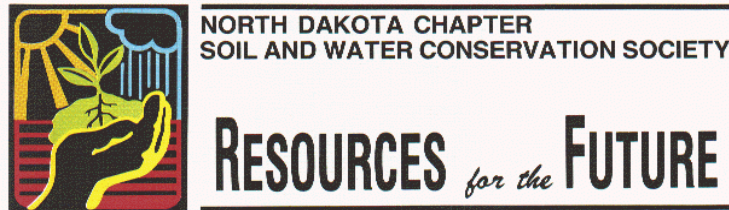
Would eco-site similarity index above 0.80 be a better enhancement criteria than one based on rest period? (Keep in mind that on some sites, a low eco-site similarity rating will not significantly change for years, even if management is optimum.)

CSP enhancements can apply to cropland, grazing land, hay land, farmsteads, and wildlife land-indeed, entire farm/ranch operations. The incentives that will be attributed to enhancements will also impact surface and groundwater, air, and wildlife. NRCS must carefully select and identify CSP enhancements to obtain maximum benefits on-site and off-site from the incentives offered.

NRCS in North Dakota is scheduled to present proposed CSP Enhancements to a sub-committee of the State Technical Committee on March 9th. The State Technical Committee - in which ND-SWCS has been participating - can comment on CSP enhancement criteria to the NRCS State Conservationist. The State Conservationist then will make a decision on CSP Enhancements and submit the plan by March 15th to NRCS National Headquarters for approval.

The selection and criteria for CSP enhancements could affect the management of North Dakota's soil, water, plant, and animal resources for years to come.

The ND Chapter SWCS needs to continue its participation in the State Technical Committee, and should voice our opinion on Enhancements. Members are encouraged to watch for Chapter correspondence regarding the CSP Enhancements, and provide recommendations to the ND-SWCS Legislative Committee on this fast-moving issue.



Volume 13 Number 1 April 2003

New Address for National SWCS:

Soil and Water Conservation Society

945 SW Ankeny Road

Ankeny, IA 50021

A Message from the North Dakota Chapter President:

Hello,

Fellow SWCS'ERS, I hope this newsletter finds you all well. My Name is Dan Hovland and I'm the new President for SWCS in North Dakota. I believe in conservation and I believe it is important enough to be involved in an organization such as SWCS. We strive to promote conservation on the land and sustainable agriculture. The mission of the North Dakota Chapter of the Soil and Water Conservation Society is to foster the art and science of sustainable resource management to protect and improve natural resources for future generations. NDSWCS promotes an ethic recognizing the interdependence of people and the environment. We have a vision to be a respected professional society that is publicly recognized for promoting sustainable use, protection and improvement of soil, water and related natural resources. Members are dedicated, informed and effective individuals who convey vital conservation information to others. I truly believe being involved and taking an active role in such an organization is truly rewarding and not only that but fun. I would like to take this time to thank each and every individual who views conservation as a key priority for their land and would like to encourage and challenge anyone that feels strongly about natural resource issues to join the society and see if you can make a difference.

Dan Hovland
ND SWCS President

WHO AND WHAT IS SWCS?

Since being appointed as the chairperson for the Publicity Committee for the North Dakota Chapter, I have come across many NRCS personnel who don't know what SWCS stands for.

The Soil and Water Conservation Society (SWCS) was founded in 1945, as an international, non-profit scientific and educational organization dedicated to promoting the conservation of soil and water resources.

Membership includes a vast representation of professional resource managers including foresters, conservation planners, biologists, agronomists, engineers, teachers and farmers and many others who are interested in soil and water conservation.

NRCS employees should be a member of SWCS for the following reasons:

- ✳ Up to date information on the latest technologies, policies and program proposals*
- ✳ Be a part of influencing conservation programs*
- ✳ Be an active member; locally led concept through active participation in local chapters*
- ✳ Being involved in the conservation partnership with other agencies*
- ✳ Many activities provide continuing educational events for professional certification*
- ✳ NRCS will support participation in activities as part of a persons career and professional growth*
- ✳ Participation in training sessions will be supported by NRCS*

It is SWCS members who help carry out the Society's mission. Involvement in resource management and planning requires a broad outlook. There are opportunities to network with professionals from many disciplines through local, regional and international meetings. Belonging to professional organizations promotes personal growth and opens the door for career opportunities.

*Julie Malvitz
Publicity Chair*

Fund Raising

Rodney O'Clair, Committee Chair

The North Dakota Chapter has not held a fundraiser in a number of years and it should plan on doing so in order to keep a balance for scholarships and operations. Member dues for the Chapter are very low and most members would like it to remain that way.

The nutrient training workshops that have been run the last several years have been the largest income producing activity for the Chapter. Because registration is usually set at the cost of National Membership, the income

from this project is not tremendously substantial as most in attendance choose to join the Society.

President Dan has asked that Rodney O'Clair chair a fundraising committee and Keith Weston has also agreed to sit on this committee. Other members are solicited to join them and/or provide some fund-raising suggestions. You may recall some of the past projects such as pop-corn sales, annual meeting auctions, and hosting seminars. Please pass your ideas to the committee or a board member. If you have a timely seminar idea that would appeal to a broad audience, PLEASE share that idea!

SOIL AND WATER CONSERVATION SOCIETY DEVELOPMENT WORKSHOP for NP Chapters

By Myron Senechal Mar. 12, 2003

"Plans pulled off as expected for a Chapter Development Workshop for Northern Plains (NP) SWCS Chapters on Thursday-Friday, March 6-7, 2003 at the Civic Center in Gering, NE," according to Myron Senechal, Northern Plains Director for the Soil and Water Conservation Society. Co-keynote presenters were Kent Matsutani, NE past President and Dr. Lorenz Sutherland, CO Chapter Member, according to Senechal. Other program leaders were Robin Foulk and Anita Nein both from the NE Chapter and John Knapp from CO chapter and Mike Collins from the WY chapter.

Matsutani sits on the Conservation Title II Farm Bill Implementation team. He gave first hand experiences and challenges for implementing conservation farm programs. Sutherland presented Soil Conditioning Index and diversity and intensity cropping information. The NP Society Leadership team organized and conducted the technical/leadership workshop.

Northern Plains Chapters reported on local Chapter technical workshop successes and learning experiences for network sharing. Technical, as well as, leadership promotional material was shared. Chapters shared local natural resource information and SWCS promotional materials, such as mini-symposium, workshops, and flyers.

The program agenda was designed for technical presentations and leadership development. Local Chapter leaders and their committee leadership and aspiring members participated in the training. The Northern Plains Society includes state Chapters in MT, WY, CO, NE, SD and ND.

Benefits of Participation in the Leadership workshop were:

Collect ideas that work from neighboring chapters.

Learn how to motivate members to make your Chapter job easier.

Network with other leaders throughout the Northern Plains region.

Take home a plan to make your chapter more effective and stronger.

Participate in discussions to shape the SWCS's future and your Chapters' future.

MARK YOUR CALENDAR!

USDA-ARS NORTHERN GREAT PLAINS RESEARCH LABORATORY'S

Friends & Neighbors Day and Summer Field Tour

June 26, 2003

Twenty-one Year Study Documents the Many Benefits of Organic Agriculture

Organic farmers have long touted their methods as a more benign way to nourish the world, ideally producing good crop yields with minimal impact on the environment and on ecological factors such as soil fertility. However, few rigorous studies have looked at the long-term yields and environmental effects of organic farming. The European Union reportedly has up to 8% of its agricultural land under organic management. However, organic farms remain a niche operation.

Now a report on page [Http://www.fibl.ch/engl/research/soil-ecology/dok/index.html](http://www.fibl.ch/engl/research/soil-ecology/dok/index.html) brings encouraging news for organic fans. A team led by agronomists Paul Mader of the Research Institute of Organic Agriculture in Frick, Switzerland, and David Dubois of the Swiss Federal Research Station for Agroecology and Agriculture in Zurich reports the results of the longest and most comprehensive study to date comparing organic and conventional farming, measuring many aspects of crops and soil over 21 years. The bottom line: Organic farms can be nearly as productive as regular farms for some crops, and they leave soils healthier. Organic soil management improves soil structure by increasing soil activity, thus reducing the risk of erosion. The study also demonstrates that in addition to advantages in soil fertility management, organic farming enhances biodiversity. Organic management results in farms hosting more kinds of beneficial insects. The study also conclusively demonstrates that for most crops, organic plots are more energy efficient per unit crop. Because no synthetic fertilizer had to be produced or applied, growing crops requires less energy than conventional crops—up to 56% less energy per unit yield. Nutrient inputs (N,P, K) in the organic systems were 34-51% lower than in the conventional systems whereas mean crop yield was only 20% lower over a period of 21 years indicating an efficient production.

The best performing organic crop was winter wheat, which stacked up at about 90% of the conventional harvest. Potatoes fared the worst with about 62% of conventional yields, mainly due to potato blight and potassium deficiency. The yields are impressive given that the organic plants received less than half the nutrients given to conventional plots. "To add that much less fertilizer and still get 80% of the conventional yields is outstanding," says John Reganold, soil scientist at Washington State University, Pullman. The team also found evidence that nutrient-cycling microbes are more diverse, plentiful, and efficient in organic soil, making more nutrients available to plants. More microbes are known to improve soil structure, and Mader's team found another benefit; higher yields in organic plots that boasted the maximum microbes. Microbial activity increases under long term organic management. More study is needed on the effect long term organic management has on yields.

Soils did appear to be healthier in organic plots, with 40% more roots colonized by fungi that assist with plant nutrition. Earthworms were up to three times more abundant and there were twice as many spiders and other pest-eating arthropods.

"This study is as complete a picture as we have from anywhere," says Phil Robertson, an agricultural ecologist at Michigan State University, East Lansing. Reganold agrees, "This gives more credibility to organic systems."

Reprinted, with permission, from the July 2002 issue (Vol. 22, No. 3) of "The Germinator", the newsletter of the Northern Plains Sustainable Agriculture Society.



National and Chapter Awards Presented

During the North Dakota Chapter SWCS's annual meeting on December 4, 2001 at the Doublewood Inn in Bismarck, the following two national SWCS awards were presented at the awards luncheon:

Dr. Stephan Schroeder, an environmental scientist with the Reclamation Division of the ND Public Service Commission in Bismarck, was presented with the highest national award, a **Fellow Award**. One of only two awarded nationally, Dr. Schroeder was recognized for his distinguished professional achievement in measuring and modeling mineland erosion in addition to his involvement with the state Chapter activities. And,

Mr. Alan Ness, an agronomist with the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) in Bismarck, was presented a **Commendation Award** for implementing yearly educational programs for Certified Crop Advisors in North Dakota and for promoting the use of conservation planning in North Dakota.

In addition, three ND Chapter award plaques were presented to the following individuals and business:

Dr. Stephen Merrill, an agricultural research scientist with the ARS Northern Great Plains Research Laboratory in Mandan, was presented with the **Chapter Professional Award** for his research on wind erosion and crop water use.

Mr. Dean Chamrad, who recently retired as a rangeland management specialist with the NRCS State Office in Bismarck, was presented with the **Chapter Service Award** to recognize his many years of efforts to improve North Dakota rangelands.

The inaugural **Chapter Business Stewardship Award** was presented to **Mr. Kelly Kiemele** representing the **Tesoro Petroleum/ Mandan Refinery** for the plants' innovative wastewater management program for protection of ground and surface water in addition to wildlife enhancement efforts at the plant.

April 2002 Volume 12 Number 1

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Past President: Jon Stika

President: Jennifer Heglund

President Elect: Dan Hovland

Secretary-Treasurer: Jackie Henderson

Council Representatives: Mark Liebig, Cal Thorson

Questions and inquiries about this newsletter should be sent to: Jill Howard, 1019 4th Avenue East, Dickinson, ND 58601 or e-mail to: jill.howard@nd.usda.gov

MEMBERSHIP

by Rod O'Clair

There are a few things happening in SWCS that you will want to pay attention to. SWCS is conducting a membership professional development survey. Make sure you take a few minutes to complete this and return it if you get one. It will tell our society what you would like to get out of it in the area of professional development. Also, if your job is in any way connected to agriculture, be sure to use the SWCS links to keep current on the development of a proposed new farm bill. I say this because as things develop that can affect your job, you may want to contact your Washington DC representation and make some comments.

In order to help each other in the society, we need to tell our story and this newsletter is one benefit you have to do that. If you have an area of expertise, and are willing to mentor others, please let that be known in this medium. Provide your e-mail address and let the editor make a link to it. In that way, someone who desires to improve himself or herself can "click" on your link and we can share our expertise with each other.

The purpose of this society is to foster the fine art of conservation. While I was calling members that were about to be terminated, to discover the reasons for that decision, I got one reply that set me back. The reason given was that the person did not believe in the point of view that conservation was important and they could not support the Society's stand. We all join for different reasons. In my case, 29 years ago, when I was competing for a promotion, the selector asked me if I was a member of the Soil Conservation Society of America, because if I was not, he could find someone who was to fill the promotion position. Needless to say, I have been a member for 29 years. I soon realized the benefits I got from an organization that brought technology to people so they could practice it, fostered professionalism among its members, and could successfully advocate conservation policy. Be sure to share your reasons with a potential member you know.

Northern Plains Chapters Meet in Deadwood South Dakota

By MP Senechal, Director, Northern Plains

Nineteen Soil and Water Conservation Society Chapter (SWCS) Leaders from the Northern Plains Region met in Deadwood, South Dakota on March 7-8, for their region's 2002 leadership workshop, according to Myron Senechal, Director, Northern Plains Region, SWCS. Presenters and workshop organizers were the Northern Plains Leadership team consisting of John Knapp, CO; Robin Foulk and Anita Nein, NE; Mike Collins, WY; Craig Cox, Ankeny, IA; and Senechal.

Craig Cox, Executive Vice President, SWCS, keynoted the workshop by explaining the 2002 Farm Bill legislative process. He referenced the Society's advocacy role and efforts in the *Seeking Common Ground for Conservation – An Agricultural Policy Project*. Farmers and Ranchers said that the next Farm Bill should strengthen existing conservation programs and build a farm policy on the role that they have as stewards of natural resources. Therefore, farmers and ranchers want a policy that supports all agricultural producers. The report contained recommendations for the 2002 Farm Bill, which were based on five SWCS regional workshops. Participants told the Society what they wanted in the 2002 Farm Bill. "Interest in the *Seeking Common Ground...* has been overwhelming," according to Cox.

In addition to the technical presentations on Farm Bill activities, Professional Developments, and Chapter Development, participants discussed Membership and Awards. Appropriately invigorated, workshop participants went home with many new ideas, a new network of contacts, and desire to be an advocate for the natural resources.



"South Dakota SWCS hosted the leadership workshop at the First Gold Motel and Casino in Deadwood," according to Tom Quinn, Past President of the South Dakota SWCS Chapter. He continued, "the weather could have cooperated better, with all the snow-predicted, attendees departed early." "States within the Society's Northern Plains region are CO, WY, MT, NE, SD and ND" said Senechal.

Those attending the workshop included:

- SWCS Headquarters Ankeny, IA: Craig Cox, Society, Executive Vice President

- South Dakota: Tom Quinn, Darrel Vig, and Yvonne Haefner

- Colorado: Mary Miller, John Knapp, Tony Arnhold, Kristi Gay, Amy Sidner, and Beth Fortman

- Nebraska: Jim Harder, Anita Nein, and Robin Foulk

-Wyoming: Steve Kadas and Mike Collins

- Montana: John Rouane

- North Dakota: Rodney O'clair, Mark Anderson, and Myron Senechal.





President's Comments

By Jennifer Heglund, ND SWCS President

I am pleased to extend an opportunity to the ND Chapter membership to participate in a "Chapter changing" event. The Council wishes to receive input from the membership on what improvements we, the Chapter, can institute to broaden the Chapter's effectiveness.

I am hopeful that you will respond to the quick and easy survey that has been developed for your use. Simply click onto <http://www.formsite.com/baldybutte/swcsform/index.html>. Please submit your survey by Oct 1, 2001.

I look forward to sharing the results with you, the membership, this fall. Thank you for taking the time to help us help you.

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North Dakota Chapter SWCS Awards

The following two awards are given yearly, if suitable candidates are nominated, at the ND Chapter Awards Luncheon held in conjunction with the Chapter annual meeting. Nominations for the awards should be forwarded, either hardcopy or e-mail, to the

Chair of the ND Chapter Awards Committee at least 3 months prior to the Chapter annual meeting. Information to be forwarded should include the name and address of the person being nominated for the award, the reason the person is being nominated, supporting materials for decision making purposes, and who is nominating the person. Award nominations may be sent to Dr. Stephan Schroeder mssmail.sas@oracle.psc.state.nd.us or 600 E. Blvd Ave. Dept. 408, Bismarck, ND 58505.

Service Award

The Service Award is presented to an individual or organization involved in soil and water conservation work and whose work has made a valuable contribution to the art and science of good land use. The individual or organization need not be a member of the state Chapter but should have some presence in the state of North Dakota.

For example, the 2000 award winner was presented to Dr. Gary Pearson of Jamestown, ND. Dr. Pearson has a long record of dedication to promoting the wise use of North Dakota's water resources. While everyone does not always share his concerns, he always uses sound scientific reasoning to promote his views on various water topics in North Dakota.

Professional Award

The Professional Award is presented to an individual directly involved in the field of soil, water, and natural resource work. Professional Award recipients have stimulated interest and progress in advancing the art and science of good land use through their professional work. The individual recognized by this award is generally a Chapter member, but this is not a requirement.

For example, the 2000 Professional Award winner was Mr. Cal Thorson who is currently employed by DowAgro Sciences in Bismarck. Mr. Thorson was recognized for his continuing efforts to organize and promote presentations where credits may be earned to maintain certification as a Certified Crop Advisor in addition to increasing the Chapter's membership through these types of meetings.

SUMMARY OF NATIONAL SOCIETY AWARDS

Essential Information

The awards program of the Soil and Water Conservation Society is designed to recognize individuals and organizations who have made outstanding contributions in advocating the conservation of soil, water and related natural resources. Award recipients are announced at the Society's annual meeting, unless otherwise indicated.

A formal nomination questionnaire **must be** filled out for the appropriate award category and may be accompanied by supporting information. There is a specific nomination questionnaire for each award category. Additional information may be obtained from the Society's headquarters office or the state awards committee for the exact procedures that **must be** followed in order to nominate someone for an award.

Society Member Awards

Fellow

The designation of Fellow is conferred on Society members who have performed exceptional service in advocating the conservation of soil, water, and related natural resources. This award is given for professional excellence, first and foremost. Professional achievement may be in practicing, investigating, administering, or teaching soil and water conservation or closely related fields.

The criteria for selection of a Fellow is as follows:

1. Only Society members with at least 10 years of membership are eligible.
2. Board members and officers of the Society are not eligible during their term of office.
3. Nominees should be widely recognized outside the Society and their state or province for their expertise as professional conservationists.
4. Nominees shall have made contributions to the progress of the Society beyond the Chapter level. Contributions may have been through volunteer service, writing, teaching, fundraising, etc.
5. The degree of Fellow **will not** be awarded to recognize long and faithful service to a chapter or to the international Society in the absence of **significant** professional achievement.

The nomination procedure shall be by petition signed by a minimum of 25 members of the Society (need not be members of the same Society chapter). Supporting material should include documentation of the individual's professional achievements in a narrative form, including significant publications, significant papers presented at professional meetings, etc. Please contact your state awards committee for all the details.

The Society Awards Committee will evaluate and rank nominees. Recommendations will be

presented to the Board of Directors for final approval. No more than one-tenth of one percent of the Society's membership will be honored each year.

Outstanding Service Award

The Outstanding Service Award is given to Society members in recognition of distinguished service in helping the Society to develop and carry out its program over a long and sustained period of time. Accomplishments of the nominees should not be of a scope or significance warranting the degree of Fellow, but should be greater than those required for the Commendation Award.

The criteria for selection for the Outstanding Service Award is as follows:

1. Any Society member may be nominated. A five-year period must elapse before members who have received the Fellow Award are eligible for the Outstanding Service Award.
2. Officers at the national and chapter levels, Board members, and Society staff members are eligible during their terms of office.
3. The nominee must have performed distinguished service to the Society on a sustained basis – for at least 10 years. This service may have been performed at the chapter, regional, or international level, or any combination thereof.
4. The nominee's service should include activities that help the Society to achieve its goals and objectives.
5. The award **will not** be given merely to recognize long membership in the Society or to honor a member's retirement.

The nomination procedure shall be by petition, signed by at least 25 Society members. Individuals signing the petition may be, but need not be, members of the same chapter. Supporting materials should include such items as length and continuity of membership; time span during which the service was accomplished; and offices, committee, and other positions held at the chapter and international levels plus many other items. Please contact the state awards committee for more detail.

The national Awards Committee will evaluate and rank all nominations. Recommendations will be presented to the Board of Directors for final approval. No more than one-tenth of one percent of the Society's membership will be honored each year.

Commendation Award

The Commendation Award gives international recognition to Society members for their service to their chapter or council of chapters.

The selection criteria includes the following:

1. All society members are eligible except members who have received the Fellow Award within the past five years.
2. The activity for which the individual is recognized should be in line with the Society's objectives, growth, and activities.
3. The nominee shall have served as a committee member, chapter officer, or in another capacity and shall have been instrumental, in an exceptional way, in the development or implementation of a chapter.
4. The activity should have required exceptional time and/or effort.
5. The activity shall have been accomplished recently; does not have to be a long, sustained project; and may have been done over a period of less than a year.
6. There is no limit to the number of times an individual may be given the Commendation Award or on the time span between Commendations.

Each Society chapter or council of chapters, each parent Society officer, and each Society board member may nominate no more than one member each year. Supporting materials should detail the specific accomplishments the nominee has made to the chapter or council of chapters.

Regional members of the Awards Committee will recommend approval or disapproval of all nominations in their respective regions. Recommendations will be presented to the Board of Directors for final approval.

SOCIETY MEMBERS AND NONMEMBER AWARDS

Hugh Hammond Bennett Award

The Hugh Hammond Bennett Award is the highest honor bestowed on an individual by the Society. It is given for distinguished service in recognition of national and international accomplishments in the conservation of soil, water, and related natural resources.

The selection criteria includes the following:

1. The award may be given to Society members or nonmembers.
2. No elected officer of the Society or Board member shall be eligible for the award while holding office.
3. The service and accomplishments of the nominee shall have made major and widely recognized contributions to the conservation of natural resources on national **and** international levels. These accomplishments shall be consistent with the goals and objectives of the Society.

Nominations may be made by Society officers, Society Board members, Society chapters, or individual Society members. The supporting material should clearly document the national and international scope of the nominee's accomplishments, including such items as professional achievements in resource conservation, publications, and papers written or delivered at professional meetings. Service to the Society either as a member or nonmember and service to other professional or conservation organizations can also be included.

The Society's Board of Directors reviews all nominations and selects the recipient. The award will be presented at the annual meeting or elsewhere as designated by the Board. The award shall be given to no more than one individual annually. No award shall be made if a suitable candidate is not nominated or if the Society's Board of Directors decides there are significant reasons for not conferring the award.

Honor Award

The Honor Award recognizes people, usually nonmembers of the Society, for outstanding accomplishments compatible with the mission of the Society.

The selection criteria includes the following:

1. Nominees can be either Society members or nonmembers.
2. Nominee's outstanding accomplishments must be widely recognized by leaders in soil and water conservation or related fields.
3. The nominee's influence or position should have materially stimulated interest in and advanced the conservation of soil, water, and related natural resources through one or more of the following fields: author, speaker, educator, administrator, industry, business, banking, soil conservation district, profession (lawyer, doctor, minister, etc.), or nonpartisan activity.
4. The nominee's activity shall have been of a voluntary nature and not part of his or her normal working duties.
5. The nominee's political activities can in no way be construed to reflect a partisan attitude on the part of the Society.

The nomination may be made by Society chapters only. An award nomination questionnaire should be filled out and supporting materials included. These should include details on the extent and scope of the nominee's contributions, any assistance the nominee has given the international Society or chapter, how the nominee's professional role relates to his or her conservation activities, and any other pertinent data.

The national Awards Committee will evaluate and rank all nominations. Recommendations will be presented to the Board of Directors for final approval. No more than 10 Honor Awards will be presented annually.

Merit Award

The Merit Award is given in recognition of an outstanding activity, product, or service by a group, business firm, corporation, or organization that promotes the conservation of soil, water, and related natural resources.

The criteria for the award includes the following:

1. Activities of corporate sustaining members of the Society are eligible.

2. Society chapter activities are not eligible in this category.
3. Eligible organizations include press, radio, movies, television, industries, corporations, churches, societies, foundations, civic clubs, scout groups, and other organizations, public or private, that have carried out a noteworthy conservation activity.
4. The activity or effort shall be in line with the Society's mission.
5. The activity should be the result of an organized program and may include the activity of an agency of government.
6. The activity shall have an effect over a large area, at least a large part of a state or province, or parts of several states or provinces.
7. The principal effect of the activity should have been directed to other than professional conservationists.
8. The activity should have clearly contributed to bringing about better conservation of soil, water, and related natural resources and/or better understanding of natural resource conservation issues.
9. The selection of the organization should not bring discredit to similar or competing organizations.

Nominations may be submitted by chapters and appropriate chapter committees, any three Society members, Society officers, Society Board members, or Society committee and task force chairs. Eligible groups may submit their own nominations. Supporting materials should include details on the geographical extent and scope of the nominee's contribution, the audience to which the contribution was targeted, and details on how the nominee's contribution improved the conservation of soil, water, and related natural resources and/or improved the understanding of natural resource conservation issues.

Nominations will be judged by the Awards Committee. Recommendations will be forwarded to the Board of Directors for final approval. There is no limit on the number of awards presented annually.

Seeking Common Ground:

CONSERVATION PROPOSED AS CENTERPIECE FOR U.S. FARM POLICY

ANKENY, Iowa (June 6, 2001) Citing missed opportunities in current farm policy, the Soil and Water Conservation Society (SWCS) today urged Congress and the Bush Administration to enact a new farm bill that puts more emphasis on rewarding the nation's farmers and ranchers for their conservation efforts and less on what they do or do not produce in the way of agricultural commodities.

"The next farm bill must be about more than the price of corn, or wheat, or cotton, or rice, or any other agricultural commodity," said Craig Cox, executive vice-president of SWCS. "There is growing public skepticism about how well traditional commodity-based subsidies are functioning. We need to find a new way to keep people who work the land on the land."

Cox suggested that conservation must become a major priority in any new agricultural policy. Most Americans appreciate the abundant, safe, affordable supply of food, which they now have. But Americans are becoming just as concerned about having healthy soil, clean air and water, and improved fish and wildlife habitat. Cox added, "We need to forge a new way of thinking about agriculture and the environment. We need a bold new approach that brings together those who depend on the land for their living and those who are concerned about their environment."

The new policy, he said, should go beyond supporting only those producers who grow crops supported by federal programs. Support should be open to all farmers and ranchers, in all parts of the country, and reward them for their work as caretakers of much of the nation's land, water, and wildlife.

A new report, prepared to inspire new ideas for the 2002 farm bill, was created with participation from farmers, ranchers, and conservationists. SWCS held a series of workshops across the country to engage those interested in soil, water, and wildlife issues and used their knowledge and experience to craft ideas that will be useful to elected and federal officials. In its conclusion, SWCS calls on federal policymakers to spend at least \$8 billion annually on conservation—\$5 billion to strengthen existing conservation programs and \$3 billion for a new stewardship-based farm and ranch program.

"At least \$5 billion a year—double our current spending—is needed," Cox stressed, "to expand existing conservation programs, with most of the new money going to programs that provide technical and financial assistance to help farmers and ranchers do conservation on the land they use to produce food and fiber."

"About 85 cents of every conservation dollar is now spent to take land out of production for conservation," Cox said. "We need to spend more to help farmers and ranchers keep producing, but in an environmentally sound way."

Strengthening existing conservation programs, however, is not enough, Cox added. Farm policy needs to change too.

Traditional farm policies that subsidize a handful of commodities should be balanced with a new option based on land stewardship, an option that pays producers to invest their land, labor, and capital to produce a better environment.

"A new farm program, based on land stewardship, could help many of the farmers and ranchers who don't benefit from current commodity program subsidies," Cox said. He noted that in 1999 almost half of the subsidies went to 8 percent of farms operating 32 percent of the land in farms and ranches.

A stewardship-based program could help "keep all the rest of those farmers and ranchers on the land and produce a better environment for all Americans at the same

time," he said. "Farmers and ranchers and taxpayers would all gain if room were made in farm policy for a stewardship-based program."

Funding for conservation programs has been flat for the past 15 years, Cox said. At the same time, the environmental challenges facing agriculture have multiplied.

"Environmental performance is becoming a key determinant of the commercial viability of agriculture, Cox said. Producers feeding livestock and irrigating crops or pasture already are facing questions about the environmental consequences of their operations, he added.

"The producers we talked with in our workshops expect that they will begin to face more questions about the environmental impact of their farms," Cox reported. "We don't have to choose between commercial viability and environmental quality," he said. "We can have both, but only if conservation moves to the center of farm policy."

Among the other recommendations in the SWCS report are proposals to create a Conservation Partner Fund that would allow states greater flexibility in the use of USDA programs and funds to meet state and local conservation needs; simplify program delivery to landowners; expand the scope of federal land retirement programs, particularly for conservation buffer practices; and continue the use of conservation compliance provisions for those producers who participate in federal commodity programs.



The W. K. Kellogg Foundation supported SWCS's agricultural conservation policy education project financially, with additional support from the Joyce Foundation, The Farm Foundation and USDA's Natural Resources Conservation Service.

The Soil and Water Conservation Society, founded in 1945, is a nonprofit professional organization that serves as an advocate for the conservation profession and for science-based conservation policy. SWCS has chapters in all 50 states and 9,000 members worldwide.

A copy of the report, "Seeking Common Ground for Conservation, A Farm Bill Proposal: Responding to the Grassroots," is available on the Society's web page at www.swcs.org or by emailing your request to pubs@swcs.org.

Published by Soil and Water Conservation Society

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Years of Membership

Please send Stephen Schroeder the number of years that you have been a member of the SWCS, including the month and year that you became a member, if possible. He is developing a database to keep track of years of service to NDSWCS. You may email the information to Dr. Stephan Schroeder at MSMAIL.sas@oracle.psc.state.nd.us or mail it to 600 E. Blvd Ave. Dept. 408, Bismarck, ND 58505.



**NORTH DAKOTA CHAPTER
SOIL AND WATER CONSERVATION SOCIETY**

RESOURCES *for the* **FUTURE**

March 2001 Volume 11 Number 1

President's Comments

By Jennifer Heglund, ND SWCS President

Nothing sparks energy in one's soul like the first glimpses of spring!

Searching out these subtle encounters with Spring is a gift that us Northerners share. To my peers in-tune with our natural resources, the members of the Soil and Water Conservation Society, I share my flashes of Spring's eminent approach.

Awaking this morning to a rain shower brought another spring prophecy by way of a childhood rhyme. The receding snow pack (or snowdrifts in North Dakota), the "V"s of Geese honking high in the warming atmosphere, the ever-increasing flows in our streams and rivers, and a pair of twittering Rocky Mountain bluebirds settling on a barbed-wire fence also forebode Spring's arrival. But the most impressive sign of spring I've perceived was in Spearfish, South Dakota.

The weather, warm and temperate, bolstered the energy level of chapter leaders of SWCS throughout the northern plains. Spring HAD sprung, even though it was early March! Under the direction of Northern Plains SWCS Director, Myron Senechal, the group reflected on past successes, current challenges and upcoming opportunities. You can be very proud of the individuals that take SWCS to the next level, leadership. These individuals are dedicated to the mission of the Society and make it THEIR mission to make a difference in the organization. You can not help but leave a spring retreat like this and not become revitalized and enthusiastic for the future!

So what did I come away with? Well, a list of tried and true ideas to implement in the North Dakota Chapter:

1. Development of an Annual Plan
2. Development of an Long Range Plan
3. Revitalize contributions to the Foundation
4. Development of a task force to identify and plan educational activities for our CCA members
5. Involve our members!

I look forward in playing a significant role in shaping the direction of the North Dakota Chapter of the Soil and Water Conservation Society. Please "spring into action" and join me!

**2000 ANNUAL MEETING OF THE NORTH DAKOTA CHAPTER
SOIL AND WATER CONSERVATION SOCIETY**

Respectfully submitted

Jackie Henderson

Meeting: Jan 16, 2001

Best Western Doublewood, Bismarck, ND

President Jon Stika called the business meeting to order at 2:00 PM. Rod O'Clair moved to dispense the reading of the minutes, since all present had been given copies. Stephan Schroeder seconded the motion. The motion carried. Treasurer Henderson presented a summary of the Income and Expenses of the 2000 calendar year. Rod O'Clair moved to accept the annual Treasurer's Report as given. Jennifer Heglund seconded the motion.

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

Regional Report - Myron Senechal

Myron commended Cal Thorson and Alan Ness of the quality of the workshops. Myron noted the national commendations for the chapter donation to the Millennium Campaign. Commendations were also given to Jon Stika for our chapter website. Myron said that it was "the best website in the Northern Plains". The 2001 Annual Conference will be held at Myrtle Beach, South Carolina on Aug 4-8. There will be a Leadership Development meeting on March 8-9 in South Dakota. There is a new national award - the Harold and Kay Scholl Excellence Award. This award will be presented to an individual or group for practical applications on the land (for producers). Once the presentation is technically and ethically approved, the award will be from \$800 to \$1000.

Awards Committee - Stephan Schroeder & Scott Hochhalter: Report attached. Please contact Stephan for nominations for this year's awards.

Position Statements - Mark Anderson

The position statement report is attached. There is a revision of the chapter position on CRP (with the ND coalition letter); this position is now outdated. This may be revised with a formal planning statement. The draft statement for the water positions will merge last year's water position statement and the 1992 position. The end of January 2001, is the deadline for comments on the water position statement. The website will be useful for addressing issues.

CPSEC Report (Certified Professional Sediment and Erosion Control)

Myron Senechal

This group will set up its own independent organization by April, 2001.

Foundation Report - Jennifer Heglund

The report as of April 2000 indicated a balance of \$1261.79. In an effort to revitalize the Foundation, Jennifer suggested using gifts to the foundation when "giving a worker a pat on the back" or an honorarium gift for the death of a friend. Myron suggested checking with the new Cabella's store for matching funds for contributions. Mark Anderson suggested posting these gifts to the website.

Old Business:

Mark Anderson asked to clarify how to respond to legislative issues. The ND Wildlife Society Chapter has a lobbyist. A lobbyist must have standing recognition. The cost for a lobbyist is approximately \$400 per year. The legislative social costs are approximately \$700 per year. An Email was sent to our national office to inquire on how other chapters are structured to address legislative issues. Mark will write up the process on how to take positions, respond to statements, and distribute information to the legislature. These will be put in the newsletter for comments. One of our members can be signed up on the review list to give testimony at a legislative committee meeting without being a lobbyist (or a written position could be presented). If a legislative issue comes up that will affect our chapter, a teleconference between key members could facilitate a more timely response.

New Business:

Election Committee Report - Linda Hugelen:

The members elected for:

President Elect: Dan Hovland

Director: Cal Thorson

Sec/Treas: Jackie Henderson

The next National meeting is at Myrtle Beach, South Carolina. Inform the representatives of the chapter on good ideas for the chapter activities report.

Jon Stika introduced Jennifer Heglund as our new chapter president.

Jennifer thanked Jon for the fantastic job that he did as chapter president.

Mark Anderson moved to adjourn the annual meeting. Linda Hugelen seconded the motion. The motion carried. The Annual Meeting of the NDSWCS was adjourned at 2:24 PM.

NORTH DAKOTA CHAPTER SOIL AND WATER CONSERVATION SOCIETY 2000 AWARDS COMMITTEE REPORT

Mr. Scott Hochhalter / Dr. Stephan Schroeder Co-chairs

National Commendation Award: This award was presented during the Awards Brunch to Mr. Jon Stika, North Dakota Chapter President, at the 2000 National SWCS meeting held in St. Louis, MO in July. The award read "In Recognition of Distinguished Professional Achievement and Service, at the State, Provincial, and Local Levels, in Helping to Carry Out the Goals and Objectives of the Soil and Water Conservation Society".

The following two state Chapter awards were presented at the Awards Luncheon held at the Seven Seas Inn in Mandan during the annual state Chapter meeting on January 17, 2001:

Service Award: The Service Award is presented to an individual or organization involved in soil and water conservation work and whose work has made a valuable contribution to the art and science of good landuse. The 2000 award winner was Dr. Gary Pearson from Jamestown, ND. Dr. Pearson was nominated for this award for his outstanding dedication to the wise use of North Dakota's water resources. The award read: "Dr. Gary Pearson is recognized for promoting the science and the art of wise water resource management in the state of North Dakota".

Professional Award: The Professional Award is presented to an individual directly involved in the field of soil, water and natural resource work. The Professional Award recipients have stimulated interest and progress in advancing the art and science of good landuse through their work. The 2000 award winner was Mr. Cal Thorson who currently works for Dow Agro Sciences in Bismarck. Mr. Thorson was nominated for his continuing efforts to organize presentations where Certified Crop Advisors may attend and earn CEUs in order to maintain their certifications. Through these efforts, Mr. Thorson has also raised the level of recognition for the state Chapter of SWCS and has increased the Chapter's membership. The award read: "Mr. Cal Thorson is recognized for promoting the education of Certified Crop Advisors in the art and the science of soil, water, and resource management in North Dakota".

The Awards Committee forwarded to the National Society the following nominations:

Commendation Award: Mr. Alan Ness for his continuing work with individuals on the use of RUSLE and his help in organizing the CCA educational workshops in the state.

Fellow Award: Dr. Stephan Schroeder for his work in researching runoff/erosion problems on mined lands and his efforts in developing and promoting the use of RUSLE 1.06 that was especially designed for disturbed land.

Northern Plains Chapters Meet in Spearfish, S.D.

Sixteen chapter leaders from the Northern Plains Region met in Spearfish, S. D., March 8 – 9 for the region's annual leadership workshop. The South Dakota Chapter of the Soil and Water Conservation Society hosted the meeting. "We were pleased that the weather cooperated this year," said Tom Quinn, South Dakota Chapter SWCS President. "Last year we canceled due to bad weather."

On Friday morning, Craig Cox, SWCS Executive Vice President, called in to the workshop to provide attendees with an update on the Society, including its two-year Seeking Common Ground for Conservation project. He said that interest in this project has been overwhelming.

Some of the other topics discussed during the session included how to recruit and retain members, hosting regional conferences and the international meeting, chapter successes and challenges, and professional development.

At the end of the meeting participants went home with many new thoughts and ideas to help improve and, as one individual said, "appropriately invigorate" their chapter.

Workshop organizers were Myron Senechal, SWCS Northern Plains Director, North Dakota; Tom Quinn, South Dakota; John Knapp, Colorado; and Steve Kadas, Wyoming.

Those attending the workshop included:

South Dakota: Tom Quinn, Bob Drown, and Penny Galinat

North Dakota: Jennifer Heglund and Myron Senechal

Nebraska: John Beckwith, Ron Bauer, Anita Nein, and Robin Foulk

Wyoming: Dan Holden and Mike Collins

Colorado: Kristi Gay, Tony Arnhold, Ron Ziehm, John Knapp, and Mary Miller

Chapter by-laws need an update

By Mark A. Anderson, Legislative Committee Chairman

Following are the current ND Chapter SWCS by-laws concerning issue advocacy;

Article III Objectives

Section 1 Develop and advance the science and art of good land and water use and management, and the promotion of the conservation of soil, water, air, and related

renewable natural resources, including without limitation, trees, grass, fish, wildlife, and all forms of beneficial plant and animal life and for these purposes to employ education of the people and other appropriate means, to the end that people of all nations may have the use and enjoyment of these resources forever.

Section 2 *The Chapter may formulate, issue, and publish statements expressing the attitude of the Chapter on matters within the scope of this Article, conforming with provisions thereof and with any action taken by the Chapter on such matters.*

No other sections of the by-laws provide clarification or procedure for issue advocacy. In the past, nearly all positions were adopted at the annual meeting. Our current by-laws provide no answers to the following questions:

- ◆ What is the procedure for adopting advocacy positions outside of the annual meeting?
- ◆ How much time must members be afforded to review and provide feedback on advocacy proposals?
- ◆ Is the board of directors authorized to enact an advocacy position on an urgent issue without member input?
- ◆ How is the board of directors held accountable to the members if they adopt an "emergency" advocacy position without member input?

Resource issues can quickly emerge, allowing very little time for the Chapter to prepare a response. While it is obviously important to inform members and allow for feedback on proposed positions, it is self-defeating to adopt by-law revisions that prevent the Chapter from responding in available timeframes. Perhaps the best means of addressing such issues is to authorize the Chapter leadership (president and board of directors) to exercise their judgment, while placing a burden of accountability on them.

To try resolve the current gaps in our by-laws, the following amendment to Article III section 2 is proposed:

A. Procedure for developing and adopting resource issue advocacy positions

1. Only chapter members in good standing (having paid-up SWCS and ND Chapter memberships) may propose a resource advocacy position for adoption.
2. Proposed position statements must begin with a thorough, concise summary of facts significant to the issue, followed by the proposed chapter position. The sponsor(s) must include their name on the proposal.
3. At the annual business meeting Chapter advocacy positions may be adopted by a simple majority of the members present. Type-written quality copies of proposed position statements shall be distributed before or at the beginning of the business meeting. Voting shall be by voice or show of hands.
4. For issues deemed by the president to warrant action sooner than 60 days from the date of proposal and before the annual meeting, a Chapter position statement may be adopted by a roll-call majority of the entire

board of directors, within the guidelines listed below. Prior to such actions, the president shall;

- * Establish a time-line for informing members of a proposed position statement, gathering feedback, and conducting a vote by the board of directors. There is no minimum time period required to gather feedback if the Chapter president deems it impractical.

- * Assure that the membership is informed of the issue to the extent feasible, including the board of directors' scheduled date to vote on the proposal.

- * Encourage all members to express their opinions on the proposal, either directly to the board of directors, or to the general membership via the Chapter website. Webmaster will post members' opinions on the Chapter website only with the author's identity and only upon the author's request.

- * Assure that member feedback is provided to the board of directors before conducting a position statement vote. The position statement, the roll-call vote of the board of directors, and the president's rationale for the response time-line (notification of members, deadline to respond, date of directors' vote) shall be listed in the minutes of the next board of directors' meeting.

5. For issues deemed by the Chapter president to warrant action later than 60 days after the proposal date but before the next annual meeting, the following procedure shall be used:

- * Newsletter chairperson shall inform the entire membership of the proposed issue and position statement via mail or Email article approved by the Chapter president. The article shall invite member feedback for at least 30 days, with a cited deadline.

- * Webmaster will post members' opinions on the Chapter website only with the author's identity and only upon the author's request.

- * Newsletter chairperson will mail or Email ballots on the proposed position statement to all members with at least a two-week return period and deadline date printed on it.

* Ballots shall be returned to the legislative committee chairperson for tallying. At least ten days will be allowed for return of ballots after the deadline printed on them.

* Proposed position statements will be adopted if approved by a simple majority of the ballots cast.

B. Resource advocacy requirements

1. Under the guise of authorization or with actual authorization to represent the chapter, members may only advocate resource issue positions that are consistent with current resource positions of the Chapter.
2. All resource advocacy correspondence on behalf of the chapter must first be approved in its entirety by the president. Such correspondence includes- but is not limited to- phone calls, faxes, Emails, letters, personal contact, testimony, and news releases.
3. Copies of all correspondence (described in item # 2 above) shall be submitted to the Chapter secretary and the legislative committee chairperson within five days of its presentation or send-date, by the source person(s). The source person(s) shall also notify the Chapter secretary and legislative committee chairperson of the date it was approved by the president, a list of the recipients/audiences, name of person(s) that sent/presented it, and the date it was sent or presented

This issue will be voted on prior to the next annual meeting. Please watch the next newsletter and website for more information.

This newsletter is a publication of the North Dakota Chapter of the Soil and Water Conservation Society (SWCS). The mission of the SWCS is to promote the conservation of soil, water and other natural resources through education and example. The SWCS uses a multi-disciplinary approach in the identification of problems relating to our natural resources, and in developing a knowledge base that is communicated both nationally and internationally.

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President: Jennifer Heglund

President Elect: Dan Hovland

Secretary-Treasurer: Jackie Henderson

Council Representatives: Cal Thorson Wayne Berry

Questions and inquiries about this newsletter should be sent to: Jill Howard, 1019 4th Avenue East, Dickinson, ND 58601 or e-mail to: jill.howard@nd.usda.gov.



**NORTH DAKOTA CHAPTER
SOIL AND WATER CONSERVATION SOCIETY**

RESOURCES *for the* **FUTURE**

July 2000 Volume 10 Number 2

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President's Comments

Jon Stika

It has become apparent to me over the course of my term as chapter president that SWCS as an organization as well as our North Dakota chapter have reached a crossroads. This happens from time to time in the life of any organization (or individual for that matter) and is not something to be feared, but considered carefully as we move forward.

In my opinion, our struggle with member recruitment and retention is a symptom of the make-up of our organization and the way we present ourselves to the rest of the world. SWCS is mostly made up of professional conservationists and environmental scientists who see the purpose of SWCS as primarily a means of professional development. Being part of an organization that has a far-reaching impact on national and international policy-making and conservation education is also a large part of why most of us are members.

Other environmental organizations are comprised of wide range of people who want to have an impact on environmental issues by acting as part of a larger constituency with some political clout (Sierra Club, etc.). Because SWCS is (and has been) geared towards conservation professionals, we inherently limit our membership. The crossroads I believe we are at today is choosing whether to expand our appeal (and membership) to the masses, or retain our focus on professional development and scientific research and education.

If we remain primarily an organization of professional conservationists and environmental scientists, then we need to come to terms with the fact that our membership will probably never reach a whole lot higher than where it stands today. If this is the case, then we need to stop kidding ourselves that membership is going to carry the financial load of doing what we feel is important to accomplish.

We need to pursue grants to continue to educate ourselves and influence policy-making rather than "tax" ourselves to make it all happen through membership dues and fees and continue to come up short of our goals.

SWCS is a unique organization. To choose to appeal to the masses would require a change in our focus and deviate from our "science and art" of professional conservationists identity to something with a wider appeal based more on politics and "tree-hugging" and less on science and art. I am a member of SWCS because it fills a unique niche in my professional development and in the world of resource conservation. I am not a member of any other environmental groups because none of them address my needs as a professional conservationist, and are driven by principles and politics that I don't subscribe to.

I think we (SWCS) need to pick a path at this crossroads. We need to change our focus to attract members outside of the sphere of professional conservationists or pursue outside sources of revenue (grants, etc.) to continue to be the leader in professional development for our members and influence scientifically sound resource policy development. Personally, I prefer the latter.



Myron Senechal and Jon Stika at the Awards Brunch

MEMBERSHIP COMMITTEE

By Rodney O'Clair

Here are a few membership statistics for the North Dakota Chapter of SWCS.

There are 7 non-profit partner, 11 Life, 2 student and 135 active category members in the chapter. Membership levels include 1 contributor, 2 leader and 1 president level. Sixty-eight members are new since 1-1-00 and 22 members have dropped out. The reasons given for dropping membership include finding cheaper life insurance, career changes, and just tried the membership for the CCA points.

The SWCS office in Ankeny provides a list of all members who have not renewed in a timely manner. Each of these persons has been contacted by whatever means is available, starting with a telephone call, to inquire about membership intentions. If there is no telephone listed, I will try e-mail. If that is not available, a letter is sent. A report is then returned to Ankeny so the information can be used to improve the Society. Sometimes there is incorrect telephone or address information and this is supplied to Ankeny. Ankeny makes a number of mailing efforts to encourage renewal of membership. This chapter tries to make voice contact. You can see that a lot of effort, time and expense goes into membership renewal.

Should anyone like to sit on the membership committee please contact Rodney O'Clair. We need some ideas on recruitment and improving membership involvement so retention can be improved.

SWCS Annual Conference

By Myron Senechal

Jon Stika, President ND SWCS Chapter, Dickinson, ND, Alan Ness, Turtle Lake, ND and Myron Senechal, Northern Plains Board of Director, Bismarck, ND attended the 2000 SWCS annual conference co-hosted by the Illinois and Missouri Chapters on July 7 through July 12 in St Louis, MO.

The St Louis Arch symbolizes the conference theme, Gateway to the Future-Conserving Private Lands. The conference was truly a gateway to exploration of new methods, solutions, technologies and partnerships for a new century. The conference consisted of training opportunities, concurrent sessions sharing research, programs without walls (tours), networking and a whole lot of fun! Major topics included community conservation, technology for the 21st century, soil quality and private land and urban/suburban growth management.

Ness presented a poster paper on Nutrient Management in North Dakota and attended all the plenary sessions. His poster presentation highlighted the state's current progress in development of nutrient management policy, conservation practice activities and risk assessment tools. Others helping in organizing and pulling the poster paper together were Keith Weston, NRCS Water Quality Specialist, and Steve Seiler, NRCS Soil Scientist. The effort in nutrient management is a collaborative effort of USDA, Universities, Farmers, Conservation Districts and state agencies.

Stika participated in the comprehensive nutrient management workshops, plenary sessions and concurrent sessions. Stika received the SWCS

Commendation Award for his commendable efforts in development and maintaining the North Dakota SWCS Web Site.

Senechal participated in the SWCS Board of Directors meetings held on July 7 and July 12 to transact the Society business. He also participated in the Chapter Development workshop on July 8 and all the plenary sessions during the conference. Senechal represented the Northern Plains at the Certified Professional in Erosion and Sediment Control committee meeting.

Many highlight presentations occurred during the conference. An example is a panel of four people presented a plenary session on Conservation in the 2002 Farm Bill. The speakers suggested that 2002 will be a major opportunity to advance conservation of working land in the U.S. and internationally. The last three farm bills have included new initiatives to make conservation pay for landowners. Support for the conservation infrastructure – people and science – however, has not kept up with the need for conservation assistance. The troubled farm economy is sparking calls for fundamental reform of farm policy, including proposals to base assistance to producers on conservation. Presenters put forth the initiatives they are supporting and projecting what may happen.

SWCS Annual Conference Informational Sessions

By Jon Stika

Another great conference! The trip there and back was "interesting" but I won't go into that here. Rarely do we as conservation professionals have such a diverse top-notch professional development opportunity as what is available at the annual conference. Following are my notes from the sessions I was able to attend – Jon.

Sunday, July 9, 2000

Nutrient Management Seminar

EPA's Water Quality Goals of AFO-and views for the NEPEDS Permit – Charles Sutfin, Director, Permits Division, Office of Water, EPA, Washington, DC

Animal Feeding Operation (AFO) Up to 1000 Animal Units (1 Animal Unit = 1 beef cow) confined for 45 days or more per year and the area they are confined in is not cropped. Confined Animal Feeding Operation (CAFO) > 1000 Animal Units under confinement. An AFO will be considered a CAFO if there is a discharge of animal waste/nutrients to a

water body. CAFOs will be required to have a permit that includes a Comprehensive Nutrient Management Plan (CNMP). These CNMPs will most likely be developed with assistance from NRCS or private vendors certified by NRCS/EPA. Identifying CAFOs from AFOs and developing CNMPs will be a major workload in the near future in some parts of the country.

Dairy Diet Effects on Phosphorous Cycles of Cropland -Dr. Mark Powell, USDA-

ARS, Dairy Forage Research Center, Madison, WI.

In an attempt to balance the Nitrogen (N) and Phosphorous (P) in manure with the N and P needs of crops, on-farm research was conducted to reduce P in dairy diets without sacrificing milk production. Typically, manure contains twice the crop needs for P as it does for N. This means that manure applied to meet the N needs of crops will result in an application of P that is about twice what the crop needs. This can result in a build-up of P in the soil that can be carried in water runoff and cause water quality problems. If the amount of P in the manure can be reduced by reducing the amount of P in the animals diet, then the manure can be applied at a rate that more closely matches both the N and P needs of crops without a bulid-up of P in the soil. It was found that reducing P to .35% of the total ration (about half of what is typically fed) brought the amount of P in dairy manure down to a level that nearly matched the N needs of crops. P is contained almost entirely in manure, not urine.

Components of the Nutrient Management Plan – Dr. Jerry Leymunyon, NRCS, Nutrient and Pest Management Specialist, Fort Worth, TX

There should be six components or areas of consideration when developing a CNMP, how Agricultural Waste (typically manure) is; produced, collected, stored, treated, transferred, and utilized. The production, collection, storage, treatment, and transfer of manure affect the availability of nutrients that should be utilized by a growing crop. The manure should be managed to supply the nutrient needs of crops, improve soil quality, and prevent water and air pollution.

Monday, July 10, 2000

Plenary Session 1

"People Sustaining the Land"

An excellent slide show of producers across the US and what they had to say about stewardship of their land.

Soil Quality and Private Lands Concurrent Session 1

Can Soil Erosion Be Predicted? – Mark Nearing, USDA-ARS, West Lafayette, IN



Soil erosion is a function of soil surface morphology, hydraulics, and erosion itself. Erosion prediction models of USLE (Universal Soil Loss Equation), RUSLE (Revised Universal Soil Loss Equation), and WEPP (Water Erosion Prediction) differed between 14% to 150% of the actual sediment collected from replicated research plots. The prediction models typically showed less erosion at low erosion rates and more erosion at high erosion rates than what actually occurred from the research plots.

Therefore, the prediction models are not very accurate at predicting actual erosion rates but are useful and consistent for comparing different cropping and tillage systems and conservation practices that might be applied to control erosion.

The models can't tell you precisely what the actual soil loss will be, but can tell you how various conservation practices will affect it.

Iowa SOM (Soil Organic Matter) Modeling: County Level Studies Using Century – John Brenner, USDA-NRCS, Fort Collins, CO

The Century computer model was used to predict SOM under various tillage systems on various soils in Iowa. The model was found to be fairly accurate but not something that field-level personnel would use. In a comparison of various land uses, no-till fields had up to 10 times as much carbon, and land in grass had 30 times as much carbon as conventionally-tilled fields.

C-Store: A Field Level Carbon Sequestration Tool – Keith Paustian, USDA-NRCS, Fort Collins, CO.

C-Store is a computer program developed in Access database that is designed for field users. The program is approximately 82% accurate and is based on information derived from the more complex Century model. The program is still undergoing testing and will hopefully be web-based in the future to be accessible to many users to predict carbon sequestration under various cropping systems.

The Rainfall Simulator – A "Seeing Is Believing" Demonstration – Clyde Mermis, USDA-NRCS, Lawrence, KS

Clyde built a rainfall simulator with trays of soil with different types and amounts of residue cover or growing crop that get rained-on and the runoff collects in glass jars to show the amount of runoff and sediment from each tray. Clyde took the group outside

the hotel on the edge of the street and ran the simulator and described how he built and uses it. After a 2.75" "rain" the soil tray with no cover on it was only wet down to about ¾" and the jar below it was full of water and sediment. The tray with a growing crop soaked-up the most water and the runoff water was almost clear. If anyone is interested in building one of these simulators, I can put you in touch with Clyde for details.

Plenary Session 2

Conservation Technology: Promise or Peril?

Jack Dangermond, Environmental Systems Research Institute, CA

Geographic Information Systems (GIS) will be used to integrate data that farmers and conservation planners use in the future. A GIS will serve as the media to organize and integrate lots of different types of land use data into user-friendly maps and images for decision-making purposes.

Mark Vanacht, AG Business Consultants, MO

Spoke of "e-conservation" and how more information and conservation technical assistance will be provided and shared with clients via e-mail and web-based applications. He said agronomy and ecology are becoming integrated into "agrology" to look at crop production more holistically including soil quality and soil biology. Conservation decisions made with an understanding of agrology and based on economics will result in economic and environmental sustainability as we learn that natural processes in the soil drive the economics of crop production on those soils.

Dr. Peter Nowak, University of Wisconsin, Madison, WI

We need to integrate specific variables and information in agriculture to make production more efficient (extract value from information). Information will need to be customized and localized to help clients solve problems and make good decisions. Government (NRCS) needs to help producers maintain and enhance ecosystem function rather than deliver conservation programs.

Miriam Gardner, USDA-NRCS, NC

We need to find efficiencies in the way we do things (high-tech or low-tech) so our time spent in the field with producers is the most effective.

Richard Wildman, Agricultural Consulting Services, Inc., NY

Large farms must maintain a good environmental image to avoid attracting the attention of regulators and avoid being labeled as polluters or environmentally unfriendly by consumers. Technology only drives the rate of change; it does not cause people to

implement changes. For any land use decision, thinking must change first; technology will provide information to help people make decisions.

Tuesday, July 11, 2000

Program Without Walls

Henry White Sustainable Agriculture Farm Tour

Toured the Henry White Sustainable Agriculture Farm across the river in Illinois. The 90+ acre farm is being set-up as an outdoor classroom/research facility to provide educational opportunities to teachers, students and producers on alternative crops, conservation practice construction and maintenance, wetlands, native prairie restoration, agro-forestry, vegetable, herb, and flower production. Though I don't think we will be able to grow Pawlonia or Pecan trees or Paw Paw bushes in North Dakota, the concept and development of the facility which is almost entirely volunteer run was impressive.



Pawlonia trees and Paw Paw shrubs on the Henry White Farm tour

Henry White Farm tour



Constructed wetland on the



Native prairie planting on the Henry White Farm tour

Wednesday, July 12, 2000

Plenary Session 3

Conservation in the 2002 Farm Bill

Tim Searchinger (Senior Attorney with Environmental Defense)

Past and current farm bill results in the most money going to the producers of the most crop commodities in price supports, disaster payments, crop insurance premium payments, etc. This does not help smaller family farmers because they cannot compete on the same scale (i.e. WalMart vs. a small local retailer). A conservation-related payment program could accomplish support of smaller farmers that could compete on a conservation basis rather than a commodity basis. A conservation-related farm bill should; support income, have clear expectations of what is to be produced on the land in the way of conservation, and be attractive to non-commodity producers. Payments should be tied to conservation not commodities.

M. Ann Tutweiler (Director, Government Relations with Central Soya Co., Inc.)

The Greening of Farm Programs Coalition is a group of agri-business not directly involved in commodity production (processors, shippers, etc.). Reward stewardship and reduce risks taken by producers by using commodity-trading mechanisms. Processors are concerned about sustainability of soil and agriculture. Processors have a lot invested in long-term processing of crops farmers produce.



Craig Cox (Executive Vice President of SWCS)

SWCS has undertaken an effort referred to as "Seeking Common Ground" to assist with development of the next farm bill by educating natural resource policymakers. SWCS is suggesting that conservation be the centerpiece of a farm bill that builds a land "health care system" that includes both prevention and treatment of the land. Past farm bills are based on looking backward and the pressures to "do something" in the present, but rarely look forward. Most environmental groups have given up on USDA because not enough actual conservation gets accomplished because programs are too complicated without clear

goals, or programs are not funded at a high enough level. The SWCS is proposing a 5-part strategy to formulate a new farm bill:

1. Goals – Need to identify clear goals of what is to be accomplished on the land, not just administer a program.

2. Invest in Infrastructure - Invest in the technical assistance delivery infrastructure (NRCS) which has declined over the past several years.
3. Prevention - Assistance to all producers to prevent environmental degradation and reward producers already practicing good land stewardship.
4. Treatment - Treat identified problems that need conservation treatment. Administer this at the lowest level possible (Field Office / SCD) not nationally or regionally (EQIP, CRP).
5. Simplification - Simplify delivery of technical assistance without administrative baggage (i.e. contract administration, progress reporting, etc.) that takes time away from field people being in the field



Jon receiving president's commendation award from SWCS Executive Vice President Craig Cox (President Dennis Pate at the podium).

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