



Nebraska Society News

Soil and Water Conservation Society

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Secretary
Treasurer
Past Pres.

April 2009 Newsletter

Officers 2008-2009

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President's Message

After 50 years of existence (June 4, 1959) the Northeast Chapter of SWCS has decided to dissolve. The Nebraska Chapter SWCS Board voted 10-0 on April 24th, 2009, to include the current members of the Northeast Chapter as a new section of the Nebraska Chapter. The Board decided this would be a good opportunity to update our by-laws to reflect the inclusion of the Northeast Chapter as a new section in the Nebraska Chapter. The Board also made several proposed changes to reflect the use of email and electronic methods for communication among the Board and all SWCS members. In order for these changes to become official, they must be approved by a majority member vote. Please take the time to read through the proposed changes that are posted on the Nebraska SWCS website home page (<http://incolor.inebraska.com/douggs/swcs/>). If you do not have access to the document through the internet, please contact myself and a copy of the proposed changes will be mailed to you. After you have had a chance to review the proposed changes, please respond with your vote concerning the changes using the By-Laws Changes Ballot included in this Newsletter by June 8th, 2009.

As usual, our Annual Meeting Committee has put together a great technical workshop and social meeting. This year's meeting will be held in Valentine Nebraska June 10-12th. The focus of the meeting is on forest health and support needs for fire management due to the increase in forest fires across the nation. The meeting is timely since it allows one to view what happens when a forest, be it Ponderosa, cedar or oak, is not maintained and succumbs to wildfire. The meeting also allows participants to see the effects of applied management techniques and their effect on forest health and the rehabilitation of a forest after a fire. Be sure to check out the schedule of events and consider staying in the beautiful Valentine area before or after the meeting. Registration and agenda information is available on the Nebraska SWCS website. I encourage you to secure local lodging by May 10th as outlined in our registration information. I hope to see as many of you as possible in Valentine.

Kris Ethridge
President

Foundation News

The Nebraska Soil & Water Conservation Foundation (SWCF) is celebrating its 20th Anniversary this year. The Foundation was chartered March 24, 1988 and the first board of directors were elected in 1989. All members of the Soil & Water Conservation Society in Nebraska are members.

The Foundation has presented at least one scholarship each year since 1989. It also has helped fund several other special projects statewide.

Current Board Members are: Val Bohaty president, Corey Brubaker vice-president, Kris Reed secretary, Paul Smith Treasurer & registered agent and Charles Reppert member at large.

Donated funds are invested and managed by the board of directors. The current market and interest rates have reduced profits this past year however relatively conservative investments have been reduced losses.

The Foundation presented a Tina Carlson Memorial Scholarship to Austin Horn this year thanks to the generosity of the Carlson Family. This award will be continued.

Tax exempt donations can be made to SWCF. Sympathy & Honor cards are available and are a major source of income.

Paul D. Smith
Treasurer & Registered.



Anita Nein presents Austin Horn the "Tina Carlson Memorial Scholarship".

**SWCS Student Scholarship Winners -
UNL Foundation Dec 2008**

The Nebraska Chapters of the Soil and Water Conservation Society have a scholarship fund at the University of Nebraska - Lincoln Foundation. The earnings on this investment fund enabled us to give two \$750 scholarships in December 2008.

The year 2008-2009 scholarship winners are **Andrew Langemeier and Jared Mauler.**

Andrew is a UNL senior majoring in Agronomy and Agribusiness. He grew up on a farm near Scribner, Nebraska. Andrew states that the wise use and conservation of natural resources is very important to the future sustainability of our farm. He has had jobs as a crop consultant, worked for a local coop as a sales representative and as a commodity risk intern and also works on the family farm. He currently is a teaching assistant for Introduction to Plant Science 131. He hopes to find a career in agronomy and farming. Andrew's grandfather Richard Langemeier appeared in our November newsletter as a golfer in the 2008 SWCS golf event.

Jake is an UNL Senior majoring in Agronomy. He grew up on a farm and ranch operation at Sargent, Nebraska. He states that conservation serves all involved well as money can be saved, environmental degradation can be minimized and the future generations will hopefully have resources to use themselves. He has a cow/calf operation of his own and works with his father on the farm and ranch operation. His goal is to return to the farm to work with his father and also begin his own crop consulting business.

The Nebraska SWCS chapters are pleased to announce these two scholarship winners. Please congratulate them when you see them and encourage them as they pursue careers in the natural resource field.

**2009 Northern Plains Technical Conference
Presentations Available**

The presentations given at the Northern Plains Technical Conference are now online. Go to www.ndswcs.org to catch up on the great information provided. Then make plans to attend a future leadership or technical conference sponsored by the Northern Plains SWCS chapters!

Ballot must be received by June 5, 2009.

BALLOT – Nebraska Soil and Water Conservation Foundation, Board of Director, 5-year term

VOTE FOR ONE

_____ Randal Gunn, Grand Island, NE – Has worked as a conservationist for Nebraska SCS/NRCS since 1983 in Nelson, Geneva, Wahoo and Wayne. Currently serving as RC&D Coordinator with South Central NE RC&D in Doniphan since 1998. SWCS Director for South Central section since 1998.

_____ Cameron Loerch, Lincoln, NE – NRCS State Soil Scientist. Has been a member of SWCS throughout 30 plus year career as a soil scientist. Currently holds the secretary position for the Nebraska Chapter.

_____ Paul D. Smith, Lincoln, NE – Retired as a Resource Conservationist with SCS in 1994. He helped organize the foundation and has been involved with it for 20 years, serving as Treasurer and handling the scholarship application process.

_____ (Write in name)

Return Ballot by mail or email by June 5, 2009 to:

Kris Reed, 1629 140 Road, Pleasant Dale, NE 68423-9000
Email at: Keystone1447@windstream.net

All SWCS members are eligible to vote.



Drop by the SWCS Network!

If you've not taken the time to see what the SWCS Network is all about, please do so. Similar to Facebook and other "online communities", this one is for people interested in conservation of natural resources. Signing up is free, easy and painless, and there are now approximately 700 people participating. Once you're in, you'll be able to browse through all of the groups that have been started to discuss various topics and issues - currently there are over 38 groups ranging from topics such as conservation photography and conservation education, to soil quality/soil health and irrigation water management and conservation engineering. There's a relatively recent group called SWCS Mentor Program for "the benefit student members and young professionals entering the conservation field".

You can personalize your 'home page' by giving as little or as much information about yourself as you want. You can limit the amount of messages you want to receive, and befriend whomever you want. You can even remain anonymous, if you wish, by giving a fake name - such as Perrie Phytton, Rip Buffer, and Secchi Dissque (real fake names on the Network!)

The Network is just another tool to gain insight and information. We even have a "Nebraska Chapters" group that can be used to pass along local event, project, research, or other relevant info, or ask questions that may come to mind. Log on and see what you're missing!

You can access the Network from the main SWCS homepage (www.swcs.org) or by going directly to <http://swcsnetwork.ning.com/>.

FROM: Peggie James, SWCS President
SUBJECT: SWCS Merit Award

It is my pleasure to inform you that the SWCS Board of Directors has named Bluebirds Across Nebraska as a Merit Award Recipient for 2009. This and other awards will be presented at an Awards Luncheon on Tuesday, July 14th at noon during our 2009 Annual Conference. The

2009 Annual Conference will be held at the Hyatt Regency Dearborn in Dearborn, Michigan July 11 – 15, 2009.

Bluebirds Across Nebraska (BAN) promotes the conservation of nongame wildlife species such as bluebirds and wood ducks, which are a "value-added" benefit of conserving soil and water resources. BAN members have established trails in 12 Nebraska state Parks and constructed/installed approximately 30,000 bluebird houses to date. Monitoring has reported a record of 26,385 bluebirds fledged in 2006 and 22,856 in 2007. BAN was also, involved in the construction and installation of 200 wood duck nesting boxes over a three-year period. This was accomplished through volunteer efforts of nearly 1900 Ban members, with 61 county coordinators in a four state area.

Learn more about the SWCS annual conference on the the SWCS website containing annual conference information at:

http://www.swcs.org/en/conferences/2009_annual_conference/

Please be aware that the prestigious 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.

AUSTIN HORN RECEIVES SCHOLARSHIP

Austin Horn was chosen from a field of fourteen applicants to be the recipient of a \$1000 Soil and Water Conservation Society Scholarship. Austin is a sophomore at Chadron State College majoring in Range Ecology. He is the son of Rod & Deb Horn of Sidney.

The scholarship was donated in memory of Tina Lorentzen Carlson from Chappell, Nebr. Tina recently worked at the Bridgeport Natural Resources Conservation Service. The donors of the scholarship to SWCS are Doug Carlson of Chappell, Nebraska, and Ron and Agnes Lorentzen of Annapolis, Maryland.

The scholarship is offered annually to college students majoring in natural resources in Nebraska. Anita Nein made the presentation (see photo on page 1).

26th ANNUAL LEGISLATIVE BREAKFAST

The Annual Legislative Breakfast of the Nebraska Chapter of the Soil Water Conservation Society was held February 27, 2009 in the Nebraska State Office Building. Kris Ethridge, President, Nebraska Chapter SWCS served as the MC. Our Speaker this year was Doug Hallum, Nebraska Dept. of Natural Resources.

The NDNR is providing leadership in an initiative to evaluate existing topographic data and develop an approach to improve the resolution and accuracy of their dataset. The purpose of this initiative is to acquire new high-resolution elevation data for the entire state that can be used by state and local agencies to increase scientific accuracy and reduce costs that are a direct result of the inaccuracy of the data. Doug will demonstrate the fundamental need for this initiative and provide background on a new technology that may be used to accomplish these purposes and provide benefits beyond the public sector. One technology under investigation is LIDAR (Light Detection and Ranging). LIDAR is a remote sensing system used to collect topographic data.

Rolls, coffee and orange juice served. Cost: \$2.00 per person. State Senators and the speaker were free. Coordination: Program, Coffee and room set-up: Kris Reed. Rolls and juice: Val Bohaty. Finances: David Langemeier.

Attendance: Nebr. Legis. Offices	6
Retired	3
NRCS Nebraska	5
Nebr. DNR	7
Nebr. Dept. of Ag	1
NRD/NEQ Liaison	1
Med-Tech	1
Total	24

David Langemeier,

Treasurer, Nebraska Chapter SWCS

Norther Plains Technical Conference Summary

In the shadow of Mount Rushmore the Northern Plains SWCS Chapters recently held the "Conservation, Sustaining Our Future" Technical Conference. Day one focused on Energy and Conservation. Topics included Bio-energy and Soil Quality, Conservation Planning for Biofuels and Conservation and Energy Production. During the evening meal, Dr. Gary Peterson of CSU gave an update on the "Dig It" Smithsonian Display. Once the "Dig It" display ends it's current run in Washington D.C. it will tour the United States pending funding.

Day two featured topics on Soil Quality and Water Quality with presentations on Soil Quality Concepts, Using Cover Crops to Enhance Soil Health, Your Plow Just

Wrecked my Living Room, Cropping Systems, Water Quality Trading Concepts, Water Quality Sampling and Protocol, Water Quality and Salinity Impacts in the Northern Plains, Modes and Tools for Water Quality, Emerging Water Quality Contaminants and a Conservation Planner Round Table.

Day three featured break out sessions on AFO/CAFO Rule Update, Pesticides and Water Quality, Air Quality Concerns, Pollinators, Rainfall Simulator, SWCS Networking Internet Site, Carbon Credits, Visual Simulations for Communicating Conservation and Carbon Budget Calculations.

Most of the above topic presentations are available for review at the North Dakota SWCS website (<http://www.ndswcs.org/>).

Some summary notes from the above presentations:

- Take the "E" out of "ET"
- We should not plan to Minimize a Loss, rather plan to Restore and Enhance.
- It takes 2700lbs of residue to just feed soil microbes.
- Soil Microbes in Early Successional soil = Bacteria Dominant.
- Soil Microbes in Late Successional soil = Fungi Dominant.
- Erosion is a symptom, what is the problem?
- We are use to seeing "failed" systems, what does a successful soil system look like?
- Nutrient cycling is life.
- Mitigate Soil Salinity with added calcium, increased SOM and add sulfur.
- 1 part per billion = 1 thimball in an Olympic sized swimming pool.
- Geologic carbon present in our native plowed prairies provided the energy for early crop production.
- Geologic carbon is now imported from great distances (unsustainable) to provided the energy for crop production.



Nebraska attendees at the NP Technical Conference, Feb. 2009

Kapels Receives SWCSF Scholarship

The Nebraska Soil and Water Conservation Foundation 2008 \$750 scholarship went to Kyle Kapels, a student at Seward Concordia College.



Kyle Kapels and Val Bohaty

Soil and Water Conservation Society 2008 International Annual Conference By Kris Ethridge

I had the privilege of attending the SWCS 2008 International Annual Conference in Tucson, AZ. Nothing makes one appreciate the value of water more than Tucson in July! The conference focused a great deal on bio-fuel production and related conservation issues, but there were many other incredible presentations on topics including Environmental Policy, the Midwest Floods of 2008, and Global Climate Change. The quality presenters and timely subject matter made every presentation a must see.

I attended the State of the Society Address given by current SWCS president Peggy James. She did a great job reaffirming our society's dedication to our mission to foster the science and art of natural resource conservation. She also encouraged each chapter to promote the society and demonstrated the importance of continuing to recruit new members. I also attended a regional roundtable luncheon with other chapter officers from the Northern Plains Region led by Mary Miller, Regional Director. We are very fortunate to have Mary as such a valuable resource within our region. Her enthusiasm and commitment to SWCS was contagious. It was great to make connections and develop friendships with other people in the region, and to share ideas on how to promote our individual chapters.

There were over 650 conservation professionals from all over the world at the conference. I even had the opportunity to visit with a SWCS'er from Canada and one from Great Britain. The experience is one I will treasure and I strongly encourage everyone to attend this conference. I am certain that if more people could see the full reach of SWCS at the national level, there would be much greater support and participation by our members. If you would like to find out more about the 2008 conference and see locations for future conferences, please visit the SWCS website at www.swcs.org.

Members:

Kuzila, Mark (UNL)
Chick, Steve (USDA NRCS)
Ethridge, Kris (USDA NRCS)
Mountford, Thomas (LPNNRD)
Dosskey, Mike (USDA FS)

Other Nebraskans:

Swanson, Robert (USGS)
awarded by the Foundation.

Silent Auction

A silent auction will again be held during our state meeting this year. The purpose of this will be to raise money for our student scholarship programs and to help with the expenses of workshops and other activities related to this year's state convention.

We are asking for items you would roughly value in the range of 10 - 50 dollars. If you are planning to attend this year's convention and would like to bring a donated item, please let Darwin Hinrichs know. We will need to know what the item is and who it is coming from so credit can be given while the item is displayed at the auction and so a thank you note can be sent to the donor. You may also send your donated item with someone else who is attending or give Darwin a call about it. Previous items have included: wine bottles, crafts, books, CD's, gloves, pictures and numerous other items. You may contact Darwin about questions for this auction or information about your donated items at:

Darwin Hinrichs, PO Box 487, Trenton, NE 69044
(308-334-5292)
darwin.hinrichs@ne.usda.gov

Nebraska SWCS Chapter
13550 W US HWY 34
Malcolm, NE 68402

Nebraska Soil and Water Conservation Society - By-Laws Changes Ballot

A Ballot to approve the proposed changes to the Nebraska SWCS By-Laws.

Summary of proposed changes (full version of edits available on website listed at bottom of this sheet):
To amend the Nebraska SWCS Chapter By-Laws with appropriate wording to allow for the members of the Northeast SWCS Chapter to become a new "Section" of the Nebraska SWCS Chapter. Other items being considered for changes in this amendment includes the appropriate wording to allow for the addition of a "Section" to accommodate the new Northeast "Section". Also included is wording to update the By-Laws to recognize new forms of communications in business such as conference calls, email and the internet.

Return this Ballot by June 8, 2009 to:

Kris Ethridge, 821 N 5th, Seward, NE 68434

or

Email your vote to: Kris.Ethridge@ne.usda.gov

VOTE

Yes - To Approve By-Laws Changes

No - Do Not Change By-Laws

The first Newsletter I worked on was February 1991, taking over for Paul Smith. Publishing the newsletter over the years has been a great opportunity for getting to know folks and the basic workings of SWCS. We can all look forward to the newsletter taking on a fresh appearance in the near future! Sarah Reece has agreed to take on the task of keeping the Nebraska Chapter informed of recent and planned happenings.

Doug Garrison