

Des Moines County Soil and Water Conservation District 70th Annual Report



Odessa Vineyard owner, Corey Nichols, explains to the Des Moines and Louisa County Women, Land and Legacy tour group how the Wapello winery was started.



Kirk Siegle explains the process of making ethanol during a plant tour by the WLL group.

WOMEN, LAND AND LEGACY PROGRAM

The Des Moines and Louisa County Women, Land, and Legacy (WLL) group hosted several educational opportunities during 2015.

A learning session was held in March at the Mediapolis City Hall for landowners to learn about soil health and cost share programs available from USDA agencies. A tour was held at Odessa Vineyards in June, where those attending learned the history of the winery and the process of making wine. A tour of the Big River Resources ethanol plant in West Burlington was held in November. The group learned how the ethanol plant got started and the lengthy process of making ethanol and other byproducts.

If interested in attending future WLL events, please contact Jamie Grimes at 319-753-6221 to be included on the mailing list.

Protecting Our Resources: The Soil and Water

By Jim Gillespie, IDALS-DSCWQ Director



other partners locally working together to address soil health and water quantity and quality.

In State Fiscal Year 2015, Iowa set another record with the Iowa Financial Incentives Program (Cost Share) with a landowner/farmer contribution of \$12.8 million, a state investment of \$9.8 million with the total investment of \$22.6 million. To put in perspective what that meant in numbers for four conservation practices, it was 515 miles of terraces, 1,264 miles of waterways, 96 grade stabilization structures, and 471 water and sediment control basins. These conservation practices are effective, long term practices that trap sediment and phosphorus in the fields. This reflects a commitment of landowners and farmers making an investment with the state where they are contributing \$1.50 or more for each dollar invested by the state.

The impacts of the various cost share programs offered locally is that it continues to get more conservation practices installed. The numerous benefits of these conservation practices are that it reduces erosion, soil losses and nutrient runoff. It continues to improve soil health and water quantity and quality issues. They reduce storm water impacts on public and private property and protect infrastructure. These programs help in protecting watersheds above and water quality in Iowa's publicly owned lakes. They also help local economies benefiting local communities.

These operations are businesses that depend on healthy soils, the water on property is well managed and utilized, the nutrients are well managed for crop production, and the livestock operation is managed effectively. The challenges that go with these elements of business are important to insure that one can operate effectively and profitably. When evaluating these components of business throughout the year and identifying needs and opportunities to make improvements, please don't hesitate to stop in the area field offices to find help with soil and water issues. These offices have great technical assistance and usually have financial assistance programs that can help put scientifically proven conservation practices on land to help with improving soil health, water quantity and water quality. Stop in any time for help.



Maureen Hutchcroft accepts the Outstanding Commissioner Award from Wallace Farmer Editor, Rod Swoboda.

Hutchcroft Receives Outstanding Commissioner Award

Maureen Hutchcroft, Des Moines County Soil and Water Conservation District Commissioner, received the Outstanding Soil and Water Conservation District Commissioner Award in 2015, at the annual Conservation Districts of Iowa conference.

Maureen is a very active commissioner who has served on many of the district's committees and attends all district, regional and annual meetings. Hutchcroft has been the chairperson of the district since 2007 and co-treasurer the last three years.

Maureen has assisted the district with organizing a booth at their Earth Day event and the Des Moines County Fair. She has helped host their state soil tour and spring regional meeting, represented the district at local meetings and judges and presents awards to poster contest winners. She supports the Iowa Learning Farms and Water Rocks programs and has been on the planning committee for the Women, Land & Legacy Program. Her farm has implemented conservation practices such as waterways, terraces, field borders and windbreaks. In 2014, her family accepted the Heritage Family Farm Award for their 150 year old McLaughlin Family Farm. Maureen's personal conservation ethic shines through in nearly every conversation she has.

Des Moines SWCD Financial Report Of State Funds July 1, 2014 – June 30, 2015	
Budget & Operating Funds	
Total Allocation	\$2,000.00
Commissioner's Expense	\$1,050.39
Office Expenses, Meeting Room Rental	\$224.64
CDI & NACD Dues	\$75.00
Balance	\$9.97
REAP PRACTICES	
Timber Stand Improvement – 12.1 acres	
Windbreak – 2 acres	
Tree Planting – 3 acres	
Pasture & Hayland Planning (Knotty Creek priority watershed) – 8 acres	
Terraces (Knotty Creek priority watershed) – 500 feet	
Allocation & Carry Over	\$19,521.31
Projects Completed	\$5,940.84
Transferred to FY16	\$3,977.25
Funds Recalled	\$9,603.24
REAP FORESTRY & NATIVE GRASSES	
Timber Stand Improvement – 21 acres	
Site Prep for Natural Regeneration – 5 acres	
Allocation & Carry Over	\$5,751.87
Projects Completed	\$2,844.12
Transferred to FY16	\$1,824.00
Funds Recalled	\$1,079.75
COST SHARE	
Terraces – 13,069 feet	
Cover Crops – 355 acres	
Summer Construction Incentive – 13.7 acres	
Allocation & Carry Over	\$70,388.52
Projects Completed	\$49,452.85
Transferred to FY16	\$20,935.67
Funds Recalled	\$0.00

Des Moines County SWCD Hosts Regional Meeting

The Des Moines County Soil and Water Conservation District was chosen to host the Spring Region 9 meeting in March. Region 9 consists of thirteen counties in southern Iowa. These meetings are held every spring at different locations throughout the region to conduct special business, allow commissioners to get together from different counties to discuss topics of interest and hear updates from partners.

The meeting was held at Pzazz Fun City. Forty-seven people were in attendance representing SWCD's from Davis, Jefferson, Keokuk, Wapello, Henry, Lee, Monroe, Mahaska, Scott, and Des Moines Counties, Conservation Districts of Iowa (CDI), Iowa Department of Agriculture and Land Stewardship (IDALS), Department of Natural Resources (DNR) and Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) state office and area office.

Thanks For Your Help

The Des Moines County Soil and Water Conservation District is a governmental subdivision that relies heavily on donations, whether it is cash donations from landowners or product donations from businesses. Businesses donating goods or services to the SWCD during 2015 include:

- Papa Murphy's pizza gift certificates to give as honorable mention prizes for the poster contest.
- Casey's General Stores – refreshments for a pollinator habitat workshop.
- Mediapolis News-prints our Annual Report every year.
- Des Moines County Fair Board-booth space at the county fair.
- Mediapolis Savings Bank-meeting space for Women, Land And Legacy meeting.
- The HawkEyeCounty Conservation-booth space at the annual Earth Day cleanup.
- Morning Sun Community Center-meeting space for the pollinator habitat workshop.
- Burlington Chamber of Commerce-bags of information for attendees of the Spring Regional meeting.

The Des Moines County Soil & Water Conservation District thanks each and every one of you! If you would like to make a donation, please call the SWCD at 319-753-6221.



2015 DES MOINES COUNTY SWCD BOARD COMMISSIONERS: (standing) Jason Hinson and Bob Hinson; (seated) Brian Messer, Don Lounsberry, June Morgan (assistant) and Maureen Hutchcroft. Not pictured: Jeff Burgus and Brad Weiss.



2015 DES MOINES COUNTY NRCS, DSCWQ AND SWCD OFFICE STAFF (L-R) Drew DeLang, District Conservationist, Jamie Grimes, State Conservation Assistant, Caleb Waters, Geode Watershed Coordinator, Shiloh Bradley, Soil Conservationist, Kindra Bradley, State Conservation Technician, and John Wischmeier, District Intern. Not pictured: Erica Yost, Pheasants Forever Farm Bill Biologist.

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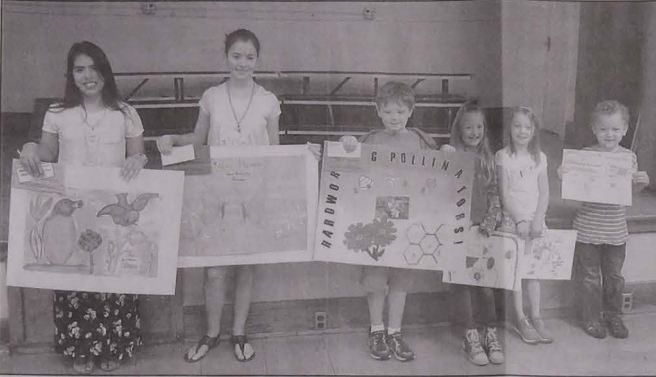
Local Heroes – Your Hardworking Pollinators

The Des Moines County Soil and Water Conservation District, in partnership with Grinnell Mutual Reinsurance Company and Conservation Districts of Iowa, sponsored the annual poster contest for all students in the county.

The 2015 theme was *Local Heroes—Your Hardworking Pollinators*. We can thank pollinators for one-in-three mouthfuls of food and drink—everything from coffee and chocolate, to most fruits and vegetables, to animal products including dairy products, beef and pork. These animals consume insect-pollinated legumes such as clover at some time.

The contest consists of five divisions—Division 1 is kindergarten and first grades; Division 2 is second and third grades; Division 3 is fourth-sixth grades; Division 4 is seventh-ninth grades; and Division 5 is 10th–12th grades. Judging criteria included conservation message, visual effectiveness and universal appeal.

Additionally, each first place winner was submitted for regional competition. The Des Moines County SWCD had one regional winner in 2015 which was Isabella Escorcio, from Great River Christian School.



Winners from Great River Christian School: (from left) Monzerrath Rodriguez, honorable mention, Division 5; Isabella Escorcio, first, Division 3; John Yancey, second, Division 1; Kayley McAninch, third, Division 1; Madelyn Thomas, honorable mention, Division 1; and Nehemiah Chancellor, honorable mention, Division 1.



Division 1 winner, Abby Boyer, from Great River Christian School with art teacher Milena Subacchi and administrator Jon Frischkorn.



Division 4 second place winner, from Great River Christian School, Serhii Boyer, with art teacher Milena Subacchi.

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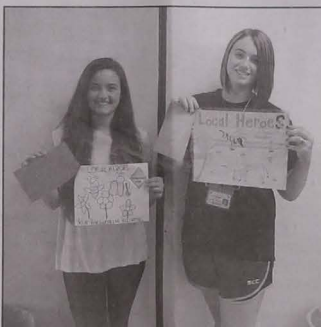
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Division 5 winners, from Burlington High School, Riley Smith, second, and Cheyenne McMillan, honorable mention.

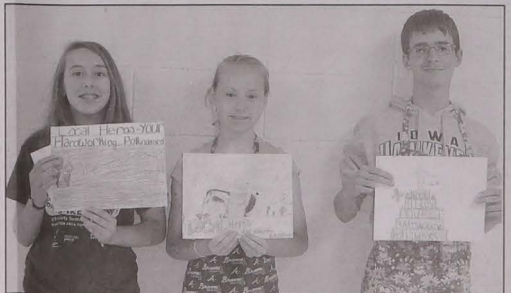
Pollinator Habitat Meeting
The Natural Resources Conservation Services (NRCS), Des Moines and Louisa County Soil and Water Conservation Districts, Aldo Leopold Chapter of Pheasants Forever and Iowa State University hosted a joint workshop for landowners interested in learning about attracting pollinators to their ground in July 2015.

Pollinators are an integral part of our environment and agricultural systems. More than one-fourth of food and beverages we consume are the product of animal pollination. Iowa animal pollinators include bees, butterflies, moths, wasps, flies, beetles, ants and hummingbirds.

Approximately 30 landowners attending the workshop learned how and what programs are available to establish a pollinator habitat. Iowa Department of Agriculture and Land Stewardship Apiarist Andrew Joseph also discussed bee keeping for beginners.



Chloe Nungaray, Burlington High School, first place, Division 4.



Winners from West Burlington Jr. High in Division 4 were Lea Grimes, honorable mention; Camy Machholz, honorable mention; and Mason Forquer, third.



Winners from Mediapolis Community School District: (front row) Solomon Zaugg, third, Division 2; Larae Steiner, first, Division 2; Quinton Schulz, honorable mention, Division 2; Alyssa Haynie, second, Division 2; (back row) Stacy Dixon, third, Division 5; Madolyn Drebenstedt, first, Division 5; Alaina Oliver, honorable mention, Division 3; Melody Manley, honorable mention, Division 3; Wesley Kodis, third, Division 3; and Jesse Massner, honorable mention, Division 2. Not pictured is Rachel Brugger, second, Division 3. All Photos Submitted