

# Henry County Soil & Water Conservation District

709 S. Iris Street, Suite 101

Mt. Pleasant, Iowa 52641

319-385-2824, Ext 3



## 2015 Annual Report

July 1, 2014 to June 30, 2015



### Soil & Water Conservation District Commissioners

Allan Barnes, Chairman; Jeff Olson; Rick Mallams, Vice-Chairman; Harlan Miller, and Alan Miller. Not pictured Assistant Commissioners Chuck Allen & Ross Tweedy



### NRCS, IDALS-DSC & SWCD Staff

Josh Sieren, Soil Conservationist; Caleb Waters, Lake Geode Watershed Coordinator; Aaron Musselman, Resource Conservationist; Dale Schmeiser, Soil Conservation Technician; Olivia LaGrange, Lower Skunk River WQI Watershed Coordinator; Michael Allen, State Technician; Barb Shelman, State Conservation Assistant; Doug Ensminger, District Conservationist.

*"Our mission is to provide leadership and administer programs to help people conserve, improve and sustain our natural resources and environment."*

# 2015 SWCD Poster Contest Winners



Soil & Water Stewardship Materials purchased by the Henry County Soil and Water Conservation District were provided to New London, Waco and Winfield-Mt. Union School Districts. Five teachers used these materials to promote soil and water conservation to their students. Posters created for the 2015 Poster Contest featured the theme **“Local Heroes-Your Hardworking Pollinators”**. Grinnell Mutual Reinsurance Company, Conservation Districts of Iowa, and the Henry County SWCD co sponsor the SWCD contest. Winners of the 2015 Poster Contest were:



**Destiny Boone-1<sup>st</sup> Place**  
**Alexis Ahn, 2<sup>nd</sup> Place**  
**Trey Edeker & Kaylee Harris**  
**Grades K-1 Waco**



**Alisa Worth 2<sup>nd</sup> Place**  
**Katherin Bird 1<sup>st</sup> Place**  
**Grades 10-12**  
**Winfield Mt. Union**



**Summer Carver-1<sup>st</sup> Place**  
**Allie Westercamp, 2<sup>nd</sup> Place**  
**Kamryn Hart, Persephany Lane, Jason Shirkey**  
**Grades 4-6 New London**



**Region 9-- 1<sup>st</sup> Place winner was**  
**Destiny Boone, 1<sup>st</sup> Grade, Waco. She**  
**received a certificate and \$35 award**  
**from Grinnell Mutual.**

**District Financial Report  
of State Funds & Accomplishments:  
July 1, 2014 to June 30, 2015**

**Budget-Operating Funds  
Commissioner and Office Expenses**

|                              |            |
|------------------------------|------------|
| Total Allocations            | \$2,525.00 |
| Commissioner Meeting Expense | \$ 845.31  |
| Office Expenses              | \$ 212.82  |
| CDI & NACD Dues              | \$1,050.00 |
| Educational Materials/Awards | \$ 119.27  |
| Postage                      | \$ 300.00  |
| Total Expenditures           | \$2,527.40 |
| Balance                      | \$ (2.40 ) |

**REAP**

**Resource Enhancement And Protection  
75% Cost-Share Funds**

**Cedar Creek Priority Watershed  
Practices Fund  
Terraces 12,450 L.F.**

|                                    |               |
|------------------------------------|---------------|
| 2014 Projects Rolled Over          | \$ 21,015.06  |
| Total Allocations Received         | \$+31,778.31  |
|                                    | \$ 52,793.37  |
| Projects Complete & Paid           | \$ -39,164.52 |
|                                    | \$ 13,628.85  |
| Funds/Projects Rolled Over to 2016 | \$- 13,628.85 |
| Funds Recalled                     | \$ 0.00       |

**Forestry/Grasses Fund  
Timber Stand Improvement 10.0 ac.  
4 Windbreaks**

|                                    |              |
|------------------------------------|--------------|
| 2014 Projects Rolled Over          | \$ 4,590.00  |
| Total Allocations Received         | \$+4,238.39  |
|                                    | \$ 8,828.39  |
| Projects Complete & Paid           | \$- 6,563.39 |
|                                    | \$ 2,265.00  |
| Funds/Projects Rolled Over to 2016 | \$ 2,265.00  |
| Funds Recalled                     | \$ 0.00      |

**Water Quality Initiative Statewide  
Cover Crops--5 landowners, 511 ac.**

|                            |             |
|----------------------------|-------------|
| Funds Paid in Henry County | \$12,775.00 |
|----------------------------|-------------|

**Public Owned Lakes---Lake Geode  
3 Projects---Terraces 2,250 L.F.  
Cover Crops 34 ac.**

|                            |            |
|----------------------------|------------|
| Funds Paid in Henry County | \$5,151.00 |
|----------------------------|------------|

**State Cost-Share Funds  
Terraces 69,922 L.F.  
1 Basin**

|                               |                |
|-------------------------------|----------------|
| <b>2015-Cost Share</b>        |                |
| 2014 Practices Rolled Over    | \$ 86,550.24   |
| Initial Allocations           | \$+153,213.00  |
|                               | \$ 225,389.24  |
| Projects Complete & Paid      | \$-177,257.18  |
|                               | \$ 62,506.06   |
| Projects Rolled Over to 2016  | \$ -46,813.19  |
|                               | \$ 15,692.87   |
| Transferred to Mgt. Practices | \$ - 14,374.00 |
| Funds Recalled                | \$ 1,318.87    |

**State Cost-Share Management Funds  
Cover Crops, 26 landowners, 501 Ac.**

|                                       |             |
|---------------------------------------|-------------|
| <b>2015-IFIP-Management Practices</b> |             |
| Total Allocations                     | \$18,025.00 |
| Projects Complete & Paid              | \$18,025.00 |
| Funds Recalled                        | \$ 0.00     |

**State Revolving Fund--No-Interest 0% Loans  
3 Grade Stabilization Structures  
Terraces 500 L.F.**

|                                    |               |
|------------------------------------|---------------|
| 2014 Projects Rolled Over          | \$ 80,000.00  |
| Total Allocations Received         | \$+65,476.90  |
|                                    | \$145,476.92  |
| Projects Completed & Paid          | \$- 48,782.53 |
|                                    | \$ 96,694.37  |
| Funds/Projects Rolled Over to 2016 | \$- 76,000.00 |
| Funds Recalled                     | \$ 20,694.37  |

**Henry SWCD  
Cost Share Program**



- 319 - Lake Geode WS NPS Proj
- Cost Share
- CRP-Buffer Initiative CP42 Pollinator Habitat
- Management Practices - IFIP
- No-Interest Loan
- Publicly Owned Lakes

| Financial Accounts                       |                    |
|------------------------------------------|--------------------|
| <b>Checking #3321</b>                    |                    |
| <b>Balance as of 1-1-2015</b>            | <b>\$ 9,160.11</b> |
| <b>Income/Deposits:</b>                  |                    |
| Interest & Dividends Received            | \$ 41.48           |
| Flag Sales                               | \$ 16.00           |
| State Comm/Office Expenses               | \$ 2,525.00        |
| State Lower Skunk River                  | \$27,503.97        |
| State Intern                             | \$ 3,531.00        |
| <b>Total Income</b>                      | <b>\$33,617.45</b> |
| <b>Expenses:</b>                         |                    |
| Postage                                  | \$ 400.00          |
| Office Expenses                          | \$ 364.95          |
| Commissioner Travel                      | \$ 818.60          |
| Dues—CDI & NACD                          | \$ 1,050.00        |
| Employee Payroll /Wages                  | \$19,397.99        |
| Employee Taxes                           | \$10,827.20        |
| Lower Skunk River Expense                | \$ 3,295.26        |
| <b>Total Expenses</b>                    | <b>\$36,154.00</b> |
| <b>Balance as of 12-31-2015</b>          | <b>\$ 6,623.56</b> |
|                                          |                    |
| <b>Savings Account on Checking #3321</b> | <b>\$ 569.43</b>   |

| Financial Accounts                      |                    |
|-----------------------------------------|--------------------|
| <b>Checking #180</b>                    |                    |
| <b>Balance as of 1-1-2015</b>           | <b>\$ 9,866.84</b> |
| <b>Income/Deposits:</b>                 |                    |
| Interest & Dividends Received           | \$ 11.16           |
| Cover Crop Champion Award               | \$ 500.00          |
| <b>Total Income</b>                     | <b>\$ 511.16</b>   |
| <b>Expenses:</b>                        |                    |
| Poster Contest Awards                   | \$ 90.00           |
| <b>Total Expenses</b>                   | <b>\$ 90.00</b>    |
| <b>Balance as of 12-31-2015</b>         | <b>\$10,288.00</b> |
|                                         |                    |
| <b>Savings Account on Checking #180</b> | <b>\$ 1,305.49</b> |
|                                         |                    |
| <b>Certificate of Deposit</b>           | <b>\$ 5,500.00</b> |



Olivia LaGrange was hired mid-October, 2015 as the Lower Skunk River WQI Watershed Coordinator. Olivia is from Cedar Rapids, Iowa where she attended George Washington High School. Olivia is a recent graduate from Iowa State University where she double majored in Biology and Environmental Science. Olivia enjoys being outdoors playing sports, hiking, biking, hanging with friends and family and enjoying all that nature has to offer. Olivia plans on furthering her knowledge within NRCS to assist in promoting the project's programs along with managing and ensuring implementation of water quality practices. For more information on the watershed you can contact Olivia LaGrange Lower Skunk River Watershed Coordinator, at the Henry County SWCD 319-385-2824 ext. 3.



All services and programs are offered on a non-discriminatory basis.



## Protecting Our Resources The Soil and Water By James Gillespie



Iowans continue to make continual commitments to protecting the soil and water resources of our state. It is evident by the strong partnership between the landowners, farmers, the Soil and Water Conservation Districts, the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service, the Iowa Department of Agriculture and Land Stewardship, and many 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.

Your operations are businesses that depend on healthy soils, the water on your property is well managed and utilized, the nutrients are well managed for crop production, and your livestock operation is managed effectively. The challenges that go with these elements of your businesses are important to insure that you can operate effectively and profitably. When you evaluate these components of your business throughout the year and identify needs and opportunities to make improvements, please don't hesitate to stop in the field offices in your area to find out how we can help with your 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 your land to help with improving your soil health, water quantity and water quality. Stop in any time and let us help you.

## 2015 Update on the Water Quality Initiative By Matt Lechtenberg & Will Myers

The Water Quality Initiative was established during the 2013 legislative session to assist the implementation of the Nutrient Reduction Strategy which provides a road map to achieve a 45% reduction in nitrogen and phosphorus losses to our waters using an integrated approach of point (cities and industries) and non-point sources (farms and residential areas). The initiative seeks to harness the collective ability of both private and public resources and organizations to deliver a clear and consistent message to stakeholders to reduce nutrient loss and improve water quality.

In 2015, 1,800 farmers committed \$3.5 million in cost share funds to install nutrient reduction practices in each of Iowa's 99 counties. The practices that were eligible for this funding are cover crops, no-till or strip till, or using a nitrification inhibitor when applying fall fertilizer. Participants include 980 farmers using a practice for the first time and more than 830 past users that are trying cover crops again and are receiving a reduced-rate of cost share.

In addition to statewide cost share, 16 targeted Water Quality Initiative demonstration watershed projects have been funded to help implement and demonstrate water quality practices. The state has provided \$7.4 million in funding to support these projects and has leveraged an additional \$11.7 million in additional funding from partners and landowners. More than 95 organizations are participating in these projects.

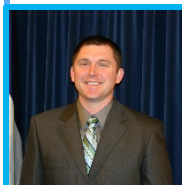
In 2015, Four additional demonstration projects focused on expanding the use and innovative delivery of water quality practices beyond an individual watershed have also received funding. These projects will receive \$3.06 million in funding through the Iowa water quality initiative over the next three years and be matched by \$2.59 million in funding from other sources. These projects include projects that will focus on expanding the use of cover crops, edge of field practices such as bioreactors and saturated buffers, and usage of water quality wetlands. A second round of funding for these projects will be awarded in early 2016.

Nine Urban Conservation Water Quality Initiative Demonstration Projects have also been funded. The state has awarded \$655,194 in funding and partners and landowners participating in the projects will provide \$2.43 million to support urban conservation efforts. A second round of funding for Urban Conservation Projects will also be awarded in early 2016.

For FY2016, \$9.6 million was appropriated by the legislature to support the Water Quality Initiative. This appropriation will allow the Iowa Department of Agriculture and Land Stewardship to continue to provide cost share, expand programs and work in targeted watersheds to achieve measurable water quality improvements.

More information about the Water Quality Initiative can be found at

[www.CleanWaterIowa.org](http://www.CleanWaterIowa.org).





## NRCS Planning for Water Quality Improvement by Kurt Simon

As the new State Conservationist for USDA's Natural Resources Conservation Service in Iowa, I feel honored to be part of the conservation TEAM in one of the most productive agricultural states in the nation. As a conservationist, I will continue the movement toward improved water quality and soil health, and more strategically planned conservation.

I have 31 years of experience in conservation with USDA, most recently serving as Tennessee NRCS Assistant State Conservationist for Field Operations in Knoxville. I take pride in the variety of positions I have held throughout the agency, including starting off as a District Technician in Ohio. I have also worked in West Virginia, South Carolina, Washington D.C., and Alabama, and served as a national liaison to the National Wild Turkey Federation and The Nature Conservancy.

As you all know, there is a great deal of attention focused on improving water quality in Iowa. In addition to the already significant contributions we are making towards water quality improvement in the state, I am committed to accelerating our positive results. We can do this in several ways:

- Prioritize and focus our conservation planning assistance to improve the effectiveness of financial assistance investments. Conservation plans serve as a blueprint for more targeted and cost-effective approaches to addressing natural resource concerns. NRCS has documented significantly higher success rates with projects on farms when producers and our staff and partners use well-developed conservation plans as the platform for action.
- Continue to collaborate with state and local conservation partners to target conservation systems where they will be most effective. That means engaging our soil and water conservation districts, ag associations, and conservation organizations to prioritize project areas.
- Partner with organizations to promote and target wetland restoration to address water quality and habitat needs. Wetlands can filter water and buffer storm discharges, ultimately improving water quality and reducing flood risk downstream.
- Work with partners to deliver and strengthen regional conservation projects. Through RCPP, we are working closely with project sponsors to ensure the success of these pioneer projects in Iowa. Moving forward, we will work with sponsors to identify potential innovative and effective project concepts, and to strengthen future project proposals.

There are many challenges ahead of us, and that is one reason why NRCS is transitioning into a conservation planning first approach. I look forward to assisting NRCS staff and our local offices through this transition, and continuing our efforts on Soil Health and the benefits it can bring to on-farm profitability, cleaner water, reduced soil erosion, and nutrient reductions.

I look forward to visiting more of the state this winter to meet with staff and partners, and to hear about the great things we are accomplishing. I also want to know what is impeding our efforts to get more conservation on the land, and what processes can be improved or streamlined.



**Jeff Olson  
received the  
Champion  
Cover Crop  
Commissioner  
Award from  
CDI**

## Our partners:

