From the President - Harold Thompson

It is my pleasure to begin my second term as president of the Hoosier Chapter. Many people have asked why I agreed to serve a second term after being retired from NRCS almost 10 years. That's an easy question to answer. I find that active participation in the Society is valuable to me personally and professionally. I look at my mentors and role models who work in conservation and agriculture and most all have stayed active in improving their skills and learning about new conservation trends and technology no matter their age. The Society gives us the opportunity to get involved and stay involved no matter what our age or where we are in our career. I am working with an excellent group of council officers, board members and committee chairs and that makes my job as president both easy and enjoyable. But those of you who know me well, know I advocate being a member of a professional society and especially SWCS for five important reasons.

1. Peer-to-peer networking – There is always value gained in interacting with your counterparts and colleagues. Networking at Society events provides you the opportunity to broaden your perspective and learn how others practice conservation, use technology and incorporate research into their everyday jobs. If you have had limited or no multi-state experience in your career, building relationships with those that work in other parts of the country or world can deepen your knowledge of the resource issues and challenges facing others, as well as conservation practices and solutions that are successful for them. Sharing information with others outside your normal circles of co-workers helps transfer knowledge and ideas. On a personal level it can be deeply satisfying when you find a mentor, role model or friend in the networking process.

2. Research and Technical Application – With so much information coming at us and expectations for us to understand and apply it, it is critical we have a credible source of information on important research and technical applications. Both the Society and the Hoosier Chapter provide many opportunities to access important information and training through the Journal of Soil and Water Conservation, newsletters, news clips, website, and also training experiences such as conferences, tours and field days.

3. Recognition – Throughout my career I have found it very valuable to be recognized by my supervisor and other agency leaders as being a member of the Society. Participating in Society activities allows members to demonstrate their professional talents and leadership skills outside of their current job, which can lead to special assignments and career advancement. Members can learn a variety of leadership skills that can be applied to their current job or community involvement.

4. Career Development – Often times it is beneficial for employees to acquire training beyond what their employer can provide. The Society provides excellent opportunities to learn new skills, share knowledge and get training not offered through regular channels. Having participated in many of these conferences I can attest to the high quality and cost effective training I have received. The Hoosier Chapter’s training programs have been recognized nationwide by the Society and other organizations. In 2017, the Chapter was recognized at the 67th SWCS Annual Conference in three award categories for our professional development activities. Over 200 Indiana Conservation Partnership employees took advantage of our training programs last year.

5. Advocacy and Support – Belonging to and actively participating in the Society and the Hoosier Chapter provides members the opportunity to join forces with over 3,500 members throughout the world (180 of them local chapter members). Being able to align yourself with this large membership expands your voice on important conservation issues and also allows you as an individual to participate in the public policy and public forum arena. SWCS keeps members updated on important topics of interest through the website, social media, the Journal and Conservogram. Likewise the Hoosier Chapter keeps its members informed through its website, social media and newsletter.

With all this said, you can see why it is my privilege to serve as the president of this organization. I encourage all members to maintain their membership, recruit new members and find a place to serve in the Hoosier Chapter’s work. An SWCS membership is one of the best investments you can make in yourself!
Join Your Colleagues at the Hoosier Chapter’s Summer Professional Development Event!

Crops grown in the U.S. are critical for the world’s food supply. Changes in temperature, atmospheric carbon dioxide, and the frequency and intensity of extreme weather can have significant impacts on crop yields, as well as the conservation practices put in place to address resource issues. Soil health practices can make land more resilient to extreme weather and innovative monitoring is showing how these practices can improve water quality and management.

**Featured Topics**
- **Our Changing Climate:** Jeff Dukes, Director, Purdue Climate Change Research Center
- **Severe Weather Impacts on Engineering Practices:** Chris Ritz, Civil Engineer, USDA NRCS
- **School Branch Water Quality and Quality Paired Watershed Study—Partnerships, Research and Data:** Shannon Zezula, State Resource Conservationist, USDA NRCS; Bob Barr, Research Scientist, Center for Earth and Environmental Science, IUPUI (invited); and Aubrey Bunch, Biologist, Ohio-Kentucky-Indiana Water Science Center, USGS (invited)

**Field Tour**
Hear from two pioneering soil health farmers located in the watershed that drains to Eagle Creek Reservoir, Indianapolis’s largest drinking water supply. They want to know what is coming off their fields and have opened their doors to one of the largest collaborative water quality studies ever. You’ll see edge of field monitoring, USGS total station monitors, soil temperature monitoring and a bioreactor and hear about the data that is proving what Mike Starkey and Jack Maloney have known all along—soil health practices improve water quality.

For more information contact Curtis Knueven at curtis.knueven@in.usda.gov.
Healthy Soil - Happy Pollinators!!

The annual Hoosier Chapter Fall meeting was held on November 16, 2017 at the Indiana FFA Leadership Conference Center in Trafalgar, IN. There were approximately 135 people in attendance. We were so pleased to have that many Conservation Professionals in Attendance!! Thanks also to the Conservation Cropping Systems Initiative for co-sponsoring and to the Indiana FFA Center for allowing us to use their location!!

Speakers included:
Dr. Jonathan Lundgren, CEO, Blue Dasher Farm and Director, ECDYSIS Foundation
Emily May, Pollinator Conservation Specialist, Xerces Society
Brianne Lowe, State Biologist, USDA NRCS
Stephanie McLain, State Soil Health Specialist USDA NRCS
Jeff Belth, Author of the Award Winning Butterflies of Indiana Field Guide
2017 Hoosier Chapter SWCS Award Winners

CONSERVATION ACCOMPLISHMENT AWARD (GROUP/INDUSTRY/BUSINESS)

The staff from the Conservation Cropping Systems Initiative (CCSI) gladly accept the Group Conservation Accomplishment Award from outgoing HCSWCS President Chris Lee.

EDUCATION AND INFORMATION AWARD

Incoming HCSWCS President Harold Thompson presented the Education and Information Award to Vera Vanderkooy representing the STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Math) Connection. The STEM Connection is a non-profit corporation aimed at facilitating hands-on, minds-on, feet-on-the-ground experiences at their Moore Road Farm and other educational sites.

OUTSTANDING SERVICE TO THE HOOSIER CHAPTER AWARD

Long standing Hoosier Chapter Member William Elliott, presents the Outstanding Service to the Hoosier Chapter Award to NRCS State Conservationist, Jane Hardisty.

HOOSIER CHAPTER PRESIDENT'S AWARD

Jamie Shonkweiler, pictured here with her son, received the Hoosier Chapter President’s Award which was presented by outgoing HCSWCS President Chris Lee.
Join SWCS

Your support can make a difference! It’s individuals like you who make healthy land and clean water for life possible. How can you benefit?

• Support local, national, and international conservation and land stewardship
• Be a part of the conservation community
• Share your work and be informed on other advances in the industry
• Enjoy professional development opportunities on current and emerging interdisciplinary topics
• Network with professionals from many disciplines through local, regional and international meetings
• Be eligible for awards and scholarships only available to SWCS members
• Effective representation in policy circles on environmental, agricultural and conservation issues
• Interaction and education through local chapter membership in US and Canada

All members receive:

• One year Subscription to the Journal of Soil and Water Conservation
• Monthly e-newsletter Conservogram
• Discount to the SWCS annual conference
• Discount on SWCS publications
• Discounts on page charges
• Free book: Aldo Leopold: The Man and His Legacy

Membership levels

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<th>Level</th>
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<tr>
<td>Presidents Club*</td>
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† Leaders also receive
• Special recognition in our annual report
• A gift from the Society and Membership Lapel pin

‡ Student members must be full-time students taking 12 credits/semester

Contact Tammy Swihart with the Hoosier Chapter SWCS for more information – tnkswihart@minerbroadband.com or 812-699-7296
Paige Hobson, a Junior in Agronomy at Purdue University was the recipient of the 2017 HCSWCS $1,000 annual Scholarship Award. This scholarship is intended to encourage qualified students to increase their interest in conservation, to obtain technical competence in a conservation related field and to pursue a career in a conservation discipline. Paige's impressive combination of experience, education and love of Agriculture and Conservation ensured her selection for the Scholarship. She was employed as a summer student intern for Lawrence County SWCD in the summer of 2016. In 2017, Paige was selected as a student trainee with the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service under the Pathways Program. She worked as a trainee during the summer of 2017 and will be working with NRCS again for the summer of 2018. Miss Hobson is a graduate from Bedford North Lawrence High School and was a 10 year 4-H member and a 4 year member of the local FFA Chapter.

Find out how you can get involved with committees, activities and events by contacting any of the folks listed below:

2018 Hoosier Chapter SWCS Officers

Officers (One Year Terms)
President- Harold Thompson – harold.thompson58@sbcglobal.net
President elect- Curtis Knueven – curtis.knueven@in.usda.gov
Secretary/treasurer- Mary Jo Woodruff-
maryjo.woodruff@in.usda.gov
Executive Secretary- William Elliott- elliott8719@sbcglobal.net
Past President- Chris Lee- chris.lee@in.usda.gov

Committee Chairs
- Chapter Development & Administration- Scott Wagner-
scott.wagner@in.usda.gov
- Legislation, Public Policy, & Public Affairs- Chris Torp-
chris.torp@in.usda.gov
- Membership, Growth& Development- Tammy Swihart-
tammy.swihart@in.usda.gov
- Professional Development- Curtis Knueven–
curtis.knueven@in.usda.gov
- Public Information & Education- Chris Lee- chris.lee@in.usda.gov
New Mexico’s rich culture and diverse landscape makes it the prime location to celebrate the 73rd SWCS International Annual Conference theme, Culture, Climate, and Conservation. The research to be shared and stories to be told from across the nation will fit right into this location where conservation spans resource concerns, cultures, and landscapes.

Register on-line at www.swcs.org

Registration Now OPEN!

For more information, contact Tammy Swihart at tmkswhart@minerbroadband.com.