

CDI News

Volume 12, Issue 4

October, 2007

CDI Board Members

Jerry Fine, President
Rick Juchems, Vice President
Butch Neumeyer, Past President
Babetta Lucke, Treasurer
Lorna Troester, Secretary

Directors

Region 1: Kenneth Gard
Region 2: Wendell Christensen
Region 3: Dean Stromer
Region 4: Lorna Troester
Region 5: Babetta Lucke
Region 6: Tim Palmer
Region 7: Kelley Putman
Region 8: Barbara Johnson
Region 9: Jim Gevock

Our Mission: *“CDI informs, educates and leads Iowans through our local districts to promote conservation of natural resources.”*

Fine Times--“Thanks for Your Support”

My term as CDI President is coming to a close. The last two years have been very educational and rewarding for me. I served as a Commissioner for 20 years before I became President. I thought I had a good grasp on how to do the job I was elected to. After serving in a leadership position at CDI and NACD, I realized there is a lot more to the job than I could have imagined. And there is so much more to be done.

One of the things I believe is that there should be more dedicated funding for implementing conservation practices on Iowa’s working lands. It is said that agriculture sustains the human race, and if that is true I believe that conservation systems sustain agriculture. Almost without exception, agriculture organizations in this state say they and their members support conservation, and are in favor of more conservation funding. CDI should continue to work with these groups to support common conservation goals and policy.

One thing that never ceases to amaze me is how political all our programs are. The individuals who originally allocated our tax dollars for conservation programs understood that without a locally led and locally managed

delivery system it would not work. They understood that for this delivery system to work, it had to have support at the local level. People actually working the land needed to have buy-in, they need to believe that the programs thought up in Des Moines or Washington, D.C. will actually improve our natural resources. They must be cost effective and affordable, or producers won’t accept them.

For the locally led process to work we need leadership, vision, teamwork, stability and communication. I’ve heard it said that if you don’t communicate, don’t expect a response. I believe that this is one of our biggest failures with policy makers and producers. It is our failure to talk with them about conservation and local resource needs.

With the ever increasing demands on our land for higher yields, for both fuel and fiber, we risk eroding even more of Iowa’s greatest natural asset--our soil. The job of helping protect the soil and water is certainly not going to get any easier. I challenge you to look for new ways to protect and enhance our soils. Look for additional partners and technologies for help. It has been a pleasure serving as your President, and I will continue to work alongside you.

Jerry Fine

Visit our website
often for events and
other information at:
www.cdiowa.org

Deb Ryun, Executive Director debryun@cdiowa.org

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Hilary Johnson, Envirothon Coordinator envirothon@cdiowa.org

Those Dreaded Watershed Grant Applications

We've just completed another review of watershed grant applications for the Watershed Improvement Review Board (WIRB), and there are probably some disappointed folks out there. The WIRB didn't spend all of the money that was allocated, and it left some projects unfunded. We understand the frustration. There are people out there who want to improve water quality in their watersheds. The WIRB members feel that having a desire to make improvements is a really great start, but desire is not enough by itself to indicate that a project is likely to succeed. Success is important to keeping WIRB funding available, so there is pressure to show results with the money allocated to water quality improvement. This is real money, after all, to the tune of \$5 million per year, or up to half a million dollars per project.

Projects the WIRB, or any other funding source, is likely to approve will share some key elements: **there has been a comprehensive assessment of the watershed, impairments are clearly identified and prioritized, the plan targets solutions to the priority impairments, the list of practices to be implemented matches the targets, and there is demonstrated local support and leadership.** There is more to be considered, of course, but these five items are essential. Without a comprehensive assessment of the watershed (a TMDL is not sufficient) and a targeted plan using appropriate practices, it is unlikely the watershed project will be funded.

One good example of what *not* to do came in the form of some faulty septic system/unsewered community applications. There were several such applications turned down because there wasn't an assessment showing that septic systems were the cause of an impairment in the watershed. The link between the human waste issue and the water quality in the watershed was not made. If certain septic systems are not functioning properly, that does not necessarily equate to a measurable, negative impact in the watershed. The same could be said for cattle in a watershed. The cattle produce "nutrients", but that doesn't necessarily mean there are high levels of nutrients in the water, or that the nutrients in the water came from the cattle. Every acre does count when it comes to protecting our soil and water. But given the need we have to show real improvements in water quality, it is vital that we target our limited resources carefully.

Working with our partners, we do have a pretty good idea of what practices need to be implemented to improve the waters of the state. Keeping the soil on the land and out of the water will do a lot. But a list of practices by itself is, again, not enough. We strongly advise anyone wanting to do a watershed project to start by reviewing the Watershed Project Planning Protocol brochure, published by IDALS-DSC. You should have one in your office, or you can

download it from the WIRB website at: <http://www.agriculture.state.ia.us/IWIRB/2007/WatershedProjectProtocol.pdf>

This brochure will address, in some detail, the nine steps of watershed project planning:

1. Identify the water quality concern
2. Determine reasonable objectives
3. Inventory the watershed
4. Analyze watershed data
5. Formulate alternatives
6. Evaluate alternatives
7. Make decisions and complete the plan
8. Implement the plan
9. Evaluate the plan

The next step in your thinking may be to contact your Regional Watershed Coordinator at IDALS-DSC, either Bob Waters (west), Jeff Tisl (northeast), or Vince Sitzman (southeast). They can guide you through the whole process, from the initial stages of what outcome you'd like to achieve, through to final plan evaluation.

Watershed plan development may be complex or pretty straightforward. Be open to working with several different "experts". You may need several people to help with, for example, GIS mapping, conducting an in-stream visual assessment, surveying the landowners and operators impacting the watershed, and compiling all the information at hand to get the plan written. The analysis, and likely the skill set needed to complete it, will be unique for each watershed. This should still be YOUR project, but staff at NRCS, DSC, DNR and elsewhere are available to help you succeed. Don't expect to go it alone.

It is important to develop partnerships in order to secure the technical expertise and financial support needed for the project to extend beyond development and into implementation. This takes more voluntary involvement and time. Partners do not automatically appear and rally around the project without invitation ***and inclusion***. Partnership development is necessary, and it requires patience. Maybe you'll focus more on non-traditional types, such as local groups to conduct monitoring, DNR-GSB staff to conduct macroinvertebrate sampling, or local county sanitarians. But whatever the eventual composition of your "team", remember that there is a very strong correlation between successful projects and leadership by local sponsors who actively sought outside support and "carried the torch" to generate partnerships.

And finally, don't try to take on more than is realistic. Multiple impairments may mean multiple projects. We are more likely to show success when working in smaller subwatersheds, and success builds upon itself.



**Don't go until the ground is
50 degrees or below!**

2008 CDI Regional Directors Elected

You will have some new representation on the CDI Board beginning January 1, 2008. Here is the lineup:

Region 1

Kenneth Gard, Director, Sioux City
Dallas Huebner, First Alternate, Hawarden
Thomas E Oswald, Second Alternate, Cleghorn

Region 2

Wendell Christensen, Director, Wesley
Jerry Crew, First Alternate, Webb
Monty Leu, Second Alternate, Ruthven

Region 3

Dean Stromer, Director, Klemme
*Jon Gisleson, First Alternate, Floyd
Harvin Meyer, Second Alternate, Wellsburg

Region 4

Lorna Troester, Director, McGregor
Charles McCullough, First Alternate, Bernard
Raymond Finn, Second Alternate, Cascade

Region 5

Babetta Lucke, Director, Persia
Alan Lemker, First Alternate, Breda
Darrell Stamp, Second Alternate, Walnut

Region 6

Tim Palmer, Director, Truro
Arlan Becker, First Alternate, Milo
Stephen Roe, Second Alternate, Des Moines

Region 7

*Jane Weber, Director, Bettendorf
Mark Kennett, First Alternate, Grinnell
*Mike Deahr, Second Alternate, West Liberty

Region 8

Barbara Johnson, Director, Villisca
Rick Oshel, First Alternate, Osceola
*Doug Campbell, Second Alternate, Shannon City

Region 9

Jim Gevock, Director, Fairfield
Donald Niebuhr, First Alternate, Albia

Please help us in welcoming the new CDI Board and Alternate Board members. These folks have shown a commitment to conservation and are willing to give of their time and talents to further the CDI mission.

WE HAVE SEVERAL BOARD MEMBERS THAT WILL BE COMPLETING THEIR TERMS AS CDI BOARD MEMBERS. PLEASE JOIN US IN THANKING THEM FOR THEIR SERVICE. Butch Neumeyer-Past President, Kelley Putman-Region 7 Director, and Joyce Dolan-Region 3 Alternate Director.

**These are either new members to the CDI Board or their titles have changed.*

Plan Now to Attend the 61st Annual Conference



Jerry Fine, President of Conservation Districts of Iowa, and Duane Sand, Chair of the State Soil Conservation Committee, encourage you to attend the 61st annual conference of the Soil and Water Conservation District Commissioners. The theme of this conference is **“Growing Conservation Opportunities”**.

The title for the 2007 Conference has multiple meanings. There has been much excitement about the growing bio-fuels industry. While on the one hand it is good for Iowa and our producers, we cannot ignore the potential soil and water consequences. Another way to look at the theme is to expand your current conservation opportunities by reaching new audiences. You could also look to the upcoming farm bill for new ways to deliver the current programs we utilize. We wouldn't want to ignore the way the climate change conversation has produced a growing interest in soil and water protection. The hypoxia issue has not gone away, and the potential to increase water quality practices, especially in the Upper Mississippi River basin, continues to grow as a national priority.

We will again have several good concurrent sessions planned. One of the three groups of sessions will focus on district meeting structure and how to be an effective board. The topics may include, Robert's Rules of Order, open meetings law, CDAT (commissioner development advisory team), soil loss complaints, board diversity and changing demographics.

Another room will discuss ways in which districts can enhance the delivery of programs to our customers. Presentations will include topics such as, conservation education in our schools, farmers engaging other farmers in conservation, and reaching absentee landowners and non-traditional clients--be it the acreage owners or urban folks.

The third set of sessions will look at innovative tools to achieve your district's conservation goals. The plan is to include: the bioeconomy, farming for carbon instead of T, tillage practices and how conservation pays, conservation credit trading, agroforestry, cover crops, and alternative land uses.

This excellent program was designed from comments you as commissioners have shared. This is a great opportunity to get together with fellow commissioners to engage in meaningful dialogue; networking with other districts is invaluable.

Make your plans to attend today!

You can download the registration packet at:
<http://www.cdiowa.org/events.html>

***DRAFT* 2007 Conference At A Glance**

Tuesday, November 27

- 1:00 p.m. Commissioner Development Tour
- 3:00 p.m. CDI Board Meeting
- 6:00 p.m. SSCC Meeting

Wednesday, November 28

- 8:00 a.m. Registration Table Opens
- 8:00 a.m. Auction Items Accepted
Continental Breakfast Available
- 9:30 a.m. Silent Auction Begins
- 9:30 a.m. CDI Business Meeting
- 9:30 a.m. Optional Spouse tour
- 11:00 a.m. Welcome and General Session Speaker
- Noon Lunch
- 1:30 p.m. General Sessions
- 3:00 p.m. Break & Posters
- 3:30 p.m. General Sessions
- 5:00 p.m. Posters, Partners Stations & Social
- 6:00 p.m. Awards Presentation
- 6:30 p.m. Dinner
Live Auction

Thursday, November 29

- 6:30 a.m. Chairs Meeting
- 7:00 a.m. Breakfast Buffet
Meet Your Regional Chair
Announcements
- 8:30 a.m. Concurrent Sessions Begin
- 10:00 a.m. Break & Posters
- 10:30 a.m. Concurrent Sessions Continue
- 11:30 a.m. Awards
- Noon Lunch
Speaker
- 1:30 p.m. CDI Board Restructuring Meeting
Other Meetings as Required

Reservations for the Hotel at Gateway Center in Ames, November 27-29, 2007, can be made by **calling 800-367-2637**. Ask for the Conservation Districts of Iowa room block with a special rate of \$79 single or double rate.

Iowa Conservationists Partner for RAGBRAI Riders

For the fifth consecutive year Iowa conservationists partnered to provide bananas, cold water, conservation-themed postcards and conservation education, all at no charge, to thousands of RAGBRAI (The Register's Annual Great Bicycle Ride Across Iowa) riders, July 22-28.

During the week, the *Iowa Conservation Team* handed out about 3,000 lbs. of bananas -nearly 10,000- and more than 3,000 postcards were sent to locations all over the world.

The *Iowa Conservation Team* partnership consists of the Iowa Chapter of the Soil and Water Conservation Society (SWCS), the Iowa Department of Agriculture and Land Stewardship-Division of Soil Conservation (IDALS-DSC), the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS), Conservation Districts of Iowa (CDI), and local Soil and Water Conservation Districts.

The *Iowa Conservation Team* set up each day in a rural area where riders might need a break, usually on a farmer's front lawn. Bob Hansen, a Black Hawk County Soil and Water Conservation District Commissioner, hosted the *Iowa Conservation*



Team on his front lawn in rural Dunkerton on Thursday, July 26. "I didn't expect so many riders to stop at our site," said Hansen. "It's obvious many know the *Iowa Conservation Team*, and appreciate the services and conservation educate they provide."

In addition to conservation-themed postcards and educational panels, the team displayed a rainfall simulator, courtesy of the Iowa Learning Farm, at its location Tuesday, July 24, near Clarion. The rainfall simulator demonstrates what happens to the land when it rains. The simulator's oscillating nozzle can simultaneously distribute rainfall on five different surfaces. The runoff from these different scenarios is collected in glass demonstrating how various ground covers affect soil loss.

"Conserving our natural resources is everybody's business," said Kevin Kuhn, president of the Iowa Chapter of the SWCS. "RAGBRAI serves as a great opportunity to show what we are doing in Iowa and how important it is to continue our conservation efforts."

Jason Johnson, NRCS

Waterfowl Hunters Reminded to Stop Aquatic Hitchhikers

Boaters and anglers are continually reminded during the summer months to prevent the spread of aquatic invasive species. Now it is the waterfowl hunters' turn to help stop aquatic hitchhikers and protect Iowa lakes, rivers, and wetlands.

Invasive species such as Eurasian watermilfoil, purple loosestrife, and zebra mussels can damage habitat for waterfowl, fish, and other wildlife species. These aquatic invasive species can be unintentionally transported on boats, decoys, and blind material if waterfowl hunters do not take the proper precautions to prevent their spread.

"Preventing the spread of aquatic invasive species into new waters is the key to controlling these species in Iowa," said Kim Bogenschutz, the DNR's aquatic invasive species program coordinator. Hunters should follow a simple set of procedures each time when leaving the water.

- Remove any visible plants, animals, or mud from decoy lines

and anchors, push poles, boats, and waders before transport.

- Drain water from boat, motor, and bilge before transport.
- Switch to elliptical, bulb-shaped, or strap decoy anchors that do not collect submerged aquatic plants as easily.
- Cut cattails or other plants above the water line when used as camouflage for boats or blinds.
- Clean and dry anything that comes into contact with water (boats, trailers, decoys, waders, dogs).

To kill or remove invasive species that are difficult to see, such as young zebra mussels, hunters should clean boats and equipment with high-pressure or hot (at least 104 degrees) water before launching in another water body. Alternately, boats and equipment can be allowed to dry for at least 5 days.

For more information contact Bogenschutz, at 515-432-2823.

Mark Your Calendars Now!

2008 Spring Regionals		
Date/Time	Region	Host
March 7	9	TBA
March 10	7	TBA
March 11	6	TBA
March 12	8	TBA
March 13	5	Shelby
March 14	1	Lyon
March 17	4	Bremer
March 18	3	Chickasaw
March 19	2	TBA

Lt. Governor Judge Co-Sponsors Climate Protection Resolutions

Former Secretary of Agriculture Patty Judge was one of 20 Lieutenant Governors to cosponsor a resolution to increase energy independence and address climate change. See below the gist of the resolution that passed by the National Lieutenant Governors Association in July, 2007.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the lieutenant governors of the National Lieutenant Governors Association (NLGA) shall:

- A. Encourage federal, state, and local governments to enact or promote policies and programs to meet or surpass the target of reducing greenhouse gas emission levels to 7 percent below 1990 levels by 2012 and 60-80% below 1990 levels by 2050, including efforts to: reduce the United State's dependence on fossil fuels and accelerate the development of clean, economical energy resources and fuel-efficient technologies such as conservation, methane recovery for energy generation, wind and solar energy, fuel cells, more fuel-efficient motor vehicles, and biofuels; and
- B. Assess and review greenhouse gas emissions within their state operations, and in their community, and help outline and establish reductions targets; and
- C. Assist NLGA members who wish to educate the public on energy independence and methods to reduce greenhouse gas emissions; and
- D. Engage schools, professional associations, busi-

nesses and industry in devising strategies to conserve energy, reduce greenhouse gas pollution and create new jobs through innovative energy technologies; and

E. Encourage development of more regional collaborations between states to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and promote the shared investment and information exchange about the next generation of renewable energy, conservation, and biofuels technologies; and

F. Encourage the U.S. Congress to pass bipartisan greenhouse gas reduction legislation that includes 1) clear timetables and emissions limits, and 2) a flexible, market-based system of tradable allowances among emitting industries; and

G. Encourage mayors to participate in the U.S. Mayors Climate Protection Agreement; and

H. Promote the increased use of clean, alternative energy by advocating development of renewable energy resources, and recovering landfill methane for energy production; and

I. Encourage the federal government to adopt higher fuel economy standards for automobiles and trucks; and

Practice and promote sustainable building practices and encourage the use of voluntary energy efficiency standards developed through an accredited standards organization.



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Dates to Remember

Oct 16-18
SWCS Regional Meeting
Holiday Inn, Dubuque
http://www.swcs.org/en/conferences/regional_conferences/

November 27
CDI Board Meeting
Gateway Hotel, Ames

November 28-29
CDI Annual Conference
Gateway Hotel, Ames
<http://www.cdiowa.org/events.html>

January 3-4
NC NACD Meeting
Chicago, IL

January 23
CDI Board Meeting

January 24
Legislative Day at the Capitol, Des Moines

February 9-13
NACD Annual Conference
Reno, NV
<http://www.nacdnet.org/events/annualmeeting/>