



TO: Chairs, All Soil and Water Conservation Districts

FROM: Susan Kozak, Division Director, IDALS  
John Whitaker, Executive Director, CDI

DATE: February 23, 2023

RE: **INFORMATION (INFO)**  
Contests and Awards

- Iowa Soil Conservation Awards Program (ISCAP)
- Trees Forever Windbreak Award
- Ken Wagner Award
- Outstanding SWCD Commissioner Award
- Outstanding Watershed Award
- Ruth Wagner Award
- Woodland Owner of the Year Award
- CDI Honorary Member Award
- Conservation Woman of the Year Award
- Paul Johnson Outstanding Soil and Water Conservation District Award

We are writing to remind you that Soil and Water Conservation District Commissioners have several opportunities throughout the year to recognize individuals who are making outstanding contributions toward soil conservation and water quality. One way to accomplish this is through the many awards programs available to you. Although it is somewhat early in the process, we suggest that you study the criteria for each award listed above and begin thinking about your selections. We encourage one Commissioner be appointed as "Awards Committee Chair", in order to devote sufficient time to this important task.

Many districts limit their awards program to specific and traditional awards that have been popular in the past. Perhaps this year your district might expand your current program by adding to your annual work plan a category that was not previously entered and submit an entry for this year.

Again in 2023, Van Wall Group of Perry and John Deere will be supporting us and involved by donating the use of a John Deere 6E Series utility tractor to the Iowa Soil Conservation Awards Program (ISCAP) Conservation Farmer of the Year. The winner will have the free use of the tractor for up to 12 months or up to 200 hours. Note that the awards promotion for Conservation Farmer of the Year allows people to nominate farmers by providing to the district a name and brief summary. A press release with more details will be sent at a later date. IDALS-DSCWQ would like each district to help complete the nominations and summaries and submit them to your Area Office to be considered for this award.

Please note – This program is open to all farmers in the SWCD, except SWCD commissioners, Assistant Commissioners, members of the SSCWQC, and employees of the sponsoring agencies. Past state winners are not eligible to compete. Past district winners are ineligible to compete during the two years subsequent to receiving the state award.

Thanks to Iowa Conservation Education Coalition (ICEC), the 2023 Iowa Soil Conservation Awards Program (ISCAP) Conservation Teacher of the Year Award Winners will receive a one-year ICEC membership!

Please take note of the Ken Wagner and Ruth Wagner Awards. The Ken Wagner Award is for Commissioners with less than five years' experience. The Ruth Wagner Award is for the outstanding Assistant Commissioner.

All 100 districts may participate by sending a nomination for the Outstanding SWCD Commissioner Award. This award is given on a statewide basis. Past state winners and present Officers or Directors of CDI are not eligible; however, past regional winners are eligible.

The following are the due dates and locations to send the nominations for awards. You can find the award forms attached to this email or on CDI's website: <http://cdiowa.org/recognition/awards/>

- Iowa Soil Conservation Awards Program (ISCAP)
  - Conservation Farmer of the Year Award (open to self-nomination) – Due by close of business **May 12** to Local SWCD, District selections due **May 26** to NRCS Area Office, Area Office selections due **June 9** to IDALS-DSCWQ
  - Conservation Teacher of the Year Award (open to self-nomination) – Due **June 9** to IDALS-DSCWQ
- Trees Forever Windbreak Award – Due **June 9** to IDALS-DSCWQ  
(Please include at least one to three color photographs)
- Ken Wagner Award (open to self-nomination) – Due **June 9** to IDALS-DSCWQ
- Outstanding SWCD Commissioner Award – Due **June 9** to IDALS-DSCWQ
- Outstanding Watershed Award – Due **June 9** to IDALS-DSCWQ
- Ruth Wagner Award (open to self-nomination) – Due **June 9** to IDALS-DSCWQ
- Woodland Owner of the Year Award – Due **June 9** to District Forester
- CDI Honorary Member Award – Due **June 9** to IDALS-DSCWQ
- Conservation Woman of the Year Award – Due **June 9** to NRCS State Office
- Paul Johnson Outstanding Soil and Water Conservation District Award - Due **June 9** to IDALS-DSCWQ

*All nominations must be submitted electronically to Sadi Hawk at [sadi.hawk@iowaagriculture.gov](mailto:sadi.hawk@iowaagriculture.gov). Be sure to scan all photographs in color. You will receive a confirmation email within one week. If you do not, please contact Sadi Hawk.*

Good luck this year with your district awards programs. If you have any questions, please call Sadi Hawk at 515-281-5258.

Susan Kozak, Division Director  
Iowa Department of Agriculture and Land  
Stewardship

John Whitaker, Executive Director  
Conservation Districts of Iowa

Attachments

cc: CDI, Jeff Goerndt, Shawn Richmond, Jeff Jensen, Jason Johnson, Kate Bussanmas, Will Myers, IDALS Field Representatives