

2006 SUSTAINED PERFORMANCE Illinois (Land of Lincoln) Chapter:

In the face of reduced support from agencies, nationally declining membership, and massive retirements, the Illinois Chapter has **maintained a membership of almost 200**. This result is due to the **sustained performance of the IL SWCS leadership over several years**. Particularly the board of directors has developed professional improvement opportunities, programs, educational materials, tours, services, networking opportunities and incentives. Listed below are elements of this comprehensive and creative response to expressed needs of the membership:

1. Developed a **half-price membership for former student SWCS members**.
2. Supported **two student chapters** and provided them with various resources.
3. Financially supported student and regular members to attend the SWCS Conf.
4. Financially supported and distributed the excellent soil educational CD: **Claude Soil**. It is now available on the internet, and our flyer helps teachers find it. It will soon be distributed nationally. Members have distributed the CDs widely.
5. Provided assistance for a new educational **Soils Kiosk in the IL State Fair Watershed Park**, with a potential audience of hundreds of thousands.
6. Worked with other WNC SWCS Chapters on the biannual **WNC Conferences**.
7. Participated and greatly benefited from **WNC Spring Leadership conferences**.
8. Produced four **newsletters** per year and distributed them by email.
9. Procured **excellent speakers and tours for annual meetings**: Chicago deep tunnel, Confluence of MO, IL and MS Rivers, Energy and Wind Farms.
10. Secured four meeting **sponsorships** by technical service provider firms.
11. Carried out a **comprehensive awards program**, which has produced a number of national awards for IL winners, and recognized IL SWCS leadership.
12. Secured **CEU or CCA** credits for participants in annual and special meetings.
13. Sponsored **CPESC** organizational and educational initiatives to promote urban soil conservation practices in construction areas.
14. Provided funding for an **IL soil display** in the Washington, DC USDA complex.
15. Provided SWCS IL **Chapter apparel** ordering service for members.
16. As a fund raiser, commissioned an artistic and limited edition **SWCS Coffee Mug** by a well known artistic potter.
17. Developed a revolving **fall color tour** as part of the annual workplan.
18. Sponsored receptions for new NRCS employees. Encouraged SWCS membership with our table-top exhibit at 4-5 meetings each year.

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19. Sponsored Savings Bond for state **FFA** Natural Resource Proficiency Awardees.
20. Maintained a healthy balance in the state SWCS treasury by frugal work and developing fund raisers to pay for projects. Performed annual audits.
21. Convened **multi-disciplinary renewable natural resources conference** planning committee with members of professional societies related to fisheries, forestry, wildlife, water resources, groundwater, and environmental education. This is planned for 2008 and will involve many members on various committees.