



TO: Chairs, All Soil and Water Conservation Districts

FROM: Dale Farnham, Chair of State Soil Conservation Committee and Robert Lynch, President of Conservation Districts of Iowa

DATE: December 29, 2016

RE: **INFORMATION (INFO)**  
Contests and Awards  
Iowa Soil Conservation Awards Program (ISCAP)  
Izaak Walton League 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

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. Further suggest that one Commissioner be appointed as “Awards Committee Chair”, thus 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. A template press release and poster are attached to promote the awards in your district.

Again in 2017, Van Wall Group of Perry will be 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 for these summaries and submit them to your Area Office to be considered for this award.

Thanks to Iowa Conservation Education Coalition (ICEC), the 2017 Iowa Soil Conservation Awards Program (ISCAP) Conservation Teacher of the Year Award Winners will receive a one year ICEC membership!

In addition to an \$800 cash award, this year's Outstanding Watershed will be able to enroll a farmer of their choice into AgSolver Profit Zone Manager. AgSolver Profit Zone Manager is an innovative computer software tool developed in Iowa to help farmers maximize profits and return on investment by identifying where conservation practices can both improve economic and environmental performance. Outstanding Watershed Award Winners will be asked to invite the chosen farmer to the awards banquet in July and they will receive a complimentary ticket for the farmer and a guest.

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/conservation-district-of-iowa/programs/public-education-acknowledgement/awards>).

- Iowa Soil Conservation Awards Program (ISCAP)
  - Farmer of the Year Award (open to self-nomination) – Due **May 1** to Local SWCD, District selections due **May 15** to NRCS Area Office, Area Office selections due **June 1** to IDALS-DSCWQ
  - Teacher of the Year Award (open to self-nomination) – Due **June 1** to IDALS-DSCWQ
- Izaak Walton League Windbreak Award – Due **June 1** to IDALS-DSCWQ (Please include at least one color photograph)
- Ken Wagner Award (open to self-nomination) – Due **June 1** to IDALS-DSCWQ
- Outstanding SWCD Commissioner Award – Due **June 1** to IDALS-DSCWQ
- Outstanding Watershed Award – Due **June 1** to IDALS-DSCWQ
- Ruth Wagner Award (open to self-nomination) – Due **June 1** to IDALS-DSCWQ
- Woodland Owner of the Year Award – Due **June 1** to District Forester
- CDI Honorary Member Award – Due **June 1** to DSCWQ
- Conservation Woman of the Year Award – Due **June 1** to NRCS State Office

Nominations can be emailed to Lori Lewis at [lori.lewis@iowaagriculture.gov](mailto:lori.lewis@iowaagriculture.gov) or mailed to IDALS-DSCWQ, Attn: Lori Lewis, 502 East 9th Street, Des Moines, IA 50319.

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



Dale Farnham, Chair  
State Soil Conservation Committee



Robert Lynch, President  
Conservation Districts of Iowa

#### Attachments

cc: CDI Officers & Regional Directors, Clare Lindahl, Paul Tauke, Aaron Lumley, Rick Robinson, Melissa Miller, Laura Crowell, Vince Sitzmann