Texas State Soil & Water Conservation Board

Public Information/Education

TSSWCB
Texas State Soil & Water Conservation Board

Association of Texas Soil & Water Conservation Districts

Texas State Soil & Water Conservation Board

Evolution of the Public Information and Education Program

Known as the "PI&E" Program, it originated in 1976 as a result of a resolution passed at the 36th annual meeting of SWCD Directors

- The resolution called for a public awareness program to be directed by a public information committee.

Texas State Soil & Water Conservation Board

Intent of the PI&E Program

- Inform public about SWCDS
- Conservation is a perpetual process
- Landowners are conscientious environmentalists
- Private property rights be respected and that conservation programs be flexible, voluntary and locally controlled

Texas State Soil & Water Conservation Board

How the PI&E Program is Funded

- Voluntary $200/yr. assessment
- Funds are deposited into a special account apart from the ATSWCD's operating funds
- Administration of funds-- The funds are administered by the ATSWCD board of directors; however the appointed PI Committee develops an annual budget, sets program priorities, and oversees the expenditures of the funds.

Texas State Soil & Water Conservation Board

How the PI&E Program is Funded

- Annual budget-- must be approved by the ATSWCD board of directors.

- Resolution mandate-- Note that the resolutions passed by SWCDS which established the PI program mandates that the program's funds be kept separate and apart from the ATSWCDS operating funds. To change the establishing resolution's intent would require a majority approval of Texas SWCDs at their annual meeting.

Texas State Soil & Water Conservation Board

Usage of Funds

- Priority Education Areas– The PI Committee budgeted $4,000 earmarked specifically for each of the five respective areas in the state.

- Field Rep Responsibilities:
  1. Advise SWCDS that funds have been allocated
  2. Decide how to allocate the funds among their assigned districts and coordinate expenditures subject to approval by PI Committee.
  3. Make request to the PI Committee for allocation of funds to designated districts.
  4. Provide documentation to PI Committee as to what educational activity the funds were used for.

Texas State Soil & Water Conservation Board

Usage of Funds

- Examples on Use of Funds—
  1. Employee workshops
  2. Poster & Essay Participation
  3. Teacher workshops
  4. WAY regional contests and woodland contests
  5. Director Training

- Unclaimed Funds– Funds not allocated within the fiscal year do not carry over.

Texas State Soil & Water Conservation Board

Current Committee Members

- Pat Hudson, Chairman (Area IV)
- W. T. (Bill) Gray (Area I)
- Volney Hough (Area II)
- Romualdo Herrera (Area III)
- Don Smart Teague (Area V)
- Douglas Meadows-Alternate

- Equal Voice-- To make sure that all Texas SWCDS have an equal voice in the state PI program, you will note that the ATSWCD board of directors are careful to appoint committee membership from each respective state area or district.

Texas State Soil & Water Conservation Board

Services the PI&E Committee provided to districts last fiscal year

- Promoted soil and water conservation districts in their surrounding area as well as across the state.
- Offered promotional displays and educational models free of charge to districts.

Texas State Soil & Water Conservation Board

Continued list of services

- Purchased new educational videos for the video library.
- Updated & revised video library catalog.
- Mailed copies to each district.
- Offered unlimited video library service free of charge to districts.
- Catalog is located on the website.

Texas State Soil & Water Conservation Board

Continued list of services

- Provided districts with Soil Stewardship Public Speaking Contest information.
- Provided (10) $500 scholarships to area contest winners and (1) $1,000 scholarship to the state winner.
- Correlates with NACD--The Soil Stewardship Public speaking contest theme traditionally correlates with NACD'S annual Soil Stewardship program.

Texas State Soil & Water Conservation Board

Continued list of services

- Notification of Theme-- The information about the Soil Stewardship public speaking contest goes out to all SWCDS in February about a week before the information is sent to the 10 area FFA coordinators and ag teachers throughout the state.

- In addition-- to the noted scholarships, a trophy is presented to each area winner.

- State winner-- receives an all expense paid trip to annual state FFA convention and annual meeting of SWCDS. At each of these events the state winner is expected to present his/her speech

Texas State Soil & Water Conservation Board

Continued list of services

- Assisted with Wildlife Alliance for Youth(WAY) state and area contests.
- Provided cash awards to 5 area high-point winners and to the 3 high-point winners at the state level.
- Assisted districts with teacher workshops–teaching materials, promotion, speakers and printing.

Texas State Soil & Water Conservation Board

Continued list of services

- There are 10 FFA areas in Texas. Competition begins with local contests with local winners competing at 10 area contests. Area winners move on to compete at one of five regional levels.
- Each regional winner receives a $200 cash award.
- At the state contest the high point winner receives a $500 cash award.
- Second place high point winner receives a $300 cash award
- Third place high point winner receives a $200 cash award.

Texas State Soil & Water Conservation Board

Continued list of services

- Provided or assisted with transportation for educational tours.
- Provided promotional materials to distribute at schools, teacher's workshops and trade shows.

Texas State Soil & Water Conservation Board

Contact information

For more information
contact your field representative or
visit our website at

http://www.tsswcb.state.tx.us./infoed.html