Texas State Soil & Water Conservation Board

Public Information/Education

Texas State Soil & Water Conservation Board

Association of Texas Soil & Water Conservation Districts

Texas State Soil & Water Conservation Board

History of the Public Information and Education Program (PI&E)

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 the establishment of a program to promote public awareness and a public information committee to direct it.

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Intent of the PI&E Program

- Inform public about SWCDs
- Promote awareness that Conservation is a perpetual process and that Landowners are conscientious environmentalists
- Encourage that private property rights be respected and that conservation programs be flexible, voluntary and locally controlled

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How is the PI&E Program 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 Public Information Committee develops an annual budget, sets program priorities, and oversees the expenditures of the funds.

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How is the PI&E Program Funded? (cont.)

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

- Resolution mandate-- Resolutions passed by SWCDs which established the PI&E program, mandate that the program's funds be kept separate from the ATSWCD's operating funds. To change the original resolution's intent would require a majority approval of SWCD's at their Annual Meeting.

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Usage of Funds

Example Use of Funds—

1. Employee workshops
2. Poster & Essay Participation
3. Teacher workshops
4. Wildlife Alliance for Youth (WAY) regional and woodland contests
5. District Director Training
6. Soil Stewardship Public Speaking Contest

•Unclaimed Funds that are not allocated within the fiscal year do not carry over.

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Current Committee Members

- Stanley Graham (Area IV)
- W. T. (Bill) Gray (Area I)
- Volney Hough (Area II)
- Romualdo Herrera (Area III)
- Don Smart Teague (Area V)

- Equal Voice-- To make sure that all SWCDs have an equal voice in the PI program, the ATSWCDs board of directors are careful to appoint committee members from each respective state area.

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Services the PI&E Committee provided to districts in the last Fiscal Year

- Promoted soil and water conservation districts in their surrounding area as well as across the state.
- Offered educational, informational displays and models free of charge to districts.
- Provided or assisted with transportation for educational tours.
- Provided promotional materials to distribute at schools, teacher workshops and trade shows.

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Services the PI&E Committee provided to districts in the last Fiscal Year (cont.)

- Purchased new educational videos and DVD's for the video library.
- Updated & revised the video library catalog and mailed copies to each district.
- Offered unlimited video library use, free of charge, to districts.
- Catalog is published on the website.

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Soil Stewardship Public Speaking Contest

- Provided districts with Soil Stewardship Public Speaking Contest information.
- Provided ten (10) $500 scholarships to area contest winners and one (1) $1,000 scholarship to the state winner.
- The Soil Stewardship Public Speaking Contest theme traditionally correlates with the National Association of Conservation Districts (NACD) annual Soil Stewardship Week program.

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Soil Stewardship Public Speaking Contest (cont.)

- Notification of Theme-- The information about the Soil Stewardship Public Speaking Contest goes out to all SWCD's in February each year about a week before the information is sent to the 10 area FFA coordinators and also to agriculture teachers throughout the state.
- A trophy is presented to each area winner.
- State winner-- receives an all expense paid trip to the annual state FFA convention and Annual Meeting of SWCD's. At each of these events the state winner is expected to present his/her speech.

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Wildlife Alliance for Youth (WAY)

- Assisted with Wildlife Alliance for Youth (WAY) state and area contests.
- Provided cash awards to 5 high-point regional FFA Chapters and 4-H Teams and to the 3 high-point FFA Chapters and 4-H Teams at the state level.

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Wildlife Alliance for Youth (WAY) cont.

- There are 10 FFA areas in Texas. Competition begins with local contests and local winners competing at 10 area contests. Area winners then move on to compete at one of five regional levels.

- Each regional winner receives a $200 cash award which is given to the FFA Chapter/4-H Team.

State contest high point FFA Teams:

- 1st place receives a $500 cash award
- 2nd place receives a $300 cash award
- 3rd place receives a $200 cash award

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Contact information

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

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