



2018 TEXAS CONSERVATION AWARDS PROGRAM

The Texas State Soil and Water Conservation Board (TSSWCB) and the Association of Texas Soil and Water Conservation Districts (ATSWCD), as directing sponsors of the Texas Conservation Awards Program, are pleased to join the 216 Texas soil and water conservation districts in the quest for area winners during 2018.

AREA AWARDS BANQUETS
(Locations to be determined)

AREA I Panhandle & Northwest Texas

AREA II Southwest Texas

AREA III South Texas

AREA IV East Texas

AREA V Central & North Texas

ENTRY DEADLINE: Entries must be postmarked by February 15, 2018.

(Each district is eligible to enter all categories.)

Mail entry to: TSSWCB, 1497 Country View Lane, Temple, TX 76504

2018 TEXAS CONSERVATION AWARDS PROGRAM

PURPOSE:

To acknowledge, recognize and honor those who dedicate themselves and their talents to the conservation and wise use of our renewable natural resources. The conservation awards program provides competition and incentives to expand and improve conservation efforts, resource development, and increase the wise utilization of our renewable natural resources. As a result, soil and water conservation districts and both rural and urban citizens of Texas are benefited.

CATEGORIES:

1. Outstanding Conservation District
2. Conservation Rancher
3. Conservation Farmer
4. Essay Contest (Jr. and Sr. divisions)
5. Poster Contest
6. Friend Of Conservation
7. Conservation Teacher
8. Wildlife Conservationist
9. Forestry Conservationist (Area IV Only)

GUIDELINES:

- Participation in any or all categories of the awards program shall be voluntary. However, to participate, **a district is required to contribute financial support to the awards program (annual specified amount).**
- All award contributions made to the ATSWCD for this purpose will be held and utilized in a separate and sole purpose account.
- Each area awards program will consist of opportunities to enter award categories selected for your area of the state administered under the same procedures. Awards banquets will be conducted on a standard format and standard awards should be presented in each area.
- Each district is eligible to submit one entry in each category as determined in your area of the state. However, a district may submit up to two entries in both the essay and poster contests.
- Entry material will be distributed in the fall of each year. Each awards packet will have a cover letter explaining exact entry procedures and the categories that may be entered for that year.
- Entry material is limited to the supporting information required on each entry form. Noncompliance with this rule will be counted against an entry.

GUIDELINES (continued):

- Entries must be postmarked by **February 15** each year unless this date falls on a Saturday, Sunday, or holiday. In this instance, entries must be postmarked on the the next business day.
- **Districts should mail entries to: Texas State Soil and Water Conservation Board
1497 Country View Lane
Temple, Texas 76504**
- Entries will be judged to select winners in each category. (A runner-up may be selected in any category.) First, second, and third place winners will be named in the poster and essay contests.
- Area winners in the poster and essay contest; Outstanding Conservation District; Conservation Farmer; Conservation Rancher; Friend of Conservation; Wildlife Conservationist and Conservation Teacher will be judged to select a state winner. The state winners will each be presented a plaque at the Annual State Meeting of Soil and Water Conservation District Directors.
- Winners of the poster and essay contest in each area are required to have at least one digital photograph of the individual whose work is to be recognized.
- The names of winners should be submitted to districts by April. TSSWCB will distribute a press release acknowledging the state winners.
- The location of each area awards banquet will be determined before winners are announced each year.
- **Each district with a winning entry is responsible for costs associated with transporting and housing state winners to the awards banquet at the Annual Sate Meeting in October. Complimentary tickets to the banquet will be provided to the winners and spouse/family by the district that submitted the entry.**
- A conservation district that has been selected as a first place winner within the immediate past two years (2016, 2017) shall not be considered in that same category as a first place winner. There is no time limit on all other categories.
- SWCD directors, Texas State Soil and Water Conservation Board members, Texas State Soil and Water Conservation Board employees, and dependent members of the above mentioned individuals' households are **NOT** eligible to compete in the Texas Conservation Awards Program. (Exception: Children of the above mentioned individuals may compete in the Poster and Essay contests.)

ADMINISTRATION:

- The Texas State Soil and Water Conservation Board employees will be responsible for assisting districts with information and guidelines and concerning the Texas Conservation Awards Program.
- An operating budget will be developed each year to determine the anticipated cost of administering the awards program. An Awards Committee shall submit the budget to both the TSSWCB and ATSWCD.
- The operating budget shall consider only the cost of awards, printing and postage. (Each awards banquet and related expenses should be self-sustaining.)
- The Awards Committee, with approval from the TSSWCB and ATSWCD, is also responsible for selection of the banquet site and outline of the banquet program.
- Judging of all entries shall be the responsibility of the State Soil and Water Conservation Board Judging Committee. The committee is comprised of Outside groups or individuals with a background in agriculture, soil and water conservation. Judging Criteria should be based upon the quality of the entry and conservation promotion. If there is an instance of entries of equal quality, judges should consider the format and observance of instructions in preparing the entry. Score sheets can be found on pages 17-21.
- An area may select a runner-up in each category. This selection should be based upon the quality of entries in each individual category.
- Outside groups, firms, or individuals are welcome to assist in sponsoring and assisting with promotion of the Texas Conservation Awards Program.
- Funds received to carry out the area awards program shall be deposited into an account separate from any other funds.
- The management of all funds relating to the awards program will be the responsibility of the Executive Director of the Texas State Soil and Water Conservation Board and the President of the Association of Texas Soil and Water Conservation Districts.

TEXAS CONSERVATION AWARDS PROGRAM

- CATEGORY SUMMARIES -

1. **ESSAY CONTEST (Two Age Divisions—Junior: 13 and under and Senior: 14 to 18 years old)**

Essay topic for 2018 is “**Healthy Soils are Full of Life.**” The essay is to be submitted to local soil and water conservation districts for judging. Each local district will judge the entries and submit two essays in each age division to the Area Judging Committee for competition on the area level. Plaques will be awarded to 1st, 2nd, and 3rd place winners on the area level and state winners will be selected from the area winners. This contest is open to students 18 years and under, and who are considered eligible under Texas University Interscholastic League eligibility requirements.

2. **POSTER CONTEST**

Posters should address the following subject for 2018: “**Healthy Soils are Full of Life.**” Posters shall be submitted to local soil and water conservation districts for local judging. Each local district will judge the entries and submit two posters to the Area Judging Committee for competition on the area level. Plaques will be awarded to 1st, 2nd and 3rd place winners on the area level and state winners will be selected from the area winners. This contest is open to students who are 12 years old and under and who are considered eligible under Texas University Interscholastic League eligibility requirements.

3. **OUTSTANDING CONSERVATION DISTRICT**

Awarded to a soil and water conservation district in each of the five areas. As a State winner of this category, a video featuring the Outstanding Soil and Water Conservation District will be developed and shared at the Awards Luncheon during the Annual State Meeting of Soil and Water Conservation District Directors.

4. **CONSERVATION RANCHER**

Awarded to the outstanding conservation rancher in each area. *They **MAY** be a resident of the district or an absentee rancher.* They **MUST** perform ranching activities within the district and be a cooperator with the district from which the entry was submitted. The rancher may have other business or professional interests. If the ranch has a district approved Water Quality Management Plan and has incorporated water quality into their ranching activities the entry **MUST** demonstrate how the nominee has substantially implemented the plan. As a State winner of this category, a video featuring the Outstanding Conservation Rancher will be developed and shared at the Awards Luncheon during the Annual State Meeting of Soil and Water Conservation District Directors.

5. **CONSERVATION FARMER**

Awarded to the outstanding conservation farmer in each area. *They **MAY** be a resident of the district or an absentee farmer.* They **MUST** perform farming activities within the district and be a cooperator with the district from which the entry was submitted. The farmer may have other business or professional interests. If the farm has a district approved Water Quality Management Plan and has incorporated water quality into their farming activities the entry **MUST** demonstrate how the nominee has substantially implemented the plan. As a State winner of this category, a video featuring the Outstanding Conservation Farmer will be

developed and shared at the Awards Luncheon during the Annual State Meeting of Soil and Water Conservation District Directors.

6. FRIEND OF CONSERVATION

Awarded to an outstanding individual in the district who has rendered the most unselfish conservation service in each area. Any of the following may be considered and are eligible under this category. Representatives of the news media (radio, television, newspaper, magazines, etc.); local civic or community organizations; Chambers of Commerce; local units of government; business/professional individuals; or district employees/district volunteers that provide support to the district and local conservation efforts. This award is not for individual conservation practices. As a State winner of this category, a video featuring the Friend of Conservation will be developed and shared at the Awards Luncheon during the Annual State Meeting of Soil and Water Conservation District Directors.

7. CONSERVATION TEACHER

Awarded to the outstanding teacher of conservation in schools in each area. Teachers of all grade levels are eligible for this award. This includes Junior Colleges, Technical Schools and Universities in Texas. As a State winner of this category, a video featuring the Outstanding Conservation Teacher will be developed and shared at the Awards Luncheon during the Annual State Meeting of Soil and Water Conservation District Directors.

8. WILDLIFE CONSERVATIONIST

Awarded to the outstanding wildlife conservationist in each area. They **MUST** be a district cooperator who has incorporated wildlife conservation into their farming and ranching activities. They **MUST** perform wildlife related activities within the district and be a cooperator with the district from which the entry was submitted. The wildlife conservationist may have other business or professional interests. If the wildlife conservationist has a district approved Water Quality Management Plan and has incorporated water quality into their wildlife activities the entry **MUST** demonstrate how the nominee has substantially implemented the plan. As a State winner of this category, a video featuring the Wildlife Conservationist will be developed and shared at the Awards Luncheon during the Annual State Meeting of Soil and Water Conservation District Directors.

9. FORESTRY CONSERVATIONIST (Area IV only)

Awarded to the outstanding forestry conservationist for an outstanding farm forestry conservation program. They **MUST** be a district cooperator or an individual who has implemented conservation practices on their land. They **MUST** perform forestry related activities within the district and be a cooperator with the district from which the entry was submitted. The forest landowner may have other business or professional interests. If the forester has a district approved Water Quality Management Plan and has incorporated water quality into their forestry activities the entry **MUST** demonstrate how the nominee has substantially implemented the plan.



2018 Texas Conservation Awards Program



SUMMARY SHEET

Please use this form to summarize your district's entries. Indicate under each category entered if the entry is enclosed or mailed under separate cover. **A quorum of signatures from SWCD Directors is required for this summary sheet.**

SWCD Name & Number

- _____ 1. OUTSTANDING CONSERVATION DISTRICT
- _____ 2. CONSERVATION RANCHER
- _____ 3. CONSERVATION FARMER
- _____ 4. ESSAY CONTEST (**CIRCLE** age division)
 - Junior: ages 13 and under
 - Senior: ages 14 – 18
- _____ 5. POSTER CONTEST (12 years and under)
- _____ 6. FRIEND OF CONSERVATION
- _____ 7. CONSERVATION TEACHER
- _____ 8. WILDLIFE CONSERVATIONIST
- _____ 9. FORESTRY CONSERVATIONIST (AREA IV only)

A quorum of signatures is required from SWCD Directors.

Chairman

Vice-Chairman

Secretary

Director

Director



Outstanding Conservation District



40th Annual Texas Conservation Awards Program

Sponsored by the
SOIL AND WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICTS OF TEXAS

Soil and Water Conservation District Name & Number

(Information in this entry is to be based on the district's last fiscal year – Sept. 1 to Aug. 31)

Please provide a narrative **on Power Point** of the soil and water conservation district's conservation activities telling how resources are utilized to accomplish the district's objectives. Both a disc/CD and a hard copy are required for each entry. Only one award, per category, is to be put on a disc/CD. **An entry is limited to only 15 PowerPoint slides.**

Individual districts may submit an entry telling their story for area competition. State winners will be selected from the five area winners.

This cover sheet must be included when submitting your awards application

As evidence of our final approval and desire to submit this entry, we do hereby affix our signatures:

_____ Soil and Water Conservation District No. _____

in session this _____ day of _____, 2018.

Chairman

Vice-Chairman

Secretary

Director

Director



Conservation Rancher



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SOIL AND WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICTS OF TEXAS

Soil and Water Conservation District Name & Number

Participant Name

Mailing Address of Participant

How Long Cooperating

Size of Ranch

Type of Ranch/Operation

The Conservation Rancher **MUST** be a District Cooperator who has or is currently performing conservation work on his or her land. Also, the individual's promotion/support of soil and water conservation and the district program should be considered. *The rancher **MAY** be a resident of the soil and water conservation district or be an absentee rancher and may have other business or professional interests.*

Please provide a narrative **in a Power Point presentation** of the Conservation Rancher's activities. If the nominee has a district approved conservation plan (WQMP, EQIP, Wildlife Management Plan, etc.) it is required that the entry reflect the plan and that the entry demonstrates how the nominee has successfully implemented the plan. This narrative is important to the judging process and should not exceed five (5) minutes. Both a disc/CD and a hard copy are required for each entry. Only one award, per category, is to be put on a disc/CD. **An entry is limited to only 10 PowerPoint slides.**

Local winners, determined by the district, may be submitted for area competition. State winners will be selected from the five area winners.

This cover sheet must be included when submitting your awards application



Conservation Farmer



40th Annual Texas Conservation Awards Program

Sponsored by the
SOIL AND WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICTS OF TEXAS

Soil and Water Conservation District Name & Number

Participant Name

Mailing Address of Participant

How Long Cooperating

Size of Farm

Type of Farm/Operation

The Conservation Farmer **MUST** be a District Cooperator who has or is currently performing conservation work on his or her land. Also, the individual's promotion/support of soil and water conservation and the district program should be considered. *The Farmer MAY be a resident of the Soil and Water Conservation District or may be an absentee farmer and may have other business or professional interests.*

Please provide a narrative **in a Power Point presentation** of the Conservation Farmer's activities. If the nominee has a district approved conservation plan (WQMP, EQIP, Wildlife Management Plan, etc.) it is required that the entry reflect the plan and that the entry demonstrates how the nominee has successfully implemented the plan. This narrative is important to the judging process and should not exceed five (5) minutes. Both a disc/CD and a hard copy are required for each entry. Only one award, per category, is to be put on a disc/CD. **An entry is limited to only 10 PowerPoint slides.**

Local winners, determined by the district, may be submitted for area competition. State winners will be selected from the five area winners.

This cover sheet must be included when submitting your awards application

2018 Texas Conservation Awards Program

Essay Contest

SUBJECT: “Healthy Soils are Full of Life”



Check the appropriate age division:
Junior: Ages 13 and under — (Maximum of 300 words)



Senior: Ages 14 to 18 — (Maximum of 500 words)

Please visit the stewardship website at: <http://www.nacdnet.org/general-resources/stewardship-and-education-materials/2017-healthy-soils/> for information relating to this year’s theme. You may also contact your local soil and water conservation district for additional information.

ALL ENTRIES MUST BE TYPED

As you write your essay, you should remember:

- Write about soil and water conservation practices
- Make your writing interesting to the reader
- Make sure that each sentence you write helps the reader understand your essay
- Make sure that your ideas are clear and easy for the reader to follow
- Write about your ideas in detail so that the reader really understands what you are saying
- Check your work for correct spelling, capitalization, punctuation, grammar, and sentences

PLEASE ATTACH THIS FORM TO EACH ENTRY

Participant Name

Mailing Address of Participant

Soil and Water Conservation District & District Number

JUDGING: Please submit all essay entries to the local soil and water conservation district. Essays will be judged within the district and the local winners will advance to area competition. State winners will be selected from the five area winners.

PRIZES: First, second and third place winners will be awarded plaques. Additional awards will be presented to state winner.

NOTE TO DISTRICTS: It is required that at least **one quality, digital photograph** is provided of each winner for the awards banquet.

This contest is open to students 18 years and under, and who are considered eligible under Texas University Interscholastic League eligibility requirements.



2018 Texas Conservation Awards Program Poster Contest



Poster entries shall be on standard poster board, cut to half size – 22” x 14”. Artwork on poster entries should be produced with materials which do not readily smear, crack, or chip. If necessary, a fixative or lamination may be used. The poster entry artwork should be flat.

All posters submitted for the 2018 contest will feature the NACD Conservation Poster contest theme for 2017. The 2018 theme is **“Healthy Soils are Full of Life.”** Please visit the stewardship week website at <http://www.nacdnet.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/07/2017-Poster-Contest-PPP.compressed.pdf> for information on the theme, additional information can be found on the TSSWCB website as well. You may also contact your local soil and water conservation district for additional information.

PLEASE ATTACH THIS FORM TO EACH ENTRY

Participant Name

Mailing Address of Participant

Soil and Water Conservation District & District Number

JUDGING: Please submit all essay entries to the local soil and water conservation district. Essays will be judged within the district and the local winners will advance to area competition. State winners will be selected from the five area winners.

PRIZES: First, second and third place winners will be awarded plaques. Additional awards will be presented to state winner.

NOTE TO DISTRICTS: It is required that at least **one quality, digital photograph** is provided of each winner for the awards banquet.

This contest is open to students 18 years and under, and who are considered eligible under Texas University Interscholastic League eligibility requirements.



Conservation Teacher



40th Annual Texas Conservation Awards Program

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SOIL AND WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICTS OF TEXAS

Conservation District Name & Number

Participant Name

Grade Level and Teacher's Subject

Participant Mailing Address

School Name

GUIDELINES:

Teachers of all grade levels are eligible. Briefly describe the nominee's conservation teaching activities. Please include a summary of the nominee's approach to teaching conservation through their subject matter. Please use the following guidelines:

1. Importance of conservation education in teacher's curriculum
 - Examples of the curriculum is taught and how the information presented.
2. Assistance from the community and resource specialists. (Who and How)
3. Program extension – in the community and into other curriculum areas.
4. Student involvement – Examples of student initiatives and involvement.
5. Originality and innovative approach.

Please provide a narrative **in a Power Point presentation** of the teacher's conservation activities. This narrative is important to the judging process and should not exceed five (5) minutes. Both a disc/CD and a hard copy are required for each entry. Only one award, per category, is to be put on a disc/CD.

An entry is limited to only 10 PowerPoint slides.

Local winners, determined by the district, may be submitted for area competition. State winners will be selected from the five area winners.

*****This cover sheet must be included when submitting your awards application*****



Wildlife Conservationist



40th Annual Texas Conservation Awards Program

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SOIL AND WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICTS OF TEXAS

Soil and Water Conservation District Name & Number

Name of Participant

Participant Mailing Address

Size of Farm/Ranch

GUIDELINES:

The outstanding Wildlife Conservationist **MUST** be a district cooperator who, as part of their farming or ranching activities as well as soil and water conservation work has done an outstanding job by:

- Providing well-located and adequate amounts of:
 1. Food – such as native and/or seeded plants needed by wildlife during critical seasons.
 2. Cover – by planting or leaving cover as needed for habitat and protection of wildlife.
 3. Water – such as farm ponds, wells, seeps and springs, or by efficient soil and water conservation on their land.
- Fish pond management
- If the nominee has a district approved conservation plan (WQMP, EQIP, Wildlife Management Plan, etc.) it is required that the entry reflect the plan and that the entry demonstrates how the nominee has successfully implemented the plan.

Please provide a narrative **in a Power Point presentation** of the Wildlife Conservationist's activities. This narrative is important to the judging process and should not exceed five (5) minutes. Both a disc/CD and a hard copy are required for each entry. Only one award, per category, is to be put on a disc/CD. **An entry is limited to only 10 PowerPoint slides.** Local winners, determined by the district, may be submitted for area competition. State winners will be selected from the five area winners.

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Forestry Conservationist

(Applies to Area IV Only)



40th Annual Texas Conservation Awards Program

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SOIL AND WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICTS OF TEXAS

Soil and Water Conservation District Name & Number

Participant Name

Participant Mailing Address

Size of Farm or Ranch

Total Acres in Woodland

The Forestry Conservationist **MUST** be a district cooperator who has implemented conservation work on his or her land and has done missionary work for conservation and the district program.

Please provide a narrative **on Power Point** of the Forestry Conservationist's activities. This narrative is important to the judging process and should not exceed five (5) minutes. Both a disc/CD and a hard copy are required for each entry. Only one award, per category, is to be put on a disc/CD. **An entry is limited to only 10 PowerPoint slides.**



Friend of Conservation



40th Annual Texas Conservation Awards Program

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Conservation District Name & Number

Name of Nominee

Nominee's Mailing Address

Type of Business/Organization

How long has the nominee assisted the Soil and Water Conservation District?

GUIDELINES:

The purpose of this award is to recognize outstanding examples of financial, personal or other assistance that an individual has provided to a local soil and water conservation district program. The key qualification is a keen interest in and support of conservation and a record of outstanding contributions to the goals and programs of a district. News media; local civic or community organizations; units of government; business/professional individuals; conservation or district employees may be considered in this category for contributions, missionary work on behalf of the district and other activities that enrich and/or further the mission of the district program:

This award is NOT for conservation practices on the individual's own land. Please provide a narrative in a Power Point presentation of the Conservation Friend's activities. A narrative is important to the judging process and should not exceed five (5) minutes. Both a disc/CD and a hard copy are required for each entry. Only one award, per category, is to be put on a disc/CD. An entry is limited to only 10 PowerPoint slides. Local winners, determined by the district, may be submitted for area competition. State winners will be selected from the five area winners. **An entry is limited to only 10 PowerPoint slides.**

Local winners, determined by the district, may be submitted for area competition. State winners will be selected from the five area winners.

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**2018 Conservation District
Score Sheet**

Judge Name: _____

Contestant's Area: _____

| ITEM | EXCELLENT (5) | GOOD (4) | FAIR (3) | UNSATISFACTORY (0) |
|--|---------------|----------|----------|--------------------|
| Involvement With the Community (Awards/Recognition) | | | | |
| Innovative Projects | | | | |
| Public Outreach Programs | | | | |
| Youth Involvement | | | | |
| Participation in Regional and State Level Programs | | | | |
| District Activities Raising Local Funds | | | | |



**2018 Conservation Farmer
Score Sheet**

Judge Name: _____

Contestant's Area: _____

| ITEM | EXCELLENT (5) | GOOD (4) | FAIR (3) | UNSATISFACTORY (0) |
|--|---------------|----------|----------|--------------------|
| Description of Implemented Best Management Practices | | | | |
| Variety of Best Management Practices | | | | |
| Composition of Presentation | | | | |
| Picture Quality | | | | |
| Description of Cooperation with Soil and Water Conservation District | | | | |



**2018 Friend of Conservation
Score Sheet**

Judge Name: _____

Contestant's Area: _____

| ITEM | EXCELLENT (5) | GOOD (4) | FAIR (3) | UNSATISFACTORY (0) |
|--|---------------|----------|----------|--------------------|
| Above and Beyond Involvement With the District | | | | |
| How Does the Friend Compliment and Promote Local District Programs | | | | |
| Promotion of Soil and Water Conservation and Natural Resource Management | | | | |



**2018 Conservation Rancher
Score Sheet**

Judge Name: _____

Contestant's Area: _____

| ITEM | EXCELLENT (5) | GOOD (4) | FAIR (3) | UNSATISFACTORY (0) |
|--|---------------|----------|----------|--------------------|
| Description of Implemented Best Management Practices | | | | |
| Variety of Best Management Practices | | | | |
| Composition of Presentation | | | | |
| Picture Quality | | | | |
| Description of Cooperation with Soil and Water Conservation District | | | | |



**2018 Conservation Teacher
Score Sheet**

Judge Name: _____

Contestant's Area: _____

| ITEM | EXCELLENT (5) | GOOD (4) | FAIR (3) | UNSATISFACTORY (0) |
|---|---------------|----------|----------|--------------------|
| Description Conservation Curriculum | | | | |
| Collaboration with SWCDs | | | | |
| Focus on Soil and Water Conservation | | | | |
| Use of "out of the classroom" activities | | | | |