

## SOIL AND WATER *Resources*

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### **Soil and Water Districts Commission to Meet Feb. 10 in Jefferson City**

The Missouri Soil and Water Districts Commission will hold a telephone conference call meeting at 10:30 a.m. Wednesday, Feb. 10, at the Missouri Department of Natural Resources' Lewis and Clark State Office Building located at 1101 Riverside Drive in Jefferson City.

For more information and a complete meeting agenda contact the Missouri Department of Natural Resources Soil and Water Conservation Program at 800-361-4827 or 573-751-4932 or visit [dnr.mo.gov/env/swcp/meetings.htm](http://dnr.mo.gov/env/swcp/meetings.htm).

### **Tim Martin Joins Missouri Soil and Water Districts Commission**

Gov. Jay Nixon appointed Timothy W. Martin (I), of Bernie, to the State Soil and Water Districts Commission in September. The Missouri Soil and Water Districts Commission formulates policies and general programs for the saving of Missouri soil and water by the soil and water conservation districts.

Martin is the president of Martin Rice Company, Martin Grain Company and Marco Inc. With his brothers, he farms and manages more than 7,000 acres of rice-growing and row crop land in southeast Missouri. In 2010, Martin Rice Company received the Governor's Award for Agricultural Achievement. Martin is a member of the Elk Township Board in Stoddard County and a member of the Little River Drainage District Board of Supervisors. Martin will serve for a term ending Aug. 15, 2018.

The Soil and Water Districts Commission held its Oct. 14 meeting at the M. W. Boudreaux Memorial Visitor Center at Mark Twain Lake. Commission chair Gary Vandiver introduced new commissioner Tim Martin to the attendees.

The commission heard updates about the FY16 cost-share/AgNPS fund status and FY17 cost-share needs assessment, health insurance for the districts, Soil Health Assessment Center and state water planning. After the meeting, the commission and guests took a tour to visit several local sites with examples of conservation practices in place.

A portion of the Parks, Soils and Water Sales Tax is used for Missouri landowners to install soil and water conservation practices through the state cost-share program. These practices conserve soil, which consequently improves water quality by reducing sedimentation in rivers and streams. The Parks, Soils and Water Sales Tax is set to expire if not renewed by voters in 2016.

During these meetings, the commission establishes policy relating to soil and water conservation issues that impact the owners of privately held agricultural land. The commission also hears appeals from soil and water conservation districts and landowners concerning these policies.



**Commissioner Tim Martin**  
MoDNR photo by Van Beydler

### Commission Works to be More Efficient

The Missouri Soil and Water Districts Commission held a meeting Dec. 1 in conjunction with the Missouri Association of Soil and Water Conservation Districts Annual Conference at Tan-Tar-A at the Lake of the Ozarks.

The commission heard reports about the FY16 cost-share/AgNPS fund status, FY15 cost-share year-end review, FY15 district grant expenditures, FY17 cost-share allocation and the Plan for the Future.

Dr. Randy Miles from the University of Missouri - Columbia College of Agriculture, Food and Natural Resources gave an update about the Missouri Soil Health Assessment Center being funded in part by the Missouri Department of Natural Resources.

The commission heard landowner appeals asking for variances to commission policies for soil and water practices started prior to a contract being approved by the local soil and water conservation district's board.

Commissioner H. Ralph Gaw said, "In the past the commission has received quite a few of these appeals. I understand the local district does not have the discretion to grant a variance and that is why they come up before the commission. I believe the commission's practice has been to grant a variance when miscommunication has occurred."

Commissioner Charlie Ausfahl said, "One thing that concerns me is the communication between landowners and the county. I think this is one thing everybody could improve on."

Commissioner Jeff Lance stated, "We need to improve how we relate that to landowners to remind them not to start anything until all the paperwork is signed."

Judy Grundler with the Missouri Department of Agriculture told the commission about training commercial pesticide applicators across the state in January.

J. R. Flores, state conservationist with the USDA's Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS), updated the commission about the Regional Conservation Partnership projects in Missouri.

Flores told the commission that \$4 million is being made available from NRCS for 10 states, including Missouri, for improving monarch butterfly habitat.

Kenny Lovelace with the Missouri Association of Soil and Water Conservation Districts said, "Missouri is an important flyway for monarch butterflies because they funnel together in Missouri before moving down to Mexico. They are a very important pollinator. About one in every three bites of food you eat is affected by pollinators."

### GovDelivery Pilot Project Held in November

eAlerts are a way to communicate via text or email using GovDelivery. GovDelivery is a service paid for and also used by the Missouri Department of Natural Resources to send email or text messages to subscribers interested in specific natural resources topics and to notify subscribers about updates to Web pages.

A pilot project was conducted in four soil and water conservation districts during November.



**Click here  
to receive  
updates from  
the district**

The people testing eAlerts in the pilot project included Peggy Lemons in Cole County, Andrea McKeown in Randolph County and Sandy Beezley in Madison and Wayne Counties. Beezley was responsible for sending eAlerts for two counties to test how the system would work in a shared district scenario. Districts will be provided access to GovDelivery to send eAlert messages to subscribers.



The Soil and Water Districts Commission listens to a presentation at the Oct. 14, 2015 meeting held at Mark Twain Lake. (l to r) Commissioner Tim Martin, chair Gary Vandiver, vice-chair H. Ralph Gaw and commissioner Jeff Lance.

MoDNR photo by Van Beydler

During the pilot, Van Beydler, from the Missouri Soil and Water Conservation Program, assisted the districts and gave guidance about how to use the GovDelivery system. Beydler gave a GovDelivery demonstration at the Missouri Association of Soil and Water Conservation Districts annual conference held at Tan-Tar-A at the Lake of the Ozarks.

### Missouri State Fair Foundation Youth in Agriculture Scholarship Application Deadline is Feb. 1

The Missouri State Fair Foundation Youth in Agriculture scholarship application for Missouri High School seniors graduating in 2016 is now available online at [mostatefair.com/youth-in-agriculture](http://mostatefair.com/youth-in-agriculture).

Applications should be submitted to the Missouri State Fair and must be postmarked by Feb. 1, 2016.

These scholarships are possible thanks to the gracious contributions of many individuals and companies. One \$5,000 platinum scholarship sponsored by Youth in Agriculture supporters, one \$2,500 supreme scholarship sponsored by Sydenstricker John Deere of Missouri/Sydenstricker Angus Genetics, and thirty \$1,500 scholarships sponsored by Youth in Agriculture are being offered.

Applicants must be high school seniors and active members of 4-H or FFA. Eligible scholarship applicants must plan to enroll in an accredited Missouri college or university, and pursue a degree in agriculture. Applicants must also have participated at least once as a 4-H or FFA exhibitor at the Missouri State Fair, however applicants cannot have sold livestock in a past Missouri State Fair Sale of Champions auction.

For more information call the Missouri State Fair at 1-800-422-FAIR (3247) or email questions to [mostatefair@mda.mo.gov](mailto:mostatefair@mda.mo.gov).

### Missouri Natural Resources Conference to be held Feb. 3 to 6 at Lake of the Ozarks

The four day Missouri Natural Resources Conference annual meeting starts Feb. 3 at the Lake of the Ozarks.

Each year the conference hosts approximately 1,000 established and aspiring natural resource professionals who meet to exchange information and ideas and encourage continued cooperation among resource professionals, agencies, and other natural resource stakeholders.

The Missouri Natural Resources Conference is an annual meeting organized and sponsored by the Missouri Chapter of the American Fisheries Society, The Missouri Chapter of the Society of American Foresters, Missouri Chapter of the Wildlife Society and the Show-Me Chapter of the Soil and Water Conservation Society.

For more information about the conference visit [mnrc.org/Welcome.html](http://mnrc.org/Welcome.html).

### Examples of Soil and Water Conservation Districts Educational Display Opportunities



More than 22,000 people visited the Missouri Department of Natural Resources building at the State Fair in August. Cover crop seeds donated by MFA, Inc. were given away at a display describing the benefits to soil and water quality gained by planting cover crops.

MoDNR photo by Van Beydler



This banner at the Missouri State Fair describes 30 years of erosion control and state parks benefits funded by the Parks, Soils and Water Sales Tax.

MoDNR photo by Van Beydler



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