



**SOUTHWESTERN ILLINOIS
R C & D , I N C .**



A N N U A L R E P O R T



SOUTHWESTERN ILLINOIS RESOURCE CONSERVATION & DEVELOPMENT, INC.

The Southwestern Illinois Resource Conservation & Development, Inc. is a not-for-profit corporation, formed in 1989 to address regional natural resource concerns to help find ways to solve regional issues and also to assist in the development of the natural resources for the betterment of the community.

MISSION STATEMENT

The Southwestern Illinois RC&D, Inc. will develop and support partnerships, create programs and implement projects that are responsive to the needs of the people within the region, that strengthen local economies, and that encourage the conservation of our environmental resources.

VISION STATEMENT

The Southwestern Illinois RC&D, Inc. Council envisions a strong economy and healthy natural environment that preserves rural traditions and the quality of life within the region.

PROGRAM AREAS

Agriculture ▪ Community Development ▪ Environmental Resources ▪ Program Administration

In 1991, the Secretary of Agriculture, through the Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS) (formerly Soil Conservation Service), designated the Southwestern Illinois RC&D, Inc. to receive technical and financial assistance to work on the issues identified in the organization's application (Area Plan).

Since 1989, the Council has worked on a variety of projects. Accelerated assistance occurred with the establishment of the Southwestern Illinois RC&D, Inc. office in Mascoutah in 1991. In 2001 the organization created a separate operating division, the Southwestern Illinois GIS Resource Center, to collect, create, store, distribute and display geographic data in support of the organization's mission. In 2003, an additional operating division was created, The Land Conservancy (TLC). TLC is in place to assist landowners, communities, and counties protect open space as well as areas of significant natural resource value. The accomplishments highlighted in this report are the result of countless hours of volunteer effort and the office support of the Southwestern Illinois RC&D, Inc.

The Southwestern Illinois RC&D, Inc. is a 501(c)3 not-for-profit corporation as classified by the IRS. All donations made to the Southwestern Illinois RC&D, Inc. are charitable contributions. The Southwestern Illinois RC&D, Inc. has its IRS 990 Form and audit available for public review during normal business hours. Technical assistance is provided to the SWI RC&D through USDA NRCS, through a full time coordinator, office space and equipment. Personnel and other expenses incurred through the SWI RC&D are offset through sponsor dues, grants, donations, contributions, and payment for services provided.

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

Stephen Gonzalez, Chairman
President, Illinois Association of RC&D Areas

It has truly been a pleasure to serve as your RC&D Chair this past year. I'm amazed at how far we've progressed in meeting the resource needs of our region. Despite losing our Program Assistant and continued federal budget woes, the SWI RC&D continues to look forward for future growth. Ed, Dave, Roberta, the GIS Resource Center and The Land Conservancy continue to find innovative ways and new programs to serve the resource needs of the area and fund the organization. Their time and commitment toward the program shows the determination involved in moving forward and not giving up. They are planting the seeds for growth. They all deserve a well needed pat on the back.



Each board member also brings something unique to the table every time we meet. You're all important in making this RC&D Council work and your participation is essential to its well-being. Sometimes it's not the participation I bring to the council meetings that I find valuable; but the wisdom and knowledge others share and I take home is of far greater value. Thank you for generously participating in the discussion and decisions to move us forward. You all serve your constituents and the Council well. That's something you all can be proud of.

We're facing many challenges again this year. I wish we could totally focus on serving the resource needs and stimulating the economic vitality of our seven counties. That would be hoping for a perfect world. The people who have participated in this RC&D's programs know the value offered. We have garnered the reputation of getting the job done and doing it well. Those who serve on this RC&D Council do so because they are helping to bring benefits and services to the people of the region. They volunteer their time to this Council because they want to be a part the good conservation and wise resource planning work in our home area. They can see that RC&Ds fill that niche in government programs as a place where local municipalities and rural areas can turn to for their resource concerns and for strategies to address their economic well being. I assure you; we are sowing the seeds of the SWI RC&D and soon will be harvesting the fruits of our labor.

Stephen Gonzalez
Chairman

In September 2006 Yvette Dulle, Program Assistant, resigned from the SWI RC&D, Inc. to pursue an opportunity with USDA Rural Development in St. Louis. She served as a Program Assistant for the Council for the past 10 years, and was a tremendous asset to the Council, overseeing the development of the organization's contacts database, developing a number of brochures and reports, as well as coordinating a number of outreach events. The Council graciously thanks Yvette for her service to the organization and wishes her the best in her future employment and personal endeavors.



COORDINATOR'S REPORT

Ed Weilbacher

RC&D Coordinator, USDA NRCS

My hats off to the Council and staff of the Southwestern Illinois RC&D for their outstanding work in a year of such adversity. This was a year of change and challenges. The Council has been a solid rock of support to insure the services of the RC&D are maintained in the area.

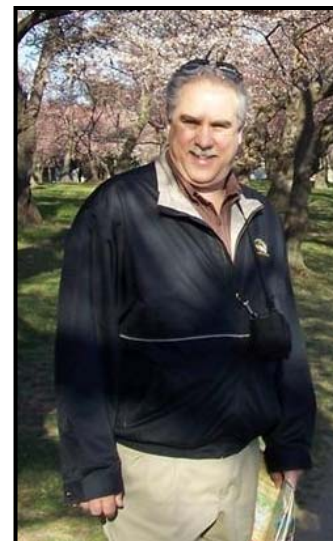
Each Council member needs to be recognized and applauded for their vision and willingness to give of their time to make the southwestern Illinois region a better place to live, work and play. This is especially true in these challenging times.

The SWI RC&D undertook a year-long effort to update the long range plan. This time allowed for the Council to look at the issues of the region and emerging needs without the pressure to rush to complete the update to the plan in just a few months. New ideas that emerged include the concept of a regional environmental fund, alternative energy crops, and developing new partnerships beyond traditional audiences.

This Council is also to be congratulated for its leadership with the State Association. Steve Gonzalez is serving as the State Association President and Pat Watkins was elected to serve as Vice-President. Both are dedicated volunteers who are making a difference in the region and state. The Council has been fortunate to have several charter members still serving on the Council. I want to recognize Marvin Ries for his service from the very inception of the SWI RC&D. Marvin has served the region as a Council member, Chairman and State Association President. In addition, I want to recognize George Luber for his dedication to the Council. George has worked as a ambassador for Bond County and has been active in many regional endeavors. He was the driving force behind the Pocahontas Mural Project. Thanks is also extended to both Dave Lampe and Dale Haudrich for their service to the Council.

I also want to recognize Yvette Dulle for her service to the Council. Yvette has helped make the Council a professional and efficient organization that is able to respond to the needs of the region. We'll miss Yvette and wish her great success with Rural Development.

I believe that the leadership of the Council, State Association and National Association will bring renewed commitment to the RC&D program and restore the financial foundation that is needed to provide the technical services to help grassroots volunteers make a difference in their region. Even though 2006 was a year of difficult change let's make 2007 a year of positive change.



Administration: SWI RC&D utilizes an accrual accounting system, incorporating MIP Fund Accounting Pro, a Best software product, to accurately account for all revenues and expenses for the organization. MIP Fund Accounting Pro is also used to create all necessary reports for daily, monthly and yearly reporting requirements. While grants are managed as a whole through two primary bank accounts, the MIP software allows for independent tracking of individual grants. The organization requires an annual independent audit, which in FY 2006 was performed by Schersahl Treloar & Co. of St. Louis, Missouri. The audit includes an assessment of the accounting principles used, as well as an analysis of the overall financial position of the organization. A copy of the FY 2006 Independent Audit is available by contacting SWI RC&D.

OPERATIONS REPORT

Dave Eustis
Operations Manager

While news of additional financial support at both the state and federal level continue to be bleak, the opportunity to update the Council's Area Plan this past year has provided us with an occasion to review our existing programs and identify additional opportunities for sustainability. During the public input component of this update stakeholders overwhelmingly advised us that there was much more work to be done in all of our program areas, specifically **Agriculture** (animal waste management, value added products), **Community Development** (outdoor recreational opportunities, alternative transportation, sustainable development, and heritage), and **Environmental Resources** (air, land and water).

Capitalizing on an increasing trend within the SWI RC&D, I have also added a fourth program area, **Program Administration**. This category covers all of the administrative support that we provide to various groups, such as three C2000 Ecosystem Partnerships, the Middle Mississippi River Partnership, the Kaskaskia Watershed Association, the Gateway Cooperative Weed Management Area, and the Metro East Greenway Alliance.

The concept of developing an **Environmental Fund** for the region was also explored in 2006, with bylaws set to be approved in January 2007. This initiative will focus on increasing charitable donations that will be used to enhance the environment within the Metro East, while providing a more stable source of revenues for many of our project partners. We will be establishing a separate

Southwestern Illinois RC&D, Inc.		
Statement of Financial Position		
As of December 31, 2006		
	2005	2006
Assets		
Cash and cash equivalents	575,184	536,103
Prepaid		500
Accounts Receivable	38,577	84,436
Total Current Assets	613,761	621,039
Property and Equipment	68,323	70,437
Less Accumulated Depreciation	59,015	64,279
Total Property and Equipment	9,308	6,158
Total Assets	623,069	627,197
Liabilities and Net Assets		
Accounts Payable	806	17,868
Accrued Expenses	1,171	1,107
Deferred Revenue	286,476	306,651
Total Current Liabilities	288,453	325,626
Net Assets		
Unrestricted	200,422	183,040
Restricted	134,194	181,531
Total Net Assets	334,615	301,571
Total Liabilities and Net Assets	623,069	627,197

Board of Directors to oversee the Fund, and look to recruit a number of partners to assist in fundraising, as well as to identify and implement projects.

With the reduction in federal financial assistance the RC&D must look to volunteers to assist with many of our operating tasks. Typically when individuals look at volunteer opportunities within a not-for-profit environmental organization they are looking at stream cleanups, stormwater drain stenciling, etc. While we are often able to match these types of volunteers to opportunities, our program, as defined, focuses more on administrative support to the organization. To assist in the recruitment process, the Council will be working with a seasonal intern with a background in Human Resources in 2007. One of the primary responsibilities of the intern will be to develop a specific recruitment plan for "critical" volunteer positions, and to then implement this plan. Quality volunteers are as difficult to recruit as regular employees, so it is important that Council members, staff and partners all participate in the recruitment process.

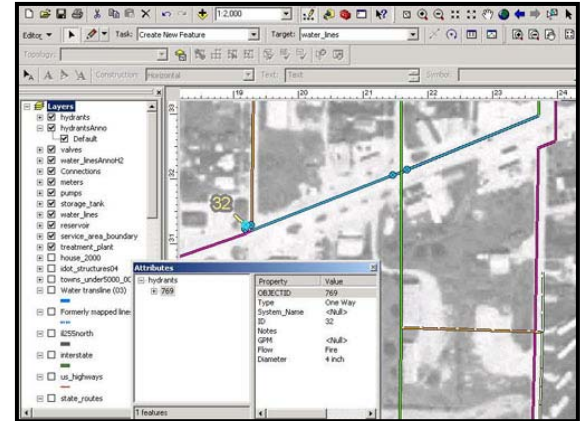
In early 2007 we will be adding a new full time employee, with funding provided by the US Forest Service. This individual will be working to bring used/excess federal fire equipment to volunteer fire departments.

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

Rural Community Water Mapping

The Illinois Rural Community Water Mapping Project is the second phase of an effort to electronically map rural and rural community water systems within the State of Illinois. Once completed, this effort will provide government agencies, planners and system operators with a more comprehensive analysis of the existing rural water infrastructure within the state.

In 2006, SWI RC&D staff mapped 24 rural communities of less than 5,000 residents with surface water as their water supply source. The comprehensive inventory provided through this initiative will allow for improved operations in these communities, as well as an improved ability to plan for changes or additions to the system. The Illinois Environmental Protection Agency and the Illinois Rural Water Association partnered with the SWI RC&D in this initiative.



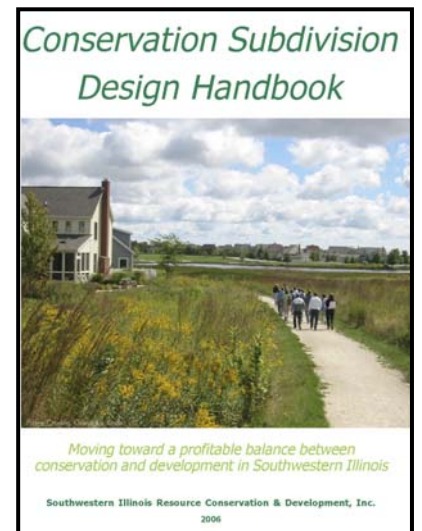
single park or area within a city. To date, we have worked with the City of Red Bud, Tri-Township Park District, Collinsville Area Recreation District, and the Missouri cities of Festus, Crystal City, Bridgeton and Vinita Park.

Bicycle / Pedestrian Trail Planning

Since partnering with Trailnet in 2004 on a Bicycle Facilities Plan for the city of O'Fallon, IL, the SWI RC&D has had the opportunity to work with a number of regional park districts and communities on their biking and walking facilities. The planning process typically involves a complete inventory of existing trails and bike routes, pedestrian destinations and public facilities such as schools and libraries. In addition, the natural landscape is examined for potential greenway corridors, linkage of the parks system and other resources. Projects range from complete city-wide implementation plans with associated cost estimates, to small scale plans for a

Conservation Subdivision Design

SWI RC&D developed a guidance document that encourages the use of conservation subdivisions (CS) for the long-term protection of natural assets. CS design protects open space and reduces infrastructure costs by clustering housing units and leaving a large percentage of the site undisturbed. The *Conservation Subdivision Design Handbook* is based on the input of local leaders in planning and development, and is available at www.swircd.org for download.



ENVIRONMENTAL RESOURCES



Rockwood Island/Liberty Chute

Open Space Preservation

In 2006 the SWI RC&D was able to assist in two significant land acquisition initiatives within the Metro East which will provide an additional 300 acres of public open space and recreational use. On Chouteau Island, in Madison County, the SWI RC&D worked with the Trust for Public Land (TPL) and the Illinois Department of Natural Resources (IDNR) to secure an additional 94 acres. This acquisition adds to the 2,150 acres that the INDR has already acquired within the island-complex. SWI RC&D received a grant of \$100,000 from the National Fish & Wildlife Foundation to contribute towards this acquisition.

The Illinois Clean Energy Community Foundation provided their third grant to the SWI RC&D in 2006 to assist in acquiring additional land on Rockwood Island (Randolph County) for inclusion in the Middle Mississippi River National Wildlife Refuge. The initiative was spearheaded by the American Land Conservancy (ALC), who was instrumental in negotiating and completing these land transactions. A total of 210 acres were acquired, with the bulk of this acreage already turned over to US Fish & Wildlife Service for restoration and long-term management.

Shoal Creek Streambank Analysis

This project is an inventory of potential streambank restoration opportunities along Shoal Creek in Bond and Montgomery counties. Geographically referenced video of the stream corridor was collected by using a helicopter equipped with a video/GPS. Potential restoration features such as severe bank erosion can be located on a map in GIS using the GPS points recorded with the video. Restoration features can then be overlaid with platbook information to identify landowners so that they may be contacted for restoration programs.



ID Number	Priority	Bank Erosion	Severe Bank Erosion
43	Medium	Left	
42	Low		
41	Medium	Right	
40	Medium	Left	
39	High		Left
38	Medium	Left	
37	Low		
36	Low		
35	Medium	Left	
34	High		Right
33	Low		
32	Low		
31	High		Left
30	High		Right
29	Medium	Left	
28	Medium	Right	
27	High		Right
26	Low		
25	Medium	Left	
24	Medium	Right	
23	Medium	Right	
22	High		Left
21	Medium	Left	
20	Medium	Right	
19	Low		
18	High		Right
17	High		Right
16	Low		
15	Medium	Left	

“Taking Back Our Natural Areas”

A landowners guide to the identification of exotic plant species common to Southwestern Illinois will be completed and distributed in early 2007.

PROGRAM ADMINISTRATION

Middle Mississippi River Partnership (MMRP)

In June of 2006, the SWI RC&D received a two-year award from The McKnight Foundation to provide technical, administrative and outreach support to the MMRP. In combination with a similar award from the Illinois Department of Natural Resources, the SWI RC&D was able to conduct a one-day Summit in Chester, two partner workshops, as well as develop a newsletter and Annual Report. In 2007 the SWI RC&D will be working to develop an interactive resource map, secure additional funding for projects, plan for ecological restoration, and continue with the newsletters and Annual Report.



Kaskaskia Watershed Association (KWA)

In 2006 the Kaskaskia Watershed Association was granted an environmental award from the Prairie State Energy Campus. As a component of this award, the SWI RC&D will provide technical, administrative and outreach support to the KWA for the next three years. In 2006, the SWI RC&D assisted the KWA with the Annual Summit and Showcasing Event, as well as developing and supporting language for a Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program within the watershed. Another activity included developing updated language for consideration in the Water Resources Development Act.

Environmental Fund of Southwestern Illinois (FUND)

During 2006 SWI RC&D staff worked with a variety of partners to develop a set of bylaws (approved 1/17/2007) for the development of the FUND. The FUND will be established for the purpose of stimulating environmental giving within the region, including personal, corporate, and mitigation monies. The mission of the FUND will be to conserve, enhance, and restore the environmental resources (air, land, water) of southwestern Illinois, including those of aesthetic or scenic value. The FUND also supports projects that educate or contribute to scientific research, and enhance citizen's access to these resources.

CLIFFTOP Alliance (CLIFFTOP)

The SWI RC&D entered into a Memorandum of Agreement with CLIFFTOP (Conserving Lands in Farm, Forest, Talus or Prairie) in 2006 for the purpose of establishing a partnership agreement to plan and implement projects on the Mississippi River bluff lands within Monroe and Randolph Counties. In addition to private donations, the partnership was able to secure grants through the Norcross Foundation and the Illinois Department of Natural Resources (C2000) that will initiate workshops and educational materials for landowners.



SOUTHWESTERN ILLINOIS GIS RESOURCE CENTER

Julia Cole
GIS Coordinator

Mission

The Southwestern Illinois GIS Resource Center, a division of Southwestern Illinois RC&D, Inc., provides GIS services, which include the collection, creation, analysis and display of geographic data. The GIS Resource Center combines a comprehensive, regional data library with innovative technology and experienced staff to provide solutions and support to civic leaders, communities, agencies and other not for profit organizations.

Vision

The vision of the Resource Center is a more informed decision-making process for improved resource management through the enhancement of a geographic knowledge base.

Data Analysis for Decision- Making

Maps—printed alone, as figures in publications, or displayed on websites, are the most well known product of GIS work. While they're visually appealing, if well done, they're really just the tip of the proverbial iceberg when it comes to the potential capacity of that map. Our ability to analyze maps comes from the data stored in the map's layers. Analysis of data brings these maps to life, helping us see connections in a world of otherwise independent features. The SWI GIS Resource Center contains a wealth of existing public data, an experienced staff, and the equipment necessary to support you in your next planning process.

Southwestern Illinois Resource Plan Implementation

The SW Illinois GIS Resource Center is nearing the completion of a practical guide for using GIS analysis for local and/or regional planning and decision-making. The document shows real-world examples of analysis using GIS information provided by the City of Edwardsville in conjunction with

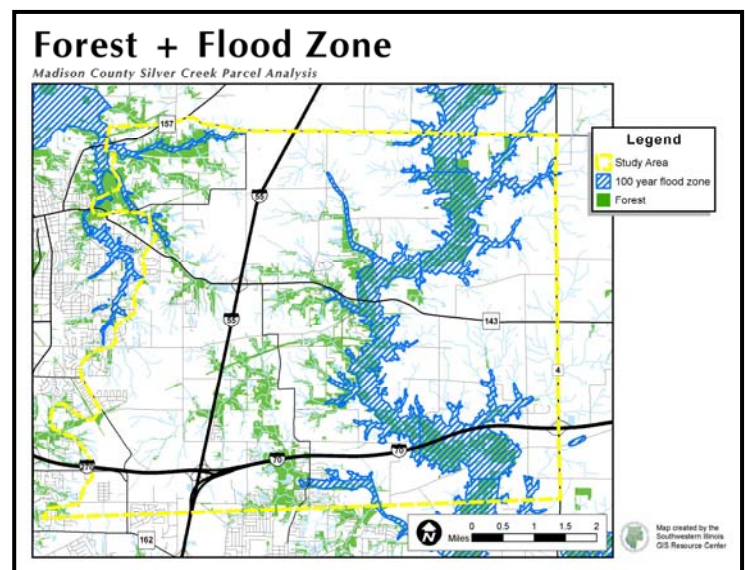
demographic, agricultural, natural, and cultural data. This document will also include recommendations for implementing GIS at the county or local level, using examples from Randolph County. This project builds on the LEAM land use modeling project of the University of Illinois as well as the recently completed *Southwestern Illinois Resource Plan*, which can be downloaded at www.swircd.org.



Madison County

Silver Creek Parcel Analysis

The GIS Resource Center is studying the natural resource impacts of the I-55 Corridor Plan in Madison County. The I-55 corridor parallels Silver Creek, which is a significant natural resource for wildlife, stormwater management, and potential recreational greenway connections. The study includes analysis of existing and proposed land use, soils, flood zones, forests, prime farmland, riparian habitat, and stormwater runoff. This analysis will assist the County in identifying parcels that could be protected to serve as "green infrastructure" to manage stormwater, provide recreational amenities, and conserve important habitat along Silver Creek.



THE LAND CONSERVANCY (TLC)

Steve Black
Coordinator

Over the past year The Land Conservancy (TLC) obtained over \$30,500 in grants, donations, and individual contributions to expand outreach and information efforts leading to conservation easements. Information meetings were held in Belleville and Edwardsville and presentations were made to several agricultural and environmental organizations and groups within the region. Conservation easements were completed on the 15 acre Mills Fleurs Preserve in Monroe County and on 50 acres of the William & Christine Boardman farm in St. Clair County. This brings the total number of conservation easements held by The Land Conservancy to six, covering approximately 350 acres.

In July of 2006, a special landowner outreach meeting was held in Millstadt, with financial assistance from the St. Clair County Board, to discuss protection of the karst sinkhole plain area of St. Clair County. Several landowners are planning to proceed with a conservation easement in that area in the coming year. Approximately 25 landowners were personally visited within the entire RC&D region to provide them information on the benefits of a conservation easement on their land. Six landowners are currently in the process proceed with a conservation easement in 2007, including one landowner in the Carbondale area.

Major Donors

The Monsanto Fund	\$25,000
Norcross Wildlife Fed.	\$2,500
St. Clair County Board	\$2,000

Individual

Melvin Balsters
Doris Bauer
Mary Biernot
Richard Ellerbrake
Paul Evans
Dave & Tamara Eustis
Dorothy Faitz
Melvin Feig
Mike & Rebecca Fruth
Robert & Lois Gentsch
Edna T. Grench
Stephen Gonzalez
Dennis & Donna Hesker
Miriam Huelsmann
Darren & Carolyn Kehoe
Nancy Larson
John & Virginia McCall
William & LaVonne Mohr
Barry & Deborah Newman
Ray & Mitze Nitzsche
Gene & Wanda Pitra
Zane & Connie Schneider
Glen & Linda Schuetz
Fred & Maren Stein
Linda Wegrzyn
Anonymous

Stewardship Endowment

William & Christine Boardman
Anonymous

William & Christine Boardman Conservation Easement

In December of 2006, William & Christine Boardman entered into a conservation easement on 50 acres of their 100 acre farm west of Millstadt. The site contains prime farmland and farmland of statewide importance that is being threatened by encroaching urban development. The area also contains some wooded wildlife habitat along a stream corridor that serves as a travel lane for various species. These areas will be protected from urban development in perpetuity and will serve as farmland, open space, and wildlife habitat. The site is within one-half mile of Stemler Cave Nature Preserve and on the boundary of the karst area of the county. William and Christine are not only protecting land for future generations, but are also reducing their tax liability by using the new income tax incentives recently passed by Congress. The farmstead on the property also contains historic buildings dating back to the mid 1800s. William is currently restoring an old original house that was built in the mid 1800s.



2006 BOARD OF DIRECTORS AND STAFF

Bond County

Don Britt, Bond Co. At-Large
George Luber, Bond Co. Bd.
Lester Harnetiaux, Bond Co. SWCD

Clinton County

Darrell Brink, Clinton Co. At-Large (Treasurer)
David Lampe, Clinton Co. Bd.
LaVerne Holtgrave, Clinton Co. Bd. - alt.
John Raymond, Clinton Co. Bd. - alt.
Edwin Varel, Clinton Co. SWCD

Madison County

Richard Schrumpf, Madison Co. At-Large
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Monroe County

Marvin Ries, Monroe Co. At-Large
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Kevin Terveer, SIMAPC

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Patricia Watkins, St. Clair Co. SWCD

Washington County

David Droste, Washington Co. At-Large
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