



**Southwestern Illinois
Resource Conservation & Development, Inc.**

2007 Annual Report



Our Mission

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.

On The Cover

One of our proudest accomplishments of 2007 was the preservation of the Engelmann Farm in Shiloh, IL. This is the main house on the property.

Chairman's Report

Stephen Gonzalez

President, Illinois Association of RC&D Areas

The Southwestern Illinois RC&D is a leader among other Councils in the Country. This is indicative of the Council addressing the needs and concerns of the current Long Range Plan. The National RC&D leadership likes to use the words "a locally lead process" and "grassroots organization" to describe Councils. I would like to add "a team effort". On the SWI RC&D team, we have no bench warmers. In my twelve years as a Council member, four years as Chairman, I am in awe at what we have accomplished. We have moved passed humble beginnings to become as independent and self-sustaining as we can be. We have grown to a capacity to have an Executive Director. His dedication and work ethic has been a perfect fit for our Council.

The decision to form and grow the SWI GIS Resource Center evolved not only from a need, but also to address the Long Range Plan. It has immensely helped with our projects and strategic planning, and has raised us to the next level of professionalism.

The Land Conservancy was formed to give people the option to protect agricultural, forest and natural lands through conservation easements. Urban sprawl was identified as an issue in the Long Range Plan. The program continues to expand, and people are becoming more knowledgeable and comfortable with protecting their land for future generations.

The SWI RC&D was formed because of a need to address resource, conservation, and development issues in our area. We have successfully filled that niche with a Council that develops and supports partnerships and assists in the protection and sustainability of the natural resources in our region. I have been proud to belong to that team.

Coordinator's Report

Ed Weilbacher

USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service

Each year I am given the opportunity to report on the year's accomplishments. USDA NRCS provides technical assistance to the Southwestern Illinois RC&D, and the Council has leveraged this technical assistance to deliver services and programs that respond to the region's issues and needs. Often, the SWI RC&D is looked to as the organization that can "get it done" - be it watershed coordination with the Kaskaskia Watershed Association, assistance to the Gateway Cooperative Weed Management Group, or support to locally-led conservation efforts.

The SWI RC&D searches for new ways to solve problems. The GIS Resource Center has brought to the region the use of GeoPDFs. This new way of providing maps to the public makes it much easier for the end-user to use the power of GIS without specialized software, while still retaining the capability of information and measuring.

The Council has hired staff to respond to the needs of our region—partnering with the Illinois Department of Natural Resources to deliver Urban Forestry assistance to the rural towns of southern Illinois is another service that adds to the quality of life of the residents.

The list of this year's accomplishments would not be complete without mentioning the special detail that I served in Louisiana to assist with the Emergency Watershed Protection Program. This one-month detail helped people struggling with the after-effects of hurricane Katrina to remove debris and other fallen materials from ditches, streams and river corridors to restore the natural flow of water.

Thanks to you for letting me provide technical assistance to the SWI RC&D for the past 17 years.

TLC Staff

Steve Black, TLC Coordinator
Linda Wegrzyn, Marketing Asst.

Stewardship Committee

C. David Tiedemann, Chairman
Mike Fruth, Vice Chairman
Mark Badasch
Ralph Buettner
Carl DauBach
Penelope DauBach
Dave Eustis
Dr. Philip J. Harris
Mitze Nitzsche
Ray Nitzsche
George Obernagle
Glen Schuetz
Barb Taylor

TLC Member Donors for 2007

Ibrahim and Elaine Abusharbain
Melvin Balsters
William Boardman
Ralph and Karen Buettner
Greg Colombo
County of St. Clair
Dorothy Faitz
Melvin Feig
Rebecca and Michael Fruth
Stephen Gonzalez
Edna and Brian Grench
Dennis and Donna Hesker
Miriam Huelsmann
Julius Brown Trust
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Brenda Ludwig
George and Susanne Luber
Carrie Magill
Ginger McCall
William and LaVonne Mohr
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George Obernagle, III
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Philip Rosenbach
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Lisa Reime
Glen and Linda Schuetz
Larry and Joyce Scace
C. David Tiedemann
Emanuel Vlastos
Ed and Kathi Weilbacher
Wetlands Forever
William and Jill Witts
Anonymous (2)

The Land Conservancy (TLC)

“Protecting Lands for Future Generations”



Engelmann Farm Protected in St. Clair County

In November, The Land Conservancy acquired the 145-acre Engelmann Farm in Shiloh. This farm, which was originally settled by Friedrich Engelmann in 1833, was in the process of being converted to a residential subdivision. In addition to 80 acres of undisturbed forest, the site contains approximately 60 acres that are currently being farmed, along with five acres containing two historic homes.

This property has ties to the late Dr. George Engelmann, a physician and prominent botanist in the 1800s. Engelmann served as a chief scientific advisor to Henry Shaw, founder of Shaw's Garden, which later became the Missouri Botanical Garden. His work allowed him to be commemorated in the names of several plants, including the Engelmann Spruce, *Picea engelmannii*.

Preservation of this property will provide public open space, protect a mature forest, and safeguard two historic structures. Native plants, which provide food and shelter for wildlife, will be replanted on existing agricultural fields. The Land Conservancy will be working with St. Clair County to ensure long-term protection of the site as well as to integrate the property into the local/regional park system.



Bust of George Engelmann
at the Missouri Botanical
Garden

Illinois Farmland Protection Conference

The Illinois Association of Soil & Water Conservation Districts has created a task force to look at the potential of establishing a statewide Farmland and Open Land Protection program. Steve Black, TLC Coordinator, is the chair of the task force. It will include representatives from throughout Illinois who are interested in land protection. The first meeting was held in January 2008 in Springfield. Illinois has one of the highest percentages of prime farmland in the nation, yet it has no program to help keep farmland in long-term agricultural production. The goal is to have a state-funded program that would provide voluntary financial incentives to help protect farmland and open space from conversion to urban uses.

Conservation Subdivision Design

SWI RC&D developed a guidance document that encourages the use of conservation subdivision design (CSD) for the long-term protection of natural assets. CSD protects open space and reduces infrastructure costs by clustering housing units and leaving a large percentage (40-60%) 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.

"It is a pleasure working with the knowledgeable and hard-working team at SWI RC&D. I have seen many impressive accomplishments as a result of their collaborative and thoughtful work on key initiatives in the area." Marc Miller, Senior Policy Advisor, Office of Lieutenant Governor Pat Quinn

Committee Completes Organizational Assessment

The Stewardship Committee for The Land Conservancy participated in a day-long guided organizational assessment in August 2007. The session was facilitated by Erin Heskett, Midwest Director for the Land Trust Alliance. The session was designed to help TLC make improvements in organizational structure and in our capacity to carry out our mission of land protection. A report was prepared with recommendations on how to improve overall operations and make the program more effective and sustainable.

This assessment is the first step towards gaining accreditation of our organization through the Land Trust Alliance (LTA). The LTA accreditation program is designed to build strong land trusts, foster public confidence in land conservation, and ensure the long-term protection of land. TLC hopes to become accredited within the next two or three years.

Mohrs Care for the Land

William (Bill) and LaVonne Mohr of Millstadt signed a conservation easement to protect their 43 acres of woodland in October 2007. "I have been dismayed at the loss of farmland and open space in this area over the past years as the land is converted to urban uses", said Bill. "I did not want the timber removed, the wildlife habitat destroyed, and the animals displaced since I enjoy the wildlife that inhabit this property." Bill and LaVonne have owned and lived on the property since 1964. Urban development is approaching their property from Millstadt to the east and from large lot subdivisions to the north and west. A 23-acre large-lot development was just established to the west of their property. Bill used the Acres for Wildlife program to plant 2.5 acres of warm-season native grasses and forbs in 1999 and 2002. He also manages and protects the woodland on the property to provide for wildlife habitat. Bill and LaVonne also encourage others to consider a conservation easement to protect their lands forever. "A conservation easement provides the long-term protection needed to prevent conversion to urban uses".

Conservation Easement Signed in Jackson County

A 66.5 acre farm two miles southeast of Carbondale is now protected from urban development by a conservation easement held by TLC. David Warner and Kathleen Warner Manfredi signed a conservation easement to protect their family farm on December 18, 2007. The property has been in the family for 90 years and was threatened by encroaching urban development. The family farm contains the original farmstead as well as woodlands and grasslands that provide open space and scenic views along Giant City Road where development is expanding.



David Warner and Kathleen Warner Manfredi (and Buddy)

The Land Conservancy will work regionally to protect agricultural, forest, and other natural lands in order to provide for open space, landscape diversity, sustainable agriculture, wildlife habitat, and conservation benefits for future generations.

Southwestern Illinois GIS Resource Center

Resource Planning

In 2007, the Resource Center conducted resource planning projects throughout our seven-county area at many different levels. At a regional level, we conducted an outreach and education campaign funded by the Illinois Department of Natural Resources C2000 Program. As part of this funding, we developed the “Southwestern Illinois Resource Plan Implementation Guide” which outlined how resource planning at a municipal level would look. It also includes information about how to set up a successful GIS program. Fourteen presentations about the handbook were given throughout our region, educating policy-makers and citizens about the importance of including resources in the comprehensive planning process.

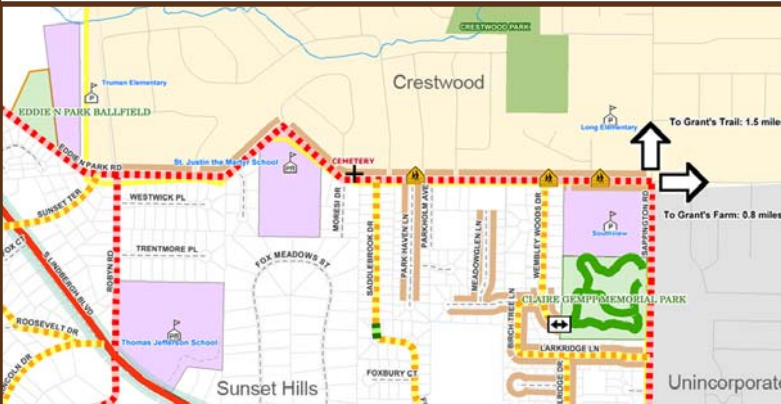
At the county-level, we worked with Madison County and their I-55 corridor plan. Using this plan, the Resource Center conducted a parcel analysis of the plan’s resource impacts on the Silver Creek corridor. The final area of resource planning was conducted at a parcel level with developers interested in incorporating resource planning into their subdivision design plans. By incorporating low-impact design, these developments will preserve our area’s resources for future generations.

Sewer Service and Septic Tank Suitability



Livable Communities

A major part of the work of the Resource Center in 2007 was participating in projects that produce bike, walk and open space facility plans for communities in the St. Louis Metro area. By producing not only the mapping component of these plans, but the GIS data behind those maps, we are actively engaged in promoting a healthy lifestyle and improved quality of life in our region. Three projects: the Missouri Communities Bikeable/Walkable Facilities Plans, the Collinsville Area Recreation District (CARD) Bikeable/Walkable Facilities Plan, and the City of Edwardsville Park, Open Space and Trails Plan, have enabled us to digitally capture and analyze the growing network of multi-use trails in our region along with the areas where trails and trail access are needed.

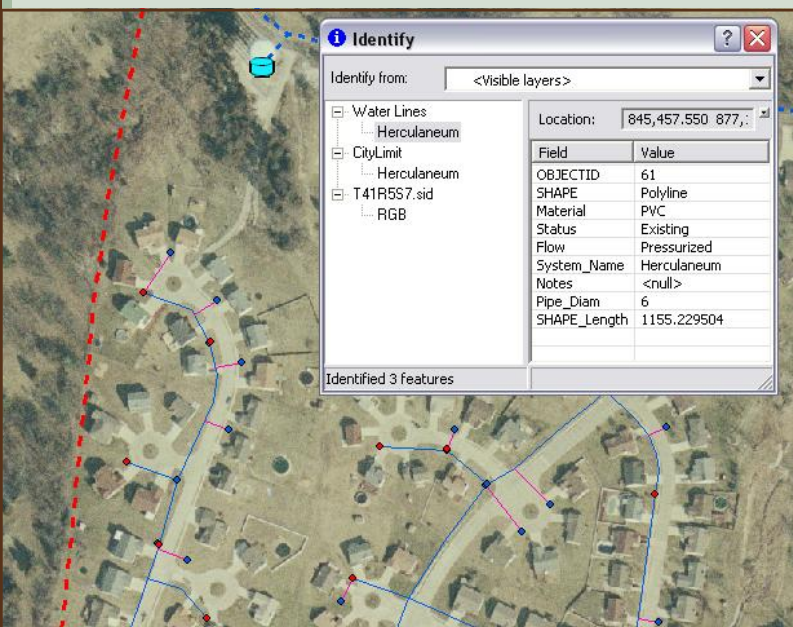


We are also working to educate our region about the need to make roadways more bicycle-friendly, encouraging the use of alternative transportation for both health and economic reasons. By providing high-quality GIS data and mapping products to our client communities, these new plans are more easily incorporated into the ongoing comprehensive planning and policy process, making these communities better equipped to handle the changing needs of their residents. These plans are also an important first step in applying for public funding for trail development.

SWI GIS Resource Center provides GIS services: collection, creation, analysis and display of geographic data. The Resource Center combines a comprehensive data library with innovative technology and experienced staff to provide solutions and support to communities, agencies and other non-profit organizations.

Utility Mapping

The Southwestern Illinois GIS Resource Center was given the opportunity to work in collaboration with the East-West Gateway Council of Governments (EWG) on a Utility Mapping project in the City of Herculaneum, Missouri in the fall of 2007. The City of Herculaneum received public funding to map their water and sanitary sewer system. Since they did not have the in-house capabilities to handle this portion of the grant, they contracted with EWG and the Resource Center to tackle this challenge.



When the project was completed in three months, the City had full GIS data layers of their utilities and full color maps of their City with utilities overlaid. They use it daily and claim it has improved their efficiency and day-to-day operations. This opportunity also gave the Resource Center its first opportunity to implement their newest technology of GeoPDFs.

The Resource Center also continues to teach and train communities that have previously utilized the Resource Center's skills and knowledge of utilities. These communities continue to move their data and technology forward and the Resource Center is there to help them accomplish their goal.

Moving Technology Forward

In 2007, the Resource Center began to implement new technology into many of its processes. These technologies had a great impact on how the Resource Center does business and applies for grants. We were able to successfully incorporate an external hard drive that completely matches the data server. This meant that the Resource Center could be on site at another location and still have all the resources from the Resource Center at hand. This provided real-time mapping and updates quickly and accurately.

The biggest technology that emerged in 2007 for the Resource Center was the incorporation of TerraGo Technologies' GeoPDFs. GeoPDFs are maps in a portable document format (PDF) that are small in file size and can be posted to websites or even e-mailed. These maps not only look good, but have fully functioning GIS attributes embedded into the file, giving the end-user the opportunity to select features and view that feature's attributes. Maps are not just static anymore, they are now becoming interactive. Being a PDF format, the end-user can also open the GeoPDF in the free Adobe Reader. GeoPDFs have become a great success and have been adopted by the US Army Corps of Engineers as well as many communities and other organizations. The GIS Resource Center is helping to move technology forward with continued quality and excellence. GeoPDF is a registered trademark of TerraGo Technologies.

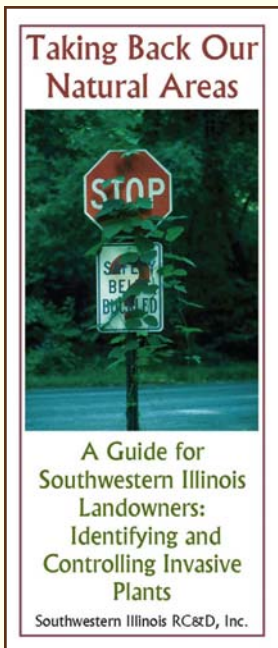
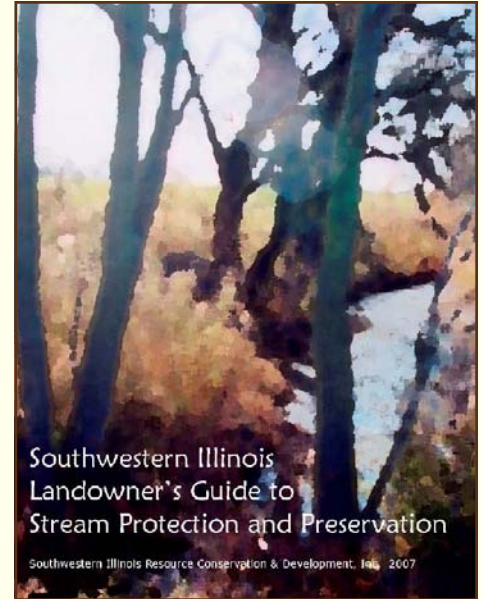


Key Activities & Partnerships

Landowner's Guide to Stream Protection

The Southwestern Illinois RC&D, Inc. entered into an agreement with the Illinois Department of Natural Resources to develop a guide booklet, specifically for southwestern Illinois, which will be used to inform and educate landowners on the importance, as well as the procedures involved, in improving local stream quality.

The booklet, which was completed and published in June 2007, discusses the value of the streams in our region, highlights common impairments, details what landowners can do to improve a damaged stream, and includes a section about when it is appropriate to contact a professional for approval (permits) for assistance. There is also a section outlining how to plan, promote and implement a local clean-up event. Information is included about streambank plantings (including appropriate plants for our region), fencing (livestock exclusion) and proper manure and chemical management, as well as methods for keeping other contaminants (pesticides, waste oil, etc.) out of local streams. To learn more or to obtain your own copy of this informational booklet, please visit www.swircd.org.



Taking Back Our Natural Areas:

A Guide for Southwestern Illinois Landowners: Identifying and Controlling Invasive Plants

The Southwestern Illinois RC&D, Inc. entered into an agreement with the Illinois Department of Natural Resources to develop a brochure, specifically for southwestern Illinois, which will be used to inform and educate landowners on the identification of and methods of control for invasive plant species. The brochure was completed and published this past spring and will be used to educate landowners in our region about the importance of identifying and controlling these species on their property. The brochure is also being distributed to local nurseries and greenhouses in an effort to discourage the propagation and sale of these species. To learn more or to obtain a brochure, please visit www.swircd.org.

Forestry

The SWI RC&D has assisted the Illinois Department of Natural Resources (IDNR) as well as the USDA Forest Service in providing three full time forestry positions within the State of Illinois. The central/southern **Urban Forester** provides technical assistance and guidance to municipalities within the southern 42 counties of Illinois. Assistance may include tree selection, planting and training workshops, tree ordinances, Arbor Day programs, Tree City USA program, and assistance with urban forestry grants. Retired City of Belleville Urban Forester William Mitchell is currently serving in this position, and is based out of the SWI RC&D Mascoutah office. Bill brings 36 years

“Our local SWI RC&D and it's staff are leaders in identifying and developing conservation initiatives for all of southwestern Illinois. Madison County has benefited greatly from the work they have done for us.” *Frank Miles, Director, Madison County Planning and Development Department*

"The SWIRC&D is a valuable resource and a generous partner. They work hard to ensure that our region's natural, cultural and historic resources are protected and used to improve quality of life for the region." *Laura Cohen, Project Director, Confluence Greenway*

of urban forestry experience to the position has already successfully conducted three tree care training programs along with reviving the Southwestern Illinois Urban Forestry Council.

The **Excess Federal Fire Equipment Coordinator** serves the entire State of Illinois, and is responsible for updating the Federal Excess Personal Property (FEPP) inventory, disposal of surplus equipment and establishing a database of volunteer fire department needs.

The **Illinois Forest Health Technician** serves the entire State of Illinois, and is responsible for administering and coordinating the implementation of statewide forest health survey, monitoring, and evaluation activities; providing statewide leadership for invasive forest insects and pathogens; and providing technical expertise for the IDNR on interagency task forces and committees related to forest health and invasive species issues.

Low Impact Development Practices

As part of a grant that the SWI RC&D received from the Illinois EPA's 319 program, the metro-east's first conservation subdivision development broke ground in Wood River, Illinois on November 28th (pictured). This 170-acre development will be built in three phases. The SWI RC&D is working with the developers on the first phase to implement 10 best management practices (BMP) for stormwater management. These 10 different examples of low impact stormwater management practices will serve as demonstrations for our region as a whole, and field trips will be organized upon their completion for municipal leaders in the seven-county area. In addition, the grant provides for the creation of an



educational publication that will explain how these types of LID practices help developers, municipalities and residents manage stormwater and improve local water quality. It will also contain an economic comparison of LID techniques with traditional methods of stormwater management. Construction completion and the subsequent publication of our handbook are slated for spring of 2009, and we are looking forward to seeing these BMPs take shape over the next year.

Partnerships

The SWI RC&D provided administrative and technical support to a number of localized and regional partnerships over the past year, including the Middle Mississippi River Partnership, the Kaskaskia Watershed Association, three IDNR C2000 Ecosystem Partnerships, the Gateway Cooperative Weed Management Area, the Confluence Greenway, the Metro East Greenway Alliance, the Clifftop Alliance, and the Soil & Water Conservation Districts within our region. Reductions in overall state and federal budgets dictated the need to develop and support partnerships capable of identifying, funding and implementing projects within the region. Specific projects enhanced through partnerships in 2007 include: the Middle Mississippi River Regional Corridor Study (MMRP), the authorization of the Water Resources Development Act for the Kaskaskia River (WRDA) (KWA), completion of several C2000 projects within the region, and the implementation of training workshops (Clifftop).

SERVE

Stewardship of Environmental Resources through Volunteer Efforts



Volunteer Christina Miller (bottom right) helps with registration at the Kaskaskia Summit

During the summer of 2007, Southwestern Illinois RC&D hired a Human Resources intern. Kinsey Wielgus, a student majoring in Human Resources at the University of Illinois assisted us in the implementation of the SERVE volunteer program. In addition to updating a volunteer policy manual and employee handbook, Kinsey spent a great deal of time meeting with community groups to spread the word about the many programs at the SWI RC&D and identified a number of specific volunteer opportunities.

As a result of Kinsey's outstanding effort, the SWI RC&D has enjoyed an influx of much needed volunteer support, including a photographer, database coordinator, website coordinator, and marketing assistance for the development of the Environmental Fund. The organization has also been accepted into the United Way program, and has been recognized



as having developed volunteer position descriptions that serve as a best management practice for other nonprofit entities.



Environmental Fund of Southwestern Illinois

In 2007, the SWI RC&D Council approved bylaws and partners for the Environmental Fund of Southwestern Illinois (FUND). The FUND was developed to promote charitable giving for environmental protection and conservation efforts within our region. Through employee, private and corporate giving, the FUND strives to assist in providing a stable source of funding to partners working to preserve and protect the region's environmental resources. The FUND also provides a reliable local source of money that can be utilized as a match when applying for federal, state and foundation grants. Initial partners in the FUND, in addition to the SWI RC&D, include the Carlyle Lake Association, Confluence Greenway, Lower Kaskaskia Stakeholders, Inc. and The Land Conservancy. Partners will be developing marketing materials in support of the program in early 2008, and anticipate being able to present the program to the public in the spring.



“The SWI RC&D has been a very valuable resource in establishing the framework for collaboration amongst diverse interest groups to build consensus on issues facing the region.”

George Andres, President, Kaskaskia Watershed Association



2007 Board of Directors and Staff

Board of Directors

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 Matt Willman, Bond Co. Bd.
 Lester Harnetiaux, Bond Co. SWCD (Secretary)
 Darrell Brink, Clinton Co. At-Large (Treasurer)
 Ron Schroeder, Clinton Co. Bd.
 Allan Huelsmann, Clinton Co. Bd. - alt.
 Steve Heiligenstein, Clinton Co. Bd. - alt.
 Edwin Varel, Clinton Co. SWCD
 Richard Schrumpf, Madison Co. At-Large
 Hal Patton, Madison Co. Bd.
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 Stephen Gonzalez, Randolph Co. Board (Chair)
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 Jonathan McLean, St. Clair Co. At-Large (Vice-Chair)
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 Patricia Watkins, St. Clair Co. SWCD
 David Droste, Washington Co. At-Large
 Brent Schorfheide, Washington Co. Bd.
 Glenn Bowers, Washington Co. SWCD

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 William Mitchell, Urban Forester (william.mitchell@rcdnet.net)
 John Banghart, Excess Fire Equipment Coordinator
 (john.banghart@illinois.gov)
 Forest Health Technician (Vacant)

The Land Conservancy (TLC) Staff

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 Megan Riechmann, GIS Planner
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USDA/NRCS Staff

Ed Weilbacher, Coordinator (ed.weilbacher@il.usda.gov)

Statement of Financial Position

As of December 31, 2007

Unaudited

Assets	2007	2006
Cash in Checking	5,856.75	6,650.90
Money Market - TLC Stewardship	2,511.84	1,000.01
Sweep Account	194,593.81	425,351.74
Petty Cash	100.00	100.00
Certificate of Deposit	100,000.00	100,000.00
CD - TLC Stewardship Fund	13,360.39	3,000.00
Accounts Receivable	90,149.34	84,435.91
Fixed Assets	59,174.33	70,436.75
Land	4,600,000.00	0.00
Prepaid Expenses	464.79	500.00
Accumulated Depreciation	(55,496.24)	(64,278.72)
Total Assets	<u>5,010,715.01</u>	<u>627,196.59</u>
Liabilities		
Accounts Payable	15,972.78	17,867.51
Advance on Engelmann Property	2,600,000.00	0.00
IRA Contribution	0.00	1,106.99
Deferred Revenue	79,108.55	306,651.58
Total Liabilities	<u>2,695,081.33</u>	<u>325,626.08</u>
Net Assets		
Beginning Net Assets	301,570.51	334,615.35
YTD Changes in Net Assets	2,014,063.17	(33,044.84)
Total Net Assets	2,315,633.68	301,570.51
Total Liabilities and Net Assets	<u>5,010,715.01</u>	<u>627,196.59</u>

Accounting

SWI RC&D utilizes an accrual accounting system, incorporating MIP Fund Accounting Pro, a Best software product, to account for all revenues and expenses, by individual grant. The organization requires an annual independent audit, which in 2007 was performed by J. W. Boyle of Belleville, Illinois. A copy of the FY 2007 independent audit is available by contacting SWI RC&D.

Printed on partially recycled paper.

The Southwestern Illinois RC&D, Inc./USDA NCRS is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

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Year in Review—2007

Dave Eustis, Executive Director

Starting 2007 with an updated five-year strategic plan has allowed the Board of Directors, staff, volunteers and partners to come together and direct efforts towards our four realigned program areas: agriculture, community development, environmental resources and program administration. While this is a somewhat diverse range of program areas, each component fills an important niche in meeting our overall vision: “*a strong economy and healthy natural environment that preserves the rural traditions and the quality of life within the region*”.

Highlights of our 2007 activities include the development of plans for walkable/bikeable communities, the preservation of the 145-acre Engelmann Farm in Shiloh, expansion of our effort to promote conservation subdivisions and implement low impact development practices, and outreach to residents through the Landowners Guide to Streambank Maintenance and the invasive plant species brochure.

Federal and state budgets dictate that we must work smarter. To that end, we hired a Human Resources intern to “ramp up” our volunteer program: **Stewardship of Environmental Resource through Volunteer Efforts (SERVE)**. The result has been an influx of talented individuals that assisted in many aspects of our work.

We hope you enjoy learning about our many accomplishments, as much as we enjoyed implementing and completing them. Your participation is critical to our future success, and we therefore encourage you to volunteer, contribute, or identify future potential projects that will assist us in improving our environmental resources, preserving rural traditions and improving the quality of life within our region.

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