



The North Central Chapter

Society of Wetland Scientists

NORTH CENTRAL CHAPTER NEWSLETTER Winter 2018

A NOTE FROM OUR PRESIDENT

Happy 2018. I hope that winter has brought about time for you to recharge, reflect on the past, and hold vision for the future. Hearty soup, warm tea, cozy blankets, slippers, (snuggled with a furry pet?) while looking out at snowfall lends toward creating space that invites reflection. This season our NCC Board has been taking stock of our programs and discussing potential opportunities for our Chapter and our members.

Goals we have for this year are to 1) Continue to fund grants, awards, and programs for students 2) Enhance our Chapter visibility in the region and increase networking opportunities for our Chapter and members 3) Deepen a grounded knowledge and pride in our Chapter and our history 4) Consolidate and disseminate wetland-related knowledge to our membership and the public.

In light of these goals, we are maintaining what has been working and initiating projects that can enhance our Chapter and benefit our members. In this newsletter there is write-up about Committee Chair positions. You are encouraged to share your skills and talents with our organization through this and other ways. We welcome your participation and passion about wetlands!

Soon the skunk cabbage (*Symplocarpus foetidus*) will be peeking through the snow in wetlands throughout most of our region (sorry, ND, SD, and NE members – you need to travel east to see skunk cabbage, but it is well worth it!). I remember being astounded the first time I heard that this plant exhibits thermogenesis, consuming oxygen akin to homeothermic animals of similar size. Check out this Nature Conservancy website for interesting tidbits about this plant:

<https://www.nature.org/ourinitiatives/regions/northamerica/unitedstates/indiana/journeywithnature/skunk-cabbage.xml>

There is still time to commemorate World Wetlands Day that was on February 2nd. “Wetlands for a Sustainable Urban Future” is the theme that Ramsar set for this year. Check out ongoing activities throughout the year in celebration of the wetlands in our world:

<http://www.worldwetlandsday.org/map> Add your event to this map!

May will bring us American Wetlands Month. Start thinking about what you can do in our region to promote and educate about wetlands. The USEPA has an informative website about this:

<https://www.epa.gov/wetlands/may-american-wetlands-month> We are privileged to know and care about wetlands and can pass this information along so that others can do the same.

For Wetlands!

Julie Nieset jenieset@illinois.edu

HAVE YOU MADE A DONATION TO SWS NCC IN THE PAST YEAR?

Thank you for all those who have made donations to our Chapter – these donations are invaluable in supporting our programs for students and outreach efforts. We are doing a routine audit of our books in an effort to standardize donation accountability. If you made a donation to our North Central Chapter through our website anytime last year, we would like to hear from you. If you made a donation for the Native American Arts Initiative (NAAI) for the NCC Annual Meeting in Fargo last fall, we have inspected these donations and do not need further information from you. For all others, please contact our NCC Treasurer Eric Plankell eplankel@illinois.edu

OPPORTUNITY KNOCKS!

The following are NCC Committee Chair positions that are open. We welcome your participation and passion for wetlands and for helping to create a stronger organization. Contact Julie Nieset jenieset@illinois.edu for more information about these Chair positions and to volunteer. Acknowledgement of your involvement will be listed on the Leadership page of our NCC website.

History/Archives Committee Chair

- Review Chapter documents to understand Chapter history. Ideally draw up a timeline or other document to highlight Chapter events, personnel, and changes over the years

Goal: For our Chapter to have a better understanding of our history, of how we have come to this point in our Chapter and more context of where we can go from here. For instance, there is a SWS chapter that has a “Past Presidents Council” where they can draw on support and insight from past chapter presidents. Gathering this type information would give us the potential to draw on support if we choose. (See also page 9 of SWS Standing Rules June 2017 <https://www.sws.org/category/governance.html>)

Ways and Means Committee Chair

- Identify potential sponsors and collaborators for Chapter events

Goal: To have sponsorship of Chapter events to offset some expenses as well as connecting with other organizations (Modeled from page 9 of SWS Standing Rules June 2017 <https://www.sws.org/category/governance.html>)

2018 Chapter Meeting Committee Chair(s)

- Identify location of annual meeting and other members to assist with preparations for 2018 NCC Annual Meeting; Plan and execute meeting along with associated tasks

Goal: To continue the tradition of annual Chapter meetings for members to connect and present regional wetland research

HIGHLIGHTED STUDENT
BY BREE RICHARDSON

This quarter we would like to recognize Oacia Fair, recipient of the 2017 SWS Multicultural Mentoring Program. Oacia recently completed her undergraduate education in Environmental Studies and Sustainability at Michigan State University. She is waiting to hear back about graduate school and plans to work in a field where she can focus on ways to reduce and eliminate food insecurity in developing countries.

How did the SWaMMP program benefit you?

There was a lack of diversity in the conference pertaining to professionals in the wetland field. It was nice to see students bringing that diversity into the conference. In addition, each student had different interests relating to wetlands. I enjoyed learning about other students' research and understanding why they are pursuing careers in wetlands science.

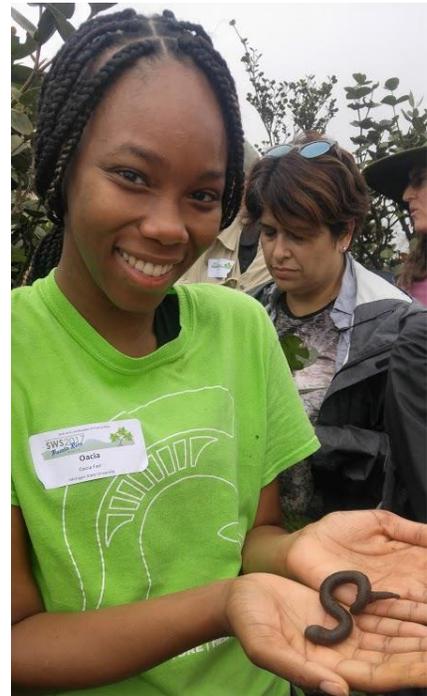
What was your favorite part of the 2017 SWS Meeting in San Juan, Puerto Rico?

Besides making lifelong friends and great connections, I enjoyed the comfortable settings. Usually, conferences are extremely professional and fancy. The field trips were some of the best things my eyes have seen and that made me feel comfortable around professionals. I felt like I could be myself on field trips and didn't even realize I was networking during those times.

Is there anything else you'd like to share?

I really enjoyed this conference and I plan to stay involved because I think wetlands are very important to the environment and I want to be a contributor to continue the cycle of educating young students on wetlands. Although, my future plans are more focused on sociology and agriculture, I cannot ignore wetland sciences in my research since they play an important role for climate. In addition, wetlands are being drained to support crop production. This conference is very multidisciplinary and each person who attends will gain a substantial amount of new knowledge.

It sounds like you had a great time at the conference Oacia! We hope to see you again and wish you the best of luck with graduate school!



NOMINATION OPEN FOR NCC STUDENT REPRESENTATIVE

The North Central Chapter is now accepting nominations for a student to serve a one-year term as the Student Representative on the NCC's Board of Directors. As a voting member of the Board, the Student Representative provides input on important Chapter decisions from the perspective of a student. The NCC has a long history of supporting our region's students through research grants, travel awards, reduced meeting registrations, and other means. Having a student helping to inform these decisions has proven to be a tremendous asset to the Board. If you are a current student attending a College or University within the ten-state area covered by the NCC and are looking for a way to become more involved in the Chapter's leadership, or know of someone who is, please contact NCC President, Julie Nieset (jenieset@illinois.edu); NCC Nominations Committee Chair, Dave Mushet (dmushet@usgs.gov); or our current Student Representative, Bree Richardson (breelacey@gmail.com). Any one of these individuals will be more than happy to discuss the details of the Student Representative position with you and help you decide if the position is for you. The election of the chapter's new Student Representative will occur during April with the selected student being installed as a new member of the NCC Board at the SWS Meeting in Denver, May 29 - June 1. Self-nominations are encouraged.

YOU CAN HELP NCC STUDENTS

Our student representative, Bree Richardson, is updating the SWS education website to help students guide their education and professional careers. Please use the following link to take a very short and anonymous survey <https://goo.gl/forms/Qw1cZdJFfcxhjATh1>. The results will be used to create a webpage that lists careers and advice to students pursuing graduate school.

If you have any questions, please contact Bree Richardson (breelacey@gmail.com) or Julie Nieset (jenieset@illinois.edu).

NCC MEMBER WINS SWS PHOTO CONTEST

Congratulations to NCC member Mark DeDina out of Dekalb, Illinois for his photo being selected as the Grand Prize Winner from the SWS photo contest. Thanks to all of our members who submitted photos!

Grand Prize Winner: Mark DeDina for *Floating Islands in Dubuque, Iowa*, Pictured right.



NCC FACEBOOK PHOTO CONTEST WINNER

Congratulations to Sarah Johnson for winning our Facebook photo contest. Winning by a landslide, her photo received 42 likes/reactions. Thank you to everyone who participated in our World Wetlands Day fun!



Ms. Johnson's post: On behalf of World Wetlands Day, I am posting this fun photo of our research crew working in a Lake Superior coastal wetland this past summer. In the background is "Boaty", the beloved research vessel. We'll be traveling in a few weeks to present our research at the WI Wetlands Association conference. Photo courtesy of Shea Schachameyer. [#WorldWetlandsDay](#) [Northland College](#) [#ApostleIslands](#) [North Central Chapter of the Society of Wetland Scientists](#)

ANNOUNCING THE SWS YOUTH ART CONTEST

We'll be accepting submissions for our Youth Art Contest from February 2 – April 2, 2018. All artworks must be submitted through our online form by **April 2, 2018, at 11:59 p.m. GMT**. This year's theme is *Wetland Wildlife*. Full rules: <http://sws.org/images/pdfs/Youth-Art-Contest-Guidelines.pdf> Help spread the word! Flyer: <http://sws.org/images/pdfs/2018-SWS-Youth-Art-Contest-Flyer.pdf>

Age Categories

Grades 1 – 4

Grades 5 - 8

Prizes

For each age category, first, second and third place winners will be awarded the following prizes:

1st place - \$50.00 USD

2nd place - \$25.00 USD

3rd place - \$10.00 USD

NCC MEMBER PROJECTS

Restoration of a Former Waste Disposal Site in Chesterton, Indiana

Joy Marburger, a resident of Chesterton, Indiana and a North Central Chapter member of SWS, has been providing guidance for restoration of a former waste disposal site of about 6 acres adjacent to a 33-acre wetland in the town. The wetland has been dominated by invasive species, such as hybrid cattail, common reed, and reed canary grass for many years. In 2012 the property was designated a migratory bird sanctuary under the auspices of the PorterCo Conservation Trust, a 501 (c) (3) nonprofit organization. From 2014 to 2015 the organization obtained the required permits from state and federal agencies to initiate restoration. Since 2015 the newly formed board and volunteers have been actively removing debris and invasive species, constructing trails, and planting native species. The current restoration plan will provide short and long-term management guidelines. The primary goals of the project are land and water conservation, preservation for wildlife habitat, and environmental education.



Hybrid cattail dominated wetland, May 2017



Cutting and herbicide spraying of hybrid cattail, common reed, and reed canary grass in August 2017.

NOTES FROM AROUND THE NORTH CENTRAL REGION

WISCONSIN: (State Contact, Laura A.B. Giese, lgiese@trcsolutions.com)

- 1) Wisconsin is shaking up the wetland regulatory process. One Special Session Bill (AB1) passed last fall and another bill (AB547) is making its way through the system. Below is a brief synopsis of each bill.

2017 Special Session Assembly Bill 1 (August 2017)

“Under this bill, a person may, without a permit, discharge dredged material or fill material into a nonfederal wetland that is located in an electronics and information technology manufacturing zone if the discharge is related to the construction, access, or operation of a new manufacturing facility that is also located in the zone. With respect to a federal wetland located in an electronics and information technology manufacturing zone, the bill provides that no state permit is required and that the state waives water quality certification. Under the bill, a federal permit for such a discharge is still required. The bill requires any adverse impacts to functional values of federal or nonfederal wetlands in an electronics and information technology manufacturing zone to be compensated at a ratio of two acres per each acre impacted through the purchase of credits from a mitigation bank, participation in the in lieu fee subprogram or escrow subprogram administered by DNR, or completion of mitigation within this state. Under current law, the general minimum ratio is 1.2 acres for each acre affected by the discharge.” <https://docs.legis.wisconsin.gov/2017/proposals/au7/ab1>

Amendment Assembly Bill 547(SB 600)

This Bill passed through the Assembly Committee on Regulatory Licensing Reform early February 2018. It relates to permitting and mitigation requirements for nonfederal and artificial wetlands and state assumption of the federal regulatory program governing the discharge of dredged or fill material into navigable waters.

“This bill exempts nonfederal and artificial wetlands from certain Department of Natural Resources wetland permitting requirements and, if the Environmental Protection Agency delegates to the state the authority to administer its own permit program for the discharge of dredge or fill material into navigable waters, authorizes DNR to assume that authority. The bill continues to require the mitigation of impacts from a discharge to a nonfederal wetland.” The bill also excludes artificial wetlands (nonfederal wetland created by human modifications to the landscape or hydrology) from the definition of a wetland, thereby exempting these wetlands from the permitting and mitigation requirements that apply to the discharge of dredged or fill material into a wetland. https://wisconsinwetlands.org/updates/amendment_ab547/

- 2) 2018 Wisconsin Wetland Association Wetland Science Conference ***Wetland Resilience for a Changing World*** will be held February 20-22, 2018 at the Grand Geneva Resort in Lake Geneva, Wisconsin.

ILLINOIS: (State Contact, Jessie Ackerman, jracker@illinois.edu)

<http://www.chicagotribune.com/news/local/breaking/ct-met-lake-michigan-wetlands-carbon-research-20171210-story.html>

Scientists from the Illinois State Geological Survey are studying how erosion can cause carbon to be released from coastal wetlands on Lake Michigan.

OHIO: (State Contact, Brad Petru, bpetru@hullinc.com)

Welcome to our new Ohio State Contact, Brad Petru! Mr. Petru has relocated to Columbus, Ohio from the Northern Virginia metropolitan area. He received his undergraduate degree from the University of Wisconsin-Whitewater with a dual major in Physical Geography and Field Ecology and has acquired his Masters of Science from George Mason University (Fairfax Virginia) with a focus on Environmental Science and Policy. He has over 17 years of consulting experience associated with private development, municipal improvement and utility development projects. His background includes wetland delineations, environmental assessments, Section 401/404 regulatory coordination, shoreline restoration, stormwater treatment wetlands and wetland and stream mitigation banking. His career over the last 12 years has had an emphasis on wetland and stream restoration design and construction oversight throughout the mid-Atlantic region. He has recently has taken on the role of Ecology and Wetlands Practice Leader at Hull and Associates, Inc.

State News:

The increase in natural gas pipeline activity over the last several years has finally resulted in a number of inadvertent returns of drilling mud which contain numerous additives. Back in April and May of 2017, the Rover Pipeline project had over 15 incidents where upwards of several million gallons per event of “bentonite slurry” were released into sensitive wetland and swamp areas along the Tuscarawas River and other locations throughout the state. Even after fines and temporary work-stop orders from the Ohio EPA, the Rover Pipeline has had at least five notices of violations since September 2017 (at least 19 in 2017) in association with spills and leaks associated with the horizontal directional drilling activities near the Mohican River.

This drilling fluid is considered non-toxic but last April the Ohio EPA found diesel fuel in the spilled mud. Typically, the inadvertent spills can threaten aquatic life within rivers that support fish, amphibian and sensitive macroinvertebrate resulting in embedded substrate, inundation of spawning habitat and burying stream habitat. However, the composition of the drilling fluid is considered proprietary and identifying other chemicals associated with drilling activities that may be contaminating the environment or private wells can be difficult because the Ohio EPA does not know what to test for.

<https://www.ecowatch.com/rover-pipeline-spill-2526282302.html>

<http://napipelines.com/ohio-epa-asks-rover-pipeline-pause-hdd-activities-following-drilling-fluid-release/>

<https://marcellusdrilling.com/2017/06/oh-epa-says-diesel-fuel-found-in-rover-2m-gal-drilling-mud-spill/>

<https://insideclimatenews.org/news/11052017/ohio-pipeline-spill-wetlands-violations-ferc-energy-transfer-partners>

NEBRASKA: (State Contact, Ted LaGrange, ted.lagrange@nebraska.gov)

INDIANA: (State Contact, Liz Pelloso, pelloso.elizabeth@epa.gov)

IOWA: (State Contact, Melinda Coogan, coogan@bvuu.edu)

MINNESOTA: (State Contact, Elizabeth Markhart, bmarkhart@comcast.net)

NORTH DAKOTA: (State Contact, Marinus Otte, marinus.otte@ndsu.edu)

SOUTH DAKOTA: (State Contact, Carol Johnston, Carol.Johnston@sdstate.edu)

MICHIGAN: (State Contact, Kurt Kowalski, kkowalski@usgs.gov)

If you have an item for a future issue of the NCC newsletter or correction, please send an email with *newsletter* in the subject line to the Editor: Jennifer Boyer (jen.boyer@dupageco.org)

NCC-SWS OFFICERS

Julie Nieset, President

Christina Hargiss, President-Elect

David Mushet, Immediate Past President

Jessica Ackerman, Secretary

Eric Plankell, Treasurer

Liz Pelloso, At-Large Board Member

Joy Marburger, At-Large Board Member

Bree Richardson, Student Representative

NCC-SWS COMMITTEE CHAIRS

Christina Hargiss, Program Committee

David Mushet, Nominations Committee

Jessica Ackerman, Membership Committee

Karen Mangan, Grants and Awards Committee

WEBSITE <http://www.sws.org/North-Central-Chapter>