



Whiteside County SWCD Education Foundation 2018 Poster Contest

The Whiteside County Soil & Water Conservation District is again sponsoring a poster contest.
The 2018 theme is: "Watersheds – Our Water, Our Home".

A Watershed is an area of land where all of the water that is under it, or drains off of it, collects into the same place such as The Mississippi River. Most of the watersheds in Illinois are part of the Mississippi River Basin Watershed, which drains into the Gulf of Mexico!

Precipitation

Imagine all of the rain that falls on those steep mountains in the distance. When water hits a steep surface, there is only one way for it to go: downhill! Gravity pulls water downhill as fast as it can by taking the easiest path it can find. This water (including melted snow) eventually comes together (runoff) to form small streams which meet other streams further down until a river is formed. Where is it going you may ask? Well some of it seeps into the ground to form groundwater, some is used by people and animals then recycled, but most of it flows until it reaches sea level, which is usually the ocean, but also may be a large lake.

The Health of a River

Throughout a river's journey to the ocean, it flows through a landscape that is rich in diverse land uses from lush forests, deserts to farmland, cities and manufacturing plants. Each of these environments has an impact on the river's health. In natural environments like forests; trees and other plants build up on the river banks, dropping leaves, logs and other organic debris into the water. This provides nutrients to feed other organisms as well as provide hiding places for creatures to live in. Human developed environments on the other hand often negatively affect the cleanliness and health of a river. Farmlands for instance, create an unnatural feeding ground where animals such as cows graze on the plant life that keeps the river bank stable and healthy, while also overloading it with animal waste. Paved surfaces like streets, parking lots and driveways for instance create a surface for water to run off too quickly, increasing flood risks and also washing down harmful chemicals and other human waste. There are many other human alterations to the environment that can severely damage our river ecosystems.

Dams

Dams are a great source of electricity for humans, it's better for the environment because it doesn't release harsh chemicals and smoke into the atmosphere. Dams work by holding water behind them, and then slowly letting the water out through turbines. As the water pushes these turbines, electricity is produced! For fish however, dams make for an incredibly rough journey to and from the Gulf of Mexico.

Remember, the next time you step outside, you are stepping onto a watershed.

(The information above was provided by: www.fs.fed.us)

The poster contest is grouped by grade level: K-1, 2-3, 4-6, 7-9 & 10-12. The first-place poster chosen from each grade level, will be sent to the Illinois State Soil & Water District Office in Springfield in July 2018. State winning entries will advance to the national contest.

Contest Rules: Any media may be used to create a flat or two-dimensional effect (paint, crayon, colored pencil, charcoal, stickers, paper or other materials on regular posters. (no computer, only special category).

- Recommended poster size is 14" x 22" but the poster can be between 8.5" x 11" and 22" x 28"
- Posters should be packaged so they remain flat when sent for judging.
- All posters must be created by an individual student rather than a team of students.
- The 2018 Stewardship title "Watersheds – Our Water, Our Home" must be on the front of your posters. This is the only title eligible for the national poster contest.
- Each entrant must sign the entry form to be eligible for judging.
- Although younger students will most likely receive help in planning from parents or teacher, NACD/SWCD encourages each student to do as much of the work as possible by him/herself. Entries completed by students in their hand writing and coloring will score better than those designed, drawn and colored by adult assistance.
- Prizes: Are yet to be determined.

The deadline for the poster contest is 4pm March 30, 2018. For any further information please feel free to contact:

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