

# Two Pennsylvanians win SCSA Honor Awards

BY SALLY DUNMIRE  
Staff Correspondent

ST. LOUIS, Mo. — During the infamous dust bowl days of the 1930's, the need for soil and water conservation spawned the soil

conservation movement.

One organization that vigorously promotes the preservation of these precious natural resources is the Soil Conservation Society of America.

This year, the SCSA's 40th annual meeting was held in the bustling metropolis of St. Louis, the "Gateway to the West". The five-day event featured 96 educational workshops of interest to farmers, environmentalists and all others concerned about conservation. Topics ran the environmental gamut from soil and water to fish, wildlife and environmental education.

Soil and water conservation are global concerns. A workshop entitled "Conservation in Tanzania.", for instance, outlined the objectives of HADO (Hifadhi Ya Ardhi Dodoma), the land rehabilitation and reclamation scheme for the Dodoma region in East Africa.

Media reports continue to document the dramatic need for conservation in Africa. For a variety of reasons, including politics, artificially depressed farm prices, drought, low fertility and erosion, the country remains incapable of feeding itself.

The grip of famine and death might have been reduced or avoided if proper soil and water conservation measures had been used. Currently Tanzania is

beginning to reclaim its land and to feed its people.

Also featured at the meeting was a land resource tour to three Illinois farms, where management and marketing were adapted to the soil's capabilities.

Other tours provided a look at Indian Springs, a historic Missouri working homestead; Arch Minerals, an active strip mine reclamation operation; the Ralston Purina Company's Research Farm; the Busch Wildlife Area; and the Forrest Keeling Nursery.

Many SCSA awards were presented to Americans and Canadians, with two Pennsylvanians among the ten Honor Award recipients. The Honor Award is given to individuals who make significant contributions to land and water conservation.

Honor award recipients from this area included William R. Eising, Lemoyne and James Hostetter of McVeytown.

An instruction advisor and a science-environment teacher at the West Shore School District, Eising was recognized by the SCSA for his innovative approach to environmental education.

Eising is the temporary director of the Whitetail Environmental Center and is involved with the teacher education programs, Project Learning Tree and Project Wild. He writes the "Outdoor Learning" column for the Pennsylvania Game News and contributes to other sportsman's magazines.

Currently working on his PhD. at Penn State, Eising believes that environmental education should be practiced in the schools, as well as at the community and statewide levels.

Hostetter, who has farmed his Mifflin County corn-alfalfa-dairy farm for 20 years, was recognized for his cost-effective conservation measures.

Hostetter employs a comprehensive program of conservation measures, including strip cropping, grassy waterways, no-till planting, water diversions, contour plowing, a winter cover crop (annual rye) and subsurface drainage. He also is extremely conscientious in his nutrient management practices, especially efficient use of his manure pit.

A member of the Mifflin County Conservation District, Hostetter believes "it won't be enough until everyone does it. There should be more emphasis on soil and water conservation, but I think it's coming, especially with the younger fellows. Almost all farmers are using some measures, especially contour plowing, but there are so many other things that can be done.

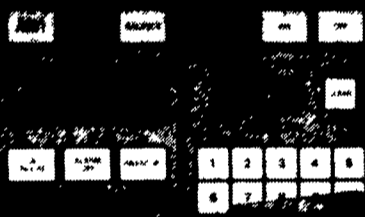
"What worries me are the proposed government funding cuts to the Soil Conservation Service. These people will come out and help you with things like laying out contour strips, or designing and supervising the construction of manure pits. They helped me with mine. If they can't do it any more, who will?"



SCSA Award winner James Hostetter, on his Mifflin County farm.

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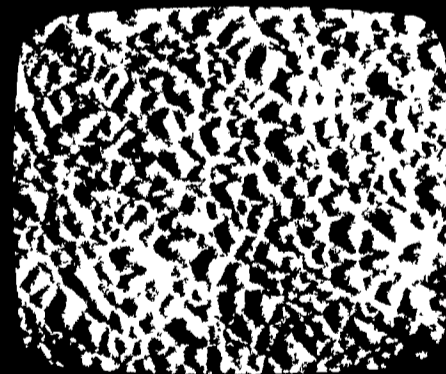
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