

FFA Leadership Development Program

2017 Soil Stewardship Public Speaking Contest Theme:



To prepare for the public speaking contest, students are to consult with their Ag Science teacher and use the Guidelines Packet accessible on the Texas State Soil and Water Conservation Board's website. The student is also to work with their soil and water conservation district (SWCD) as a local resource. A statement signed by an SWCD representative must be attached to the submitted speech.

To locate and contact a soil and water conservation district, **refer to page 8** of this packet and follow the instructions.

This program is a partnership between the Texas FFA, the Vocational Agriculture Teachers Association of Texas, the Texas State Soil and Water Conservation Board, and the Association of Texas Soil and Water Conservation Districts.

For more information contact:

Texas State Soil and Water Conservation Board
P.O. Box 658
Temple, TX 76503
(254) 773-2250 or 800-792-3485
<http://www.tsswcb.texas.gov>



Scholarships Available



Three scholarships will be awarded by the Association of Texas Soil and Water Conservation Districts. *One \$3,000.00 scholarship* will be awarded to the first place contestant, *one \$2,000.00 scholarship* will be awarded to the second place contestant and *one \$1,000.00 scholarship* will be awarded to the third place contestant.

Scholarship money must be used to defray costs of a recipient's education at a technical institution, college, or university of the recipient's choice. Scholarship funds will be transmitted directly to a public speaking contest winner's chosen technical school, college, or university in the student's name upon proof of registration as a full-time student at the institution of higher learning.

Expense Paid Trips: The state first place scholarship winner and his or her advisor will receive an expense paid trip under State of Texas travel guidelines to the annual meeting of Texas Soil and Water Conservation District Directors. The first place Soil Stewardship Public Speaking Contest Winner is required to present his or her state winning speech at the annual meeting of SWCD Directors.

To Access the Guidelines Packet

1. Click on the Texas State Soil & Water Conservation Board's website: www.tsswcb.texas.gov
2. On the left side of the home page, under Program Quick Links click on "SWCD Information & Education."
3. Click on "Soil & Water Stewardship Public Speaking Contest" and scroll down for the 2017 Program Guidelines Packet

To Get the Student Started

Using the prompt statements or questions noted in the speech outline on page six, the student is to center his/her speech on the theme "***NO LAND-NO WATER***"™. The focus of the speech is to demonstrate knowledge gained as a result of research and personal consultation with the local soil and water conservation district. It is further recommended that the student consult the listed resources that follow to gain a well rounded view of the theme topic. **Other resources may also be consulted in addition to the listed references.**

Recommended Resources for Speech Development

<http://txlandtrends.org/files/lt-2014-fact-sheet.pdf>

Defines working lands, and presents brief notes on state population growth, land loss, land values and ownership data in Texas.

<http://txlandtrends.org/files/lt-2014-report.pdf>

A publication of the Texas A&M Institute of Renewable Natural Resources. The document presents a status update and trends related to Texas rural lands. It defines working lands, trends in population growth, land loss, land values, ownership size and an overview on the numbers of acres in private farms and ranches.

https://www.twdb.texas.gov/waterplanning/swp/2017/doc/2017_SWP_Adopted.pdf

A publication of the Texas Water Development Board. The document presents information about future human population in the state and resultant water demands. Information is also presented on current and future water supplies in Texas.

<http://agecoext.tamu.edu/files/2013/08/AgFacts.pdf>

Facts About Texas and U.S. Agriculture: The publication discusses the changing face of Texas and U.S. agriculture and the factors that impact the change. See the publication's table of contents for more specific subject matter.

<https://www.texasagriculture.gov/About/TexasAgStats.aspx>

Texas Department of Agriculture: Document illustrates key facts about Texas agriculture.

<http://texasalmanac.com/topics/agriculture/state-texas-agriculture>

Texas Almanac: Presents a summation relative to the status of Texas agriculture.

<http://www.txaglandtrust.org/conservation/why- conserve-working-lands/>

Texas Agricultural Land Trust: Fact sheet explaining the reasons for the conservation of working lands.

http://www.ers.usda.gov/webdocs/publications/eib161%5C60298_eib161.pdf

United States Department of Agriculture-“U.S. Farmland Ownership, Tenure, and Transfer: Farmland tenure shapes many farm decisions, including those related to production, conservation, and succession planning. The relatively advanced age of many farmers raises questions about land ownership, especially how land will be transferred to the next generation of agricultural landowners and operators. This study provides a descriptive baseline analysis of land ownership and then focuses on more detailed aspects of land tenure, including non-operator landlords, rental agreements, the acquisition and transfer of land, and how decision making is shared by landlords and their tenants.

<http://www.ers.usda.gov/amber-waves/2016/september/an-economic-perspective-on-soil-health/>

United States Department of Agriculture-“An Economic Perspective on Soil Health”- NRCS defines soil health as “the continued capacity of soil to function as a vital living ecosystem that sustains plants, animals, and humans.” Key components of the document include discussions on the economics of soil health, practices farmers and ranchers can use to build soil health, federal and state incentives to soil health practices, economic issues associated with managing for soil health and key soil health practices.

http://www.farmlandinfo.org/sites/default/files/FINAL_LO_RES_aft-tx_brochure_09-15-2010_1.pdf

Private Lands Public Benefits—Incentives for Stewardship of Texas Agricultural Lands: This guide is for Texans who want to ensure a future for the state’s farms and ranches: landowners who want to conserve, protect and steward their land and its resources; policymakers concerned about the costs to the state of the loss of rural lands, and all Texans who value the many benefits provided by working farms and ranches.

https://irnr.tamu.edu/media/251930/land_fragmentation_briefing.pdf

Fragmented Lands-Changing Land Ownership in Texas: This brochure provides information to help make crucial decisions that address the ownership fragmentation issue and its potential impact on Texas’ rural communities and the natural resources upon which our waters, wildlife habitats, and agricultural economies are ultimately based.

<https://static1.squarespace.com/static/54c15aa8e4b08b9c092063a6/t/568bf9c5df40f37b331ac139/1452014021244/Land+Fragmentation.pdf>

Land Fragmentation: Texas landowners are increasingly dividing their properties, either to sell parts of it or to diversify its uses. In a state where 95 percent of the land is privately owned, land divisions play an important role in determining the future of development in the region. This briefing paper analyzes the current trends in land fragmentation and provides policy recommendations that address land conservation concerns.

Specific Instructions: The speech must be between *six and eight minutes in length*. For specific rules and requirements relating to the contest, consult the Degree Check Guidelines.

Objective of the Speech

The objectives of the speech are as follows:

1. Develop and communicate what working lands are and how population growth, land loss, and land values affect production agriculture.
2. Convey an understanding of the current status of state water supplies contrasted with future needs.
3. Speak about the changing face of Texas agriculture and be able to convey the factors that clearly influence the change.
4. Provide a clear explanation of the importance for the conservation of agricultural lands.
5. Communicate a clear understanding regarding the economic importance including incentives for managing soil health.
6. Be able to clearly explain what is meant by “fragmented lands” and how land fragmentation impacts communities and natural resources with respect to water, wildlife habitat, and agricultural economics.



Speech Outline

Introduction

- Introduce the theme “**NO LAND-NO WATER**”™. Consider incorporating a reflective thought based upon what was learned during research for the preparation of the speech.
- Set the tone of the speech with some thought provoking quote regarding a philosophical view for the conservation of soil and water resources.

Body of Speech

- State some facts about current rural land trend issues in Texas and projections of the trend. How will land trend issues impact changes in agriculture? Consider the issue and causes of land fragmentation and how land divisions play a role in determining the future of production agriculture and related natural resources.
- Define what working lands are. Explain how population growth, land loss, land values, and ownership size affect working farms, ranches and timberland.
- From interviews and discussion with local soil and water conservation district personnel (USDA Natural Resource Conservation Service personnel, a soil and water conservation district employee, or a conservation district director) discuss ways in which the local soil and water conservation district, along with agricultural producers cooperating with the SWCD, contribute to good land management in the local community.
- Present a perspective on current and future water supplies for Texas in contrast to increasing population demographics. Where will be the greatest demand and how will such projections be met?
- Discuss how good land stewardship contributes to the environmental and economic health to the local community, state, and nation. Give examples of public benefits derived from a healthy viable agricultural sector.

Conclusion

- In reflecting on what you have learned do you believe that your generation has a real concern about the future of the state and nation's land and water?

** It is not required that the above prompt questions be addressed in the speech as chronologically listed. The student has the flexibility to rearrange the prompt questions in a manner that permits a smooth flow of delivery. The student also has the flexibility to introduce other concepts into his or her speech that he or she feels relevant to the presentation.*

Soil and Water Conservation District Consultation Affidavit

I certify that _____ consulted with
the _____ Soil and Water Conservation
District in preparation for the 2017 Soil and Water Stewardship Public Speaking
Contest (“No Land-No Water”).

(Student Signature)

(Date)

(SWCD Representative Signature)

(Date)

(This form should be submitted along with the speech.)





How to find your local soil and water conservation district: Follow the below steps.

1. Click on the link
<http://www.tsswcb.texas.gov/en/swcds/locatormap>
2. Click on the region number in which your county is located.
3. Find the name of your county and click on it. Up pops the name of your SWCD, and information on how to contact the district, or the Texas State Soil and Water Conservation Board Field Representative who assists the district.