

Michigan Chapter of the Soil and Water Conservation Society

CALENDAR YEAR 2026 EXECUTIVE COUNCIL

Zachary Curtis, President

Adam Reimer, President-elect

Sarah Zeiler, Past President

Katie Droscha, Vice President

Daniel F. Kesselring, Secretary

Kelly Goward, Treasurer

Dan Busby, Region 1 Director

Mila Resetar, Region 2 Director

Sherman Reed, Region 3 Director

Steve Schaub, At-large Director

CALENDAR YEAR 2026 MICHIGAN CHAPTER SWCS COMMITTEES

Committees defined in Bylaws

POLICY COMMITTEE (Membership is 5 Available Past Presidents. If 5 not available, then other past officers. Current officers are not eligible except for immediate Past President who is Chair.)

Sarah Zeiler, Year 2026 Past President, Chair. Members: Katie Droscha; Year 2024 Past President; Glenn O'Neil, Year 2022 Past President; Steve Schaub, Year 2025 Past President; and Sarah Ehinger, Year 2008 Past President.

LEGISLATIVE COMMITTEE

Members: Gerald Miller, Co-Chair, and Tess Van Gorder, Co-Chair **Volunteers needed.**
Committee should have 5 members.)

SCHOLARSHIP COMMITTEE

Zachary Curtis, Chair. Members: Steve Schaub, Heather Varboncoeur and Dan Kesselring

NOMINATIONS COMMITTEE (Appointed by President 180 days before Annual Meeting)

2025 Members: Patty McNinch, Steve Schaub and Laura Campbell.

ELECTIONS COMMITTEE (Appointed by President)

2024 Members: Caroline Schadd and Patty McNinch.

Committees not defined in Bylaws

ANNUAL MEETING COMMITTEE (Ad Hoc)

President and Executive Council

ARCHIVES COMMITTEE (Permanent Committee)

Dan Kesselring, Chair

AWARDS COMMITTEE (Ad Hoc)

Members: Sarah Ehinger, Chair; Michael LaPointe, Taylor Ulbrich

FINANCE COMMITTEE (Permanent Committee)

Kelly Goward, Chair; Members: Dan Kesselring, Heather Varboncoeur

MEMBERSHIP AND OUTREACH COMMITTEE (Permanent Committee)

Glenn O'Neil, Chair; Members: Dan Kesselring; Zachary Curtis, Newsletter Editor

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE (Permanent Committee)

Jerry Miller, Chair. Members: Dan Busby, Katie Droscha, Kelly Goward, Daniel Kesselring, Glenn O'Neil, Steve Schaub and Tess Van Gorder.

STUDENT CHAPTER RELATIONS COMMITTEE (Ad Hoc)

Members: Kelly Goward, Grand Valley State University Chapter Liaison

Todd Aschenbach, GVSU Student Chapter Advisor

Steve Schaub, Dan Kesselring, Heather Varboncoeur, Zachary Curtis

Committee Assignments

Policy Committee Assignments:

(According to the Bylaws, the Policy Committee is made up of the previous 5 available Past Presidents. If 5 Past Presidents are not available, any past officer may be appointed by the President as a replacement.)

The Policy Committee shall meet at the request of its chairperson, any Policy Committee member or the Executive Council. The Policy Committee shall review and discuss general policy, such as Bylaws, and administrative matters, such as non-profit and corporation status, of the Chapter, and develop recommendations for consideration by the Executive Council. The Policy Committee may receive policy suggestions from other Committees, review and possibly modify those suggestions, and forward policy recommendations to the Executive Council.

Legislative Committee Assignments:

The Bylaws state: *The Chapter shall have a Legislative Committee consisting of one Executive Council member and a minimum of four representatives of the Chapter. Any staff person employed by the Chapter and being responsible for legislation will be an ex-officio member of this Committee.*

The purpose of the Legislative Committee is to foster, implement, organize and administer ways and means by which the Chapter can communicate with, and represent, its members with respect to legislation or proposed legislation of direct interest to the Chapter's objective of promoting the conservation of all natural resources. The function of the Legislative Committee recognizes that the Chapter may be an advocate, but cannot lobby.

Scholarship Committee Assignments:

The purpose of the Scholarship Committee is to encourage qualified students to enter the field of natural resource conservation and to prepare them for such careers through an organized program of study in an institution of higher education offering training in appropriate areas.

Award Scholarships based on interest in conservation as evidenced by scholastic ability and participation in conservation activities.

Maintain, update as needed, and issue applications for the scholarship.

Develop and maintain a list of State University and College Contacts who distribute the scholarship information to the students.

Maintain a scoring matrix for scholarship application review.

Advise and consult with the Executive Council regarding suggested modifications in the Scholarship Program and management of the Scholarship dedicated funds.

Nominations Committee Assignments:

(Shall have State-wide representation. Number not specified. Should be at least 3, one for each Region. Each Regional Director is responsible for finding a member to serve on the Nominations Committee.)

The Nominations Committee shall encourage members to be on the ballot for the Michigan Chapter Executive Council.

The Nominations Committee shall nominate and submit to the President, no later than 60 days before the annual meeting, a list of candidates for the elective offices who have consented to have their names appear on the ballot.

The Election Ballot is prepared and distributed by the Executive Council.

Elections Committee Assignments:

The Secretary shall deliver the election ballots to the Election Committee chairperson.

Upon receiving the ballots, the Elections Committee shall meet and count the ballots, and certify results of the election to the President.

The Elections Committee shall deliver the counted ballots to the Secretary who shall make them available for inspection by any member for six months after which they may be destroyed.

If possible, the Elections Committee should be made up of individuals who will be attending the Annual Meeting.

Archives Committee Assignments:

The Archives Committee is assigned the task of documenting the history of the Michigan Chapter and preserving records related to our organization that may be beneficial for future Chapter leaders and members.

Archival materials shall be donated to the Michigan State University Archives and Historical Collection. Copies shall be retained by the Archives Committee.

Awards Committee Assignments:

Solicit nominations for Chapter and Society awards by the deadline set by the Executive Council.

Recommend and prepare nominations for Chapter and International Society awards.

Submit nominations for Chapter and International Society awards to the Executive Council for approval by the deadline set by the Executive Council.

Prepare award certificates, plaques, etc. for Chapter award recipients.

Plan and conduct the annual awards ceremony at an appropriate meeting as determined by the Executive Council.

Prepare and submit nominations, as directed by the Executive Council, for International Society awards to SWCS headquarters by the deadline.

Ensure proper recognition of Chapter and International Society award winners.

Chapter and Society Awards include the following:

For Society Members:

Fellow. (National Society award)

Outstanding Service. (National and Michigan Chapter awards)

Commendation. (National and Michigan Chapter awards)

For members and non-members:

Hugh Hammond Bennett. (National Society award)

Honor. (National Society and Michigan Chapter awards)

Merit. (National Society and Michigan Chapter awards)

Conservationist of the Year. (Michigan Chapter award)

News/Media. (Michigan Chapter award)

Education. (Michigan Chapter award)

Finance Committee Assignments:

Develop a fiscal year budget and submit it to the Executive Council for approval.

Review all Chapter accounts and how they are presently managed and reported, including who has access to perform transactions and who has access to observe records provided directly from the banks.

Make recommendations, regarding any improvements the Chapter can make regarding secure access to transactions and/or records.

Review current record keeping and archive practices, and make recommendations for improvements, if deemed necessary.

Develop recommendations for future or on-going activities of the Finance Committee.

Consider other financial issues identified by the Finance Committee members or the Executive Council.

Membership and Outreach Committee Assignments:

Membership:

Promote membership in the Chapter.

Develop strategies to increase membership and member involvement, and then implement approved strategies.

Develop strategies to retain, strengthen, motivate, and involve members, then implement approved strategies.

Develop strategies to increase Chapter visibility among relevant state and national agencies, organizations, societies, and groups, and then implement approved strategies.

Research or survey the professional needs of members, and report findings to the Executive Council.

Establish and maintain a new-member mentoring program and assign mentors to new members upon request.

Recommend members who merit advancement and are well qualified to serve as Chapter or Society officers or committee members, then initiate nominations of those that are recommended.

Outreach:

Includes newsletter, website, table top display and other general outreach and public communication activities.

Prepare the periodical Chapter newsletter and make it available to all Chapter members by most appropriate means.

Monitor and manage the Chapter website and Facebook page to communicate the Chapter's values, goals and objectives to SWCS members and the general public.

Solicit articles from Executive Council members and Chapter members for inclusion in the newsletter.

Prepare appropriate upcoming event articles for the newsletter as needed.

Edit submitted articles, with appropriate consultation with original writers.

Update, prepare and deliver the Chapter display to appropriate events, and look for event opportunities.

Consider contacting University members who might be interested in contributing articles.

Professional Development Committee Assignments:

- Responsible for Chapter professional development activities such as the ANR Seminar, tours, workshops and webinars.
- Propose professional development activities for Executive Council consideration.
- Solicit professional development programming ideas from the Chapter membership.
- Keep tuned to developing environmental issues, environmental events and conservation professional's needs.
- Consult with agencies and other organizations for professional development needs and opportunities.
- In cooperation with the Executive Council, plan, arrange and execute the ANR week seminar held in early March.
- Prepare a program description for inclusion in the Michigan State University ANR Week Program Guide.
- In cooperation with the Executive Council, plan, arrange and execute a Summer Tour or Field Day in the designated Region. Membership should be mostly from that Region.
- In cooperation with the Executive Council, and the Michigan Association of Conservation Districts (MACD), plan the Technical Workshop and/or Field Trip in conjunction with the MACD Annual Conference.
- Be responsible for assuring adequate facilities are arranged through MACD.
- Be responsible for speaker arrangements and accommodations, or Field Trip site visit and travel arrangements.
- Propose additional professional development opportunities for consideration by the Executive Council, and develop and implement proposals approved by the Executive Council.

Student Chapter Relations Committee

The intent of this Committee is to develop new Student Chapters in appropriate Institutions, and to support and encourage existing Student Chapters.

Targeted Institutions shall be determined by the Committee in consultation with the Executive Council.

The Committee should consider developing networking opportunities with University Faculty members and other relevant student organizations.

Note: Committee activation, membership needs and member term lengths vary depending on Committee functions and needs.