

**Michigan Chapter of the Soil and Water Conservation Society  
Professional Development Committee Report for 2023**

The Professional Development Committee is a permanent committee of the Michigan Chapter. Committee members are: Jon Bartholic, Dan Busby, Katie Droscha, Kelly Goward, Tim Harrigan, Glenn O'Neil, Steven Schaub, Tess Van Gorder and Jerry Miller, Chair. Chapter Secretary Dan Kesselring serves as a resource to the committee.

Committee activities during the year included coordinating multiple professional development events. Activities included:

1. 2022 Chapter Annual Meeting webinar coordinated by Chapter President-Elect Katie Droscha.
2. 2023 ANR Week seminar program chaired by committee member Tim Harrigan.
3. A keynote presentation during the in person 2023 MACD summer conference coordinated by Chapter President Katie Droscha.
4. Workshop including a field event coordinated by committee chair Jerry Miller

A summary of select activities implemented by the Professional Development Committee include:

1. A webinar was hosted December 16, 2022, as part of the Chapter's annual meeting. The presentation was made by Dr. Jeremiah Asher, Assistant Director, Institute of Water Research, Michigan State University. The webinar was titled "Edge-of-field monitoring for tillage management impacts on water quality and quantity in St. Johns, Michigan".
2. The annual Agriculture and Natural Resources Seminar was held on March 10, 2023, at the AgroLiquid facility, St. Johns. The seminar theme was: Sustainable Intensification of the Rural Landscape: Protecting Soil Health, Water Quality and Farm Profitability. The keynote speaker was Dr. John Yellich, Director, Michigan Geological Survey. His presentation was titled "Michigan Water! What is needed and known after years of nothing in Ottawa County, and what does Michigan need?" The agenda for the seminar is posted at <https://www.miglswcs.org/app/download/7127102923/2023+SWCS+ANR+Seminar+Agenda+02-24-23+v7.pdf>
3. A keynote presentation by Dr. Jason Rowntree on June 5, 2023, at the Michigan Association of Conservation Districts Summer Conference. Dr. Rowntree's presentation was titled "Impacts of soil carbon sequestration on life cycle greenhouse gas emissions in the Midwest". The coordination for his presentation was made by Michigan Chapter SWCS President Katie Droscha, a member of the Michigan Association of Conservation Districts event planning committee.
4. The chapter hosted a workshop and field component on September 15, 2023, at the Polkton Township Hall, Coopersville, MI. The event title was "Anaerobic Digester Workshop: The future of manure and food waste management". An overview of anaerobic digesters was presented by James DeYoung, owner and consultant CJD Farm Consulting, and Dana Kirk, Ph.D, PE and Engineer Consultant, and Retired faculty, Michigan State University. The presentations were followed by a field event to a local bio-digester facility handling dairy manure at Ottawa County Farm, LLC., located north of Coopersville and managed by Brightmark Renewal Energy.

Upcoming activities planned by the committee include:

1. The committee is coordinating webinar presentations following the Chapter's annual meeting on December 15, 2023. Five-minute presentations will be presented by Chapter members describing their professional work in soil and water conservation.
2. The 2024 Agriculture and Natural Resources annual seminar is scheduled for March 8, 2024, at the AgroLiquid Conference Facility at St. Johns, Michigan. The seminar is being planned as an in-person event. Tim Harrigan chairs the program planning committee for the annual seminar. Committee members are in the process of identifying topics and speakers.
3. Virtual webinars are being discussed for each quarter (Apr – Jun and Jul – Sep).
4. Following the March ANR Seminar the Professional Development Committee will discuss ideas for a Summer workshop and field event.

**Report submitted by Gerald "Jerry" Miller, Committee Chair**