BLACKHAWK HILLS

Resource Conservation and Development

Report to Sponsors

Following is the latest news from Blackhawk Hills RC&D:

Annual Meeting – Everyone is invited to the Blackhawk Hills Annual Dinner Meeting on April 16, 2010 at 6:00 PM at the White Pines Inn in Mt. Morris, IL. Dale Hoppe will speak on the Black Hawk Statue. Come learn about our accomplishments for the year, celebrate the achievements of our program and connect with our partners and friends. For more information or to register for our Annual Dinner Meeting, please contact Julie Jacobs at the RC&D Office.

Connecting the Green Dots Beyond the River – Blackhawk Hills RC&D will be hosting the Driftless Area Initiative's Earth Day Event which will commemorate the 40th Anniversary of Earth Day and the 75th Anniversary of the USDA, Natural Resources Conservation Service. The Celebration will be held on April 23, 2010 at 9:30 AM at Chestnut Mountain Resort. The Secretary of Ag Tom Vilsack has been invited to be the keynote speaker.

Economic Development Workshop Series – Blackhawk Hills has started a series of workshops. The first workshop, "CEDS Leadership Training: What Are the Roles and Responsibilities" was held on March 24th. The workshop's presentation can be viewed by visiting our website at www.blackhawkhills.com and click on the Publication link. The second workshop, "Bracing for Impact? True Experiences from the Florence, CO Federal SuperMax Facility" will be held on May 5th at Buck's Barn in Thomson, IL. The final workshop, "What Are They Really Looking For and Are You Ready?" will be held on June 30th location to be determined. For more information on the workshops, call the RC&D Office at 815-625-3854.

Blackhawk Hills Broadband Project – The Illinois Broadband Opportunities Partnership Northwest (IBOP-NW), an 8-county (Carroll, Jo Daviess, Lee, Ogle, Stephenson, Whiteside, Winnebago and LaSalle) made a $67M grant application with more than $9M in non-federal matching funds, to the federal Stimulus Plan. In addition, IBOP-NM has $14M in State match. This project is a significant upgrade of the Blackhawk Hills RC&D's broadband infrastructure that will meet the broadband demand and provide ongoing and long-term benefits to area schools, communities, enhance public safety, provide disaster recovery capabilities, improve service delivery to citizens and businesses and serve as an economic stimulus, expanding infrastructure and creating local jobs.

Energy Efficiency and Conservation Block Grants (EECBG) – Blackhawk Hills is getting closer to having access to $759,460 in EECBG funds for the six-county area to reduce fossil fuel emissions, reduce total energy consumption levels and/or generally improve overall energy efficiency. The RC&D staff will attend a training session on April 19th and is hoping to be able to offer the funds to our local governments shortly there after.

Prevailing Wage Workshop – Blackhawk Hills RC&D is hosting a Prevailing Wage Workshop on April 29th at 9:30 AM at the US Bank building in Rock Falls. Tom Whalen, IL Department of Labor, will speak on the new Prevailing Wage laws and what impact it will have on communities. Three new bills went into effect on January 1, 2010.

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