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2014 State Conservation Awareness Poster & Speaking Contests Held

The 57th annual State Conservation Awareness Poster and Speaking Contests were held in Appleton at the Radisson Paper Valley Hotel on Monday, March 10, 2014. Volunteers from various county land conservation departments and natural resource state agencies and Fox Speaks Toastmasters club helped judge the speaking contest and poster contest. The first place winning speaker from each division presented their award-winning speech at the Wisconsin Land and Water Conservation Annual Conference luncheon on Monday to a crowd of over 300 conservation professionals from across the state.

Mariah Haberman, host of Discover Wisconsin and Jim VandenBrook, Executive Director of Wisconsin Land and Water Conservation Association presented the speaking contest winners with trophies and recognized all of the students for their outstanding speeches and their commitment to conservation. "Educating our youth about conservation is critical to our state's future, said VandenBrook. The WLWCA Poster and Speaking contest is one of the many programs that our Youth and Education committee coordinates to educate and inspire Wisconsin's youth so they continue to care for our beautiful state."

The winning speeches ranged in topics from "The World's Greatest Sponge" promoting the value of wetlands, to "Frac Sand" which explained the need for sound management of frac sand mining operations, to "Worth of Wisconsin Water," discussing how dependant we are on abundant supplies of water to maintain healthy lakes, streams and groundwater for safe drinking water, sustainable agriculture, communities and ecosystems. Haberman also announced the first place winner for the poster contest from each division whose theme this year was "Dig Deeper Mysteries in the Soil" the first place posters will represent Wisconsin at the National Association of Conservation Districts (NACD) Poster Contest held at the National Association meeting in New Orleans.

"These pint-sized conservation advocates were so fearless! It sure was refreshing (and comforting!) to hear the passionate opinions of our next generation," said Haberman.

SPEAKING CONTEST

Elementary Division: First place: Breanna Weiland, Waupaca County - “The World’s Greatest Sponge”;
Second place: Jasmine Pleet, Wood County; Third place: Abby Fry, St. Croix County.

Junior Division: First place: Chloe Steiner, Barron County - “Frac Sand”; Second place: Sadie Grootousen,
Rusk County; Third place tie: Martin Hogar, Oneida County and Natalie Rustad, Waupaca County.

Senior Division: First place: Lily Howder, Eau Claire County - “Worth of Wisconsin Water”; Second place:
Adileen Sii, Wood County; Third place: Courtney Runnels, Marquette County.

POSTER CONTEST

Primary Division: First place: Chance Doyle, Juneau County; Second place: Matthew Winch, Grant County;
Third place: Krystal Moddie, Marinette County.

Elementary Division: First place: Rebel Sorenson, Juneau County; Second place: Michaela Runde, Grant
County; Third place: Samuel Ross, Polk County.

Middle Division: First place: Ben McMeeken, Washington County; Second place: Olivia Asare-Outagamie
County; Third place: MacKenzie Slater, Pepin County.

Junior Division: First Place: Lily Anne Schroeder, Oconto County; Second place: Lindsay Neefe, Richland
County; Third place: Linnea Ryan, Outagamie County.

Senior Division: First place: Taylor Helgersen, Crawford County; Second place: Christian Tango-an, Fond
du Lac County; Third place: Maria Nogueira, Marinette County.

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**SPEAKING CONTEST
Elementary Division Winners**



First place: Chloe Steiner



Second place: Jasmine Pleet



Third place: Abby Fry

**SPEAKING CONTEST
Junior Division Winners**



First place: Chloe Steiner



Second place: Sadie Groothousen



Third place tie: Martin Hogar and Natalie Rustad

**SPEAKING CONTEST
Senior Division Winners**



First place: Lily Howder



Second place: Adileen Sii



Third place: Cortney Runnels