



2026 TEXAS CONSERVATION AWARDS PROGRAM

ENTRY DEADLINE: Entries must be postmarked by February 2, 2026.

The Texas State Soil and Water Conservation Board (TSSWCB) and the Association of Texas Soil and Water Conservation Districts (ATSWCD), as directing sponsors of the Texas Conservation Awards Program, are pleased to join the 216 Texas soil and water conservation districts in the quest for area winners during 2026.

AREA AWARDS BANQUETS
(Locations to be determined)

- AREA I.....Panhandle & Northwest Texas
- AREA II Southwest Texas
- AREA IIISouth Texas
- AREA IVEast Texas
- AREA V Central & North Texas

ENTRY DEADLINE: Entries must be postmarked by February 2, 2026.

(Each district is eligible to enter all categories.)

Mail entry to: ATSWCD, 1497 Country View Lane, Temple, TX 76504

2026 TEXAS CONSERVATION AWARDS PROGRAM

PURPOSE:

To acknowledge, recognize and honor those who dedicate themselves and their talents to the conservation and wise use of our renewable natural resources. The conservation awards program provides competition and incentives to expand and improve conservation efforts, resource development, and increase the wise utilization of our renewable natural resources. As a result, soil and water conservation districts and both rural and urban citizens of Texas are benefited.

CATEGORIES:

- Outstanding Conservation District
- Conservation Rancher
- Conservation Farmer
- Essay Contest (Jr. and Sr. divisions)
- Poster Contest (kindergarten-2nd Grade and 3rd-6th Grade divisions)
- Friend of Conservation
- Conservation Teacher
- Wildlife Conservationist
- Forestry Conservationist (Area IV Only)

GUIDELINES:

- Participation in any or all categories of the awards program shall be voluntary. However, to participate, at any level (area or state) **a district is required to contribute financial support to the awards program (annual specified amount) by February 2, 2026.**
- All award contributions made to the ATSWCD for this purpose will be held and utilized in a separate and sole purpose account.
- Each area awards program will consist of opportunities to enter award categories selected for your area of the state administered under the same procedures. Awards banquets will be conducted on a standard format and standard awards should be presented in each area.
- Each district is eligible to submit one entry in each category as determined in your area of the state. However, a district may submit up to two entries in both the essay and poster contests.
- Entry material will be distributed in the fall of each year. Each awards packet will have a cover letter explaining exact entry procedures and the categories that may be entered for that year.
- Entry material is limited to the supporting information required on each entry form. Noncompliance with this rule will be counted against an entry or disqualification.

DEADLINE: Area Qualifying entries must be postmarked by February 2, 2026.

For questions, please reach out to awards@tsswcb.texas.gov

GUIDELINES (continued):

- Entries must be postmarked **by February 2** each year unless this date falls on a Saturday, Sunday, or holiday. In this instance, entries must be postmarked on the next business day.
- When shipping entries to **ATSWCD, 1497 Country View Lane, Temple, TX 76504**
 - Please make sure to ship posters flat and do not fold
 - Send an email to awards.atswcd@gmail.com to notify them that the shipment is in the mail so they can keep an eye out for it
- Entries will be judged to select winners in each category. (A runner-up may be selected in any category.) First, second, and third place winners will be named in the poster and essay contests.
- Area winners in the poster and essay contest; Outstanding Conservation District; Conservation Farmer; Conservation Rancher; Friend of Conservation; Wildlife Conservationist and Conservation Teacher will be judged to select a state winner. The state winners will each be presented a plaque at the Annual State Meeting of Soil and Water Conservation District Directors.
- Winners of the poster and essay contest in each area are required to have at least one digital photograph of the individual whose work is to be recognized.
- After winners are selected, TSSWCB will distribute a press release acknowledging the state winners.
- **Each district with a winning entry is responsible for costs associated with transporting and housing state winners to the awards banquet at the Annual State Meeting in October. Complimentary tickets to the banquet will be provided to the winners and spouse/family (there is a limit to the number of tickets an individual can receive.)**
- The ATSWCD will provide some financial support for SWCDs with State Winners. Districts can receive up to \$500 in reimbursable expenses to assist with travel expenses. The ATSWCD will work directly with winning SWCDs on allowable expenses and reimbursement process.
- A Soil and Water Conservation District that has been selected as a first place winner within the Outstanding Soil and Water Conservation District in the immediate past two years (2024, 2025) shall not be considered in that same category. There is no time limit on all other categories.
- SWCD directors, Texas State Soil and Water Conservation Board members, Texas State Soil and Water Conservation Board employees, and dependent members of the above mentioned individuals' households are **NOT** eligible to compete in the Texas Conservation Awards Program. (Exception: Children of the above-mentioned individuals may compete in the poster and essay contests.)

DEADLINE: Area Qualifying entries must be postmarked by February 2, 2026.

For questions, please reach out to awards@tsswcb.texas.gov

ADMINISTRATION:

- The Texas State Soil and Water Conservation Board employees will be responsible for assisting districts with information and guidelines and concerning the Texas Conservation Awards Program.
- Staff will evaluate the anticipated budget to determine if there is a need for an increase in quota for the continuation of the awards program.
- The operating budget shall consider only the cost of awards, printing and postage. (Each awards banquet and related expenses should be self-sustaining.)
- Judging of all entries shall be the responsibility of the Texas State Soil and Water Conservation Board Judging Committee. The committee is comprised of outside groups or individuals with a background in agriculture, soil and water conservation. Judging Criteria should be based upon the quality of the entry and conservation promotion. If there is an instance of entries of equal quality, judges should consider the format and observance of instructions in preparing the entry. Score sheets can be found on pages 20-26.
- An area may select a runner-up in each category. This selection should be based upon the quality of entries in each individual category.
- Outside groups, firms, or individuals are welcome to assist in sponsoring and assisting with promotion of the Texas Conservation Awards Program.
- Funds received to carry out the area awards program shall be deposited into an account separate from any other funds.
- The management of all funds relating to the awards program will be the responsibility of the Executive Director of the Texas State Soil and Water Conservation Board and the Executive Director of the Association of Texas Soil and Water Conservation Districts.

DEADLINE: Area Qualifying entries must be postmarked by February 2, 2026.

For questions, please reach out to awards@tsswcb.texas.gov

CATEGORIES:

1. ESSAY CONTEST (Two Age Divisions—Junior: 13 and under, and Senior: 14 to 18 years old)

The essays must address the following 2026 topic of ***the title “Soil. Where It All Begins” must be included in the essay and the essay should address the topic.*** The essay is to be submitted to local soil and water conservation districts for judging. Each local district will judge the entries and submit two essays in each age division to the Area Judging Committee for competition on the area level. Plaques will be awarded to 1st, 2nd, and 3rd place winners on the area level and state winners will be selected from the area winners. This contest is open to students 18 years and under, and who are considered eligible under Texas University Interscholastic League eligibility requirements.

2. POSTER CONTEST

Posters should be drawn by hand and address the following subject for 2026 is ***“Soil. Where It All Begins.” The title must be included on the poster.*** Posters shall be submitted to local soil and water conservation districts for local judging. Each local district will judge the entries and submit two posters for each age division to the Area Judging Committee for competition on the area level. Poster age divisions are: Kindergarten-2nd Grade and 3rd-6th Grade. Plaques will be awarded to 1st, 2nd and 3rd place winners of each age division on the area level and state winners will be selected from the area winners. This contest is open to students who are 12 years old and under and who are considered eligible under Texas University Interscholastic League eligibility requirements.

3. OUTSTANDING CONSERVATION DISTRICT

Awarded to a soil and water conservation district in each of the five areas. As a State winner of this category, a video featuring the Outstanding Soil and Water Conservation District will be developed and shared at the Awards Luncheon during the Annual State Meeting of Soil and Water Conservation District Directors.

4. CONSERVATION RANCHER

Awarded to the outstanding conservation rancher in each area. *They MAY be a resident of the district or an absentee rancher.* They **MUST** perform ranching activities within the district and be a cooperator with the district from which the entry was submitted. The rancher may have other business or professional interests. If the ranch has a district approved Water Quality Management Plan and has incorporated water quality into their ranching activities, it is suggested that the entry demonstrate how the nominee has implemented the plan. As a State winner of this category, a video featuring the Outstanding Conservation Rancher will be developed and shared at the Awards Luncheon during the Annual State Meeting of Soil and Water Conservation District Directors.

5. CONSERVATION FARMER

Awarded to the outstanding conservation farmer in each area. *They MAY be a resident of the district or an absentee farmer.* They **MUST** perform farming activities within the district and be a cooperator with the district from which the entry was submitted. The farmer may have other business or professional interests. If the farm has a district approved Water Quality Management Plan and has incorporated water quality into their ranching activities, it is suggested that the entry demonstrate how the nominee has implemented the plan. As a State

winner of this category, a video featuring the Outstanding Conservation Farmer will be developed and shared at the Awards Luncheon during the Annual State Meeting.

6. FRIEND OF CONSERVATION

Awarded to an outstanding individual in the district who has rendered the most unselfish conservation service in each area. Any of the following may be considered and are eligible under this category. Representatives of the news media (radio, television, newspaper, magazines, etc.); local civic or community organizations; Chambers of Commerce; local units of government; business/professional individuals that provide support to the district and local conservation efforts. SWCD employees or technicians *CANNOT* compete in this category. This award is not for individual conservation practices. As a State winner of this category, a video featuring the Friend of Conservation will be developed and shared at the Awards Luncheon during the Annual State Meeting of Soil and Water Conservation District Directors.

7. CONSERVATION TEACHER

Awarded to the outstanding teacher of conservation in schools in each area. Active teachers of all grade levels are eligible for this award. This includes public or private schools, Junior Colleges, Technical Schools and Universities in Texas. As a State winner of this category, a video featuring the Outstanding Conservation Teacher will be developed and shared at the Awards Luncheon during the Annual State Meeting of Soil and Water Conservation District Directors.

8. WILDLIFE CONSERVATIONIST

Awarded to the outstanding wildlife conservationist in each area. They **MUST** be a district cooperator who has incorporated wildlife conservation into their farming and ranching activities. They **MUST** perform wildlife related activities within the district and be a cooperator with the district from which the entry was submitted. The wildlife conservationist may have other business or professional interests. If the wildlife conservationist has a district approved Water Quality Management Plan and has incorporated water quality into their ranching activities, it is suggested that the entry demonstrate how the nominee has implemented the plan. As a State winner of this category, a video featuring the Wildlife Conservationist will be developed and shared at the Awards Luncheon during the Annual State Meeting of Soil and Water Conservation District Directors.

9. FORESTRY CONSERVATIONIST (Area IV only)

Awarded to the outstanding forestry conservationist for an outstanding farm forestry conservation program. They **MUST** be a district cooperator or an individual who has implemented conservation practices on their land. They **MUST** perform forestry related activities within the district and be a cooperator with the district from which the entry was submitted. The forest landowner may have other business or professional interests. If the forester has a district approved Water Quality Management Plan and has incorporated water quality into their ranching activities, it is suggested that the entry demonstrate how the nominee has implemented the plan.

2026 Texas Conservation Awards Program

Check List

- Summary Sheet is completed with a quorum of signatures and accompanies the entries from each SWCD.
- SWCD has paid quota for the Conservation Awards Program by February 2, 2026.
- Ensure entry form for Wildlife, Friend, Rancher, Farmer, Forestry, and Outstanding SWCD is filled out with the participant's correct information.
- Poster and Essay entries have the necessary requirements listed in the respective checklists on pages 11 and 12.
- Entry is in the:
 - Correct file format (Powerpoint with notes) on flashdrive
 - Has the allotted number of slides allowed (varies by category, please check the rules)
 - File is named using the SWCD's Name and type of entry
 - *Example: "Howard SWCD Conservation Teacher"*
- Entry on a flash drive, printed hard copy of entry, along with necessary paperwork, must be sent to the ATSWCD by February 2, 2026.
- Send entries to: ATSWCD, 1497 Country View Lane, Temple, Texas 76504 and postmarked by February 2, 2026.

Suggested Timeline for Preparing Awards Entries for Area Awards Program

- **January:** At SWCD meeting select candidates for Farmer, rancher, wildlife conservationist; decide if SWCD will be entered for award
- **February-May:** Depending on rainfall and crops, take pictures on candidate's place (land preparation, planting, livestock working,). Meet with candidates to see if they have pictures that can be used. Discuss their operation and take notes. If SWCD is being entered, take pictures at every SWCD event held.
- **June-October:** Take end of growing season pictures (baling, harvest, livestock) Select Teacher and Friend of Conservation candidates during this time. After school starts, make appointment with teacher for pictures. Also provide information to schools on poster and essay contest.
- **November-December:** Prepare narrative for photos of all awards categories being entered, and put together Powerpoint entries.
- **February 2:** Submit Awards for judging.

2026 Texas Conservation Awards Program

SUMMARY SHEET

*****This cover sheet must be included when submitting your awards application*****

Please use this form to summarize your district's entries. Indicate under each category entered if the entry is enclosed or mailed under separate cover.

SWCD Name & Number

Number of Entries

_____ OUTSTANDING CONSERVATION DISTRICT
_____ CONSERVATION RANCHER
_____ CONSERVATION FARMER
_____ JUNIOR ESSAY CONTEST
_____ SENIOR ESSAY CONTEST
_____ POSTER CONTEST DIVISION: KINDERGARTEN – 2ND GRADE
_____ POSTER CONTEST DIVISION: 3RD GRADE – 6TH GRADE
_____ FRIEND OF CONSERVATION
_____ CONSERVATION TEACHER
_____ WILDLIFE CONSERVATIONIST
_____ FORESTRY CONSERVATIONIST (AREA IV only)

*****This sheet requires a quorum of signatures from SWCD Directors. Through participating in the Conservation Awards Program at any level, SWCDs are required to provide financial support to the program by February 2, 2026. Each SWCD with a state winning entry is responsible for costs associated with transporting and housing state winners to the Awards Luncheon at the Annual State Meeting in October.*****

Chairman

Vice-Chairman

Secretary

Director

Director

For questions, please reach out to awards@tsswcb.texas.gov



Essay Contest

48th Texas Conservation Awards Program

THEME: *“Soil. Where It All Begins”*

Junior: Ages 13 and under — (Maximum of 300 words)

Senior: Ages 14 to 18 — (Maximum of 500 words)

Please visit the following website for additional resources, information will be listed under “Technical Resources” on the right side: www.tsswcb.texas.gov/programs/public-information-and-education. You may also contact your local soil and water conservation district for additional information.

Soil. Where It All Begins, celebrates the incredible power of soil to support life in all its forms. Soil is not just the ground we walk on. It is the starting point for healthy food, clean water, thriving habitats, and resilient communities. From backyard gardens to forests and city parks, everything begins with what is beneath our feet. Soil does a lot more than grow plants. It holds water, cycles nutrients, and provides homes for billions of living organisms that help keep nature in balance. It keeps roots in place, helps prevent flooding, and supports wildlife and people alike. The trees in our neighborhoods, the food on our tables, and the natural places we love all depend on healthy soils.

CHECKLIST:

- Entry is typed, subject matter of the essay follows the topic and is meets the maximum allotment of words (*stated above*) and includes the title *“Soil. Where It All Begins”*
- Entry includes cover sheet with the following items listed, if the following information is **not** included with the entry, **it is subject to disqualification**:
 - Age Division: either Junior or Senior
 - Participant’s Name
 - Participant’s Guardian Name
 - Participant’s Mailing Address and guardian’s phone number
 - Participant’s School
 - ****SWCD use only**: please include SWCD name & number**

PROCESS: The essay is to be submitted to local soil and water conservation districts for judging.

Locate your local district here: www.tsswcb.texas.gov/swcds/locatormap. Each local district will judge the entries and submit two essays in each age division to the Area Judging Committee for competition on the area level. Plaques will be awarded to 1st, 2nd, and 3rd place winners on the area level and state winners will be selected from the area winners. This contest is open to students 18 years and under, and who are considered eligible under Texas University Interscholastic League eligibility requirements.

JUDGING: Follow the topic set for the year, 2026 is *“Soil. Where It All Begins,”* Include soil and water conservation practices as they relate to the topic. Make the writing interesting to the reader and that the ideas are clear and easy for to follow. Finally, check the work for correct spelling, capitalization, punctuation, grammar, and sentences.

*****FOR SWCD USE ONLY, PLEASE FILL OUT BEFORE DISTRIBUTION TO SCHOOLS*****

Local District Deadline: _____

Please Return To: _____

For questions, please reach out to awards@tsswcb.texas.gov



Poster Contest

48th Texas Conservation Awards Program

THEME: “Soil. Where It All Begins”

Poster Age Divisions:
Kindergarten – 2nd Grade
3rd Grade – 6th Grade

For subject resources visit, information will be listed under “Technical Resources” on the right side www.tsswcb.texas.gov/programs/public-information-and-education. You may also contact your local soil and water conservation district for additional information.

Soil. Where It All Begins, celebrates the incredible power of soil to support life in all its forms. Soil is not just the ground we walk on. It is the starting point for healthy food, clean water, thriving habitats, and resilient communities. From backyard gardens to forests and city parks, everything begins with what is beneath our feet. Soil does a lot more than grow plants. It holds water, cycles nutrients, and provides homes for billions of living organisms that help keep nature in balance. It keeps roots in place, helps prevent flooding, and supports wildlife and people alike. The trees in our neighborhoods, the food on our tables, and the natural places we love all depend on healthy soils.

CHECKLIST:

- Entry meets the specifications:
 - Must include title of “***Soil. Where It All Begins***” and fit that theme
 - Poster size: 22” x 14” (which is a standard poster board, cut to half size)
 - The ENTIRE poster must be drawn by hand and does not readily smear, crack, or chip
 - The poster entry artwork should be flat
 - The use of stickers or gluing other materials/objects to the poster are not allowed
- The following information is legibly written on the back of the entry, if the following information is **not** included with the entry, **it is subject to disqualification**:
 - Age Division: either **Kindergarten-2nd Grade** or **3rd-6th Grade**
 - Participant’s Name
 - Participant’s Guardian Name
 - Participant’s Mailing Address and guardian’s phone number
 - Participant’s School
 - ****SWCD use only**: please include SWCD name & number**

PROCESS: The poster is to be submitted to local soil and water conservation districts for judging.

Locate your local district here: <https://www.tsswcb.texas.gov/swcds/locatormap>. Each local district will judge the entries and submit posters to the Area Judging Committee for competition on the area level for each of the age divisions. Plaques will be awarded to 1st, 2nd, and 3rd place winners on the area level and state winners will be selected from the area winners. This contest is open to students 12 years and under, and who are considered eligible under Texas University Interscholastic League eligibility requirements.

*****FOR SWCD USE ONLY, PLEASE FILL OUT BEFORE DISTRIBUTION TO SCHOOLS*****

Local District Deadline: _____

Please Return To: _____

For questions, please reach out to awards@tsswcb.texas.gov

Outstanding Conservation District

48th Annual Texas Conservation Awards Program

Sponsored by the
SOIL AND WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICTS OF TEXAS

Soil and Water Conservation District Name & Number

*Please provide a narrative in the notes section in Power Point of the soil and water conservation district's community involvement, innovative projects, public outreach programs, youth involvement, participation in area and state level programs, and district activities during the District's last fiscal year – Sept. 1 to Aug. 31. **Narrative will not be accepted if not included in Power Point. Please reference the score sheet on page 20 for further judging criteria.**

*Both a flash drive and a hard copy are required for each entry. An entry is limited to only 15 PowerPoint slides. State winners will be selected from the five area winners.

As evidence of our final approval and desire to submit this entry, we do hereby affix our signatures:

_____ Soil and Water Conservation District No. _____

in session this _____ day of _____, 2026.

Chairman

Vice-Chairman

Secretary

Director

Director

This cover sheet must be included when submitting your awards application

DEADLINE: Area Qualifying entries must be postmarked by February 2, 2026.

Conservation Rancher

48th Annual Texas Conservation Awards Program

Sponsored by the
SOIL AND WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICTS OF TEXAS

Soil and Water Conservation District Name & Number

Participant Name

Mailing Address of Participant

How Long Cooperating

Size of Ranch

Type of Ranch/Operation

Does the participant lease the land?

The Conservation Rancher **MUST** be a District Cooperator who has or is currently performing conservation work on his or her land. Also, the individual's promotion/support of soil and water conservation and the district program should be considered. *The rancher MAY be a resident of the soil and water conservation district or be an absentee rancher and may have other business or professional interests.*

Please provide a narrative in the notes section **in a Power Point presentation** of the Conservation Rancher's activities including: conservation practices, cooperation with local SWCD and community involvement. **The narrative will not be accepted if not included in Power Point.** This narrative is important to the judging process. **Please reference the score sheet on page 23 for further judging criteria.** If the nominee has a district approved conservation plan (WQMP, EQIP, Wildlife Management Plan, etc.) it is suggested that the entry reflect the plan and that the entry demonstrates how the nominee has successfully implemented the plan. A flash drive and a hard copy are required for each entry. An entry is limited to only 10 PowerPoint slides. Local winners, determined by the district, may be submitted for area competition. State winners will be selected from the five area winners.

*****This cover sheet must be included when submitting your awards application*****

DEADLINE: Area Qualifying entries must be postmarked by February 2, 2026.

For questions, please reach out to awards@tsswcb.texas.gov

Conservation Farmer

48th Annual Texas Conservation Awards Program

Sponsored by the
SOIL AND WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICTS OF TEXAS

Soil and Water Conservation District Name & Number

Participant Name

Mailing Address of Participant

Phone of Participant

Size of Farm

How Long Cooperating with SWCD

Type of Farm/Operation

Does the participant lease the land?

The Conservation Farmer **MUST** be a District Cooperator who has or is currently performing conservation work on his or her land. Also, the individual's promotion/support of soil and water conservation and the district program should be considered. *The Farmer MAY be a resident of the Soil and Water Conservation District or may be an absentee farmer and may have other business or professional interests.*

Please provide a narrative in the notes section in a **Power Point presentation** of the Conservation Farmer's activities including: conservation practices, cooperation with local SWCD and community involvement. **The narrative will not be accepted if not included in Power Point. Please reference the score sheet on page 21 for further judging criteria.** If the nominee has a district approved conservation plan (WQMP, EQIP, Wildlife Management Plan, etc.) it is suggested that the entry reflect the plan and that the entry demonstrates how the nominee has successfully implemented the plan. This narrative is important to the judging process. **A flash drive and a hard copy are required for each entry. An entry is limited to only 10 PowerPoint slides.**

*****This cover sheet must be included when submitting your awards application*****

DEADLINE: Area Qualifying entries must be postmarked by February 2, 2026.

For questions, please reach out to awards@tsswcb.texas.gov

Conservation Teacher

48th Annual Texas Conservation Awards Program
Sponsored by the
SOIL AND WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICTS OF TEXAS

Soil and Water Conservation District & District Number

Participant Name

Participant Mailing Address

Participant Phone Number

School Name

Grade Level and Teacher's Subject

GUIDELINES:

Teachers of all grade levels are eligible. Briefly describe the nominee's conservation teaching activities. Please include a summary of the nominee's approach to teaching conservation through their subject matter. Please use the following guidelines:

1. Must be actively teaching, please check page 7 for additional information.
2. Promotes conservation in the classroom.
 - Examples of the curriculum is taught and how the information presented.
3. Curriculum promotes agriculture, soil, and water conservation.
4. Assistance from the community and resource specialists (explain who and how.)
5. Use of "out of the classroom" activities.

Please provide a narrative **in the notes section of a Power Point presentation** of the teacher's conservation activities. This narrative is important to the judging process. **The narrative will not be accepted if not included in Power Point. Please reference the score sheet on page 24 for further judging criteria. A flash drive and a hard copy are required for each entry. An entry is limited to only 10 PowerPoint slides.** Local winners, determined by the district, may be submitted for area competition. State winners will be selected from the five area winners.

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Wildlife Conservationist

48th Annual Texas Conservation Awards Program

Sponsored by the
SOIL AND WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICTS OF TEXAS

Soil and Water Conservation District Name & Number

Participant Name

Mailing Address of Participant

Phone of Participant

Size of Farm/Ranch

Does the participant lease the land?

GUIDELINES:

The outstanding Wildlife Conservationist **MUST** be a district cooperator who, as part of their farming or ranching activities as well as soil and water conservation work has done an outstanding job by:

- Providing well-located and adequate amounts of:
 1. Food – such as native and/or seeded plants needed by wildlife during critical seasons.
 2. Cover – by planting or leaving cover as needed for habitat and protection of wildlife.
 3. Water – such as farm ponds, wells, seeps and springs, or by efficient soil and water conservation on their land.
- Implementing conservation practices
- Cooperating with local soil and water conservation district
- Fishpond management, if applicable
- If the nominee has a district approved conservation plan (WQMP, EQIP, Wildlife Management Plan, etc.) it is suggested that the entry reflect the plan and that the entry demonstrates how the nominee has successfully implemented the plan.

Please provide a narrative in the notes section of a **Power Point presentation** of the Wildlife Conservationist's activities. This narrative is important to the judging process. **The narrative will not be accepted if not included in Power Point.** Please reference the score sheet on page 25 for further judging criteria. **A flash drive and a hard copy are required for each entry. An entry is limited to only 10 PowerPoint slides.** Local winners, determined by the district, may be submitted for area competition. State winners will be selected from the five area winners.

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Friend of Conservation

48th Annual Texas Conservation Awards Program Sponsored by the SOIL AND WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICTS OF TEXAS

Conservation District Name & Number

Name of Nominee

Nominee's Mailing Address

Nominee's Phone Number

Type of Business/Organization

How long has the nominee cooperated with the Soil and Water Conservation District?

GUIDELINES:

This award honors individuals who demonstrate exceptional commitment and active involvement in advancing soil and water conservation through volunteer efforts. Recipients are those who consistently support and promote the mission of local SWCDs by collaborating with districts and community partners to strengthen conservation programs.

Key Qualifications:

- A demonstrated passion for conservation and a track record of meaningful volunteer contributions that directly benefit the goals and initiatives of a local SWCD.
- Active engagement in outreach, education, advocacy, or partnership activities that advance conservation efforts beyond their own property.
- Open to individuals from news media, civic or community groups, government entities, and business or professional sectors who work collaboratively with SWCDs to promote conservation within their communities.
- **Note:** SWCD employees or technicians are not eligible for this award.
- This award does **not** recognize conservation practices carried out solely on the nominee's personal land.

Please provide a **narrative in the notes section of a Power Point presentation** of the Conservation Friend's activities. **The narrative will not be accepted if not included in Power Point.** A narrative is important to the judging process. A flash drive and a hard copy are required for each entry. An entry is limited to only 10 PowerPoint slides. Local winners, determined by the district, may be submitted for area competition. State winners will be selected from the five area winners. **An entry is limited to only 10 PowerPoint slides.** Please reference the score sheet on page 22 for further judging criteria.

This cover sheet must be included when submitting your awards application

DEADLINE: Area Qualifying entries must be postmarked by February 2, 2026.

For questions, please reach out to awards@tsswcb.texas.gov

Forestry Conservationist

(Applies to Area IV Only)

48th Annual Texas Conservation Awards Program

Sponsored by the
SOIL AND WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICTS OF TEXAS

Soil and Water Conservation District Name & Number

Participant Name

Mailing Address of Participant

Phone of Participant

Size of Farm or Ranch

Total Acres in Woodland

The Forestry Conservationist **MUST** be a district cooperator who has implemented conservation work on his or her land and has done work for conservation and the district program. **Please reference the score sheet on page 26 for further judging criteria.**

Please provide a narrative in the notes section of Power Point presentation of the Forestry Conservationist's activities. **Narrative will not be accepted if not included in Power Point.** This narrative is important to the judging process. **A flash drive and a hard copy are required for each entry. An entry is limited to only 10 PowerPoint slides.**

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2026 Conservation District Score Sheet

48th Annual Texas Conservation Awards Program

Judge's Last Name: _____

Contestant's Area: _____

ITEM	POSSIBLE POINTS ALLOWED	POINTS GIVEN	COMMENTS
Involvement with the Community	10		
Innovative Projects	5		
Public Outreach Programs	10		
Youth Involvement	5		
Participation in Area and State Level Programs	10		
District Activities (<i>Fish, Tree and Seed Sales, etc.</i>)	5		
Quality of Presentation (<i>thorough narrative and quality photos</i>)	10		

Total Points: _____

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2026 Conservation Farmer Score Sheet

48th Annual Texas Conservation Awards Program

Judge's Last Name: _____

Contestant's Area: _____

ITEM	POSSIBLE POINTS ALLOWED	POINTS GIVEN	COMMENTS
Description of Cooperation with Local Soil and Water Conservation District	15		
Description of Conservation Practices	10		
Variety of Conservation Practices	10		
Community Outreach/Volunteer Efforts	5		
Quality of Presentation (<i>thorough narrative and quality photos</i>)	15		

Total Points: _____

2026 Friend of Conservation

Score Sheet

48th Annual Texas Conservation Awards Program

Judge's Last Name: _____

Contestant's Area: _____

ITEM	POSSIBLE POINTS ALLOWED	POINTS GIVEN	COMMENTS
Actively promotes conservation	20		
Cooperation with local Soil and Water Conservation District(s)	15		
Community Involvement/Volunteer Efforts	10		
Quality of Presentation (<i>thorough narrative and quality photos</i>)	10		

Total Points: _____

2026 Conservation Rancher Score Sheet

48th Annual Texas Conservation Awards Program

Judge's Last Name: _____

Contestant's Area: _____

ITEM	POSSIBLE POINTS ALLOWED	POINTS GIVEN	COMMENTS
Description of Cooperation with Local Soil and Water Conservation District	15		
Description of Conservation Practices	10		
Variety of Conservation Practices	10		
Community Outreach/Volunteer Efforts	5		
Quality of Presentation (<i>thorough narrative and quality photos</i>)	15		

Total Points: _____

2026 Conservation Teacher Score Sheet

48th Annual Texas Conservation Awards Program

Judge's Last Name: _____

Contestant's Area: _____

ITEM	POSSIBLE POINTS ALLOWED	POINTS GIVEN	COMMENTS
Cooperation with local Soil and Water Conservation District	15		
Promotes conservation in the classroom	10		
Curriculum focuses on agriculture, soil and water conservation	10		
Use of "out of classroom" activities	5		
Quality of Presentation (<i>thorough narrative and quality photos</i>)	10		

Total Points: _____

2026 Wildlife Conservationist
Score Sheet
48th Annual Texas Conservation Awards Program

Judge's Last Name: _____

Contestant's Area: _____

ITEM	POSSIBLE POINTS ALLOWED	POINTS GIVEN	COMMENTS
Description of Cooperation with Local Soil and Water Conservation District	15		
Description of Conservation Practices	10		
Variety of Conservation Practices	10		
Community Outreach/Volunteer Efforts	5		
Quality of Presentation (<i>thorough narrative and quality photos</i>)	10		

Total Points: _____

2026 Forestry Conservationist Score Sheet

48th Annual Texas Conservation Awards Program

Judge's Last Name: _____

Contestant's Area: _____

ITEM	POSSIBLE POINTS ALLOWED	POINTS GIVEN	COMMENTS
Description of Cooperation with Local Soil and Water Conservation District	15		
Variety of Conservation Practices	10		
Description of Conservation Practices	10		
Quality of Presentation <i>(thorough narrative and quality photos)</i>	10		

Total Points: _____