

## **2016 Conservation Awareness Speaking and Poster Contests**

The Dunn County Environmental Services Department-Land and Water Conservation Division held its annual Conservation and Environmental Awareness Speaking Contest on January 21 at the Dunn County Community Services building. This event provides an opportunity for students to speak about the importance of conservation, protection, and preservation of our natural resources and environmental quality.

Students choose their own topic to focus on and this year's students spoke about endangered species, energy use, water quality, and nonmetallic mining. Students were judged on the content, delivery, and style of their speech.

First place in the Elementary Division went to Amelia Zebro, daughter of Danielle and Jerry Zebro of Ridgeland, with her speech "What does Karner Blue Mean to You?" Second place went to McKensie Clementson, and third place was awarded to Samantha Bowers.

Trey Hovde, son of Trevor and Nancy Hovde of Colfax, took first place honors in the Junior Division with his speech "Pollution Ruining the Cheesehead State". Second place went to Aza Knaack for her speech "High Capacity Wells Decreasing Water". "Ethanol – Good and Bad" was the title of the speech that took third place for Edward Doerr.

Kayla Scholfield and Belinda Loew also presented their speeches in the Junior Division, with both focusing on frac sand mining. There were no competitors in the senior division this year.

Accompanying the speaking contest was a poster contest with the theme "We all Need Trees". The poster contest was open to students from kindergarten to twelfth grade and was divided into five age categories. Posters were evaluated on five criteria: conservation message, visual effectiveness, originality, universal appeal, and individual artwork.

Posters were submitted in three of the five categories from Colfax Public Schools. The winner in the Primary Division was Sam Ralph. In the Elementary Division, the winner was Cohen Martinson. Honors for first place went to Jeanette Hydukovich in the Middle Division.

First place finishers in both the speaking and the poster contests advanced to the West Central Area Land and Water Conservation Association Contest which took place in Eau Claire on February 10. Students from seven counties participated in the area contest. Top finishers from Dunn County were Trey Hovde, who finished in second place in the speaking contest's Junior Division, and Sam Ralph, whose poster placed third in his division.

Special thanks go out to Gail Olson of Prairie Farm Middle School, Lori Halpin of Colfax Middle School and Stephanie Ulcej of Colfax Elementary School who worked with students in preparation for the events.

The Dunn Environmental Education Steering Committee would like to thank all of the guest judges and volunteers that made these competitions a success. We are always looking to increase participation in youth programs, so please contact the Dunn County Land and Water Conservation Division at 715-231-6540 if you would like to find out about additional education opportunities.