



# Essay Contest

## 48<sup>th</sup> Texas Conservation Awards Program

**THEME: "Soil. Where It All Begins"**

**Deadline Friday, January 9, 2026**

**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](http://www.tsswcb.texas.gov/programs/public-information-and-education).

### CHECKLIST:

Entry is typed, subject matter of the essay follows the topic and 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
- Please include Kerr County SWCD #214

**PROCESS:** The essay is to be submitted to Kerr County SWCD #214 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 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup>, and 3<sup>rd</sup> 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.

**NOTE TO DISTRICTS:** It is required that at least **one quality, digital photograph** is provided of each winner for the awards banquet.

### "Local" Winners Will Receive:

**1<sup>st</sup> Place: \$100 cash    2<sup>nd</sup> Place: \$50 cash**

Return Entries to:

Kerr County Soil and Water Conservation District

2104 Memorial Blvd. Ste. 103

Kerrville, TX 78028

-or- email Missie Dreiss to pick up your 4-H or school's entries!

[missie@kerrcountyswcd.com](mailto:missie@kerrcountyswcd.com) ~ [www.kerrcountyswcd.com](http://www.kerrcountyswcd.com)