



% Minnehaha Conservation District,
2408 E Benson, Sioux Falls, SD 57104
Phone: (605) 330-4515 extension 3
Email: sewaterfest@gmail.com

Please join us at the
29th Annual Sioux Empire Water Festival

The 29th Annual Sioux Empire Water Festival will be a hybrid event held **March 8 and 9, 2022** on the campus of the University of Sioux Falls AND virtually. This exciting educational event is geared toward 4th grade students and their teachers. The festival features presentations, exhibits, and a Quiz Bowl all with **water** as the main theme. Students engage in hands-on activities on topics such as wetland habitats, wildlife, groundwater, health, safety, and aquatic life. The best thing of all, the festival is *free*; there is absolutely *NO CHARGE* to send your students to the event! If transportation costs are prohibiting your school from attending, please contact our office for potential transportation assistance.

Due to Covid-19 and the ripple effects it has been causing such as staffing and transportation shortages, the 2022 Sioux Empire Water Festival will be a hybrid event, meaning we will have a combination of live presentations at the USF Campus, and virtual presentations to be viewed in your classrooms as you did last year. We will need to implement the following changes:

- Until we see how many presenters are able to participate in person and Covid precautions are shaping up, participation for those classes who wish to attend the live event will be limited, based upon a first come, first served basis.
- Because the classrooms will need to be sanitized between presentations, we will need to have longer periods between each presentation. This means each class will see **four presentations rather than five**, with one presentation being the Exhibit Hall. Time between presentations will be lengthened to 15 minutes. Teachers and volunteers will be asked to help the presenter sanitize the classroom before the students enter.
- All **registered** classes will also be able to enjoy a virtual water festival, same as last year. The recorded presentations will again be available until the end of the school year. Whether attending live or virtually, you should register your class.
- We are hoping to get a few more recorded presentations this year.
- We will hold a virtual Quiz Bowl for the registered classes that would like to participate. Each class answers questions in an online quiz; you won't know which other schools are participating and there won't be individual teams as in the past. This is purely a class by class competition. Winning classes will be those with the most correct answers in the shortest amount of time. Gift certificates will be awarded to the winning teachers.

Schools from Minnehaha, McCook, Turner, Lincoln, Clay, and Union counties are welcome to attend. Please register online by **December 17, 2021** by going to this link: <https://tinyurl.com/SchoolRegistration2022>. If you do not submit the registration form by December 17, 2021, we will assume that your class will not be attending the festival this year, live or virtually.

We will email a registration confirmation to your school upon receipt of your registration. If you do not receive official notice by December 31, 2021, and you plan to attend the festival, please call our office % Minnehaha Conservation District at (605) 330-4515 extension 3, or email me at sewaterfest@gmail.com.

As you can imagine, we will be facing a few challenges for this year's water festival. We will strive to do our best and bring you a quality event. We ask for your flexibility in return. As always, I will try to keep you informed as much as possible. Please feel free to email me if you have any questions whatsoever and I'll do my best to answer them.

Please share this letter with any new 4th grade teachers in your school.

We look forward to your school's participation at the 2022 Sioux Empire Water Festival. Please plan to attend!

Thank you!

Sincerely,

Melanie Raine
SEWF School Arrangements and Scheduling Coordinator