



# FARMLAND INFORMATION CENTER

## NORM BERG COLLECTION

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CRAIG COX  
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, SOIL AND WATER CONSERVATION SOCIETY

I first met Norm Berg in the flesh in 1989, although I had heard of him much earlier. I had just come to Washington DC as a staff officer at the Board on Agriculture of the National Research Council. I was just beginning work on a major project looking at how to address agriculture's effect on soil and water quality and was trying to get my footing in my new world in DC. I spent the first week on the job asking people who I should talk to. The first name on everyone's list was Norm Berg.

Over the 18 years since I first met Norm he has always been there with wise counsel and advice as I moved from the Board on Agriculture, to the Senate Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry, to the U.S. Department of Agriculture, and now as Executive Director of the Soil and Water Conservation Society (SWCS). Norm has always been ready to talk, open the right doors, and most important, tell me when he thought I was wrong.

Norm is a Charter Member of the SWCS, but he is much more than that. Over the years I have come to see Norm as the epitome of the professionalism SWCS stands for. He is a dedicated, smart, tireless, and passionate conservationist. His life, his career, and his spirit point the way for the rest of us in the conservation profession. He reminds me every day that conservation is truly more than a job; it is, as Wendell Berry says, the "never-ending life work of our species."