

# 2025 Photo Contest Rules and Guidelines

Entries are being accepted for the 11th Annual SWCD Photo Contest! The contest is open to amateur photographers who reside in Hamilton County. Photographs will be showcased at our booth at the 2025 Hamilton County 4-H Fair. We will accept up to five photos per photographer.

We have a single category this year: **Home is Where the Habitat Is**, in honor of the National Poster and Photo Contest held by the National Association of Conservation Districts. Youth photo contest participants are encouraged to participate in the national contest as well.

Photographers will be separated into youth and adult categories. Winners will be chosen by a panel of judges, and a People's Choice Award will be chosen by social media interactions during the Hamilton County 4-H Fair. There will be a total of 3 winners. Winners in both age divisions and the winner of the People's Choice Award will each receive a \$50 prize.

**Photo and entry forms are due Monday June 30th, 2025 at Noon**

## Contest Rules

- Minor digital enhancements for cropping, red-eye removal, filters, and corrective functions are permitted. However, images that are significantly altered may be disqualified.
- Contestants may not add borders, frames, watermarks, dates, signatures, or copyrighted images to their photos.
- Previously published photos are not eligible.
- Use of AI is not permitted.

## Submission Process

- The photo contest is open to amateur photographers of all ages who reside in Hamilton County.
- Each participant may submit up to 5 photos.
- Participants may submit their entries through our online submission form on the Hamilton SWCD website.
- Each photo must be named.
- Photos must be submitted with an entry form and a photo release form **for each photo**. *Photos without an entry form and photo release form will not be considered*
- All submissions must be received by Monday June 30<sup>th</sup>, 2025 by Noon. Submissions received after this deadline will not be considered.

## File Requirements

Submissions must be in JPEG or PNG format with a high resolution (300 dpi or higher).

Each photo file must be named using the following format:

**First Initial\_Last Name\_Photo Name\_Youth or Adult\_Photo #**

**Example:** An adult named John Smith submits a photo called “Blue Jays” would be named:  
**J\_Smith\_BlueJays\_Adult\_1**

## Judging Criteria

- **Expression of theme:** The photo aligns with the theme “Home is Where the Habitat Is”?
- **Visual Appeal:** The photo is compelling, well composed, and high quality
- **Originality:** The photo is unique and captures the photographer’s unique perspective
- **Overall Artistic Impression:** All together, the photo is compelling and showcases the photographer’s perspective in a way that connects with the audience.

## Awards

One winner will be chosen per age division by a panel of judges. A People’s Choice Winner will be chosen by likes or other interactions on Facebook during the Hamilton County 4-H Fair.

Winners will receive a \$50 Cash Prize

## Additional Notes

- All entries become the property of Hamilton County Soil and Water. For a photo to be considered in the contest, it must be submitted with a signed photo release.
- The photographer retains rights and use of their photo.
- A signed photo release form must be submitted for any identifiable individuals featured in the photo contest submissions.

Questions? Contact us at (317) 773-2181 or email [soil.water@hamiltoncounty.in.gov](mailto:soil.water@hamiltoncounty.in.gov)