**RULES:**

* The Public Speaking Contest is open to any 6th – 12th grade student attending school (public, private, virtual, and/or home-school) in Florida; who have competed and placed first at their local County and Area contests. Only one contestant from each Area will advance to the state competition; if the 1st place winner is not able to attend the state competition then the offer will be passed down (in order) to each of the remaining Area winners.
* Contestants must register by submitting a completed registration form AND a typewritten copy of their speech, double-spaced on 8.5 x 11 inch white bond paper, with a one inch margin. Speech must be typed using a standard font no greater than a size 12 (suggested: Times New Roman, Arial, Trebuchet MS or Corbel).
* Speeches must be original, not previously used, and created by the contestant.
* Speeches must be a minimum of six (6) minutes; but not greater than, eight (8) minutes in length. Time under or over these requirements, respectively, will result in 2 points deducted for each 15 second increment or part thereof.
* Contests must NOT give their name or introduce themselves as part of their speech. During the course of the contest, contestants will be referred to as contestant 1, 2, 3, and 4.
* Contestants may use notes while speaking; but no form of audio or visual aids.
* Contestants are expected to dress in a professional manner; however, contestant may NOT wear attire that will identify them with any organization (i.e., FFA, 4-H, or school logos).
* A previous State First Place Winner may NOT compete again at the state contest.

Failure to abide by the rules or expectations as listed above will result in the contestant being disqualified. Changes to the winning rankings will result in moving the remaining rankings up a level (i.e., second will become first, third will become second, fourth will become third (if applicable). If contestant is disqualified awards distributed will be forfeited and returned to the Association of Florida Conservation Districts.

Prior to the oral presentation date, the Association of Florida Conservation Districts will have selected three (3) competent, impartial judges and a timekeeper. A standard score sheet will be used for all contestants. The judge's decisions will be final.

JUDGING CRITERIA:

* **Content:**

Relevance to the given topic 10%
Treatment (material used and accuracy of statements) 20%
Originality (subject matter and treatment) 20%

* **Composition:**

Organization, cohesiveness, grammar, and style 10%

* **Delivery:**

Voice (enunciation, modulation) 10%
Personal Appearance (neatness, posture) 10%
Communicative Expertise (sincerity ability to convey idea) 10%
Stage Presence (gestures, visual contact) 10%

For additional contest information or if you are interested in starting a Public Speaking Contest, in your District, at the local level, please contact your local Soil and Water Conservation District