The Clermont Conservation Quarterly

Autumn 2014

Our Mission:

“To promote the wise use of our natural resources through service and education”

JOIN US FOR OUR ANNUAL BANQUET!

Thursday, September 25, 2014—Pattison Park Lodge

Please help us celebrate another great year of conservation at our 71st Annual Meeting Banquet at Clermont County’s Pattison Park Lodge on September 25. The banquet will feature a catered dinner and entertainment provided by Jake Speed and the Freddies, a Cincinnati based, award winning American folk, bluegrass, and ragtime band. The itinerary for the event is still ongoing. Please check our website or find us on Facebook for updates.

Doors open at 5:45 p.m. with dinner at 6:30. Voting polls for SWCD Board Supervisor will remain open until 6:45 pm (see page 2 for candidate bios).

Dinner will be catered through CNE Schools, so your attendance will help support the local school district! In addition to the great food, you will also have the opportunity to enjoy a glass of wine or beer at this year’s event.

After dinner festivities include conservation awards and a brief district update. And don’t even think about leaving early or you may miss out on one of the many awesome door prizes.

See enclosed reservation form for banquet tickets ($12 for adults and $4 for children 12 and under), which must be purchased in advance. (See Registration Form on Page 6)

CLERMONT AND BROWN COUNTY NRCS FIELD OFFICES MERGE

The Clermont and Brown County Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) offices have recently merged. Field offices remain open in both counties. Three employees now servicing both counties include Lori Lenhart, District Conservationist; Larry Whitaker, Resource Conservationist; and Tara Fisher, Soil Conservation Technician. Office hours are 8:00 am – 4:30 pm. Feel free to call the Clermont County office ahead of a visit at 513-732-2181 x-3, since the office may not be staffed every day. Welcome Larry and Tara to Clermont County!
Candidates for SWCD Board of Supervisors

Dave Anspach

Dave Anspach grew up on the family farm in Owensville, where he and his wife Pam reside today. Dave’s family has always practiced conservation on the farm, and his father Ray was the District’s Outstanding Cooperator of the Year in 1977. Installed practices include a WASCOB, several drainage/ditching projects and utilizing no-till in their operation. About 100 acres are rotated in soybeans and corn on the 125 acre farm.

Dave has a B.S. degree in Business from Miami University, and worked for the Farm Credit Services Agency for 15 years, before serving as Clermont SWCD’s Administrator from 1990-97. During his tenure with the SWCD, Dave helped oversee the development of a full-time education program and helped coordinate the development of the Agricultural Center complex and movement of the District offices to the fairgrounds facility in 1995.

Dave has served on the Clermont County Park Board for 16 years, during which time he helped plan and direct the development of the new Chilo Lock #34 Museum and Visitor Center.

In 2006, Dave rejoined the Clermont SWCD family as a Board Supervisor. He is now completing his third 3-year term on the SWCD Board and currently serves as Board president. Additionally, Dave serves as the Area IV Director for the Ohio Federation of Soil & Water Conservation Districts. Dave states that he would like to continue to use his conservation background and experience to serve the community.

Becky Geiger

Becky Geiger and her husband own and live on a small farm in Wayne Township in Clermont County where they grow hay, vegetables, berries and tree fruit. They operate one high tunnel and one greenhouse. Various livestock resides at the farm as well. Becky has participated in the transition to organic program and the high tunnel program. She and her husband have operated several Farmers Markets in the past. In addition to the farm, Becky also operates a contracting business. She has one daughter who is completing her degree in Microbiology. Becky’s interests are in sustainable practices with common sense approaches.

Steve Phillips

Steve Phillips is a lifetime resident of Clermont County. He lives with his wife and family on their farm in Tate Township just south of Bethel. Steve attended the Ohio State University Agricultural Technical Institute in Wooster where he earned an associate’s degree in Agronomy. He has worked locally for Cargill for over 20 years. Steve and his family farm 130 acres raising cattle, and growing berries and tobacco. Steve has worked closely with the Clermont SWCD and NRCS staff to install numerous conservation practices on his land, including a spring development and solar watering device. Steve was the District’s Cooperator of the Year in 2008 and has served as a District Board Supervisor since 2009. Currently, Steve is serving as the Board’s Vice-President.

Board of Supervisors

Election Procedures

County residents and property owners attending our annual meeting this year will find the voting procedures for SWCD board members to be very similar to voting in the general election. Upon arrival at the annual meeting, attendees will immediately be directed to the election registration table where election officials will find your name in the voter registry. Voters will sign next to their name to verify their eligibility, be given a ballot and proceed to a nearby voting booth where they will mark their ballot and deposit it in the ballot box. Meeting attendance is not required if voting only.

We will be electing two (2) board members to a 3 year term commencing January 1, 2015. County residents and landowners have an additional option for voting for SWCD board members if they cannot attend the Annual Meeting. Residents may mail enclosed request form, stop by the District office to request an absentee ballot or cast their vote at the District Office beginning September 4th through 4:00 pm September 18th, 2014. Absentee ballot requests must be received by the District Office by 4pm on September 11, 2014.

There are special requirements for non-resident landowners and corporation election procedures. A notarized affidavit must be on file prior to absentee ballot request at our office before the September 11th deadline. For more election and affidavit information call us at 513-732-7075 ext. 2.
HELP OHIO'S HONEYBEES

Ohio farmers rely on bees to pollinate more than 70 crops, but 50 to 80 percent of the honeybees raised by Ohio’s registered beekeepers died in the winter of 2013-14. Researchers suggest a number of reasons for this phenomenon, including the loss of the flowering habitat bees need to strengthen and grow their colonies.

Farmers can create flowering habitat without taking a whole field out of crop production by planting borders around fields or along streams, planting flowering trees, or mixing flowering plants into pastures. NRCS recommends using flowering plants native to Ohio, such as pasture rose, Canadian milk vetch, slender bush-clover, and many others. To provide a continuous source of flower pollen and nectar, it’s best to use a seed mix containing flowers that bloom at different times throughout the growing season.

Certain pesticides, or pesticides applied improperly appear to contribute to the decline in honeybees so NRCS encourages limited or no use of pesticides on or near honeybee habitat. NRCS also encourages keeping bees hives, called apiaries, nearby. Ohio has 4,390 registered beekeepers with 7,199 apiaries across the State.

Please contact the Clermont NRCS office for technical assistance for planting pollinator habitat in your fields and additional programs available to assist with their establishment at 513-732-2181 ext. 3.

Cover Crop Seed For Gardens

Cover Crop Seeds available on a first come basis for those gardeners looking to plant winter crops on vegetable/flower gardens. All gardens benefit from the use of cover crops, or “green manures” planted at the end of the season. Tilling, weeding, harvesting and foot traffic tends to destroy soil structure. Planting cover crops is an easy way to revitalize the soil and help soil tilth during the off season.

1 lb. package $7.00

We are offering 1 lb. packages of 3 cover crop seed mixes for your garden; please see below for more information.

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<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Summer Mix</th>
<th>Fall Cover</th>
<th>Late Mix</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Size/Coverage</td>
<td>1#/250 sq ft.</td>
<td>1#/250 sq ft.</td>
<td>1#/250 sq ft.</td>
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<tr>
<td>% Legume</td>
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<tr>
<td>% Grass</td>
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<td>3</td>
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<td>7</td>
<td>4</td>
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<tr>
<td>C:N Ratio</td>
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<td>34:1</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tap Root</td>
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<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Winter Kill</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pollinators</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Plant Date</td>
<td>June</td>
<td>Aug-Sept</td>
<td>Aug-Oct</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Attention Residents: A view from above

Do you own property in Clermont County? Have you ever wondered about the history of the land or where that rumored barn used to be sited? Or even the estimated age of that large oak tree in the front yard?

Come by our office to examine the aerial photographs that we have on hand. These aerial flyovers are complete for the most recent years and historic hard copies of 1985, 1968, 1962, 1950, and even 1938 are available for your viewing. These photos are an excellent source when determining past activities and planning for the future management of your property.

Aerial view of Batavia in 1950
The Turning of a Pond

This summer has been challenging for many pond owners. Coming out of a long, hard winter in April and into the 90 degree temperatures in early June caused difficult algae management and stressed fish populations. Compounding the problem is the worries and nuisance of Hazardous Algae Blooms (HABs) most notably in Harsha Lake (East Fork Lake) and most recently in the Toledo area of Lake Erie. When fish start dying in the summer, many people first think of poisoning from agricultural operations, HABs/algae, or climate change. This brings about this article regarding “natural” fish kill and the environment in a summer pond.

Ponds much like ourselves age over time and become less efficient at maintaining optimal performance. As ponds age they become “sinks” for nutrients that find their way in, becoming trapped in the sediments and accumulating year after year. This causes changes to occur, the pond does things that it hasn't done before (often suddenly) and can be unpredictable as to when and if the occurrences returns. For example a large storm (or even a turtle) may disturb the pond bottom, releasing sediments and attached nutrients into the water column where they can then feed algae growth and cause an ugly bloom. Whether nutrients get used in plant growth or settle back to the bottom to become locked up within the sediment may determine if the blooms are a one time occurrence or will return again in the years to come. Simply killing algae may not rid them from your pond because algae decomposition releases nutrients which can then cause another bloom.

Many ponds in our area stratify during the summer months, resulting in water layers of differing temperatures and densities within the pond. Over time the temperature difference between these layers can become significant. Anyone who has walked into a pond or lake during the summer has noticed the depth where the water is much colder along the bottom. You have broken though the thermocline of the pond—the invisible layer that keeps the upper warm water from mixing with the lower cool water. Since the water at the bottom is deprived of the sun and atmosphere, it becomes cold and oxygen deprived. Whereas, the water on top receives sunlight to promote photosynthesis (oxygen production process) and is able to pull oxygen out of the atmosphere through wind action. This is a natural process that occurs every summer and ends during the fall when cooler temperatures allow the breakdown and mixing of the two layers.

This process can be a problem when the thermocline is broken during the high temperature months. This is typically caused by a cold rain, a strong wind/thunderstorm, or turning an aerator on after being idle for a time. When this occurs the top layer crashes though the oxygen deprived lower layer and causes sediment to be thrown up into the water column. Multiple things now occur: 1. The mixing of the layers deprives oxygen throughout the pond 2. Increased sediments give the water an organic color and smell 3. Increased nutrients from the bottom are released and could cause an algae bloom. Early signs of this are fish gulping for oxygen at the pond surface usually in the early morning (oxygen levels are lowest just before sunrise). This process is called a turnover and once started, is nearly impossible to stop. There are varying degrees of turnover from small oxygen loss, to complete fish kill within the pond in a short amount of time. Most turnovers affect certain sizes or species of fish depending on the severity of oxygen depletion.

When a fish kill does occur our first reaction is oftentimes “who” and not “what” caused this to occur. An agricultural or chemical fish kill will kill all fish sizes and species including other life forms as well. If you are seeing dead frogs, birds, or other life, this could be attributed to something other than lack of oxygen and should be further investigated. Algae/HABs are often difficult to differentiate and will not cause a fish kill. However, a strong rain can breakup and kill algae, causing decomposition which can remove oxygen from the water and cause fish loss.

Our initial reaction to blame others is often unwarranted, but if suspicious activities are suspected, investigate further. Although not entirely preventable, turnovers can be reduced with proper pond management, addition of aerators (preferably bottom aeration), and limiting chemical use when weather is hot. Many conditions must align to cause a turnover and as ponds age, these conditions are likely obtained if proper maintenance is lacking. Much like the way we take care of ourselves, our ponds must also be managed and cared for to perform properly.
Mark your Calendars for the Great East Fork River Canoe Adventure

Come join us for a naturalist guided canoe adventure down the East Fork of the Little Miami River to search for beaver, wood ducks, turtles, and other aquatic wildlife. We’ll make a brief stop on the new Wilson Nature Preserve inland before ending at Sycamore Park. After the trip, grab a kick net and help us collect aquatic insects to determine the quality of the water in the river. Participants will be given a brief safety demonstration before entering the water. If water levels are low, be prepared to pull your canoe through shallow rapids...you will get wet.

Saturday September 27, 2014
2 time slots for canoe trips:
9:30-11:30 am or 12:00 pm - 2:00 pm

Meet at Sycamore Park
*Pre-registration is required. Call 513-732-7075 to register before September 23rd.

Participants must sign a waiver prior to the program. (No children under the age of 4 in the canoes please).
Canoe Adventure program is co-hosted by the Clermont Soil and Water Conservation District, the Clermont County Park District and the Clermont County Office of Environmental Quality. The program is part of the Great Outdoor Weekend. Visit this website to learn more about Great Outdoor Weekend 2014.

http://www.greatoutdoorweekend.org/

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If your address is incorrect or you would like to be added/removed from our mailing list, please contact us at (513) 732-7075

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Calendar of Events

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Event</th>
<th>Date</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>SWCD Office Closed (Holiday)</td>
<td>Sept. 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SWCD Board Meeting</td>
<td>Sept. 10 - 5pm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SWCD Annual Meeting</td>
<td>Sept. 25 - 5:45pm</td>
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<tr>
<td>Great Outdoor Weekend</td>
<td>Sept. 27</td>
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<tr>
<td>SWCD Board Meeting</td>
<td>Oct. 8 - 5pm</td>
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<tr>
<td>SWCD Office Closed (Holiday)</td>
<td>Oct. 13</td>
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<tr>
<td>SWCD Office Closed (Holiday)</td>
<td>Nov. 11</td>
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<tr>
<td>SWCD Board Meeting</td>
<td>Nov. 12 - 5pm</td>
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<tr>
<td>SWCD Office Closed (Holiday)</td>
<td>Nov. 27</td>
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</tbody>
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All NRCS / SWCD programs and services are offered on a non-discriminatory basis without regard to race, color, national origin, gender, religion, age, disability, political beliefs, sexual orientation and marital or family status.
Request for Absentee Ballot

Clermont Soil & Water Conservation District

Please send an absentee ballot for the Clermont SWCD Supervisor Election that will be held at Pattison Park on Thursday, September 25, 2014.

*Please note non-resident landowners and corporations must have a notarized affidavit on file before requesting absentee ballot.

Name (print)____________________________________________________________________________________________________

Address/City/State/Zip (print)_____________________________________________________________________________________

*By signing this request, I confirm I am over 18 years of age and a resident of the county.

_____________________________________________  ____________________________
Signature  Date

***This form must arrive at our office by 4:00 pm September 11, 2014.

Request for Annual Meeting Tickets

September 25, 2014 Pattison Park, 2228 US 50, Owensville, OH

Name ________________________________  ______________________________________

Address  ____________________________________________________________

City ___________________________ State _____ Zip _________

No. Attending ________ Telephone No. ________________________________

Amount Enclosed $____________________

Tickets are $12.00 for adults, $4.00 for 12 and under. Please mail check and order form to

Clermont SWCD
P.O. Box 549
Owensville, OH 45160