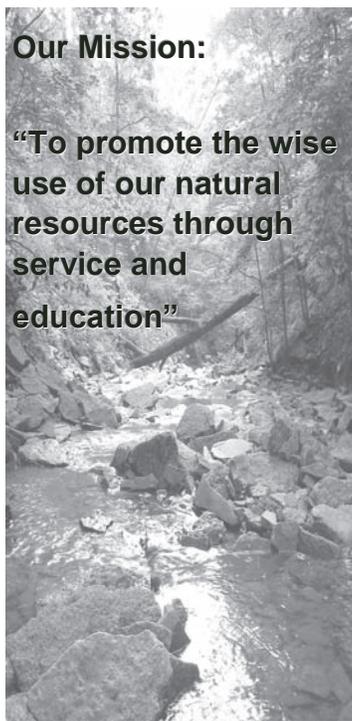


Summer 2010

**Our Mission:**

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



## The Middle East Fork Balanced Growth Project Kicks Off

The Clermont SWCD held two kick-off meetings in May to initiate planning for the Middle East Fork Balanced Growth Project. Earlier this year, Clermont SWCD and the Clermont County Planning Department were awarded a grant through the Ohio Water Resources Council to develop a Watershed Balanced Growth Plan for the Middle East Fork, a 56 mi<sup>2</sup> sub-watershed of the East Fork Little Miami River Watershed located in and around Batavia. The objective of the Middle East Fork Balanced Growth Project is to help the Middle East Fork communities develop a locally-driven watershed land use plan that supports economic development and conservation of important natural resources.

A Watershed Planning Partnership has been formed to oversee the planning and implementation of the Middle East Fork Balanced Growth Plan. The Partnership includes representatives from each Township/Village in the planning area, along with other key stakeholders representing public agencies and private organizations and interests. Selected members of the Partnership are also serving as members of the Technical Committee, which is charged with analyzing data/information and developing implementation tools/strategies.

(Continued on Page 5)

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**NATURAL RESOURCES CONSERVATION SERVICE**

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- Paul Berringer
- Judy Krebs
- Susie Steffensen
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- Jacob Hahn

## Rain Barrels & Compost Bins Still Available!

The Clermont SWCD has a limited supply of plastic rain barrels and compost bins in stock. The rain barrels sell for \$80 (actual retail price is \$120) and the compost bins are \$45. The 60 gallon terra cotta colored barrels come with hose hookup and nylon plugs required for simple operation. Rain barrels are great for storing rainwater runoff to irrigate your home garden or landscaping. They also lessen the stress put on local rivers and streams by capturing rooftop runoff.



You can purchase yours today by visiting our office on the Clermont County Fairgrounds. We accept cash or check; for more information, call 732-7075.

**For those of you who have already purchased a rain barrel, use Armor All Protectant® or an equivalent UV protectant to help maintain barrel color as recommended by the manufacturer.**

## **SWCD and Little Miami Inc. Rescue O'Bannon Creek Streambank, Homes**

A call from worried homeowners along O'Bannon Creek in 2006 left District staff scratching their heads for ideas. A site visit revealed an alarming rate of erosion, threatening property, homes and water quality in this stretch of the stream.

The District identified several causes for the erosion including increased urbanization and runoff in the O'Bannon Creek watershed. Homes were also



*Eroding Streambank Behind O'Bannon  
Meadows Subdivision*

built too close to the stream, and stormwater from roofs and sump pumps was being piped to the top of the steep, already unstable streambank.

The additional water added to the weight of the bank and resulted in a series of landslides wherever a drain pipe emerged from the bank.

The District sought out Little Miami Inc. (LMI), owners of the narrow stretch of land along O'Bannon Creek, known as Woliver Preserve, to discuss stabilization and restoration ideas. The parties worked for nearly 2 years seeking recommendations and cost estimates on various options. But in the end, the \$350,000 price tag made any project seem unrealistic.

As homeowners fears heightened, a new product and approach to stream stabilization emerged. Motz Enterprises, makers of an erosion control matting called "flex-a-mat," had begun using the product to control erosion along small streams. Intrigued by the product, Clermont SWCD and LMI approached owner Jim Motz for his recommendations on the troublesome site.

Motz was eager to demonstrate his product on a larger stream and worked with the District to

engineer a design plan and cost proposal that was affordable. Using \$60,000 in funding LMI received via Ohio EPA from the American Restoration and Recovery Act, the project became reality in the fall



*Project Site Post Construction—May,  
2010*

of 2009. The site was planted heavily this spring with native trees and shrubs, which will naturalize the streambank and reinforce the

flex-a-mat. The District, LMI, and Motz Enterprises

will be monitoring and maintaining the project site closely in coming years to insure its continued success.

## **A Soggy, but Successful East Fork River Sweep!**

The early morning storms and cloudy skies weren't enough to deter dedicated volunteers from giving the East Fork Watershed a proper spring cleaning on April 24. Over 150 volunteers braved the weather to clean 6 miles of river bank along the East Fork Little Miami River and 5 miles of shoreline at East Fork State Park and Stonelick State Park. River Sweepers walked the banks and paddled in canoes to collect 123 bags of trash and large items including televisions, propane tanks, large metal drums, guardrail, a mailbox, scrap metal, among other various items and debris.

Many local agencies, organizations, and businesses provided support for the event. We would like to thank Duke Energy, Little Miami River Inc., Buckeye United Fly Fishers, Kroger, Sam's Club, and the Valley View Foundation for their support. Many thanks also go to the Clermont Office of Environmental Quality, Clermont Stormwater

(Continued on Page 6)

## Stormwater-friendly Lawns

The majority of Clermont County homeowners have lawns in their landscaping and many of us go to great lengths to achieve healthy, green lawns. Because our homes and lawns are linked to local streams and lakes through stormwater runoff, it is important to be aware of a few simple steps we can take to improve our lawns, while also improving the water quality in our local streams.

Lawns naturally provide many environmental benefits, the most significant being the stabilization of soil against water and wind erosion. Lawns, along with trees and shrubs, also help to moderate high summer temperatures with shading and filter the air by trapping dirt, particulate matter and carbon dioxide. Noise pollution can be reduced by lawns and landscaping features as they absorb and deflect sounds, and lawns also add aesthetic appeal around the home.

In spite of all the natural benefits lawns provide, there are some lawn care practices, such as excessive fertilizer use, that can adversely impact local streams. When too much fertilizer is applied, the excess chemicals are washed into storm drains and streams during rain events. The chemical of prime concern is phosphorus, because it can stimulate algal growth in streams and lakes. The overabundance of algae in streams and lakes depletes oxygen levels in the water, which harms fish and aquatic bugs.

In many communities, phosphorus has become so problematic that local governments have instituted ordinances that partially or completely ban the application of lawn fertilizers that contain phosphorus. In 2006, Ann Arbor, Michigan adopted such an ordinance to reduce phosphorus levels in the Huron River. Researchers from the University of Michigan studied the effectiveness of the ordinance and detected an average 28% decrease in phosphorus levels in the river after the ordinance took effect. Communities across Michigan and elsewhere are taking notice of these results.



Phosphorus bans may not be the right solution for every community. In fact, there are many simple steps homeowners can take to help reduce the impact of lawn fertilizers. For example, soil testing can determine the nutrient requirements for your lawn and can prevent the excessive application of fertilizers. Hamilton Soil & Water Conservation District offers homeowner soil testing kits and the majority of results show that most soils have adequate phosphorus content and don't require additional fertilizer. In Clermont County, the Ohio State University Extension office offers soil testing for a nominal fee.

If you need to fertilize, try a few stormwater-friendly alternatives, such as a low-phosphorus or zero-phosphorus fertilizers. You could also fertilize with mulched grass clippings or compost, which will add the nutrients needed without posing a water quality risk. It is also important for homeowners not to apply fertilizers before a rain event. Keeping fertilizers and other chemicals away from streams, ditches, and storm drains will reduce the chances of chemicals washing into nearby streams. Also, try not to over water your lawn and always follow the directions for chemical applications.

Healthy lawns play a critical role in the environment and as the spring and summer seasons approach, it is important to keep in mind the various lawn care maintenance tips that will not only keep our lawns looking green and lush, but will also keep harmful chemicals out of streams and lakes. If you're interested in learning more about stormwater-friendly lawn care maintenance, please visit the Clermont Stormwater Management Department's website at: [www.clermontstorm.net](http://www.clermontstorm.net).

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## Silent Auction Items Wanted!

The District will be hosting a silent auction to benefit conservation at it's 2010 Annual Banquet to be held in October at the Fairgrounds. If you have something of value that you would like to donate to the cause (new or slightly used but in new condition) please call the District office at 732-7075. Previous auction items include framed artwork, rain barrel, compost bin, horseback riding lessons, and fly fishing lessons. Your support is greatly appreciated!

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# Ticks are Out and About in Clermont County

Submitted by Dan Meakin, DVM

All Creatures Animal Hospital, Amelia

(Full Article to be posted to SWCD website)

Ticks have already been collected at All Creatures Animal Hospital. They are common skin parasites that feed on the blood of their hosts. Ticks are attracted to motion (like dogs), warm temperatures from body heat, and the carbon dioxide exhaled by mammals, which is why they are attracted to such hosts as dogs, cats, rodents, rabbits, cattle, small mammals, etc. The bite itself is not usually painful, but the parasite can transmit diseases and cause tick paralysis, which is why tick control is so important. (Removing the ticks leads to rapid improvement of the paralysis.) It takes several hours for an attached tick to transmit disease, so owners can usually prevent disease transmission to their pets by following a regular schedule to look for and remove ticks from their pets.

## **Environmental Control**

Treating the yard and outdoor kennel area, if any, is an important tool in the arsenal against ticks. There are products containing fenvalerate, that can be used to spray the outdoor area. Fenvalerate is not harmful to the environment. During prime tick months in the summer, spraying may be necessary every 1 to 2 weeks.

If ticks are indoors, flea and tick foggers, sprays, or powders can be used. Inside, ticks typically crawl (they don't jump) up and may be in cracks around windows and doors. A one-foot barrier of insecticide, where the carpeting and wall meet, can help with tick control.

## **Prevent Ticks from Attaching**

If your pet goes outside regularly, you can use some type of residual insecticide. Frontline (fipronil) is a liquid applied to the skin between a dog's shoulders that discourages ticks from staying or implanting. Revolution (selamectin) is labeled for one kind of tick. Promeris is strong flea and tick repellent available just from veterinarians. A permethrin spray can be used on dogs (but not in cats, for whom it can be fatal) as a tick repellent and killer. All Creatures carries Frontline, Revolution and Promeris at both locations.

If you use a liquid spray treatment, cats and skittish dogs typically prefer a pump bottle because of the noise from aerosol cans. Shampoos are useful only for ticks that are already on your pet. Preventic collars, available at vets, are also very effective at controlling and preventing attachment of ticks. Like Frontline, Promeris or Preventic collars cannot keep all ticks off your pet, but it discourages ticks from implanting or staying on. The collar might be somewhat more water resistant than a residual insecticide, so if your dog likes to swim, the collar might be a better choice. Flea combs can be used to help remove ticks. Wash your pet's bed frequently.

Some people use a topical spray, but don't realize they should not use more than one insecticide or repellent. Doubling the amount of anti-tick product, or using two at once, may cause toxicity problems. DEET, found in many over-the-counter insecticides, is toxic to pets. Any spray insecticide labeled for use on clothing should not be sprayed directly on pets.

## **Find and Remove the Ticks**

The best way to find ticks on your pet is to run your hands over the whole body. Check for ticks every time your pet comes back from an area you know is inhabited by ticks. Ticks attach most frequently around the pet's head, ears, neck, and feet, but are by no means restricted to those areas.

The safest way to remove a tick is to use rubbing alcohol and a pair of tweezers. Dab rubbing alcohol on the tick, and then use the tweezers to take hold of the tick as close to the dog's skin as you can; pull slowly and steadily. Try not to leave the tick's head embedded in the dog's skin. Don't squeeze the tick

because it might inject some disease-causing organisms, such as bacteria, viruses, protozoa, or other agents, into the animal during the process. Risk of disease transmission to you, while removing ticks, is low but you should wear gloves if you wish to be perfectly safe. Do not apply hot matches, petroleum jelly, turpentine, nail polish, or just rubbing alcohol alone (the tick must be pulled out after application of alcohol) because these methods do not remove the ticks and they are not safe for your pet.



Once you have removed a live tick, don't dispose of it until you have killed it. Put the tick in alcohol or insecticide to kill it.

## **Watch for Infection and Diseases**

After you pull a tick off, there will be a local area of inflammation that could look red, crusty, or scabby. The tick's attachment causes irritation. The site can get infected; if the pet is scratching at it, it is more apt to get infected. A mild antibiotic, such as over-the-counter triple antibiotic ointment can help, but usually is not necessary. The inflammation should go down within a week. If it stays crusty and inflamed longer than a week, it might have become infected.

Ticks can transmit diseases to pets and humans that the ticks contract from a previous host. Ticks can parasitize many different mammal species, birds, and reptiles. Lyme disease is one that most people have heard about, but ehrlichiosis is a possibility; it is a rickettsial disease, and its progression from an acute to a chronic stage can be prevented by early treatment. Babesiosis causes red blood cell destruction and anemia. Rocky Mountain spotted fever is the most prevalent rickettsial disease in humans and in Clermont County.

Although ticks can transmit diseases, they are usually nothing more than a nuisance. The best approach is to prevent them from embedding, and once embedded, to remove them quickly. As long as you stay on top of the situation, your pets should cruise right through the tick season with no problems.

## **Clermont County Farm Bureau**



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## CNE High School Students Compete in Area 4 Envirothon

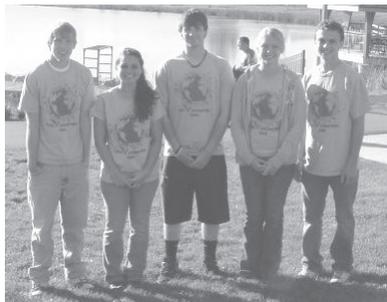
Clermont Northeastern (CNE) high school students recently tested their knowledge about the environment and environmental issues against 68 other schools in Southwestern Ohio. Two five member teams competed at the Voices of America Park in Butler County.

The Ohio Envirothon is a competitive, academic, outdoor team event for high school students which tests their knowledge in five areas; aquatic ecology, current environmental issues, forestry, soils and wildlife. The event is designed to stimulate and reinforce the students interest in environment and our natural resources and encourages cooperative decision making, team building and problem solving.

This years environmental issue was "Protection of Groundwater", covering may different aspects from land-use planning, drinking water protection, monitoring, and decision making issues. Each year the subject topic changes and state winners can compete nationally at the Canon Envirothon.

This year was a great learning experience, given this was the first competition for all team members and instructors. Students were excited about the opportunity and are eager to compete in next years competition. Ohio Soil and Water Districts and ODNr sponsor and administer this contest in Ohio. Congratulations to both teams at CNE!

Team #1 (from left to right) Greg Warman, Cydney Hill, Troy Miller, Sam Strotman, and Zach Miller



Team #2 (from left to right) Kylie Sumner, Jessica Irvin, Maria Hill, Ashley Gilkerson, and Dylan Reynolds

## Summer Pond Clinic Being Offered in August

The Clermont SWCD will be offering a Pond Clinic on **Tuesday August 10, 2010 at 5:30 pm at the Washington Township Park off SR 756 near Moscow.** This will be an outdoor event in a shelter house overlooking the scenic park lake.



This free event will contain information on pond maintenance, weed control, aeration, fish stocking, and any other items that you bring to discuss.

Please contact our office to register for this event at (513)732-7075.



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(Continued from page 1)

The planning process will take place over the next 18 months. During the summer and early fall of this year, the Partnership will organize public meetings to present the goals of the Balanced Growth project and provide an opportunity for additional stakeholders in the planning area to offer their comments/opinions. The Partnership recognizes that public involvement is critical to the success of this project and we will make every effort to provide opportunities for the public to be involved in the planning process.

Updated information will be posted to the Clermont SWCD website. Please contact our office if you have additional questions or comments.

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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(Continued from Page 2)

Management Department, Clermont Water Resources Department, ODNR State Parks, ODNR Division of Watercraft, ODNR Scenic Rivers Program, Clermont Park District, the Harsha Lake Army Corps of Engineers, and the Clermont County Ohio State University Extension Office. We would also like to thank the Riverside Coffee Mill, the Meguire Family and Mr. Mark Birkle for their assistance.

### Calendar of Events

SWCD Office Closed (Holiday)	July 5
SWCD Board Meeting	July 7 –6pm
Clermont County Fair	July 25-31
Summer Pond Clinic	August 10-5:30
SWCD Board Meeting	August 11 –6pm
SWCD Office Closed (Holiday)	Sept. 6

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