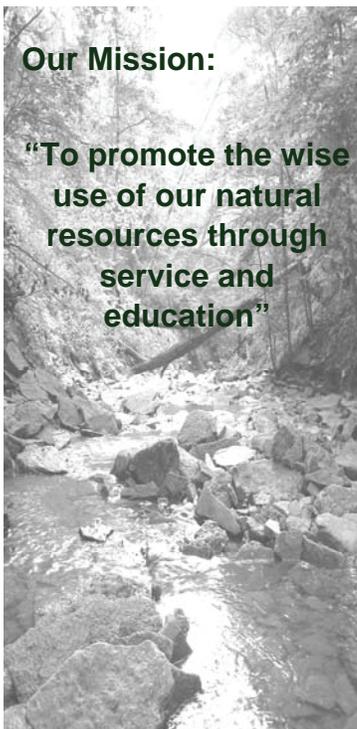


Summer 2012

Our Mission:

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



Harmful Algal Blooms

By Becky McClatchey, Watershed Coordinator

Over the last 50 years, the amount of nitrogen (N) and phosphorus (P) pollution entering our nation’s waters has escalated significantly. This type of pollution, referred to as nutrient pollution, now affects 30% of U.S. streams. When excess nutrients enter streams and lakes, increases in N and P concentrations may trigger algal blooms.

Algae are a natural component of the aquatic food chain and are typically not harmful to people. However, some algal species may cause harm through the production of toxins. Harmful algal blooms (HABs) can cause illness or irritation – sometimes even death – in pets, livestock, and humans. Most HABs are caused by planktonic bacteria called cyanobacteria, which are commonly known as “blue-green algae.” Cyanobacteria often float to form scums on or near the surface, forming colonies that look like bright green paint. Not all algal blooms are HABs and cyanobacteria should not be confused with small harm-

(Harmful Algal Blooms continued on page 3)



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Asian Longhorn Beetle EA Available

The much anticipated Environmental Assessment (EA) is now available for public review regarding environmental findings and future alternatives to manage the infestation in Tate/Monroe Townships. Individuals can access the document through the following address http://www.aphis.usda.gov/plant_health/ea/alb.shtml. A copy can also be obtained through the Ohio ALB Cooperative Eradication Program Office at the following address: 1761-A State Route 125, Amelia, OH 45102. Anyone wishing to comment on the document should send their remarks to the address of Dr. Reardon by **July 9, 2012**. Any comments received will be considered and may result in changes to the proposed activities. Once all comments are received and considered, a determination of the environmental impacts regarding proposed eradication activities will be made available at the website listed above.

While the District has no authority in the eradication effort, it has the authority and responsibility to assist landowners with all efforts relative to the conservation and wise use of local natural resources. The District supports the immediate removal of all ALB infested trees, the USDA Animal & Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) and Ohio Dept. of Agriculture (ODA) action currently underway. Currently Clermont SWCD is reviewing this document and preparing to submit comments. Comments are not limited to residents within the quarantine zone.

Balanced Growth

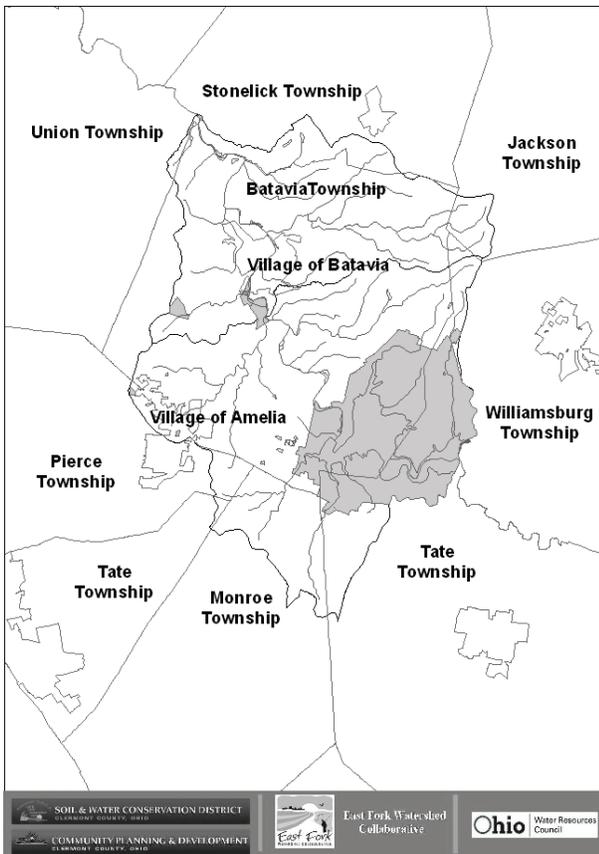
In March 2012, the Ohio Water Resources Council, along with state partnering agencies, unanimously approved endorsement of the Middle East Fork Watershed Balanced Growth Plan. The Middle East Fork Watershed Planning Partnership (WPP) worked together over a two-year period to develop the Plan to identify priority areas for development and conservation. The Plan includes recommendations for implementation and examples of Best Local Land Use Practices, such as Conservation Development. Implementation is voluntary for each jurisdiction in the planning area.

To be considered for State endorsement, the Plan was required to achieve local endorsement by at least 75% of the jurisdictions in the planning area, representing 75% of the watershed population and 75% of the watershed land area. The Middle East Fork Plan was endorsed by 9 of the 11 jurisdictions, representing 81% of the number of watershed communities, 97% of the population and 93% of the land area.

The areas selected as Priority Development Areas and Priority Conservation Areas will now serve as direction to the agencies of the State of Ohio. The Plan offers the opportunity for state and local collaboration to encourage well planned development while conserving critical areas across the watershed.

A copy of the Middle East Fork Balanced Growth Plan can be found at: http://ftp.clermontcountyohio.gov/SoilAndWater/BG_MEF_Draft.pdf

Balanced Growth: Middle East Fork Watershed



Calendar of Events

SWCD Office Closed (Holiday)	July 4
SWCD Board Meeting	July 11 –6pm
Clermont County Fair	July 23-29
SWCD Board Meeting	August 8 –6pm
SWCD Office Closed (Holiday)	Sept. 3

Litter Clean-up a Local Success

Over 800 volunteers helped Mother Nature with a big spring cleaning on Saturday, April 28, 2012, as part of the annual East Fork River Sweep and Clermont Clean and Green Clean-Up. Volunteers braved the rain and wind to remove litter from streams and parks at 14 locations in Clermont County and the East Fork Watershed; the event was organized by the East Fork Watershed Collaborative and Valley View Foundation.

Volunteers collected lots of trash including water bottles, fast food containers, even discarded televisions and tires. Crews removed 24 tires from just one location at Harsha Lake! Thanks to the efforts of volunteers, our waterways and parks are cleaner and safer.

Sponsors of the Clean & Green and River Sweep included the Ohio Department of Natural Resources, the Clermont Convention and Visitors Bureau, Clermont Water Resources, Little Miami, Inc., Buckeye United Fly Fishers, Kroger, GSM-Global Scrap Management, Cornerstone Marketing, The Clermont Sun, Duke Energy and Loveland Canoe and Kayak. Partnering agencies included the Clermont Stormwater Management Department, Clermont Office of Environmental Quality, ODNR – State Parks and Division of Watercraft, Clermont Water Resources, the Harsha Lake U.S. Army Corp of Engineers, Clermont Park District, the Valley View Foundation and the Clermont Soil & Water Conservation District.



Volunteers at Stonelick State Park

Visit the Potter Hill Home's zero energy home at this year's Homearama, located for the first time in Clermont County. SWCD and County Stormwater Department have constructed a raingarden for capturing and filtering roof runoff. This allows for infiltration



into groundwater and reduction of pollutants that enter our waterways.



Clermont County Farm Bureau



A membership organization which fights for fair property taxes, property rights, and the interest of agriculture.

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(Harmful Algal Blooms continued from page 1)

less aquatic plants called duckweeds or other true algae.

Many HAB-forming organisms are native to Ohio, but only cause problems when environmental conditions (often human-induced) favor them. Factors that contribute to HABs include an overabundance of nutrients, sunlight, shallow water, calm water, warmer temperatures, and low salinity. Nutrients that contribute to HABs and other algal blooms come from many sources, including agriculture, lawn fertilizers, wastewater treatment plants, sewer overflows and leaking septic systems. In addition to these external sources, the internal cycling of nutrients within lakes and ponds can also trigger algal blooms.

HABs can occur almost anywhere there is water: lakes, ponds, stormwater retention basins, rivers, streams or reservoirs. HABs can cause taste and odor problems in drinking waters, pollute beaches with scum, reduce oxygen levels for fish and other animals, causing processing problems for public water supplies, and may generate toxic chemicals. Cyanobacteria can cause a range of problems for recreation and the environment, but at their worst they can cause health problems because of their ability to produce toxins. It's important to note that the mere presence of cyanobacteria does not necessarily mean that toxins are being produced. The level of toxicity depends on the strains of cyanobacteria present and environmental factors (i.e. the amount of nutrients, light, temperature, etc.).

The Ohio EPA, Ohio Department of Health and Ohio Department of Natural Resources are monitoring HABs across the state and working to educate local communities. While the number of HABs has increased over the last few years in Ohio's inland lakes, most of the blooms have been small scale outbreaks in the headwaters of reservoirs. The State issues advisories when toxins released by cyanobacteria are detected and exceed health standards for recreational use. People and pets are advised to minimize contact with and avoid ingestion of the lake water.

Steps to reduce the input of nutrients into streams and lakes include a number of best management practices, including protection of streamside forests and wetlands. These natural features absorb and filter polluted runoff before it enters natural waterways. Reductions in fertilizer runoff from agriculture and lawns can also help reduce nutrient inputs and minimize the potential for HABs. For more information on HABs in Ohio waters, visit: <http://www.epa.state.oh.us/dsw/HAB.aspx>

Clermont Soil and Water Conservation District
P.O. Box 549
1000 Locust Street, Owensville, Ohio 45160

Phone: 513-732-7075
Fax: 513-732-7077
Web: www.clermontswcd.org



Clermont SWCD, along with OSU extension and Farm Service Agency (FSA) assisted with the assessment of agricultural tornado damage that occurred in the county on March 2nd. Clermont County has been allocated \$379,200 for emergency conservation practices through U.S. Department of Agriculture. This includes restoring permanent fences and removal of debris from fields. Eighteen applicants have applied for assistance through this program.

The Soil Quality and Cover Crop Workshop conducted on May 2nd was a success, with over 50 participants. Cover crops, crops grown on agricultural fields during winter months to improve soil quality and reduce erosion, are increasing in popularity. Some local farmers are already implementing them into their cropping rotations, with many more wanting to learn how. The workshop allowed farmers to learn some of the techniques and crop types being utilized.



NRCS soil scientist George Derringer (far right) discusses soil quality basics.

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