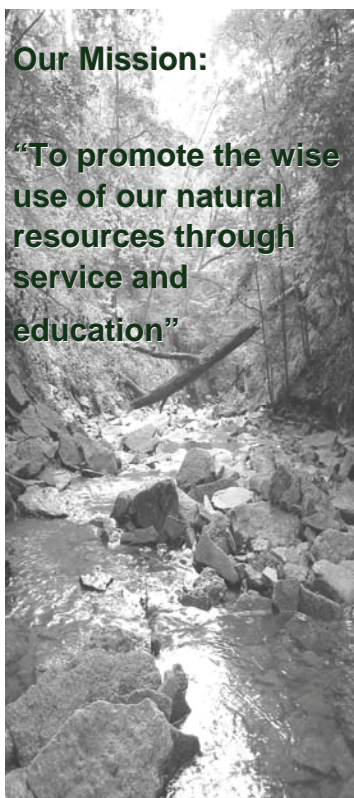


Winter 2009

Our Mission:

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



Another Successful Year in Conservation!

Over 100 Clermont County residents and supporters of conservation showed up at the Fairgrounds on October 29 for Clermont Soil and Water Conservation District’s 66th Annual Meeting. The evening began with the election of two supervisors (see article on p. 2). Immediately following the election, guests enjoyed pulled pork barbeque sandwiches with all the trimmings and brownies ala mode for desert.



During the meeting, several partners in conservation were recognized, including Steve Phillips (right) of Tate Township, who was awarded the District’s Conservation Cooperator of the Year. Judy Krebs, district education coordinator was honored for her 20 years of service. The evening continued with District Administrator Paul Berringer giving a presentation on the accomplishments of the SWCD over the past year. Photos displayed during the slide show included images of O’Bannon Creek stream restoration project, EQIP and (Continued on Page 2)

BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

- David Anspach
- Joe Glassmeyer
- Meri Johnson
- Steve Phillips
- David Smith (2010 elect)

NATURAL RESOURCES CONSERVATION SERVICE

Lori Hillman - District Conservationist

DISTRICT STAFF

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

LAND PRESERVATION IN CLERMONT COUNTY

(Written by Becky McClatchey)

The Use of Conservation Easements to Protect Open Space

(Batavia, Ohio) More people are calling Clermont County home. Since 2000, the County has experienced a 10% increase in population, growing from an estimated 177,977 residents to 195,385 residents. As growth and development continue, land preservation tools such as conservation easements, will be essential for protecting natural areas and open space.

A conservation easement is a voluntary agreement made by a landowner to place deed restrictions on property (or a section of property) to preserve land in its current state. The easement prohibits future land uses and development to protect farmland, forested areas, open space, wildlife habitat, streams, or wetlands. Many landowners place an easement on

(Continued on Page 6)

Glassmeyer, Smith Elected to Board of Supervisors

In the election held on October 29th, Joe Glassmeyer (right) retained his seat on the Soil and Water Conservation District's Board of Supervisors, where he has faithfully served for the past 24 years. Joe has been on the board since 1986 and will begin his ninth 3-year term in January. He is also currently serving as treasurer for the Ohio Federation of Soil and Water Conservation Districts.



David Smith (below) has been elected to his first term as board supervisor. David is currently an associate supervisor with the Clermont Soil & Water Conservation District. He brings a strong background in conservation and alternative energy as an employee of Melink Corporation.



Joe and David will be sworn in by an Ohio Supreme Court Justice at the Ohio Federation of Soil and Water Conservation Districts Meeting in Columbus. Appointments begin January 1, 2010.

Congratulations to both gentlemen and thank you for serving your conservation district and county!

(Continued from page 1)

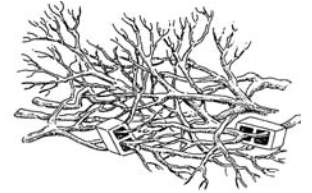
CRP projects, rain gardens, and scenes from around the county.

The evening continued with musical entertainment by father/daughter duet Anna and Milovan Belgin. A silent auction was a new feature of this year's meeting and a big success – over \$1500 was raised to help fund the District's conservation work! The evening concluded with some wonderful door prizes. A special thank-you goes out to all those individuals and businesses (listed on p. 3) who donated door prizes and silent auction items, and all bidders who made the auction such a success.

Utilize that winter ice to add structure to your pond

As many of us dread the winter months ahead and others relish the potential of a good ice fishing season, many pond owners miss the opportunity for improving their fishing holes during these dormant months. Many think that summer and fall have passed and the mowing of your dam and other maintenance of your pond is done until the spring rains come again. However, this is a great chance to improve the quality and quantity of fishing in your pond with the addition of fish attractants and spawning structures.

These structures carry many benefits to fish health, reproduction ability, and weight gain. As a pond owner, you want to enjoy the benefits of quality fishing without having to stock year after year. The amount of practices depends on the desired conditions and the size and layout of your pond. These structures allow for increased reproduction, adequate hiding places to reduce stress and a system that is better self-sustaining for both predator and prey fish species.



You may ask WHY do I undertake these projects in the winter. The answer is simple, ICE. When the ice is thick enough to work on, you are able to place these structures on the ice where needed and when the ice melts, they will sink to the bottom. This allows for better placement and easier access when a sufficient boat is not available.

There are many different structures that can be added to your pond; and some are even free. There are the retail structures that can be purchased in all price ranges. There are others available to pond owners/managers that can be found for free. These include gravel for bass and bluegill spawning beds, Christmas trees for hiding places, wooden stacked pallets for bait/prey fish spawning and hiding areas, and cream/5-gallon buckets for catfish spawning.

Please contact the SWCD Office to discuss the best options available for your pond.

Rain Gardens Continue to Blossom at Clermont Schools

The District and its partners have completed the initial phase of the Clermont County Rain Garden Project. Thanks to a \$50,000 grant from Ohio EPA (OEEF), ten gardens have been installed at the following school campuses: Batavia High School, Bethel Tate Middle School, Clermont Northeastern High School, Clough Pike Elementary School, Felicity Franklin High School, Goshen High School, Grant Career Center Milford Jr. High School, Pattison Elementary School, Williamsburg High School.



Pattison Elementary students help plant a rain garden on campus off South Milford Rd.

The gardens will be utilized as learning labs and 2010 classes will begin using an activity curricula guide also developed under the grant. The lessons will allow students to learn how rain gardens help manage storm water runoff and protect local water quality. The curricula integrates fully with the Ohio Academic Content Standards and includes many other interactive science and math lessons for students related to soils, plants, and storm water runoff.

District partners include the Clermont County Storm Water Department, Greenacres Foundation, Clermont County Education Services, and Marvin's Organic Gardens. The group intends to broaden the scope of the project to include certain schools in Hamilton and Butler counties in 2010.

CLERMONT TO HOST SOUTHWEST OHIO 7th ANNUAL SEDIMENT & EROSION CONTROL FIELD DAY

Wednesday Feb. 24th, 2010; 2-7 pm.

Multipurpose Building, Clermont County Fairgrounds, Owensville, OH.

This year's Field Day, sponsored by the soil and water conservation districts of SW Ohio, has something for everyone. Don't miss this entertaining and educational event.

- ◆ Expert speakers from NAHB Green Building Program, the Low Impact Development Center, & OSU Extension
- ◆ Catered steak dinner with cash bar
- ◆ Featured Comedian Drew Hastings (of *Bob & Tom Show* fame)
- ◆ Erosion & Sediment Control Vendor Exhibits
- ◆ Outdoor BMP exhibit area

Space limited – \$30 early registration fee until Jan. 25th. For registration details, visit <http://www.butlerswcd.org/Events/FieldDay.html>



Special thanks to all our sponsors in 2009 through newsletter advertising, door prizes, silent auction items and donations!

- | | |
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Thanks to All Our Cooperators for the Conservation Best Management Practices Installed This Year!

AES Asset Mgt	Wildlife Habitat Borders
Eric and Tammy Averwater	Rain Garden
Ival Bailey	Pipeline, Heavy Use Pad, Watering Facility
Troy Baker	Access Road, Stream Crossing
Jack Barker	Fence
Kimberly Becker	Fence
Roger Bedinghaus	Pasture and Hay Planting
Roger Benter	Restoration and Management of Declining Habitats
Charles Blakley	Fence, Heavy Use Pad, Access Road
Wayne Blakley	Watering Facility, Watering Pump, Wildlife Habitat Borders
VJ Brashear	Waste Storage Facility, Fence, Pipeline
Timothy Callahan	Pipeline, Heavy Use Area, Pasture and Hay Planting, Watering Facility
Carl Church	Pipeline, Spring Development, Watering Facility
Cin. Nature Center	Pasture and Hay Planting, Access Road, Waste Storage Facility
Joseph Dollenmayer	Prescribed Grazing
Russell Durbin	Pipeline, Heavy Use Pad, Watering Facility, Riparian Buffer
Lee Eubanks	Fence
Patty Fix	Wildlife Habitat Borders
Charles Foreman	Watering Facility, Pipeline
Virgil Foster	Fence, Access Road, Heavy Use Pad
Armin Frank	Wildlife Habitat Borders
Jason Garrison	Rain Garden
Linda Gonzalez	Fence(2)
Donald Graves	Fence(2)
Carlos Hamilton	Heavy Use Pad, Watering Facility
Mark Hatfield	Watering Facility, Access Road, Heavy Use Pad
Billy Hazelbaker	Prescribed Grazing
William Hehman	Waste Storage Facility
Greg Hensley	Stream Crossing
John Jarman	Prescribed Grazing
Tim Jarman	Pasture and Hay Planting
Karen Johnson	Fence, Pipeline, Watering Facility(2)
L&L Farm Holdings	Fence, Roof Runoff Management
Donald Larrison	Prescribed Grazing, Pasture and Hay Planting, Pipeline, Watering Facility
Dana Macke	Watering Facility, Pipeline
James Napier	Watering Facility, Pipeline, Pasture and Hay Planting, Heavy Use Pad
Teresa Napier	Access Road, Roof Runoff Mgt., Heavy Use Pad, Watering Facility(2)
Earl Neltner	Forest Stand Improvement
OEEF Rain Gardens	10 gardens installed at Clermont County Schools
Steve Phillips	Stream Exclusion Fencing, Solar Watering System, Pipeline, Tree/shrub Planting



Bill Rogers' wetland with SWCD district technician Jake Hahn



Covered waste storage facility under construction at Cincinnati Nature Center

(Continued on Page 5)

Craig Rigdon	Heavy Use Pad, Pasture and Hay Planting, Fence, Watering Facility
Bill Rogers	Wetland, Wildlife Habitat Borders
James Rouse	Heavy Use Pad
Bernard Schultian	Fence
Kirk Schultz	Pasture and Hay Planting, Nutrient Management
Sheila Sherwood	Rain Garden
John Spiller	Waterway
Vincenet Urbanek Jr.	Restoration and Management of Declining Habitats
Charles Voluse	Rain Garden
Dan Weber	Pipeline, Watering Facility(3), Roof Runoff Structure, Stream Crossing

Opportunities for Financial Incentives through Farm Bill Programs

Program applications for the 2010 funding cycle for the Environmental Quality Incentive Program (EQIP), Wetlands Reserve Program (WRP), Wildlife Habitat Incentives Program (WHIP), Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP), and Grassland Reserve Program (GRP) are due in to the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) by mid February 2010. While the application period for these conservation programs is continuous, funding selections are made once or twice a year, depending on the number of applications and availability of funds.

Several new opportunities exist for addressing priority natural resource issues using EQIP. Some of the most popular practices include: **Cropland:** Cover crops, and no-till incentive payments; **Pasture:** fencing for stream exclusion, manure storage facilities, winter feeding pads for pasture protection; **Woodland:** bush honeysuckle and grapevine control. Limited resource producers, beginning farmers, and socially disadvantaged farmers will be eligible for up to 90 percent cost share and an advance of 30 percent of the cost of implementing a practice.

Wetlands Reserve Program is available for landowners interested in creating, enhancing, or restoring wetlands on agricultural land and woodland. Payments will range from \$2700 to \$3500 based on land use.

Over 20 conservation practices are available to agricultural producers interested in improving wildlife habitat using WHIP. Native grasses, wetland creation or restoration, and hardwood tree planting are just a few of the practices available through this program.

The Grassland Reserve Program had a large interest in Clermont County in 2009, and funding is expected to be released again in 2010 for this program. If you have an interest in protecting your grassland for 10 to 20 years, or in perpetuity, you can receive a payment annually for rental contracts or a lump sum for a permanent easement.

The listed programs are competitively ranked amongst applications received in the county or on a statewide basis, based on natural resource concerns and environmental benefit. For more information on any of these programs, contact Lori Hillman, District Conservationist, Natural Resources Conservation Service at 513-732-7075. You can visit us on the web at www.oh.nrcs.usda.gov



Incentive payments in 2009 for planting cover crops ranged from \$29- \$42 per acre through EQIP.



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<i>Calendar of Events</i>	
SWCD Office Closed (Holiday)	Dec 24-25
SWCD Office Closed (Holiday)	Jan 1
SWCD Board Meeting	Jan. 13
OFSWCD Annual Meeting	Jan. 15-17
SWCD Office Closed (Holiday)	Jan. 18
SWCD Board Meeting	Feb. 10
SWCD Office Closed (Holiday)	Feb. 15

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

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

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(Land Preservation in Clermont County Cont. from Page 1)

their property because of the long-term environmental benefits. Natural areas that are lush with vegetation can help improve the water quality of local streams by absorbing rain water and filtering out harmful pollutants.

Landowners can sell or donate a conservation easement to a local land trust or government agency. Financial compensation is based on the easement value, which is determined by property appraisals done before and after the deed restrictions. Those who donate an easement may be eligible for state and federal tax deductions. Because the deed restrictions lower the property’s market value, easements are ideal for landowners looking to reduce the estate tax burden for those who may inherit the property in the future.

Conservation easements are important balancing tools for urbanizing areas. In a recent land use planning survey, Clermont County residents indicated a desire to balance future growth and development with the protection of specific land uses, such as open space. Often, communities that are undergoing a rural to urban transition express a desire to maintain the natural, rural character of their communities. As the region develops, communities can rely on conservation easements as a win-win strategy that maintains the natural, rural character of the landscape, and also provides economic incentives to the individual landowner and long-term environmental benefits for the region.

If you’re a Clermont County landowner interested in learning more about conservation easements, please visit the Clermont Storm Water Management Department’s website (www.clermontstorm.net).