



Richland Soil and Water Conservation District

Conservation, Education and Stewardship

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For Immediate Release

January 28, 2021

Meeting Scheduled for Ditch Petition Process

MANSFIELD, OH - Community members in Shelby privately planned and organized cleaning a portion of the Black Fork River.

Phase 1 cleaned the section of the river from State Route 13 to State Street and Phase 2 is cleaning the river from State Street to Mickey Road. The combined total cost for the cleaning projects is approximately \$367,000.

Both phases of the Black Fork River clean-up project are nearing completion. These two projects were beneficial in cleaning and clearing the river, but more work is necessary to help with continuing efforts to keep the river flowing.

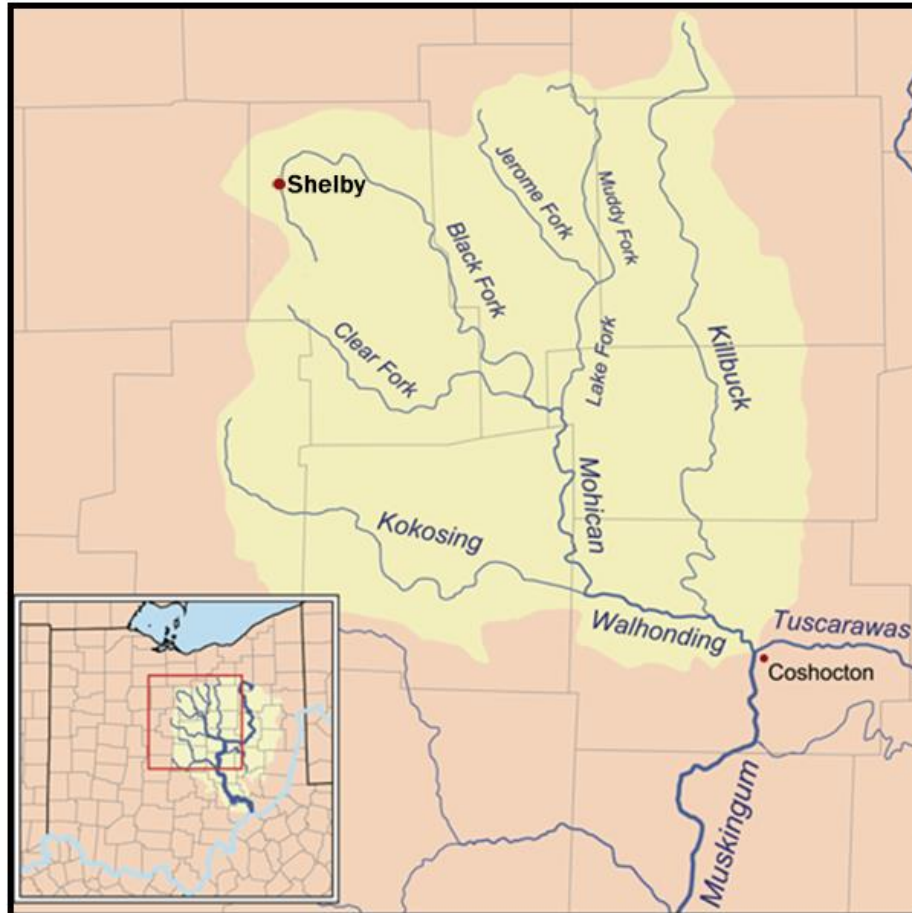
To help with the cleaning efforts and maintain the Black Fork River for years to come, the City of Shelby and rural community members will continue their efforts by filing a Ditch Petition with the Richland County Commissioners. The Ditch Petition will request the Black Fork River be cleaned and maintained from Mickey Road to State Route 13. The City of Shelby will be petitioning for the area of the river inside of the city corporation limits, while rural community members will be petitioning for the remainder of the river. The total petitioned area of the river is approximately 18 miles.

Black Fork River Ditch Petition Project

- A Ditch Petition is a legal process under Ohio Revised Code 6131-6137 that is requested by a petitioner(s) for the cleaning and the annual maintenance of a waterway (ditch, tributary, stream, river) through an assessment process to all parcel owners within the watershed area. The petition is filed with the County Commissioners. There are approximately 11,000 parcels in the petitioned watershed area, involving approximately 80,000 acres.
- The petition will request the river be cleaned and maintained annually by removing felled trees, leaning trees, log jams, and debris piles. The clearing of the obstructions will allow for better drainage and reduce risk of flooding. It also improves safety by removing rotting

logs and trash, allowing for recreational use of the water including boating, fishing, birding, wildlife watching and enjoying the natural views.

- For more information on the ditch petition process, visit <https://richlandswcd.net/services/water/stormwater/ohio-drainage-laws>. Richland Soil and Water Conservation District (Richland SWCD) will host a Facebook Live meeting on Wednesday February 3 at 1:00 p.m. To participate, visit <https://www.facebook.com/richlandswcd> at that time.
- The Black Fork River begins near Mansfield/Ontario, goes through Shelby to Charles Mill Lake and joins the Rocky Fork River east of Lucas below Charles Mill To find out more about the Black Fork Watershed and the other seven watersheds in Richland county, visit <https://richlandswcd.net/services/water/watersheds-of-richland-county>



The Black Fork River is a principal tributary of the Mohican River and is 58.4 miles (94 km) long in north-central Ohio in the United States. The Black Fork River drains an area of 351 square miles (909 km) and is part of the Muskingum Watershed Conservancy District.

The Black Fork starts about 7 miles (11 km) west of Mansfield in Richland County, and initially flows northward through the city of Shelby, then eastward across northern Richland County before turning southeast for the remainder of its course through eastern Richland and southern Ashland Counties, past the towns of Perrysville and Loudonville. It joins the Clear Fork in Ashland County to form the Mohican River, about 2 miles (3 km) southwest of Loudonville.

A U.S. Army Corps of Engineers dam in Ashland County, completed in 1936, causes the Black Fork to form Charles Mill Lake.

The Richland Soil and Water Conservation District develops, implements, and assists landowners, government agencies and our partners with a wide range of natural resource conservation programs.

Programs and assistance of the Richland Soil and Water Conservation District are available without regard to race, color, religion, sex, gender identity, age, national origin, ancestry, disability, or veteran status.

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