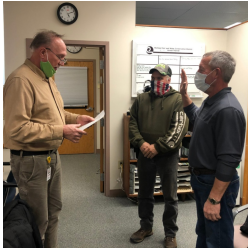


Richland Soil and Water Conservation District News

January 2021

Board of Supervisors Reorganize and Meeting Schedule



Brian Alt and Robert (Rob) McConkie, Jr. were sworn into office as Soil and Water Conservation District Board Supervisors on January 19 by Richland County Commissioner Cliff Mears. Brian was re-elected to serve another three-year term. Rob is beginning his first three-year term. Rob and Brian join Fred Cooke, Lanny Hopkins and David Krichbaum as Board Supervisors. The Board of Supervisors elected Brian Alt as Chairman, Fred Cooke as Treasurer, Lanny Hopkins as Secretary, David Krichbaum as Vice Chairman and Rob McConkie, Jr. is At Large.

Supervisors are elected to serve three-year terms as unpaid public officials. The Board of Supervisors create an annual and long-term plan of operation that protects the District's mission and vision and are interested, conservation-minded, local leaders who promote conservation of the county's natural resources through education, planning and technical assistance which are key to the success of the District. Supervisors advocate for the District, attend and participate in monthly board meetings, assist with District programs and services and attend area and state meetings.

Board Supervisors meet the third Tuesday of every month at 9:00 a.m. and the public is welcome to attend the meetings. If you wish to attend, please contact Richland SWCD Director [Erica Thomas](#).

Virtual Conservation Story Time Starts January 27



We are partnering with the Mansfield/Richland County Public Library (MRCPL) to offer Virtual Conservation Story Times beginning Wednesday, January 27. All Story Times will be at 10:00 a.m. and are free.

The first books we will read are *Animals on the Farm* and *Crops on the Farm* written by Teddy Borth. Please go to our [website](#) to watch this Story Time.

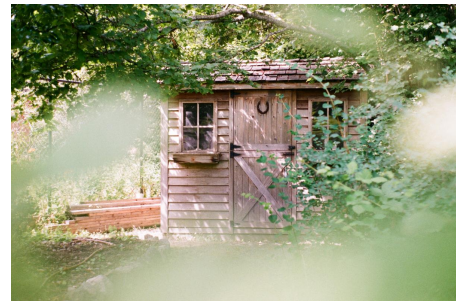
Each Virtual Conservation Story Time will provide a different story, activities, and a book list related to the story's topic. Story Time is geared toward children from Preschool to Second grade and will feature books about nature, wildlife, soil, water and much more. In addition to a book reading, Story Time will provide activity suggestions for parents, families, teachers, day care centers, and Montessori's to share with children.

Featured and suggested books are available for check out at MRCPL.

Thank you to volunteer Candy Brenner, MRCPL, and a grant from the Richland County Foundation for helping make the Virtual Conservation Story Time possible.

Erosion Controls on Small Construction Sites

[Studies](#) have shown construction sites of all sizes to be significant contributors of sedimentation of waterways. Fortunately, there are several tools in our best management practice (BMP) tool kit that can be incorporated into smaller construction projects to mitigate construction site runoff.



Installing silt fences is the most common BMP used on a small construction site. Erosion and sediment controls such as silt fences, construction entrances, sediment traps and inlet protection devices should be installed prior to any earth disturbance project to prevent sediment from moving offsite.

Leaving a well vegetated perimeter (>5') around the active construction area and under tree drip lines will dampen erosive forces of water and may act as a filter strip to allow for sediment to settle out of sheet flow during rain events. Temporary stabilization (seeding/mulching) of idle construction areas and soil stockpiles is crucial to keep sediment onsite and held in place.

Each construction site is unique and each pose different opportunities for different sediment and erosion control BMPs. Many of these practices can be used in conjunction with one another and work more effectively together. For more information on practices for small construction sites see chapter 8.2 in the Rainwater and Land Development Manual available on our [website](#). Stop in our office for a review of your project when obtaining a stormwater permit.

Ditch Petition Process and Ohio Drainage Laws



Landowners can't block water from entering and leaving their property without providing an outlet. There is updated information on our [website](#). Please contact [Matt](#) if you have questions.

Milkweed Seed Distributed at Kingwood

With the help of volunteers, Ella Hafenstein and Pete

Holmes, Richland SWCD sponsored and decorated a Christmas Tree at Kingwood Center. The tree was decorated in the theme of Milkweed for Monarchs and we gave away over 200 packets of milkweed seeds with planting instructions. Pete removed seeds from milkweed seed pods collected this fall and Ella assembled the packets. Thank you, Ella and Pete for helping! We hope you had a chance to see the beautifully decorated grounds, house and other community Christmas trees at Kingwood Center.

To request free milkweed seeds, please contact [Theresa.](#)



Voluntary Wetland and Riparian Buffer Projects Pay Off



The Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP) is a USDA Farm Bill conservation program that offers farmers and landowners financial compensation for taking cropland out of production and establishing conservation practices such as buffer strips, grasslands, and wetlands to improve water quality for a contract period of 15 years. The new H2Ohio Water

Quality Incentive Program is being offered in combination with Lake Erie CREP and provides a onetime payment of \$2,000 per acre for new Lake Erie CREP wetlands and forested riparian buffers (buffer strip with trees) to help improve water quality in the Lake Erie watershed. More wetlands and forested riparian buffers will help reduce phosphorus runoff into Lake Erie. Both conservation practices are on the H2Ohio top 10 list of phosphorus reduction practices. Enrollment deadline is January 29. For more information, visit this [webpage.](#)

Meet Intern Kourtney Van Wagner

Thanks to a grant received from the Fran and Warren Rupp Fund of the Richland County Foundation, Kourtney Van Wagner and Natalie Snyder are interning with us this semester.

Kourtney VanWagner is a junior at Ohio State in Columbus studying Environmental Science with a major in Ecosystem Restoration. She is assisting with the [MS4 program.](#) She is from Shelby and attended Shelby High School. So far she and Dan have worked on learning the ARC GIS system, working on learning the programs on the iPad and mapping out the outfalls going to the tributaries in Madison township.



Her hobbies are rollerblading, rock climbing, biking, hiking, working with her four pups and just being outside and spending a lot of time with family. She

hopes to work in a national park or for the EPA doing research or maybe being a park ranger.



Meet Intern Natalie Snyder

Natalie Snyder is a sophomore at ATI (Agricultural Technical Institute) in Wooster studying Agricultural Communications and Leadership. She is helping with SWCD communication and so far has helped with [Story Time](#) and In the Know videos and social media. She is from Shiloh and graduated from Plymouth High School in 2019. She grew up on a family farm in Shiloh where they raise horses, goats, cattle, and have a hay field. Natalie said, “I know how important it is to advocate for agriculture and that is why I choose to study Agricultural Communications at OSU and that’s also why I want to work within agriculture. I plan to attend graphic design school to focus on Videography and Photography.”

She was active in FFA (Future Farmers of America) and was president her senior year (2018-2019). She was also active in 4-H as a Clover Bud all the way till she aged out (2020). She was president of the Richland County Wranglers from 2015-2020. She was also active in student council and was a class officer her junior and senior year. She was in the Big Red Video Production class in high school (news team) and that’s where she learned her love of creating videos.

She enjoys taking photos, spending time outside, spending time with my family (especially my nephews and niece) and friends, hiking, playing with animals, exploring abandon areas or places full of history, painting and crafting, and riding horses.

She shared, “My major goal in life is to find something that I enjoy doing as a career. I guess I am creative and that’s what draws me towards creating videos and taking photos. If I could live anywhere in the country I would like to be somewhere in the mountains. I have a large family who has lived all over the country, so I am very lucky to have visited 21 states (including Ohio), and my favorite so far is Washington State. I really enjoy my internship so far because I am doing what I want to do (create videos) while still being active in agriculture.”

Only Rain Down the Drain

Storm Drains and roadside ditches eventually lead to our inland lakes and the Ohio River. Here are some things we can do to make sure that there is “Only Rain Down the Drain”. Never dump anything down a storm drain or into a ditch.

1. Compost yard waste
2. Take unused and unwanted paints and hazardous chemicals to an approved hazardous collection site.

3. Periodically look for leaks under your vehicle and recycle your motor oil, anti-freeze, Transmission fluid and other hazardous chemicals.
4. Check and maintain your septic system, have it pumped regularly.
5. Plant grass seed or mulch bare spots in your yard.

Important Dates

January 27: Virtual Conservation [Story Time](#) Begins at 10:00 a.m.

February 15: Office Closed in Observance of President's Day

April 9 & 10: Clear Fork Alumni [Tree Seedling Sale](#)

April 14, 21, & 28: Grazing School Webinars

April 16: Pond Fish Sale Orders Due

April 23: Pond Fish Orders Pick Up

SWCD Staff

Erica Thomas, District Administrator

419-747-8684

thomas.eric@richlandswcd.net

Dan Herrold, MS4/Urban Technician

419-747-8077

herrold.dan@richlandswcd.net

Jordan Keller, Urban Technician

419-747-8688

keller.jordan@richlandswcd.net

Theresa Sutter, Community Relations Coordinator

419-747-8685

sutter.theresa@richlandswcd.net

Matt Wallace, Agriculture Technician

419-747-8687

wallace.matt@richlandswcd.net

NRCS Staff

Jason Ruhl, District Conservationist

419-747-8691

jason.ruhl@oh.usda.gov

Derek Benner, Wildlife Biologist

567-280-6058

dbenner@pheasantsforever.org

Board Supervisors

Brian Alt, Chairperson

Fred Cooke, Treasurer

Robert McConkie, Jr., At Large

Lanny Hopkins, Secretary

David Krichbaum, Vice Chair

Board meetings are held the third Tuesday of each month at 9:00 a.m. at the Longview Center, 1495 W. Longview Avenue, Mansfield, OH 44906. The meetings are open to the public. Call to confirm meeting date, time and attendance. If you plan to attend a board meeting, please contact Erica Thomas, District Administrator, in advance so that enough meeting packets will be prepared.

To be more efficient in answering and managing phone calls, we are using an automated answering system. If you call our main number at 419-747-8686 you will be given the opportunity to connect with a staff member or partnering office. Individual phone numbers and email addresses are provided on the left. If you have any questions, please [let us know](#).

See what's happening on our social sites:



For information on varied volunteer opportunities within our office, including scanning and archiving historical photos and documents, engaging young people in the District, becoming a Precipitation Monitor, Lake Monitor, Stream Quality Monitor, Office Assistant, Photographer, help with Special Events or be an Earth Team volunteer with the Natural Resources Conservation Service, please [click here](#). **Congratulations to volunteers for being awarded the 2018 NRCS National and Northeast Regional Earth Team Chief's Field Office awards!**

USDA is an equal opportunity provider, employer, and lender.

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.