



Richland Soil and Water Conservation District News Spring 2022

The Importance of Conservation

Recently I attended the Annual Partnership Meeting with my colleagues. This event is an open invite to all eighty-eight soil and water districts in Ohio, as well as the Ohio Department of Agriculture (ODA), the United States Department of Agriculture's Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS), and The Ohio State University, along with representatives and vendors from other conservation organizations. It is put on by the Ohio Federation of Soil and Water Districts (OFSWCD). The goal of this annual meeting is for the State's numerous conservation employees to come together to share knowledge and build partnerships to use in their districts.



The two-day conference includes several general sessions that covered climate change, conservation, agriculture and a word from the new Chief of NRCS, as well as a multitude of breakout sessions. I attended talks covering GIS (Geographic Information Services, or digital mapping and data visualization), the usage of drones in conservation projects, best practices for forages and cover crops, H2Ohio and several others. I really enjoyed myself and was thrilled to attend the different informational sessions and observe the work that other districts are doing.

Which brings me to something I've been thinking about recently: the importance of conservation. What is it for? What's the use? Why fill a room with hundreds of soil and water employees from across Ohio? Although I admit that I don't have a complete answer, nor an answer that will satisfy everyone, I think conservation is important because of you. Yes, you, the person reading this article.

I think it is often the case that conservation is thought of as preserving, protecting and enhancing the natural world alone. However, I don't think conservation exists within a vacuum. Are we not, as humankind, dependent on and emersed by the environment? The natural world, in fact, has many direct impacts upon us.

You are an integral part of the environment! And that is why I love conservation, and why I enjoy being a part of Richland Soil and Water Conservation's team. By working to conserve Richland County's natural

resources, I believe I am also helping to improve the lives of its citizens. A healthy and well-functioning environment is a benefit to everyone within it. The Annual Partnership Meeting, and events like it, give me a lot of hope for modern conservation efforts.

Richland SWCD offers many exciting programs and services that offers revenue and cost-share like the Farmland Preservation program, H2Ohio, and Muskingum Watershed Conservancy District Cover Crop program. There are also the annual tree seedling and pond fish sales. Plus, don't forget the numerous workshops and clinics! Whether your interest is urban, rural agriculture, residential or commercial we have programs and services for you, many which are free or at a nominal cost. We also want to make sure you know Richland SWCD is truly here as a resource for you, and we are committed to the betterment of Richland County.

Effective conservation takes a community effort, and perhaps the most important thing we do is provide educational opportunities on conservation, natural resource and environmental topics and issues. If you would like to know what kind of programs we offer, what events we are holding (we have monthly conservation creation workshops this year!), or even how you could help advance and support conservation by volunteering with us (we always need volunteers!) then please let us know! We're friendly. We don't bite.

Most of the time.

Evan Stern, Richland SWCD Technician

Black Fork Joint Board Ditch Petition Update

The **Ditch Petition** was **filed** by the City of Shelby and local residents on February 24, 2021.

- **18 miles** of the Black Fork from Mickey Rd. bridge to Rte. 13, which encompasses **70,024 acres and includes 10,567 parcels**.
- Falls under **ORC 6133, Joint Ditch Petition**, since it spans across both Richland and Crawford counties
- **Joint Board** formed by Richland and Crawford County Commissioners March 9, 2021
- In-person and virtual **Viewings**: May 20-21, 2021
- **First Hearing** of Joint Board and presentation of Engineer's Preliminary Report: August 5, 2021. All costs associated with planning, construction, inspections, and administration to be assessed to landowners, and it was determined that the benefits of the project outweigh the potential cost.
- **SWCD Survey work** to identify logjams and mark trees for removal: January-March 2022
- **Engineer's Final Report**: In progress, estimated May 2022
- **Final Hearing of Joint Board**: estimated this summer, 2022

- Any questions should be directed to [Richland SWCD](#), [Richland County Engineer](#) or the [Richland County Commissioners](#).

For more information please visit the [website](#) or call Matt at 419-747-8687.

Join the Richland SWCD Team This Summer



Spend your summer with Richland Soil and Water Conservation District (Richland SWCD) as a Communications Intern.

The Communications Intern will represent and assist with district and community events and programs, help with event management, assist with communicating district events, programs and services, work with outside organizations and partners, take photos and videos and edit and share them. The ideal candidate will be outgoing and friendly with computer skills. The full job description is available on our [website](#) or by emailing [Theresa](#) or calling her at 419-747-8685.

Compensation is \$12.00 per hour and is funded through a grant through the Fran and Warren Rupp Advised Fund of the Richland County Foundation.

Last Call for H2Ohio Sign-Up

This is your **last chance** to sign up for H2OHio. Applications are due by **April 30**.

Currently the program is guaranteed through 2025 but whether it will continue after that is still up in the air.

- The minimum requirement for the program is getting representative soil tests pulled on cropland acres and working with an agronomist, CCA or a technical service provider to come up with a **nutrient management plan** for your field's needs. This is especially enticing for producers who could potentially save on fertilizer costs as their fields may already have sufficient nutrients for crop production from past years of applying nutrients.
- The program is primarily about phosphorus reduction in the soil and waterways. The goal of reducing the use of phosphorus fertilizers and implementing nutrient management practices is to clean Ohio's waterways and environment, especially Lake Erie.
- The practices in this program **may help decrease a farmer's need for commercial fertilizer**.
- Richland County recently received **over \$900,000** to pay H2ohio producers for properly implementing practices.

- The paying practices of H2Ohio are things **you may already be doing**. They include:
 - 1) Voluntary Nutrient Management Plan Implementation (**\$10 ac/yr**): having a nutrient management plan written and following its prescriptions
 - 2) Variable Rate Phosphorus Application (**\$5 ac**)
 - 3) Subsurface Phosphorus Placement (**\$25 ac**): placing phosphorus fertilizer below the soil
 - 4) Manure Incorporation (**\$60 ac for all manures except chicken, which is \$30 ac**): this practice is very specific and only applies to summer/fall applications of manure, but it pays very well
 - 5) Conservation Crop Rotation – Small Grains (**\$35 ac**): if you already plant and harvest wheat, you may already be eligible
 - 6) Conservation Crop Rotation – Forages (**\$35 ac**): if you are planning to put a field into hay/alfalfa or another perennial forage, you can capitalize with an H2Ohio payment (only if it is a newly established forage crop)
 - 7) Drainage Water Management (**\$1,500-4,000 for installation, \$200 for maintenance**): a drop-board structure installed on tile intended to manage water flow off of your crop ground and raise the water table, may assist in crop health during dryer months.

EVEN IF YOU AREN'T SURE YOU ARE ELIGIBLE FOR H2OHIO BUT ARE INTERESTED IN THE PROGRAM, PLEASE CALL 419-774-7890 OR 419-747-8688 TO TALK TO OUR H2OHIO TECHNICIANS, EVAN AND JORDAN. WE WANT TO HELP YOU GET THE MOST OUT OF YOUR OPERATION WHILE ALSO PRESERVING IT FOR FUTURE GENERATIONS.

USDA Report Shows a Decade of Conservation Trends

The report, Conservation Practices on Cultivated Cropland: A Comparison of CEAP I and CEAP II Survey Data and Modeling, from USDA's Natural Resources Conservation Service demonstrates progress made through voluntary conservation over a 10-year period. Findings from the report will inform future conservation strategies, including USDA's efforts to tackle the climate crisis. It found significant gains for soil health and soil carbon storage, while also identifying areas where additional and targeted nutrient management strategies are needed. Find out [more](#) or call our local USDA-NRCS office at 419-747-8691.

Trees are Incredible Stream Stabilizers

Riparian forest buffers filter sediments from streams during storm events, remove nitrogen and



phosphorus leached from adjacent lands, provide stability to stream banks, shade and modify stream temperatures, provide aquatic and wildlife habitat for many species, reduce stream velocity, and reduce downstream flooding.

Protected riparian buffer widths vary from 10 feet to provide some bank stability to 250 feet plus to provide flood mitigation, wildlife habitat, and

recreation. While riparian areas continue to be preserved and restored across the state, mature wooded buffers are destroyed during new construction or by misguided landowners.

It's time we understand and talk about the role trees, forests, and healthy soils play in keeping our waters clean and reducing stormwater runoff and flooding instead of just mentioning how trees beautify a community. The Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection has recently included urban tree planting as one of the control measures that MS4 (Small Municipal Separate Storm Sewer Systems communities can use to meet the TMDL (total maximum daily load) requirements that have been established to meet their water quality improvement goals.

[Learn more](#) about the MS4 program in Richland County or by calling Dan at 419-747-8077.

Source: [Penn State University Extension](#)

Clear Fork FFA Alumni Tree Seedling Sale



Did you know trees help improve water quality in streams, rivers, and lakes by reducing flooding and minimizing chemical/sediment runoff? The tree's canopy acts as a large umbrella capturing rainwater as it falls, which reduces the speed and amount that reaches the ground and becomes stormwater runoff. A tree's root system takes up various pollutants and reduces the effects of erosion.

You can help Clear Fork FFA while helping to manage stormwater and prevent soil erosion at the Clear Fork FFA Alumni Tree Seedling Sale held in partnership with Richland Soil and Water Conservation District. Purchase seedlings **April 1, 2022**, at multiple locations. The sale proceeds benefit Clear Fork FFA programs.

Please note last year they sold out early and this year may be the same so we encourage you to arrive early.

Richland County Fairgrounds Nature Park: Friday, April 1, from 9:00 a.m. until 7:00 p.m. or all seedlings are sold

Clear Fork High School back parking lot, Friday, April 1 from 8:00 a.m. until 1:00 p.m. or all seedlings are sold

Planktown Market near Shiloh (at inside door), Friday, April 1 from 9:00 a.m. until 1:00 p.m. or all seedlings sold

The tree seedlings cost \$10.00 per bundle of 8. Sales are available on a first come, first serve basis with cash or checks only being accepted. If you wish to purchase left-over seedlings, call Jim at 419-564-3881.

Tree species include: Norway Spruce, White Pine, Douglas Fir, Balsam Fir, Red Cedar, Scotch Pine, Red Mulberry, Ohio Buckeye, Common Pawpaw, White Oak, Sugar Maple, Persimmon, Tulip Poplar, Red Oak, Scarlet Oak, Black Cherry, and Redbud. Bluebird Houses will also be available for \$10.00.

Go to our [website](#) or the [Clear Fork FFA Facebook page](#) for more information and an order form.

Order Fish for Your Pond by April 15

It is time to think about catching some fish for your pond! Pond owners are invited to order fingerling fish through us.

Buyers can choose from among a selection of Bluegill, Largemouth Bass, Hybrid Bluegill, Redear Shellcracker, Channel Catfish, White Amur and Fathead Minnows. We have also added pond conditioner and fish food pellets.



Another change is we were informed by the Ohio Department of Taxation we are to collect sales tax on fish orders. When ordering fish, please add 7% sales tax.

Orders and payment are due by Friday, April 15, 2022, and pick-up is Friday, April 22, 2022, at 10:00 a.m. at the Richland County Fairgrounds.

This is the only pond fish sale Richland SWCD will sponsor this year, so do not miss this opportunity. Full details, including pricing and an order form may be obtained by visiting our [website](#) or by calling 419-747-8685.

Camp Canopy Back this Summer

This summer's Camp Canopy will be held June 12 through 17 at the Ohio FFA Camp Muskingum nestled in Carrollton, Ohio.

A summer camp like no other, Camp Canopy is the perfect mix of traditional camp activities – like hanging out around the campfire, breaking a leg in the talent show and dancing the night away with your fellow campers-turned-BFFs – AND educational activity sessions centered around all things forestry and wildlife, to keep your brains as sharp as a pine needle during the summer months.

Camp Canopy is a co-ed residential camp where incoming high school freshmen through graduating seniors (up to 19 years of age) will be able to learn, explore and connect with nature while learning about a mixture of forestry, wildlife, and adventure activities. For more information including registration, location, activities, and scholarships call 888-388-7337 or visit the [Camp Canopy website](#).

Mark Your Calendar to Apply for the MWCD Cover Crop Program

The 2022 MWCD Cover Crop program will accept applications for eligible properties within the assessment boundary in May. For information, visit our [website](#), contact [Matt](#) or call him at 419-747-8687



Cover crops have strong root systems and hold the soil in place which prevents erosion and runoff into streams, lakes and rivers. They are often planted after the garden or field is harvested to over-winter. Come spring they may be left in the ground, mowed down or incorporated into the soil before planting. Cover crops may be inter-seeded among warm weather plants and crops, too. Examples of cover crops are radishes, clovers and rye. They are great for soil and water health.

Spring Drainage and Manure

During spring rains, the ground can become saturated and start manifesting problems for homeowners. We are able to offer technical advice to



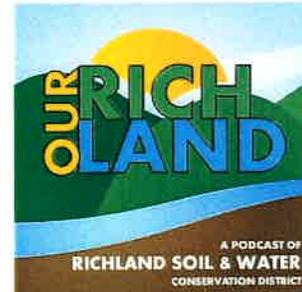
residents to help them mitigate their concerns and assist them with their issues. While offering a technical service and advice we also provide educational information to landowners about what they can and cannot do as it pertains to drainage. To learn more, call 419-747-8687 or visit our [website](#).

Application of manure prior to planting is a common occurrence and can be seen throughout fields in Richland County. It is recommended that manure be placed on a growing crop and/or in a field with little or no chance of running off and preferably tilled into the soil. Setbacks are highly recommended by the Ohio Department of Agriculture and recommended standards are found in the 590-CSP-1 form from the United States Department of Natural Resources Conservation Service (USDA-NRCS) Contact Matt at 419-747-8687 or [email](#) him to arrange a time to pick them up in the office or he can email them to you.

Listen and Learn with the New Podcast Series

We have partnered with Josh Steffen, Kingwood Center Gardens Executive Director, to launch a podcast series aptly titled, "Our Rich Land." He and Evan Stern from our office are co-hosting the podcasts.

The podcasts will focus on a variety of natural resource topics. You'll hear and learn from professionals and there is no shortage of humor. Who said learning can't be fun?!



Tune in to the podcast from our [website](#) by clicking on the colorful logo or at Spotify, Amazon Music, and the Podbean App. Don't forget to bookmark it so you don't miss any episodes.

The introductory podcast has already been released and further explains what the series is about and how Soil and Water Conservation Districts came into existence.

The next podcast with Kathy Smith, OSU's Forestry Program Coordinator has also been released. You will be tremendously fascinated by the ongoing research efforts with maple trees at OSU-Mansfield, maple syrup production and much more.

For more information call Evan at 419-774-7890 or [email](#) him.

New Conservation Cost Share Grants Announced



In an effort to promote conservation, we are providing cost-share grants to offset some of the cost of installing a rain garden, a rain barrel, and having soil tested. These practices protect the health of humans and wildlife.

The application period is open until June 1. Those applying for a cost-share grant need to complete and submit an application. For further details and an application, please click [here](#), contact Theresa via [email](#) or by calling 419-747-8685.

The cost-share grants are made possible through the generosity of donors.

Richland County Foundation Announces Gift of Grain Fund

What is Gift of Grain?

Farmers looking to minimize their tax liability and contribute to their community can donate crops to the Richland County Foundation via a local elevator. The producer can select a fund, such as the Gift of Grain Fund, to receive the gift. Grants made out of the Gift of Grain Fund go to Richland County agricultural-related nonprofits like FFA and 4H. It is a wonderful way to invest in Richland County.

Why give grain instead of cash?

The donated grain is not recorded as income; you may save all or some of the following taxes: self-employment taxes, federal, state & local income taxes. Available for cash basis farmers only.

You may minimize costly tax deduction phase-outs. Some tax benefits are taken away at higher levels of adjusted gross income (AGI). These benefits are retained when you give grain rather than cash.

You may receive additional tax benefits. IRS rules limit charitable contribution deductions to 50% of your AGI. (The percentage is 10% for C-corporations.) Since the donated grain is not reported as income, by giving grain rather than cash, you can, in effect, give more and save more taxes than those limits allow. This is helpful either if you are especially generous or if you wish to “prepay” your donations in a given year.

The grain you give will not count as income in your government payments limitation caps calculations. If you are a high-earning farmer, please contact us for more details. You may be able to effectively redirect significant sums of

money from the government to causes you would rather support. Before donating a gift of grain contact your CPA or tax adviser to discuss your personal tax implications.

For more information, visit the Richland County Foundation [website](#) or call 419-525-3020.

Richland SWCD in the Community



As you may have noticed, Richland SWCD has taken on an aggressive schedule this year to share the importance of conservation, especially soil and water conservation.

This month we have attended the Mid-Ohio Home Show, the Business Expo, held Conservation Creation and

Rain Garden and Rain Barrel workshops, attended Raising Richland Community Garden Summit and partnered with Richland County Solid Waste Management Authority on workshops. We have probably omitted some things, but you get the point. The District is in the community!

We have a long-standing relations with the Richland County Building Department due to the county permitting process. A stormwater permit must be obtained or exempted from Richland SWCD before the landowner/contractor seeks a permit from the Richland County Building Department.

Last week, Richland SWCD partnered with Kara Russel, Director of Richland Co. Building Dept. to have a presence at the 2022 Richland Business Expo. We also partnered with her department for the Mid-Ohio Home Show on March 12-13. Our intent of being at the shows was to bring more awareness to the building and stormwater permitting process in Richland County. To accomplish this, we developed a Stormwater/Richland County Building Jeopardy game to quiz participants. It was a lot of fun to see who got the answers right. Everyone earned a prize no matter if they knew the answer or not. However, it was the prize of new knowledge we are most excited about. Although, we did have fun "swag" to hand out, we also had the participant's undivided time for a few minutes and we used that time to introduce them and/or expand their knowledge about stormwater in Richland County. No one walked away from the game without learning something new. From our perspective, this was a huge success because it will translate into increased stewardship and conservation!

Where will we be next? Check out our [calendar of events](#) and the Important Dates section below.

Important Dates

April 1: Clear Fork FFA Tree Seedling Sale, Richland County Fairgrounds Nature Park, Clear Fork High School, and Planktown Market. [Click here](#) for information or call Jim at 419-564-3881.

April 1: Water You Gonna Do, 1:00 pm to 3:00 pm, Country Market, Loudonville, with Ashland Soil and Water Conservation District. \$5.00 per person, open to the public. The event will be covering why/how to monitor precipitation and the importance of it. NOAA representative will be going over ice spotting in the river and the information it takes from the monitors to keep the predictions accurate. Theresa will discuss the Richland SWCD Precipitation Monitoring program. Register by calling 419-281-7645.

April 2: Alpaca Spring Fling, 1 to 5 p.m., Shady Lane Alpaca Farm, 3073 Gass Road, Lexington. Lots of kids activities: Easter Egg Hunt @ 3 p.m., make a nesting heart, make a pot and plant seeds, plus more. Games, Snacks and pony cart rides. Stop and see us for a fun kids activity! Call 419-560-0780 for more information.

April 12: Conservation Creation Arts & Crafts Workshop: Recycled Rain Chain, sold out. For future programs, please visit our [website](#) or call 419-747-8684.

April 15: Pond Fish Orders Due. Call 419-747-8685 for more information.

April 20: Board Supervisor Meeting, 9:00 a.m., Longview Center, 1495 W. Longview Avenue, Mansfield. If you wish to attend, please email [Erica](#) or call her at 419-747-8684.

April 22: Pond Fish Pickup, Richland County Fairgrounds, 10:00 a.m.

April 30: H2Ohio Phase 2 Applications Due. Email [Evan](#) or call him at 419-774-7890 for more information.

May 3: Native Plant Workshop and Sale, Richland County Fairgrounds Nature Park. The workshop is free from 3:00 to 4:00 pm and the plant sale is from 4:00 to 6:00 pm. The workshop will cover the Farm Bill program for FSA (Farm Service Agency) and the benefits of native plants. Gale from Natives in Harmony and Noah from Pheasants Forever will be the guest speakers. Information on our [website](#) or call Theresa at 419-747-8685 or [email](#) her.

May 5: Litter Clean-Up Day, 12:30 to 3:30 pm, Temple Christian School

May 10: Conservation Creation Arts & Crafts Workshop: Flower Power Paper, 6:00 to 8:00 pm, Longview Center, 1495 W. Longview Avenue, Mansfield. ...bring May flowers! Make dried flower paper with us that can be used as stationary, for scrapbooking, or other creative ideas! This floral craft

will get you excited for summer! \$6.00 per person. To register, [click here](#) or call 419-747-8684.

May 14: [Lake Monitor Volunteer Training](#), 9 to 11 a.m., at Pleasant Hill Lake Park, 3431 OH-95, Perrysville, OH 44864. Register to attend by May 11 to [Theresa](#) or call 419-747-8685.

May 16: Rain Barrel Workshop, Free, 6:00 pm to 8:00 pm. at Bellville Library. [Click here](#) to register or call Dan at 419-747-8077.

May 18: [Board Supervisor Meeting](#), 9:00 a.m. ., Longview Center, 1495 W. Longview Avenue, Mansfield. If you wish to attend, please email [Erica](#) or call her at 419-747-8684.

May 19: Rain Barrel Workshop, 6:00 to 8:00 p.m, Free, Mansfield Main Library. [Click here](#) to register or call Dan at 419-747-8077.

May 23: Rain Barrel Workshop, 6:00 pm to 8:00 pm. at Plymouth Library. [Click here](#) to register or call Dan at 419-747-8077.

May 26 Rain Barrel Workshop, Free, 6:00 pm to 8:00 pm. at Ontario Library. [Click here](#) to register or call Dan at 419-747-8077.

May 30: Office closed in observance of Memorial Day

June 1: Cost-share grant applications due

June 14: Conservation Creation Arts & Crafts Workshop: Needle Felted Sheep, 6:00 to 8:00 pm, Longview Center, 1495 W. Longview Avenue, Mansfield. Warm weather is creeping up on us, so it's time we do a fun craft indoors with some natural materials! This month's workshop is making felted sheep from wool. These baaaad boys will keep you company indoors when you're escaping the heat! \$6.00 per person. To register, [click here](#) or call 419-747-8684.

June 15: [Board Supervisor Meeting](#), 9:00 a.m., Longview Center, 1495 W. Longview Avenue, Mansfield. If you wish to attend, please email [Erica](#) or call her at 419-747-8684.

June 17: [MWCD Cover Crop Applications Due](#). For questions, call Matt at 419-747-8687 or [email](#) him.

June 25: Family Fun Festival, 2 to 6 p.m., Malabar Farm State Park, 4050 Bromfield Rd., Lucas. Join Richland Soil and Water Conservation District, Malabar Farm, and a host of partners for this family-friendly event on the Farm. Free and open to the public. To help with the festival or be a vendor call Theresa at 419-747-8685 or [email](#) her.

[Click here](#) for the complete calendar of events.

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Board Supervisors

Brian Alt, Chairperson
Fred Cooke, Treasurer
Robert McConkie, Jr., Secretary
Lanny Hopkins, Vice Chairman
Jean McClintock, At Large

Board meetings are held the third Wednesday 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](#).

RICHLAND SOIL AND WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT
1495 W. Longview Avenue, Suite 205B, Mansfield, OH 44906
419.747.8686 | www.RichlandSWCD.net

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.

Richland Soil and Water Conservation District | 1495 W. Longview Ave, Suite 205B, Mansfield, OH 44906

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