



Richland Soil and Water Conservation District News Winter 2022

Schedule Change for E-Newsletter

Happy New Year! One change we are making this year is to lessen emails in your inbox by moving to a quarterly newsletter you'll receive in winter, spring, summer, and fall beginning with this newsletter. However, if we feel services and programs merit more attention, we'll email additional newsletters so you don't miss any news. We hope this change is better for you. Let us know what you think about this [change](#).



Thank You

Thank you to those who so generously donated funds to the District both during Richland Gives and at other times throughout last year. A special thanks to Frank Shipley, Mark and Amy Workman, Jean and John McClintock, and Susan Clewell, for their recent financial donations.

New Conservation Creation Series Underway



Join Richland Soil and Water Conservation District every second Tuesday from 6:00 to 8:00 p.m. for fun arts & crafts workshops using natural materials. Every month has a different themed project with January being a Cinnamon Snowflake. The Richland County Longview Center, the same building of our office, located at 1495 W. Longview Avenue, Mansfield, will host most of the workshops, unless noted. This is a good opportunity to enjoy fun times with friends and family.

Richland Soil and Water Conservation District will provide the materials and tools needed to make the projects. Reservations are requested for the workshops and most cost \$6.00 per person, unless noted.

The monthly workshop schedule is:

- January 11: Cinnamon Snowflake – fill your home with the warm, cozy scent of cinnamon with this snowflake to make your winter more pleasant.
- February 8: Romantic Wreath - Valentine’s Day is a big day for big hearts, so show some love with a pinecone wreath.
- March 8: Leprechaun’s Décor – enjoy making a moss ball to add greenery in the home or office.
- April 12: Glass Rain Chain – make a rain chain from recycled glass bottles at Richland County Solid Waste Management, 1125 Nussbaum Parkway, Mansfield.
- May 10: Flower Power Paper – create paper May flowers by making dried flower paper to use for stationery, scrapbooking or in other creative ways.
- June 14: Felted Sheep – make felted sheep from local Corriedale wool
- July 12: Rustic String Art – create string art on wood pieces from an easy design
- August 9: Aviary Tea Party – help our feathered friends out by creating a hanging bird feeder from teacups and saucers.
- September 13: Fall Centerpieces – design a fall centerpiece with autumn materials and recycled vases.
- October 11: Corny Wreaths - celebrate the harvest season by making a wreath with Indian corn. Corny jokes will be in abundance!
- November 8: Wine & Design – don’t be surprised if you see Bob Ross at this wine and paint workshop. A fun design to paint and a glass of wine will make for a fun evening. Note: the location and cost of this workshop is not finalized yet.
- December 13: Grapevine Tree – make a grapevine tree to get you in the Holiday mood.

Please visit our [website](#) or call 419-747-8684 for more information and to register for the workshops.

H2OHio Pancake Breakfast Thursday



beyond.

Producers, time is running out to take advantage of the H2Ohio program. The final sign-up period for the Richland County H2Ohio program is scheduled for this spring. We encourage you to attend an H2Ohio informational breakfast to learn more about the program so you don't miss this opportunity. Incorporating H2Ohio conservation programs will benefit soil and water health in Richland County and

Join Richland SWCD for free pancakes and information on the H2Ohio farmer incentive program at a pancake breakfast in January .The breakfast is free, just bring questions and your appetite! Delicious maple syrup donated by OSU at Mansfield will top the pancakes.

Date:

January 13, 7:30 a.m., Jefferson Township Hall, 115 Main Street, Bellville

Please RSVP to [Evan](#) or 419-774-7890. RSVPs are encouraged, but not required. Don't miss these flippin' good times! Click [here](#) for the flyer.

If you wish to put a H2Ohio sign in your yard, please contact [Evan](#).

Also, for current and prospective H2Ohio program participants, mark your calendar for the free **Pizza Meeting Thursday, February 17 from 6 to 8 p.m.** at the Longview Center, 1495 W. Longview Avenue, Mansfield. The finer details of Phase 2 of H2Ohio and nutrient management plan submission will be discussed. This is a great opportunity to have your questions answered.

[Register here.](#)

Farmland Preservation Program Accepting Applications

December 14 marked the Richland Soil & Water Conservation District's first completed easement in the Farmland Preservation Program also known as The Clean Ohio Local Agricultural Easement Purchase Program (LAEPP). Cass & Lisa Gwartz applied to the program and their farm has been approved by the Ohio Department of Agriculture (ODA) Office of Farmland Preservation in conjunction with Richland Soil & Water Conservation District, who acts as the local sponsor for the program. This means their farm is protected by a perpetual easement from future commercial development and will remain a farm for generations to come. Thank you, Cass and Lisa for enrolling in the program! To learn more about why the Gwartz family decided to enroll their farm in the program, watch this [video](#).



If you would like to consider the advantages of preserving your farmland for future generations, there are two options.

(1) The Clean Ohio Local Agricultural Easement Purchase Program (LAEPP) provides funding to farmland owners for placing an agricultural easement on their property. Monies are issued for up to 75 percent of the appraised value of a farm's development rights. A payment cap has been set at \$2,000 per acre, with a maximum of \$500,000 per farm. All easement transactions are recorded on the property deed and transfer with the land to successive owners. Funds from the purchase of these easements are invested in the local economy

by the landowners who use them by expanding their farming operations, purchasing new equipment, reducing debt, adding conservation practices, planning for retirement, sending their children to college or for other purposes. When the state purchases a farmland easement, the proceeds are plowed into Ohio's economy.

(2) The Agricultural Easement Donation Program (AEDP) is a tool for landowners to protect their farm's soils, natural resource features, and scenic open space. It provides landowners the opportunity to donate the easement rights on viable farmland to the Ohio Department of Agriculture (ODA). The department assures the land remains in agricultural use forever. The standard cost for services needed to secure the easement (i.e., title examination, title policy, escrow, closing and recordation) are covered by ODA. All easement transactions are permanent. They are recorded on the property deed and will transfer with the land to successive owners.

The 2022 Farmland Preservation Program for Richland County is open, and we are accepting applications thru March 1, 2022. For additional information visit the ODA [webpage](#) on Farmland Preservation, go to the Richland SWCD [website](#) or contact [Matt Wallace](#) at 419-747-8687 for details.

Get Your Pond Questions Ready For the Pond Clinic



Have you ever thought about putting in a new [pond](#), how to maintain an existing pond, what fish you should stock, or just how to maintain your pond? Richland Soil & Water

Conservation District is hosting a [Pond Clinic](#) March 1 from 5:30 until 7:30 p.m. Steve Fender of Fenders Fish Hatchery in Baltic Ohio will lead the discussion and answer your questions. SWCD staff members along with Ashland and Morrow Soil and Water Conservation Districts will also assist in the program and answer questions. Children's activities and light refreshments will be available. Register [here](#).

Need to order fish for your pond? Order fish March 1 to April 15. Pick up is at the Richland County Fairgrounds Friday, April 22 at 10:00 a.m. If you wish to order, please [click here](#).

Don't Leave Your Field (or Garden) Bare

The 2022 MWCD Cover Crop program will accept applications for

eligible properties within the assessment boundary in May. For information, visit our [website](#) or 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, covers and rye. They are great for soil and water health.

Photo courtesy of OSU.

A Technician's Journal: Underground Livestock

Winter is setting in and Theresa and I are bundled in jackets as we step out of the vehicle. We are at the Hurst home: a few miles north of Plymouth, just over the Huron County line. Barnyard sounds drift over the air from the building and shop to the right. A few small, old tractors peak out at us from the shadows of the open shop. A small flock of tan and brown Muscovy ducks waddle here and there around the pond in the front yard.



We meet Gerald in the basement of his home. He is the man we've come to see. He's tall and broad, hair cropped short, with a friendly smile and large hands that I'm sure have seen many days of hard work. The garage is full of an assortment of tools, bikes, and toys. He greets us warmly.

Gerald and his family are Old-Order Mennonites, and we've come today to ask him how the Conservation District can better serve the Mennonite community in Richland County with our educational programming and technical conservation assistance. As we converse, I ask him what he would like us to know about the Mennonite way of life. He pauses for a second. Then he proceeds to tell me that their way of life emphasizes a life lived simply, the community coming together to assist and support each other, and the stewardship of what has been given to them, among other things.

For Gerald, the stewardship aspect of his culture has especially taken root. Pun intended. The conversation in his garage turns from Mennonite culture to cover crops, perhaps Gerald's favorite subject. His eyes seem to light up at the idea of future workshops with well-known agriculture conservation leaders and cover crop specialists. Before we leave, he insists that we see his own cover crops on his field and garden.

We cinch up our coats again and head to the end of his driveway, where the garden is covered in green in mid-November. Vetch, clover, radish, and a mixture of other plants have completely blanketed the soil. Wielding a shovel, Gerald wastes no time plunging into the springy ground and showing us the resulting clod he has dug up. Roots are intertwined all throughout, and little bugs and worms are spotting squeezing through pockets in the soil. Some of his neighbors scoff at the cover crops that he plants because they can't feed livestock like corn or hay. Gerald proudly retorts, "But I'm feeding 100 million livestock, underground!" And the evidence is on the tip of his shovel. Gerald stewards his land by giving back to the soil. The cover crops that he plants help to remedy his soil compaction issues by their root structures, which also creates more space for air infiltration into the ground. Some cover crops, including clover and vetch, fixate nitrogen to the soil, an essential crop nutrient. Furthermore, the roots and matter of dead cover crops do indeed feed millions and millions of soil-dwelling organisms, increasing soil organic matter.

Gerald is a student of the land and understands the meaning of stewardship to include the soil where his food and livelihood come from. And he's an enthusiastic student, no less, eager to dig into the soil and learn by trial and error. He's a local conservation hero in my book. I want to be a steward like Gerald.

Evan Stern, RSWCD Technician

New Year, New MS4 Theme: Trees - Reduce and Clean Stormwater

This year we will be sharing with you how trees help manage stormwater and other benefits trees provide. Did you know, trees are the most productive filters on the planet, starting from their canopy down to their roots? They 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. This reduces the speed and amount of precipitation that reaches the ground and becomes stormwater runoff. A tree's root system takes in various pollutants and reduces the effects of erosion. An average tree can catch and hold onto 700 to 1000 gallons of rainwater a year. (Multiple Sources)



To find out an estimate of what the tree outside your window may be doing for you and the environment go to [My Tree](#). This **estimator** tool will give you information such as carbon dioxide sequestered, stormwater runoff avoided, air pollution removed each year and a valuation of the carbon Dioxide stored to date.

Keep an eye out for information on our upcoming Rain Garden – Rain Barrel Workshop in late March. We would be happy to see you there and answer your questions after the presentation. Time and location to be announced.

To find out more about Trees - Reduce and Clean Stormwater and the MS4 program, contact [Dan](#), call 419-747-8077 or visit the MS4 page on the [website](#).

Make sure to stop by the Clear Fork FFA Alumni [Tree Seedling Sale](#) April 1. Please remember trees are available on a first come basis while supplies last.

2021 Accomplishments



What services and programs did we provide in 2021 and what is coming up in 2022? Read this article for some of the [2021 highlights](#) and check the [2022 event calendar](#) for events planned so far this year.

Important Dates

January 11: Conservation Creation Workshop: Cinnamon Snowflake, \$6.00 per person, 6 to 8 p.m., Longview Center, 1495 W. Longview Avenue, Mansfield. [Click here](#) to register.

January 13: [H2Ohio Pancake Breakfast](#), Free, 7:30 a.m., Jefferson Township Hall, RSVP encouraged, but not required.

January 14: [Conservation Stewardship Program \(CSP\) Application Deadline](#)
Helps agricultural producers maintain and improve their existing conservation systems and adopt additional conservation activities.

[Environmental Quality Incentives Program \(EQIP\) Application Deadline](#)

Provides financial and technical assistance to agricultural producers to address natural resource concerns and deliver environmental benefits

[Regional Conservation Partnership Program \(RCPP\) Application Deadline](#)

Promotes coordination between NRCS and its partners to deliver conservation assistance to producers and landowners.

February 8: Conservation Creation Workshop: Romantic Wreath, \$6.00 per person, 6 to 8 p.m., Longview Center, 1495 W. Longview Avenue, Mansfield. [Click here](#) to register.

February 17: H2Ohio pizza meeting, free, 6 to 8 p.m., Longview Center, 1495 W. Longview Avenue, Mansfield. For new and current H2Ohio program participants. Finer details of Phase 2 and nutrient management plan submission will be discussed. Light dinner provided. [Register here.](#)

March 1: Pond Clinic, Free, 5:30 to 7:30 p.m., Longview Center, 1495 W. Longview Avenue, Mansfield. [Register here.](#)

March 1: Applications due for [Farmland Preservation Program](#)

March 8: Conservation Creation Workshop: Leprachun's Decor, \$6.00 per person, 6 to 8 p.m., Longview Center, 1495 W. Longview Avenue, Mansfield. [Click here](#) to register.

March 22: Rain Garden and Rain Barrel Workshop, 6 to 8 pm, Free, Location to Be Determined. Further details will be posted on the [website](#) when available.

March 22: Cover Crop Workshop, 6 to 8 pm, Free, Longview Center, 1495 W. Longview Avenue, Mansfield. Further details will be posted on the [website](#) when available.

March 31: Tentative ranking date for [Conservation Stewardship Program \(CSP\)](#) fiscal year 2023 renewals.

April 1: Clear Fork FFA Alumni Tree Seedling Sale. Three locations. Seedlings available on a first come basis while supplies last.

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

SWCD Staff

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Board Supervisors

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

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.

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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.

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