

**UNION SOIL AND WATER  
CONSERVATION DISTRICT**

**ANNUAL PLAN OF  
OPERATIONS**

**2023**

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All programs and assistance of the Union Soil and Water Conservation District are available without regard to race, color, religion, age, marital status, handicap, or national origin.

# INTRODUCTION

The Union Soil and Water Conservation District (USWCD) staff have prepared an Annual Plan of Operations (APO) setting forth the problems and critical areas in Union County requiring conservation planning and treatment. Goals to be obtained and methods of obtaining these goals are set forth in the following plan of operations.

Our overall priority is to provide the best service possible to the landowners, operators, and people of Union County. Our services will be provided on controlling soil erosion and improving the water quality of Union County's ditches, streams, and wetlands. Educating the community on soil conservation and water quality is our most effective means of delivering conservation on the land.

## ***Mission Statement***

*To promote, preserve, and enhance the wise use of our natural resources for the people of Union County by providing technical, financial, and educational assistance.*

## ***Vision Statement***

*To promote and locally lead soil and water conservation efforts within Union County.*

### ***Board Supervisors***

Rick Weigand, Chair

Andy Clarridge, Vice-Chair

Cheryl Trivisonno, Secretary

Matt Staley, Fiscal Agent/Treasurer

Randy Trapp, Member

### ***District Staff***

Brent Nickel, District Administrator/Wildlife Specialist

Sherry Maisenbacher, Administrative Assistant

Mark Watkins, District Technician

Ross Carter, District Technician

Joe Eads, Drainage Maintenance Supervisor

Matt Archer, Drainage Maintenance Technician

Stephen Johnson, District Technician

Joseph Grove, Urban Technician

### ***NRCS Staff***

Ron Nieman, District Conservationist

LaRae Baker, Resource Conservationist

Adam Slappy, Soil Conservationist

## **Cooperation with Other Agencies**

### **Farm Service Agency, FSA**

The FSA County Committee and the District will cooperate on conservation provisions of the current Farm Bill and the impact on Union County producers who participate in USDA programs. The district will provide technical assistance to cooperators with highly erodible land and wetlands to remain in compliance with Farm Bill Conservation provisions.

### **Natural Resources Conservation Services (NRCS)**

Soil and Water Conservation Districts have formed a close working bond with the NRCS. The staff of the NRCS provide technical assistance to local land managers, SWCDs, and many other entities. The NRCS has a staff of technical specialists in many different fields to aid in solving a wide range of natural resource problems

### **Ohio Department of Agriculture (ODA) Division of Soil and Water Conservation (DSWC)**

Provides administrative and technical support for county SWCDs. ODA-DSWC promotes the Agricultural Pollution Abatement Program and environmental awareness through conservation education programs.

### **Ohio Division of Wildlife (DOW)**

The DOW is our wildlife management partner. We work closely with the wildlife officer and wildlife biologist in Union County.

### **Ohio Federation of Soil and Water Conservation Districts (OFSWCD)**

Provides locally driven solutions to natural resource concerns at both the rural and urban settings of the SWCD's in various capacities. They do this through legislative advocacy, public outreach, grant support, training, and development programs to better enable SWCD's to serve their communities.

**Objective 1: Training****Goal:** Pursue continuing education opportunities for supervisors and office staff.

<b><u>Action Items</u></b>	<b><u>Responsibility/Partners</u></b>	<b><u>Completion Date</u></b>
NACD Annual Meeting	USWCD Board and Staff / NACD	February 11 - 15, 2023
OFSWCD Annual Partnership Meeting	USWCD Board and Staff / OFSWCD, and OASWCDE	February 20 - 22, 2023
ODNR DOW Diversity Conference	Brent Nickel / ODNR DOW	March 1, 2022
Area IV Winter Supervisor & Employee Meeting	USWCD Board and Staff / OFSWCD and Area IV Directors	December-2023
ODA Administrative Development Program (ADP)	USWCD Board and Staff / ODA	2023
Provide displays for promotion of SWCD / NRCS programs	Brent Nickel / USWCD Staff	2023
Spray license certification – Obtain/Keep (test every 3 years)	Joe Eads / ODA and OSU Extension	2023
SWCD Wildlife Specialist Training	Brent Nickel ODNR DOW	2023
Technician Development Program (TDP)	Joseph Grove, Ross Carter, Stephen Johnson, and USWCD Staff / ODA and NRCS	2023
Obtain Notary Public License (renew every 5 years)	Sherry Maisenbacher Union County Records Dept	Expires June 24, 2023

**Objective 2: Technical Assistance**

**Goal:** Work with Union County landowners and partners to provide technical assistance for natural resource concerns.

<b><u>Action Items</u></b>	<b><u>Responsibility/Partners</u></b>	<b><u>Completion Date</u></b>
Inspection of Arno Renner, Erna Bailey, and Don & Marge Bailey Agriculture easements held by ODA	Mark Watkins and Joseph Grove / ODA	December-2023
"Assist NRCS with conservation programs and engineering	Mark Watkins, Stephen Johnson, and Ross Carter / NRCS	2023
Provide technical assistance in the areas of erosion, sediment, stormwater control/management (as requested)	Mark Watkins, Stephen Johnson, and Ross Carter / Engineer, Health Department, Twp. Trustees, and City of Marysville	2023
Respond to pollution abatement complaints; work with appropriate parties to resolve the issue; maintain up-to-date complaints; Record in Beehive	Mark Watkins, Stephen Johnson, and Ross Carter / ODA, EPA, and Union County Health Department	2023
Provide new pond site evaluations / planning (as requested)	Brent Nickel and Mark Watkins / USWCD Staff /	2023
862 Mid-Contract Management (MCM's) & Re-Enrollment Inspections, Assessments, and landowner meetings	Brent Nickel, NRCS, and FSA / Pheasants Forever	2023
Assist landowners in preserving their farmland through ODA's Landowner Agricultural Easement Purchase Program (LAEPP).	Joseph Grove / USWCD Staff	2023
OACI perform surveys, establish methods to improve water quality in Ohio and to increase the number of best management practices being implemented on farms.	Joseph Grove / OFSWCD	2023

**Objective 3: Education****Goal:** Provide and promote conservation education opportunities.

<b><u>Action Items</u></b>	<b><u>Responsibility/Partners</u></b>	<b><u>Completion Date</u></b>
Area IV Envirothon - Promote/encourage participation by Union County Students	USWCD Staff / OFSWCD	April 25, 2023
Soil Stewardship Week – Provide NACD Soil & Water Stewardship Materials and speakers to churches/schools if funding allows. (as requested,)	Sherry Maisenbacher / Local Churches and Schools (upon request)	April 30 – May 7, 2023
Offer Don Cook Memorial 4-H Camp Scholarships – Co-sponsor w/Cook family (4)	Sherry Maisenbacher / USWCD Board, Dave Cook, and Dean Cook	April 26, 2023
Conservation Tillage Breakfast Meetings - planning meetings	Mark Watkins, Hardin, Logan, & Union SWCD's, OSU Extension, and NRCS / Local Ag Businesses	2023
Science Fair Judging-Union County (as requested)	USWCD Staff / Union County Local Schools	2023
Union County FFA Wildlife Judging Teams - provide information (as requested)	Brent Nickel / ODNR and DOW	2023
<u>School Presentations:</u> Groundwater Simulator, Enviroscope, In Stream Studies/Sampling/ Water, Quality Testing, AR Sandbox, Passport to Fishing, Archery, etc. The Lorax, and “Pave It or Save It” to discuss topics Relating to stormwater, groundwater, soil conservation, water quality, and Development	Brent Nickel and Joseph Grove / Union County Local Schools	2023
Indoor Pond Clinic w/OSU Extension (last one held 9/26/18)	Brent Nickel / ODNR and DOW/ OSU Extension	2023



**Objective 4: Drainage Maintenance (DM)**

**Goal:** Promote importance of and perform continued maintenance for the Union County Drainage Maintenance Program.

<b><u>Action Items</u></b>	<b><u>Responsibility/Partners</u></b>	<b><u>Completion Date</u></b>
Organization and implementation of Union County landowner ditch petition projects (940 / 6131)	Joe Eads / USWCD staff, Union County Commissioners (UCC) and Union County Engineer (UCE)	2023
Maintain bookkeeping to track petition ditch and subdivision accounts. (114 Active accts.)	Sherry Maisenbacher / Union County Auditor	2023
Maintain DM Time entries and post to the spreadsheet monthly	Sherry Maisenbacher / Joe Eads	2023
Maintain historical records pertaining to County petition ditch projects.	Sherry Maisenbacher / Joe Eads	2023
Manage maintenance program for current maintained ditches and subdivisions	Joe Eads / USWCD staff and UCE	2023
Manage the construction/inspections of new petition ditch projects.	Joe Eads and Matt Archer / USWCD Engineering staff / (UCE)	2023
Perform maintenance, mowing and inspections on all maintained ditches and subdivisions	Drainage Maintenance Technicians / Joe Eads	2023
Provide engineering and design for proposed petition ditch projects.	USWCD Engineering staff / UCE	2023
Punch List Walk-Throughs	Joe Eads / UCE	2023

**Objective 4: Drainage Maintenance (continued)**

**Goal:** Promote importance of and perform continued maintenance for the Union County Drainage Maintenance Program.

<b><u>Action Items</u></b>	<b><u>Responsibility/Partners</u></b>	<b><u>Completion Date</u></b>
Special Assessments: Maintain special assessment spreadsheets update splits, combinations, and transfers.	Joe Eads, Joseph Grove, and Sherry Maisenbacher / Union County Auditor	2023
Mapping, inventory, and coordination of log jam removal project on Mill Creek.	Joe Eads / USWCD staff, UCC, UCE, and UC Township Trustees	2023

**Objective 5: Wildlife Education/Assistance**

**Goal:** Promote and implement wildlife conservation and wildlife management in Union County.

<b><u>Action Items</u></b>	<b><u>Responsibility/Partners</u></b>	<b><u>Completion Date</u></b>
Annual Wildlife Specialist Report to ODNR DOW	Brent Nickel / ODNR DOW	July 1, 2023
Organize and promote National Hunting and Fishing Day (NHFD) @ Heart of Ohio Fishing Club	Brent Nickel / John Carl, ODNR DOW	September 23, 2023
Attend Monthly Union County PF meetings to answer questions, promote proper conservation/habitat practice establishment and maintenance.	Brent Nickel / Union County Pheasants Forever Chapter #535	2023
Attend ODNR DOW District 1 Meetings, Trainings and Events	Brent Nickel / ODNR DOW	2023
Develop Wildlife Conservation Education, Fishing, Hunting, and Outdoor programs to promote future generations of hunters, fishermen/women, and outdoor enthusiasts.	Brent Nickel / ODNR DOW	2023
Pond Management Visits & Pond Fish Kill Investigations (as requested)	Brent Nickel / ODNR DOW	2023
Promoting, implementing, monitoring, and maintaining contact with conservation practice sites.	Brent Nickel / NRCS	2023
Respond to wildlife damage complaints; offer human-wildlife conflict resolutions (as requested)	Brent Nickel / ODNR DOW	2023

**Objective 5: Wildlife Education/Assistance (continued)**

**Goal:** Promote and implement wildlife conservation and wildlife management in Union County.

<b><u>Action Items</u></b>	<b><u>Responsibility/Partners</u></b>	<b><u>Completion Date</u></b>
Secure funding to promote and hold Outdoor Education/ Fishing Days throughout the county at township & local park as requested. (1 grant)	Brent Nickel / ODNR DOW and the Village of Richwood	2023
Wildlife Management Ordinance Execution – City of Marysville (as requested)	Brent Nickel / ODNR DOW and the City of Marysville	2023
Wildlife Management, Monitoring & Recommendations	Brent Nickel / ODNR DOW	2023

**Objective 6: Urban**

**Goal:** Promote and assist with implementation of urban conservation Best Management Practices (BMPs).

<b><u>Action Items</u></b>	<b><u>Responsibility/Partners</u></b>	<b><u>Completion Date</u></b>
Address/assist Union County property owners with drainage complaints. (as needed)	Mark Watkins / USWCD Staff	2023
Check outlets for drainage with Union County Health Department (as requested)	USWCD Staff / Union County Health Department	2023
Construction Site Reviews (as requested)	USWCD Staff	2023
Encourage Township Trustees to consider drainage before issuing zoning permits for development.	Joe Eads, Matt Archer, and USWCD Staff	2023
Promote BMPs for urban sites.	USWCD Staff / NRCS	2023
Provide assistance to landowners with drainage concerns.	USWCD Staff	2023
Review subdivision plats to address drainage/water quality concerns. (as needed)	Joe Eads and Matt Archer / Joseph Grove - LUC Regional Planning Commission	2023
USWCD input on proposed changes to subdivision regulations. (as needed)	Joe Eads / Joseph Grove - LUC Regional Planning Commission	2023

**Objective 7: Resource/Watershed Planning****Goal:** Promote importance of water quality in Union County.

<b><u>Action Items</u></b>	<b><u>Responsibility/Partners</u></b>	<b><u>Completion Date</u></b>
Develop promotional storm water education materials (i.e., brochures, maps, placemats)	Union SWCD Staff	2023
Hold Local Work Group meeting in conjunction with annual planning meeting	LaRae Baker, Ron Neiman, Brent Nickel, Sherry Maisenbacher and USWCD Board	April-2023
Implement and facilitate educational dealing with water quality protection water studies with Bunsold students, protection watershed tours, canoe floats, storm drain marking, stream monitoring, etc.).	Joseph Grove	Spring / Summer 2023

**Objective 8: Outreach/Public Relations****Goal:** Market importance of Union SWCD and NRCS to Union County residents.

<b><u>Action Items</u></b>	<b><u>Responsibility/Partners</u></b>	<b><u>Completion Date</u></b>
Ditch Maintenance: Provide Information (as requested)	Joe Eads / UCE and USWCD Staff	2023
Dry Hydrants: Provide Information (as requested)	Mark Watkins / Local Fire Departments	2023
Union SWCD Facebook and Web Page - maintain announcements, events, and individual pages	Sherry Maisenbacher and USWCD Staff / Union County IT	2023
Newspaper Articles (1)	Sherry Maisenbacher and USWCD Staff	2023
“Ohio Woodland Journal” – provide to Fairbanks, Marysville, and North Union High School libraries	USWCD Board and Brent Nickel / ODNr DOW	Annually
Union SWCD Annual Report published in the district newsletter.	Sherry Maisenbacher, USWCD Board and Staff	Annually
Union SWCD Cooperator of Year Award /Other recognition of deserving partners presented at the Union SWCD Annual Meeting	USWCD Board and Staff	Annually
Union SWCD Newsletters (4 digital - quarterly) - “Wild About Wildlife” & “Up the Crick” newsletter sections	Brent Nickel, Joseph Grove, and USWCD Staff	Winter, Spring, Summer & Fall 2022
Unmanned Fair Booths/Displays for Wildlife & Conservation Info.	Brent Nickel and USWCD Staff	2023

## Objective 9: Conservation Products

**Goal:** Provide variety of conservation products to Union County residents.

<u><b>Action Items</b></u>	<u><b>Responsibility/Partners</b></u>	<u><b>Completion Date</b></u>
Tree Seedling and Related Items Sale	Brent Nickel, Sherry Maisenbacher, and USWCD Staff	April-2023
Fish Fingerling Sale	Brent Nickel, Sherry Maisenbacher, and USWCD Staff	October-2023
Miscellaneous Item Sales	Sherry Maisenbacher and USWCD Staff	2023
No-till Drill Rental	Brent Nickel and USWCD Staff	2023
Straw Blower Rental	Brent Nickel and USWCD Staff	2023
Tree Planter Rental	Brent Nickel and USWCD Staff	2023
Tree Puller Rental	Brent Nickel and USWCD Staff	2023



**Objective 10: District Policies/Administration**

**Goal:** To set forth policy in conjunction with cooperating agencies in an effort to fulfill objectives of the Union Soil and Water Conservation District.

<b><u>Action Items</u></b>	<b><u>Responsibility/Partners</u></b>	<b><u>Completion Date</u></b>
Submit 2022 Cash Basis (Hinkle) Report to Auditor of State	Sherry Maisenbacher / Union County Auditor	March 1, 2023
Complete the fiduciary review - Form 11	Sherry Maisenbacher and Brent Nickel / Area IV Program Specialist	May 1, 2023
Union SWCD Annual Meeting	USWCD Board and Staff	August 2, 2023
Prepare District Budget (Annual)	Brent Nickel, Sherry Maisenbacher, and USWCD Board	Aug. / Sept. 2023
Annual Evaluations	Brent Nickel and USWCD Board	Nov. / Dec. 2023
Attend monthly county staff meetings (12)	Brent Nickel, Sherry Maisenbacher, and USWCD Board and Staff	2023
Attend/plan monthly Union SWCD board meetings (12)	Brent Nickel / Sherry Maisenbacher	2023
Maintains the bookkeeping functions for the special and district accounts	Sherry Maisenbacher and USWCD Board	2023
Maintain MOUs between District and Cooperating agencies	Brent Nickel, USWCD Board and Staff / NRCS, OSU Extension, Townships, ODNR, etc.	2023
Provide information to ODA Program Specialist	Brent Nickel and Sherry Maisenbacher / ODA-DSWC	2023

**Objective 10: District Policies/Administration (continued)**

**Goal:** To set forth policy in conjunction with cooperating agencies in an effort to fulfill objectives of the Union Soil and Water Conservation District.

<b><u>Action Items</u></b>	<b><u>Responsibility/Partners</u></b>	<b><u>Completion Date</u></b>
Research/apply/obtain grants	USWCD Staff and Board	2023
Review current policies and create new policies as needed	Brent Nickel, Sherry Maisenbacher, and USWCD Staff and Board	Annually
Schedule weekly staff meetings/review APO	Brent Nickel, Sherry Maisenbacher, and USWCD Staff	2023
Track projects, initiatives, and timesheets in Beehive & utilize information as needed.	USWCD Staff / ODA	2023
Strategic Plan (2023 - 2027) revise, update	Brent Nickel, and USWCD Staff and Board	2023