



Conservation News

VOLUME 24, No. 4

FALL 2020

Board of Supervisors

Andy Clarridge
Steve Robinson
Matt Staley
Cheryl Trivisonno
Rick Weigand

SWCD Personnel

Brent Nickel
Mark Watkins
Jeremy Burrey
Sherry Maisenbacher
Garrett Carpenter
Emmett Phelan
David Smilnak

NRCS Personnel

Ron Nieman, DC
LaRae Baker

Pheasants Forever

Mark Wallen

Union SWCD

18000 St. Rt. 4 North
Suite B
Marysville, OH 43040
937-642-5871 x 3

www.co.union.oh.us/Union-Soil-Water-Conservation-District/

OFFICE UPDATES

Due to continued concerns over the Coronavirus, the Union Soil & Water Conservation District will remain closed to the public.

Our staff is available by email, phone and by appointment. Please contact our office during business hours if you have any questions or to schedule an appointment.

For an in-person meeting, we ask that you follow all Ohio Department of Health, Center for Disease Control, and Union County Health Department procedures, recommendations, and guidelines.

Face coverings are required while visiting the office.

If you need to drop-off/pickup
call 937-642-5871 ext. 3 to schedule.

Thank you for your understanding and flexibility during this ever-changing time.

Union SWCD District Staff - Office # 937-642-5871 x 3

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David Smilnak	(ext. 2218)	dsmilnak@unioncountyohio.gov

**Would you like to receive *Conservation News* by email on a quarterly basis?
Email bnickel@unioncountyohio.gov to be included on our list.**

75th Annual Election Results

The Union Soil and Water Conservation District (SWCD) held its 75th Annual election through absentee voting, in-person voting, and through a series of Drive-Thru dates. Jocelyn Henderson, Area IV Program Specialist for the Ohio Department of Agriculture's Division of Soil and Water Conservation, announced that the candidates, Rick Weigand and Randy Trapp, will begin their new three-year term on January 1, 2021.

Congratulations!

Rick Weigand will begin his 3rd term on the Union SWCD board, and Randy Trapp will be a new board member, replacing retiring supervisor Steve Robinson.

Rick Weigand



Randy Trapp



Thank you to all of the candidates for your support of the mission of the Union SWCD. We would also like to say, thank you, to our residents and landowners for your continued commitment to the conservation of our natural resources and your participation in our elections process. We are privileged to fulfill our mission and be a valuable service to Union County!

Welcome to our New Technician—David Smilnak!



Hi, my name is David Smilnak and I am the new District Technician here at the Union SWCD. My primary duties include engineering designs and educational outreach. I'm eager to start putting plans together for grassed waterways, embankments, and any other conservation projects you and the SWCD may need. Once it is safe again, I hope to see you all at our district's workshops and clinics. Originally from Pennsylvania, I earned a Bachelor of Science in environmental resource management from Penn State. My career has taken me to upstate New York, as well as Colorado where I worked with other conservation districts and provided educational programming for agricultural communities. After completing my master's in Agricultural and Extension Education, I was accepted to The Ohio State's Agricultural Communication, Education, and Leadership doctoral program. Here in Ohio, I look forward to continuing my studies, and serving our agricultural community. Feel free to reach out at 937-209-2218 or dsmilnak@unioncountyohio.gov

Mill Creek Log Jam Project

Emmett Phelan
Drainage Project Manager Technician
18000 St. Rt. 4
Marysville OH 43040
Phone: 937-642-5871 X 2216
ephelan@unioncountyohio.gov

Thank you to all of the Townships (Liberty, Paris, Dover, Millcreek, Taylor) for providing me the opportunity to present an update of the Mill Creek Log Jam Project and answer any questions or concerns as we continue to move forward with progress. I am scheduled to meet with Taylor Township on October 20th at 7:00pm at the township hall in Broadway next. The Mill Creek Log Jam Committee is also scheduled to meet at the Union County Agricultural Center on October 14th at 1:00pm to discuss updates and options for moving forward with the project. I have been compiling data and information to put pricing together to present to the committee and gather contractor bids for the project as of late. Please contact me with any questions, suggestions and/or concerns regarding the Mill Creek Log Jam Project at

ephelan@unioncountyohio.gov or (937)642-5871ext.2216

Urban Update

SWPPP- Stormwater Pollution Protection Plan is a program that Union Soil & Water Conservation District & the City of Marysville manages. The goal of the program is to prevent sediment & pollutants from entering storm drain systems within municipal limits as developments of new residential and commercial properties continue to be constructed. Union County residents can also get involved and positively contribute to cleaner water by preventing pollutants and excess sediment from entering our waterways through storm drains. Pollutants such as: fertilizer/ herbicides, lawn waste, animal waste, motor oil/antifreeze and trash can also enter storm drains and travel to rivers and streams which negatively affects water quality upon arrival. Our rivers & streams are ultimately the sources of drinking water for many residents & wildlife within the county, so it is our responsibility to prevent pollution of these precious resources. Bethechangeforcleanwater.org is a great resource for interested residents to learn more about how to prevent the decrease of water quality standards of Union County and City of Marysville waterways.

Storm drains and ditches lead to streams and rivers, so anything that goes down them winds up in the homes of fishes, frogs, turtles, birds and mammals!



YOU can prevent pollution by:

- Picking up trash and not littering.
- Washing cars on the lawn or at the car wash instead of the driveway.
- Picking up pet waste and throwing it away.

Learn more by taking the stormwater quiz at:

<http://www.bethechangeforcleanwater.org/quiz>

BetheChange
for clean water .org

Only Rain Down the Drains and Ditches!



Help Save the Monarch Butterfly by Protecting Native Milkweed

The iconic monarch butterfly, which has long been a welcome sight in backyard gardens across Ohio, faces many threats. In Ohio, one way we can ensure future generations of monarch butterflies continue to visit flower gardens throughout our state is by protecting native milkweed plants.

Every year in the fall, monarch butterflies across the eastern U.S. and Canada begin a 3,000-mile-long journey down to wintering grounds in Mexico. In the spring, these same butterflies head back north, and delight us with their presence once again. However, this amazing journey would not be possible without milkweed, a group of plants critical to the survival of the monarch butterfly. As butterflies, monarchs can feed on the nectar of a number of different flowering plants, but as caterpillars, monarchs are entirely dependent on the availability of milkweed.

Monarch caterpillars hatch from eggs laid on milkweed plants and feed on the leaves of the plant as they grow. If these plants are mowed, removed, or sprayed with pesticides or herbicides, the caterpillars will not survive. Protecting these plants, especially during the egg-laying period from July through September, helps both monarch butterflies and caterpillars continue their life cycle and ultimately results in more monarch butterflies that can complete their journey to Mexico and back.

In the past, milkweed was viewed as a toxic weed. Today, we know that milkweed is a very important group of native plants that helps support many species of wildlife, including monarch butterflies. Learn more about ways you can help ensure these beautiful butterflies are around for generations to come by visiting the [Monarch Joint Venture](#).



Ohio Pollinator Habitat Initiative

Annual Milkweed Pod Collection

September 1st through October 30th

Contact your local Soil and Water Conservation District
[for more information](#)

Starting September 1, we will again be collecting Milkweed pods and seed to turn into plugs for use in conservation practices. We welcome your donations here at the office and are also on the lookout for healthy populations to do some organized collections.

If you have questions feel free to call
Brent Nickel at 937-642-5871 x2220

Wild About Wildlife

Brent Nickel, Union SWCD Wildlife Specialist.
bnickel@unioncountyohio.gov

Fall Wildlife, Habitat, Interests and Concerns

GOT THE APP?

The Ohio Division of Wildlife has launched a new mobile APP! The app allows convenient access to user accounts, licenses, and harvest information.

Other features include sunrise/ sunset info., interactive mapping for lakes, shooting ranges and public hunting and fishing areas.

Look for it in the App Store and Google Play.

Union County NWTF to host Youth Deer Hunt and accepting applicants for Learn2Hunt

National Wild Turkey Federation Union County Ohio is hosting a youth deer hunt and hosting another round of Learn2Hunt/ *Wild about Hunting in Union County*

Nov 21: Youth Hunt- Deer

Register at <http://unioncountynwtf.weebly.com/>

Or by calling/ texting

Casey (937)578-8492 or Mason (937)243-1912

Have you ever wanted to learn how to hunt and didn't know where to begin?

<http://unioncountynwtf.weebly.com/>

What's In-Season

Always Refer to the Current Year's Regulations.

See what is currently **"In-Season"** at this website:

<http://wildlife.ohiodnr.gov/huntingandtrappingregulations>

Fishing Regulations:

<http://wildlife.ohiodnr.gov/fishingregulations>

"Hunting With Permission" forms and **Hunting Regulations** and **Fishing Regulations** are available at our office.

Wetland Dike Problems?

For anyone experiencing chronic damage from muskrats, now is the time to recruit trappers to reduce the explosive muskrat population. In Union County, the regulated muskrat trapping season is from **November 10, 2020** through **February 28, 2021**. I have a list of willing trappers in my office if you need someone to assist you.

Don't Forget Your Best Friend

State public hunting areas opened back up to training and exercising on Sept. 1. Several hunting seasons are open also. Get out there with your best friend and enjoy the early season, either with the gun or just to get some exercise and do some scouting for other upcoming seasons. The work you put in now can pay big dividends come Upland Hunting Season.

COVID strikes again! Ugh!!

All annual youth events hosted by the Union County Pheasants Forever Chapter have been cancelled for 2020. Hopefully things will get back to a more normal status for 2021.

Spot an owl this winter? Let us know!

You may be eligible to receive a cash reward!

ohiodominican.edu/OwlProject

Supported by Columbus Audubon

Barn Owls are often found in **barns, silos, and other farm buildings.**

The **Central Ohio Owl Project** is documenting the range of Ohio's wintering Barn Owls.

Questions? Email mathysb@ohiodominican.edu

Call/text (937) 309-1839

All reports will be kept strictly confidential

Barn Owl

Photo by Ken Busch



Injured—or what appears to be **Helpless Wildlife?**

Call or contact the **Ohio Wildlife Center** – 614-793-WILD (9453) – then follow their every instruction!

<http://www.ohiowildlifecenter.org/dnn/>

Drainage Maintenance Quarterly Update

Drainage Maintenance has completed the following work in the Summer quarter. Crews have stayed busy with a variety of different projects. Covid-19 Has presented some challenges for us but we seem to be getting back to the new normal. We recently held our first public hearing for the Beery- Morris project. We would like to send a special thank you to the Leesburg Township Trustees for allowing us to hold the meeting in the Fire Station so we could properly socially distance in an open-air setting.

We plan to dip out Duns Run this fall and winter. Adjacent landowners will receive notification via mail on the plans for the clean out. We also plan to clean out and repair sections of the beach ditch. Estimates are also being collected for the repair of the concrete channel in New California. The channel is in the dry basin and needs some repairs.

Projects this past quarter:

- Mowed Northern ditches
- Pleasant Ridge basin clean up
- Mitchell crossing retention basin pump down/ outlet structure clean out
- New California dry basin concrete channel clean out and grubbing around perimeter
- Fixed hole in bank on Bown ditch
- Mowed subdivision retention basins
- Cleaned retention basin outlet structure in Autumn ridge
- Stream Corridor clean up in Autumn ridge
- Dunn's run surface swales/ spot dip
- Pleasant View Farms waterway reworked and reseeded
- Surface swales/ blowout and headwall repair on Ottawa

If you have any drainage related questions, please feel free to contact our office.

Jeremy Burrey
Drainage Maintenance Supervisor
18000 St. Rt. 4
Marysville OH 43040
Phone: 937-642-5871 X 2228
jburrey@unioncountyohio.gov



Grassed Waterways- A Tried and True Fix for Gully Erosion

By: LaRae Baker, NRCS Resource Conservationist

Gully erosion occurs in fields where water concentrates and cuts into the soil. A misconception is that no-till planting can prevent gully erosion. Another is that conventional tillage creates gully erosion. The truth is that rainwater can fall with enough velocity to dislodge soil and that concentrated surface water can scour the soil surface first creating rills then creating larger gullies over time. Ephemeral gullies can be active or inactive and may even disappear for a time. As with most things in life, there is a sliding scale and variables will affect how fast or slow the gully grows.



Ephemeral gully in field. Photo credit: Fairfield SWCD

The most important thing to remember is you are likely losing a lot more soil to erosion if you use tillage to “fill in” the gully than if you fix the problem. Tillage loosens the soil from other parts of the field and moves them into the eroded area which is more likely to erode again over time. No-till fields with ephemeral gullies are more likely to stabilize once they reach the old plow layer but also need addressed if the gully continues to actively erode.

Since the passage of the Soil Conservation Act of 27 April 1935, the grassed waterway has been one of the most tried and true ways of fixing an area prone to soil gully erosion. The Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) and Soil and Water Conservation District (SWCD) have been installing them for decades because they work. The Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) not only has cost-share to install the waterway but also pays an annual rental for 10 years.

The Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) is another way to potentially assist with the cost-share for installing waterways. There is no rental associated with EQIP but may cover areas not eligible under CRP. Keep in mind there is no income on an area if it can't be planted or if the crops get washed away every year. Fixing the issue now will create a more economical and sustainable system in your field for the years to come.



*Grassed waterway properly maintained.
Photo courtesy of Jason Johnson Iowa NRCS*

Contact the office at 937-642-5871 x3 or email LaRae.Baker@usda.gov to schedule a field visit between crops to allow for proper planning and survey work to be completed for your farm.

SWCD Equipment for Sale and Rent

The following items are available for sale:

- | | |
|---------------------------|--|
| • Marking flags | \$10 per 100 flags, available year round |
| • Soil Survey Narratives | \$15 each or free online, available year round |
| • Topographic Quadrangles | \$6 each, available year round |
| • Soil Survey Aerial Maps | Free |
| • Fish Fingerlings | Prices vary, sale held in Fall |
| • Tree Seedlings | Prices vary, sale is in April |



The following equipment is available for rent: (subject to schedule and availability)

- | | |
|--|--|
| • John Deere 1590 No-Till Drill (15-foot) | \$12/ acre w/ \$125 minimum charge |
| • Tree Puller | \$100 per day
\$150 per weekend
\$300 per week |
| • Straw Blower (tailgate mulcher)
- \$150 deposit | \$75 per day
\$100 per weekend |
| • Tree Planter | \$40 per day |

**All equipment must be scheduled through the Union SWCD office
at 937-642-5871 during regular business hours.
Please contact Brent Nickel at ext. 2220 to schedule.**

2020 Affiliate Members

Diamond Memberships



KG Agri Products, Inc.

Platinum Memberships



Scotts **Miracle-Gro**

Gold Memberships



Silver Memberships



Dean E. Cook

Nationwide
Insurance



OHIGRO
Inc.



Seed
Consultants

Bronze Memberships



Become a Union SWCD Affiliate Member

<https://www.unioncountyohio.gov/affiliate-members--donors>



Affiliate membership dollars are used to help contribute to a variety of natural resource education efforts for Union County residents. Such efforts include field days, pond clinics, displays, tours, camp scholarships and presentations to schools and civic groups.

Membership Benefits:

Listed in our Annual Report

Listed in our Annual Meeting Program

Recognized in our quarterly newsletter

Listed on our website

(2) Annual Meeting tickets

Recognized on Annual Meeting PowerPoint

Please complete the form below:

Business Name: _____

Contact Name: _____

Email: _____ Phone: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Website: _____

Choose one of the following Affiliate memberships available:

_____ Diamond Membership	\$500 or more
_____ Platinum Membership	\$250 - \$499
_____ Gold Membership	\$100 - \$249
_____ Silver Membership	\$50 - \$99
_____ Bronze Membership	\$25 - \$49

Send this form along with a check payable to: Union SWCD
18000 State Route 4, Suite B
Maryville, OH 43040

If you have any questions please contact Sherry Maisenbacher at
937-642-5871 x 2221 or smaisenbacher@unioncountyohio.gov

Upcoming Events:

October 8, 2020 - Union SWCD Board Meeting - 7:00 PM in the Ag Center - Buckeye Mtg. Room

October 12, 2020 - Columbus Day HOLIDAY - Office Closed

October 13, 2019 - Union SWCD Fish Sale Pick Up - 9:30 AM at the Ag Center Parking Lot

November 11, 2020 - Veteran's Day HOLIDAY - Office Closed

November 12, 2020 - Union SWCD Board Meeting - 6:00 PM in the Ag Center - Buckeye Mtg. Room

November 26, 2020 - Thanksgiving Day HOLIDAY - Office Closed

December 10, 2020 - Union SWCD Board Meeting - 6:00 PM in the Ag Center - Buckeye Mtg. Room

December 24,25, 2020 - Christmas HOLIDAY - Office Closed

January 1, 2021 - New Years HOLIDAY - Office Closed

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The Union Soil and Water Conservation District and the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) prohibit discrimination in their programs on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, religion, age, disability, political beliefs and marital or familial status.

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