



Conservation News

VOLUME 27, No.4

FALL 2023

Board of Supervisors

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Andy Clarridge
Matt Staley
Cheryl Trivisonno
Randy Trapp

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Union SWCD

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Marysville, OH 43040
937-642-5871 x 4

www.unioncountyohio.gov/USWCD

78th Annual Meeting Highlights

Thank you to everyone who joined us for the Union Soil & Water Conservation District Annual Meeting & Banquet on August 2nd at the Der Dutchman Restaurant in Plain City, Ohio.

An election of supervisors was held to start off the evening. We had a great evening with 66 people in attendance.

Congratulations to Randy Trapp and Rick Weigand on being re-elected to our Union SWCD board!



Randy Trapp is currently serving his 1st term on the Union Soil and Water Board.

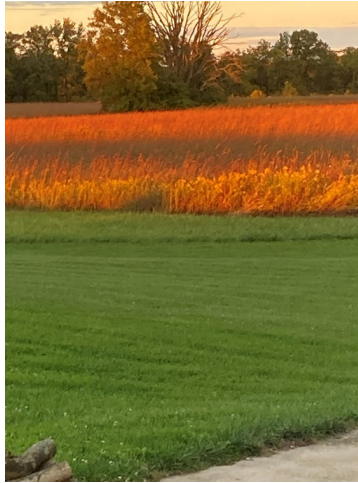


Rick Weigand is currently serving his 3rd term on the Union Soil and Water Board.

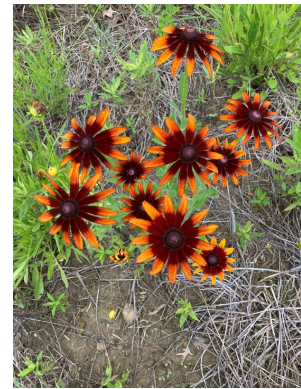
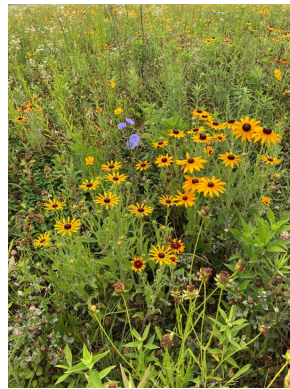
**Would you like to receive our Conservation News by email quarterly?
Email bnickel@unioncountyohio.gov to be included on our list.**

Attendees enjoyed the presentation given by Steve Graham. Steve's presentation included the practices he implemented on his farm and the CREP program.

Graham Farm—Prairie in the Summer & Fall



Graham Farm—Prairie in the Summer & Fall



Congratulations to Steve Graham, he is Union SWCD's 2023 Cooperator of the Year. Graham Farm is owned and operated by Steve & Cathy Graham.



THANK YOU!

Union SWCD and Staff would like to thank the following supporters for helping make our 78th Annual Meeting a success.

Affiliate Members

Al's Leather Craft LTD

Benny's Pizza

Bluescreek Farm Meats & Market

Bokes Creek Orchard

Bokes Creek Hot Shots

Connolly Companies

Cook Real Estate

Dean Cook Nationwide Insurance

Grainery, The

Heart of Ohio Fish & Game Assoc.

Millcreek Gardens LLC

MitchellAgri

Mitchell's Berries & Blooms

MJS Oil, Inc., dba Smith Distributing

Ohigro Inc.

Richwood Tire Center

Seed Center, The

Seed Consultants

Select Sires, Inc.

Smart Oil, LLC

Steve Stolte

Union County Farm Bureau

Vititoe Construction, Inc

Door Prize Donors

1487 Brewery

A-1 Advanced Plumbing

ASE Feed & Supply LLC

Benny's Pizza

Blue's Creek Farm

Bokes Creek Orchard

Boston's Gourmet Pizza & Sports Bar

Cherry Hawk Farm Apple Orchard

Crazy Richards Peanut Butter

Der Dutchman Restaurant

Dutch Mill Greenhouse

Grainery, The

MAiZE at Little Darby Creek, The

Mitchell's Berries & Blooms

Ramsey's Parkway , Pizza & Pub

Smart Oil, LLC

Suds Brothers (Connolly Companies)

Union Station 1820

Drainage Maintenance Update

Drainage Maintenance will be conducting our annual inspections in the next couple of months. We will be using a John Deere Gator to make our way around the county. If you see a Gator driving along the ditch on your property, look for our truck and trailer by the road. Our trucks are all clearly marked with the Union Soil and Water logo.

Our ditch maintenance crews have been busy performing various work orders consisting of mowing the southern ditches, spraying inlet and outlet pipes, repairing washouts, and doing dip outs on several agricultural drainage ditches to provide positive flow.

The Morris-Beery ditch petition project in the northern portion of the County is nearing completion.



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

Joe Eads

Drainage Maintenance Supervisor

18000 State Route 4, Ste. D Marysville, OH 43040

937-209-2236

jeads@unioncountyohio.gov

Technical Activities

Union SWCD's Technicians have been working diligently to install a number of grassed waterways this summer in conjunction with the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) and Farm Service Agency (FSA).



As the season comes to a close, we now have time to reflect on this year's work and to start planning for the next.



Grassed waterways are wide, shallow, vegetated channels that help to control and prevent soil erosion while also improving water quality. Projects this summer have included the installation and seeding of nearly 13 acres of waterway.

If your farm has soil erosion problems, we may be able to help!

Contact Union County FSA for additional program information and eligibility.

Wild About Wildlife

Brent Nickel, Union SWCD Wildlife Specialist.
brent.nickel@unioncountyohio.gov

Fall Wildlife and Habitat Interests and Concerns

Share Your Love for the Outdoors - Take A Kid Hunting

Hunting season is here and now's the time to get into that Hunter's Education Class. The Division of Wildlife offers three types of certification courses; instructor-led training, home study courses, and online. The online course has a \$15 fee, but all other options are Free!

For more information about when and where these classes are available, see the web page below:

[ODNR : Hunter Education Courses](#)

If your young one isn't quite ready for Hunter's Education, check out the Hunter's Apprentice Program. Apprentice hunting licenses or fur taker permits allow new hunters and trappers, both adults and youth, to sample the experience of hunting under the mentorship of a licensed adult prior to taking a hunter or trapper education course.

Several Youth Hunting Opportunities are
available in Union County:

Pheasants Forever Chapter #535-Union County, Ohio

Oct. 21: Youth Hunt - Pheasant
Register by Oct 15 by calling
Brent (740)262-6068

National Wild Turkey Federation Union County Ohio

Nov 18: Youth Hunt- Deer
Register [HERE!](#)
Or by calling/ texting
Casey (937)578-8492 or Mason (937)243-1912

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, 2023** through **February 29, 2024**. I have a list of willing trappers in my office if you need someone to assist you.

Wildlife Conflict Management

...Forget Control!

Experiencing wildlife conflicts? Try the solutions associated with this wildlife conflict resolution website!

The Internet Center for Wildlife Damage Management:

<http://www.icwdm.org/>

What's In-Season

Hunting Regulations:

<https://ohiodnr.gov/discover-and-learn/safety-conservation/about-ODNR/wildlife/hunting-trapping>

Fishing Regulations:

<https://ohiodnr.gov/buy-and-apply/hunting-fishing-boating/fishing-resources>

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

The Division of Wildlife has an "APP" for that!

<https://ohiodnr.gov/buy-and-apply/hunting-fishing-boating/hunting-resources/huntfishoh-mobile-app>

Get the APP and do all of your Division of Wildlife business right from your phone! Don't forget to update your APP on an annual basis for updated hunting and fishing regulations!



OHIO LANDOWNER/HUNTER ACCESS PARTNERSHIP

- This is private property open to access for the purpose of wildlife-based recreation.
- OLHAP permit is required.
- Please practice leave no trace by packing all trash out.
- Funding for OLHAP is partially funded by grant monies in the VPA section of the Farm Bill.
- For more information on this program or to obtain your OLHAP permit visit ohiodnr.gov.



VPA-HIP

DIVISION OF WILDLIFE
OHIO DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES



**NEED A PLACE TO
HUNT?
OLHAP
has you covered!**

The Ohio Landowner/
Hunter Access Partnership
program is up and running!

Check out the great
properties enrolled in this
program to expand your
hunting opportunities.

Tallgrass Truths—Revealed! Management is your Friend...

Landowners, there is nothing wrong or "illegal" with mowing random and curving "hunt trails", or walkways, through the voluntary Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) grassland practices. It is always best to mow to an eight-inch height. Hunting trails that wind through the tall and thick vegetation will not place the landowner in "non-compliance" with the voluntary conservation practices' contracts. Up to 20% of your acreage can be mowed per year under your contract without penalty. If done in sections or strips, this will not only open up the field for wildlife to use but will also open it up more for you to use and be easier to hunt. Be sure to address any woody vegetation growth during this mowing opportunity

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>

"Humans are often wildlife's last hope for survival – not necessarily their best hope."

Ohio Pollinator Habitat Initiative Annual Milkweed Pod Collection

Our 2023 collection is open!

A large green collection bin with a yellow lid is located outside of our office at 18000 State Route 4, Suite D, Marysville, OH 43040 from September 1st through October 30, 2023. Stop by anytime to drop off your seed pods!

Each year, Soil and Water Conservation Districts across Ohio partner with the Ohio Pollinator Habitat Initiative to collect Milkweed Seed. Since the project began in 2015, volunteers have collected tens of thousands of gallons of milkweed seed pods, totaling over 22 million seeds! ODOT sows the on to "conservation corridors" designated areas along highways planted with native prairie perennials.

Milkweed is the only host plant for the Monarch butterfly for egg-laying and caterpillar rearing. It also serves as a food source for Monarchs and many other pollinator species. The disappearance of milkweed across the U.S. has contributed to the 80% decline of the eastern monarch butterfly population over the last 20 years. We are working hard to change this, and you can help! Follow these simple tips to make our 2023 even better:

- * Make sure that before you collect seed, you become familiar with common milkweed to avoid harvesting pods from similar plants such as hemp dogbane and swamp milkweed.
- * It is best to collect the pods when they are dry, grey, or brown. **IT IS IMPORTANT TO CHECK THIS.** If the center seam pops with gentle pressure, they can be harvested.
- * Store the pods in paper bags; plastic bags collect unwanted moisture.
- * Put the date and county collected on the bag when you turn them in.
- * Keep the pods in a cool, dry area until you can deliver them to the nearest collection site.
- * Leave some pods (10-25%) on the plants so that seeds have a chance to naturally disperse and do their job as an important food source for milkweed bugs and other critters.

For more information on milkweeds, refer to this video: <http://u.osu.edu/beelab/milkweed-seed/>

We thank you for your help to promote native plants and save the Monarch Butterfly!



Below the Surface: Soil Sampling and Testing

Are you wondering how well your conservation efforts work? Do you have a problem area or field and want to know why your crops aren't thriving? Or maybe you want to know how to be efficient with your manure and inorganic fertilizer application. Soil testing can help answer these questions and provides a backbone of data for your operation. A core principle of precision agriculture is you can't manage what you don't measure. Measuring nutrient, pH, and cation exchange capacity (CEC) trends on your property can guide management decisions and lead to improved yield and productivity.

Tips for soil sampling:

Most soil testing in Ohio is done in the fall after harvest. This is due to drier weather conditions, and it allows ample time for lime application to adjust soil pH. However, if you can get into your fields, the spring also works and could cut down on wait times for lab results. The most important thing is to test during the same time each year to cut back on seasonal variability.

Sample collection methods vary, but popular practices include zonal and grid sampling. The practice you choose depends on scale and time. You can collect the samples on your own, but some agricultural consulting firms will collect samples for you as well as send them to get tested.

Make sure you establish a standard depth and volume for samples. You typically want to sample where root activity takes place, which is around 6- 12 inches. A soil probe is a tool that can help standardize your samples by reaching the same depth each time. T-handle probes are easier to use where the soil is loose and uncompacted, and a T-handle step probe should be able to get through compacted soils. Using a shovel takes more time and effort but is applicable if you are sampling small scale.

Use a plastic bucket to collect samples. Metal ones could contaminate.

Typically, you want to take a composite, or combined, sample of 10-15 subsamples. Remember subsamples need to be of the same depth and volume. Mix the subsamples thoroughly.

For zonal sampling, take your samples in a zig-zag pattern. This creates the best representative sample of your area.

Clean or wipe off the shovel or probe in between each field to reduce error.

Dry the soil before sending it in. The soil should be dry enough to have a powdery consistency.

Make sure you are sending it to the correct address. Usually, you must include a printed paper with the site's label, history, and land use for the lab. The information they need should be provided.

A good practice is to take samples every 3 to 4 years to accurately analyze and adjust your nutrient management plan.

The nutrients and soil properties measured differ based on lab and land use. Results commonly include pH, phosphorus, potassium, magnesium, calcium, zinc, copper, sulfur, and lime requirement. Depending on the lab, recommendations for fertilizer application may be provided as well. You can use the results to create a nutrient management plan, which can also help you qualify for state or federal financial assistance programs like H2Ohio and the Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP).

For more information and a list of labs for Ohio, see this article by Ohio State University Extension: [Soil Testing for Ohio Lawns, Landscapes, Fruit Crops, and Vegetable Gardens](#).

Feel free to reach out to your local USDA-NRCS and Extension offices for questions and help interpreting soil test results!

Mariah Lashley

Soil Conservationist

USDA-NRCS

Union County

937-209-2239

mariah.lashley@usda.gov



Up the Crick...

Using resources today, conserving for tomorrow.
Joseph Grove, Urban Technician - jgrove@unioncountyohio.gov



Exploring Your Soils With Web Soil Survey

When erecting a structure, installing a septic system, or even planting a garden, a homeowner may want to know what kinds of soil are on their property. While Union SWCD will gladly provide this information to anyone who asks for it, did you know that you can also access this information yourself from the comfort of your own home?

The US Department of Agriculture maintains an online tool called “Web Soil Survey” that you can use to find soil data for any location in the country. Here’s how you can use it to learn about the soils on your property:

1. Navigate to the Web Soil Survey website at: <https://websoilsurvey.sc.egov.usda.gov/App/WebSoilSurvey.aspx>
2. Find your “Area of Interest” (AOI). You can do this by typing in an address under the “Address” dropdown. Or, you can also select the magnifying glasses in the toolbar and then click to zoom in on or out from that location.
3. Draw your Area of Interest (AOI). In the toolbar, you can choose between two different icons. One allows you to draw only rectangles, and the other will let you draw your own area of any shape. If you make a mistake, don’t worry! Just select “Clear AOI” in the dropdown that will pop up on the left.
4. After your Area of Interest (AOI) has been drawn, there are multiple different things you can do. By clicking “Soil Map”, you can see a map showing the different types of soils in your AOI and how much space they comprise. By clicking “Soil Data Explorer”, you can use the different tabs and dropdowns to check what properties your soil has and how it is rated for different uses. Clicking “Intro to Soils” under this section will also give you access to a library of general information on soils and ecology. Lastly, going to their “Free Shopping Cart” and checking out will automatically generate a detailed report on the soils in your AOI that you can print or download.

2023 Affiliate Members

Platinum Memberships



Gold Memberships



Silver Memberships



Become a Union SWCD Affiliate Member

<https://www.unioncountyohio.gov/departments/USWCD/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:

Annual Meeting Ticket

Listed in our Annual Meeting Program

Listed in our Annual Report

Listed on our website

Recognized in our quarterly newsletter

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

Send this form along with a check payable to:

Union SWCD
18000 State Route 4, Suite D
Maryville, OH 43040

If you have any questions please contact Sherry Maisenbacher at
(937) 642-5871 x2221 or smaisenbacher@unioncountyohio.gov

Upcoming Events / Office Closures:

October 3, 2023	Union SWCD Annual Fingerling Sale Pickup @ 9:30 am in the Ag Center's Parking Lot
October 9, 2023	Columbus Day Holiday - Office Closed
October 12, 2023	Union SWCD Board Meeting , 6:00 pm in the Ag Center - Buckeye Mtg Room
November 9, 2023	Union SWCD Board Meeting , 6:00 pm in the Ag Center - Buckeye Mtg Room
November 10, 2023	Veteran's Day Holiday - Office Closed
November 23, 2023	Thanksgiving Day Holiday - Office Closed
November 24, 2023	Day after Thanksgiving Day Holiday - Office Closed
December 14, 2023	Union SWCD Board Meeting , 6:00 pm in the Ag Center - Buckeye Mtg Room
December 22, 2023	Christmas Eve Holiday - Office Closed
December 25, 2023	Christmas Day Holiday - Office Closed
January 1 2024	New Year's Day Holiday Office Closed

**Would you like to receive our Conservation News by email quarterly?
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Union Soil and Water
Conservation District and the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA)
prohibit discrimination in their programs based on race, color, national origin, sex, religion,

Mailing Address Goes Here

STANDARD RATE
U.S. Postage Paid
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Marysville, OH 43040

Conservation News

Union Soil & Water Conservation District
18000 State Route 4, Suite D
Marysville, Ohio 43040
(937) 642-5871 option 4
<https://www.unioncountyohio.gov/USWCD>