

Conservation News

VOLUME 25, No. 3 SUMMER 202

Board of Supervisors

Andy Clarridge
Matt Staley
Randy Trapp
Cheryl Trivisonno
Rick Weigand

SWCD Personnel

Brent Nickel Mark Watkins Jeremy Burrey Sherry Maisenbacher Damien Peppin Perry

NRCS Personnel

Ron Nieman, DC LaRae Baker

Pheasants Forever

Ashley Dawson

Union SWCD

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

www.unioncounty ohio.gov/unionsoil-waterconservationdistrict

You're Invite to join us for our 76th Annual Election & Banquet

The Union Soil and Water Conservation District will hold its 76th Annual Meeting on Wednesday, August 11th, at the Der Dutchman Restaurant, 445 South Jefferson Avenue in Plain City.

There are a variety of things planned for the evening.

The term of the current Supervisor, Matt Staley,
will be expiring on December 31, 2021.

An election for one supervisor to be held before the meal
beginning at 5:45 p.m. to 6:30 p.m.
Candidates are Andy Sabula and Matt Staley.
The buffet meal at 6:30 p.m. followed by the
Columbus Zoo and Aquarium's animal ambassadors at 7:30 p.m.

Banquet Tickets are \$20.00 per adult and \$10.00 for children between the ages of 3-10. To purchase tickets, contact Sherry Maisenbacher at (937)642-5871 ext. 2221 or by email: smaisenbacher@unioncountyohio.gov by August 2, 2021.

NRCS Office Status Update

The USDA is committed to providing a safe environment for staff and visitors. Customers need to request an appointment by phone at 937-209-2224 or via email at larae.baker@usda.gov. Walk-in customers for NRCS business cannot be accommodated at this time.

Union SWCD Office Status Update

While our Federal Partners policy is currently at allowing no Walk in Customers, we are here and are able to answer the door and answer questions pertaining to the SWCD office and projects that we are working on. Feel free to stop by and ring the bell. We'll answer the door. If seeking assistance from NRCS or seeking to discuss with a specific staff member, please call to set up an appointment as requested to be sure that they are in the office and available.

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

76th Annual Election & Banquet cont.

To be eligible to vote:

- The applicant must be a resident of Union County, own land in Union County, or own a corporation, partnership, association, or other entity registered with the Ohio Secretary of State in Union County; and
 - The applicant must be over the age of 18.

There are 3 ways an eligible voter can cast a ballot:

- 1) At the SWCD office from July 13, 2021 until 3:00 p.m. on August 11, 2021 during normal business hours; or
- 2.) At the SWCD Annual Meeting, which will take place at <u>Der Dutchman Restaurant Plain City, OH 43064</u> on <u>August 11, 2021</u> from <u>5:45 p.m. – 6:30 p.m.</u>; or
- 3.) Voting absentee

from July 13, 2021 until August 11, 2021, by requesting the ballot application and election ballot from the SWCD office at the following address: 18000 State Route 4, Suite B, Marysville, OH 43040, by calling (937) 642-5871 Ext. 3 or email smaisenbacher@unioncountyohio.gov.

Absentee ballots must be received by the SWCD office by August 11, 2021.

One supervisor will be elected to a three year term commencing January 1, 2022 and ending December 31, 2024.

Nominees are: Andy Sabula and Matt Staley

Meet the Candidates

Andy Sabula



Andy Sabula has lived in Union County, Dover Township since 1990 along with his wife, Lisa. They continue to enjoy their home and property with the woods and creek. Andy recently retired from the Ohio Department of Natural Resources (ODNR), after 20 years of service as a Forester in the Division of Forestry. Andy is a graduate of The Ohio State University, with a Bachelor of Science in Natural Resources Forestry. Prior to working for ODNR, Andy worked in the private sector for 17.years in the wood and manufacturing industries.

With the assistance of Natural Resources Conservation Services (NRCS), Andy built a small shallow-water wetland on his Union County property in 2004.

Andy is a member of the Wild Turkey Foundation and the Ohio State Trappers Association. He enjoys hunting, fishing, trapping, beekeeping, and traveling.

Matt Staley

Matt Staley has served as a district supervisor for Union Soil and Water Conservation District since 2001. He received a bachelor's degree in Animal Science from The Ohio State University in 1996. Upon graduation returned to his family farm near York Center.

Matt is the fifth generation to live and work on this farm. Along with his father, Matt raises 1400 acres of cropland and feeds 6000 hogs per year. Matt has utilized conservation practices in both the crop and livestock

aspects of the operation, and he is committed to protecting the soil and water on his family's farm so that the next generation can enjoy the pleasure and responsibility of farm life.

Matt and his wife Andrea are the proud parents of twelve-year-old triplet boys, Rhett, Ryan, and Brady. Matt and Andrea are also active volunteers with The Heart Center at Nationwide Children's Hospital, and they have participated in several fund-raising efforts for The Heart Center.

Matt is also a member of the North Union Board of Education.

Wild About Wildlife

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

Summer Wildlife, Habitat, Interests and Concerns

National Hunting and Fishing Day

Come join us for FREE Kids outdoor activities on Saturday Sept. 25 from 9 - Noon at the Heart of Ohio Fishing Club.

Usual activities include an archery range, trap shooting, "Passport to Fishing" Instruction, BB Gun Range, Sling Shot Range, Trapping Displays, and Leather Working.

REFRESHMENTS will be provided. Share the Great Outdoors with a young person and reap the benefits for years to come.

Tallgrass Truths - Revealed! Native Warm Season Grasses in Summer...

Right now, Native Warm Season Grasses are thriving and maximizing their growth. One can almost hear them growing. For USDA grassland practice contracts, the annual Ground Nesting & Brood-rearing Season began on **March 1st** and runs through **July 15th**. All mowing is prohibited during this period of nesting, egg-laying, brooding, nestling development, and fledging of grassland birds.

August is a great time to mow any
Cool Season Grass Fire Breaks that may be
associated with the Tallgrass contracts.
These borders need to be mowed annually-even if a
prescribed burn is not planned. It is the unintentional
wild fire that annual border mowing will help deter.

Check with the Farm Service Agency and/ or the Natural Resource Conservation Service office before mowing to be sure that your contract allows annual maintenance mowing.

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.

Don't Forget Your Best Friend

Designated dog training areas are located on portions of the Berlin, Caesar Creek, Delaware, Fallsville, Indian Creek, Killdeer Plains, Lake La Su An, Oxbow, Resthaven, Rush Run, Spencer, Tri-Valley and East Fork wildlife areas.

Dogs may not be trained or exercised on state public hunting areas from **May 1 through August 31**, except on these designated dog training areas.

Recommendations to PONDer!

Except for fishless ponds and those pond owners capable of executing precision applications, the window of opportunity to treat aquatic vegetation with prescribed herbicides has closed for another year!

It becomes just too risky to treat warm pond

water which is supporting robust plant growth.

Summer applications may result in fish kills.

If you are still looking to control algae and floating weeds, it's time to get your rake out and manually remove the offending aquatic culprits.

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/

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/

34th ANNUAL FISH SALE

Union Soil and Water Conservation District (SWCD) is now taking orders for fish fingerlings.

This is an opportunity for Union County pond owners to stock their ponds at a reasonable price without traveling out of the county. The fingerlings will be delivered on **Tuesday**, **October 5**, **2021**, and may be picked up at 9:30 a.m. in the Union SWCD parking lot located at 18000 State Route 4, Marysville.

We will accept orders from September 20 - 24, 2021.

When the fish are picked up bring enough containers to hold the purchased fish. Five-gallon buckets work well. Each container must have an unscented poly liner (trash bag). Do not use a lid; use a twist tie or twine to close the bag. Each container shall be filled with customer's pond water, but just **one-half full**. General rule of thumb: one container per 100 small fish, one container per 1,000 minnows, one container per 4-5 large fish. Stocking rates vary according to pond size. Guidelines for a one-acre pond are: 100 largemouth bass, 500 bluegills, 100 channel catfish, and 5-10 white amur.

We would recommend that the crappie and perch be stocked in two-acre or larger ponds only.

If you have questions, call our office at (937) 642-5871, Option 3 on the automated menu.

Payment must accompany orders!

Please fill out the blank order form listed below and send with payment to: Union SWCD, 18000 State Route 4, Suite B, Marysville, Ohio, 43040.

<u>Species</u>	<u>Size</u>	<u>Benefit</u>	Quantity		<u>Price</u>	<u>Subtotal</u>
Largemouth Bass	2"- 4"	Recreational/ Predator		@	\$0.95	=
Bluegill	2 to 4	Recreational Fishing		@	\$0.85	=
Channel Catfish	4 to 5	Recreation/Bottom Feeder		@	\$0.75	=
Yellow Perch	2 to 3	Recreational Fishing		@	\$0.90	=
Hybrid Bluegill	2 to 4	Recreational Fishing		@	\$0.85	=
Shell Cracker	2 to 4	Eats snails from pond		@	\$0.85	=
Fathead Minnows	1 to 3	Recreational Fishing		@	\$7.00/ 100	=
White Amur	8 to 10	Aquatic Weed Control		@	\$13.00	=
			Totals			\$
		e delivered in good condition; tality rate can be expected and				
Name:	I	Phor	ne:			
Address:						
E-Mail:						

https://www.unioncountyohio.gov/union-soil-water-conservation-district

Descriptions of Fingerlings

Largemouth Bass

The largemouth bass is a popular sport fish. It is native to Ohio and can be found in every county in the state.

Largemouth bass have a very large mouth that extends beyond the rear edge of the eye when it is closed. This characteristic distinguishes it from the smallmouth and spotted bass where the back of the mouth does not extend passed the eye. Young largemouth bass do not have an orange tail like juvenile smallmouth and spotted bass. The largemouth also has a black stripe that extends down the side of the body. This sport fish belongs to the Centrachidae (sunfishes) family, and is also called black bass, bigmouth bass, and bucket mouth. It is typically 15-18 inches and 1-5 pounds but can reach up to 26 inches and 13 pounds in Ohio.

Source: https://ohiodnr.gov/wps/portal/gov/odnr/discover-and-learn/animals/fish/largemouth-bass

Bluegill

Bluegill (Lepomis macrochirus) are an important and abundant sport fish in the United States. They are also one of the most common species in Ohio and can be found in almost every body of water throughout the state. Larger fish are usually caught in late spring or early summer while they are spawning in large colonies near shore.

A deep slab-sided fish with a small mouth and a long pointed pectoral fin. They have 5-9 dark bars on their side and an overall dark green body color. When caught in muddy water, they can appear more silver in overall coloration. The ear flap (opercle) is always black without a red tip, like redear sunfish. Bluegill sunfish often have a black blotch near the back of the soft dorsal and anal fins. They have blue along the bottom edge of their jawline and rear bottom edge of their gill covers. They do not have any wavy blue lines on the cheek like pumpkinseed, green and longear sunfishes. Their belly is white in young, yellow in females, and orange to a rusty red in breeding males. They are in the Centrachidae family with other sunfishes and are also known by the name "bream." They are typically 6-10 inches long, but can reach up to 12 inches, and can typically weigh less than one pound, but can weigh up to two pounds.

Source: https://ohiodnr.gov/wps/portal/gov/odnr/discover-and-learn/animals/fish/bluegill-sunfish

Channel Catfish

The channel catfish (Ictalurus punctatus) is a popular sport and food fish. It is active during the night, moving around and finding food after dusk. During the day it will most likely be found in deep water with little activity.

The channel catfish, like other catfish, has no scales, a single bony spine in each pectoral fin and the dorsal fin, and 8 barbels around the mouth. They have a deeply forked tail and the upper jaw is longer than the lower jaw. The dorsal and pectoral spines are sharp and deeply serrated, and the anal fin is curved and has between 24 and 30 rays. The body can be blue, gray, silver, or almost black. Their belly is usually white or cream colored. Small individuals are usually more silver in color and often have many black spots on their sides. Some anglers mistakenly call large channel catfish with few or no spots blue catfish, but the blue catfish has an anal fin with a straight edge and more than 30 rays. A member of the Ictaluridae family (North American catfishes), the channel catfish is also called: spotted cat, silver cat, and squeaker cat. This sport fish typically weighs in at 2-10 pounds but can reach up to 37 pounds. On average, it measures 15-25 inches in length, but it can get to over 40 inches.

Source: https://ohiodnr.gov/wps/portal/gov/odnr/discover-and-learn/animals/fish/channel-catfish

Yellow Perch

The yellow perch (Perca flavescens) is native to Ohio and is found in lakes, reservoirs, ponds, and slow moving rivers. Yellow perch are golden yellow to brassy green with six to eight dark vertical bars and a white to yellow belly. Yellow perch do not have large canine teeth like the closely related walleye or sauger. Their pelvic and anal fins usually have some orange coloration and the first dorsal fin has a dark blotch near the rear of the fin. All other fins are relatively clear with no distinct markings. Also referred to as the lake perch or ringed perch, the yellow perch is in the Percidae (perches and darters) family. It is a sport fish that usually measures 5-12 inches in length but can reach 16 inches. It typically weighs .25-1 pound but has been known to reach just over 2 pounds.

Source: https://ohiodnr.gov/wps/portal/gov/odnr/discover-and-learn/animals/fish/yellow-perch

Descriptions of Fingerlings (cont.)

Hybrid Bluegill

Hybrid bluegill/sunfish are among the most publicized and promoted sunfish in the nation.

Hybrids are great for small ponds with a goal to grow 1-pound sunfish—fast. They are not a forage species and should not be stocked in lakes managed for bass. This brightly-colored, greenish panfish has hot-orange rimmed fins, is aggressive, and readily consumes fish food. Hybrids outcompete bluegill because their mouth is five times larger than a bluegill. Bigger mouth, bigger meals. It also means hybrids compete in a larger food chain of insects and small fish. They definitely have an advantage over bluegill, especially in new ponds. They cohabitate well with channel catfish. For long-term success, restock every few years.

Source: https://americansportfish.com/news-updates/hybrid-bluegill-good-choice-for-small-ponds-2018-11-4756

Redear (Shellcracker)

The Shellcracker or Redear is a species of sunfish or bream related to the bluegill. This fish is adapted for feeding on snails and other mollusks, in addition to insect larvae. They coexist well with bluegill and do not compete with them for nest sites.

Stocked by themselves they will not reproduce in sufficient numbers to support a bass population. Therefore, we suggest stocking them in combination with the bluegill. The common stocking combination of these fish is 85% bluegill and 15% shellcracker.

Source: https://americansportfish.com/fish-stocking-2/redear-shellcracker

Fathead Minnows

The fathead minnow is a small, olive-colored baitfish that has been used for a century or more as bait for small predator fish such as crappie. They are often called "tuffies" or "tuffie minnows" and are available at live bait stores throughout most of the United States. They are native to central North America and were originally found from Canada to Mexico. Through many decades of use as live bait, they are now found throughout most of the United States.

Fathead minnows are not only good live bait but are also beneficial in providing forage (food) in newly stocked bass-bluegill ponds. These minnows begin spawning during the early spring, often several months before the bluegill spawn and provide a valuable food source for small bass fingerlings. Fatheads can actually increase the growth rate of bass during their first year of life.

Source: https://americansportfish.com/articles/fathead-minnows-a-great-food-fish-for-new-ponds-2010-12-135

White Amur

White Amur (uh-moor), also known as grass carp, originate from the Amur River that forms a border between China and Russia. The Amur is a true example of a herbivorous fish, surviving on nothing but plant matter alone. These fish grow very rapidly with adults reaching nearly 4 ft in length and weighing up to 75 lbs. They live an average of 12-15 years. These fish were imported to the southern US. in 1963 to control algae growth in ponds along fairways on various golf courses. To accommodate an increasing demand for white amur, yet to avoid the possibility of them becoming established in systems where they are not wanted, a sterile triploid form was developed. In 1987, the Ohio Division of Wildlife allowed the importation of these forms of Amur and shortly thereafter, Freshwater Farms began to carry them for their pond customers.

Source: <u>https://fwfarms.com/white-amur/</u>

Ohio Drainage Law Updates!

With the introduction of House Bill 340 there have been some recent changes to the Ohio Drainage Laws. Please see the article below for a brief explanation. We will plan to implement the tax credit and rehabilitating the 15 ft. grass berms on all maintained open ditches in the county in the coming Year.

COLUMBUS, Ohio — Ohio's "petition ditch laws" are at last receiving a major revision. The Ohio General Assembly has passed H.B. 340, updating the laws that address the installation and maintenance of drainage works of improvement through the petition process. Some of Ohio's oldest laws, the drainage laws play a critical role in maintaining surface water drainage on Ohio lands but were in serious need of updating.

An updating process began over seven years ago with the Ohio Drainage Law Task Force convened by the County Commissioners Association of Ohio (CCAO). CCAO charged the Task Force with the goals of clarifying ambiguous provisions in the law and embracing new technology and processes that would result in greater efficiencies, fewer misunderstandings and reduced legal costs for taxpayers. Task Force members included county commissioners, county engineers and staff, county auditors, Soil and Water Conservation District professionals, Ohio Farm Bureau staff, and Ohio State University's Agricultural & Resource Law Program and other OSU faculty. Rep. Bob Cupp sponsored the resulting H.B. 340, which received unanimous approval from both the House of Representatives and Senate.

Here are a few highlights of the legislation:

- Mirroring the timeframes, deadlines, notices, and hearings and appeals procedures for petitions filed with the county engineer and with the county soil and water conservation district.
- The use of technology may substitute for a physical view of a proposed drainage improvement site.
- The minimum width of sod or seeded strips will be ten feet rather than four feet; maximum width remains at fifteen feet.
- The entire amount of sod or seeded strips will be removed from the taxable valuation of property, rather than the current provision removing only land in excess of four feet.
- Factors to consider for petition approval are the same for SWCD board of supervisors and county engineers, and include costs versus benefits of the improvement, whether improvement is necessary, conducive to public welfare, will improve water management and development and will aid lands in the area by promoting economic, industrial, environmental or social development.
- Clarification that the lead county in a multi-county petition is the county in which a majority of the initial length of the proposed improvement would exist, and assignment of responsibilities to officials in the lead county.
- The bond amount for county engineer petitions increases to \$1,500 plus \$5 for each parcel of land in excess of 200 parcels.
- Additional guidance for factors to be considered when determining estimated assessments.

Current law allows county commissioners to repair an existing drainage improvement upon complaint of an assessed owner if the cost doesn't exceed \$4,000. The new law increases that amount to \$24,000 and allows payment of repair assessments in 10 semiannual installments rather than four.

We're working with other Task Force members to prepare detailed explanations of the bill's provisions and a guideline of the new procedures. County engineers and SWCD offices will begin following the revised law on the bill's effective date of March 18, 2021, just in time for Spring rains and drainage needs.

Go here to read H.B. 340.

Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) Staying in Compliance!

NRCS has been tasked with the responsibility of reviewing CRP contracted land sometime between 12-24 months prior to the expiration date. The purpose of this is to give the customer at least 12 months to make sure the provisions of the contract are being met so the land can be considered eligible when time for re-enroll. Here is a list of the most common compliance issues that are found in CRP fields and actions the customer can take to prevent or correct the problem:

Problem	Solution			
Vegetation is being harvested or grazed without proper prior authorization	Write a request to the FSA/ County Committee if vegetation needs harvested or grazed. NOTE: There may be a reduction in rental rates that year. Contact FSA for more information.			
Encroachment of adjacent ag commodity crop	Mark the CRP field boundaries in areas with high risk of encroachment. Make sure herbicide application does not drift into CRP areas. Let contractors know where CRP fields are located.			
Excessive use as a farm lane	Vegetation must be maintained at all times in the CRP field. Vegetation that is disturbed or removed must be replanted according to the conservation plan.			
Excessive mowing	Herbaceous CRP fields are allowed to have up to 20% of the field mowed outside of the primary nesting period (March 15- July 15). It cannot be the same area each year. NRCS will write a mowing plan upon request. Mowing with or without a plan requires a request in writing each time. Contact Greg Scheiderer at FSA to initiate the request. The FSA phone number is 937-642-6741 x2.			
Noxious weeds not being properly controlled	Fields with excessive <u>noxious weeds</u> and <u>invasive species</u> need managed properly. Follow guidance above to have a mowing plan developed.			
Incorrect vegetation type- cool season grass in native warm season grass stand	Refer to the conservation plan to see if the field is supposed to be a cool or warm season grass stand. A good rule of thumb to know if a warm season grass stand has cool season grass in it is to observe it November- March. Cool season grass will still be green during this period of time. Contact FSA if you have a CRP field with the wrong type of cover.			
Incorrect vegetation type- woody vegetation in an herbaceous field	Most CRP fields are planted to perennial herbaceous vegetation and are not to have woody vegetation establish. Periodic mowing (mowing plan), prescribed burning, and other practices can be utilized to manage the cover and keep woody vegetation from becoming established during the contract period. *This does not apply to CRP tree practices.			

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.

2021 Affiliate Members

Platinum Memberships







Gold Memberships





MITCHAGRI, INC







Silver Memberships











Bronze Memberships



Upcoming Events:

July 5, 2021 - Independence Day - HOLIDAY - Office Closed

July 8, 2021 - Union SWCD Board Meeting - 6:00 PM in the Ag Center - Buckeye Mtg. Room

Aug. 11, 2021 - Union SWCD Annual Mtg. - Der Dutchman Restaurant

- Find details on page one of this newsletter

Aug. 12, 2021 - Union SWCD Board Meeting - 6:00 PM in the Ag Center - Buckeye Mtg. Room

September 6, 2021 - Labor Day HOLIDAY - Office Closed

Sept. 9, 2021 - Union SWCD Board Meeting - 6:00 PM in the Ag Center - Buckeye Mtg. Room

Sept. 25, 2021 - National Hunting and Fishing Day - 9:00AM - Noon

Heart of Ohio Fish & Game Association Inc. Lakes - NW Parkway just off of ST RT 33

October 5, 2019 - Union SWCD Fish Sale Pick Up - 9:30 AM at the Ag Center Parking Lot

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

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.

Mailing Address Goes Here

STANDARD RATE U.S. Postage Paid Permit #3 Marysville, OH 43040

18000 State Route 4 North, Suite B Marysville, Ohio 43040 (937) 642-5871 option 3 www.unioncountyohio.gov/union-soil-water-conservation-district

Union Soil & Water Conservation District

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