

Conservation News

Union Soil & Water Conservation District
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www.unioncountyohio.gov/USWCD

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Brent Smith, ACES

81st ANNUAL MEETING HIGHLIGHTS

This year marked the 81st anniversary of the Union Soil and Water Conservation District. The annual meeting was held on August 12, 2026, at the Der Dutchman Restaurant in Plain City, OH.

The evening started with a Board of Supervisors election. Congratulations to our re-elected Board Supervisor, Randy Trapp, and newly elected Supervisor, Wyatt Marshall! Their three-year terms begin January 1, 2027. Sean O'Hara of the Ohio School of Falconry presented an assortment of birds.



**Re-elected Board Supervisor
Randy Trapp**



**Newly Elected Supervisor
Wyatt Marshall**

Fall Fingerling Sale pickup is October 8, 2026

Sean O'Hara of the Ohio School of Falconry brought the following birds: Quinny, a North American Barn Owl; Chatel, a Lanner Falcon; Echo, an African Augur Buzzard; Henson, a Eurasian Eagle Owl; and Irwin, a Harris' Hawk.



Quinny



Chatel



Echo



Henson

“Call to the Glove” featuring Irwin



**USWCD Board and Staff would like to THANK
the following supporters for helping make our
81st Annual Meeting a success**

Affiliate Members

Ag-Pro Richwood

Bahan Excavating LLC

Bokes Creek Orchard

Connolly Companies

Cook Real Estate

Dean Cook Nationwide Insurance

Gravatt Farms

Millcreek Gardens LLC

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Richwood Tire Center

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City Barbeque of Plain City

Coffee Hall and Creamery

Comfort Suites Marysville

Dean Cook Nationwide Insurance

Der Dutchman Restaurant

Giovanni's Pizza of Marysville

Gravatt Farms

Ill Mannered Brewing Co.

Irwin Farms Christmas Trees

Leeds Farm

MAiZE at Little Darby Creek

Mitchell's Berries & Blooms

Suds Brothers (Connolly Companies)

Teresa Rockenbaugh

Texas Roadhouse

Union Soil & Water

Winans Coffee & Chocolate

Wild about Wildlife

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

Fall Wildlife and Habitat Interests and Concerns

What's In Season?

Hunting Regulations:

Fishing Regulations:

"Hunting with Permission" forms and printed Hunting and Fishing Regulations are available in our office.

The Division of Wildlife has an APP for that!

Get it HERE!

Get the APP and do ALL of your Division of Wildlife Business right from your phone! Don't forget to update the APP annually to keep up on the most recent regulations.

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.

Be TICK Smart - Ohio.Gov/Tick

Protect*Check*Remove*Watch

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, homestudy 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.

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, 2026** through **February 28, 2027**.

I have a list of willing trappers in my office if you need someone to assist you.

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.

OLHAP



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





OHIO'S FIELD TO FOOD BANK

Make a difference this year by donating your harvest to those in need! Hunters can donate their deer at no cost through the Division of Wildlife's Field to Food Bank program. After processing, the venison will be distributed by local food banks.

Sign up to receive email reminders about deer donation days.



For more information and to view donation locations and dates, visit ohiodnr.gov/DonateVenison.

DonateVenison@dnr.ohio.gov

1-800-WILDLIFE

Wildlife Habitat Opportunity for Ohio landowners

The Wildlife Habitat Initiative (WHI) is a state conservation program giving eligible Ohio farmers and landowners the opportunity to improve habitat for grassland birds, pollinators, and other native wildlife on their land. Eligible participants will receive incentive payments for successfully completing approved conservation practices such as grass and wildflower plantings, brush management, herbaceous weed treatment, and more.

To qualify for WHI, landowners must be eligible for USDA farm programs and establish a farm record with the USDA Farm Service Agency (FSA). Projects with a focus on grasslands and pollinator habitat are preferred. Program sign-up is continuous throughout the year, so project planning can begin anytime. Funding will continue to be available through the end of 2028, with contract terms ranging from 1 to 2 years.

WHI is funded by the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) and led by the National Bobwhite and Grassland Initiative (NBGI), with technical assistance provided by Ohio Division of Wildlife and local soil and water conservation districts.

If you are a Union County landowner interested in learning more, please contact Emma Scott, Urban Technician at Union SWCD, at escott@unioncountyohio.gov or 937-209-2216.

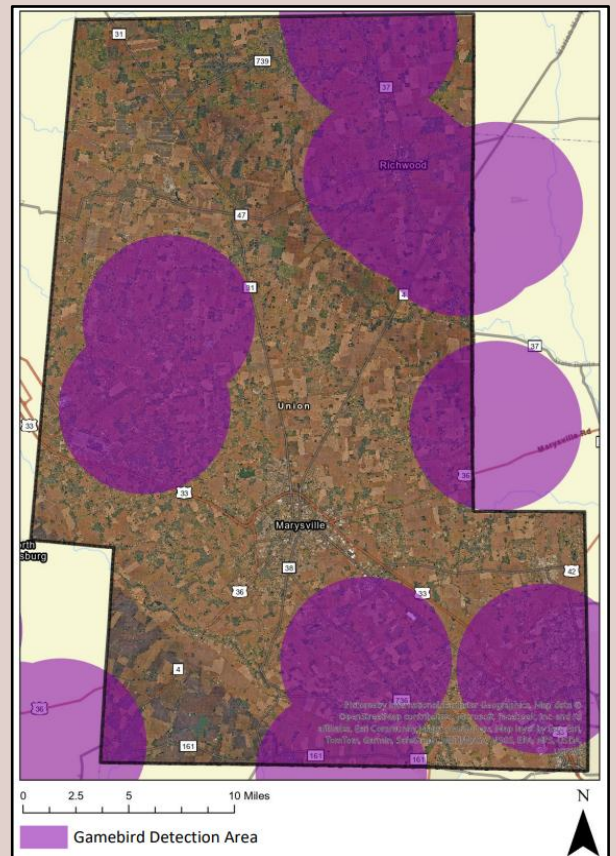


Natural Resources Conservation Service
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE



Annual Wildlife Cover Payments

If you are within a Grassland Gamebird Priority Area (highlighted in purple below), you may qualify for the Annual Wildlife Cover incentive with payments up to \$739/acre with a maximum of 50 acres per FSA tract per year. Annual wildlife cover consists of a full season that provides standing cover in the summer months for brood rearing of ground nesting birds (Quail, Pheasants, Turkeys, etc.) and in the winter for protective and thermal cover for wildlife.



Drainage Maintenance Update

Drainage maintenance crews have been working in subdivisions, mowing and repairing basins. The crews are gearing up to start annual inspections of maintained Ag ditches and subdivisions.



If you have any drainage-related questions, contact our office
Monday - Friday from 8:00 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.

Joe Eads, Drainage Maintenance Supervisor
18000 State Route 4, Ste. D, Marysville, OH 43040
Email: jeads@unioncountyohio.gov
Ph: 937-209-2236
www.unioncountyohio.gov/USWCD

Mill creek Logjam update

H&H Land Clearing has finished the construction stage of the Mill Creek Logjam initiative. Our crews will perform Annual inspections to evaluate Mill Creek. If you own land adjacent to Mill Creek and have a logjam on your property, contact our office so we can develop a strategy for its removal.



Technical Trivia: Culverts

Covering conservation and drainage topics on a quarterly basis

What is it? A culvert is a conduit used to allow a watercourse to flow through or under an obstruction. Their typical function is similar to that of a bridge: to facilitate and maintain access to an area without causing excessive flooding or otherwise damaging infrastructure. Some places you might expect to see them are:

Where a ditch or stream flows underneath roadways or driveways.

Where excess water pools on one side of a path



A concrete box culvert to allow Willis Ditch to flow under State Route 347 in Union County, Ohio



A corrugated metal pipe culvert to allow a field road to pass over a drainage ditch

Culverts come in many different shapes and sizes. The best one for the job depends on the needed application, financial restrictions, and site conditions.

Culverts are an essential part of drainage infrastructure, but they are complex structures, and you should consult an expert if you are planning to install one. Improperly designed or installed culverts can waste money, contribute to flooding, and even have safety implications.

Upcoming Events / Office Closures

October 8, 2026	USWCD Annual Fall Fish Sale: Pickup 2:00 p.m., in the back parking lot
October 8, 2026	USWCD Board Mtg.: 6:00 p.m., in the Buckeye Mtg. Room
October 12, 2026	Holiday: USWCD Office CLOSED to observe Columbus Day
November 11, 2026	Holiday: USWCD Office CLOSED to observe Veterans Day
November 12, 2026	USWCD Board Mtg.: 6:00 p.m., in the Buckeye Mtg. Room
November 26, 2026	Holiday: USWCD Office CLOSED to observe Thanksgiving Day
November 27, 2026	Holiday: USWCD Office CLOSED to observe the day after Thanksgiving
December 10, 2026	USWCD Board Mtg.: 5:00 p.m., in the Buckeye Mtg. Room
December 24, 2026	Holiday: USWCD Office CLOSED to observe Christmas Eve
December 25, 2026	Holiday: USWCD Office CLOSED to observe Christmas Day
December 31, 2026	Holiday: USWCD Office CLOSING at Noon to observe New Year's Eve
January 1, 2027	Holiday: USWCD Office CLOSED to observe New Year's Day

2026 Affiliate Members

www.unioncountyohio.gov/departments/USWCD/affiliate-members--donors