

# ON THE LAND

Cuyahoga Soil and Water Conservation District

LEADING CONSERVATION IN THE URBAN LANDSCAPE



Fall 2010

## 2011 Ordinance Update

Given that 2011 is fast approaching, it's time to ensure that codes pertaining to construction and post-construction storm water runoff control are up-to-date and consistent with Ohio EPA's current Construction General Permit (OHC000003). Detailed model ordinance updates are available at <http://www.noaca.org/reglmodord.html>.

For your convenience, the Northeast Ohio

Regional Storm Water Task Force has provided a comparison Word document that identifies all changes made to the January 2006 versions of: (i) *Ordinance Controlling Construction Site Soil Erosion, Sediment, and Other Wastes and Storm Water Runoff*, and (ii) *Ordinance Controlling Post-Construction Water Quality Runoff*. Contact Todd Houser at 216/524-6580, ext. 17 for detailed assistance.

## Annual Meeting 2010

The District's 61st Annual Meeting, which featured a variety of activities, such as nature hikes, a rain barrel presentation, children's activities, environmentally oriented displays and a picnic lunch was held on August 28th at Camp Corde in Parma.

Two candidates ran for the open board seat. Kevin Kubovcik was re-elected to serve a second term on the board and Tom Marsalis will continue to serve as an associate board member.

The Cuyahoga SWCD board and staff wish to thank CT Consultants, Cuyahoga County Farm Bureau, and Grace Brothers Nursery and Supply for sponsoring the Conservation Day activities. We also want to thank the many agencies that hosted displays.

Congratulations to Conservationist of the Year, **Dave Pietrantone** of Riverstone Company and to Educator of the Year, **Stefanie Penn Spear** of EcoWatch Journal for helping to protect natural resources.



## Preparing for Winter



### Rain Barrels

Since 2007, the Cuyahoga SWCD has had a tremendous response to our rain barrel workshops resulting in over 1,400 sold. The barrels are inexpensive, easy to make and use, and are relatively maintenance free. There is a potential for algae growth, especially if your barrel is light or if it isn't used enough, because algae is more prone to grow in stagnant water.

You can either paint the barrel so light won't get through, or make sure to use the water regularly. If you notice algae or your barrel becomes smelly or clogged, you will need to clean it out. A simple remedy is to add two ounces of bleach when the barrel is nearly empty and ready to be re-filled. The bleach will stop the algae growth and the next rain will dilute the chlorine in the barrel. Use the collected water within 5-7 days.

Prepare your rain barrel for winter by disconnecting the hose on the diverter and plugging the diverter (see picture above). Clean the barrel and rinse thoroughly, use bleach if needed and rinse well. Do not let water stand in the barrel over the winter. Turn it upside down for storage or place in the garage or basement, especially if your barrel is painted.



### Rain Gardens

This winter give hungry birds some tasty food and provide habitat by not cutting the plants in your rain garden. Seeds are nutritious and the plants make an ideal habitat for small creatures. Also make sure the water flow way into the rain garden is not obstructed. In the spring, cut back the plants and divide the plants to make room in your garden. Don't forget to share them with your friends or build a new rain garden to provide additional habitat and to help reduce storm water runoff. Call Amy Roskilly at 216/524-6580, ext. 22 for more information.

## Funds Awarded to Remove Dams on Baldwin Creek

Cuyahoga SWCD has been awarded a \$147,000 grant through the Ohio EPA Surface Water Improvement Fund for the removal of three low head dams situated along the lowermost one-half mile of Baldwin Creek in Berea. The City of Berea, Cleveland Metroparks and the Rocky River Watershed Council have partnered on the project.

One intact dam and two smaller, partially breached dams impede fish migration and degrade habitat throughout the project reach. Dam #1 is located at the confluence of Baldwin Creek with the East Branch of the Rocky River.

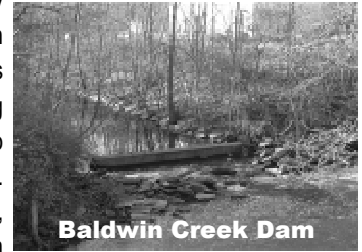
Dam #2 is at the Berea Water Treatment Plant Access Road and Dam #3 is immediately upstream of South Rocky River Drive. Dam #1 and #2 are partially breached, while Dam #3 is intact. Sampling conducted by Cleveland Metroparks in 2009 indicates that the fish community is "marginally good" below Dam #3, but only "poor" above it.

The removal of the dams will also serve to reconnect populations of the state-threatened Bigmouth Shiner (*notropis dorsalis*), which are currently isolated above the dam sequence and below the dams in the East Branch of the river.

The project is recommended by the state-endorsed Rocky River Watershed Action Plan

and by Ohio EPA's 2001 Rocky River TMDL report, both of which indicate that removing the dams is an essential step in restoring Baldwin Creek's fish community to attain Clean Water Act goals. According to the TMDL report, "Unlike many urban streams in Ohio, analysis of the Baldwin Creek QHEI data does lead to a conclusion that habitat restoration in the stream could have a high degree of success. If implemented, in conjunction with stream channel barrier removal or enhancements, stream bank erosion protection, and storm water controls, the capacity for Baldwin Creek to attain warm water habitat bio-criteria would be significantly improved."

Deconstruction is expected to begin in late 2011.



Baldwin Creek Dam



The Bigmouth shiner, a beneficiary of dam removal on Baldwin Creek, is a prairie relic species from the Cyprinidae (minnows and carp) family. While common throughout portions of the Upper Midwest and Great Plains, its range in Ohio is limited to Baldwin Creek, the East Branch of the Rocky River and the West Branch of the Black River. Bigmouth shiners are found in pools where they swim in schools just above the substrate.

## WIN A ROCKY RIVER WATERSHED T-SHIRT!

How well do you know the Rocky River watershed? Did you know it is home to acres of park land, a major airport, a college, and 28 communities?

Can you guess the location in the photo to the right? Call your guess into Jared Bartley at 216/524-6580, ext. 14. Leave your name and phone number. Names of those who answer correctly will be placed in the drawing for a t-shirt. Good luck.

Do you want to receive the quarterly Rocky River Watershed E-Newsletter? Email Jared at [jbartley@cuyahogawcd.org](mailto:jbartley@cuyahogawcd.org).

## WHERE IN THE WATERSHED?



## Want to know what's up in the Rocky River?

Join us for the January Rocky River Watershed Council Annual Meeting. The meeting will feature a discussion of the watershed council's accomplishments and ongoing initiatives, and will highlight planned activities. Please join us to learn more about the watershed and how you can get involved! The Board of Trustees election will also be conducted.

Rocky River Watershed Council Annual Meeting  
January 26, 2011 – 7:00 PM  
Rocky River Nature Center, 24000 Valley Parkway



Cuyahoga  
Soil and Water  
Conservation  
District

### SWCD BOARD

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Michael Emancipator  
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Rocky River Watershed Coordinator  
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Storm Water Program Manager  
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**Amy Roskilly**  
Conservation Education Coordinator  
**Lisa Vavro**  
Storm Water Specialist II

### NRCS STAFF

**Jim Storer**  
District Conservationist



## Euclid Creek Receives Great Lakes Restoration Initiative Funds

The Cuyahoga Soil and Water Conservation District is thrilled to announce that we applied for and were awarded \$1,396,050 from the Great Lakes Restoration Initiative (GLRI) to fund the *Lacustrine Refuge in the Cuyahoga Area of Concern (AOC) project*.

The Lacustrine Refuge project will restore five acres of urban coastal wetlands and restore 1,500 linear feet of shoreline habitat in the Lower Euclid Creek to serve as a fish habitat refuge and nursery for the urban coastal estuary zone.

Euclid Creek is a part of the Cuyahoga River Area of Concern (AOC), which includes the Cuyahoga River and several tributaries east of the Cuyahoga. The AOC status was established by the International Joint Commission under the Great Lakes Water Quality Agreement (1978) identifying waters within the Great Lakes Basin as impaired and not meeting fourteen objectives (called Beneficial Use Impairments) for healthy water. This project will aid in delisting the Cuyahoga River AOC by increasing habitat for degraded fish and wildlife populations.

Wetlands continue to be identified as an important restoration tool to improve water quality, especially in the urban watersheds of the Great Lakes.

Keep updated on this exciting project by checking the Euclid Creek website.

### Project RFP

**Request for Proposals** was issued on October 30. Proposals are due in the SWCD office on Wed., December 1, 2010 by 4:00 p.m. The detailed RFP can be viewed on the SWCD site:

[www.cuyahogawcd.org](http://www.cuyahogawcd.org)



## LAKE ERIE AWARD TO THE FRIENDS

The Friends of Euclid Creek were presented with the **2010 Lake Erie Award** by the Ohio Lake Erie Commission at their September quarterly meeting in Euclid. This award is presented each year to one organization that has distinguished itself in providing leadership in protection and restoration of Lake Erie and its watershed.

Congratulations to the Friends of Euclid Creek for your dedication and hard work in improving the Euclid Creek watershed over the past eight years.



**Ohio Department of Natural Resources Director Sean Logan presents the Lake Erie Award to the Friends of Euclid Creek**

## Growing Stewards of the Earth

The Cuyahoga SWCD received funding from the Ohio Farm Bureau Foundation and Cuyahoga County Farm Bureau for the **Growing Stewards of the Earth Project**. The project goal was to promote watershed education to middle-school students and involve them in a fun pollution prevention project - building rain gardens at or near their schools.

Recent studies have shown that up to 70% of the pollution in our streams, rivers and lakes is transported there by rain, in the form of runoff, which negatively affects aquatic life. Some of the common "non point source pollutants" from our yards that end up in our local waterways include soil, fertilizers, pesticides, pet wastes, grass clippings and other yard debris. Rain gardens help to reduce pollution by increasing the infiltration of storm water into the soil.

Rain gardens are attractive landscaped areas planted with perennial native plants that do not mind getting "wet feet". Built in a bowl shape, a rain garden is designed to increase infiltration allowing rain and snowmelt to seep naturally into the ground instead of running off into storm sewers. Thirsty native plants assist by soaking up water through their roots and the roots also help to stabilize the soil, which reduces erosion.

Funding was used to implement the program with three schools: John Hay in Cleveland, North Olmsted Middle School, and Beachwood Middle School.

Watch for more information about the benefits of Native Plants in upcoming issues of On The Land. Log on to our website to get a copy of the Rain Water Manual. (photos-p. 4)

# ON THE LAND

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## SCHOOL SCOOPS

## Collaboration for Environmental Education

Sunview Elementary third graders planted a rain garden in Lyndhurst's Brainard Park. This rain garden is the result of a partnership with the South Euclid-Lyndhurst School District, the City of Lyndhurst, Cuyahoga Soil & Water Conservation District, Euclid Creek Watershed Council and the Northeast Ohio Regional Sewer District. Staff from the City's Service Department prepared the site with bio-retention soil mix and mulch, and students from Mrs. Tierney's class then planted 70 native plants species that will attract birds and butterflies.



## ***GROWING STEWARDS OF THE EARTH!***



*Photos clockwise*  
North Olmsted M.S.,  
Beachwood M.S.,  
John Hay H.S.-Cleveland and  
Sunview Elementary

Thanks to **Kurtz Bros., Inc.**  
and the **Cuyahoga County  
Farm Bureau** for their support  
and technical assistance for  
the *Growing Stewards of the  
Earth* project.

