

Euclid Creek Watershed Update



Water: Carving, Euclid Creek Res.-Walden Woods by Susanne Sande

Euclid Creek Watershed Program Partners

Euclid Creek Watershed Council

Nine municipalities that came together in 2000 to address common environmental, storm water and development concerns in the Euclid Creek Watershed.

Friends of Euclid Creek

The citizens group whose mission is to raise awareness about and preserve the natural features of the Euclid Creek Watershed.

Cuyahoga Soil & Water Conservation District

Houses the Euclid Creek Watershed Coordinator, the Program's full time staff.

7th Annual Wildwood Fall Cleanup & Bioswale Garden Service Day

Saturday, September 19
10:00am-noon

Wildwood Park—Euclid Creek Reservation, Cleveland
E. 174th St. & Lakeshore Blvd.

Volunteers are needed to help with restoration activities at the wetland and to cleanup the bioswale garden

Meet at Wildwood Picnic Pavilion

Dress for weather (long sleeves, pants, work boots, gloves)

Register on Cleveland Metroparks' Website

All groups welcome, children under 18 must fill out and bring a Cleveland Metroparks waiver signed by a parent/guardian

Euclid Creek Streamside Tree & Shrub Program Update

One of the easiest and most important actions a streamside property owner can take is to leave trees, shrubs and vegetation next to the stream. But in an urban environment, many landowners prefer a more manicured appearance and mow to the edge of the stream. So, restoring streamside areas is very important as trees and shrubs stabilize stream banks, filter nutrients and sediment from storm water, decrease storm water runoff, cool the streams for aquatic inhabitants and increase property values.

Last Fall, we received a Lake Erie Protection Fund grant to provide trees and shrubs to riparian (streamside) property owners in Euclid Creek. Brochures describing the importance of forested riparian buffers and explaining how to enroll in the program were sent to over 1,400 streamside property owners in the Cuyahoga and Lake County portions of the Watershed. 90 riparian landowners participated in the program. Overall, 429, 3-gallon trees and 4,725 tree and shrub seedlings were distributed to property owners to take home and plant. Those receiving seedlings own a combined 3.8 miles of stream in the watershed. Roughly 30 miles of Euclid Creek is above ground and ~13 miles is culverted below ground, so reforesting 13% of the stream is outstanding.

The distribution was made possible with the help of 28 volunteers who helped sort seedlings, cut tree protection fencing and distribute the plants to the enrollees. During the distribution events two forestry experts, Chris Vild, City of Beachwood Service Dept. and Chad Clink, Holden Arboretum's Community Forester, gave presentations on proper siting, planting, maintenance and deer protection for the vegetation. We are immensely thankful to the City of Lyndhurst Service Department for providing the space for the tree storage and the distribution events, and for Lyndhurst City Arborist, Tom Morgan's time and expertise at the event.



Volunteers cutting deer protection fencing for the trees



Volunteers helped participants load trees in car at Lyndhurst City Hall



Chris Vild (above) and Chad Clink showed participants how to correctly plant trees and seedlings



Trees and shrubs planted along tributary will help stabilize stream bank and cool stream over time

2015 Upcoming Meetings & Events

- | | |
|---------------------------------|---|
| Tue, Sept 1, 6:30-8:30pm | Friends of Euclid Creek walk , Highland Heights (details on p. 3) |
| Sat, Sept 12, 10am-12pm | Great Lake Erie Boat Float , Edgewater Park-watch us sail our recycled boat! |
| Sat, Sept 12, 11am-3pm | South Euclid Harvest Fest , Quarry Park—stop by our FOEC table! |
| Sat, Sept. 19, 10am-12pm | Wildwood Fall Cleanup , Euclid Creek Res.-Wildwood Park, Cleveland* |
| Sat, Sept 19, 1-5pm | Fall Fun Fest at Greenwood Farm, Richmond Hts. , stop by our FOEC table! |
| Thu, Sept 24, 4:30-6pm | CSWCD's 66th Annual Meeting and Election , Cuyahoga Valley Career Cntr* |
| Sat, Oct. 3, 10am-4pm | Mayfield Library EcoFair , Mayfield Library, stop by our FOEC table! |
| Tue, Oct 6, 6:30-8:30pm | Friends of Euclid Creek meeting , Acacia Reservation (details on p. 3) |
| Thu, Oct. 15, 5-7pm | Euclid Creek Watershed Council Mtg. , Mayfield Library, RSVP-space limited |
| Tue, Oct. 30, 6:30-8pm | Green Cleaning Workshop for Inside and Out , South Euclid Com. Cntr* |

*Registration required, or more details on website (contact info. and website on back page)

Spring Celebration Recap, *by Christi Carlson, President*

Thanks to everyone for your ongoing participation and support of Friends of Euclid Creek (FOEC). Whether your support is through volunteerism or financial, our joint efforts have made the Euclid Creek Watershed a more rich and vibrant community. I especially want to thank all of the sponsors, donors and attendees who supported the *Spring Celebration* fundraiser. We had a lovely evening for our fundraiser on April 24, 2015, held in the clubhouse at Acacia Reservation. The venue offered a beautiful view of the park, and was the perfect setting for the Spring Celebration.

The event was deliciously catered by Dino's at Acacia, and we want to thank them and their staff for enabling the evening to run smoothly. Everyone enjoyed the music of Jimmy Maguire. Chris Ronayne, President of University Circle, Inc. gave a terrific talk on the history and revitalization of the University Circle neighborhood.

Exhibitors at the event included the Euclid Creek Watershed Program, Roy Larick of the Bluestone Heights group and Cleveland Metroparks displayed their restoration plans for Acacia Reservation. We want to thank Nolan Beck, a graphic design major at Cleveland Institute of Art who designed the fundraiser invitation and program with a whimsical fish theme. We also want to thank Wendy Mahon, a well-known artist for Parade the Circle, who painted a rain barrel for the live auction. Kim Colich from the Northeast Ohio Regional Sewer District was so excited to be the winning bidder! We also want to thank our local businesses, Fish Furniture and Fantasy Candies.

Barb Holtz, resident Naturalist and Friends of Euclid Creek Board member, closed the evening with a charming story, and through imagination, immersed everyone into the Creek.

And lastly, although the event was a group effort, we want to especially thank Virginia Aveni for her tireless and extraordinary work in shepherding the event from conception to clean-up. It would not have been possible without her knowledge and dedication.

The fundraiser proceeds will support educational outreach and land conservation goals planned for the 2015-16 fiscal year. A special shout-out and thank you go to our Sponsors and Friends:



FOEC's Ginny Aveni (left) greets guests Chris Alvarado and Christina Znidarsic



Keynote speaker Chris Ronayne, President of UCI, gave a riveting talk about the history and revitalization of University Circle



President Christi Carlson and past president Barb Holtz raffling off donated items

SPONSORS

Anonymous
Virginia Aveni
Acacia Homes Development Company
Cleveland Metroparks
Cuyahoga Soil & Water Conservation District
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First Interstate Properties, Ltd.
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Northeast Ohio Regional Sewer District
Stephen Hovancsek & Associates, Inc.
Western Reserve Land Conservancy
Wild Birds Unlimited, David Pretnar

FRIENDS

Joe Cicero, Mayor of Lyndhurst
Dennis Fiorelli, South Euclid Councilman
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Jane Goodman, South Euclid Councilwoman
Cathy Murphy, Highland Heights Council President
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Georgine Welo, Mayor of South Euclid

Bluestone Heights
Chagrin River Watershed Partners
Cleveland Metroparks
Cuyahoga County Solid Waste District
Cuyahoga County Planning Commission
Cuyahoga River Restoration
Fantasy Candies
Fish Furniture
Good Nature Organic Lawn Care
Greenwood Farms Historical, Cultural & Arts Assn
Lyndhurst Garden Club
Ohio Environmental Council
Richmond Heights Garden Club
Richmond Heights Kiwanis Club
Rocky River Watershed Council
The Nature Conservancy

To see all fundraiser Friends please go to our website blog



FOEC members setting up for the event. From left to right: Ken Messinger Rapport, Carolyn Sugiuchi, Chris Vild and Ginny Aveni



Dave Holtz and artist Nolan Beck enjoying the evening



Artist Wendy Mahon's beautifully painted rain barrel auction item

FOEC Membership

Please remember to renew your 2015-16 membership.

You can request a membership or donation form be mailed to you at friendsofeuclidcreek@gmail.com or renew online at www.EuclidCreekWatershed.org and click on 'Support Us' tab

Gardening Rules

Over and over we hear that planting native plants makes environmental and economic sense. Transforming our yards from lawn and foreign blooms to less turf and native flowers will better support our native pollinators and keep us from dumping money into water, fertilizers and herbicides. **But is it true? Do landscapes with more native plants truly make a difference?**

Enjoy this excerpt from a blog written by Jim McCormac, a biologist/naturalist for the Ohio Department of Natural Resources:

“Lawns are little better than cement in fostering biodiversity. They are biological dead zones. All of this is mostly for aesthetics. The manicured lawn is perpetuated by peer pressure and lack of imagination. We can do better. In spring of 2012, we eradicated one-third acre of turf grass at the Ohio Department of Natural Resources’ headquarters in Columbus (where I work). The site was seeded with a mixture of native prairie plants. The results, in just three years, are stunning.

We have spawned a biodiversity factory. The meadow is awash with nature’s ultimate pollinators...I’ve tallied about 25 species of butterflies thus far. This food factory hasn’t gone unnoticed by the birds...Their joyful tunes are a constant part of the prairie’s soundscape. The site is a thousand times more interesting than when it was a grass monoculture.” (August 2, 2015 - www.jimmccormac.blogspot.com)



*Native plants are good for humans too!
Photo by Betty Hall from www.wildones.org*

Clearly, adding native plants to our landscapes makes a difference. But, does your city allow for more naturalized gardening? A natural landscaping ordinance is not the same as a weed ordinance or rules concerning turf grass. To learn more about how you can suggest an ordinance change or addition in your community, join Friends at our October meeting. Naturalist Barb Holtz will share examples of model ordinances you can take to your council as well as share the importance of moving away from our lawn addiction.

Who Lives In The Watershed? by Barb Holtz



Late summer and fall are a great time to spy bears wandering in the watershed. WOOLY BEARS! As fall approaches, woolly bear caterpillars search forest floor and yards for places to hole up for the winter. I am always intrigued by how many I see crossing warm pavement to get to the proverbial other side of the road in mid-October.

Have you ever scooped up a woolly bear caterpillar in your hand? The usual response is to curl into a “C” only to stretch out and continue its journey when released. After spending winter under dried leaves or bark, hidden for months, the “bears” emerge to finish what nature began. Caterpillars will pupate and emerge as Isabella moths.

How does nature do it? This call to change and begin again. Humans have paid attention and developed wisdoms from nature’s cycles. Folklore that follows the woolly bear has to do with the severity of the winter to come. The more black than brown, the harsher the winter. So do some woolly bear watching this fall...what do the woolly bears in our watershed predict?



Upcoming FOEC Meetings / Activities

September 1 @ 6:30 pm - Dusty Goldenrod Preserve, Highland Heights - Join us for a walk outside as Lynn Garrity, Coastal Program Specialist with ODNR, takes us on a hike through the beautiful protected property and discusses her role in protecting our local watersheds.

October 6 @ 7:00 pm - Acacia Reservation - Natural Landscaping & Ordinances discussion—Natural landscapes sustain native pollinators, decrease storm water runoff and afford beauty to the beholder. But many municipalities have restrictive ordinances prohibiting native plantings. Naturalist Barb Holtz will discuss weed ordinances and how we can affect change.

November 3 @ 7:00pm - Acacia Reservation - Meeting topic coming soon

December 1 @ 7:00pm - Annual Holiday Party / Fundraiser - Mayfield Village Community Room

Please confirm upcoming meetings and details on our website or facebook page (web addresses on back page)

2nd Annual Day in the Life of Euclid Creek Event

Our second annual "Day in the Life of Euclid Creek" (DITLEC) event, held on Saturday, July 18th was quite different from last year - it was beautiful, warm weather! The inaugural 2014 DITLEC was held on a very chilly, 40 degree October day where participants learned about how we monitor water quality through water chemistry sampling, macroinvertebrate (aquatic bug) monitoring, and electrofishing. What makes this event so unique is the collaborative effort to organize and run the event between Cleveland Metroparks, Friends of Euclid Creek (FOEC), NEORS, Sierra Club, and Cleveland - Division of Water.

The day started with Euclid Creek water monitoring program manager from Tri-C East, Lou Rifici, who started the day with chemistry training, followed by demonstrations from Sierra Club Water Sentinel volunteers at Acacia Reservation at the headwaters of Euclid Creek. Then we followed the Main Branch of Euclid Creek down to the Highland Picnic Area in the Euclid Creek Reservation, where the Main Branch and the East Branch join. Here, Metroparks Aquatic Research Coordinator, Claire Weldon, collected macroinvertebrates to show what species of aquatic bugs can live in Euclid Creek. We ended the day at Wildwood Park at the mouth of Euclid Creek and Lake Erie, where Metroparks staff demonstrated electrofishing. Aquatic biologist, Mike Durkalec, showed the group how they shock the water from a boat to momentarily stun and collect fish to sample populations and species, resulting in no permanent harm to the fish.



Chemistry training (upper left); Macroinvertebrate sampling (upper right); Electrofishing demonstration (lower left); Participants getting an up close look at fish in Euclid Creek (lower right)



Overall, we collected 12 water quality samples using 3 different methods across 9 different sites. Check out the 'Outcome Tab' on the program website (euclidcreekwatershed.org) to see 2014 and 2015 results. At the end of the day results were discussed over pizza and salad and raffle winners collected their booty - from rain barrels, to native plants to organizational bling like water bottles and t-shirts.

The results that stood out most for people were the values for conductivity, which relate to concentrations of dissolved solids in water. High conductivity levels are linked to road salt and some fertilizers, so the fact that conductivity numbers were very high in mid-summer, shows that road salt is still being processed in the watershed. Through the Euclid Creek Volunteer Monitoring Program, we see conductivity levels vary seasonally with levels increasing in winter as we salt our roads more, and decreasing through summer and it takes until fall for the levels to normalize. Any elevated level of conductivity is a challenge to the health of aquatic life.

A big thanks go out to all who attended and made the day a great success! Congrats to those of you who went home with raffle prizes. Good luck to everyone in the Clean Water Tour & Sweepstakes—see the Sustainable Cleveland webpage to see other ways to be a part of the Year of Clean Water. And thank you to Patrick Henry for taking amazing photos.

Save the Date for our Third Annual *A Day in the Life of Euclid Creek*, which is scheduled for July 16th, 2016.

The Challenge of Managing Invasive Plants

In the fall of 2010, we installed a rain garden in front of Beachwood Middle School with beautiful native plants, as storm water management education for students, parents, and teachers. In 2013, what started with a few seedlings of an invasive plant called *Phragmites* spread over the year to a pervasive problem.

This particularly tough invasive plant has underground runners that take over the native plants and illustrates a challenge we have when trying to introduce native plants to a site. Just a short distance away is the naturalized Shaker Blvd. bikeway and median where phragmites has established in several areas, so we believe this was the seed source for the phragmites in the nearby rain garden. We are trying to control the plant without spraying chemicals by cutting it back several times a year coordinating with students at Beachwood Middle School. By cutting the plant back frequently, we hope that it will lose its energy and start to lose the fight in taking over the rain garden and eradicating the biodiversity we have built in this garden over the years. We'll keep you posted on how this fight goes as there are many other invasive plant fights going on in other protected, ecologically sensitive properties in the watershed.



Phragmites, an invasive grass, is taking over the native plant rain garden at Beachwood Middle School (above)

In August, we cut back the *Phragmites* and you can see the 24 varieties of native perennials, shrubs and grasses trying to outcompete the Phrag. (below)



Who is Responsible for our Streams?

Most property owners do not always know what to do with their backyard stream when they notice problems, which in northeast Ohio are primarily related to streambank erosion, stream channel conveyance and loss of riparian/streamside natural buffers.

If a stream is on your property, you are responsible for any maintenance you want done to the stream. Some communities have ordinances requiring that streamside property owners keep their stream 'free-flowing' and clear of blockages, so check with your community to see if there are regulations you should know about as a streamside property owner. The water in the stream is a 'public good' and is not considered private property (e.g. people have the right to float on top of the water), but the land beneath the water is private property (e.g. when you stop floating and step onto the land, you are now trespassing). If two property owners own to the edge of a stream, then each actually owns to the center of the stream unless a property deed specifies something else. Also, on large navigable waters, boaters have the right to navigate on the stream, regardless of who owns the land beside or underneath it. For more details, google Ohio Department of Natural Resources Fact Sheet called 'Who Owns Ohio's Streams?'

One other nuance to consider, is that whatever you do to your segment of stream cannot cause harm to property owners up or downstream (e.g. if you construct a dam that curtails water flow downstream and unreasonably impacts that property owners use of the water, you may have to remove that dam). In many rivers, impeding navigation is not permitted, so check with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers to see if any permit is needed, especially if you are considering placing any fill in the stream or on the stream banks.

While municipalities have the authority to improve drainage and clear streams of blockages (e.g. logjams), and some communities assist property owners with clearing obstructions in a stream, there is no one governmental agency assigned that responsibility. So the burden can fall on the property owner to address blockages, although they are not legally responsible to do so unless a court rules that the owner has caused upstream or downstream problems unreasonably (e.g. building a dam that causes a debris blockage that causes upstream problems may necessitate removing the blockage or the dam entirely).

The main takeaway from this article is to check local ordinances and potential state or national permit requirements before undergoing stream maintenance activities as whatever you do on your stream segment could impact upstream and downstream property owners as well as the health of the stream system. Alert professionals quickly if you see a problem starting, as most times that we get calls from landowners, a problem is too far along for a simple/cheap fix and may require costly engineering and restoration.



Cleveland Metroparks Open Houses Euclid Creek and Acacia Reservations

Reservation Master Plans completed in 2012 are updated on a continual four year cycle. Please join Cleveland Metroparks and participate in the 2015 update, focusing on Acacia, Euclid Creek, North Chagrin, and South Chagrin Reservations.

Time: 6-7pm each evening, with a short presentation at 6:15

Monday, September 21

Acacia Reservation

Acacia Clubhouse
26899 Cedar Road
Lyndhurst, OH 44122

Thursday, September 24

Euclid Creek Reservation

Lower Highland Picnic Shelter
Euclid Creek Parkway
Euclid, OH 44143

Plans and comment cards will be available for each reservation at each meeting, and will be online at www.clevelandmetroparks.com/ReservationPlans from September 14th through 30th. Check the website for the North and South Chagrin Reservation meeting dates/details.

Sustainability Summit 2015 Year of Clean Water



The 7th Annual Sustainability Summit is on September 16 and 17, 2015 from 8 am to 5 pm, at Public Auditorium, 500 Lakeside Avenue, Cleveland. The 2015 summit will highlight the current celebration year – Clean Water, with a look ahead to 2016 - the Year of Sustainable Transportation.

When you register, you can vote on Innovation Sessions that help shape the Summit. Examples of proposed sessions include:

- A New Vision for the Lakefront: Building Connections Between People and the Waterfront
- Green Lawns, Blue Water
- Scrubbing Lake Erie Clean

To register or for more information go to: sustainablecleveland.org (register by 8/31 to avoid a late fee)

Euclid Creek Watershed Coordinator
Cuyahoga Soil & Water Conservation District
6100 West Canal Road
Valley View, Ohio 44125

More About Our Program Partners

Euclid Creek Watershed Council (ECWC)

City of Beachwood	City of Cleveland
City of Euclid	City of Highland Heights
City of Lyndhurst	City of Mayfield Heights
Mayfield Village	City of Richmond Heights
City of South Euclid	

Each community appoints a representative to serve on the Council, which meets three times a year and has several committees that focus on education & outreach, technical issues and volunteer monitoring.

Friends of Euclid Creek (FOEC)

The Friends of Euclid Creek is a community-based watershed stewardship group, a non-profit 501(c)(3).

Board: Christi Carlson - **President**; Chris Vild - **Vice President**; Jeanette Evans - **Secretary**; Ken Messinger-Rapport - **Treasurer**; and **Directors:** Gary Bloom, Brian Gilbert and Barb Holtz.

Monthly Meetings: First Tuesday of the month, 7:00-9:00pm, Cleveland Metroparks Acacia Reservation, Lyndhurst. Meeting location may vary, please check website to confirm location/time

Join FOEC or donate to our land conservation fund. For more details call, email, or check the website.

Friends of Euclid Creek
P.O. Box 21384
South Euclid, OH 44121
FriendsofEuclidCreek@gmail.com



Cuyahoga Soil & Water Conservation District

Houses the Euclid Creek Watershed Coordinator, the Program's full time staff person who implements the Euclid Creek Watershed Action Plan and acts as the liaison between the ECWC and FOEC.

Euclid Creek Watershed Coordinator, Claire Posius
Cuyahoga Soil & Water Conservation District
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Program Website and Facebook Page

Website: www.EuclidCreekWatershed.org

Facebook: Like 'Friends of Euclid Creek'



Only Rain Down the Drain

If you would like to **receive this newsletter electronically**, email cposius@cuyahogawcd.org or call 216-524-6580 x16 with your email address.

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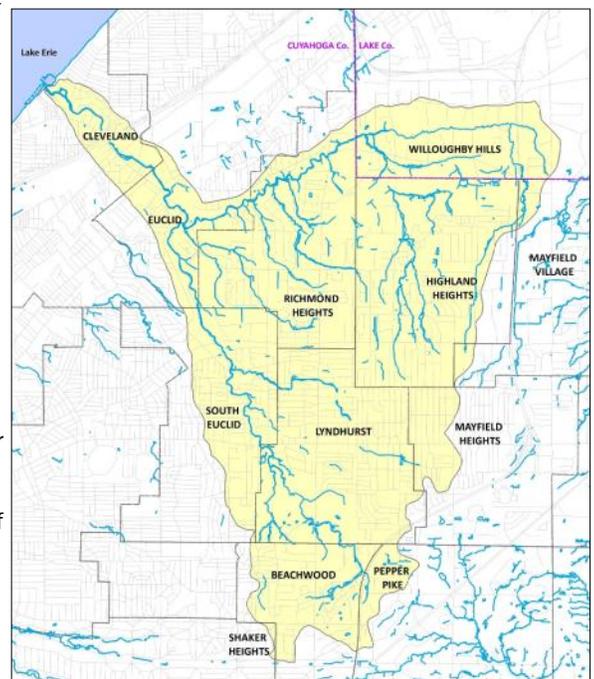


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What is a Watershed? A watershed is the area of land that drains to a single river, stream or lake. Because the actions we take on land directly affect the quality of our rivers and streams, it is important to take the entire watershed into consideration when trying to protect and improve the health of our local waters.

The Euclid Creek Watershed drains 24 square miles from 11 Northeast Ohio communities in Cuyahoga County and a portion of Lake County. The Creek includes 34 miles of streams as far as 8 miles away from the Creek's outflow to Lake Erie, our source of drinking water, at Wildwood Park in Cleveland.



Map of the Euclid Creek Watershed.

Euclid Creek is one of the most densely populated and developed watersheds along the Ohio Lake Erie coastline—which results in poor water quality. But we have a plan to restore the health of the watershed and it includes you, so contact us to find out how you can help Euclid Creek today!