



Annual Report 2017

Mission: Advocate and implement best management practices for conservation of land and aquatic resources in a developed environment through education, stewardship and technical assistance.

Cuyahoga Soil & Water Conservation District's (SWCD) main program areas are:

- Conservation and Stormwater Education
- Euclid Creek and Rocky River Watershed Programs
- Stormwater Pollution Prevention Program & Long Term Operations and Maintenance Program
- Urban Agriculture/Natural Resources

The scope of activities implemented in 2017 was incredible. With a staff of twelve, the Cuyahoga SWCD has expanded its coverage within the entire county. In 2017, the District's programs directly impacted more than 133,000 county residents and stakeholders, and probably many more.

This report merely highlights the expanded work efforts, which focused on pollution prevention for the ongoing and necessary protection of our vital soil and water resources. Throughout the year, projects, programs and events reached hundreds of stakeholders in nearly every community within Cuyahoga, and some in Medina County as well.

LAKE ERIE: Don't Waste It!



Pick up after your pet in every season.



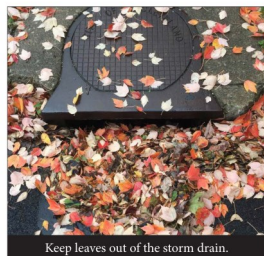
Properly dispose of household hazardous waste.

Winter, Spring, Summer or Fall

Be a friend to the environment by keeping pollutants off the land and out of the storm drain.



Don't dump yard waste in or near a stream.



Keep leaves out of the storm drain.



NACD Poster Contest Winner - Lorah, Age 9



For more information, [all you have to do is call.](http://www.cuyahogawcd.org)
Cuyahoga Soil & Water Conservation District • 216.524.6580 • www.cuyahogawcd.org

Annual Theme: Lake Erie, Don't Waste It

The Program Year By the Numbers

The board and staff established 7 Strategic Goals with 17 initiatives tied to the overall goals. Staff implemented numerous projects and programs related to those initiatives and in doing so expanded the District's visibility and impact throughout Cuyahoga County.

- Grants for conservation-related projects totaled \$506,202 with \$237,040 in match dollars
- Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan Reviews - 297
- Comprehensive field reviews of active construction sites with reports – 2,097 for about 175 active sites per month
- Long Term Operations and Maintenance reviews and reporting of water quality and water quantity basins in the county - 743 sites in 18 communities (an 11% increase since last year. Reviews included Cuyahoga County Library and Cuyahoga County Department of Public Works sites; with additional technical assistance for 100 sites (20% increase in 2017)
- Tool Box Talks, also known as Lunch-n-Learn sessions - 1
- Staff participated, coordinated and implemented 216 programs and events
- Educational programs included Rain Barrel Workshops (19); Rain Garden Workshop (1); Composting Workshops (2), Green Cleaning Workshops (2); Earth Day Events; Career Days; Backyard Stewardship, Invasive Plant Pulls; School Programs, including Water Festivals and poster contest - 17; community organization presentations -9
- Latino Earth Partnership - A five day program for 18 teachers
- Expanded programs to schools included 24, programs mostly for elementary students
- Educational materials included four new fact sheets and three newsletters
- Urban Agriculture Programs (soil health) - 3
- National Wildlife Federation Backyard Habitat Steward Training - 15
- Trees planted-200; grants received to provide funds for trees
- Stream cleanups - 29
- Blog posts by staff on the Cuyahoga SWCD website - 52
- Special technical presentations for 2 national webinars and 4 statewide conferences
- Weekly water samples collected on the Cuyahoga River for Heidelberg Labs
- Professional trainings for community service staff and homeowner's associations related to maintenance of stormwater control measures, such as bioretention basins
- 96 hours of general assistance, including site visits, related to erosion, plants, assistance with land, fishing, soil testing, hydrology, water testing, pollution complaints, permits and drainage

Funding, Special Projects and Grants

Most of the District's funding is provided through local governments, the State of Ohio (Ohio Soil & Water Conservation Commission) and Cuyahoga County. Funding to support conservation projects is provided through government and private sector grants for projects, such as tree planting, urban agriculture and stream restoration.

Cuyahoga SWCD was recognized by the Ohio EPA for outstanding implementation of two Ohio Environmental Education Fund projects.

Grants 2017

- Willoughby-Eastlake School of Innovation Stream Restoration project; Grantor: Ohio Environmental Protection Agency-Section 319
- A Link in the Chain – Restoring the Upper East Branch at Royalton Farms; Grantor: Ohio EPA Section 319
- Stopping Sediment to Save Mirror Valley's Brook Trout; Grantor: National Fish Wildlife Federation-Sustain Our Great Lakes
- Tillage Radishes in Cleveland; Funded by Ohio Department of Agriculture
- Soil Health Doesn't Happen Overnight – Making the Case for More Organic Matter; Funded by ODNR-Division of Soil and Water Resources
- Tree Canopy for Conservation; Grantor: Dupont Clear into the Future®
- Regional environmental education outreach; Funded by NEORSD
- Native Plant & Pollinator Garden; Funded by Native Plant Society of Northeastern Ohio
- Community Relations Sponsorship for Project WET; Funded by NEORSD
- Healthy Watershed Tree Planting; Funded by Dominion/Western Reserve Land Conservancy (WRLC)
- Community Christian Church Riparian Tree Planting, Euclid; Funded by Dominion/WRLC
- Plum Creek Good Neighbor Program*; Funded by Dominion/WRLC

Conservation and Stormwater Education

Nearly every community in the county (89%) is required to implement a Public Involvement/Public Education Program (PIPE) program under their NPDES Phase II Permit. In late 2016, the Cuyahoga SWCD was recognized by the Northeast Ohio Regional Sewer District as a “preferred service provider” for PIPE programs for communities. The number of communities receiving assistance with their PIPE programs doubled in 2017, which provided opportunities for the District to reach 96% of the County's population!

Expanding assistance to 49 communities allowed the District to hire a Stormwater Educator who provided more specialized educational programs for schools, plus an increase in all PIPE programs. In 2017, the Earth Partnership for Schools, which has been an annual program cosponsored by the District for 5 years, focused on reaching out to schools in heavily Latino communities. Training through the National Wildlife Federation's Backyard *Habitat Stewards Program* continued to attract volunteers who have help to inspire homeowners and others to improve their yards to better benefit local wildlife. The District also provided opportunities for students to participate in Envirothon, Camp Canopy (formerly Forestry Camp) and the revived Poster Contest.

The diverse types of programs were created to meet the needs of the different communities. In addition to general information related to pollution prevention, the staff designed four new brochures to target issues that were identified by community leaders. *What's Your Runoff Footprint; Failing Septic Systems Pollute our Water; Illegal Dumping; and Let them pick up the sticks...You Pick Up the Waste* were mailed to raise awareness about illegal

dumping, septic system owners, licensed dog owners, commercial properties and restaurants.

Rain barrel workshops continue to be popular, as do stream clean ups, rain garden maintenance, stream monitoring, and tree plantings. Other programs included green cleaning and composting workshops, participation in numerous community events, and presentations to various organizations. The District staff was actively engaged as “Tree Stewards,” not only promoting the benefits of trees, but also advocating for streamside (riparian) buffers and hosting tree planting events.

Urban agriculture programs and on-site technical assistance related to improved growing, cover crops, soil testing and irrigation were also held. In late summer an Urban Agriculture Tour for local officials featured urban farm sites within Cleveland and the southwest side of the county. To assist urban farmers with an array of issues, the *Blueprint to Urban Agriculture* was developed and is online. It will be updated, as needed.



Stormwater Pollution Prevention Program

Since 2004, the District has assisted communities with their stormwater pollution prevention programs under their NPDES Phase II Permits. Efforts address erosion and sediment control on active construction sites and long-term operations and maintenance of post construction stormwater control measures. The District implements these programs for 18 communities and the County’s Department of Public Works. Program tasks include reviews and approvals of stormwater pollution prevention plans, regular inspections of active construction sites, monthly reporting and outreach to site planners and operators, and on-site technical assistance. Education is central to the District’s mission. Technical assistance and guidance through fact sheets, workshops and training are essential components of the Stormwater Pollution Prevention Program.

Plans were approved for more than 200 sites, of which about 175 are active at any given time. At the end of the year nearly 2,100 field reviews were conducted, with detailed reports provided to site operators and communities, and other stakeholders, as needed.

Good long-term operations and maintenance of stormwater control measures (SCMs) starts with a good plan, conscientious installation and proper maintenance. To help achieve this goal, the District begins working with the site operators before the active construction phase is completed on a site. In 2017, the District inspected 748 SCMs, an increase of 11% over the previous year. Detailed reports, included site-specific fact sheets, and were mailed to landowners to raise awareness about the importance of regular maintenance for long term viability of stormwater control measures. Special educational programs were also provided to home owner associations and others.

Natural Resources Program

All work implemented by District staff is dedicated to conservation, preservation and restoration of soil and water resources. Initiatives focus on identifying and reducing stormwater pollution, protecting and improving habitat for land and aquatic species, increasing the environmental IQ of diverse audiences, improving soils and constantly educating the public. In addition to the education and stormwater programs, the District holds and monitors conservation easements on sensitive lands. If needed, information about conservation easements is mailed to adjacent property owners that alerts them to the importance of “Keeping Conservation Easements Natural.”

Trees are the original “green infrastructure.” The City of Cleveland’s tree canopy is now only 19% and Cuyahoga County’s canopy is less than 50%. Advocating for the proper planting and care of trees with a focus on plantings in stream corridors has been and remains a significant focus of the District. In an effort to provide better technical assistance to landowners, half of the staff completed *Tree Stewards Program* and three staff members completed the sophomore class of the *Tree Commission Academy*. Cuyahoga SWCD is also an active member of the Cleveland Tree Coalition.

Staff also participated in 22 other county and statewide initiatives, including the Cleveland Climate Action Plan Advisory Group, Cleveland Tree Coalition, Cuyahoga AOC Advisory Committees, Lake Erie Allegheny Partnership (LEAP), Northeast Ohio Public Involvement/Public Education Work Group, NEO Storm Water Training Council, Northeast Ohio Areawide Coordinating Agency Water Quality Committees, Ohio Farm Bureau, Ohio State Extension Advisory Committee, and Western Reserve Resource Conservation & Development Council.

Watershed Programs

The Euclid Creek and Rocky River watershed programs are aimed at protecting, restoring and perpetuating healthy watersheds through watershed planning, public education and collaboration among the watersheds’ many stakeholders. Charged with implementing the state-endorsed watershed action plans, now called the non-point pollution source implementation plans, the staff seeks funding and works with a variety of partners to address impairments in the watersheds through special projects, ongoing environmental education programs and events.

The scope of projects included stream restorations, volunteer water quality monitoring and training for new volunteers, stream assessments to gauge erosion and to help identify areas for future restoration projects, streamside tree plantings, watershed outreach through education and activities such as stream cleanups, and annual progress meetings to raise awareness of watershed issues to stakeholders.

Euclid Creek’s watershed is only 24 square miles and encompasses parts of 10 communities in Eastern Cuyahoga and a portion of Lake County. Compelling stakeholders to get involved is as challenging as it is rewarding. In 2017, 962 volunteers participated in 2,132 hours of watershed activities. The value of their contribution was \$50,820.

The Rocky River Watershed drains a 294 square-mile network of neighborhoods, farms, forests, parks, roads and stream stretches from Medina to Lake Erie, and includes parts of Cuyahoga, Medina, Lorain and Summit Counties, including all or part of 32 municipalities and townships. In 2017, 565 volunteers participated in 1,470 hours of watershed activities. The value of their contribution was \$33,795.30.

Urban Agriculture Program

Funding from the National Association of Conservation Districts enabled the District to hire its first-ever horticulture specialist. In addition to reaching out to Cleveland’s urban agriculture community, the Blueprint to Urban Agriculture was completed and can be found online at www.BlueprintToUrbanAgriculture.com. To help fill a niche and at the request of local stakeholders, District staff provided on-site technical assistance to agricultural producers, related to planting, hoop houses, cover crops and irrigation. Late in the year, dedicated funding was established for the urban forestry initiative under the (NRCS) Resource Conservation Partnership Program.



Board of Supervisors

Five locally-elected Supervisors establish and monitor the District's policies and provide direction and support for strong fiscal management. Supervisors approve the annual plan of work, which corresponds to the Strategic plan and the annual budget. This year we also had four Associate Supervisors who aided the board and staff.

Ruth Skuly.....Chair
Rachel Webb.....Vice Chair
Ted Esborn.....Secretary
Jeremiah Swetel.....Fiscal Agent
Whitnye Long Jones.....Nominating Committee Chair

Associate Supervisors

Each year the Board appoints associate supervisors. These volunteers provided expanded our capacity and better enabled Cuyahoga SWCD board and staff to meet and exceed the 2017 goals. Their time and service were extremely important to increasing our ability to get conservation on the ground.

Kathleen Bradley • Patricia Carey • Dorothy Hazel • Howard Maier

Cuyahoga SWCD Staff

Cuyahoga SWCD staff had a successful year. The work program expanded, staff expertise increased, and efficiencies were made for better delivery of our services. The staff's passion for the environment and commitment to Cuyahoga SWCD's mission supported ongoing conservation efforts that protected land and aquatic resources.

Janine Rybka.....District Administrator
Jared Bartley.....Rocky River Watershed Coordinator
Ellen Brown ArmstrongPrograms Assistant
Brent Eysenbach.....Stormwater Program Coordinator
Elizabeth Hiser.....Natural Resources Coordinator
Justin Husher.....Horticulture Specialist
Kelly Parker.....Urban Conservationist
Claire Posius.....Euclid Creek Watershed Coordinator
Carla RegenerStormwater Specialist
Amy Roskilly.....Conservation Education Specialist
Megan Smith.....Urban Technician
Jacquelyn Zevenbergen.....Stormwater Educator

Program Interns and Volunteers

Seasonal interns not only gain valuable learning experiences, they also provide important input and assistance to annual program tasks. These conservationists-in-training helped staff tackle projects, including workshops, stream and conservation monitoring.

Franchesca Bodnar • Daniel Kloos • Kristen Hebebrand
Special thanks to Kirk Kallenborn who volunteered his assistance

Supervisors-Elect

In addition to the annual election of Supervisors, the Annual Meeting celebrates people who are dedicated to conservation efforts. The 68th Annual Meeting was held at the Dunham Tavern Museum in Cleveland. Congratulations to Sherri Lippus and Jeremiah Swetel who were elected to the Board of Supervisors for the 2018-2020 terms.



Sherri Lippus



Jeremiah Swetel

2017 Conservation Heroes

This year's *Conservation Heroes* were selected for their commitment to promoting good practices - in the classroom and in the field. The board and staff recognized and thanked the following Conservation Heroes for their contributions to conservation and the environment.



Conservationist of the Year
Mary Ellen Stasek



Cooperator of the Year
Kyla Werling



Educator of the Year
Roy Larick



**Justin Husher gives a tour of the cover crop
demo site at Dunham Tavern at the Annual Meeting**

2017 Financial Report

	District Fund	Special Fund	(Memorandum Only)
Cash Receipts			
Grants			
Local Government		727,879	727,879
State Government		260,624	260,624
Federal Government			0
Sale of Products/Materials	21,226		21,226
All Other Revenue (sales, interest, grants)	66,663		66,663
	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>
<i>Total Cash Receipts</i>	87,889	988,503	1,076,392
	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>
Cash Disbursements			
Salaries		612,727	612,727
Supplies	1,929	3,508	5,437
Equipment	26,816	1,180	27,996
Contract Services/Cost Share Payment	28,600	30,405	59,005
Rentals	25,200	31,200	56,400
Service Fees			0
Information and Education			0
Travel and Expenses		4,253	4,253
Advertising and Printing	4,693	20,864	25,557
OPERS		85,123	85,123
Worker's Compensation			0
Unemployment Compensation			0
Product/Materials for Resale	15,959		15,959
Other (benefits, medicare, bank charges, software, meetings, postage, dues, phones, gasoline, professional services)	46,999	137,820	184,819
	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>
<i>Total Cash Disbursements</i>	150,196	927,080	1,077,276
	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>
<i>Excess of Receipts Over (Under) Disbursements</i>	(62,307)	61,423	(884)
	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>

2017 Financial Report continued

	District Fund	Special Fund	(Memorandum Only)
Other Financing Receipts (Disbursements)			
Transfers In			0
Transfers Out			0
Advances In			0
Advances Out			0
Other Financing Sources	17,489		17,489
Other Financing Uses	(625)	(36,614)	(37,239)
<i>Total Other Financing Receipts (Disbursements)</i>	<u>16,864</u>	<u>(36,614)</u>	<u>(19,750)</u>
<i>Net Change in Fund Cash Balances</i>	(45,443)	24,809	(20,634)
 <i>Fund Cash Balances, January 1</i>	 <u>1,284,532</u>	 <u>276,444</u>	 <u>1,560,976</u>
Fund Cash Balances, December 31			
Nonspendable	99,173	0	99,173
Restricted	0	0	0
Committed	1,250	0	1,250
Assigned	6,267	0	6,267
Unassigned (Deficit)	1,132,399	301,253	1,433,652
<i>Fund Cash Balances, December 31</i>	<u>\$1,239,089</u>	<u>\$301,253</u>	<u>\$1,540,342</u>
 <i>Net Change in Fund Cash Balances</i>	(\$45,443)	\$24,809	(\$20,634)
<i>Fund Cash Balances, January 1</i>	<u>1,284,532</u>	<u>276,444</u>	<u>1,560,976</u>
<i>Fund Cash Balances, December 31</i>	<u>\$1,239,089</u>	<u>\$301,253</u>	<u>\$1,540,342</u>

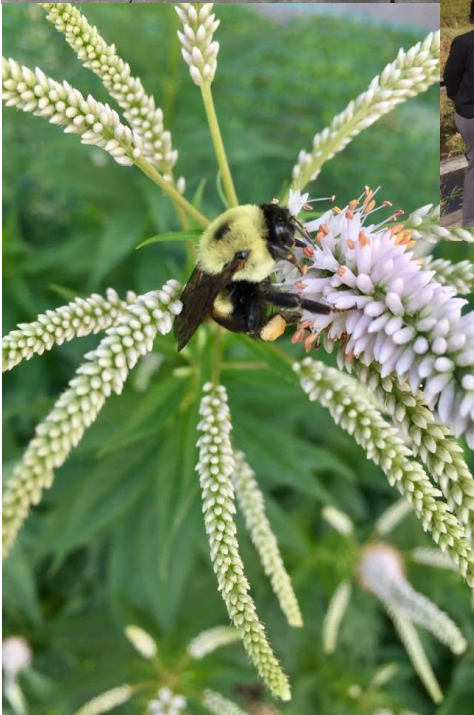
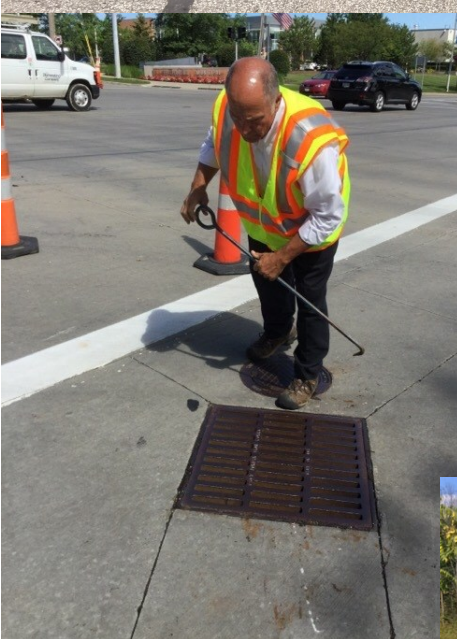


2017 photos





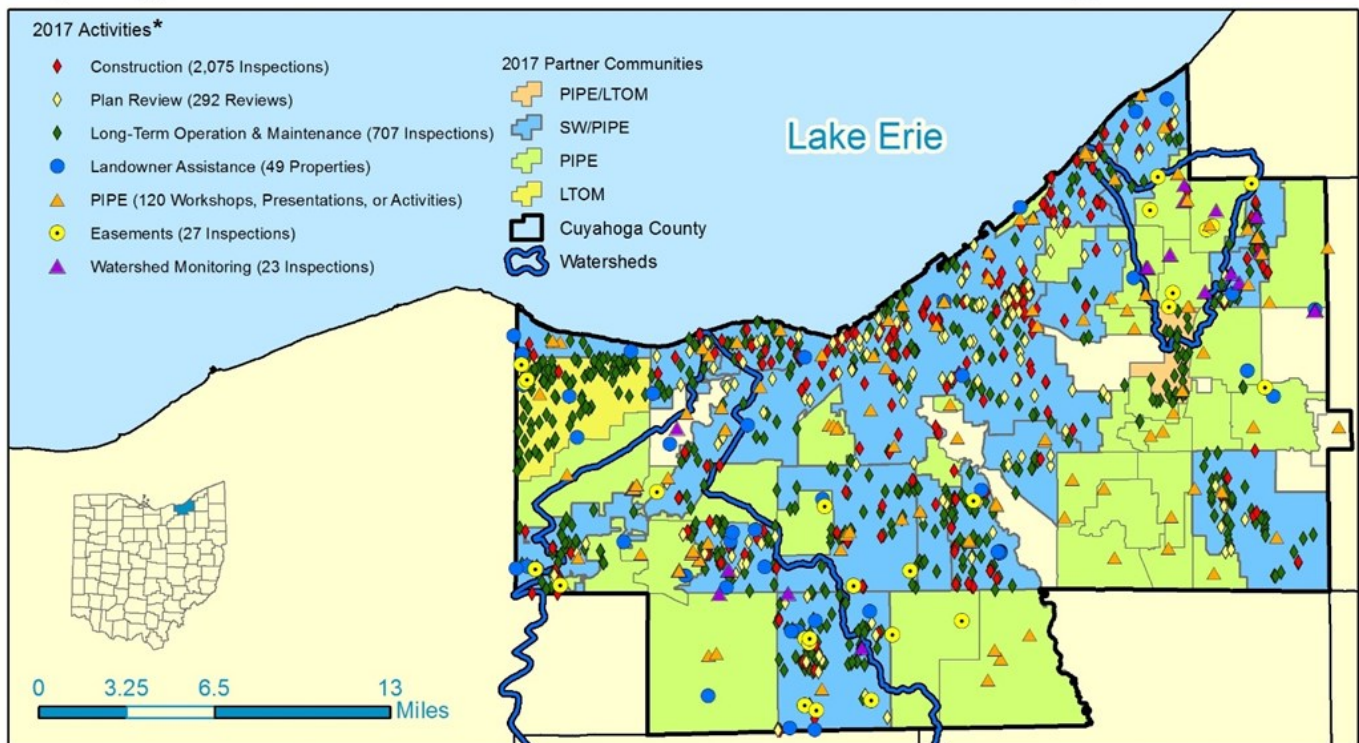
2017 photos



The Cuyahoga Soil & Water Conservation District Board of Supervisors and staff would like to thank our funders, collaborators and stakeholders - including Cuyahoga County, Division of Soil and Water Conservation Commission (State of Ohio), and local governments, schools and residents for helping us achieve our 2017 goals.

Cuyahoga Soil & Water Conservation District is an Equal Opportunity employer and provider.

Cuyahoga SWCD Partner Communities and Watershed Programs



* Monthly Construction Inspections, Multiple Construction Plan Reviews Per Site, Annual Long-Term Operation & Maintenance Inspections, Annual Easement Monitoring
Partner Community Programs: SW = Sediment and Erosion Control Plan Review, Construction Site Inspections, and Long-Term Operation & Maintenance Inspections,
LTOM = Long-Term Operation and Maintenance, PIPE = Public Involvement and Public Education Programs, County Programs: Landowner Assistance and Easement Monitoring

Leading Conservation in the Urban Landscape since 1949



www.cuyahogaswcd.org