



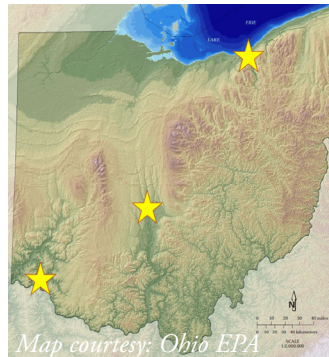
# ON THE LAND

## FALL 2020

## Community + Conservation + the 3C's

Cuyahoga, Franklin and Hamilton SWCDs are teaming up for their first-ever collaborative annual meeting. On Thursday, October 22, from 6-7 p.m. the three most urban SWCDs in Ohio are inviting their respective communities to Zoom-in and come together in yet another initiative that breaks down regional differences and unites us on what we hold common – Community, Conservation, and the fact that we are all Ohioans.

Join us to hear how we are united in our ground-breaking efforts for conservation programs, events and best practices aimed at protecting and improving our soil and water resources.



Bob Short, President of the Ohio Federation of Soil and Water Conservation Districts will welcome participants, followed by the Chairs of the three SWCDs. Cuyahoga SWCD Chair, Sherri Lippus, will introduce Cuyahoga SWCD. Short videos produced by the SWCDs and

highlights from the directors will round out the program.

Each of the SWCDs offers numerous programs to inspire the public to take action for conservation and mini-grants are offered to support conservation initiatives. The Annual Meeting will end with a challenge to the three C's stakeholders. Don't miss this historical opportunity to get a bird's eye view of the conservation work that is happening in these three regions of Ohio. Please join us!

**For more information,  
see Page 3 and visit  
[www.cuyahogaswcd.org](http://www.cuyahogaswcd.org)**

## Master Rain Gardeners

At the Ohio Stormwater Conference in 2018 I saw a presentation by Susan Bryan, of Washtenaw County Water Resources Commissioner's office, called "How to Get 400 Rain Gardens in The Ground Without Lifting a Shovel." What ensued was a journey in train the trainer that had me building my own rain garden and working with local conservation agencies to bring what is known as the Master Rain Gardener course to Northeast Ohio.

The Master Rain Gardener course is a 5-class certification course offered to residents. Step-by-step, residents



*Mark Brody built two rain gardens in the fall of 2019. This is one of his rain gardens in July of 2020.*

learn how to design and build their own rain garden. At graduation residents will have built or adopted a rain garden, and they are ready to teach their neighbors what

they have learned. Each graduate grows the capacity of our region to advocate and educate others about rain gardens and how they can help address stormwater runoff. Cuyahoga Soil & Water Conservation District (SWCD) has worked with Chagrin River Watershed Partners, Lake SWCD, and Summit SWCD to teach two in-person courses and five online courses since June 2019. Since that journey started, we have had 201 students take the Northeast Ohio Master Rain Gardener Course.

*Continued on Page 2*

## The Next Generation Steps Up to Help Out

Despite the challenges young people are facing today, they show amazing resilience. Their willingness to learn about land and water conservation virtually, individually and in small groups gives me great hope for our future.

Since the schools closed in March, we have conducted several outdoor education and involvement events supported by youth groups and their families and leaders. When we conduct an activity in person we keep the groups small (usually a few families), wear masks, social distance and practice good hygiene. I love seeing so many families enjoying the great outdoors and I hope this trend continues long after the pandemic is over.

In June, CSWCD decided to restart our public involvement programming with virtual and outdoor opportunities.

A STEM youth group at Case



*Macroinvertebrate collection at the Organic Connects: Neo Nu Hydromatic Aquathon*

Western Reserve University invited us to teach them about trees with a virtual presentation. Girl scout families did Tinker's Creek stream cleanups in Solon and Warrensville Heights with supervision from CSWCD and Tinker's Creek Watershed Partners. Walton Hills Day Camp divided the campers into small groups to do storm drain art projects to educate the public about the importance of "only rain down the drain." They even got some well-deserved recognition on Fox 8 News' Cleveland's Own Helping Cleveland's Own segment.

Thanks to a great partnership with our friends at Organic Connects, students from the greater Cleveland area were able to participate in the Neo Nu Hydromatic Aquathon. During the two field days of this event, middle and high school age students rotated through stations where they learned how to conduct both biological and chemical water quality sampling and analysis, practiced using an underwater drone, and got their art on with a biomimicry art contest. All work and no play makes for a dull day so participants also had rotations through water recreation activities. Kayaking on the Vermillion River and fishing in Shadow Lake gave Neo Nu participants a chance to appreciate the recreational benefits of clean water.

**Jacki Zevenbergen,**  
*Stormwater Education  
Program Manager*

## Master Rain Gardeners - continued

52 rain gardens have been built, 9 professionals have been certified to install rain gardens, and 14 graduates have adopted public rain gardens and are performing monthly weeding. And soon, two more 2020 online classes will wrap up and those numbers will climb!

Prior to our first class in 2019, Northeast Ohio Regional Sewer District had 45 rain gardens receiving



*Master Rain Gardener graduate with sign and t-shirt*

stormwater credits. We have over doubled that number of rain gardens in just one year with the Master Rain Gardener program.

Have you been thinking about installing a rain garden, or wondering what to do with that wet area in your back yard? Get out of thinking mode and into action mode with the Master Rain Gardener Program! Next scheduled class starts April 26, 2021.

**Elizabeth Hiser,**  
*Watershed Program Manager*

[www.cuyahogawcd.org](http://www.cuyahogawcd.org)  
Click on Programs - Master Rain Gardener Class

Partners from Cleveland Metroparks, Lake Metroparks, and Holden Arboretum have supported the course with supplemental instruction and hosting our in-person courses. Funding support has been provided by the Dominion Energy and Western Reserve Land Conservancy Watershed Mini Grant Program, Northeast Ohio Regional Sewer District & the West Creek Watershed Stewardship Center through Watershed Service Agreements.





Columbus



# JOINT *Annual Meeting*

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Thursday

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**22**

**6PM - 7PM**

Online on Zoom Webinars

Contact Us  
**(513) 772-7645**



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

# Meet the Candidates



## MIKE JIROUSEK

Why Mike Jirousek? Because I love this area and I want to continue to contribute.

- Long, diverse career with FirstEnergy, starting and ending in their Environmental Department, with the last ten years supervising 26 Scientists, Engineers and Technicians as Manager of Air and Water Programs over their 24 coal, gas, nuclear and hydro power plants within their six-State service territory.
- Always in pursuit of the “reasonable person” solution, collaborated with all levels of the Company to develop workable programs and provide day-to-day guidance, dramatically reducing environmental exceedances year over year while introducing Sustainability initiatives.
- Worked well externally with legislators, regulators and the public on complex environmental, legal and social issues. BA in Economics/Environmental from John Carroll and a MS in Environmental Management from University of Findlay.

My family and I live and work here, and we want to see the Cleveland Metro area continue to rebound and excel! I hope that my Management and Environmental experience can help the CSWCD in their service to my home town.



## SHERRI LIPPUS

Sherri Lippus is a current Soil & Water Conservation District Board Supervisor who served as the Treasurer and Chairperson during her first term.

Ms. Lippus is an IT Security Specialist at NASA Glenn Research Center, a licensed teacher, with a bachelor's degree in elementary education and a master's degree in Instructional Technology from Kent State University. Ms. Lippus brings a wealth of experience to the board as an IT security specialist, a former Olmsted Township trustee, educator, computer forensic investigator and small business owner.

Ms. Lippus also serves on two Homeowner Associations Boards and served on several County boards and advisory committees.

She has received numerous achievement awards, including the 2002 Cuyahoga Soil & Water Conservation District Educator of the Year. Her background in education, small business, and local and federal government experience have provided her with a thorough understanding of the importance of stormwater management, conservation, and proper management of various forms of infrastructure in a developed environment. Ms. Lippus resides in Olmsted Township with her husband, Jeff, and their two sons.



## JOE MACDONALD

Joe MacDonald, AICP is currently Director of Strategic and Environmental Planning for the Northeast Ohio Areawide Coordinating Agency (NOACA). His current responsibilities include development of eNEO2050: An Equitable Future for Northeast Ohio, NOACA's Long Range Plan (June 2021), and Clean Water 2020, NOACA's wastewater management and water quality plan (September 2020).

Prior to NOACA, Dr. MacDonald served as Project Manager of the Environment for the Northeast Ohio Sustainable Communities Consortium (NEOSCC). NEOSCC produced the Vibrant NEO 2040 Regional Visioning Framework, recipient of the 2015 Daniel Burnham Award from the American Planning Association.

His background and experiences are a sound investment for the Cuyahoga Soil & Water Conservation District Board and its mission to protect and restore the county's healthy soil and water resources.

Dr. MacDonald holds a Ph.D. in City and Regional Planning (University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill); an M.S.P. in Urban and Regional Planning (Florida State University); and a B.S. in Atmospheric, Oceanic and Space Sciences (University of Michigan).



## Meet the Candidates



### DEMAR SHEFFEY

Demar L. Sheffey, a native of Cleveland, brings more than 100% of his passion for community service and leadership together in all his endeavors.

His skillsets have led him to become the co-founder of Advocacy Confidence and Encouragement, a program that educates students on the innerworkings of trials which honed in on students' skillsets during mock trial proceedings.

Besides his work in classroom settings, Mr. Sheffey has hosted a plethora of events surrounding current issues such as infant mortality, constitutional forums, and college programming to name a few. These events were aimed at improving area community efficiency and sustainability.

Mr. Sheffey is a two-time college graduate. He received his Bachelor of Arts degree in Political Science from Notre Dame College in 2011. He then continued his education at Thomas M. Cooley Law School at Western Michigan University where he is a Juris Doctor.

When Mr. Sheffey is not serving his community, he spends time with his two loving children and amazing fiancé Crystal Carson. Besides work and family, Mr. Sheffey really likes watching movies in his spare time. His all-time favorite movie is Black Panther.

## SUPERVISOR ELECTION VOTING

The Cuyahoga Board of Supervisors consists of five elected officials who voluntarily serve three-year terms. This year, four candidates are running for two open positions. We encourage Cuyahoga County residents or business owners to participate in the election, which will run from September 9 - October 22.

### HOW TO VOTE

- Interested voters may request a ballot, by email, through the contact form on the District's website, or by phone at 216/524-6580, ext. 1000. Ballots will be mailed. Completed ballots must be returned to the office (by mail or in person) by October 22.
- In person voting will take place from October 9 - October 22 at the Cuyahoga SWCD office, 3311 Perkins Avenue, Cleveland, during normal business hours of 8:30 a.m.- 4:30 p.m. There is free parking across the street.

Election information can also be found at  
[www.cuyahogawcd.org](http://www.cuyahogawcd.org).



## Did You Know?

Did you know there is a Soil & Water Conservation District in all 88 counties of Ohio? There should also be one in every county of the United States but sometimes they are combined with other counties.

Soil & Water Conservation Districts were formed out of the Dust Bowl of the 1930's. Bad farming practices and a drought led the federal government to create the Soil Conservation Service (now called Natural Resources Conservation Service - NRCS) led by Hugh Hammond Bennet, the father of soil conservation. Eventually local SWCD's were formed to represent county interests, however we still have our federal partners in NRCS.

Cuyahoga SWCD was formed in

1949 and continues to serve the residents of Cuyahoga County to this day.

Find out more about who we are and what we do by watching our introduction video. Take a scavenger hunt thru our website and enter to win a packet of native plant seeds.  
[www.cuyahogawcd.org/about/mission](http://www.cuyahogawcd.org/about/mission).

Be sure to follow us on Facebook (Cuyahoga Soil & Water Conservation District) and Instagram (Cuyahoga SWCD).



# Watershed Reorganization

Since the start of the Cuyahoga SWCD Watershed Program almost 20 years ago, our watershed staff was organized geographically by watershed, starting with a Euclid Creek Watershed Coordinator, then in 2007 adding a Rocky River Watershed Coordinator, and in 2018 a Watershed Coordinator with a primary focus on the Cahoon Creek-Frontal Lake Erie Watershed.

This worked well for a long time. However, as our program and our staff have grown, we have found it to be somewhat inefficient to have three people doing basically the same thing in three separate watersheds.

The following is a general description of how the CSWCD Watershed Program will be structured moving forward. Please note that staff positions are no longer watershed specific.

- Our new Watershed Coordinator will be Cuyahoga SWCD's primary liaison to the watershed groups and other citizen groups with whom we work. This includes Rocky River Watershed Council, Friends of Euclid Creek and some of the community groups, such as Bay Village Green Team, that we work with in the Cahoon Creek-Frontal Lake Erie Tributaries Watershed.

- The Watershed Coordinator will also lead all of our volunteer water quality monitoring programs.

- Our Watershed Program Manager and Senior Program Manager will continue to work collaboratively with the Watershed Groups on specific projects and programs, based on staff area of expertise and work load.

- The Watershed Program Manager and Senior Program Manager will continue to be Cuyahoga SWCD's liaison to most of the communities in the Rocky River, Euclid Creek and Cahoon-Porter watersheds for watershed and PIPE/outreach-related projects, programs and services.

- Watershed planning, project development and grant-writing will be led by the Watershed Program Manager and Senior Program Manager, with support from the Watershed Coordinator.

Overall, we believe this new structure will foster additional collaboration and efficiency within the Cuyahoga SWCD Watershed Program.

*Jared Bartley,  
Senior Program Manager*

## Euclid Creek - Mayfield Campus

Cuyahoga SWCD recently received funding from Ohio Lake Erie Commission to design a stream restoration project for the Mayfield Campus golf course in Lyndhurst. The golf course lies on the West Branch of Euclid Creek and is home to over 11,500 feet of stream and 235 acres of land, a significant contiguous portion of the Euclid Creek Watershed.

This project is a result of the need to improve fish populations, benthic populations, and fish and wildlife habitat within the Cuyahoga River Area of Concern (which Euclid Creek is a part of). The purpose of this project is to stabilize eroding streambanks utilizing bioengineering, thus reducing the amount of sediment that travels downstream, stabilize the stream bed, improve in-stream and riparian habitat, and reconnect the



*EnviroScience staff mark proposed restoration concept in the field for stakeholder input*

streams to their floodplain while still allowing for a functional golf course.

Stakeholders from Cuyahoga River Restoration, Northeast Ohio Regional Sewer District, the City of Lyndhurst, the golf course, and Ohio EPA are working with Cuyahoga SWCD on the project.

EnviroScience, Inc. leads the contract team awarded the project. EnviroScience staff met with project

partners in July to mark out and review planned restoration design elements in the field. The next step will be to work on the 30% design for project partner review.

The design will aim to restore and stabilize at least 2,000 feet of stream channel, enhance 10.7 acres of existing riparian forest, and convert 2.6 acres of existing rough from turf to native riparian forest or meadow.

Once we have full designs and a bid package in place later this year it will be time to find funding options for construction of the project.

*Elizabeth Hiser,  
Watershed Program Manager*



# Welcome Meg!



Meg Hennessey is our new Watershed Coordinator. A biologist and ardent nature lover, Meg has previously worked in watershed and ecosystem health in Indiana and New Mexico. Her favorite part of the job is making science more relatable for folks of all backgrounds- since the health of our environment impacts everyone! At CSWCD she will be heading up the volunteer monitoring programs and working with watershed groups. In her free time she is a weaver, fiber artist, backpacker, and horse rider. She looks forward to meeting all the friends and partners of the CSWCD.

## Ohio NPDES Phase 2 Small MS4 Permit Renewal

In December 2002, the Ohio EPA issued the original Small Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System (MS4) discharge permit under the National Discharge Pollution Elimination System (NPDES).

At the heart of the permit is the stormwater management plan (SWMP), which municipalities are required to prepare to address non-point source pollutants. The six minimum controls measures (MCMs) focus a community's effort to combat polluted runoff resulting from rainwater interacting with the built environment.

Nearly eighteen years later the permit is set for its third renewal. Along the way the permit has evolved to reflect changes in the understanding related to non-point source pollution, changing social outreach norms, and new technologies, among other things.

The current Small MS4 permit expired on September 10, 2019, but has continued to remain in effect while the draft general permit is being reviewed and finalized. The draft general permit has been out for public notice and comment since July 15, 2020.

Cuyahoga SWCD provides technical support to municipalities throughout



Cuyahoga County in five of the six MCMs. As such the District takes this opportunity to provide comments, which come around only once every five years, very seriously. Every member of the staff carefully reads the draft general permit documents and analyzes the proposed changes against what has been learned during the previous permit term.

Thus far eighteen substantive changes have been proposed. These changes effect all MCMs and range from new administrative procedures to increased reporting guidelines, and more prescriptive performance standards. Once the Cuyahoga SWCD staff compiles our comments, we will send them to the Ohio EPA.

The Ohio EPA in turn is dedicated to evaluating all comments received during the public notice phase prior to issuing the final permit. Once the final permit is issued, Cuyahoga SWCD will work with our municipal

partners to ensure that the new requirements are incorporated into their stormwater management plans and strategies are implemented to address the performance standards.

While reviewing general permits is not as fun as planning and executing a stream restoration or getting your boots dirty doing a field inspection, it is a necessary part of conservation.

For more information about the Small MS4 permit visit the Ohio EPA stormwater page at [epa.ohio.gov/dsw/storm/index](http://epa.ohio.gov/dsw/storm/index)

*Brent Eysenbach,*  
*Senior Program Manager*

**Love the newsletter but  
hate the paper?**

Contact Amy Roskilly,  
216.524.6580 x1005  
[aroskilly@cuyahogaswcd.org](mailto:aroskilly@cuyahogaswcd.org)

We can put you on our  
broadcast email list that  
includes an electronic version  
of our newsletter and other  
pertinent conservation news!



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## Feed the Pod Monster and Help Save Monarchs



Cuyahoga SWCD will be collecting Common Milkweed pods from September - October.

Don't worry, the pod monster doesn't bite.  
However, he wants you to be sure the  
Common Milkweed pods you feed him are  
ready to be donated.



Be sure the pods are dry and gray/brown in color.  
Put them in a paper bag (no plastic) and mark  
the bag with the county where they were picked.  
Seeds will be used to establish monarch habitat  
across the state of Ohio.

Visit the pod monster anytime on the west side  
of our building by the garage door  
(off E. 33rd St. - 3311 Perkins Ave. - Cleveland).  
We thank you, the pod monster thanks you  
and the monarchs thank you.