



# ON THE LAND

## WINTER 2021

### CONSERVATION ACTION GRANT & SCHOLARSHIP FUND

Cuyahoga SWCD has long promoted the installation of conservation projects such as tree planting, rain gardens, rain barrels, native plant gardens, cover crops and more to improve the health of Cuyahoga County's soil & water resources.

In addition to educating the public about these practices, we strive to reduce the barriers that may exist that prevent residents and other landowners from adopting these practices: through rain barrel workshops where we supply all the materials necessary to construct and install a barrel, to our native plant kit sale, and our soil test kit distributions.

We are now taking this commitment to reducing barriers to the adoption of conservation practices one step further with the



*Planting trees at Community Christian Church in Euclid*

introduction of our Conservation Action Grant & Scholarship Fund. Cuyahoga SWCD is offering small grants and scholarships for conservation education and projects aimed at improving soil and water resources. Grants and scholarships for up to \$1,000 will be awarded in March and September. Applications for the March funding round are due March 10. Successful project applications are

those related to environmental and conservation programs with a special emphasis on engaging underserved populations or those with financial barriers to project implementation.

Our goal is to award 75 grants and scholarships by the 75th Anniversary of Cuyahoga SWCD in 2024.

The program is funded by a budget allocation by the Cuyahoga SWCD Board of Supervisors, and by donations from the public. Donations can be made by visiting [www.cuyahogawcd.org/donate](http://www.cuyahogawcd.org/donate).

**For more information and to request an application, visit [www.cuyahogawcd.org](http://www.cuyahogawcd.org), or call Jared Bartley at 216/524-6580, ext. 1003.**

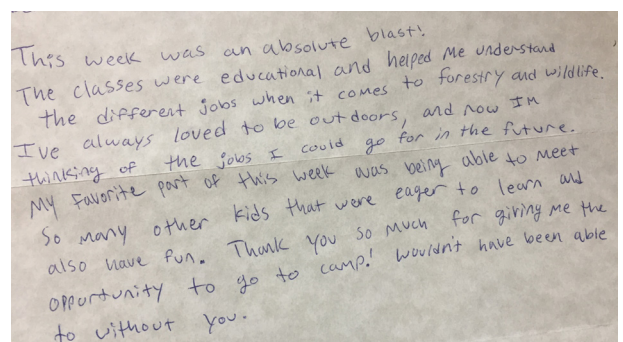
## YOU can help send a student to camp!

Cuyahoga SWCD provides annual scholarships for students to attend Camp Canopy. This camp is a week long program held at Camp Muskingum and concentrates on forest ecology, silviculture, tree identification, and forestry products. Primarily an academic program, there are also excellent facilities for swimming, softball and other recreational activities. You can help a student attend camp by making a donation here.

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

Camp Canopy is scheduled for June 13-18, 2021.

For more information, contact Jacki Zevenbergen at 216/524-6580, ext. 1006 or [jzevenbergen@cuyahogawcd.org](mailto:jzevenbergen@cuyahogawcd.org)



*Happy camper from 2018*



**You want native plants? We've got native plants!**

**You want native seeds? We've got native seeds!**

**You want roots and corms? We've got roots and corms!**

You want to know what we mean by roots and corms? In short, the dormant part of the plant. A corm is like a bulb.

**You want native trees? We've got native trees!**

## Cuyahoga SWCD Native Seed, Plant, and Tree Sales



Visit our website for information and to order!

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

click on Native Seed, Plant and Tree Sales



### Plant a pollinator garden in 2021

Last year we celebrated our first Ohio Native Plant Month. This law was enacted to increase the awareness of Ohio's native plants and the benefits they provide to our health, wildlife, environment, and economy.

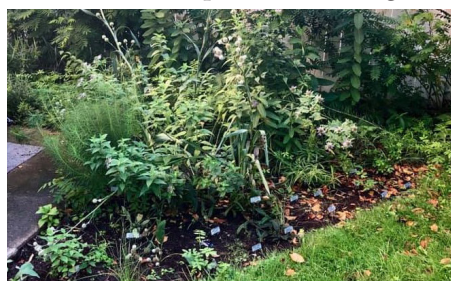
Plants, even small ones, have large impacts regarding stormwater, pollination of plants and crops, honey, carbon uptake, oxygen output, pollution reduction, food and shelter for wildlife, landscaping/aesthetics, and soil health. Ohio is one of the first states in the country to dedicate an entire month to its native plants.

In 2020 Ohio Native Plant Month had a goal of tracking plantings of 100,000 native trees and woody shrubs across Ohio, and they recorded almost 200,000, including many from Cuyahoga SWCD!

Last year, Cuyahoga SWCD sold 186 native plant kits and 181 packets

of native seeds. Each packet of seeds and native plant kit is enough for 250 sq. feet. Our sales totalled 91,750 sq. feet of native plantings.

In 2021, they are encouraging people to plant pollinator gardens, changing lawn area into beneficial habitat. You can report your new gardens on their website at [www.ohionativeplantmonth.org](http://www.ohionativeplantmonth.org).



*New garden section added in 2020.  
Planted with native plants.*



Take your gardening up a notch in 2021! Share your knowledge and become your community's expert on rain gardens. At the end of this 5-session course, you will become a Master Rain Gardener! Recorded class webinars can be watched at your convenience with live Q&A sessions each week (Spring session starts April 26 and Summer session starts August 23).

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

**Programs-**

**Master Rain Gardener Class**  
or contact Elizabeth Hiser at  
216/524-6580, ext. 1002  
[ehiser@cuyahogawcd.org](mailto:ehiser@cuyahogawcd.org)



## How Trees are Taking Root for Stormwater and Climate Change

THURSDAY, MARCH 25<sup>TH</sup>

6:30 PM

REGISTER BY MARCH 24<sup>TH</sup>

Virtual Presentation Featuring:

**DAN HERMS**

V.P. of RESEARCH and DEVELOPMENT

DAVEY TREE EXPERT COMPANY



Picture provided by Harald Bransch

To register visit:  
[CurbingTheConsequences.eventbrite.com](https://CurbingTheConsequences.eventbrite.com)  
 Registration questions or issues?  
 Contact Melissa at 419-239-2652 or  
[mfeliciano@eriecounty.oh.gov](mailto:mfeliciano@eriecounty.oh.gov)

Workshop sponsored by:



Western Reserve  
Land Conservancy  
land • people • community

Many areas of the U.S. are experiencing an increase in the frequency of intense storms, heavy precipitation events, and associated flooding. Join us to examine the vital role trees can play in curbing the negative consequences of a changing climate. While all trees "feel the heat," some are experiencing increased stress and mortality in certain areas, yet increased growth in others. Join us for this informative online presentation to learn more about the challenges facing our future forests and some simple strategies you can use to take root for stormwater!

## WHAT DO TREES DO FOR YOU?

Leaves intercept rainfall and store and release water into the atmosphere.

Leaf litter builds healthy soil, increases soil's water holding capacity, and helps replenish ground water.

Roots increase infiltration and storage, reduce erosion, and take up nutrients and pollutants from the soil.

An american sweetgum with a diameter of 15" intercepts about 1,446 gallons of stormwater and has an approximate monetary benefit of \$147/annually. To calculate the benefits of your trees, go to [treebenefits.com/calculator/](http://treebenefits.com/calculator/)



## Tree Resources

In 2020, Cuyahoga SWCD created a series of tree brochures using information with permission from the International Society of Arboriculture.



These are on our website and available to you by contacting our office at 216/524-6580.  
[www.cuyahogawcd.org](http://www.cuyahogawcd.org) - Programs - Tree Planting

Learn how to plant any kind of tree  
 Bare Root - Containerized -  
 Balled and Burlap  
[www.arborday.org/trees/planting](http://www.arborday.org/trees/planting)

Need an Arborist?  
[www.treesaregood.org/findanarborist](http://www.treesaregood.org/findanarborist)

# Put Food Back in the Forest

If you look at the manicured parks and trees lining the streets around your city, you may notice that these trees are not typically fruit bearing. There is a recently growing movement to plant trees and plants that bear fruit in public spaces. A sub-movement within this is the one promoting planting not only fruit bearing trees, but entire ecosystems called food forests.

A food forest is just as the name suggests: a forest whose purpose is to also produce food. Food forests serve the dual purpose of restoring areas to a more natural state (especially when native trees and plants are used) while also providing food for the community to forage. In general, a mixture of nut trees, fruit trees, plants, herbs, ground cover, and mushrooms are used to form a functioning food forest.

Your first step is to select a site. Many factors go into site selection, such as ownership. Once the site is selected, your next step is to put together a plan to figure out what plants to purchase. When determining site design and plants there are several factors to consider, such as soil conditions: nutrients, organic matter, pH, moisture, etc. This information can be gathered

through doing soil tests. Another factor to consider is shade/light. The site should also be laid out to mimic a forest's natural function. There should be trees in stratification to form the upper story and under story, as well as plants and mushrooms to form ground cover and lower story. Once you have your plan together, the final step is to make your selection and start planting.

In general, reforestation has many benefits. It adds habitat for local fauna, sequesters carbon, helps regenerate depleted soils, and provides pollinator habitat. In addition to these, the most important part of the food forest is that it provides for the community. This can be especially

impactful in urban areas that have become food deserts. In these areas food forests can supplement food for families as well as provide a healthy alternative to the processed foods that are typically available in these food desert areas.

Cuyahoga Soil & Water Conservation District was awarded a grant by the National Association of Conservation Districts to implement two food forests in the greater Cleveland area. The first food forest was installed in Garfield Heights near Garfield Heights High School. This site was chosen because of the ability to build programmatic capacity with the high school as well as the proximity to an existing community garden. The second site is at the Coit Road Farmers Market in East Cleveland. This site was chosen due to its location in an urban center as well as it being an historic market place.

**For more information about food forests or Cuyahoga Soil & Water Conservation District's work to install more functional restorative trees, please contact Jakob Hamlescher at 216/524-6580, ext. 1007 or [jhamlescher@cuyahogawcd.org](mailto:jhamlescher@cuyahogawcd.org).**

## Colleen Berg Education Program Specialist

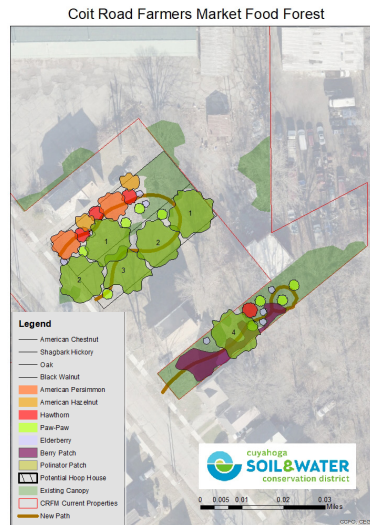
Colleen is the most recent member of the staff, although in reality she has been working with the Cuyahoga SWCD since October 2019, initially as a NOWCorps member. A native of Guyana in South America, Colleen

has a degree in Environmental Sciences with a strong foundation in agriculture and forestry. She will continue to engage students in forestry and agriculture programs. This year she is developing two new SWCD initiatives - the George Washington Carver Program and the Conservation

Career Fair. In between, Colleen will be assisting with many other

SWCD initiatives, especially related to trees! Welcome Colleen!

**Colleen Berg - 216/524-6580, ext. 1014 - [cberg@cuyahogawcd.org](mailto:cberg@cuyahogawcd.org).**





# West Branch Euclid Creek Mayfield Campus Restoration Design Project Update

Cuyahoga SWCD received funding from Ohio Lake Erie Commission in October 2019 to design a stream restoration project for 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. 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 (Euclid Creek is a part of this area of concern).

The 60% design for this project has been submitted and reviewed



*Landscape design review meeting*

by partners. Landscape plans are in place, and consultants are currently drafting permit applications and bid packages needed for 100% design. Project completion is anticipated for the middle of 2021.

Cuyahoga SWCD has submitted

a grant application to Ohio EPA in hopes of funding construction for Phase 1 of this project. We will continue the search for construction funding for Phase 1-3 as we wrap up design in hopes of seeing our project break ground.

**Check out a great video created by Jane Goodman on the Cuyahoga Area of Concern and Euclid Creek Restoration Projects that features our project on our website at: [www.euclidcreekwatershed.org](http://www.euclidcreekwatershed.org) - Programs - West Branch Euclid Creek Mayfield Campus Restoration Project.”**

## Rocky River Backyard Buffers Program



*Planting trees in the Rocky River watershed*

Enrollment is now open for the 2021 Rocky River Backyard Buffers Program, presented by CSWCD in partnership with Rocky River Watershed Council. Anyone who owns streamside property in the Rocky River Watershed is eligible and encouraged to enroll. No stream is too small! Program participants will receive a free kit of trees and shrubs to plant along their backyard streams,

in order to establish forested riparian, or streamside, buffers. Enrollment ends March 20, and seedlings will be available in mid-late April.

This is a great opportunity for residents to get directly involved in the preservation of the Rocky River Watershed, which includes parts of Cuyahoga, Medina, Lorain and Summit Counties. The riparian area is the land alongside a stream or river that directly affects-or is affected by -the water.

Healthy riparian buffers contain trees, shrubs, and other vegetation that protect both the stream and the streamside property. In the Rocky River Watershed, many of our riparian buffers have been cleared

in order to make additional space for lawns, houses, fields and roads. Properly maintained riparian buffers stabilize stream banks, decrease peak storm flows, filter nutrients and sediment from storm water, provide essential habitat for fish, birds, and other wildlife, and increase property values.

The Rocky River Backyard Buffers Program is made possible through a grant to the Rocky River Watershed Council from the Western Reserve Land Conservancy/ Dominion Energy Watershed Grants Program.

**For more information and to enroll in the Rocky River Backyard Buffers Program, visit [www.cuyahogaswcd.org](http://www.cuyahogaswcd.org) - Programs - Rocky River Backyard Buffers**



# Poster Contest

Cuyahoga SWCD hosted a 2020 district poster contest for Cuyahoga County students themed “Where Would We Bee Without Pollinators.” First place students in each grade band level advanced to the state contest sponsored by the Ohio Federation of Soil and Water Conservation Districts.

Gianna Condelli, a student in Matt Lubin’s class at Mayfield Middle School, finished first in the 7th – 9th grade category at the state competition. Her poster is on its way to the national competition sponsored by the National Association of Conservation Districts (NACD) and the NACD Auxiliary. Ayden Gonzalez from Charles A Mooney School in Cleveland finished second at the state level in the 2nd-3rd grade category. Congratulations to Gianna and Ayden for their awards at the county and state level!

Cuyahoga SWCD is hosting a 2021 Poster Contest themed “Healthy Forests = Healthy Communities.” Students may begin posters on or after



*Gianna Condelli's winning poster*

Tu B'Shevat, Thursday, January 28th, the day that marks the beginning of a “new year” for trees. Register your class online by Thursday, April 1st, the beginning of Ohio Native Plant Month. Submission deadline is 6:00 p.m. on Arbor Day, Friday, April 30th. Detailed instruction available at [www.cuyahogawcd.org](http://www.cuyahogawcd.org) – click on Events – January 28th.

Linking art and creative thinking with science, the poster contest provides K-12th grade students the

chance to develop and share their thoughts and ideas about natural resource issues. Posters are submitted digitally and the topic can be explored virtually so the contest is a great remote learning experience. Students are encouraged to use the poster to creatively express their ideas on how conservation improves the environment. The contest is a great way for teachers to instill in their students an appreciation for the environment and an awareness of the need to protect our natural resources.

Cuyahoga County schools can request other tree related programs from Cuyahoga SWCD. The Native Urban Tree Starters (NUTS) program, which directly and actively involves students in the process of restoring the tree canopy in Cuyahoga County, has lessons and activities for grades K-12. District educators can bring the free Project Plant It program to 3rd grade classes in late April to celebrate Earth Day, Arbor Day or Stewardship Week. Project Plant It provides free education materials for teachers and free tree seedlings and pollinator packets for students (while supplies last).

## Project WET Facilitator of the Year

Congratulations to Jacki Zevenbergen, Stormwater Education Program Manager who was recognized by Dennis Clement, Ohio EPA as the 2020 Project WET Facilitator of the Year. Project WET is water education for teachers.

There are many engaging activities that incorporate multi-disciplinary, hands-on, and engaging activities for all grade levels. Every year Jacki coordinates numerous teacher workshops and professional development opportunities, including last year, which was the first time the workshops were held virtually.



*Jacki receiving her award from Jared Bartley and Janine Rybka*



## Did You Know?

Tu B'Shevat is a Jewish holiday occurring on the 15th day of the Hebrew month of Shevat (in 2021, Tu B'Shevat begins at sunset on January 27 and ends in the evening of January 28). It is also called Rosh HaShanah La'Ilanot, literally 'New Year of the Trees.' In contemporary Israel, the day is celebrated as an ecological awareness day, and trees are planted in celebration.



# Cuyahoga SWCD Board of Supervisors

The Cuyahoga SWCD Board of Supervisors consists of five volunteers who are formally elected to their positions. The election occurs up to the Annual Meeting which is held in the Fall. Board candidates must be residents of the County, age 18 years or older, and have an interest in conservation and pollution prevention. Board members are required to attend monthly meetings and are instrumental in establishing the District's policies.

Supervisors and Districts have no land use regulatory or decision-making authority. They are volunteers who serve without compensation. Two board position will be open at the 2021 election.

Interested? Please forward an email to Janine Rybka, Director at [jrybka@cuyahogaswcd.org](mailto:jrybka@cuyahogaswcd.org) that includes your interest in running and contact information (phone, email). Someone from the Nominating Committee will contact you to discuss board member commitments and the election process. You may also contact for more information.

A warm thank you to Howard Maier who came back on the board to finish a vacated position. Demar Sheffey was elected in October to serve the 2021-2023 term. We are thankful to the current board members who also include Sherri Lippus-Chair, Ruth Skuly, Caroline Kelemen and Draye Luton for their willingness to help the Cuyahoga SWCD achieve its mission.

## Cuyahoga SWCD's mission: Implement programs and practices that protect and restore healthy soil and water resources

### Welcome Demar Sheffey



*Cuyahoga SWCD Board Member, Demar Sheffey*

Demar L. Sheffey was elected to the Cuyahoga Board of Supervisors for the 2021-2023 term. A native of Cleveland, he brings more than 100% of his passion for community service and leadership together in all his endeavors. Mr. Sheffey received his Bachelor of Arts degree in Political Science from Notre Dame College in 2011 and then continued his education at Thomas M. Cooley

Law School at Western Michigan University where he is a Juris Doctor.

He is the co-founder of Advocacy Confidence and Encouragement, a program that educates students on the innerworkings of trials to help improve the students' skillsets during mock trial proceedings.

In addition to his work in classroom settings, Mr. Sheffey has hosted many 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. We are looking forward to Mr. Sheffey's contributions as we strive to have a greater impact for good conservation practices in Cuyahoga County.



[www.cuyahogaswcd.org](http://www.cuyahogaswcd.org)  
[#lakeeriestartshere](https://twitter.com/lakeeriestartshere)

### Welcome Nikole Davis



*NOWCorps member, Nikole Davis*

Nikole Davis is our newest NOWCorps member, which is coordinated through Tinkers Creek Watershed Partners. A geologist with a passion for igniting an interest of nature through advocacy and education within her community-Nikole has previously worked in Cuyahoga County fulfilling conservation grants, fundraising, and outreach.

At Cuyahoga SWCD she will be leading our Native Urban Tree Starts (N.U.T.S.) program, assisting with volunteer water quality monitoring programs, and participating in stream stewardship projects within the Rocky River, Euclid Creek, and Cagoon Creek/Direct Lake Erie Tributaries watersheds.

In her free time, she is an artist, rock/mineral collector, and passionate about live local music. Her favorite part about serving at Cuyahoga SWCD is meeting all the people who share her love of soils, impacting environmental health, and water quality.

**CUYAHOGA SOIL & WATER  
CONSERVATION DISTRICT**

3311 Perkins Avenue, Suite 100  
Cleveland, OH 44114

**Phone** 216.524.6580  
[www.cuyahogawcd.org](http://www.cuyahogawcd.org)



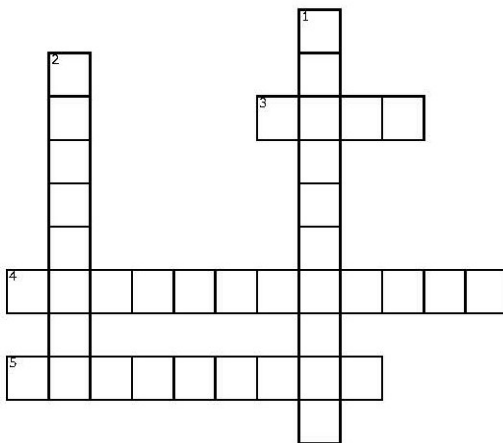
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## Lake Erie Starts Here



**Across:**

- 3. What is made up of sand, silt and clay?
- 4. What is the prevention of the wasteful use of a resource?
- 5. What is an area or region drained by a river, river system or other body of water?

**Down:**

- 1. What is water that originates from rain, including snow and ice melt?
- 2. What river drains into Lake Erie near downtown Cleveland?

### Love the newsletter but hate the paper?

Contact Amy Roskilly - 216.524.6580 x1005 - [aroskilly@cuyahogawcd.org](mailto:aroskilly@cuyahogawcd.org)  
We can put you on our broadcast email list that includes an electronic version of our newsletter and other pertinent conservation news!