

Issue 31

Summer 2014

# Euclid Creek Watershed Update



Euclid Creek Reservation-Welsh Woods by Benjamin Bell

## Euclid Creek Watershed Program Partners

### Euclid Creek Watershed Council

Nine municipalities that came together in 2000 to address common environmental, stormwater 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.

## Upcoming Events

### Friends of Euclid Creek Monthly Meetings

Sept. 2, Oct. 7, Nov. 3, 6:30pm  
Dec. 2-Annual Meeting/Holiday Party  
South Euclid Community Center

### Rain Barrel Workshop

September 11, 7:00pm-8:30pm  
South Euclid Community Center  
Registration required by Sept. 4\*

### Fall Cleanup Day - Wildwood Wetland & Euclid Beach

September 20, 10:00am-noon  
Wildwood Park & Euclid Beach, Cleve.  
Register at [clevelandmetroparks.com](http://clevelandmetroparks.com)

### Green Cleaning Workshop for Inside & Out

October 1, 6:30pm-8:00pm  
Mayfield Hts. Community Center  
Registration required by Sept. 30\*

### A Day in the Life of Euclid Creek

October 4, 8:00am-2:00pm  
Acacia and Euclid Creek Reservations  
Register at [clevelandmetroparks.com](http://clevelandmetroparks.com)

### Highland Heights Planting Day

October 11, 9:00am-1:00pm  
Bishop Road Conserved Property  
Registration required by Oct. 9\*

\*To register, for more details, or to see the full event schedule, call the Watershed Coordinator or visit our website (contact info. on back page of newsletter)

## Land on Euclid Creek Tributaries Protected in Highland Heights

The Cuyahoga Soil and Water Conservation District (CSWCD), in partnership with West Creek Conservancy (WCC) and Friends of Euclid Creek (FOEC), has protected 12 acres of wooded land in the City of Highland Heights after CSWCD's proposal was awarded funding from the Clean Ohio Conservation Fund. The land lies west of and adjacent to the Highland Heights Community Park and fronts on Bishop Road just south of Hawthorne Drive.

This wooded property includes mostly native trees in a mature forest with sensitive headwater streams and three wetland complexes that provide critical wildlife habitat and hydrologic function. Protecting the streams and wetlands provides valuable floodplain capacity by holding and filtering pollutants from storm water runoff. Conserving our last remaining wetlands is critical as 95% of the watershed's wetlands have been destroyed.



In addition to the immediate conservation value, the 12 acres combine into a larger conservation area with Highland Heights Community Park and the Mayfield School Board-owned Dusty Goldenrod property conserved in 2008 with Clean Ohio funds, totaling nearly 125 acres of protected greenspace.

The City of Highland Heights and Council fully supported the grant proposal and have shown overwhelming support for the now funded project, as well as residents along adjacent Hawthorne Drive who are thrilled at the land protection. Highland Heights Mayor Coleman said about the project, "On behalf of the City of Highland Heights and our City Council, I would like to congratulate the Cuyahoga Soil and Water Conservation District, the West Creek Conservancy and the Friends of Euclid Creek for their successful grant bid. We were pleased to provide our support to this mutually beneficial conservation project, and we look forward to the additional greenspace for our residents to enjoy."

"Many thanks to the collaborative partnership that brought this project to fruition! It's integral that we're able to preserve vital greenspace within our communities, not only to expand our park systems, but to also provide natural buffers for our streams and wetlands. We're happy to help preserve yet another gem within the Euclid Creek watershed", said Derek Schafer, Executive Director of the West Creek Conservancy.

The land will be owned by West Creek Conservancy and CSWCD will hold the conservation easement. Immediate plans for the property are to assess the property's ecological health and to conduct restoration where needed.

**Project partners are planning a volunteer cleanup day at the site on Saturday, October 11 from 9:00am - 1:00pm** in order to install plants, fencing and to clean up trash. Whether through a monetary donation or a commitment of time and effort, those who participate in this preservation day will truly be making a significant impact upon the health and beauty of this special place in the watershed. Donations are appreciated to help with costs associated with the future maintenance of the property.

For more information about the watershed program, how to get involved, or to register for the planting day contact the Euclid Creek Watershed Coordinator, Claire Posius (contact information on back page of newsletter).

## Annual Report-Lite, *by Barb Holtz, past President*

While many organizations' fiscal year runs from January to December of any given year, Friends of Euclid Creek follows a different path. Our year is July 1st through June 30th of the following year. The 2014-2015 year has begun for us so that means two things: an annual report is in order and it's time to renew your membership (or join for the first time!). This is actually the first time in a long time since FOEC has compiled a report. Because of that, it is important that you see how far we have come in the last year and a half. Our hope is to have our supporters and those who may become supporters discover our commitment to being the citizen voice for the Euclid Creek watershed. We have plans and we invite you to help them come to fruition.

## Our Accomplishments

- ◆ Strategic planning process begun and completed with Tom Romito serving as facilitator (Feb-Mar 2013)
- ◆ Established the Land Conservation Fund, a restricted fund to support land preservation purchases
- ◆ Raised \$20,000 to preserve 8.7 acres, Redstone Run, in Richmond Heights
- ◆ Amended FOEC by-laws to support our strategic plan, developed financial procedures and conflict of interest policies
- ◆ Continued pursuit of Highland Heights property adjacent to Highland Heights Community Park and near dusty goldenrod meadow
- ◆ Volunteered at numerous watershed events and community festivals



*Redstone Run Highland Reserve ravine, Richmond Heights, Ohio*

## There's More to the Story...

Since our beginning in 2001, Friends of Euclid Creek has always been a dedicated, passionate group of folks with an important purpose in mind - preserve the land surrounding Euclid Creek so it can do the job nature intended and share with others how they can care for the creek. To that end we have continued the important work of face to face conversation at neighborhood events, engaging our members via educational meetings and supporting the many tasks accomplished by Claire Posius, the Euclid Creek Watershed Coordinator (Cuyahoga Soil & Water Conservation District).

However, we decided in 2013 to go a step further and go through the exercise of deciding who we are today and where we would like to go in the future. This exercise would also allow us to develop a strategic plan that would help us be in a better position to compete for grant funding.

The hard work paid off! We set our minds to being a land conservation force in the watershed and raising the money needed to do so. We took a more business-like approach to reaching defined goals. From that model, we were pleased to add Redstone Run as the second property in our "land preservation portfolio". The best part of this story is our fund raising efforts and the generosity of many have left our Land Conservation Fund with a surplus. This truly is a success and one we look to the next year to build upon.

## What's coming up on the FOEC calendar

We hope you can join us at an upcoming FOEC meeting and at our Annual Holiday Party. Here is the upcoming schedule:

September 2: Urban Tree Talk—Al Klonowski, Certified Arborist, will talk about trees in our urban environment.

October 7: Water Quality Talk—Northeast Ohio Regional Sewer District will give us an update on projects in the watershed.

November 3\*: State Legislative Update—Jack Shaner, Deputy Director & Senior Director of Legislative & Public Affairs from the Ohio Environmental Council. (\*Please note the Monday meeting time, as meetings are usually the first Tuesday)

December 3: Annual Holiday Party / Fundraiser, Mayfield Village Community Room.

All meetings will be held at the South Euclid Community Center (1370 Victory Drive, 44121) starting at 6:30pm unless otherwise noted.

## Euclid Creek 'Friends' Make All the Difference

A vital message that remained through this past year of planning, strategizing and reporting was that we stayed connected to one another. We never want to lose the friendships and camaraderie we have come to know as members of FOEC. This is why our monthly meetings are so important. Yes, we share board business and hear a report or two, but we gather to learn, have a laugh and visit with one another. The watershed makes us neighbors no matter which suburb we call home.

Every year at our holiday party, we honor members who have gone above and beyond as well as public officials and community partners. Here are our awardees for 2013:

**Tom Jenkins Award** - Fran Hogg—Highest honor bestowed by FOEC for someone who epitomizes what it means to be a steward of the Euclid Creek watershed through exemplary service and volunteerism.

**Volunteer of the Year** - Connie Herron—For her dedication to the preservation of Redstone Run in Richmond Heights.

**Public Official Award** - Chris Vild, City of Beachwood—For keeping the watershed conservation message front and center within his city and beyond.

**Community Partner Award** - Derek Schafer, West Creek Conservancy—For his help and commitment as a partner in Euclid Creek watershed land preservation.

**Good Neighbor Award** - Joe Phillips, Hollywood Scapes, Inc.—For his assistance and generous donation of time, equipment and staff with Redstone Run clean up and maintenance.

## Anne Roberto—Our First Scholarship Winner!

We are pleased to announce our first scholarship winner—Anne Roberto. Anne will receive \$1,000 toward her education at Cuyahoga Community College as an Environmental Studies major. Anne will be transferring to Cleveland State University to complete her Bachelor's degree in environmental science with a focus in biology.

Anne shared in her scholarship application that she grew up in South Euclid, playing and exploring in Euclid Creek. It was this connection that led her to environmental studies and wanting to do what she can to preserve the natural world around us.

If you know of a high school senior or current college student who is a resident within the Euclid Creek watershed and pursuing a career in environmental sciences, please let them know about this annual scholarship opportunity.



*Anne and Jerrod getting volunteer monitoring training to further help Euclid Creek in May (facing the camera)*



## Who Lives In The Watershed? *by Barb Holtz*

Have you ever been walking in the woods and smelled a fleeting skunk odor? It probably wasn't a skunk at all...it may have been a fox. Especially during the late winter/early spring a musky, skunk-like scent may waft through the air. That tells you a fox den may be near. Although they can be found throughout the Euclid Creek watershed, seeing a red fox is a special site. Most folks expect a red fox to be a big animal when in reality they are about the size of a large house cat. The rusty-red coat is the first thing to catch your eye along with a long bushy tail tipped in white. Although they are considered nocturnal, fox can be seen hunting during the day for small mammals and birds as well as munching on berries and grasses. These adaptable creatures are just another one of our many animal neighbors in the Euclid Creek watershed.



Photo by Jim McCormac

## What's on the Horizon for 2014-15?

As we look to a new year, we have already begun to channel our energy on next steps in fundraising, upgrading our marketing/educational materials, increasing membership, and putting our best foot forward at community events.

We hope you will join us for a meeting or just stop by our table at any number of community events or festivals. We welcome your voice as we raise awareness about and preserve the natural features of the Euclid Creek watershed. Friends of Euclid Creek - WE SPEAK FOR THE CREEK.

## Saint Clare School Students Learn from the Watershed, *by Hallie Simenc, Science Teacher*

The students at Saint Clare Elementary School in Lyndhurst studied the Euclid Creek Watershed last school year. The seventh grade class participated in River XChange. River Xchange began in 2007 as a pilot project of Experiential EE, LLC (under a services agreement with the New Mexico Water Conservation Alliance) and the National Great Rivers Research and Education Center. This year the program included over one thousand students in New Mexico and over one thousand students in more than twelve states and four countries. The students all participate in the same year-long curriculum that included a speaker and a field trip. The students at Saint Clare communicated their knowledge of Euclid Creek with a partner school in New Mexico by sharing a private wiki. With our high-tech pen pals, students not only learned the importance of taking care of their watershed but also about water issues in another part of the country. Students communicated their learning by using cooperative groups, writing skills, and technology. Saint Clare students also received an award for their writing about the field trip.

As one of our seventh graders shared with our pen pals from New Mexico,

*“Last Tuesday on April 8th, our seventh grade class went to Euclid Creek, our watershed, and did some water testing! But before we entered the water, our naturalist warned us about large fish that were swimming in the cold water. The fish were called Creek chubs, Black Aces, and another breed was called Stone Rollers. Those particular fish live in very polluted and acid-filled waters, already giving us the indication that our watershed had lots of pollution in it... According to our naturalist, the water was about 39 degrees Fahrenheit. Brrrrr that water was cold!! The PH of the water was six, and the turbidity was 40 JTU. The dissolved oxygen in the water was 4.6 ppm and acidity was very high. In other words, our watershed has lots of pollution. I hope that we can fix this problem soon because as we talked about last time, pollution is terrible for animals and the rest of Earth's population.”*

The students entered their results into the World Water Monitoring Challenge, and compared the results to past data from the same site. Saint Clare School hopes to continue participation in this worthwhile program which brings awareness of the human impact on the environment.



## Be Wise and Don't Fertilize Lake Erie!

### Ways that You Can Help Prevent Toxic Algae Blooms in our Great Lake

With the recent toxic algae bloom and drinking water scare in Toledo, the question blaring in all of our minds is - *Could this happen in the Central Basin of Lake Erie and impact Cleveland's drinking water?* It certainly could!

While issues in the Maumee River in Toledo are primarily related to agricultural runoff and septic systems, urban areas contribute just as many pollutants to our lake. In Euclid Creek, we are a heavily urbanized watershed draining directly to Lake Erie, and the most problematic pollutants are from nutrients getting in our waterways from urban storm water runoff. In large rain events, fertilizers and other pollutants runoff of our properties into the storm drain, traveling directly to our creeks and on to Lake Erie. From fertilizer on our lawns to pesticides, herbicides, dog waste, and winter road salt, we are adding a lot of toxins to Euclid Creek and Lake Erie. But there are ways you can help!

**If you fertilize your lawn, practice the 4 Rs of Fertilization:**

- 1. Right Type.** Have your soil tested to determine fertilizer needs and choose a slow-release fertilizer. *Best Management Practice:* Use phosphate-free organic fertilizer.
- 2. Right Rate.** Soil test results will supply you with the appropriate fertilizer rate. Do not exceed the recommended rate and never apply more than 1.5 pounds of nitrogen per 1,000 square feet. *Best Management Practice:* Use mulching blades on your mower and leave the grass clippings on the lawn.
- 3. Right Time.** September is the best time to fertilize lawns when cool season grasses are actively growing. *Best Management Practice:* Never apply fertilizer when rain and wind are in the forecast.
- 4. Right Place.** Proper fertilization techniques save money and protect waterways and wildlife. Avoid fertilizing near streams, ditches, hard surfaces, and slopes. *Best Management Practice:* Incorporate native plantings near streams, ditches, and slopes to better intercept pollutants before they enter waterways.

**If you rent property with a lawn,** please share these recommendations with management to help educate them about these important water quality issues.



PugetSound.org

**Don't Fertilize Lake Erie!**  
Find out what your lawn needs before applying fertilizer with a simple soil test and follow the 4 Rs.



## Redstone Run Highland Reserve Update and Appreciation for Land Steward and Neighbor, Joe Phillips

Now that the 8-acre Redstone Run Highland Reserve site in Richmond Heights is protected we are moving full steam ahead with educating residents about the project and getting students involved in restoration efforts at the property. Claire Posius talked about the project with the Richmond Heights Garden Club in the spring, and over 40 geology and nature buffs joined Friends of Euclid Creek and Bluestone Heights on a tour of the property in May. Roy Larick taught people about the unique history and geology of the site, and Chris Vild and Claire Posius discussed the forest habitat and ecological value of the riparian property. Educational signage was installed at the entrance to give residents more detail about the property's conservation. And lastly, Euclid Eagle Scout Michael Huber is planning and fundraising for an Eagle Scout Project where he plans to install four Monarch Waystations throughout the site. With the help of his Scout Troop, he will install the native plant gardens to provide habitat for monarch butterflies and other pollinator species in need of food sources.

Neighbor, Joe Phillips, and owner of landscape firm Hollywood Scapes, Inc., continues to assist immensely with the maintenance of the property by mowing the frontage pro bono and keeping an eye on the new plantings. We can't thank Joe enough! In a recent conversation with Joe, it is clear he has a deep appreciation for the conservation of this important site on Redstone Run, a tributary to the East Branch of Euclid Creek. He sees the importance of setting aside greenspace for residents and wildlife and in not developing every inch of land in our region.

Joe started Hollywood Scapes 21 years ago and has had a love for nature and being outside for as long as he can remember. While he always valued nature, he became more aware of development pressures on greenspace when the Euclid Creek Watershed Program began and projects started popping up throughout the watershed. He realizes that while nature is resilient, it can't take care of itself if we don't help it through restoration and protection efforts. Growing up in a farming and hunting family, Joe realized he preferred photographing and enjoying nature over hunting, and he is passing along his respect and love for nature to his son whom he regularly takes camping. We are unbelievably fortunate to have a land steward as great and dedicated as Joe next to our Redstone Run Highland Reserve.



Educational Signage at entrance of site



Neighbor and owner of Hollywood Scapes, Joe Phillips, helps with tree planting at site last year (above, middle facing camera) and mows the frontage of our conserved property (below) pro bono—we are very lucky to have Joe!



## Green Infrastructure Abounds in Watershed Council Communities

Congratulations are in order for two exciting Green Infrastructure projects just on the periphery of the Euclid Creek.

In City of Cleveland's Green Creek Watershed, Northeast Shores Development completed two exciting green parking lot projects incorporating art, bioretention, and pervious pavement, with NEORSF funding, Ohio EPA, US EPA and Cleveland Economic Development monies totaling nearly \$240,000. The added parking will support the Waterloo District experiencing growth and vitality from its thriving music and arts community.



The 'Azure Stained Glass' parking lot at E. 156th and Waterloo was retrofitted with bioretention to hold and filter pollutants from the surrounding parking lot (left). Closeup of colored blue glass used in the design (right).



The 'Outdoor Theater' lot incorporates a sun bioswale, a moon infiltration basin and stars landscape meadow which receive and filter stormwater from the surrounding parking lot. Public art and signage are coming soon!



The City of Euclid recently completed a green infrastructure project at the Shore Cultural Center in the Babbit Run Watershed consisting of permeable pavement and bioretention with Ohio EPA Surface Water Improvement (SWIF) funds totaling \$121,600. The Watershed Coordinator is providing guidance on educational signage for both projects.



Shore Cultural Center's permeable parking (left) installed only in the parking spots as is evident from infiltration after recent rain. Rain flowing over traditional asphalt flows into bioretention cell for infiltration (right).



The City of South Euclid and Mayfield Village were just awarded two more Ohio EPA SWIF grants; \$144,665 for more green parking at South Euclid City Hall's rear parking lot and \$126,500 for green infrastructure at Mayfield's Civic Center.

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
Village of Mayfield	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;** Ken Messinger-Rapport, **Vice President;** Jeanette Evans, **Secretary;** Rick Evans, **Treasurer;** and **Directors:** Gary Bloom, Barb Holtz, and Chris Vild.

Monthly Meetings: First Tuesday of the month, 6:30-8:30pm, South Euclid Community Center. Meeting location may vary, please check website to confirm location.

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 SWCD  
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### Program Website, Blog and Facebook

Website: [www.EuclidCreekWatershed.org](http://www.EuclidCreekWatershed.org)

Blog: [foecnews.blogspot.com](http://foecnews.blogspot.com)

Facebook: Like 'Friends of Euclid Creek'



## Only Rain Down the Drain

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

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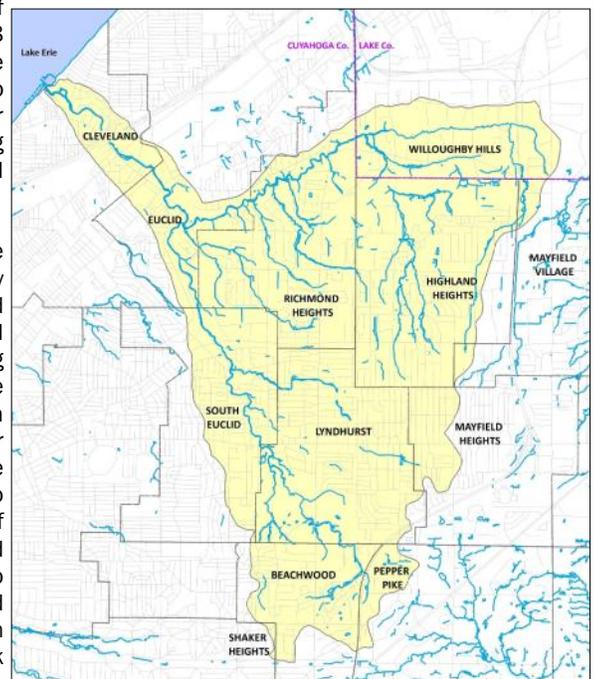


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**What is a Watershed?** A watershed is the area of land that drains to a single river, stream or lake. Because the actions we take on land directly affect the quality of our rivers and streams, it is important to take the entire watershed into consideration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