

# ON THE LAND

CUYAHOGA SOIL AND WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT  
LEADING CONSERVATION IN THE URBAN LANDSCAPE



Summer 2013

## Rebuilding Brown Infrastructure: Rapid Field Assessment for Urban Soil Rehabilitation

Interest in human influences on soils has increased in recent decades with a focus on soil functions. According to the Natural Resources Conservation Service, soil functions include regulating water for plants, filtering of pollutants, storing and cycling nutrients and carbon and providing stability and support. Soil plays a unique role as the brown infrastructure of urban ecological systems much the same way that vegetation is thought of as "green infrastructure."

While many urban soils are compacted and have nutrient and pH imbalances, the Storm Water Program staff has demonstrated that some small-parcel residential properties in Cleveland and Youngstown,

developed prior to World War II, have been found to have areas of slight soil disturbance, particularly at the boundaries.

Given that parcel-level assessment is needed as a scientific basis for rehabilitating urban soil functions, a rapid field assessment, which corresponds with established soil survey concepts and selected soil quality indicators, can help determine how to best rebuild the brown infrastructure.

Cuyahoga SWCD Storm Water Program staff has been conducting rapid field assessments on vacant lots within the county. The staff also met with Mahoning SWCD staff to demonstrate how rapid field assessments are conducted.



Shannon Mullins and Lisa Vavro with assistance from Steve Prebonick, ODNR-DSWR, work with Todd Miller, Mahoning SWCD (center) and Fred Cash (Cuyahoga SWCD Supervisor)

For more information on the need to understand soil variability, check out Todd Houser's peer-reviewed article entitled, *Storm Water Planning from the Ground Up-Connecting Plant-Soil Systems BMPs to site and Soil Conditions* - found on the SWCD's website under the Storm Water tab or call 216/524-6580, ext.17.

### CALENDAR OF EVENTS

#### Rain Barrel Workshop

Thursday, August 22nd - Cleveland

#### Green Cleaning Workshop

Wednesday, September 11th  
Richmond Heights

#### Rain Barrel Workshop

Thursday, September 12th - Parma

#### Cuyahoga SWCD Conservation Day and Annual Meeting

Saturday, September 21st  
Wildwood Park Pavilion, Cleveland

#### Green Cleaning Workshop

Wednesday, October 23rd - Parma

For more information or to register, visit our website at [www.cuyahogaswcd.org](http://www.cuyahogaswcd.org) or call 216/524-6580

## Taking Root for Clean Water

**Thursday, Sept. 26, 2013**  
**5:30 p.m. - 8:00 p.m.**

**The Watershed Stewardship Center at West Creek**  
**2277 W. Ridgewood Dr., Parma**

**Join us for a guided hike and special presentations**

You are invited to the Cleveland Metroparks' newest facility, which showcases urban watershed stewardship practices. Learn about the benefits of native plants and trees and find out how communities are depending on trees as a best management practice for storm water management and nutrient reduction. This event is sponsored by the Northeast Ohio Public Involvement and Public Education work group with funding from the Ohio Department of Natural Resources-Division of Soil and Water Resources.

#### Trees Equal Health

by Thomas Munn, Hudson Arborist

#### Go Native! Planting with a Purpose

by Barb Holtz, Manager of the North Chagrin Nature Center/Look About Lodge

Door prizes and light refreshments  
Free and open to the public!!

RSVP: Jenn Elting, 216/214-0542,  
or email [eltingj@neorsd.org](mailto:eltingj@neorsd.org)

## ELECTION 2013

Soil and Water Conservation Districts are political subdivisions of the state that provide natural resource management assistance to county landowners and other units of local government. The Cuyahoga SWCD is currently funded by municipalities, Cuyahoga County and the Ohio Department of Natural Resources-Division of Soil and Water Resources. Each SWCD is administered by a board of five locally-elected supervisors who serve three year terms. Each year any Cuyahoga County resident 18 years of age or older may vote in the election of SWCD supervisors (board members). This year, the Nominating Committee presents the following candidates to fill one open position:  
**Howard R. Maier and Glenn Odenbrett.**

### **Howard Maier**

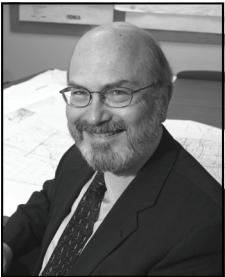
Howard Maier recently retired after more than two decades as executive director of the Northeast Ohio Areawide Coordinating Agency (NOACA). Much of his work at NOACA and elsewhere focused on transportation, land use, advocacy, policy, and administration. He worked in environmental planning as well. At NOACA, Howard was the staff person ultimately responsible for the agency's work in both air and water quality.

During his tenure as executive director, NOACA completed updates to its water quality plan based on Section 208 of the Clean Water Act. All planning was done with an engaged board, highly skilled technical staff, public involvement, multiple governmental and private sector partners, and in a transparent manner.

As a Cuyahoga SWCD Supervisor, he would bring active involvement as well as a history of collaboration with other counties and partner agencies. He is also committed to policies and programs that address the emerging new challenges within Cuyahoga SWCD's mission of conserving soil and water resources.

Howard respectfully asks for your vote as a Supervisor of the Cuyahoga Soil and Water Conservation District. He stated, "I believe my experience and energy will be a benefit to the Cuyahoga SWCD, the citizens of Cuyahoga County, and the environment we all cherish."

Howard is a resident of Cleveland Heights.



Residents of Cuyahoga County may vote for their favorite candidate at the Annual Meeting on Sept. 21, 2013 from 9:30 - 11:30 a.m. at the Wildwood Park Pavilion. Voting can also be done by absentee ballot. Contact the office at 216/524-6580, ext.10 to request an absentee ballot or visit [www.cuyahogaswcd.org](http://www.cuyahogaswcd.org) for the required request form, instructions and the latest Annual Meeting information (after August 31).

### **Glenn Odenbrett**

Glenn Clayton Odenbrett has been engaged in environmental protection for nearly half a century, beginning with his days as a Boy Scout, and continuing today in both personal and professional capacities. A resident of Cleveland Heights, he is an avid sailor, gardener and supporter of local urban agricultural initiatives.



Professionally, Glenn has served in a variety of organizations at which he founded and managed environmental initiatives engaging undergraduate faculty and students in conservation efforts, including Case Western Reserve University, the Western Reserve Resource Conservation and Development Council, and the National Center for Science and Civic Engagement. One of the first directors of an environmental AmeriCorps National Service program in Ohio, he recently served on a Federal Advisory Committee appointed by former Interior Secretary Salazar to foster the establishment of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Conservation Service Corps.

Glenn has significant project management and fund-raising experience, and his views on the role that young people can play in environmental leadership have been published and disseminated nationally. He is particularly interested in strengthening the District's partnerships with local colleges and universities and, as a fluent speaker of Spanish, in enhancing the District's ability to provide services to the County's increasingly diverse population.



**Cuyahoga  
Soil and Water  
Conservation  
District**

#### **BOARD OF SUPERVISORS**

Patricia Carey  
Fred Cash, Sr.  
Kevin Kubovcik  
Keith Linn  
Ruth Skuly, Chair

#### **DISTRICT STAFF**

**Janine Rybka**  
*District Administrator*

**Jared Bartley**  
*Rocky River Watershed Coordinator*

**Brent Eysenbach**  
*Natural Resources Specialist*

**Todd Houser**  
*Storm Water Program Manager*

**Gloria Kestranek**  
*Administrative Assistant*

**Shannon Mullins**  
*Storm Water Specialist*

**Claire Posius**  
*Euclid Creek Watershed Coordinator*

**Amy Roskilly**  
*Conservation Education Specialist*

**Lisa Vavro**  
*Storm Water Specialist II*

**Al Norwood**  
*Urban Conservationist, NRCS*

**Scott Kenreich**  
*District Conservationist, NRCS*

**Program Interns**  
Maura Brett-Eiger  
Joe Higgins

**Did you know??**  
The Rocky River Watershed is 294 square miles and flows thru 28 communities and 4 counties.

Learn more about the Rocky River Watershed at [www.myrockyriver.org](http://www.myrockyriver.org)

# Cuyahoga Soil and Water Conservation District presents 64th Annual Meeting & Conservation Day

Saturday, September 21, 2013

## Wildwood Park Pavilion

E. 174th Street and Lakeshore Blvd  
Cleveland 44110

9:00 a.m. - Noon



**Join us for one or all of these fun, family-friendly  
educational events featuring:**

- ◆ Euclid Creek Rain Garden cleanup - with Friends of Euclid Creek  
9:00am - 11:00am
- ◆ Wetland and Stream Restoration Celebration  
10:00am - Noon
- ◆ Euclid Creek Annual Stream Cleanup  
10:00am - Noon
- ◆ Euclid Beach Cleanup - with Euclid Beach Adopt-a-Beach Group  
10:00am - Noon
- ◆ Rain Barrel Workshop - 11:00am - Noon  
(registration required, 216/524-6580, ext. 10)

**Congratulate our Conservation Heroes at 11:30 a.m.**

Please visit our website for program listings.  
Come for a program or for the entire morning!

### **Cuyahoga SWCD Supervisor Election**

Five volunteer board members oversee the operations of the Cuyahoga SWCD. Each year candidates are solicited to run for the Board of Supervisors and the public is encouraged to participate in their election. Voting takes just a few seconds and will take place between 9:30 - 11:30 a.m. at the event.

See page 2 for candidate information and check our website for the latest Cuyahoga SWCD program information

*Conservation Day 2013 is possible due to the support from*

**Container Compliance Corporation**

**Riverworks-EnviroScience, GDP Group and RiverReach Construction**

2013 Conservation Day partners  
Lake Erie Allegheny Partnership  
Cleveland Metroparks

USDA-Natural Resources Conservation Service

For more information or to register call 216/524-6580, ext. 10  
Visit [www.cuyahogaswcd.org](http://www.cuyahogaswcd.org) for the latest information

## ON THE LAND

CUYAHOGA SOIL AND  
WATER CONSERVATION  
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FAX: 216/524-6584  
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LEADING CONSERVATION

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**Like the newsletter,  
but hate the paper?  
Read it on line at:**

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

Or get on our email list by  
sending your email to:

[gkestranek@cuyahogaswcd.org](mailto:gkestranek@cuyahogaswcd.org)

*Conserving land and aquatic resources in a developed environment through stewardship, education, and technical assistance.  
An equal opportunity employer and provider*

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Paper

## School Scoops

# Project Learning Tree & Rain Barrel Teachers Workshop Friday, October 11th

Brecksville Community Center  
1 Community Drive, off Rt. 21

Call 216/524-6580, ext. 22 to  
register or for more information

Project Learning Tree Workshop is  
\$30 per person  
(*\$35 additional to make a rain barrel*)



**Project Learning Tree®**  
*The Cornerstone for Environmental Education*

Project Learning Tree is the environmental education program of the American Forest Foundation and is widely recognized as one of the premier environmental education programs in the world.

This program is outstanding for teachers, naturalists or informal science educators or those interested in environmental education. Join us for this teachers workshop and learn the K-8 Project Learning Tree curriculum.

- ◆ Activities meet state and national standards
- ◆ Lesson plans are stimulating and provide the tools educators need to bring their students into the environment.
- ◆ Project Learning Tree can also be used for team-teaching.