

ON THE LAND

CUYAHOGA SOIL AND WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT

LEADING CONSERVATION IN THE URBAN LANDSCAPE

Summer 2014



Composting: Rebuilding Urban Soils

Most of us take soil for granted. The earth under our feet is teeming with life and is essential for food production, filtering and purifying our water, recycling and storing nutrients, keeping our air clean. We also use soil for building materials.

Gardeners know how important good soil is and work hard to improve the soil for greater productivity by adding carbon and nitrogen. Since soil is alive, one way to improve soil health is by feeding the organisms that live in the soil. A simple way to do that is to add organic matter - compost!

Reduce the wastes from your yard and kitchen. Instead of dumping grass

clippings, leaves and kitchen vegetable scraps in the trash, use it to make a rich compost that can be incorporated into the soil. Not only will the millions of organisms that live in the soil be happy and well fed, the water holding capacity of the soil will increase and nutrients will be available for your plants.

Cuyahoga SWCD teams up with Cuyahoga County Solid Waste District to hold Rain Barrel and Composting workshops. Conservation starts here - save water and improve your soil!

The Cuyahoga County Solid Waste District www.cuyahogaswd.org has fact sheets to guide your composting efforts. Remember to recycle

those leaves, grass clippings, plants, nut shells, straw, fruits, vegetables, grains, coffee grounds, dryer lint, shredded paper. A good compost pile requires some effort, including turning the pile and an occasional watering. And the good news is that a good compost pile will not smell foul. If it does, some simple additions will get you back on track.

Test your soil to determine if you need to add more nitrogen or carbon and build your compost pile to help achieve your best results.



Cleveland Lakefront Nature Preserve News

The 88 acre confined disposal facility for sediments dredged from the Cuyahoga River between 1977-1997 was opened to the public as the Cleveland Lakefront Nature Preserve in 2012. In 2013, US EPA funds were used to cap the 5-acre area that the 2008 environmental assessment identified. The project, a

collaboration of the Cleveland Cuyahoga Port Authority, US EPA, Ohio EPA, Cuyahoga County Development and Cuyahoga SWCD reused clean dredged material for the cap and then planted the area with native plants. This year's abundant rain helped the meadow-like area flourish. If you haven't

been the Nature Preserve, now is a great time to take a walk on the groomed paths, relax at the scenic outlook and enjoy the fall bird migration.

Cleveland Lakefront Nature Preserve is accessible from behind the Lakefront Park Office at 8801 Lakeshore Blvd.

Calendar of Events

Rain Barrel Workshop

Sept. 11, 6:30 p.m.

South Euclid Community Center

Wildwood Wetland Service Day,

Sept. 20, 10:00 a.m.

Wildwood Park and Euclid Beach

Annual Meeting Reception

Sept. 23, 4:30 p.m.

Cuyahoga Valley Career Center
Brecksville

Green Cleaning Workshop

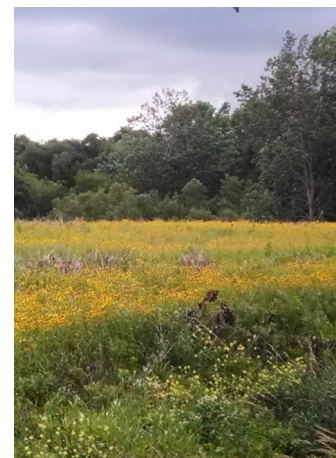
Oct. 1, 6:30 p.m.

Mayfield Heights Community Center

Planting Day in Highland Heights

Oct. 11, 9:00 a.m.

Bishop Road Property
Highland Heights



The recently created native plant meadow is a great bird and butterfly habitat

Election Update

Soil and Water Conservation Districts, located in all 88 counties, are legal subdivisions of Ohio's government providing natural resource management assistance to county landowners and other units of local government. The Cuyahoga SWCD is currently funded through county, municipal appropriations, project grants and state match dollars through the Ohio Department of Natural Resources.

In accordance with Chapter 1515 of the Ohio Revised Code, an election of two supervisors of the Cuyahoga Soil & Water Conservation District will be held. Residents or landowners, firms and corporations that own or occupy land in Cuyahoga County and are 18 years of age are eligible to vote. A non-resident

landowner, firm or corporation must provide an affidavit of eligibility, which includes a designation of a voting representative prior to casting a ballot.

The candidates for the two open positions are: Pat Carey of University Heights, Ted Esborn, Jr. of Cleveland Heights, Joyce Hairston of Cleveland, Kenneth Messinger-Rapport of Highland Heights and Jeremiah Swetel of Euclid.

Information about the candidates can be found on pages 4-5 or on the Cuyahoga Soil & Water Conservation District website.

Voting can be done three ways:

- At the Annual Meeting on Tuesday, September 23, from 4:30 – 6:00 p.m., at the Cuyahoga Valley Career

Center, 8001 Brecksville at Wallings Road.

- By requesting and submitting an absentee ballot. **
- At our office from September 2 – 22 between 8:00 a.m. – 4:30 p.m.; or on September 23 from 8:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m.

**Contact the office or go to www.cuyahogawcd.org for an *Absentee Ballot Request Form*. Forms must be individually signed and mailed or brought to the office in order to obtain a ballot.

No absentee ballots will be accepted at the Annual Meeting.

For questions or more information, contact Gloria at 216-524-6580, ext. 10.

IN THE NEWS... Earlier this summer, 400,000 residents in the Toledo area were told not to drink the water until a determination was made about its safety. Toxic algae blooms, due to over-fertilization, is a human health hazard and negatively impacts water supplies, fishing, boating and other recreation.

Help protect our soil and water, especially Lake Erie by practicing the **4Rs**-the right type of fertilizer, added at the right rate, at the right time and in the right place. Test your lawn or garden soil to determine if you need to fertilize. Check our website under "soil fertility" or call the office for more information.



Cuyahoga SWCD is working with Northeast Ohio SWCDs to promote healthy lawn and garden practices.



Weeds Gone Wild: Alien Plant Invaders of Natural Areas

This web-based project of the Plant Conservation Alliance's Alien Plant Working Group provides information for the general public, land management, researchers, and others on the serious threat and impacts of invasive alien (exotic, non-native) plants to the native flora, fauna, and natural ecosystems of the United States. Along with a compiled national list of invasive plants infesting natural areas throughout the U.S., the site provides background information; illustrated fact sheets, suggested alternative native plants, and other information; and selected links to relevant people and organizations. [www. nps.gov/plants/alien](http://www.nps.gov/plants/alien).

Wildlife Concerns

Geese, raccoons, deer or other wildlife that are impacting your property have learned to adapt well to our urban environments. A key to limiting unwanted attention are to keep your trash secure and to pay attention to your landscaping. Understand the wildlife in your area and what they like and take that into consideration before designing your yard. Cuyahoga SWCD offers assistance but it is up to the resident to follow through. Contact Eric Lance on extension 12 with your wildlife questions.



65th Annual Meeting

Tuesday, September 23, 2014

**Cuyahoga Valley Career Center
8001 Brecksville Road – Brecksville**

4:30 p.m. - 6:30 p.m.

SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

4:30 - 6:00 p.m. Vote for your favorite Board of Supervisors candidates

4:30 - 6:30 p.m. Visit the displays, mingle, network and enjoy refreshments produced and served by the Cuyahoga Valley Career Center students

6:00 p.m. Recognition of the 2014 Conservation Heroes ~ Elva Edger, Carl Skalak and Robert Kestranek

6:15 p.m. Ohio's Century Farms by John M. Schlichter, Deputy Director, Ohio Department of Agriculture

6:30 p.m. Announcement of Election Results

6:45 p.m. Cuyahoga Farm Bureau Annual Dinner Meeting***
Dinner is \$10 per person

This year's Annual Meeting is possible through the support of the Cuyahoga County Farm Bureau, NEO Restoration Alliance, local farmers and the students of Cuyahoga Valley Career Center, with assistance from the USDA-Natural Resources Conservation Service

For SWCD (free) reservations call 216-524-6580, ext. 10

*****For Farm Bureau Dinner reservations
Call 440-877-0706**

Please join us!

MEET THE CANDIDATES

Patricia Carey is completing her third term on the Cuyahoga SWCD Board of Supervisors. She is also currently Vice-President of the Western Reserve Resource Conservation & Development Council, a nine-county organization of County Commissioners, Soil and Water representatives and citizens at-large which leverages national, local and private funding for natural resource projects.

Pat said, "I am especially happy to serve on the Cuyahoga Soil & Water Conservation Board because of the innovative and effective ways it works to preserve healthy soil and water in an urban/suburban setting."

Recently retired, Pat previously served as director of the Cuyahoga Valley Regional Council of Governments, an organization of 30 local governments surrounding the Cuyahoga Valley National Park, and as Northeast Ohio director of Greater Ohio, which works to improve Ohio policies affecting land planning, development and conservation.

Earlier Pat was executive director of NORA, a nonprofit that supported county commissioners in the initial discussion of regional land-use planning. Pat has worked more than 25 years on sustainable land use, including other advocacy and consulting roles. She sums up her priorities as good land-use for healthy and sustainable communities, abundant natural resources and clean water.



Ted Esborn is a lifelong resident of Cleveland who currently resides in Cleveland Heights with his wife Austine.

Ted earned a Bachelor's Degree in History from Johns Hopkins in 2006. In 2007, he started working in planning and development for Mayfield Village. Last year, he received his Master of Public Administration degree from Cleveland State and will receive his law degree this December.

In 2010, Ted became the Mayfield Village economic development director, a role which requires him to build municipal revenue through attraction and retention of businesses, and to seek outside funding through grants and loans. This year, he worked with Chagrin River Watershed Partners to secure an Ohio EPA Surface Water Improvement Fund grant for a stormwater demonstration project at the Mayfield Village Civic Center. He also pursued funding to improve soil and water quality through conversions from septic systems to sanitary sewers. Professionally, he brings an understanding of inter-governmental relations. He stated, "I know how the protection of soil and water quality overlaps jurisdictions and entities. I am from this community and stenciled my neighborhood's storm drains as a kid. I plan to continue to protect our resources in the future."



Joyce Hairston is extremely interested in helping to make sure that our precious natural resources are protected. She welcomes the opportunity to participate in regional and state programs that focus on soil and water conservation issues.

Joyce's experience includes field work in the area of agriculture and specialized government research projects. Her skills and interests include marketing, gardening, promotions, writing and public speaking. She hopes to contribute her skills in these areas and more, as needed, to the board as a member.

A Cleveland resident, Joyce serves as committee precinct person for her district as well as serving on the Opportunity Corridor Neighborhood Development Subcommittee. She is actively involved in successfully working with community leaders to represent residents, in the practice of growing healthy food and learning to acquire resources such as gaining access to land and funding for High Tunnels, which extend the growing season. To help achieve this goal, she volunteers to run a community garden in her neighborhood, a project that has special emphasis on social inclusion. The people involved are taught to eventually form their own gardens.

If elected, Joyce would be honored and plans to continue to share her talents and remain civically involved in Cuyahoga County issues.



MEET THE CANDIDATES

Ken Messinger-Rapport graduated from University of Michigan, BA (Economics) and Case Western Reserve University, JD. For the past eight years Ken's law practice has focused on environmental law.



In 2006 Ken co-lead the opposition to gas wells in Highland Heights. He co-founded a community group to oppose the gas wells. That group passed a Charter Amendment protecting the parks from being exploited for their resources. He also represented a group of residents pro bono, in a case between the city and Bass Energy that settled without wells being placed in the park.

In 2009 Ken was the primary author of legislation to revise Ohio's law on oil and gas regulation. Many of the provisions for stronger protections of public health, safety and the environment are incorporated into current State law. He also wrote a brief to argue for restoration of zoning control over oil and gas development by cities, in a case currently pending before the Ohio Supreme.

Since 2008 Ken has served on the Board of the Friends of Euclid Creek (FOEC) and as Treasurer. He currently serves as Vice-President. Most recently, he worked with the SWCD to bring about the conservation of approximately twelve acres of undeveloped urban woodlands.

Jeremiah

Swetel is a life-long county resident who lives in Euclid with his wife and three children. A graduate of Hiram College, he has been working for the City of Euclid for eight years and currently works in the Engineering/Public Service department. He was recently named the research and compliance manager for the City of Euclid's waste water treatment plant.



Jeremiah is certified as an erosion and sediment and storm water inspector, certified professional erosion & sediment control (in training), CMS4S, QCIS and QPSWPPP for storm water related issues and sediment and erosion control. Currently assisting in writing a grant for Lake Erie shoreline protection and restoration through Ohio EPA-Division of Environmental and Finance Assistance, Jeremiah also established the City of Euclid's Recycle and Repurpose Committee and is an active member of the Euclid Creek Watershed Council.

Jeremiah is committed to improving the region's environmental issues and will strive to ensure a healthy and clean Lake. If elected, Jeremiah will commit to expanding the services of the Soil and Water district to meet the continued demands of local governments and will continue to promote environmental best practices and education.

Jeremiah enjoys family time kayaking, cycling, and vacationing in St. Albans, Vermont.



BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

Patricia Carey
Keith Linn
Howard Maier
Tom Marsalis
Ruth Skuly, *Chair*

DISTRICT STAFF

Janine Rybka
District Administrator

Jared Bartley
Rocky River Watershed Coordinator

Gloria Kestranek
Administrative Assistant

Brent Eysenbach
Storm Water Program Coordinator

Eric Lance
Storm Water Specialist

Susan Bell
Storm Water Specialist

Claire Posius
Euclid Creek Watershed Coordinator

Amy Roskilly
Conservation Education Specialist

Carla Regener
Storm Water Specialist

NRCS STAFF
Lynette Harmon
Al Norwood

Rocky River Watershed Program

Welcome Elizabeth and Megan!

Our seasonal CSWCD Watershed Program staff members have hit the ground running. Watershed Specialist Elizabeth Hiser and Watershed Program Intern Megan Smith started in mid-July and will be on board through October. Elizabeth is focusing on assessing streambank erosion in the Baldwin Creek watershed in support of our "Stopping Sediment at its Source in the Rocky River" project. In addition to assisting on streambank erosion assessments, Megan is conducting water quality monitoring, inspecting rain gardens, updating educational materials and assisting with outreach activities and events.



Assessing Streambank Erosion in Baldwin Creek

Sediment has long been known to be a problem in Baldwin Creek, which drains portions of North Royalton, Parma, Middleburg Heights, Strongsville and Berea. Excessive sedimentation

leads to the substrate in the creek bed becoming embedded. In other words, the spaces between the sand, gravel and cobbles on the creek bed get filled in with silt. In addition to the impacts on water quality, this reduces the amount and quality of habitat available to aquatic macro invertebrates - such as crayfish, caddisflies and midges - that spend all or part of their life cycle along the creek bed. Additionally, excess sediment is transported downstream, eventually dumping into Lake Erie, where the sediment and any nutrients contained in it contribute to water quality problems.

The Rocky River Watershed Action Plan estimates that 7500 lineal feet of streambank in Baldwin Creek should be stabilized or otherwise restored in order to address the creek's sediment problem. As part of the "Stopping Sediment at its Source in the Rocky River" project, funded by the Great Lakes Commission,

Cuyahoga SWCD is assessing the streambanks in Baldwin Creek and its tributaries using a methodology called the Bank Erosion Hazard Index (BEHI). Once completed, the BEHI analysis will allow us to rank the streambanks based on the severity of the erosion, and direct funding and other resources to the highest priority sites. The project goal is to restore 2500 lineal feet of streambank.

Funds Awarded to Rocky River Watershed Communities

Cuyahoga SWCD, the City of Fairview Park and the Medina County Park District have been awarded 2014 Surface Water Improvement Fund (SWIF) grants from Ohio EPA. Cuyahoga SWCD will work with Cleveland Metroparks to restore a headwater stream in a former pasture in Hinckley Reservation, the City of Fairview Park will restore an eroding streambank along Coe Creek in Bain Park and Medina County Parks will create a storm water wetland to reduce downstream erosion in a high quality headwater stream.

These projects will also serve to demonstrate locally the restoration concepts that will be implemented.

Watershed Events

- ♦ **Fall Cleanup Day - Wildwood Wetland and Bioswale Service Day, and Euclid Beach Cleanup**
Sat., Sept. 20, 10:00am-noon, Wildwood Lakefront Reservation, Cleveland
- ♦ **Green Cleaning Workshop for Inside and Out Mayfield Heights**
Wed., Oct. 1, 6:30pm-8:00pm, Ross C. DeJohn Community Center Workshop Cost: Free, but participants will have the opportunity to make two green cleaners to take home and try for \$10.
- ♦ **A Day in the Life of Euclid Creek**
Sat., Oct. 4, 8:00am-2:00pm, Acacia, Euclid Creek Reservation & Wildwood Park. Take a snapshot of Euclid Creek starting near the headwaters in Acacia Reservation and ending at the confluence with Lake Erie in Wildwood Park. Volunteers will help test water quality and other measures of stream quality with demonstrations offered by natural resource staff and educators.

Euclid Creek Watershed Program

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 Schaffer, 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 clean-up 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.

Contact Claire Posius at 216-524-6580, extension 16 for watershed program and event information.



cuyahogaswcd.org/euclidcreekfiles/euclidcreekthehomepage.htm

ON THE LAND

CUYAHOGA SOIL & WATER
CONSERVATION DISTRICT
6100 WEST CANAL ROAD
VALLEY VIEW, OHIO 44125

PHONE: 216-524-6580
FAX: 216-524-6584



Printed on



Recycled Paper

Nonprofit Org.
US Postage
PAID
Cleveland, OH
Permit No.
3666

Conserving land and aquatic resources in a developed environment through stewardship, education, and technical assistance. Cuyahoga SWCD is an equal opportunity employer and provider.

Tick Talk

Black-legged ticks, which have been known to carry Lyme Disease, have become established in Ohio. Take the following precautions when out hunting and tromping through the woods.

- Tuck pants into socks & shirts into pants.
- Use 25 - 30 % DEET on exposed areas such as neck and arms.
- If going into brush or wooded areas, used pyrethrin imbedded clothing, or spray thoroughly several days before the trip. Home applied tick-preventative (pyrethrins) will last up to six washings.

Be cautious around cats- this chemical can be lethal to them.

- Do outer tick checks before coming indoors and do thorough tick checks in the shower.

SUMMER SUPERVISOR SCHOOL-CLEVELAND STYLE

Statewide SWCD board members and their families attended the Area2 Summer Supervisor School in Cleveland. In addition to educational exhibits and presentations regarding SWCD operations, current projects and conservation concerns, tours were held to showcase the Northeast Ohio conservation works.

Claire Posius, Euclid Creek Watershed Coordinator made a presentation about the Euclid Creek stream and wetland restoration project. She also led a tour to the project site and the Cleveland Lakefront Nature Preserve.

Janine Rybka, District Administrator and Al Norwood, NRCS Urban Conservationist led the Urban Agriculture Tour that stopped at the Ohio City Refugee Farm, Avon Standard's Hoop House, Rid-All and the Blue Pike Farm.

Special thanks to all this year's sponsors, especially the following entities from Cuyahoga County: Cuyahoga County Farm Bureau, GDP Group, KC Masonry, Northeast Ohio Regional Sewer District, Partners Environmental Consulting and WKYX-TV 3. Great job Area 2 staff and board members!

