



# ON THE LAND

## SUMMER 2015

## STORM WATER TROOPERS

### WHO IS THAT LOOKING IN MY BASIN? AND WHAT DO THEY SEE?

If you live in a subdivision or work at a building that has been built since 2003 you may have noticed our staff out looking at your basin, rain garden, or permeable pavement this year. In addition to making sure active construction sites prevent sediment from entering our streams, our storm water staff also inspects what are called post construction storm water control measures (SCMs) or best management practices (BMPs). SCMs are put in place to hold back storm water runoff and treat pollutants before the runoff enters our storm sewers and streams. These practices are required to be maintained in perpetuity and municipalities are required to make sure they are functioning properly.



*Storm water professionals observing a storm water basin and identifying maintenance needs*

Cuyahoga SWCD staff inspects SCMs on behalf of municipalities and identifies needed maintenance items. The most common maintenance needs our staff sees are removal of trash, removal of fine sediment, removal of invasive vegetation (ex. narrow leaf cattail and phragmites), and repair of eroding areas in SCMs. The best way to ensure a SCM is maintained is to have a maintenance plan and to make sure those in charge of maintenance understand how the SCM is supposed to function. The Cuyahoga SWCD staff have example maintenance plans for those in need and will meet on site with landowners to discuss needed maintenance and potential solutions.

An ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure, so be proactive in performing routine maintenance.

## GROWING SUCCESS FROM THE GROUND UP UNLOCKING THE SECRETS OF SOIL

Urban farming requires some of the same components as traditional farming - one of these components for improving soil health is using soil amendments employing cover crops. Continue the journey to learn about soil fertility and soil health for successful crop production.

**Date: Saturday, September 26 9:00 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.**

**Location: Stearns Homestead 6975 Ridge Road - Parma (south of Ridgewood Dr.)**

- Seasonal High Tunnels - What they are, cost-share incentives and installation assistance
- Soil Health, Soil Tests and how to read a soil test analysis
- Cover crops and their benefits for improving soils
- Resource Management Systems for improving vegetable productions

Educational handouts, resource materials and door prizes. Bring a container to take home free manure for your compost pile.

**Please RSVP by September 18:** 216/524-6580, ext. 13 or 440/877-0706



# SHRINK YOUR LAWN

When most people think of the ideal lawn, they think of well-maintained, bright green turf grass. There are around 40 million acres of lawn in the lower 48 states, occupying about 2% of the surface of the United States. We perceive a well-maintained yard as aesthetically pleasing to the human eye, but they're not pleasing toward our environment.

Turf grass is a largely impervious (not penetrable) surface, so most rain water flows directly off your lawn. Run-off pollution occurs with each rainfall and snowmelt when water flows over land picking up soil and pollutants and depositing them in streams, ponds, wetlands, lakes, and rivers. Run-off pollution can result in excess algal growth, fish kills, reduced tourism, impaired drinking water, and more. It is environmentally and economically costly.



Example of a cut-out the Center planting, using native plants

While we want to make our yards friendlier to pollinators and the surrounding environment, regulations from some homeowners associations or municipalities don't always make it easy. Turning your front yard into a wild meadow may get you grief from a homeowners association but you can incorporate landscaping features using native plants to shrink your lawn.

*Here are 5 simple tips to shrink your lawn at home:*

**CONNECT THE DOTS** - If you have several random planting areas in your yard, you can consolidate them into one larger planting area. To get an idea of what it would look like, get some rope or a hose and map out the area to see where you would be removing sod. This way you can "try out" the shape before any digging.

**HEDGE THE EDGE** - This entails digging up the perimeter of your lawn in favor of a hedge. To keep the lawn from infiltrating the new growing bed, you'll want to edge it with stone, brick or cement. If you lay it at ground level, it will enable you to mow more easily.

**CUT-OUT THE CENTER** - You can make a planting area or a patio in the center of your lawn. Plant natives to attract wildlife or ring a hidden patio with a planting bed.

**CUT CORNERS** - Pick a corner of your lawn and convert it into an herb garden, rock garden or a space for something else you've been dying to grow.

**GO WILD** - Let a piece of your lawn go back to its natural state to become an oasis for local wildlife. Decide which part of your lawn to convert and replace it with native plants.

Visit our website for a list on natives plants and other lawn tips.

## NATIONAL WILDLIFE FEDERATION (NWF) HABITAT STEWARDS

Join NWF's nationwide team of volunteers who serve their communities as Habitat Stewards! The NWF will teach you how to help people create and restore wildlife habitat in backyards, schoolyards and other private and public areas. NWF will provide you with training to become a Habitat Stewards volunteer – no prior experience is necessary. Topics covered include habitat, landscaping, native plants, birds, reptiles, insects, and more, all taught by experts in interactive sessions. Helping to develop habitat sites, creating your own habitat, and assisting with educational or other events will count towards the 30 hours of volunteer time required after the training. Participate in all 24 hours of training for certification. Sign up now! Space is limited.

- Who:** Anyone interested in volunteering to help restore our environment for wildlife  
**When:** September 14, September 16 (6:30 p.m. -9:00 p.m.), September 19, 2015 (9:30 a.m. -2:00 p.m.)  
September 21, September 23 (6:30 p.m. -9:00 p.m.) and September 26, 2015 (9:30 a.m. -3:30 p.m.)  
**Where:** Don Umerley Civic Center - 21016 Hilliard Road - Rocky River, OH  
**Fee:** \$40 Workshop Only



Questions & Registration Contact:  
Amy Roskilly, 216/524-6580, ext. 22  
aroskilly@cuyahogawcd.org  
**Registration deadline is September 4, 2015**

# 66<sup>TH</sup> ANNUAL MEETING

THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 24, 2015

CUYAHOGA VALLEY CAREER CENTER  
8001 BRECKSVILLE ROAD, BRECKSVILLE

4:30 - 6:00 P.M.

## SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

- 4:30 - 5:45 p.m. **Vote for your favorite Board of Supervisors Candidates**
- 4:30 - 6:00 p.m. **Visit the displays, mingle, network and enjoy refreshments produced and served by the Cuyahoga Valley Career Center students**
- 5:15 p.m. **Speaker: Yvonne Lesicko, Sr. Director of State and National Policy for the Ohio Farm Bureau**  
**Protecting Soil and Water Resources: Farmers Taking Action**
- 5:45 p.m. **Recognition of the 2015 Conservation Heroes**
- 6:00 p.m. **Announcement of Election Results**



There is no charge for this program, however we request a confirmation of your attendance. Please contact: [gkestranek@cuyahogawcd.org](mailto:gkestranek@cuyahogawcd.org) or 216/524-6580, ext. 10. You may also use this number for election information.

This year's Annual Meeting is possible through the support of the Cuyahoga County Farm Bureau, local farmers and the students of Cuyahoga Valley Career Center.

The Cuyahoga County Farm Bureau cordially invites you to their annual meeting and dinner, which will immediately follow the Cuyahoga SWCD Annual Meeting. Cost is \$10 per person. To reserve, call 440/877-0706 or email [cuyahoga@ofbf.org](mailto:cuyahoga@ofbf.org)

# MEET THE CANDIDATES



**JOYCE HAIRSTON**

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



**TOM MARSALIS**

Tom Marsalis received a Bachelor of Science from Cleveland State University. He retired from the City of Cleveland Division of Water Pollution Control in 2009 where he served as Deputy Commissioner, and supervised all areas of sewer maintenance including personnel, budget, vehicle maintenance, engineering, construction, inspection, customer service, outreach, sewer repair, sewer cleaning, and the Capacity Management Operation and Maintenance program.

He served as the City of Cleveland's representative on the Cuyahoga RAP Technical Committee since 1990 and was an active member of the Northeast Ohio Storm Water Task Force that proposed storm water activities in the area to comply with USEPA Storm Water requirements.

Tom wrote the City of Cleveland Storm Water compliance permit application and the annual reports and has lectured on storm water controls at conferences locally, nationally, and abroad. He has also been involved in coordinating public events, including the Big Creek Watershed Clean Up and Public Works Day.



**DR. RUTH SKULY**

Dr. Ruth Skuly is completing her 5th term on the Board. Currently the board chair, she has served as treasurer and vice chair, led the development of our Strategic Plan, helped with community outreach and is completing her twelfth year as a director of the Ohio Federation of Soil and Water Conservation Districts.

Ruth earned a BA in biology from St. Xavier College (Chicago), an MS in environmental biology from Cleveland State University and a Ph.D. in Educational Administration from Kent State University. She retired from the Cleveland Municipal School District where she taught biology and environmental science before becoming an administrator.

Ruth and her husband, Leo Deininger, reside in Cleveland Heights and they own and manage a tree farm in Coshocton County where they have implemented programs under the federal Farm Bill. She has been instrumental in bringing federal cost share dollars to Cuyahoga County.

She has also taken training in storm water management, brownfield redevelopment and the Urban Forestry Tree Commission Academy, all of which are relevant to helping lead the District.

# CUYAHOGA SWCD ELECTION UPDATE



**RACHEL WEBB**

Rachel Webb is a Watershed Team Leader with the Northeast Ohio Regional Sewer District (Sewer District). Ms. Webb works to develop, implement and manage the Sewer District's watershed management programs, and with the Sewer District's 62 Member Communities to provide innovative options to address the flooding, erosion, water quality, and infrastructure needs across the region.

Rachel coordinates projects and services internally across the Sewer District to ensure customers understand related initiatives and programs and access Sewer District technical assistance. Ms. Webb received her Bachelor of Arts in geology from Wittenberg University, and a Master's in Environmental Sciences from Miami University of Ohio.

Before joining the Sewer District, she was the Low Impact Development Coordinator at the Chagrin River Watershed Partners, Inc. in Northeast Ohio until 2010. Prior to her move to the Cleveland area, Ms. Webb was the Watershed Coordinator for Wayne Soil and Water Conservation District in Wooster, OH until 2006.

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 and 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: Joyce Hairston, Tom Marsalis, Ruth Skuly and Rachel Webb.

Voting can be done three ways:

- At the Annual Meeting on Thursday, September 24, from 4:30 p.m. – 5:45 p.m., at the Cuyahoga Valley Career Center, 8001 Brecksville Road, Brecksville.
- By requesting and submitting an absentee ballot. \*\*
- At Cuyahoga SWCD from September 2 – September 23 between 8:00 a.m. – 4:30 p.m.; or on September 24 from 8:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.

\*\*Contact the office or go to [www.cuyahogawcd.org](http://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.

## DISTRICT STAFF

Janine Rybka,  
District Administrator

Jared Bartley,  
Rocky River Watershed Coordinator

Brent Eysenbach,  
Storm Water Coordinator

Elizabeth Hiser,  
Natural Resources Coordinator

Gloria Kestranek,  
Administrative Assistant

Kelly Parker,  
Urban Conservationist

Claire Posius,  
Euclid Creek Watershed Coordinator

Carla Regener,  
Storm Water Specialist

Amy Roskilly,  
Conservation Education Specialist

Brian White,  
Urban Conservationist

Al Norwood,  
Urban Conservationist, NRCS

Lynette Harmon,  
District Conservationist, NRCS

## BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

Ruth Skuly, Chair

Howard Maier, Vice Chair

Tom Marsalis, Treasurer

Ted Esborn, Secretary

Jeremiah Swetel, Fiscal Agent



# ROCKY RIVER WATERSHED

## STOPPING SEDIMENT AT ITS SOURCE

In 2011, Cuyahoga SWCD received a grant from the Great Lakes Commission to work with farmers in the upper areas of the watershed and with stream side property owners in the more urbanized areas of the watershed. The project has provided cost-share funding for agriculture projects in the Mallet Creek and Plum Creek subwatersheds, and bank stabilization in the Baldwin Creek subwatershed, preventing 15,000 tons of sediment from entering the Rocky River over the lifetime of the implemented practices.

To date, over 2000 acres of cover crops have been established through the project, and scheduled streambank restoration projects will reduce severe streambank erosion at multiple sites in Baldwin Creek. Rocky River Watershed Coordinator Jared Bartley's article about the project was published in the July-August 2015 issue of Land and Water magazine and is currently posted on the Cuyahoga SWCD website.



## HINCKLEY STABLES CONSTRUCTION COMPLETE

Restoration of an ephemeral channel at the Ranger Stables in Cleveland Metroparks Hinckley Reservation has been completed. Funded through a grant from Ohio EPA's Surface Water Improvement Fund, the project repaired a severe headcut in the stream channel, which was exporting sediment to sensitive downstream habitats. The photos below illustrate the evolution of the site through this restoration.



*Downcutting occurring before restoration*



*Dogwood planting during construction*



*Vegetation being established post-construction*

## ROCKY RIVER WATERSHED EVENTS

**SEP 20**

**Streamside Tree Planting from 2:00 p.m. - 5:00 p.m. at Cleveland Metroparks Timberlane Farm on Boston Rd. in North Royalton**

**SEP 26**

**Streamside Tree Planting from 10:00 a.m. - 2:00 p.m. at the northeast corner of Edgerton Rd. and Bennett Rd. in North Royalton**

# EUCLID CREEK WATERSHED

## 2ND ANNUAL DAY IN THE LIFE OF EUCLID CREEK

Our second annual “Day in the Life of Euclid Creek” (DITLEC) event, held on Saturday, July 18th was quite different from last year - it was beautiful, warm weather. Participants learned about how we monitor water quality through water chemistry sampling, macroinvertebrate (aquatic bug) monitoring, and electrofishing. What makes this event so unique is the collaborative effort to organize and run the event between Cleveland Metroparks, Friends of Euclid Creek (FOEC), Northeast Ohio Regional Sewer District (NEORS), Sierra Club, and the City of Cleveland – Division of Water.

The day started with Euclid Creek water monitoring program manager from Tri-C East, Lou Rifici, who started the chemistry training, followed by demonstrations at the headwaters of Euclid Creek. Then we followed the Main Branch of Euclid Creek down to the Highland Picnic Area in the Euclid Creek Reservation, where the Main Branch and the East Branch join. Here, Metroparks staff, led by Claire Weldon, collected macroinvertebrates to show what species of aquatic bugs live in Euclid Creek. We ended the day at Wildwood Park at the mouth of Euclid Creek and Lake Erie, where Metroparks staff demonstrated electrofishing. Aquatic biologist, Mike Durkalec, showed the group how they shock the water from a boat to momentarily stun and collect fish to sample populations and species.

Overall, we collected 12 water quality samples using 3 different methods across 9 different sites. Check out the ‘Outcome Tab’ on the program website to see 2014 and 2015 results. At the end of the day results were discussed over pizza and salad. Raffle winners collected their booty - from rain barrels to native plants to organizational bling like water bottles and t-shirts.

The results that stood out most for people were the values for conductivity, which relate to concentrations of dissolved solids in water. High conductivity levels are linked to road salt and some fertilizers, so the fact that conductivity numbers were very high in mid-summer, shows that road salt is still being processed in the watershed.

Through the Euclid Creek Volunteer Monitoring Program, we see conductivity levels vary seasonally with levels increasing in winter as we salt our roads more, and decreasing through summer and it takes until fall for the levels to normalize. Any elevated level of conductivity is a challenge to the health of aquatic life.

A big thanks go out to all who attended and made the day a great success! Congrats to those of you who went home with raffle prizes. Good luck to everyone in the Clean Water Tour & Sweepstakes! See the Sustainable Cleveland webpage to see other ways to be a part of the Year of Clean Water. [www.sustainablecleveland.org](http://www.sustainablecleveland.org)



## EUCLID CREEK WATERSHED EVENTS

SEP 1

**Friends of Euclid Creek Hike, Dusty Goldenrod Preserve, Highland Heights – 6:30 p.m.**

Join us for a walk outside as Lynn Garrity, Coastal Program Specialist with ODNR takes us on a hike through the beautiful protected property and discusses her role in protecting our local watersheds.

SEP 12

**Great Lake Erie Boat Float, Edgewater Park - watch us sail our recycled boat! 10:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.**

SEP 12

**South Euclid Harvest Fest, Quarry Park - stop by our FOEC table! 11:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.**

SEP 19

**7th Annual Wildwood Fall Cleanup & Bioswale Garden Service Day -10:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.**

Wildwood Park—Euclid Creek Reservation, E. 174th St. & Lakeshore Blvd. ClevelandVolunteers are needed to help with restoration activities at the wetland and to cleanup the bioswale garden

SEP 19

**Richmond Hts. Family Fun Fest, Greenwood Farm, stop by our FOEC table! 1pm - 5pm**

For event details go to [www.euclidcreekwatershed.org](http://www.euclidcreekwatershed.org)

**CUYAHOGA SOIL & WATER  
CONSERVATION DISTRICT**

6100 West Canal Road  
Valley View, OH 44125

**Phone** 216.524.6580

**Fax** 216.524.6584

www.cuyahogaswcd.org



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

## PROJECT WET (WATER EDUCATION FOR TEACHERS)

SPONSORED BY: OHIO DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES, CUYAHOGA VALLEY NATIONAL PARK,  
SUMMIT SWCD, CUYAHOGA SWCD, & WATER MANAGEMENT ASSOCIATION OF OHIO

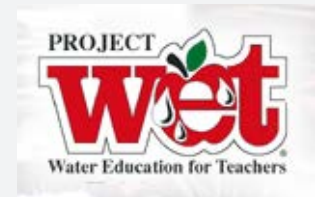
**Friday, October 9, 2015 9:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.**

**Cuyahoga Valley Environmental Education Center - 3675 Oak Hill Rd, Peninsula, OH 44264**

**\$15.00 (includes continental breakfast & lunch)**

**Participants Will Receive:**

- Certification as an Ohio Project WET Educator
- A copy of the Project WET Curriculum & Activity Guide 2.0 and a Guide Membership to the online Water Education, Portal & DiscoverWater.org
- A copy of the Project WET Conserve Water Educators' Guide
- Additional Water Conservation materials and training



For more information, contact: Leonard Black, ODNR-Division of Soil & Water Resources  
614/265-6758 or [leonard.black@dnr.state.oh.us](mailto:leonard.black@dnr.state.oh.us)