



CONSERVATION NEWS



Pickaway Soil & Water Conservation District

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Pickaway Soil & Water Conservation District, 110 Island Road, Suite D, Circleville, Ohio 43113

Discover the cover: Farmers realize benefits, challenges of soil-improving cover crops

SPECIAL POINTS OF INTEREST:

- Benefits of Cover Crops
- Poster Contest Winners
- EE Camp Information
- Join Our Team
- NRCS Program Updates

A growing number of farmers throughout the nation have “discovered the cover”—and for some very good reasons. They’re increasingly recognizing that by using cover crops and diverse rotations, it’s possible to actually improve the health and function of their soil. According to David Lamm, a soil health expert with USDA’s Natural Resources Conservation Service in Greensboro, N.C., farmers are also reaping the benefits healthy soils bring to their operations in the form of better nutrient cycling, improved water infiltration and more consistent yields over time.

“The principles of building healthy soils are the same everywhere—you have to stop tilling the soil and switch from a monoculture crop rotation to one with a diversity of crops that should include cover crops,” Lamm said. “But the path to soil health is different on each farm.” Lamm said that keeping the soil covered and growing with living roots is a critical component in improving the health and function of the soil. “That means understanding how to manage cover crops in a soil health management system. And that can be one of the biggest challenges farmers face.”

According to Lamm, cover crop and cash crop selections and rotation sequences should be chosen to fit the farmer’s resource concerns and priorities, and the resources available at that farm. For more information on how to “Unlock the Secrets in Your Soil,” call or visit your local USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service office or visit www.nrcs.usda.gov.

Thank You for another successful Fish and Tree Sale. The district sold over 7,200 tree and plant species and over 18,000 fish species.



Soil & Water Stewardship Celebration & Poster Contest



4th-6th Grades

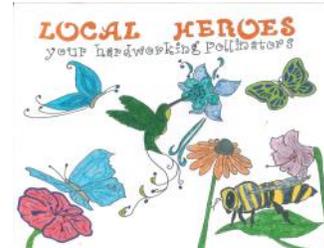


Makayla Lange-1st Place



Conner Robinson-2nd Place

7th-9th Grades



Carly Karshner-1st Place



Emily Watkins-2nd Place



Poster Contest HONORABLE MENTION WINNERS

6th Grade Honorable Mention Winners

Salt Creek Elementary-Lorrie Huysman

Destiny Whitt

Tyler Hines

Teegan Rainey

Rachel Townsend

8th Grade Honorable Mention Winners

McDowell-Robyn Helsel

Isabelle Adkins

Arianna Fink

All the winning posters will be displayed at the Pickaway County Library April 24th– May 2nd. In addition the Pickaway Soil and Water Conservation District is partnering with some local restaurants and displaying artwork on placemats throughout the week. You can visit the Circleville Bob Evan's, Captain D's during lunchtime and Donato's on May 1st.

The Pickaway Soil and Water Conservation District wants to remind you we all have the responsibility of being good stewards of our Natural Resources throughout the year.

We had 189 participants total from McDowell Exchange, Salt Creek Intermediate, Walnut Elementary, Teays Valley West Middle School and homeschool students.

Experience Earth Camp Registration is open.



Pickaway SWCD will once again host Experience Earth Camp on June 16-17 at Mary Virginia Crites Hannan Park from **9-3**. Experience Earth Camp is open to children who are enrolled in 3rd or 4th grade in a Pickaway County School or live in Pickaway County. Campers will have fun participating in hands-on environmental activities while learning about wildlife, plants, soil, water and more. They will be able to participate in archery, geocaching and many other outdoor activities. Registration is set at \$15 and the first 50 paid registrations will be accepted. Registration costs cover lunch's, t-shirt, water bottle and take home materials at the end of camp. Registration forms are now available on the Pickaway SWCD website at www.pickawayswcd.org. Paid registrations are due May 6. If you have any questions or for more information call Ashley Clark, EE Camp Director, at 740-477-1693. If you are interested in volunteering, this is a great opportunity. We welcome volunteers, minimum age is 13. Visit www.pickawayswcd.org for more information.

Save The Date

PICKAWAY COUNTY 4TH GRADE AG DAY

The Pickaway Soil and Water Conservation District's 76th Annual Meeting and Supervisors Election will be held on November 5, 2015. The event will return to Emmett Chapel UMC with a fantastic meal and program. Watch for more information in the July edition of the newsletter.



Pickaway County Farm Bureau and Pickaway SWCD will be hosting the 4th grade Ag Day on September 18th at Ohio Christian University. Ag Day is a hands-on learning experience. Participants will learn how agriculture impacts their lives. We are looking for farmers and others in farm related fields to lead presentations. If you have an interest in sharing agriculture with 4th graders, and you are available on September 18th, please contact Ashley Clark at 740-477-1693.

Pickaway Soil & Water Conservation District

WE WANT YOU!

To be an Affiliate Member of the Pickaway Soil and Water Conservation District.

Pickaway SWCD provides assistance to hundreds of children and adults throughout its Education Programs at no charge.

This year we will be starting a memorial scholarship for graduating Pickaway County Seniors that will be majoring in a Natural Resources field.

By becoming an affiliate member you would be helping to make these things possible.

**Corporate Member
\$250.00**

For Your Contribution You Get:
Two Complimentary Annual Meeting Tickets
Recognition at September Annual Meeting
Recognition in "Conservation News"
Recognition on District Web Site
A High Quality Framed Certificate

**Steward of the Land
\$100.00**

For Your Contribution You Get:
A Complimentary Annual Meeting Ticket
Recognition at September Annual Meeting
Recognition in "Conservation News"
Recognition on District Web Site
A Certificate of Appreciation

**Soil & Water Protector
\$30.00**

For Your Contribution You Get:
Recognition at September Annual Meeting
Recognition in "Conservation News"
Recognition on District Web Site

**Future Conservationist (Student)
\$10.00**

For Your Contribution You Get:
Recognition at September Annual Meeting
Recognition in "Conservation News"
Recognition on District Web Site
Eligible to apply for SWCD Scholarship



Pickaway Soil & Water Conservation District

110 Island Road
Suite D
Circleville, Ohio 43113
Phone: 740-477-1693
www.pickawayswcd.org

Name _____
Address _____

Phone _____

Method of Payment

Check
 Cash

Sign-Up Form

	Price
<input type="checkbox"/> Corporate Member	\$250.00
<input type="checkbox"/> Steward of the Land	\$100.00
<input type="checkbox"/> Soil & Water Protector	\$30.00
<input type="checkbox"/> Future Conservationist	\$10.00

Total: _____

NRCS Program Updates

Submitted By Kyle Wheeler

EQIP Environmental Quality Incentive Program

Eligible program participants receive financial and technical assistance to implement conservation practices, or activities like conservation planning, that address natural resource concerns on their land. Payments are made to participants after conservation practices and activities identified in an EQIP plan of operations are implemented. Sign-ups can be taken year round.

What's New in CSP Conservation Stewardship Program?

Through CSP, participants take additional steps to improve resource condition including soil quality, water quality, water quantity, air quality, and habitat quality, as well as energy.

CSP provides two types of payments through five-year contracts: annual payments for installing new conservation activities and maintaining existing practices; and supplemental payments for adopting a resource-conserving crop rotation. Producers may be able to renew a contract if they have successfully fulfilled the initial contract and agree to achieve additional conservation objectives. Payments are made soon as practical after October 1 of each fiscal year for contract activities installed and maintained in the previous year. CSP General sign-up and contract renewal deadlines have passed for this year, however applications can be taken all year long.

Sky Dance

Submitted By Seth Rankin, Farm Bill Biologist

I sat on my back Porch sipping on a cold drink, as I watched the last glimmer of a painted sunset sink below the horizon. I took a mental picture of its beauty, but soon started to focus again on the task at hand, as it wasn't the sunset that I was there for. Finally in the inky half-light of dusk coming from the neighbor's prairie grass field I heard the old familiar sound that I had been thinking about all winter.... Peent!

What I was hearing was the American Woodcock (*Scolopax minor*). Woodcock are a native gamebird to Ohio, migrating every year in early spring from their wintering grounds in the south to their breeding grounds all across Ohio. Their arrival is typically one of the first signs of spring. They are often found in the early spring time in young forests and shrubby fields, using their well camouflaged and cryptic coloration to remain hidden from their prey. At early dawn and late dusk, the males perform a very public display of affection, sounding off with a very distinct and audible "PEENT" before launching themselves straight into the air. What happens next could best be described as a broken helicopter as the male erratically twitters up and down through the air column with a flight that ends with a steep and fast dive back to the ground where he started from. This is often referred to as the sky dance.

As I watch the whole skeptical unfold before me I chuckled to myself at the quirkiness of this little bird. I had no way of knowing his current moral, but to me he sure seemed chipper out in his field. Soon a symphony of Spring Peepers and Chorus Frogs joined in and added to the show that had now been going on for a solid five minutes. I felt a warm breeze on my back as it started to lightly blow in from the south. I took a sip and smiled. The sky dance had happened. Spring was finally here.



The District is continuing their rain barrel program this Spring. We have 55 gallon barrels with spouting kits available in the office for \$35.00.

Mark Your Calendar



April 30-- New Hope Field Day
May 6-Pickaway Elementary School Day
May 6-- Experience Earth Camp Registration Due
May 19-Board of Supervisors Meeting-7:30 am
June 16-17, Experience Earth Camp
June 16 Board of Supervisors Meeting-7:30 am
June 22-28 Pickaway Co. Fair
July 14-Board of Supervisors Meeting-7:30 am
July 26th-Friday in the Park

Visit us on Facebook
www.facebook.com/PickawaySoilandWater

Pickaway Soil & Water Conservation District

Phone: 740-477-1693 Fax: 740-477-3327 Website: <http://pickawayswcd.org>

Board of Supervisors

Belinda Aukeman
Bill Black
Steve Hawkins
Barbara Martindale
Devin Weller

SWCD Staff

Ashley Clark, Education Specialist
Doug Kohli, District Technician
Aaron Mosley, District Technician
Tawn Seimer, District Administrator
Lyndsay Shaffer, District Technician

Natural Resources Conservation Services Staff

Kyle Wheeler, District Conservationist
J. Robert Skidmore, Civil Engineering Technician
Phil Roe, Agriculture Conservation Experienced Service Enrollee

Pheasants Forever

Seth Rankin, Farm Bill Biologist

Affiliate Members

Corporate Members-C. Randal and Cindy Metzger, Farm Credit Mid-America, Pickaway Farms, The Savings Bank
Steward of The Land-Drummond General Partnership, A. Gabriel Farms, Hartssock Ag.
Soil and Water Protector-Wisehart Farms, Shaw Family Farms