

June 2005

Conservation Notes

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We are committed to promoting citizen stewardship of Montgomery County's natural resources by providing conservation education and Technical assistance.

How About Those Trees !

Dan Jackson, Open Space Program Coordinator / District Technician

If you enjoy trees and want to know more about them, the Ohio Division of Forestry has a web site made just for you. Visit www.dnr.state.oh/forestry to read all about the native trees found in our state. Click on the link [Ohio's Big Trees](#) to explore many pictures of each variety along with its details such as leaf appearance, uses for the wood, and what kind of fruit it may produce. You will also find photos of trees that hold state and national records. The Division of Forestry web site gives you a way to get better acquainted with the tree that gives you all those leaves to rake in the fall.

Montgomery County has many excellent facilities that showcase trees of all sorts. Five Rivers Metroparks has eight-teen parks, many of which have a wealth of forests. Germantown Metropark has the largest contiguous forest in the county; it has a healthy mix of Oaks, Hickory, Ash, Beech and Tulip trees. Taylorsville Metropark has a state record Shumard Oak.

Sugarcreek has the "Three Sisters", a set of 550-year-old Oaks. Miami Township's Waldruhe Park on State Route 741 is a wonderful place, first protected in 1917; Woodland Cemetery in Dayton has over 3000 trees on 200 acres, complete with beautiful vista views of downtown. Dull Homestead, near the Wolf Creek Bike Path will be open to the public in the near future, for people to appreciate an incredible Swamp Oak.

With increased knowledge you'll be able to better appreciate some other regional record-holders: the 86 inch circumference Red Bud in Fairborn, the 50 foot tall Red Cedar in Wilmington. Several champions are available at the Spring Grove Cemetery in Cincinnati. This facility has hundreds of varieties of trees and shrubs and is a natural wonder to tour. Make sure you take some water and good shoes, as this place is over 600 acres. If you like history too, there are dozens of famous Cincinnatians at final rest there.

We have many great parks in our area and all across the state to enjoy and marvel at nature's wonder. But one of the best I've seen is nearby in Indiana. The Schrader-Weaver Woods is a federally protected native natural landmark. It is between Connersville and Rushville, about 65 miles from Dayton. It is a spectacular example of old growth forest unequaled in the region. There are Beech trees that are tremendous in height and Oak trees that were large even when Tecumseh was around.

If you want to visit, take I-70 west to Indiana State Route 1 south. Take CR 700 west 5.5 miles to CR 450W, going south 1.5 miles. Be sure to bring your bug repellent, as you'll be in deep woods. Take some water, a camera, and good walking shoes to enjoy a day trip that you'll forever remember.

This place is special to me because my Great, Great, Great grandparents and their parents are buried about two miles from Schrader-Weaver Woods. It's fascinating to think that they probably saw these very same trees after moving here from North Carolina.



State Champion Redbud in Fairborn, Ohio

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Montgomery SWCD Board Seeks Nominations

Jim Dillon, District Administrator

The nominating committee of the Montgomery Soil and Water Conservation District (MSWCD) will meet the last week of June to nominate candidates for its Board of Supervisors. Two members will be elected to the MSWCD Board during its annual meeting on Saturday, September 10, 2005, to serve three-year terms beginning in January 2006.



2005 Montgomery SWCD Board of Supervisors

The Board meets monthly to conduct District business. This consists of entering into working agreements with other agencies, establishing policy, and setting priorities on the work of District employees. Supervisors approve financial decisions for the continued growth and stability of the agency. They are also involved in other tasks that help landowners and local governments develop natural resources wisely in Montgomery County.

As District Administrator, I believe that issues regarding urban growth, drainage, and water quality will provide the Supervisors elected with many opportunities to make a difference for the better of our community. In fact, Board membership is an opportunity to take an active role in the in decisions about natural resources of both the rural and urban communities of the County.

Being a Supervisor also offers an individual the opportunity to attend state and national meetings, to network and learn first-hand information that will affect local landowners, also providing a venue to offer ideas and feedback to many agencies and government officials.

As the District offers a variety of programs, it seeks Supervisors with a diversity of interests such as agriculture, natural resources, education, development, finances, land preservation, government and environment, to name a few areas. Supervisors are required to be 18 years of age and must reside in the county to which they are elected. Past Supervisors have included teachers, farmers, business owners, and others.

To learn more about being a MSWCD Supervisor or place your name on the ballot, contact Jim or Cheryl at the MSWCD office or by phone at 854-7645. Inquiries may also be made of the nominating committee members Dan Ennist, Executive Director of the Farm Service Agency, Pete Lane, OSU Extension Agent, or Fred Glander, MSWCD Supervisor

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Conservation Activity Report
Jeremy Huggler, District Technician

Over the past few months, the District Technicians have been busy surveying and designing the many conservation projects that are planned for construction this summer. To date, 2 ponds have been completed, with 3 more ponds and 2 wetlands likely to be constructed in the months ahead. With the assistance of USDA cost-share programs, the number of waterway projects has been increasing each year, and this year has been no exception. Some landowners have begun installing drainage tile for grass waterways which will be finished later this summer. Currently, over 47,000 feet of grass waterways are scheduled to be built on 29 farms in Clay, German, Jackson, and Perry Townships this summer. Many farm operators have planted wheat in anticipation of extensive waterway construction and tile installation later this year. With the help of our District Cooperators and the efforts of local excavation and drainage contractors, we are looking forward to another successful season of putting conservation on the land in Montgomery County.

There will be much to report on the Drainage program in our next newsletter in August. House Bill 202, effective April 15th 2005, made significant changes to Ohio drainage law. It is meant to simplify, streamline, and clarify the administration procedures for group drainage projects, otherwise known as Conservation Works of Improvement (CWI).



Jeremy Huggler, part of the District's technical staff, conducting a land survey. The data gathered is used in a Computer Assisted Design program (AutoCad) to create engineering drawings. Contractors then construct conservation practices such as grassed waterways, ponds or wetlands, all of which protect water quality.

And Now... A Word From Our Sponsors

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Conservation Education Programs Reach Diverse Audiences

Caroline McColloch, Education / Information Specialist

The 2005 Spring schedule for the District's outreach presentations, displays, and partnership activities have been especially hectic. One of the major projects this year has been to co-host with Preble SWCD, the 2005 Area IV Envirothon. This major event rotates each year to a new host site within the 18 counties of southwest Ohio (Area IV). Envirothon is a natural resources field testing event for High School teams in the areas of aquatics, soils, forestry, wildlife and current environmental issues; it brings together typically about 100 five-member teams and requires the coordination of 70-100 volunteers. Everyone was glad the weather was cooperative on May 3rd! Thanks especially to Jane Lightner and the Preble County Historical Farm Center as site host. Congratulations to the winning team from Northmont High School and their advisor, Kevin Jones. Second, third and fourth place teams were as follows: Cedarville High School (Greene County), Franklin High School (Warren County), and Fort Loramie High School (Shelby County). These teams will be representing Area IV at the Ohio Envirothon, to be held on June 12-14 at Hiram College in Portage County.

The District Education Specialist Caroline McColloch served large numbers of students with help from other staff members, Stefan Bridenbaugh, Dan Jackson, and Josh Klepinger. For the 35th anniversary of Earth Day, 560 students at Northwood Elementary received instruction on watersheds and non-point source pollution using the EnviroScape teaching model. 100 Germantown Elementary students learned about erosion, land use, and stream health using the Stream Table. 124 Students got a hands-on experience with aquatic insects during our "Bugs-R-Us" presentations at the annual Children's Water Festival sponsored by Miami Valley Earth Central.

Two longer-term projects continue to make progress: The Wolf Creek Stream Team, and the Wolf Creek Watershed Partnership. The Stream Team is entering its third year of data collection at five sites in the watershed, powered by a dedicated group of twelve citizen stewards. The Wolf Creek Watershed Partnership is raising public awareness of storm-water management issues and garnering financial support of the local match to fund an Army Corps of Engineers study of the watershed's hydrology. This study will yield computer models that can predict changes in stream flow based on existing and proposed changes in land use. A critical part of this process is fostering cooperation among the seven local governments in the watershed, and generally, the responses have been supportive and encouraging.

We are forming a new partnership with some teachers from Dayton Public Schools, using the Healthy Water Healthy People curriculum. Last Friday, Mrs. Ervin's seventh grade classes from Eastmont Park School enjoyed a field trip to collect and identify macroinvertebrate stream insects. They also learned how to classify them according to pollution tolerance. This method is used to gauge the biological health of a stream. The students found that the Little Miami River at the Narrows Park in Greene County, is home to a very healthy community of aquatic insects.



2005 Area IV Envirothon Winners
Northmont High School



District Technician Josh Klepinger
Teaches Germantown Elementary
Students about Conservation



Eastmont Park School Students Seining
for Macroinvertebrates
on the Little Miami River

