



Montgomery
Soil and Water
Conservation
District

The Conservation Advocate March 2007

Helping People and Communities Care for Land and Water

10025 Amity Rd. Brookville Ohio 45309 937-854-7645 Fax 837-2241 www.montgomeryswcd.org

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Today is the Day to Be Part of Conservation's Power

Soil and Water Stewardship Week, April 29 - May 6, 2007

Think about the energy you use everyday. Does it come from renewable or non-renewable energy sources? Over 92% of energy used today comes from non-renewable resources such as petroleum, natural gas, coal, and uranium. Only a small fraction of the energy we use comes from renewable sources. Is this good stewardship?

What can we do? Take the time to learn about energy efficiency (using less energy to perform the same function), energy conservation, and renewable energy. Then put what you learn into practice. Efficiency and conservation are key components of energy sustainability. Simply put, we need to meet today's energy needs while allowing our children to meet tomorrow's.

For 52 years, the National Association of Conservation Districts has promoted Soil and Water Stewardship Week each spring. Promotional materials are offered at no cost for your church or civic group, courtesy of Montgomery Soil and Water Conservation District.

The following links open printable pages from our web site:

- [Catalog](#) - photos and pricing information
- [Order Worksheet](#) - for planning your order
- [Downloadable Files](#) - theme clipart and photos, background information, guides for church leaders and educators

To receive promotional materials at no cost, please place orders with Caroline at Montgomery Soil and Water Conservation District by March 12th, 2007. Call 937-854-7645 or email from the home page to place your order.

For a closer look at alternative energy, visit the Future Energy and Conservation Center, at 10404 West National Rd., Brookville

A Conservation Poster Contest is sponsored each year by Montgomery Soil and Water Conservation District for kindergarten through twelfth grade students. The theme follows that of Stewardship week; this year's theme is "Conservation's Power", focusing on energy conservation and alternative / renewable energy. If you would like to make this a class or youth group project, Education Specialist Caroline McColloch is available for presentations to help students get started. To schedule a presentation, call the office at 937-854-7645. The promotional materials used for Soil and Water Stewardship Week are also helpful to get young people oriented toward the theme.

Any of the documents referred to above, can also be mailed or faxed to you.

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District Secretary Lynn Peters Retiring



As of March 1st, Lynn Peters will start a new direction in her life, after more than 21 years of service to the District.

A life-long Perry Township resident, she is well connected to the local community, which has been a big help to the Technicians as they work with landowners on group drainage projects. Peters has for many years been an enthusiastic participant in the annual conservation bus tour and state-wide professional development training opportunities for District employees. She is an avid promoter of recycling, and has always taken care of the office paper, aluminum, and other items.

Lynn plans to keep pace with lots of interests which include her husband Jerry, four children Roy, Bear, Susan, Betsy, and (8!) grandchildren, visiting antique malls, genealogy research, Model A Club outings, and doing home improvement projects. She has been a very diligent employee, and great fun as a co-worker. We'll miss you...! but it's great that you'll still be 'just down the road'. Best wishes and God's blessings in your new life.

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And in Other District News...

Congratulations to District Technician Stefan Bridenbaugh and his wife Jennifer, on the birth of their third child, Lydia Mae, making her entrance on Friday, February 16th. Everyone is healthy and happy! Brothers Mathew and Michael are also delighted to welcome their new sister.



Lydia Mae Bridenbaugh

8th Congressional District Farm Forum March 10th

On Saturday, March 10th, Congressman John Boehner is hosting the annual Farm Forum at Edison Community College in Piqua, from 10:00 am to 1:00 pm (registration and coffee begin at 9:30 am).

As in the past, the purpose of Farm Forum is to bring together experts from different sectors of the agriculture community for a panel discussion of issues impacting the agriculture industry. The panel this year will discuss the Farm Bill and the general state of agriculture in Ohio. Lunch will follow the panel discussions and will be provided at no cost.

The keynote speaker will be U.S. Secretary of Agriculture Mike Johanns. Secretary Johanns was sworn in as the 28th Secretary of the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) on January 21, 2005. Prior to coming to USDA, Secretary Johanns was Nebraska's 38th governor. During his tenure, he was a strong advocate for rural communities, farmers and ranchers. Secretary Johanns grew up on a dairy farm in Iowa, and describes himself as "a farmer's son with an intense passion for agriculture." If you're planning to attend, please RSVP to the 8th Congressional District office by March 8th by calling 1-800-582-1001.

Drainage 101

Adapted from Lorain Soil and Water Conservation District

Water drainage is a major land use concern throughout Montgomery County. Most landowners can testify to this as evident by wet yards, flooded basements and soggy farm fields. The primary cause of wetness is poorly drained soils, flat topography, high clay content and 36 inches of annual "precipitation. These factors combine to create standing water and saturated soils for a large part of the year in our area.

The Soil Survey of Montgomery County describes soil and drainage conditions on an acre-by acre basis county-wide. This is a useful document for determining land and soil limitations for building, farming, construction, and a number of other land uses. The Soil Survey is an excellent document to review prior to purchasing property especially when it comes to drainage, flooding and wetlands.

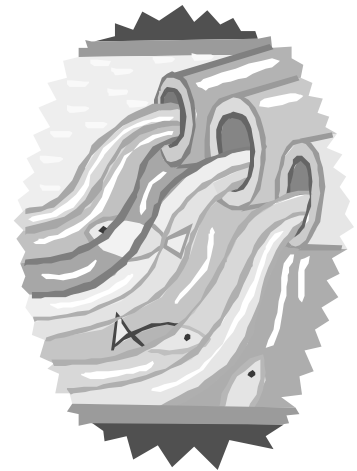
Much of the Soil Survey for Montgomery and most Ohio counties is now on a web site called the Web Soil Survey (WSS); the URL address is: <http://websoilsurvey.nrcs.usda.gov/app/websoilsurvey.aspx>.

Drainage problems in this area are traditionally addressed in two ways: subsurface or surface methods. Subsurface drainage involves the use of underground pipes called tile, which removes the internal water in the soil, thereby lowering the water table. Surface drainage involves the use of grass waterways, swales and ditches to remove standing water and convey storm water runoff to a suitable outlet.

A suitable outlet is critical to the functioning of any drainage system. The outlet is the point where excess water is discharged to a receiving structure such as a storm sewer catch basin or body of water such as a ditch or stream. The outlet must be at a lower elevation than the area to be drained because the system typically operates by gravity.

Drainage problems are not usually limited to one property, and often cross property lines following natural drainage patterns, depressions, and soil types. In the same way that drainage problems traverse property lines, correcting these problems often requires that neighbors work together to correct areas of flooding and wetness. The location and depth of the drainage outlet is generally the key and dictates how far the drainage project can be extended.

There are many questions and misconceptions about drainage such as: who is responsible for improving drainage, who regulates what landowners can do on their own property, as well as the rights and wrongs about installing and maintaining artificial drainage systems. The legality of drainage work often arises, especially in the case of feuding neighbors. For more information on these questions, visit the Frequently Asked Questions link on our web site's Drainage Program page, www.montgomeryswcd.org



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Wolf Creek Stream Team Update

Spring is approaching as the Wolf Creek Stream Team enters its fifth year of stream monitoring. Some of the proposed ideas for 2007 goals will be discussed at the first quarterly meeting on March 2nd. The other scheduled meeting dates are: June 1st, September 7th, and December 7th. Each meeting will be on a Friday night, 6:30-8:00 pm at the District office. We traditionally share a pizza and potluck dinner.

Five goals are being proposed, encompassing public outreach and program development. The possible outreach activities are 1) procure and distribute a brochure about non-point source pollution, with a printable version on the Stream Team web site; 2) Stream Team news published in local municipal newsletters, and 3) publication of stream quality data analysis.

Program development items include watershed mini-grant funding for kit supplies, and helping members attain the Qualified Data Collectors certification from the Ohio Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). Each year, the Division of Soil and Water Conservation (Ohio Department of Natural Resources) has modest funding available for local community watershed groups. This program has helped fund stream kit supplies in the past. It is interesting to note that the value of the time put in by volunteers in 2006, totaled \$4,260. This was based on a total of 184 volunteer hours. Each of our five sites are monitored once per month from April through October. Volunteer time counts on grant applications as 'in-kind' services. New to the kit this year will be test sets for Coliform bacteria. The source of Coliform bacteria in streams includes failing septic systems, leaking sewage pipes, livestock manure or pet wastes washed into storm drains.

Ohio EPA has established guidelines for three levels of expertise regarding stream data collection. Level 3 involves college course work and certified testing by EPA; Level 2 requires certain college courses as well as monitoring experience in the field and laboratory. Level 1 certification means that the group is affiliated with a local organization that supports surface water monitoring that maintains long-term data collection, and that the members have been trained through a certified monitoring training program. The Wolf Creek Stream Team members will be looking into becoming Level 1 Qualified Data Collectors.

Anyone with an interest in water quality and community involvement is welcome to attend any of the quarterly meetings or contact Caroline at Montgomery Soil and Water Conservation District for more information. You can also get information from the Stream Team web site, www.wolfcreekstreamteam.org, or the District site at www.montgomeryswcd.org. Other volunteer jobs are available besides stream monitoring.



2006 Stream Team at the December volunteer meeting - a friendly group of citizens, active in our community.

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Announcements



- **Plant Sales Order Deadline Nears**

March 9th is the last day to place orders in the spring plant sale. Many Ohio native species, important to natural habitat, are included. The order form may be faxed, emailed or printed from the District web site (www.montgomeryswcd.org). Also on the web site are featured wildflower photos and a list of all the plants with their scientific names and native status.

- **Overholt Drainage School**

March 12-16, Erie County, Ohio. Provides continuing education for land improvement contractors, soil and water conservation technicians, farmers, engineers, sanitarians, consultants and others interested in advancing their knowledge of basic concepts, principles and skills related to water management. Participants can register for the full 5 day program or any combination of individual sessions. Advance registration required by March 8th. Tuition includes lunches, reference materials and supplies, manuals, guides, design notebooks, and a certificate of completion. For more information or to register, contact Larry Brown, at 614-292-3826 or brown59@osu.edu.

- **Scholarship Opportunity**

A \$500 scholarship is offered annually by Montgomery SWCD each spring, for a high school senior who wants to pursue a college career in natural resources management or agriculture. The application is due May 1st, and can be faxed or emailed upon request, or printed from the web site at: www.montgomeryswcd.org.

- **County Envirothon**

Envirothon is an outdoor, natural resources knowledge and skills event open to students from Montgomery County High schools. It is a great opportunity to explore environmental conservation careers and practice teamwork. Levels of competition include county, regional, state and national. This year's County Envirothon will be on April 25th at Germantown Metropark. Interested persons should contact Caroline McColloch at the District office. You can also visit <http://www.areaivenvirothon.org/> for detailed information.

- **Water Quality Report**

The District Technicians have been busy this winter planning and designing water quality improvement projects for 2007. To date, 24 waterways and 1 wetland are scheduled for construction this year in Montgomery County. The waterway construction season begins April 1 and ends September 15.

- **County Land Judging Contest Site Needed**

The county land judging contest is planned for September. This contest is a valuable tool for educating high school students on the importance of land and soil features in making wise land use and management decisions. In the past, we have generally looked for a wheat field that will be harvested by the time of this event, but any large open space may be suitable. If you are interested in hosting this event, please contact District Technician Jeremy Huggler for more details.

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Return Service Requested

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All programs and services provided by the Montgomery Soil and Water Conservation District are available to everyone without regard to race, color, sex, religion, national origin, age, handicap or marital status.



Calendar of Events

														
	March 9th	Spring Plant Sale Orders Due												
	March 12	Stewardship Week Promotional Material Orders Due												
	March 12-16	Overholt Drainage School												
	Week of April 15	Pick Up Plants (exact date TBA)												
	April 25	County Envirothon												
	April 27-29	Environmental Education Council of Ohio Conference	