

CONSERVATION COMMENTARY



Meigs Soil & Water Conservation District

Volume XIII, Issue 3

www.meigsswcd.com

Fall 2012

Leading Creek featured at annual Meigs SWCD meeting

LEADING CREEK, and more specifically its restoration, was a main focus of this year's annual Meigs SWCD meeting and banquet held Tuesday, Sept. 25 at Meigs High School near Pomeroy.

Reintroduction of mussels

The reintroduction of mussels into the Leading Creek watershed was discussed by guest speaker, Dr. Tom Watters.

Watters said that most mussels are extinct or on the verge of extinction.

He explained the complicated and specific life cycle of mussels. Mussels require a host, usually a fish, to carry the fertilized eggs. Mussels have devised many different and unique ways to attract their specific host. Mussels hardly move at all so when something happens to their environment, they suffer the consequences. The dewatering of Meigs Mine 31 killed all aquatic life



Fat Mucket mussels, as displayed here by Dr. Tom Watters, were native to Leading Creek but wiped in the 1993 mine dewatering. These particular mussels were stocked into Leading Creek last month as part of a restoration project funded by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

in Leading Creek downstream of Parker Run. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and Columbus Zoo and Aquarium partnered to reintroduce several mussel species back into Leading Creek. The mussels were collected from the Olentangy River and

introduced in several locations in Leading Creek Watershed, most recently last month.

When asked why mussels are needed in our freshwater habitats, Watters explained that they are indicators of the health of our streams, and they help to filter the water.

He was also asked if the mussels were edible. He did not recommend it since they filter the water and any impurities in the water become part of the mussel.

"You try it (eating the mussels) and let me know how it works out for you," he commented.

Thomas Fork Doser project

"Thomas Fork is the most severely impacted stream by acid mine drainage in the Leading Creek watershed," said Barbara Flowers, lead project officer for Acid Mine Drainage programs with ODNR Division of Mineral Resource Management.

Thomas Fork, which dominates the lower third of the 150-square-mile Leading Creek Watershed has been the subject of numerous studies and countless hours of investigation and sampling over the past two decades.

The problem, acid-mine drainage (AMD), was known, the question was how to best address it and all indicators pointed to a small, unnamed tributary of West Thomas Fork that borders the northern portion of Bailey Run Road.

"The decision was made to treat the Unnamed Tributary, due to its devastating effects on Thomas Fork and being the largest contributor of acid and metal loading," Flowers said.

A water-powered "doser," which neutralizes the acidity in the stream with lime, was the choice of treatment.

Located on Bailey Run near State Route 143, the doser was manufactured by Aqua Fix and installed by D.V. Weber Con-



Thomas Fork Doser located on Bailey Run Road helps neutralize acid-mine drainage by depositing limestone into the creek.

struction, Inc of Reedsville.

It was completed in January 2012 at the cost of about \$416,000.

The doser started operation on Jan. 27. The silo holds 35 tons of lime pellets and is 12 feet in diameter. The lime is designed to raise pH and remove metals from the water and is supplied by Greer Industries, Inc.

AMD passes through a water wheel, which drives an auger that dispenses the lime pellets into the stream at an adjustable rate. The treated water discharges into a concrete-lined mixing channel before entering Thomas Fork where treatment continues.

Meigs SWCD is under contract with ODNR to operate and maintain the doser. Six downstream sites are monitored weekly to track pH and flow.

Preliminary post construction results indicate that the doser adequately treats all of the sources of AMD during high and medium flows.

Fish studies before and after the doser have shown an increase in fish population and species diversity.

The mission of the Meigs Soil and Water Conservation District is to provide assistance for the wise use of our natural resources for present and future generations.

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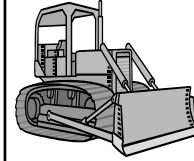
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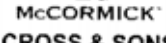
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If so, contact the Meigs SWCD at 740-
992-4282.

Thank You!

The Meigs SWCD and its supervisors would like to thank the following individuals and business for their generous donations to the Meigs SWCD Annual meeting and banquet.

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SWCD equipment for sale, rent

The following items are available for sale:

Marking Flags — \$.10 each
 Topographical Maps — \$8 each
 Meigs County Platbooks — \$20.00
 Ohio Pond Management Handbooks — \$3 each
 Digital Soil Survey CD—\$10 each
 'Leading from the Past—Stories of Leading Creek' Book—\$15



The following equipment is available for rent (subject to scheduling and availability):

John Deere No-Till Drill (10-foot)	\$90 min. plus \$9/acre over 10 acres	70 HP tractor min.
Tye No-Till Drill (7 foot)	\$80 min. plus \$8/acre over 10 acres	45 HP tractor min.
Brillion Seeder (8-foot)	\$80 min. plus \$8/acre over 10 acres	40 HP tractor min.
Lime Spreader	\$50 min. plus \$2/ton over 25 tons	60 HP tractor min.
Forester Tree Planter	\$25 per day	25 HP tractor min.
Planter Bars	Free with \$20 returnable deposit	
Box Trap	Free with \$30 returnable deposit	

A \$100 delivery/
 pickup fee will be assessed for equipment rentals outside of the county.

All equipment must be scheduled through the Meigs SWCD office at 992-4282 during regular business hours for delivery Monday through Friday between the hours of 7:30 a.m. and 4 p.m. The minimum fee will be assessed if equipment is delivered and not used. A \$10 charge per month will be added to all bills after 60 days.

Scott Upton named Outstanding Cooperator for 2012



Scott Upton, Olive Township, was named Meigs SWCD Outstanding Cooperator of the year for 2012.

Carrie Crislip, Meigs County District Conservationist for the Natural Resource Conservation Service introduced Upton at the annual meeting.

Mr. Upton's property consists of approximately 10 acres of woodland, 37 acres of hayland/pasture and 22 acres of permanent pasture.

Scott began working with Meigs SWCD and NRCS in 2010. In February 2011, Scott signed a contract with NRCS to participate in the Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP). He completed all of his contract within a year of signing his contract.

He completed two access roads totaling almost 1500 square feet. He completed a heavy use pad and a livestock watering facility. 2.5 acres of critical area was re-worked and re-seeded. Scott installed approximately 2500 feet of pasture division fencing, 3000 feet of pipeline and 4 watering facilities.

Currently, there are 30 head of beef cattle in this grazing operation. Approximately 1900 feet of woodland exclusion fencing was also installed.

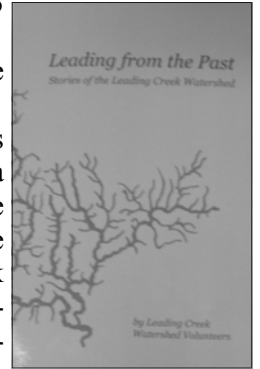
Scott has done an excellent job implementing conservation on his farm.

'Leading from the Past: Stories of the Leading Creek Watershed'

The Meigs SWCD still has some copies of "Leading from the Past: Stories of the Leading Creek Watershed" for sale at \$15 each.

Supplies are limited.

The 200-plus page book is a product of the Stories of the Leading Creek Watershed Project which culminated with the unveiling of the book on Nov. 4, 2010. The project, funded by the Ohio Humanities Council, includes stories from a variety of watershed residents.



Meigs SWCD Conservation Area Update

The Conservation Area added a much needed restroom the end of June. It was constructed with funding from the Meigs County Grants Office.

Another addition was a rain garden at the shelterhouse. The rain garden was made possible with donations from the Ohio Association for Garden Clubs, Bob's Market and Green House, and Forest Run Ready Mix.

Trail markers along the Pauline Atkins trail were installed by the Meigs County Health Department. A \$600 grant from Buckeye Hills RC&D will be used for trail improvements this fall.

2012 Hay Show Winners



The hay show is held each year at the Meigs County Fair. It is co-sponsored by the Meigs County Fair Board and the Meigs Soil and Water Conservation District. This year there were four entries for the hay show.

Winning class 2- All grasses was Brian Windon with Elizabeth Harris taking second. Class 3- 49% or less legumes was won by Elizabeth Harris with Brian Windon placing second.



District Land Judging Awards

Each year, the Meigs SWCD sponsors a county-wide soil judging contest for Vocational Agriculture students. This year's contest was held in Meigs County at the Meigs SWCD Conservation Area and was held Sept. 13 in conjunction with the Athens SWCD.

Students from Southern Vocational Agriculture Departments participated in the contest with 17 students participating; four in urban and 13 in agricultural.

The highest scoring students in the Agricultural Judging Contest were—in order—Johnny VanCooney, Gage Smith and Trenton Cook. The top scoring team was from Southern and included VanCooney, Smith, Cook and Justin Hettinger.

High scoring individuals in the Urban Judging Contest were—in order—Joyce Weddle, Megan McGee and Mickayla Eblin. The top scoring team was from Southern and included Weddle, McGee, Eblin and Brandon Marcinko.



Urban Team: Mrs. Jenna Gilliam, Southern Vo-Ag teacher, Mickayla Eblin, Megan McGee, Meigs SWCD Education Coordinator Jenny Ridenour, Brandon Marcinko, and Joyce Weddle.



SOIL JUDGING—These youngsters try their hand at judging one of three soil pits at the annual Soil Judging Competition held Sept. 13 at the Meigs SWCD Conservation Area.

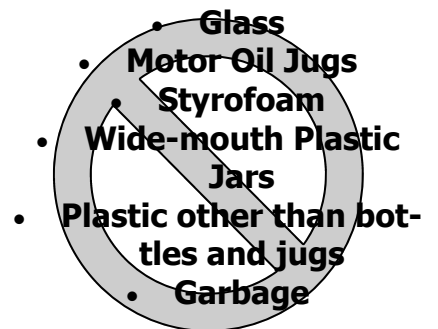


Agriculture Team: Mrs. Jenna Gilliam, Southern Vo-Ag teacher, Johnny VanCooney, Justin Hettinger, Meigs SWCD Education Coordinator Jenny Ridenour, Trenton Cook, and Gage Smith.

Recycling in Meigs County is easy, just use the booths located near your home!

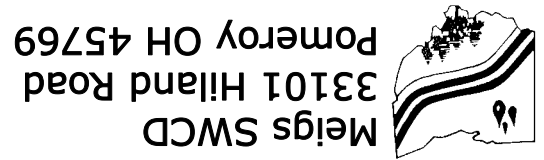
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Meigs SWCD Calendar of Events

Regular meetings of the Meigs SWCD Board of Supervisors are generally held at 11:30 a.m. the fourth Thursday of each month at the SWCD office, 33101 Hiland Road, Pomeroy. Dates and times are subject to change.

- Nov 6– Office closes at noon– Election Day
- Nov 12– Office closed– Veterans Day
- Nov 22– Office closed– Thanksgiving Day
- Nov 23– Limited staff
- Dec 24– Limited staff
- Dec 25– Office closed– Christmas Day
- Jan 1– Office closed– New Years Day
- Jan 21– Office closed–Martin Luther King, Jr. Day



Bolin and Romine re-elected to Meigs SWCD Board of Supervisors

Joe Bolin of Rutland and Kim Romine, Pomeroy, were reelected to the Meigs SWCD Board of Supervisors at the district's annual meeting and election held Sept. 25.

Bolin and his wife, Janet, live on a 120-acre farm in Rutland. He is a member of the Masons, Scottish Rite, Shriners, National Rifle Association, Star Grange, Meigs Local Emergency Planning Committee, Community Improvement Corporation and is a Rutland Township Trustee. He also serves on the Buckeye Hills Resource Conser-



JOE BOLIN

vation and Development Council and the Ohio Mineland Partnership. He has been a Meigs SWCD Supervisor since January, 1993.

Romine and her husband, Keith, live on a 70-acre farm in Bedford Township where they raise produce and are planting a vineyard. She is a member of the Racine Area Community Organization, Star Mill Park Board, an officer of Hemlock Grange and president of Forest Run Ready Mix LLC. She is also a past president of Southern Band Boosters and is retired from the Southern Local School District. She is



KIM ROMINE

currently employed at Forest Run Ready mix and teaches at the University of Rio Grande-Meigs Center. She has been an SWCD supervisor since January, 2010.

The third candidate was Adam Woirol of Dexter. Woirol is the owner/operator of Dexter Run Farms in Salem Township and was one of two Meigs SWCD 2008 Outstanding Cooperators of the Year.

Meigs SWCD, established in 1943 is a legal subdivision of state government that provides natural resource management assistance to county landowners and other units of local government.

The district is funded by the Meigs County Board of Commissioners, and county funds are supplemented by funding from the Ohio Department of Natural Resources. The district is governed by a five-member board of supervisors, all county residents. Board members serve staggered three-year terms.

Ohio farmers doing RIGHT today—4RTomorrow

Farmers know better than anyone the importance of good land and water stewardship. For the last 69 years, when natural resource challenges have arisen, farmers in Meigs County have stepped up and worked with the Meigs Soil and Water Conservation District (SWCD) to do what's right.

Agriculture again is being challenged. As the world's growing population places increased demand on production, public scrutiny of production methods and land and resource management is intensifying. Add to that the water quality challenges Ohio is currently facing, and it is clear that the time for farmers to step forward has come once again—and that is exactly what they are doing! The increasing algae blooms in lakes across the state are impacting not only our states' water quality but our natural ecosystems and the quality of life for all Ohioans. If nothing is done, the problem will continue to grow.

The nutrients that are building up in Ohio's waterways come from many

sources – agriculture, storm water, urban areas, developments, and other natural causes. As we work to solve the problem, it will be critical that all stakeholders involved do their part to



protect our state's water quality. The farming community is working together with SWCDs and others – to lead the way and show others the importance of doing their part to protect water quality.

With that in mind, the Ohio Federation of Soil and Water Conservation Districts and your local SWCD have

partnered with the Ohio Soybean Council to launch the 4R Tomorrow Nutrient Stewardship Program. The purpose of the 4R Tomorrow program is to educate and promote wise nutrient management to conserve water quality and soil health using 4R nutrient stewardship principles and other conservation practices.

As a part of this program, farmers and non-farmers are joining the 4R Tomorrow Team by “resolving” to reduce the amount of phosphorus and nitrogen that is applied to their fields and yards in an effort to reduce potential runoff and erosion that may negatively impact Ohio's water quality. For farmers, this means implementing the 4R principles (the four “rights” in nutrient stewardship)—the right fertilizer source, right rate, right time and right placement.

The 4Rs are based on scientific principles, and farmers can work with their local SWCD to build a customized 4R management plan for their farming operations. For non-farmers, this means implementing Backyard

“Hi! I’m Darla Staats, the new clerk at the Meigs SWCD office. I am a retired employee of American Electric Power and decided I missed the working environment and accepted a part-time office position with the SWCD. I am enjoying learning new job tasks and meeting new co-workers with my job.”

New faces at the Meigs SWCD!



“Hello , I am Michelle Tarian, the new Americorps with Leading Creek. I attended Ohio University where I studied Environmental Geography and Women and Gender Studies. I became interested in water quality through the Leading Creek Volunteer Monitoring Program and now am working to improve the water quality in Leading Creek. I hope to serve the watershed and the communities surround it well throughout my one-year term with Meigs SWCD.”

Meigs FSA moving to Gallia

The Meigs County Farm Service Agency office, which has shared office space and other resources with the Meigs SWCD as long as any of us can remember, is moving to Gallia County.

Steve Maurer, State Executive Director for the Ohio FSA announced that as of Nov. 30, the Meigs County FSA office will be officially closed. From that date forward, all FSA program services will be provided by the Gallia/Lawrence county FSA office unless a producer has elected to transfer his/her record to another county.

At this time the Meigs SWCD and USDA-Natural Resources Conservation Service is not certain how this will affect our agencies, but we do know that we are going to remain here in Meigs County to continue to provide services to local producers and landowners.

One thing we do know for certain is that with change comes sorrow. We are going to miss our friends Ann, Cindy and Lisa, and the other FSA employees we have worked with over the years and wish them well in the future. We will fondly remember our lunch table conversations and sharing our personal joys as well as our sorrows.

They are going to be greatly missed.

The Gallia/Lawrence County FSA office is located at:
111 Jackson Pk. Room 1571
Gallipolis, Ohio 45631

Financial assistance available to woodland owners via EQIP

The Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) is a voluntary program for people who want to conserve their forest resources. Through EQIP, the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) provides financial and technical assistance for Ohio woodlot owners who have non-industrial private forest land or land capable of growing trees. EQIP Forestry agreements between NRCS and the participant generally last from 2 to 3 years from the date the agreement is signed. A typical contract may consist of such practices as tree plant-

ings, grape vine control, crop tree release, thinning, and control of woody invasive species (bush honeysuckle, tree of heaven).

Eligibility includes: 1) Owning or managing a woodland; 2) a current Forest Stewardship Plan; and 3) establishing a customer service record with Farm Service Agency. If you do not have a Forest Stewardship Plan, either NRCS or the ODNR Division of Forestry can assist you with getting one. The two agencies have formed a partnership to provide technical assistance to forest landowners.

Those interested in entering into a cost share agreement with NRCS to improve their forest resources may file an application at any time; however selection periods typically occur once a year either in the fall or winter. EQIP is a competitive program. Applications are ranked and evaluated against other applications. In Meigs County, you may contact Carrie Crislip, District Conservationist at 740-992-6647 for additional information.

Other EQIP Opportunities!

EQIP also supports production agriculture and environmental quality as compatible goals. Through EQIP, agricultural producers may receive financial and technical help with structural and management conservation practices on agricultural land.

EQIP offers contracts with a minimum term that ends one year after the implementation of the last scheduled practice and a maximum term of 10 years. People engaged in livestock or agricultural production on eligible land may participate in the EQIP program. EQIP activities are carried

out according to a plan of operation developed in conjunction with the producer that identifies the appropriate conservation practices to address the resource concerns. The practices are subject to NRCS technical standards adapted for local conditions.

A typical contract may consist of such practices as pipeline, watering facilities, pasture division fence, use exclusion fencing, access roads, and heavy use feeding pads, irrigation, cover crops, seasonal high tunnels, pasture/hay land plantings, stream crossing, and brush management. Although this is not an all inclusive list, these are practices that may be utilized to address

resources concerns identified such as, inadequate livestock quantity, water quality, soil compaction, soil erosion, excessive nutrients, etc.

Those interested in entering into a cost share agreement with NRCS to improve their agricultural resources may file an application at any time; however selection periods typically occur once a year either in the fall or winter. EQIP is a competitive program. Applications are ranked and evaluated against other applications. In Meigs County, you may contact Carrie Crislip, District Conservationist at 740-992-6647 for additional information.