

CONSERVATION COMMENTARY

Meigs Soil & Water Conservation District

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Attention Producers!

USDA taking applications for Conservation Stewardship Program

Local agricultural producers and forest landowners with a record of conservation stewardship wanting to improve their operations or natural resources on their farms have until Feb. 3 to sign up for assistance under a federal program designed to help them meet their natural resource goals.

The U.S. Department of Agriculture's Natural Resources Conservation Service is currently accepting applications for enrollment in the Conservation Stewardship Program, the nation's largest conservation program.

Through CSP, agricultural producers and forest landowners earn payments for actively managing, maintaining, and expanding conservation activities like cover crops, ecologically-based pest management, buffer strips, and pollinator and beneficial insect habitat – all while maintaining active agriculture production on their land.

CSP also encourages the adoption of cutting-edge technologies and new management techniques such as precision agriculture applications, on-site carbon storage and planting for high carbon sequestration rate, and new soil amendments to improve water quality.

CSP is for producers who are already established conservation stewards, helping them to deliver multiple conservation benefits on working lands, including improved water and soil quality and enhanced wildlife habitat. Information about CSP, including national and state ranking questions and enhancement descriptions, is available on the Ohio NRCS website.

NRCS has made several updates to the program this year to help producers better evaluate their conservation options and the benefits to their operations and natural resources. New methods and software for evaluating applications will help producers see up front why they are or are not meeting stewardship thresholds, and allow them to pick practices and enhancements that



Photo courtesy NRCS

work for their conservation objectives. These new tools also allow producers to see potential payment scenarios for conservation early in the process.

"This year, the Conservation Stewardship Program provides even more opportunities for conservation and greater flexibility at the local level to prioritize resource concerns and conservation approaches," says Terry Cosby, NRCS State Conservationist in Ohio. "Customized CSP tools for Ohio will improve the customer experience during application evaluations."

People interested in the additional opportunities the updated CSP will offer can find information on the new CSP portal, located at <http://www.nrcs.usda.gov/>

csp . This one-stop shop, which provides information to help producers determine whether CSP is right for them, will be continually updated as more information becomes available. Changes that producers can expect to see include nearly double the enhancements and conservation practices offered and better reporting tools to tell producers the results of their conservation efforts on their land.

NRCS has addressed producer and stakeholder input requesting greater flexibility to address local resource concerns. Now, NRCS will more effectively utilize input from farmers, ranchers and partners in State Technical Committees and local workgroups to inform and expand conservation strategies under the program. Producers will be better prepared to apply because they will know these local ranking priorities and targeted resource concerns in advance.

Meigs County producers interested in the program should visit their local USDA Service Center at 113 East Memorial Drive, Suite D, Pomeroy, to submit an application, or contact Carrie Crislip, NRCS District Conservationist at 740-992-6646.

NRCS offices will accept applications through Feb. 3, 2017.

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

"Leading from the Past: Stories of the Leading Creek Watershed" are still available for sale at \$15 each.

The 200-plus page book was unveiled on Nov. 4, 2010.

The project, funded by the Ohio Humanities Council, includes stories from a variety of watershed residents.

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.

Sept. 30 deadline nearing for fertilizer certification

OSU Extension to host certification classes

Ohio Senate Bill 150 signed in May, 2014, created a certification program for applying commercial fertilizer in Ohio. The bill requires farmers applying commercial fertilizer to more than 50 acres to attend a course on fertilizer application. The Ohio Department of Agriculture (ODA), The Ohio State University (OSU), and several state agricultural organizations are encouraging farmers to attend a training course.

The certification is required if you apply fertilizer to more than 50 acres of agricultural production grown primarily for sale. This does not include manure. Included in the certification requirement are broadcast, side dress, sub-surface, and knifing application types. It also includes dry and liquid fertilizer that contain nitrogen, phosphorus, or other plant nutrient. Lime and limestone are not considered fertilizers.

If you raise hay, silage, corn for use on your farm and have questions about fertilizer certification, please contact the Ohio Department of Agriculture at 614-728-6987 or check the ODA website.

An uncertified person is allowed to apply fertilizer if they are under the direct supervision of a person who is certified. OSU will hold training sessions all across the state this winter. The sessions will focus on best management practices (BMP) and the latest research to keep nutrients in the field and available to crops, and reducing nutrients leaving the field.

To become certified a person must fill out an application form, pay an application fee, and attend a training session. The fee for fertilizer certification will be \$30. The initial fertilizer application certification training requires a three-hour course. A person who already has a valid commercial or private pesticide applicator license must apply for the fertilizer certification, but will not be required to pay the application fee. The fertilizer training session will also be included in the pesticide license training. All certifications will be valid for three years, at which point the applicator will need to be recertified.



Local 3-hour Agricultural Fertilizer Certification meetings are scheduled as follows:

- **Thursday, Feb. 23, 6-9 p.m. at OSU Extension, Gallia County, contact Jeff at 740-446-7007**
- **Tuesday, March 14, 3-6 p.m. at OSU Extension, Athens County, contact Ed Brown at 740-593-8555**
- **Thursday, March 16, 12-3 p.m. at OSU Extension, Washington County, contact Marcus McCartney at 740-376-7431**
- **Thursday, March 16, 2017 6-9 p.m. at OSU Extension, Hocking County, contact Tim McDermott at 740-385-3222**

A warning will be given to those not certified by the Sept. 30, 2017 deadline and those that receive a warning will also be asked to stop applying fertilizer until their certification is completed. Failure to complete certification could result in fines being levied by ODA.

The bill requires certified applicators to maintain records including, date, place and rate of application of fertilizer, type of fertilizer, name of person applying fertilizer, soil conditions, temperature, precipitation, and weather forecast for the day following the application. Records must be maintained for three years after.

This fertilizer certification requirement is in response to concerns that phosphorus from farm fields contribute to blue-green algal blooms in Lake Erie and escaping nitrogen contributing to the hypoxic zones in the Gulf of Mexico. Reduction in nonpoint source pollution of excess nutrients in both rural and urban areas will continue to be a focus of the ODA, and the Soil and Water Conservation Districts across the state.

Best management practices will be the basis of the agricultural fertilizer training with a focus on the 4Rs. 4R nutrient stewardship provides a framework to achieve cropping system goals which include: increased production, increased farmer profitability, enhanced environmental protection and improved sustainability.

The 4Rs incorporate the Right source at the Right rate at the Right time and in the Right place. The goal of fertilizer BMPs is to match nutrient supply with crop requirements and to minimize nutrient losses.

Other conservation practices such as no till farming and the use of cover crops, play a valuable role in supporting 4R nutrient stewardship.

ODNR-DOW launches web-based wildlife complaint system



The Ohio Department of Natural Resources—Division of Wildlife has an online process to assist agricultural producers that are experiencing white-tailed deer and Canada goose damage.

For more information about Deer Damage Control Permits visit <http://wildlife.ohiodnr.gov/species-and-habitats/nuisance-wildlife/deer-damage-complaint-procedure>

For more information about Canada goose permits or

other nuisance wildlife visit <http://wildlife.ohiodnr.gov/species-and-habitats/nuisance-wildlife>

Deer damage control permits are only valid during the time that damage is occurring. With very few exceptions these permits are not valid during any deer hunting. A site visit will usually be conducted to verify the damage.

For assistance contact Jim Freeman, Meigs SWCD Wildlife Specialist at 740-992-4282.

SWCD Upcoming Events

Clean Up Day returns May 20

Meigs County residents can dispose of their junk, electronics, and tires for FREE at the Meigs County Clean up Day on Saturday, May 20 from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. at the Meigs County Fairgrounds.

Proof of county residence will be required. Acceptable household items include furniture, toys, tools, box springs, mattresses, and carpet. The Shred Devil will be there to shred personal documents.

Passenger vehicle tires are limited to 10 per vehicle. No tires will be accepted on rims.

Electronic waste includes televisions, computers, servers, monitors, keyboards, speakers, stereo equipment, cell phones, video game systems and video games, DVD players, CD media, microwaves, and toasters.

We will not accept general household trash, appliances with refrigerant, chemicals, cleaners, fluorescent lamps, pesticides, fertilizer, herbicides, batteries, or liquids.

Funding and support provided by the Ohio Environmental Protection Agency, the Meigs Soil and Water Conservation District, Meigs County Health Department, the Meigs County Commissioners, Meigs County Grants Office, and the Gallia, Jackson, Meigs, Vinton Solid Waste District.



Scrap metal pile at the May 2, 2015 clean up day.

Free Rain Barrel Workshop set for April 13

A free Rain Barrel Workshop will be held Thursday, April 13, starting at 6 p.m. at the Meigs SWCD Conservation Area located on New Lima Road between Rutland and Harrisonville.

Teresa Caldwell, education coordinator with the Athens Soil and Water Conservation District, will be the guest speaker and topics will include: the benefits of collecting rain water, different ways of collecting rain water, setting up your own rain barrel, care and maintenance of your rain barrel, winterizing your rain barrel, and best practices of using a rain barrel.

The workshop is free and open to the public, but the first 15 people who pre-register will receive a free rain barrel and attachment kit if they attend the workshop.

To register, call the Meigs SWCD at 740-992-4282.

This program is funded through a grant from the Buckeye Hills RC&D.



17th Leading Creek Stream Sweep slated for April 22

The 17th annual Leading Creek Stream Sweep will take place Saturday, April 22 from 9 a.m. to noon at the Meigs SWCD Conservation Area on New Lima Road between Rutland and Harrisonville.

Trash bags, safety vests and gloves are provided for volunteers, and pizza will be served afterwards. Youth or other community groups are welcome.

The first Leading Creek Stream Sweep was held in 2001 in Rutland and it has been held every April since then, roughly coinciding with Earth Day.

The event is sponsored by the Meigs Soil and Water Conservation District, Rutland Township Board of Trustees and the Meigs Transfer Station. For more details about Stream Sweep or for registration forms contact the Meigs Soil and Water Conservation District at 740-992-4282.

Annual Ohio River Sweep to be held June 20

The 32nd annual Ohio River Sweep will be held Saturday, June 17 from 9 a.m. to noon, and volunteers are needed to assist in this massive, six-state clean-up.

River Sweep is an event organized by the Ohio River Valley Water Sanitation Commission, an interstate water pollution agency for the Ohio River Valley, along with environmental protection and natural resource agencies from Illinois, Indiana, Ohio, Kentucky, West Virginia and Pennsylvania.

Locally, the Meigs Soil and Water Conservation District will administer clean-up sites in Pomeroy and Racine. For more information on those sites contact Jenny Ridenour at the Meigs SWCD at 740-992-4282.

Volunteers will get an Ohio River Sweep t-shirt and pizza. Gloves and bags are provided.

River Sweep encompasses the entire length of the river, from its origin in Pittsburgh, PA to its end in Cairo, Ill. More than 20,000 volunteers in six states bordering the river come together to collect more than 20,000 tons of trash and other debris from the banks of the Ohio River and tributaries.

For more information about the Ohio River Sweep or to find other clean-up sites visit www.orsanco.org/sweep

Support our affiliate members!



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Main Street, Rutland, 740-742-7405



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Pomeroy OH 45769
740-992-0099

Southwest Flavor on the Ohio River


Birchfield Funeral Home
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Rutland, OH 45775
740-742-2333



3R Industries Inc.
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The Meigs Soil and Water Conservation District would like to sincerely thank its affiliate members, the Meigs County Board of Commissioners, and other county and township officials for a successful 2016, and most especially the volunteers and community members who comprise the Meigs SWCD Board of Supervisors for their selfless service.



Meigs SWCD Board members, from left: Tony Carnahan, Tonja Hunter, Bill Baer, Joe Bolin, Keith Bentz.



Kyger Creek Generating Station
Cheshire OH

If you would prefer to receive our newsletter by email, please call the Meigs SWCD at 740-992-4282.

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Langsville

Quality Print Shop
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**Leading Creek
Conservancy District**
Rutland

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Pomeroy

D.A. Boston Excavating
Reedsville

King's Ace Hardware
Middleport

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Racine

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Halliday-Atkins-Jewell Family
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740-992-6451

**Your ad could be here!
For more information
please call the Meigs
SWCD at 740-992-4282.**

SWCD equipment for sale, rent

The following items are available for sale:

Marking Flags — \$.10 each
Topographical Maps — \$8 each
Ohio Pond Management Handbooks — Free
Digital Soil Survey CD—\$10 each
'Leading from the Past—Stories of Leading Creek' Book—\$15
SWCD Hats— \$10

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
Tye No-Till Drill (7 foot)	\$80 min. plus \$8/acre over 10 acres
Brillion Seeder (8-foot)	\$80 min. plus \$8/acre over 10 acres
Lime Spreader	\$50 min. plus \$2/ton over 25 tons
Forester Tree Planter	\$50 per day
Planter Bars	Free with \$50 returnable deposit
Box Trap	Free with \$30 returnable deposit



70 HP tractor min.
45 HP tractor min.
40 HP tractor min.
60 HP tractor min.
25 HP tractor min.

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

All equipment rentals must be scheduled through the Meigs SWCD office at 992-4282 during regular business hours for delivery Monday through Friday between the hours of 8 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.



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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, 113 E Memorial Drive, Suite D, Pomeroy. Dates and times are subject to change.

- Feb 17 — Tree Order Deadline
- Feb 20— Office Closed-Holiday
- Feb 27-28 — Limited Staff due to training
- Feb 23 — SWCD regular board meeting
- March 23— SWCD regular board meeting
- April 13— Rain barrel workshop, Conservation Area
- April 22— Leading Creek Stream Sweep and Earth Day
- April 27— SWCD regular board meeting
- April 28— Arbor Day

Keep up with what's new at the Meigs SWCD! Like us on Facebook at "Meigs SCWD Conservation Area" and "Meigs Soil and Water Conservation District" or visit us at www.meigsswcd.com

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