



CLERMONT EST 1943
SOIL & WATER
Conservation from the Ground Up

CLERMONT SOIL & WATER ANNUAL REPORT

2025



OUR HISTORY

Clermont Soil & Water is a political subdivision of the State of Ohio, as authorized under Ohio Revised Code 901: 13 and 940. Clermont Soil & Water was established by local election of the Clermont County populace in 1943 to work with landowners to help address soil and water conservation issues.

Soil and Water Conservation Districts got their start following the Dust Bowl era in the 1930s, when a period of drought and high winds led to vast amounts of soil being blown from bare, over-plowed farmland, blanketing much of the country with thick layers of dust. In April 1935, Congress passed and President Franklin D. Roosevelt signed the Soil Conservation Act creating the Soil Conservation Service (now the Natural Resources Conservation Service). In 1941, the Ohio Soil Conservation District Enabling Act was passed, allowing the creation of local Soil Conservation Districts. Clermont Soil & Water was established in August 1943.

In the early years, the District focused on working with the Soil Conservation Service and farmers to control erosion, promote water quality, and enhance wildlife habitat on agricultural working lands. Over the decades, Clermont, like many other SWCDs, has become a multi-faceted agency that works with rural, suburban and urban landowners alike. The District provides technical assistance, educational programming and other resources to landowners to help them address a diverse range of local conservation issues.

Our Purpose: To Improve and Sustain Soil and Water Quality in Clermont County

Our Mission: To Provide Resources to Meet the Conservation Needs of Clermont County



BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

Clermont Soil & Water is governed by a volunteer board of five supervisors who are responsible for charting the course for the District's conservation programs and providing oversight of our operations and budget. Funding comes from the Clermont County Commissioners, whose contribution is matched by the State through the Ohio Soil and Water Conservation Commission. The District also receives funding from the Adams-Clermont Solid Waste Management District to conduct education programs related to recycling and litter prevention. Other funding comes through grants, sales of conservation related items and donations.



From left to right: Mike McGraw (Member), Dave Anspach (Secretary-Treasurer), Joe Glassmeyer (Associate Supervisor), Connie O'Connor (Vice-Chair), Tim Rose (Member), Todd Winemiller (Chair)

2025 Supervisor Election

In the election held on September 11, Connie O'Connor was re-elected for a third term on the District's Board of Supervisors. Connie O'Connor has been a Clermont Soil & Water Board Supervisor for six years. Connie is Director of Applied Learning for the Cincinnati Nature Center, where she has worked for the past 30 years. Connie has lived in Clermont County for 26 years and enjoys her home on three acres in Batavia, where she and her husband "landscape for wildlife".



Connie O'Connor

CLERMONT SOIL & WATER STAFF



Front row (left to right):

Abbie Frazer, Watershed Technician

John McManus, Director

Becky McClatchey, Watershed Programs Manager

Amanda Best, Agricultural Specialist

Back row (left to right):

Connie Miller, Executive Assistant

Matt Sperry, Urban Specialist

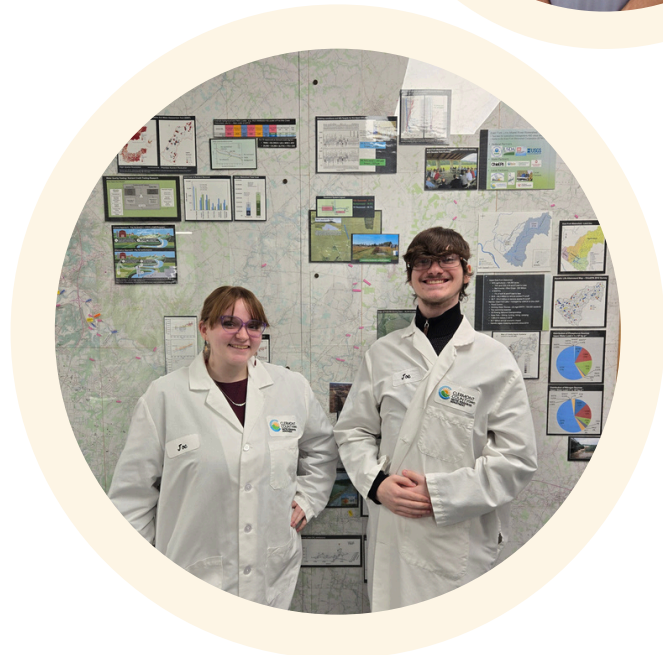
Jake Hahn, Conservation Programs Manager

Elea Cooper, Education and Communications Coordinator

Staff Updates

Clermont Soil & Water was pleased to welcome Matt Sperry as our new Urban Specialist in July. Matt grew up in Indiana and moved to Fairfield, OH in 2013. He recently graduated from Miami University with a B.S. in Applied Biology in Environmental Science, and worked in two labs, studying sediments and soil pattern formations in Nevada, and spider ecology.

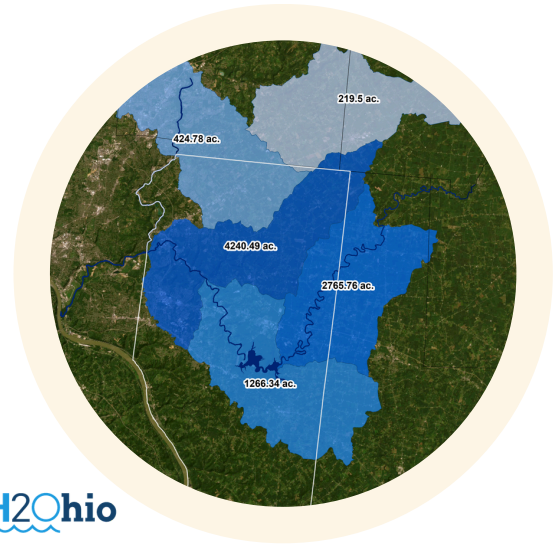
We were also so pleased to have two West Clermont High School interns last spring: Suzy Lemon and Ryan Magnussen! During their internship, they helped with education programs, invasive removal, tree planting, social media, and much more. We are so happy with the work they did and are excited to continue this program with WCHS going forward.



AGRICULTURAL CONSERVATION

H2Ohio Program

In 2024, Governor DeWine's H2Ohio water quality initiative was rolled out in the Ohio River Basin, providing financial incentives to producers to develop and implement volunteer nutrient management plans through Soil and Water Districts. Clermont Soil & Water has contracted 8,256 acres through this initial roll out (165% of our original goal), including 2,766 acres in the East Fork Lake watershed. We retained all our contracted acres through 2025 and our producers completed the first year of implementing nutrient management plans on their fields as part of this program.



Events

We had a very successful year of agriculture education events! Clermont Soil and Water hosted two farmer luncheons to discuss multiple conservation related matters, which allowed us to connect with 15 local producers. In August, we partnered with OSU Extension to hold an Equine pasture walk. The Grassy Acres Horse Retreat hosted 23 attendees who walked the property and learned about management of pastures for horses and mud and pollution management. Clermont Soil & Water created the Southwest Ohio Agriculture Collaborative consisting of six local Soil and Water Groups in 2025 and held a successful field day together in August. Speakers from across the region came to Butler County, Ohio and spoke to 81 local area farmers about their operations and how they implement conservation on their farms. Ernie Hatfield, a local farmer from Felicity who won the ODA Farm Family Award in 2025 with brothers Mark and Lowell, was a panelist at the event.

Outreach

In 2025, we partnered with Clermont Farm Bureau to help implement a Workforce Development and Agriculture Literacy Grant and presented to school groups on soil health and agricultural conservation. In addition to programs, we have developed new factsheets including a beginning farmers resources guide sheet and a Clermont County Farmers' Markets Guide.

Conservation Planning & NRCS Assistance

Clermont Soil & Water continued to write farm conservation plans which create personalized inventories of unique issues on their farms and details strategies to address them through conservation practices. In 2025 we completed two Conservation Farm plans in full and began work on two more plans. In addition to these plans, we also helped the National Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) complete engineering plans for three projects.



WATERSHED MANAGEMENT

Lower East Fork Restoration Project

Construction on the Lower East Fork restoration project is underway. Severe stream bank erosion (totaling ~7,000 tons of sediment per year) landed this segment of the East Fork Little Miami River (EFLMR) on Ohio's list of impaired streams. Funding to stabilize the stream banks and restore degraded in-stream habitat was provided by Ohio EPA's Water Resources Restoration Sponsor Program, and we're excited to have Davey Resource Group and Greensite LLC leading design and construction. Work will continue through summer 2026.



Scan the QR code to learn more and view pictures/videos of the project site!

Cloverlick Creek Dam Removal

The baseline design for the Cloverlick Creek (or, Bethel Water Works) dam removal project is complete and project partners plan to contract with a Design-Build team in spring 2026. The dam has become a liability/public safety hazard since the village ceased water works operations in 2013. Over the years, the structure has also degraded stream habitat and biology, placing Cloverlick Creek on the state's list of impaired streams. Project funding is providing through ODNR's H2Ohio Rivers Program, Clean Ohio, U.S. Fish & Wildlife and the National Fish & Wildlife Foundation. Stay tuned for project progress updates!



Solomon Run

Clermont Soil & Water provided assistance to Brown SWCD, a long-time East Fork watershed partner, to secure funding to remove a low-head/earthen dam and restore a primary tributary to the EFLMR located in the Solomon Run sub-watershed (Fayetteville, OH). Ohio EPA awarded \$385,790.00 through the Clean Water Act Section 319 Program in winter 2025. Planning is underway.

WATERSHED MANAGEMENT

Williamsburg Wetland

First constructed in 2023, Williamsburg Wetland acts as a filter that removes pollutants from the East Fork Little Miami River. The wetland filtered about 50,000,000 cubic feet of water in 2025, which was 65% more than in 2024!

Monitoring the amount of pollutants removed is important for quantifying the benefits of constructed, floodplain (riverine) wetlands. This data will be shared to help inform the siting and design of future wetland projects, which can be customized to fit various landscapes and river systems to help communities meet specific water quality goals.

Our OSU partners have taken the lead in sample coordination/monitoring throughout the wetland. Extended monitoring has been confirmed to continue through February of 2028 thanks to grants through the Ohio Department of Higher Education Harmful Algal Bloom Research Initiative.

Williamsburg's design is unique and highly effective at offloading sediment and nutrients when the river accesses the floodplain. Project partners recognized a design alteration that could be constructed at the inlet to increase river-floodplain access during smaller storm events and successfully secured \$40,000 through Ohio EPA's Gulf Hypoxia Program. Small, alternating rock vanes will be installed along the inlet to improve connectivity between the river and the floodplain, and increase overall pollutant removal.

Williamsburg Wetland also served as a great learning location for K-12 educational programs! Students visit the site and learn all about wetlands, water quality monitoring, and biological monitoring methods.

At the collegiate level, Williamsburg is also a great site for learning. OSU graduate, Sarah Wallentine, defended her thesis "Quantifying Treatment Effectiveness and Modeling Hydrologic and Hydrodynamic Complexities in a Constructed Riparian Wetland System Treating Riverine Storm Flows in Southwest Ohio" based on her months of research done at Williamsburg Wetland!



EDUCATION AND COMMUNITY OUTREACH

Outreach Programs

Throughout the year, Clermont Soil & Water provides free education programs for county residents to learn about sustainable lawn care, local watersheds, wetlands, local biological diversity and identification, composting, recycling, and more.

19 programs
to 398
participants



Master Rain Gardener

In the fall of 2025, we hosted a Master Rain Gardener Cohort for Clermont County. We had 10 new Master Rain Gardeners complete our 6 week course. Now, they will be installing beautiful rain gardens across the county that will slow and filter stormwater!



Pond Management Clinic

In April, we hosted our annual pond management clinic. A total of 20 people attended and learned about problems that arise as ponds age, pond design, fish stocking, pond weed control, vegetative buffers and more.



EDUCATION AND COMMUNITY OUTREACH

School Programs

We continued to offer free field trips, classroom visits, and loaner activities to all K-12 groups in the county in 2025. Students love getting to conduct water quality tests, catch and identify fish and macroinvertebrates, and assess habitat quality of our local waterways.

In May, we were awarded a grant from the Ohio Environmental Education Fund to purchase waders and boots for our field trip experiences! Students are more engaged than ever in our programs, and love getting to be knee deep in learning about water quality!

**22 programs
to 1380 K-12
students**



Litter Prevention & Recycling

Clermont Soil & Water continued to assist the Adams-Clermont Solid Waste District with its litter prevention and recycling education programs.

In 2025, we had the biggest year for our School Supply Recycling and Donation program ever! This program was held at 13 county schools, during which over 2,000lbs. of school supplies were collected. Many supplies were donated to our charity partners, and the rest were taken for specialty recycling at the Cincinnati Recycling and Reuse Hub.

We also continued our work with several local schools to help obtain and execute grants to reduce waste generated at schools and bring learning opportunities for students in the process!



EDUCATION AND COMMUNITY OUTREACH

Bethel Tree Giveaway

In September, we were excited to partner with the OKI Regional Council of Governments and Taking Root to distribute 300 free trees to landowners in the Bethel area. The distribution was made possible by an Urban Forestry grant provided by ODNR Division of Forestry. Bethel and Tate Township have experienced a tremendous amount of tree loss due to the Asian Longhorned Beetle (ALB), and our goal with this project was to begin to help the community re-establish the tree canopy. We will conduct one additional giveaway in 2026.



2025 Logo Contest Winner

Conservation Plant Sale

Each spring, Clermont Soil & Water holds a plant sale for Clermont County residents. Customers can purchase low cost plants to enhance their home landscaping, develop small areas of reforestation, and provide plants for native and pollinator gardens. In 2025, 3,805 plants, were sold to more than 160 people along with rain barrels and compost bins.



Spring Litter Cleanup

In April, we partnered with several organizations to host our 33rd annual Spring Litter Cleanup event, during which volunteers collected 352 bags of trash. Nearly 200 volunteers attended, including families, 4-H clubs, scout troops, and local businesses.

STORM WATER MANAGEMENT

Clermont County and many of its townships and municipalities are required by Ohio EPA to carry out programs designed to reduce the amount of pollution in storm water runoff. Under an agreement with the Board of County Commissioners, Clermont Soil & Water administers most of the required programs. Key accomplishments in 2025 include:

- Approximately 3,485 inspections of water management and sediment control measures (avg 290/month) at 1,394 construction sites
- Investigated 52 potential violations of Clermont County stormwater regulations
- Reviewed 30 plans for 14 new subdivisions
- Investigations of 7 reports of illegal discharges to the storm sewer system
- Upkeep of Clermont County storm sewer maps



Drainage and Erosion Assistance

Technical assistance to property owners dealing with drainage or erosion problems is our most requested service. In 2025, Soil & Water staff conducted 124 site visits providing guidance to property owners on a range of issues such as flooding/standing water/poor drainage on property, storm sewer infrastructure problems, ditch and streambank erosion, and pond repair/construction/management



Public Events & Education

- Gave a presentation to the Ohio Valley Development Council on construction site inspections and the importance of stream buffers
- Partnered with SWCDs in Southwest Ohio to host a post-construction water quality workshop for 48 people
- Gave a presentation to East Side Rotary Club on watersheds, stream buffers, and county's stormwater programs
- Led a rain barrel workshop with 30 attendees
- Partnered with the Regional Storm Water Collaborative and the Cincinnati Zoo to hold the 13th annual Rain Barrel Art Event, during which 40 rain barrels painted by local artists were auctioned to raise money for area conservation.



FINANCIAL REPORT

DISTRICT ACCOUNT

BALANCE ON HAND JANUARY 1, 2025	\$97,098	
INCOME	\$9,805	Resale Income
	\$23	Other - Registrations, Compensation
	\$366	Interest Income
<u>EXPENDITURES</u>	<u>-\$12,733</u>	
BALANCE ON HAND DECEMBER 31, 2025	\$94,559	

SPECIAL ACCOUNT

BALANCE ON HAND JANUARY 1, 2025	\$260,834	
INCOME	\$329,389	County Funding
	\$452,738	State Funding
	\$76,075	Federal Funding
	\$15,000	Solid Waste
	\$211,860	Transfers In
	\$12,785	Other
<u>EXPENDITURES</u>	<u>-\$1,022,769</u>	
BALANCE ON HAND DECEMBER 31, 2025	\$335,912	



CLERMONT EST 1943
SOIL & WATER
Conservation from the Ground Up

1000 Locust St. | P.O. Box 549
Owensville, OH 45160
(513) 732-7075
www.clermontswcd.org