



Clermont SWCD Cooperator of the Year – The Village of Williamsburg

Clermont SWCD is pleased to honor the Village of the Williamsburg with the 2020 Cooperator of the Year award. The recipient of this award is selected each year based on the efforts of an individual, group or organization that demonstrates environmental stewardship and works to protect Clermont County’s natural resources. The Village of Williamsburg has been an exemplary watershed steward by supporting and facilitating efforts to restore and protect the East Fork Little Miami River (EFLMR) with two signature projects.

In 2018, the Village worked with local partners through a grant provided by Ohio EPA to remove a low-head dam and restore a significant segment of the EFLMR. Built in the 1930s as a Works Progress Administration project to supply drinking water, the dam posed a significant threat to public safety and the river ecosystem. The first steps were taken in October 2018, when the dam was notched to slowly release water downstream. As the river level receded, 58 volunteers helped the project team collect and relocate over 700 freshwater mussels that live in the river bed. Some of these were relocated upstream, while others were relocated to Mill Creek in

Cincinnati in an attempt to re-establish a healthy mussel population. Full removal of the dam and stream restoration culminated in November and a ribbon-cutting ceremony celebrated the project completion and hard work contributed by the many project partners.

Clermont SWCD and the Village of Williamsburg are partnering again to complete a second watershed project in the area, which utilizes the 3 acre drinking water reservoir formerly connected to the dam. The plan is to convert the abandoned reservoir into an off-channel wetland that will not only provide quality habitat for fish, migratory birds and other species, but will also absorb flood waters and help to filter pollutants out of the river. Design plans for this project are underway.

On behalf of the Clermont SWCD Board of Supervisors and all of the East Fork Watershed Collaborative partners, we thank the Village of Williamsburg for their dedication to restoring and protecting Clermont County’s resources.

Ribbon-cutting ceremony - (pictured) Clermont County Commissioner David Painter and Mayor Mary Ann Lefker (center); Susan Ellerhorst, Village Administrator (far right); representatives from Clermont SWCD, Clermont County Park District, Wood Environmental, and Ohio EPA.

Our Mission:

“To promote the wise use of our natural resources through service and education”

BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

- David Anspach
- Joe Glassmeyer
- Melody Newman
- Steve Phillips
- Todd Winemiller

NATURAL RESOURCES CONSERVATION SERVICE

- Christina Gates
- Brittany Feichtner

DISTRICT STAFF

- John McManus
- Susie Steffensen
- Becky McClatchey
- Jacob Hahn
- Kat Zelak

Tim Rose & Dave Anspach Elected to Board of Supervisors

In the election held September 26 - October 9, Tim Rose was elected to a first term and Dave Anspach was re-elected for a sixth term on the Soil and Water Conservation District's Board of Supervisors.



Dave Anspach

Tim is a lifetime resident of Clermont County and the third generation Rose to operate Ohio Pike Farms in Bethel. Dave has served on the Board of Supervisors since 2006 and Clermont County Park Board since 1999.

Their terms will begin January 1, 2021 and run through 2023. Congratulations Tim and Dave, and thank you for serving your conservation district!



Tim Rose and Family

Office COVID-19 Update

Clermont SWCD continues to adjust to the changes required to combat COVID-19. At the time of this publication, Clermont SWCD offices and others at the Agricultural Resource Center in the County Fairgrounds remain closed to the public. Staff are rotating the days during which they work in the office, and are available to make site visits any time during regular business hours (M-F, 8 to 4:30). Visits to the District office may be made by appointment only. To schedule an appointment, email our staff or call (513) 732-7075. Upon arrival for your appointment, please come to our walk-up window located to the right side of the main entrance to the Ag Center. Masks should be worn by anyone visiting the office or meeting with staff off-site.

Is Stocking Catfish Beneficial to My Pond?

Channel Catfish is the fish of choice when stocking a small farm pond with catfish and they are great fun to catch. They are a great predator fish because they do not interfere with the management of your other fish, meaning they pair well with other predator fish such as bass. These catfish are bottom feeders that eat insects, invertebrates, fish and sometimes aquatic plants. A pond that is shallow could be muddied as catfish forage the bottom.

Channel catfish can grow up to 15 inches in a small pond within 5 years. You may increase this rate with periodic stocking of bait fish or by feeding fish pellets, which they can easily be trained to eat. They are not self-sustaining in most ponds because they require cavities to spawn. Structures to mimic cavities can be added to the pond or fish can be periodically restocked.

Many people stock their ponds from other sources where fish are harvested in the wild. However, it is recommended to purchase your fish through a certified hatchery to minimize the risk of contaminating your pond with diseased fish, thus ruining your fishery. Check out local hatcheries where fish can be purchased. Bullhead, flathead and blue catfish are either undesirable in small ponds or are not suited to the type/size of environment. Contact our office at 513-732-7075 or our website for additional advice on pond management.



View of East Fork Little Miami River after low-head dam removal in Williamsburg

Steve Phillips Retires from Board of Supervisors



Steve Phillips has been a great asset to the Soil & Water Conservation board, and after 12 years of service, we bid him a fond farewell. He has always reached out for new ideas on farming, and is willing to try different approaches. His interest and passion for sustainable farming brought a new perspective to our board, and by working closely with

NRCS, he has implemented many projects to support these beliefs. He has been a pleasure to work with and we consider him not only a coworker, but a friend. He engages the agricultural community and agencies to learn and also share his experiences in his diverse operation, which has been a great benefit to Clermont SWCD board and employees, and to NRCS. Thank you, Steve... you will be greatly missed!



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YOUR
Art

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Calling All Artists

Want to showcase your art in the Rain Barrel Art Benefit Auction?

Here is How:

1. Visit SaveLocalWaters.org website to sign up and submit your idea for approval by Jan. 14th.
2. Once approved, attend the artist workshop on February 6th at the Cincinnati Zoo.
3. Pick up your rain barrel at end of the workshop
4. Return your painted rain barrel March 27-30 and visit it at the Cincinnati Zoo through April.

Simple as that!

This Rain Barrel Art Project was created to promote the use of rain barrels throughout the Ohio River Valley area via an entertaining yet educational medium.

Visit SaveLocalWaters.org for more information.

Rain Barrel Art Benefit Auction TBD

Dependent on COVID-19 restrictions



2021 Spring Litter Clean-Up Planning Underway

Did you know that while people litter both large and small items at recreational areas, the source of most litter found at parks, beaches and open spaces is pedestrians? (Keep America Beautiful) Clermont SWCD and the Valley View Foundation are once again teaming up to host the annual Spring Litter Clean-Up – an all-volunteer event focused on litter removal and prevention in Clermont County and the East Fork Little Miami River (EFLMR) watershed. We invite students, families, scouts, civic groups, local business and individuals to “Fight Dirty” and participate in this worth-while community event! Details will be posted on the event website: <https://www.springlittercleanup.com/>. Stay tuned!

Calendar

HOA Webinar Series	Dec. 8 6pm
Monthly Board Meeting	Dec. 9 8am
Holiday (Office Closed)	Dec. 25
Holiday (Office Closed)	Jan. 1
Monthly Board Meeting	Jan. 13 8am
Holiday (Office Closed)	Jan. 18
Monthly Board Meeting	Feb. 10 8am

Connecting with Nature When Life Gets Busy

by Kristin Stratman

The weather is getting colder - and somehow, life seems busier than it did before we had to fear catching or spreading a deadly virus. But no matter how chilly the weather is or how busy your schedule gets, it can help to squeeze in some routine time outdoors.

I spoke with Robin Green, a naturalist at the Clermont County Parks District, about the importance of developing a relationship with nature. “It’s really easy to get busy in your life and lose that connection to nature even though, at least in Clermont County, it’s a little easier to find nature,” said Green, “A lot of people can just go out in their yard and find nature pretty easily.”

Time spent in nature can help prevent or even resolve certain health issues. The 2020 Community Health Assessment released by Clermont County Public Health shows that cancer, cardiovascular diseases, and obesity are all public health concerns in Clermont County. A survey described in the report also showed that around a quarter of respondents in the county felt down, depressed, or hopeless and almost a third had symptoms of anxiety. All of these health problems might be alleviated by spending time outside.

In the current pandemic, many of our usual activities, like eating out at restaurants and going to movie theatres, are frowned upon. Spending time outdoors is both healthy and socially-responsible. And you don’t need to go far to get your nature fix: Clermont County is home to more than sixty greenspaces, parks, and nature preserves. Call up a friend to go on a socially-distanced nature hike or get a head start on your New Year’s fitness resolution. Green also suggests finding a “sit spot”, an outdoor location where you return to and observe your surroundings for a set period of time, when you need some peace in your life.

“What I find is you get really meditative,” says Green, “you start noticing things about nature and feeling connected just spending that short time in that spot.” No matter how you decide to bring nature into your life, your body and mind will thank you.

Kristin Stratman, a freelance journalist and Clermont County native, is currently pursuing her Master’s Degree in Biology through Miami University’s Project Dragonfly Program.



*Fair Oak Park, November 2020
from Kristin Stratman*

Recycle Your Holiday Lights
November 1 - February 1

Shor Park
○ 4659 Tealtown Road, Milford, OH 45150

Pierce Township Administrative Office
○ 950 Locust Corner Road, Cincinnati, Ohio 45245

Clermont County Soil & Water Conservation District
○ 1000 Locust St, Owensville, OH 45160

Clermont County Water Resources
○ 4400 Haskell Lane, Batavia, OH 45103

Cincinnati Nature Center
○ 4949 Tealtown Road, Milford, OH 45150

in partnership with

CohenUSA.com/lights



Recycle Those Old Christmas Lights

As you’re decorating for the holiday season, take advantage of our free light recycling program for any broken or unused light strands. Please place lights only in marked bins, no pre-lit trees or wreaths. All proceeds from recycled lights will benefit the Clermont County Park District.



Thanks to all our Cooperators for all the Conservation Best Management Practices Installed this Year

Doug Auxier	Nutrient Management Cover Crops	Michelle McClain	Critical Area Planting Mulching, Brush Management, Forage Planting
Thomas Borchers	Nutrient Management	James Metzger	Forest Stand Improvement (3)
Lynn Buede	Grasslands Initiative	Jeremy Myers	Nutrient Management
David Church	Grasslands Initiative	Theresa Napier	Nutrient Mgt. Plan
Cornwell Family Partnership	Nutrient Mgt.(4), AgChem Handling Facility, Access Road	John Stahl	Cover Crops (2)
E. Wiederhold Farms LLC.	Nutrient Management	Robert Stahl	Nutrient Management, Cover Crops
Jennifer Ebbing	Heavy Use Protection, Underground Outlet	Jason Tolliver	Brush Management (2), Herb. Weed Control, Tree/Shrub Estab., Forest Stand Improvement
Jeannette Garrison	Heavy Use Protection	Collander S. Turner	Conservation Cover
Louise Gartner	High Tunnel (3), Roof Runoff Structure (2), Subsurface Drain	Varick Family Trust	Brush Management (3), Herb. Weed Treatment
Rebecca Geiger	Conservation Cover (2)	David Werring	Nutrient Mgt (2)
Charles Grant	Nutrient Management	Wolfer Farms	Cover Crops (3)
Jason Grant	Nutrient Mgt. (2)		
James Grosnickle	Nutrient Management		
Ted Hollaender	Nutrient Management Cover Crops		
John Johnson	Nutrient Mgt. Plan		
Aaron Knorr	Brush Management (3)		
L&L Farm Holdings LLC	Roof and Cover, Livestock Pipeline, Prescribed Grazing, Access Road, Heavy Use Protection, Watering Facility, Underground Outlet, Waste Storage Facility		
League for Animal Welfare	Brush Management		
James Liming	Nutrient Mgt. Plan, Fence, Access Road		
Christopher Lockey	Brush Management Herb. Weed Control, Tree/Site Preparation		

(x)- Number of practices completed



Agriculture Chemical Handling Facility to safely store, mix, load and clean-up chemicals while protecting water quality.

If your address is incorrect or you would like to be added / removed from our mailing list, please contact us at (513) 732-7075.

All NRCS / SWCD programs and services are offered on a non-discriminatory basis without regard to race, color, national origin, gender, religion, age, disability, political beliefs, sexual orientation and marital or family status.

Clermont Soil and Water Conservation District
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Phone: 513-732-7075
www.clermontswcd.org
<http://www.facebook.com/clermontswcd>
<http://www.twitter.com/clermontswcd>

Williamsburg Wetland Restoration Project Planned

As nutrient-driven harmful algal blooms continue to occur each year on East Fork Lake, Clermont SWCD remains focused on efforts to reduce the amount of nitrogen and phosphorus entering the lake. Recently, the District has been awarded four separate grants totaling \$518,950 to construct nutrient removal wetland treatment systems, which studies have shown to be extremely efficient in removing these nutrients. Two grants were provided by the US Fish and Wildlife Service, and individual grants were awarded by the Duke Energy Foundation and the Ohio Department of Natural Resources' H2Ohio program

Clermont SWCD will construct the first wetland treatment system at the site of the old Williamsburg reservoir, which borders the East Fork Little Miami River just upstream of the village. In 2018, Clermont SWCD partnered with Williamsburg to remove the old low-head dam and drain the 3-acre reservoir which was no longer used by the village as a source of drinking water. Under this project, modifications will be made to the floodplain and reservoir which will allow water from the East Fork to fill the reservoir during high flows. The water will then drain slowly from the reservoir into the constructed wetland,

where sediment and nutrients will settle out before the filtered water re-enters the river. Clermont County's Office of Environmental Quality will monitor the water quality as it enters and leaves the wetland to assess the efficiency of the system. In addition to the expected water quality benefits, the wetland will also provide quality habitat for native fish, mussels, migratory birds and other wildlife.

The project is currently in the design phase and we hope to begin construction in the fall of 2021. Watch our website and Facebook page for updates on this exciting project.



Mussel Relocation Event – pictured: Mayor Mary Ann Lefker; Warren High, Principal Ecologist; Thomas Lefker; Bennett Kottler, Mill Creek Alliance