Board of Supervisors

After 12 years of service to Clermont SWCD, Steve Phillips retired from the Board of Supervisors at the end of 2020. The District benefitted greatly from Steve’s knowledge and his passion for sustainable farming. Working with Steve was a pleasure, and he’ll be greatly missed.

Dave Anspach was re-elected to a sixth term commencing in 2021, and Tim Rose was elected to fill Steve’s position. Tim is a lifetime resident of Clermont County and the third generation Rose to operate Ohio Pike Farms in Bethel.

NRCS Office Changes

The NRCS office for Clermont and Brown County welcomed a completely new staff in 2020. Christina Gates became the District Conservationist after working with Indiana NRCS for 3½ years and prior to that, with Shelby County SWCD for 2½ years. Brittany Feichtner joined the NRCS office in spring as the new Soil Conservationist. Brittany worked as a land manager and educator for a park district in Carmel, Indiana, and like Christina, is a graduate of Purdue University.
Conservation Practices
In 2020, the following scheduled conservation practices were put in place:
- 2,244 acres of cover crops planted
- 3 Nutrient Management Plans Written
- 3,359 acres of nutrient management
- 4,874 sq. ft. heavy use area protection
- 13.5 acres brush management
- 33 acres herbaceous weed control
- 2 high tunnels totaling 4,255 sq. ft. growing space
- Over 21 acres of pollinator habitat
- 2,250 feet fencing
- 450 access road
- 1 underground outlet

SWCD staff also assisted NRCS with outreach by visiting new producers and assisting with planning and technical support.

Winter Ag Workshop / Southwest Ohio Ag Conservation Menu
In February, Clermont SWCD and the East Fork Watershed Collaborative hosted a Winter Ag Workshop at Southern State College in Mt. Orab, where the Southwest Ohio Agricultural Conservation Menu (SOACM) website was presented for the first time to 41 attendees. The website – www.soacm.com – was created under an Ohio Environmental Education Fund grant as a “one stop shop” for conservation program needs. The SOACM is designed to help local producers and landowners find information, technical assistance and programs related to conservation practices. The website also includes a Farmer Forum where farmers can post questions, share information and discuss local issues.

2020 “Summer” Litter Clean-up
Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the 2020 Spring Litter Cleanup was re-scheduled as a virtual, ‘Do-It-Yourself’ event during the month of July. Volunteers were encouraged to find nearby areas, streams and parks in need of litter removal. Over 115 people registered to participate. SWCD staff also chipped in to help, joining the Clermont County Office of Environmental Quality in cleaning up a section of bank on East Fork Lake.

Drainage & Erosion Assistance
Clermont County landowners commonly request technical assistance from SWCD staff with drainage or erosion problems on private property. In 2020, staff conducted 131 site visits, providing guidance to property owners on a range of issues such as flooding, standing water/poor drainage, storm sewer infrastructure problems, ditch and streambank erosion, and pond repair/construction/management.
Stormwater Programs

Urban Storm Water Education
As members of SaveLocalWaters.org, Clermont SWCD helped organize two virtual training events. In July, the Collaborative hosted a webinar for the development community on creating effective storm water pollution plans. In December, to replace the annual Storm Water Management Field Day that was cancelled as the result of the pandemic, Save Local Waters provided a series of virtual workshops for homeowner association members that focused on storm water basin management, rain gardens and native plantings, composting, and alternative energy sources. Clermont SWCD also organized a workshop in the fall for local municipalities and townships on performing tree inventories and developing urban forestry plans.

Storm Water Basin Inspections
Under an agreement with the Board of County Commissioners, Clermont SWCD inspects storm water management practices such as detention basins after construction has been completed. If issues are noted during our inspections, we inform those responsible for maintenance and provide guidance on how to correct the problems. In 2020, staff inspected 175 storm water basins, identifying issues in 21 of these.

Illicit Discharge Inspection & Elimination
Clermont SWCD is responsible for identifying and eliminating illicit discharges to the county’s storm sewer system. In 2020, staff inspected 374 locations, finding 7 illicit discharges, including illegal dumping of restaurant grease, fuel oil, asphalt sealer and concrete slurry.

East Fork Watershed

Watershed Plan Development
Clermont SWCD continues to update watershed management plans for different sections of the East Fork Little Miami River watershed. The revised plans include improved data and information along with recommendations for restoration and protection. In 2020, staff completed watershed plans for the Glady Creek and Solomon Run subwatersheds, both of which are located upstream of East Fork Lake in parts of Clermont, Brown, Clinton and Highland Counties. Upon completion of the plans, NRCS placed these watersheds in the National Water Quality Initiative program, under which dedicated funding will be provide for three years to producers in these watersheds for a wide range of conservation practices.

Williamsburg Nutrient Removal Wetland
In 2020, Clermont SWCD received additional grants from Duke Energy, US Fish & Wildlife Service and the H2Ohio program to construct a nutrient removal wetland at the site of the old Williamsburg reservoir. The project is currently in the design phase. Once completed, the wetland system will remove nitrogen and phosphorus from the East Fork Little Miami River, which in turn will help control harmful algal blooms in East Fork Lake.

The Village of Williamsburg has been an exemplary watershed steward, supporting and facilitating efforts to restore and protect the East Fork for many years. In appreciation of our partnership, Clermont SWCD was pleased to present the Village of Williamsburg with its 2020 Cooperator of the Year award.
Education Programs
SWCD’s education programs experienced some extraordinary changes and challenges in 2020. Judy Krebs, our education coordinator for 31 years, retired in January. In May, we welcomed Kat Zelak as our new education coordinator. With all in-school programs cancelled due to the pandemic, Kat focused on developing new curriculum and on-line resources, including the Southwest Ohio Education Resources web site, where teachers can download virtual presentations developed by educators with Butler, Clermont, Hamilton and Warren SWCDs.

Plant Sale
Despite the pandemic, Clermont SWCD’s annual conservation plant sale was a big success. In 2020, 127 orders were taken for 1,881 tree seedlings and perennial plants to enhance their home landscaping, create pollinator habitat, and develop small areas of reforestation. 5 rain barrels were also sold.

Clermont SWCD 2020 Financial Report
January 1, 2020 through December 31, 2020

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<td>Ending Balance Dec. 31, 2020:</td>
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