



Conservation Notes

Summer 2009

"Local leadership for soil and water conservation"

Newsletter for the

Medina County Soil & Water Conservation District

You are invited to join us for our

65th Annual Meeting

August 22, 2009

Buffalo Creek Retreat
8780 Hubbard Valley Road, Seville

Agenda

- 5—6:30 voting for 2 supervisors
- 6-7 Pork chop dinner by Port-a-Cook
- 7—8 Program and awards
- 8:00 Speaker, Joe Tait
- 9:00 Door prizes and raffle winners



Raffle
\$5 for six tickets or
\$1 for one ticket
3 conservation items to choose from



Joe Tait
The voice of the Cavaliers

A look inside

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65th Annual Meeting Ticket Reservations

August 22, 2009—5:00pm
Buffalo Creek Retreat, Seville

Name: (please print) _____

Address _____

Phone number: _____

\$10 ____ adult \$5 ____ children \$ ____ enclosed

Make check payable to **MCSWCD** and mail to our office before August 14.
Medina County SWCD, 6090 Wedgewood Road, Medina, Ohio 44256
Tickets will be held at the door.

Board of Supervisors

Steve Fulton, Chairman
Debbie Russell, Vice Chairman
Jim Kamps, Secretary
Frank Ehrman, Treasurer
Bill Jordan, Fiscal Agent

District Staff

Jeff Van Loon, District Manager
Janet Kuthe, Administrative Assistant
Jim Dieter, District Technician
Beth Schnabel, Education Specialist
Gary Norcia, Watershed Coordinator

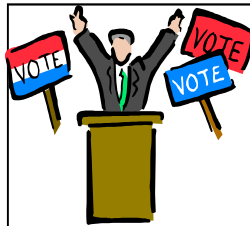
NRCS Staff

Dave Kopchak
District Conservationist
USDA-NRCS
330-722-2628, ext.110
dave.kopchak@oh.usda.gov

Monthly Board Meetings held

The Board of Supervisors hold a monthly meeting on the third Tuesday of each month at 6090 Wedgewood Road. The meetings commence at 1:30 p.m. and the public is welcome to attend.

Please notify the office one week prior to the meeting at 330.722.2628 ext. 3 for information or to be put on the agenda.



To vote for supervisor you must be at least 18 years of age and reside in Medina County or own land in Medina County.

You can vote the night of the meeting
From 5:00 to 6:30 at Buffalo Creek Retreat
8780 Hubbard Valley Road, Seville

Or Stop in the office between August 1 and Friday, August 21, 2009 between 8:00am to 4:30pm to cast your vote.

Or ... by requesting an absentee ballot request form between August 1 and August 18. Each absentee ballot request form must be signed by the person requesting the ballot.

M e e t o u r ‘ 0 9 S u p e r v i s o r C a n d i d a t e s



Ken Barco, York Township: Ken has been part of the family owned Barco Sons, Inc. since 1978. They wholesale indoor and outdoor floral products for all of Northeast Ohio. They have 235,000 sq. ft. of greenhouses on 43 acres with 2 irrigation ponds and 1 water retention pond. Ken serves on the Buckeye school board, current Farm Bureau president, and a past member of Erhart Fire Department for 20 years. He and his wife Kathleen have 2 grown children, Brian and Kate. Brian is part of the 4th generation to work in the business. Kate is planning a career in television news production. Ken says he likes our education program.



Steve Fulton, Guilford Township: Steve, along with his family and sister, farm 600 acres on Maple Valley Farm. Together they milk 140 dairy cows, 100 replacement heifers, and 50 beef cattle a year. As an active farmer for the past thirty nine years, he has utilized filter strips, no-till, chisel plowing, grassed waterways, a manure storage and utilization system, and systematic tiling. In 2005-06, with the help of EQIP funds, they were able to address a feedlot runoff problem. Steve also assists with maple syrup production where 1600 taps generate enough raw sap for 300-400 gallons of syrup per season. Steve and his wife Beth have four children. He is a Farm Bureau member and has been supervisor since 1992, currently serving as Chairman. He says, "I really enjoy using conservation practices on the land and helping others do the same."



Celia Kruggel, Litchfield Township: Celia and her husband John have 3 children and 8 grandchildren. Celia has lived her whole life in Medina County and she currently helps operate the 600+ acre dairy farm with her basic duty is taking care of the calves. She is currently a trustee for Lorain Medina Rural Electric, a member of Litchfield Baptist Church, Litchfield Town Bank, Farm Bureau. She has served as an associate SWCD Board member for the past 7 years. She has been a 4-H advisor, a teacher, member of the Buckeye School Board of Education, Litchfield Volunteer Fire & Rescue Department firefighter and EMT and the Litchfield Cemetery and Park Association.

25 year milestone reached

Janet Kuthe, Administrative Assistant, has served the office faithfully for 25 years. She has served well in her position at three different office locations. Her recollections of past Supervisors, staff members and many landowners are well etched in her mind. Probably the most memorable was John Hocker former District Conservationist.

Janet is famous for her tree packet program, annual meeting activities, board business, excellent state audits and greeting everyone on the phone and in the office.



Bob Hendershot, NRCS state grazing specialist

Equine twilight pasture walk held

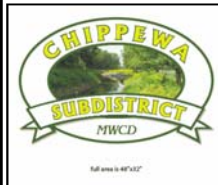
45 people braved rainy weather to attend the June 17th twilight event held at the Joyce Tretow horse farm. There were presentations provided by Bob Hendershot, state grazing specialist for USDA-NRCS and Mike Molnar, agronomist for Seville Town and Country. Topics included soils, nutrient management, using forages versus hay, use of paddocks, fences, weeds and control. We want to thank Joyce for welcoming everyone to her farm.

Naturalizing your pond clinic



Jim Dieter, District Technician

60 people attended an evening outdoor event May 12 with presentations by the District staff. Also helping were, Paul Saldutte, Medina Co. Park District, Mike Miller, OSU Extension. We utilized 2 neighboring ponds, one at the building here which is a water quality retention pond, and the other adjoining Park reptile and amphibian pond.



Chippewa Subdistrict office relocates

The Chippewa Subdistrict office has moved from near the county park office headquarters to Guilford Township next to Buffalo Creek Retreat at 8780-B Hubbard Valley Road, Seville.

The Chippewa office is a sub-district of the Muskingum Watershed Conservancy District consisting of 33 miles of channel improvements for flood control, 3 wet pool dams and 5 dry dams for flood control protecting farmers, businesses and communities in parts of southern Medina County, northeast Wayne County and a small portion of Summit County.

Chippewa Watershed Project Coordinator Debbie Russell is responsible for implementing maintenance work on the dams and channels that were constructed in 1969 through 1980, many of which need attention to perform up to current standards.

All lands adjoining the channel improvements are held as easement areas along the channel and extend out 100 or 150 feet from the top of the bank depending on the bottom width of the channel.

For further information about the Chippewa Subdistrict, call 330-769-2781.

Balanced Growth Project endorsed

This three-year project culminated in state endorsement by the Ohio Lake Erie Commission on June 3 for the Upper West Branch Rocky River Watershed. Medina County communities involved are Brunswick City, Hinckley Twp., Lafayette Twp., Medina City, Medina Twp., Montville Twp., Sharon Twp. and Medina County Commissioners.



As a result of state endorsement, those communities are now eligible for state incentives for priority development areas, priority conservation areas and priority agricultural areas as designated in each jurisdiction.

Incentives can come in the form of grant dollars, lower interest rates on loans, grant application points, access to state agency technical personnel and more yet to be determined.

A Watershed Planning Partnership work group consisting of volunteers from the development sector, the conservation sector, the agricultural sector and the county infrastructure agencies established the criteria for the priority areas and were supported by the 8 supporting jurisdictions.

The future of the Balanced Growth Program will evolve as communities attempt to apply for state funded projects.

P l e a s e v o t e !

Commissioners adopt updated Erosion and Sedimentation Regulations

Updated Sediment Regulations and Standards for earth disturbing activities in Medina County were approved by the Medina County Commissioners June 22. The requirements will be administered by the Medina County Engineers office. The original rules were adopted in the mid-1980's. The SWCD appreciates having the counties updated rules in place. Agricultural earth disturbing activities are exempt. However, other rules for excessive agricultural erosion and sedimentation apply through the Medina SWCD office.



Sign up continues for folks living in or who own land in the Rocky River watershed and Black River watershed in Medina County in the Lake Erie Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP). Landowners with certain cropping histories can be eligible for annual payments for converting cropland or marginal pasture land along stream corridors or ditches into grassed buffers or tree plantings for 15 years. These areas are sometimes chronic wet or flooding areas for farmers or landowners and cause suppressed crop yields more often than not. Payments are based on soil types, acres involved, and practices put in.

The State of Ohio offers bonus payments for tree planting practices to encourage and reward those applicants who install those practices. The Medina SWCD administers the State bonus payments.

The program signups are slated to end in 2010 unless congress extends the signup period. But the payments will not end because they are contracts with USDA and the District.

If you are interested or just want more information, please contact Robin Smith at the Farm Service Agency, 330.722.2628 ext 100.

Kruggel Farms win award

We extend our congratulations to the Kruggel Farm family for being recipients of a *Livestock Farmer Neighbor of the Year* award from Farm Bureau. Kruggel's have been recognized numerous times for their innovative conservation practices and use of no-till, filter strips and manure management plan. The Farm actively engages and educates both children and adults and a wide variety of groups through a number of community activities and on-farm events.

Time to reseed or renovate a pasture?

Jim Dieter, District Technician

We've all seen it. The grass is thin or nonexistent, so I must need to plant some seed, right? It might pay to ask why there isn't much grass. Is the field simply overgrazed, too many animals on the field for too long? A new seeding won't have a chance where your livestock have constant access to a field that is too small for the number of animals that you have. Is it low fertility soils? Expensive seed can be wasted where fertility and soil pH are not where they need to be.

To renovate a pasture you need to answer several questions. Most important: what do I expect out of my pasture? Do I want to grow feed to reduce the amount of hay I have to feed, or do I just have an exercise lot? Do I have current soil tests? What types of plants are growing in the pasture, including the weeds? What are the soil conditions of the pasture along with drainage problems?

If you want to grow feed for your livestock, investing in pasture forages would be recommended. If you just want something green to grow, let nature take its course by allowing existing plants to grow and you can mow the plants to a uniform height before they go to seed, to control weeds.

The first step in renovating a pasture is to soil test. There are many qualified labs that can test your soil for a nominal fee. Our office or OSU Extension can provide a list of laboratories for you. You'll need to state what forages you are trying to grow, so that you receive the correct type of recommendation from the agronomist.

Deciding on what mixture of forages you want to plant is next. Seeding new varieties of forages can help to increase pasture production and palatability. There have been improvements in pasture forages over the years and now is the time to introduce them into the pasture system. Talk with your local seed representative about pasture mixes, or you can call the office for alternative mixes. In any case I would recommend that any mixture include up to 30% legume to reduce your nitrogen inputs for productivity. The time of the year to seed is in the spring (March-May) or late summer/fall (August-Sept).

Now that you have your soil test back you can make any adjustment to the soil fertility at this time by mixing in the additional nutrients and lime into the top layer of soil. It is best to apply lime separately, and as far in advance of seeding as possible. When it's time to seed, don't plant too deep! Many stands' failure can be traced back to planting the forage seed too deep. Seed should be planted about ¼ inch deep. It is better to err on the side of planting shallower rather than deeper. "Seed to soil contact" is most important. Firming the ground with a roller or cultipacker prior and after planting will help.

Once seeding has been made it usually takes 6 to 8 weeks for the forage to become established. At that time, if ground conditions permit you may want to lightly graze the new pasture. It is most important to go into winter with at least 4 to 6 inches of growth, then maintain a good pasture rotation to help the new forage in years to come. Resting the pasture, by keeping the livestock out, is the key.

Continued on page 5

Why Would You Consider Management Intensive Grazing?

by Beth Kruprzak, NRCS Grassland Conservationist, Hopedale, OH

Many of you have seen them - farms split into paddocks where the animals are rotated each week, every three days, once a day, or even every 12 hours. Some of you may wonder why? Why go to all of that hassle? Is it really worthwhile?

I suppose to some, all of those division fences and dealing with rotating livestock seems like a lot of unnecessary work. Your livestock rotate themselves through their large pasture just fine you may think. They're in one area in the morning and they work their way around the field by evening. Isn't that the same thing with less work on your part?

The answer is no – it is not the same at all. You see, most livestock species' goal in life is to eat and when they eat, they prefer to eat the best tasting young forages in the pasture. Livestock live day to day without planning ahead to ensure that they will have a meal to eat tomorrow, so they will eat that young tasty forage over and over. Every time it grows back a little bit, they will eat that fresh new growth until they have depleted the plants' energy supply in the roots and eventually the plants die out. This leaves you with either a pasture full of undesirable plants or with the entire field grazed down to almost nothing.

This is where dividing your pasture into paddocks and some management from you comes in. As we just discussed, when left to manage themselves, livestock will graze out the good species of forages in your pasture or graze the whole pasture down until it resembles indoor/outdoor carpet. Management is necessary to prevent these problems.

I sometimes like to compare pasture management to how you manage your hayfield. You wouldn't dream of mowing your hayfield every day, would you? You make one cutting of hay and then you give the field time to rest, recover, and regrow before harvesting another cutting from that field. Similar principles apply to grazing. You don't want to manage a pasture exactly like a hayfield, but like a hayfield, your pasture needs time to rest and regrow between grazing periods in order to be productive.

By managing your pasture fields through divisions and rotating livestock, you allow the pasture to recover and regrow, providing additional feed for your livestock. By producing more grass on the same acreage, you are essentially saving yourself money. More grass for the livestock to eat for a longer period of time means less hay that you have to bale yourself or buy to feed them. This will save you money in the long run.

It may seem time consuming to have to go out and move your livestock from one paddock to another. As someone who has experience with this, it really does not take much time at all. Once you have the paddock divisions built, all that is involved is opening and closing a gate or stepping in a few temporary posts and running a poly-wire division across a paddock. It may take you

anywhere from 5 minutes to about 30 minutes at the most. Often if you take the time to set up some division fences one evening when you can afford to spend the time, it will leave you with all 5 minute moves the rest of the week. The livestock quickly learn that moving means fresh grass, so they normally are very cooperative.

A major advantage of moving your animals on a regular basis is the opportunity to interact with them. Your livestock get used to your presence and it becomes easier to work with them should a problem arise. It also gives you an opportunity to keep an eye on livestock health. If you don't spend much time with your livestock, often you may not catch a problem until it is too late; whereas, being with your animals once a week or even more often, you will tend to notice a health problem sooner and be able to treat it.

Management intensive grazing means producing more and higher quality forages for your livestock, reducing your need to bale or buy as much hay, and having the opportunity to spend more time with your livestock to monitor their health more closely. A small investment of your time and energy will net you more profit from your livestock venture, through better production, money saved from reduced hay costs, and money saved from a decrease in your vet bills. So, maybe a better question would be why wouldn't you consider Management intensive Grazing?

(for more information, please contact Dave Kopchak, 330-722-2628, ext.110)



Pasture seeding continued from page 4

Good pasture management is important now. Most forages should be grazed **no closer** than 3 inches, with a rest period long enough to allow the grass to grow back to 8 to 10 inches before being grazed again (usually 21 to 28 days).

If you have any question on pasture renovation please feel free to call the office for additional information.

**Medina County Soil & Water
Conservation District**

6090 Wedgewood Road
Medina, Ohio 44256
330.722.2628 ext. 3
www.medinaswcd.org

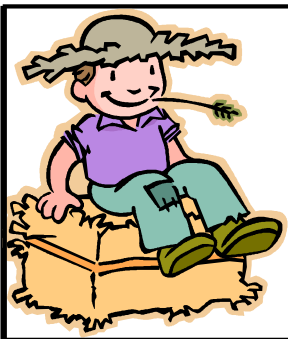
**Annual Meeting
August 22, 2009**

Non-Profit
Organization

U.S. Postage
PAID

Medina, Ohio
Permit 62

Address correction requested



Hay Show

Remember to pick out your best machine tied bales of hay for the fair this year. Entries can be 1st, 2nd or 3rd cutting of alfalfa, mixed, grass, or

clover hay or enter the haylage/baleage/silage class.

This event is open to juniors (15 years of age or younger) as well as adults.

Don't forget to enter the small grain class, too— Last year's corn or soybeans, or this year's wheat.

Or maybe you think you have the tallest corn stalk?

We want the Ag Building at the fair packed with entries this year.

**Rain barrels
now available**

Two local vendors are now offering rain barrels.

**Darren Bingham
330-421-3932 , Medina
(barrel is white)**



Their prices are in the \$65-\$75 range. Please contact them directly to arrange your orders.



**Hinckley Boy Scout
Troop 520
216-220-1549
(barrel is blue)**