



# CONSERVATION TRAILS

“Follow the Trail of Natural Resource Conservation”

**Wayne Soil & Water Conservation District**

## Awards Presented at 64th Annual Meeting

The 2011 Conservation Farm Award was presented to the Virgil Gasser Family Farm. The Gasser Farm is a 500



Lois & Virgil Gasser, Virgil Gasser & Family  
2011 Conservation Farm Award

head Holstein dairy in Canaan Township. Virgil farms with his sons, Aaron, Steve, David, and Nathan, and his nephew Adam. The Gassers follow conservation and comprehensive

nutrient management plans. They also farm 1,400 acres which include a rotation of corn, soybeans, wheat and alfalfa using no-till and mulch-till methods. They have installed several grassed waterways and a 160-foot diameter concrete manure storage tank, the first circular tank with a ramp installed in Ohio.

Ray and Allyson Leisy received the Conservation Education Award. Both are involved in recycling and



Allyson & Ray Leisy

environmental issues in Wayne County. Ray is the Wayne County Juvenile judge and Allyson is the assistant manager for the Gleaner Antique store in Ashland. They began recycling four years ago

soliciting funds for recycling barrels, then began recycling at downtown Wooster events with help of juveniles from the Juvenile Court. Three years ago they began a recycling program at the Wayne County Fair. With help from other volunteers, they have diverted 4-5 tons of trash per year from the landfill.

John Kessler, Deputy chief of the Ohio Department of Natural Resource's Division of Soil and Water

Resources, thanked David Rohrer for twenty-five years of dedicated service to the Wayne Soil and Water Conservation District. Velda, his wife, was also recognized for twenty-five years of service with the Wayne SWCD Auxiliary.



David & Velda Rohrer

Gerald Payn, Wooster, OH, was the speaker for the evening. He presented a program representing Abraham Lincoln. Mr. Payn spoke of the Civil War, the Whitehouse, and what agriculture was like during that time period.

Fred Myers, Dalton was re-elected as Wayne Soil and Water Conservation District Supervisor.



### Thank You to Annual Meeting Donors

The Wayne SWCD would like to thank the following donors for their contribution to our Annual Meeting.

- Pine Tree Barn - The J. M. Smucker Co.
- Green Thumb—Maurer Farms
- Tyler Grain & Fertilizer Co. Inc.

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# Winter Green Tips

By Kelly Riley

In the spirit of giving, this Holiday season, I thought I'd share some green ideas for those last minute shoppers, gift givers, or even for future shoppers. Also, after the Holidays are over, consider the environment with all of your holiday "left-over's"!

## 3R's

One of the easiest things you can do is to use a re-usable cloth bag or tote whenever you go shopping. The re-usable bags hold more, are stronger, and very affordable! Worldwide, plastic bag usage is out of control, with consumption rates between 500 billion and 1 trillion each year! Less than 1% of the plastic bags get recycled, that means they either take up landfill space, or end up as litter, and pollution. Sadly, it is estimated that an average family of 4 will use 1,460 plastic bags a year. Plastic bags are also the 2<sup>nd</sup> most common type of ocean refuse, after cigarette butts. So, please remember the three R's: **Reduce, Reuse and Recycle**. Reduce the number of plastic bags you acquire, and reuse or recycle the ones you currently have. It may take some time... to become a habit for you to use the reusable bags. I know I had to run back out to my vehicle more than once when I went into the store, and forgot my bags! But now, it's a habit. To help you out, start with always keeping the bags in your vehicle(s). Then remember to take them with you... After a while, you will remember them, it will be a habit. These reusable bags also make wonderful gifts, and can be a nice "gift wrap".

## Leftover's

I'm not going to debate the pros and cons of using real or artificial trees. What I care about is what is done with the "real" trees after Christmas. So, the best environmentally friendly route would be to purchase and use a balled ever-green, and then plant it after the holidays. Realizing not everyone does that, you should have a "green" plan for your leftover ever-green. Cut trees can be recycled, that is;

shredded and mulched. Many places provide this free service, as long as the tree is free of decorations and doesn't have tinsel on it. In Wayne County, Paradise Lawn Care will take trees and yard waste, FMI call them at 330-669-3141. To find out where you can locally take your cut Christmas tree, try the website <http://earth911.com>. You can also use your cut tree to enhance wildlife habitat in your yard, or donate it to a landowner. Birds, rabbits, and other wildlife will seek shelter in the winter with brush and downed trees. Another idea is to put an "anchor" or weight on the tree, and put it into a pond. My parents would take our friends tree's and do that to our pond. The branches will become great habitat and a safe haven for young fish and other aquatic life that need protection. This can be done even if a pond is frozen over, just place the weighted tree on it and wait for the thaw, and soon the tree will sink & become aquatic shelter!



With a little fore-thought and effort, there are many small things we can all do that together can make a big difference. Other green tips include sending an electronic card, instead of mailing one, or reusing old ones for crafts or gift tags. Also consider using LED lights and timers for lighting decorations, composting food scraps, using washable dinner ware or compostable type cups, utensils and plates, and giving "green" gifts. One last thing, don't forget the wildlife and our feathered friends, these harsh winters can be deadly to anything outside. Bird feeders and food plots may help keep many creatures alive this season! May everyone have a very happy and "green" winter!

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## Prepare Your Rain Barrel for the Cold !

It's that time of the year when the weather is changing and there is a chill in the air. For those of you who bought rain barrels from the district the past two years, it is time to winterize your rain barrel.



Your rain barrel will last for many years, if it is treated right! Now is the time to winterize it so it will be in good shape to help store rain water this spring, and water your flowers in the summer. Begin by unhooking your barrel,

and cleaning out any sediment that has collected in the bottom. If possible, store the barrel inside. If that's not an option, turn your barrel up side down and place a large rock or two on the top to keep it from blowing away. Be sure to re-attach your downspout so any water coming from your roof flows out and away from your house. The final step? Enjoy the beauty of the winter, and look forward to spring, when you can hook your barrel back up in time for the spring rains!

## Receive Your Newsletter by Email

If you would like to switch from the mailed newsletter to the emailed newsletter, email us at [info@wayneswcd.org](mailto:info@wayneswcd.org)  
We will email the next Newsletter to you.  
Thanks for helping us conserve!

# Killbuck Creek Watershed Quality Study - Summary

by Rob Kastner

A Water Quality Study for the Killbuck Creek Watershed was conducted by the Ohio EPA in 2009 and released to the public in June of this year. The watershed extends into Medina, Wayne, Holmes and Coshocton County, where it discharges into the Walhonding River. In addition to the Killbuck Creek, the Killbuck Watershed consists of the Apple Creek, Salt Creek, Clear Creek, Cedar Run, Shreve Creek and their tributaries in Wayne County – covering about half of the land in Wayne County. The watershed includes the largest remaining wetland in Ohio, outside the Lake Erie coastal region, which stretches from south of Wooster into Holmes County. This wetland includes the 5,671 acre public hunting and fishing area – the Killbuck Marsh Wildlife Area. According to the study, the makeup of the watershed in Wayne County is approximately 20% Forest land and 60% Farmland, with the remainder being developed.

Stream samples were taken at 36 locations in Wayne County, primarily at points where the waterways crossed under roads for ease of access. The samples were tested for aquatic life indices, water chemistry parameters, bacteria and dissolved oxygen. Fish were also inventoried at most sampling locations. All but seven sampling stations in Wayne County achieved full aquatic life use attainment

status, which is based on criteria measuring fish and macro-invertebrate response to stream environment. The report indicated the causes for stations receiving a partial attainment status were channelization and dam impoundments on the east side of Wooster, habitat alterations and sedimentation/siltation due to channelization and elevated nitrate/nitrite levels from cattle accessing the stream and municipal wastewater treatment plants (WWTP's) in the south and southwest portions of the County. As a result of the positive sample results, the study recommends elevating the use designation status of several streams in Wayne County. Overall the study was positive with regards to the water quality in the Killbuck Watershed in Wayne County; however, there is some room for improvement. Recommendations in the study included, improving riparian buffers, adhering to proper fertilizer and pesticide application, seeking alternatives to channelization when cleaning streams and fencing cattle out of streams. Recommended urban improvements include improvements to WWTP's, managing failing septic systems and implementing storm water management practices during and after construction activities. This article only summarizes a portion of the study. The complete study is available online at <http://www.epa.ohio.gov/dsw/tmdl/>

## USDA Announces Ranking Dates for Conservation Initiatives

by John Knapp

USDA has announced the ranking dates for the On-Farm Energy, Organic, and Seasonal High Tunnel initiatives. All three initiatives offer technical and financial assistance through the Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP).

NRCS accepts applications for financial assistance on a continuous basis throughout the year. There will be three ranking periods for the initiatives ending on February 3, March 30 and June 1, 2012. At the end of a ranking period, NRCS ranks all submitted proposals for funding consideration. NRCS will notify all applicants of the results of the rankings and begin developing contracts with selected applicants.

**On-Farm Energy Initiative:** NRCS and producers develop Agricultural Energy Management Plans (AgEMP) or farm energy audits that assess energy consumption on an operation. NRCS then uses audit data to develop energy conservation recommendations. Each AgEMP has a landscape component that assesses equipment and farming processes and a farm headquarters component that assesses power

usage and efficiencies in livestock buildings, grain handling operations, and similar facilities to support the farm operation.

**Organic Initiative:** NRCS helps certified organic growers and producers working to achieve organic certification install conservation practices for organic production. New for fiscal year 2012, applicants will be evaluated continuously during the ranking periods. Applications meeting or exceeding a threshold score may be approved for an EQIP contract before the end of the ranking period. This new scoring process allows organic producers to implement conservation practices in a timely manner.

**Seasonal High Tunnel Pilot Initiative:** NRCS helps producers plan and implement high tunnels, steel-framed, polyethylene-covered structures that extend growing seasons in an environmentally safe manner. High tunnel benefits include better plant and soil quality, fewer nutrients and pesticides in the environment, and better air quality due to fewer vehicles being needed to transport crops.



### Calendar

Jan. 11 **Board Meeting** 7:00 pm  
Feb. 8 **Board Meeting** 7:00 pm  
Feb. 23 **Deadline for Tree Sales**

Natural Resources Conservation Service  
 John Knapp, District Conservationist  
 Jeff Lefever, Civil Engineering Technician  
 Jonathan Mauk, Soil Conservationist  
 Ray Rummell, Conservation Specialist

Wayne SWCD Staff  
 Sarah Beck, Administrative Assistant  
 Mark Duncan, Nutrient Management Specialist  
 Steve Grimes, No-Till Specialist  
 Rob Kastner, Water Management Engineer  
 Adam Liston, Conservation Technician  
 Debbie Pettijohn, Secretary  
 Kelly Riley, Education Specialist  
 Duane Wood, District Program Administrator

# Tree Order Form Inside

## SWCD Sponsors Annual Fish Sale



The Wayne Soil & Water Conservation District will begin taking orders for our annual fish sale. The fish will be purchased from Fender's Fish Hatchery in Baltic. The types of fish which are available include fingerling size largemouth bass, channel catfish, white amur, perch, minnow, bluegill, crappie and redear shellcracker. White amur (grass carp) are an excellent alternative to chemical control of weeds in ponds.

Orders for the fish will be taken until **Friday, April 13th**. **Pickup** date will be **Tuesday, April 17th from 9:00-10:00 a.m. at the Wayne County Fairgrounds**. Orders must be picked up at the specified time. At the pickup, you will need to bring a container filled with your own pond water, 5 to 10 gallons of water per 100 fish is required. Line the container with a new plastic liner before adding water. The White Amur must be placed in a container with a lid or a liner large enough to be tied at the top. Only 2 Amur to each 5 gallons of water. If you have any questions concerning stocking rates, please contact our office at 330-262-2836. Send order to Wayne SWCD, 428 W. Liberty St., Wooster, OH 44691.

Keep this section for reference

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Return this section with payment

	No.	Species	Size	Price	Total
Name _____	_____	Largemouth Bass	2-4"	.85	_____
	_____	Bluegill	2-4"	.70	_____
Address _____	_____	Channel Catfish	4-5"	.75	_____
	_____	White Amur	8-12"	12.00	_____
City _____ State _____ Zip _____	_____	Perch	2-4"	.75	_____
	_____	Minnow	1-2"	.07	_____
Daytime Phone _____	_____	Redear Shellcracker	2-4"	.85	_____
	_____	Black Crappie	2-4"	.85	_____
	_____	<b>Total</b>			_____

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### Wayne Soil & Water Conservation District

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### ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

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 David Rohrer, Secretary