

## CHANGES, CHALLENGES, AND COLLABORATION ARE HAPPENING AT SOIL & WATER

A question we hear a lot, “What’s going on at Soil & Water?” The short answer is A LOT!

Soil & Water was chartered in 1944, serving the agricultural community to ensure we maintain clean water and healthy soil in the county. Fast forward to 2023, not much has changed, we are still working to ensure we have clean water and healthy soil. How we accomplish that task has changed from working mainly with farmers to working with many types of landowners. With so many new team members and so much going on, here is a brief overview of what is going on at Soil & Water.

### Land use changes and challenges:

Administratively, Soil & Water is collaborating with many partners, elected officials, and various types of landowners. Kristy Hawthorne, District Program Administrator, has been at the forefront of the discussions to ensure proper care for the natural resources in the watershed as a whole.

Since 2020, two commercial solar developments were announced, encompassing about 3,200 acres total.

Becoming an Intervener in the Ohio Power Siting Board application process allowed Soil & Water to have a voice in managing the drainage, vegetation, landscaping, and decommissioning.

Intel’s announcement in January 2021 to build a new manufacturing facility has created a flurry of activity across the county. With all the development in the new business park in western Licking County, the ripple effect of this development means landscape will be forever changed. Now it is about managing the development in a sustainable manner and protecting our natural resources as commercial buildings replace corn fields.


**Watershed-wide:** In 2021, a Watershed Specialist position was created to help monitor the watershed as a whole, identify areas that would benefit from conservation practices and find funding for projects. Kyle Seitz has transitioned from an Urban Technician to this new role, focusing on writing strategic plans for the watersheds and redefining the water quality monitoring program.

**Urban Stormwater:** Licking County is designated a rapidly developing watershed by the Ohio EPA. The County has a Small Municipal Separate Storm Sewer Systems (MS4s) permit to manage the stormwater during and after land has been developed. Linda Nicodemus, Stormwater Manager, is leading a team of 3 Urban Technicians, Joe Jarvis, Harley Kirkingburg and Nick Garavuso, in managing the permit and working with the Ohio EPA on any compliance issues. Details about the permit are outlined on page 2.

**Agriculture:** Brent Dennis, Ag Technician, continues to provide resources to landowners through the USDA-Natural Resources Conservation Service to put conservation projects on the ground. In 2022, there were 24 contracts for 1,382 acres securing \$351,838 of cost share to Licking County landowners. He also oversees the Timber Harvest Reviews, Agriculture Pollution complaints, FFA Soil Judging competition and provides technical assistance on ponds, drainage issues and woody debris fields in waterways.

Briana Hodgson, Project Coordinator, is managing the ODA Agricultural Easement program with 29 farms for a little over 5,000 acres currently protected. A true Chaos Coordinator, Briana also oversees the annual spring tree sale, native plant sale, programming at the Hartford Fair Natural Resources Area and the River Round Up logistics.

**Education:** Deirdre Wetmore joined the Soil & Water team in October 2022 as the Conservation Educator. She will be working with the 14 school districts, home school groups and community organizations to provide educational resources and in person educational presentations. Deirdre also coordinates educator workshops, supports the Envirothon teams and other seasonal programming with our partners.

**Administrative work:** As with any office, a great Administrative Assistant makes all the difference. Britney Stuller greets our customers, handles all the accounting and local, state and federal reporting. She recently took over administering the mini-grant program, as well as helping coordinate efforts for our seasonal programs and Board committees. 

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**2023 Tree Sale order form  
is enclosed - Order Now!**



*Promoting conservation of natural resources through local leadership, education, and technical assistance.*

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740-670-5330  
LickingSWCD.com

#### SOIL & WATER STAFF

Brent Dennis  
Nick Garavuso  
Kristy Hawthorne  
Briana Hodgson  
Joe Jarvis  
Harley Kirkingburg  
Linda Nichodemus  
Kyle Seitz  
Britney Stuller  
Deidre Wetmore

#### BOARD MEMBERS

Kim Byce  
Seth Dobbelaer  
Bill Goodman  
Ron Thompson  
Rodney Tornes

#### ASSOCIATE BOARD MEMBERS

Jeff Baker  
Jeff Bates  
Mamie Hollenback

#### USDA NRCS STAFF

Joe Koehler  
Carlton Howard  
740-670-5340  
www.nrcs.usda.gov

Office Hours: 8:00 AM – 4:30 PM  
Monday – Friday  
Closed Federal Holidays

The Soil & Water Board meets on the second Tuesday of the month at 4:30 PM at the Soil & Water office. The public is welcome to attend.

USDA is an equal opportunity provider, employer, and lender.



## LOCALLY-LED CONSERVATION IS BASED ON THE PRINCIPLE THAT LOCAL PEOPLE MAKE THE BEST DECISIONS FOR THEIR OWN COMMUNITIES.

Annually the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) and the Licking County Soil & Water Conservation District gathers landowners to discuss local conservation practices and needs. The Farm Bureau is joining the conversation to determine policy needs from their Licking County members.

**Wednesday, March 29, 2023**

**FREE breakfast at 7 am ~ Discussion begins at 7:30 am**

**At Ag Services Center, 771 East Main Street, Newark, OH 43055**

RSVP at, [bit.ly/315BLnG](https://bit.ly/315BLnG) call 740-670-5330 or email

[BritneyStuller@LickingSWCD.com](mailto:BritneyStuller@LickingSWCD.com) by Monday, March 24th.

If you are unable to attend consider sending a representative in your place or sharing written comments in advance.

## WHAT IS AN OEPA STORMWATER PERMIT?

The Storm Water Rule is the next step in U.S. EPA's effort to preserve, protect, and improve the nation's water resources from polluted storm water runoff.

The Phase II Rule defines a small MS4 storm water management program as comprised of six minimum control measures that, when administered in concert, are expected to result in reduction of the discharge of pollutants into receiving water bodies. Implementation will require the development and implementation of best management practices and the achievement of measurable goals to satisfy each of the following six minimum control measures:

**MCM 1 Public Education and Outreach:** Distributing educational materials and performing outreach to inform citizens about the impacts polluted storm water runoff discharges can have on water quality.

**MCM 2 Public Participation/ Involvement:** Providing opportunities for citizens to participate in programs,

as well as the SWMP development and implementation process.

**MCM 3 Illicit Discharge Detection and Elimination:** Developing and implementing a plan to detect and eliminate illicit (prohibited) discharges to the storm sewer system.

**MCM 4 Construction Site Runoff Control:** Developing, implementing, and enforcing an erosion and sediment control program for construction activities that disturb one or more acres of land.

**MCM 5 Post-Construction Runoff Control:** Developing, implementing, and enforcing a program to address discharges of post-construction storm water runoff from new development and redevelopment areas.

**MCM 6 Pollution Prevention/ Good Housekeeping for Municipal Operations:** Developing and implementing a program with the goal of preventing or reducing pollutant runoff from municipal operations.

# VOLUNTEER WITH US TO PREP FOR TREE SALE!

We are preparing for our Tree Sale distribution on April 21st and our second annual Backyard Conservation Day May 13th.

This is a great experience for service groups or students who need volunteer hours. Adventures abound; we have inside and outside needs, sitting and

standing, and for a couple of hours or for a whole day. All activities will be held at our office at 771 E Main St, Newark, OH 43055. To learn more about volunteer opportunities with Soil & Water go to [lickingswcd.com/how-to-help/volunteer.html](http://lickingswcd.com/how-to-help/volunteer.html).



# FREE TREES FOR STUDENTS

Thanks to our generous sponsors, Licking County Soil & Water Conservation District offers free seedling trees to elementary and middle schools that serve Licking County students. The free seedling tree program is an opportunity to show students how essential trees are to their health, community, and environment.

In addition to the seedling trees, your school will receive tree planting guides, and tree education resources for the classroom.

Educators can order trees by Friday, March 24th for pick-up on Friday, April 21st. For more information complete the request form at [lickingswcd.com/what-we-do/education.html](http://lickingswcd.com/what-we-do/education.html) or contact Deirdre Wetmore at 740-670-5333.



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## JOIN US FOR THESE UPCOMING EVENTS

**FORESTRY FIELD DAY**  
**APRIL 15TH AT 9 AM**

**Brown Property**  
**3411 Montgomery Rd**  
**Newark, OH**

**POND CLINIC**  
**MAY 1ST AT 5:30 PM**

**Granville Brewing Company**  
**5419 Columbus Road**  
**Granville, OH**

RSVP requested for  
planning purposes

Visit <https://lickingswcd.com/news-events/event-calendar.html>  
for additional details



## CHECK OUT OUR STORMWATER WEB PAGE

Learn about the benefits of:

- Rain Gardens
- Rain Barrels
- Native Plants
- Composting
- Tree Planting
- and more!

Visit <https://LickingSWCD.com/what-we-do/stormwater.html>



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# ENTER THE 2023 RIVER ROUND UP POSTER CONTEST TO WIN CASH PRIZES!

The 2023 River Round Up Poster Contest is open to all school-aged youth living in Licking County.

Posters must reflect water pollution awareness and encourage volunteer participation in the 30th Annual River Round Up.

Posters will be judged in three age categories: Elementary (K–5), Middle

School (6–8), and High School (9–12). One winner will be chosen from each age category.

**Poster Awards:** \$100 to the student artists of the winning posters from each of the three categories and \$500 to the student's school for advancing science and art programming. The winning poster artwork will be the primary electronic marketing images

used for the 2023 River Round Up event.

The deadline to submit posters is April 7th!

For more information on submitting posters to participate in the contest go to [www.LickingSWCD.com](http://www.LickingSWCD.com) and on the Licking County River Round Up Facebook pages. 🌍

## IMPORTANT DATES

Mar 29	Local Work Group/Policy Development Meeting*
Mar 31	Tree Sale Pre-Order Extended Deadline
Mar 31	Ag Hall of Fame Inductees Breakfast*
Apr 7	River Round Up Poster Contest Deadline
Apr 15	Forestry Field Day*
Apr 21	Tree Sale Pre-order Pick Up
May 1	Pond Clinic*
May 2	Fish Sale Orders Due
May 9	Fish Sale Pick Up
May 13	Backyard Conservation Day w/ Master Gardener Plant Sale

\*Events require RSVP. Please visit our website at [LickingSWCD.com](http://LickingSWCD.com), or call our office at 740-670-5330.

## CELEBRATE NATURAL RESOURCES THIS SPRING

**Agriculture Week**  
March 21–27

**Earth Day**  
April 22

**Arbor Day**  
April 28

**Stewardship Week**  
April 30–May 7