

CELEBRATING SOIL & WATER'S 75TH ANNIVERSARY

Since 1944, Licking County Soil & Water Conservation District exists to promote wise use of our land and water. During those 75 years, Licking Soil & Water has worked with countless landowners to manage and protect natural resources on public and private lands. This year, for our 75th birthday, Licking Soil & Water is reflecting on our history in and impact on Licking County. Below is Part Four of a four-part series celebrating our legacy.

21st Century Conservation

Streambank erosion is not a new issue, but in 2001 Licking Soil & Water took on a serious streambank erosion problem along the North Fork Licking River. By the spring of 2005, with nearly one million dollars in grants and community support, the

St. Louisville project was complete. Licking Soil & Water still holds this conservation easement.

Conserving working lands through easements became a larger workload with the Farmland Preservation program's launch. Licking Soil & Water helped producers place over 30 easements on more than 3,100 acres, with many more farms in process.

We continue to help landowners use conservation practices. To encourage the use of cover crops, Licking Soil & Water joined forces with Muskingum Watershed Conservancy District to offer a cost-share program starting in 2013.

With the County Commissioners support, Licking Soil & Water joined the county's Technical Review Committee to protect land and water during development. More recently, Licking Soil & Water took on management of a collaborative stormwater permit that focuses on limiting urban pollution

The Power of Partnerships

Local leadership is a tenant of the Licking Soil & Water mission. Multiple supervisors have served on the Ohio Federation of Soil and Water Conservation Districts Board including Charles Warthen and Bill Goodman.

In 2006, Licking Soil & Water partnered with the Hartford Fair and various groups to create the Natural Resources Area. Today this beautiful site provides a park-like setting to relax and enjoy free, family-friendly programming.

A few years ago, when the Ohio Certified Volunteer Naturalists of Licking County were in need of a new host agency, we joined forces with the



Licking Park District and The Dawes Arboretum to adopt this group of educated and dedicated naturalists.

In 2011, the City of Newark and Licking Soil & Water resurrected the River Round Up. Today it is a premier river cleanup event. The tremendous expansion is directly tied to recruiting partners and developing a robust planning committee.

Looking Forward to Another 75 Years

As our 75th birthday celebration comes to a close, we want to ensure Licking Soil & Water adds value to our community, while staying true to our mission. Our strategic plan specifically calls attention to strengthening existing partnerships and building new ones. To better serve, we will develop a communication strategy and renew our commitment to professional training for the team. We commit to taking the long view, because wise use of land and water today is an investment in generations yet to come. Thank you for letting us serve you for 75 years, and here's to another 75 years. 🌱

Sources include:
Ohio Department of Agriculture
Licking County Records and Archives

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See page 3 for the results of our Licking River Round Up



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

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Jeff Baker
Jeff Bates
Dee Hammel

USDA NRCS STAFF
Joe Koehler
Carlton Howard

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

The Soil & Water Board meets on the second Wednesday 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.

Soil & Water Gives Back

To celebrate Soil & Water’s 75th Anniversary, the Board established a community Conservation Mini-Grant Program. The program offers up to \$1,000 to Licking County non-profits that demonstrate the need and ability to carry out on-the-ground conservation projects. Thirteen applications were received from non-profits, local government entities, and/or schools for local conservation projects with just over \$5,000 distributed in 2019.

Congratulations to the Inaugural Conservation Mini-Grant Program Fund Recipients!

The Granville Garden Club installed a prairie garden walkway at the Bryn Du Mansion. The walkway allows the public and school groups to closely observe pollinators enjoying native plants.

The Learning Spectrum created, painted, and installed rain barrels to collect stormwater for the schoolyard flower and vegetable gardens.

The City of Pataskala is developing outdoor teaching gardens providing educational demonstrations, and creating education materials for the William V. Karr Park.

Licking Memorial Hospital plans to increase pollination on their mini-farm by establishing adjacent pollinator habitat. The mini-farm provides fresh produce for the Fruit and Vegetable Prescription Program.

Learning 4 Life Farm will create an educational organic garden that will serve as a transition training site for middle and high school students on the autism spectrum.

The Johnstown Sportsman Club will improve stormwater drainage in the main field used for outdoor education events.

Eagle Wings Academy will build an outdoor classroom area with pollinator habitat. 🌱

AmeriCorps Member Breanna Joins Soil & Water Team

Welcome Breanna Boudinot, new AmeriCorps Service Member serving Licking Soil & Water through August 2020.

Breanna grew up in Athens County where she attended Ohio University. In August 2019, she graduated with her Bachelor’s degree in field ecology along with a minor in environmental health. During her time in academia, she developed a passion for botany while working in a soil chemistry lab.



Breanna spent this past summer interning in Washington D.C. at the United States National Arboretum. Not long after, she joined the Rural Action Ohio Stream Restore Corps to make a difference in her own community. “I grew up surrounded by dead streams that were bright orange and teal as a result of acid mine drainage,” says Breanna. “I always knew I wanted to do something to fix it.”

Breanna looks forward to engaging Licking County residents with our natural environment, and getting familiar with a new part of Ohio. You can contact her at americorps@LickingSWCD.com, or stop by any time to take a stroll through the Licking County TREES Land Lab with her. 🌳

River Round Up Final Numbers



375 Volunteers



357 tires



Nearly 30 miles of rivers and streams cleaned



One cat rescued & rehomed



4900 lbs. scrap metal recycled



Over 300 River Round Up poster contest entries



6750 lbs. trash to landfill

Save the Date – Saturday September 12, 2020

River Round Up 2020 Poster Contest. Win Cash Prizes!

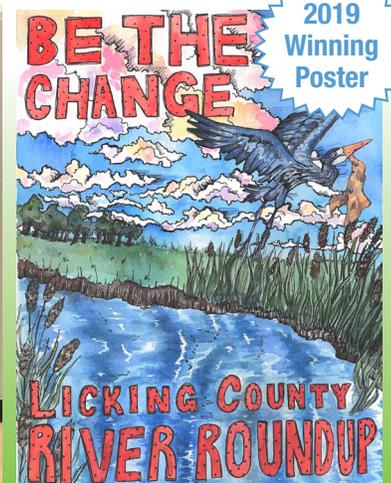
The Poster Contest Is Open To All School-Aged Youth Living In Licking County.

Posters should reflect water pollution awareness and encourage volunteer participation in the River Round Up.

The winning individual receives \$100 in prize money and the winner's school receives a \$500 scholarship to use for advancing science and art programs. Two honorable mentions receive a \$250 scholarship each for their school and \$50 in prize money.

The winning poster is the primary electronic marketing picture for the 2020 River Round Up.

Drop off entries at Licking County Recycling, 295 Wilson Street, Newark, Ohio 43055, or mail to 20 S. 2nd Street, Newark, Ohio 43055.



Deadline 4:30 P.M. Friday, February 21, 2020

Licking Soil & Water Recognizes People In Our Community That Work Cooperatively With Us To Practice Wise Use Of Land and Water.

Agriculture Cooperator Of The Year

Pat Deering was a farmland preservation advocate, local food connoisseur, volunteer naturalist, and longtime friend in conservation. She served Licking Soil & Water from 2008 until 2019, as Information Specialist and Land Conservation Manager.

Pat literally wrote the Licking County Century Farms book. The book beautifully highlights more than fifty farms that were a hundred years or more by the bicentennial year of Licking County.

As one of the original members of the Licking County Local Food Council, Pat was an advocate for the importance of having farms thriving in our community. She emphasized the opportunities provided to Licking County residents such as

farmers' markets and encouraged the creation of community gardens.

She built our robust Farmland Preservation Program, a program that has become a model throughout the state. Under her leadership, over 30 farms were accepted into the preservation program. Pat mentored many other farmland preservation colleagues and was an especially important mentor to Briana Hodgson, Licking Soil & Water's Program Assistant. Through Pat's mentorship and despite losing our biggest advocate, Briana keeps the Farmland Preservation Program moving forward. Briana recently reflected on a conversation with Pat. She told of the great honor Pat felt learning about each farm's history and the importance of preserving its legacy.



Although we miss her dearly, Licking Soil & Water proudly honors Pat Deering's legacy as Agriculture Cooperator of the Year. 🌍

Urban Cooperator Of The Year

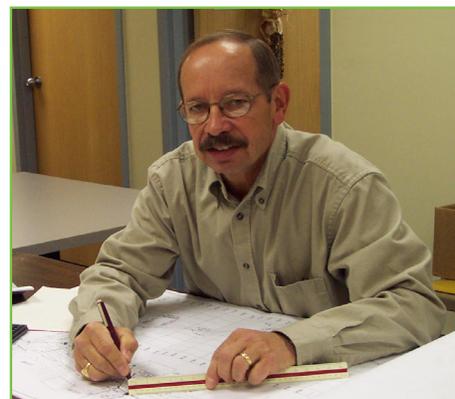
The Urban Cooperator award focuses on efforts off the farm and in the built environment. One public servant knows where water goes better than anyone else in the county and that is why Licking Soil & Water awarded Dan Blatter the Urban Cooperator of the Year Award.

Dan has served Licking County in the Soil & Water Conservation District for decades before moving to the County Engineer's Office. He has been helping people manage drainage issues and now focuses on the petition ditch program. Dan has taught and mentored many natural resource management professionals.

"I was often told that Conservation is just as much an art as it is a science, and Dan could find the balance between the two and come up with a solution to any problem." — Bill Evans, Construction Projects

Inspector, Licking County Engineer's Office.

"It takes all of about 30 seconds interacting with Dan Blatter to realize what an incredible resource he is to the county. Dan is always willing to share his vast knowledge with anyone lucky enough to get to work with him." — Josh Troyer, Urban Technician, Licking Soil & Water. 🌍



FFA Soil Judging Awards Winners

This local competition teaches students to evaluate land and soil for making decisions when faced with soil-related limitations.

Urban Team — Licking Valley

Clayton Orr, Breanna Laughlin, Kacey Felumlee, Brandon Bishop, Jesse Flowers

Urban Individual

Kacey Felumlee

Rural Team — Utica

Amanda Annett, Kenneth Davenport, Emily Hill

Rural Individual

Amanda Annett

Volunteer of the Year Damian Shackelford

The Licking County River Round Up is a community-based conservation initiative that demonstrates the philanthropic nature of our community. The annual waterway cleanup brings out the best in volunteerism and civic engagement. Removing junk from our rivers and streams is not glamorous. Managing trash once it comes out of the river isn't glamorous either. But that isn't Damian "Shack" Shackelford's concern.

Shack of Shackelford's Disposal, stepped up as the presenting sponsor for River Round Up in 2015. The commitment included in-kind and cash contributions. The biggest cost for a county-wide river cleanup is the trash disposal. Shack took care of that expense, and in doing so, allowed the River Round Up to

expand significantly. Keep in mind this trash is wet, heavy, sometimes muddy, and overall gross. Sometimes there is really big and heavy junk for disposal, like mattresses and couches. But none of this phases Shack. He made a commitment and he is sticking to it. In the past five years, Shackelford's Disposal hauled away over eight tons of trash from our rivers and streams.

Shack is a hard-worker and humble individual; so much so that it is difficult to get him to special recognition events like the River Round Up Preview and this year's Licking Soil & Water Awards Presentation where he was to be celebrated! Nevertheless, Damian "Shack" Shackelford is most deserving of the Licking Soil & Water Volunteer of the Year award. 🌍



Educator of the Year Amy Hurst

Licking Soil & Water is pleased to name Amy Hurst, Educator of the Year. Amy Hurst first contacted Licking Soil & Water for technical support for a wet area on the The Learning Spectrum (TLS) property. Amy dreamed of creating an outdoor classroom for students. This outdoor classroom turned into a WILD School Site with a super-sized rain garden and many partnerships. Additionally, she made sure every TLS student and staff member participated in conservation education with Licking Soil & Water.

After coordinating a Project WILD workshop for the TLS staff in partnership with Franklin and Licking Soil & Water, Amy requested Project WILD curriculum be incorporated into their classrooms. Amy and Licking Soil & Water Conservation Educator Michelle Illing will collaborate in 2020 to provide a session called *Nature Based Learning for Students with Autism* for the statewide Environmental Education Council of Ohio Conference.

Using her B.S. in Horticulture, Amy recently launched the non-profit Learning 4 Life Farm. The Farm will provide education and job training to teens and young adults with autism. Amy says the

rewards of working with students with Autism Spectrum Disorder are seeing the kids learning about gardening, and watching them take ownership of the projects.

She believes environmental education is important because we need the natural world to be healthy, happy, to survive and thrive, and it is up to the next generation to keep it strong. She added that the kids have started calling her "The Crazy Mulch Lady" and she decided to take it as a compliment! 🌍



Hollenback Elected to a Second Term on Soil & Water Board

The landowners and residents of Licking County elect the governing body, the Board of Supervisors. Each of the five supervisors serve an unpaid, three-year term. Thank you to our candidates, David Grim and Mamie Hollenback. Mamie Hollenback was elected to a second term on the board.

BetheChange for clean water .org

Be the Change for Clean Water is a central Ohio initiative that includes ten counties and a multitude of partners to provide education, resources, and opportunities to make it easier for all Central Ohio residents to Be the Change for Clean Water. Licking Soil & Water is proud to partner with Be the Change for Clean Water because when it comes to protecting our water resources, we all need to be part of the solution. To highlight the Be The Change campaign, we will explore a unique Be The Change message in each edition of our newsletter. More information about Be the Change for Clean Water is available at www.bethechangeformcleanwater.org.

Pump It Out

Septic tanks and aeration tanks fill up. To keep your home sewage treatment system and your family healthy, your tank should be pumped every three to five years. Find out how much water you use and ideas for conserving by visiting www.home-water-works.org/calculator.

A septic system is a self-contained, underground wastewater treatment system. Modern systems include a primary tank and a drain field. The solid waste collects in the tank. Bacteria naturally breaks down some of the solids and the tank requires pumping every few years. Liquids pass through the tank and into a system that allows the soil to naturally filter the wastewater.

Some older septic systems only included an aeration tank that discharged directly to a creek, ditch or surface of the ground. Although these are not allowed to be installed today, we still have them in the county. According to Licking County Health Department, since these types of systems discharge, it is extremely important that they are maintained and in good working condition to prevent the spread of disease through bacteria in water, insects, and rodents.

Unfortunately, these legacy systems are often discovered when they fail and raw sewage gets released. If you discover a poopy smell or see what looks like human waste coming out of a pipe, bubbling up from the ground, or flowing into a waterway, please report this pollution. This type of pollution is often called illicit discharge and the county health department investigates these complaints.

To avoid septic system failure and properly maintain a septic system for many years, follow these tips: Pump It Out every three years; keep downspout and sump pump drains away from your system; repair any faucet or toilet leaks to avoid adding extra water to your system; and do not place any buildings or other structures on top of your system.

For systems with aerators, familiarize yourself with the Homeowner Aeration Treatment Unit Inspection Form (www.lickingcohealth.org/documents/EH/ATU_Inspection_Report.pdf). If you know of a drainage tile, stream or ditch that you think the Licking County Health Department Sanitarian should add to the monitoring list, please call (740) 349-6535. 🌍



NRCS Welcomes Carlton Howard

Carlton Howard joined the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service team this past summer. A Columbus native, he studied Wildlife Resource Management at Hocking College. Continuing his education, he graduated from West Virginia University in May 2019 with a B.S. in Wildlife & Fisheries.

As the Licking County Soil Conservationist, Carlton will be

working directly with landowners to put conservation practices on the ground such as grassed waterways, wetland delineations, and Highly Erodible Land & Conservation Reserve program reviews.

“I’m excited about being here in Licking County,” Carlton states. “I look forward to helping the hard working farmers in the county to prevent soil erosion and help maintain water quality.”



Accepting Farmland Preservation Applications for 2020

Soil & Water will receive funds from Clean Ohio to preserve farmland under the Local Agricultural Easement Purchase Program (LAEPP) next year.

To be considered for permanent protection, the farm must remain in agriculture production in perpetuity. Selected farms must be at least 40 acres, actively engaged in farming, participate in the Current Agricultural Use Valuation

(CAUV) program, demonstrate good stewardship of the land, have the support of their local government and not lay directly in the path of development.

Applications will be accepted from January 7 to February 7, 2020. For more information, visit www.LickingSWCD.com or call Briana Hodgson at (740) 670-5330.

Keeping It Under Cover

Last year harvesting was being done between rain showers and mud was plentiful, which decreased the number of cover crop acres planted. Fast forward to 2019 and the fall presented beautiful weather to harvest, in fact almost too dry. What a difference a year makes!

Since 2013, the cover crop cost-share program promotes the use of cover crops to keep soil and nutrients on the land, thus enhancing water quality. Muskingum Watershed Conservancy District and Licking Soil & Water Board of Supervisors cost-shared \$12-\$15 per acre on 2,900 acres.

Of the 23 program applicants, 19 planted cover crops using a no-till seed drill and four producers participated in aerial application. Many of the program participants rented

a Licking Soil & Water no-till seed drill to plant winter rye cover crop seed. Licking Soil & Water’s coordination of cover crop planting by aerial application resulted in 430 acres planted in one day.

Much appreciation goes out to the following for continued generosity and support in promoting conservation through the use of cost-share dollars, equipment, and facilities:

- Muskingum Watershed Conservancy District
- George H. Fackler III of Fackler Kubota Tractor
- Clint Appleman and Tim Matheney of Southeastern Equipment Co. Inc.
- Newark-Heath Airport

Pesticide & Fertilizer Applicator Certification/Recertification Scheduled

February 18th, 6 PM to 10 PM
March 3rd, 10 AM to 2 PM
Ag Service Center, 771 East Main Street, Newark

The first 3 hours is pesticide recertification and the 4th hour is fertilizer recertification.

Call (740) 670-5315 to register. The \$35 fee is payable at the door and includes materials and food. This fee is in addition to the \$30 payable to ODA. For just the fertilizer section, the cost is \$10.

Fertilizer Application Record Keeping App Available

A free app helps meet the state recordkeeping requirements for both Senate Bill 1 (SB 1) and Senate Bill 150 (SB 150). The Ohio Nutrient Management Record Keeper (OnMRK) is a computerized recordkeeping system that syncs with a smartphone or tablet to create a simple, easy and quick way to record all fertilizer and manure applications while in the field.

Download the app from the Google Play store for Android devices and iTunes for Apple products. To get started, simply go to the app’s website <https://onmrk.com/>.

EQIP Sign-Up

The Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) provides technical and financial assistance to producers to address natural resource concerns and deliver environmental benefits. Through EQIP, the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) provides agricultural producers with one-on-one help and financial assistance to plan and implement improvements, or what NRCS calls conservation practices. Together, NRCS and producers invest in solutions that conserve natural resources for the future while improving agricultural operations.

NRCS offers about 200 unique practices designed for working farms, ranches, and forests. Some of these practices include: Heavy Use Area Protection, Livestock



Watering Facilities, Seasonal High Tunnels, Pollinator Seedings, Brush Management, and Forest Stand Improvement. NRCS financial assistance can cover part of the costs of implementing conservation practices.

Applications for EQIP financial assistance are accepted throughout

the year, however NRCS anticipates the Fiscal Year 2020 application deadline for funds to be after the first of the year.

For more information about EQIP and/or to apply, please contact the Licking County NRCS office at (740) 258-6753.



IMPORTANT DATES

- Dec 25 Christmas - office closed
- Jan 1 New Years Day - office closed
- Jan 8 Soil & Water Board Meeting, Ag Center
- Jan 20 Martin Luther King Day - office closed
- Feb 3 Tree sale opens
- Feb 7 Farmland Preservation 2020 Application deadline
- Feb 12 Soil & Water Board Meeting, Ag Center
- Feb 17 President's Day - office closed
- Mar 11 Soil & Water Board Meeting, Ag Center
- Mar 13 Ag Hall of Fame Induction, COTC Reese Center
- Mar 14 Farmers Share Breakfast, C-TEC
- Mar 20 Local Work Group Meeting, The Grove by the River

For details, visit www.LickingSWCD.com.

AG HALL OF FAME

The Licking County Agricultural Hall of Fame recognizes individuals who have demonstrated life-long exemplary service to their community and the industry of agriculture. Application Deadline: December 31, 2019

Save the Date for the Inductee Breakfast on March 13, 2020.

Visit <https://licking.osu.edu/> or call (740) 670-5315 for additional information.