



Licking County Local Work Group Minutes

May 8, 2022 at 7:30 am

The Grove By the River, 840 Hollander Street, Newark, OH 43055

Attendees: 43 attended, see attached list.

Mamie Hollenback, Chair Soil & Water Board and Andy Hollenback, President Licking County Farm Bureau welcomed everyone. Licking County Commissioner Rick Black presented Soil & Water with a Proclamation for the 75th Anniversary celebration.

Denise Natoli Brooks, Soil & Water DPA, Joe Koehler, NRCS District Conservationist and Kayla Jones, Organizational Director for Licking County Farm Bureau gave brief overviews of each organization.

Topics discussed:

- Need for cover crops
 - Cost share for installing
 - Education to landowners of long term benefits
- Ditch maintenance
 - Working with Townships to keep water moving, not ponding in fields
 - Heavy rains exasperate drainage issues, impervious urban negatively affecting farm fields, especially in western part of county.
- Riparian Corridors & Log Jams – Debris in river
 - Losing fields, farm land with high water events recently.
 - Debris and dead trees have littered the waterways. Educate landowners about their responsibilities.
 - Funding for debris removal from waterways
 - Riparian Corridor buffer incentives
- Education
 - Educating new landowners on good stewardship practices
 - Local Food Movement – increase in small and specialty producers
 - Farm Bureau offers education and outreach initiatives, for example live broadcasts from the farm are brought into the classroom with technology.
 - Broadband needs across county for educational and business needs
- Beginning Farmers
 - FSA- Microloans
 - Education about resources available
 - Access to land – Discussion about MN offering tax incentives for retiring farmers to sell land to new farmers, mentoring program and grants for equipment purchases

- Forestry
 - Ash Tree removal
 - Invasive management
- Nutrient Management
 - Need for new, innovative, technology driven programs
 - Creating wetlands to reduce run off
- Wildlife animal population
 - Canada Geese - Buckeye Lake region issue

Participants had the ability to provide comments via an electronically if they were unable to attend. Summary of additional comments gathered:

- Dredging Buckeye Lake to reduce nutrient-rich sediment in the lake
- Repairing and maintaining the Feeder Canal to improve water quality coming into Buckeye Lake
- Creating wetlands to reduce nutrient run-off into Buckeye Lake
- Reducing Canada goose population to decrease E. coli feces contamination of lake water, particularly around beach areas
- I have used the polymer coated urea for a couple of years now on both hay and pasture ground. I like the results and application time is very flexible (evaporation considerations). I would think there are environmental benefits such as decreased evaporation and run-off. For pasture and hay ground, balancing growth over the whole season is much more advantageous. Spring application of regular urea will no doubt enhance spring growth but the spurt growth is hard to utilize for either pasture or hay. The premium for the coating is not insignificant. Could a conservation program be devised that helps defray the cost of the coating but not subsidize the cost of the fertilizer itself?
- With the increased use of drones, could policy be written that creates restricted air space above private property? It would seem reasonable and realistic to create a 1000 foot restricted drone air space above all private property.
- I think there should be an effort to make Licking County VERY horse friendly. In addition, create a sales-pitch program to encourage horse owners to be a part of Licking County. In the past my opinion on this subject might have been different. Holistically, horses are a net positive for the agricultural and rural economies plus play well into Agritourism.