

SOUTH LICKING RIVER WATERSHED: CURRENT STATE AND STRATEGIC VISION

Join us for the South Licking River Watershed: Current State and Strategic Vision! The Soil & Water Conservation District and the South Licking Watershed Conservancy District is pleased to announce the State of the South Licking River Watershed Open House, scheduled to take place on July 18, 2024 from 5:30 – 7:30 pm at Alexandria Church of Christ, 5380 Moots Run Rd, Alexandria, OH 43001. This event is open to all community members, stakeholders, and environmental enthusiasts who are interested in the health and future of the South Licking River Watershed.

The State of the Watershed meeting aims to provide a comprehensive update on the current state of the South Licking River Watershed. Attendees will have the opportunity to learn about recent water quality data, ongoing conservation projects, and future initiatives designed to protect and enhance the watershed. Project leaders will provide brief presentations starting at 6 pm.



Information tables with experts will be on hand to provide project details and answer questions.

Quick overview of projects:

- **Raccoon Creek Flood Study:** The flood mitigation study is focusing on identifying areas of flood risk in the watershed, refining H&H models using updated information, and developing alternatives for flood damage reduction projects in the Raccoon Creek watershed.
- **FEMA Hazard Mitigation:** The project is to conduct a flood mitigation study focusing on identifying areas of flood risk in the South Fork main stem watershed from Pataskala to Heath, refining H&H models using updated information, and developing alternatives for flood damage reduction.
- **Nonpoint Source Implementation Strategies reports update:** A living strategic planning document that summarizes causes and sources of

impairment, establishes critical areas, identifies quantifiable objectives to address causes and sources of impairment, and describes projects designed to meet those objectives. Previously completed reports will be available and updates on the Headwaters of Raccoon Creek and Moots Run reports will be provided.

- **USGS Water Quality Testing on Raccoon Creek:** USGS's mission is to provide reliable scientific information to provide data to support water resource management, policy making, and regulatory decisions. USGS is managing the water quality testing site on Raccoon Creek.

Registration: The event is free to attend! Interested participants are encouraged to RSVP at <https://forms.gle/f7M8mDpzGj3MjaeV6> or call 740-670-5330. For more information, contact Kristy Hawthorne at Kristy.Hawthorne@LickingSWCD.com.

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

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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.

COVER CROP COST SHARE OPPORTUNITY

To promote the use of cover crops, the Muskingum Watershed Conservancy District is again providing funding for the Cover Crop Cost-Share Program, which assists producers in planting cover crops to decrease erosion and improve water quality.

Long-term use of cover crops can increase crop yields, reduce fertilizer inputs, improve soil health, and decrease water runoff. Different cover crop species and mixes are available to address specific needs such as controlling erosion, recycling nutrients, fixing nitrogen, reducing compaction, managing soil moisture, and producing forage.

Soil & Water will be accepting applications until July 12, 2024. Applications are evaluated individually, and fields are scored based on several criteria. Fields that score high enough are approved for cost-share funding at \$12/ approved acre. There is a cap of 200 approved acres per producer.

To enroll in the program, you need soil tests, a seed tag, and must pass a seed germ test. The applications also need a USDA Farm Service Agency (FSA) field map. Contact FSA at 740-670-5340 to have your maps printed before applying.

Contact Tayler Coy at TaylerCoy@LickingSWCD.com or 740-670-5329 for details and application.



CONSERVATION MINI-GRANT

The Soil and Water Conservation Mini-Grant program is an excellent opportunity to help fund a conservation-based service learning project for the community.

In celebration of Soil and Water's 75th Anniversary, the Board established a Community Mini-Grant program in 2019. Each year, 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.

Last year, eight applications were received from Licking County non-profits, local entities, and schools for local conservation projects. Just over \$5,000 was distributed to all eight organizations!

The Mini-Grant program is open to non-profit organizations such as schools, watershed groups, local government entities, municipalities, community groups, and civic associations within Licking County. The deadline to apply for the 2024 Conservation Mini-Grant is September 27, 2024.

To learn more about Soil and Water's Mini-Grant program, please visit the Conservation Mini-Grant page of our website. To apply for a Conservation Mini-Grant, please visit the Conservation Mini-Grant Online Application page of our website. If you have any questions about the program, please contact Britney Stuller at BritneyStuller@LickingSWCD.com or 740-670-5330.

Visit the Natural Resources Area at the Hartford Fair!

Sunday August 4 - Friday August 9



Sunday 11 am - 7 pm: Water Wonders- learn with water. Water activities, kids ice cream eating contest! Bring your dinner back and enjoy the picnic tables, board games and fun until 7 pm.



Monday 11 am - 4 pm: Soar to Explore- Lets have fun celebrating our soaring winged bats and birds friends. There'll be crafts, falcons from Midwest Falconry and paddling with the Licking Park District!



Tuesday 11 am - 4 pm: Ranger Rookies- Learn about outdoor sporting activities such as fishing, coon dog hunting, butterfly counting and much more. Don't miss our fishing contest for the chance to win a prize. Plus paddling & archery with the Licking Park District.



Wednesday 11 am - 4 pm: Flora & Fauna Family Fun- Sink your teeth in and wolf down our local foods after the cooking competition, learn about native plants, animals & much more.



Thursday 11 am - 7 pm: Buzzing Bug Fest- outdoor activities will be buzzing around into the night. Don't miss the BugMan and lantern craft. Plus paddle the pond into the night!



Friday 11 am - 4 pm: Outdoor Challenge Finale- Compete and test your skills and knowledge in a variety of competitions. FFA Challenge and skill-a-thon!



AMERICORPS OPENING

AmeriCorps is a national service program that engages more than 80,000 Americans in intensive service annually at 21,600 nonprofits, schools, public agencies, and community organizations nationwide. AmeriCorps members gain valuable service experience and have access to professional development and skill-building opportunities while also earning scholarship dollars to be used toward education or student loan repayment. Since the program's founding in 1994, more than 1 million AmeriCorps members have contributed more than 1.2 billion hours in service across America while tackling pressing problems and mobilizing millions of volunteers for the organizations they serve. Licking County Soil & Water is hosting an AmeriCorps member for 2024–2025. This AmeriCorps position will serve as the Buckeye Lake Watershed Coordinator and assist Soil & Water's Watershed Coordinator.



Some duties are as follows: Assist with outreach activities such as preparing displays, developing and distributing brochures and fact sheets, and contributing to newsletters and publications; Assist with water quality education activities, including youth programming in schools and community events; Prepare a monthly Buckeye Lake Watershed Board meetings; Coordinate water quality monitoring activities such as field monitoring/data collection, data entry, analysis, and mapping; Coordinate Buckeye Lake Citizen Water Quality Testing Program, including training the volunteer Lake Keepers to collect monthly water samples. For the full job description or to apply, go to www.LickingSWCD.com or call 740.670.5330.

ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT OPENING

Licking Soil & Water is hiring a part-time Administrative Assistant! The admin assistant will be responsible for opening and closing the office and keeping it presentable during regular office hours; will provide timely and courteous service to walk-in customers, as well as by phone and email; will make bank deposits, reconcile invoice payments and aged receivables, and create invoices, warrants, and accounting reports; and will provide support to the Director and Operations Coordinator, including assistance with calendar, communications, and tracking deadlines.

This is a part-time position for 24–32 hours per week. Some work after office hours or weekend events may be required. For the full job description and to apply, go to www.LickingSWCD.com or call 740-670-5330.

GET GRASSY: TAKING CARE OF YOUR LAWN THIS SUMMER

About Watering

To water or not to water? It is important to make a decision about whether or not you'll provide regular watering for your lawn to keep its green color, or let it go dormant in the summer. Dormancy is best suited for well-established lawns rather than new or heavily trafficked lawns. Residents in new developments where topsoil has been removed may want to keep their lawns watered.

Dormant grass is not dead. Turfgrasses are cool-season plants designed for dormancy when water is scarce, though they may look ugly and brown. After 4–6 weeks of no rain, even dormant grass needs to be watered. Watering it seldom and deeply (1–1.5 inches) will keep the roots alive without causing the grass to green up. This encourages deeper roots that are more drought-tolerant.

Don't tease your lawn with an occasional sprinkle. Sporadic, irregular watering "confuses" your turf resulting in shallow rooting and stress. If you're watering grass to maintain its green color, approximately 1" of water per week is necessary. Measure using a rain gauge or even a tuna can.

How and when you water matters. Overwatering is more of a problem for homeowners than is under-watering. Too much irrigation deprives plant roots of oxygen, and can contribute to water pollution when fertilizer is washed away before grass is able to use it. Grubs will enjoy laying eggs in your damp lawn too! Watering deeply in the morning when water is needed and less likely to evaporate is ideal.

Mow High and Let It Lie

Keeping your grass a little taller at about 3" in the summer reduces soil

temperatures, preserves moisture, prevents weed germination, and helps maintain turfgrass quality. Grass cut too closely is easily stressed, causing it to brown more quickly than longer grass. Dandelions are especially common in lawns that are thin or cut too short. Leaving the grass clippings on your lawn recycles nutrients and doesn't cause thatch (it's caused by over-fertilization and over-watering that produce excess growth and long clippings.) Grass in our storm drains pollutes our water and provides nutrient-rich "food" for algae, so keep that mower aimed away from the street, and be sure to clean up after yourself!

Proper lawn care practices protect our streams! Healthy lawns benefit our streams because they absorb more water during rain storms, require less fertilizer, and are less likely to require pesticide and/or herbicide application than unhealthy lawns.

Information courtesy of Franklin Soil & Water Conservation District.

RIVER ROUND UP SEPTEMBER 7, 2024!

It's that time of the year again, River Round Up registration is opening July 1st! Registration is open from July to September 2nd. Sign up to volunteer at www.LickingSWCD.com/how-to-help/river-round-up.html.

The Licking County River Round Up is an annual, county-wide river cleanup in September on the Saturday after Labor Day. This year takes place on September 7! This community event

brings out hundreds of volunteers who pull tires, shopping carts and mountains of trash from the Licking River and its tributaries.

LAST YEAR WE COLLECTED:

Trash to landfill: 25,320 pounds

Tires: 120

Scrap metal: 1,160 pounds

We can't do this cleanup without the wonderful volunteers at 13 locations across the county, dedicated committee members, and sponsors! We look forward to seeing everyone on Saturday, September 7, 2024!

Interested in becoming a sponsor for 2024? Check out the River Round Up page at www.LickingSWCD.com or reach out to Kristy Hawthorne at 740-670-5330 or KristyHawthorne@LickingSWCD.com.

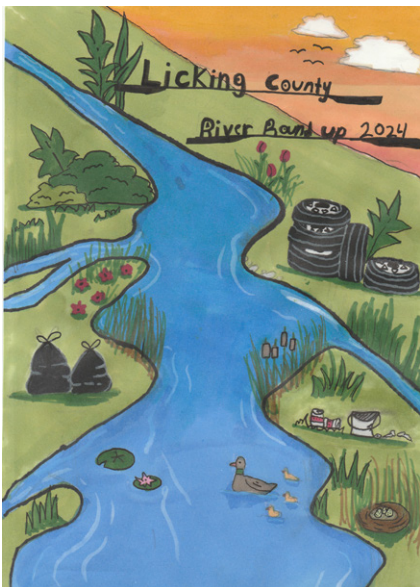


RIVER ROUND UP POSTER CONTEST WINNERS

Congratulations to our 2024 River Round Up Poster Contest winners! The winners received

\$100, and their schools received \$500 for science or art programming. The posters are used as advertising materials for the 2024 River Round Up!

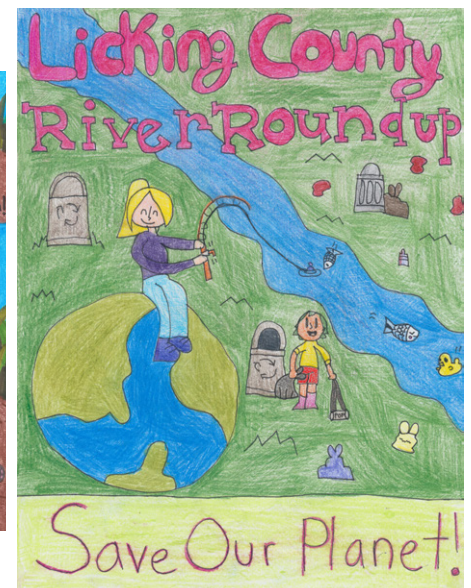
Congratulations to Jenna Hager, Katie Culbertson, and Eva Haylett!



Jenna Hager
Middle School Homeschool



Katie Culbertson
Johnstown Monroe High School



Eva Haylett
Licking Heights South Elem.

RENT OUR NO-TILL DRILL



Have a pasture or hay field to replant? Small soybean field? Other planting needs? Our no-till drills rent for only \$12 per acre.

**CALL TO SCHEDULE:
740-670-5330**

Great Plains 706NT Drill

**Tractor Requirements – 85 hp
Planting Width – 7 feet
Total Width – 9 feet 10 inches**

John Deere 1590 Grain Drill

**Tractor Requirements – 55 hp
Planting Width – 10 feet
Total Width – 10 feet 6 inches**

IMPORTANT DATES

July 4	Independence Day - Office Closed
July 9	Soil & Water Board Meeting
July 12	Cover Crop Cost Share Deadline
July 18	State of the Licking River Watershed Open House*
July 23	South Licking Watershed Conservancy District Meeting
Aug. 5-9	Hartford Fair Natural Resources Area Programming
Aug. 10	Rain Barrel Workshop
Aug. 13	Soil & Water Board Meeting
Aug. 27	South Licking Watershed Conservancy District Meeting
Sept. 7	The Licking County River Round Up

*Events require RSVP. Please visit our website at LickingSWCD.com, or call our office at 740-670-5330.

RAIN BARREL WORKSHOPS

Licking County Soil & Water and its partners are offering a Rain Barrel Workshop series this summer! You'll learn how to build a rain barrel, get hands-on instruction, and walk away with a fully plumbed rain barrel! The regular price for this type of rain barrel is \$65, but the workshop cost is only \$50, plus you gain knowledge on the environmental benefits of rain barrels!

July 13, 2024, at Infirmary Mound Park from 2-4 pm.

August 10, 2024, at Foundation Park from 9-11 am.

September 28, 2024, at Foundation Park from 9-11 am.



Visit www.LickingSWCD.com for more information and to register, or call 740-670-5330.



LOCAL FOOD COUNCIL SURVEY

Calling all Licking County residents! Fill out the survey(s) to the right to help guide the newly formed local food council. The Licking County Food Council needs your input to serve the community better to provide needed and wanted services. There are TWO surveys, one for producers/farmers and one

for consumers. Filling out the survey enters you into a rain barrel raffle!

Producer Survey!
If you are a farmer
this survey is for you!



Consumer Survey!
If you are NOT a farmer
this survey is for you!



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Take a simple step to help us accomplish our mission. Save paper and receive our monthly newsletter via email. Visit LickingSWCD.com to sign up or contact 740-670-5330.

Scan to sign up!

