

April - June 2008

# Leading Creek News



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## New Watershed Tour Format

The Leading Creek Watershed Tour took a new turn this year and focused on the Wetlands of the Watershed. On May 8th community members got the chance to tour three wetlands. A tour of the Wilson Wetland on State Route 7 in Hobson near Middleport was hosted by Chris Smith from Cooper Hollow Wildlife Area. The Wilson Wetland is a 13-acre wetland community which was donated to the ODNR – Division of Wildlife by Robert

Joseph Wilson in 1992. It is open for the public to enjoy bird watching and exploring and is managed by Cooper Hollow.

The second stop was the Fairgrounds Wetland Mitigation Area on Rocksprings Road near Pomeroy hosted by Michael Austin from the Ohio Department of Transportation (ODOT). It was created by ODOT to mitigate for wetlands filled during the construction of the Athens to Darwin and Ravenswood Connector highway projects. As a part of the project, ODOT enhanced 8.4 acres of wetland; created 3.2 acres of new wetland; protected in perpetuity 35 acres of surrounding forested buffer; and improved overall water quality by constructing

acid mine drainage treatment systems.

The next stop on the tour was the Meigs SWCD Conservation Area on New Lima Road near Rutland where SWCD staff showed attendees around the 2.2 acre wetland. The tour ended at the Jim Vennari Park in Rutland where a picnic meal was served.

Mike Austin, shown below, points out features at the ODOT Fairgrounds Wetland.



The Wilson Wetland (bottom left) and Chris Smith from Cooper Hollow (below)



## Meigs SWCD Staff

Steve Jenkins, *Program Administrator*  
 Vicki Morrow, *Assistant Administrator*  
 Jenny Ridenour, *Education Coordinator /  
 District Technician*  
 Jim Freeman, *Wildlife Specialist /  
 Watershed Coordinator*  
 Raina Fulks, *Leading Creek Watershed  
 Coordinator*  
 Mary Ann Hawk, *NRCS - District  
 Conservationist*  
 Jason Crislip, *NRCS - Soil Conservationist*

## Our Partners

Meigs Soil and Water Conservation  
 District  
 Agri-Drain Corporation  
 American Electric Power  
 Buckeye Hills RC&D  
 Boy Scouts of America  
 Eastern Local School District  
 Girl Scouts of the USA  
 Leading Creek Conservancy District  
 Leading Creek Improvement Committee  
 Meigs County Commissioners  
 Meigs County Engineer  
 Meigs County Health Department  
 Meigs County Recycling & Litter  
 Prevention  
 Meigs Local FFA  
 Meigs Local School District  
 Mid Valley Christian School  
 Natural Resources Conservation Services  
 Ohio Department of Natural Resources,  
 Divisions of Forestry, Soil & Water  
 Conservation, Mineral  
 Resources Management, and Wildlife  
 Ohio Environmental Protection Agency,  
 Division of Surface Water  
 Ohio State University Extension  
 Ohio University, College of Engineering  
 Ohio University, ILGARD  
 PDK Construction  
 Residents of the Leading Creek  
 Watershed  
 Rural Action, Inc.  
 Rutland Village Council  
 Southern Local School District  
 Township Trustees of Columbia, Salem,  
 Rutland, and Salisbury Townships in Meigs  
 County  
 U.S. Department of Agriculture  
 U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service  
 U.S. Office of Surface Mining  
 4-H

## ACOE Watershed Study Meeting



Joe Trimboli from US Army Corps of Engineers explaining sections of the study to residents.

At a public meeting in Pomeroy on June 24<sup>th</sup>, the Huntington District of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (ACOE) presented their Southeast Ohio Watershed Assessment Study. The purpose of the study is to provide coordination assistance for five Southeastern Ohio counties and develop watershed assessments addressing water resource issues. Some of these include flooding,

abandoned mine lands, water supply, ecosystem degradation, and sewage treatment. The Meigs County section of the report focuses on the Upper Ohio-Shade Watershed, which encompasses most of the county.

Citizens, organizations, and government officials were given the chance to identify and prioritize watershed concerns. These comments will be incorporated into the final report.

The goal of the final report will be to create an assessment that when implemented will result in improved water quality, reduce flood hazards, and increase opportunity for economic development. The Army Corps plans to submit the final report to the Appalachian Regional Commission this September.

## Coyote Education

Would you like to learn more about coyotes? Then come to the Meigs SWCD Annual Meeting and Banquet, which will take place on September 23<sup>rd</sup> at the Meigs High School near Pomeroy. Voting for supervisors begins at 6pm and the meeting and banquet begins at 7pm. Our keynote speaker will be Stanley Gehrt, Assistant Professor and Wildlife Extension Specialist with the Ohio State University. His intriguing presentation will focus on the ecology of coyotes. Registration is \$12 per person. Please contact the Meigs SWCD at 740-992-4282 to register.



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# Watershed Camp

The 4th Leading Creek Watershed Day Camp was held on June 4th and 5th at the at the Meigs SWCD Conservation Area near Rutland. Children from both Meigs and Gallia County joined us for two days of fun and learning outside at no charge. Of course, when holding camp in the great outdoors the weather can sometimes be unpredictable. This year camp was mired by rain storms the first day and extreme heat the second day. But nevertheless all activity stations were held, and the campers were able to brave through it and enjoy themselves.

Presenters from many partnering agencies ran activity stations during camp that focused on individual subjects. Many new topics were added this year like the importance of soils, wetland habitats, flint knapping, and archery. Some of the favorite topics from past years were seen again such as acid mine drainage, forestry, and the ever popular animals. Children explored the connections between wildlife and water

quality by seeing and even holding snakes, birds, fish, and bugs. Many great volunteers from the community helped out each day to make these lessons a fun learning experience.

Thanks to all our partners that made Camp such a wonderful event: Meigs SWCD staff, Board, and Auxiliary, Hocking College, Hocking Hills State Park, OSU Meigs Extension, ODNR- Division of Forestry, ODNR-Division of Mineral Resources Management, ODNR-Division of Wildlife, Rutland Township Board of Trustees, Danny Roush, Dave Enterline, and Will Dewees. Partial funding for this camp was also provided by U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service. Look for Watershed Day Camp again next year!



Campers learned about wetlands and all the bugs that live there with Dave Enterline.



Danny Roush showed the art of flint knapping and talked of Native American life.



The snakes from Hocking College came to visit during camp.



The Division of Forestry taught students about forestry and tree identification.

*\* This publication was funded in part by U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service.*

# Pics From Watershed Camp



Above: This barred owl named Click made friends with all the students.



Above: OSU Extension showed many wildflowers and traditional Native American plant uses.



Above: The archery trailer from Division of Wildlife allowed kids to learn to shoot a bow and arrow safely.



Above and Below: At the craft station students decorated shirts, wooden fish, and pop can cozies with paint and stickers.



Left: Students learned how to make a home composting bin with redworms.

This 'worm box' now has a home at the Meigs SWCD office.

Right: Mudpuppies are the second largest salamanders in Ohio, growing to be about 9 inches long. They retain their gills throughout life and prefer deep, muddy waters. Mudpuppies can appear sinister but are completely harmless to humans.



Above: This large nocturnal salamander, a mudpuppy, was something many kids would never have seen otherwise.



Above: Water chemistry and acid mine drainage



Above: Campers were able to see the different layers of soil and explore deep into the ground with the soils drilling truck.



# Ohio River Sweep 2008

On Saturday, June 21st the 20th Annual Ohio River Sweep took place. The Meigs Soil and Water Conservation District organized three locations in Meigs County this year, including Pomeroy, Portland, and Racine. Many other groups sponsored clean up sites all along the river.

At 9am at each site volunteers began picking up trash to make their community look a little brighter. Nearly 1 ton of trash was removed between the three sites by

about 75 volunteers. At noon volunteers were treated to lunch and all received a new River Sweep T-shirt.

River Sweep is a riverbank cleanup that extends the entire length of the Ohio River and beyond. Some tributary streams are also gradually being added to the list of clean up sites. All counties along the Ohio River participate in this extensive day of cleaning up litter. Leading Creek ends up in the Ohio River, so we were very pleased to see the great turn out.

This event would not be



These volunteers in Pomeroy were among the 50+ people that came out to clean up litter at that site alone.

possible without the many partnering agencies that contribute time and supplies. Thanks go out to the partners and donors: Ohio River Valley Water Sanitation Commission (ORSANCO), the Village of Pomeroy, Village of Racine, Village of Portland, Portland Community Center, Lebanon Township Trustees, the Meigs County Transfer Facility, **Overbrook Center**, **Powell's Food Fair**, **Dettwiller Lumber**, **Pepsi of Cheshire and Athens**, **Jaymar Inc**, **Roadside Hot Spot**, **Fox's Pizza**, **Hill's Sunoco**, **Dairy Queen**, **Ohio Valley Bank**, **Home National Bank**, and **Farmers Bank**.

# RC&D Meeting and Tour



A view from the Pauline H. Atkins Memorial Trail looking down at the parking lot.

(RC&D) Council will take place on August 21<sup>st</sup>. Meet at the Wild Horse Café in Pomeroy at 4pm where a special guest from Wayne National Forest will speak. After dinner a tour will take place at the Meigs SWCD Conservation Area near Rutland. Meigs SWCD staff will lead the tour featuring Little Leading Creek, the 2.2 acre wetland, the Atkins hiking trail, and

The next meeting of the Buckeye Hills Resource Conservation & Development

future plans at the Conservation Area.

Contact Buckeye Hills RC&D at 740-373-7926 for prices and registration details.

## Students With Soggy Socks

On May 15<sup>th</sup> and again on May 20<sup>th</sup> the Meigs SWCD was glad to host two local schools for field trips at the Meigs SWCD Conservation Area along Little Leading Creek. Students from Mid-Valley Christian School and from Meigs Intermediate School were some of the first to explore the wetland there. The wetland was completed last fall, but it is already a common sight to see black ducks, buffleheads, sandpipers, and, of course, Canada geese. Wetland plants are emerging and the aquatic insects are already abundant.

The SWCD provided the students with nets and with rubber boots, which most of the students promptly filled up with water. The students tromped through the shallow



These students from Mid-Valley Christian School were excellent bug-catchers.

upper end of the wetland, used nets to scoop up critters in the water, and excitedly announced their finds. Staff expected to find the hundreds of tadpoles and dozens of crayfish but were pleasantly surprised to find masses of aquatic bugs.

One insect that was pleasantly absent was mosquito larvae. After all, a **healthy wetland doesn't bite!** This was due in part to one species that was in abundance, the Predacious Diving Beetle. This bug and many others found feed on the larvae of mosquitoes and prevents them from being there to bite us. In its larvae form this bug is a long, slender insect with strong jaws and surprisingly swift movements. In the adult

form it is a large, dark colored beetle with large pinchers.

The 2.2 acre wetland is just one of the many projects planned for the Conservation Area, which is primarily used for outdoor education. Future plans include a handicapped accessible path that will border Little Leading Creek and the wetland, as well as a trailhead facility with a pavilion.

During the May 20<sup>th</sup> field trip, students were also treated to presentations from partner agencies such as Ohio EPA, ODNR-Division of Wildlife, United Plant Savers and OSU Extension. Thanks go out to our partners who focused on topics like camouflage, stream habitats, agriculture and food, and wildflower and plant identification.

Meigs Intermediate School students braved a few rain showers to explore the wetland.



Students from Mid-Valley Christian School saw how important bugs are to the ecosystem.



# Leading Creek Watershed Group Membership Form

*Join us today!* Leading Creek wants *you* to become a member!

To become a member of the Leading Creek Watershed Group simply fill in your information below and drop this form off at our office or mail it to us c/o Meigs SWCD  
33101 Hiland Road  
Pomeroy, OH 45769

*Yes, I want to join today!*

*And I want to donate! (see options below)*

\_\_\_\_\_  
Name (Please print) Organization (if applicable)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Mailing Address

\_\_\_\_\_  
City State Zip

\_\_\_\_\_  
Telephone Email

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature Date

### *Benefits of Membership*

All members receive personal invitations throughout the year to participate in activities such as watershed tours, group contests, litter clean up days, and water sampling demonstrations.

### *Option to Donate*

Here is your chance to help us restore and protect the watershed. All donations are used to directly benefit the efforts of the Leading Creek Watershed Group. Those who donate \$25 or more receive one of our newly designed t-shirts. Also keep in mind that your contributions are tax deductible.

Please make checks payable to Leading Creek c/o Meigs SWCD.

- \$10 *Donor* Preferred Shirt Size (If applicable) \_\_\_\_\_
- \$25 *Supporter*
- \$50 *Patron*
- \$100 *Sponsor*
- \$500 *Benefactor*
- Other \$\_\_\_\_\_

The Leading Creek Watershed Group is a partnership of residents, officials, and agencies united by common interest in restoring the Leading Creek Watershed to add to the quality of life for the residents of the watershed and surrounding communities.

*Thank you for your membership and for your support!*

# CALENDAR OF EVENTS

July 17th: Leading Creek Improvement Committee Meeting at 9:45 a.m. at Logan office of OEPA

August 7th: Leading Creek Improvement Committee Meeting at 9:45 a.m. - location to be announced

Week of August 11th: Meigs County Fair - limited office staff

August 21st: Buckeye Hills RC&D Meeting at 4pm at Wild Horse Café in Pomeroy with tour to follow

September 23rd: Meigs SWCD Annual Meeting & Banquet at 6pm at Meigs High School near Pomeroy

Office Closed for Holidays:

July 4th

September 1st

October 13th



[www.geocities.com/meigsswcd](http://www.geocities.com/meigsswcd)

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