

CONSERVATION COMMENTARY

Meigs Soil & Water Conservation District

Volume X, Issue 2

April-June 2009

Meigs County to host July grazing meeting

An Athens area grazing council meeting/pasture walk is scheduled for Thursday, July 23 beginning at 6:30 pm. The meeting will be hosted by Curt Cline at a Meigs County property he plans to develop into a grazing system. The land currently has no fence or water and has been used for hay production. Curt is working with the Meigs County NRCS and SWCD office on an EQIP contract to help him develop the grazing system.

This is a good opportunity to learn about the planning process of developing a grazing system. Participants at the meeting will have an opportunity to make suggestions regarding fence and water options. Other topics that will be covered at the meeting include: Making Management Decisions Based on Goals, Soil Fertility, Preparing Pastures for Winter Stockpiling, Use of Hay, Pasture Management and Internal Parasite Control in Small Ruminants. Because there are a number of topics to talk about, the format will be different than our regular grazing council pasture walks. We will begin with a general session and then break into groups and participants can rotate between a couple of different break-out session topics. Resource people include: Cathy Bobo, Athens SWCD, Jason Crislip and Steve Jenkins from the Meigs County NRCS/SWCD office, Daryl Clark, retired OSU Noble County Extension Educator and Rory Lewandowski, OSU Extension

Athens County. Dr. Bill Shulaw, OSU Extension Veterinarian will conduct the session on pasture management and parasite control.

Curt is planning to provide grilled lamb samples and some light refreshments for the meeting. In order to help him plan the amount needed, please RSVP by contacting the Athens County Extension office at (740) 593-8555 by Monday July 20 if you plan to attend. Participants may want to consider bringing a lawn chair to sit in during the sampling following the meeting.

Directions to the farm: (Doug Lowther property)

From Albany....Take Rt 32 west to St Rt 143. Turn left on St Rt 143, go approximately 4-5 miles to Salem-School Lot Rd. Salem School Lot Rd. is just past the Columbia Township Fire Dept. Turn right on Salem-School Lot Rd. and go approximately 2 miles. Farm is on the left. Watch for "Grazing" signs.

Or...Take St Rt 32 west to Co. Rd 71 (Columbia Rd Just prior to the airport) Turn left on Columbia and follow it into Meigs county to St Rt 143(approximately 4-5miles). Go across St Rt 143. After crossing St Rt 143 go approximately 2 miles, farm on left. Watch for "Grazing" signs.

Meigs SWCD Annual Banquet and Election to be held September 22 at the Meigs High School

This year the Meigs SWCD Annual Meeting will be held at the Meigs High School cafeteria **September 22nd** at 7 p.m., but registration and voting for supervisor election will begin at 6 p.m. Joe Bolin and Marco Jeffers's 3 - year term will expire December 31, 2009.

Our keynote speaker will be Susie Vance, Wildlife Communications Specialist with the Ohio Division of Wildlife. Her intriguing presentation will focus on the Ohio Black Bears and Bobcats.

A catered dinner by Star Grange will begin at 7 p.m. Annual Meeting registration forms cost \$12.00 this year. The deadline to register for the meeting will be September 10th.

The Meigs SWCD will also recognize the District land judging winners, hay show winners, affiliate members, and present door prizes

Call the Meigs SWCD office at 740-992-4282 for more information or to obtain an absentee ballot for the supervisor election.



How to get on the ballot

Any resident 18 years of age or older who resides or owns land within the county of the election can seek election to the SWCD board of supervisors. Names can be placed on the ballot in one of two ways.

Candidates can be nominated by the SWCD nominating committee. This committee works throughout the year looking for candidates who are interested in the conservation and protection of natural resources within the county. Interested individuals may also stop by the SWCD office, 33101 Hiland Road, Pomeroy, OH and pick up a nomination petition form. Potential candidates need to secure at least 10 signatures from residents and/or landowners from the county and submit the petition to the district by the close of business on **August 19**. Candidates meeting the eligibility requirements and deadline will be listed on the ballot for the special election, which will take place on September 22nd at Meigs High School cafeteria before the Annual Meeting.

Soil and Water Conservation Districts, located in all 88 counties, are legal subdivisions of state government that provide natural resource management assistance to county landowners and other units of local government. The district is funded by Meigs County Commissioners, and county funds are supplemented by funding from the Ohio Department of Natural Resources. The district is governed by a five-member board of county residents. Board members serve staggered three-year terms.

The mission of the Meigs Soil and Water Conservation District is to provide assistance for the wise use of our natural resources for present and future generations.

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Support our affiliate members!

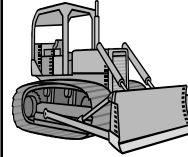
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Interested in being a Meigs SWCD affiliate member? Do you want your business listed on this page? If so, contact the Meigs SWCD at 740-992-4282.

Meigs SWCD announces 2009 Poster Contest Winners

“Dig it! The Secrets of Soil” was the theme of the 2009 Meigs Soil and Water Conservation Poster Contest.

The students made a poster on brown paper bags supplied by TNT Pit Stop. These bags are returned to TNT Pit Stop for distribution to its customers. The bags are to serve as a reminder to the residents of Meigs County of the importance of keeping our soil resource clean and healthy.

A total of \$205.00 was awarded to 12 fourth grade classes in the poster contest, with first place in each class receiving \$10 and second place winners, \$5. Each student received a “Wild Ohio for Kids” magazine booklet and a pencil.

Winners in each class along with the name of the teacher, listed first and second place respectively, are as follows:

Meigs

Gillilian – Crystal Unbankes and Kevin Pridemore
Korn – Jake Roush and Morgan Lodwick
Ramey – Joseph Paul Jr. Kennedy and Emily Henry
King – Gracie Hoffman and KJ Tracy
Walker – Hanna Young and Nicole Folmer

Southern

VanMeter – Katie Barton and Kody Greene
Barr – Macie Rodriguez and Shaun Wickersham
Hill – Marlee Maynard and Sara Schenkelberg

Eastern

Jewell – Gracie Roush and Sara Vance
Lisle – David Roush and Danielle Burrelli
Weber – Sierra Gerlach and Emily Combs
Mid Valley Christian
Edward – Nikole Smith and Jordan Roush

Jake Roush of Meigs Intermediate was the overall county champion in the poster contest and received \$25. Jake was also chosen to represent Meigs County at the State Poster Competition.



Meigs SWCD announces 2009 Essay contest winners

“Dig it! The Secrets of Soil” was the theme of the 2009 Meigs Soil and Water Conservation Essay Contest.

Sixth graders learned how Soil and Water Conservation District began and what the District does to assist landowners in Meigs County. The secret world below our feet is filled with a diversity to which we rarely give a second thought. Soil is composed of more than “dirt”, it includes an abundance of organisms, minerals, gases, water, and decaying material. Erosion, exposed soil moved by water, blowing wind, or moving ice is a major concern as this soil is usually deposited in streams, lakes or ponds.

The vital roles that soils play are far too important for us to overlook.

A total of \$130.00 was awarded to 7 sixth grade classes in the essay contest, with first place in each class receiving \$10 and second place winners, \$5. Each student that participated received a “Wild Ohio for Kids” magazine booklet and a pencil.

Winners in each class along with the name of the teacher, listed first and second place respectively, are as follows:

Southern

Manuel – Cameron Yates and Chais Rodriguez
Neal – Jacob Hoback and Sophie Guinther
Lisle – Kali Cunningham and Cassie Roush

Eastern

Otto – Greyson Wolfe and Kylie Long
Houck – Tyler Morris and Rylee Creeger
Circle – Kiera Casto and Brenna Bailey
Mid Valley Christian
Fisher – Jenna Westfall and Matthew Shiflet

Jenna Westfall of Mid Valley Christian was the overall county champion in the essay contest and received \$25.



Permanent Riparian Protection Gained in Watershed

The Meigs Soil & Water Conservation District and the Leading Creek Improvement Committee (LCIC) are proud to announce the completion of another environmental covenant project that protects tributaries to Leading Creek. The Gaston Environmental Covenant Project was completed in June. It protects 42 acres of riparian lands along Sharps Run. This project was funded by the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service using funds from the Leading Creek Improvement Account.

A property owner holds more than the land itself. They can also own rights to the land such as the right to farm, harvest timber, subdivide, extract minerals, or develop. Landowners have the right to place limits on the types of land uses that may take place on the property through an environmental covenant. The primary objective of one is to eliminate development as a potential future land use. This is very similar to the function of a conservation easement. Environmental covenants are permanent agreements that are recorded on the property’s deed and “run with the land.” The landowner will maintain ownership of the land and preserve it as they see fit. A landowner may also be able to benefit from financial incentives and compensation.

These projects protect valuable riparian, or streamside, lands. Riparian plants act as a buffer, reducing pollution that enters a stream. Roots from vegetation help water percolate into the ground which results in less flooding. Tree roots stabilize stream banks and reduce erosion.

Two other environmental covenant projects were completed through the Leading Creek program in 2007 and 2008. The combined acreage of the three projects is nearly 95 acres of protected land. Any interested streamside landowners within the Leading Creek Watershed can contact the Meigs SWCD at 740-992-4282 to help protect and maintain their land.

Fifth Leading Creek Watershed Camp

Where can kids learn about things like wetlands and streams, fields and forests, or see things like snakes, birds and fish, and even have the opportunity to handle some of these critters (if they aren't too squeamish)?

At Leading Creek Watershed Summer Camp!

This year's Leading Creek Watershed Summer Camp was held on June 3rd and 4th at the Meigs Soil and Water Conservation District's Conservation Area on New Lima Road between Rutland and Harrisonville.



This year marks the fifth year for the watershed camp.

During the two-day day camp, students participated in a number of hands-on activities to discover the importance of clean water and explore all the critters that make their homes in and around streams and wetlands. Nearly 50 children participated in the camp this year.

There are no classrooms at the Conservation Area; the Conservation Area itself is a 174-acre classroom furnished with fields and hills, trails and trees, streams and wetlands, where kids have the opportunity to learn about fish, snakes, birds, soils, prairies, wetlands (and wetland bugs), trees, flowers and plants.

Instructors and presenters at the camp were staff members of the Meigs SWCD, Ohio EPA, Hocking Hills State Park, Ohio Department of Natural Resources, Ohio State University Extension Service, and other agencies.



New this year at watershed camp was the Passport to Fishing curriculum, which was developed by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and adopted by the Recreational Boating and Fishing Foundation. Passport to Fishing is a quick and easy program teaching such fishing fundamentals as casting, knots and rigging, habitat and handling fish. Children who completed the program received a fishing rod and reel and tackle.

The camp is free and lessons are prepared for students entering grades 5-8, or ages 10-13. Each day camp lasts from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Lunch and a snack were served. Watershed camp is an outdoors-only event, so campers happily splashed about when light rain showers joined the event.



The Meigs SWCD purchased the Conservation Area in 2003 through a grant from the Clean Ohio Fund. Since then the district has constructed a parking lot, a 1.5-mile hiking trail, a wetland, a 1/4 mile handicap accessible walking trail, and a native grass and wildflower prairie. Plans also call for the construction of a recreation and fitness walking trail and a picnic shelter.

The Conservation Area is open to the public and permission is not necessary for general use, hiking, bird-watching and other non-consumptive activities.



20th Ohio River Sweep

Volunteers participating in this year's Ohio River Sweep in Meigs County picked up more than two tons of trash and debris from the banks of the Ohio River at locations in or near Middleport, Pomeroy and Racine.



This year marked the twentieth consecutive Ohio River Sweep which is a riverbank cleanup that extends the entire length of the Ohio River and into major tributaries. It is the largest environmental event of its kind, and encompasses six states.

In Meigs County, three Ohio River Sweep sites were coordinated by the Meigs Soil and Water Conservation District. Volunteers participating in the three-hour event received an Ohio River Sweep T-shirt and pizza.

In all, 103 volunteers were scattered between sites in the three villages. Local support is vital to the continuation of this event. Sponsors this year included McClure's, Powell's, Pepsi of Athens, Overbrook Rehabilitation Center, Village of Pomeroy, Village of Middleport, Village of

Racine, Fox's Pizza, Hills Sunoco, Meigs Transfer Station, Ohio Valley Bank, Farmers Bank, and Home National Bank.



Ninth annual Leading Creek Stream Sweep

Approximately 40 volunteers turned out to celebrate Earth Day this year by making a difference in their watershed. The ninth annual Leading Creek Stream Sweep was held on Saturday, April 18 at Jim Vennari Park in Rutland. Volunteers met at 9 a.m. and began picking up litter and debris along local waterways and roads. Gloves and trash bags were provided, and lunch was served afterwards. All participants received a new Leading Creek Stream Sweep T-shirt for picking up 1 ton of litter.



Stream Sweep is a great way

for groups to get involved in a community project at minimal cost, which is especially important given the current economic outlook.

The event is sponsored by the Meigs Soil and Water Conservation District, Rutland Township Board of Trustees and the Meigs County Transfer Station.

Help your local economy by shopping locally!

King Builders Supply Inc, Middleport
Meigs County Farm Bureau, Pomeroy
Margie J. Lawson, D.D.S., Inc, Racine
Little, Sheets, & Warner, LLP, Attorneys at Law, Pomeroy

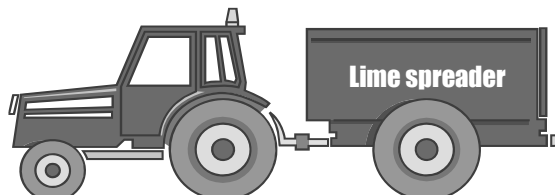
SWCD equipment for sale, rent

The following items are available for sale:

Meigs SWCD caps — \$6 each
Marking Flags — \$.08 each
Topographical Maps — \$8 each
Meigs County Platbooks — \$15.00
Ohio Pond Management Handbooks — \$2.25
Digital Soil Survey CD—\$10 each

The following equipment is available for rent (subject to scheduling and availability):

John Deere No-Till Drill (10-foot)	\$80 min. plus \$8/acre over 10 acres	70 HP tractor min.
Tye No-Till Drill (7 foot)	\$70 min. plus \$7/acre over 10 acres	45 HP tractor min.
Brillion Seeder (8-foot)	\$70 min. plus \$7/acre over 10 acres	40 HP tractor min.
Lime Spreader	\$25 min. plus \$1/ton over 25 tons	60 HP tractor min.
Forester Tree Planter	\$25 per day	25 HP tractor min.
Planter Bars	Free with \$20 returnable deposit	
Box Trap	Free with \$30 returnable deposit	



A \$100 delivery/pickup fee will be assessed for equipment rentals outside of the county.

All equipment must be scheduled through the Meigs SWCD office at 992-4282 during regular business hours for delivery Monday through Friday between the hours of 7:30 a.m. and 4 p.m. **A \$20 fee will be assessed if equipment is delivered and not used. A \$10 charge per month will be added to all bills after 60 days.**

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Conservation Commentary is a quarterly publication of the Meigs Soil and Water Conservation District.

To subscribe or unsubscribe from Conservation Commentary, contact the Meigs Soil and Water Conservation District at 740-992-4282.

Meigs SWCD Calendar of Events

July 3—Office Closed in Observance of 4th of July
July 16—Leading Creek Improvement Meeting, Logan
July 23—Meigs SWCD Board of Supervisors' Regular Meeting
Aug 13—Leading Creek Improvement Meeting, Logan
Aug 17-22— Meigs County Fair Week
Aug 19 — Last day to petition for Supervisor Election
Aug 27—Meigs SWCD Board of Supervisors' Regular Meeting
Sept 7— Office Closed in Observance of Labor Day
Sept 10— Soil Judging Contest
Sept 10— Last day to purchase tickets for Annual Banquet
Sept 17—Meigs SWCD Board of Supervisors' Regular Meeting
Sept 22— Annual Banquet and Election

Regular meetings of the Meigs SWCD Board of Supervisors are generally held at 11:30 a.m. the fourth Thursday of each month at the SWCD office, 33101 Hiland Road, Pomeroy. Dates and times are subject to change.

**For more information visit us at
www.geocities.com/meigsswcd**