

PROPOSED CHANGES TO ODNR POLLUTION ABATEMENT RULES

There will be a hearing in the beginning of December that will likely enact 20 changes to Ohio's current Pollution Abatement Rules. Many of these changes are a result of increased scrutiny over impaired waters which have seen spikes in algal blooms, toxins and dissolved reactive phosphorus over the past year. The worst example has been Grand Lake St. Marys near Celina, Ohio. There are many causes and sources of these problems, but the ODNR Division of Soil and Water Resources has recognized the need for runoff from agriculture to be reduced.

What are the changes?

If a watershed is designated to be in “distress”, there will be more stringent requirements for storage, handling and land application of manure and/or the control of erosion. (Fairfield County does not have any watersheds classified as distressed.) Nutrient management plans will also be required for all livestock operations. Operations will be visited and records reviewed a minimum of once every three years by the chief’s designee, which would be the local SWCD office. Reports of violations will be provided to the local Soil and Water Conservation District Board of Supervisors and the Division.

“Our hope is that people across Ohio realize that we must do more to protect and manage our abundant water resources and that the proposed rules will help in watersheds like Grand Lake. But that before conditions worsen elsewhere, and we experience more economic and social impacts, we all step back, and step up our mutual, cooperative, voluntary, personal, and community/watershed efforts. If we fail to do so we invite intervention by the federal government and even state and local government will be compelled to do more. This can be avoided if business sectors and citizens become more committed and engaged. To cite just two of what needs to be many examples for consideration: How can farmers reverse the trend of applying fertilizers in the winter, and how can homeowners avoid using phosphorus lawn fertilizers unless truly necessary? Ohio has abundant water resources that are a great advantage for our economy, for recreation, and for our environment. But protecting and managing them is not easy, and demands much of all of us.”

David Hanselmann, ODNR-DSWR Chief

There is only a pollution violation through the Pollution Abatement Laws if manure or sediment is entering the waters of the state. According to Ohio law, all potential violations will be investigated within three days after receiving a written complaint by the local SWCD Office or ODNR, Division of Soil and Water Resources. There is no basis in the law that governs nuisance or odor complaints. For more information on Ohio’s pollution abatement rules/process contact the SWCD office at (740) 653-8154 or visit www.dnr.state.oh.us.



HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE ANNUAL MEETING/BANQUET



Bill & Debbie Crum were recognized as a 2009 Cooperator of the Year. They received this award for the installation of waterways and many acres of conservation cover.



Lowell & Leigh Miller were presented with a 2009 Cooperator of the Year Award. They were one of the first producers in the county to install an agrichemical containment facility.



John Stitzlein & Nancy Crow were presented with a 2009 Cooperator of the Year Award. They built a 1.3 acre wetland on their farm and were one of the first farms to install quail buffers along the edge of cropland.



Vicki Kohli (left), Fairfield SWCD Education Specialist, presented Sheryl Baker (teacher at Berne Union Elementary) with the 2009 Conservation Education Teacher of the Year Award.



Perry Orndorff (right), District Manager, presented Cindy Cook with a \$100 Cord Camera gift card for her 1st place photo in this year's "Energy" themed photo contest.



Vicki Kohli (right), Fairfield SWCD Education Specialist, recognized Taylor Justice as a recipient of the Fairfield SWCD's \$500 College Scholarship.

67TH ANNUAL MEETING/BANQUET HIGHLIGHTS



Vicki Kohli (left), FSWCD Education Specialist, recognized Alaina Berry as a 2nd place statewide winner in the 2010 NACD Conservation Poster Contest.



Vicki Kohli (left), FSWCD Education Specialist, recognized Jessica Costello as the 1st place SWCD winner in the 2010 NACD Conservation Poster Contest.

This year marked the 67th anniversary of the Fairfield Soil and Water Conservation District. The annual meeting/banquet was held on September 9, 2010, at the Goslin Nature Education Center on the grounds of Alley Park. The evening started off with a Board of Supervisors election. After dinner Dale Arnold, Director of Energy Services with the Ohio Farm Bureau Federation, gave a presentation.

The 2009 Cooperator of the Year Awards were presented to the following: John Adams (not able to attend), Bill & Debbie Crum (Crum Farm), Leigh & Lowell Miller, and John Stitzlein & Nancy Crow (Stitzlein/Crow).

The Conservation Education Teacher of the Year Award is presented annually to a Fairfield County teacher who has demonstrated outstanding commitment to teaching conservation, environmental awareness, and natural resource education to students in Fairfield County. This year the 2009 Conservation Education Teacher of the Year Award was given to Sheryl Baker, a teacher at Berne Union Elementary.

Tyler Genders and Taylor Justice were recognized as this year's scholarship program recipients. Alaina Berry was presented with a certificate for being the second place statewide winner in her age category in the 2010 NACD Conservation Poster Contest. Jessica Costello was recognized for being the first place winner in her age category at the SWCD level of the NACD poster contest. The winners of the 2010 Photo Contest ("energy" theme) were: 1st place - Cindy Cook, 2nd place - Cheryl Bach, 3rd place - Philip Molyneux. All of the photo contest winners were given gift certificates to Cord Camera.

Bonny Calderwood was re-elected to serve another three-year term starting January 1, 2011.

CURT STIVISON RETIRES

After 10 years of service, Curt Stivison, Engineering Technician, announced his retirement from the District in September. He was initially hired as a

temporary employee with NRCS in Fairfield County. He was then hired by the District in 2000. Curt enjoyed working with landowners and contractors on conservation projects. He also worked closely with livestock producers on grazing management issues. He published many articles and did several experiments over the years in conjunction with OSU-Extension on pasture related topics. At times he received phone calls from around the world for further information. We wish Curt well in his retirement.



Congratulations to Lynn Getz and Elsie Sullivan for each winning an "energy" giveaway (indoor/outdoor thermometer, set of Energizer rechargeable batteries and GE energy smart light bulbs) and Trevor Thomas for winning the "My Little Animal Book" & "The Bug Bottle". Thanks to everyone who visited the Fairfield SWCD fair booth at the 2010 Fairfield County Fair.

FALL HUNTING SEASONS HELPTO SOLVE DEER PROBLEMS

Many Fairfield County producers may have experienced deer damage this year in row crops, orchards or nurseries. Landowners can have an important role in regulating deer herd size because they control access to their property. If landowners allow access to hunters, they may be able to reduce deer numbers locally, especially if adjacent neighbors also allow hunting. Because Ohio has a high deer birth rate, with many does producing twins, harvesting a single doe effectively reduces the local deer herd by a factor of two or three.

One of the best tools for dealing with deer damage is fall hunting seasons. Archery season for whitetail deer opened on Saturday, September 25, 2010, and runs through Sunday, February 6, 2011. This year Fairfield County is in Deer Management Zone C, which allows harvest of up to six deer, only one of which may be antlered. Harvesting bucks does little to control population levels. Some landowners specify that hunters harvest a doe while hunting on their property before a buck may be taken.

One additional tool available again this year to increase the harvest of does is the increased use period for antlerless deer permits. These tags can be purchased for \$15 and a full price deer tag (either sex, \$24) does not have to be purchased first. These reduced price antlerless tags are legal to use through the last day of shotgun season (Sunday, December 5, 2010). For further information, please refer to pages 7 and 8 of the 2010-11 Ohio Hunting Regulations Digest or on-line at www.wildohio.com.

If you want fewer deer on your property but do not want the venison, Farmers and Hunters Feeding The Hungry (www.fhfh.org) accepts donations at Bower and Sons in Millersport (740) 467-3800. The deer must first be field-dressed. The local FHFH coordinator is Jeff Fornshell (740) 407-8247.

If you are a hunter and are looking for places to hunt, please keep a couple of things in mind:

1. Always get written permission, not having written permission is the highest number of violations cited by wildlife officers.
2. Respect property boundaries and fences, saying that you "thought you were on Joe Smith's place" doesn't hold water.
3. If you pass up several does hoping for the "wall hanger" you might not be welcomed back to that farm. This is the greatest source of landowner complaints against hunters, not being willing to take does.
4. Tell the landowner how many deer you shot and offer some ideas on how many deer you are seeing on the property. Many hunters get permission to hunt, but far fewer report back to landowners.

STREAM CORRIDOR WORKSHOP BEING HELD

The Fairfield SWCD is hosting a workshop for landowners on November 4, 2010, on how to maintain the stream corridor through their property. The workshop will start promptly at 4 p.m. and last until 6 p.m. We will be meeting at the Lancaster High School tennis court parking lot on Arbor Drive. Topics will include: stream bank stabilization options, permit requirements, characteristics of streams, benefits of trees, tree maintenance and logjams. Speakers with the Army Corps, ODNR Division of Forestry and Division of Water Resources will be presenting along with local personnel. We will be viewing several stream restoration/stabilization sites near Lancaster High School and evaluating sections along Fetters Fun for stability.

The workshop will be outside and involve some walking, so please dress accordingly. There is no charge to attend. If the weather prevents us from being outside (rain or below zero wind chill) the workshop will be held at the Fairfield

C o u n t y
Agricultural
Center located at
831 College
Avenue in
Lancaster. For
more information,
please call the
Fairfield SWCD
at (740) 653-
8154.



2010-11 Ohio Hunting & Trapping Seasons

Game Species	Opening Date	Closing Date	Bag Limit
Squirrel	Sept. 1	Jan. 31	6
Whitetail Deer	Zone C, refer to hunting digest for details		
Ruffed Grouse	Oct. 9	Jan. 31	2
Ducks, Geese	See waterfowl regulations		
Wild Turkey (Spring)	April 18, 2011	5/15/11	
Cottontail Rabbit	Nov. 5	Feb. 8	4
Ringneck Pheasant	Nov. 5	Jan. 9	2
Fox, Raccoon,	Nov. 10	Jan. 31	None
Opossum, Skunk,			
Weasel			
Coyote	No closed season for hunting or trapping		None
Groundhog	Closed during deer gun season only		None
Wild Boar	No closed season		None

SIGN-UP PERIOD EXTENDED FOR CSP

NRCS Chief Dave White has announced the ranking period cut-off date for producer applications in NRCS' Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP) has been extended to January 7, 2011.

"We're extending the deadline for applications to CSP to provide agricultural producers more time to complete their applications," said White. "This will help farmers, ranchers and forestry producers by giving them more time and hopefully allow even more producers to participate in this program."

All producers are encouraged to apply for CSP. The program, authorized in the 2008 Farm Bill, offers payments to producers who maintain a high level of conservation on their land and who agree to adopt higher levels of stewardship. Eligible lands include cropland, pastureland, rangeland and nonindustrial forestland.

A CSP self-screening checklist is available to help producers determine if CSP is suitable for their operation. The checklist highlights basic information about CSP eligibility requirements, contract obligations and potential payments. It is available from at the NRCS office or on-line at http://www.nrcs.usda.gov/programs/new_csp/csp.html.



EQIP CONTINUOUS SIGN-UP



EQIP (Environmental Quality Incentives Program) offers contracts that provide financial assistance to help develop conservation plans and implement conservation practices. Owners of land in agricultural production or persons who are engaged in livestock or agricultural production or non-industrial forestland management on eligible land may participate in the EQIP program. Program practices and activities are carried out according to an EQIP plan of operations developed in conjunction with the producer that identifies the appropriate conservation practice or measures needed to address identified natural resource concerns.

To participate in EQIP, an applicant must be an individual, entity or joint operation and meet the following criteria:

- Be an agricultural producer with an annual minimum of \$1,000 of agricultural products produced and/or sold from the operation, except for forestry operations
- Have an interest in the farming or forestry operation associated with the land being enrolled
- Have control of the land for the term of the proposed contract
- Producers with forestland are exempt from the \$1,000 minimum annual sales, but must have a forest management plan or forest stewardship plan
- Federal and state governments and political subdivisions are NOT eligible; however, land that they own may be eligible if leased to an eligible agricultural producer

Applications for EQIP are accepted on a continuous basis; however, Ohio NRCS establishes application "cut-off" (December 1, 2010) or submission deadline dates for evaluation and ranking of eligible applications. To obtain an EQIP application, visit or contact David Libben or Melissa Horton with NRCS at (740) 653-5320.

2010 FORESTRY EQIP PROGRAM

Are you interested in establishing a stand of trees?	Are you eligible?	What is available?	How do I apply?
<p>Would you like to improve the health and vigor of your existing woods?</p> <p>If you own a woodlot in Ohio that is at least 5 acres and you qualify as an agricultural producer, Ohio's EQIP Forestry program may be for you.</p> <p>EQIP (Environmental Quality Incentives Program) is a way for landowners to receive program payments and technical advice from professional foresters.</p>	<p>The eligibility criteria for Ohio's EQIP Forestry program include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Owning or managing a minimum of 5 acres of woodland. •Having a Forest Stewardship Plan. •Restricting livestock from the forested land. •A USDA customer service record with the Farm Service Agency (FSA). 	<p>The 2010 Forestry EQIP practices include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Tree planting •Grape vine control •Crop tree release (selective cutting of trees to allow other trees of value to grow) •Thinning •Control of wood invasive species (Bush Honeysuckle, Tree of Heaven, etc.) <p>Note: There is a minimum of 5 acres and a maximum of 50 acres for all practices except the control of woody invasive species.</p> 	<p>Applications for the EQIP Forestry program are available at your local USDA Service Center in the NRCS Office. Although the selection period for 2010 has already occurred, applications are accepted throughout the year. Turning in an application and having our area's ODNR Service Forester create a Forest Stewardship Plan will have you ready for the 2011 selection period.</p> <p>EQIP is a competitive program: all applications are ranked and evaluated against other applications. Contact the NRCS office at (740) 653-5320 for more information. Additional information is also available on the web at www.oh.nrcs.usda.gov/programs/.</p>

2011 AGRICULTURAL EASEMENT PURCHASE PROGRAM

The Ohio Department of Agriculture has indicated the opening of the 2011 Agricultural Easement Purchase Program will be January 5, 2011. Because of the popularity of this program in Fairfield County, we ask that you indicate your intention to apply to the SWCD office no later than Wednesday, January 19, 2011.

Our staff resources will focus on the completion of approximately 30 applications during the first forty-five days the application process is open. Priority will be given to updating applications made in 2010, or farms that had applied during previous years. We will focus our efforts on applications that are based on the date you provided your intention to apply. They will be processed on a first-come first-served basis. No new applications will be started during the last 45 days of the application period to allow for the creation of the County Commissioners resolution of support and final application preparation.

Fairfield SWCD hopes to complete applications for all eligible applicants with the understanding that time and staff resources available will be the ultimate deciding factor.

Last year's 29 applications (4,000 acres +/-) resulted in three successful applications totaling 369 +/- acres. That averages out to an agricultural easement purchase price offered by the state/federal at \$1,355/acre. Stipulations through this program are \$2,000/acre maximum to \$500,000/farm application or \$500,000/county total.

Expectations for successful applications in 2011 include:

- All applications to the AEPP will be reviewed for possible inclusion in the USDA-NRCS Farm and Ranchlands Protection Program. If your farm is selected for this program you will see tighter restrictions on impervious land cover, strong restrictions to one oil and gas well for the entire farm and a specific appraisal process. You cannot opt out of this if you are selected and your deed will be under Federal/State/Commissioners control. All farms not meeting the FRPP criteria will go through the Clean Ohio AEPP funding process as a State/Commissioners controlled deed. The blending of monies from these programs allows more land to be protected statewide.
- Applications selected will have to pay for a title search up front to meet the program's specifications. The option will exist to solicit your own title search or have the State solicit a title search for you within the program specifications.
- Landowners will need to obtain an appraisal to match their deed expectations to the program's specifications up front. This appraisal must be current at the time of deed closure for those interested in a Federal tax write-off.

- Landowners will be responsible to resolve all outstanding reserved oil and gas rights not currently under lease up front. This must be completed with appropriate legal documents showing release within a limited time frame after notification of acceptance.
- Out of pocket survey costs may be necessary if your current property description does not meet County Transference standards as determined by the County Auditor's Map Room.

Program Guidelines for 2012

- FSWCD will apply no more than 30 applications for the AEPP annually (they may be of the same ownerships but meeting the individual application requirements).
- Those applicants who have applied the year prior are given first priority to apply but must decide to re-apply within the first 30 days the application is open each year or lose the opportunity.
- Those in waiting will be placed on a first-come first-serve list.
- Once FSWCD is notified of who was accepted, we will contact those first on the waiting list.

If you have questions or would like to talk about the programs or other alternatives to protect your farm, please call Jonathan Ferbrache, Resource Specialist, at (740) 653-8154.



SAVE THE DATE

The Southeast Ohio Farmland Preservation meeting will be held at Kenyon College on Tuesday, December 7, 2010. This is a repeat of our recent outreach efforts in Hocking County in 2009 and in Perry County in 2010.

HUNTER EDUCATION CLASS BEING HELD

There will be a Hunter Education Class offered on November 8, 9, and 10, 2010, at the Fairfield County Agriculture Center in Lancaster. The class will be held from 5:30 - 9 p.m. each night and those participating must attend all three nights. Children 10 and under must be accompanied by a parent or guardian.

Please call the Fairfield SWCD office at (740) 653-8154 for more information and to register.

CRP RULE CHANGES

The Conservation Reserve Program that allows for cropland to be converted to tree and grass filter strips and for the development of grass waterways and wetlands has made a change in the eligibility rules. In order to be eligible for this program, the land needs to have been cropped four out of six years between 2002 and 2007 and is physically capable of being cropped. Previously the eligibility years were 1996 to 2001.



District Supervisors

John Albert
Bonny Calderwood
Bob Hoffman
Mike Wolfe
Joe Young

District Personnel

Amy Boyer
Nikki Drake
Jonathan Ferbrache
Christina Holt
Rita Kemmerer
Vicki Kohli
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Perry Orndorff

NRCS Personnel

Bob Hendershot
Melissa Horton
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Mark Scarpitti