

# NEWS

## & views

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## Farm Science Review Happenings

Soil and water conservation got its fair share of visibility at the Farm Science Review in September. Here are a few highlights:

### Vance Inducted into "FSR Hall of Fame"

Former Division of Soil and Water Conservation Chief Larry Vance was honored for his work in promoting and obtaining funds for the both the Federation Park and the Gwynne Conservation Area. Vance, who served as division chief from 1981-2002, was responsible for procuring a \$150,000 grant from the Ohio Department of Natural Resources NatureWorks Bond Package to build the new Natural Resources Interpretative Center. He was also the driving force behind Federation Park, and initiated the Conservation Farm

Family Awards program in 1984.

### Federation Park Renamed

Located at the corner of Beef Street and Friday Avenue, Federation Park is an oasis of green where FSR-goers can sit and relax – and, of course, learn about soil and water conservation programs. On Tuesday September 17, it became Lawrence G. Vance Soil and Water Conservation Park in a ceremony led by ODNR Director Sam Speck. In his remarks, Speck noted that, "from the initial concept to what we enjoy today, there isn't much about Federation Park that Larry hasn't had a hand in – literally. He's mowed the grass, pulled weeds, driven nails, spread mulch, planted trees, painted and – perhaps most importantly – prodded, pleaded, and promoted until he – more often than not – has gotten what he wanted to make this area a showcase for conservation."



Conservation Farm Family Award winners for 2002 were honored during the FSR.

### Going Strong at 104...

Since the Ohio Conservation Farm Family Awards program was initiated in 1984, the Division of Soil and Water Conservation, in partnership with Ohio Farmer magazine, the Ohio Farm Bureau Federation, and Hancor, Inc., has honored exemplary private lands conservationists from all over the state. The five families honored during this year's FSR

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Marian and Larry Vance with ODNR Director Speck following the dedication of "Lawrence G. Vance Soil and Water Conservation Park" during the Farm Science Review.

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# Conservation Views



As we near the end of harvest and feel the chill in the air, it reminds me that it won't be long until the Federation's annual meeting will be here. As those who have attended in the past will attest, this is a very important meeting for our members and for the continued development of our organization. If you haven't participated in this meeting in the past, I would strongly recommend that you talk with the local SWCD staff and plan to participate.

worked with in the past that are causing pollution problems. In order to do that, we need to develop local strategies for working with those individuals who don't come through our doors and ask for help. We need to develop new sales techniques that open the doors to those producers who we haven't worked with in the past, but know can benefit from our assistance.

And as conservation leaders, both board members and staff, we need to be good examples in our communities. If we expect to have any credibility with others, we need to "clean up our own backyard" if we haven't already done so.

I look forward to seeing you at our 60th Annual Meeting and discussing these and other issues with you. ■



Dave Linkhart, President  
*Ohio Federation of Soil and Water  
Conservation Districts*

One of the issues on this year's agenda deals with water quality and pollution violations from livestock operations, both large and small. I believe that if the livestock industry is going to continue to prosper in Ohio, operations that are causing pollution to Ohio's lakes, rivers, and streams must solve the sources of that pollution. And we, as conservation leaders, must be willing to step forward to provide assistance to operations that we have not

## Scioto CREP Development Underway

The Ohio Conservation Partnership is working on the development of a new Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP) for Ohio. The Scioto River Basin CREP would be a 29 county collaboration with local SWCDs, ODNR, USDA, and other conservation organizations. Business and industry along with municipalities are also being sought as potential funding partners.

The Scioto River Basin CREP will focus on nutrient/nitrate delivery, sedimentation/soil erosion, protection of municipal drinking water supplies, and wildlife biodiversity. Issues such as flash flooding/flood plain management, habitat loss/modification, forestry management, and farmland protection may also be addressed in the proposal. In addition to traditional CRP type practices, some new practices may be included in the proposal to specifically address nutrients/nitrates. Such a concept is being referred to as a "Super CREP" proposal, where CRP practices are merged with other Farm Bill programs such as EQIP. This new CREP initiative was first unveiled at the OFSWCD Summer School in July. Two public information meetings were held this past summer, followed by two Guidance Committee meetings. The Guidance Committee is composed of rep-

resentatives from the initial information meetings – the Ohio Conservation Partnership, Farm Service Agency, local watershed groups, Ohio Farm Bureau, Ohio Livestock Coalition, Ducks Unlimited, Pheasants Forever, RC&D, Heidelberg College, and other local and state agencies and organizations. The Guidance Committee is meeting monthly to assist in the development of the Scioto CREP proposal.

The DSWC, which is coordinating the initiative, plans to have a draft proposal ready for submission to USDA-Washington by December 31.

Meanwhile, Ohio's two up-and-running CREP programs have been tremendously popular. Since May of 2000 the Lake Erie CREP SWCDs have signed up over 15,000 acres and contracted more than \$4 million in payments to local producers. Ohio's \$4 million in payments is being matched by nearly \$37 million from USDA for rental payments over fifteen years, cost-share, and incentives. The Lake Erie CREP is targeting sedimentation and soil erosion throughout 27 counties in northwest and north central Ohio. ■

### CONSERVATION CALENDAR

#### January 21-22-23, 2003

OFSWCD Annual Meeting  
Adams Mark, Columbus

#### February 9-13

NACD Annual Meeting – Disney's  
Coronado Springs Resort, Orlando

#### February 18-21

Conservation Leadership Class 3  
(District Administrators) – Columbus

#### March 4-5

All Employees Meeting  
Adams Mark, Columbus

#### March 16-19

NACD Spring Legislative Conference  
– Washington Court Hotel

#### April 27- May 4

Soil and Water Stewardship Week –  
"Food for the Future"

#### June 8-9-10

Ohio Envirothon – Urbana University

#### July 26-31

Canon Envirothon – Mount St.  
Mary's College, Frederick, Maryland

#### August 3-5

Summer Supervisors School  
Radisson Hotel, Toledo

#### August 12-13-14

11th Annual Education Workshop  
Deer Creek State Park

# Focus on Education

By Jeanne Russell, Nonpoint Source Education Coordinator

## Conservation Education Teacher of the Year – Jim Duxbury

Congratulations to 2002 Ohio Teacher of the Year winners Cathy Knoop (Hocking County elementary teacher) and Jim Duxbury (science teacher at Orrville High School, Wayne County). Jim's program is featured below; Cathy's program will be highlighted in our next News & Views.

Jim Duxbury attributes much of his teaching success to making his lessons "real" for students. "If it doesn't connect to their lives, then it doesn't matter to them." He challenges students to find something that is NOT related to earth science - in exchange for an "A" on their next test. Naturally this gets their attention and sets them to thinking about the importance of science in their lives.

Jim's students are introduced to complex topics such as energy conservation, land use planning, overpopulation, hydrogeologic assessments, and wetlands mitigation as they assume the role of environmental consultants, conducting soil surveys and writing environmental impact statements for their homes and producing groundwater pollution potential maps for their school. Several years ago his students researched, planned, and installed a 17' groundwater monitoring well - the first of its kind on a school campus. The well is now used as an educational tool by many classes and the community for tracking groundwater depths and conducting chemical water quality analyses. His students also participate in a contest sponsored by Zero Population Growth in which they produce 30-second radio commercials relating overpopulation to habitat loss, global warming, pollution, and resource depletion. Two of his students qualified as national finalists.

Jim strives to set a good example for his students. He presented a plan to city

council listing the benefits of keeping city property natural, and enthusiastically entered into a partnership to help install a two-mile nature trail with educational signage and enhanced wetlands.

With the help of other teachers, students, and scout groups, they are currently re-establishing a prairie, building bridges, cleaning up streams, and building bird and bat houses. Jim's students also initiated several recycling campaigns, including a biannual newspaper drive that collects an average of 5-7 tons of newspaper per event.

Jim believes in introducing his students to the planet's many wonders and the endless possibilities for careers in the environmental sciences. He serves as advisor to a 38-year-old earth science club that averages 75 members (out of a school population of 550). The club travels to a number of Ohio State Parks, and a six-day trip is planned each year during spring break to one of three national parks; Shenandoah, Great Smokey Mountain, or the Missouri Ozarks. Club members also assist with elementary school science fairs, park clean-ups, and Rails to Trails projects. ■

## New Round of Watershed Coordinator Grants Awarded

Six more watershed groups have received



Jim Duxbury received the OFSWCD "Teacher of the Year Award" – Secondary Grades Category – from president Dave Linkhart at Summer School.

a total of \$234,000 in grants to hire or support watershed coordinators to help support local stream and river protection in Ohio. These grants bring to 28 the number of watershed coordinators funded through the Watershed Coordinator Grants program since 2000.

Organizations receiving grants were: Grand River Partners, Inc.; Meigs County Soil & Water District (for Leading Creek); Friends of Alum Creek; West Creek Preservation Committee (tributary of the Cuyahoga River); Cuyahoga Soil & Water Conservation District (for the Euclid Creek watershed); Mercer County Soil & Water Conservation District; and the Wabash Watershed Alliance.

The grants are part of \$4 million allocated by ODNR and Ohio EPA to fund watershed coordinator positions throughout the state over a six-year period. Each grant recipient has committed to producing a watershed plan that will restore and maintain the chemical, physical and biological integrity of streams within their jurisdiction – an objective of the 1972 Clean Water Act. ■

# Conservation Innovation – Leading Districts Into the 21st Century

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## Area Interests

*Compiled by program specialists, edited by Dan Kush.*

### Area 1

*Ed Crawford*

#### “Circle The Wagons!”

**Allen, Hancock, Hardin, Mercer, Putnam, Paulding, Wyandot and Van Wert SWCDs** worked together to provide hands-on training for teachers at the Paulding SWCD Nature Center. Their 5th Annual EARTH (Environmental Awareness & Resources for Teaching Harmony) Teacher Workshop has now reached 250 teachers. The workshop is designed to increase teachers’ awareness of environmental issues and to give creative ideas for their classrooms. This year’s topics included: Global Positioning Systems, Art in the Environment, Soils, and Stream Ecosystems. Graduate credit was available through Bowling Green State University.

### Area 2

*Dorothy Farris and Jeff Van Loon*

#### Districts Fair Well at Annual County Events

Many northeastern Ohio SWCDs stepped out of the box at their annual county fairs to inform landowners of SWCD programs and services. **Mahoning SWCD** took advantage of the new NRCS “Toolkit” software to produce and print nearly 450 customized aerial photo-maps for fairgoers. “Folks were lined up to get a shot of their property during the fair and we had several call the office afterwards,” says Mahoning SWCD Urban Conservationist Don Garver. In **Stark County**, passers-by were attracted to a collection of antique tools and implements and enjoyed trying to guess what they were and how they were used. Stark district administrator Carolyn Gabric says the booth was very popular and increased the time folks spent at the display over previous years. “The staff also learned a few things,” says

Gabric. “Many people related stories about the history of the items as well as their own personal experiences using the items.” **Geauga County** boasted its own “Conservation Hut” in the natural resources area at the Great Geauga County Fair. See page 6 to find out who dropped by!

### Back to the Future

The Area 2 “area office” is being reconstituted after a seven-year absence. The Medina County Commissioners constructed a 7,000 square foot building southwest of Medina for the USDA and conservation agencies, including the NRCS and Division of Soil and Water Conservation area office staffs. The conference room holds twenty people comfortably. Medina had been the home for the area office since the 1960s until it was dismantled in 1995.

### Area 3

*Chad Amos and Fred Hammon*

#### Expanding the District’s Circle of Influence

The **Holmes SWCD** recently conducted a Master Conservationist Program. Twenty-five participants spent 15 contact hours learning about conservation issues and topics. With three classroom sessions and two field trips, the group studied ecosystems, soils, nonpoint source pollution, stream quality, water issues, and conservation practices. The class was a diverse group of local citizens, farmers, and teachers. One of the participating teachers summed things up this way, “The Master Conservation Program provided me with information and personal contacts in order to expand my fourth grade science curriculum. In my science class I encourage experimentation, but with the contacts I’ve made through this class I plan to schedule short field trips for my students to observe the world around them.” What a great way to grow the conservation movement!

## Strategic Planning “Railroads” SWCD Goals

**Muskingum SWCD** participated in the “Local Motion” workshop at the OFSW-CD Winter Meeting in Columbus, and later involved local stakeholders in the county to help further define issues for the SWCD to focus on. According to Dick Sorg, Muskingum SWCD district administrator, “This not only helps the SWCD staff on a day-to-day basis, but we have used our strategic plan when working with our county commissioners to help secure funding to meet the goals we have developed.” To date, the Muskingum SWCD has addressed the two top issues in their plan; the next three will be addressed within two years.

### Area 4

*Ed Everman*

#### Annual Meeting Evolves Into Appreciation Dinner

In an effort to thank the community and cooperators who work with them, the **Logan SWCD** has, for the past two years, not charged for their annual meeting meal. Instead, the office staff has helped prepare the meal and found ways to shave costs. This year Bob Stoll, district conservationist, and Dan Crusey, Division of Wildlife biologist, grilled rib eye steaks and the Logan SWCD staff prepared the rest of a fine meal – finishing it off with ice cream! Supervisors greeted folks as they arrived. A short business meeting, which included the election of supervisors and honoring of the outstanding cooperator, highlighted the evening. Guests felt they were appreciated for their involvement with the district and went home with a sense of ownership in the conservation program of Logan County.

### Area 5

*Steve Hawkins and Constance White*

#### Gallia SWCD Expands Agriculture Awareness

“COSI on Wheels” rolled into Gallia

County for the Farm Bureau's Agricultural Awareness Day. The Columbus-based science center's portable classroom and thirteen other groups worked with 400 fourth graders to teach "logical thinking" skills as required in the Ohio proficiency tests. Stella Gibson, **Gallia SWCD** education coordinator, demonstrated soil erosion and its effects on the community. Other learning stations included farm math and honey production. "The importance of teaching soil conservation at an early age is often overlooked," said Gibson. "Fourth graders understand that growing our food and protecting our environment begins with preventing soil erosion."

## Water Education Rules

**Fayette SWCD** held their "Waterfest" recently for all the 5th graders in the county. They began with a group picture in front of the official Waterfest sign and a visit by "Les Waters" the "water drop," who discussed water conservation and quality. Activities included operating a fire hose, a fishing demonstration, demonstrations of hydrostatic pressure, watershed discovery, a puppet show, experiments with water, making a glacier, water games by rescue specialists, soil conservation demonstrations and more for a total of 20 activities. Many agencies, volunteers, supervisors, and spouses made it a success. ■

## 50th Annual FFA State Land and Soil Judging

*By Tim Gerber, Administrator, Soil Inventory and Evaluation Section*

This year's FFA State Land and Soil Judging Contest was held on October 12 at the Delaware Wildlife Area in southeastern Marion County. The teams judged a variety of soils from pits at eight sites selected by Larry Tornes, serving as a private contractor for the division. Judges for this year's contest were the division's Steve Miller, NRCS' Rich Gehring, and OSU's Brian Slater. Ninety-seven teams from 71 Ohio high schools earned the right to compete at the state level. Some schools brought two teams – one to judge soils for agricultural uses and another for the urban use contest. The following teams and individuals excelled in the contests:

### Agricultural Uses – Teams:

- First Place: Monroeville H.S. (Huron)
- Second Place: East Knox H.S. (Knox)
- Third Place: Bellevue H.S. (Huron)

### Agricultural Uses – Individuals:

- First Place: Josh McConnell (Jefferson)
- Second Place: Derrick Thrasher (Erie)
- Third Place: Steven Carlson (Hocking)

### Urban Uses – Teams:

- First Place: Adena H.S. (Ross)
- Second Place: Mt. Gilead H.S. (Morrow)
- Third Place: Hardin Northern H.S. (Hardin)

### Urban Uses – Individuals:

- First Place: Jason McBride (Hardin)
- Second Place: Erin Wells (Ross)
- Third Place: Rose Dudgeon (Knox)



*About 360 students gathered at the Delaware Wildlife Area on an overcast Saturday morning for the 50th Annual FFA State Land and Soil Judging Contest.*

## Soil Program Celebrates 50th

2002 marked the 50th anniversary of the activation of ODNR's soil program, and a group of about 60 people gathered on September 12 to celebrate the milestone. The group included 15 of the 22 soil scientists in the Division of Lands and Soil (DLS) in 1982, when that division merged with the Division of Soil and Water Districts.

The keynote speaker for the 50th Anniversary Reunion Banquet was OSU Vice President for Agricultural Administration Bobby Moser. ODNR Assistant Director Bill Moody, Division of Soil and Water Conservation Chief David Hanselmann, and former ODNR Director Bob Teater also offered remarks during the program. Moser and NRCS State Conservationist Kevin Brown received plaques recognizing OSU's and NRCS' collaborative efforts in the Ohio Soil Survey over the past 50 years.

Through the influence of Louis Bromfield and others, the DLS was one of ODNR's original seven divisions when the Department was created in 1949. Although the Natural Resources Commission recognized the DLS as the third-most important division, it took almost three years for the director to select the DLS' first employee, Chief John Ferguson. The Commission's intent was for Ohio's soil survey program to be a collaborative effort, coordinated through the Ohio Soil Inventory Board. It still is today. ■

# The Back Page

## Governor Visits Geauga SWCD Fair Booth

Location, location, location. Geauga SWCD was in just the right spot over the Labor Day weekend, as Governor Taft dropped by the district's booth during his visit to "The Great Geauga County Fair – Ohio's oldest continuous county fair."

The governor visited with district administrator Carmella Shale and board members Kevin O'Reilly, Jr. and Linda Henry and observed a demonstration of the district's "Streamulator" stream table model. He noted that Ohio's soil and water conservation program is well respected as one of the best in the country, and encouraged the district to keep up their good work.

Gauga SWCD boasts it's own "Conservation Hut" in the Natural



Left to right are GSWCD administrator Carmella Shale, Gov. Taft, and GSWCD board members Kevin O'Reilly, Jr. and Linda Henry

Resources Area on the fairgrounds. This permanent home puts Geauga SWCD "right where we belong," says Vicki Domonkos, the district's recently hired education specialist. ■

## Farm Science Review

con't from pg 1

were: Bill Frankart and Gene Cook of Seneca County; William and Carol Farris of Wayne County; James and Judy Rex of Morgan County; Frank and Gayle Phelps of Logan County; and Wayne and June Williams of Jackson County.

## Farm Bill Central

"A new farm bill almost always includes sweeping changes to programs that greatly affect the farm operations and cropping decisions of Ohio's farmers, and people usually have a myriad of questions." That's how Division of Soil and Water Conservation Chief David Hanselmann set the stage for this interactive opportunity for FSR-goers to have their conservation and commodity questions answered. Division and USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) and Farm Service Agency (FSA) staff were available each day to discuss the new Farm Bill's provisions one-on-one and in small group question and answer sessions. ■



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