



Jefferson Soil & Water
Conservation District
500 Market Street
Mezzanine, Suite 4
Steubenville, OH 43952
740-264-9790

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The County Cooperator

A PUBLICATION OF
THE JEFFERSON SOIL AND WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT

September
2022



Fun Ohio River Facts

- The Ohio River is a major river artery of the east-central U.S.
- Approx. 981 miles in length.
- 10th longest river in the U.S.
- Flows through or along the border of 6 states: IL, IN, KY, OH, PA and WV.
- Largest tributary, by volume, of the Mississippi in the U.S.
- Ohio's tributaries include the Tennessee, Cumberland, Kanawha, Big Sandy, Licking, Kentucky, and Green rivers from the south and the Muskingum, Miami, Wabash, and Scioto rivers from the north.
- Ohio's drainage basin includes parts of 15 states: NY, PA, MD, WV, KY, TN, VA, NC, OH, IN, IL, GA, AL, MS and SC.
- Serves as a climatic transition area as its water runs along the periphery of the humid subtropical climate and humid continental climate thereby being inhabited by fauna and flora of both climates.
- The Ohio River supports 160 species of fish.
- The Ohio River is a source of drinking water for more than five million people



this issue

Annual Meeting	cover
Fun Facts	cover
2022 Election	pg. 2
Photo Contest	pg. 3
Annual Fernwood Outdoor Days	pg. 4
Indian Creek High School	pg. 5
Career & Education Fair	pg. 6
Excess Fertilizer	pg. 7
New Staff	pg. 8
Jefferson County Fair Contest	pg. 8
Septic System	pg. 9
Pasture Walk	pg. 10
Business After Hours	pg. 10
Stream Debris Removal Program	pg. 11
Dates to Remember	back

JSWCD Mission Statement "Promoting Conservation of Our Lands and Waters"

JSWCD BOARD:
Mark Nelson, Chair
Duayne Wetherell, Vice Chair
Shawn Dougherty, Secretary
Ken Perkins, Treasurer
Stephanie Vance, Public Relations

JSWCD STAFF:
Irene Moore, District Administrator
Wendee Dodds, Operations Manager/Natural Resources Specialist
Brandon Andresen, Water Quality Coordinator
Aaron Dodds, Projects Manager
Tim Bell, Cross Creek/Yellow Creek Watershed Coordinator
Kirsten Zwick, Ag & Natural Resources Technician
Amy Browning, Bookkeeping Manager/Program Assistant

JSWCD ASSOCIATE BOARD MEMBERS: Dr. Eric Haenni, Jodee Verhovec, Kam Pendleton & Paul Sweeney

We are online and on Facebook
www.jeffersonswcd.org



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Please join us for the
Jefferson Soil and Water Conservation District's

Annual Meeting and Banquet

Tuesday, October 25th

Jeffco Event Center
256 John Scott Hwy
Steubenville, Ohio

RSVP to 740-264-9790 or imoore@jeffersoncountyoh.com
by October 17th

\$25.00 per/ticket

5:30 p.m. to 6:45 p.m.

Hors D'oeuvres provided by Piergallini Catering
Supervisor Election Voting
Photo Contest Voting
Browse Displays

7:00 p.m.

Introductions
Dinner provided by Manfreds Catering
Awards



If you would like to stop receiving printed newsletters and would prefer to receive electronic versions via email, please instruct us by contacting us at 740-264-9790 or abrowning@jeffersoncountyoh.com

We appreciate your help in minimizing unwanted printed mail.

If you still want the print issue, no action is required.

dates to Remember

- Columbus Day (Office Closed) · October 10
- JSWCD Board Meeting · October 17
- Veterans Day (Office Closed) · November 11
- JSWCD Board Meeting · November 21
- Thanksgiving Day (Office Closed) · November 24
- JSWCD Board Meeting · December 19
- Christmas (Office Closed) · December 26



“
The earth is
what we all
have in
common
”

WENDELL BERRY

The Jefferson Soil and Water Conservation District is guided by 5 volunteer board members who are elected to their positions for 3 year terms. These board members are community members who help make funding decisions on how local and state funds are spent to improve the use of conservation practices in Jefferson County.

Ken Perkins and Mark Nelson, whose board terms expire this year, have decided to run for re-election. These two highly qualified candidates will run uncontested for our two open positions on the Jefferson SWCD Board of Supervisors.

The Ohio Soil and Water Conservation Commission will cause an election of Supervisors of the Jefferson Soil and Water Conservation District (SWCD) to be held in accordance with Chapter 940 of the Ohio Revised Code. Voters eligible to cast a ballot for Jefferson Soil and Water Conservation District Supervisor (JSWCD) must be 18 years of age or older, a resident or own land in Jefferson County or own a corporation, partnership, association or other entity registered with the Ohio Secretary of State in Jefferson County. Residents wishing to vote to affirm either or both Mark Nelson and Ken Perkins positions on the JSWCD Board may request a ballot application and ballot from Jefferson SWCD by any of the following ways: Requesting an application by either calling the JSWCD office at 740 264-9790 or by emailing imoore@jeffersoncountyoh.com.

Upon request to vote, the SWCD will provide a ballot application, election ballot, and ballot envelope. The election period starts on September 26, 2022. Ballots must be received (not postmarked) in the SWCD office by noon on Tuesday, October 25, 2022.

You may also vote in person at the JSWCD office located at 500 Market Street, Mezzanine, Suite 4, Steubenville, OH 43952 during office hours Monday through Friday from 8:00 am to 4:30 pm.

Casting of ballots will also be accepted 5:30 pm to 6:45 pm prior to the convening of the JSWCD Annual Meeting and Banquet scheduled for October 25, 2022 to be held at the JeffCo Event Center located at 256 John Scott Highway, Steubenville, OH. Reservations for the Annual Meeting and Banquet are not required to be eligible to vote.



Perkins, Ken is completing his third term as a JSWCD board supervisor. Perkins has served as public relations chair, secretary, vice chair and is currently serving as the JSWCD board treasurer.

Ken resides in Wells Township with his wife

Becky (Gilson) and stepdaughter Kayla. Ken has been a Jefferson County resident since 1991 and is President of Tri-State Financial Services, LLC located in Steubenville. He has over 35 years' experience as a Financial Advisor and is currently a Circle of Excellence Advisor with Cetera Advisor Networks LLC.

Ken's financial planning practice has assisted family farms in Jefferson and surrounding counties with estate planning, asset preservation, creating and preserving wealth. Ken takes pride in assuring that the family farm stays in the family for future generations. Ken feels that with his many years of community involvement he can bring great value to the Board as well as increase the public knowledge of what our district does and can do for our local residents.



Nelson, Mark is completing his third term as a Jefferson SWCD supervisor. He has served as the board secretary, public relations chair and is currently serving as the JSWCD board chair.

Mark and his family live in Cross Creek

Township. He and his wife Gretchen and their ten children all hunt, fish, trap, work together on their hobby farm and enjoy recreating on the Ohio River.

Mark owns Nelson Fine Art and Gifts where he and his family offer a full spectrum of in-house services and custom manufacturing as well as three storefronts: Leonardo's Coffee Shop, Steubenville Popcorn Company and Drosselmeyer's Nutcracker Shoppe. The Nelson family are also the creators of the Steubenville Nutcracker Village.

Mark looks forward to continuing to make a positive impact on the county by utilizing the capacities in which he currently serves.

County Unveils New Stream Debris Removal Pilot Program

Supported by County Commissioners and JB Green Team

The Jefferson Soil and Water Conservation District (JSWCD) officially launched its new stream debris removal program this past August. Thanks to generous aid by the County Commissioners, as well as JB Green Team, the JSWCD's new program has already moved beyond its first application phase and into its site visit and ranking phase. Officially unveiled in the Fall of 2021, the stream debris removal program aims to help landowners with the long-time issues of debris removal from streams throughout Jefferson County.

The topography of Jefferson County, in combination with its short distance to the Ohio River, results in many small streams and creeks that flow through heavily wooded areas. These small waterways often jam, and subsequently flood nearby areas, because debris from nearby becomes stuck in place in the stream. These floods are the source of a significant amount of damage to public and private property, as well as environmental degradation and more.

In Ohio, while the water is the property of the government, the land beneath it and the materials resting on that land are the responsibility of the landowner. According to past census data for Jefferson County, land along these waterways is often owned by low-to-moderate income households, who often do not have the resources to remove these hazards.

In an effort to aid in the removal of these hazards, the JSWCD developed and launched this stream debris removal pilot program. Thanks to the generous help of the County Commissioners, as well as JB Green Team, the program will allow landowners to apply to have their property visited and assessed to hopefully prevent damages that log-jams and more could cause on their property.

For more information on the program, please call our office at 740-264-9790, or email Tim Bell, Watershed Coordinator at tbell@jeffersoncountyoh.com





Pasture Walk

The Eastern Ohio Grazing Council (EOGC) works in cooperation with Carroll, Columbiana, Harrison, Jefferson, Mahoning, Stark, & Tuscarawas County Soil and Water Conservation District (SWCD) and Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS) staff to plan pasture walks and workshops.

The EOGC hosts a pasture walk on the 4th Thursday of each month April through November. Pasture walks present new and old ideas for review, discussion and possible implementation.

September's Pasture Walk was hosted by Jules and Jodee Verhovec at the Straus family farm in Smithfield, Ohio. Jules and Jodee raise Charolais cattle and utilize rotational grazing on their own acreage adjacent to the family farm.

Le Chateau Pier prepared a delicious array of food using locally sourced produce from Farmers gateway Market vendors.

Pasture Walk topics included Legumes and Soil Nitrogen, Soil Testing Options and Extensive Gravity Flow Water Systems. Josh Emanuelson, ODA, provided a Watershed Minute overview.

Pasture Walks were virtual during the pandemic and those videos are available to view by visiting our website at www.jeffersonswcd.org.



The Jefferson County Chamber of Commerce Business after Hours partnership sponsored by the Jefferson Soil and Water Conservation District and

hosted by Jodee and Julius Verhovec was held at the home of the Straus Family with a beautiful farm setting.

Business After Hours is a casual event that offers a chance for attendees to network and enjoy food, fun and fellowship while the sponsors receive a unique opportunity to showcase their business and introduce goods or services and staff to fellow Chamber members.

Unique to this particular evening, in addition to showcasing the host, several local growers provided the produce and meats for the evenings menu prepared by Le Chateau Pier. Providers included Clint and Bobbi Finney Family, Spring Valley Stock Farms; JR Lerby and Shawna Wells, It's All Good Farm; Bill and Marty Packer, Packers' Orchard; Wally and Mary Sadowski; Kolb Orchard and Robert, Stephanie, Jonathan & Jordan Vance, Double J Farm.



The Straus Family Farm includes the original home and barn built in the late 1880's by Joseph M. Cope, raising Marino sheep on the farmland. Fred and Helen Straus acquired the property in 1964, moving in with their three daughters, Jayme, Jodee and Jane.

Host Jodee Straus Verhovec served as a Jefferson SWCD board member for 15 years and both she and Jules has been in a conservation partnership with the

District for many years. Presently, Jules and Jodee Verhovec manage the property, raising Charolais cattle while carrying out conservation practices thanks to the education and technical assistance provided by Jefferson Soil and Water Conservation District staff and the Natural Resources Conservation Service. These practices have also been implemented on acreage owned by Jules and Jodee which adjoins the family farm.



Photo Contest

Who is Eligible?

Only amateur photographers are eligible. (An amateur photographer does not possess a professional photographer tax identification number for the sale of photographs). **The photos must be taken in Jefferson County however the photographer is not required to reside in the county.** The contest is not open to any JSWCD Supervisor, staff, or immediate family members.

Entry

8x10 Prints and digital submissions must be received in the JSWCD office by 4:30 on Monday, **October 3rd**.

There will be no entry fee and you may enter your work in any of the categories offered. **A total of three (3) photos may be submitted per photographer in one or multiple categories.** Photos must be taken within Jefferson County and PHOTO SUBJECT MATTER MUST BE CONSERVATION/NATURAL RESOURCES RELATED TO BE CONSIDERED FOR JUDGING.

Each photo submission must be accompanied by an entry and photo release form.

Categories
<p>Patterns in Nature</p> <p>Category examples could include: plantings or anything conservation/natural resources related that displays a pattern. Pattern could be seen from ground level or aerial view.</p>
<p>Fin, Feather, Fur (Wildlife)</p> <p>Category examples could include: any species that has fin, feather or fur that lives in the wild and is photographed within Jefferson County. No pets such as dogs or cats, etc.</p>
<p>Catch All</p> <p>Anything nature, agriculture or wildlife related that takes place within the Jefferson County.</p>

Judging

First Round:

Entries will be judged to determine appropriate category entry and to select the top eight (8) winners in each topic category. First round judges reserve the right to switch prints to a more appropriate category or to disqualify if the entry is not suitable for any of the categories. Top photos in each category will be displayed at the JSWCD Annual Meeting and Banquet for voting. Participant need not be present but are invited to attend the event being held at JeffCo Event Center, Steubenville. Event information is available at www.jeffersonswcd.org and our facebook page.

Second Round:

Those attending the JSWCD Annual Meeting and Banquet on October 25, 2022 will vote for the 1st place winners by secret ballot from the top eight (8) choices determined in the first round of judging. The winners will be announced at the closing of this event and recognized on the JSWCD Facebook page and website within a few days following the event.

Judging Criteria: Technical excellence (sharpness, lighting, composition, exposure) • Originality/creativity • Interest (photo features a recognizable center of interest in relationship to the category) **DIGITAL SUBMISSIONS WILL BE PRINTED IN OUR OFFICE. PHOTO QUALITY MAY NOT BE AS GOOD AS PROFESSIONALLY PRINTED PHOTOS SUBMITTED.**

Awards

1st place winner in each category will receive a \$50.00 cash award.

Use of Prints by the Jefferson Soil and Water Conservation District

Submitted photos are unable to be returned. All entrants agree that any photo submitted to the photo competition may be used for marketing and promotion purposes directly related to the mission of the conservation district. Credit will be given to the photographer when possible.

Conservation



Annual Fernwood Outdoor Days

JSWCD held its 33rd annual Fernwood Outdoor Days program in May at Fernwood State Forest, Bloomingdale, and due to rain, a day was held at Jefferson County Fairgrounds at Friendship Park.



This program provided approximately 500 5th grade students and their teachers from local Jefferson County school districts the

opportunity to experience and engage in natural resource-focused outdoor activities.

Schools in attendance included: Steubenville Harding, Buckeye Local (North, West and South), Indian Creek, Bishop John King Mussio, Edison John Gregg and Jefferson County Christian School. Covid precautions forced last year's program to be held virtually but it was still well received by area students. However, students, teachers, event volunteers and organizers were glad to be back in person teaching hands on the importance of the natural resources that surround us.

The success of this program is largely due to the countless hours



dedicated by local organizations and state agencies that take part in this educational event.

“ What makes this program great is the collaboration between so many agencies and partners. Everyone comes together for the purpose of educating our youth about natural resources and that's something special. ”

- JSWCD Board Member & Presenter, Stephanie Vance

Groups of students rotated between seven stations.

- Presenters from **ODNR Division of Forestry** operated a station which taught students ways to prevent wildfires and gave them hands on fun holding a firehose and shooting water at wildfire practice targets.
- **ODNR Division of Wildlife** provided an archery trailer allowing kids the opportunity to test their archery skills.
- **OSU Extension** challenged kids to collaborate in building a rocket ahead of time that was launched in front of the crowd of attendees. Students then applied Newton's Laws to each launch.
- **JB Green Team** educated kids on the importance of recycling and the long term effects on the environment as well as the benefits of composting.
- **JSWCD board members and staff** taught fish identification, knots and rigging and provided students the chance to go fishing, some for the first time.
- Beekeepers **Joe & Cindy Rodak** introduced the kids to beekeeping and allowed students to hold a stingerless drone bee.
- The aquatics station was led by **EGCC Biology Professor and JSWCD Board Member, Stephanie Vance**. Professor Vance taught students about aquatic life, water quality and watersheds. For many of the students this annual field trip may be their first encounter with hands-on, nature-based activities. But hopefully will not be their last.

Your SEPTIC SYSTEM Your RESPONSIBILITY

Did you know that as a homeowner you're responsible for maintaining your septic system?

Did you know that maintaining your septic system protects your investment in your home?

Did you know that you should periodically inspect your system and pump out your septic tank?

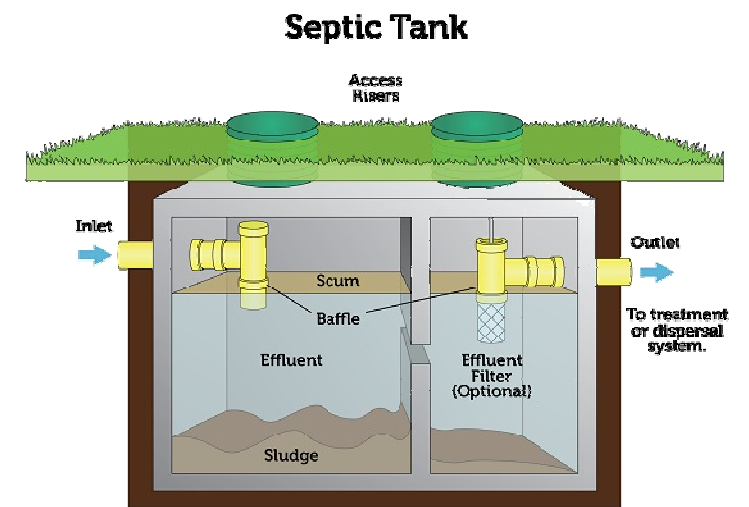
If properly designed, constructed and maintained your septic system can provide long-term, effective treatment of household wastewater. If your septic system isn't maintained, you might need to replace it, costing you thousands of dollars. A malfunctioning system can contaminate groundwater that might be a source of drinking water. And if you sell your home, your septic must be in good working order.

Keep in mind that a key reason to maintain your septic system is to save money. Failing septic systems are expensive to repair or replace and poor maintenance is often the culprit. Having your septic system inspected is a bargain when you consider the cost of replacing the entire system. Your system will need pumping every 3 to 5 years, depending on how many people live in the house and the size of the system. An unusable septic system or one in disrepair will lower your property's value and could pose a legal problem.

There are 4 easy ways to protect your septic system

1. Inspect your system (every 3 years) and pump your tank as necessary (generally every 3 to 5 years).
2. Use water efficiently.
3. Don't dispose of household hazardous wastes in the sinks or toilets.
4. Care for your leach field.

Avoid driving or parking vehicles on your leach field. Plant only grass over and near your leach field to avoid damage from roots. Keep roof drains, basement sump pump drains and other rainwater or surface water drainage systems away from the leach field. Flooding the leach field with excessive water slows down or stops treatment processes and can cause plumbing fixtures to back up.



Please note: The number of compartments in a septic tank vary by state and region.

We are pleased to announce two new staffing additions to the Jefferson Soil and Water Conservation team.



Tim Bell will lead the conservation efforts as the new **Cross Creek/Yellow Creek Watershed Coordinator**. Tim was born in Virginia, went to college at Gettysburg College in Pennsylvania where he majored in Environmental Studies, moved to Vermont during his senior year and then decided to settle in Steubenville after accepting this position. Tim looks forward to learning more about Ohio as well as the people of Jefferson County.



TO OUR NEW STAFF!

Kirsten Zwick joins us as the new **Ag and Natural Resources Technician** and has spent the past few months interning at Harrison SWCD where she gained knowledge of the world of soil and water. She holds a Agribusiness Marketing degree from the University of Northwestern Ohio, and is excited about starting her career at JSWCD.



Education

Indian Creek High School

Indian Creek Environmental Science class participated in a conservation learning experience at Friendship Park. More than 40 students visited stations where they learned about archery, fishing, the park amenities and activities, its embankment dam and 85 acre lake, as well as the recently completed first phase of the reclamation project.

Students learned about the major earth moving project made possible by Federal, State and local dollars to eliminate dangerous highwalls. Friendship Park board member, Judy Henthorn, discussed with students the restoration of 32.5 acres of strip mine land within Friendship Park and the Foster Fluharty Farm LLC. Reclamation of this ground will soon provide 1.5

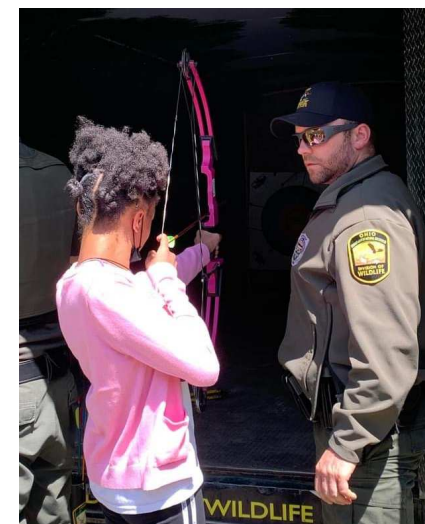


miles of walking and bridle trails, 1.5 acres of wetland habitat, 4.3 acres of pollinator habitat, and 8 acres of new forestland/ biodiversity for the community to enjoy.

Students also tried their hand at shooting a bow and arrow at the ODNR Division of Wildlife archery trailer.



JSWCD provided students with an opportunity to cast a line into Friendship Parks waters. Students learned about watersheds and the importance of protecting our waters and best practices.



Craig Porter, Wildlife Officer, instructs student

4-H'ers Show off their **RECYCLING AND UPCYCLING** Skills



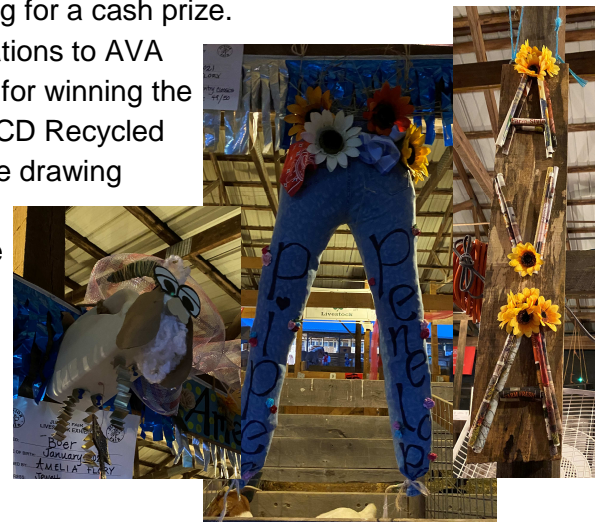
Jefferson Soil and Water hosted their annual **Name Plate Recycling Contest** at the Jefferson County Fair. Contest participants in each barn were judged on the creativity, originality, attractiveness and diversity of recycled materials used to make a stall name plate of either their own or animals name.

Ribbons made of recycled materials were awarded to a winner in each barn and each winning name was placed in a drawing for a cash prize.

Congratulations to **AVA AFTANAS** for winning the 2022 JSWCD Recycled Name Plate drawing contest.

Ava's name was drawn during the Livestock Auction on Saturday.

Each year the participation in the contest grows with this years contest having more than 40 entries and becoming more and more creative in their use of recycled and upcycled materials.





COUNTY WIDE CAREER & EDUCATION FAIR

HOSTED BY THE CHAMBER'S WORKFORCE TRAINING & EDUCATION COMMITTEE

JSWCD staff was happy to have had the opportunity to participate in the Jefferson County Chamber County Wide Career and Education Fair hosted by the Chamber's Workforce Training and Education Committee.

The event was held at the Fort Steuben Mall in September. Approximately 700 students from Jefferson, Harrison and Columbiana county high schools rotated through nearly 100 stations filled with employers, colleges, universities, technical schools, labor unions and military branches with intriguing displays to promote their fields.

JSWCD highlighted conservation careers using an interactive simulated stream filled with live native insects, a "Rubber Ducky" trivia game, Hellbender display and handouts. Staff encouraged visitors to explore the many great careers in natural resources by sharing personal stories and answering questions.

Chamber President Kate Sedgmer said the purpose is to provide students with options as they forge paths for successful futures.

The committee, which is headed by Jefferson County Educational Service Center Superintendent Dr. Chuck Kokiko, includes 12 members representing school districts and businesses who helped organize the career fair while the districts transported their pupils. Students were invited from Buckeye Local, Catholic Central, Edison, Harrison Central, Indian Creek, Jefferson County Board of Developmental Disabilities' School of Bright Promise, Jefferson County Christian School, Jefferson County Joint Vocational School, Steubenville, Toronto and Southern Local.



Wendee Dodds, Natural Resources Specialist and Tim Bell, Cross Creek/ Yellow Creek Watershed Coordinator, introduced students to different aquatic life and spoke about the Eastern Hellbender.

Irene Moore, District Administrator and Amy Browning, Program Assistant, shared their knowledge of careers in natural resources along with ways they can make a difference in conservation.



Students picked a numbered duck and Kirsten Zwick, Ag & Natural Resources Technician, asked students correlating questions relating to natural resources and conservation. Students walked away with prizes and District info.

"The Chamber of Commerce has a Workforce Training and Education Committee and we talk about ways to get our kids to stay local," Sedgmer explained. "We want to introduce them to career fields that are available here, and the goal is to get kids to stay here after high school or go to college and return home."

Applying Excess Fertilizer Doesn't Make Money Grow on Trees

Wendee Dodds, Natural Resources Specialist/Operations Manager

Have you ever started out the new year certain that you were finally going to take soil tests before applying lime and fertilizer; only to realize several months later that trekking across that 75-acre hillside on the back forty just never made it to the top of the priority list? Sometimes, work and chores and changing seasons get ahead of us, and as a last resort we take the easier route and just put down the basics annually. But how can you be sure your fields really need it? If you have a field that is doing great, why? If you have a field that is performing poorly, why? A soil test on those fields can be a step toward solving the mystery.

If you inherently dislike chemistry as I do, it may seem like a daunting realization that the truth of the relationship between plant growth and soil nutrient levels is that it is a delicately-balanced exercise in chemistry. Which is precisely the reason why we should soil test before applying lime and fertilizer. There is no way to be sure about a field's pH and nutrient needs unless we test it first. More is not always better, and can result in poor plant performance, and contribute to the glaring problem of excess nutrients in our waterways. Add in the increasing costs for lime and fertilizer, and the math becomes easier than the chemistry – it pays to soil test!

To help you get started, the Jefferson Soil and Water Conservation District is offering limited soil testing as a service to agricultural producers and growers in Jefferson County.

The District will send out staff to collect soil samples on up to 100 acres of crop or pasture fields per producer per year, at a cost \$20 per sample. Fields over 20 acres or with differing management or landforms will require multiple samples and will be determined with you prior to sampling. A & L Great Lakes Laboratories will be used for sample analysis. In addition to soil test results, lime and fertilizer recommendations will be provided.



If soil testing through the District seems like the solution for you, we would like you to be there! It's a great opportunity to catch up and talk about your farm. You don't have to walk with us and collect samples over all of the acreage, but at the very minimum, we would like you to meet with us on site the morning of sampling to go over any pertinent items such as field maps, cropping history, yield goals, etc. If we will be testing pasture fields, we ask that you

please remove livestock from the fields to be tested during sampling.

If you wish to test more than the 100-acre limit, or if you would like to take the samples yourself, the District can provide a soil sampling probe and empty sample bags. The sampling probe can be checked-out for a maximum of 10 days, and requires a \$100 deposit, which will be returned to you when you bring the probe and filled sample bags back to the office. The cost of each sample taken yourself is \$10.

To find out more, or to schedule soil sampling, please call the District office at (740) 264-9790.

The nation that destroys its soil destroys itself.

Franklin D. Roosevelt



Resources available in our office include:

- Soil Test Kits
- Jefferson County Plat Book and Wall Maps
- Home Sewage Treatment System Applications
- Woodlot Packets