

April—May—June

2024 Newsletter



VAN WERT

# Soil & Water Conservation District Newsletter

1185 Professional Drive, Van Wert, OH 45891

Telephone (419) 238-9591 Web site: [www.vanwertswcd.org](http://www.vanwertswcd.org)

## College Scholarship Being Offered

The Van Wert SWCD is offering one, \$1,000 scholarship to college students studying agriculture, natural resources, or closely related fields at an Ohio college or university during the 2022/23 academic year. Recipients of the scholarship must have completed their freshman year, and must be a Van Wert County resident.

Scholarship applications are due by May 3, 2024. The Scholarship Committee of the SWCD will review all applications and the recipient will be announced in June. Scholarship money will be sent directly to the recipient's college or university at the beginning of the academic year.

Criteria for determining the recipient will be area of study, grades, activities, leadership, and commitment to conservation practices. The SWCD reserves the right to refuse any applications not meeting requirements.

Applications and two reference forms need to be completed and sent to the office by the deadline of May 5. The forms are available at the office or on the Van Wert SWCD website. You may email your completed form to Becky at [becky@vanwertswcd.com](mailto:becky@vanwertswcd.com), or send it in the mail to 1185 Professional Drive, Van Wert, Ohio 45891.

## Stewardship Week

The Van Wert SWCD wants to remind you that each of us has a connection to natural resources. The National Association of Conservation Districts (NACD) is celebrating the 69th year of Stewardship week April 28 – May 5, 2024. The 2024 Stewardship Week is themed “May the Forest Be with You, Always”.

NACD Stewardship Week is one of the largest national programs to promote natural resource conservation. Celebrated annually since 1955 between the last Sunday in April and the first Sunday in May, NACD Stewardship Week reminds us of our individual responsibilities to care for natural resources.

During Stewardship Week, Van Wert SWCD will provide a Buckeye tree seedling and a presentation on the importance of trees to 4th grade students in the county. There will also be other information and materials passed out to students at schools in the county.



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### Special points of interest:

- ✧ *Soil & Water Stewardship Week April 28–May 5*
- ✧ *\$1,000 College Scholarship is being offered*
- ✧ *Need fish for your pond—order now!*

# Wetlands, Water Quality and Your Wallet?

By: Jeff Carlson, Ohio Senior Wildlife Biologist, Pheasants Forever

H2Ohio's initiative has brought in massive amounts of funding to address water quality and climate issues across the state. As part of this initiative, Lake Erie CREP (Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program) has been rolled out to incentivize landowners to enroll their land, or even just parts of their land into this program to help address these issues mentioned above as well as provide quality wildlife habitat. To accomplish this, ODNR has agreed to pay landowners a one time, \$2,000 per acre bonus payment to install wetlands on their property. That is on top of the rental rate that is also paid on a per acre basis every year of the contract. For those who are not familiar with the CRP program offered by the Farm Service Agency (FSA), for all CRP/CREP there is a per acre rental rate that is paid on a yearly basis to implement a variety of conservation practices over the course of a contract period, in which the cover installed shall be maintained according to the Conservation Plan that is provided to every landowner. Through Lake Erie CREP, for those

whose properties meet the requirements of the program, that base rental rate would be doubled as part of an added incentive to enroll new land. Again, these programs are not meant to take away prime farmland, but instead to enhance areas where crop yields are poor and as a result, may not make sense financially to farm for a wide array of reasons.

Saturday August 24<sup>th</sup> Pheasants Forever and NRCS will be hosting a CREP wetland workshop that will take a deeper dive into all things wetlands, including touring two wetland sites in the field. Stay tuned for more information including an official invitation/registration event where you can sign up to attend, free of charge, if interested!

For questions contact Jeff Carlson with Pheasants Forever; Cell: 440-822-9350 or stop in to the local NRCS office for more details.

Benefits Of Installing Wetlands Through CREP:	Requirements to be eligible to Enroll:
Payments up to double base soil rental rates; Approximate range from \$296-588/acre. An additional \$2,000/acre bonus payment for newly enrolled lands. No minimum or maximum acreage size for enrollment. Up to 90% cost-share to install the wetlands. Provides quality wildlife habitat for a variety of species. Can earn more money than poorly performing cropland.	Having owned the property for one full year or more. Have cropping for 4 out of 6 years under the current Farm Bill term. Initial costs are landowners responsibility and reimbursement will be made after practice is installed. Must have hydric soils; Examples: Pewamo, Hoytville, Toledo, Sloan, etc...

## H2Ohio Working Lands Buffer Program

The Van Wert SWCD along with surrounding counties will be offering the Working Lands Buffer Program. The purpose of this program is to filter surface water before it enters streams and other water sources that contribute to harmful nutrient runoff to waterways and to minimize streambank erosion and the trap sediment.

### **Applicability:**

Acres converted from cropland or an existing filter strip, hay buffer or field border with perennial vegetative cover will be considered eligible for this program. If the proposed acres are an existing filter strip, the area is ineligible to receive funding for the same practice through the USDA,

ODA, local grants, or other programs such as (CRP, CREP, EQIP, H2Ohio, MWCD). Cost share funding is not eligible for: Filter strips and field borders that were previously meadows, existing pasture, and/or ditch maintenance right of ways.

The deadline to sign up for this program is April 15th. The cost share payment is \$200 per acre for 2 years.

For more information and eligibility of this program please contact the Van Wert SWCD at: 419-238-9591 or Seth Owens at [seth.j.owens@oh.nacdnet.net](mailto:seth.j.owens@oh.nacdnet.net).

## Fish Fingerling Orders / Delivery Scheduled

The SWCD is currently taking orders for fish fingerlings. The types of fish available are: largemouth bass, blue gill, channel catfish, black fat-head minnow, redear shellcracker, and white amur.

The fish sale is an opportunity for pond owners to stock or restock their ponds for a reasonable cost.

Orders will be accepted until Friday, April 25 at 4:00. Payment is expected when the order is placed.

The fish will be available for pick up Thursday, May 2 at 3:00 p.m.

Stocking recommendations for a one acre pond are:

100 largemouth bass  
100 channel catfish

500 blue gill  
500-1000 minnow

The orders will be boxed and ready at the time of delivery. Order forms are available in the office or on the website at:

[www.vanwertswcd.org](http://www.vanwertswcd.org)



## Tree Sale

Thank you to everyone who participated in our tree sale this year. It was a huge success. We sold over 2,000 tree seedlings and were able to hand out a Buckeye tree seedling to all of the area 4th graders. Along with giving the students a tree they also had a class presentation and were given information on their new tree that they can plant at home.

Trees contribute to their environment by providing oxygen, improving air quality, climate amelioration, conserving water, preserving soil, and supporting wildlife. During the process of photosynthesis, trees take in carbon dioxide and produce the oxygen we breathe.

As trees grow, they help stop climate change by removing carbon dioxide from the air, storing carbon in the trees and soil, and releasing oxygen into the atmosphere. Trees provide many benefits to us, every day.

The annual tree sale runs every year from January-March with different varieties each year. Be sure to check our website for more info.

\*\*\*Tree order pick up will be the week of April 15th. An email will go out with more details.



## Education

Our education program continues to be a huge success in all the Van Wert County schools. Education coordinator, Tammy Campbell, visits all the area schools to teach students on a wide variety of topics that go along with what they are learning in the classroom. For more information on our program you can visit our website: [vanwertswcd.org](http://vanwertswcd.org) to look at our booklet that shows the different presentations we have available or by emailing Tammy at: [tammy@vanwertswcd.com](mailto:tammy@vanwertswcd.com).

Thank you to the Van Wert County Foundation for providing a grant to us that allows us to buy supplies that make many of these presentations possible. Pictured below the students are learning about worms with a hands on presentation to learn about habitat, anatomy, reproduction, etc...



Van Wert S.W.C.D.  
1185 Professional Drive  
Van Wert, OH 45891

Nonprofit Organization  
U.S. POSTAGE PAID  
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Wapakoneta, OH

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## **Board of Supervisors**

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Ryan Mohr, Youth & Publicity

## **SWCD Staff**

Becky Dowler, Office Manager  
Seth Owens, District Technician  
Kady Fuhrmann, Special Program Technician  
Tammy Campbell, Educ. Coordinator

## **NRCS Staff**

Ken Kottenbrock, District Conservationist  
Tinina Hale, Civil Engineer  
Noel Morris, Soil Conservation Tech.  
Jeff Carlson, PF Senior Wildlife Biologist

## **Upcoming Dates and Events**

- April 8– Solar Eclipse
- April 10—SWCD Board Meeting 8:00 AM
- April 15-April 19– Tree pick up this week
- April 25 – Deadline to purchase fish fingerlings
- April 28- May 5 – Soil and Water Stewardship Week
- May 2– Fish pick up at 3 PM
- May 3 – College Scholarship Application Deadline
- May 8 - SWCD Board Meeting 8:00 AM
- May 27—Memorial Day (office closed)
- June 12– SWCD Board Meeting 8:00 AM
- June 19– Juneteenth (office Closed)