



# PICKAWAY SOIL & WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT

## CONSERVATION NEWS

Volume 79, Issue 1

Conservation News — Published Quarterly

January 2022

Pickaway Soil & Water Conservation District, 110 Island Road, Suite D, Circleville, Ohio 43113

### Upcoming Events

January 17  
Office Closed  
MLKJ Day

January 18  
Board Meeting  
9:00am

February 10  
Tree Seedling Order  
Forms Due

February 15  
Board Meeting  
9:00am

February 21  
Office Closed  
President's Day

March 15  
Board Meeting  
9:00am

March 16  
Fish Fingerlings  
Order Forms Due

March 29  
Fish Fingerlings Distribution

April 1  
SWCD Poster Contest  
Entries Due

April 8  
Tentative Tree Pick Up



## 800 Farm-to-Table Books Delivered to 1st Grade Students Throughout the County

Approximately 800 copies of the book titled “Right This Very Minute: a table-to-farm book about food and farming,” was delivered by Pickaway SWCD to 1st grade students in Pickaway County Schools in November. This is the second year in a row Pickaway SWCD was able to provide these books to students in the county. Details at: [www.pickawayswcd.org/farm-to-table-book](http://www.pickawayswcd.org/farm-to-table-book)

The farm-to-table book gives students a sneak peek into the diverse world of agriculture and where our food comes from, whether it be from pollinators, crop fields, orchards, livestock farms, soil, etc. We hope the message within the book will reach both our students and their families.



S. Bloomfield



Scioto



Westfall



Westfall

Westfall FFA visited their 1st grade classrooms, read the book with students, and then students learned where the food they eat at Thanksgiving comes from.

## 2022 TREE SEEDLING SALE

Tree and shrub seedlings, ground cover, and various seed mixes are offered in this year's sale. These products are excellent for wildlife habitat, windbreaks, landscaping, stream buffers, ground cover, Christmas trees, and more. The sale is open to everyone and plants may be planted without restriction.

Seedlings are 1-3 years old and average 6-18 inches in height. Seedlings are bare rootstock and are dipped into a preservative gel before they are placed into a plastic bag in order to keep them moist. Each packet can be carried in one hand. The District does not offer reimbursements for any trees that do not survive.



**Orders are due to Pickaway SWCD by Thursday, February 10, 2022.** Tentative order distribution date is Friday, April 8 at the garage in the lower parking lot of the Service Center, 160 Island Road. Please send someone to pick up your seedlings if you are not able to come yourself. A postcard will be sent to confirm exact pick up date, location, and times. Be sure to include the number of packets ordered and your correct mailing address, telephone number, and email address if available on the order form. Please complete the enclosed order form and drop it off in person or mail it with your payment to: Pickaway SWCD 110 Island Road, Suite D, Circleville, Ohio 43113.

Orders can be paid with cash or check only. Please make checks out to Pickaway SWCD. If you include your email on the order form, a confirmation email and copy of your receipt will be emailed to you. Hard copies of all receipts will be given at pick up. If you have any questions, please call the office at 740-477-1693. For additional details or for order forms, please visit [www.pickawayswcd.org](http://www.pickawayswcd.org).

Please note that Pickaway SWCD and several other SWCDs order all of our trees through Athens SWCD. Athens SWCD works with various greenhouses on varieties and they are the distributor. The Athens SWCD reserves the right to substitute species in the Specialty Tree Packets, Erosion Control Seed Mix and Wildlife Food Plot Seed Mix based upon availability.

**Please visit [www.pickawayswcd.org](http://www.pickawayswcd.org) for more information and detailed descriptions of all the items available through this year's tree sale.**

### Coniferous Trees

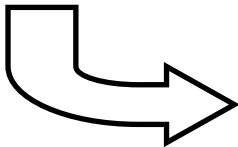
Type of Tree	Mature Height	Ideal Growing Conditions
Bald Cypress	100-120 ft	Very wet soils, muck, clay, or fine sand
Eastern Redcedar	30 ft	Prefers full or partial sun; any type of soil
Eastern White Pine	80+ ft	Prefers full sun; shade tolerant
Norway Spruce	100 ft	Grows well in most soils
Virginia Pine	70 ft	Well-drained soil; full sun

### Deciduous Trees

Type of Tree	Mature Height	Ideal Growing Conditions
Black Cherry	60+ ft	Tolerate a variety of conditions
Black Walnut	75 ft	Prefers fertile, deep soils
Northern Red Oak	80+ ft	Full sun and acidic soil
Sugar Maple	100+ ft	Partial to full sun; well-drained soil
White Oak	100+ ft	Shade tolerant, best in deep, sandy loam on south and west facing slopes

### Specialty Tree and Shrub Packets

No substitutions



#### Edibles Packet

(2 each of the following species = 10 seedlings)

Type of Tree/Shrub	Mature Height
American Elderberry	5-12 ft
Butternut	60 ft
Hazelnut	15-18 ft
Paw Paw	15-20 ft
Persimmon	50 ft

#### Honey Bee Packet

(4 each of the following species = 20 seedlings)

Type of Tree	Mature Height
American Plum	20 ft
Black Locust	40-60 ft
Eastern Redbud	20-30 ft
Sourwood	25-30 ft
Tulip (Yellow) Poplar	80 ft

## 2022 Pickaway SWCD Tree Seedling Order Form

Tree	Trees per Packet	# Packets	\$/Packet	Total \$
Black Cherry	25		\$20.00	
Black Walnut	25		\$20.00	
Northern Red Oak	25		\$20.00	
Sugar Maple	25		\$25.00	
White Oak	25		\$20.00	
Bald Cypress	25		\$20.00	
Eastern Redcedar	25		\$20.00	
Eastern White Pine	25		\$20.00	
Norway Spruce	25		\$20.00	
Virginia Pine	25		\$20.00	
Edibles Packet	10		\$12.00	
Honey Bee Packet	20		\$20.00	
Dwarf Bartlett Pear	2		\$27.00	
Shiitake Mushrooms	1 kit		\$28.00	
Whitetail 365 Food Plot Seed Mix	25 lbs		TBD	
Erosion Control Seed Mix	2 lbs		\$16.00	
Wildflower and Grass Seed Mix	1 oz		\$6.00	
Wild Ginger	25 per packet		\$25.00	
Partridge Berry	25 per packet		\$25.00	
Bat House	Each		\$30.00	
Eastern Bluebird Box	Each		\$30.00	
Plantskydd-ready to use spray	1 quart		\$22.00	
Plantskydd-soluble powder	2.2 lbs		\$49.00	
Weed Wand Magic with 3 replacement tips	1		\$27.00	
Tree Marking Flags	Each \$0.10 100 for \$10.00		\$0.10 \$10.00	
<b>Order Total</b>				<b>\$</b>
<b>(Required by the state beginning in 2022)</b>				<b>Sales Tax x 0.0725</b>
<b>Total Payment Amount</b>				<b>\$</b>

Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
 City/State/Zip: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

**Order deadline is  
February 10, 2022.**

~Cash or Check Only~  
 Make checks payable to:  
**Pickaway SWCD**

2022 tree pick up will be **Friday, April 8** only. **ALL** orders need to be picked up this day. A postcard will be sent to you to confirm pickup date, location & times. Seedlings should be planted within 5 days after pick-up and watered regularly.

We will send you an email confirmation of your order once your forms and payment are received at the office.

Office Use Only-(OO)

Receipt # \_\_\_\_\_

## 2022 Pickaway SWCD Fish Fingerling Sale



**Channel Catfish**

4-5" fingerling- a sport and food fish; spawns are forage for bass; can grow up to 14"; easier to catch after a hard rain



**Fathead Minnow**

1-2" fingerling- a forage fish; can grow to 3"; readily consumed by predatory species



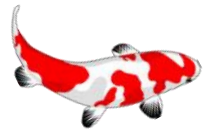
**Hybrid Bluegill**

2-4" fingerling- a forage and sport fish; know for their rapid growth to 10"; the primary prey of largemouth bass



**Largemouth Bass**

2-3" fingerling- primarily a sport fish; can grow over 25" and 14 lbs.; ravenous predatory feeder; will eat anything that fits in mouth



**Japanese Koi**

6-8"- Maximum length is 3 ft; do best in ponds with more than one koi; get along well with other, non-aggressive fish; great for controlling duckweed and other aquatic weeds



**Redear Shellcracker**

2-4"- closely related to the bluegill; popular pan fish; can grow up to 11"; eats snails, crayfish and small fish



**White Amur (Grass Carp)**

8-14"- good for aquatic weed control



**Black Crappie**

2-4" fingerling- a sport fish; can grow 5-12", prefer more aquatic vegetation



**Bluegill**

2-4" fingerling- a forage and sport fish; can grow to 10"; the primary prey of largemouth bass

Recommended Stocking Rates Number Per Pond Surface Acre

Fathead Minnow	1000
Bluegill	200
Hybrid Bluegill	100
Redear Shellcracker	100
Largemouth Bass	100
Channel Catfish	50-100
Yellow Perch	100
White Amur 20-40% Pond Cover: 5 Fish 40-60% Pond Cover: 10 Fish	

For more information on any of the items sold in this year's sale, you may visit our supplier's website:  
**Fender's Fish Hatchery**  
[www.fendersfishhatchery.com](http://www.fendersfishhatchery.com)

**Pond Conditioner**

Nature's Pond Conditioner by Koenders is a two in one bottle product, containing both needed bacteria and pond dye.

**Optimal Fish Food**

40 lb. Bag - 40% protein, small pellet

**Pond Management Book—  
The Common Sense Guide**

Written by Steve Fender of Fender's Fish Hatchery.

### ***Fish Sale Pick Up Information***

Order forms are due by **March 16** with payment

Fish pick up: Tuesday, **March 29** from 10:30-11:30 a.m.

Location: **Pickaway County Fairgrounds, Hog Barn, Enter off Lancaster Pike**

- Bring a 10-20 gallon garbage can or 5 gallon bucket
- Line container with non-deodorized plastic liner
- Fill half full of **your own pond water**

Approx. 10 gallons of water holds 100 fingerlings. Each White Amur and Koi requires 2 gallons of water and must be placed in a container with a lid or a liner that can be tied at the top. All fish guaranteed to be delivered in good condition, however, we can not guarantee survival after being picked up.

# 2022 Fish Fingerling Order Form

Return this form with payments by March 16, 2022  
 Pickaway SWCD, 110 Island Road, Suite D, Circleville, Ohio 43113  
 Cash and Checks (payable to Pickaway SWCD) accepted



Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Office Use Only  
 Receipt # \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ ST: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Please provide your email and 2 reachable phone numbers so we can contact you if needed. We will also send you an email confirmation when we receive your order form and payment.

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone 1: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone 2: \_\_\_\_\_

Species	Size	Quantity	Price	Item Total
Fathead Minnow	1-2"		100 for \$8.00	
Hybrid Bluegill	2-4"		.90 ¢	
Redear Shellcracker	2-4"		.90 ¢	
Largemouth Bass	2-3"		\$1.00	
Channel Catfish	4-5"		.85 ¢	
Black Crappie	2-4"		.95 ¢	
Bluegill	2-4"		.90 ¢	
Japanese Koi	6-8"		\$13.00	
White Amur	8-14"		\$15.00	
Pond Conditioner	1 gallon		\$90.00	
Fish Food	40 lbs.		\$45.00	
Pond Management Book			\$20.00	
<b>Order Total</b>				\$
(Required by the state beginning in 2022)			<b>Sales Tax</b>	x 0.0725
<b>Total Payment Amount</b>				\$

**Pick-Up:** Tuesday, March 29, 2022 from 10:30—11:30 a.m. at the Pickaway County Fairgrounds, Hog Barn, Circleville, OH 43113. Enter off Lancaster Pike by Ankrom Building.

# Education & Outreach Events

## Poster Contest

Calling all local young artists! It's time to dive into your creative skills for the Soil and Water Stewardship poster contest! The contest is open to all Pickaway students currently in grades K-12. All grades are eligible to complete a hand drawn poster, and 10th-12th grade students are eligible to complete a digital poster.

“**Healthy Soil: Healthy Life**” is the 2022 theme. A PowerPoint presentation on the Pickaway SWCD website includes contest guidelines, examples, and educational info on the current topic.

Medallions or rosettes will be awarded to top placing participants in each category. All other participants will receive participation ribbons. Copies of top placing posters will be featured on placemats in restaurants around Pickaway County and displayed at the Pickaway County Library during Soil and Water Stewardship Week, April 24-29, 2022. First place posters in the older age categories will also be framed and displayed at the Pickaway County Library near the Children’s Area for a year. First place posters advance to the State Contest with a chance to advance to the National Contest.



Contest info and the Poster Contest Entry Form is located at [www.pickawayswcd.org/poster-contest](http://www.pickawayswcd.org/poster-contest). Posters must be turned in to the Pickaway SWCD office by **Friday, April 1**.

We are partnering with the Pickaway County Library to host an optional program for any students interested. A lesson, snack and poster supplies will be provided.

Thursday, February 10 @ 6 p.m. - Tween students (grades 6-8)

Thursday, February 24 @ 6 p.m. - Elementary students (grades 1-5)

## Donald E. Minor Memorial Scholarship

Pickaway SWCD is offering at least three \$1,000 scholarships to Pickaway County high school seniors who will be majoring in agriculture or natural resources. The scholarships are for the purpose of continuing higher education at a two or four year college or university. Applications are **due Friday, April 15**. For further information on the scholarship and how to apply, please visit our website at [www.pickawayswcd.org/scholarships](http://www.pickawayswcd.org/scholarships).

### 2021 Annual Report

Be sure to check out our annual report to see photos and numbers of all the things we accomplished throughout 2021!

The report will be posted to the website:  
[www.pickawayswcd.org/annual-reports](http://www.pickawayswcd.org/annual-reports)

Corporate Affiliate  
Membership Ads



**C. RANDALL METZGER**

6950 Hunsicker Road  
Williamsport, Ohio 43164

740.225.0036  
[c.randallmetzger@gmail.com](mailto:c.randallmetzger@gmail.com)

# Technical Corner

Improve your bottom line and help conserve our environment by practicing good nutrient stewardship with the 4Rs. Nutrient Stewardship represents the four “RIGHTS” of fertilizer management. Use the right source, at the right rate, at the right time, and with the right placement. This message is especially important to keep in mind as we head into winter. Remember that ODA does not permit the application of manure on frozen or snow covered soil. For emergency application procedures, refer to the ODA website: [bit.ly/3IW19TN](http://bit.ly/3IW19TN)

			
<b>RIGHT SOURCE</b> Matches fertilizer type to crop needs.	<b>RIGHT RATE</b> Matches amount of fertilizer to crop needs.	<b>RIGHT TIME</b> Makes nutrients available when crops need them.	<b>RIGHT PLACE</b> Keeps nutrients where crops can use them.

# Affiliate Memberships

Pickaway SWCD provides assistance to hundreds of children and adults each year through its education programs at no charge. We also offer a memorial scholarship to graduating Pickaway County Seniors that will be majoring in a Natural Resources field. By becoming an affiliate member, you would be helping to make these things possible. We renew memberships the beginning of each calendar year. All affiliate members receive recognition at our annual meeting, on our District website, and in our quarterly newsletter. Please contact the SWCD office with questions.

*Your membership contribution is tax deductible.*

## Affiliate Membership

\_\_\_\_ **Future Conservationist** (Student) \$10.00

\_\_\_\_ **Steward of the Land** \$100.00

\_\_\_\_ **Soil & Water Protector** \$30.00

\_\_\_\_ **Corporate Member** \$250.00

Please Print:

Name as you wish it to appear on recognition materials: \_\_\_\_\_

Contact Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Mailing Address: \_\_\_\_\_ City: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Website (for Corporate Affiliate Recognition): \_\_\_\_\_

PICKAWAY SWCD  
110 ISLAND ROAD, SUITE D  
CIRCLEVILLE, OHIO 43113

NONPROFIT ORG  
U.S. POSTAGE PAID  
CIRCLEVILLE, OHIO  
PERMIT NO. 199

## Pickaway Soil & Water Conservation District

Phone: 740-477-1693 Website: pickawayswcd.org



### Office Staff

Tawn Seimer, District Administrator  
Katerina Sharp, Education/Outreach Coordinator  
Nate Taylor, District Technician  
Justin Armintrout, District Conservationist  
Eliezer Ortiz-Barbosa, Resource Conservationist  
Lindsey Douglas, Civil Engineering Technician  
Caleb Worley, Pheasants Forever Farm Bill Biologist

### PSWCD Board

Matt Anderson  
Bill Black  
Jonathan Lohstroh  
Dewey Mann  
Brian Reid

### Pickaway County Agencies-Phone Numbers

Farm Service Agency 740-477-1691  
Pickaway County Commissioners 740-474-6093  
Jason Van Houten-ODNR Service Forester 614-265-6703

### Affiliate Members 2021

#### **Corporate Members**

Columbus Turf Nursery, LTD., C. Randall & Cindy Metzger,  
Honeyrun Farms, Pickaway County Banking Center,  
Pickaway Farms - Jay & Marci Wippel, Richard & Judy  
Clifton, Ruff Farms, The Savings Bank, Vickers Farms

#### **Steward of the Land**

Clyde & Leslie Ohnewehr, Dunlap Farms-John & Susie  
Dunlap, Hartsock Ag, John & Curtis Drummond, Musselman  
Farms, Shaw Farms, Tim & Amy Colburn

#### **Soil and Water Protector**

Ashley Hansen, Becky Messer, Daren & Susan Metzger,  
Doug & Vicki Kohli, Laurina Harper, Mark & Toni Schein, Paul  
Marshall, Penelope LaRock, Todd Millard, Wiseheart Farms

#### **Future Conservationist (Students)**

Clara Wilson, Maggie Wilson, Mark Wilson

OSU Extension 740-474-7534  
Pickaway County Engineer 740-474-3360  
Division 1 ODNR 614-644-3925



# Ohio Bobwhite Quail Workshop Series

## Bobwhite Quail Habitat Field Tour

Tuesday, January 4<sup>th</sup>  
1:00pm - 3:00pm

Host: Fallsville Wildlife Area  
6204 Powell Road,  
New Vienna, OH 45159



**RSVP is required**, but the event is free. Please contact Caleb Worley to RSVP (419) 450-9602 or [cworley@pheasantsforever.org](mailto:cworley@pheasantsforever.org)



Learn more about managing your property for bobwhite quail, white-tailed deer, wild turkeys, and cottontail rabbits

- Edge Feathering
- Pollinator Habitat
- Native Grasslands Management
- Invasive Species Removal
- Wildlife Habitat Enhancements through the EQIP Program

Thank you to these partners:





United States  
Department of  
Agriculture

Natural Resources  
Conservation Service  
200 North High Street, Room 522  
Columbus, OH 43215  
Voice: 614.255.2472  
Email: [PublicAffairs@oh.usda.gov](mailto:PublicAffairs@oh.usda.gov)  
Web: [www.oh.nrcs.usda.gov](http://www.oh.nrcs.usda.gov)

# News Release

Brooke DeCubellis  
Public Affairs  
[Brooke.DeCubellis@usda.gov](mailto:Brooke.DeCubellis@usda.gov)

## **Increase Productivity and Protect the Value of Your Land through USDA's Conservation Stewardship Program**

**COLUMBUS, OH, Dec. 14, 2021** – The USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) in Ohio is accepting applications for the [Conservation Stewardship Program](#) (CSP). While applications for CSP are accepted throughout the year, interested producers should submit applications to their local NRCS office by Jan. 14, 2022, to be considered for the 2022 ranking funding period.

CSP helps build on existing conservation efforts while strengthening operations. Whether you are looking to improve grazing conditions or increase wildlife habitat, your Ohio NRCS team can help you identify natural resource problems and provide technical and financial assistance to solve those problems or attain higher stewardship through a custom designed CSP plan.

"CSP is designed to help farmers achieve more robust conservation activities," said Acting State Conservationist for Ohio Jon Bourdon. "Through the voluntary adoption of conservation practices, producers and landowners can attain their conservation goals while improving their operations."

Changes in the 2018 Farm Bill authorize NRCS to accept new CSP enrollments through 2023 and make additional improvements to the program, including higher payment rates for specific conservation activities on working lands.

Producers interested in CSP should contact the Pickaway County USDA office at 740-477-1691 or visit Ohio NRCS CSP webpage to learn more details.

###



United States  
Department of  
Agriculture

Natural Resources  
Conservation Service  
200 North High Street, Room 522  
Columbus, OH 43215  
Voice: 614.255.2472  
Email: [PublicAffairs@oh.usda.gov](mailto:PublicAffairs@oh.usda.gov)  
Web: [www.oh.nrcs.usda.gov](http://www.oh.nrcs.usda.gov)

# News Release

Brooke DeCubellis  
Public Affairs  
[Brooke.DeCubellis@usda.gov](mailto:Brooke.DeCubellis@usda.gov)

## Ohio NRCS Announces Conservation Funding Application Deadline

*Application Deadline is January 14, 2022*

**COLUMBUS, OH, Dec. 14, 2021** – The U.S. Department of Agriculture's Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) is offering a number of conservation opportunities to private landowners through [Ohio's Environmental Quality Incentives Program \(EQIP\)](#). Applications for EQIP are taken on a continuous basis, however, interested landowners are encouraged to contact their local NRCS service center prior to the January 14, 2022 signup deadline for fiscal year 2022 funding.

EQIP is a voluntary conservation program which helps producers make conservation work for them. NRCS provides agricultural producers with financial resources and one-on-one help to plan and implement improvements, or what NRCS calls conservation practices. Using these practices can lead to cleaner water and air, healthier soil and better wildlife habitat. Together, NRCS and producers invest in solutions that conserve natural resources for the future while also improving agricultural operations.

Financial assistance is now available through a number of categories that are listed below:

**General:** Conservation opportunities exist in cropland, forestry, pasture operations, seasonal high tunnels, socially disadvantaged producers, conservation activity plans, on-farm energy and organic. Several special projects are also available which address water quality, forestry management, improving pollinator populations and wildlife habitat, pasture improvements and many more.

**Beginning Farmers:** Ohio dedicates a portion of its total EQIP allocation specifically to beginning farmers, or those who have not previously farmed or have not operated a farm for more than 10 years. EQIP gives no preference to the size of the operation; small agriculture operations compete equally with larger ones. NRCS offers a wide variety of practices for beginning farmers interested in livestock, forestry, pasture/grazing operations and specialty, organic and row crop production. These practices help beginning farmers

meet their goals to improve their operations, commodity production and environmental improvement.

**Working Lands for Wildlife (WLFW):** Landowners can create habitat aimed at improving and protecting wildlife habitat. Through WLFW, NRCS works with partners and private landowners to focus voluntary conservation on working landscapes. NRCS provides technical and financial assistance to agricultural producers, helping them plan and implement conservation practices that benefit target species and priority landscapes. Conservation practices such as upland wildlife habitat management, conservation cover and brush management will help create, restore, maintain, or enhance areas for food and cover for wildlife species.

**Urban Agriculture:** As American agriculture continues to grow in new directions, NRCS conservation assistance is growing along with it. Urban agriculture provides jobs, improves access to fresh food, and offers environmental benefits. Ohio NRCS is focused on supporting urban farmers in their efforts to achieve local, healthy, sustainable food for their communities.

**Northern Bobwhite in Grasslands Priority Area:** NRCS has designated a new priority area in Ohio focused on improving and creating northern bobwhite quail habitat. The Ohio State University has identified edge habitat and woody escape cover, both essential during the winter months, as critical factors in quail survival. The selected townships shown on the priority area map have been identified by the Ohio Division of Wildlife as the areas of highest concern within Ohio's bobwhite quail range. [Click here](#) for a fact sheet detailing the priority area, prioritized conservation practices and additional resources.

**Conservation Incentive Contract:** This program is designed to be a stepping-stone between EQIP and Conservation Stewardship Program, to help producers improve their level of conservation and earn benefits of longer-term conservation enhancements. It expands resource benefits for Ohio producers through incentive conservation practices such as cover crops, nutrient management, conservation crop rotations, and precision agriculture technologies. Additionally, EQIP-CIC allows producers to target priority resource concerns on their property by offering incentive payments for a 5-year contract without needing to enroll the entire operation into the program.

**Mississippi River Basin Initiative:** This funding opportunity for Ohio producers in the Loramie Creek Watershed promotes the use of key conservation practices, such as nutrient management, cover crops, animal waste storage structures, and tillage management. The impact of these practices reduces nutrient loading in local water bodies, and eventually, the Gulf of Mexico.

**National Water Quality Initiative:** This funding opportunity for agricultural producers in three Ohio watersheds in the East Fork Little Miami River Basin promotes conservation practices that improve soil health, reduce erosion, and lessen nutrient runoff, such as cover crops, reduced tillage, and nutrient management; waste management systems that treat agricultural waste and livestock manure; and wetland restoration that increases wildlife habitat, mitigates flooding, and improves water quality.

Applicants should be farmers, or farm or forest landowners and meet eligibility criteria. To participate in USDA conservation programs, contact your [local NRCS conservationist](#) as soon as possible. Be sure to check the status of your Service Center when you reach out to us. For offices with restrictions on in-person appointments, we are still available by phone, email, and through other digital tools. Your Service Center's status is available at <https://www.farmers.gov/working-with-us/service-center-locator>.

Visit Ohio NRCS website under "[EQIP Funding Categories](#)" for more details. To learn more about EQIP or other technical and financial assistance available through NRCS conservation programs, visit [Get Started with NRCS](#) or contact the Pickaway County USDA office at 740-477-1691.

###