



PICKAWAY SOIL & WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT

CONSERVATION NEWS

Volume 80, Issue 4

Conservation News — Published Quarterly

October 2023

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

Upcoming Events

October 17

Board Meeting - 8 a.m.

October 18-20

Pumpkin Show

OFFICE CLOSURES at NOON



November 10

Veterans Day

OFFICE CLOSED

November 21

Board Meeting - 8 a.m.

November 23 & 24

Thanksgiving

OFFICE CLOSED



December 12

Board Meeting - 8 a.m.

December 25

Christmas

OFFICE CLOSED



January 1

New Year's

OFFICE CLOSED

2023 Cooperator of the Year

The Pickaway Soil and Water Conservation District would like to offer a huge congratulations to Richard Clifton and Family for being chosen as the Pickaway SWCD 2023 Cooperator of the Year!

Richard farms with his wife Judy, son Sam, and granddaughter Anna. They have been with our organization as a cooperator since 1979. Their operation consists of rotations of corn, soybeans, and wheat. Richard is in the Conservation Stewardship Program where he plants cover crops, as well as in the Conservation Reserve Program for waterways on the farm.

Our office has enjoyed working with the Clifton Family over the years, and we are excited to continue working with them to conserve our natural resources here in Pickaway County.





District Updates

2023 Annual Meeting and Banquet

Thank you to everyone who joined us for our joint Pickaway Soil & Water Conservation District and Pickaway County Farm Bureau Annual Meeting & Banquet on September 16. We changed things up this year and had an OSU game watch event. We had a great evening with nearly 100 people in attendance!

Thank you to Justin Adams and family for hosting, and to Up In Smoke and Oh Crepe for dinner and dessert. We had a great event! Congratulations to Bill Black and Jonathan Lohstroh on being re-elected to our Pickaway SWCD board! Their three-year terms run from January 2024 through December 2026.

Milkweed Pod Collection

Pickaway SWCD is accepting collected milkweed pods through November 12. Milkweed pods can be dropped off at our office any Monday through Friday from 8 a.m. through 4:30 p.m.

Please Note:

- Pick pods when they are dry and when they are GRAY or BROWN in color. GREEN seedpods are NOT ready for collection. Wear gloves.
- Center seam of pod should pop with gentle pressure when it is time to collect.
- Collect pods in paper lunch bags or paper grocery bags. Avoid using plastic bags, as they attract moisture. Be sure to leave a few pods on plant to endure natural regeneration occurs.
- Please mark paper bag with the collection details: county where milkweed was collected, date and time of the collection, species (if something other than Common Milkweed).
- Store seeds in a cool, dry area until you can deliver them to the Pickaway SWCD office.
- Harvesting milkweed pods does not destroy or have any lasting impact on the milkweed in an established area.
- All milkweed pods collected during this time will be processed by Ohio Pollinator Habitat Initiative (OPHI) partners and all of the seeds collected will be used to establish new plantings and create additional habitat for the Monarch butterfly throughout Ohio. Some of the seeds are returned to Pickaway County.



Milkweed is the only host plant for the Monarch butterfly for egg laying and caterpillar rearing. It also serves as a food source for Monarchs as well as many other pollinator species. The disappearance of milkweed across the U.S. has contributed to the 80% decline of the eastern monarch butterfly population over the last 20 years. We are working hard to change this, and you can help!

Education & Outreach Events

Pickaway County Ag Day

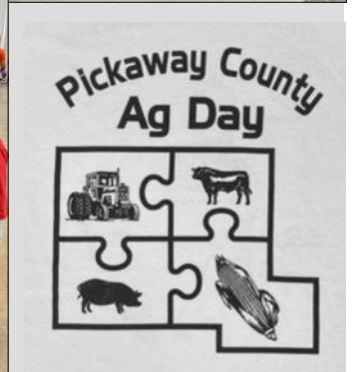
Over 800 fourth grade students learned about livestock, crops, ag careers, soil & water conservation, pollinators, and farm equipment from 180 FFA students at this year's Ag Day on Thursday & Friday, September 28 & 29. This was our first year splitting Ag Day into two days to have smaller numbers at the event each day in order to make Ag Day more engaging. Teays Valley & Westfall attended Ag Day on Thursday; Circleville, Logan Elm, New Hope, Crossroads, and a home school group attended on Friday. This was a huge success!

THANK YOU to:

- Pickaway Ag and Event Center for the great space.
- Rural King Supply for donating bottled water and seed packets for everyone at the event.
- The farmers who volunteered their time and equipment during harvest.
- Pickaway County Community Foundation - Farm Bureau fund and Grant Committee (sponsor)
- South Central Power Co. (sponsor)
- Cargill (sponsor)
- The Savings Bank (sponsor)
- Homeland Credit Union (sponsor)
- Atomic Credit Union (sponsor)
- Farm Credit Mid-America (sponsor)
- Bane-Welker Equipment (sponsor & equipment)
- Pickaway County Banking Center (sponsor)

Partnering to Host Ag Day:

- Pickaway County Farm Bureau
- Pickaway Soil & Water Conservation District
- Circleville-PRCTC FFA
- Logan Elm FFA
- Teays Valley FFA
- Westfall FFA



Education & Outreach Events

Experience Earth Camps

Pickaway SWCD hosted our annual Experience Earth Camps (EE Camp) again this summer! EE Camp this year was held at Cooks Creek, which was recently purchased by the Park District and turned into a nature preserve. We were excited to hit max capacity with 60 students entering 3rd, 4th and 5th grades attending our 3-day camp on July 18-20, and 30 incoming 1st and 2nd grade students attending our one-day Jr. EE Camp on July 21.

Campers are given the opportunity to learn about nature, agriculture, wildlife and the environment from experts in a fun, hands-on and educational way. Pickaway SWCD was fortunate to again partner with Pickaway County Park District and RPHF Solid Waste District to host our EE Camps.



Stormwater Awareness Week

Experts believe almost 70% of the pollution in our rivers and lakes is carried there by stormwater runoff. While rainwater is great for lawns and gardens, it can be dangerous for streams and rivers. Stormwater can push common household items – such as trash, lawn fertilizer, or paint - into local waterways, threatening our environment and clean drinking water.

During Stormwater Awareness Week, Soil and Water Conservation Districts throughout Ohio are urging residents to take one or more of the following actions:

- Check the weather report before applying fertilizer to your lawn or any oil or chemicals to driveways and sidewalks.
- Make sure lawns have 3-4 inches of topsoil under the grass. This reduces runoff and makes lawns easier to maintain.
- Plant native plants that have deep roots, which will help break up clay soil and increase the amount of water remaining on a property while benefiting birds, butterflies and bees.
- Plant a tree in your yard or install a rain garden. Trees can soak up 900 gallons of rain a year and a well-designed rain garden almost entirely reduces stormwater from a property.

Pollution left on roadways, sidewalks, driveways, and parking lots drains directly to our streams and rivers. Simple actions can improve water quality and reduce stormwater runoff. Stormwater can also erode away streams, which can cause flooding. Each year, Conservation Districts investigate multiple sources of pollution and assists hundreds of homeowners concerned with stream erosion and flooding, all caused by stormwater runoff.



Education & Outreach Events

FFA District 7 Soils Contest

This was Pickaway SWCD's year in the rotation to host the District 7 Soil Judging Career Development Event (CDE). We had 19 schools and 151 students in attendance. Special thanks to the Richards Family for allowing us to use their farm, to Brian Cooley for judging the soil pits, and to board member Bill Black for helping dig the pits. This is an excellent learning opportunity for students and we look forward to the next time we are asked to host!



We decided to take full advantage of this opportunity, and spent the morning after the FFA contest teaching soil judging to Logan Elm's environmental and natural resources classes. We talked about texture, landforms, slope, soil structure, water, and looked at web soil survey maps of the area.



Technical Corner



Technical Update

Our technicians have been busy over the past year! Pickaway SWCD techs worked on 67 waterways over the past year and helped 108 people with drainage & pond assistance.

Working on CRP keeps our technicians especially busy. In 2022, Pickaway County was #2 in the State of Ohio for CRP rental dollars, receiving \$3,557,451.00. Pickaway was #3 in the state for acres with 10,781 acres, and #4 in the state for contracts with 873 contracts receiving state dollars.

Grain Bin Hazards to Keep in Mind

Respiratory: Dust from grain can affect people in a variety of ways. Reduce and prevent by wearing protective gear or ventilation equipment so you won't suffer breathing issues from the dust.

Fire or Explosion: Build-up of grain dust can be ignited by a heat source such as fire, sparks, or hot bearings. Don't weld or smoke in a grain bin containing grain.

Falling: Falls can occur as workers move from bin to bin, vertical exterior ladders, grain legs etc. Be aware and careful of your surroundings while working.

Entrapment: Flowing grain, which is a down and outward movement, forms a funnel when grain flows to the center of the cone. It only takes 3-4 seconds to be knee deep and become "trapped" or suffocated. Never enter a grain bin when grain is being removed. Always use a safety line or have two observers during grain bin entry.

Be safe out there!



Old or New Tile & WW Records

If you have any old or new tile and/or waterway records you would like us to scan and preserve as an electronic format to be stored in our office, please call our office at 740-477-1693. Paper records don't last forever!



NRCS Updates



Farmers' Guide to 2018 USDA Farm Bill Programs

This guide describes Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) assistance for farmers, ranchers, and forest managers available through the 2018 Farm Bill. To learn more, visit farmers.gov or your local USDA Service Center by calling the office at 740-477-1693.

CONSERVE — Opportunities to implement conservation on your operation.	
Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS)	
Agricultural Conservation Easement Program (ACEP)	Helps landowners, land trusts, and other entities protect, restore, and enhance wetlands, grasslands, and working farms and ranches through conservation easements.
Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP)	Helps agricultural producers maintain and improve their existing conservation systems and adopt additional conservation activities to address priority natural resource concerns. Participants earn CSP payments for conservation performance—the higher the performance, the higher the payment.
Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP)	Provides financial and technical assistance to agricultural producers to address natural resource concerns and deliver environmental benefits, such as improved water and air quality, conserved ground and surface water, reduced soil erosion and sedimentation, and improved or created wildlife habitat.
Farm Service Agency (FSA)	
Conservation Reserve Program (CRP)	Protects soil, water quality, and habitat by removing highly erodible or environmentally sensitive land from agricultural production through long-term rental agreements.





NRCS Updates



CRP Waterway Steps for Customers

The Conservation Reserve Program is a cost-share program for grassed waterways based on flat rates for waterway components. Check with the District for the current cost-share percentage. If you are interested in a CRP grassed waterway, here are the steps to follow:

1. Contact the Soil and Water office (740-477-1693). Please provide the location and a Farm and Tract number if possible. Let us know when you would like to build the waterway and if you have a contractor lined up to do the work once the project is under contract. If you can't find a contractor, SWCD has a contractor list on their website at www.pickawayswcd.org. You are not required to use one of them, nor do we make recommendations.
2. SWCD/NRCS staff will visit the site to verify erosion in the field. If there is no erosion present, a waterway can't move forward at this time.
3. SWCD/NRCS staff will work with FSA to determine if the site is eligible for the CRP program. To be eligible for the CRP program, there must be reported crop history for the area of the waterway. If the area is not eligible for CRP, you can either sign up for the Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) with NRCS or the SWCD staff will design a plan for you without a cost-share program.
4. Once erosion is verified, SWCD/NRCS staff will survey and start design on the waterway(s). This may involve several visits, especially if underground utilities are present.
5. Upon finishing the waterway engineering plan, the landowner will be given two copies. Additional copies may be purchased.
6. The conservation plan and contract will be written by NRCS and FSA based on the components of the engineering plan. FSA will contact the landowner to schedule an appointment to have it reviewed and signed, if the waterway is considered eligible for the CRP program and the landowner has agreed to the cost estimate and signed an application with FSA.
7. Once the contract is signed and the site passes an archaeological study, construction can begin. SWCD/NRCS will schedule to meet with the contractor/landowner to review the plan, usually on site. Contractor or landowner will need to contact SWCD/NRCS a few days prior to construction to request a construction layout.
8. SWCD/NRCS will follow construction and approve the waterway(s) to be seeded when all standards have been met. After completion, the appropriate NRCS, ODA, or SWCD engineer or technician will approve the construction.
9. Your contract will have a deadline for completion, usually three years from the time you sign. Tile can be installed any time of year; most opt to do it over the winter in advance of any grading to allow tile trenches to settle. Seeding dates are March 15 to May 31 and August 1 to September 15. If the waterway seeding is completed outside of these dates (unless there was an extension by USDA), payment will be held until the next seeding date opening. If grass is established at that time, payment can be made. If not, the waterway will need to be reseeded at the landowner's expense.
10. Landowner submits bills to FSA and signs request for payment. The bills will be reviewed by FSA/SWCD/NRCS and compared to the constructed quantities. FSA then makes the payment.
11. Landowner is responsible for maintaining the waterway(s) for the contracted life of 10 years. They will receive annual rental payments with the potential to renew at expiration depending on program changes and the waterway condition.

Contacts

SWCD	(740) 477-1693 (Option 4)	Brad Hughes or Adriaahna Karr
NRCS	(740) 477-1691 (Option 3)	Justin Armintrout or Megan Sweeney
FSA	(740) 477-1691 (Option 2)	Sherrill King or Kristi Riddle



Feature Piece - What3Words



To all the farmers and outdoor explorers, this is for you!

We've recently come across a pretty cool app, called What3Words, that has the potential to be an excellent tool in the case of an emergency (or for some family fun). Many of us spend time outside in a farm field, hiking a trail, or boating down a river. One thing all of these places have in common - no address. If something goes wrong and you need to call for help, it can be challenging to give family members or first responders a good description of where you are located for them to be able to find you quickly. That's where the What3Words app comes in.

The What3Words app has divided the entire globe into 10 foot by 10 foot squares, and each square has been assigned a random three-word "address". For example, the "address" for our Pickaway SWCD front office door is *///defend.acute.dice*. The "address" for the back ramp door into our building is *///oiled.robe.prone*.

First responders have started to use this app around the globe, including right here in Pickaway County. As long as you have phone service to call for help, this app will give you an exact "address" to share with dispatchers. The What3Words address would be about as exact as using GPS coordinates or longitude and latitude coordinates, but is a lot more user friendly than trying to read off a 14 or 16 digit address. A note of caution revolves around the accuracy of the cell phone signal used to generate the location information. In wooded areas or areas with poor signal, the location will be a little jumpy, but still sufficient to point first responders in the right direction to find you.

What3Words also has some great opportunities for family fun. Want to play hide and seek with the kid who is glued to their phone? Try going to a park and hiding, share your address and see how long it takes them to find you. Want to remember where you saw that 16-point buck while out in the field? What3Words can help you remember and navigate back to that spot.

To learn more about this free app and to view video guides on what the app looks like and how to use it, visit the website: <https://what3words.com/how-to-use-the-what3words-app>



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

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Affiliate Annual Membership

Future Conservationist (Student)	\$10.00
Soil & Water Protector	\$30.00
Steward of the Land	\$100.00
Corporate Member	\$250.00

If you are interested in becoming an Affiliate Member, please [contact the SWCD office](#). All affiliate members receive recognition in the Conservation News, on the District website, and at the Annual Meeting. Beginning in 2023, Corporate Affiliate members also receive an aluminum sign the first year. We renew memberships the beginning of each calendar year from January through March.

Your membership contribution is tax deductible and is used to help provide educational opportunities on soil and water conservation practices in our community. Thank You!

In the January Issue of Conservation News

Information on ordering tree seedlings and fish fingerlings from Pickaway SWCD!



Pickaway Soil & Water Conservation District

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



Office Staff

Tawn Seimer, District Administrator
 Katerina Sharp, Education/Outreach Coordinator
 Brad Hughes, District Technician
 Adriaanna Karr, District Technician
 Justin Armintrout, District Conservationist
 Megan Sweeney, Soil Conservationist
 Matt Mauzy, NRCS Civil Engineering Technician
 Melanie Cowell, Pheasants Forever, Farm Bill Biologist

PSWCD Board

Matt Anderson, Vice-President
 Bill Black, Treasurer & Fiscal Agent
 Jonathan Lohstroh, Member
 Dewey Mann, President
 Brian Reid, Secretary

Pickaway County Agencies-Phone Numbers

Farm Service Agency	740-477-1691
Pickaway County Commissioners	740-474-6093
Adam Komar -ODNR Service Forester	740-961-0194

Affiliate Members 2023

Corporate Members

Columbus Turf Nursery, LTD., Elite Construction Design Management, LLC, Richard & Judy Clifton, Pickaway County Farm Bureau, Honeyrun Farm, Lightning Tree Barn, LLC, Randy & Cindy Metzger, Ruff Agri-Services LLC, The Savings Bank, Vickers Farms, Pickaway Farms - Jay & Marci Wippel

Steward of the Land

Tim & Amy Colburn, Crawford Apiaries, Dunlap Farms-John & Susan Dunlap, John & Curtis Drummond, Hartsock Ag, Laurina Harper, Musselman Farms, Pickaway County Banking Center, Clyde Ohnewehr, Shaw Farms, Wiseheart Farms

Soil and Water Protector

Anonymous (2), Thomas & Scarlett Ebenhack, John & Kathy Ellis, Doug & Vicki Kohli, Penelope LaRock, Darren & Susan Metzger, Todd Millard, Mark & Toni Schein, Melanie Self

Future Conservationist (Students)

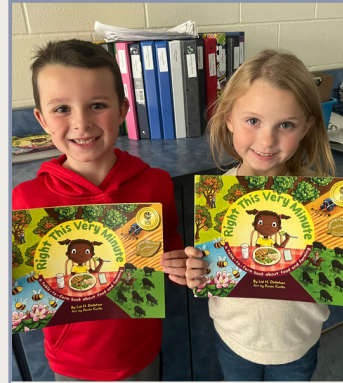
Austin Clark, Trey & Trenton & Mackenzie Dille, Lane & Levi Musselman, Reese & Adrian Moehl, Zac & Zoe Scott, Clara & Maggie & Mark Wilson

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

Pickaway Soil and Water Conservation District



CRP Rental #s 2022
Pickaway vs Ohio
#2 for dollars
(\$3,557,451.00)
#3 for acres
(10,781 ac)
#4 for contracts
(873 contracts)



Students
Receive
Farm-to-Table
Books & Tree
Saplings

2022-2023
Classroom
Programs
155 classes
3,271 students



Assisted 108
People with
Drainage &
Pond
Assistance



90 Youth
Attend
Experience
Earth Camps



Worked on
67 Waterways
Over Past Year

No-Till Drill
Seeded
12 farms &
232 acres



4th Grade
Students
Attend Ag Day

