

2004 Annual Report

**Hamilton County Soil and Water
Conservation District
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Newberry Wildlife Refuge/Colerain Township

Appreciation and recognition is expressed to the Hamilton County Commissioners: John Dowlin, Phil Heimlich and Todd Portune. Also, the Ohio Legislature, the Ohio Department of Natural Resources-Division of Soil and Water Conservation, the Ohio Soil and Water Conservation Commission and the Natural Resources Conservation Service for their continued support.

Board of Supervisors

Chairman.....Thomas W. Reininger
Vice-Chairman.....Patrick Arnette
Secretary.....Joe Allen
Treasurer.....Steve Sandfort
Program Chairman...Tim Boehmer

Associate Supervisors

Karen Heyob, Melissa Krieger and Stanley Strimple

District Staff

Holly Utrata-Halcomb, District Administrator
Barbara Connole, Administrative Assistant
Dan Taphorn, Urban Conservationist
Chey Alberto, Urban Technician
Nate Sturm, Urban Technician
Gwen Roth, Education Specialist
Michelle Balz, Education Assistant
Brian Bohl, Stream Specialist

NRCS

John Williams, District Conservationist
Jeff Barnes, Soil Conservationist
George Cummings, District Conservationist

Consultants to the District

Mohammad Islam, Geotechnical Engineer
Willie Potter, Design Technician II

Mission Statement: A public organization committed to assisting the citizens of Hamilton County through education, technical assistance and leadership to be stewards of our soil and water resources.

Vision: To be a dynamic leader in soil and water conservation working to achieve the sustainable use of our soil and water resources on a local and regional basis.

All District programs and services are offered on a nondiscriminatory basis without regard to race, color, national origin, religion, sex, age, marital status or handicap.

New Initiatives in the Year 2004

By Holly Utrata-Halcomb, District Administrator

WATER QUALITY TAKES ON A NEW PRIORITY

The Soil and Water Conservation District entered into a collaborative agreement with the Hamilton County Engineer's, Public Works and the General Health District to accomplish the goals of the new National Pollution Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) Phase II Storm Water Quality Program. The Hamilton County Commissioners formed the Storm Water District after a two-year study with participation from all jurisdictions in the county. Hamilton County Engineer, Bill Brayshaw, was asked to administer this countywide program. Membership of the district includes 44 out of the 49 jurisdictions in Hamilton County.

Since the enactment of the original *Clean Water Act* by Congress in 1972, local and state governments have worked with industries and wastewater treatment plants to reduce pollution loads to improve water quality. As the *end-of-pipe* pollution sources improved, however, it became apparent that other types of pollutants were having a significant impact on the quality of our waterways. The most prominent sources of *nonpoint* pollutants include sediment from construction sites and agriculture, fertilizers, pesticides, urban runoff, faulty septic systems, stream channelization and mining.

The NPDES Phase II program requires the following minimum controls to reduce nonpoint pollution:

- ❖ Public Information and Education on how individual actions affect water quality.
- ❖ Public Involvement and Participation, such as installing watershed signage, storm drain labeling and supporting local watershed group activities.
- ❖ Construction Site Runoff Control of sediment and erosion on sites 1 acre and larger.
- ❖ Post Construction Runoff Control that includes maintenance of structural and non-structural best management practices.
- ❖ Illicit Discharge Detection and Elimination.
- ❖ Pollution Prevention and Good Housekeeping.

Our District has assumed responsibility for the first three minimum controls. We already had involvement and expertise in these areas prior to this new program and this opportunity has allowed us to expand our current program abilities.

Having multiple county departments working together has several positive spin-offs. The increased communication benefits other areas of our program. It provides consistent administration of the rules and will hopefully produce more consistent regulations between the townships, municipalities and villages. Ultimately, our goal is to attain better water quality through education and superior technology.

THE DISTRICT GOES DIGITAL

We are fortunate in Hamilton County to have one of the best Geographical Information Systems in the Country. Time saved in viewing maps and having the ability to pull up over 700 layers of information is immeasurable. The District's Geotechnical Engineer, Mohammad Islam, has contributed to this wealth of data by adding layers on fill sites, landslides and subsurface soils, such as soil boring that will show data to the depths of drill hole, bedrock and water table.

Our Earthworks staff has also been creating a site inspection sheet that will be filled out in the field using a "tablet" computer. This tablet can be placed into a dock back at the office and the information will immediately download to the county permit program. Once again, the time saved in transferring information and having the ability to immediately share it with other departments will be considerable.

As we move through the year with our regular programs and tasks and respond to situations dictated by the weather; our goal is to serve our county residents to the best of our ability. We are grateful to the Hamilton County Commissioners, the Ohio Legislature and ODNR-Division of Soil & Water Conservation for their continued support. As always, we appreciate input and feedback from our county residents. Do not hesitate to contact us for any reason.

2004 Annual Report

General Office Stats

Telephone Contacts

Earthwork/erosion/hillside stability calls	1,107
Watershed/Stream/Pond calls	446
Drainage calls	241
Farm programs calls	50
Education calls	711
Miscellaneous Calls	1,674
Visitors	535
Soil Surveys	124
Other	73
Total	4,961

Landowner On-Site Visits

Ponds/Lakes/Streambank/Drainage	204
Farm related visits	51
CAUV reports furnished	28
Erosion	156
Landslides	12
Total	451

Website visitors per year 16,376

Earthwork Program

Plans reviewed	2,629
Zoning Reviews	9
Earthwork permits issued (for 5 acres and larger)	97
Acres cleared for development (not including sites < 5 ac)	1,050 ac
Site inspections	1,529
Fill sites	56
Education Programs	4 for 235 participants

Education

School and Youth Programs	
Classroom presentations (students served)	260 7,526
Student events	7
*Hamilton County Waterfest	
*Butler SWCD Water Festival	
*Fairview Elementary Science Night	

*Free Tree Give-a-Way

*Area IV Envirothon/high school students

*Arbor Day/Loveland Primary School

*Bugfest at the Cincinnati Museum Center

Students served 5,727

Teacher Workshops

	17
*Archdiocese of Cincinnati Workshop Series (K-8)	
*Cincinnati Public Schools Soils Workshop (2nd grade)	
*3 Worm Composting Workshops	
*Project WILD	
*WCET Teacher Appreciation Night	
*Land Lab Workshop	
*Cincinnati Public Schools Science Kit Series (1st grade)	
*Project Learning Tree	
*Healthy Water/Healthy People Workshop	
*OEEF Grant Writing Seminar	
*Cincinnati Nature Center Volunteer Training	
*SWCD Area IV Education Specialist Workshop	
*Cincinnati Public Schools Land & Water Workshop	
*Hamilton County Children's Waterfest	
*Project WET	
*UC Summer Ag Institute	
Teachers served	589

Storm Drain Labeling Events

4

(by 47 participants/applied 127 labels)

Special Projects and Grants

- Testified before the Ohio House of Representatives Township and Finance subcommittee concerning HB 411.
- USDA allocated \$50,000 through NRCS for the Environmental Quality Assistance Program (EQIP) to provide cost-share for farmers to install conservation measures.
- Developed criteria for Water Quality Education Mini-Grants and distributed a total of \$20,000 to watershed groups to promote public education.
- Developed a brochure on the new Hamilton County Storm Water District and printed 62,000 to be distributed to the 45 member jurisdictions.
- Developed some layers in Cincinnati Area Geographical Information System (CAGIS) denoting fill sites, landslide database, subsurface soil information, such as soil boring information that we obtain for different projects, which show soil information to depths of drilled hole and also the depth of bedrock and water table.

- Designing and publishing a K-12 educational curriculum on Water Quality specifically for Hamilton County.
- Received \$5,000 from OEEF, \$5,000 from Greenacres and \$2,000 from Hamilton Co. Environmental Services to develop an interactive *soils tent*.
- Received \$250.00 donation from Lucille Diebel for the Diebel/Odegard Memorial Scholarships.
- Received \$300.00 from The Brickman Group, LTD for the annual *Photo Contest*.

General Public Presentations 10

- Farm Bureau Spring Fling
- Symmes Township Signage Kick-off
- Regional DAR
- Greater Cincinnati Development Council
- Tree Seminar w/Hamilton County Parks
- Two Hamilton Co. Storm Water District Meetings
- Cincinnati Civic Garden Center Master Composting Class
- Two Pond Clinics
- Total Attendees** 546

Public Exhibits 8

- Earth Day at Sawyer Point
- Hamilton County Fair
- Arbor Day Celebration in Loveland
- Public Employee Day on Fountain Square
- Taylor Elementary Family Health & Safety Festival
- Cincinnati Zoo Greater Cincinnati Environmental Educators
- Price Hill Park Water Week w/Cincinnati Park Board
- Martin Luther King Park Water Week w/Cincinnati Park Board

Farm Bill Programs

Environmental Quality Incentives Program-EQIP

- Pasture & hay land planting - 100.7 ac.
- Fencing - 22,015 ft.
- Composting facility - 1
- Heavy Use Protection Area - 9,050 sq. ft.
- Access Road - 8,000 sq. ft.
- Animal Waste Facility - 1
- Roof Runoff Management - 124 ft.
- Tree Stand Improvement - 30 ac.

Conservation Reserve Program - CRP

- Grassed Waterway - 2.5 ac.
- Subsurface Drainage - 3,600 ft.
- Grade Stabilization Structures - 4

Wildlife Habitat Incentives Program - WHIP

- Riparian Forest Buffer - 12.0 ac.
- Tree Planting - 1.5 ac.
- Wetland - 1.0 ac.
- Native Grass Planting - 0.5 ac..

Cooperative Projects

- Mill Creek Watershed and Stream Restoration Project partnered with OKI Regional Council of Government. OKI received a \$240,000 319 grant to fund project.
- Colerain Township - West Fork of the Mill Creek Riparian Corridor Restoration. Partnered with Colerain Township on an \$85,000 Clean Ohio Fund Grant.
- Great Miami River Run-Off Reduction Project. Partnered with Miami Conservancy District and OKI for a \$65,000 US EPA grant.

Financial Report

January 1, 2003 thru December 31, 2003

District Account

Balance on Hand.....	\$22,007.35
Income.....	52,727.18
Expenditures.....	<u>40,733.00</u>
Balance to Date.....	\$34,001.53

Special Account

Balance on Hand.....	102,637.51
Income	
County Appropriations.....	335,871.00
State Matching Funds.....	290,796.10

Expenditures

Earthwork Contract.....	146,495.00
Other.....	<u>433,567.69</u>
Balance on Hand.....	\$149,241.92

This is an unaudited financial report for the period January 1, 2003 thru December 31, 2003.
