

# Conservation Spotlight

Hamilton County Soil & Water Conservation District

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Winter Edition 2010

## 65th Annual Meeting

The Hamilton County Soil and Water Conservation District held its 65th Annual Meeting on September 16, 2010, at the District office. It was a delightful evening. We enjoyed showcasing our new office for the community.

Ohio Senator Eric Kearney presented the District with a framed proclamation signed by Senator Harris, Senator Sietz and himself honoring the District's 65<sup>th</sup> Anniversary.



Senator Eric Kearney and Holly Utrata-Halcomb, District Administrator



Representative Connie Pillich and Holly Utrata-Halcomb, District Administrator



William Brayshaw and Holly Utrata-Halcomb, District Administrator



District Supervisor Craig Abercrombie and Chief David Hanselmann

## 2010 Outstanding Conservation Partnership Award

The Storm Water Districts within Hamilton County, Clermont County, Butler County, City of Mason, Warren County, Deerfield Township, Northern Kentucky Sanitation District No. 1, City of Florence, Kentucky and Metropolitan Sewer District of Greater Cincinnati formed the Regional Storm Water Collaborative (RSWC) in 2006. The purpose of this organization is to address unfunded federal mandates for education and community involvement under the Phase II of the Clean Water Act.

### Regional Storm Water Collaborative

The challenge of this mandate was that each storm water district must reach at least 25% of their jurisdiction's population annually with water quality education messages. The RSWC realized that using the media was the only way to achieve this objective. Through fundraising and grant writing the Collaborative was able to raise enough funds to buy ad time and develop a robust website to support WLWT – Channel 5 segment entitled "Project Earth" which airs three times per week. The "Project Earth" segment enables all of the groups to provide sound, science based information on environmental issues, upcoming event and seasonal topics. Check out the website at [projectearth.wlwt.com](http://projectearth.wlwt.com)



Bob Lentz, Kathy Dormor, Amy Pond, Jonathon McManus, and Karen Ball



## Bob Minges - 2010 Water Quality Partner of the Year

Bob Minges is a lifetime resident of western Hamilton County, where he has assisted in the operation of a 98 acre family farm. The farm employs conservation practices such as a cistern for water reuse, livestock fencing, manure storage, crop rotation and use of grass filter strips. Professionally, Bob has extensive experience in water quality monitoring. He has served as an active Board Member for the Land Conservancy of Hamilton County for 11 years and the Friends of the Great Miami for 9 years.



Bob Minges and Brian Bohl

Bob is receiving this award for his tireless efforts to assist the District with water quality related programs such as the Clean Sweep of the Great Miami River and riverside tree plantings at several locations along the Lower Great Miami. Bob has also donated his dump truck to the clean-up efforts, making it possible to clean more river miles and retrieve additional trash from the river each year.

Through Bob's partnership, we are slowly but surely restoring riparian areas and associated water quality benefits along the Lower Great Miami River. Bob routinely provides temporary storage for tree saplings as well as transport of the trees, mulch and a water tank to tree planting sites. He is also cultivating saplings on his own property for future planting efforts.

## Lucy Ward - 2010 Conservation Teacher of the Year

Lucy Ward has been a teacher for over 20 years. Several years ago, she invited Gwen Roth, Education Specialist, out to her classroom to present conservation programs. Since then, she has been instrumental in helping to expand the use of our education outreach program throughout Cincinnati Public Schools.

In 2009, Lucy invited Gwen to speak to the Cincinnati Public Schools Science Curriculum Council. Over 40 teachers attended that meeting. They learned about the many resources that the District has to offer to teachers and their students. Since that time, many of the teachers in attendance have contacted the District for programs and resources. Lucy is a mentor and inspiration to other teachers and educators and especially to her students.

## Todd Murray - 2010 Conservation Award Glenbridge Manor Stream Relocation

A large condo complex near the corner of Montgomery and Kemper Roads in Symmes Township had a stream that was under-mining the stability of a modular block retaining wall. In order to avoid additional problems, the stream was re-routed away from the wall, and almost 4,000 cubic yards of excavation, 9 feet of fill and 435 linear feet of a tributary to Polk Run Creek had to be moved. Performance Site Management handled the site work with Todd Murray as the Site Manager. Todd was very cooperative and proactive with the sediment & erosion control issues and employed various practices during every phase of the construction process to reduce sedimentation. This included two stream crossings that had to be timed to coincide with all the excavation & fill activity on the site. Todd was one step ahead of the District's concerns throughout the construction process.



Dan Taphorn, Urban Conservationist, Todd Murray, Craig Abercrombie, District Supervisor

## Duke Construction - 2010 Urban Conservation Award Western Ridge (Good Samaritan Hospital)

The Western Ridge Project is 32 acres located on Harrison Road in Green Township. This site will consist of five commercial lots and a Good Samaritan Hospital Building at the top of a steep slope, constructed through 164,100 cubic yards of excavation, 138,110 cubic yards of fill and export of 26,000 cubic yards to an offsite location. The site is made even more challenging because at the bottom of the hill is Harrison Avenue.

Duke Construction, represented by Chuck Schroeder, established a good working relationship with the District and implemented effective Best Management Practices at the site. Sediment basins and perimeter sediment controls were installed immediately before grading areas upslope. Strict implementation of temporary and permanent seeding requirements were observed. One major seeding application on critical slopes after final grade was applied in late January, beating the major snowstorm by just hours.



Dan Taphorn, Urban Conservationist, Chuck Schroeder, Craig Abercrombie, District Supervisor





## New Supervisors!

Congratulations to Sam McKinley and Pete Mallow for winning the election for Supervisor during our Annual Meeting. They will both serve three-year terms starting in January 2011.

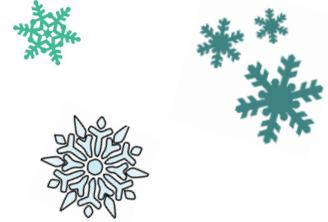
We thank Karen Ball, Robert Biddle and Wendi Van Buren for running for the Board and hope they will try again next year.



Sam McKinley,  
Supervisor



Pete Mallow,  
Supervisor



## FARMBILL WORKSHOPS

The Butler and Hamilton County SWCD's along with NRCS will be having Farmbill workshops at the Butler County SWCD/NRCS Service Center located at 1802 Princeton Road, Hamilton, OH 45011. At these workshops, different governmental agencies will be introducing their programs. Some of the agencies presenting include: The Butler County CAUV Specialist, the Division of Forestry, the Division of Wildlife, the Farm Service Agency, the Soil and Water Conservation Districts and the Natural Resources Conservation Service.

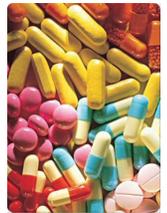


The workshops will be scheduled for early 2011. If you are interested in learning about the Farmbill workshops which could benefit you technically and possibly financially, please contact the Butler County SWCD or John Williams, District Conservationist with NRCS at 513-887-3720.



## PHARMACEUTICAL COLLECTION EVENT SUCCESS OVER 2,000 LBS COLLECTED!

In order to provide residents with a safe and environmentally friendly disposal method for unwanted and expired medication, the Southwest Ohio Dispose Responsibly of Pharmaceuticals (DROP) collaboration organized 22 drop-off sites throughout Clermont, Hamilton and Warren County. It involved over 120 volunteers; 70 police officers, firefighters and 50 residents. The event was designed to provide a service for proper disposal and to raise awareness regarding the dangers of both prescription drug abuse and improperly disposed medication. The regional event was held on Saturday, November 13th as part of the American Medicine Chest Challenge. Hundreds of residents throughout the region participated with officials collecting over 2,000 pounds during the 4 hour event.



Southwest Ohio DROP is a regional collaboration of local health, safety and environmental professionals working to reduce the amount of stored and improperly disposed of pharmaceuticals that can enter our waterways. By not flushing unwanted pharmaceuticals and by purchasing less over the counter medication, we can contribute to cleaner water in our environment and at the tap. For more information, contact Annette Meagher at 513-772-7645 or [annette.meagher@hamilton-co.org](mailto:annette.meagher@hamilton-co.org).



**One good rainfall is not a drought buster.**

**Is your rain gauge gathering cobwebs during this drought?** Don't forget to keep watering your trees and landscape. It would be more costly to replace them in the spring than to spend a little money now on watering.





## Venturing into the World of Scouting



The world of scouting offers so many opportunities to send a message about the value of our natural resources to our youth, and we at the District want to help.

Recently, we started collaborating with the Education Outreach Department of the Girl Scouts of Southwestern Ohio. We participated in the *Girl Scouts During the School Day* series; a new, free outreach program that targets girls who may have transportation or language barriers, lack of adult leadership or no safe place to meet as a troop. These girls may be unaware of the opportunities the Girl Scouts have to offer or may be interested but don't have the resources to participate.

*Girl Scouts During the School Day* is spent at a chosen school and the program acts like a specials class, where an entire grade of girls will meet at a time and have a guest speaker related to an environmental topic once a week for 8 weeks. We have visited Quebec Heights and Roselawn Condon schools this fall and will be visiting Rees E. Price and Cheviot School in the spring of 2011. It is a great opportunity not only to speak to hundreds of young girls, but also to showcase our programs to schools that may be unaware of what we do.

In addition to these programs, we will be working on the Scout section of our website. We will be offering programs to meet requirements of Girl Scout patches and Boy Scout badges. We will also be open to any scout leader or volunteer that would like us to speak to their troop on a soil or water topic. If you are interested in these programs, please feel free to call the office at 772-7645 (SOIL) or email Niki at [niki.marengo@hamilton-co.org](mailto:niki.marengo@hamilton-co.org).

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## PROJECT EARTH SAVING THE PLANET ONE CLICK AT A TIME

It has been four years in the making, but well worth the time and effort! The District is excited to announce a new collaboration with the Regional Storm Water Collaborative and WLWT – Channel 5 news called “Project Earth.” The purpose of this project is to get the citizens of Cincinnati and the Tri-State educated and involved in the stewardship of all of the regions’ natural resources.

Through special reports on WLWT News 5, and a special Project Earth section on [www.WLWT.com](http://www.WLWT.com), Project Earth is answering questions about water conservation, preserving our watershed, land use, the environment and our health.

“There are small changes that each of us can make that will have a big impact here in the Tri-State,” said WLWT President and General Manager Richard Dyer. “Project Earth is answering questions and giving people the resources to take action and conserve.”

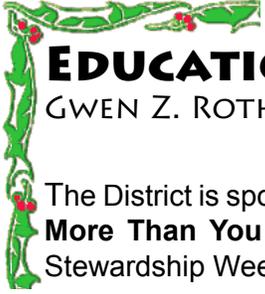
The Regional Storm Water Collaborative is composed of local experts of storm water districts, municipalities and soil and water conservation districts in Hamilton, Butler, Clermont and Warren Counties in Ohio and Boone, Kenton and Campbell Counties in Northern Kentucky, with other sponsors including MSD and OEPA. The purpose of the partnership is to present relevant issues with science based information and practical solutions.

For more information, visit the special Project Earth section online at: <http://projectearth.wlwt.com>

If you have story ideas, upcoming events to post on the website calendar or questions, contact Holly Utrata-Halcomb at 772-7645 or [holly.utrata-halcomb@hamilton-co.org](mailto:holly.utrata-halcomb@hamilton-co.org).

**Teachers and youth leaders - check out the “Learning Center” which is packed with loads of activities and information.**





## EDUCATION CORNER

GWEN Z. ROTH, EDUCATION SPECIALIST AND NIKI MARENGO, EDUCATION ASSISTANT

### Poster and Essay Contests

The District is sponsoring both an essay contest and a poster contest in 2011. The theme is “**Forests for People: More Than You Can Imagine!**” which corresponds with the National Association of Conservation District’s Stewardship Week *April 24 – May 1, 2011*. (For more information, go to [www.nacdnet.org](http://www.nacdnet.org)).

We want to connect people to the forest. We all have a connection to the trees in the forest that provide wood for our homes and furniture. We can thank trees that help clean the air we breathe.

Hamilton County students are eligible to enter each contest. The essay contest is open to students in the following grade divisions: 3 - 5, 6 - 8, and 9 - 12. The poster contest is open to students in following grade divisions: K - 2, 3 - 5, 6 - 8, and 9 - 12.

For detailed information on each contest, please see our website at [www.hcswcd.org](http://www.hcswcd.org).

Both posters and essays are due by **Friday, April 8, 2011**, in our office at 22 Triangle Park Drive, Cincinnati, Ohio 45246, Attention: Gwen Z. Roth.

Winners from each grade level category will receive a \$25 gift certificate and sponsoring teachers will also receive a \$25 gift certificate. *All essays and posters become the property of Hamilton County Soil and Water Conservation District.*

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### Steve Sandfort Memorial Arbor Day 2011 Recycled Sculpture Contest

**What your class does:** Create a sculpture of a tree or anything tree-related (animals, bugs, leaves) in honor of Arbor Day - April 29, 2011. Our relationship to trees must be evident.

**What we do:** Bring a beautiful tree to the winning school on or near Arbor Day so it can be planted to honor your victory!

#### Contest Rules

- ❖ Must be tree or tree-related
- ❖ Must be made from recycled materials
- ❖ Must have a place to plant your winning tree and principal’s permission to dig
- ❖ All Hamilton County Schools are eligible
- ❖ Only one entry allowed per school
- ❖ Sculpture no larger than 3’ x 3’ x 3’

**All entries due by March 31, 2011**

For detailed information, please see our website at [www.hcswcd.org](http://www.hcswcd.org).

*All sculptures become the property of Hamilton County Soil and Water Conservation District.*



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## Growing Up WILD Workshop

The new **Growing Up WILD** curriculum has 27 hands-on activities designed for preschool and kindergarten students, featuring arts and crafts, music, conservation, reading, math and take home connections. It is correlated to the National Association for the Education of Young Children Standards and to the Head Start Domains. It is also correlated to the Ohio Academic Content Standards for Early Childhood in Science and Social Studies.

Participants will receive Project WILD’s **NEW** Growing Up WILD curriculum book, teacher resources to use in the classroom and light breakfast.

**PRE-REGISTRATION IS REQUIRED** by Tuesday, March 1

Date: Saturday, March 26, 2011  
Time: 9:00a - 12:00p  
Location: Butler County SWCD office  
1802 Princeton Road  
Hamilton, OH

Who: Educators who work  
with children ages 3-7  
Cost: \$10.00



To register or for more questions, contact:

Gwen Roth (513-772-7645 or [gwen.roth@hamilton-co.org](mailto:gwen.roth@hamilton-co.org)) or Lynn White (513-785-6666 or [whitelr@butlercountyohio.org](mailto:whitelr@butlercountyohio.org))

Sponsored by: Butler and Hamilton County Soil & Water Conservation Districts



# Upcoming Events

## Board of Supervisors

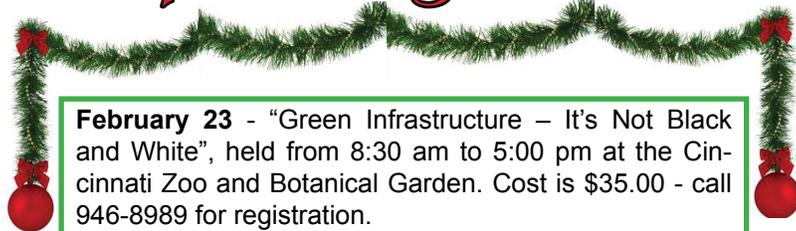
Nate Holscher, Chairman  
Sam McKinley, Vice-Chairman  
Denny Benson, Secretary  
Steve Johns, Treasurer  
Craig Abercrombie, Program Chairman

## District Staff

Holly Utrata-Halcomb, Administrator  
Susan Juriga, Administrative Assistant  
Cheryl Reinke Peck, Office Assistant  
Annette Meagher, Public Relations Specialist  
Dan Taphorn, Urban Conservationist  
Chey Alberto, Urban Technician  
Nate Sturm, Urban Technician  
Robert Sheets, Geotechnical Engineer  
Gwen Z. Roth, Education Specialist  
Niki Marengo, Education Assistant  
Brian Bohl, Stream Specialist

## NRCS

John Williams, D.C./NRCS



**February 23** - "Green Infrastructure – It's Not Black and White", held from 8:30 am to 5:00 pm at the Cincinnati Zoo and Botanical Garden. Cost is \$35.00 - call 946-8989 for registration.

**March 26** - Growing Up Wild Workshop (see page 3)

**April 8** - Poster Contest (see page 3)

**April 29** - Arbor Day Sculpture Contest (see page 3)



Merry  
Christmas  
&  
Happy  
New Year!



**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.

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



Hamilton County Soil and Water  
Conservation District  
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Cincinnati, OH 45246-3411

Non-Profit Organization  
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Cincinnati, OH