

2009 Annual Report

**Hamilton County
Soil and Water Conservation District
29 Triangle Park Drive, Suite 2901
Cincinnati, Ohio 45246-3411**

Phone: 513-772-SOIL (7645)

Fax: 513-772-7656

Website: www.hcswcd.org



Little Miami River - Branch Hill
Photo taken by Nathan Sturm

Dear Hamilton County Landowners and Residents:

Recently, we emerged from the coolest July on record. This was a surprise after the dust bowls of 2007 & 2008. Unlike the previous years, we have enjoyed mild temperatures and plenty of rain, creating a striking lush of green as far as the eye can see. Fortunately, we have seen a dramatic decrease in landslides, from 34 in the first 8 months of 2008 to only 4 reported so far this year.

Education continues to be the cornerstone of all of our programs. This past year, our staff presented 402 classroom programs to 10,548 students and offered 10 teacher workshops for 176 teachers impacting 4,576 children. In addition to these programs 66 adult public education programs, events and displays were also provided to our County residents.

The development of the Regional Stormwater Collaboration may be the District's most successful venture over the past year. This group focuses on media education to provide a consistent message and benefit from the economy of scales in purchasing air time. We have also collaborated in securing over \$700,000 for future educational efforts and putting actual conservation practices on the ground.

Our Board of County Commissioners adopted the revised Hamilton County Earthwork Regulations on June 15, 2009. These revised regulations were developed in a collaborative effort with participation from the Greater Cincinnati Home Builders Association, the Ohio Valley Development Council and the Hamilton County Storm Water District Technical Advisory Committee. Input was also sought from the Sierra Club and the Hillside Trust. In response to this feedback, our new regulations have aligned Hamilton County with state and federal Clean Water Act rules. Simplifying rules and regulation will facilitate understanding and compliance and thereby reduce the need for enforcement action. Recently, the District's Board of Supervisors approved the District administering this program for an additional 19 municipalities in addition to the original 12 townships.

The Hamilton County SWCD Urban Stream Program has provided over 200 consultations to landowners, businesses, contractors and local governments on a variety of water quality and stream stability issues. This program has also provided water quality and storm water management education at over 20 community forums. Our Urban Stream Program uses a variety of approaches to improve water quality such as watershed signage, river clean-ups and assistance with stream corridor restoration.

As an urban county with declining population, Hamilton County's main focus must be to regain its status as a highly desirable place to live, work and play. Regulations alone can not achieve this goal. Partnerships with those who share our interest in maintaining our natural resources and attracting population including the businesses we regulate like builders and land developers as well as our landowners. This is the District's role in improving the County's outlook. Over the past year, the Hamilton County SWCD has taken several steps to build these partnerships.

Our continued effort to educate the entire community about our core mission is the best way to instill environmentally friendly best practices into our resident's day to day lives. Education is the foundation upon which any other SWCD activity must be built.

Sincerely,
Denny Benson
Chairman, Hamilton County Soil and Water Conservation District

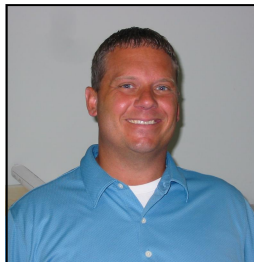
Board of Supervisors 2009



Denny Benson
Chairman



Nate Holscher
Vice - Chairman



Craig Abercrombie
Secretary



Sam McKinley
Treasurer



Steve Johns
Program Chairman

Service Statistics for 2009

Telephone and E-mail Contacts

Landowner- 3,347

Drainage/erosion - 639
Pond/lake - 152
Storm Water - 620
(storm system, road, sewer, etc.)
Landslides - 21
District services & products - 1,859
(soil fertility kits, maps, etc.)
Farm Programs - 24
Misc. Calls - 332



Clean Sweep 2009
Along the bank of the
Great Miami River

Education/Outreach- 8,474

School/teachers - 1,266
General public - 101
Public Relations - 718
Public events - 2,043
Collaboration with groups - 3,345
Public Involvement - 1,001

Earthwork- 4,518

Contractor/developer/builder - 2,661
Complaint - 241
Unit of Gov't - 1,616

Stream- 2,246

Stream bank erosion - 584
Stream-water quality - 712
Flooding - 60
Coordination of watershed groups - 880

Units of Govt. - 1,371

Administrative - 1,925

Miscellaneous - 131

Office Visitors - 728

Web Site Statistics - www.hcswcd.org

Visitor Sessions - 71,964 Avg. per day - 525 Total Hits - 316,713/year
Pages Viewed - 95,118 On-line complaints and inquires - 128

Landowner Sites Visits - 339 Total

Pond/drainage - 96 Erosion - 53
Fill Sites - 66 Ground Water - 1
Stream Bank Erosion - 45 Stream Permitting - 19
Farm - 29 Log Jams - 2

Stream Contamination - 7
Landslide - 37 (Many carryover from 2008)

Farm Bill Programs

Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP):

Fencing - 5,690 ft
Heavy Use Area Protection - 5,670 sq ft
Access Road - 265 sq ft
Pipeline - 510 ft
Watering Facilities - 6

Emergency Watershed Program - Floodplain Easement Program

Hamilton Co. Park District**
Number of Acres - 720.1
Number of Sites - 5

Amount of USDA Cost-Share Funds Distributed \$45,441 + Hamilton County Park District Easements**

Number of EQIP visits - 35
Number of CRP visits - 10
Number of Drainage/Pond visits - 14
Number of WHIP visits - 5

Conservation Reserve Program (CRP)

Grassed Waterways - 1.5 ac.
Subsurface Drainage - 2,740 ft
Grade Stabilization Structures - 2

**The dollar amount that will be received is unknown at the time of publishing this report.



EQIP Program
Heavy Use Area around a pasture shelter



EQIP Program
Woven wire fencing project completed

Earthwork Program

Plans Reviewed - 1,362 Total# of active sites - 180 Acres disturbed - 293.31
 Development Sites inspected on a semi-monthly or monthly basis - 180 avg.
 Zoning reviews - 33 New fill sites - 14



Erosion on Development site.

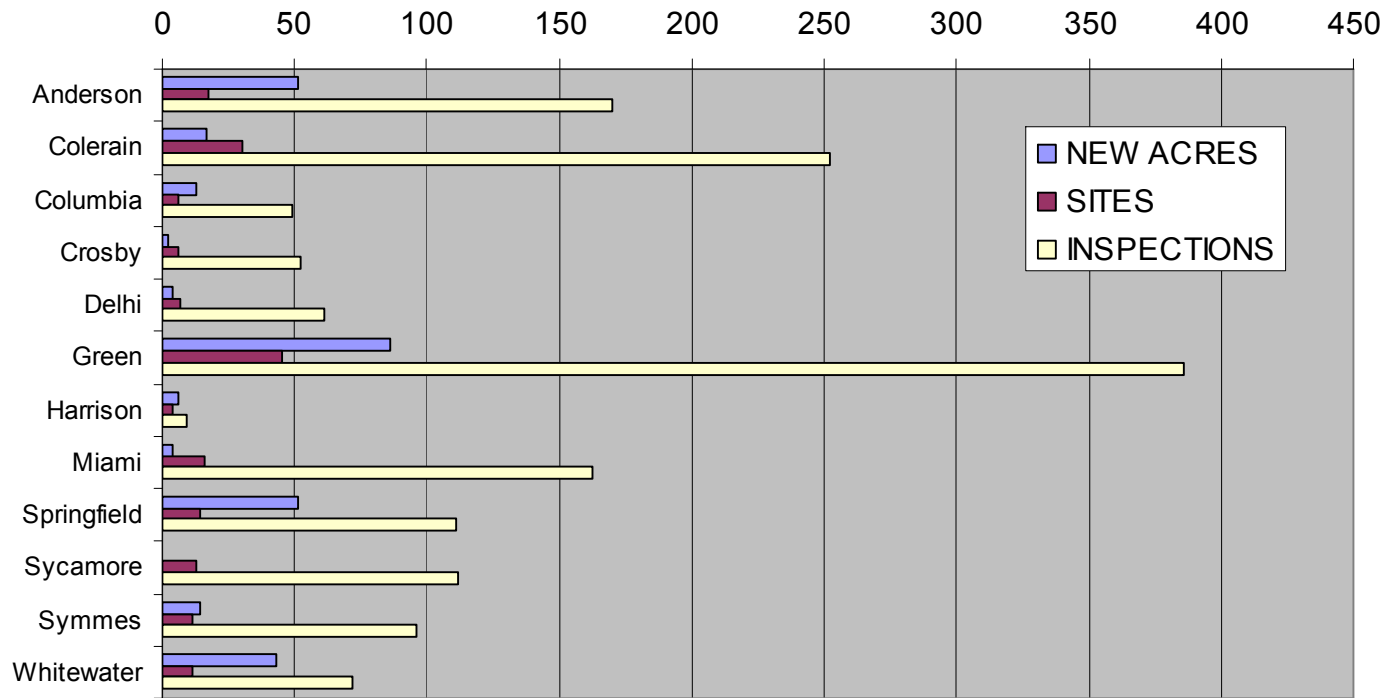


Temporary seeding on Development site

Permits issued by Township August 1, 2008 - July 31, 2009

Anderson - 23 Colerain - 9 Columbia - 3 Crosby - 3 Delhi - 3 Green - 22
 Harrison - 1 Miami - 9 Springfield - 4 Sycamore - 1 Symmes - 11 Whitewater - 1
Total New Permits = 90

**EARTHWORK SITES
 August 2008 - July 2009**



	Whitewater	Symmes	Sycamore	Springfield	Miami	Harrison	Green	Delhi	Crosby	Columbia	Colerain	Anderson
NEW ACRES	43.31	14.65	1	51.3	4	6	86.28	3.68	2	13.09	16.7	51.3
SITES	11	11	13	14	16	4	45	7	6	6	30	17
INSPECTIONS	72	96	12	111	162	9	386	61	52	49	252	170

Storm Water Quality Community Involvement

Community Presentations/Displays: 18 presentations, activities and/or display opportunities with an audience of 1,193 total individuals.

Watershed Signs: 20 new signs installed at stream crossings in the Village of Arlington Heights, the City of Blue Ash, the City of Cincinnati, Colerain Township, Green Township, Miami Township, Symmes Township and White-water Township.

Storm Drain Labeling Events: 4 events, 107 participants, 347 storm drains labeled, 1,034 flyers distributed.

September 2008

- Great Miami River Days Festival - 40,000+ attendees
- Volunteer recruitment visit at Sycamore High School - 25 participants
- Storm Drain Labeling Event in Blue Ash - 11 Blue Ash/Montgomery Rotary Club volunteers labeled 55 storm drains and delivered informational flyers to 168 homes



Enviroscope Presentation

October 2008

- Tree planting and river clean-up with Procter & Gamble employees - presentation on storm water BMPs and Great Miami River water quality - 35 participants
- Blue Ash Storm Drain Labeling Event and Enviroscope Presentation - Sycamore High School - 99 storm drains labeled, 223 informational flyers delivered, 13 volunteers
- Southwest Ohio Stream Stewards Conference - seining and presentation of macroinvertebrate sampling techniques in the Great Miami River - 35 participants
- Presentation of Southwest Ohio Waterways Challenges and Opportunities Conference - 40 participants
- Storm Drain Labeling - Event and Enviroscope Presentation - Sunny D Beverages Executive Offices - 168 storm drains labeled, 547 information flyers delivered, 30 volunteers

November 2008

- Green Township Storm Drain Labeling Event - 15 volunteers (6 adults and 9 Cub Scouts) received an Enviroscope Presentation
- Presentation to a University of Cincinnati class regarding the role of government agencies and nonprofit organizations in watershed management - 15 participants

February 2009

- Green Industry Expo - Sharonville Convention Center - 200 attendees

April 2009

- Watershed Awareness Forum, Watershed Sign Installation Kick-off event, Green Township Nathaniel Green Lodge, presentation of "Water Quality Challenges in Hamilton County Waterways" and "Nonpoint Source Pollution Prevention Strategies" - 20 attendees

May 2009

- Presented Great Miami River water quality issues and nonpoint source pollution prevention practices at the Friends of the Great Miami Annual Meeting, West, Whitewater Twp. - 35 attendees
- Rain garden function and design presentation for Blue Ash City Council - 30 attendees



Western Hamilton County Watershed Awareness Forum

July 2009

- Water quality presentation and monitoring demonstrations as part of the Great Miami River Mini-Paddle - 20 paddlers in attendance (Crosby & Colerain Twp.)
- East Fork Mill Creek and Mill Creek educational canoe event with the Mill Creek Yacht Club - provided information regarding stream morphology (Sharonville) - 12 participants

June 2009

- Watershed Awareness and Pollution Prevention Event (City of Blue Ash) - 17 participants

River Clean-ups: 2 locations, 41 participants

May 2009 - Clean Sweep of the Great Miami at Heritage Park and Shawnee Lookout Park. Heritage Park - 19 volunteers, 1/5 large roll off box filled, 11 tires removed. Shawnee Lookout Park - 22 volunteers, 1/5 large roll off box filled, 66 tires removed. Unique finds - sheet metal, fencing, toilet, deer hide, freezer and a boat

Education Media Outreach

Public Relations and Media - Secured \$43,000 worth of media donations.

- ⇒ "Conservation Spotlight Newsletter" Published quarterly and distributed to 5,380 residents per quarter.
- ⇒ PSA's and news articles - 12 published in the "Community Press", "Cincinnati Enquirer", Community Newsletters, "Hello Hamilton County" E-newsletter.
- ⇒ Purchased Ad Space - 4 - "Cincinnati Enquirer", "Community Press" & "City Beat". Topics included: Sunshine Law, Annual Budget Report, Well Testing Program, and Earth Day Ad on Water Quality. Potential audience for all above categories could be in the millions.
- ⇒ February 2009 - Radio Interview with WMKV - 89.3 FM "It's Great Outdoors" Host Carol Mundy - Audience - 15,350.
- ⇒ March - May - One billboard posted on I-75 S just past Mitchell Road on Stormwater Quality. Potential audience - 256,106 per month. Plus four posters along connecting arteries with potential audiences of 62,900 per month. Lamar Advertising donated May and June billboard and poster space that had a **donation value of \$18,000.**
- ⇒ May 2009 - WCPO - Channel 9 donated thirty; 30-second ads that addressed individual impacts on water quality - Potential audience of 1,727,223. Value of **donation \$25,000.**
- ⇒ June 2009 - CET Connect filmed our worm program for use with educators. The audience will be thousands of teachers.



WCPO Television ad on Water Quality



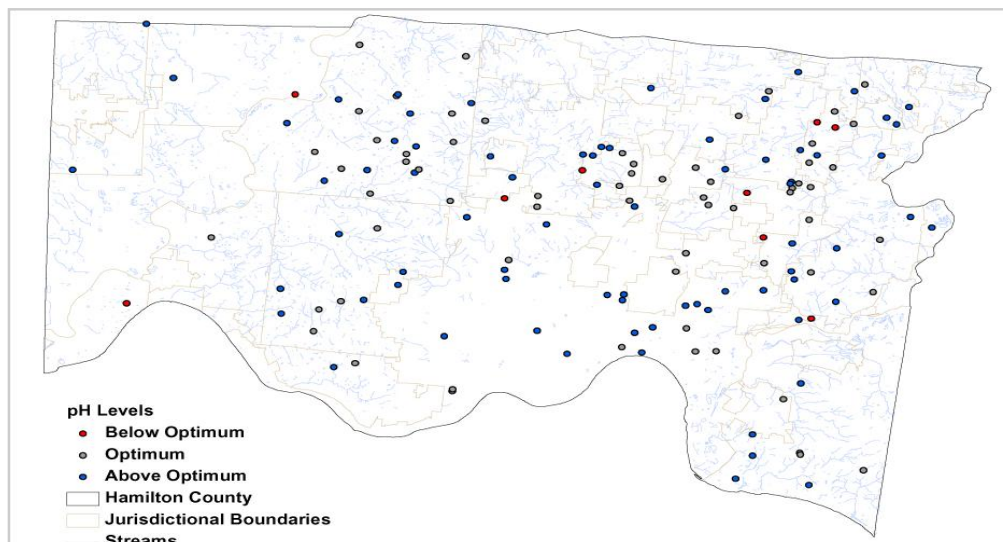
Billboard posted on I-75 & connecting arteries

Soil Fertility Testing - Community Involvement

Fertilizer run-off is one of the major causes of water quality impairment in our County. The District worked in partnership with Michigan State University to offer soil Fertility Testing to our landowners. During this past year, the District sold 1,032 kits. The testing results instruct the landowner on exactly how much fertilizer to apply for optimum plant growth. This knowledge saves money and reduces the amount of fertilizer applied.

A majority of the results revealed that a great percentage of our soils have a high pH and high **Phosphorus content**. We are in the process of mapping these results on our soils GIS layer to determine if soil type is the reason the levels are so high. As more results come in, we will update you on this study.

pH Levels of Soil Testing Sites in Hamilton County, Ohio



Map prepared by Beth Fisher

Public Education - Programs, Events and Displays - 48 Total

August 2008

- Northwest Local School District Back to School Health and Safety Fair - 500 participants
- Wild about Wine fundraiser at the Zoo for CREW

September 2008

- Harvest Home - 30,000+ attendees over three days
- Greater Cincinnati Environmental Educators Ultimate Educator Expo at Cincinnati Zoo - 300+ participants
- "Your Home, Your Health, Your Voice" Conference - 200+ participants
- Agricultural Education Day - 300+ students attended
- Annual Meeting - 100 people

October 2008

- Green Garden Party at Cincinnati Zoo - 300+ participants
- Agriculture Education Day school event - 350 participants
- Agriculture Education Day public event - 1,000 participants
- Wyoming Fall Fest - 500 attendees
- Worm Workshop - 11 participants
- Butler County Water Festival
- Safe Water Science Workshop at Cincinnati State - 15 participants
- PLT workshop at Mt. St. Joe's - 11 participants



Planting flowers at the
Agriculture Education Day

November 2008

- Water & Waste Workshop - 14 participants

December 2008

- Hosted Office & Field tour for Dr. Rebecca Kelley's NKU class - 14 participants

February 2009

- Table Top Night - Home Builders Association - 692 in attendance
- Fairview German Math and Science Night - 200+ participants
- Water quality presentation to Buckeye United Fly Fishermen (Springdale) - 20 attendees
- "Rain Garden Workshop for Green Professionals" at the Cincinnati Zoo - 130 participants
- Forest Park Garden Club presentation - 15 participants

March 2009

- ASCE Dayton Chapter erosion and sediment control program - 83 participants
- SOSI Principals Academy - 14 participants
- Springdale Children's Health Fair - 500+ participants
- City of Montgomery - "Soil Fertility Testing" class - 96 participants
- Winton Woods "Soil Fertility Testing" program - 7 participants
- US Dept. of Energy presentation on "Women in Conservation" Received a plaque and flowers for work with DOE - 70 participants
- "Best Garden Ever" soils class at Miami Whitewater Park - 13 participants

April 2009

- Township Road Superintendents Signage Training - 16 participants
- Earth Day at Sawyer Point - 3,000+ attendees
- Earth Jam at Cincinnati State - 500+ attendees
- Rain Barrel Sale - 135 barrels sold; orders taken for 36 more
- Pond Clinic - 35 participants
- Cincinnati Flower Show potting station in Small Wonders Tent - 10,000+ attendees
- Mt. Healthy "Soil Fertility" program - 35 participants
- Display and presentation at the Regional Stormwater Conference - 225 participants



Erosion and Sediment Control Workshop

May 2009

- Public Employees Recognition Day - Several hundred in attendance.
- Area IV Envirothon - Competition for High School Students on Environmental Topics
- Crosby Days - 500+ attendees
- Kids Day America in Blue Ash - 100+ attendees
- Plant, Herb and Hosta Sale at the Civic Garden Center - Sold Soil Fertility Test Kits

June 2009

- Pond Clinic - 35 participants
- Bugfest at Cincinnati Museum Center - 3,000+ attendees
- CET Connect filmed our worm program for broadcast
- Paddlefest Kids Expo - 3,000+ attendees
- Paddlefest Music Festival - 15,000+ attendees



Provided 39 Library program to 1,242 participants

July 2009

- Village of Woodlawn Friends and Family Picnic - 1,000+ attendees

Education

School or Youth Presentations - 402 programs for 10,548 students

Teacher workshops - 10 for 176 participants impacting at least 4,576 children*

**The students impacted number came from multiplying # teachers (176) by 26 (avg. class size)*

District Resources & Products—Items Provided or Sold

Soil Surveys - 51
Soils CD - 1

Soil Fertility Test Kits - 1,032
Rain Garden Manual - 1,979

Arial photo CD - 1
Rain Barrel program - 135

Hamilton County Soil and Water Conservation Staff



Sitting - Starting from the left: Annette Meagher, Public Relations Specialist, Nathan Sturm, Urban Technician II, Cheryl Reinke Peck, Education Assistant, Dan Taphorn, Urban Conservationist, Holly Utrata-Halcomb, District Administrator, Robert Sheets, Geotechnical Engineer
Standing - Starting from the left: Brian Bohl, Stream Specialist, Susan K. Juriga, Administrative Assistant, Willie Potter, Design Technician II, Gwen Z. Roth, Education Specialist, Chey Alberto, Urban Technician I

USDA - NRCS Staff (not pictured)

John Williams, District Conservationist

Jeff Barnes, Soil Conservationist

Leadership Positions, Membership of Committees and Accomplishments of the Hamilton County Soil and Water Conservation District's Staff

The District

- Administer the Hamilton County Earthwork Regulations - for hillside stability, sediment and erosion control in the unincorporated areas of the County and 19 municipalities and villages
- Serve as the Hamilton County liaison for all USDA farm related programs through the Natural Resource Conservation Service
- Designated the Hamilton County enforcement official for ODNR - Division of Soil & Water Conservation Agriculture Pollution Abatement Rules
- Responsible for Hamilton County Storm Water District Education, Outreach and Public Involvement Programs, and Construction Components of the National Pollution Discharge & Elimination System (NPDES) Phase II - Clean Water Act

Leadership Positions Held by District Staff

Holly Utrata-Halcomb, Administrator

- Vice Chair, District 2 Natural Resource Assistance Council for the Clean Ohio Fund
- Chair of the Regional Storm Water Collaborative
- Resource Development Chair for Cincinnati Area Professional Green Infrastructure Network (CAPGIN)
- Co-author and Editor, "Rain Garden Guidelines for S.W. Ohio" development workshop
- Member, Advisory Board, USEPA Shepherds Creek Project
- Member, Greater Cincinnati Green Initiative Council
- Member, Hamilton County Stormwater District Technical Advisory Committee

Dan Taphorn, Urban Conservationist

- Member, Hamilton County Stormwater District Technical Advisory Committee
- Coordinator of Advisory Board with Greater Cincinnati Home Builders Association

Brian Bohl, Stream Specialist

- President of Friends of the Great Miami
- Member, Ohio EPA Stream Mitigation Rule Working Group
- Member, Saturday Stream Snapshot Stream Monitoring Program
- Member, Mill Creek Watershed Council of Communities
- Member, Lower Little Miami Watershed Action Planning Committee
- Member, Clean Sweep of the Lower Great Miami River Planning Committee
- Member, Stormwater District Technical Advisory Committee
- Member, Great Miami River Network
- Member, Lower Great Miami Drinking Water Protection Advisory Committee
- Member, Advisory Board for USEPA Shepherds Creek Project
- Member, Hamilton County Stormwater District Technical Advisory Committee
- Member, Chevron Advisory Panel
- Co-author, "Rain Garden Guidelines for S. W. Ohio"



Great Miami River Paddle

Gwen Roth, Education Specialist

- Coordinating Committee Member for the State of Ohio Federation of Soil & Water Certification for Educators
- Member of Coordinating Committee for Greater Cincinnati Environmental Educators



Meeting with State regulators

Chey Alberto & Nate Sturm, District Technicians

- Members, SW Ohio Sediment & Erosion Control Field Day Committee
- Members, Hamilton County Inspectors Group

District Membership in the following Committees

- OKI-Regional Conservation Council - Supervisor, Craig Abercrombie
- Miami Valley, Resource Conservation & Development Council - Supervisor, Steve Johns
- Mill Creek Watershed Council—Supervisor, Nate Holscher

Honors and Certifications earned by District staff in the past year

- Brian Bohl received Ohio EPA Level 2 Chemical Method Training & Level 3 Qualified Data Collector status for stream habitat assessments (QHEI analysis).
- Nate Sturm received the Certified Erosion, Sediment and Storm Water Inspector (CESSWI).
- Holly Utrata-Halcomb received an award from the U.S. Department of Energy of America's for her support to the DOE Environmental Management Consolidated Business Center.

Financial Report
January 1, 2008- December 31, 2008

District Account

January 1, 2008 beginning balance	\$ 12,182
Income	7,172
Expenses	11,842
	\$ 7,512

Special Account (Soil & Water Conservation)

January 1, 2008 beginning balance	\$202,242
General Fund Subsidy	313,911
State Match (This is a combination of 2007 and 2008 funds deposited in 2008)	385,007
Total Expenditures	598,616
	302,544

Special Account (Storm Water)

January 1, 2008 beginning balance	\$151,091
General Fund Subsidy	212,345
State Match (This is a combination of 2007 and 2008 funds deposited in 2008)	312,505
Total Expenditures	282,998
	392,944

This is unaudited financial report for the period January 1, 2008 - December 31, 2008.

Hamilton County Soil and Water Conservation District

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 Phone: 513-772-7645 - Fax: 513-772-7656
 Website: www/hcswcd.org

The District sincerely appreciates the support we received from the Hamilton County Commissioners; Commissioner Greg Hartman, Commissioner David Pepper and Commissioner Todd Portune. We also appreciate the support we received from ODNR, Division of Soil & Water Conservation, the Ohio Legislature, the Ohio Department of Natural Resources and the Ohio Soil & Water Conservation Commission and the Natural Resources Conservation Service.



Greg Hartmann



David Pepper



Todd Portune

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

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.