

# CONSERVATION SPOTLIGHT

SUMMER 2014

A NEWSLETTER OF THE  
HAMILTON COUNTY SOIL AND WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT



## CARING FOR OUR WATERSHEDS CONTEST WINNERS!

By Gwen Roth

On Saturday, May 3, ten teams of students from Mount Notre Dame, Taylor, Withrow and Wyoming High Schools competed for over \$12,000 in cash and prizes for their team and their school in the "Caring For Our Watersheds" Ohio competition sponsored by Agrium Inc.



Amy, Kelsey and Emily, Mt. Notre Dame High School  
1st place winners.

Caring For Our Watersheds is a global competition that asks students to submit a proposal that answered the question, "What can you do to improve your watershed?"

Students researched their local watershed, identified an environmental concern and came up with a realistic solution.

Community judges read over 75 proposals and selected the top entries to compete in the final verbal presentations at the Cincinnati Zoo & Botanical Garden. The community judges then became

watershed mentors to the students helping them to develop their ideas further.

Each finalist had 5 minutes to explain their idea to a panel of judges and a public audience. Judges included Scott Huber (District Board Member), Ted Hubbard (Hamilton County Engineers), Jean Bagel (Agrium, Inc), Laura Fay (Ohio Department of Natural Resources) and Chris Cotton (Ohio EPA).

Using the judges' written proposal and verbal presentation scores, student's ideas were ranked. Top 10 teams received a cash prize. Their schools also received a matching cash prize. In addition, all students are encouraged to implement their ideas with \$10,000 grant monies from Agrium, Inc.

Caring for our Watersheds is currently offered in Canada within Alberta, Saskatchewan, Manitoba and Ontario; in the United States within Colorado, California, Ohio, Virginia and Washington, DC; in Argentina within San Antonio de Areco; and in Australia within the Glenelg Hopkins Region in Victoria.

Amy, Kelsey and Emily from Mount Notre Dame High School won first place and \$1,000 with their presentation, which included planting of natives around a culvert to reduce erosion and filter runoff. Their presentation was entitled the "Sister Dorothy Stang Watershed Project." We couldn't be more proud of them and all our teams that participated.

For more information please visit:

<http://caringforourwatersheds.com/usa/ohio/>  
or contact local program coordinator, Gwen Z. Roth.



HAMILTON COUNTY SOIL AND WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT  
PROGRAMS AND ASSISTANCE  
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URBANLAND & EARTHWORKS | PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT PROGRAMS  
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# CERTIFICATION TO APPLY FERTILIZER REQUIRED FOR FARMERS

On May 22, Gov. John Kasich signed the much-discussed Ohio Water Quality Legislation, Am. Sub. SB 150, into law.

According to Tony Seegers, Director of State Policy for the Ohio Farm Bureau Federation, "SB 150 is meant to be one component of a more comprehensive statewide nutrient reduction strategy. Ohio agriculture has and will continue to do its part to protect our state's precious water resources."

SB 150 will require some changes for farms with regard to nutrient management. The bill states that if a farmer is applying fertilizer on more than 50 acres, the person applying the fertilizer will have to be certified. The bill also allows for fertilizer to be applied by a person who is not certified if the person is applying the fertilizer 'under the instruction and control' of someone who is certified. This allows an employee of a farm to be certified and 'supervise' the application of fertilizer by another or the farm can utilize the services of a custom applicator. Those who will be applying fertilizer on more than 50 acres for agricultural production will have until September 30, 2017 to obtain their fertilizer applicator certification. ODA has indicated after they finalize their rules on



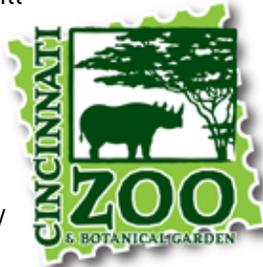
certification the classes will be offered as soon as possible. ODA is working with OSU Extension to offer the training. These trainings will be advertised in upcoming issues of this newsletter.

While the law does require certification, it does offer some legal protection for farms. SB 150 will allow farmers to obtain an affirmative defense to civil actions for claims involving or resulting from the application of fertilizer if certain elements are met. An affirmative defense is a reason a defendant asserts to the court as to why that defendant should not have to pay damages. It is a tool to help a defendant have the case dismissed early on in the litigation process, thus saving possibly large legal fees.

## 2014 ULTIMATE EDUCATOR EXPO

Wednesday, September 10, 2:00 - 6:00p

Tri-State educators are invited to the Cincinnati Zoo & Botanical Garden for the 2014 Ultimate Educator Expo. The event, hosted by the Zoo in partnership with Greater Cincinnati Environmental Educators (GCEE), takes place at the Cincinnati Zoo's Harold C. Schott Education Center. Join us at the Zoo for the ultimate opportunity to learn about environmental education resources available in our community. Exhibitors from governmental, non-profit and educational organizations will provide you with grade level appropriate training opportunities, lesson plans, field trips and tons of free stuff. We offer FREE Zoo admission & parking; breakout sessions, refreshments and door prizes just for you. To register, go to: <http://cincinnati-zoo.org/events/ultimate-educator-expo/>



## RAINWATER AND LAND DEVELOPMENT MANUAL MOVED

Our apologies to anyone looking for the Rainwater and Land Development manual. The website changed recently and so far the search feature isn't helpful. Here is the new address for the manual:

<http://soilandwater.ohiodnr.gov/water-conservation/stormwater-management>.

### Board of Supervisors

Sam McKinley, Chairman  
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Scott P. Huber, Secretary  
Steve Johns, Treasurer  
Pam Simmons, Program Chairman

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Holly Utrata-Halcomb, Administrator  
Susan Juriga, Administrative Assistant  
John Nelson, Public Relations Specialist  
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Dan Taphorn, Urban Conservationist  
Chey Alberto, Urban Technician  
Steve Eberts, Urban Technician  
Robert Sheets, Geotechnical Engineer  
Gwen Z. Roth, Education Specialist  
Niki Marengo, Education Assistant  
Brian Bohl, Stream Specialist  
Carrie Gibbons, Program Assistant

### NRCS

John Williams, District Conservationist  
William Cook, Soil Conservationist

# FUN-TASTIC EXPERIENCE AT THE 2014 ENVIROTHON

By Niki Marengo

Competition was fierce at one of the largest Envirothon competitions in years! There were 400 high school students from all around the Southwest Ohio region getting outside for a hands-on learning competition at the beautiful Procter Center in London, Ohio. Hamilton County was represented by three teams at Sycamore High School, mentored by teacher Ron Hochstrasser. Ron's teams came *this close* to the state competition at Salt Fork State Park, tying for fourth place. What's really important for the students, though, is the experience of the day. As Sycamore student John Grossheim said, "One of the unique things about this competition is that you take what you learn in the classroom and you get to bring it out on the field and use it there, and learn stuff here too...that I bring back to the classroom and then I can teach my friends or talk about with my teachers." We would love to have more schools from Hamilton County represented in this amazing outdoor competition! Check out our Envirothon

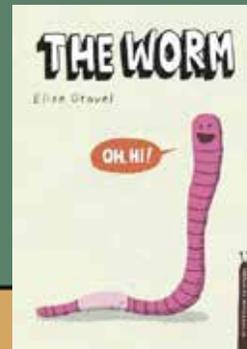
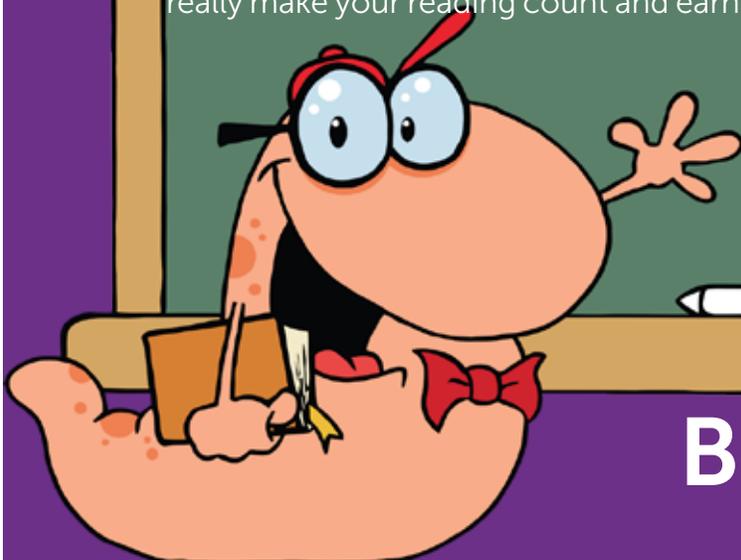
Facebook page or website to learn more or call Niki or Gwen at our office. We hope to see a team from your high school there next year!



## The Disgusting Critters Series - Elise Gravel

It's finally warm, and we are all outside (hopefully) playing, exploring and digging. This means that it's the perfect time for your little ones to discover all sorts of creatures! Help them to get interested in the little and typically thought of as icky ones with Elise Gravel's *Disgusting Critters* series, including *The Worm*, *The Fly* and *The Slug*. How do you keep the kids interested in books during the summer? Make them funny and a little bit gross! And although we know for example, that worms don't have eyes, the books are appealing and it doesn't take away from all of the knowledge about yucky creatures that kids love. They (and you) will be laughing at the critter's commentary and the author's entertaining illustrations.

\*Don't forget to sign up for the Cincinnati Public Library's summer reading program to really make your reading count and earn prizes at [cincinnati.org/summerlearn/](http://cincinnati.org/summerlearn/)!



## Bookworm Burrow

By Niki Marengo

# Summer Library Educational Programs

The Soil and Water Conservation District will be presenting education programs at several libraries around town this summer. If you have any questions about any of these programs, please contact Gwen or the children's librarian at the library listed.



Thursday, June 26, 1:00 - 2:00p, Green Township Library, Be Water Wise

Thursday, June 26, 3:00 - 4:00p, Reading Library, Ohio Fossils Rock

Monday, June 23, 2:00 - 3:00p, Mt Healthy Library, Wiggly Worms

Monday, June 30, 2:00 - 3:00p, Deer Park Library, Edible Soil

Monday, June 30, 3:00 - 4:00p, Walnut Hills Library, The Lorax

Tuesday, July 1, 2:00 - 3:00p, North Central Library, Wiggly Worms

Tuesday, July 1, 2:00 - 3:00p, Avondale Library, Edible Soil

Tuesday, July 8, 3:00 - 4:00p, Symmes Township Library, Curious Garden

Thursday, July 10, 1:00 - 2:00p, Bond Hill Library, Cookie Mining

Thursday, July 10, 2:00 - 3:00p, Mt Washington Library, Cookie Mining

Thursday, July 10, 2:30 - 3:30p, College Hill Library, Be Water Wise

Monday, July 14, 3:00 - 4:00p, Miami Township Library, Mud

Tuesday, July 15, 10:30 - 11:30a, Main (downtown) Library, Ohio Fossils Rock

Wednesday, July 16, 12:30 - 1:30p, Price Hill Library, Rainsticks

Wednesday, July 16, 4:30 - 5:30p, Main (downtown) Library, The Lorax

Thursday, July 17, 11:00a - 12:00p, Delhi Township Library, Curious Garden

Thursday, July 17, 2:00p - 3:00p, Greenhills Library, Rainsticks

Monday, July 21, 2:00 - 3:00p, Deer Park Library, Wiggly Worms

Tuesday, July 22, 2:15 - 3:15p, College Hill Library, Rainsticks

Tuesday, July 22, 4:00 - 5:00p, Mariemont Library, Edible Soil

Tuesday, July 22, 2:00 - 3:00p, Westwood Library, Edible Soil

Tuesday, July 29, 10:30 - 11:30a, Harrison Library, Edible Soil

Tuesday, July 29 2:00 - 3:00p, Pleasant Ridge Library, Edible Soil

Thursday, July 31, 1:00 - 2:00p, Bond Hill Library, Curious Garden

Wednesday, August 13, 2:00 - 3:00p, Green Township Library, In A Nutshell



# CAN YOU CLICK IT?

## 2014 Amateur Digital Photography Contest

Do you have a special natural area that you go to get refreshed? A quiet place to enjoy nature? This year's Photography Contest is looking for your favorite natural place within Hamilton County.

### Rules and Guidelines

1. Submit only high resolution digital photographs. Please use the highest quality setting available in your digital camera. Please avoid phone camera pictures.
2. All pictures must be taken in Hamilton County, OH and the location should be identified in the caption.
3. Individuals may submit only one photograph for consideration. Digital images can be uploaded to our Facebook contest page, emailed to [john.nelson@hamilton-co.org](mailto:john.nelson@hamilton-co.org) or sent via mail, on a disc. Mail entries may be sent with your name, address, daytime phone number and location of photo to: Hamilton County SWCD, 22 Triangle Park Drive, Cincinnati, OH 45246
4. The first prize winner receives \$150. The second prize will receive \$100 and the third place winner receives \$50. Winners and one guest will be invited to our Annual meeting in September to share their winning picture with our guests.
5. Winners will be chosen by public voting on Facebook. Entrants are encouraged to vote and promote their own entries with other Facebook friends.
6. Deadline for submission is July 20, 2014.
7. Voting begins on July 21 and will end on August 15.
8. By entering this contest, entrants will agree for their pictures to be used in District publications. In order to ensure the highest quality images, the entrants may be asked to provide a high-resolution file of their photograph.



## EROSION AND SEDIMENT CONTROL IN HAMILTON COUNTY CONSTRUCTION SITES.

By Chey Alberto

Erosion and sediment control is a part of nearly all construction and development projects in Hamilton County, and the rest of the United States. Projects that will disturb one or more acres of land are required by law to implement erosion and sediment control best management practices (BMPs).

Erosion occurs naturally but manmade activities such as construction that strip vegetation from the ground increase erosion substantially, in some cases by up to 1000 times greater. This eroded soil makes its way to our streams and rivers and can have drastic negative effects on water quality and aquatic habitat.

Erosion controls aim to reduce the amount of soil that is lost. Effective erosion control will reduce the need for sediment controls, which aim to prevent the soil particles from leaving the site. Erosion controls work by anchoring soil in place, such as the roots of plants will, or by slowing the water down so it has less energy as it runs off the site. Erosion control products include rip rap (rock), geotextile or turf matting, or straw mulch. However, the most

effective erosion control is natural vegetation.

There are a variety of sediment control BMP options to suit the specific needs of a project. For smaller projects, it may be sufficient to use products such as silt fence or compost filter logs filled with shredded material, or a mulch berm. These BMPs are not designed to filter sediment, as most particles are too small, but they will cause water to pond behind them for an extended period of time allowing these soil particles to settle to the bottom while the water drains slowly. Larger projects would also need a sediment trap or sediment basin, which collect the runoff water and allow the sediment to settle to the bottom.

Each project will have specific needs depending on the size, soil type, slope of the ground, nearby water resources (streams, ponds, etc.), and the scope of the work. For more information on erosion and sediment controls, you may refer to Ohio Department of Natural Resources Rainwater and Land Development Manual (<http://soilandwater.ohiodnr.gov/water-conservation/stormwater-management>.) or contact the District.

**Follow us on social media!**

WEBSITE



NEWSLETTER



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FACEBOOK



Hamilton County  
Soil & Water  
Conservation District  
22 Triangle Park Dr.  
Cincinnati, OH 45246  
(513) 772-7645  
www.hcswcd.org

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.

**SAVE THE DATE**

**HCSWCD Annual Meeting & Election of Supervisors  
September 15, 6p to 8:30**

The Farm, 239 Anderson Ferry Rd, Cincinnati, OH 45238

**Southwest Ohio Erosion Control and Stormwater Forum  
October 10, 9a - 2p**

The Carriage House , 6306 Princeton Glendale Rd. Liberty Township, Ohio 45011

**UPCOMING EVENTS**

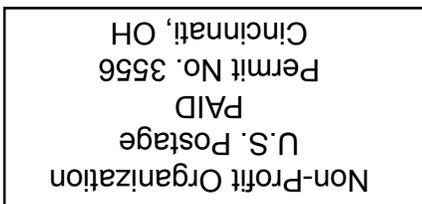
**Red, White and Blue Ash (Education Booth) - July 4**  
Summit Park, 4335 Glendale-Milford RD. Blue Ash, Ohio 45242

**Board Meeting - July 8, 12p at The District Office**

**Sycamore Twp Annual Festival (Education Booth) - July 11 & 12**  
Bechtold Park, 4312 Sycamore Road, Cincinnati, OH 45236

**Taste of Colerain (Education Booth) - August 9**  
Govt. Complex, 4200 Springdale Rd. Cincinnati 45251

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED



Hamilton County Soil and Water  
Conservation District  
22 Triangle Park Drive  
Cincinnati, OH 45246-3411