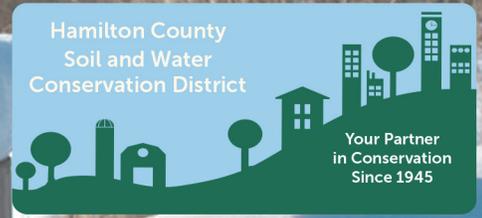


# CONSERVATION SPOTLIGHT

WINTER 2017



A NEWSLETTER OF THE  
HAMILTON COUNTY SOIL AND WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT

## Artists Needed to Save Local Waters Through Rain Barrel Art Project



All artists, including students and seasoned professionals, are invited to apply to be a part of the 6th annual Rain Barrel Art Project, an initiative

designed to educate the community about water conservation and pollution caused by storm water runoff.

The Rain Barrel Art Project is a joint effort of Save Local Waters, its members and the Cincinnati Zoo & Botanical Garden. As part of this initiative, students and other community members throughout the Ohio River Valley are asked to submit artistic designs to beautify otherwise dull rain barrels that are then displayed at the Cincinnati Zoo and auctioned off to raise funds for conservation education.

"We are so grateful to the artists who've contributed to this project in the past. Their efforts to make otherwise plain rain barrels appealing to the eye have allowed us to raise awareness and encourage the use of rain barrels," said John Nelson, a Save Local Waters representative and public relations specialist. "Rain barrels are a great tool for conserving water and saving money, and through the Rain Barrel Art Project we've so far been able to place about 250 beautiful rain barrels at homes and businesses throughout the Ohio River Valley area."

Artists who wish to submit a design for consideration must do so by Jan. 22, 2018 through an online form at [www.savelocalwaters.org](http://www.savelocalwaters.org), where additional instructions and submittal tips can be found. Designs will be selected and announced

at the end of January. Artists whose designs are selected will be asked to attend an artist workshop on Feb. 10, 2018 to pick up their rain barrels and learn techniques for applying their design. Finished rain barrels must be returned between March 29 and 31. They will remain on display at the Cincinnati Zoo until April 19. The barrels will be made available to the public via an online auction between April 9 and 19.

For more information regarding the Rain Barrel Art Project or Save Local Waters, contact John Nelson at 513-772-7645 or visit the website at [www.savelocalwaters.org/2018-project](http://www.savelocalwaters.org/2018-project).



Barrels from the 2017 Rain Barrel Art Project

HAMILTON COUNTY SOIL AND WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT  
PROGRAMS AND ASSISTANCE  
AGRICULTURE & SOIL FERTILITY | EDUCATION | URBAN STREAMS  
URBANLAND MANAGEMENT & EARTHWORKS | PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT PROGRAMS  
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EDITOR: HOLLY UTRATA-HALCOMB | DESIGN: JOHN NELSON

# Help Restore the Great Miami River: Volunteers Needed!



Thanks to funding obtained by the Dominion Watershed Mini Grant program, this coming spring HCSWCD will team-up with Rivers Unlimited, Friends of the Great Miami, OKI Regional Council of Governments, Taking Root, and Ohio Valley Forestry Fellowship to install nearly 1,000 tree cuttings (or "live stakes") into the banks of the Great Miami River. That is a lot of trees, and we need YOUR help! Please register at: <https://www.hcswcd.org/livestaking.html> to insure we have the correct size tee-shirt and lunch to provide for you.

## When?

- The Main Event is scheduled for March 24th from 9am to 1pm. With your help, we will get the majority of the live stakes planted during this event.
- A Follow-up Event is scheduled April 28th from 9am to 1pm. During this smaller event, we will plant the remaining live-stakes that we are unable to plant in March. In the event that the first event is canceled due to cold weather or high river flow, this will become the "Main Event".

## Where?

- We will meet at Heritage Park in Colerain Township – groups will disperse from there. The address is: 11405 E. Miami River Road, Cincinnati, Ohio 45252

## Who?

- Adults & Teenagers accompanied by a parent/guardian (ages 15+). Please register at <https://www.hcswcd.org/livestaking.html> to insure we have the correct size tee-shirt and lunch to provide for you. You will also be asked if you prefer to access the river by canoe or overland. Canoes will be provided by Rivers Unlimited (Volunteer owned canoes/kayaks welcome)!

## How?

- Live stakes will be planted in the riverbanks from within the river channel. Teams will access planting sites from canoes/kayaks or from overland.

Approximately 20 canoes are being provided by Rivers Unlimited for the event. Please register at <https://www.hcswcd.org/livestaking.html> to reserve your canoe seat.

The Great Miami River (GMR) has experienced significant alterations through generations of intensive land use changes in its watershed and along its banks. In the GMR's floodplain and along its banks, stabilizing tree cover has been cleared to plant crops up to the water's edge, and the GMR watershed has experienced a significant increase in impervious cover (e.g. roads, parking lots, buildings). The increase in total volume of runoff and runoff speed that has resulted from this watershed development, has led to both deepening and widening of the GMR's channel.

Today, much of the GMR, within Hamilton County, is characterized by more than 20-foot high vertical riverbanks. This type of vertical riverbank does not generate/support habitat characteristics needed by



the aquatic wildlife that the river once supported (e.g. root wads/mats, shade, and woody debris). The loss of trees rooted in the riverbanks has also impaired the river's ability to process nutrient pollution through direct uptake by trees and denitrification through hyporheic exchange. Additionally, these vertical banks are highly unstable and constitute a major source of sediment pollution in the GMR.

This spring, with YOUR help, we can begin to restore these lost ecological functions to the GMR. With nearly 1,000 trees, we can cover a lot of distance along the river. If this program is repeated for just a few years we can make a major impact on the entire flow path to the GMR in Hamilton County. Don't forget to register at <https://www.hcswcd.org/livestaking.html>, and we'll see on the river!

# Upcoming Teacher Workshop

## Project WILD

You asked for it and we planned it. Join us February 24 for a Project WILD workshop at Fernald

Preserve. This workshop is most appropriate for 3rd - 7th grade teachers, but the guide is designed for K-12th grade teachers. Project WILD is a national curricula that links students and wildlife through its mission to provide wildlife-based conservation and environmental education. Incorporate wildlife education into your reading, writing, math and social studies lessons with hands-on, investigative and easy to use activities.

What: Project WILD Teacher Workshop

When: Saturday, February 24, 2018, 9:00a - 3:30p

Where: Fernald Preserve

Cost: \$10

For more information please visit, <http://www.hcswcd.org/teacher-workshops.html>, or call Sara at 513-772-7645.

**Board of Supervisors**  
Steve Johns, Chairman  
Denny Benson, Vice-Chairman  
Kaniz Siddiqui, Secretary  
Scott P. Huber, Treasurer  
John Mangan, Program Chairman

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Aaron Habig, Earthwork Technician  
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Adam Lehmann, Stream Specialist  
Carrie Gibbons, Program Assistant

### NRCS

John Williams, District Conservationist  
Michaela Mullikin, Soil Conservationist

## CARING FOR OUR WATERSHEDS

CFW ASKS STUDENTS TO SUBMIT A PROPOSAL THAT ANSWERS THE QUESTION:  
"WHAT CAN YOU DO TO IMPROVE YOUR WATERSHED?"

CFW asks students to submit a proposal that answers the question: "What can you do to improve your watershed?"

Students can work independently, or as a team of no more than four to research their local watershed, identify an environmental concern, and come up with a realistic solution.

- Proposals should be approximately 1,000 words and include visuals and a budget. Due February 2, 2018.
- Entries are scored by a panel of judges in the following areas: realistic idea, environmental impact, clear communication, innovation, scope, budget and visuals.

- Ten finalists/teams will get up to \$1,000 to implement their projects and then make a 5-minute verbal presentations at a final competition on Saturday, April 28, 2018.
  - All finalists win cash rewards (up to \$1000) for themselves and matching rewards for their schools. Schools also receive \$100 for every ten complete proposals submitted, even if they do not send students to the finals.
- For more information, go to [www.caringforourwatersheds.com](http://www.caringforourwatersheds.com) and click on Ohio. To volunteer, please contact Gwen. We always need help mentoring students, reviewing proposals, inputting scores, etc. If you can help, we can find a task that fits your schedule and preferences.



2017 Caring for Our Watershed Finalists

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Hamilton County  
Soil & Water  
Conservation District  
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Cincinnati, OH 45246  
(513) 772-7645  
[www.hcswcd.org](http://www.hcswcd.org)

**UPCOMING EVENTS**

Rain Barrel Art Project Submission Period Nov. 15th - Jan 22nd  
(see Page 1 for more info.)

Christmas Eve & Day (Office Closed) - Dec. 25th

New Year's Day (Office Closed) - Jan. 1st

Board Meeting - Jan. 9th @ District Office - 2pm

Caring For Watersheds Entry Deadline - Feb. 2nd  
(see page 3 for more info.)

Board Meeting - Feb. 13th @ District Office - 2pm

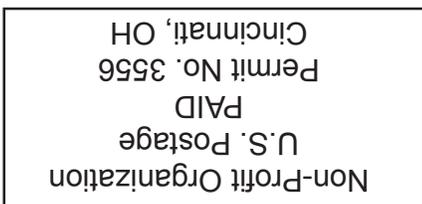
GMR River Lab Data Analysis Presentation - Feb. 17th  
(Visit website or call for more info.)

Live Staking of the GMR - March 24th & April 28th  
(see page 2 for more info.)

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.

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED



Hamilton County Soil and Water  
Conservation District  
1325 E. Kemper Rd. #115  
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