



HAMILTON COUNTY CONSERVATION DISTRICT

ADVANCING SOIL AND WATER SUSTAINABILITY

Conservation Spotlight

April 2023

Farewell from John Nelson

When I joined the Conservation District 10 years ago as the Public Relations Specialist, I had not the slightest clue what an adventure the next 10 years would bring. From attempting to solve complex regional conservation issues to putting a simple smile on a family's face when they stop by one of our festival booths, every step has been an adventure and a labor of love. My love for nature, the people we serve, and the people I work with are what has made each day at the District a special one for me.

Just as a good book has well-timed chapters, our lives too exhibit themselves in intrinsic divisions. I stand at one such division and I am casting a gaze forward while I reminisce about the chapter that I am ending. My new chapter includes me working for Hamilton County JFS (Job and Family Services). While this chapter may look a lot different, at its core it keeps the thread of the chapter I am leaving. It is still about attempting to solve complex regional issues and putting smiles on the faces of families. The part I will miss the most is the people I have met and loved over the last 10 years, my team, my board members, my volunteers, and my conservation family across Ohio.

This is certainly not a "goodbye forever," I still plan on regularly volunteering and providing support to conservation efforts in the region. Please stay in touch and do not hesitate to reach out to me if I can help. I can assure you the District is in the good hands of the team I leave behind, and the very able Interim Executive Director, Sara Fehring. My best wishes to Sara and the team.

-John Nelson



2022 Supervisor of the Year

John Mangan joined the Hamilton County Conservation District in 2017 and served for two 3-year terms.

During his time as a board member, John was passionate about urban conservation and worked to get the Urban Networking Committee (UNC) off the ground. Having also served as an Area Director for Area 4, John is heavily involved in his community in the Cincinnati Area with organizations such as the Mill Creek Alliance, The Hamilton County Environmental Action Commission, and the Mill Creek Yacht Club.



John Mangan received the 2022 Supervisor of the Year award at the Ohio Federation of Soil and Water Conservation Districts Annual Partnership Meeting. Hamilton County Conservation District staff appreciate John's service and will miss having him around.

Rain Barrel Workshop

Wednesday, June 7th, 5:30-7:30 pm

Collect free water for your plants! Come learn how rain barrels can help you save water and lessen stormwater impacts. A rain barrel is a container that connects to a downspout on your home and is used to collect and store rain water that runs off your roof. The collected rain water can be used to water your yard or



landscaping. Join Hamilton County Conservation District staff to learn additional benefits to rain barrels, how to install your rain barrel and rain barrel maintenance. Two registration options are available; one includes a rain barrel and the other does not.

[Register Here](#)

Skimmer Specifications, Installation, and Maintenance Workshop

Thursday, June 15th, 8:00 am-12:00 pm

Sediment basins are the most effective way to capture sediment from construction site runoff. Skimmers are key tools in retrofitting retention basins to allow them to function as sediment basins during construction. This workshop is geared to equip engineers, contractors, plan reviewers, and inspectors with the information they need to effectively design, install, inspect, and maintain these devices.



3.5 Professional Development Hours can be claimed. Hours have been preapproved by Envirocert.

[Register Here](#)

Rain Barrel Art Project Barrel Auction

Barrels from the 2023 Rain Barrel Art Project are now on display at the Cincinnati Zoo. Over the past three months, local artists (1st graders up to professional artists) have painted 40 rain barrels that will be auctioned off. Funds raised from the auction benefit environmental education in the tri-state area. The barrels will be on display until April 27th. The auction will take place on eBay, starting April 18th at 10 am, and will conclude on April 28th at 10 am. For additional information and to view all the barrels from this year, **click here**.



Boots & Books Reading Club

Join us for a themed discussion and a walk in one of the Great Parks. Discussion topics will be targeted to teens and adults and will be led by Hamilton County Conservation District staff. Cincinnati and Hamilton County Public Library staff will offer children's activities during the discussions. Then we'll head outside for a walk in nature to learn more about the seasonal theme. Walks will be directed by Great Parks staff.



Join us on Saturday, May 13 to discuss water issues.

[See Upcoming Dates and Topics Here](#)

Putting H2Ohio to Work For You

The State of Ohio launched its flagship water quality program in Ohio called H2Ohio in 2019. The program that was first piloted in the Western Lake Erie Basin has since been systematically expanding through other counties. Some portions of these funds have already become available in Southwest Ohio and associated projects are in various stages of completion. During this workshop, attendees will learn about the different forms of funding, the application processes, and the challenges. As part of the workshop, the attendees will tour the Williamsburg Wetland which was partially funded using the H2Ohio Program.



[Register Here](#)

Soil Fertility Testing

It is spring and our thoughts move toward working in the yard. It is time to get out and start planting the vegetable garden, tending to the flower beds, and working on the lawn. So how do you know what these areas need? If you have not had a soil fertility test, you may not know what the soil conditions are, and you could be spending money on things you may or may not need. The District offers low-cost soil fertility testing through PennState Extension. **Click here** to read more about soil fertility testing.

Mow Greener with Southwest Ohio Air Quality Agency



You are invited to replace your old gas-powered lawn mower with a new battery-operated mower through the "Mow

Greener" program. Southwest Ohio residents may register online to receive a \$100 VISA gift card when they recycle their old mower and provide proof of purchase of a battery-powered mower.

[Learn More Here](#)



Native Plant Month

April is National and Ohio Native Plant Month. A month where we celebrate all our native plants and how they help us, the pollinators, and the wildlife. Check out the websites below for lists of recommended plants and even locations where you might be able to purchase them.

[Ohio Native Plant Month](#)

[Cincinnati Zoo and Botanical Garden](#)

Caring For Our Watersheds Top 10



The Caring For Our Watersheds Top 10 teams have been announced. Teams from Loveland HS, Mount Notre Dame HS, Spencer Center for Gifted and Exceptional Students, and Wyoming HS have all qualified for the top 10 and they are busy starting to implement all their amazing projects. Students will give a presentation at the final event on Saturday, May 6 at the Cincinnati Zoo and Botanical Garden. We wish them all the best of luck and are so proud of the work they are doing to care for our watersheds!

Backyard Composting Seminars

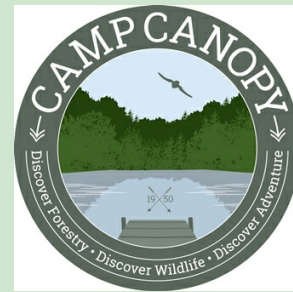
Spring is a great time to start composting, yet many people don't know how to begin. Hamilton County R3Source is here to help with its free Backyard Composting seminars!



Attendees will learn how to compost and create a valuable addition to the soil during these one-hour programs. The seminar includes information on how to balance a compost bin, what materials are compostable, and how to overcome any composting challenges. Hamilton County residents will receive a free kitchen scrap collector and a "Simple Guide to Composting in Your Backyard" booklet at the in-person seminars. These seminars are perfect for those wishing to start backyard composting or those who want a refresher course and tips to improve their compost. Space is limited, so interested individuals are encouraged to register right away. **Click here**, for additional information.

Camp Canopy

Have you ever wondered what types of trees are in Ohio's forests? Or what kind of relationships do organisms have with the forest? If so, Camp Canopy is the place to be! Camp is held at FFA Camp Muskingum, located on Leesville Lake in the beautiful rolling hills of Carroll County, Ohio. Any student who has completed 8th grade through seniors graduating the year of camp are welcome to participate. Be prepared to obtain valuable forestry information, make many new friends, and HAVE FUN!!!



Camp Canopy will take place June 10-15. For more information and registration details, [click here](#).

Upcoming Workshops & Public Events

- April 22nd - Cincinnati Zoo Earth Day Celebration
- April 22nd - Summit Park Earth Day Celebration
- April 23rd - Anderson Township Urban Farm Seed Bash
- April 18th -28th - Rain Barrel Art Project Auction
- May 6th - Civic Garden Center Plant Sale
- June 7th - Rain Barrel Workshop

District Staff

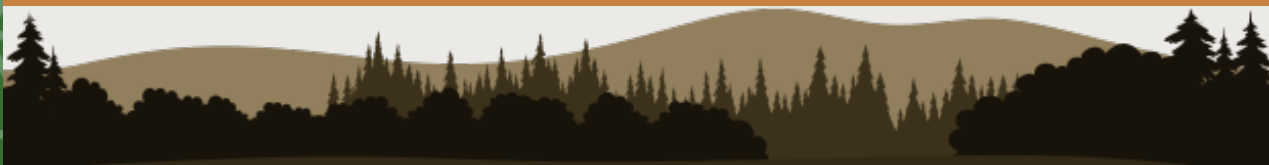
Sara Fehring, Interim Director
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Chey Alberto, Urban Conservationist
James Gleason, Earthwork Technician II
Haley Golsch, Earthwork Technician I
Emily Hoskins, Earthwork Technician I
Aaron Habig, Conservation Program Specialist
Gwen Z Roth, Education Specialist
Sara Fehring, Marketing & Outreach Coordinator
Adam Lehmann, Stream Specialist
Sarah Meadows, Public Involvement Coordinator

NRCS

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Conservation Spotlight
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