

# Union Soil and Water Conservation District

Serving Union County's Conservation needs for 79 years

## 2024 Annual Report

***Our Mission** is to promote, preserve, and enhance the wise use of our natural resources for the people of Union County by providing technical, financial and educational assistance.*

The Union SWCD was formed in 1945, the 47th District in Ohio, for the purpose of planning and carrying out natural resources conservation programs. The District is a political subdivision of the State of Ohio and is governed by a board of five supervisors, elected by the landowners of Union County, who serve staggered three-year terms. The supervisors donate their time to serve Union County landowners.

Monthly board meetings of the Union SWCD Board of Supervisors are held on the 2nd Thursday of each month to conduct business. All meetings are open to the public and held on the second Thursday of the month at 6:00 p.m.

### 2024 Board of Supervisors

**Matt Staley, Chair**

**Andy Clarridge, Vice-Chairman**

**Cheryl Trivisonno, Fiscal Agent/Treasurer**

**Randy Trapp, Secretary**

**Rick Weigand, Member**

### 2024 Union SWCD Operating Funds

*The Union Soil and Water Conservation District operates on funding provided by the Union County Commissioners, the Union County Township Trustees and matching funds from the Ohio Department of Agriculture, Division of Soil & Water Resources.*

#### **Local Funds:**

Union County Commissioners	\$400,000.00
Township Trustees	\$ 1,200.00

#### **Other Sources:**

State Matching Funds	\$308,384.00
ODNR Wildlife Specialist Grant	\$ 20,000.00

# Annual Meeting & Election

The Union Soil and Water Conservation District held its 79th Annual Meeting on Wednesday, August 7, 2024, at the Der Dutchman Restaurant at 445 South Jefferson Avenue, Plain City, Ohio. There were 72 people in attendance.

The election of Supervisors was held with candidates were Cat Hufnagle and Larry Morris. Larry Morris was elected for a three-year term to begin January 1, 2025

Entertainment: Emily Mullen of The Mullen Dairy and Creamery. Emily's presentation explained how she diversified her family's dairy operation and the inspiration behind its success.

## Associate Supervisors

Bill Conklin                      Jay Rausch                      Jim Mitchell                      Joe Wiley  
Matt Furer                      Steve Drumm                      Suzi Clarridge

## District Staff

Brent Nickel, District Administrator/Wildlife Specialist  
Sherry Maisenbacher, Administrative Assistant  
Mark Watkins, District Technician  
Ross Carter, District Technician  
Matt Williams, District Technician  
Joseph Grove, Urban Technician  
Joe Eads, Drainage Maintenance Supervisor  
Matt Archer, Drainage maintenance Technician  
Cody Beery, Drainage maintenance Technician

## USDA, NRCS Staff

Ron Neiman, District Conservationist  
LaRae Baker, Resource Conservationist  
Adam Slappy, Soil Conservationist  
Mariah Lashley, Soil Conservationist  
Sierah Geldbaugh, Soil Conservationist  
Brent Smith, ACES



## **Conservation Products**

- Rentals: No-till drill was rented out (17) times for a total of 658 acres  
Straw blower was rented out (1) times.  
Tree Planter was rented out (2) times.  
Tree Puller was rented out (0) times.
- Tree Sale: Union SWCD 2024 Tree Sale was held as a drive-thru on April 15th, 2024 With 5,090 seedlings available to 129 customers.
- Fish Sale: Union SWCD 2024 Fish Sale was held October 1st and we sold 5,364 fingerlings to 9 customers.

## **Education**

- School Presentations: Presented the Groundwater Simulator and the Enviroscape modules to Fairbanks Middle School, North Union Middle School, and North Union High School. Read The Lorax to the first graders at North Union on Earth Day.

The Groundwater Simulator, the Enviroscape modules, and the AR Sand table were made available to Union County teachers upon request to use in their classrooms.

- National Hunting & Fishing Day:  
Assisted with 100+ participants
- Hunting & Fishing Education:  
Assisted with - 10 classes for over 400+ participants
- Pheasants Forever Youth & Ladies Shoot and Hunt:  
2 presentations and 75+ participants
- Conservation Tillage Club Breakfasts:  
(4) Conservation Tillage Club breakfasts were held in 2023 at the Plaza Inn in Mt. Victory with (200+) people attending.

## **Outreach**

- Don Cook Memorial Scholarship Fund: Cook Real Estate, Dean Cook Nationwide Insurance and Union SWCD sponsored Anna Headings, Cory Meyer, John Heffelfinger, and Sophia Cramer to attend 4-H Camp at Camp Clifton.
- Provide a subscription of the Ohio Woodland Journal to Fairbanks, Marysville and North Union High Schools.
- Participated in the Richwood Independent Fair by provided educational displays
- Union SWCD Website: Provided announcements, events, quarterly newsletters, conservation and drainage information to the public.

<https://www.unioncountyohio.gov/USWCD>

- District Facebook Page: Provided announcements, events, conservation and drainage information to the public

## **Drainage Maintenance**

- Ditches: (35) Maintained with 62.59 miles of ditches by spraying (southern ditches) and mowing (northern ditches).
- Subdivisions: (39) maintained with 16.58 miles of subsurface drainpipe along agriculture drainage systems, (52) urban subdivision retention basins, and (199) concrete drainage structures which included headwalls, manholes and catch basins and (40) projects are pending awaiting the final punch-outs
- Construction Projects: Morris Beery completed in the fall.
- Petition Projects: Mill Creek Logjam approved and started in the fall.
- Subdivision Plat Reviews: (30) subdivision plats reviewed.
- Assessment Spreadsheets: (72) spreadsheets are maintained.

## **Technical Assistance**

The following are some of our technical accomplishments of the past year:

- Agricultural Conservation Easement Program (ACEP): (4) Inspections completed
- Agricultural Pollution Abatement Program (APAP): (5) Complaints: Investigated
- CRP-MCM Assessment/Review: (39) Field Visits and Landowner Meetings
- Grassed Waterways: Assisted (47) landowners designing/planning
- Local Agricultural Easement Purchase Program (LAEPP): (4) UC landowners
- Pond Management: Provided assistance to (32) pond owners.
- Pond Site Evaluations and Planning: Assisted (9) residents
- Drainage Assistance: Assisted (90) UC landowners with Erosion, sediment, storm-water control and management
- Ohio Agriculture Conservation Initiative (OACI): Assisted (6) UC landowners
- Low Water Crossing (LWC): Assisted/designed (3) for UC landowners
- H2Ohio Clean Water Initiative: Assisted (20) landowners with P1 signups
- Agricultural Subsurface Drainage: designed (1) for UC landowners
- Drainage Maintenance: Developed an inventory and project tracking system
  - ◇ Petitioned ditches (repairs): Beach Open, Blues Creek, Cattail Swamp, Elliott Run SCS, Leo Rausch Sugar Run, Lower Green Joint, Marriott Open, Morris Beery, Prairie Run SCS, Kile, Rapid Run SCS, and Rocky Fors SCS
  - ◇ Construction: Mill Creek Logjam project began in the fall of 2024.
  - ◇ Petitioned subdivisions (repairs): Britonwood GPN 10, Darby Braeside, Glacier Pointe Ph. 1, Jerome Village - Hyland Croy, ERN01, GPN01, GPN03, GPN07, GPN08, GPN12, Mitchell Crossing, New Cali. Hills 13, and Waterford Estates
  - ◇ Pending Projects: Ditches - Lincoln, Wenrick, Farrington and Subdivisions - Curry Farm, Del Webb, Jerome Professional Park, Jerome Village Market, and Memorial Jerome Medical Center
- Solar Projects: Acciona/Union Solar; Invenergy/Cadence Solar, and Samsung/Richwood Solar.

## **Urban Conservation**

- Memorandums of Understanding (MOU) Townships: Currently we have agreements to provide technical assistance on soils and drainage for all new home sites. In addition to home site inspections, the following townships require a zoning permit for ponds as well

Darby Township Trustees

Dover Township Trustees

Leesburg Township Trustees

Liberty Township Trustees

Millcreek Township Trustees

Paris Township Trustees

Union Township Trustees

York Township Trustees

- Home Site Reviews: (18) Home site visits to determine proper lot drainage for new homes were performed and (2) construction site for sediment and erosion control BMPs.
- Be the Change for Clean Water Partner: The Be the Change initiative exists to keep you informed about programs and services in Central Ohio & how they can benefit you! When it comes to protecting our water resources we all need to be part of the solution. Be The Change for Clean Water is bringing together ten counties and a multitude of partners to provide education, resources, and opportunities to make it easier for all Central Ohio residents to Be the Change for Clean Water.

<http://www.bethechangeforcleanwater.org>

- Drainage Complaints/Investigations/Information: (37) incidents were addressed

## **Wildlife Assistance**

- Wildlife Conflict/Damage Investigations (9):  
Bagworms, Bats, Beaver, Bees, Caterpillars, Coyote, Fox, Feral Cats, Geese, Hawks, Muskrats, Raccoons, Groundhogs, Woodpeckers, Blackbirds/ Starlings, Squirrels/ chipmunks, Rabbits, Swans, and Turtles.
- Wildlife Assistance (17):  
Provided assistance to variety of individuals concerning pheasant rearing, wildlife rescue information, “orphaned wildlife”, wildlife exclusion methods, habitat, muskrat/dike damage, wildlife conflict/nuisance investigations, Nuisance Trapper Lists, plant ID, etc.
- Wildlife Habitat Assistance (10):  
Landowner discussions for field management/contract requirements. Assist landowners with Native Plant ID’s.

***Union SWCD Board of Supervisors would like to thank all  
the Partners, Funders, Sponsors and Supporters***

**2024 Supporters**

Union County Commissioners

Union County Engineer

Union County Auditor

Union County Treasurer

Union County Health Department.

City of Marysville

UC Chapter of Pheasants Forever Chapter #535

Union County Farm Bureau

OSU Extension

USDA Farm Service Agency

Union County Ag Association

The Scotts Company

Darby Township Trustees

National Association of Conservation Districts

ODNR Division of Forestry

ODNR Division of Wildlife

ODA Division of Soil & Water Conservation

Ohio Soil & Water Conservation Commission

Ohio Federation of Soil & Water Conservation Districts



# 2024 Affiliate Members

Cook Real Estate (Gold Member)	60 years
Ohigro Inc. (Silver Member)	51 years
MJS Oil, Inc., dba Smith Distributing (Silver Member)	37 years
Dean Cook Nationwide Insurance (Gold Member)	32 years
Select Sires, Inc (Platinum Member)	30 years
Union County Farm Bureau (Gold Member)	27 years
Smart Oil, LLC (Gold Member)	11 years
Millcreek Gardens LLC (Silver Member)	5 years
Seed Consultants (Silver Member)	5 years
Vititoe Construction, Inc. (Platinum Member)	5 years
Connolly Construction Co. (Silver Member)	4 years
MitchellAgri (Gold Member)	4 years
The Seed Center (Gold Member)	4 years
Benny's Pizza (Gold Member)	3 years
Bokes Creek Hot Shots (Gold Member)	3 years
Bokes Creek Orchard (Gold Member)	3 years
Richwood Tire Center (Silver Member)	3 years
Steve Stolte (Gold Member)	3 years
Al's Leather Craft LTD (Silver Member)	2 years
Heart of Ohio Fish & Game Association (Gold Member)	2 years
Bahan Excavating LLC	1 year
Gravatt Family Farm	1 year
Heflin Catering	1 year