



# Conservation Highlights

*Serving Conservation Needs in Darke County Since 1955*

## Be Salt Smart this Winter

Did you know that many lakes and rivers across the United States are contaminated with chloride? This toxic chemical comes in large part from the salt and deicers we use to keep ice off our roads in winter. Although they make it easier to travel, they impact the environment in a big way. Chloride is virtually impossible to remove from a waterbody; once it is there, it is there for good.

Local public works agencies have begun training their snow plow crews and giving them tools to minimize this type of pollution. You can do your part at home by following these simple tips for pollution-free snow and ice removal.



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#### ◆ Remove the Snow

- ◇ Shovel, scrape & repeat

The best way to remove snow and ice is to clear the snow and chisel or scrape the ice away. Shovel early and often.

- ◇ Don't let snow get compacted
- ◇ Choose the right tool: shovels, scoop shovels, ice chisels and ice scrapers

#### ◆ Salt, Deicers and Sand

- ◇ The Truth About Salt

There is no such thing as environmentally friendly salt or deicer. These chemicals should be used as little as possible.

- ◇ When to Use Salt

If you must use salt or deicer, do it after the storm is over. Clear off loose and compacted snow first. Apply the product on the ice only, not the dry pavement.

Double check the temperature on your product to make sure it will work before you apply it.

- ◇ How much Salt to Use?

More salt does not equal faster melting, just more pollution and wasted money. Salt granules should be 3-inches apart. Try to apply no more than 1 pound per 250 square feet of pavement.

*Continued on Page 2*

◇ What about sand?

Sprinkle just enough to provide traction on walkways. Sweep up any excess after ice melts and dispose of or reuse. Don't bother mixing sand and salt; sand is useless in wet, melting snow and slush.

## Conservation Day Camp Coming in June



Darke SWCD is excited to announce that on June 14th and 15th, Darke County Conservation Day Camp is back! This camp is for current 1st through 4th grade students. During the event, we will provide students the opportunity to get outside and learn about how their daily actions affect wildlife, water, soil and the people around them. The goal of this camp is to provide an interactive and hands-on approach to learning about the environment. The camp will be held at Chenoweth Trails from 9:00am to 3:00pm each day.

Registration will be \$20 per student and includes snacks, and program materials. We have many exciting activities planned including archery, fishing, water quality, bird house building and much more! **Registration will open on March 10th** and will be limited to the first 200 participants. Visit [www.darkeswcd.com](http://www.darkeswcd.com) for more information or to register.

## 2023 Annual Tree Seedling Sale



It's time for the annual Darke SWCD Tree Seedling Sale. Each year we accept orders for a variety of trees and shrubs that are native to Ohio. This year is no exception, we are offering 20 different species to choose from. Everything from hardwoods, evergreens, fruit trees, strawberry and asparagus plants are available in limited supply. These packets offer a low-cost source of conservation plant materials that will provide food and cover for wildlife.

These two to three-year-old seedlings are bare root stock. Upon arrival, each tree is dipped in a preservative gel to keep the roots moist. All seedlings are packaged in packets of five trees. An assortment of tree packets are offered for sale to both rural and urban landowners. The plant varieties are selected for their popularity and hardiness in the Darke County area. This is an economical way to work toward establishing or adding to a wildlife area, creating a windbreak, or improving the landscape.

Payments must be received when placing your order. Prices range from \$7-\$14 per packet. All orders and payment must be received by March 17, 2023. Please note that supplies are limited and early orders are encouraged. Pick up for orders is Wednesday, April 5th and Thursday, April 6th. Order forms can be found inside this newsletter.

# Thank you 2022 Camp Sponsors



OUR WORMS CATCH FISH  
OR DIE TRYING!™



Aultman Farms  
Cooper Farms  
Cy Schwieterman Inc.  
Darke County Farm Bureau  
Darke County Park District  
Edison State: Department of Agriculture  
Farm Credit Mid-America  
Flaig Lumber Co. Inc.  
Harrod & Harrod Farms LLC  
High Point Hills  
Hollinger Excavating  
Jordan Agency  
McGlinch Family Farms  
Nancy's Blankets  
Oakley Outdoors  
Park National Bank  
Rural King

## Application Period Open for LAEPP Program



Darke Soil and Water Conservation District (SWCD) is accepting applications from Darke County landowners interested in selling an agricultural easement on their farms through January 31, 2023. Darke SWCD has received an allocation from the Clean Ohio Fund to select, close and monitor easements under the Local Agricultural Easement Purchase Program (LAEPP) to protect local farmland.

The program allows landowners to voluntarily sell easements on their farms to the state of Ohio. The easement requires the farm remain permanently in agriculture production. Selected farms must be 40 acres or more, actively engaged in farming, participate in the Current Agricultural Use Valuation program, demonstrate good stewardship of the land, have the support of their local government and not lay directly in the path of development. Landowners may use the proceeds of the easement in any way they wish, but most reinvest it in their farm operations.

Funding for the state's farmland preservation efforts is derived from the Clean Ohio Conservation Fund, approved by voters in 2008, and used to purchase agricultural easements from willing sellers through a competitive process. From 2002 to 2022, 589 family farms in 61 Ohio counties have collectively preserved 91,507 acres in agricultural production. Permanent easements preserved under related programs bring the total acres currently preserved in Ohio to over 102,000.



2023

*Douglas Steinbrunner*

*Memorial*

**SCHOLARSHIP**

In memory of Douglas Steinbrunner and his more than 30 years of service to the Darke Soil and Water Conservation District, this scholarship awards a \$1,000 scholarship to a Darke County high school senior pursuing a two or four year degree in natural resources or agriculture at an Ohio college or university.

Call 937.548.1715 ext. 3 or visit [www.darkeswcd.com](http://www.darkeswcd.com) for an application or more information.

**Application Deadline - April 21, 2023 at 4:00pm**

# Grassland Habitat Misconceptions

What comes to your mind when you hear the term “Wildlife Habitat”? Do you think of a mature hardwood stand of oaks and hickories? Or a brushy creek bottom? Maybe a prairie or wetland? Or even the backyard where squirrels, birds, and the occasional deer pass through? When we see wildlife using these areas, our first thought is often “That must be great habitat for \_\_\_\_!”. However, use of habitats does not always mean those animals are selecting for, or prefer, that habitat type. Many factors play into an animal’s use and selection of habitat, and quality habitat is not always what we might picture immediately. There are many misconceptions around quality wildlife habitats. I would like to discuss some common habitat quality misconceptions I hear from landowners in my role, especially in their Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) acreage.

This article will focus on grassland habitat, as grasslands habitat types make up a lot of the acreage of CRP in our area, and most of the contracts I am tasked with assessing. I am going to break down a few common misconceptions about how these grasslands should be managed and maintained.

**“The thicker these grasses are, the better. I don’t understand why we need flowers out here”**  
I hear this quite often from producers who have Native Warm Season Grass Plantings, and although these grasses are very important to wildlife, they can become problematic if left unchecked. When grasses become too thick, they will out compete other species of native forbs and legumes, which are important for insect and pollinator habitat and food sources. The thatch that is created from the grasses can build up at the ground level, making it difficult for grassland birds, turkey poults, and young mammals to move through it effectively to find food and evade predators. A more desirable habitat will have a “patchier” structure. A mixture of Native warm season grass for thermal cover, nesting cover, and roosting cover, as well as native forbs, and legumes to create bare ground and food resources for pollinators and wildlife, specifically grassland birds and turkeys. The best way to keep grasses thinned out is regular disturbance. Disking, prescribed grazing, and prescribed fire are all good tools in the toolbox to keep the desired diversity of these covers.

**“Why would I disk this stand? I thought we didn’t want to expose bare soil in CRP. Couldn’t I create the same benefits with mowing?”**

This question comes up quite a bit when we discuss things like Mid-contract management and enhancements for reenrollment. The concerns of creating an erosion problem by using tillage to thin grasses and promote forbs is warranted, especially if on slopes or near streams and ditches. In most of those cases, disking should be done with great caution, or other options should be considered. However, in a flat stand that is not adjacent to a water course, disking is very effective, as stated in the explanation above. It thins the grasses and promotes forbs, which is a benefit to our pollinator and wildlife species. When disking, we implement them in blocks or strips, to allow some cover to stay standing for wildlife benefit and hold soil in place in case of any rain that causes overland flow. Mowing is useful for suppressing woody vegetation and weeds when used correctly, but it increases the thatch layer that inhibits young wildlife movement, and thickens grasses overall, which is why disking is often a more appropriate practice when it comes to re-setting succession in these grasslands.

## Order Information

Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
 City: \_\_\_\_\_  
 State & Zip: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Phone #: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Email: \_\_\_\_\_

## Additional Information

- \* Orders will not be processed until payment is received.
- \* Make checks payable to Darke SWCD. Sorry, we do not accept credit cards.
- \* Any orders received after March 17, 2023 will be subject to availability.
- \* Substitutions will be made in the event of a shortage. Customer may select substitute or request a refund.
- \* Immediate care is advised for these 1-3 year old bare-root seedlings. Darke SWCD cannot guarantee survival after distribution.

**Thank you for your order!**

## For Office Use Only

Date Paid: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Amount Paid: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Cash/ Check #: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Tax Exempt?   N   Y   Form on File?   N   Y

Species Sold in packs of 5 trees	Size	Price/ Pack	# of packs	Total
Colorado Blue Spruce (\$13.06 cost + \$0.94 sales tax)	2-3'	\$14		
Norway Spruce (\$13.06 cost + \$0.94 sales tax)	18-30"	\$14		
<b>Fruit &amp; Vegetable Plants</b>				
Earliglow Strawberry (\$6.53 cost + \$0.47 sales tax)	\$7 for 5 plants			
Jersey Knight Asparagus (\$6.53 cost + \$0.47 sales tax)	\$7 for 4 plants			
<b>Other Items For Sale</b>				
Marking Flags – each (\$0.07 cost + \$0.01 sales tax)		\$0.08		
Marking Flags – per 100 (\$7.46 cost + \$0.54 sales tax)		\$8		
Flag Color (circle):	White	Pink	Yellow	Red
	Orange			
Starter Fertilizer Tabs (10 pack) (\$2.80 cost + \$0.20 sales tax)		\$3		
1 Foot Tree Protection Tubes (\$0.93 cost + \$0.07 sales tax)		\$1		
2 Foot Tree Protection Tubes (\$1.86 cost + \$0.14 sales tax)		\$2		
3 Foot Tree Protection Tubes (\$2.79 cost + \$0.21 sales tax)		\$3		
4 Foot Tree Protection Tubes (\$3.72 cost + \$0.28 sales tax)		\$4		
Rain Barrel with Kit (\$41.86 cost + \$3.14 sales tax)		\$45		
2023 Plat Book (\$23.31 cost + \$1.66 sales tax)		\$25		
<b>Total Due:</b>				

Species Sold in packs of 5 trees	Size	Price/ Pack	# of packs	Total
Austrian Pine (\$6.53 cost + \$0.47 sales tax)	7-12"	\$7		
Norway Spruce (\$6.53 cost + \$0.47 sales tax)	10-18"	\$7		
Colorado Blue Spruce (\$6.53 cost + \$0.47 sales tax)	9-15"	\$7		
White Spruce (\$6.53 cost + \$0.47 sales tax)	18-24"	\$7		
False Indigo (\$6.53 cost + \$0.47 sales tax)	12-18"	\$7		
Eastern Redcedar (\$9.33 cost + \$0.77 sales tax)	10-16"	\$10		
White Pine (\$9.33 cost + \$0.77 sales tax)	8-12"	\$10		
Common Pawpaw (\$9.33 cost + \$0.77 sales tax)	18-24"	\$10		
Arborvitae (\$13.06 cost + \$0.94 sales tax)	18-24"	\$14		
American Plum (\$13.06 cost + \$0.94 sales tax)	2-3'	\$14		
Persimmon (\$13.06 cost + \$0.94 sales tax)	2-3'	\$14		
Pin Oak (\$13.06 cost + \$0.94 sales tax)	2-3'	\$14		
Red Oak (\$13.06 cost + \$0.94 sales tax)	2-3'	\$14		
White Oak (\$13.06 cost + \$0.94 sales tax)	2-3'	\$14		
Red Maple (\$13.06 cost + \$0.94 sales tax)	2-3'	\$14		
Tulip Poplar (\$13.06 cost + \$0.94 sales tax)	2-3'	\$14		
Eastern Redbud (\$13.06 cost + \$0.94 sales tax)	2-3'	\$14		
Staghorn Sumac (\$13.06 cost + \$0.94 sales tax)	2-3'	\$14		

All orders include 7.25% Sales Tax.

If tax exempt, complete form in Darke SWCD office.

## EVERGREENS

### AUSTRIAN PINE

Very hardy, withstanding city, heat and drought and clay and alkaline soils. Good for windbreaks. Full sun. Prefers moist, well drained soils. May grow 60 feet tall by 40 feet wide, with a medium growth rate.

### COLORADO BLUE SPRUCE

Display of blue or blue-silver needles. Prefers moist (not wet), acidic soils. Drought resistant once established. Good for windbreaks; long-lived. Full sun. May grow 75 feet tall by 20 feet wide, with a slow to moderate growth rate.

### NORWAY SPRUCE

Stiff needles, drooping foliage. Adapts to a variety of soils, and is generally a healthy, care free tree. Easy to transplant. Full sun to part shade. May grow 60 feet tall by 30 feet wide, with a rapid growth rate.

### WHITE SPRUCE \*New for 2023

A straight tall tree easily recognized by its needles. Cones always hang down. Good for windbreaks and used for Christmas trees. Beautiful year round color. Full sun. May grow 60 feet tall by 20 feet side, with a medium growth rate.

### EASTERN REDCEDAR

#### \*New for 2023

Dense pyramid shape, excellent for windbreaks and screens. Aromatic. Birds love its berries. Full sun. May grow 50 feet tall by 20 feet wide with a medium growth rate.



Juniperus virginiana  
Forest and Kim Starr  
CC-BY 2.0

### WHITE PINE

Transplants easily. Works well for windbreaks and is widely used as a Christmas tree. Soft and flexible needles. Full sun to part shade. May grow 80 feet tall by 40 feet wide with a rapid growth rate.

### ARBORVITAE

Feature tiny, scale-like leaves. Adapts well to shaping and shearing. Creates a low maintenance hedge. Full sun. May grow 60 feet tall by 15 feet wide with a slow to medium growth rate.

## DECIDUOUS TREES

### PAWPAW

This small tree is easily recognized by its large, tropical-looking foliage and prized for its delicious fruits that mature in late summer. Needs partial shade for establishment. Prefers moist, well drained soils. May grow 40 feet tall by 15 feet wide, with a moderate growth rate.

### AMERICAN PLUM \*New for 2023

Also known as wild plum. White, pungently sweet blossoms. Forms colonies and thickets in fields, fence rows and along roadsides. Full sun to part shade. Prefers moist soils. May grow 35 feet tall by 15 feet wide with a medium growth rate.

### PERSIMMON \*New for 2023

Shrubby tree. Known for sweet, orange fall fruits which are edible after a frost. Valuable food source for wildlife. Adaptable and disease-free. Partial Shade. Prefers well drained soils. May grow 60 feet tall by 35 feet wide with a slow growth rate.

### PIN OAK

Native to eastern US. Offers dense shade and is easy to transplant. Fall color is scarlet and bronze. Thrives in full sun. Prefers moist, well drained soils. Cannot tolerate alkaline soils. May grow 70 feet tall by 40 feet wide, with a rapid growth rate.

### RED OAK

Major timber tree, also an important shade tree in landscaping. Brilliant fall color. This native thrives in part to full sun. Prefers moist, well-drained soils. May grow 75 feet tall by 60 feet wide, with a rapid and vigorous growth rate.

### WHITE OAK

Long-lived oak with showy fall foliage. Medium-sized acorns favored by deer. Prefers moist, well drained soils. Full sun to part shade. May grow 80 feet tall by 80 feet wide with a slow growth rate.



Compound leaves and red fruits.  
Scott Zona  
CC-BY-NC 2.0

### STAGHORN SUMAC

#### \*New for 2023

Often used in mass plantings or on steep slopes; colony forming. Has large, upright clusters of fuzzy red fruits; appealing to birds. Full sun.

Compound leaves and red fruits. Prefers well drained soils. May grow 30 feet tall by 30 feet wide with a rapid growth rate.

### EASTERN REDBUD \*New for 2023

A springtime favorite for its early purple buds followed by heart-shaped leaves. Sun to part shade. Prefers moist, well drained soils. May grow 30 feet tall by 35 feet wide with a slow growth rate.

### RED MAPLE

Popular shade tree with brilliant red fall color.

Commonly found along creeks and bottomlands.

Prefers moist to wet soils. Full sun to part shade.

May grow 60 feet tall by 50 feet wide, with a medium to rapid growth rate.

### TULIP POPLAR

Named for its showy flowers and the silhouette of its large leaves, both of which resemble a tulip. Has a straight trunk. Prefers evenly moist, well-drained, slightly acidic soils. Full sun. May grow 80 feet tall by 40 feet wide, with a rapid growth rate.

### FALSE INDIGO \*New for 2023

Shrubby perennial that blooms in late spring in yellow, blue or purple. Provides structure and color in garden. Ornamental blooms attract pollinators. Full sun to part shade.

May grow over 24 inches tall with a moderate growth rate.



False Indigo: Flowers  
Andreas Rockstein  
CC-BY-SA 2.0

## FRUITS & VEGETABLES

### EARLIGLOW STRAWBERRY

A variety of strawberry that produces fruit that has a firm, glossy skin, firm flesh and medium size. Its sweet flavor makes the variety excellent for fresh eating and freezing. Vigorous and runner well. Recommended for beginners.

### JERSEY KNIGHT ASPARAGUS

Extremely vigorous, has large, succulent spears, and quickly attracts a loyal following. The flavor is excellent, and the plant is resistant to rust, crown rot and fusarium. It also performs equally well in heavy, clay-like soils.

# 2023 Poster Contest



We are pleased to announce the annual Soil and Water Stewardship Poster Contest to Darke County is open! We are sponsoring the contest that is open to all Darke County students in grades 5-8.

The purpose of this contest is to provide students with the opportunity to share their thoughts about soil, water and related natural resource issues. Project Based Learning through poster design and researching the theme, can give your students a voice in your community on important conservation issues. Good posters tell important stories to present and future generations. Posters capture people's attention with a

powerful graphic and inspire with a message for your community.

"One Water" is the theme selected for 2023 by the National Association of Conservation Districts (NACD). But what is a watershed? A watershed is an area of land that channels rainfall and snowmelt to creeks, streams, and rivers, eventually leading to outflow points such as reservoirs, bays, and the ocean. Those bodies of water are all connected, so every drop that falls becomes part of *one water*.

Watersheds can be any size and usually have some high points of land like hills, mountains, or ridges. When rain, sleet, or snow falls to the ground, the precipitation runs from those higher points to the lower points. Gravity pulls the water downhill until it reaches a body of water. If the land in the watershed is steep, the water usually runs off into rivers or streams. If the land in the watershed is level, the water will slowly flow into lakes or ponds, or seep into the soil and add to groundwater. If the watershed is close to the ocean, then tidal marshes, estuaries, and wetlands will be part of the watershed. From the top of the mountain all the way to the coast, it is all *one water*.

Have you ever watched it rain? The raindrops fall on the ground and flow through the soil. Water soaks through the soil until it reaches groundwater, which is water that moves through spaces in soil and rock underground. A lot of the water we use and drink every day comes from water in the ground. As it rains and the water runs off, it collects in rivers, lakes, and oceans and then returns to the atmosphere to fall as rain somewhere else. All land across the entire earth is made up of watersheds. We all live in a watershed. We share the water in our watershed with other people, with animals, and with plants because... it is all *one water*. Darke SWCD can provide educational materials to introduce students to the theme and educational materials are also provided on our website for teachers interested. Posters are due in the Darke SWCD office by 4:00pm on April 21, 2023.

Posters will be judged in two grade level categories: Grades 5-6 or Grades 7-8. Awards will be handed out for each grade level category. First through third place winners in each category will receive a ribbon and a monetary prize. Monetary prizes include: 1st place-\$30; 2nd place- \$20 & 3rd place- \$10. The first place winner from each category will advance to the state competition with the chance to advance to the national competition. Students must complete an entry form with parent signature and tape it to the back of their poster for the submission to be eligible. Entry forms are available on at [www.darkeswcd.com](http://www.darkeswcd.com). Rules, guidelines and helpful information are also found on our website.

# Affiliate Membership Drive

The Board of Supervisors for the Darke Soil & Water Conservation District (SWCD) is conducting their annual affiliate membership drive. Our affiliate members provide much needed funding to help the district offer technical guidance, education and programs focused on conservation needs in Darke County.



Some of the opportunities affiliate membership supports include: Conservation Day Camp, adult workshops, county land judging contest, sponsorship of Darke County teams participating in the Area IV Envirothon, in-classroom education programs, lending library materials, youth workshops and a scholarship opportunity. Thanks to our

affiliate members, these programs and others are available for schools and community groups.

The past support of conservation education programs from our affiliate members is greatly appreciated and we thank those who participated in 2022. We invite those who have never contributed to please consider this worthwhile opportunity. Our affiliate members are recognized at our banquet in November, on our website and in our e-newsletter. New this year, you can include a business card with your affiliate membership form and we will include it in our e-newsletter.

**We appreciate your consideration and support for  
conservation education in Darke County.**

## Membership Supports:

Adult Workshops

~

Conservation Day Camp

~

County Land Judging Contest

~

Darke County Area IV Envirothon  
Teams

~

In-Classroom Education  
Programs

~

Lending Library Materials

~

Scholarship

~

Youth Workshops

## Conservation Camp Counselors Needed



Darke Soil & Water Conservation District (SWCD) is seeking responsible, energetic high school and college students to serve as counselors for Conservation Day Camp at Chenoweth Trails on June 14th and 15th. These counselors will serve as guides for the groups of elementary students. The goal of this camp is to provide students the opportunity to get outside and learn about how their daily actions affect wildlife, water, soil and the people around them.

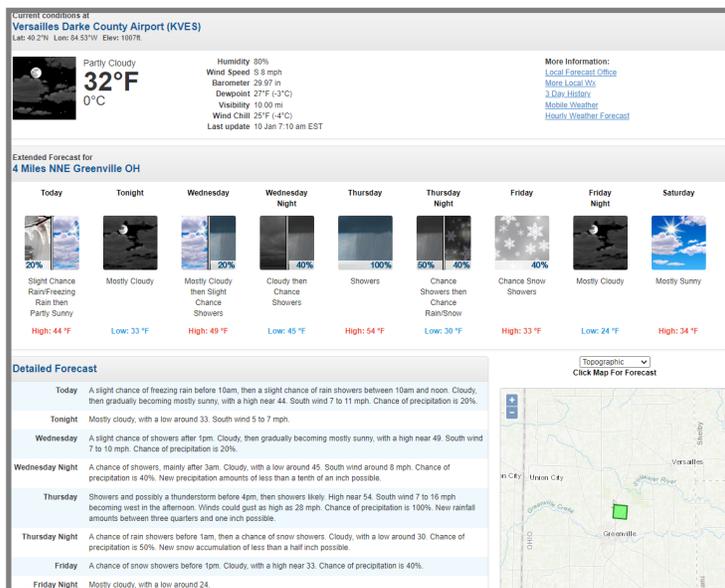
Serving as a camp counselor is a way to develop leadership, responsibility and teamwork skills. It is also a great way to build a leadership portfolio for future goals such as 4-H Camp Counselor, Junior Fair Board member and applications for college, scholarships and jobs. Application forms are available online at [www.darkeswcd.com](http://www.darkeswcd.com) or at the Darke SWCD office located at 1117 Southtowne Ct. in Greenville. The application deadline is April 21st at 4:00pm.

# SWCD Board Reorganization & Meeting Notice

Newly elected supervisor, Monty Stump, was sworn into office on January 5, 2023 by Darke County Commissioner Matt Aultman. Board reorganization took place during the monthly board meeting and Tom Harrod, Mississinawa Township, was elected to serve as Chairman for 2023. Other officers elected were Rick Honeyman, Van Buren Township as Vice Chair; Monty Stump, Greenville Township, as Treasurer; Kevin Jones, Adams Township, as Secretary; and Gary Goettemoeller, Wayne Township as Publicity. Monty will also serve as Chairman for the nominating committee.

For 2023, the Darke SWCD board of supervisors will hold their monthly board meetings on the first Monday of each month at 8:00 a.m. The meetings will be held at the Darke SWCD office, 1117 Southtowne Court, Greenville. Special board meetings may be scheduled throughout the year. If a special board meeting is necessary, the location, date and time will be posted on the office door and [www.darkeswcd.com](http://www.darkeswcd.com). Meetings are subject to rescheduling; therefore, please call 937-548-1715, extension 3 to verify meeting date and time. If you are interested in receiving meeting notices, please contact the office to be placed on a phone or email notification list.

## Check Weather Forecast Prior to Manure Application



Darke SWCD staff encourages livestock producers and farm operators to be attentive when applying manure to local fields. From social media to increasing public awareness about livestock facilities and issues with some lakes and rivers throughout Ohio, producers are under increasing scrutiny, especially when handling manure. It is important to check and print the weather forecast prior to any manure application. The weather forecast can be found at [www.weather.gov](http://www.weather.gov) and searched by your zip code. You should keep the printed weather forecast with your other manure application records, such as application rate, source, etc. Remember, if there is greater than a 50% chance of

rainfall of more than 1/2-inch forecast within 24 hours, manure application is not recommended. Also make sure you check soil moisture prior to application. More information about nutrient management can be found by visiting our website, [www.darkeswcd.com](http://www.darkeswcd.com).

## Thank you Darke County Commissioners

**Matt Aultman, Marshall Combs & Larry Holmes**

The Darke Soil and Water Conservation District Board of Supervisors and Staff would like to thank the Darke County Commissioners for their financial support and dedication to soil and water conservation. The annual financial assistance from the county is matched by funds from the state which enables the District to continue to provide assistance to all

Darke County landowners

**Thank you!!**

# Grassland Habitat Misconceptions Cont'd

## **“Why can't we leave this field go and let nature take its course?”**

Although I wholeheartedly wish this were possible, quality habitat requires management. There are two main reasons behind this. The first reason is that we must control for noxious weeds and invasive vegetation. Unfortunately, here in Ohio we have a plethora of species that are undesirable. Canada Thistle, Common and Cut-leaved Teasel, Bush Honeysuckle, and autumn-olive are just a few of many species that plague our land in this area. These species have the tendency to overtake out ground and out-compete native species, and generally have a lower value for soil health, wildlife habitat and food sources. The second reason is that there are no longer the natural disturbances that historically happened to these habitats. Prior to European Settlement, Ohio was home to large herbivores such as elk and bison, which would have disturbed the landscape as they moved through areas and grazed, which would reset succession through this grazing pressure. Wildfire also played a part in resetting succession. Lightning strikes, indigenous farming practices, and other factors allowed for fire to run through the landscape occasionally, which things back to early successional habitat and grasslands. We have suppressed fire on our landscapes to protect our property and families, but it is important to remember that controlled, prescribed fires are a great tool in our conservation toolbox. Many other things also worked to create disturbance historically, that do not happen as often today, which is why we need to play an active role in managing these habitats for the benefit of our native plants and wildlife species.

## **“I'm supposed to mow my grassed waterways multiple times per year, and my filter strips once a year, why am I not allowed to mow the rest of my CRP?”**

When it comes to this, it's important to keep in mind that CRP is an overarching, umbrella term that covers a wide variety of practices that address many different resource concerns. Think of it like the word “food”. Sure, all food is edible, and meant to give us nutrition, but cannot all be treated and prepared the same way. If you cook your chicken the same way you cook steak, you are probably going to get sick (unless you like your steak well done, then your chicken could be cooked the same). Grassed Waterways protect soil from erosion by carrying water off the field and stopping gullies from forming. Keeping the grass mowed short helps these waterways work as designed. Filter strips filter sediments and nutrients out of overland flow for water quality and soil retention purposes. We don't mow them as often as waterways, but we do mow them to control weeds and woody vegetation. Wildlife focused practices, like upland buffers, field borders, prairie strips, and wetlands, are focused on creating quality wildlife habitat. For these practices to work as designed, the correct species of native grasses and forbs should be maintained, and vegetation on most of the stand should always be standing and tall. Management and maintenance activities should be done in spots or small areas, but never the whole field. Focus on the bad areas, or put the field on a treatment rotation, so weeds and trees can be controlled while allowing adequate habitat to always be present. Be sure the weeds you're controlling are in fact undesirable weeds, and not native wildflowers and legumes that are supposed to be in the seed mix. Contact your local Soil and Water and USDA Service Center if you aren't sure.

These are just a few of the many misconceptions that exist around wildlife habitat, but these are likely the most common and important ones to address. To actively manage our habitats benefits our natural resources, plants, and wildlife, and ultimately makes us better stewards of the land.

By Matt Gardner—Farm Bill Biologist



# 2023 AFFILIATE MEMBER

DARKE SOIL & WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT

## WHAT IS AN AFFILIATE MEMBER?

Individuals, families, businesses or groups who provide much needed funding to help the District offer technical guidance, education and programs based on conservation needs in Darke County.

## WHY BECOME AN AFFILIATE MEMBER?

While Darke SWCD is a political subdivision of the State of Ohio, there is **no mandated public budget** for the District. Our conservation work depends on our ability to secure grants and funding from Darke County Commissioners, City of Greenville, businesses and private citizens.

**Thank you 2022  
affiliate members!**

## MEMBERSHIP SUPPORTS

- Conservation Day Camp
- County Land Judging Contest
- Darke County Envirothon teams
- In-classroom Education Programs
- Adult Workshops
- Scholarship
- Youth Workshops
- Lending Library

Darke SWCD supervisors & staff appreciate the generous support of the many Affiliates that have contributed to our programs through the years. We look forward to continuing and expanding our education programs in 2023!

## LEVELS OF SUPPORT

(check one)

Individual - \$50

- 1 Banquet Ticket & Recognition at Annual Meeting

Business - \$100

- 2 Banquet Tickets & Recognition at Annual Meeting
- Business card or listing in e-newsletters & on website

Business Plus Camp Sponsor - \$250

- All Business Silver membership benefits
- Business name listed on camp t-shirts, journals, website and flyers.

## CONTACT INFORMATION

Business Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Contact Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City, State, Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Make checks payable to: Darke SWCD 1117 Southtowne Court, Greenville, OH 45331

# Finding Forest & Wildlife Management Help

Have woods to manage or interest in reforestation or creating wildlife habitat? You might be wondering where to find help? It is always wise to seek the assistance of a natural resource professional. However, where to find help is not always clear.

A helpful website is available by support from the Ohio Division of Forestry, the Ohio Division of Wildlife, the Society of American Foresters, and the Nature Conservancy to make it easier for landowners to find the assistance they are looking for.

The Ohio Resource Connection [www.Ohioresourceconnection.com](http://www.Ohioresourceconnection.com) is a website that provides a way for landowners to connect with natural resource professionals. Whether you are looking for a forester, wildlife biologist or a Forest/wildlife habitat improvement vendor, the Ohio Resource connection maintains helpful links and lists of natural resource professionals.

Users can navigate and search by services and regions served throughout Ohio for the natural resource professionals they are looking for.

Also, if you have interest in becoming a Listee on the website as an Ohio Forest/habitat improvement vendor, users can follow the instructions and requirements on the website to do so.

The Ohio Division of Forestry promotes and applies management for the sustainable use and protection of Ohio's private and public forestland. With 24 state foresters working across Ohio, landowners can contact their service forester who can help answer any questions they might have.

## Justin Law, State Service Forester

ODNR Division of Forestry

8570 East State Route 73 Waynesville, Ohio 45068

(614) 212-3286

[Justin.law@dnr.ohio.gov](mailto:Justin.law@dnr.ohio.gov)

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## Become a Forestry/Wildlife Habitat Vendor

### Benefits for being listed:

- Cheap advertising for your company
- Be a part of a statewide network of forestry and wildlife habitat vendors
- Increase your client list
- Network with professionals
- Learn about training opportunities
- Grow your services provided

To Become a Listee, go to:

[www.ohioresourceconnection.com](http://www.ohioresourceconnection.com)



## Find a Forestry/Wildlife Habitat Vendor

Services provided to landowners include:

- Discing/plowing
- Chainsaw work
- Wetland work
- Seeding of grasses, food plots, pollinator fields, etc.
- Invasive plant control
- Herbicide spraying
- Tree thinning
- Tree planting

And more...

To find a vendor, go to

[www.ohioresourceconnection.com](http://www.ohioresourceconnection.com)



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<p><b>CF Poeppelman, Inc.</b></p>  <p>Phone: 937-448-2191</p> <p>info@cfpoeppelman.com</p>	 <p><b>Cargill</b>™ Helping the world thrive</p> <p>2400 Industrial Drive    Phone: 937-419-7149 Sidney, Ohio 45365    cargillag.com</p>	 <p><b>COOPER FARMS</b> FRESH from the HEARTLAND</p> <p>2321 State Route 49 Ft. Recovery, OH 45846 cooperfarms.com</p>
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 <p><b>Down Nature's Path LLC</b></p> <p>www.DNP NATIVES.COM</p> <p>Molly Kenney, Owner    dpnatives@gmail.com</p>	 <p><b>Agriculture at Edison State Community College</b></p> <p>601 Wagner Ave Greenville, OH 45331</p> <p>937-548-5546 blentz2@edisonohio.edu</p>	 <p><b>farmCREDIT</b> MID-AMERICA</p> <p>10539 Kley Road, Versailles    937.526.5705</p>
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 <p><b>GREENVILLE NATIONAL BANK</b> Your Independent Hometown Community Bank</p> <p>446 S Broadway, PO Box 190 Greenville, OH 45331</p> <p>Phone: 937-548-1114    www.greenvillernationalbank.com</p>	 <p><b>GROW</b> EXCAVATING LLC</p> <p><b>Todd Grow</b></p> <p>growexcavating@gmail.com 937-459-8342</p> <p>ANSONIA, OHIO</p>	<p><b>Harrod &amp; Harrod Farms LLC</b></p> <p><b>Tom Harrod</b></p> <p><b>Korey Harrod</b></p> <p>Rossburg, Ohio</p>
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 <p><b>Mote &amp; Associates</b> Engineering, Land Surveying Phone: 937-548-7511 214 W 4th Street Greenville, OH 45331 info@moteassociates.com</p>	<p>CONTACT US 740-845-1129</p>  <p><b>Nancy's Blankets</b> <b>Erosion Control Blankets</b></p> <p>We are the only exclusive users of Kritter Kind mesh</p>	 <p><b>NORTH STAR</b> HARDWARE &amp; IMPLEMENT CO. 169 S. Main St. North Star, OH 45350 www.northstarimplement.com Phone: 419-582-8053</p>
<p><b>NUPCO Plastic Tubing, Inc.</b></p>  <p>Luke Wilker Eric Dicke 06561 Co. Rd. 66A North New Bremen, OH 45869 419-629-2259 www.nupcoplastic tubing.com ewilkernupco@yahoo.com Manufacturer of 4", 5", 6" and 8" corrugated plastic tile</p>	 <p><b>Nutrien</b> Ag Solutions™ Nutrien Ag Solutions 415 S Ohio Street Greenville, OH 45331 Phone: 937-548-1816 nutrienagsolutions.com</p>	 <p><b>Kevin C. Otte</b> Consultant, CCA, CPCC-I, CAB 7368 Indian Trail Road Maria Stein, OH 45860 <b>OTTE AG, LLC</b> (937) 564-1567 kevin@otte-ag1.com</p>
 <p><b>Park</b> NATIONAL BANK 499 S Broadway Greenville, OH 45331 Phone: 937-548-2122 www.ParkNationalBank.com</p>	 <p><b>Premier Crop Insurance</b> Ron Barga II CFO/ Partner 937-659-0071 PO Box 96 Ansonia, OH 45303 premiercropins.com</p>	 <p><b>Rebscoz</b> 4362 US Route 36 Greenville, OH 45331 937-548-2246</p>
<p><b>Reforestation &amp; Wildlife Services</b></p> <p>Gary Steinbrunner Phone: 419-375-7708 PO Box 593, Ft.Recovery, OH 45846</p>	 <p><b>St. Henry Tile Co., Inc.</b> Wayne Builders Supply 5410 St Rt 49 Greenville, OH 45331 Phone: 937-548-1101 info@waynebuilderssupply.com</p>	 <p><b>The Andersons</b>  <b>The Andersons Marathon Holdings LLC</b></p>
<p><b>The Conservationist, LLC</b> Envirolok Vegetated Environmental Solutions - Invasive species control Consulting - Wildlife habitat planning / establishment / maintenance 7277 Piqua-Clayton Rd, Covington, OH 45318 (937) 606-4754</p>	<p><b>Ted Finnarn</b> Attorney At Law Phone: 937-548-3240 toflaw@earthlink.net</p>	 <p><b>vpp</b> More than ink and paper. 960 E Main St. Versailles, OH 45380 Phone: 937.526.3213</p>
 <p><b>Worch Lumber Inc.</b> 36 North Steffin Street Versailles, OH 45380 Phone: 937-526-4501 www.worchlumber.com</p>		

# Upcoming Events

<b>Conservation Camp Registration Opens</b>	<b>March 10</b>
<b>Tree Orders &amp; Payment Due</b>	<b>March 17</b>
<b>Tree Pickup</b> <i>Darke SWCD Office</i>	<b>April 5 &amp; 6</b>
<b>Spring Soil Sampling</b>	<b>April 14</b>
<b>Poster Contest Submission Deadline</b>	<b>April 21</b>
<b>Scholarship Applications Due</b>	<b>April 21</b>
<b>Area IV Envirothon</b> <i>Camp Friedlander, Loveland, Ohio</i>	<b>April 25</b>
<b>Fish Fingerling Orders Due</b>	<b>May 12</b>
<b>Fish Fingerling Sale Pick-up</b>	<b>May 23</b>
<b>Office Closed– Memorial Day</b>	<b>May 29</b>
<b>Darke County Parks Native Plant Sale</b> <i>Bish Discovery Center</i>	<b>June</b>
<b>Educational Canoe Float</b>	<b>June 9</b>
<b>Darke County Conservation Day Camp</b>	<b>June 14 &amp; 15</b>

## **Darke SWCD Staff**

Brian Cope– *Technician*  
Jared Coppess– *District Administrator*  
Elizabeth Farver– *Nutrient Mgmt Technician*  
Dustin Grieshop– *Technician*  
Tim Rank– *Technician*

## **Darke NRCS Staff**

Ryan Kemper– *District Conservationist*  
Sean Drew – *Soil Conservationist*  
John Bleill– *Civil Engineering Technician*  
Daniel Francis– *Natural Resources Specialist*  
Matt Gardner– *PF Biologist*