

Conservation Highlights

Issue 250
June 2014



“Serving conservation needs in Darke County since 1955”

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Darke SWCD Donates to Ansonia Outdoor Classroom



ABOVE: Darke SWCD Supervisors, Monty Stump and Bill Roll (second and third above from left), donate tree seedlings to the Ansonia Outdoor Classroom. They are pictured above with Ansonia teachers, Jason Wright and Brad Lentz (first and sixth above from left) along with some of their students.

The Ansonia Local School District received a grant from the Darke County Pheasants Forever Chapter for the construction of an outdoor classroom. Since then, project coordinator Jason Wright, who is also the Science teacher at Ansonia, has been working tirelessly on the installation of this outdoor learning area. Jason has worked with Darke SWCD technicians on design and layout of the area as well as the Ansonia FFA on some of the installation and construction projects.

Upon completion of this outdoor classroom, teachers from all grade levels will be able to take their students outside to engage with nature as they learn. This outdoor classroom will create an environment where everything from science and art to math and literature courses can benefit from the serenity and uniqueness of this habitat.

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Darke SWCD Staff Members

- Jared Coppess — District Administrator
- Linda Calland — Secretary
- Doug Steinbrunner — Technician/Wildlife Specialist
- Tim Rank — Technician
- Janell Weiss—Nutrient Mgmt Specialist/Ag Technician
- Collin Rhine — Pheasants Forever Wildlife Biologist

Darke NRCS Staff Members

- Jim Bennett — District Conservationist
- John Bleill — Civil Engineering Technician

DARKE SWCD OFFICE HOURS

Monday — Friday
8:00 AM — 4:30 PM

Conservation Compliance and Crop

by Jonathan Coppess, Department of Agricultural and

The Agriculture Act of 2014 (the 2014 Farm Bill) links crop insurance premium assistance and compliance with wetlands and highly erodible lands conservation provisions. As part of the series explaining provisions of the new farm bill (available [here](#)), this post discusses the new conservation compliance provisions and requirements. As with other posts, the discussion below describes those provisions in the farm bill, final operation of compliance for crop insurance will depend on how it is implemented by USDA and updates will be forthcoming as needed.

Background

Historically, linking conservation compliance to crop insurance was considered during creation of the crop insurance program in 1937 and 1938, however, it wasn't included as a requirement until the Food Security Act of 1985 (more history is available [here](#)). Under that bill's provisions, any person who produced an agricultural commodity on highly erodible land or wetlands became ineligible for Federal Crop Insurance. The Federal Agriculture Improvement and Reform (FAIR) Act of 1996 removed the crop insurance provision from the statute, which effectively exempted crop insurance from the highly erodible lands and wetlands conservation provisions and requirements.

During consideration of the farm bill on the Senate floor in 2012, Senator Saxby Chambliss (R-GA) offered an amendment to re-establish the link between conservation compliance and crop insurance. Senator Chambliss' amendment sought to condition eligibility for any portion of the premium paid by the Federal Crop Insurance Corporation on compliance with highly erodible lands and wetlands conservation in the same fashion as required for Title I commodity programs. The amendment narrowly passed the Senate by a vote of 52 in favor and 47 opposed (the vote is available [here](#) and debate on the amendment is available [here](#)). The 2013 version of the Senate farm bill contained a revised version of compliance for crop insurance and the conference committee modified it further before including it in the final version of the 2014 farm bill.

Discussion

Conservation compliance is concerned with annual crop production on highly erodible land. It also seeks to address both conversion of and production on wetlands. Highly erodible land and wetlands compliance have historically (since the 1985 Farm Bill) been two separate components of compliance, receiving somewhat different treatment due to the conservation issues each seeks to address. They often have parallel or similar operational aspects as well and the new farm bill builds upon that existing structure.

Under the 2014 Farm Bill, failure to comply with the conservation compliance provisions will result in the person becoming ineligible for any portion of the crop insurance

policy's premium that is paid for by the Federal Crop Insurance Corporation (FCIC) - commonly referred to as premium subsidy or premium assistance, both terms are used interchangeably in this discussion. Importantly for crop insurance premium assistance, ineligibility only applies in a forward-looking manner such that a person can only be ineligible in reinsurance years after the date that USDA has reached a final determination on the violation. Final determination in this setting means the person can first exhaust all administrative appeal rights before becoming ineligible and if that falls during the reinsurance year, the person becomes ineligible the following year. Ineligibility cannot, however, apply to existing or prior reinsurance years. These explicit provisions in the statute mean that ineligibility for crop insurance premium assistance only impacts future years; there is no authority to impact current or previous crop insurance policies or contracts. According to the Standard Reinsurance Agreement (SRA) between the insurance companies and the FCIC the reinsurance year begins on July 1 and ends on June 30th of the following year (the SRA is available [here](#)). Again, these provisions are common for both highly erodible lands and wetlands compliance.

(1) Highly Erodible Land Conservation Compliance

A violation of the Highly Erodible Land provisions occurs when a person produces an agricultural commodity on any field that is considered predominantly highly erodible or if the land has been designated for non-cultivation under a USDA program. (16 U.S.C. §3811(a)). For purposes of compliance (including wetlands), the statute defines agricultural commodity as any crop that is planted and produced by "annual tilling of the soil," while including sugarcane. (16 U.S.C. §3801(a)(1)).

By applying a conservation plan for the land that has been approved by NRCS, the person can remain eligible for crop insurance premium subsidy while producing a crop on highly erodible land (or at least portions of it). Additionally, any person subject to compliance for the first time solely because the 2014 Farm Bill relinked compliance and crop insurance is given five reinsurance years to develop and comply with a conservation plan before becoming ineligible for premium assistance. If a person would have been in violation if they had participated in programs requiring compliance after the 2014 Farm Bill was enacted (February 7, 2014) and the person remains in violation, the person has two reinsurance years to develop and comply with an approved conservation plan.

(2) Wetlands Conservation Compliance

For wetlands conservation compliance, there are two types of violations: (1) production of an agricultural commodity in any crop year on converted wetland; and (2) beginning after November 28, 1990, any conversion of a wetland (includes draining, dredging, filling, etc. if it serves to make

Insurance in the New Farm Bill

Consumer Economics, University of Illinois

production possible). (16 U.S.C. §3821(a) and (d)). Either of these constitute a violation of the statute and may impact eligibility for premium assistance in future reinsurance years.

The date of conversion is important for ineligibility under the wetlands provisions. If the wetland was converted after the 2014 Farm Bill goes into effect (February 7, 2014), then ineligibility for crop insurance premium assistance applies as stated to subsequent reinsurance years. If, however, the conversion impacts less than five acres on the farm, the person may pay a contribution equal to 150 percent of the cost of mitigation for the converted wetland. This contribution goes into a dedicated fund at USDA for wetland restoration purposes.

If the wetland was converted before the 2014 Farm Bill went into effect (February 7, 2014), then ineligibility for crop insurance premium assistance will not apply based on that conversion. In other words, prior conversions of wetlands appear to be grandfathered for purposes of being eligible for crop insurance premium assistance with the new date trumping the provision regarding conversions after November 28, 1990. Further information from USDA in the regulations can be expected to clarify the matter. It is not written to impact eligibility for Title I commodity programs, however, which presumably still apply the 1990 date for violations based on a conversion.

Agricultural commodities that do not currently have a policy or plan of insurance under crop insurance are provided different treatment. For those commodities, ineligibility only applies to conversions that take place after the date the policy or plan of insurance becomes available. The person has two years to take the necessary actions to mitigate the conversion.

In general, if a person has violated the wetlands provisions they have one reinsurance year to initiate a mitigation plan to address the violation. Failure to address the conversion results in the person being ineligible for premium assistance in future reinsurance years. If the person is subject to wetlands compliance for the first time solely because the 2014 Farm Bill relinked crop insurance and compliance, they have two reinsurance years to take necessary actions to remedy or mitigate the violation. If USDA determines that the person violated the wetlands provisions in good faith (i.e., did so without intent to violate), the person also has two reinsurance years to take necessary actions to remedy or mitigate the violation.

The farm bill explicitly addresses situations for tenants where the landlord has converted the wetland and refuses to remedy or mitigate the conversion. If the tenant has made a good faith effort to comply and the landlord refuses to comply, so long as it is not part of a scheme or device to

avoid compliance, then the tenant will not lose eligibility across his or her entire farm for crop insurance premium subsidy. Instead, only the specific farm of that landlord will be ineligible for premium subsidy and that will apply to any future tenant as well. In other words, if the tenant is not to blame for the conversion and the landlord refuses to comply, then the landlord's farm is subject to ineligibility but the tenant can keep eligibility for the rest of the farms and acres. The landlord cannot escape this by renting to a new tenant. This provision protects tenants from actions by landlords over which they have no control.

The final matter is certification that a person is in compliance. The 2014 Farm Bill requires those seeking crop insurance premium subsidy to certify to USDA that they are in compliance. Based on the bill language and the explanatory statement in the conference report, Congress did not intend for new certification forms or processes but that USDA use what is already in place for compliance (i.e., form AD-1026). USDA must review and evaluate the certificate in a timely manner and the person properly providing it cannot lose crop insurance coverage or premium assistance while evaluation is being undertaken. If USDA fails to timely evaluate a certification, the person cannot become ineligible based on the violation for which they provided certification. There is no indication in the statute as to what is considered timely. If the person fails to properly certify to USDA, however, and is later found to have violated the wetlands compliance provisions, that person will be required to make an equitable contribution to the dedicated fund at USDA for wetlands restoration. The amount of the contribution is at USDA's discretion but it cannot exceed the total amount the person is considered to have received in premium subsidies for the years they were in violation of the certification requirement.

Conclusion

The 2014 Farm Bill links crop insurance premium assistance and conservation compliance for highly erodible lands and wetlands. This updated version of compliance has been modified to address specific issues unique to crop insurance, such as contracting realities with third-party providers and reinsurers. Compliance only applies to the crop insurance premium subsidy or assistance. Ineligibility can only apply to future reinsurance years, it cannot require repayment of previous premium assistance or indemnities. Producers who are currently in compliance for purposes of commodity or conservation programs in the farm bill should not have any issues with this linkage. Producers farming on highly erodible land need to work with NRCS on a conservation plan. For wetlands, compliance issues are most likely for conversions after February 7, 2014, and existing or previously-determined violations that have not been resolved.



Darke SWCD Awards 3 Scholarships

Each year the board of supervisors strives to acknowledge an outstanding graduating senior pursuing a degree in an agricultural or natural resources related field by awarding them with a scholarship. This year the board decided to offer a second scholarship and a generous donation from long-time volunteer in the conservation office and Greenville resident, Terry Tonovitz, a third scholarship was available. The district received several qualified applicants from six schools around the county. It was a tough choice, but the decision was finally made. Here is a little bit about the three scholarship winners for 2014.



TAYLOR BERGMAN - ANSONIA

Taylor will be graduating from Ansonia with a 4.0 GPA and attending Wilmington College this fall where she plans to major in Agriculture Education. She is a 9-yr 4-H member who has raised market lambs and breeding sheep for the Darke County Fair.

Taylor has held many offices in the FFA and attained numerous achievements throughout her four years, such as her Greenhand degree, State degree, Star Chapter Farmer and numerous proficiency awards. Taylor played and lettered in both volleyball and track.

Taylor wants to inspire and bring agriculture to youth all over Ohio. She wants to share the inspiration she received from those who played an important role in her life: her parents, 4-H advisors, FFA advisors and others.

Darke SWCD congratulates Taylor on her accomplishments and is proud to announce her as one of the recipients for the 2014 scholarship.

LEFT: Darke SWCD Supervisor, Monty Stump, recognizes scholarship recipient Taylor Bergman at the Ansonia Awards Banquet on May 13, 2014.



EMILY HARMAN - VERSAILLES

Emily will be graduating from Versailles with a 3.835 GPA and attending Wilmington College in the fall where she plans to major in Agronomy. Emily played golf and basketball during her high school career.

Emily was very active in the Versailles FFA chapter, which has helped to expose her to a variety of occupations available in agriculture. She has been the Greenhouse Manager throughout her high school years, which helped her to realize her true interests. Emily earned her Greenhand degree as a Freshman and District and State Proficiency Awards in Vegetable Production as a Sophomore and Junior.

Emily is a scholar athlete who has been involved in a number of community services and activities. She credits growing up in a rural community to her interest in ag. Her goal after obtaining an Agronomy degree is to return to this area and utilize her degree to the fullest.

Darke SWCD congratulates Emily on her accomplishments and is proud to announce her as one of the recipients for the 2014 scholarship

ABOVE: Darke SWCD District Administrator, Jared Coppess, recognizes scholarship recipient Emily Harman at the Versailles Senior Awards Breakfast on May 22, 2014.

Continued on the next page

Darke SWCD Donates to Ansonia Outdoor Classroom cont.

Upon completion of this outdoor classroom, teachers from all grade levels will be able to take their students outside to engage with nature as they learn. This outdoor classroom will create an environment where everything from science and art to math and literature courses can benefit from the serenity and uniqueness of this habitat.

The board of supervisors for the Darke SWCD decided to donate tree seedlings from their 2014 tree sale to the outdoor classroom. "Our goal is to help reduce some of the plant cost for the school as they complete and work to establish this outdoor classroom," said Jared Coppess, District Administrator.

Ansonia held an open house on May 30, 2014 with many of their supporters to dedicate the outdoor classroom to the school and the Ansonia community.



RIGHT: Ansonia students plant tree seedlings donated by Darke SWCD. Supervisors Bill Roll (L) and Monty Stump (R) were on site during the planting.

Scholarships continued



ABOVE: Jared Coppess congratulated scholarship recipient Thomas Shaw during the Greenville Awards Night on May 22nd.

THOMAS SHAW - GREENVILLE

Thomas will be graduating from Greenville High School with a 3.3 GPA. Thomas is planning to attend Wilmington College in the fall of 2014 and pursuing a double major in Agriculture Education and Agriculture Communications.

Thomas has been very active in the FFA and received his State degree in 2013. Thomas has held a number of officer positions in his FFA chapter. He is also a 10-yr member of the Grade A Kids 4-H Club.

As a Freshman, Thomas began a weekly radio show for WTGR 97.5 called the Greenville FFA Happening. He later became a Farm News Director for WTGR. In 2013, Thomas broadcast with Dale Minyo from the Ohio FFA Convention on Ohio Ag Net. Thomas has also spoken and interviewed US Education Secretary Arne Duncan and Orion Samuelson, long time ag broadcaster.

Thomas is looking forward to being able to invest back into future generations of agriculture. Darke SWCD congratulates Thomas on his accomplishments and is proud to announce him as one of the recipients for the 2014 scholarship

Each scholarship award is for \$500 and will be processed through their college's enrollment office and be available to the student in January 2015 after proof of enrollment has been obtained.

"It was a tough decision for our board; we received many great applications from students around the county. The academic and extra-curricular activities of these three seemed to stand out among the group," said Jared Coppess, District Administrator for the Darke SWCD.

"On behalf of the board, I would like to thank all applicants for taking the time to apply; we wish them the best of luck in their pursuit of higher education." said Coppess.

Darke SWCD Welcomes Janell Weiss



Janell Weiss, Nutrient Management Specialist/Ag Technician for Darke SWCD, presents at a workshop held at the OSU Extension conference room, off Wagner Avenue, back in April.

The Darke Soil and Water Conservation District (SWCD) Board of Supervisors are excited to welcome Janell Weiss as the district's Nutrient Management Specialist/Agriculture Technician. Janell comes to the district from Mercer SWCD, where she spent the last year as a Conservation Technician. She grew up in Patterson Township and graduated from Versailles High School. Janell continued her education at the Ohio State University where she majored in Ag Engineering. She received her undergraduate degree in 2007. Janell then obtained a Master of Science in Biological Systems Engineering from Virginia Tech in 2013. In between degrees, Janell spent time with the Peace Corps as a Sustainable Agriculture Extensionist in Panama.

"As a Peace Corps Volunteer I worked with a community of farmers to manage soil fertility and control the incidence of crop disease. In Panama we grew cacao (chocolate trees) and used machetes and shovels, but the agronomic principles are universal," said Weiss.

Janell began working for the Mercer County SWCD in March 2013. While there she did survey work, learned and promoted NRCS programs and worked with producers on comprehensive nutrient management plans and EQIP applications.

"Darke County, like our northern neighbor, is a livestock intensive county. With livestock, comes the challenge of manure management. Working in Mercer County gave me the opportunity to work with livestock producers to promote good soil fertility and manure management – from storage to field application," Weiss said.

When asked about her interest and reason for returning to Darke County, Weiss responded, "My husband and I both hail from Darke County farms. After a decade of studying and working out of the area, family and rural living drew me back to Darke County. I missed digging in the dirt, and I wanted to walk in a woods without having to drive to a metro park."

Janell started at the Darke SWCD office in March 2014. She will be focusing on a number of different areas for the district, including nutrient management planning and education, design and installation of conservation practices and the district ag pollution abatement program.

"We are excited to have Janell on our team. She is a great fit for our county and office. Janell brings some valuable experience and education to the district." said Jared Coppess, District Administrator for Darke SWCD.

Soil Fertility & Nutrient Management Workshop Series

JUNE - SEPTEMBER 2014



REGISTRATION ONLY



\$10.00

*Registration includes: Four meals, Binder of Reference Materials,
Two Soil Samples (up to 50 acres), calculator and a field/farm plan.*



The Darke Soil and Water Conservation District (SWCD), Shelby SWCD, Wright State University-Lake Campus and the Ohio State University will be jointly hosting a third round of their Soil Fertility and Nutrient Management Workshop Series beginning in June and ending in September before harvest. This series will consist of four workshops — June, July, August and September — that will cover basic agronomy, how to obtain a proper soil sample, a tour of a soil lab, understanding and interpreting the results, recommendations and how to properly maintain and enhance your soils, and the development of a field plan.

SPACE IS LIMITED. Call 937.548.1715, Ext. 3 or email jared.coppess@oh.nacdn.net to reserve your spot today!



IMPORTANT WORKSHOP DATES

JUNE 19, 2014	6:00-8:30 PM
Location: Versailles School, Rm D147	
Topics: Basic Agronomy, Soil Sampling, Nutrient Sources	
JULY 17, 2014	9:00 AM-2:00 PM
Location: Brookside Labs, New Bremen	
Topics: Process of Soil Testing and Importance	
AUGUST 26, 2014	6:00-8:30 PM
Location: Versailles School, Rm D147	
Topics: Interpreting Results and Understanding Crop Requirements	
SEPTEMBER 9, 2014	6:00-8:30 PM
Location: Versailles School, Rm D147	
Topics: Field Plan, Application, Nutrient Reduction Methods	

THANK YOU SPONSORS

OHIO DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES, TOP OF OHIO RC&D COUNCIL, OHIO LIVESTOCK COALITION, BROOKSIDE LABORATORIES, VERSAILLES FFA AND MENKE CONSULTING

Soil Fertility & Nutrient Management Workshop Series Offered

The Darke and Shelby SWCDs, the Ohio State University Extension and Wright State University-Lake Campus will be jointly hosting a third round of the Soil Fertility and Nutrient Management (SFNM) workshop series beginning in June and wrapping up in early September. This series will consist of four workshops – June, July, August and September – that will cover basic agronomy, how to obtain a proper soil sample, a tour of a soil lab, understanding and interpreting the results, recommendations and how to properly maintain and enhance your soils, and development of a field plan for 2015. The cost to participate in this workshop series will be \$10.00. This registration fee will cover all of your meals, resource materials and soil samples for up to 50 acres. Space is limited, so call or email to reserve your spot today!

The first workshop will be June 19th at the Versailles School beginning with a meal at 6:00pm. This first workshop will give an introduction to the series, cover how to properly collect a soil sample and discuss nutrient sources and concentrations. It is important to note that the Darke SWCD, through a series of grants and sponsorships, will cover two (2) samples to be tested from your farm. This workshop series will utilize your samples to walk you through understanding your soil fertility and nutrient management needs. You will need to turn in your soil samples at the office before the second meeting date.

The second workshop will take place on July 17th. The group will meet at the Darke SWCD office at 9:00am before traveling to Brookside Labs in New Bremen. While there, we will tour the facility and visit with available technicians to understand the process of soil testing. This is when and where the samples you pull will be delivered for analysis. After the tour, the group will grab lunch before returning to Greenville.

The third workshop will be held on August 26th at the Versailles School. This meeting will cover your soil sample test results and begin the process of interpreting and understanding the results for an analysis of your farm. We will also go over recommendations for the ar-

ea and cover any environmental limitations or concerns that may exist. Like the first meeting, this one will begin at 6:00pm with a meal.

Finally, the group will gather for a fourth and final workshop on September 9th back at the Versailles School. This will cover ways you can build upon or maintain your soil health by identifying practices you can utilize on your farm. The workshop series will end with an overview of the 4R Tomorrow program and a certificate of completion for all participants.

All workshops in the series will include a meal. The goal is to help you better understand how to identify and address the needs of your soil. Upon completion of the series, you will have a wider knowledge base and many reference materials to help you get the most out of your soil in a healthy manner.

“The benefits of proper nutrient management are two-fold: the farmer lowers inputs while reducing any potential for environmental impairments. These are two goals any farmer should have because it relates to money and protecting their land,” said Jared Coppess, District Administrator at Darke SWCD.

This workshop wouldn't be possible without the cooperation of the Darke SWCD; Shelby SWCD; OSU Extension; Wright State University-Lake Campus; Versailles FFA; Menke Consulting; Brookside Laboratories and the support of our sponsors: The Dayton Foundation, Ohio Department of Natural Resources, Top of Ohio RC&D Council and the Ohio Livestock Coalition.

If you are interesting in learning how to best manage your soil's needs, sign up now for this workshop by calling the Darke SWCD at 937.548.1715, extension 3 or email jared.coppess@oh.nacdnet.net.

WORKSHOP DATES	
June 19, 2014 Versailles School, Rm D147 <i>Topics: Basic Agronomy, Soil Sampling, Nutrient Sources</i>	6:00-8:30 PM
July 17, 2014 Brookside Lab, New Bremen <i>Topics: Process of Soil Testing and the Importance</i>	9 AM—2:00 PM
August 26, 2014 Versailles School, Rm D147 <i>Topics: Interpretation of the Results and Understanding Crop Requirements</i>	6:00-8:30 PM
September 9, 2014 Versailles School, Rm D147 <i>Topics: Field Plan, Application, Nutrient Reductions Methods</i>	6:00-8:30 PM

REGISTER NOW! SPACE IS LIMITED

Store Rain Water with a Rain Barrel

Rain barrels are a great way to conserve groundwater and potentially reduce your water bill.

Did you know that the Earth is made up of 70% water and 30% land? If you look at the 70% of the Earth's water supply, only 3% percent of that is freshwater. People in the United States use 150 gallons of water per day, which is the most around the world. Just a little fact to show the demand on the freshwater supply.

A rain barrel is a rain water collection system that stores rooftop runoff to be used later for activities such as lawn and garden watering, car washing or even window cleaning. Never use this water for drinking or cooking.

Residential irrigation can account for 40% of domestic water consumption in a given area. This can be a problem, particularly in the summer, when the majority of outdoor water use occurs. This also happens to be a time when there is likely to be a water shortage.

Collecting rainwater from your roof using a rain barrel can not only lower your water bill, but also help to decrease water demand during hot months while helping the environment.

Rain barrels can be decorated to fit any style. The Darke SWCD office sells 55 gallon plastic barrels along with the kits to turn them into rain barrels for \$30. Contact us today and start saving that rain water tomorrow!

Photos from Workshops Darke SWCD Participated in



Darke SWCD partnered with Preble SWCD and ODNR to host a Dam Safety Program at the Corn Crib.



Mrs. Brandewie's 6th graders at Ansonia learn about soils and soil sampling. Here one of the students uses a soil probe during the soil sampling demonstration.



Darke SWCD teamed up with the Darke County Parks District to host a couple Rain Barrel Workshops.

Darke SWCD partnered with OSU Extension and Solid Waste for the Grow It, Make It, Can It Workshop held in April at OSU Extension.



Darke SWCD hosted a cover crop informational meeting with Treaty Soil, KB Seeds and Wright State-Lake Campus back in March at Shawnee Prairie.

Thank you Darke County Commissioners

The board of supervisors and staff for the Darke Soil and Water Conservation District would like to thank our county commissioners for their support of the district's activities. We appreciate the continued partnership with our county commissioners and would like to take this opportunity to individually thank Diane Delaplaine, Mike Rhoades and Mike Stegall for their support over the years. It is great to have such strong local supporters! Thank you.

Area IV Envirothon Held in Madison County

London, OH – Competition was intense at the Procter Center on April 29, 2014, as over 400 high school students from Southwest Ohio met in the Area’s annual Envirothon. “Students were tested on their environmental knowledge in five areas including Aquatics, Current Environmental Issues (CEI), Forestry, Soils and Wildlife. The CEI this year focuses on Sustainable Agriculture – Locally Grown. The testing is rigorous, and students must be able to apply their knowledge to real-world situations,” said Jill O’Banion of Greene Soil and Water Conservation District (SWCD), one of this year’s co-hosts. Madison and Fayette SWCD also co-hosted.

The top four teams from the event representing Miami Trace, Centerville, Beavercreek, and West Jefferson High Schools advance to the Ohio Envirothon, where they will compete with top teams from the other four areas in the state. Team members will be meeting on a regular basis to work with local resource professionals to prepare for the state event, which is June 9 and 10 at Salt Fork State Park.

Each Envirothon team consists of five students. An adult advisor must accompany the team, but is not permitted to assist the team during the competition. Besides field testing, teams at the Ohio Envirothon will also be given a problem to solve and must develop an oral presentation on their recommendation.

Major sponsorship for the Area IV Envirothon comes from Honda of America and the 18 Soil & Water Conservation Districts in Southwest Ohio. The Procter Center was a magnificent location for this year’s event. The rain held off and the teams enjoyed an educational day while experiencing the outdoors. Pictures and tests from the event can be viewed at www.areaivenvirothon.org.

In Ohio, the Envirothon is sponsored by the Ohio Federation of Soil and Water Conservation Districts and the Ohio Department of Natural Resources – Division of Soil & Water Resources (ODNR-DSWR). The Envirothon began in Ohio in 1989, and was modeled on a similar program from Pennsylvania. Students who prepare for and participate in the Envirothon gain a greater awareness of natural resources and environmental issues. They meet a wide range of professionals and are exposed to various points of view on environmental responsibilities while learning about career opportunities.



ABOVE LEFT: Greenville #1 and #2 take a group photograph before the competition begins.
ABOVE RIGHT: Franklin Monroe’s team for the 2014 Envirothon.

WHERE THE DARKE COUNTY TEAMS FINISHED	
16.....	Greenville #2
46.....	Franklin Monroe
69.....	Greenville #1
83 teams competed in 2014	

- | |
|--|
| The Envirothon consists of 5 areas of testing:
<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Aquatics2. Soils3. Wildlife4. Forestry5. Current Environmental Issue <p>* Sustainable Farming</p> |
|--|

Photos from the Envirothon



Franklin Monroe students take the soils portion of the Envirothon test.



Linda Calland, Darke SWCD, working at the Area IV Envirothon contest.



Mr. Guttadore speaks with students after testing has completed.



Greenville #1 poses in the soils pit.



Mr. Jackson talks with his students during the lunch break.



Greenville #1 completes the soils test.



Franklin Monroe checking their work.

Darke SWCD

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in Darke County since 1955**



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Conservation Highlights

SPRING 2014

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

- | | |
|---------------|---|
| JUN 13 | Stillwater River Clean Up
<i>Stillwater Beach Campground</i> |
| JUN 19 | Soil Fertility & Nutrient Management Mtg #1
<i>Versailles School, Room D147</i> |
| JUN 24 | Home Gardener Workshop: Bees, Bugs & Worms
<i>OSU Extension Conference Room, Greenville</i> |
| JUL 4 | OFFICE CLOSED |
| JUL 17 | Soil Fertility & Nutrient Management Mtg #2
<i>Brookside Lab, New Bremen</i> |
| AUG 26 | Soil Fertility & Nutrient Management Mtg #3
<i>Versailles School, Room D147</i> |
| SEPT 9 | Soil Fertility & Nutrient Management Mtg #4
<i>Versailles School, Room D147</i> |

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www.darkeswcd.com