



# Conservation News

VOLUME 22, No. 3

SUMMER 2017

## “Union SWCD’S 72nd Annual Meeting”

The Union Soil and Water Conservation District will hold its 72nd Annual Meeting on Thursday, August 10, at the Der Dutchman Restaurant, 445 South Jefferson Avenue in Plain City.

There are a variety of things planned for the evening.

The terms for USWCD Supervisors Steve Robinson and Rick Weigand will be expiring as of December 31, 2017, and an election of two supervisors will be held prior to the meal from 5:30-6:45 p.m.

Candidates will be Matt Hobbs, Steve Robinson and Rick Weigand.

Eligible voters may cast their ballot at the Der Dutchman from

5:30-6:45 p.m. on August 10

(voters do not have to be meeting attendees),

in the SWCD office from 9:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m. on August 10, or by requesting an absentee ballot.

A buffet meal will begin at 6:30 p.m. followed by the annual meeting at 7:30 p.m. to feature Columbus Zoo animals. For more information or to purchase tickets, please contact the Union SWCD office at 937/642-5871 x2221.

### Board of Supervisors

Andy Clarridge  
Bill Conklin  
Steve Robinson  
Matt Staley  
Rick Weigand

### SWCD Personnel

Terri Gravatt  
Jeremy Burrey  
Brent Nickel  
Aaron Smith  
Mark Watkins

### NRCS Personnel

Ron Nieman, DC  
Robin Sweeney  
LaRae Baker

### Pheasants Forever

Mike Retterer

### **Union SWCD**

18000 St. Rt. 4 North  
Suite B  
Marysville, OH 43040  
937-642-5871 x 3

[www.co.union.oh.us/Union-Soil-Water-Conservation-District/](http://www.co.union.oh.us/Union-Soil-Water-Conservation-District/)



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**Steve Robinson** operates a family farm in Union County, Ohio. Robinson has served as a district supervisor for Union Soil and Water Conservation District since 1988. He has filled many leadership roles both in his district and in his state association, including service as President of the Ohio Federation of Soil and Water Conservation Districts from 1999-2001. Robinson has participated at the national level since 1997, serving as a member of the Board of Directors and chair of the District Operations Committee. He was elected to national office in 2006, serving as President of the National Association of Conservation Districts in 2009-2010. Steve presently serves as Chair for the National Conservation

Foundation.

Robinson's commitment to conservation was recognized by his colleagues in 2003 when he received the Ohio Department of Natural Resources Cardinal Award for Conservation Achievement.

Robinson was raised on a dairy farm in Union County and continues to farm approximately 900 acres of corn, soybeans and wheat there today. Conservation practices on his farm include nine water and sediment control structures, three waterways with rock chutes, surface drainage, a wooded wetland, filter strips and use of no-tillage and strip tillage on corn. In addition, Steve manages Robinson Excavating, Inc., a family owned business specializing in drainage tile and earth moving for ponds, waterways, rock chutes, wetlands and site development.

Steve and his wife, Ann, have three children and eight grandchildren.



**Rick Weigand** is the owner and operator of The Seed Center in Ostrander, Ohio, and has served as a Union SWCD district supervisor since January of 2015. He has a life-long commitment to the ecology of the soils, not only in Union County, but throughout the mid-west. Investing in soils future is the key to sustainable agriculture for generations to come. This year, he is celebrating 33 years cultivating and creating the building blocks for the success of his companies.

He has implemented and worked with government agencies to create best management practices for agriculture, cover crops, CRP, waterways and pollinators. Rick also supplies the grass seed for hundreds of thousands of acres that have been seeded to turf. The Seed Center has engineered the mixes for pipelines, athletic field complexes as well as the Columbus Zoo Africa exhibit.

In closing, on behalf of himself, his wife and sons, Rick would like to thank the neighbors and friends of Union County for their support in his run for Board Supervisor.



My name is Matt Hobbs and I am running for Union Soil and Water Conservation District supervisor. To tell a little bit about myself.... I have been a Marysville rural resident for my entire life. I graduated from Marysville High School and then went on to become the farmer I am today. I attended college for two years on and off, and knew that school wasn't for me, so decided to come back home to the farm and start in full time. The farm is family owned and operated by my grandfather George Beeson, father Larry Hobbs, sister Cari, two hired hands and myself. I have been farming now for almost 19 years full time, and have experience in a range of farming practices. We farm row crops, wheat, corn, soybeans and also hay. With the farmable acres we have, we strive to be the best stewards that we can be. We have installed buffer strips along ditches, waterways to slow soil erosion, and work hard to create a safe environment for us and the surrounding area. Our farm is also involved in the beef cattle industry. We have a beef feedlot here and also run a stocker beef ranch in Coshocton, Ohio. With

this operation comes a big responsibility to operate and have sense to be good stewards of the land and have the common sense to make the correct environmental decisions. With these responsibilities on the farm I feel I am well qualified to make a great effort and decisions on this soil and water supervisor board. I am honored to be chosen as a supervisor candidate and thank my wife, Jennifer and our families for their support.

# 36TH ANNUAL FISH SALE

The Union Soil and Water Conservation District is now taking orders for fish fingerlings. This is an opportunity for Union County pond owners to stock their ponds at a reasonable price without traveling out of the county.

The fingerlings will be delivered on Thursday, October 5, 2017, and may be picked up at 9:30 a.m. in the Union SWCD parking lot located at 18000 State Route 4, Marysville. The last day which orders will be accepted will be October 2. Payment must accompany orders.

Persons placing fish orders will be sent a reminder on the time and place of delivery. When the fish are delivered, they will need to be placed in a clean container filled with fresh pond water. A 5-10 gallon trash can with a plastic liner would be adequate for 100 fingerlings. The white amur must be placed in something with a plastic liner. Stocking rates vary according to pond size. Guidelines for a one-acre pond are: 100 largemouth bass, 500 bluegill, 100 channel catfish, and 5-10 white amur. We would recommend that the crappie and perch be stocked in two-acre or larger ponds only.

Please fill out the order blank listed below and send with payment to:  
**Union SWCD**, 18000 State Route 4, Suite B, Marysville, Ohio, 43040. If you have questions, call our office at 937/642-5871, Option 3 on the automated answering menu.

## 2017 Fish Fingerling Order Form

Item	Size Range (Inches)	Benefit	Price (Per Fish)	Quantity	Subtotal
Bluegill	2 to 4	Recreational fishing	\$.80	_____	_____
Channel Catfish	4 to 5	Recreation/Bottom Feeder	\$.75	_____	_____
Largemouth Bass	2 to 3	Recreational/Predator	\$.85	_____	_____
White Amur	8 to 10	Aquatic Weed Control	\$13.00	_____	_____
Yellow Perch	2 to 3	Recreational fishing	\$.80	_____	_____
Fathead Minnow	1 to 3	Feeds on mosquitoes	\$.06	_____	_____
Shell Cracker	2 to 4	Eats snails from pond	\$.80	_____	_____
Hybrid Bluegill	2 to 4	Recreational fishing	\$.80	_____	_____
Black Crappie	2 to 4	Recreational fishing	\$.80	_____	_____
<b>TOTALS:</b>				_____	_____

Note: Fish are guaranteed to be delivered in good condition; however, we cannot guarantee survival after being placed in your pond. A reasonable mortality rate can be expected and may well result. (>20% Mortality – ODNR Division of Wildlife).

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

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

Cell Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ E-Mail: \_\_\_\_\_

## Help Save the Monarch Butterfly by Protecting Native Milkweed

The iconic monarch butterfly, which has long been a welcome sight in backyard gardens across Ohio, faces many threats. In Ohio, one way we can ensure future generations of monarch butterflies continue to visit flower gardens throughout our state is by protecting native milkweed plants.

Every year in the fall, monarch butterflies across the eastern U.S. and Canada begin a 3,000-mile-long journey down to wintering grounds in Mexico. In the spring, these same butterflies head back north, and delight us with their presence once again. However, this amazing journey would not be possible without milkweed, a group of plants critical to the survival of the monarch butterfly. As butterflies, monarchs can feed on the nectar of a number of different flowering plants, but as caterpillars, monarchs are entirely dependent on the availability of milkweed.

Monarch caterpillars hatch from eggs laid on milkweed plants and feed on the leaves of the plant as they grow. If these plants are mowed, removed, or sprayed with pesticides or herbicides, the caterpillars will not survive. Protecting these plants, especially during the egg-laying period from July through September, helps both monarch butterflies and caterpillars continue their life cycle and ultimately results in more monarch butterflies that can complete their journey to Mexico and back.

In the past, milkweed was viewed as a toxic weed. Today, we know that milkweed is a very important group of native plants that helps support many species of wildlife, including monarch butterflies. Learn more about ways you can help ensure these beautiful butterflies are around for generations to come by visiting the [Monarch Joint Venture](#).



## Ohio Pollinator Habitat Initiative

### Annual Milkweed Pod Collection

September 1<sup>st</sup> through October 30<sup>th</sup>

Contact your local Soil and Water Conservation District  
[for more information](#)

Starting September 1, we will again be collecting Milkweed pods and seed to turn into plugs for use in conservation practices. We welcome your donations here at the office and are also on the lookout for healthy populations to do some organized collections.

If you have questions feel free to call  
Brent Nickel at 937-642-5871 x2220

# Wild About Wildlife

Brent Nickel, Union SWCD Wildlife Specialist.  
brent.nickel@oh.nacdnet.net

## Summer Wildlife and Habitat Interests

### NATIONAL HUNTING AND FISHING DAY

Come join us for FREE Kids outdoor activities on  
**Saturday Sept. 23 from 9 - Noon**  
**at the Heart of Ohio Fishing Club.**

Usual activities include an archery range, trap shooting, "Passport to Fishing" Instruction, BB Gun Range, Sling Shot Range, Trapping Displays, and Leather Working. REFRESHMENTS will be provided.

Share the Great Outdoors with a young person and reap the benefits for years to come.

### SHARE YOUR LOVE FOR THE OUTDOORS - TAKE A KID HUNTING

Hunting season is just around the corner and there's no time like the present to get a kid involved in the outdoor sports. Now's the time to start thinking about getting into that Hunter's Education Class.

The Division of Wildlife offers three types of certification courses; instructor-led training, home study courses, and proficiency testing for those 18 and older.

Best of all; It's FREE!

For more information about when and where these classes are available, see the web page below:

<http://wildlife.ohiodnr.gov/education-and-outdoor-discovery/hunter-and-trapper-education>

### TALLGRASS TRUTHS - REVEALED!

#### *Native Warm Season Grasses in Summer...*

Right now, Native Warm Season Grasses are thriving and maximizing their growth. One can almost hear them growing.

For USDA grassland practice contracts, the annual Ground Nesting & Brood-rearing Season began on **March 1st and runs through July 15th**. All mowing is prohibited during this period of nesting, egg-laying, brooding, nestling development, and fledging of grassland birds. **August** is a great time to mow any **Cool Season Grass Fire Breaks** that may be associated with the Tallgrass contracts. These borders need to be mowed annually-even if a prescribed burn is not planned. It is the unintentional wild fire that annual border mowing will help deter. Check with the Farm Service Agency and/ or the Natural Resource Conservation Service office before mowing to be sure that your contract allows annual maintenance mowing.

## What's In-Season

See what is currently **"In-Season"** at this website:  
<http://wildlife.ohiodnr.gov/huntingandtrappingregulations>

### Fishing Regulations:

<http://wildlife.ohiodnr.gov/fishingregulations>

**"Hunting With Permission"** forms and **Hunting Regulations** and **Fishing Regulations** are available at our office.

**Hunting and Fishing Licenses are now available for 2017-2018 Seasons**

## YOUTH HUNTING OPPORTUNITIES

Union County Pheasants Forever Chapter #535 will hold an outdoor skills day on Oct. 7, 2017 at 1 Ross Lane Richwood, OH and follow up with it's annual youth hunt on Oct. 21, 2017.

For more information, please see their Facebook page "[Pheasants Forever Chapter #535 - Union County, Ohio](#)"

## TICKS IN OHIO

Tick season is here and you should take the time to learn about Ohio's tick species and how to protect yourself. American Dog Ticks, Blacklegged ticks and Lone star Ticks can all pose a threat to outdoorsmen and women.

Read More About Ohio's Ticks Here:  
<http://wildlife.ohiodnr.gov/species-and-habitats/ticks-in-ohio>

## DON'T FORGET YOUR BEST FRIEND

Designated dog training areas are located on portions of the Berlin, Caesar Creek, Delaware, Fallsville, Indian Creek, Killdeer Plains, Lake La Su An, Oxbow, Resthaven, Rush Run, Spencer, Tri-Valley and East Fork wildlife areas.

Dogs may not be trained or exercised on state public hunting areas from **May 1 through August 31**, except on these designated dog training areas.

## RECOMMENDATIONS TO PONDER!

Except for fishless ponds and those pond owners capable of executing precision applications, the window of opportunity to treat aquatic vegetation with prescribed herbicides **has closed** for another year!

It becomes just too risky to treat warm pond water which is supporting robust plant growth.

Summer applications may result in fish kills.

If you are still looking to control algae and floating weeds, it's time to get your rake out and manually remove the offending aquatic culprits.

## Injured—or what appears to be **Helpless Wildlife?**

Call or contact the **Ohio Wildlife Center** – 614-793-WILD (9453) – then follow their every instruction!  
<http://www.ohiowildlifecenter.org>

*"Humans are often wildlife's last hope for survival – not necessarily their best hope."*

# Are your gutters ready for Winter?

Summer is in full swing; kids are splashing in the pool, lemonade stands are popping up in front yards, there are garage sales, and the local t-ball league is wrapping up their final games of the season. While summer gives off a nice relaxing vibe, the dark looming shadow of fall property maintenance is just around the corner. If you look outside of your cool air-conditioned house, you will see that some of the first leaves are starting to change colors and a few may have even fluttered to the ground.

Even the best gutter and downspout system can get clogged up by the leaves of autumn, so it is best to stay ahead on maintenance. The last thing you want is water overflowing your gutters and coming up out of your downspouts. That water can erode away your meticulously kept flowerbeds, and maybe even make its way into your basement or crawlspace. Here are some things you should check when you are doing your rounds.

- First things first, brush up on your safety. Make sure you have a ladder tall enough to comfortably look down into your gutters. NEVER stand on the top step of a step ladder and make sure someone knows that you are out working so that if you don't show up for dinner, they can come looking for you. Also, a good pair of gloves may come in handy!
- Clean all of the debris from the gutter. If you have gutter guards, peek into the holes to see if there is any debris inside, and if there is clean it out. Make sure that the holes in the gutter guards are also free of debris. If you do not have gutter guards, consider buying and installing some, especially if your downspouts tie into a subsurface drain. If you can see debris in your downspouts, disconnect them from any subsurface tile and use a garden hose and a stick or plumbing snake to push debris out of at the bottom. Rake up the debris and dispose of it in a location where it will no longer be an issue.
- Make sure that your downspouts are connected into the subsurface tile at the base, or are pointed away from your foundation. If you have a good enough slope away from your house, the water should take care of itself. Consider putting in a splash block or some stone at the mouth of an open downspout to help prevent erosion.
- If you live in an urban area that has a storm sewer system, keep an eye on the street gutter and curb inlets along your property. Clean up trash, leaves, and grass clippings from those areas to allow water to travel freely. Call your local streets/maintenance department if you find any issues.
- Never try to lift the metal grate cover, clean the catch basin yourself, and watch for cars!

The next time it rains (but not during a thunderstorm!) after doing some cleaning, take a walk around and make sure your gutters and downspouts are working properly. Chances are that you will need to do these one or more times during the autumn months as the rest of the leaves fall. Staying on top of this will lessen your headaches and keep your property looking nice and functioning properly! Enjoy the rest of your summer!

# SWCD Equipment for Sale and Rent

## The following items are available for sale:

- Marking flags \$10 per 100 flags, available year round
- Soil Survey Narratives \$15 each or free online, available year round
- Topographic Quadrangles \$6 each, available year round
- Pond Warning Signs \$7 each, available year round
- Soil Survey Aerial Maps Free
- Fish Fingerlings Prices vary, sale held in Fall
- Tree Seedlings Prices vary, sale is in April



## The following equipment is available for rent: (subject to schedule and availability)

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| • John Deere 1590 No-Till Drill (15-foot)            | \$12/ acre w/ \$125 minimum charge                   |
| <hr/>  |  |
| • Tree Puller  | \$100 per day<br>\$150 per weekend<br>\$300 per week |
| <hr/>  |  |
| • Straw Blower (tailgate mulcher)<br>- \$150 deposit | \$75 per day<br>\$100 per weekend                    |
| <hr/>  |  |
| • Tree Planter                                       | \$40 per day   |

**All equipment must be scheduled through the Union SWCD office  
at 937-642-5871 during regular business hours.  
Please contact Brent Nickel at ext. 2220 to schedule.**

## **OHIO DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE ANNOUNCES FARM PESTICIDE DISPOSAL COLLECTION IN DELAWARE COUNTY**

REYNOLDSBURG, Ohio (Jul. 11, 2017) – The Ohio Department of Agriculture will be sponsoring a collection for farmers wishing to dispose of unwanted pesticides on Aug. 10 from 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. at the Delaware County Fairgrounds (entrance off U.S. 23), 236 Pennsylvania Ave., Delaware, OH 43015.

The pesticide collection and disposal service is free of charge, but only farm chemicals will be accepted. Paint, antifreeze, solvents, and household or non-farm pesticides will not be accepted.

Pesticide collections are sponsored by the department in conjunction with the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. To pre-register, or for more information, contact the Ohio Department of Agriculture at 614-728-6987.

## **Drainage Maintenance Quarterly Update**

Drainage Maintenance has been very busy the last couple of months with a lot of maintenance projects throughout the county. The SWCD board voted to accept the Clark and Yoder drainage improvement project. Plans and engineering for the project are being completed as well as assessment calculations to present to the Union County Commissioners and watershed parcel owners in the coming months.

The County Ditches and Subdivisions will continue to be mowed and sprayed on alternating years. This year the northern ditches have been sprayed to help maintain the 15 ft. buffer strip and for weed and brush control. The southern ditches are being mowed by the SWCD staff to help maintain the 15 ft. buffer strip and control weeds and brush.

Subdivisions are being sprayed for weed and brush control and will be mowed throughout the summer months. All basins have been sprayed and mowing is currently being done now. Cattails and vegetation control is critical to maintain the flow and storage of storm basins and ponds. It is critical to keep inlet and outlet areas clear of vegetation that could cause issues with the storm water collections system.

If you would like to report a problem on a maintained ditch or have questions regarding maintenance please contact Jeremy Burrey at 937-642-5871x 2213

## Highly Erodible Land (HEL) and Wetland Compliance (WC), and Form FSA-1026

The Food Security Act of 1985 as amended, provides that persons who produce an agricultural commodity on a field on which HEL is predominate, or designate land on which HEL is predominate to be set aside, diverted, devoted to conservation uses, or otherwise not cultivated under a program administered by the Secretary to reduce production of an agricultural commodity, shall be ineligible for benefits under certain programs administered by USDA, unless the production of an agricultural commodity on HEL is in compliance with an approved conservation plan or system or an exemption applies.

The 1985 Act also provides that, unless exempt, persons are ineligible for benefits under certain programs administered by USDA if they:

- Plant an agricultural commodity on wetland that was converted after December 23, 1985.
- Convert a wetland after November 28, 1990, by draining, dredging, filling, leveling, or any other means for the purpose, or to have the effect, of making the production of an agricultural commodity possible.

Producers who request program benefits with USDA certify compliance to HEL and Wetland compliance by filing a FSA- 1026 form. By signing this form producers agree to the following;

- NOT** to plant or produce an agricultural commodity on highly erodible fields unless actively applying an approved conservation plan or maintaining a fully applied conservation system.
- NOT** to plant or produce an agricultural commodity on wetlands converted after December 23, 1985.
- NOT** to convert wetlands by draining, dredging, filling, leveling, removing woody vegetation or any other means that would allow the planting of any crop, pasture, agricultural commodity, or other such crops.
- NOT** to use proceeds from any FSA farm loan, insured or guaranteed, or any USDA cost-share program, in such a way that might result in negative impacts to wetlands, except for those projects evaluated and approved by NRCS or Army Corps of Engineers.

Producers are encouraged to contact the FSA office **BEFORE** they do any land clearing or installing of tile on any area that has not had a HEL or Wetland determination made. Failure to do so could be very costly! Contact your local FSA office if you have any questions. A more in depth document is being prepared about the Highly Erodible Lands and Wetland Conservation provisions of the Farm Bill so be sure to look for the link in future newsletters.

## Upcoming Events:

Aug. 10, 2017 - Union SWCD Annual Mtg. - 5:30 PM voting opens, 6:30 dinner & meeting begin  
Der Dutchman Restaurant, Plain City OH

Aug. 24, 2017 - Union SWCD Board Mtg. - 7:00 PM - Ag Center - Conservation Mtg. Room

Sept. 4, 2017 - Labor Day Holiday - Office Closed

Sept. 14, 2017 - Union SWCD Board Mtg. - 7:00 PM - Ag Center - Conservation Mtg. Room

Sept. 23, 2017 - National Hunting and Fishing Day - 9-Noon  
Heart of Ohio Fishing Club on Northwest Pkwy.

Oct. 5, 2017 - Union SWCD Annual Fish Sale Pickup

Oct. 7, 2017 - Union County Pheasants Forever Outdoor Skills Day - 9:00AM - Afternoon  
1 Ross Lane, Richwood, OH

Oct. 12, 2017 - Union SWCD Board Mtg. - 7:00 PM - Ag Center - Conservation Mtg. Room

Oct. 21-22, 2017 - Pheasants Forever Chapter #535 Union County, OH - Youth Hunt -  
See their Facebook page for more details

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The Union Soil and Water Conservation District and the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) prohibit discrimination in their programs on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, religion, age, disability, political beliefs and marital or familial status.

Mailing Address Goes Here

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Marysville, Ohio 43040  
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# Conservation News

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