



Muskingum Soil & Water Conservation District

"Your Soil and Water Conservation Specialists"

225 Underwood Street, Suite 100, Zanesville OH 43701

Phone (740)454-2027
FAX (740)454-1451

Newsletter Issue 4

muskingumswcd.org

Winter 2020-21, Published Quarterly

2020 Supervisor Election Results

Another great election is in the books for 2020. We are so thankful to have had a great group of candidates run this year. Each candidate brings a unique vision and set of skills to our county. We want to thank all of our candidates for running this year! It was a very close race, and all candidates were great candidates—the District wasn't going to lose no matter who was elected!

Congratulations to Doug McConnell and Becky Vansickle, who will be sworn in January 12, 2021.

Thank you very much to Mark Sterling and Lois Zook-Gerdau for running. Thank you all for your interest in conserving Muskingum County's natural resources.



Attention Educators!



Are you looking for outside resources to display in your virtual classrooms? Soil and Water has come up with virtual programs and short videos, and is available to "Zoom" into your classrooms for all programs. We are also expanding our programs and want your ideas! Do not forget we also have an array of trunks and materials we can lend out to you for additional teaching materials. Take a look at our [website](http://www.muskingumswcd.org) to see what kind of educational opportunities we have or contact Ashlee Kopchak at ashlee.kopchak@muskingumswcd.org or (740) 454-2027.

Welcome NRCS Staff

Hello, my name is Jacob Lotz. I will be serving as a Soil Conservationist for Area 3 with the Ohio Natural Resources Conservation Service, an agency of the USDA. I was recently hired to this full-time position in August of 2020 after working for three summers as an intern in Knox County. As a Soil Conservationist, I will be assisting in six counties, including Muskingum, Morgan, Guernsey, Noble, Belmont and Monroe. My assigned office is in the Cambridge field office serving Guernsey and Noble Counties, but I will also have a presence in the Muskingum and Belmont/Monroe offices. I plan to work from the Muskingum NRCS/SWCD office on Thursday and Friday of each week. My job is to assist the District Conservationists, serve the community with technical assistance pertaining to agricultural conservation, as well as through our conservation programs, which are aimed towards working cooperatively with participants to install conservation practices on their own or rented land.



I grew up in Fredericktown in northern Knox County on a small family farm with chickens, horses, and a few beef cattle. I graduated from Fredericktown High School in 2016. In high school I was heavily involved in FFA and had the opportunity to compete in soils, wildlife, and forestry competitions. My most memorable competitions include national and regional competitions where we had the chance to compete in Oklahoma, Massachusetts, and Indiana. I am honored to have had the opportunity to compete in the national environmental and natural resources competition at the National FFA Convention as the winning team. I received my American Farmer Degree from the National FFA Organization two years ago. I have recently graduated from Mount Vernon Nazarene University with a bachelor's degree in Environmental Biology. I have chosen a career with NRCS because I want to utilize my passion for agriculture in a meaningful way and continue to develop as a natural resource conservationist.

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A Few Thoughts from the Newbie

New blog series "As Learned by Doreen" written by our very own Doreen Maurer, Administrative Assistant. This series gives her perspective on what it's like to be a "newbie" to all things resource conservation and environmental related.



I am fairly new here at Muskingum Soil and Water Conservation District (MSWCD) and have learned a lot about how important the work done on Underwood Street is for our community. I was hired as an administrative assistant, but in a short time, I have developed a great love for conservation and its importance.

I started with no agricultural background. I quickly learned that there is a huge difference between soil and dirt. I shared with my new-found friends at MSWCD that I didn't like to touch dirt; it was never on the top of my list of what I

would like to get my hands on. Maybe a new pair of shoes, but dirt, no. My friends here tried to help me with my aversion to dirt by leaving it here and there. What really helped, was learning the difference between soil and dirt. Dirt is dead. Soil is alive. Wow! What an awakening. I learned that you must keep life in soil for it to stay alive. Keeping soil covered with vegetation keeps life in the soil. It also allows creatures living underneath the soil to do their job to keep soil healthy. Keeping soil covered with vegetation will also help with soil erosion. This is what we call cover crop. We at Muskingum Soil and Water Conservation District work hard to educate our staff and our community on the importance of keeping our soil alive and productive. I am excited to share that there is a science and technique behind soil conservation.

Have you noticed that we don't see as many butterflies or bees flying or buzzing around? Preserving our pollinators is one conservation practice that I have learned about. I had never noticed the decrease in these pollinators until I started working with MSWCD. (You noticed, I said pollinators; that's conservation lingo). MSWCD educates and provides the resources to encourage our community to create habitats for butterflies and other beneficial insects by planting wildflowers to attract them. This allows butterflies and beneficial insects to visit and go through their life cycle right in your backyard. Just knowing what to plant and how to plant it can make a huge difference in what pollinators you can attract to your yard.

Another practice of conservation is simply mowing your lawn less. Mowing too frequently will destroy the plants that attract bees who play a big part in pollination. Did you know there are over 300 species of native bees? (Another wow moment for me.) So, to test this mow less idea, I asked my husband to join me in the "mow less experiment". He was more than agreeable. He needed a break anyway. In a few short weeks, I noticed the increase in bee activity. It was amazing. It really worked!

In all my days, I never thought I would love to touch soil or get excited about bees flying around in my yard. However, working for MSWCD has changed my attitude and perspective about the importance of preserving our natural resources. I am not only the first face you may see when you come to the office, I am also a new born in the conservation world. It has been nice to know that I can make a change, because preserving our natural resources can be as close as my own backyard.

Are you interested in reading more? Visit our website and subscribe to receive updates about new blog posts from Doreen. www.muskingumswcd.org.



Tree Shelters - Are They Worth The Cost?

The Muskingum SWCD has been selling tree shelters for many years. This year, to provide a good comparison of sheltered versus non-sheltered trees, we asked several past tree shelter customers why they continue to use shelters year after year.

One farmer that we visited has been planting trees since he purchased the property in 2015. As time has gone on he has increased the percentage of sheltered trees. He sees multiple benefits from using the shelters, including what is likely the most important-protection from the deer. Small twigs are high in nutrients throughout the year, which makes these desirable snacks for the deer, especially in late winter. The shelters also discourage the bucks from rubbing the trees. In addition to deer protection, the shelters also increase growth significantly.

In the spring of 2018 American Plum were planted in several areas of the farm, and in just one growing season those that were sheltered had outperformed the unsheltered ones by at least a four to one ratio. The faster the trees grow the quicker they will produce mast for wildlife feed. There has also been a significant reduction in damage caused by moles, voles, mice and rabbits. While these small animals typically won't eat the tree, they will strip the bark to eat, which in turn essentially strangles the trees.

This landowner in particular has seen, and continues to see, the value in tree shelters. In addition to increased growth rates, deer protection, and other animal protection, shelters have also greatly reduced the labor needed to control weeds around his trees. He is able to spray the weeds and reduce competition with much less concern of any herbicide getting on the trees due to the shelter. To decrease the time period to maturity you can either spend \$50 plus on a 3/4" caliper tree and then have to plant a large ball or you can buy a \$2 seedling and protect it with a \$10 shelter and have the same result in the next 5 years. If you have any questions regarding the benefits of tree shelters please contact the office at 740-454-2027.

Tree shelters can be picked up during tree seedling pickup. Orders of 50 or more shelters please call the office for bulk pricing. Deadline for orders is March 5th, 2021.



Sheltered Tree

Bur Oaks planted in 2016 within 50' of each other on a farm in northern Muskingum County. The tree on the left was placed in a shelter at that time, while the one on the right was not. The one on the left has grown out of the top of the 5' tall shelter and is well on its way to the 6' mark while the one on the right just barely reaches the 1' mark. These pictures were taken 10/5/2018.



Unsheltered Tree

Tree Shelter Order Form

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Email: _____ Cell: _____

Three Foot Tree Shelter \$8.00 X _____ = _____

Four Foot Tree Shelter \$9.00 X _____ = _____

Five Foot Tree Shelter \$10.00 X _____ = _____

Total Amount Due \$ _____

Please make checks payable to: **MSWCD**
Sales tax included in cost.

2021 MUSKINGUM SWCD TREE ORDER FORM

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State _____ ZIP _____

Daytime Phone #: _____ Cell Phone #: _____

E-mail: (update you when the orders come in) _____

Supply is limited. Deadline to order is **Friday, March 5, 2021**. Projected pick-up date is mid-April 2021.

SPECIES	VALUE	SIZE	PACKET PRICE	# OF PACKETS	COST
THESE ARE SOLD IN 25 TREES PER PACK					
DOUGLAS FIR		6-10 inches	\$13/25 trees		
EASTERN WHITE PINE		8-12 inches	\$26/25 trees		
RED OAK		10-18 inches	\$21/25 trees		
WHITE OAK		12-15 inches	\$21/25 trees		
SUGAR MAPLE		10-15 inches	\$26/25 inches		
BLACK WALNUT		18-24 inches	\$31/25 trees		
BLACK CHERRY		8-12 inches	\$21/25 trees		
COMMON PERSIMMON SOLD IN 10 PACK		6-10 inches	\$10/10 trees		
SWEETGUM SOLD IN 10 PACK		24-36 inches	\$9/10 trees		
PAW PAW SOLD IN 5 PACK		6-10 inches	\$12/5 trees		

- Edible Parts
- Evergreen
- Good For Birds
- Good For Deer
- Good For Pollinators
- Good For Small Mammals
- Nut Producing
- Timber Tree

TOTAL BULK AMOUNT DUE \$ _____
 Prices of bulk trees contains sales tax.

FALL COLOR— 5 OF EACH SUGAR MAPLE, WHITE OAK, PERSIMMON, SWEETGUM	SEE ABOVE INDIVIDUAL TREES	\$17/ packet		
TIMBER PACK—5 OF EACH SUGAR MAPLE, RED OAK, WHITE OAK, BLACK CHERRY, BLACK WALNUT	SEE ABOVE INDIVIDUAL TREES	\$24/ packet		

Mail order form & payment to
 Muskingum SWCD: 225 Underwood Street, Suite 100,
 Zanesville OH 43701.
 For more information contact the office at (740) 454-2027.

TOTAL PACKET COST \$ _____
 Sales Tax is included in the cost of Packets.

TOTAL AMOUNT
 DUE FOR ALL TREES \$ _____

Please contact the office for a Tax Exemption form. All sales are final, no refunds or exchanges. We reserve the right to make substitutions. No shipping. Thank you for your order. To order by credit card, please stop by the office.

2021 MUSKINGUM SWCD TREE SEEDLING SALE

COMMON NAME	INFORMATION	COST PER BUNDLE	SIZE	AGE	MATURE HEIGHT	SOIL MOISTURE	GROWTH RATE	LIGHT
THESE TREES ARE SOLD IN PACKS OF 25 TREES								
DOUGLAS FIR		\$13/25 TREES	6-10 INCHES	3 YEARS	60'	WD-MWD	F	P
EASTERN WHITE PINE		\$26/25 TREES	8-12 INCHES	4 YEARS	60-80'	MWD-SPD	F	S
RED OAK		\$21/25 TREES	10-18 INCHES	2 YEARS	60-80'	MWD-WD	M	S, P
WHITE OAK		\$21/25 TREES	12-15 INCHES	2 YEARS	60-80'	MWD-SPD	S-M	S, P
SUGAR MAPLE		\$26/25 TREES	10-15 INCHES	2 YEARS	60-80'	MWD-WD	M-F	SH
BLACK WALNUT		\$31/25 TREES	18-24 INCHES	1 YEAR	60'	WD-MWD	F	P
BLACK CHERRY		\$21/25 TREES	8-12 INCHES	2 YEARS	50-60'	MWD-WD	S	S
COMMON PERSIMMON SOLD IN 10 PACK		\$10/10 TREES	6-10 INCHES	2 YEARS	30-50'	SPD-WD	F	S, P, SH
SWEETGUM SOLD IN 10 PACK		\$9/10 TREES	24-36 INCHES	3 YEARS	20-30'	WD-SPD	F	S, P, SH
PAW PAW SOLD IN 5 PACK		\$12/5 TREES	6-10 INCHES	2 YEARS	25'	MWD	M-F	S, P

- Edible Parts
- Evergreen
- Good For Birds
- Good For Deer
- Good For Pollinators
- Good For Small Mammals
- Nut Producing
- Timber Tree

FALL COLOR PACKET- \$17
5— SUGAR MAPLE
5— WHITE OAK
5— COMMON PERSIMMON
5— SWEETGUM

TIMBER PACKET- \$24
5— SUGAR MAPLE
5— WHITE OAK
5— RED OAK
5— BLACK CHERRY
5— BLACK WALNUT

- Soil Moisture:**
 WD= Well Drained
 MWD= Moderately Well Drained
 SPD= Somewhat Poorly Drained
 PD= Poorly Drained
- Growth Rate:**
 F= Fast
 M= Medium
 S= Slow
- Light:**
 S= Sun
 P= Part Sun/
 Shade
 SH= Shade

Supply is limited, so order early. For more tree information, visit: <http://forestry.ohiodnr.gov/trees>, or contact our office. All sales are final— no refunds or exchanges. Deadline to order is Friday, March 5, 2021. Projected pickup date is mid April 2021.

2021 Farmland Preservation

The Clean Ohio Local Agricultural Easement Purchase Program (LAEPP) provides funding to assist landowners and communities in preserving Ohio's farmland, our most vital resource. The program purchases agricultural easements from landowners who volunteer to keep their land in agricultural production in perpetuity. In 2013 the program was changed to the Local Agricultural Easement Purchase Program (LAEPP) to reflect the increased role of the Ohio Department of Agriculture's (ODA) local sponsors in farmland preservation: counties, cities, townships, Soil and Water Conservation Districts and land trusts.

Muskingum Soil and Water Conservation District is a local sponsor. Please look on our website www.muskingumswcd.org for more information as it becomes available. Also, check out Ohio Department of Agriculture Website. <https://agri.ohio.gov/wps/portal/gov/oda/programs/farmland-preservation-office>

THE VAN SHOW

PIZZA, POP & PROFIT



Come and discuss nutrients and crop management with Van.

January 22, 2021 12:00 p.m.

February 26, 2021 12:00 p.m.

Rural Service Building Meeting Room
225 Underwood Street
Zanesville, Ohio 43701



This meeting will be conducted via Zoom, so pop in a frozen pizza or order in your favorite. Limited seating for those without internet access, please contact the office (740) 454-2027 for accommodations.

Zoom information: Meeting ID: 297 457 7970 Passcode: 5dBtXZ or dial in by phone, 1 929 205 6099 and follow the prompts.

Farming After Dark...Finding a Better Way

"You have to adapt and overcome," spoken by Clint Eastwood's character in the movie Heartbreak Ridge. In order to adapt and overcome in the age of coronavirus we are embarking on a new adventure...ZOOM! Starting **December 16, 2020 at 7:30 pm** we will have our kick-off episode of **Farming After Dark...Finding a Better Way**. During the initial ZOOM meeting we will be discussing ideas, areas of interest and potential topics for future meetings. We will also be sharing observations from the 2020 crop year. These virtual meetings are planned to last around an hour in length.

The goal of "Farming After Dark...Finding a Better Way" is to provide a platform to share information that is beneficial to production agriculture and the general public. Our plan is to have episodes once a month on the third Wednesday of the month. Times will vary depending on the time of year to make it more convenient for you to participate. Our January 20, 2021 ZOOM will feature our very own Buckeye, Jim Hoorman of Hoorman Soil Health Services. The February 17, 2021 episode will feature John Morton, Private Lands Biologist for ODNr Division of Wildlife.

We are excited to be able to offer this opportunity in the midst of social distancing, quarantines, and cancellations. We hope you will be able to join us for these educational and fun events! If you would like to be added to an invite list please email Van Slack at van.slack@muskingumswcd.org or Melissa Devore at melissa.devore@muskingumswcd.org with your contact information. Hope to see you virtually on December 16, 2020 and together we can adapt, overcome, and find a better way! Have a safe and blessed holiday season!



Zoom information: Meeting ID: 871 0561 9149 Passcode: 428362 or dial in by phone, 1 929 205 6099 and follow the prompts. Limited seating for those without internet access, please contact the office (740) 454-2027 for accommodations.

Spotted Knapweed – Another Foreign Invader



It seems as if every day we hear of another invasive species attacking our farms and natural resources. Unfortunately, we have another newcomer, spotted knapweed, that is becoming more prevalent throughout southeastern Ohio. Spotted knapweed was introduced to this area through infected seed mixes and hay purchased from western states.

Muskingum SWCD has partnered with SWCDs from Guernsey, Noble, and Morgan Counties along with United States Department of Agriculture Natural Resources Conservation Service to create a program to help area landowners control knapweed. The Spotted Knapweed Treatment for Ohio Producers, STOP, program is a competitive program of the Regional Conservation

Partnership Program, RCPP, to financially assist producers who have spotted knapweed in permanent pasture or hayfields.

Spotted knapweed is a small biannual or short-lived perennial plant that can take over hay fields and pastures. Once this weed gets established it can spread very rapidly, producing a thousand seeds every year, as well as producing a chemical that limits the growth of surrounding vegetation. This plant blooms a pretty purple flower in July, August and September that can resemble clover. While this bloom looks pretty and can be utilized by pollinators, it can be very detrimental to forage quality on livestock operations. Knapweed is not a desired food source of livestock as it has little to no nutritional value.

Pasture and hay land infested with knapweed must be treated so that it does not outcompete the nutritious plants in the stand. If left untreated, knapweed will completely infest entire fields, eliminating plant biodiversity and nutritious forage for livestock.

Spotted knapweed typically does not cause an issue in crop fields due to the chemicals used to control weeds in row-crop operations. These chemicals do a pretty good job of controlling knapweed on land used for grain farming. In pastures and hay fields, the chemicals that are effective at controlling knapweed in row-crops will also kill off a lot of our desirable broadleaf forages, like clover, which can degrade the nutritional quality of a pasture and impact management decisions.

Special herbicides intended for hay and pasture must be used to combat spotted knapweed in an effective manner.

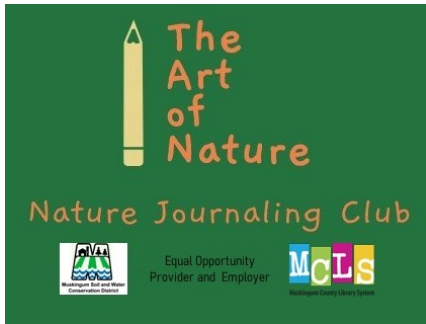
Treatment for spotted knapweed, recommended by NRCS, is a three-year chemical application plan that helps to ensure that knapweed is controlled within a field. Wherever a spotted knapweed plant is located within a field, the plant as well as a 10-foot radius around the plant should be chemically treated. Most often when multiple knapweed plants are found within a field, the entire field should be treated to be certain that all knapweed plants are treated. It takes three years to effectively treat knapweed with the first year being a “blanket pass,” which treats the entire field, followed by spot treatment the second year and another blanket pass the third year

as the final step in the treatment. It is also crucial to identify any potential seed sources of knapweed to avoid a reinfestation. For example, infested nearby roadways or hay purchased off the farm could be spreading seeds to fields even after treatment has been implemented.

NRCS and Muskingum SWCD are currently accepting applications for financial and technical assistance in combating spotted knapweed on permanent pasture and permanent hay land. The signup deadline for 2021 funding has not yet been announced, but we encourage you to apply as soon as possible. For more information contact the Muskingum SWCD at (740)454-2027.



Nature Journaling: “The Art of Nature”



Children and adults need nature. Connecting with nature can improve health and reduce stress and it is also a meaningful place to learn. There are no substitutions to being in nature. There you can see habitats, animals, insects, and the natural world up close. You can engage your mind and discover the world using art, writing and science. Nature is more than just wilderness. It can be farmlands, urban parks, community gardens, playgrounds, or national forests. Nature journaling is about observing whatever is in front of us.

Nature Journaling is not just about drawing pictures. You can use numbers, tables, graphs, words, photography, and math to observe and study the world around you. The purpose is to increase your skills in observation, thinking,

and memory. Whatever technique you use, you develop a life-long connection with nature.

Due to COVID-19, our current monthly events will be held virtually for the foreseeable future. The events will feature speakers and instruction on how to get started nature journaling, and experts on various aspects of the natural world. If you want to learn more about drawing, trees, bees, or wildflowers, you won't want to miss our upcoming virtual events. The events will also provide time for questions and sharing. Future plans include taking local field trips (once we're allowed to gather in groups again) and on-site speakers. The events will be held the third Monday of each month at 6pm, except when that falls on a holiday. Details can be found through the Muskingum County Library's website at <https://muskingumlibrary.org/> as they are handling registration. Make sure to enter your email in the registration to receive the virtual invite.

Updates and information can also be found on our website at www.muskingumswcd.org and our social media sites.

Meetings have been moved to the third Tuesday for January and February, due to holidays.

Intern Opportunities

The MSWCD is looking for Volunteer Interns for the summer of 2021. The need is dependent upon how the Covid-19 pandemic continues throughout programming in 2021. To be eligible, students must be high school graduates and in college. Those interested will be required to fill out an application and submit a resume and short essay. Selected students must be able to pass a criminal background check.

Two interns are needed to assist with Youth Camp, should we be able and are permitted to hold camp. Students in environmental or teaching fields of study are encouraged to apply. Those selected to assist with camp must be able to work during camp times.

One intern is needed for the Urban Greens program. This intern will help with the community gardens in the Putnam area.

Interns will also work with the other MSWCD staff in various program areas, including agriculture, forestry, wildlife, urban agriculture, water quality monitoring, education and soil sampling. Again, everything is contingent upon need and the continuation of the pandemic.

While these are all volunteer positions, there is a scholarship opportunity available. The MSWCD Board has approved granting up to three \$1,000 scholarships to interns who successfully meet the requirements and standards for the position and complete the required hours. Also, a copy of the students' 2021 fall college class schedule will be required for college enrollment verification. To be considered for the scholarship opportunity, the application, resume and essay must be submitted by March 15, 2021. Applicants will be contacted for phone interviews.

For more details, contact the MSWCD office at 740-454-2027 or check out our website at www.muskingumswcd.org.





MUSKINGUM SOIL AND WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT
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Save the Date

Live at Noon	December 8
MSWCD Board Meeting	December 8
Farming After Dark	December 16
The Art of Nature Meeting	December 21
Live at Noon	December 22
MSWCD Office Closed	December 24-25
MSWCD Office Closed	December 31
MSWCD Office Closed	January 1
Live at Noon	January 12
MSWCD Board Meeting	January 12
MSWCD Office Closed	January 18

The Art of Nature Meeting	January 19
Live at Noon	January 26
Farming After Dark	January 20
Pizza, Pop, and Profit	January 22
Live at Noon	February 9
MSWCD Board Meeting	February 9
MSWCD Office Closed	February 15
The Art of Nature Meeting	February 16
Live at Noon	February 23
Farming After Dark	February 17
Pizza, Pop, and Profit	February 26



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