

Conservation News

Stark Soil and Water Conservation District

<p><u>August, 2024</u> <u>Inside this issue:</u></p>	<p><i>A Message from the District Program Administrator</i></p>	<p><u>Board of Supervisors</u></p>
<p><i>A Message From the DPA</i> 1</p>	<p>As we transition from cool spring nights to the heat of summer, it's sometimes hard to grasp how quickly time passes. Gardens that were just yesterday's seeds are now alive with thriving plants that will provide nourishing greens and other table fare. Tomatoes are ripening and ready to be sliced and enjoyed on a grilled burger. Those feeble spring born calves are now full of vibrance and energy. The songs of Bull frog choruses and cadence of cicadas dominate our evenings as the beacons of fireflies light our paths.</p>	<p>Ann Wolfe <i>Board Chair</i> Natalie Hammer <i>Vice Chair</i> Rodney Campbell <i>Fiscal Agent</i> Andy Wentling <i>Secretary</i> Rick Horner <i>Member</i></p>
<p><i>New Stormwater Inspectors</i> 2</p>	<p>Change and transition is inevitable, nature has taught us that. Recently many changes have been made here at the Stark Soil and Water Conservation District. Through transition we have grown. I am proud to say that through tireless effort from our Board of Supervisors, we are almost fully staffed. We are truly proud of the skill set and talent that our new staff bring to the table.</p>	<p><u>District Staff</u></p>
<p><i>Grazing Warm Season Grasses</i> 2</p>	<p>Though names and faces of our dedicated staff may have changed, the services and programs we offer, have not. I encourage you to keep a close eye on our website, social media pages and look for new programs, events and opportunities.</p>	<p>Dan Kunz <i>District Program Administrator</i></p>
<p><i>Ohio Rocks! Outreach Program</i> 2</p>	<p>Without change we cannot grow. Have a great summer</p>	<p>Bryan Weyant <i>Natural Resources and Drainage Technician</i></p>
<p><i>Important Dates and Events</i> 2</p>	<p>Daniel M. Kunz</p>	<p>Julie Berbari <i>Storm Water Specialist</i></p>
<p><i>Annual Meeting and Election</i> 3</p>	<p>District Program Administrator</p>	<p>Todd Clark <i>Stormwater Inspector</i></p>
<p><i>Pond Algae Management</i> 4</p>	<p>dmkunz@starkcountyohio.gov</p>	<p>Tim Dietz <i>Stormwater Inspector</i></p>
	<p>On the right, you will see an introduction to our Staff.</p>	<p>Lindsay Short <i>Office Administrator</i></p>
	<p>Call us at 330-451-7645</p>	<p><u>NRCS Staff</u></p>
		<p>Lynette Harmon <i>District Conservationist</i></p>
		<p>Jay Jordan <i>Natural Resource Specialist</i></p>
		<p>Jon Reedstrom <i>Resource Soil Scientist</i></p>
		<p>Jim Maple <i>ACES</i></p>



New Faces in the Stormwater Program

Stormwater Inspectors

Brought on board in June of 2024, Tim Dietz and Todd Clark will be conducting periodic inspections of active construction sites throughout Stark County in the coming months.

Here to help, Stark SWCD stormwater inspectors work closely with developers, construction contractors, and property owners to ensure that stormwater runoff and pollutants are minimized in line with the goals of Stark County’s stormwater quality regulations and Ohio’s standards for stormwater management, land development, and stream protection.

An inspector’s role begins shortly after the Plan Review Process concludes. Approved plans, along with the details of the Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP), are used by Stark Soil & Water stormwater inspectors to conduct pre-construction meetings with all regulated parties and to ensure that on-site operations are proceeding according to the filed plans. Observations and corrective action recommendations made by stormwater inspectors help to prevent sediment, debris, and pollutants from leaving construction sites and are essential to protect the integrity of Stark County’s natural resources.

As stormwater inspectors, Tim and Todd see projects through from preliminary construction meetings all the way through to the Notice of Termination filing signaling the finalization of a project. Periodic inspections and mandatory reporting make sure each project’s process is in compliance with the goals of the EPA’s National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System program and the conservation of Stark County’s soil and water resources.



Todd Clark (left) and Tim Dietz are the new SWCD Stormwater Inspectors

Grazers can Beat the Summer Lull with Native Warm Season Grasses – By Bryan Weyant



Native Warm Season Grasses (Photo: B.Weyant)

Summer is upon us, and like many others this time of year, you may be running out of grass and considering supplementing with hay. Cool season grasses such as Timothy and Orchard Grass do not actively grow during the heat of the summer, and this period is known amongst grazers as the Summer Lull. Warm season grasses, however, *are* actively growing while cool seasons are not. Incorporating warm season grasses into your pastures is a great way to combat the summer lull and allow you to minimize supplemental feeding through the summer. Choosing native varieties, such as Switchgrass, Indian Grass, and Big Bluestem also benefit wildlife, especially grassland nesting birds. Establishment does require some preparation and patience, but having a stockpile of grass to graze through the summer makes it all worth it. Start thinking about how warm season grasses can fit into your grazing management model, and give our office a call at 330-451-7645 for planning and technical assistance.

Ohio Rocks!! – By Tim Dietz

There are several different types of rocks found in Ohio. Most of them consist of limestone, dolomite, shale, or sandstone. The next time you take a walk, or go kayaking in the Stark County waterways, keep an eye out for rocks shaped like the State of Ohio.

Take a picture of it and send it to tddietz@starkcountyohio.gov. Let us know who you are, and where you found it. We will look for the best one that has the best features, and the best Ohio Rock will be featured in our next newsletter!



IMPORTANT DATES:

- ◆ Stark SWCD Board Meeting - 8:00 a.m. Thursday, Aug. 8th
- ◆ Stark County Fair - Tuesday, Aug. 27th to Monday, Sept. 2nd
- ◆ Labor Day - Monday, Sept. 2nd, office will be closed.
- ◆ Annual Meeting and Election - 5:30 p.m. Monday, Sept. 9th
- ◆ EOGC Pasture Walk - 6:00 p.m. Thursday, September 26th





Annual Meeting

September 9, 2024 | Doors open at 5:30p.m.
Meeting starts at 6:30pm

Hartville Kitchen
1015 Edison St NW, Hartville, OH 44632



STARK COUNTY



STARK
SOIL & WATER

Stark SWCD and Stark County Farm Bureau will hold a joint annual meeting on Monday, September 9th at Hartville Kitchen.

Stark SWCD will hold a Supervisor Election for two positions on the Board for three year terms beginning January 1, 2025.

Voting Starts at 5:30 p.m. and ends at 6:30 p.m.

Dinner tickets are \$20 for Farm Bureau members and \$40 for non-members, paid at the door. RSVP by Friday, Sept. 6th by calling Stark County Farm Bureau at 330-456-4889. If you are unable to attend the meeting but want to vote, you may request an absentee ballot. Ballot request forms are available by calling the office at 330-451-4645, online at our website at www.starkswcd.org, or by coming by the office Monday through Friday from 8:00a-4:30p. Ballots must be returned to the SWCD office no later than 2:30p on September 9th, 2024. You must be a Stark County resident and be over 18 years of age to vote in the election.

CANDIDATE



Rodney Campbell

Rodney resides in Minerva with his wife, Cindy, and their three Children. He grows corn, beans, and wheat as part of the Campbell Bros. Farms in Homeworth, Ohio. The Campbell Bros. Farms have installed many conservation practices over the years and were named Cooperators of the year in 2017. In addition to grain farming, Rodney also milks cows. Rodney is concerned about the increasing development in the county and is an advocate of farmland preservation.

CANDIDATE



Ann Wolfe

Ann lives in Nimishillen Township with her husband, John. They have three grown children. Ann worked for 30 years for various companies as a graphic designer and copywriter. She now works on the family's farm operation. They milk Holsteins and grow acres of corn, beans, wheat and hay. They were named Cooperators of the Year in 2013. She is interested in increasing awareness among residents and funders on the important work the District does to protect and preserve natural resources in the county.



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Pond Management: Reducing Algae without a Fish Kill –By Bryan Weyant

Owning a pond makes for great recreation opportunities for you and the family, but it also comes with a lot of work. A muck-laden pond can make swimming miserable, and a dense mat of filamentous algae will limit the choices in your tacklebox. As summer heats up, many pond owners watch before their eyes as their once weed-free pond is taken over by a sea of algae. It is tempting to use an algaecide to take your pond back, but we strongly suggest you refrain from treating your pond during and around periods of hot, dry weather. Dry summer months with little wind can cause your pond to separate into layers, or *stratify*, based on temperature and dissolved oxygen levels within the water. Dissolved oxygen (what fish need to breathe) is mostly supplied by wave action from wind and photosynthesis of aquatic vegetation. Subtract out wind and add high temperatures, and before long you have a stratified pond with plummeting dissolved oxygen levels.

Dissolved oxygen is further depleted during the decomposition process of algae and vegetation, and a large die-off from pesticide application can completely sap up any remaining dissolved oxygen and can cause a fish kill.

Thankfully, there are alternatives to address algae problems at the source while keeping dissolved oxygen levels steady through the summertime. Installing a bottom aeration system with a weighted air hose and diffuser is a great first step in improving the health of your pond and minimizing problems in the future. Bottom aeration adds oxygen to the bottom part of the pond, or the “dead zone”, which is typically devoid of oxygen. The addition of oxygen in the dead zone encourages bacteria to consume nutrient rich muck and organic material, ultimately lowering the nutrient load in your pond. You can even supplement with additional natural bacteria that is readily available on the market. Lower nutrient levels mean lower algae levels, and this effectively treats the source of the algae problem rather than the symptom. Bottom aeration also helps to circulate the water column, reducing stratification and lowering chances of a pond flip after a significant weather event.

Proper planning and timing of management is critical to the health and longevity of your pond. Stark SWCD offers pond technical assistance as well as a spring fish sale. Give us a call today at 330-451-7645!



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