

STARK STEWARDSHIP

Stark Soil & Water Conservation District

Fall 2019

Board of Supervisors

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Jim Halter, Vice Chair
Rodney Campbell, Fiscal Agent
Ann Wolfe, Secretary

District Staff

John S. Weedon
Rich Rohn
Matthew Ferrel
Jay Jordan
Anthony Lerch
Sarah Matheny

NRCS Staff

Sandy Chenal

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Suite 100
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330.451.7645

www.starkswcd.org

Monday to Friday
8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

Closed: Veteran's Day (November 11th); Thanksgiving Day & Day After (November 28th & 29th); Christmas (December 25th); New Year's (January 1st); MLK Day (January 20th)

Board Meetings: November 13th; December 11th; January 8th @ 8:00 a.m.

New Board Member



At the District's 69th Annual Meeting, Rick Horner was elected to serve a three year term on the Board of Supervisors starting in 2020.

Rick resides in Tuscarawas Township and has lived in Stark County for 45 years. He works for HYDAC International as an application engineer. A farmer since 1986, he raises registered Angus cattle and grows corn, soybeans, and alfalfa on 150 acres. He has no tilled since 1988 and practices rotational, strip, and mob grazing to protect the soil, reduce potential run-off, raise healthy cattle, and foster productive pastures.

He is a life member of American Angus Association and an active member of Eastern Ohio Angus Association and attends Newcomers Chapel of Pigeon Run United Methodist Church.

Best in Show



Stark Soil & Water and Stark County Agriculture Society awarded Gary Habrun "Best in Show" for his soil entry as well as for winning awards in several hay and grain categories in the 2019 Hay and Grain contest at the Stark County Fair.

This is the first year for the "healthiest soil" category. Healthy soils are defined as the continued capacity of soil to function as a vital living ecosystem that sustains plants, animals, and humans. District staff and a professional soil scientist assessed soil entries using five soil health tests including the slake test (measures the stability of soil when exposed to rapid wetting), soil structure, smell, infiltration, and organic matter. Habrun's soil performed well in all categories and did especially well in the infiltration test. This can be attributed to the amount of pore space and earthworm holes present, which increases water flow through the soil profile.

Gary and Catherine Habrun are fervent believers in cover crops and keeping the soil covered. They utilize cover crops for ryeilage and plan to graze them this winter.

Habrun also won awards in soybean stalks, silage, corn grain, and cereal rye categories.

In accordance with Federal civil rights law and U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) civil rights regulations and policies, the USDA, its Agencies, offices, and employees, and institutions participating in or administering USDA programs are prohibited from discriminating based on race, color, national origin, religion, sex, gender identity (including gender expression), sexual orientation, disability, age, marital status, family/parental status, income derived from a public assistance program, political beliefs, or reprisal or retaliation for prior civil rights activity, in any program or activity conducted or funded by USDA (not all bases apply to all programs). Persons with disabilities who require alternative means of communication for program information (e.g., Braille, large print, audiotape, American Sign Language, etc.) should contact the responsible Agency or USDA's TARGET Center at (202) 720-2600 (voice and TTY) or contact USDA through the Federal Relay Service at (800) 877-8339.

69th Annual Meeting District Award Winners

Cooperator of the Year award was presented to Greg & Traci Cecconi. The award is given to an individual, organization, or farm family that demonstrates a consistent commitment to protecting and conserving soil, water, and other natural resources in Stark County. The Cecconi's were recognized for their exemplary work on their 57-acre tree farm in Canton Township. During their ownership tenure they implemented several components of a forest management plan written by Jim Elze, an advisor to the Northeastern Ohio Forestry Association. In woods dominated by black cherry, red oak, and white oak, Cecconi's hired a forester to conduct three timber harvests, worked on removing grapevine, multiflora rose, and other invasive plant species, and restocked several areas, including planting over 950 tree on two to three acres. In a county with 23.3% forest cover, the Board wanted to recognize the commitment the Cecconi's have made to woodland stewardship.

Contractor of the Year was given to Beaver Excavating Company. This award recognizes an individual or company that demonstrates a consistent commitment to implementing and promoting best management practices on construction sites so that soil, water, and other natural resources are protected and conserved in Stark County. Matthew Ferrel, Storm Water Technician, presented the award to Betsy Sterling and Joe Brown of Beaver Excavating. From plan review through long term maintenance, Beaver Companies has been repeatedly demonstrated clear communication, responsive action and a spirit of collaboration. The company often proactively reaches out to Soil & Water even when not required to ensure protecting the environment while growing the economy. Beaver Companies has even gone as far as engaging the local schools systems in educating students about their role in erosion and sediment control. At every level of every trade of every project, Beaver Companies personifies the union between Pride in Craftsmanship and Stewardship of Environment.

From the Drainage Desk



Fall in Ohio is a great time for football games, apple cider, and local pumpkin patches but it is also the perfect time to tackle general home maintenance projects. The temperatures are moderate, and the weather is dry. The right preparation around your yard now will save you time and energy for the spring season. Here are a few items for your fall maintenance checklist:

- *Remove leaves and debris from rain gutters and downspouts.* Maintain proper drainage by clearing out blockages and rinsing with a hose.
- *Invest in gutter guard installation for easy cleaning maintenance.* Clogged gutters can lead to problems such as yard erosion, flooded basements, and mildew and mold.
- *Drain hoses, fountains, and in-ground sprinkler systems and store them in a dry place.* Standing water left in these items over the winter can damage equipment. Go the extra mile by wrapping insulation around outdoor faucets and pipes in unheated garages!
- *Aerate the lawn.* Breaking up the soil prevents ponding water and helps to move nutrients to roots during the winter.

Stark Soil & Water offers free site evaluations and technical assistance to help landowners and homeowners address drainage and erosion problems around the home and farm. Call 330.451.7645 for assistance.

Farmer's Breakfasts

Join District board members, staff, and partners for the Farmer's Breakfast series at Thompson's Dairyland (7519 Columbus Rd. NE, Louisville). Meals are optional and at your own expense.

- Thursday, November 7th, at 8:00 a.m. — Cover Crop Overview
- Thursday, December 5th, at 8:00 a.m. — Renting Ground
- Thursday, January 2nd, at 8:00 a.m. — 2020 Topics/Year in Review

Soil Fertility & Nutrient Management

As the farm economy becomes tighter, understanding your soil fertility and nutrient needs becomes essential. Attend Soil Fertility & Nutrient Management to learn the benefits of a nutrient management plan so you're only applying what the crop needs!

- Thursday, December 12th, from 6:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m.
- USDA Service Center (2650 Richville Dr. SE, Massillon)

Become a Cooperator!

If you would like to save money and protect your natural resources, consider becoming a Stark Soil & Water cooperator. We will work with you to establish a conservation plan for your farm and operation. Contact Jay Jordan at 330.451.7643 or email jmjordan@starkcountyohio.gov.

JJ's favorites

John's Favorite *e-newsletter* . . . On Pasture (<https://onpasture.com/>)

Jay's Favorite *e-newsletter* . . . Practical Farmers (<https://practicalfarmers.org/category/publication/>)



FARMER REBATES

Livestock Exclusion Fencing Program provides a rebate up to \$10,000 per project to keep livestock out of streams and other waterbodies. Design and implementation must follow NRCS standards.

Contact Jay Jordan at 330.451.7643 or email jmjordan@starkcountyohio.gov to see if you qualify.

Weather Corner

August, September, October . . . Last year, the three month precipitation total was 14.78". As of October 23rd of this year, we have only received 4.32" for the same three months. *Crazy*. For August, the average temperature was 71.9 degrees; in September, the average was 70.4; and in October 60 degrees.

Going Forward . . . For the three month (November, December, January) outlook, there is a 40% chance of ABOVE average temperatures, and an EQUAL CHANCE of above normal, normal, and below normal precipitation.





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Be a Good Storm Water Neighbor



Water flows according to gravity, not property lines. Consequently, it's important to realize what you do might harmfully affect your neighbor's property, because real estate exists not in a vacuum, but rather as part of an interconnected web.

To be a good storm water neighbor, understand how storm water flows on your property. Ask yourself, how does water enter and exit my property? Are there areas of intense flow currently causing damage to your property or neighboring property? Can flow be re-directed to vegetated areas for infiltration? Or, can you install rain barrels, rain gardens, or dry wells to control roof run-off.

It is important to take steps to protect natural water courses, infiltration areas, and drainage paths. **Be mindful** of how your actions can affect nearby landowners and take steps to prevent damage not only on your own property but also on your neighbor's property.

If you have questions about local storm water regulations or how to manage storm water on your property, contact Anthony Lerch at 330.451.7649 or email aslerch@starkcountyohio.gov.

"Like winds and sunsets, wild things were taken for granted until progress began to do away with them. Now we face the question whether a still higher 'standard of living' is worth its cost in things natural, wild and free."

Aldo Leopold, **Foreword**, *A Sand County Almanac*

Help Us Save Money

Request this newsletter electronically and help reduce our postage and printing expenses.

Send an email to jsweedon@starkcountyohio.gov with the message, "Want to save you money" or "Please put me on your electronic mailing list" or "Spend your money on other stuff."

Much appreciated.