



Soil & Water Conservation District Newsletter

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Seedling Sales Have Begun

The SWCD 2010 seedling sale has begun. Order forms are available in the office. The seedlings are packaged in packets of ten.

This year the order form includes: American Arborvitae, Austrian Pine, Colorado Blue Spruce, Eastern Red Cedar, Eastern White Pine, Norway Spruce, Black Walnut, Common Lilac, Pin Oak, Red Bud, Red Maple, Red Osier Dogwood, Tulip Poplar, and White Oak.

Two assorted packets have been put together. They contain two each of five different varieties. They are :

- ❖ *Homeowner Packet* : Colorado Blue Spruce, Red Bud, Red Maple, Common Lilac, and Tulip Poplar.
- ❖ *Wildlife Packet* : Norway Spruce, Black Walnut, Pin Oak, Red Osier Dogwood, and White Oak.

Three seed packets are offered. Wildflower, Hummingbird blend, and Bird and Butterfly seed. The Wildflower seed contains 10-12 different annual and 10-12 different

perennial species adapted for this area. Hummingbird blend contains 4-6 different annual and 4-6 different perennial varieties. Bird and Butterfly seed contains 7-9 different annual and 7-9 different perennial varieties.

This program is open to the public and orders will be accepted until March 12.

Stop in the office if you have questions or need help in developing a planting plan for a windbreak. Pictures and species information are available.

Payment is required when orders are placed. There is no warranty or guarantee on the seedlings.

Orders will be available for pickup from the office the middle of April. Post cards will be mailed with information on the specific delivery date and time.



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Special points of interest:

- ❖ *Seedling deadline is March 13, 2009*
- ❖ *SWCD Equipment going to Auction*
- ❖ *New CSP sign up begins January 15*
- ❖ *Wetland Reserve Program*

Going To Auction

The SWCD Board of Supervisors have made the decision to discontinue the drill rental program. The SWCD drill and Chevy pickup will be taken to the Farm Focus auction. The auction will take place on Friday, January 8, 2010 at 10:00 a.m. on the north side of the Marsh Foundation. The auction is being conducted by Siefker Auction Company.

Specifications on the equipment are: 1993 Chevy 2500 4x4 Pickup with regular cab with 115,000 miles and 1996 15' JD Drill with

grass seed boxes and markers. For more information on the items available at the auction visit the web site at: www.siefkerauctions.com.

We would like to take the opportunity to thank those of you that have rented the no-till drill over the years. And thank you for your support in conserving our natural resources by participating in reduced tillage practices.



Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP) Sign-Up Begins January 15

Sign up for the “new” Conservation Stewardship Program will begin January 15, 2010. CSP is a new program established in the 2008 Farm Bill and is administered by USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service. This program is to reward agricultural producers for maintaining and managing existing conservation activities, as well as to encourage producers to undertake additional conservation activities to address natural resource concerns on their land.

The program is similar to, but should not be confused with, the Conservation Security Program, also referred to as CSP, which was authorized in the 2002 Farm Bill. There are significant differences between these two conservation programs. If an applicant is selected for CSP funding, a contract will be developed with NRCS. The contract length is 5 years, with an option to extend the contract for another 5 years at the end of the first period.

There are three components to eligibility for the CSP—applicant

eligibility, land eligibility and the stewardship threshold requirement.

Applicant Eligibility ~

- ❖ Be listed as an operator of record in the FSA system prior to application for CSP
- ❖ Have documented control of land for term of contract
- ❖ Meet compliance with highly erodible land and wetland conservation provisions

Land Eligibility ~

- ❖ Land must be private land
- ❖ Must include the entire agricultural operation
- ❖ Land currently in CRP, WRP, GRP, CSP and land used for crop production not planted 4 of 6 years prior to June, 2008 is NOT eligible.

Stewardship Eligibility ~

Agricultural operations must meet a level of natural resource conservation and environmental management required to conserve and im-

prove the quality and condition of a natural resource.

This voluntary program offers two types of payments, an annual payment for conservation activities and a supplemental payment for the adoption of a resource conserving crop rotation.

The CSP has an annual payment limitation of \$40,000 and contracts must cover all the eligible land in the entire operation. Person or legal entity cannot exceed \$200,000 for all CSP contracts entered into during any 5-year period.

Payments for completed conservation activities will be made in the year after the conservation activities are implemented.

Water Quality Monitoring Continues at the SWCD

By: Ken Kottenbrock, District Technician

As we enter into our 21st year of monitoring, I would like to provide an update on the Van Wert County Long Term Water Quality Study. The Van Wert SWCD has been monitoring ground and surface water quality in Van Wert County since 1989. The ongoing study, funded by the Van Wert County Foundation, includes 5,036 analysis on 1,636 ground and surface water samples collected from June 1989 through December 2009. In 2002 we added the sampling of E. coli and in 2006 we added the DNA genetic testing of E. coli

Water samples are collected every month from Town Creek and tested for nitrates and phosphorus. Town Creek is also screened for pesticides every June and November. Additionally, area municipalities and rural wells are tested for a variety of pesticides each June. The data collected so far shows that the efforts of area residents and landowners are paying off with good water quality. For 2009 the nutrient levels in town creek were lower than normal for most of the year, it wasn't until November when we seen a spike in nutrient levels. This situation was

mainly do to the dry weather this year that resulted in very little field runoff along with unutilized nutrients still in the field. This fall was wetter than normal and caused more nutrients to get washed out of our tile lines.

Nutrient contents on Town Creek have decreased on average since the study began in 1989. So far Van Wert's City and for the first time Delphos raw water samples have been the only municipalities that had nutrients in it. The reason for that is that they get their water from surface water Van Wert City gets its water from Town Creek and Delphos gets its water from the Little Auglaize. Samples from other municipalities in the area did not have any detectable levels of nitrates or pesticides over the course of the study.

People living in rural areas often have a well for their source of water. Wells may become contaminated through improper maintenance or improper pesticide handling. Chemicals can also move to the well through ground water. The current study is not inclusive of rural well

water quality in the entire county as it tests only one well from each township. However, it does provide some general information, and the results from the sampling show that Van Wert's rural wells continue to be safe or have levels that are below the HAL limits.

There was no E coli detected in any of the township wells. All the township wells less than 100 feet deep were found to have coliform bacteria in them. However, (not to be alarmed) the bacteria that was found is a naturally occurring bacteria that feeds on the metal of the pipes and well casings. These wells can be disinfected by shocking the well with bleach.

Even though this study shows area water is of good quality, residents still have a responsibility to protect and conserve the county's water supply. If you would like to see the Water Quality Study visit our web site at : www.vanwertswcd.org.

Unprecedented Funding Available to Restore Ohio Wetlands

The USDA's Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) has over \$6 million available to restore wetlands through the Wetlands Reserve Program (WRP). Applications are accepted year round with the first funding decisions to be made by February 15, 2010.

"Ohio has received more than twice the amount of funding to protect, restore, and enhance wetlands than it did in previous years," explains Terry Cosby, NRCS State Conservationist. "We will be working closely with the Ohio Department of Natural Resources and

other partners to ensure Ohio's private landowners are aware of this unique opportunity and they understand the benefits from participating in WRP."

WRP provides financial incentives to help farmers restore farmland, including pastures, which were once wetlands to create fully functioning wetlands again. An additional benefit of putting ground in WRP has been that landowners no longer have to worry about planting a crop on land that is often too wet to harvest.

To be eligible for WRP, land that was originally wetland, but was drained for cropping is eligible, including land that is currently forested. Cropland and non-cropland areas may be enrolled in the program as long as the drainage are removed. Applicants can request a permanent easement, a 30-year easement, or a 10-year contract which offers cost sharing for restoration work. The landowner maintains ownership of the land, access to the land, and responsibility for taxes. Public access IS NOT required on WRP land.

Van Wert S.W.C.D.
1185 Professional Drive
Van Wert, OH 45891

Nonprofit Organization
U.S. POSTAGE PAID
Permit #70

Board of Supervisors

Gary Weck
Craig Pohlman
Dave Jones
Bob Gehres
Ray Eickholt

SWCD Staff

Julie Buggle, Office Manager
Ken Kottenbrock, Technician
Logan Welker, WLEB Conservationist

NRCS Staff

Steve Brown, District Conservationist
Rebecca Lowry, Field Engineer
Abi Watson, Soil Conservationist

Upcoming Dates and Events

<i>January—March 12</i>	<i>Tree Seedling Sale</i>
<i>January 13</i>	<i>SWCD Board Meeting</i>
<i>January 18</i>	<i>Holiday (office closed)</i>
<i>February 10</i>	<i>SWCD Board Meeting</i>
<i>February 15</i>	<i>Holiday (office closed)</i>

Contacting the SWCD / NRCS Office

To reach the office dial (419) 238-9591, when the automated system answers, press (3). If you want to talk to a specific person dial their extension instead of (3). The extensions are:

Julie—101 Abi-110 Ken—113 Steve—109
Rebecca—111 Logan—118