



Conservation CloseUp



Hancock Soil & Water Conservation District

3rd Grade Environmental Adventure Day

Bright sunshine and crisp fall air greeted students and teachers attending the 3rd Grade Environmental Adventure Day at Van Buren State Park on October 14, 2010.

Park Naturalist, Natalie Miller, spearheaded this great educational event with cooperation from Hancock SWCD and Friends of the Van Buren State Park.

There were 13 stations for students to attend with topics ranging from; Rocks Rock, Fantastic Forestry, Edible Landfills, Ohio Bats, What's Your Watershed Address, Hooked Beaks, Go Wild, Incredible Edible Insects, Wonderful Weather, It's Not Just Dirt, Macroinvertebrate Mayhem and Seed Dispersal.

Thank you to all the great presenters and volunteers that made this a terrific event!



Supervisor Elected

Linda Tuttle was elected to the Hancock SWCD Board of Supervisors at the 64th Annual Meeting, August 3, 2010.

Linda will be sworn into office in January and will serve a 3-year term of office. Linda will join current supervisors; Ron Cornwell, Richard Gassman, Mark Shick and Dave Reese on the board. Hodd Moorhead, current supervisor since 2008, will leave the board as of December 31, 2010.

CREP Buffer Award

The 2010 CREP Buffer Award was presented during the 64th Annual Meeting to Dan Boyd.

Dan Boyd is an active participant in the CREP program with .5 acres of Field Windbreaks, 2.8 acres of Escarpment Area utilizing Warm Season Grasses and Forbs, 2,400 feet of firebreaks installed, 4.3 acres of Contiguous Riparian Buffer and 1.4 acres of Field Border with Warm Season Grasses and Forbs.

Mr. Boyd is dedicated to following sound conservation practices on his property to preserve the land for the future.

Outstanding Cooperator

The Outstanding Cooperator award was presented during the 64th Annual Meeting to Boehm Dairy Farms, LLC – Mark and Andrew Boehm.

The Boehms have been cooperators with the Hancock SWCD since 1978. Mark and Andrew have made many conservation improvements on their farm in Eagle Township. Just a few of the practices installed include; subsurface drainage, conservation tillage, animal waste holding ponds and scrape alleys for manure transfer. They also have several projects planned for future installation.

This award and plaque are sponsored by Sparks Commercial Tire, Inc. We appreciate Terry Sparks interest and support of sound conservation practices in Hancock County.



Pictured above: Andrew Boehm, Mark Boehm and Hancock SWCD Chairman, Dave Reese.

Conservation Stewardship Program Extended

Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) has extended the ranking period cut-off date for producer applications in NRCS' Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP) to January 7, 2011.

CSP is a voluntary program designed to encourage producers and landowners with cropland, pasture, or woodland to put additional conservation on the land and to improve and maintain existing practices. Individuals, entities, and Indian Tribes operating privately owned agricultural land or nonindustrial woodland may apply.

The 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 (RCCR). A RCCR is defined as perennial grass or forages, a high residue producing crop, or a cover crop following an annual crop.

A CSP self-screening checklist is available to help producers determine if CSP is suitable for their operation. The checklist highlights basic information about CSP eligibility requirements, contract obligations and potential payments. It is available from local NRCS offices or online at http://www.nrcs.usda.gov/programs/new_csp/csp.html.



USDA Compliance

On December 23, 1985 the Conservation compliance rules were signed into law in the 1985 Farm Bill. These rules still apply today and must be followed in order to be a program participant in USDA programs. Random spot checks are made every year by the office to check compliance with these provisions

The conservation provisions that must be followed are:

Highly Erodible Land (HEL):

Crop Fields that have been identified as HEL must be farmed in accordance with a conservation plan. If you have not reviewed your plan for awhile or are not sure of the requirements, now is the time to check with the office. With higher commodity prices and dry soil conditions, some producers may be changing their rotations or contemplating more fall tillage. This **may not** be in accordance with your conservation plan on **HEL** fields.

Sodbuster :

If you are going to plant an agricultural commodity on land that was not previously farmed, a determination of whether it is HEL must be made first. Planting or "sodbusting" of new land that is HEL with no conservation plan could cause the loss of program payments. Check with the Farm Service Agency (FSA) and request a determination on these areas before they are planted.

Swampbuster:

These provisions apply to any naturally occurring wetlands that are manipulated/drained for the purpose of planting a crop. This applies to new areas and even existing areas in crop fields that are wet and may have been abandoned.

Drainage Maintenance

Gary Tuttle, District Technician, reports the following drainage maintenance projects have been completed:

Dip-Outs –

J.L. Elsea – 5,210 ft.
Ropp Ditch – 1,720 ft.
W.B. Kring – 1,200 ft.
Corbin Ditch – 2,850 ft.
Aurand Run – 11,980 ft.
McKean Jt. – 760 ft.

Sprayed in 2010 –

Wilch Ditch – 9,290 ft.
Lye Creek – 15,610 ft.
Folger Ditch – 7,148 ft.
Marsh Run Joint – 18,900 ft.
W.S. Corbin – 4,382 ft.
McKean Jt. – 14,342 ft.
Rothlisberger #194– 11,700 ft.

Rock Placements –

Overholt Ditch
Rush Creek
Ropp Ditch
McKean Jt.



Why Plant a Windbreak?

The purpose of the Northwest Ohio Field Windbreak program is to establish windbreaks on or adjacent to crop fields. Field windbreaks reduce wind erosion, protect crops and provide for wildlife habitat. The goal of the program is to encourage large systems which treat entire farms.

The program is not intended for farmstead, pasture, or home site plantings and orders will not be accepted solely for these purposes.

Incidental plantings adjacent to buildings may be accepted if they meet all of the following criteria: 1) the planting is bordered on one side by a crop field and each row adjacent to the building area is a continuation of field windbreak row that is planted at the same time. 2) The planting is part of a larger field windbreak system and the area adjacent to the buildings constitutes no more than ten percent (10%) of the total row feet planted 3) The total order constitutes a minimum of 3,500 row feet. 4) The section can be efficiently planted by the crew as part of the total job.

Wildlife Shrub Plantings - (CRP & CREP)

As a result of the increased interest for multiple row shrub plantings through the CRP& CREP, windbreaks having only wildlife shrubs as the species being planted are eligible to be planted through the

Northwest Ohio Field Windbreak Program. These windbreaks will be considered as hedgerow plantings. The following guidelines will be used for hedgerow plantings through the Northwest Program: 1) the windbreaks must be through the Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) or Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP) 2) The Division of Forestry agrees to plant the seedlings, apply a herbicide in the Spring, and return in the Fall to do a survival count and a second application of herbicide. There would not be a replant guarantee, but replacement seedlings would be offered to the landowners to plant themselves. 3) Field windbreak plantings in designated counties will have a priority over hedgerow plantings. The preferred method for hedgerow plantings is through district tree planters or private tree planting vendors. Hedgerow plantings may be planted through the Northwest Ohio Field Windbreak Program to the extent that time allows.

Applications must be received by November 26, 2010. Contact Gary Tuttle at 419-422-6569 or visit www.dnr.state.oh.us/forestry for more information.



Windbreak being planted

Soil Judging Results

The Hancock County FFA Soil Judging competition was held in September during the Hardin Northern Invitational and the Liberty Benton teams won the Hancock County Overall Rotating Trophy!

The Rural Team Results:

- 1) Liberty Benton 1
- 2) Cory Rawson 2
- 3) Arlington Rural 1
- 4) McComb 1
- 5) Arcadia Rural 1
- 6) McComb 2
- 7) Arlington 2
- 8) Cory Rawson Rural 1

The Rural Individual Results:

- 1) Anthony Jones, LB
- 2) Megan Drake, LB
- 3) Megan Augustine, CR
- 4) Colten Schwab, CR
- 5) Erika Nigh, CR
- 6) Caleb Quiroga, McComb

The Urban Team results:

- 1) McComb 1
- 2) LB 1
- 3) Arcadia 1
- 4) Cory Rawson 1
- 5) McComb 2
- 6) Arlington 1

The Urban Individual results:

- 1) Daniel Olin, McComb
- 2) Jared Wittenmyer, LB
- 3) Evan Riggs, Arcadia
- 4) Matt Babic, LB
- 5) Alexis Moser, CR
- 6) Travis Roller, Arcadia

Total Team Results for the Rotating Trophy were:

- 1) Liberty Benton, 3323.25
- 2) McComb, 3156.5
- 3) Cory Rawson, 3066
- 4) Arcadia, 3039
- 5) Arlington, 2705

Congratulations to all students and advisors. Good Luck at District competition!

Are You on the Losing Side?

Have you lost topsoil, crops or fertilizer in the recent flooding and rains? Would you like to receive money to turn that land into something that will help the rest of your crops? Then this article may be for you! The Lake Erie CREP program has two practices designed to help take care of the damaging effects of excess water.

The Filter Strip Practice allows for the installation of a grass filter strip alongside ditches and streams. The grass strip slows down the force of any water that escapes the ditch bank, distributing it over the width of the filter strip. Slower water means less crop damage and less soil erosion.

To participate in the Filter Strip Practice, the area must be immediately adjacent to a stream, river or eligible drainage ditch. Also, the area must be cropland for this program. The filter strip has a minimum width of 20' from the top of the ditch and a maximum width of 150' (300' for alluvial soils).

The second practice is for Filter and Recharge Areas. This program allows for conversion of a min. of 0.25 acres of cropland into a grassed filter area. Maximum sizes are based on the contributing drainage area. The locations for this practice include areas where sheet flow accumulates or leaves, areas of concentrated flow, and where surface flow enters a watercourse via a concentrated drainage way, drop structure, culvert or subsurface drain (tile inlet).

The payment rate for both programs is 155% Base CRP

Rental Rate (cool season grasses/CP1) or 175% Base CRP Rental Rate (warm season grasses/CP2). The payment duration is 15 years and to be eligible you must agree to keep and maintain the filter strip or filter/recharge area for those 15 years.

If you are interested in either of the above programs, or would just like to know more about them, please stop in to your local Soil and Water Conservation District!



Filter and Recharge Areas



Filter Strip

CRP Practice CP33 - "Quail Buffer" Habitat

The purpose of this CRP practice is to establish a cover of tall grass prairie on eligible cropland that will enhance environmental benefits. Tall grass prairies provide a unique habitat for wildlife; however the acreage of prairies has declined



significantly in Ohio since the time of settlement.

Establishing Quail Buffers provides the following benefits: reduces sheet, rill and wind erosion, improves water quality by reducing sediment and nutrients delivered to water bodies, creates and enhances unique wildlife habitat, and increases hunting and bird watching opportunities.

Landowners should consider the following specifications when planning on using this practice: NRCS conservation planning assistance is available to plan the practice, warm season prairie grasses and multiple species of wildflowers are used, minimum width is 30 feet up to a maximum of 120 feet, no harvesting or grazing during the life of the contract, Quail Buffer acres cannot be used as a turn row or access lanes, and the best time to seed prairie grasses is April 1st to May 30th.

For more information you may contact your local Farm Service Agency at 419-422-5438.

Reminder

Producers wanting to install a waterway through Continuous CRP will need to be sure to sign up with the Farm Service Agency as soon as possible before construction season. Grassed waterways are now subject to a cultural resources review before construction can begin. This review will take at least 30 days.



2011 TREE PACKET PROGRAM



NAME: _____ TELEPHONE: _____

ADDRESS: _____

CITY: _____ STATE: _____ ZIP: _____

ORDER DEADLINE: MARCH 17, 2011

**** CHECK MUST ACCOMPANY ORDER ****

Make check payable to: Hancock SWCD, 7868 Co. Rd. 140, Suite E, Findlay, OH 45840

ORDER FORM

(Download an Order Form @ hancockswcd.com)

PACKET	# PKTS. ORDERED	PRICE	TOTAL
White Pine (25)		\$ 15/pkt.	
Scotch Pine (25)		\$ 15/pkt.	
Norway Spruce (25)		\$ 15/pkt.	
Colorado Blue Spruce (25)		\$ 15/pkt.	
American Arborvitae (25)		\$ 15/pkt.	
Red Cedar (10)		\$ 8/pkt.	
Bald Cypress (ea.)		\$ 3/ea.	
Swamp White Oak (5)		\$ 5/pkt.	
Pin Oak (5)		\$ 5/pkt.	
Sargent Crabapple (5)		\$ 5pkt	
Marking Flags (100 per pkt.)		\$ 10/pkt.	
*All seedlings are 8"-14" tall except Bald Cypress that are 2-3 Feet tall.	TOTAL AMOUNT DUE		

****Seedlings usually arrive around the first week of April; however, we do not have a definite delivery date. You will receive a letter telling you when to pick-up your order.**

Please be patient as we try to outguess and work with Mother Nature! Thank you.