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69 S. Plains Road  
The Plains, Ohio 45780  
(740) 797-9686 or (800) 582-8890

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**Mark Your Calendars**

- April 25 - Area 5 Envirothon
- April 27 - Fish Sale Order Deadline
- May 4 - Fish Sale Pick-up
- May 11 - Tree Trimming and Chainsaw Safety for the Weekend Warrior Workshop
- May 18 - Board Meeting
- May 23 - Creating Rain Gardens to Improve Water Quality Workshop
- May 29 - Memorial Day—Office Closed
- June 5 - Athens County Grazing Council Pasture Walk
- June 11-13 - State Envirothon
- June 15 - Board Meeting
- June 17 - River Sweep
- July 4 - Independence Day—Office Closed

**Ohio River Sweep on the Hocking**



The Athens SWCD is joining the Ohio River Valley Water Sanitation Commission (ORSANCO) on Saturday, June 17<sup>th</sup> to coordinate a local effort in this year's Ohio River Sweep Event. At a length of nearly 100 miles, the Hocking River is a major tributary of the Ohio River. This year, local efforts will cover approximately 5 miles of the Hocking River from the West State Street ball fields to behind the State Side Technology Park. **WE NEED YOUR HELP!** Volunteers are needed to assist in our local efforts which will contribute to the success of the annual program. Those interested in volunteering for this event should visit the website [AthensSWCD.org](http://AthensSWCD.org) to register. Registration will be held at the Athens Community Center from 9:00am to 9:30am and trash pick-up 9:30am to 11:30am. Youth are welcome but must be accompanied by an adult.

The first one hundred people to volunteer for the Hocking River pick-up will receive a 2017 River Sweep T-Shirt. Thanks to our local sponsors all participants will be served lunch after the pick-up. Trash bags are provided and gloves will be issued to each volunteer. Volunteers may also call 740-797-9686 ext. 111 for more information.



**Conservation News**



**Athens Soil and Water Conservation District**

**69 S. Plains Road The Plains, Ohio 45780**  
**740-797-9686 or 800-582-8890**

**athensswcd.org**

*Mission: Provide leadership by promoting the wise use and enhancement of Athens County's natural resources for current and future generations.*

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**STATE LEGISLATORS MEET WITH COUNTY CONSERVATION LEADERS**



Athens Soil and Water Conservation District (SWCD) staff and supervisors met with State Representative Jay Edwards recently at the annual Conservation Partnership Meeting held in downtown Columbus. Over 650 conservation leaders consisting of supervisors and staff from Ohio's 88 SWCDs, partners representing the Ohio Department of Agriculture, the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS), the Ohio Association of Soil and Water Conservation Districts Employees, Ohio EPA, Ohio Department of Natural Resources, The Ohio State University, and many others were on hand during the two-day event centered around the theme, "All-In For Conservation."

The meeting challenged attendees to identify and strengthen their commitment to conservation as each work to positively impact Ohio's economy, environment, and future. Meeting participants networked, participated in thought-provoking workshops and breakout sessions, heard from key speakers including Leadership Speaker Randy Frazier, Jim Richardson from National Geographic, USDA NRCS Regional Conservationist Gayle Berry from Washington, DC, ODA Director David Daniels, and State Senator Bob Peterson. During a special event held at the Statehouse Rotunda, the districts met with State Legislators.

"We appreciate Representative Edwards taking the time to meet and hear how SWCDs are positively impacting our local communities through a variety of programs and projects aimed to increase the economy while advancing conservation stewardship," said Brenda Dahse, Chair of the SWCD Board.

To learn more about the event and the great things Athens SWCD is doing locally contact Cathy Bobo, District Manager at 740-797-9686 ext. 104 or visit our webpage at [www.athensswcd.org](http://www.athensswcd.org).

**Thank You to our Local Funding Sources!**

The Athens SWCD Board of Supervisors and Staff wish to thank the Athens County Commissioners, the City of Athens, and the Athens County Auditor for their continued support and dedication to soil and water conservation in our county. The financial assistance at the county level draws matching funds from the state which allows our office to continue to provide both technical and educational assistance to all Athens County residents.

**Athens SWCD Board Reorganization**

Athens SWCD Board of Supervisors reorganized their slate of officers during their January meeting. Officers for 2017 are: Brenda Dahse, Chairman; Steve Stone, Vice Chairman; Glenn Lackey, Secretary; Harold Dodd, Treasurer and Kelly Abfall, Member. The Athens SWCD prides itself on being a locally led organization addressing agriculture, natural resources, and urban issues facing Athens County.



[athensswcd.org](http://athensswcd.org)

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## 2017 Backyard Conservation Series

The annual Athens SWCD "Backyard Conservation Series" will help you understand the environment in your yard, how it works, and what conservation steps you can take for future generations. Visit our webpage at [www.athensswcd.org](http://www.athensswcd.org) to register. The remaining workshops in this series include...

### May 11: "Tree Trimming & Chainsaw Safety for the Weekend Warrior", FREE, 6:00 to 8:00pm at the Athens Community Center

- Speakers: Ann Bonner, ODNR Division of Forestry and Eddie Ferris, Ohio Forestry Association. Come learn the proper way to trim a tree for a strong and healthy structure. Chainsaws can be dangerous, so safety methods will also be discussed!

### May 23: "Creating Rain Gardens to Improve Water Quality", Free, 6:00 to 8:00pm at the Athens County Fairgrounds

- Speaker: Teresa Caldwell, Athens SWCD. We will discuss the principles of rain garden design and construction as well as how rain gardens can reduce stormwater run-off and promote soil infiltration.



## Books and Bird NOTES Project Takes Flight!



When the tree swallows, bluebirds, and other cavity nesting species return from warmer climates they will find some new 'digs' to explore for the 2017 nesting season. In just one year, local schools have placed more than 30 manmade nesting boxes at school sites in partnership with the Athens Soil and Water Conservation District 'Books and Bird NOTES' project. In one case, even the City of Athens has joined in on the fun and learning.

Participating schools include land managed by Alexander, Athens, Federal Hocking and the Tri-County High School Career Center. Students at these locations are studying the habits and nesting activities of these birds.

They will be keeping nesting records through-out the spring and summer while tracking successful fledglings of offspring produced at these boxes. These bird numbers will be reported to various 'citizen science' projects and add to the statistics of population growth and/or decline nationwide. To find out how your school can become involved, visit our website or contact our office for details.

## Teachers Seeking CEUs or College Credit for Ohio Teaching Recertification!

The "Healthy People: Brought To You By Healthy Water" Teacher's Seminar will be offered this summer **June 20-22**. Held at locations in Meigs and Athens County it will feature guided field tours of...

- A Drinking Water Treatment Plant
- An Acid Mine Drainage Doser
- An Established Wetland
- A Waste Water Treatment Plant

In addition to the tours, there is a Training/Certification in the nationally recognized and awarded Project WET, Healthy Water, Healthy People Program, and (NEW to our area) the Wonders of Wetlands program presented by Ohio EPA. Teachers will receive all manuals for these programs.

Exploration of educational methods in 'Field Investigations' in Science through outdoor classrooms and schoolyard enhanced learning. **All manuals and published materials for WET, HWHP, and WOW will be provided to participants via an OEPA mini-grant.**

There will be additional discussions on the background of Wellhead Protection Zones and groundwater movement with a groundwater model demonstration.

For additional information on fees and registration, visit our webpage at [www.athensswcd.org](http://www.athensswcd.org) under 'education'.



## USDA Woodland Restoration Project in Southeastern Ohio

The U.S. Department of Agriculture's Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) announces an opportunity to help restore oak-hickory woodlands in southeastern Ohio.

In an effort to restore oak-hickory woodlands, NRCS and its conservation partners created the 'Collaborative Oak Management' project in southeastern Ohio. The project area includes the Wayne National Forest and Ohio State Forests, as well as privately held forest land. Approximately 73 percent of the land within the Wayne National Forest is privately owned and interspersed within the forest boundaries. However, the boundaries of private and public land don't exist for invasive species and wildlife. The Collaborative Oak Management project provides a mechanism to restore oak-hickory woodlands seamlessly across both public and private land.

NRCS uses the Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) to help restore oak-hickory woodlands owned privately. Woodland owners in the project area can receive both technical assistance from professional foresters and financial assistance to implement conservation measures recommended by foresters using EQIP. Conservation measures that promote oak and hickory growth include the control of invasive plants and undesirable trees like the highly invasive non-native tree of heaven.

Contact Joe Weber, District Conservationist, at 740-797-9686 ext. 100 or stop by the office if you are interested in applying for the EQIP Oak Management program. Sign-up deadline is May 19, 2017.



## Controlling Invasive Species

Spring has sprung, which also means it's a great time to start control measures on invasive species. For information on control techniques, types of invasives to watch for, or even a visit to your property to help identify any present invasives, contact your local Wildlife Specialist/ Forestry Technician at 740-797-9686 ext. 107.

## BE THE SOLUTION TO STORM WATER POLLUTION

### 10 ways to prevent storm water pollution:

- ◆ Minimize the use of fertilizers
- ◆ Minimize the use of pesticides
- ◆ Vegetate bare spots in your lawn
- ◆ Compost yard waste
- ◆ Direct downspouts away from paved surfaces
- ◆ Utilize a rain barrel or rain garden
- ◆ Dispose of pet waste properly
- ◆ Have car leaks fixed
- ◆ Use a car wash or wash your car on a permeable surface
- ◆ Inspect and pump your septic tank regularly

## Office Staff Achievements

Two Athens SWCD staff members have recently received certificates of accomplishment for their achievements. These achievements will help them to better serve Athens County residents.

- Abbot Stevenson completed requirements of the National Stormwater Center for training to become a Certified Stormwater Inspector for municipalities.
- Jill Montle has completed 11 contact hours of Technician Development Program Advanced Series: Nutrient Management. This was sponsored by: OFSWCD, ODA Division of Soil and Water Conservation and USDA NRCS.

## CAUV Site Evaluations

Over the next few months the Athens SWCD, in cooperation with the Athens County Auditor's Office, will be conducting annual CAUV site evaluations. If your property is enrolled in the CAUV program, you may see us in your area taking pictures of your property.

If you have any questions or concerns, feel free to call the office at 740-797-9686.

Advertising in this newsletter does not constitute an endorsement by the Athens SWCD/NRCS.

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