



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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athensswcd.org



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Athens SWCD 77th Annual Meeting



Please join the Athens Soil and Water Conservation District as we celebrate 77 years of conservation during our annual meeting! Enjoy an evening of fellowship at the Federal Valley Resource Center!

When: Thursday, October 19, 2023

Where: Federal Valley Resource Center, 8225 State Route 329,
Stewart, Ohio 45778

Cost: \$ 6.00 per person

Agenda: 4:30 - 5:30 p.m. - Registration & Social Time
- SWCD SUPERVISOR ELECTION VOTING
5:30 - 6:15 p.m. - Meal - Catered by Texas Roadhouse
Buffet style - Chicken Breast or Pulled Pork, salad,
mashed potatoes, green beans, hot rolls,
dessert, and drinks
6:15 - 7:15 p.m. - Presentation of Awards / Entertainment

Door Prizes and Raffle Drawing

Reservations are due by October 12, 2023

Athens Soil and Water Conservation District's 77th Annual Meeting and Banquet

Name(s): _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____

of Meals - Pulled Pork _____ x \$6.00 = \$ _____

of Meals - Chicken _____ x \$6.00 = \$ _____

****Please contact our office if you have special dietary needs.**

**Complete form, make check payable to Athens SWCD and return to:
Athens SWCD, 69 South Plains Road, The Plains, Ohio 45780**

Due in office no later than October 12, 2023

Election Notice and Candidates....

The Ohio Soil and Water Conservation Commission will cause an election of Supervisors of the Athens Soil and Water Conservation District (SWCD) to be held in accordance with Chapter 940 of the Ohio Revised Code. Individuals who own or occupy land within the Athens SWCD and are 18 years of age or older may vote for supervisor.

There are 3 ways an eligible voters can cast a ballot:

1. At the Athens SWCD office from September 18, 2023 until October 17, 2023 during normal business hours of 8:00 am - 5:00 pm Monday - Thursday, and 8:00 am - 4:30 pm on Fridays.
2. At the SWCD Annual Meeting, which will take place at Federal Valley Resource Center, 8225 S.R. 329, Stewart, Ohio 45778 on Thursday, October 19, 2023 from 4:30 pm - 5:30 pm; or
3. By voting absentee from September 18, 2023 until October 17, 2023 by requesting the Voter Verification and Election Ballot from the Athens SWCD office at 69 S Plains Road, The Plains, Ohio 45780, or by calling 740-797-9686 ext. 6280, or by emailing cathybobo@athensswcd.org. Absentee ballots must be received by 5:00 p.m. on Tuesday, October 17, 2023 .

Two Supervisors will be elected to a three-year term commencing January 1, 2024, and ending on December 31, 2026. Nominees are: Zachary Crabtree, Brenda Dahse, and Gary Willison. (see bios below)



Zachary Crabtree - Zach attended The Ohio State University where he studied Agronomy and Plant Science. While in school he participated in the NRCS student trainee program for 4 years and worked in multiple locations across the state helping with EQIP. This included working in the Athens office for a summer. He owns an excavating and construction company, ZC Excavating LLC, where he operates and performs projects locally to southern Ohio for residential and commercial. Zach also farms with his dad and wife in Albany, Ohio. They raise corn, soybeans, wheat, hay and freezer beef.

Brenda Dahse - Brenda is a life long resident of Athens County. She and her husband Kevin reside on a 52 acre horse farm in Bern Township. They have installed fencing, watering systems and structures to accommodate their current livestock operation. Brenda currently holds the positions of Chairman and Fiscal Agent on the Athens SWCD Board of Supervisors where she has served for the past 12 years. She is currently an Area 5 Director for the Ohio Federation of Soil and Water Conservation Districts and a member of the District 18 Buckeye Hills Natural Resources Assistance Council. Brenda has been employed as the store manager at Buckley Brothers, Inc. in The Plains for the past 20 years. Prior to that, she worked as the office manager for Landmark, Inc. for 5 years. Brenda is very generous with her time in helping her nieces, nephews and area youth with their 4-H projects. "It is very satisfying to see kids succeed with their projects" Brenda says. She enjoys horseback riding, gardening, and the outdoors.



Gary Willison - Gary graduated from The Ohio State University, where he received his bachelor's and master's degrees in Forest Management. He retired from the US Forest Service after 34 years, where he managed the forest resources in four national forests. On the Wayne National Forest he managed a Watershed Team that completed 54 abandoned mine land projects which greatly improved water quality in the Monday Creek Watershed. Gary also worked closely with Ohio Department of Transportation to minimize effects to wildlife

and soil and water resources while managing the US Route 33 Bypass around Nelsonville. Currently he is a forestry instructor at Hocking College and a consulting forester in Southeastern Ohio. Gary holds the position of Treasurer on the Athens SWCD Board of Supervisors where he has served for the past 3 years. Gary lives on a farm in eastern Athens County with his wife and son where he raises Christmas trees and produces maple syrup.

Soil Test and Fall Liming Applications



When was the last time you sampled the soils in your lawn, garden, crop fields or pastures? This easy and inexpensive process is often overlooked but is an incredible tool when it comes to getting the most out of our soils. Testing can be done in the spring or the fall and while it doesn't need to be done annually, you should consider testing once every three to five years. Results from your soils test can be used to add amendments in the proper and safe quantities.

Why is this important? When the soil pH becomes too acidic, certain nutrients needed for proper growth (such as nitrogen, phosphorus, potassium, and calcium) become unavailable to the lawn, so the grass is unable to grow properly. Ideally, we will want our soil pH to be in the 6.0-6.8 range but there are exceptions to this. There are situations when we want more acidic soils – when growing blueberries or rhododendrons for example. Peas, lavender and hydrangeas all do better in more alkaline soils. Regardless of what you're growing, understanding your soils and using this simple procedure to determine your needs will improve your results.

While fall and spring are both good times to do lime applications, fall has the added advantage of rain, snow, and freezing / thawing cycles will help breakdown applied lime. Generally speaking it will take a minimum of 6 months for change in pH to start occurring. It is certainly a slow process – so taking the time and effort to maintain proper pH is a worthwhile strategy.

More information on how to take a soil test can be found on our website, www.athensswcd.org.

Don't Guess - Soil Test - for FREE!!!!



The Athens Soil and Water Conservation District has teamed up with Athens-Meigs County Farm Bureau to offer two (2) free soil test to Farm Bureau members this fall. Soils must be collected and delivered to the Athens SWCD office between October 23 - 27, 2023 ONLY. Go to athensswcd.org for more information. Tests are per member household - any additional samples will cost \$12.00 per sample.

Become a Farm Bureau member by going to <https://ofbf.org/join/> or by contacting the Athens Meigs County Farm Bureau office at 740-201-2739.

Fall is a Great Time for Conservation Planning

NRCS staff are working with landowners now to develop conservation plans for the Fiscal Year 2024 sign-up of Farm Bill Conservation Programs. Applications for the Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) & the Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP) are accepted on a continuous basis. However, landowners are encouraged to plan ahead & work with NRCS staff now, to develop a plan & complete a program application.

If you have a conservation project that you are considering for your property, call 740-797-9686x3 or email our District Conservationist at joe.weber@usda.gov.

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

143 N. Plains Rd
The Plains, OH
45780

Leading the Others
Since 1904

Bring this ad in
for \$2.00 off one
25# bag of Bird

YOUR LOCAL FARM & FEED SUPPLY STORE

Upcoming Tree Sales

Watch for upcoming Tree Sale information in the January, February, March 2024 newsletter & on our website at athensswcd.org

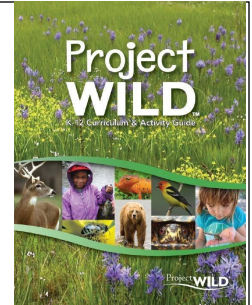
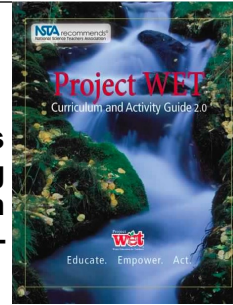
Calling ALL Educators to a Teacher's Workshop

The Athens and Meigs Soil and Water Conservation District offices and Ohio EPA are pleased to announce that we will be joining forces to present a Teacher's Science and Conservation Education Workshop Day on Wednesday, October 25, 2023 from 9:00 am - 3:30 pm.

This one day workshop will introduce educators to the nationally acclaimed Project WILD, Aquatic WILD, and Project WET programs. Teachers will come away from the workshop with a toolkit of practical lesson plans that will introduce their students, grades K-12, to hands-on learning for the outdoors and in the classroom. All activity manuals and materials will be available, free of charge, for our participants to take back to their classrooms.

For more information, contact Teresa Caldwell, Athens SWCD Conservation Education Coordinator at teresacaldwell@athensswcd.org or 740-797-9686 ext 6282.

Online registration will be available starting October 3rd at www.athensswcd.org.



Multi County Soil Judging

Athens SWCD hosted this year's multi county soil judging contest in which teams from Athens, Meigs, and Vinton counties participated. The event was held at Bobcat Bed & Breakfast on Rooster's Ridge owned by Tom and Joyce Bobo. Approximately 115 students had the opportunity to brush up on their Ag and Urban soil judging skills in preparation for their district contest. Thank you to everyone that helped, in any way, to make this educational event possible. Educating our youth - that is what it's all about!



Ohio River Sweep on the Hocking

Two River Sweep events were held this year in an effort to clean up our waterways. 51 bags of trash and 30 bags of recycling were collected by 70+ volunteers during the August 26th event within the City of Athens.

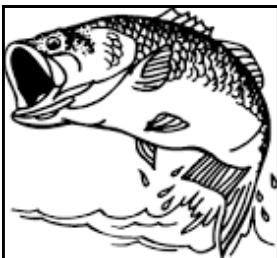
During the September 20th clean up event, Hocking College students and staff canoed the lower portion of the Hocking River. 15 bags of trash and 1 bag of recycling were collected. Both events covered a total of 9 miles of the river.

Thank you to everyone that participated in the Ohio River Sweep of the Hocking and for making Athens County a cleaner place to live!!

All Athens County Photo Contest Results

The Grand Prize Winner of this year's All Athens County Photo Contest goes to Judy Wilson - with her "Female Ruby-throated Hummingbird sipping a white flower" photo. Congratulations and Thank You to everyone for their entries. This year's winner and semi-finalists will be on display the month of December at the Athens Public Library. These photos will also be joined by a collection of the past 15 years of grand prize winners. The 2023 entries can also be viewed on our website. This is a great time to be outdoors taking pictures for next year's contest!





Athens SWCD Offers Fall Fish Sale

Athens SWCD is accepting orders for the 2023 Fall Fish Sale. This sale is to stock new ponds or to replenish fish in existing ponds. Order forms and stocking rates can be found on the District's website www.athensswcd.org. Completed order forms must be returned to the Athens SWCD office with payment, no later than October 3rd. The fish will be delivered to the Athens SWCD office, located at 69 South Plains Road, The Plains, Ohio between 1:00 - 2:00 pm on Tuesday, October

10th. **You must pick up your orders at this time!** Please bring unscented plastic trash bags and containers with some of your own pond water in them when picking up your fish. If you have any questions, contact our office at 740-797-9686 ext. 5.



Rental Equipment Available

The Athens SWCD has the following rental equipment available through our office:

- * Sunflower No-Till Drill - \$100.00 minimum or \$10.00/acre after 10 acres
- * Farm Bureau Membership Benefit for Sunflower No-Till Drill - \$50.00 minimum or \$5.00/acre after 10 acres
- * Truax No-Till Drill - \$100.00 minimum or \$8.00/acre after 12.5 acres
- * Stoltzfus Lime Spreader (5 ton) - \$50.00 minimum or \$2.00/ton after 25 tons
- * Worksaver ATV Seeder - \$50.00/day or \$75.00/weekend

Contact Rich Blazier, District Equipment Manager
at (740) 818-5282
for seed and drill specifications.

OPHI Milkweed Pod Collection



The Athens SWCD has partnered with Ohio Pollinator Habitat Initiative again this year to be a designated Common Milkweed Pod Collection Station. The collection will begin September 1st and end October 30st. Let's make this year's pod collection successful by following these simple tips!

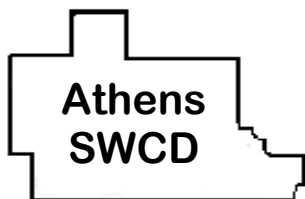
- Collect pods from Common Milkweed plants only.
- Collect the pods when they are dry, grey, or brown.
- If the center seam pops with gentle pressure, they can be harvested.
- Store the pods in paper bags; plastic bags collect unwanted moisture.
- Put the date and county collected on the bag when you turn them in.
- Keep the pods in a cool, dry area until you can deliver them to the Athens SWCD office.

If you have any questions about the milkweed pod collection, contact the Athens SWCD at 740-797-9686 ext. 5.

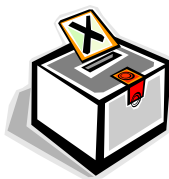
Student Intern

Sheridan Boyd is a senior at Federal Hocking High School. She plans to go to college for agricultural education. Last year she did her internship with Federal Hocking's Ag teacher JoAnn Pfeiffer and decided that is what she wanted to do. We are happy to have Sheridan in the Athens SWCD and USDA NRCS office for another agriculture related job experience and to learn more about what we do. Sheridan is a 4 year member of the golf team at Federal Hocking. She is also a long time member of 4H and FFA.





BANQUET EDITION!



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September / October / November 2023
A quarterly publication / Issue 38

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NRCS PERSONNEL

Joe Weber, District Conservationist
Bill Serbonich, Conservation Specialist
Dean Sinclair, Soil Conservation Technician

Current Resident or

Mark Your Calendars

October 9 - Office Closed - Columbus Day
October 10 - Fall Fish Sale
October 12 - Board Meeting
October 19 - Annual Meeting and Banquet
October 23 - 27 - Soil Test Drop Off
October 25 - Educator Workshop
November 5 - Daylight Saving Time Ends
November 10 - Office Closed - Veterans Day
November 16 - Board Meeting
November 23 & 24 - Office Closed - Thanksgiving
December 21 - Board Meeting
December 25 - Office Closed - Christmas Day
January 1 - Office Closed - New Years Day

- ***Visit our website www.athensswcd.org for more information on the events listed above.***



Athens Soil and Water Conservation District Employment Opportunity

The Athens Soil and Water Conservation District has the following job opportunities available: District Technician and Wildlife Specialist/Forestry Technician.

Go to www.athensswcd.org for more information.