



# Conservation Connection

*Spring/Summer 2018*

## Butler Honored at State Meeting

The Ohio Federation of Soil and Water Conservation Districts (OFSWCD) is turning 75 this year. At the Federation's Annual Meeting in February, Butler SWCD was recognized as one of the ten Districts that celebrated their 75th anniversary in 2017. The Federation presented Butler SWCD with a metal sign for the District to display. Pictured (left to right) ODA Director David Daniels; OFSWCD President Harold Neuenschwander; Butler SWCD Administrator Kelly Crout; NRCS State Conservationist Terry Cosby; Butler SWCD Board member Linda Peters; ODA—Division of SWC Chief Kirk Hines; and Butler SWCD Board member David Brate.



## District Changes

Every five to ten years Districts are encouraged to reevaluate programs and long range plans. The Butler Soil and Water Board of Supervisors started on this process in January. While looking at programs and trying to reorganize, we have also changed some job titles and will continue as the process goes on. The District in recent years had two Natural Resource Specialists. We will now have a Rural Specialist and an Urban Specialist. These changes will allow us to better focus on our residents' needs.

If you are having drainage or erosion issues, the specialist have broken this into two areas of expertise:

**Farmland and rural areas of the County**, then you will be contacting our Rural Specialist, Brady Smith, 513-785-6663 or [smithbe@butlercountyohio.org](mailto:smithbe@butlercountyohio.org).

**Subdivision, business, or if you are located in the city or urban portion of our County**, you will be contacting our Urban Specialist, Elizabeth Downs, 513-785-6664 or [downsea@butlercountyohio.org](mailto:downsea@butlercountyohio.org).

While job titles may change from time to time, our District staff and Board are focused and dedicated to our mission to "promote the conservation, restoration, and responsible use of our natural resources through technical assistance and education." If any resident or landowner of Butler County has any topics or areas that they would like our District to provide technical assistance or education on, please let us know by calling 513-887-3720 or emailing us at [butlerswcd@butlercountyohio.org](mailto:butlerswcd@butlercountyohio.org).

## Butler SWCD Board

**Jeremy Fruth**  
Chair

**John Del Verne**  
Vice –Chair

**Nathan Gillespie**  
Treasurer

**Linda Peters**  
Secretary

**David Brate**  
Member

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## New Rural Specialist

Butler Soil and Water Conservation District would like to welcome our newest employee, Brady Smith to our office. Brady is a native of Morgan Township and graduated from Ross High School in 2015. While in high school,

Brady was an active member of the Ross FFA. From his FFA experience, and growing up spending time on his grandfather's farm in Okeana, Brady wanted to go into the agricultural field. Brady continued his education by attending Wilmington College, in Wilmington, Ohio. Brady will graduate from Wilmington College in December of 2018 with a B.S. in Agronomy. Brady is looking forward to working with and meeting the landowners of Butler County and helping to assist with any natural resource concerns they may have. Brady will be assisting with Farm Bill programs, farmland drainage and erosion issues, and any other natural resource concerns in our rural parts of the county.



## Summer Intern

This summer the District will be having an intern to assist with all of our summer programs and events. Our intern is Caleb Young. Caleb is currently a Junior at Miami University regional campuses

majoring in psychological science. Caleb is a 2016 graduate of Edgewood High School. In high school, Caleb was a member of the Edgewood/Butler Tech FFA Chapter. Caleb was also involved in 4-H for nine years as a member of the Wayne Sizzlin Scissors and Livestock 4-H club. Caleb was also a member of the Butler County Junior Fair Board, and in 2016 was the Butler County Junior Fair King. Caleb is very excited to be interning with our SWCD office this summer.

## Stream Ecology For Adults & Teens

Participants will learn about using biological sampling to look at the health of our local streams. Attendees will then be able to sample for the Butler County Stream Team in the stream of their choice.

We will be going in the creek to collect samples, so please be prepared to get wet.

June 16, 9—11 am—Indian Creek Park  
1899 Oxford Reily Rd, Reily Twp

July 21, 9—11 am—Dudley Woods Park  
5591 Hankins Rd, Liberty Twp

**Please RSVP** to Lynn White at  
whitelr@butlercountyohio.org or 513-887-3720



## Rain Garden Workshop For Landscape Professionals

June 25, 9 am—2 pm

**Sanitation District No. 1**, 1045 Eaton Dr, Ft. Wright, KY

**Cost:** \$25 (includes lunch and refreshments)

**Register:** [www.savelocalwaters.org/raingarden.html](http://www.savelocalwaters.org/raingarden.html)

This unique workshop for all Greater Cincinnati landscaping professionals will further their knowledge and skills on rain gardens, helping them offer custom solutions to both their residential & commercial clients. All aspects of designing & constructing, including details on siting, sizing, soil amendments, plant selection will be covered.

This workshop is provided by Save Local Waters, a collaborative effort between Soil and Water Conservation Districts, Storm Water Districts, and several other related entities.





## Creeking in the Parks

Learn about the animals that live in the creeks during this fun, wet, hands on program. These free programs are held at **10 am every Thursday** throughout the summer at various locations.

***Shoes are required at all times. No Flip flops please.***

- June 7—Rentschler Forest Metropark- Reigart Rd
- June 14—Forest Run Metropark Wildlife Preserve (Hamilton -New London Rd)
- June 21 Four Mile Creek, Antenen Preserve (New Miami)
- June 28, Forest Run Metropark Welcome Center (Timberman Rd)
- July 5 Indian Creek Metropark, Oxford Reily Rd
- July 12 Elk Creek Metropark, Sebald entrance
- July 19 Governor Bebb
- July 26 Renstcher Forest Metropark, Timberhill entrance

These programs are provided by Butler Soil and Water Conservation District and Metroparks of Butler County.



## Scholarship Recipient

Oria Daugherty, a student at the College of Wooster, has received the Butler SWCD's annual scholarship.

She is studying Biology, with a double minor in Environmental Studies and Spanish. She is passionate about ecology and conservation, and is currently completing an internship at SonLight Power, a non-profit organization that

implements solar energy in developing countries. In her free time, she is a member of Wooster's collegiate Moot Court team, plays intramural volleyball, and is the treasurer of GreenHouse, the campus sustainability club.



## Family Fun Fridays

These free programs are a great chance to get out in nature with your family to learn while having fun.

Programs run from 10 am—11:30 am.

The topics in June will be repeated in July.

June 8, 15, 22, 29—Rentschler Forest Metropark

July 6, 13, 20, 27— Forest Run MetroPark Welcome Center

Week 1—Something Fishy

Week 2—Kids Loco-Motion

Week 3—All About Water

Week4—What's Outside?

These programs are a partnership between Butler Soil and Water Conservation District, Ohio State University Extension, and Metroparks of Butler County.

## Educator Workshops

Butler SWCD is hosting two educator workshops this summer. Attendees at each workshop will receive nationally recognized curricula along with many other resources.



### Growing Up Wild

**For Early Childhood**  
Wednesday, August 15,  
2018 1– 4 pm  
At Butler SWCD.

**Cost:** \$10

**Register by:** Aug 8

**[www.ButlerSWCD.org](http://www.ButlerSWCD.org)**



### Curious KIDSS

**K-2 Educators**

Thursday, September 6  
6– 9 pm  
YMCA Children's Center  
4200 E University, Blvd,  
Middletown

**Cost:** \$10

**Register by:** Aug 31

**[ButlerSWCD.org](http://ButlerSWCD.org)**

Kindling Inquiry and Discovery  
in Science and Social Studies

# Ditch Maintenance

Maintenance of ditches needs to be done on a regular basis. Cleaning and reshaping are the most important maintenance techniques. Be sure to do the right maintenance. Any ditch work, if not managed and repaired can expose the gravel to erosion and may also change the depth of the ditch to an undesirable degree.

## Cleaning

Cleaning ditches involves removal of sediment and vegetation from the bottom of the ditch. Very small amounts of material should be removed. Cleaning should be checked by walking the ditch after the cleaning. A small amount of annual and perennial grass seed can be spread ahead of the person checking the work. Cleaning the ditch does not involve changing the width or depth of the ditch. If it is too deep, the ditch may become a hazard to motorists.

## Reshaping

Reshaping is often referred to as cleaning, but it is not. Reshaping involves significant changes to the cross-section of a ditch, or the slope (grade line), or both.

Except in rare cases, ditch reshaping should avoid making the cross-section larger. In fact, most ditches have evolved to be deeper than needed. For the same cross sectional area, a wide ditch is safer and more erosion resistant than a deep one, and the capacity differences are negligible.

Reshaping should be laid out prior to beginning work, and should be checked by the foreman with a hand level to ensure the proper slope and cross-section are achieved. Generally the slope of the ditch follows the grade line of the road, but this is not always the best design. Whenever possible, the ditch slope should be at least 0.5 percent and no more than 2 percent. Remember, the purpose of the ditch is to carry water. If it is too flat the water may not be able to flow. If the ditch is too steep, it may erode and wash away.

The grade line of the ditch bottom should be on a straight line between relief culverts (that cross under the road) and driveway pipes. If the ditch slope varies, in places where the slope flattens out the ditch will fill in rapidly with sediment and possibly vegetation. Those locations will become a maintenance problem.

## General Tips

- Always clean ditches while moving uphill
- Place erosion protection or seeding at the end of each day and before any rain and have erosion-control material ready before starting
- When in doubt, GET HELP. Your local SWCD is a good resource to use.



# Understanding 100 Year Storm Events

Doesn't it make sense that a 100-year storm even should occur approximately once every 100 years? By definition, a 100-year storm is an event of the magnitude that has a percent chance of occurrence in any given year. Perhaps more accurately, it should be called a 1-in-100 chance storm. The law of averages state that this type of storm should have a return rate of approximately every 100 years. However, aberrations can and do occur. Thus a coin toss can turn up heads five times in a row. Although its unlikely, the same is true of storm events, we can experience two 100-year storms in one year.

Storm events must be reported relative to some standard time period and geographic area to be meaningful. For Butler County, a 100-year storm is considered to be 5.58-6.04 inches of rain fall in a 24 hour period (depending on database used). However, most rain events do not last for 24 hours straight. Thus these rates are based on duration and rain fall amount. So, 3 inches per 1 hour is considered the rate of a 100 year storm in our region.

Why does It seem like we have so many 100- year storm events? A 100-year storm event doesn't necessarily equal a 100-year runoff or flood event. Several factors are involved. First, a 100-year storm in a small watershed, say 1 sq mile, will have a more significant effect on stream flow than the same storm in a 450 sq mile basin. Also, soils that are already saturated from previous rains have lower capacity for allowing the water to soak in (infiltration). The amount of impervious surfaces (roads, roofs, driveways, etc), lack of natural retention areas (such as wetlands) and loss of wooded areas and fencerows can heavily affect the velocity of runoff. The faster the water gets to the stream, the more swollen the stream can get, making it appear like we received a large storm. "I never remember seeing the stream come that far out of it's banks in the past", is a comment we receive regularly. Is this because we keep getting larger storm events? No, it's more likely to be the changes we have made speeding up water on it's journey to the rivers across impervious surfaces and through our storm-water network. Check out NOAA Atlas 14 for our region's precipitation data.





## Farm Agency News

The wet weather and cold temperatures have finally lifted and producers are beginning to finish their 2018 spring planting. The Butler/Hamilton County FSA office encourages producers to please contact the office immediately upon completion of planting to schedule an appointment to certify acreage reports on the FSA-578. A reminder, our office phone number changed earlier in the year. The new phone number is 513-642-3715

It is also once again time for the Butler/Hamilton County FSA office to receive County Committee nominations. Beginning each June, nominations will be accepted from eligible voters within a Local Administrative Area (LAA) holding an election. This year an election will be held representing LAA #1 comprised of the Butler County Townships of Milford, Oxford, and Reily. Any agricultural producer who participate or cooperates in an FSA program within these townships may be nominated. To become a nominee, eligible individuals must sign and submit nomination form FSA-669A to the Butler/Hamilton County FSA Office by August 1, 2018. For more information regarding COC elections or for roles of a committee member please contact are office.

## FSA and NRCS New Phone Numbers.

Our Butler/Hamilton FSA and NRCS offices have installed new phones that are on a federal phone line. Soil and Water is still on the County phone system. Due to this, Soil and Water can no longer transfer calls to FSA. Butler SWCD can still currently transfer calls to NRCS.

Here are the new numbers for your convenience:

**FSA:** 513-642-3715

**NRCS:** 513-642-3716

**Butler SWCD:** 513-887-3720

## CRP Grass Waterway Maintenance Reminders

If you have a CRP waterway practice on your property or on a farm you rent, take some time to make sure that it is being managed properly.

Inspect all grassed waterways regularly throughout the year, especially following heavy rains. If there are any damaged areas, fill, compact and reseed those areas as soon as possible. If there are sediment deposits, remove those to maintain the capacity of the waterway.

Make sure that your CRP grass cover does not contain any noxious weeds such as thistle and teasel or any woody species such as trees or multiflora rose. Allowing weeds or trees to grow will steal nutrients from your grass, and can lead to spreading of invasive species. Mowing of CRP cover is permitted, but must be conducted outside of Ohio's primary nesting season (March 1 - July 15) and this activity must be included in your conservation plan. Spot mowing is also another options, or spot spraying with an approved herbicide that will not harm the grass or pollinating insects. These treatment will not hinder the CRP practices' erosion control, water quality, and wildlife habitat.

While planting or tilling, make sure to avoid waterways as turn-rows and lift tillage equipment when crossing and turn off spray nozzles. Do not use waterways as a field road and avoid crossing with heavy equipment when wet. Also do not encroach on the waterway, and be sure to maintain the designated waterway width. Any haying or grazing of waterway is prohibited.

Unauthorized disturbance of CRP cover is considered a violation of the terms and condition of the CRP contract and conservation plan. Violations could potentially result in hefty penalties including contract termination and refund of all contract related payments. If you have any questions on proper maintenance and management of your CRP practice contact the FSA office at 513-642-3715 or NRCS at 513-642-3716.

# The Scoop on Worm Poop: Vermicompost

Charles Darwin estimated that an acre of garden space might hold 50,000 earthworms. After a good soaking rain this is easy to believe. These worms in our yard play an important role in making our soil productive. Their tunnels allow air and water to get to the roots. As they eat, decaying plant and animal material pass through their body and are excreted as rich usable nutrients.

You don't have to rely on the worms in your veggie garden, you can also make compost using earthworms. This process called vermicomposting, can convert your kitchen waste into nutrient rich organic compost.

Experts estimate more than 6,000 species of earthworms exist. When it comes to vermicomposting, there's one species that's the favorite: *Eisenia fetida*, the red wiggler. This species thrives in the topmost layer of the earth's decaying material. It doesn't burrow through the matter, it actually eats its way through, consuming up to its own body weight per day. As organic material passes through the worm's digestive system, it becomes laden with minerals and microorganisms. This worm poop is known in scientific circles as vermicast, or worm castings.

Vermicomposting is typically an indoor endeavor in this part of the country. The red wigglers cannot survive in the extreme temperatures of our summer and winter. Keeping them indoors also keeps them close to where all the action is,; your kitchen where you are generating the food scraps.

Just like with any animal, you need to consider their basic needs:

**Habitat**– a wooden or plastic container large enough for your worms. They prefer wider rather than deeper.

**Shelter**– the bedding. We typically use moistened coconut fiber, but you can use shredded leaves, shredded paper, etc. The bedding also is a carbon source for your compost and provides bulk to stop the food waste from matting down and blocking airflow..

**Water**– Worms need wet skin to breathe! The bedding should be kept moist. Some drainage holes at the base of the box stop it from getting overly wet.

**Air**– the box should contain air holes. I typically drill them in the lid and sides.

**Food**— Red Worms do not have teeth. Anything you expect them to eat through should be soft, or should break down to softer material. All fruit and veg scraps. Coffee grounds and filters, tea bags, pasta, bread. Worms have a gizzard like a chicken and so need gritty material to help digest their food. Finely crushed egg shells, or a cup of soil can provide this. They cannot consume oily/greasy foods. This coats their skin suffocating them. The smaller the pieces of food, the quicker the worms can break them down. Word of warning, make sure to bury the food to avoid worm bin pests such as fruit flies.

Another great benefit of having a worm bin is that they are great for teaching kids. There are so many things they can learn such as: the differences between our bodies and senses and the worms; what is biodegradable and what's not; comparisons of plant growth , with and without vermicompost, the list goes on.

Ever since I have had my first worm bin, I have used a book called Worms Eat My Garbage from Mary Appelhof. This book is available at Lane Libraries and Middletown Libraries and of course you can purchase your own. There are other great books on worm composting available, especially for children.

We have more information about vermicomposting and traditional backyard composting on our website at [www.butlerswcd.org/compost](http://www.butlerswcd.org/compost)



## Upcoming Events

•**Board Meetings:**  
2nd Tuesday of each month  
at 3:30 pm.

• **Pond Clinic:**  
June 5 from 6 - 8:30 pm

•**Ecology Class:**  
June 16 from 9- 11 am

• **Rain Barrel Workshop:**  
June 21 from 6 - 8:30 pm

• **Creeking programs:**  
Thursdays in June and July

•**Rain Garden Workshop  
for Professionals:**  
June 25 from 9 am - 2 pm

•**Ecology Class:**  
July 21 from 9 - 11 am

• **Butler County Fair:**  
July 22 - 28

•**Growing up Wild:**  
August 15 from 1 - 4 pm

•**Butler SWCD Annual  
Meeting/Open House:**  
August 28

•**Curious KIDSS:**  
September 6 from 6 - 9 pm

•**2018 Pesticide Testing  
for Applicator License:**  
September 27, October 25,  
and November 29 at 10 am.

To find out more information on any of these upcoming events, please check out our website at [www.butlerswcd.org](http://www.butlerswcd.org) or call our office at 513-887-3720.





<b>Gail Lierer Crop Ins. Agency</b> Gail Lierer Crop Insurance Agent 1487 Chapel Road Okeana, Ohio 45053 513-738-9973 home 513-615-9257 cell lierer.1@gmail.com	<b>THEODORE JUNG, EA</b> Tax Advisor, Certifying Acceptance Agent  110 Boggs Lane, St 101 Cincinnati, OH 45246 Office: 513.771.5611 Fax: 513.771.5514 theodore.jung@blockadvisors.com www.blockadvisors.com	 <b>Butler Rural Electric Cooperative, Inc.</b> Your Touchstone Energy Partner <b>Electrical Services</b> Agricultural Residential Commercial 3888 Stillwell Beckett Rd. Oxford, OH 45056 www.ButlerRural.coop 513-867-4400
<b>Rich Excavating, Inc.</b> 370 Bauer Road Somerville, Ohio 45064 (513) 726-6741 Fax # (513) 726-4326 Cell # (513) 515-6183 richexcavating@gmail.com  SITE DEVELOPMENT LAND CLEARING UNDERGROUND UTILITIES PONDS & LAKES Rob Rich	<h2 style="text-align: center;">Sponsor Our Newsletter</h2> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>\$125 for 4 issues</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Call us at 513-887-3720 to find out more</b></p>	 <b>D. Mike Schenck</b> (513) 424-0183 <b>Schenck Land Improvement Contractors LLC</b> <i>Pond Building My Specialty</i> PO Box 233 Middletown, OH 45042-0233 
<b>Schenck Accounting LLC</b> E-file Taxes & Bookkeeping PO Box 233 Middletown, OH 45042 <b>Connie J Schenck, CPA</b> Certified Public Accountant 513-424-0183 513-594-0338 Schenck@Voyager.net	 <b>Mike Rack</b> Cell: 513-265-6360 Off: 513-738-2177 Clearing Grading Driveways Drain Tile Waterways Basements Water Lines Building Pads Ponds Footers Located in Okeana Ohio - Fully Insured	 5096 US Rt. 127 South Eaton, OH 45320 937-286-0407 agdatasolutions@gmail.com www.agdatasolutions.com <b>Don Garrett</b> Certified Crop Advisor Technical Service Provider for NRCS CNMP and NMP Certified-Ohio Farm Works Software Sales and Support 

## The Butler SWCD

**Mission:** To promote the conservation, restoration, and wise use of our natural resources through technical assistance and education.

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 <b>Butler County Agricultural Society</b> <i>Promotes Butler SWCD</i> www.butlercountyohfair.org 2018 Fair Week: July 22-28	<h2 style="text-align: center;">Tree Sale</h2> <p style="text-align: center;">Order Online  <b>www.ButlerSWCD.org</b>          Order deadline is March 14, 2018          Order pickup April 5-7</p>	 <b>Bartels Farm</b> <i>Christmas Trees</i> 4427 Cotton Run Rd Hamilton, Oh 45011 513-795-2271 www.bartelsfarm.com



Butler SWCD  
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The Butler SWCD and the NRCS prohibits discrimination in its programs on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, religion, age, disability, political beliefs, and marital or familial status.  
USDA: An Equal Opportunity Provider, Employer, and Lender.

## Pond Clinic

Tuesday, June 5  
6—8:30 pm

At Butler SWCD  
1802 Princeton Rd, Hamilton

### Topics:

- Pond construction and maintenance
- Aquatic weed control
- Fish stocking
- Aeration
- Wildlife management
- Liability.

Bring your wet weed samples for identification



**Clinic Provided by:**  
Butler Soil & Water  
Conservation District  
Hamilton County Soil &  
Water Conservation  
District

## Rain Barrel Workshop

*Make your own rain barrel to take home*

Thursday, June 21  
6—8:30 pm

At Butler SWCD  
1802 Princeton Rd, Hamilton

**Cost:** \$35 per barrel, not per person attending. Yes, you can pay to make multiple barrels.

**Registration Deadline:** June 14

### Register:

**Online with Credit Card:** You can register online with a credit card for a small additional fee at [www.ButlerSWCD.org](http://www.ButlerSWCD.org)

**Drop into the office:** We can take cash or check.

**Mail a Check:** Call us at 513-887-3720 to hold your space and then mail a check made payable to "Butler SWCD" and send to Butler SWCD, 1802 Princeton Rd, Hamilton OH 45011.

