

CONSERVATION NEWS

Portage Soil & Water Conservation District

Summer 2011

Volume 51

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REMINDERS

August 23-28

Visit our booth at the
Randolph Fair!

September 8, 2011

**SWCD Annual Election
Voting 8:30 am-9:45 am
with \$4.00 breakfast
buffet**

September 20

**White Amur Pick Up
11:00am SHARP
Randolph Fairgrounds**

September 22

**Farm Science Review
Bus Trip**

Annual Election & Breakfast

Thursday, September 8, 2011

Garden Meeting Room 6970 State Route 88

Ravenna, OH, 44266

8:30am - 9:45am Buffet Breakfast from Special Moments

8:30am-9:45am - SWCD Board of Supervisors Voting

Please join us for our 65th Annual Election!

Come enjoy a breakfast buffet provided by Special Moments Catering.

This is also your opportunity to elect two individuals to the Portage SWCD Board of Supervisors. The candidates will be highlighted at the entrance. You only need to purchase a \$4.00 ticket if you will be joining us for breakfast. Please preorder breakfast tickets by using the order form in this newsletter or by visiting us at the office. Tickets should be ordered no later than September 2, 2011. There are two ways an eligible voter can cast a ballot: (1) at the annual election: which will take place September 8, 2011 at 8:30 a.m. or (2) vote absentee by requesting the proper absentee request forms from the

SWCD office at the following address:

Portage SWCD, 6970 State Route 88

Ravenna, OH 44266.

All absentee ballots must be received
before 4:00 p.m. August 31, 2011.

Contact Marybeth at 330-297-7633 x101 for more information.

Farm Science Review Bus Trip

It's that time of year...time to sign up for the Farm Science Review Bus Trip! This year we will be meeting at Maplewood Career Center parking lot (like always!) and heading to the Farm Science Review on September 22, 2011. Please register by using the order form in this newsletter or by visiting us at the office.

Thursday, September 22, 2011

**Bus departs at 6:00am from Maplewood Career Center & returns around
9:30pm, \$40.00 per person - A Great Deal !!**

Cost includes ticket, bus ride, morning refreshments, and dinner at Troyer's Dutch Heritage Restaurant. This popular trip fills up fast, so reserve your seat today!



Poster Contest Winners

Nearly 800 fifth grade students from eight schools in Portage County participated in the 2011 Conservation Poster Contest. The annual contest is sponsored by the Portage County Garden Center and the Portage SWCD.

The theme for this year's contest was

“Forest for people: more than you can imagine”

This contest gives teachers an opportunity to introduce environmental concepts to their classes.

Our local Garden Clubs sponsor participating schools and facilitate the school contests. Countywide winners receive award certificates and cash prizes from the SWCD.

This year's winners are:

1st place – Natalie Bollheimer, Leighton



2nd place – Avery Malotte, Garfield

3rd place – Matt Dudley, Willyard

4th place – Emily Spellman, Waterloo

Honorable Mention – Elizabeth Richmond, Katherine Thomas

White Amur Fish Sale

White Amurs are sterile, plant-eating fish used to control submerged aquatic vegetation such as pondweeds, coontail, and milfoil. They do not prefer to eat algae and are not a good control option for floating weeds such as duckweed.

Use the form in this newsletter to place your **prepaid** order by Friday, September 16, 2011.

Pick up

Tuesday, September 20, 2011

11:00am - sharp!

**Randolph Fairgrounds
(4215 Fairgrounds Rd, Randolph 44265)**

\$12.00 per fish

- ◆ Bring a covered container, lined with a plastic bag, and recently filled with your own pond water (use one 5-gallon bucket per 2-3 amur).
- ◆ Stock 5-10 amurs per acre, depending on weed problem
- ◆ Arrive promptly—the fish truck will be there a short time
- ◆ Please mark pick up dates and location on your calendar. NO reminders will be sent.
- ◆ Contact Marybeth at 330-297-7633 x101 with questions.

Northern Nut Growers

The Portage County Chapter of the Northern Nut Growers Association will be holding its first meeting on Tuesday, September 6th at 6:30 PM. Meeting location is in the Garden Meeting Room at Portage SWCD, 6970 State Route 88, Ravenna. Topics planned for the evening are: Crop nut trees suitable for Portage County, government programs that might assist land-owners in establishing nut crops, possible tree sources. This meeting is free of charge and open to the public.

Rain Barrel Workshop

A rain barrel workshop will be held on Tuesday, September 27th at 6:00 p.m. at Lake Hodgson Lodge, 5089 Lakewood Road, Ravenna. Registration is open to Portage County residents and will be on a first-come basis. The cost per participant is \$25.00, and is limited to the first 40 registrants. Please make check payable to: The City of Ravenna and mail along with the completed form on back to: Stormwater Coordinator, City of Ravenna, 210 Park Way, Ravenna, OH 44266-

Tree Seedling Sale... Seeking Your Input

Spring will be here again in a blink of an eye! Customers often ask questions about how our tree seedling sale is planned. Believe it or not, we begin selecting and ordering our tree seedlings in September! That said, we would like to give you the opportunity to contribute your suggestions.

We would like to continue the trend of offering as many Ohio natives as possible in our sale, but also want your suggestions for berries, shrubs, evergreens, deciduous conifers and plants for tough sites. Customer suggestions for the 2012 tree sale can be emailed by September 16 to Lynn at lvogel@portageswcd.org.

Based on pricing and availability we cannot guarantee your tree will appear on the list, but we will do our best! Thank you in advance for your input!





Get a Jump on Next Year's Growing Season!



Late summer and early fall is the perfect time to test your lawn, garden and crop soils. Soil nutrient quantities can fluctuate during heavy spring rains due to leaching. We typically have less rain in late summer so soil nutrients are usually more stable, making it a preferable time to test your soils. A soil test is a fairly inexpensive way to truly determine the fertility of your soil. We all know that plants get the nutrients they need from the soil. Soil testing will quantify the existing available nutrients in your soil as well as identify nutrient deficiencies. Soil pH is also determined with a soil test and that information will help you determine if you need to try to adjust the acidity of your soil to make nutrients more available to your plants. Soil test results will be accompanied by recommendations for optimum fertilizer rates as well as pH adjusters (lime or sulfur). Additionally, most testing labs will also recommend the optimal time to apply any beneficial soil amendments. A late summer soil test will provide you the information you need to make appropriate soil amendments.

Fall Fertilization Offers Many Advantages

Some of the advantages of fall applications are:

- Fall fertilization saves valuable time in the spring and clears the way for quick spring planting
- Fall fertilization reduces the probability of soil compaction due to drier fall soils
- The probability of nutrient leaching and run-off is far greater in spring applications than in fall applications. The environmental impact of fertilizers moving through stormwater to waterways is minimized by fall applications.
- Fall application allows more time for lime to react with the soil, which is especially beneficial in reduced tillage systems.

And when it comes to lawn care, fall is the absolute BEST time to fertilize according to Joe Rimelspach, OSU Plant Pathologist. Late August and early September is also the best time to see a new lawn or overseed an existing lawn that needs help. More information about fall lawn fertilization recommendations can be found at

<http://ohioline.osu.edu/hyg-fact/1000/1191.html>

Soil testing materials are available at Portage SWCD office.

Lynn Vogel, Storm Water Educator

Did You Know.....that storms are rated using a statistic called a return period? A storm with a return period of 10 years is one that is likely to occur only once over a ten year period, thus having a ten percent chance of occurring during any given year. This is typically referred to as a "10 year storm." These ratings vary for different areas, and in Portage County a storm that dropped 2.5 inches of rain in 6 hours would be rated as a 10 year storm. These ratings are used by engineers as guidelines for designing storm water infrastructure. For example, an engineer may design a system of storm sewer pipes to handle up to a 10 year storm event, where as a storm water detention pond may be required to be designed to safely pass a 50 year storm event without over-topping.

The spring of 2011 has been one of Northeast Ohio's wettest on record with well above average rainfall for the months of March, April and May. In fact, for the state of Ohio this April was the wettest in the last 130 years! During those three months Portage County experience 5 storm events that exceeded the 1 year storm rating, and one storm event that exceeded the 10 year storm rating. So if it feels like we've had a lot of water this year, that's because we have!

For more information visit:

<http://www.geography.osu.edu/faculty/rogers/statclim.html>

<http://lwf.ncdc.noaa.gov/oa/documentlibrary/rainfall.html>

Eric Long, Water Quality Engineer

Fall Program Sign-up

Fall Program Sign-Up

With hay cutting, harvesting and other projects in full swing, conservation projects are not at the top of the “to do” list this time of year. However, now is a good time to look at your fields and headquarters to line up future projects or to address the completion of current Environmental Quality Incentive Program (EQIP) or Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) items.

Summer is a good time to think about prospective EQIP or CRP projects that you may want to sign up for next year. The EQIP program can assist producers in grazing management plans (GMP), fence, heavy use area protection for livestock, comprehensive nutrient management plans (CNMP), manure storage, high tunnels and a host of other conservation practices. Forestry EQIP can assist landowners with cost sharing for services such as tree planting or grapevine and invasive species control.

Participants that have current EQIP contracts need to be planning construction. A practice must be completed within the first year that the contract is signed. Other practices must then be completed in three years, or as planned by the district conservationist and landowner. The incentive payment in the EQIP program are paid after an item is completed.

The CRP program is used to install grassed waterways and buffer strips, eligible areas (Eligibility determined by office) can be signed up at anytime with the Farm Service Agency (FSA). If you have gully erosion in areas that are cropped, now is a good time to sign up and start planning fall construction after harvest.

I would like to take this opportunity to inform interested landowners that EQIP sign up will begin around mid September to early October 2011 for the 2012 contract application period. Now is a good time to make an appointment for a field visit with NRCS or SWCD staff for more information.

Gretl Whiteleather, NRCS Conservationist

Summer Conservation Tips for Homeowners

As we prepare for the transition from summer to fall, please remember that your small personal choices can have a big impact on water quality! Here are some tips and ideas on how you can join the effort to improve water quality:

- ◆ Only rain down the drain! Don't put anything that you wouldn't eat or drink down the storm drain.
- ◆ Reduce the amount of pesticides and herbicides used at your home this summer.
- ◆ Plant a rain garden in your yard using native plants. These beautiful gardens temporarily store water and they can filter out pollutants.
- ◆ Mow the grass high. Even better, leave portions unmowed to entice butterflies and provide wildlife habitat.
- ◆ Leave a 25 foot or more buffer zone of unmowed area along your stream or wetland.
- ◆ Recycle! Especially remember to recycle used oil and fluids drained from your summer maintenance equipment.
- ◆ Do not flush medications or chemicals down any drains.
- ◆ Try substituting chemical cleaners with vinegar.
- ◆ Identify and remove invasive plant species on your property
- ◆ Enjoy the remainder of our warm weather!!

SWCD Event & Item Order Form

Please check one or more: Breakfast Banquet FSR Bus
 White Amur Rain Barrel Workshop

Name: _____ Phone: _____

Address: _____ City: _____ Zip: _____

Rain Barrel Workshop X \$25.00 each = _____

Breakfast Tickets X \$ 4.00 each = _____

FSR Bus Tickets X \$40.00 each = _____

White Amur Carp X \$12.00 each = _____

TOTAL = _____

Office Use Only

Paid: Yes___ No___

Cash or Check # _____

SWCD Initials: _____

Detach & return with check payable to:

Portage SWCD 6970 SR 88, Ravenna OH 44266

