

# CONSERVATION NEWS

## Portage Soil & Water Conservation District

Summer 2022

### 2022 Annual Board of Supervisors Election

#### Inside This Issue:

FSR Bus Trip	2
Workshop Info	3
Sponsors	4
Waste Spotlight	5
Backyard Conservation	6
Fall Fish Sale Information	7

Thursday, September 15th, 2022

Garden Meeting Room 6970 State Route 88

Ravenna, OH, 44266

6:30 p.m. Dinner

6:00–7:00 p.m. - SWCD Board of Supervisors Voting

The Ohio Soil and Water Conservation Commission will cause an election of Supervisors of the PORTAGE Soil and Water Conservation District to be held in accordance with Chapter 940 of the Ohio Revised Code.

Residents or landowners, firms, and corporations that own land or occupy land in PORTAGE COUNTY and are 18 years of age and older may vote for Supervisor. A non-resident landowner, firm, or corporation must provide an affidavit of eligibility, which includes designation of a voting representative, prior to casting a ballot.

There are three ways an eligible voter can cast a ballot:

- (1) In-person at the annual meeting, on Thursday, September 15, 2022 at 6:00p.m. in the Garden Meeting Room at 6970 State Route 88, Ravenna, OH 44266
- (2) At the SWCD office from 8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. between August 17th and September 15th, 2022
- (3) Vote absentee by requesting a ballot from the office at the following address:  
Portage SWCD, 6970 St. Rt. 88, Ravenna, Ohio, 44266  
Via phone 330.235.6798 or email [csells@portageswcd.org](mailto:csells@portageswcd.org)

The Portage SWCD will have the annual banquet and election on September 15th, 2022. Voting starts at 6:00 p.m. Dinner will be provided by Ravenna's own Guido's Restaurant starting at 6:30 p.m. After dinner, please join us for a presentation. There is no charge for this event, but reservations are required to help us plan for the banquet. Reservations must be received by Monday, September 12th and can be made by emailing Carey at [csells@portageswcd.org](mailto:csells@portageswcd.org) or by calling (330)235-6798. We hope to see you there!

#### REMINDERS

**Sept. 10th**  
Make & Take  
Hypertufa Workshop

**Sept 15th**  
SWCD  
Annual Meeting /  
Election

**Sept. 20**  
Fall Fish Sale Pick-up

**Sept. 21**  
FSR Bus Trip

**Sept. 24th**  
Integrating Natives  
Workshop #3

**Oct. 1st**  
Growing Dahlias  
Workshop

**Nov. 5th**  
Integrating Natives

### Meet the Candidates

**Fred Rodenbucher** is a third-generation farmer in Portage County & has been a full-time farmer for the past 15 years in Randolph. He raises corn, beans, wheat and hay in rotation. Fred has served on the Farm Bureau board for 3 years. Fred is also a current SWCD board member and has dutifully served for 9 years and is seeking re-election. He and his wife Darlene, live in Atwater.

**Robert Bane** and his wife Penni live in Atwater Township where they operated a 400-acre farm until recently. They have five children. Bob graduated from Southeast High School and KSU. He is a retiree of the Chrysler Corporation. Bob and Penni attend the Atwater Congregational Church where they are members.

# Farm Science Review Bus Trip

Are you a farmer? Do you just want to learn more about agriculture and natural resource management? Do you enjoy getting to know your fellow farmers and community members?

Join us on Portage County's annual bus trip to the OSU Farm Science Review! Farm Science Review attracts upwards of 140,000 visitors from the US and Canada who come to discover 4,000 product lines from 600 commercial exhibitors, to get the most up to date information on farm science and technology, to witness field demonstrations on combines, tillage, nutrient and lime applications, drainage installations, and more. The Gwynne Conservation Area, a 67-acre demonstration and education area for agriculture and natural resource management practices, is another great attraction. This site is home to a natural stream, wetland ponds, windbreak plantings, crop tree plantings, wildlife food plots, soil pit, riparian forests, dry hydrant and more.

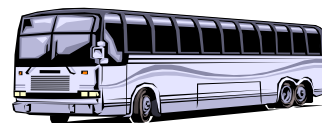
To best serve our community members, Portage SWCD has been providing community transportation to this event for over 30 years. **This annual tradition includes your ticket, the commercial bus ride to and from the event, morning refreshments, and dinner at Der Dutchman Restaurant, all for the cost of \$40.00!! For groups of 5 or more tickets, the price will be reduced to \$35.00 each, so gather your family and friends and bring them to this great event! We will also offer this reduced rate to students. To qualify for the discount, you must be registered by the closing of business on Friday, August 31<sup>st</sup>. There are only 56 seats available on the bus, so reserve your seat today!**

We will be meeting on **Wednesday, September 21<sup>st</sup> @ 5:45 a.m.** at the Maplewood Career Center parking lot (like always) and heading to the Farm Science Review.

Please register by using the order form below. The bus departs at 6:00 a.m. from Maplewood Career Center & returns around 9:30 p.m.

**Deadline for ordering tickets is Monday, September 12, 2022**

To learn more about this year's event, please visit [www.fsr.osu.edu](http://www.fsr.osu.edu)



## FSR Ticket Order Form

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

**Office Use Only**

Paid: Yes\_\_\_ No\_\_\_

Cash or Check # \_\_\_\_\_

SWCD Initials: \_\_\_\_\_

Receipt # \_\_\_\_\_

**FSR Bus Tickets**                      \_\_\_\_\_ X \$40.00 each = \_\_\_\_\_

**FSR Group Rate (5 or more)** \_\_\_\_\_ X \$35.00 each = \_\_\_\_\_

**Student Rate**                      \_\_\_\_\_ X \$35.00 each = \_\_\_\_\_

**TOTAL =** \_\_\_\_\_

Detach & return with check payable to:

**Portage SWCD at 6970 SR 88, Ravenna OH 44266**

## Homeowner Educational Workshops

### Integrating Native Plants into the Home Landscape:

Did you know that your lawncare and landscaping decisions can have far-reaching environmental and economic impacts? By adding native plants to your landscape, you can often reduce chemical use (such as fertilizers) and reduce storm water run-off (native plants have deep roots that help retain storm water). Native plants also provide excellent habitat for Ohio's wildlife. Portage SWCD is partnering with Portage County Master Gardener Volunteers to offer a four-part educational series that will help participants learn which native plants will work best in their yard. Judy Semroc will be the lead presenter for each of these workshops. Registration is now open all workshops.

**Make & Take Hypertufa Workshop—September 10th @ 9:30am –11:30am:** to be held in the Garden Meeting Room at Portage SWCD, 6970 SR 88, Ravenna. The Portage County master Gardeners are hosting this Hands-on make and take workshop. Donna McMillen, garden artisan and hypertufa enthusiast will instruct and assist participants in making a hypertufa! All supplies and materials will be provided but register early, this workshop is limited to the first twenty registrants. To register type in link, to Eventbrite registration page. Link: <https://hyper-tufa.eventbrite.com>

**Integrating Natives Into your home Landscape Session #3—September 24th @ 10am:** to be held in the Garden Meeting Room at Portage SWCD, 6970 SR 88, Ravenna. Integrating native Plants into the Home Landscape Session #3. What You Will Learn: Importance of late season pollen sources, Herbaceous plants to fuel the flight of migratory species, Fall Clean up? Less=More. Free Plants for participants. To register type in link, to Eventbrite registration page. Link: <https://integratingnatives3.eventbrite.com>

**Growing Dahlias—October 1st @ 10am-11:30am:** to be held in the Garden Meeting Room at Portage SWCD, 6970 SR 88, Ravenna. Would you like to learn more about growing dahlias? Then this workshop is for you! the Portage County master gardener and Dahlia enthusiast Nancy Polz will guide participants through the seasons to share her expertise in planting, staking, digging, dividing, labeling and storing dahlia tubers. Nancy's hands-on demonstrations will take the guesswork out of how to successfully grow the exquisite flowers. To register type in link, to Eventbrite registration page. Link: <https://growingdahlias.eventbrite.com>

**Integrating Natives Into your home Landscape Session #4—November 5th @ 10am:** to be held in the Garden Meeting Room at Portage SWCD, 6970 SR 88, Ravenna. What You Will Learn: How to provide for wildlife in the winter, Attractive berries, bark and winter-interest natives, which native plants offer the most benefits to wildlife. Free plants for participants. To register type in link, to Eventbrite registration page. Link: <https://integratingnatives4.eventbrite.com>

## Borders Help Farms to Clean Water & Provide Homes for Wildlife

Sometimes in a quest for bigger harvests, producers put every inch of land to work. But more land for crops or pastures doesn't always lead to bigger yields. It's best to use land for its greatest purpose, enabling more than a traditional yield. One common way producers do this through conservation is field borders. Field borders are managed strips of grass or legumes, sometimes mixed with shrubs, on the edge of cropland fields that reduce erosion, promote wildlife and improve environmental quality.

Field borders – typically 15 to 30 feet wide – make operating easy for farm equipment, providing a sod-based area at the edge of the field to turn machinery during field operations. They also help protect combines and other equipment from overhanging tree limbs. Field borders protect water quality by trapping sediment and nutrients, much like a filter. These planted areas, depending on their location, reduce erosion, and trap sediment and nutrients that can have negative effects downstream. They also slow water down as it runs off fields.

Properly managed field borders also increase plant diversity and the availability of food sources such as seeds and insects for bobwhite quail, cottontail rabbits, wild turkeys, gray fox and many other wildlife species. Many of these species like bobwhite quail have increased in population as field borders have been implemented. Not only can field borders serve as a wildlife-friendly practice, but they can be attractive features on farms.

For more information, contact your Portage County USDA Service Center at 330-297-7633 x3 or visit [nrcs.usda.gov](https://nrcs.usda.gov).

# Newsletter Sponsors

Please tell our sponsors that you saw them in our newsletter!



Any of combination of this clip art will work



## Waste Spotlight: Single-use Plastic Bags

Our summer Waste Spotlight is on plastic bags. When we spoke with both private and municipal recyclers, they urged us to write about single-use plastic bags. Plastic bags get tangled in sorting and processing equipment and create major problems when added to curbside and municipal recycling. Removing these tangled bags results in delays to the sorting process, damage to equipment, and also increases the risk of worker injuries.

Here are a few tips to consider:

- Do not add empty plastic bags to your recycling bins or dumpsters.
- Do not place recycle items in a plastic bag prior to adding to bins or dumpsters.
- If you do **NOT** have curbside service and are hauling your recycling to a community dumpster it is understandable that you might need to bag your recycling for transportation. However, please dump or otherwise remove recycle items from the bag prior to placing them in bins or dumpsters.

The better way to remedy this problem would be for all of us to always use reusable bags when shopping. Many of us have already developed the habit of taking reusable bags to the grocery store. However, we are not as consistent with taking reusable bags into the pharmacy, hardware store, or other retail outlets. We need to demand more of ourselves since this really is an easy habit to develop! Our reliance on plastic for convenience is not sustainable.

Below are a few tips for honing your reusable bag skills:

- Keep reusable bags in your vehicle by taking the time to return bags immediately to your car after unpacking.
- If you get in the store and realize you left your reusable bags in the car - make the trip back to the car to get them.
- If you realize you left your reusable bags at home, try to limit your purchases to what you can carry out of the store unbagged! The inconvenience may be enough to 'reset' your mental checklist of what you need to bring with you when you leave your home to go shopping.

Have you ever wondered what type of reusable bag offers the least environmental impact? After all, many reusable bags are also made of plastic. Cotton or natural fiber bags are also an option. They are sturdy, washable, and score points on some key environmental measures for being durable and biodegradable. But studies show that buying new, cotton bags is not eco-friendly, even when the cotton is grown organically. So, what is the best reusable bag? The bottom line is that the best reusable bag is **the one you already have!** If you have a stash of single-use plastic bags at home, carry those back to the store and re-use them while they last. Just be sure to dispose of them properly when they are no longer usable. Another option is to source bags made from fabric that would otherwise be landfilled. In the United States, we landfill approximately 21 billion pounds of textile waste annually – and that number is growing exponentially. Diverting waste from the landfill is always a worthy goal. The Socially Responsible Sweatshop, a non-profit group in Kent, has waste diversion as one of their key operating principles. They produce a wonderful assortment of reusable bags made from fabric that was destined for the landfill! You can visit them at Haymaker Market in Kent each Saturday morning or visit their website for more information at: <https://sociallyresponsiblesweatshopohio.org/>. When you purchase SRS bags you are getting a washable, durable, and eco-friendly product that is also supporting local community services from sales proceeds.

Lastly, please note that the best and easiest way to recycle single-use plastic bags is at **drop-off bins conveniently located near grocery and big box store entrances**. For bag recycling at retail locations, recycle only clean, dry plastic bags and film. Remove receipts or any other items from bags. Recycling is important, please take the time to do it right!!

## No-Till Drill Information

Portage Soil & Water Conservation District, similar to some other districts, operates a No-Till drill rental program. Our rental program includes two no-till drills, one 10' HayBuster and one 6' LandPride. To use either of the no-till drills you must first fill out the Cooperator Agreement form, then depending on which drill you would like to use, you will have to fill out the appropriate rental agreement form for that drill. All forms are available on our website or in person at our office. Once the forms are filled out you will be put on the user list, when the drill becomes available you will be contacted to see if you are prepared and ready to use it, if not the next person in line will be contacted after that, then we will circle back at that time. Both drills will be up to the next user to transport to their farm or field where they plan to use it, the district does not offer delivery or pickup unless prior arrangements have been made due to circumstances. Our rental fees differ for each drill, the 10' haybuster drill rental fee is \$8.00 per acre planted and the 6' landpride is a flat fee of \$50.00 plus \$10.00 per acre on top of that. The drills are to be cleaned out and in good working condition after each user is done with it, failure to do so may result in additional cleaning or maintenance fees in addition to your rental fee which are outlined in the cooperator agreement form. For More information or any question about our rental program please call Anthony @ 330-235-6811.

# Conservation at Work Video Series

A video series from NRCS and [farmers.gov](http://farmers.gov), *Conservation at Work*, presents short and easy to understand videos about popular conservation practices. These videos feature producers explaining how an individual practice helps their land and why they are using it.

The videos shine the spotlight on farmers, ranchers, and forestland owners from across the U.S. who explain why they've implemented the conservation practices and how they work on their land. They also provide insight into how each practice is helping them protect and improve resources and save time and money.

We've got videos showcasing high tunnels, no-till, cover crops, prescribed grazing, and many more.

Check out the *Conservation at Work* video series at [farmers.gov/conservation/conservationatwork](http://farmers.gov/conservation/conservationatwork).

## Backyard Conservation: Have you surrendered?

### *Have you surrendered to the status quo?*

When it comes to landscaping, most of us make decisions based on aesthetically pleasing plants and landscape designs without much regard to ecosystem function and wildlife habitat. The status quo a U.S. residential landscape is represented with a large area of turfgrass, a tree in the front yard, and a few shrubs along the front of the house. Sound familiar? And the lawn needs to be green all season, well-trimmed and free of dandelions or other 'weeds'! Many Americans also rely on lawn care services to manage their landscapes. We've all seen the little, white flags placed on lawns that have been chemically treated. While, most of us learn pretty early in life that a white flag signals 'surrender', it is doubtful that anyone is actually placing these white flags on lawns to communicate 'surrender'. But the question is worth considering— are we surrendering something important when we choose to chemically treat our lawns?

### ***A matter of scale:***

If you look at the mounting research, you will soon learn that ***much is surrendered when we choose to chemically treat our lawns***. First of all, we have a LOT of turf grass in the United States. NASA backed research estimates that we have approximately 30 million acres of turf grass - making our home lawns the single, largest irrigated crop grown in the U.S.! And the grasses that make up our lawns are NOT plants native to North America. From bluegrass to Zoysia, our lawns are comprised of plants that were imported from Europe or Asia. Non-native plants typically require more chemical inputs to perform as well as native plants that have co-evolved with our soils and climate. That is certainly the case when it comes to turf grass! Averaged over the course of a year, Americans use ***nearly 8 billion gallons of water per day to maintain their green lawns***.

### ***Water pollution:***

Water, either from rainfall or sprinklers that falls onto our artificially lush, green grass quickly becomes polluted by the ***pesticides, herbicides, and fertilizers*** we have used to maintain these lawns. This polluted water is transported through storm sewers and ditches and eventually ends up in our streams, rivers, lakes, and oceans. Once there, these chemicals disrupt the ecosystems they enter. Recent large scale algal blooms fed by the increased presence of nutrients (phosphorus and nitrogen) in Lake Erie and other waterways are the cumulative effect of many different sources. These sources include farm-land runoff, wastewater overflows, leaking sewage systems, and ***the 80 million tons of synthetic lawn fertilizers Americans apply each year to our lawns***. Our aquatic ecosystems are altered in many other ways besides algal blooms by the impact of sediment and pollutants. Many aquatic plants and animals that are integral in helping to keep our water clean are unable to live in these chemically altered ecosystems. As we lose these species, we ***surrender the benefits*** they provide for keeping our water healthy.

### ***Missed opportunities to support healthy ecosystems:***

In addition to the destruction of healthy aquatic habitats caused by water pollution, we further undermine ecosystem function with our commitment to other non-native landscape ornamentals besides turfgrass. Please remember that our urban and suburban landscapes encompass about ***30 million acres***. When you consider that most American landscapes also include some non-native shrubs such as taxus, boxwood, and burning bush, add too that our dominant landscape tree of choice for the past several decades has been Callery or Bradford Pears — a species native to China, you can quickly calculate that our residential landscapes are comprised of mostly non-native species! ***We surrender wildlife habitat*** when we choose to plant non-native species. Many native Ohio insects are unable to use these non-native plants as food sources. Insects are at the base of the food chain and biologists are reporting continual decreases in Ohio's bird populations.

### ***A different kind of surrender:***

But, the good news is that there is a better way to manage our landscape to improve soil quality, preserve the health of our water, and to make it more habitable to wildlife. If we would all make the choice to reduce the amount of space we are using to grow turfgrass AND reduce the chemical inputs used to grow grass, that would, in turn, reduce the amount of chemicals entering our waterways. By ***surrendering*** those areas to instead allow a native species to grow, we could create wildlife habitat. Planting a native oak tree is one of the simplest ways to increase ecosystem function in your yard. If you don't have space for an oak tree, there are many smaller native Ohio trees, shrubs, and perennial plants to choose from! Feel free to contact our office for assistance with selecting or finding native plants!

# 2022 Fall Amur Fish Sale

## 2022 Fall Amur Fish Sale Information

**Date:** Tuesday, September 20th

**Time:** 10:30 a.m. SHARP!!

**Place:** Randolph Fairgrounds, 4215 Fairgrounds Road, Randolph, OH 44265

- \* Complete the order form below and mail with payment PRIOR to **September 13th**
- \* Arrive promptly - or early if you have a large order, the fish truck will only be there for a short time
- \* Bring a covered container lined with a plastic bag and recently filled with your own pond water (be careful not to puncture the bag when you cover the container)
- \* Please mark the pick up date and the location on your calendar!

### FALL AMUR FISH SALE ORDER FORM

Pick up is on Tuesday, Sept. 20 at 10:30 a.m. SHARP!!  
Randolph Fairgrounds—4215 Fairgrounds Road, Randolph 44265  
Please fill out this form & send it with your check payable to  
Portage SWCD, 6970 State Route 88, Ravenna OH 44266

Order Deadline: Tuesday Sept. 13th, 2022

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_ Daytime Phone # \_\_\_\_\_

Cell Phone # \_\_\_\_\_ Email \_\_\_\_\_

White Amur Carp @ \$16.00 each    Quantity X \_\_\_\_\_ = \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Subtotal = \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Sales Tax ( x 0.07%) = \$ \_\_\_\_\_

TOTAL \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Check here if you want to be ADDED to our mailing list \_\_\_\_\_

Portage Soil & Water Conservation District  
6970 State Route 88  
Ravenna, Ohio 44266  
330-235-6815 fax: 330-296-5917  
www.portageswcd.org

Non-Profit  
Organization  
U.S. Postage  
PAID  
Portage SWCD

*USDA and SWCD are an Equal Opportunity Employer and Provider*

**Sign Up Now for  
USDA Conservation  
Programs!**



---

### **Visit us at the Randolph Fair!**

Stop by and see us at the Portage County Randolph Fair!

Our booth is in the Agriculture Building across from the dairy barn and live milking demonstrations. We are featuring information about the importance of native plant communities and will have free Swamp White Oak trees available for fair patrons, on a first-come basis while supplies last. We will also have one of our no-till drills at the fair on display with rental information available.