

Watershed News

Volume 3, Issue 1

January 2005

Special points of interest:

- 2005 marks the SRWC's 8th year serving the local community.
- Our \$11,000 raised in 2004 from membership contributions was our highest level ever! The 2005 goal is \$17,000. Look inside for info on how to help.
- Look inside for information on Committee Activities and how you can get involved.
- Visit the website often for new articles, programs, and announcements—including a current article on Ducks Unlimited. Have content ideas or things you would like to submit, if we agree that they are web-friendly, they may get posted.

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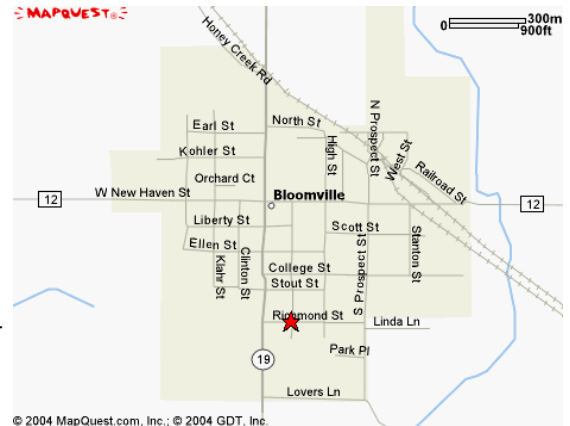
Watershed Plan Public Comment Period to Open at Winter Meeting

The SRWC's Winter Meeting will be held on **January 25, 2005** at the **Bloomville Community Center** from **7:00-9:00 pm**. The meeting will focus on watershed planning and will open the public comment period for the Honey Creek Watershed Action Plan. The meeting will discuss the planning process thus far and we will walk through a section of the plan to help provide guidance on how to provide comments and input on the plan.

The public comment period will last about one month, and will give the general public another chance to take part in the planning process.

If you can't make it to the meeting but still want to submit comments, please visit our website. The draft plan and instructions for submitting comments will be placed on the website as soon as they are available.

Even if you don't live in the Honey Creek watershed, this is still a great opportunity to take part and to learn more about



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The community center is located at 10 Beeghly Ave in Bloomville. There is a parking lot on the east side of the building.

the planning process. Public participation in the process will help bring watershed planning to your area more quickly, which can help bring in funds for voluntary water quality related programs.

For directions or more information on the meeting, please check the website calendar or contact the SRWC directly. Hope to see you there!

Strategic Plan 2005—Your Input Needed

The SRWC, in an effort to meet the needs of our members, will be holding a strategic planning session on March 16. The session will be a chance for members and partners to help us formulate a plan for the next year and beyond. This process will help to unite our efforts and ensure that we are working on the topics that affect you most. If you would like to attend, **please contact Chris Riddle**

to register. The time and location will be posted on the website sometime in January. Those who register will be sent a reminder as well. Can't make it out that day? A form for submitting comments will also be posted on the website for those who cannot attend on the 16th.

Submitting comments?? It's a great opportunity to submit your 2005 membership as well. Forms available online.

2005 Membership Drive—Invite A Friend

As the new year begins, now is a great time for resolutions. Of course, you have probably broken many of them by now, but who's counting. Here is a resolution you can keep. Renew your commitment to clean water in your community. If you haven't renewed your membership yet, now is your chance. It's easy to do, and you'll feel good knowing that you are supporting the health of the water our community depends on. Want to make a bigger impact? Get a friend to join! Give a gift membership or just talk to your friends and neighbors about joining on their own. Getting those around you to join will help raise their awareness of water quality concerns and will benefit your neighborhood! Visit our website for the membership form. Don't have internet access, just give us a call and we'll send a form to you.



Fishing on Sandusky Bay.

Why become a member of the SRWC???

- Help protect local water resources that are vital for a healthy community and economy.
- Don't have time to give? Making a financial contribution can help support an organized, professional effort to protect water quality.
 - Receive quarterly newsletters with great updates, information, and opportunities.
 - Receive invitations to quarterly meetings, canoe floats, and other great events.
 - Become a part of a community of local citizens who want to protect the Sandusky River for generations to come.
 - If you feel it's important to contribute, then why wouldn't your friends, family, and neighbors?

Wastewater & Agriculture Committees Making Progress

The Wastewater Committee has started its 2004 Section 319 grant program to replace home sewage treatment systems. Visit the Committee's page on the SRWC's website for more information on program objectives, regulations, and target areas.

Educational information on system maintenance and upkeep will be on the web as well. Proper maintenance can extend the life of your system, saving you money.

For more information on either of these programs, visit our website or contact the SRWC at 419-334-5016.

The Agriculture Committee, a Core 4 Conservation Alliance, is working on completing the development of a farmer recognition program. Nine watershed residents are working with the SRWC to produce the guidelines for the program. The program will help us recognize farmers who are protecting our water resources. Details will be unveiled soon on the Coalition's website, visit the Ag. Committee page for more info.

Core4  Better Soil. Cleaner Water. Greater Profits. Brighter Future.
Conservation for Agriculture's Future

2005 SRWC Members

The 2005 Membership Drive has gotten underway. About \$3,700 dollars have been raised already this year, with an average donation of \$182.00.

2005 Members

Bald Eagle—WSOS/ RCAP

Mink—American Electric Power, City of Fremont, City of Tiffin.

Walleye—Richard & Lisa Dunn, Mary Fran Kuebler, James W Pry II, Village of New



Swartz Bridge—one of 3 covered bridges in the watershed.

Washington.

Damselfly—Ken Baker, Gordon Downard, George Fruth, Izaak Walton League - Tiffin-Seneca, Sandra & Robert Laipply Jr, Seneca County Farm Bureau, Scott & Joanne Riddle, Seneca Caverns, Margaret Widman, Terry Wright.

Sycamore—Robert & Berniece Bear, James L. Cooper, Mary Anne & Carl Koebel, Terry & Katie McKibben, Joe and Karen Perry Family. Updated: Dec 13,2005

Sandusky State Scenic River Support Scenic Rivers on your vehicle

A scenic Ohio stream, complete with leaping sport fish, provides a new design for the state's Scenic Rivers License Plate, available through the Ohio Bureau of Motor Vehicles (BMV) and local deputy registrars.

Sales of the new plate, which costs an additional \$25 beyond the standard annual license fee, benefit the Ohio Scenic Rivers Protection Fund, which receives \$15 from each purchase or renewal.

Administered by the Ohio Department of Natural Resources, the fund helps protect and restore scenic river forest corridors, protect and preserve Ohio's scenic rivers, improve water quality and river habitat for endangered species, facilitate river clean-ups, research projects, and the popular volunteer-based Stream Quality Monitoring (SQM) project, and promote river conservation and education. Since the creation of Ohio's scenic rivers license plate in 1995, more than 77,000 plates have been sold, generating \$1,200,000 for the



Scenic Rivers Protection Fund.

For more information, visit www.ohiodnr.com or call Robert Vargo, NW Ohio Scenic River Manager, at 419-981-6319.

Scenic River Funds Benefit the Sandusky River Watershed

Scenic River Funds from the purchase of license plates have helped benefit the projects of the Sandusky River Watershed Coalition and the residents of the Sandusky River Watershed through a variety of projects. The most recent partnership led to Scenic Rivers providing funds

to help with the printing of the Recreational Resources Map. The map, available at www.sanduskyriver.org or in printed format from locations around the watershed or through the Coalition, was printed with funds from the Scenic Rivers Program and the Lake Erie Protection Fund, administered by the Lake Erie Commission. Visit www.epa.state.oh.us/oleo for more on the Commission and Fund.

Steering Committee Visits New Washington Water Treatment Plant, Gets New Members

The Steering Committee continued its quarterly road trips around the watershed in November with a trip to the New Washington Water Treatment Plant. Mayor Neidermier hosted the Committee meeting at the village hall, and plant operator Chris Sallee led the tour. New Washington relies on a small ditch for its water supply, pumping into two reservoirs. Careful management of the water supply produces a great water supply for the village residents. Their biggest local complaint is poor taste, which occurs due to natural turnover of the cooler



SC members at the New Washington Reservoirs.

water. This problem however is limited to a small window each year.

The Steering Committee has also gained a few new members recently. Between annual meeting elections, individuals can request to become a part of the Committee by appointment. New members are Jim Bailey, Chris Schimpf, Mike Hall, and Chuck Gates. Opens left are the Erie and Hardin/Marion County seats.

Development Committee Planning for Watershed Video Getting Involved in Your Community

The Development Committee has begun discussions with WBGU and other interested groups in an attempt to produce a video on the Sandusky River Watershed. Although the project is still in its earliest stages, there is a lot of excitement within the group about the potential for a video.



Sandusky River in Ballville Twp., Sandusky County.

Funding will likely be requested this spring or summer for the project, which we hope to begin in early 2006. This video is a great opportunity to show off the beauty of the Sandusky, and educate people at the same time.

This is one example of the many projects our Committees are working on. To get involved in any of the Committees, contact the comm. chair or Chris. Contact information is available the website, follow the link to the Committees Page.

SANDUSKY RIVER WATERSHED COALITION

219 S. Front St.
PO Box 590
Fremont, OH 43420

Phone: 419-334-5016
Fax: 419-334-5125
Email: cmiddle@wsos.org
Web: www.sanduskyriver.org

Mailing Address Line 1
Mailing Address Line 2
Mailing Address Line 3
Mailing Address Line 4
Mailing Address Line 5



Working together for healthier streams.

We're on the Web!
www.sanduskyriver.org

SRWC Briefs

- The SRWC has made an appearance in a few unlikely places recently. The NWOET Scanner, a newsletter to 1,100 educators in Northwest Ohio featured an article on the Farmer Recognition Program and the Coalition's efforts to educate students about water protection. The Buckeye Bulletin had an article by Dan McElhatten that provided a lot of great information about the watershed and the SRWC. We are always looking for a new, interesting audience to reach, if you have a need for articles or presenters, feel free to contact us.
- On Veteran's Day the USS Bucyrus Victory and its crew were honored in Bucyrus. The ship was christened on October 31, 1944 with a bottle of champagne and a bottle of Sandusky River water. She served in the Pacific during WWII and in the Far Eastern occupation duty until late 1945. The ship was decommissioned Feb 24, 1946 (Source: Telegraph-Forum Nov 12, 2004).
- The TMDL for the Upper Sandusky watershed has been finalized by Ohio and US EPA. The report is available online at: www.epa.state.oh.us/dsw/tmdl/SanduskyRiverUpperTMDL.html

- Steering Committee seats are still available to Erie Co and Hardin/Marion Co representatives.



Seneca Co. Courthouse—one of several hundred sites of interest in the watershed.

- The SRWC is always looking for donations of useful items, door prizes, and give-away items. If your organization has any to donate, let us know.
- Have a camera and need a good reason to go see more of the watershed? We are always accepting paper and digital pictures for our website and other uses.

All we ask is you keep a record of where you took the pictures, so we can identify the great locations for others who may be interested in seeing them. Eventually we will have a virtual tour of the watershed available online, your pictures would be a great help in making this a reality. Pictures of landmarks, interesting features, wildlife, recreational activities, waterways, and just about anything else are all accepted.

- Did You Know? Yard trimmings and food residuals combined are 23% of our waste stream? For information on composting, visit: <http://www.epa.gov/epaoswer/non-hw/composting/index.htm>