

Watershed Waves

News of the Sandusky River Watershed Coalition

Summer 2008

Watershed Waves
Volume 2, Issue 2

Drops of Information Inside this issue:

2	Target Watershed Grant work Kicked off
2	Phosphorus Soil Test Program Sign up
2	Thank you to Sandusky River—Tiffin
3	Broken Sword Cover Crop Grant Extended
3	Happy Birthday Could be Bittersweet for
3	Watershed Coordinator Comments
4	Sandusky River Clean Sweeps

SRWC Recipients of \$6100 American Water Environmental Grant

The Sandusky River Watershed Coalition (SRWC) was recently presented with a \$6,100 Environmental Grant from the American Water Company.

Previously the message about how to dispose of medications has been to flush them. Recent news articles have promoted the need for the change and this grant will provide the message about accepted practices for dis-



Jim Welty and David Little of Ohio American Water Company present grant to Chris Schimpf, SRWC Chair and Cindy Brookes, Watershed Coordinator

posal as well as several collections for proper disposal of unused or expired

over-the-counter or prescription medications.

The program is to benefit water quality by providing education for proper disposal to those with Home Sewage Treatment Systems that can become ineffective by flushing some medications. This will help to maintain healthy Septic Systems thus reducing water quality issues in our streams and rivers.

SRWC Invites You to Learn About Hidden Treasures

On August 23, 2008, the Sandusky River Watershed Coalition invites you to join them for the First Annual Sandusky Watershed Hidden Treasures Event.

Come learn about the unsung nature and beauty of our watershed by participating in Bird Banding of Migratory Shorebirds and enjoying the Marsh Areas

of Winous Point Marsh Conservancy and Green Creek Hunting Club.

The day will begin at 7:30 AM from the Winous Point Marsh Conservancy with bird banding and later travel to Green Creek Hunting Club for a \$9.00 (cash only) box lunch and afternoon presentations about Projects and Re-

search. A tour of the Green Creek Hunting Club is being scheduled to conclude the day.

For more information or to experience the beauty of our Hidden Treasures, please RSVP by August 15th to Cindy Brookes, Watershed Coordinator at 419-334-5016 or cabrookes@wsos.org.

Special points of interest:

- Save the Date — Annual Meeting September 11, 2008
- Like to get more involved attend a SRWC Steering Committee Meeting—1st Thursday of each month at 8:00 AM at the Seneca County Ag Center Conference Room (Please note August Meeting has been changed to August 6th same time and place.)



Target Watershed Grant work Kicked off

Maybe you have seen a group of people out in a County Maintained

Ditch but they are not cleaning or spraying – so what are they doing?

As part of the Honey Creek Targeted Watershed Grant the National Center for Water Quality Research is conducting a study of aquatic or fish habitat in selected ditches.

Why survey fish and invertebrate communities? Agricultural ditches are

designed to convey storm runoff and tile water quickly from farmland. Yet wherever water persists for even a few days, aquatic habitat is present and aquatic organisms begin to make themselves at home. Ditches and headwater streams that were recently cleaned or “dipped” provide poor habitat for most fish and invertebrates. In succeeding years the habitat becomes more “complex” as pools develop, the channel bottom develops bends and turns, and vegetation becomes established on the banks and in the channel. As this happens,

an increasing variety of fish and invertebrates take up residence. Thousands of miles of ag ditches in Ohio provide an extension of the natural downstream communities and contribute valuable areas for fish spawning and fish-food (invertebrate) production. The study is aimed at understanding how quickly, and to what extent, the aquatic habitats of maintained ditches and headwater streams become more complex and thereby develop these beneficial communities in response to a variety of Best Management Practices.

Phosphorus Soil Test Program Sign up

For farmers and landowners in the Sandusky River watershed there is a new 4 year grant that will provide Stratified Soil Testing for phosphorus at no cost to the farmer. This program will help to better understand phosphorus accumulation in the soil surface, potential impacts on root nutrient uptake and increased vulnerability to phosphorus loss in surface runoff.

The stratified soil testing will be con-

ducted at the same time as a standard 8” soil test. It is not meant to replace the standard soil test practice. Standard soil testing is still the responsibility of the farmer.

To participate you can contact your local SWCD office, the Sandusky River Watershed Coordinator or the National Center for Water Quality Research to find out if your local fertilizer dealer or certified crop advisor is participating. Then contact



your dealer or advisor so that they can schedule your testing. The stratified soil test will be fully paid for by the grant while you will still be responsible for the standard 8” sample testing.

Thank you to Sandusky River—Tiffin Survey Participants

A Thank you goes out to the farmers and landowners that took part in the Sandusky River—Tiffin Social Indicator Survey. This survey is to give us a better idea of the importance of conservation practices and the education needed to promote conservation practices within the Sandusky River—Tiffin watershed.



All preliminary numbers show that nearly 45% of all landowners and farmers receiving the survey participated. This is a great help to those working to bring you the programs.

Final calculations and results will be available by late July at <http://ohiowatersheds.osu.edu/gl/>. If you do not have access to a computer

and would like to review the results please contact the Sandusky River Watershed office at (419) 334-5016.

The next step to this program will be to devise educational efforts based on input received from the survey.

Again thanks to all who participated as it is another step toward improving water quality in the Sandusky River Watershed.

Broken Sword Cover Crop Grant Extended

For the past two year the Upper Broken Sword watershed has been the focus of a National Fish and Wildlife Foundation Grant promoting the planting of Cover Crops to reduce runoff and improve stream habitat.

Funding for this program has been extended through 2008 with a few changes to the program allowing for more flexibility.

The program will now be offered to

the entire Broken Sword watershed within Crawford County. Also grazing and haying of the cover crop will be permitted with the understanding that 3" of growth is remaining for over wintering. There will also be a one time incentive to anyone signing up for Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP) infiltration area and escarpment practices. The final addition to the program is for an incentive to anyone that will

relay intercrop wheat in the Fall of 2008 and follow with Soybeans in the Spring of 2009.

For more information regarding this program contact the Crawford Soil and Water Conservation District office.



2007 participating field in the Cover Crop program



Happy Birthday Could be Bittersweet for Ohio's Scenic Rivers

2008 marks the 40th Birthday for the Ohio Scenic Rivers Act. In 1968, the Ohio

Scenic Rivers Act was passed and unknown to Ohio residents later the same year the National Scenic & Wild River legislation passed. Currently, there are 13 state designated rivers, with a total of over 700 river miles under protection. Three rivers are being studied to add as Scenic Rivers, they include: the Ashtabula, the Vermilion, and the Mad River.

The Sandusky, with 66 river miles designated, was the second river in Ohio to be named a State Scenic River in 1970. Recently there has been an effort under way to extend the designation of the Sandusky from its origin, at Lowe-Volk Park to Harrison– Smith Park in Upper Sandusky where the original designation began. This would add the entire river in Crawford County, and the remaining area in Wyandot County. If this is successful, then 114 out of the 130 miles of river would be designated as State Scenic River.

Problems could lie ahead as ODNR Scenic River Program Managers could be lost to state budget cuts if the program is not consolidated with ODNR Division of Watercraft. The Scenic River Managers provide review of public projects, landowner assistance and education and water resource protection while protecting private property rights. To help keep our State Scenic River Managers please contact your state legislator and encourage them to consolidate the Scenic Rivers Program with the ODNR Division of Watercraft.

Watershed Coordinator Comments

Do you ever think—"What would happen if I ran out of water?" Many people around the world and even in the US don't just think they worry about this possibility.

Living in the Great Lakes Basin we take the amount of water in the Great Lakes area for granted. Some will say we live in the most water rich environment on earth. We only become concerned when we are facing a drought while this is a daily worry for others.

Due to the Great Lakes Compact, which could make it more difficult for other states or nation to gain access to our water we must learn water saving techniques to protect the water we have.

Why should we learn water saving techniques? In an attempt to set a standard for others wanting our water we first

Do not let the faucet run while brushing your teeth or shaving. On average, you can save more than 5 gallons of water.

must set the example that the others needing water should already but may not be following. It is the same as the oldest child must set the example for the younger children.

By following water saving measures you can also save your self some monies. A lower water bill, lower electric bill or possibly both, a better environment. In the coming newsletters I will include water conservation tips to help you more in the right direction.

News of the Sandusky River Watershed Coalition



Sandusky River Watershed Coalition
219 South Front Street
P.O. Box 590
Fremont, Ohio 43420
Phone: 419-334-5016
Fax: 419-334-5125
e-mail: cabrookes@wsos.org

**Go Green! Give us your
email and receive this
newsletter
electronically and in full
color.**

Sandusky River Clean Sweeps

CLEAN SWEEP LOGO DESIGNED by: Anne Coburn-Griffis - ODNR Ohio Scenic Rivers



Saturday, **August 16th**

Pioneer Mill Pavillion, Tiffin

SCHEDULE of EVENTS

Registration

8 a.m. - 8:45 a.m.

CLEAN-UP

9 a.m. - 12 p.m.

Picnic, prizes,
education & more
12:15 p.m. - 2 p.m.



Seneca County Event

Crawford County Event

Save the Date—
September 13, 2008

