



OASWCDE news & updates

September | 2022



Upcoming Events

September

- Clean Sweep of the Great Miami River, September 17, 2022
- Farm Science Review, September 20-22, 2022

October

- Ohio Stormwater Awareness Week, October 16 - 22, 2022

December

- Area 2 Winter Meeting, December 2, 2022
- Area 4 Winter Meeting, December 6, 2022
- Area 5 Winter Meeting, December 7, 2022
- Area 1 Winter Meeting, December 8, 2022
- Area 3 Winter Meeting, December 13, 2022

February

- OFSWCD Winter Partnership Meeting, February 21-22, 2023

Remember to visit the [OASWCDE website](#) for other events and training

opportunities.

If you would like to have your event added to the next newsletter please send details to [Sara Fehring](#) by December 5th.

Summer Supervisor's School Thank You!

By: Rebecca Longsmith

A big thank you to everyone who worked to make the 2022 Summer Supervisor's School a success! There were around 130 attendees that participated in some great breakout sessions and networking. Mother Nature was on our side on tour day, letting the bikes, busses, and watercraft avoid the rain for the most part. Special recognition goes to Nikki Hawk and Janelle Mead from OFSWCD and our Area 5 host districts- we appreciate you!



Sherry West Memorial Scholarship Recipient

By: Rebecca Longsmith



The 2022 recipient of the \$500 Sherry West Memorial Scholarship is Lynnea Crock, daughter of Lisa Crock at Muskingum SWCD. Congrats Lynnea! Lynnea was a high school scholar-athlete with participation in archery, track, and soccer. She also was involved with a range of volunteer activities such as 4-H, Junior Fair Board, and the Key Club. Lynnea's work ethic is reflected in her ability to maintain good grades, while also being employed and earning college credit during high school.

Lynnea is currently majoring in advertising, with minors in photojournalism and visual journalism, at Kent State University. While COVID put a damper on college social activities in her first year, Lynnea is looking forward to joining a service group or an outdoor club on campus.

Looking for some additional education or training yourself? Remember that the OASWCDE still has training scholarships available for eligible, dues-paying members on a rolling basis. If you have a training opportunity you'd like to participate in, visit our website for more information on how to apply.

SWCD Job Postings

By: Sara Fehring

A new page on the OASWCDE website hopes to make the advertisement of Soil and Water Conservation District Jobs in the State of Ohio a little bit easier. The hopes are that by compiling all the open positions in Ohio on one, easily sharable page we can spread the word about Soil and Water Conservation District jobs. Job postings are pulled from AllOhio emails or can be emailed to [Sara Fehring](#).

Mental Health First Aid Workshops

By: Beth Diesch



The OASWCDE is excited to cooperate to offer this free, in-person Mental Health First Aid training with OSU Extension. All SWCD staff and any Ohio conservation partners are welcome to register and attend the training. Each training is limited to 30 people, if these trainings fill up, more will be offered in the future. The Employees Association strategically planned these workshops to occur prior to the holiday season to benefit you personally, in regional locations for ease, and at a low cost for your professional benefit.

Please consider attending this training with personal and professional applications and benefits. Knowing how to respond to physical first aid needs proves life-saving over and over again...so will mental health first aid response training! If you have any questions or need additional information contact Beth Diesch, at (419)447-7073 or bdiesch@conservesenecacounty.com

To see dates, locations, and to register for the workshops visit our [website](#). The OASWCDE Directors in each Area will welcome and host you at their regional training.

If you have other items on your training wishlist please email them to [Rebecca Longsmith](#).

Ohio Pollinator Habitat Initiative

By: Matthew Browne



The Ohio Pollinator Habitat Initiative (OPHI) is a collaboration of various agencies, nonprofits, and businesses from across Ohio working together to promote, create, and improve pollinator habitat. Much of their efforts focus on the Monarch Butterfly, which was recently added to the endangered species list, with habitat loss being a key factor in its decline. In order to help the Monarch and pollinators in general, OPHI promotes the creation of pollinator habitat, which involves the inclusion of Milkweed, which is the host plant for the Monarch Caterpillar.

Is your office interested in partnering with OPHI? Now is a perfect time, the annual milkweed seed pod collection program is set to begin! Many SWCD offices are the local community drop-off points for the yearly milkweed seed pod collection. For those who are already participating just a reminder to have your collection bins clearly marked and keep the seeds dry in paper bags. OPHI has resources and information available to share with your community to ensure proper pod collection and storage.

District Feature - Vinton SWCD and Their Wildfire Agreement

By: David Runkle

In the fall of 2017, Vinton SWCD hired David Runkle as a technician. In previous employment, David was a wildland firefighter, with plenty of experience and certifications. After several months on the job, he realized he missed the wildfire trips as part of his employment, so he began working on a plan to continue to do so.

First, he sat down with his board to devise a system that would work well for the district, then he contacted the Division of Forestry to present their plan. Over the next few months with several back-and-forth communications, a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) was completed and signed in 2018. In short, the Division of Forestry agreed to reimburse Vinton SWCD for the employee's salary while fighting wildfires, while the district retains all liabilities for the employee. In this scenario both organizations gain here- Vinton SWCD saves by way of salary savings, and the Division gets a qualified firefighter to assist wild wildfire control both out west and within the state.



Over the years, the MOU has been updated several times since the initial agreement. Originally written as only a 1-year agreement, the current version has been extended to a 2-year time span due to its success. David has been to Colorado, Minnesota, Oregon, and California with the Division of Forestry to suppress wildfires to save both homes and natural resources.

From the Districts standpoint, this agreement is a win-win for everyone involved. The Division gets access to a highly qualified wildland firefighter as well as the positive press of being able to partner with other agencies within the state to achieve a common goal. Vinton SWCD gains financially by way of salary savings, as they had budgeted to pay their tech for 12 months, but they receive reimbursement for the time out west. Most importantly, the district is offering its services to help the greater natural resource community. The employee gains as well, not only do they get to see a different part of the country, but they also get to earn overtime if the fire detail requires it. As we all know over time is not a common thread in government work, so this is an opportunity for the employee to earn some bonus money, thus improving employee retention.



In each newsletter, we would like to feature a creative and innovative project that is being undertaken by a District. If your District has a project you would like to feature in the December edition of the newsletter please reach out to **Sara Fehring no later than December 5th.**

Welcome, New Hires!



Patrick Troyer
Lucas SWCD
Education Specialist
ptroyer@co.lucas.oh.us



Laura Miller Frase
Carroll SWCD
Education Specialist/Admin Assistant
laura.frase@carrollswcd.org



Andrea Smythe
Seneca Conservation District
Technician

asmythe@conserve-seneca.com



Maria Goshe
Seneca Conservation District
Technician

mgoshe@conserve-seneca.com



Clint Lease
Seneca Conservation District
Technician

clease@conserve-seneca.com

As new staff members are added to your team please send an email and photo to **Sara Fehring**. The goal is to highlight new staff members quarterly.

2022 Board of Directors

Area 1

- **Matthew Browne** - Lucas SWCD
- **Beth Diesch** - Seneca CD

Area 2

- **Amy Roskilly** - Cuyahoga SWCD
- **Chad Stang** - Huron SWCD

Area 3

- **Katie Kovaly** - Monroe SWCD
- **Amanda Tubaug** - Carroll SWCD

Area 4

- **Kelly Crout** - Butler SWCD
- **Sara Fehring** - Hamilton County CD

Area 5

- [David Runkle](#) - Vinton SWCD
- [Rebecca Longsmith](#) - Delaware SWCD

Ohio Conservation Partnership Administrative Areas



Visit our [website](#) for:

- Catastrophic Sick Leave Program
- Events and Education
- Membership Forms
- Scholarships and Awards
- By-laws

Serving Employees - Building Community - Developing Professionals

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