

SUMMER 2024 • JULY

# CONSERVATION CHRONICLES

SHELBY SOIL & WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT E-NEWSLETTER

## WE LOVE TREES, TAKE 2!

The Ohio Department of Natural Resources (ODNR) Division of Forestry planted a swamp white oak at Hardin-Houston Local Schools on Arbor Day in coordination with Shelby SWCD and the local school system. The tree planting ceremony was part of the Division of Forestry's celebration of ODNR's 75th anniversary. ODNR Division of Forestry planted a commemorative tree in each of Ohio's 88 counties in April to highlight the importance of Ohio's forests.

At the tree planting ceremony Hardin-Houston 1st graders sang a song about an oak tree and recited a poem named, "My Tree." Hardin-Houston 1st graders celebrated Earth Day on Monday April 22nd with Shelby SWCD where they learned about the importance of trees and conservation of forests.

Ohio was approximately 95% forested prior to European settlement, reached a low of around 10% forested at the turn of the century, and has rebounded to about 30% forest cover in this new millennium.



Justin Law, state forester ODNR Division of Forestry planting swamp oak with Hardin-Houston 1st graders.

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## Area IV Envirothon

BY AMANDA HURLEY

Students from Anna, Botkins, Houston, Lehman Catholic and Russia high schools participated in the Area IV (southwest Ohio regional) Envirothon on April 30th at Gwynn Conservation Area in London, OH. Envirothon is an outdoor, academic environmental competition for high school students.

The Envirothon program started 45 years ago to encourage high school students to become interested in natural resource conservation, environmental issues, and careers. At the time, it was named the "Environmental Olympics," then shortened to "Enviro-Olympics," and eventually to Envirothon. In 1988 the National Envirothon was born with competing teams from Pennsylvania, Ohio, and Massachusetts.

Today, all 50 states have Envirothon programs and the National Envirothon also includes teams from Canada and China. Each year over 25,000 high school students worldwide participate; since inception, hundreds of thousands of students have participated. Many Envirothon alumni go on to have careers as forest rangers, climate scientists, biologists, conservationists, soil scientists, environmental educators, and more.

The event tests students' knowledge of aquatic ecology, forestry, soil and land use, wildlife, and a current environmental issue (CEI). This year's CEI topic was "Renewable Energy for a Sustainable Future." Anna High School's team finished highest among Shelby County schools at Tuesday's event, hosted by the Fayette Soil & Water Conservation District (SWCD) and Madison County SWCD. They placed 16th out of 60 teams! Teams from West Jefferson, Sycamore and Beavercreek high schools advanced to the State Envirothon competition.



**"Don't just tell children about the world. Show them"**

PENNY WHITEHOUSE



ANNA ENVIROTHON TEAM: AVEN ZIMPFER, ADAN BALDANODO, MASON HUGHES, BEN GEHRET, TYLER DICKMAN.

For more information about Envirothon contact Amanda Hurley, education and outreach coordinator at Shelby SWCD ([amanda.hurley@usda.gov](mailto:amanda.hurley@usda.gov) or 937-419-2597) or visit [envirothon.org](http://envirothon.org) and [areaivenvirothon.org](http://areaivenvirothon.org).



## SHELBY SWCD CONSERVATION POSTER CONTEST WINNERS

The National Association of Conservation District's Conservation Poster Contest's theme for 2024 is "May The Forest Be With You Always." Shelby SWCD got over 100 entries for the local contest. The first place posters in each grade category have been submitted for the state contest at Summer Supervisor School. The posters were displayed at Amos Memorial Public Library in June. The posters will also be displayed at the SEEC Building during the Shelby County Fair.

2nd-3rd Grade

1st



Vivian Zimpfer - Botkins 3rd Grade

2nd



Garrett Schutte - Botkins 3rd Grade

4th-6th Grade

1st



Wyatt Wagner - Botkins 4th Grade

2nd



Lilian Clay - Botkins 4th Grade

7th-9th Grade

1st



Brezlyn Egbert - Anna 7th Grade

2nd



Mike Jenkins - Anna 7th Grade



## Conservation Day Camp

AMANDA HURLEY

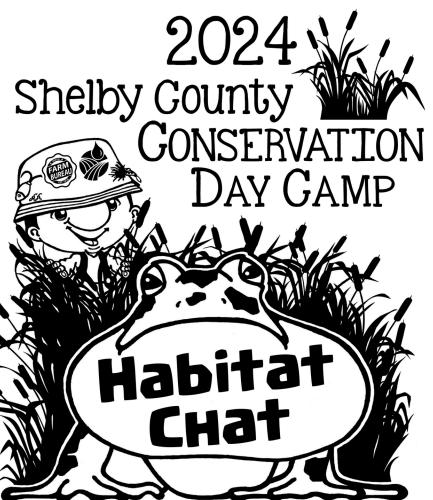
Shelby County Conservation Day Camp was a success again this year. This three day camp was held at Shelby County Fish & Game Association and hosted by Shelby Soil & Water Conservation District (SWCD) and Shelby County Farm Bureau June 25th through June 27th. Over one hundred 2nd-5th graders from Shelby County attended.

The theme of camp this year was Habitat Chat. The campers learned about what makes a habitat, how habitats can be conserved and what certain animals need in their habitats among other conservation and agriculture-related topics. Campers also got to try their skills at archery, fishing and tie-dying.

Presenters at Conservation Day Camp hailed from Ohio State University Dept. of Entomology, Ohio Division of Wildlife, National Wild Turkey Federation, Miami Conservancy District, Ohio State University Extension, Blooming Bridge Music Therapy, Anna FFA, Pheasants Forever, Shelby County Libraries, Master Gardener Volunteers and Shelby Farm Bureau. Campers learned through hands-on activities and got to take home several projects they completed at camp.

Conservation Day Camp is made possible by sponsors including Whitetails Unlimited, Shelby County Farm Bureau, Shelby SWCD Friends of Conservation, Cargill, Farm Credit Mid-America, North Central Ohio Solid Waste District, B & B Ag-Vantages, Bambauer Fertilizer and Seed, Cy Schwieterman Inc, Miami Conservancy District, Germain Ford of Sidney, Nationwide Insurance Rusty Eilerman, and Pioneer Electric Cooperative. Conservation Day Camp is also possible because of generous volunteers that dedicate their time in set-up, lunch service, monitoring safety of campers, and tear down among other activities to make camp run smoothly.

For more information about Conservation Day Camp contact Amanda Hurley ([amanda.hurley@usda.gov](mailto:amanda.hurley@usda.gov); 937-419-2597) or follow Shelby Soil & Water Conservation District or Auglaize/Logan/Mercer/Shelby Farm Bureau on Facebook.



# Dirty, Wet, and Wild!

## 2024 MULTI-COUNTY EDUCATOR WORKSHOP

DARKE, MIAMI, MONTGOMERY, AND  
SHELBY COUNTIES

Join us for a 2 day educator workshop focusing on hands-on soil and water related lessons in Montgomery County (Miami Valley CTC 6800 Hoke Rd, Clayton, OH). Day ONE we will get “Down & Dirty” introducing multiple soil-related topics, developing vermiculture for your classroom, and taking a field trip to a CSA. Day TWO will be “Wet and Wild” covering water testing basics, in-stream macroinvertebrate sampling, and water cycle lessons. End the workshop with a field trip to a water treatment plant to see how water is cleaned before consumption and to a local brewery to see how water is essential in food production. Cheers!



JULY 31  
& AUG 1

JOIN US

- Montgomery SWCD  
Mike Mullen  
937-854-7646  
[mullenm@mcohio.org](mailto:mullenm@mcohio.org)

- Miami SWCD  
Linda Raterman  
937-335-7645  
[lraterman@miamiswcd.org](mailto:lraterman@miamiswcd.org)

- Shelby SWCD  
Amanda Hurley  
937-419-2597  
[amanda.hurley@usda.gov](mailto:amanda.hurley@usda.gov)

- Darke SWCD  
Jared Coppess  
937-548-1715 x3  
[www.darkeswcd.com](http://www.darkeswcd.com)

Contact the above staff to get a registration form

**Register before July 19th**

As planting season ends, remember to turn in your nutrient application records for the 2024 crop year. Please turn in the following for each practice you have completed.

## 2024 VNMP Implementation (\$10/acre)

This applies to any commercial fertilizer or manure applied to fields for the 2024 crop.

- Turn in all N, P, and K fertilizer/manure application data. This can include bills, scale tickets, as applied maps, or a summary of nutrients applied.
- Any manure applications done in the Fall 2023/ Spring 2024 need to be turned in.
- H2Ohio requires soil test to be 4 years old or less.
  - Failure to keep updated soil test will result in a forfeit of \$10.00/acre VNMP Implementation and forfeit of any additional H2Ohio practice payments associated with that field.

## 2024 Variable Rate (\$5/acre)

This applies to phosphorus applications done Fall 2023 or Spring 2024

- Must turn in applicator information.
- Must turn in as-applied nutrient application maps.

## 2024 Subsurface Phosphorus Application (\$25/acre)

This applies to phosphorus applications done Fall 2023 or Spring 2024

- Must turn in applicator information.
- Must turn in as-applied nutrient application maps.

Please report complete and incomplete practices by July 31, 2024. If you have any questions, please contact Cassie Lefeld, H2Ohio Coordinator, (Cassandra.Lefeld@usda.gov or 937-419-2589)



## Farmers Help America Keep Soil Healthy

Our lives are dependent on healthy soil. Healthy soil gives us clean air and water, bountiful crops and forests, productive grazing lands, diverse wildlife and beautiful landscapes. It's the reason why USDA's Natural Resources Conservation Service experts are in your community and across the nation.

Soil is composed of air, water, organic matter and minerals. A community of organisms – functioning as a soil food web – lives all or parts of their lives in soil. More individual organisms are in a teaspoon of soil than there are people on earth. Increasing soil organic matter typically improves soil health, since organic matter improves several critical functions of soil.

To improve the health of their soil, more and more farmers and ranchers are keeping soil covered, reducing disturbance activities such as tilling, keeping plants growing throughout the year, and diversifying the crops they're planting in a rotation. Taking these steps allow farmers and ranchers to help reduce erosion while increasing the soil's ability to provide nutrients and water to the plant at critical times during the growing season.

When producers focus on improving soil health, they often have larger harvests, lower input costs, optimized nutrient use, and improved crop resilience during drought years like last year. In heavy rainfall years, healthy soil holds more water, reducing runoff that helps avert flooding downstream.

And because healthy soil allows for greater water infiltration and less erosion, nutrients and pesticides stay on the farm where they benefit crops, and are far less likely to be carried off the farm into streams and lakes where they can cause harm.

NRCS helps farmers install conservation practices such as cover crops to maintain and improve soil health – all of which can lead to productive, profitable and sustainable farming and ranching operations for generations to come.

Contact Justin Wagner, District Conservationist, with NRCS related questions (justin.wagner@usda.gov or 937-419-2590).



## Staff Spotlight

AMANDA HURLEY

**Role: Education and Outreach Coordinator**

**Employee Since: January 2023**

**What I do:** I do educational activities and lessons with children in classrooms, at libraries and at other organizations. I also host and plan educational workshops for adults. I plan and coordinate Shelby SWCD events like Forestry Field Day and the Annual Banquet.

**What conservation practice resonates most with you?** The conservation practice that resonates with me the most is wetland creation and restoration. Wetlands improve water quality, provide habitat for a plethora of wildlife, mitigate flooding and are a great place to bird!

**About Amanda:** My husband Zak and I have been married for 9 years; we have 2 children. Outside of work, I enjoy birding and reading.



May you be proud of the work you do, the person you are, and the difference you make.

## Supervisor Spotlight

BRENT CLINEHENS

See [www.shelbyswcd.org](http://www.shelbyswcd.org) for full staff directory.

**Years as a Supervisor: 4 years**

**What made you want to be a Supervisor?** As farmers we are all connected to soil and water and I think its interesting to be in the forefront on what is being discussed related to conservation. Being a supervisor gives you a chance to be a voice when policies are being developed.

**What conservation practice resonates most with you?** Grassed waterways. They are one of the most beneficial practices. Most farms have an area that could benefit from a grassed waterway to prevent soil erosion. Keeping soil in place benefits everyone.

**Best place you visited for a conservation related conference or training?** Last year I attended OFSWCD Summer Supervisor School in West Chester, Ohio. It was intriguing to see urban conservation practices. Favorite part of being a Supervisor: Working with staff has been very interesting. There are many project ongoing at one time - drainage projects, waterways, education, cost-share programs, etc. It is really neat to see different staff address these unique activities.

**About Brent:** Has a grain operation in Salem township, formerly had a dairy for 27+ years. Brent has 2 stepsons and a stepdaughter. He also has a granddaughter who is 1.5 years old.



# Events & Announcements

7/4/2024	Federal Holiday - Shelby SWCD Office Closed
7/12/2024 @ 10:00am	<u>Conservation Storytime "HBD Smokey"</u> <u>Russia Community Library</u>
7/16/2024 @ 2:00pm	<u>Conservation Storytime "Crawdad Creek"</u> - <u>Anna Community Library</u>
7/19/2024 @ 6:30am	Board Supervisor Meeting
7/19/2024 @ 2:00pm	<u>Macro Sampling with Sidney City Parks</u> <u>Tawawa Park Geib Pavilion</u>
7/19/2024	<u>Deadline to register for Multi-County</u> <u>Educator Workshop</u>
7/21/2024-7/23/2024	<u>OFSWCD - Summer Supervisor School</u> <u>Area 1</u>
7/21/2024-7/27/2024	Shelby County Fair - visit us in the Grange Building
7/31/2024	<u>Women in Ag Scholarship Application Due</u>
7/31/2024 6:30pm	<u>Pond Clinic</u> <u>Location TBD</u>
7/31/2024, 8/1/2024	<u>Multi-County Educator Workshop</u>
8/16/2024 @ 6:30am	Board Supervisor Meeting
9/2/2024	Federal Holiday - Shelby SWCD Office Closed
9/5/2024 @ 6:00pm	<u>Celebrating Women in Ag Event</u> <u>VanDemark Farms</u>
9/20/2024	Board Supervisor Meeting

If you have questions about events or announcements, please contact Amanda Hurley (937-419-2597 or amanda.hurley@usda.gov)



**growing women in agriculture**  
*An Empowerment Celebration*

## Scholarship Opportunity

One of the best ways to empower yourself is through education.

To help a local woman GROW her education we are offering a \$500 scholarship!

See application for more information about eligibility.

Application must be completed and returned to Shelby County Farm Bureau by July 31, 2024

*Find more information about the Women in Agriculture Scholarship here:*  
<https://co.shelby.oh.us/339/Women-in-Agriculture-Scholarship>

## Pond Clinic

**7/31/2024 at 6:30pm**  
**Location TDB**

Contact Rylee Kay Puthoff at Shelby Co OSU Extension for more info (puthoff.84@osu.edu, 937-419-7126)

