

WINTER 2025 • JANUARY

CONSERVATION CHRONICLES

SHELBY SOIL & WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT E-NEWSLETTER



SALT SMART

Shovel First: Salt should follow snow removal and only in areas needed for safety.

Less is more: More salt doesn't mean more melting. A coffee mug's worth should cover 10 sidewalk squares.

Spread Evenly: Distribute salt evenly to avoid wasteful clumps.

Sweep excess: If salt is left after melting, too much was used. Sweep it up to keep it out of our rivers and streams.



Road salt (sodium chloride) is our winter traction hero, but when it melts off the roads, it infiltrates our water systems, posing risks to aquatic life, ecosystems, and even our drinking water.

There are a number of ways to conserve WATER, and they all start with YOU!

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78th Shelby SWCD Annual Banquet and Board Supervisor Election

BY AMANDA HURLEY

Shelby SWCD held its 78th annual banquet on Thursday, December 5th at St. Michael Hall in Fort Loramie. Approximately ninety attendees were present including Shelby County residents; supporters of Shelby SWCD; representatives from Ohio Department of Agriculture, United States Department of Agriculture, and many community groups; and district staff.

After Board of Supervisor voting and a buffet dinner, the keynote speaker, Mike Less, better known as "Farmhand Mike" from Arcanum, Ohio gave a presentation about his career and recent YouTube success. Mike grew up on a farm and has worked as a technician, field service representative or product specialist for several agricultural equipment companies throughout his career. In recent years he started posting videos of different agricultural practices and equipment from around the world on YouTube and other social media outlets. He reviewed the stories behind some of his most successful videos and talked about how being a recognizable YouTube personality has surprised him in many ways.



MIKE LESS GAVE KEYNOTE PRESENTATION

Next, Aaron and Sarah Heilers, were awarded the 2024 Cooperator of the Year Award. Aaron and Sarah are long time cooperators and champions of soil & water conservation. The Heilers have utilized many best management practices on their land and participated in many Shelby SWCD programs over the years.

Conservation is a state of harmony between men and land.

ALDO LEOPOLD



JASON BRUNS AND STEVE BERNING PRESENTING THE 2024 COOPERATOR OF THE YEAR AWARD TO AARON AND SARAH HEILERS.

Off the farm, Aaron has worked with numerous local producers professionally to develop nutrient management plans and further conservation efforts. Sarah and her FFA students have been a valued partner of the district by providing countless hours of assistance to district educational and outreach function. Lastly, the work and activities of Shelby SWCD was reviewed with a video.

Voting for open board supervisor positions were concluded on December 31st. Steve Berning and Leonard Albers were re-elected for 3-year terms. Their new terms will begin January 1, 2025. Other board members serving in 2025 include Michael Watercutter and Brent Clinehens. There is currently a vacant board supervisor position.

Thank you to all who attended and thank you to everyone who supported the efforts of Shelby SWCD in 2024! We look forward to a wonderful 2025!



West Ohio Agronomy Day 2025

January 6th, 2025

8:30 am - 4:30 pm

St. Michael's Hall,
33 Elm Street
Ft. Loramie

January 14th, 2025

5:00 pm - 9:00 pm

Clopay Building
Shelby County
Fairgrounds
655 South
Highland Street
Sidney

Please call our office at
(937) 498-7239 before
visiting, as holiday hours
and vacations may affect
our schedule.

Shelby County Extension is once again hosting Western Ohio Agronomy Day, this January! This is the opportunity for those who hold a Pesticide and/or Fertilizer Applicators License to get recertified and receive their credits for the next three years.

We have two dates are being offered this year:

- Monday, January 6th from 8:30 am-4:30 pm
- Tuesday, January 14th from 5:00 pm-9:00 pm.

On January 6th, there will be lunch provided to those who pre-register, as well as the opportunity to talk to local ag businesses and OSU professionals.

The cost to register for class:

\$45 for Commercial Credits

\$35 for Private Applicator Credits

\$15 for Fertilizer Credits

\$10 for those who do not need credits

REMINDER: Payment of \$30 needs to be sent to the Ohio Department of Agriculture in Reynoldsburg and is necessary for your license fee.

**Registration deadline is January 3rd, 2025 register in the office or
email Rylee Kay Puthoff at puthoff.84@osu.edu**



THE OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY
EXTENSION

College of Food, Agricultural, and Environmental Sciences
Shelby County Extension
shelby.osu.edu



2025 Fish Fingerling Sale

SHELBY SOIL & WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT

Orders due in Shelby SWCD office by May 7th at 4pm

ORDER FORM	Recommended stocking rate (per surface acre)	Packs	Quantity	Cost
Yellow Perch (2"-3")	100	\$30 for 25 fish		
Bluegill (2"-4")	350-500	\$30 for 25 fish		
Channel Catfish (4"-5")	100	\$30 for 25 fish		
Largemouth Bass (2"-3")	100	\$30 for 25 fish		
Redear Sunfish (2"-4")	150-500	\$30 for 25 fish		
Hybrid Bluegill (2"-4")	100	\$30 for 25 fish		
Fathead Minnows (1"-3")	1000 (if no bluegill or sunfish)	\$12 for 100 fish		
Japanese Koi (6"-8")		\$15 per fish		
White Amur (8"-10")	*depends on vegetation	\$18 per fish		
			Order Total	

CONTACT INFORMATION

Contact Name: _____

Make checks payable to:

Shelby SWCD

822 Fair Road Sidney, OH 45365

Order pick-up May 15th at 11am

Address: _____

Please remind me by:

City, State, Zip: _____

Phone Call Email

Phone: _____

Email: _____

Join Shelby SWCD e-newsletter email list? Yes No

OFFICE USE

Date Paid: _____

Cash / Check

Check #: _____

H2Ohio producers have turned in their completed acres for 2024 fall practices. The total number of acres that have been reported are as follows:

2024 Cover Crops: 4,222.70 acres

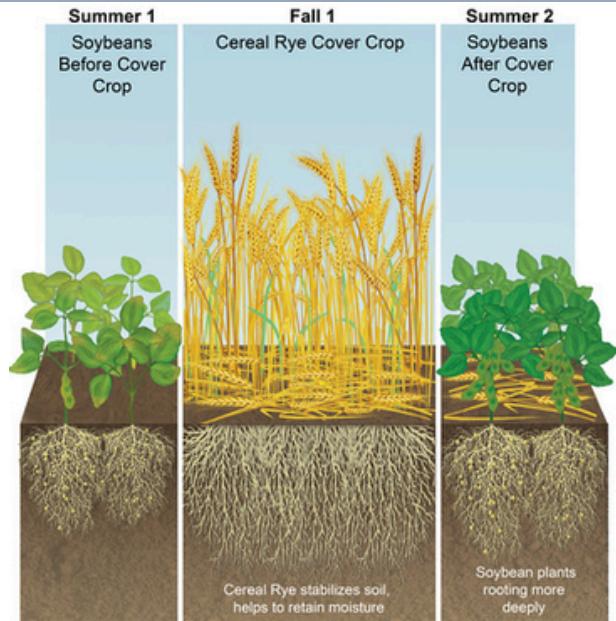
2025 Small Grains: 1,610.9 acres

2025 Manure Incorporation: 1,169.0 acres

If you have not reported your 2024 fall practices to Shelby SWCD, please do so as soon as possible.

Current H2Ohio contracts will be expiring in the fall of 2025. The Ohio Department of Agriculture has decided to open enrollment for Seneca, Huron, Erie, Wyandot, Richland, Sandusky, Marion, Ottawa, Crawford, and Shelby counties. Producers with acres in these counties will be eligible to sign up for H2Ohio. Enrollment will begin in March 2025. Soil samples will need to be current (no older than 4 years) at the time of enrollment. Be on the lookout for more information to come in the following months!

Questions? Contact Cassie Lefeld, H2Ohio Coordinator, Cassandra.Lefeld@usda.gov or 937-419-2589



NEW ENROLLMENT MARCH 2025,
MORE INFO COMING SOON!



NATURAL RESOURCES CONSERVATION SERVICES UPDATES



NRCS Ohio Announces Application Deadline for Fiscal Year 2025 for Select Programs

Publish Date: December 10, 2024, USDA-NRCS

USDA's Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) is accepting applications for Fiscal Year 2025 for two financial assistance programs: Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) and the Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP).

All applications must be received by January 31, 2025, to be considered for funding.

Applications received after the signup date will compete in the next established signup period. While producers may apply at any time during the year, NRCS recommends producers apply as soon as they are interested in conservation financial assistance programs.

Establishing farm records with USDA's Farm Service Agency (FSA) is a necessary step to be eligible for USDA financial assistance programs. By registering your farm with FSA, producers will be eligible to apply for Farm Bill program funding to support their operations – including conservation programs offered through NRCS.

"Many required documents, including the financial assistance application, can be signed virtually, from a smart phone or computer, significantly reducing mailing delays and trips to the local service center," said Ohio State Conservationist John Wilson. "This helps keep producers where they want to be – in the field and on the farm."

Assistance is only a phone call away. NRCS staff are ready to answer your questions, address conservation concerns on your land, and work to ensure your success with eligible USDA Farm Bill programs. Call Justin Wagner, NRCS District Conservationist, 937-419-2590 or visit 822 Fair Road office for more information.

Original article adapted from: [this press release](#).



Educational Opportunity:

CONSERVATION TILLAGE & TECHNOLOGY CONFERENCE (CTTC)

CTTC, hosted by our friends at Allen SWCD, will be March 11-12, 2025, (Tuesday-Wednesday) at Ohio Northern University, Ada, Ohio. Connect with other great farmers and CCAs, experience new ideas, and increase your net income.

Our theme is "Getting More from Less." Cutting costs is key following a year where corn and soybean yields were reduced for many farmers. And crop prices are barely breakeven. We don't know what the weather will be in 2025, but commodity prices are projected to stay low.

Early registration is now open for the 2025 Conservation Tillage and Technology Conference at ctc.osu.edu until February 25 (increased registration price after this date). Learn more about at <https://agcrops.osu.edu/.../conservation-tillage-and...>



2025 CTTC
March 11-12
Ohio Northern
University



**Early Registration
Now Open at
ctc.osu.edu**



FREE



Educator Workshop

THURSDAY 2/27/2025
9AM-4PM

Growing Up WILD and
Project Learning Tree
Preschool-Early Elementary
Educator Workshop

Calling all preschool or elementary
educators (up to 2nd grade); parents &
caregivers of young children; and
environmental, conservation, or outdoor
educators - this workshop is for you!

Growing Up Wild and Project Learning Tree are
free educational nature-based activity guides that
promote hands-on exploration to develop a positive
impression of nature while building
lifelong social and cognitive skills!

Shelby County Ag. Service Center
822 Fair Road
Sidney, OH

REGISTER BY EMAILING:

Amanda Hurley
Shelby Soil & Water Conservation District
amanda.hurley@usda.gov
Questions? Call 937-419-2597
or email Amanda



“Growing Up WILD & TREE!”





Staff Spotlight

JASON BRUNS

Role: District Administrator

Employee Since: July 2000

What I do: Manage the employees and business functions of the district along with assisting landowners with drainage and other technical projects.

What conservation practice resonates most with you?:

Tough Question, but I guess I would probably say grassed waterways. Over the years I've witnessed firsthand how a such a simple practice can make a remarkable difference on a farm.

About Jason: Married to my wife Jenny for 25 years. We live on the west end of the county along with our children.



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

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

Supervisor Spotlight

MICHAEL WATERCUTTER

Years as a Supervisor: 2

What made you want to be a Supervisor? I worked for a Soil and Water District in the past and wanted to help promote conservation in my home county.

What conservation practice resonates most with you? Cover Crops. On my family farm we use cover crops on every acre. We have been using covers for 8 years now. A firm believer in the benefits cover crops do for the soil.

Best place you visited for a conservation related conference or training? The Big Soil Health Event in Cedar Falls Iowa was one of the better conferences for conservation topics. Learning from other farms at this event has been beneficial for the farm and my career.

Favorite part of being a Supervisor: Collaborating with the other supervisors to make sure we do our best to help our SWCD staff succeed and continue to do a great job for the county.

About Michael: My wife Katie and I have 3 children who love living close to the family farm. I am the Lead Conservation Agronomist for Mercer Landmark. I enjoy working on the farm with my boys and Dad. My family and I enjoy the outdoors, going on trips and being around family and friends.



Events & Announcements

1/1/2025	Federal Holiday - Shelby SWCD Office Closed
1/6/2025 8:30am-4:30pm	<u>West Ohio Agronomy Day</u> <u>St. Michaels Hall Fort Loramie</u>
1/10/2025 @ 10:30am	<u>Conservation Storytime "Tracks in the Snow"</u> <u>Russia Community Library</u>
1/17/2025 @ 6:30am	Board Supervisor Meeting 822 Fair Rd. Sidney
1/16/2025 5:00pm-9:00pm	<u>West Ohio Agronomy Day</u> <u>Shelby County Fairgrounds</u>
1/17/2025 @ 11:00am	<u>Conservation Storytime "Tracks in the Snow"</u> <u>Jackson Center Community Library</u>
1/20/2025	Federal Holiday - Shelby SWCD Office Closed
1/21/2025-1/22/2025	<u>OFSWCD Partnership Meeting</u> <u>Columbus, OH</u>
1/24/2025 @ 11:15am	<u>Conservation Storytime "Tracks in the Snow"</u> <u>Anna Community Library</u>
1/29/2025 @ 10:00am	<u>Conservation Storytime "Tracks in the Snow"</u> <u>Amos Memorial Public Library</u>
1/31/2025 @ 10:30am	<u>Conservation Storytime "Tracks in the Snow"</u> <u>Russia Community Library</u>
1/31/2025 @ 12:30am	<u>Conservation Storytime "Tracks in the Snow"</u> <u>Fort Loramie Community Library</u>



Questions? Please contact Amanda Hurley
(937-419-2597 or amanda.hurley@usda.gov)

2/7/2025 @ 10:30am	<u>Conservation Storytime "Slugs in Love"</u> <u>Russia Community Library</u>
2/17/2025	Federal Holiday - Shelby SWCD Office Closed
2/19/2025 @ 10:00am	<u>Conservation Storytime "Slugs in Love"</u> - <u>Amos Memorial Public Library</u>
2/21/2025 @ 6:30am	Board Supervisor Meeting 822 Fair Rd. Sidney
2/21/2025 @ 11:00am	<u>Conservation Storytime "Slugs in Love"</u> <u>Jackson Center Community Library</u>
2/21/2025 @ 12:30pm	<u>Conservation Storytime "Slugs in Love"</u> <u>Fort Loramie Community Library</u>
2/27/2025 9:00am-4:00pm	Project Wild and PLT Educator Workshop registration required
2/28/2025 @ 11:15am	<u>Conservation Storytime "Slugs in Love"</u> - <u>Anna Community Library</u>
3/6/2025 @ 7:00pm	<u>Soil Testing of Lawn and Garden Workshop 1</u> <u>Location TBD</u>
3/7/2025 @ 10:30am	<u>Conservation Storytime "Bird Beak Buffet"</u> - <u>Russia Community Library</u>
3/7/2025 @ 12:30pm	<u>Conservation Storytime "Bird Beak Buffet"</u> - <u>Fort Loramie Community Library</u>
3/12/2025 @ 10:00 am	<u>Conservation Storytime "Bird Beak Buffet"</u> - <u>Amos Memorial Public Library</u>
3/21/2024 @ 6:30am	Board Supervisor Meeting 822 Fair Rd. Sidney
3/21/2025 @ 11:00am	<u>Conservation Storytime "Bird Beak Buffet"</u> - <u>Jackson Center Community Library</u>
3/27/2025 @ 7:00pm	<u>Soil Testing of Lawn and Garden Workshop 2</u> <u>Location TBD</u>
3/28/2025 @ 11:15am	<u>Conservation Storytime "Bird Beak Buffet"</u> - <u>Anna Community Library</u>
3/28/2025	<u>Tree Seedling Orders Due</u>