



Our Mission:

To promote responsible land use decisions for the conservation, protection and improvement of soil and water resources by providing information and assistance through effective partnering, technical guidance and education.

Our 2024 **Top 5**

Five District Activities That Defined Our Year

1

Implemented the Franklin County Urban Agriculture Critical Infrastructure Grant

This year we had the opportunity to partner with the Franklin County Board of Commissioners to offer a total of \$150,000 in grants for small agricultural operations to improve their infrastructure and increase production. From high tunnels to rolling carts for market transportation, this program helped increase local access to healthy food.



Accessible raised beds increased yields and opportunities at Family Adolescent and Child Community Engagement Service Urban Garden.



Education Specialist Amy Tressler speaks with Salem Elementary students during Stormwater Awareness Week.

2

Delivered Environmental Education to 20,436 Students

Our Youth Education Team Linda Pettit, Amy Tressler, and AmeriCorps service member Tori Robinson utilized program loan kits, community events, classroom visits and field trips to educate students all around the County about how they can help keep water clean and why clean water is important to our communities.

3

Began The Columbus Tree Assistance Program

Franklin Soil and Water Conservation District partnered with Columbus Recreation and Parks Department to develop the Columbus Urban Tree Assistance Program. This program is made possible by funding from Columbus Recreation and Parks Department. Increased tree canopy in urban areas is shown to be associated with positive health outcomes, lower average temperatures, reduced stormwater runoff and increased biodiversity.



Neighbors in Willow Brook plant native trees and shrubs on a steep hillside in their neighborhood.

4

Facilitated Funding Assistance for 12 Rain Gardens

We provided funding assistance for 12 resident-led rain garden projects. Rain gardens can help control water pollution from nutrients and heavy metals and reduce urban stormwater runoff and peak flow during storm events. Since we began the program, we have helped fund 29 rain gardens in Franklin County thanks to our municipal partners.



Tammy P's new rain garden in Columbus was funded in part by our rain garden cost-share program.

5

Provided Record Community Backyards Rebates

We set a new record for our Community Backyards rebate program, with **\$112,818.92** reimbursed to county residents for the purchase of rain barrels, rain gardens, compost bins and native plants that not only improve soil and water quality, but also save residents money on utilities, increase climate resilience and offset food waste. This program also includes an educational course that reached 3,132 residents in 2024.



Friends of the Lower Olentangy Watershed facilitates a Community Backyards workshop at Maple Grove United Methodist Church.

2024 Numbers From The Field:

Conservation Easement Program

34 conservation easements inspected with 757 acres of land protected.

Conservation Site Inspections

1,685 site inspections completed.

Mapping, Water Quality Monitoring, Field Data Collection

Inventoried over 9,297 features (including pipes, catch basins, and open channels) to detect possible pollution sources and assist in municipal and county storm sewer mapping, and pollution identification and elimination.

Field data collection and mapping for 2024 included:

- Dry Weather Screening
- Storm Sewer System Mapping
- Home Sewage Treatment System Mapping
- Waterway Assessment and Mapping

Conservation Projects

162 instances of on-site natural resource or backyard assistance.

Provided 12 rain garden cost shares.

Donated over \$2,000 of native plant material to staff projects and non-profit groups.

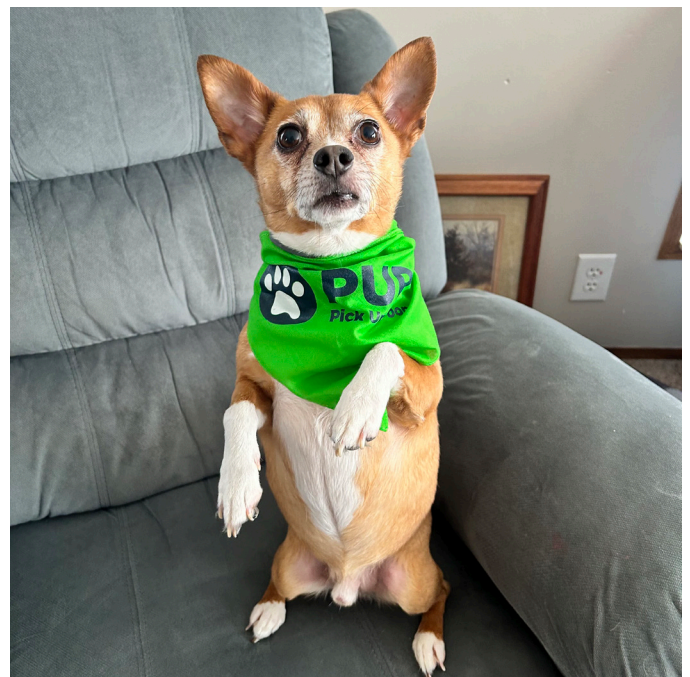
Sold 10,360 native trees and shrubs, 68 native plant kits, 47 seed packets, and 25 mushroom kits in the 2024 Spring sale.

Awarded 2 Conservation Mini-grants to local non-profit organizations who demonstrate their ability to carry out on-the-ground conservation projects in Franklin County:

- Franklinton Farms - Native Plants and Compost
- Friends of the Lower Olentangy Watershed- Worthington Native Tree Nursery Improvements.

Program Highlight: [Pick Up Poop- PUP](#)

- Our PUP program is adapted from Northeast Ohio Regional Sewer District. City of Columbus Water & Power and Recreation & Parks also utilizes PUP to encourage pet waste pickup at their parks and trails.
- In 2024 our Outreach Intern, Halle Tebbe, took ownership of the PUP program and spread our messaging to more pet-centered businesses and veterinary clinics in target communities.
- This expanded outreach increased PUP pledges by 77% in 2024 compared to 2023.

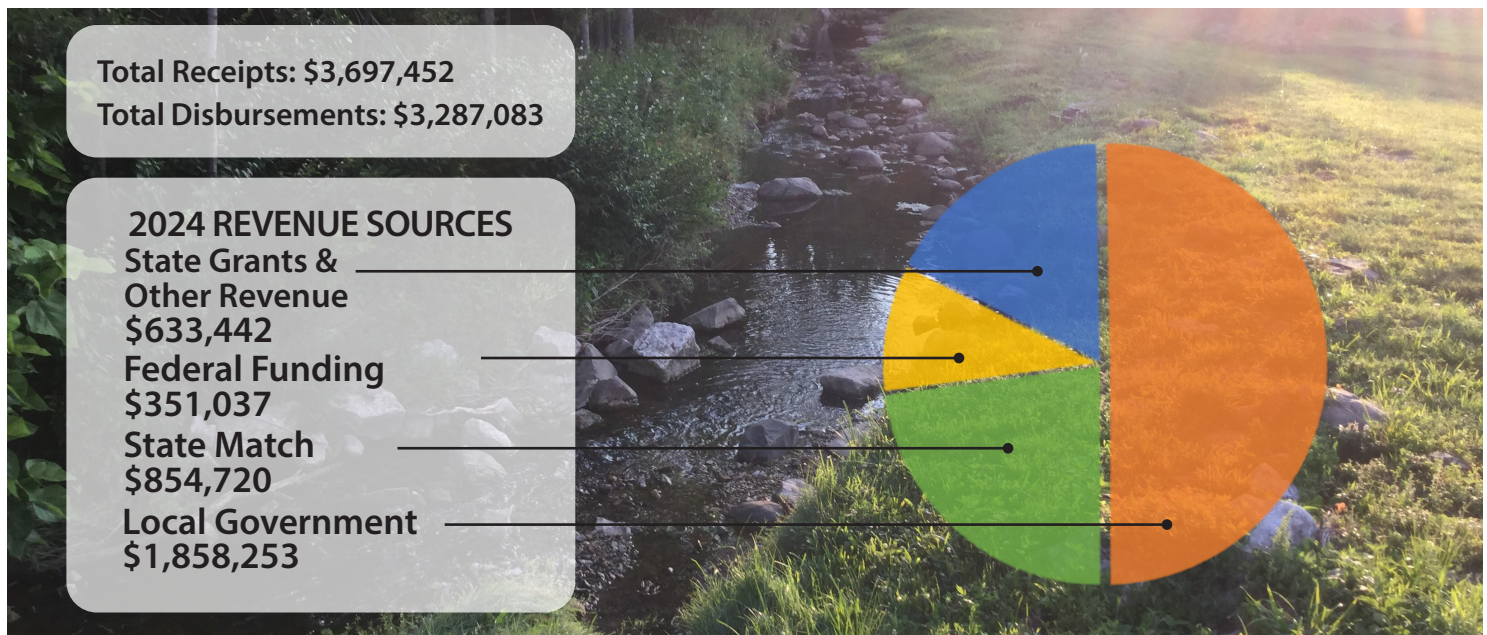


Look for our new PUP Bandanas at dog events all around Franklin County!

2024 Education & Outreach Numbers

<i>Public Information, Education, Outreach and Involvement</i>	
20,436 students reached with educational presentations.	Provided general assistance to 3,921 landowners, local government staff, contractors and developers, watershed groups and other nonprofit partners.
Participated in 75 community events, reaching 7,906 people with conservation messaging.	1,980 rebates distributed to residents for rain barrels, compost bins and native plants.
35 trainings provided to 928 local government stormwater and education professionals through webinars, conferences and meetings.	Reimbursed 1,305 planted Native Trees & Plants through the Community Backyards Program.
Over 700,000 individuals reached through radio programs, newspaper articles, advertisements, and social media.	3,492 Water Quality Partnership program brochures mailed. 51 businesses pledged to adopt clean water practices in 2024.
<p>Delivered the following audience specific newsletters:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 14,867 landowners received the <i>Frankly Speaking</i> newsletter • 5,452 residents received our <i>Backyard Conversation</i> monthly e-newsletter • 2,261 educators received the <i>SWIFT</i> teacher resource update • 1,738 developers received the <i>Urban Review</i> newsletter • 688 partners received <i>Update to Partners</i> • 70 Community PR professionals received our monthly outreach articles to share as needed 	<p>Participated in 17 regional programs and shared services:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • AmeriCorps and America's Service Commissions • Be the Change for Clean Water • Children's Water Festival • Central Ohio Watershed Council • Central Ohio Partnership for Regional Invasive Species Management • Central Ohio Food Waste Initiative Convening • Environmental Education Council of Ohio • Lead The Way Learning • Leave No Child Inside Central Ohio Collaborative • Mid-Ohio Regional Planning Commission • Native Plant Backyard Challenge • Ohio Federation of Soil and Water Conservation Districts • Ohio Stormwater Association • School Gardens of Ohio • Terrific Resources for Environmental Education • Water Management Association of Ohio

This table is a partial list of representative projects and activities of the District.



Our financial report is available by calling the office at (614) 486-9613.

Thank you to all the Partners, Funders, Sponsors and Supporters of Franklin Soil and Water Conservation District.

There are many ways that residents, businesses and local governments in Central Ohio support the mission of our District. We acknowledge their generosity, as we all benefit from conserving and protecting our natural resources.

Business Partnerships

298 businesses in Franklin County are Water Quality Partners - www.franklinswcd.org/water-quality-partner-businesses

7 lawn care partners through our Get Grassy program - www.getgrassy.org/program-partners

9 garden center and nursery partners through our Gardening for Clean Water Program- www.centralohioraingardens.org

5 local vendors participate in the Community Backyards immediate discount rebate vendor program- communitybackyards.org/immediate-discount-vendors

Thank You To Our Sponsors!

Conservation Advocate: Coldwater Consulting

Conservation Steward: MAD Scientist Associates, Oakland Nursery, King Business Interiors

Conservation Friend: 3C Technology Solutions, Able Printing, Del-Co Water Company

Conservation Partner: Jerry Holloway, Mary Lutmerding, Emilie Renner, Jared Laughbaum, Adam & Kathleen Wagenbach, CAPA, Columbus Symphony, Columbus Museum of Art, Columbus Zoo and Aquarium, Covelli Enterprises

2024 Funding Partners:

25 Local Governments • Working Agreements • Grant funding • State Match



Giving to Conservation

Franklin Soil and Water fundraises for sponsors for our annual meeting and professional education events and seeks donations for our Columbus Foundation Conservation Stewardship Fund throughout the year.

The purpose of the Conservation Stewardship Fund is to raise money for the implementation of conservation projects targeted at improving water quality for the benefit of wildlife, recreation and drinking water. Along with proceeds from our annual meeting and spring tree sale, these funds support our mini grant program, which allows us to supplement conservation funding for grassroots projects undertaken by our partners around the county.

Sponsorship of Urban Program events, including our Central Ohio Stormwater Roundtable Series, Center for Watershed Protection Webcast Series and Stormwater Awareness Week helps provide development and education to land use decision makers.

For more information or to donate visit:
www.franklinswcd.org/conservation-fund.



Sponsorship of events like our Annual Meeting (pictured) is a win-win for funding conservation and helping companies promote themselves to Central Ohio's environmental professionals.

District programs and services are offered on a non-discriminatory basis.

2024 Board of Supervisors

Jessica D'Ambrosio
Marty Wicks
Erin Miller
Kim Landsbergen
Leigh Anne Ward

Leadership Team

Jennifer Fish, Director
Kyle Wilson, Assistant Director
Josh Garver, GIS and Special Projects Director
Aaron Hebert, GIS Manager

Connect With Us



Franklin Soil and Water Conservation District
Creating Conservation Solutions for Over 70 Years

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