Franklin Soil and Water provides a variety of interactive environmental education programs focused on connecting our community to local soil and water resources.

Education programs are made possible through support from Franklin County Commissioners, City of Columbus, Municipalities, Villages and Townships in compliance with stormwater permit requirements.
Where Does Our Water Flow?
Grades 4, 7, 8 ESS, Grades 9-12 ER
Using the Augmented Reality Sandbox (ARS), students will investigate hydrology, watersheds, and run off. The ARS is an interactive, digital model that demonstrates changes to landscapes in real time, allowing students to discover how water flows across a watershed.

Extend student learning by borrowing this model for your classroom. Franklin SWCD will assist with set-up, training, and breakdown of the model.

Water Quality and Watersheds

What’s in Our Water? 🌿
Grades 4, 7 ESS/LS, Grades 9-12 ER
Using the Enviroscape watershed model, students observe changes in water quality when rain and land pollutants mix. Runoff, erosion, point and non-point source pollution concepts will be addressed.

Splashing into Stream Quality
Grades 3-5, 7 LS, Grades 9-12 ER
This outdoor field trip turns students into scientists as they wade into a local stream to investigate what animals live below the surface. Students will participate in scientific field sampling techniques and determine the health of the stream based on the macroinvertebrates they collect.

Sliding Soil 🌿
Grade 4, 8 ESS, Grades 9-12 ER
Using a soil erosion simulator, students predict and compare the effects of rain falling on bare soil, mulched soil and grass. Soil erosion, water quality and landscape alterations are discussed.

Crawdad Creek 🌿
Grades PreK ESS/LS, K-3 LS
Sitting around a “dry stream” model, students encounter local stream animals and their habitat needs as we read Crawdad Creek by Scott Russell Sanders.

Francis the Fish 🌿
Grade PreK ESS/LS, Grade 4 LS
Students portray characters in a local community and observe how everyday actions impact local water quality.
Human Impact on the Environment

How to Design a Rain Garden
Grades 9-12 ER
This program will answer the what, how, why and where of putting in a rain garden and specifically focus on how we use math formulas to design a rain garden in the most optimal location.

The Empty Lot
Grades PreK ESS/LS, Grades K-2, 4 LS
Habitat needs and environmental interaction are explored as students participate in this story by Dale Fife.

The Lorax
Grades PreK ESS/LS, Grades K-2, 4 LS
Through participation in the narration of this Dr. Seuss story, students witness human impact on the environment and discuss the importance of making wise choices.

Soil Quality and Habitats

Discovering Soil is Alive!
Grades PreK-3, 5 LS
In this hands-on investigation, students discover that soil is alive as they uncover invertebrates living below. Students will determine that soil is a habitat for many animals and unearth the ways these animals make our soil healthy.

For younger participants, the book *Under One Rock* by Anthony D. Frederick is used to enhance student learning.

Journey Through the Soil
Grade 3 ESS, Grade 4 ESS/LS, Grade 6 ESS
Students will step inside the soil tunnel to discover what’s below ground. A realistic canvas mural depicts underground soil layers, plant roots and organisms in urban, aquatic, forested and agricultural landscapes. The ingredients, textures, properties and importance of soil are discussed as we investigate each landscape.

Exploring Soil
Grades 3, 6 ESS
Students will get their hands dirty in this soil exploration as they create new soil with rocks, texture different soils to determine soil type and create a loam model to enhance their understanding of soil components. Soil horizons, components, types and their uses will be addressed.

The Power of Plants!
Grade PreK ESS/LS, Grades K,1, 3 LS
An introduction of plant parts and their different roles will be followed by a discussion of what plants need to survive. In the end, students will discover that plants are important to us for food, providing oxygen and filtering stormwater runoff.

Schedule an Environmental Education Program for your students!

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2019 - 2020 Models and Kits for Loan

Enhance student learning with visual and interactive materials that provide students with a better understanding of scientific concepts. Models and Loan Kits are available on a first come, first served basis, for extended periods of time. The Augmented Reality Sandbox (pg 2) is also offered as a loan.

Murky Water Caper
Grade 4 LS
This readers' theater detective story by Deborah Rodney Pex's encourages students to investigate the causes and effects of water pollution. Scripts, "costumes" and simple scenery are included.

Ground Water Model
Grades 7 ESS, Grades 9-12 ER
A simulated cut-away section of the earth shows the dynamics of water flowing underground and the potential for groundwater contamination.

Watershed Loan Kit
Grades K-3 LS
Children's books, activities, puppets, preserved macroinvertebrates, watershed posters and a dry stream model help students become familiar with watershed concepts, stream habitats and water quality.

Rocks and Soil Loan Kit
Grade 3 ESS, Grade 4 ESS/LS
Grade 6 ESS, Grades 9-12 ER
Books, activities and samples of rocks, minerals, fossils and soil, help meet ESS standards on the components, properties and importance of these resources.

Soil Profile Panel
Grade 3 ESS, 4 ESS/LS, 6 ESS
A 6' x 6' felt backdrop simulates the layers of the soil. Soil component add-ons, provide interactive learning of what is in our soil.

The Lorax
Grade PreK ESS/LS, Grades K-2, 4 LS
A 6’ x 6’ felt backdrop and related props are provided to bring Dr. Seuss’s story of The Lorax to life.

Any additional education programs marked with this leaf are also available for loan

Additional Opportunities for Students and Educators

Soil and Water Information for Teachers (SWIFT) is distributed electronically three times during the academic year. It provides information about environmentally themed educator workshops, contests, grant opportunities, resources and family events.

www.franklinswcd.org/newsletter-signup

Conservation Poster Contest

Each spring, Franklin County students (grades K-12) are invited to participate in a contest featuring a specific environmental theme. Winners for different ages are presented with awards at a local ceremony. The 2020 theme is “Where would we BEE without Pollinators?” More information can be found online.

www.franklinswcd.org/conservation-poster-contest

Ohio Envirothon

In this outdoor competition, teams of high school students answer questions about aquatic ecology, forestry, soils, wildlife and environmental issues. Regional winners progress to the state contest with hopes to advance to the North American event.

www.ofswcd.org/envirothon.html
www.area5envirothon.org/

Educator Workshops

Workshops for educators provide resources, background information and hands-on activities for a variety of environmental topics. In addition to specific curriculum programs (WET, WILD, PLT, etc.), we can provide presentations for your district or organizations professional development workshops. College & Continuing Education credits are available!