



### Our Mission

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

### Just What Does Franklin Soil and Water Do?

*The function of the Conservation District is to take available technical, financial, and educational resources, whatever their source, and focus or coordinate them so that they meet the needs of the local land user for conservation of soil, water, and related resources.*

National Association of Conservation Districts

### Conservation for the Future

Conservation is a state of mind. For conservation to be implementable at a large scale it must be both cost effective and collaborative, while protecting our natural resources. Franklin Soil and Water Conservation District completed our 5th strategic plan update last year, updating our goals for 2014-2016. In order to meet the greatest local need, stormwater continues to be front and center to what we do.

To meet our stormwater strategic directive, more staff will be professionally certified in stormwater management, erosion control and water quality. More importantly, we will engage to a greater degree with our partners regarding their needs as they update their programs to comply with the next Ohio EPA municipal stormwater general permit. To help with the evolution of local stormwater programs, we will develop new tools and programs to engage small businesses, landscape companies and garden centers.

Visibility and conservation implementation are our remaining strategic directives. Because we are a non-mandated government service agency, working with Franklin Soil and Water is voluntary. We are always aware of how important our visibility and reputation are to being able to protect natural resources. We know we have room for improvement. If you are not satisfied with a service we provide or have an idea for us to consider, feel free to contact us. Feedback is the greatest compliment you can provide.

In regard to conservation implementation, we will be looking at programs nationwide to develop a more robust landowner education and incentive program that increases awareness and supports communities' stormwater management efforts. We are also looking for new ways to support the management of nutrients in our streams by engaging landscape businesses and investigating the feasibility, interest and sustainability of providing additional potential services such as, in-house soil testing and water quality monitoring services.

*Thank you for your continued support*



*Pictured from left to right:*  
Chris Wible: Board Member  
Jennifer Fish: Executive Director  
State Senator: Bob Peterson

## 2013 by the numbers

Total receipts: **\$1,698,368.34**

Total disbursements: **\$1,465,779.08**

*The entire financial report is available by calling the office at (614) 486-9613*

*The table below is a partial list of representative projects and activities of the District*

<b>Conservation Easement Program</b>	
26 conservation easements inspected with 700 acres of land protected	
<b>Conservation Site Inspections</b>	<b>Tree Plantings and Stream Clean-up</b>
493 completed on 48 construction sites	Planted 500 trees on 10 acres
<b>Mapping, Water Quality Monitoring and Field Data Collection</b>	
Inventoried 7,280 features including pipes, catch basins, and open channels to detect possible pollution sources assisting in county storm sewer mapping and conservation implementation	Installed stream inserts into Reynoldsburg tributary to test the effectiveness of in-stream biofilters for filtering out nutrients for urban streams impacted by failing septic systems
Continued to work with City of Columbus and USGS to monitor effectiveness of Rain Gardens at Griggs Reservoir	Detailed household sewage treatment system mapping in designated areas within Dublin, and related risk assessment. City-wide drainageway inspections throughout Dublin to assist with planning, management and ongoing maintenance of the drainageways.
<b>Conservation Projects</b>	
NRCS restored or enhanced 20 acres of wetland	NRCS applied conservation practices to 138 acres of forest land
NRCS applied conservation practices on 274 acres of grazing land	NRCS improved 617 acres for fish and wildlife habitat
NRCS wrote conservation plans on 1,396 acres	NRCS applied conservation to improve soil quality on 4,129 acres
NRCS applied conservation to improve water quality on 4,572 acres	NRCS applied conservation on 2 acres to improve irrigation
NRCS installed 3 seasonal high tunnels	Provided 9,763 trees and 508 customers
4 rain gardens established with assistance from Franklin Soil and Water (over 250 registered in Central Ohio, collecting over 50 million gallons of water)	Provided 20 landowners with backyard conservation or stream management technical guidance and 16 landowners with other natural resource assistance
Provided 4 mini grants up to \$1,500 to OSU Wetlands, Hamilton Township, Girl Scouts and Weinland Park for honey suckle removal, native plantings, rain garden implementation and monitoring	Signed agreement with Appalachia Ohio Alliance to be a local sponsor of Farmland Preservation easements through Clean Ohio
<b>Public Information, Education and Outreach</b>	
Distributed 831 rain barrels through 15 workshops and an on-line interactive website in partnership with county, municipalities, and watershed groups	Provided training at 16 workshops for 448 local government, natural resource and education professionals
Provided 15,743 students with stormwater and environmental education presentations and hands on activities	Participated in 18 community events reaching over 2,288 residents with a conservation message
Delivered 4 audience-specific newsletters to the development community (540 receiving Urban Review), education professionals (5,600 receiving SWIFT), partners (440 receiving program updates), and landowners (7,500)	Provided natural resource information and land use guidance to 6,000 landowners, 600 local government staff, 190 consulting firm employees, 185 contractors and developers, and 12 watershed group members

2013

**Backyard Conservation**



Central Environmental Nursery Trade Show



Our Lady of Perpetual Help Rain Garden

The Gardening for Clean Water project is now in its second year, having recruited 3 new nurseries and garden centers to help the rain garden message “sink in” (pun intended). The Central Ohio Rain Garden Initiative (CORGI) appeared at the CENTS (Central Environmental Nursery Tradeshow) show to begin the new year and promote the program.

Last year, we worked with Oakland Nurseries (Columbus location), Scioto Gardens (Delaware County), and Kurtz Bros (Westerville). This year, Dill’s Greenhouse (Groveport), Straders (Northwest location), and Acorn Farms (Galena) are new partners. Nursery employees have received educational resources and presentations about stormwater pollution, appropriate vegetation for rain gardens, and garden installation and maintenance. Since spring, each participating location has

hosted a rain garden display featuring available plant material and guides for interested customers. Several have expressed interested in installing their own rain garden, or already have.

Franklin Soil and Water and CORGI appreciate and continue to support local garden centers’ interest in promoting clean water and habitat, particularly with native plants: said Linda Johnson of Scioto Gardens, “Having the display has made it easy to start conversations about what a rain garden is and why they are important. It also gives us an opportunity to help correct some of the common misconceptions about rain gardens. We saw a good amount of interest in learning about rain gardens. We look forward to continuing teaching our customers this year.”

**Watershed Project**

Last fall Kurt Keljo, Watershed Coordinator, installed stream inserts in an unnamed tributary of Blacklick Creek. They are similar to the floating islands used in lakes with problems with high bacteria counts and excessive nutrients. The fibers of the plastic matrix of the inserts become coated with biofilms which then reduce nutrient concentrations and numbers of bacteria, such as E. coli. Kurt and partners at the Columbus Division of Water have tested for bacteria and nutrients in this stream and two tributaries to the Big Walnut for nearly ten months prior to the installation of the inserts and are continuing that testing. An initial look at the data suggests that the inserts are improving water quality, especially with regard to E. coli. We believe that the primary sources of nutrients and bacteria in this tributary are poorly functioning household sewage treatment systems. For more information on the stream inserts or the initial data, contact Kurt at (614) 486-9613, ext. 121 or at kkeljo@franklinswcd.org.



2013

### Urban Stormwater Delineations

The purpose of the Urban SubH2Oshed Initiative is to further develop a process for collecting and processing watershed related data to assist in identifying the best locations for stormwater mitigation projects within watersheds. This process was defined and tested in the Spring Run watershed in the City of Westerville. The process and results of this work were recently presented at the ESRI International Users Conference as an example of leveraging GIS technologies to work with stormwater related issues.

Local municipalities are increasingly interested in understanding the characteristics and functions of urban watersheds including stormwater and drainage networks, stream stability, and the impacts of land use. This is in response to both ongoing flooding and stream erosion concerns and increasing mandates of construction and municipal stormwater general permits. However, stormwater mitigation in an urban environment is a complex issue. For example, to effectively mitigate stormwater, it is necessary to precisely know the land area draining to the waterway being studied for mitigation. Watersheds, or drainage areas, are traditionally determined by using land elevations. However, in urban areas, water can be rerouted by storm sewers running beneath the lands surface, thus altering the natural watershed boundary.

Over the past decade, under the direction of forward thinking leaders, Franklin Soil and Water Conservation District has developed an extensive GIS stream resource geodatabase that includes surface and subsurface

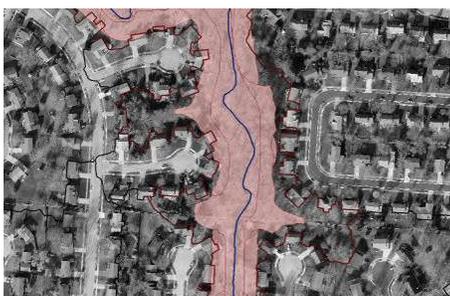


*Catchment and Corridor Delineations with Extracted Geospatial Data*

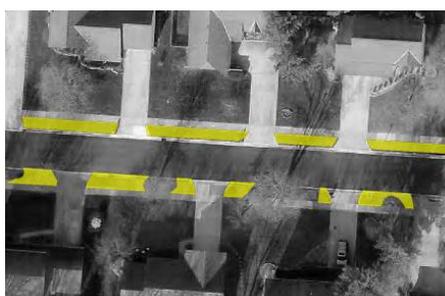
flow paths. More recently, staff has completed more extensive stream inventories for communities, including Dublin, Westerville and Columbus, laying the groundwork for better watershed study and stormwater management. When used for mitigation, this work will assist in defining opportunities to infiltrate or reuse water to reduce the amount of water running into storm sewers and streams.

To deal with the complexities of the urban environment, the District Geomatics Team produced a GIS desktop investigation methodology including producing watershed delineations based on known stormwater infrastructure and surface elevations. Subsequently, baseline data was mined from these urban watershed delineations using established water quality indicators including: impervious surface, tree canopy, soils, and turf areas as well as identifying available landscape zones for possible green infrastructure projects.

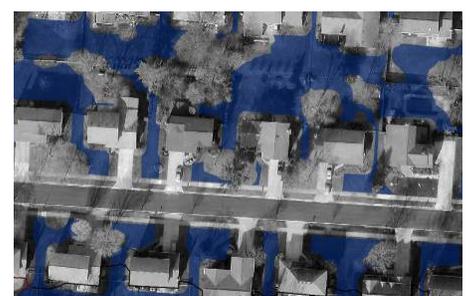
This methodology can be used to explore and prioritize options to reduce stormwater runoff and downstream flooding, as well as address active erosion in the stream corridor. Recommended best management practices will include green infrastructure practices that use water infiltration into soils and transpiration through plants. It also includes a methodology for conducting physical inventory and analysis of streams and their adjacent corridors, recording 'areas of concern': channel modifications, stream erosion, impacts to the stream buffer, log jams; and 'areas of opportunity': stormwater outfalls and sites with potential for improvements. These efforts allow participating communities to be more proactive in mitigating stormwater, especially, when future stormwater general permits will likely require communities to use stream restoration, reforestation, pervious pavement, and storm water infiltration practices in developed and developing areas to meet water quality goals.



*Stream Buffer and Floodplain*



*ROW Allowance*



*Landscape Allowance*

2013

## Education and Outreach

We welcomed new Environmental Education Assistant, Carol Loopstra to the Education Team in July 2013! She assists with bringing educational programs on soil and water conservation into the schools.

Carol holds a MS degree in agronomy from the University of Maryland. She has four years of previous experience as a soil conservation planner with Charles Soil Conservation District in southern Maryland where she also became involved with instructing high school students in their Envirothon program. Throughout her career, she has taught undergraduates through teaching assistantships, instructed young children how to grow vegetables, and presented soil basics to professionals, college students, and schoolchildren through workshops and seminars. She is excited to be working with a team of fellow conservationists and glad to be in a place where she can help children see and understand the world under our feet.



*Carol Loopstra, Environmental Educational Assistant*

This year we received our new soil tunnel panel which includes a rain garden and pervious and impervious road surfaces. Significant programs in 2013 included our partnership with Our Lady of Perpetual Help to install a rain garden at their school. Students rotated between planting the rain garden, experiencing the new soil tunnel, and learning from the soil erosion simulator. This was the debut of the new soil tunnel panel! We also partnered with the City of New Albany and their schools to perform a stream clean up along Rose Run where we provided the new soil tunnel as a station during this event.

Franklin Soil and Water Conservation District recognizes an educator within a Franklin County school district each year who goes above and beyond the call of duty to bring environmental experiences to his/her students. We rotate this award between elementary teachers, secondary teachers and non-formal educators.

The 2013 Educator of The Year Award was presented to Amy Mastroianni in conjunction with the 2013 poster contest ceremony held at the Columbus Zoo and Aquarium. She currently teaches at Harmon Elementary School and she previously taught at Darbydale Elementary, both in the South-Western City School District. Congratulations and thank you to all that participated. We also extend our gratitude to the Columbus Zoo and Aquarium for partnering with us on the event!



*Amy Mastroianni, 2013 Educator of the Year - standing second from left in back row*

## Program Areas

### Franklin Soil and Water Supports Your Community

- *Local governments receive more programming, more technical support and more on-the-ground conservation for their money because of state matching funds*
- *Expertise in grant writing, management and reporting*
- *Able to partner with government, nonprofit and private-sector organizations with minimal delays and low overhead costs*

#### Backyard Conservation and Landowner Assistance



With the goals of improving surface water quality and wildlife habitat, we offer site assessment, evaluation and technical guidance to help landowners learn about and implement conservation practices. Practices include drainage management, stream buffers, streambank stabilization, rain gardens, rain barrels, composting and the use of native plants. We also offer workshops and management of municipal cost-share programs for these practices.

#### Conservation Easements

We partner with landowners, developers and local governments to hold donated or purchased conservation easements along streams to improve water quality, protect streams, restore wetlands and protect against flooding. We use a targeted, watershed-based approach to make the greatest impact on stream protection. When combined with our Hellbranch Meadows property, our conservation easement program has provided permanent protection for more than 700 acres of riparian corridor throughout Franklin County.

#### Developing Lands

We provide technical services for stormwater management and sediment and erosion control on developing lands. Services provided to municipalities, developers and residents include guidance on practices to reduce soil loss, review of stormwater pollution prevention plans, inspections of active construction sites, and training in these topics. Achieving compliance with NPDES permit regulations reduces the negative impacts of stormwater runoff and improves water quality.



## Program Areas

### Public Outreach and Participation

We provide a variety of public education, outreach, involvement and participation programs for townships and municipalities to help meet the requirements of NPDES stormwater permits. These programs include both print and electronic newsletters, social media platforms, community displays, workshops, volunteer opportunities and stream clean-up events.



### Watershed Coordinator Implementation

We provide coordination services for state-approved watershed action plans and TMDLs in the Lower Big Walnut, Alum Creek and Lower Olentangy watersheds, including projects outside of Franklin County. This involves identifying local resources, needs and interests for restoration projects and providing services to get projects implemented, including grant writing, meeting facilitation, public presentations, evaluation of new technologies, demonstration projects, overseeing project implementation and water quality monitoring.

### Environmental Education

We provide a variety of educational programming to both students and educators. Resources for students include loan kits, in-class presentations, field investigations, including stream quality monitoring, and competitions such as the Envirothon and the conservation poster contest. All student programs are correlated with Ohio Academic Content Standards. Environmental education workshops for in-service and pre-service teachers are offered throughout the year.



### Illicit Discharge Detection and Elimination (IDDE)

We assist Franklin County Public Health in meeting NPDES Phase II illicit discharge detection requirements for Franklin County and local municipalities. Dry weather screening and sampling of outfalls is conducted in coordination with stream resource mapping. IDDE field staff are certified by Ohio EPA as qualified data collectors. The IDDE data is fully integrated into our nationally recognized GIS geodatabase for ease of municipal or township management.

### Natural Resources Mapping

Our geomatics team uses GIS technologies to create, collect, manage and analyze both natural and manmade resources. Our countywide stream resource geodatabase includes agricultural tile outfalls, MS4 outfalls, stormwater lines, and surface drainage. Land use professionals can access digital drainage information to use with mapping and analysis of natural resources and built infrastructure. We also have developed tree canopy layers for the county, wetland potential layers for use in plan reviews and are developing urban watershed layers for improved stormwater management.

Thank You to Our 2013 Funders

Franklin County Board of Commissioners  
 The Ohio State Legislature  
 The City of Columbus  
 The Cities of Canal Winchester, Dublin, Gahanna, Grove City, Hilliard, New Albany, Reynoldsburg, Upper Arlington, Westerville and Worthington; and the Villages of Obetz and Lockbourne  
 The Franklin County Economic Development and Planning Department and the Franklin County Sanitary Engineer  
 The Ohio Environmental Education Fund  
 Natural resources assistance from USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service and the Ohio Department of Natural Resources, Division of Soil and Water Resources.

2013 Event Sponsors

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*Thank you for your continued support of our conservation efforts in protecting natural resources for future generations.*



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