

Welcoming New Staff

We're excited to announce that Stark Soil and Water has two new employees we would like to introduce!

First, is our new District Technician, Jay Jordan, he will be handling our Agriculture sector. Jay comes to us with a B.S. in Environment and Natural Resources from The Ohio State University. His previous experiences include his former employment at Plain Township Parks and Recreation, field work with The Ohio State University, CADFW, ODNR, and USFWS. His focus includes sustainable agriculture and assisting our community.

Second, is our new District Administrator, John S. Weedon. He joins us from Connecticut, but grew up in northeast Ohio, and his family owns a dairy farm in Geauga County. John will oversee district activities and staff under the guidance and direction of the Board of Supervisors.

“I am honored to be working with the Stark district staff, board, and partner agencies as we focus on helping producers and landowners protect their precious natural resources,” he said. “It is truly rewarding and meaningful work.”

John received an undergraduate and graduate degree from the University of Michigan and was recently awarded a Master of Science in natural resources/environmental science from the University of Illinois. His most recent position was conservation manager for Connecticut Farmland Trust where he worked with landowners to permanently protect their farmland from development.

Stark SWCD Staff

John S. Weedon, District Administrator
 Matthew Ferrel, District Technician
 Jay Jordan, District Technician
 Deanna Kail, Administrative Assistant
 Rebecca O'Neill, Education Specialist
 Rich Rohn, Urban Program Specialist

Stark SWCD Supervisors

Randy Pero, Board Chairman
 Chuck Midcap, Vice Chairman
 Scott Briggs, Fiscal Agent
 Jim Halter, Secretary
 Natalie Hammer, Equipment Manager



2017 JOINT ANNUAL MEETING AND SUPERVISOR ELECTION IS SEPTEMBER 12TH!

Stark Soil and Water Conservation District (SWCD) and Stark County Farm Bureau will hold a joint annual meeting at Varian Orchards in East Canton on Tuesday, September 12, 2017. The doors open at 6:00 p.m. with dinner served at 6:45 p.m. The joint business meeting starts at 7:30 p.m. and ends at 8:30 p.m.

Stark SWCD will hold an Election of Supervisors at the meeting for two positions on the Board of Supervisors for three year terms that begin on January 1, 2018. Voting begins at 6:00 p.m. and ends at 7:00 p.m. The SWCD Nominating Committee placed the following candidates on the ballot for the two available positions:

*** Scott Briggs**

*** Jim Halter**

*** Peter Motts**

Individuals interested in petitioning to be on the ballot must submit completed petitions to the SWCD office by 4:30p.m. on August 8, 2017.

If you are unable to attend the Annual Meeting but would like to vote in this election, please contact the SWCD office to request an application for an absentee ballot or print an absentee ballot request form on our website starting August 22, 2017. Ballots must be returned to the SWCD office no later than 4:30p.m. on September 12, 2017. To vote in the election, you must be a Stark County landowner or resident and be over 18 years of age.

Tickets are \$15 per person for Farm Bureau or SWCD members and \$30 for non-members.

Education Programs

Stark Soil and Water Conservation District values the cultivation of conservation education. Interactive educational programs and materials are offered at no charge to any school, group, organization, club, or resident of any age, in Stark County. Stark Soil and Water educational programs are based on the best management practices in conservation on the topics of soil, water, and natural resources. You can select a sample program from our website, or contact us and we can accommodate the program. Contact the district for additional information and scheduling.

Programs	Program Topics
Soil	Testing soil for essential nutrients, determine soil composition, soil typing, creating sediment, soil layers, decomposers, composting, weathering and erosion, living and non-living parts of soil, reading soil maps
Water	Determine water quality based on macroinvertebrates (go to stream, bring to program, or use a model), storm water, water cycle, weathering and erosion
Natural Resources	Ecosystems, biodiversity, nutrient cycling, invasive species, farm to school, species interactions, point-source and non-point source pollution, recycling, composting, waste, energy transfer, photosynthesis, populations, continuation of species, genetic modifications, algal blooms, etc.
Outdoor Learning	Identifying living and non-living organisms, habitats, niches, locating and observing organisms around the school, testing school soil
Teacher Workshops	Project WET, Project WILD, soil, water quality monitoring, outdoor learning spaces, education grants
Clubs/Organizations	Composting, rain barrels, outdoor learning spaces, best management practices, pollinators, native species, water quality

Upcoming Events

Grazing Management Workshop Series - The workshops will be presented by Bob Hendershot. Participants will design a grazing system by managing soil fertility and forage species selection. All attendees will receive a grazing workbook, pasture stick, and forage field guide. One soil test will be provided for each participant that brings a pasture sample to the first workshop. A certificate will be awarded to participants that attend all 3 sessions. Following the workshop series, a Grazing Field Day will held on September 9th @ Motts Mapleton Farm, 3415 Lotz Ave. SE, East Canton, Ohio.

NO Registration Fee, but reservations are required by July 26th due to limited space for sessions 1 - 3. September 9th field day requires a reservation also, but you have until September 6th. Please call 330-451-7645 for reservations.

* August 1st, 8th, & 15th @ 6:00pm - 8:30pm - USDA Service Center, 2650 Richville Dr SE. Massillon, Ohio 44646

* Grazing Field Day September 9th @ 9:00am - 1:00pm - **Lunch will be provided**

Lunch will be provided by Stark County Farm Bureau. Bottled water and additional supplies will be provided by Farm Credit for Field Day.

Stark Crop Producers' Breakfast - Farm Employees

* August 3, 2017 @ 8:00am

* Thompson's Dairyland, Louisville, Ohio

Meals are optional and at your own expense

Plain Township Farmers Market - Stark SWCD will be present at the market! We will have an information booth and kid friendly activities.

* August 9, 2017 @ 4:00pm - 7:00pm

* Veterans Park - Across from Glen Oak High School on Schneider.

Homeowners Series Workshop, Compost Bins - Join us to learn about effective compost methods for household yard waste, as well as ways to use nutrient rich hummus around your home. We are currently taking orders! Please visit our website at www.starkswcd.org to download your order form. Orders/Payments are due no later than August 2nd!

* August 16, 2017 @ 6:00pm - 8:00pm

* Louisville Constitution Center, 1022 W. Main St. Louisville, Ohio 44641

Stark Crop Producers' Breakfast - Cover Crop Application

* September 7, 2017 @ 8:00am

* Thompson's Dairyland, Louisville, Ohio

Meals are optional and at your own expense

Homeowners Series Workshop, Vermiculture - Learn the method of composting using red wigglers, or composting worms, to speed up the process of decomposition and obtain "worm juice" to use on household plants & gardens. Participants may choose to create their own vermiculture set up for their home. Please RSVP no later than Friday prior to the workshop!

* September 13, 2017 @ 6:00pm - 8:00pm

* The Plain Township Administrative Offices, 2600 Easton St. Canton, Ohio 44721

Stark Crop Producers' Breakfast - Extending the Grazing Season

* October 5, 2017 @ 8:00am

* Thompson's Dairyland, Louisville, Ohio

720 Market - We will have an information booth and kid friendly activities!

* October 15, 2017 @ 11:00am - 4:00pm

* Gervasi Vineyard, 1700 55 St. NE., Canton, OH 44721



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Feds and Farming

"I don't want the government to have anything to do with my farming operation," a local producer relayed to me this month. I can understand his mistrust, I have, after all, worked in the federal government for 34 years. A lot has changed in those 34 years for sure. More laws and programs from the government side, and more yields, equipment and efficiency on the farm side. And don't forget the advances in science and technology for everyone. But one thing is the same, participation in USDA programs is voluntary. A lot of people have worked hard and long to keep it that way.

That is one reason our wetland rules are different than EPA's. EPA enforces federal regulations period. USDA "enforces" Farm Bill regulations only for individuals and entities that participate in Farm Bill programs. I realize that some of the programs are an economic necessity for many operations, at least sometimes like during droughts or disasters, so the voluntary concept may be debated. Even so, your local conservationists still have the mindset that we are here to help you. Help you plan, help you improve your land for your family, and all that depends on healthy soil and water.

Our assistance is designed to help you make the best decisions for your operation. You are the decision maker. We help you formulate alternatives to solve any resource concerns, whether that is soil, water, air, plants, animal, or human concerns such as labor, time, or capital. We do it with science, engineering, financial assistance, and a true desire to help you help the land. In NRCS we can provide just technical help, or both technical and financial assistance through governmental contracts. Contracts do require commitment, the key is to make good decisions through planning. The plan that documents your decisions is the basis for the contract if you are selected for funding.

Good planning takes time. Now is a good time to start the planning process for the next few years, if you want to compete for funds this fall which will be fiscal year 2018. You can call our office at 330-830-7700 ext. 103 to set up an appointment to meet with a conservationist. Remember, you are the decision maker.

Unless extended, this will be the last year of programs for the 2014 Farm Bill. What will the 2018 Farm Bill bring? Well, you can voluntarily influence that as well.

- Written by Sandy Chenal, District Conservationist, Natural Resource Conservation Service