

STARK STEWARDSHIP

Stark Soil & Water Conservation District
2021 District of the Year

Summer 2023

Board of Supervisors

Ann Wolfe
Rick Horner
Rodney Campbell
Natalie Hammer
Andy Wentling

District Staff

John S. Weedon
Sarah E. Matheny
Adrienne Bock
Matthew Ferrel
Jay Jordan
Rome Marinelli
Taylor Noble

USDA-NRCS Staff

John Knapp
Lynette Harmon

2650 Richville Dr. SE.;
Suite 100
Massillon, Ohio 44646
330-451-7645
starkswcd.org
Monday to Friday
8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

Closed: Labor Day
(September 4th)

Board Meetings: 2nd
Thursday of the month
@ 8:00 a.m.

Special Events

2023 Supervisor Election

Stark Soil & Water Conservation District (SWCD) will hold an election for two Board of Supervisors positions for a three-year term beginning January 1st, 2024.

Voting starts August 14th and ends September 12th.

Voters can cast ballots at the District's Annual Meeting (see below) or at its office between August 14th and September 12th during regular office hours (8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.; Monday to Friday).

Absentee ballots may be requested by contacting the office between August 14th and September 12th. Absentee ballots must be returned to the office no later than 4:30 p.m. on September 12th.

Eligible voters are Stark County landowners or residents at least 18 years old.

2023 Annual Meeting

Stark SWCD and Stark County Farm Bureau will hold a joint annual meeting at Paradise United Church of Christ (619 E Main St., Louisville, OH 44641) on Tuesday, September 12th starting at 6:00 p.m. Tickets are \$15 per person for Farm Bureau or SWCD members and \$30 per person for non-members. Call 330-456-4889 by September 7th to RSVP.

5th Annual Healthy Soil Contest

Stark SWCD is holding its fifth annual contest to promote the importance of healthy soils. Core cylinders can be picked up at the office. Samples must be dropped off at the District office by August 18th (8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.). One sample per landowner.

District staff and soil scientists will conduct five different soil health assessment tests to determine the healthiest soil. If you have questions or would like more information contact Jay Jordan at 330-451-7643.

Farm Science Review Bus Trip

Stark SWCD, Stark County Farm Bureau, and OSU Extension are sponsoring the annual Farm Science Review bus trip on Wednesday, September 20th. Participants will enjoy coffee & donuts, bus ride, admission ticket, and buffet dinner at Der Dutchman. The cost is \$70 per person. Call 330-456-4889 by September 14th to RSVP. Limited seating.

MEET THE CANDIDATES



Natalie Hammer

Natalie Hammer lives in Canal Fulton with her husband, Andrew, and her three children: Joshua, Noelle, and Julianne. Natalie and her husband breed and raise beefalo, chickens, and pigs on their 39 acre farm. She has over 15 years in the cattle business as well as 25 years in land management.

Natalie has served on the Stark Soil & Water Board of Supervisors since 2017. She is active in her children's schools.

Natalie is a firm believer that the key to conservation is being good stewards of our resources and keeping a balance between need and resource. She believes that the Board and the District staff have an incredible opportunity to provide both the urban and the rural areas of Stark County with the opportunities to learn and grow as experienced stewards of our resources.



Mark Martin

Mark resides in Jackson Township with his wife, Joyce. Mark moved to Stark County in 2009. He has had a long and distinguished public service career, having served as a Summit County Deputy Sheriff and firemedic for Green Township and Coventry Township. He also served as firemedic, captain, and division chief with the City of Stow Fire Department and finished his career as Fire Chief for Perry Township. He is currently a part time instructor for the Ohio Fire Chiefs' Association. He holds a bachelor's degree from Malone College and a master's degree in public administration from University of Akron.

He is past president of the Perry Township Rotary Club and board member of the Patriot Ball Committee.

Mark strongly believes in the importance of public service and giving back to the community. He wants to work on the soil & water board of supervisors to strengthen the district's role in helping homeowners be better prepared for the more frequent and intense rainfalls we are experiencing. He also wants work with townships and municipalities to better handle drainage issues in their communities.



Andy Wentling

Andy resides in Sugar Creek Township with his wife, Tera, and their two children, Hannah and Alivia. He has lived in Stark County his entire life. He is the Director of North East Ohio with Leppo Rents and with his brother grows soybeans, corn, wheat, and hay on over 1,000 acres as well as five acres of pumpkins and gourds. The family practices a mix of conventional tillage and no-till and has incorporated contour strips and waterways to prevent soil erosion.

He holds two associates degrees from OSU-ATI (hydraulics and diesel mechanic). He has held the position of president and public policy chair with Stark County Farm Bureau and chair of Young Ag Professionals with Ohio Farm Bureau. Andy is running for re-election to represent county residents that are engaged in production agriculture. He is interested in learning more about soil & water services and programs and bringing that knowledge to his fellow producers.

Upcoming Programming

Streamside Maintenance

Join us to learn tips and strategies to help maintain your streamside land. Topics will include how to stabilize streambanks, repair damage from erosion, and prevent future erosion while adding aesthetic beauty to your backyard.

- August 17th (6:00 p.m.) at 2650 Richville Dr. SE., Massillon - Register for the program visiting starkswcd.org or calling the District at 330-451-7645.



Rain Barrels and Compost Bins

Have you considered rain barrels or compost bins but are unsure where to start? Join Stark Soil & Water to learn about the benefits of implementing these sustainable practices.

- September 12th (6:00 p.m.) at Stark Parks Sippo Lake Exploration Gateway 5712 12th St. NW, Canton - Register for the workshop by visiting starkparks.com/certifiedbackyardhabitat/.

Master Rain Gardener Certification Course

Due to staffing levels, the Fall 2023 Master Rain Gardener Certification Course has been postponed.

The Course will resume Spring 2024. Visit www.starkswcd.org/master-rain-gardener-course for more information.



Wildflower Seed Collection

Assist staff with collection of seeds from a variety of flowering plants. Participants will learn how to collect and process seeds for future planting and can take some seeds home. Wear sturdy shoes and long pants.

- October 21st (1:00 p.m.) at 16146 Daniel St. NE, Minerva - Register for the program by calling Huston-Brumbaugh Nature Center at 330-823-7487.

To Move Forward, Have a Vision!

Before you consider specific changes for the future of your farm business, it is important to formulate a vision. The development of a meaningful vision is not easy or instantaneous. It takes time, thought, effort, teamwork and introspectiveness. Without a vision your steps for change will most likely result in failure. With a well-developed vision it makes the planning process easier and just takes forward movement and action to get where you want to be.

I have been continuously inspired working with a farmer who purchased 70 acres of property a few years ago. They were solid in the long-term vision to convert all tillable acres to pasture where they would raise 100% grass-fed beef. Fueled by a passionate vision, they started to research and learn everything they could about rotational grazing and grass-fed beef. Soils tests were taken to determine the nutrient needs for a new planting and we started with a small grazing plan that converted 10 acres to pasture. Now, with their second year in operation, 20 more acres have been converted to pasture, and fencing will be going up this fall. When I asked what's been a key success in making progress, they said a well thought out vision. So, even though they have made mistakes and are still learning, having a vision helps provide the fuel to keep moving forward on the farm.

Stark Stewardship Symposium

November 3rd, 2023 | 8AM - 4:30PM

Enjoy a full-day conference focusing on resources available to small- and large-scale property owners. Learn how to make conservation work for you from natural resource professionals. The Event is co-hosted by Stark Soil & Water Conservation District and Stark Parks. Breakfast and lunch provided.

Ticket prices: \$25 (Early-Bird Registration ends September 10th) or \$30 (Regular Registration ends October 20th)

Stark Stewardship Symposium will take place at Sippo Lake Exploration Gateway, 5712 12th St. NW, Canton. Register for the conference by visiting starkswcd.org or calling Stark Soil & Water at 330-451-7645.

8:00-8:40	REGISTRATION <i>Welcome to the Stark Stewardship Symposium!</i>	
8:45-9:00	Opening Remarks	
9:00-9:50	Resource Guide for Stark County Residents Presented by: Matt Thomas, <i>Muskingum Watershed Conservancy District</i> & Chris Eidson, <i>Natural Resources Conservation Service</i>	
	BREAKOUT SESSIONS	
	<i>Small-Scale Properties (Room A)</i>	<i>Large-Scale Properties (Room B)</i>
10:00-11:00	A Homeowner's Guide to Green Infrastructure Presented by: Courtney Boyle, <i>Environmental Collaborative of Ohio</i>	The H2Ohio Initiative Presented by: Joy Mulinex, <i>Ohio Lake Erie Commission</i>
11:05-12:05	Planning for Pollinators Presented by: Adam Zorn, <i>Huston-Brumbaugh Nature Center</i>	Sustainable Forestry Presented by: Tom Rooney, <i>The Nature Conservancy</i>
12:15-1:15	LUNCH & EXHIBITS	
	<i>Rapid Fire Sessions</i>	
1:20-1:50	Backyard Conservation Presented by: Sam Reilly, <i>Stark Parks</i>	Leave A Legacy: Conserve your property for future generations Presented by: Chris Eidson, <i>Natural Resources Conservation Service</i>
1:55-2:25	Bringing Birds to the Backyard Presented by: Adam Zorn, <i>Huston-Brumbaugh Nature Center</i>	Managing Woodlands Presented by: Ryan Clester, <i>ODNR Division of Forestry</i>
2:30-3:00	How Nature Nurtures Presented by: Mary Grueber, <i>Stark Parks</i>	Wetlands for the Win Presented by: Lydia Fach, <i>US Army Corps of Engineering</i>
3:05-3:15	BREAK	
3:20-4:20	Managing Invasive Plants Presented by: Jennifer Windus, <i>Ohio Invasive Plants Council</i>	Build a Better Hunt Presented by: Jacob Stutz, <i>ODNR Division of Wildlife</i>
4:20-4:30	Connecting Conservation Across the County Closing Remarks Presented by: <i>Stark Soil & Water Conservation District</i>	

Do's and Don'ts During a Drought

Believe it or not, rain following a drought can carry negative impacts. When droughts occur, the soil dries up to the point where it becomes as hard and impervious as pavement. Consequently, when rainfall finally arrives, instead of soaking into the ground, the water rushes off the land. Here we highlight how to prepare for rainfall following a drought to maximize its benefits and minimize potential issues such as runoff and flooding.

Adjust Sprinkler Systems: Check your sprinkler system regularly to ensure it is in good working condition. Adjust the sprinkler heads to avoid watering non-landscaped areas like driveways and sidewalks. Lawns typically require only 1 inch of water per week.

Avoid Mowing: Droughts cause plants stress. Avoid mowing when possible. If necessary, mow with a raised deck so that the grass can be maintained at 3" high. Additionally, if you choose to mow during a drought, you may be creating an additional water demand for your grass, which is unnecessary water usage.

Capture Rainwater: Install rain barrels or cisterns to harvest and store rainfall for later use. These water collection systems are beneficial during droughts and can provide a valuable water source for your plants and garden during dry periods.

Cover Bare Ground: Use mulch, straw, or stones to create a protective layer over the soil. This will minimize erosion and muddy water runoff, preserving the soil. The same concept should be applied to any exposed soil piles; cover them with tarps.

Plant Drought-Tolerant Species: Choose native plants adapted to your region's climate. These plants require less water and can withstand dry periods, reducing the need for irrigation.

Utilize Drip Irrigation: Consider installing drip irrigation systems for targeted watering. Drip irrigation delivers water directly to the plant's root zone, minimizing water loss through evaporation and runoff.

Water Early in the Day: Water your plants and lawn in the early morning when temperatures are cooler. This allows for better water absorption and reduces evaporation.

Water Prior to Rainfall: If possible, water your lawn and plants at least one day before the anticipated rain event. This helps soften the hard, dry soil, enabling it to absorb the incoming rainfall more efficiently. AND

Watch the Weather Reports: Stay informed by regularly monitoring weather reports and forecasts in your area. By keeping a close eye on upcoming rain events, you can prepare your property and make the most of the rainfall when it arrives.

2023 Stark County Fair

August 29th - September 4th

Come visit us at the 2023 Stark County Fair! We will be located in the Farm Bureau Building and our staff will be available all week to answer questions. Join us to learn something new, grab a handout, and help yourself to giveaways.





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www.starkswcd.org
Facebook: StarkSWCD
Twitter: @Stark_SWCD
Instagram: stark.swcd
YouTube: @starksoilwater9702



Only Rain Down the Drain



Did you know that the storm water entering our storm drains is untreated before it reaches our waterways? Storm water is the flow of water after a precipitation event. As storm water travels, it crosses roads, parking lots, and other hard surfaces. These hard surfaces are known as impermeable surfaces and do not allow storm water to soak in. Storm water flows across impermeable surfaces on the way to the storm drain, picking up pollutants. Once polluted storm water enters the storm drain, it will travel through the storm sewer system and eventually reach our local waterways such as rivers, lakes, and streams. These waterways accept incoming storm water, along with all of the pollutants carried by the water. It is important for all of us to take steps to minimize storm water pollution.

Common storm water pollutants include sediment, bacteria, excess nutrients, trash, debris, auto fluids, and road salt. Be a good storm water steward by soil testing before fertilizer application and only disturb soil if absolutely necessary. Have your septic system and sewer lines inspected to minimize leaks, and pick up your pet's waste to reduce bacteria pollution. Ensure your trash is secured and lawn waste is disposed of properly. Maintain and inspect your vehicle to avoid leaking, and properly apply road salt to reduce the impacts on our storm water. Work to keep the storm drains clear of debris in your neighborhood, and reach out to our office if you would like other ideas about minimizing storm water pollution. We can all work together to protect our storm water and water quality by making sure only rain travels down the drain.

Go Green!

Request this newsletter electronically and help reduce your environmental impact.

Send an email to ajbock@starkcountyohio.gov with the message, "Let's Go Green!" or "Save the Trees!" to be added to our electronic mailing list. Thank you to all our electronic subscribers for going green!