

Program Highlights 2019

Mission: To advocate and implement best management practices for conservation of land and aquatic resources in a developed environment through education, stewardship and technical assistance.

Cuyahoga Soil & Water Conservation District's (SWCD) main program areas are:

- **Conservation and Stormwater Education**
- **Watershed Programs**
- **Stormwater Pollution Prevention Program**
- **Natural Resource Conservation and Urban Agriculture**

Annual Theme: *Slow It Down, Spread It Out, Soak It In*

Conservation and Stormwater Education

The Conservation Education Program is implemented to 50 communities across the county. Educational materials, programs, events and opportunities for engagement are provided to nearly every resident within the County. Some of the more requested and successful programs include:

- General education related to trees, proper planting and care
- Tree plantings and tree giveaways
- The litter prevention Stow It, Don't Throw It pledge has been done for more than 300 people
- Native plants and pollinator plants and gardens, including the Master Rain Garden initiative conducting children's tour for Summer Supervisor School
- Workshops for the general public, such as Green Cleaning and Rain Barrels
- Teacher workshops supported by funding from the NEORS for student transportations
- Envirothon: 6 Cuyahoga County schools (4 new) and 9 teams total entered the 2019 area 2 competition. Brecksville Broadview Hts. HS qualified and went to the state competition.
- Grant funding was received from, the Western Reserve Resource Conservation & Development Council, Cuyahoga Farm Bureau, Western Reserve Land Conservancy, Dominion/East Ohio and NEORS program assistance
- Partnered with Girl Scouts– Orange Library garden maintenance, tree giveaway at trunk or treat, storm drain stencil in Glenwillow, Warrensville stream cleanup, pollinator garden installation with native plants in Highland Hills and Valley View
- Marie Kondo Your Storm Drain Facebook post (reached over a million people, 6,200 shares, 15+ countries)
- Cuyahoga SWCD programs, such as stream restorations, tree planting, the floating wetlands project and milk weed pod collection were highlighted in various media: WKSU, Sun Newspapers, Plain Dealer, Cleveland.com, Channel 5

Natural Resources and Urban Agriculture

- Ohio Israel Agriculture Initiative (OIAI) grant for planting cover crops to help repair degraded urban soils that are typically biologically dead, compacted, alkaline and full of debris. The goal is to increase soil tilth (grow-ability) through cover cropping by increasing organic matter and soil micro-biology for ecosystem benefits. A one percent increase in a soil's organic matter over an acre of space will allow that acre to absorb 25,000 gallons more water per rain event

- Cuyahoga SWCD has partnered with Cuyahoga County to help design and implement the Cuyahoga County Healthy Urban Tree Canopy grant program.

Watershed Programs

Cahoon Creek- Frontal Lake Erie Watershed Highlights:

- Developed and submitted the Nonpoint Source Implementation Strategy (NPS-IS) plan, which was approved by the Ohio EPA
- The CC-FLE watershed began its' very own Watershed Champion Program which currently has 23 Watershed Champion Members.
- Floating Wetlands project was housed at the City of Westlake's Recreation Center pond, which has been a great success attracting local media and news outlets, as well as communities that would like to see more floating wetlands in their stormwater basins and ponds. The plants from the floating wetland will be transferred to North Royalton, making the new stream restoration site their forever home.
- The CC-FLE watershed partnered with the Bay Village Green Team and were recently awarded a grant from Western Reserve Land Conservancy and Dominion Energy which will be used to purchase a water quality monitoring kit, initiating the creation of the CC-FLE watershed's very own Water Quality Monitoring Program.

Euclid Creek Highlights:

- Through October 2019th the program has held 28 volunteer events and over 600 volunteers have dedicated more than 1,500 hours of time to the creek! Volunteers helped to plant native forbs and trees, cleaned up streams, removed invasive plants, and monitored water quality.
- The Willoughby Hills Stream Restoration Project was featured on WKYC and at the National Floodplain Managers Conference.
- Helped the City of South Euclid to install a bioswale and native landscaping project along Green Road. \$15,000 William Bingham Foundation grant.
- Helped Lower Hawken to plant 75 native trees and shrubs. \$2500 Dominion/WRLC grant.
- Awarded grant funding (\$374,865.00) for design and engineering work on West Branch Euclid Creek project in 2020.

Rocky River Watershed Program Highlights:

- Construction of the Royalton Farms Stream Restoration Project on the East Branch of the Rocky, which features 800 feet of restored stream channel and reconnected floodplains.
- The enhancement of riparian wetlands and the installation of a roadside bioswale at NASA-Glenn Research Center through a partnership with Fairview High School, and the installation of 1200 live stakes and live fascines along 2500 feet of eroding headwater streams in the Strongsville backyard preserve.
- Trained 35 new volunteers, who monitor water quality at 23 sites throughout the watershed
- NPS-IS watershed plan approved for the Baldwin Creek-East Branch subwatershed.

Stormwater Pollution Prevention Program

The Stormwater staff reviews approximately 20 storm water pollution prevention plans each month and conducts about 240 monthly construction site inspections for 17 communities and Cuyahoga County Department of Public Works. The staff inspects more than 1100 sites to ensure installed storm water control measures are adequately maintained.

The staff continues to increase their knowledge through training and two staff received professional accreditations. Staff continues to share knowledge with community staff and is recognized for their technical expertise.

In partnership with NEORSD six individuals were trained in how to maintain green infrastructure stormwater control measures. Cuyahoga SWCD aided in the training by providing informational tours and presenting an official training module to the group. Other successful programs aimed at raising awareness of MCM 5 included a bicycle tour of stormwater infrastructure with 27 residents of Cuyahoga County and a bus tour of green infrastructure with 15 supervisors from other county SWCDs.

The SWCD is now assisting the City of Cleveland Division of Water Pollution Control to aid in complying with MCM 6 (Pollution Prevention & Good Housekeeping) by identifying potential sources of pollution at municipally owned facilities and implementing best management practices to mitigate the risk. The City of Cleveland continues to demonstrate a desire to be a leader in stormwater pollution prevention.