

Focus Newsletter

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Delaware Soil and Water Conservation District

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**SOAK UP THE
STORMWATER!**



Upcoming Events

- April 3** - Education Mini Grant Application Deadline
- April 14 - 17** - Bare Root Tree Sale Pick-Up
- April 16** - Area 5 Envirothon
- April 21** - Monthly Board of Supervisor's Meeting, 6:30pm
- April 22** - Powell Earth Day
- April 22** - Seminary Hill Farm Earth Day
- April 24** - Sunbury Arbor Day
- April 24** - Camp Canopy Sponsorship Application Deadline
- April 24** - College Scholarship Application Deadline
- May 1** - Powell Touch-a-Truck
- May 20** - Monthly Board of Supervisor's Meeting, 6:30pm
- May 27** - Memorial Day Holiday Office Closure
- June 13** - Habitat Hoopla at Scioto Gardens
- June 19** - Juneteenth Holiday Office Closure
- June 19-20** - Powell Festival
- July 3** - Independence Day Holiday Office Closure

TREE SALE REMINDER

TREE SALE PICK-UP

Did you order trees from our annual Bare Root Tree Seedling Sale? If not, you still have time to order!

[Download the Order Form by clicking here.](#)

If you did place an order, **don't forget pick it up from our office from April 14-17, 2026 from 8:00am-4:30 pm.** When you turn into the parking lot, you will head towards the back of the building. Veer left towards the greenhouse, and you will see us out back. You will

find us in between the Sheriff's Evidence Room and the greenhouse. There will be signs to direct you as well. Arrangements can be made for after-hours pick-up if needed. Our tree selection is ordered from a Native Tree Nursery in Pennsylvania and shipped. Bare root seedlings are relatively small and orders are filled in Delaware SWCD tote bags; a large vehicle is not necessary for pick-up unless your order is above average size.

What are Bare Root Trees?

Bare root trees and shrubs are plants that have not yet been potted. Instead, they are dormant trees with no soil around their roots. Each seedlings' bare roots are dipped in a preservative gel and placed in a plastic bag. Seedlings should be planted immediately into your yard or into a permanent container while still dormant for best chance of survival.



EDUCATION UPDATES

CAMP CANOPY

Do you know a high school student who loves all things outdoors, is a nature enthusiast, or who wants to pursue forestry and wildlife careers? Encourage them to apply for our Camp Canopy sponsorship, for a week they will never forget!

Delaware SWCD covers the cost of one high school student to attend Camp Canopy. This weeklong residential camp is the perfect mix of forestry, wildlife and adventure. By the end of the week, students will be experts on Ohio's great outdoors! More details and application can be found on our website.

Application Deadline: April 24th, 2026

CAMP CANOPY SPONSORSHIP

Sponsorship Application
Now Open!



June 7-12, 2026

**Ohio FFA Camp Muskingum
Carrollton, Ohio**

Learn
More and
Apply by
April 24th



EDUCATOR MINI GRANT

If you know an educator that is passionate about the outdoors, conservation, or teaching about the environment, send them our way to apply for our Educator Mini Grant!

Grant items being offered include rain barrels, compost bins, native wildflower seed for your outdoor classroom, bug kits, and more! Visit our website for more details and application.

Application Deadline: April 3rd, 2026

EDUCATION UPDATES

DELAWARE SWCD SCHOLARSHIP

Now Accepting Applications!

Delaware
Soil and Water
Conservation District



SCAN ME!

Learn More and
Apply by April 24th

COLLEGE SCHOLARSHIP

Do you have a high school student entering college next year who's interested in studying natural resources, environmental science, or agriculture? If so, they might be the perfect candidate for our scholarship! Each year, we provide a \$500 scholarship to one student entering their first year at a two or four-year college, technical school, or university (undergraduate or graduate school). More details and application can be found on our website.

Application Deadline: April 24th, 2026

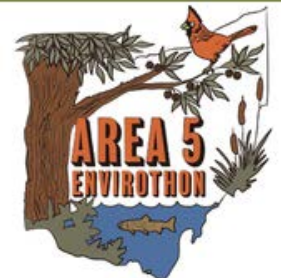
AREA 5 ENVIROTHON

Delaware SWCD and Franklin SWCD are hosting this year's Area 5 Envirothon at Rocky Fork Lake State Park, on April 16, 2026. The Area 5 Envirothon is a regional environmental competition for high school students. Students' knowledge of aquatic ecology, wildlife, forestry, and soils will be tested.

Please reach out to Erin Fisher, efisher@co.delaware.oh.us, if interested in having a team this year or in future years, as Delaware SWCD will register and pay the cost for your team.

LOCAL ENVIROTHON

Team Registration
Now Open!



April 16, 2026
Rocky Fork Lake
State Park

LEARN MORE AT

[soilandwater.co.delaware.oh.us/
envirothon/](http://soilandwater.co.delaware.oh.us/envirothon/)

area5envirothon.org

SOAK UP THE STORMWATER!

Celebrate Earth Month with Backyard Conservation

Soak up the Stormwater!

Rain is your resource! Don't let it "run off" onto the road and into the storm sewer system – put it to good use instead. When you capture water on your property, you are providing many ecological benefits, such as recharging groundwater, filtering out pollutants, reducing localized flooding, and keeping polluted water out of our streams and rivers.

Here are 5 things you can do on your property to soak up stormwater:



- **Install a rain barrel** – a free water source that your plants will love.
- **Plant native plants** – they are good at soaking up stormwater and provide habitat for native pollinators. By choosing native over non-native plants, you are joining in on the effort to restore balance to our natural world. [Click here for a list of local nurseries that sell native plants.](#)
- **Install a rain garden** – Feeling ambitious? [Click here to find resources on building a rain garden to capture even more water from your roof.](#)
- **Incorporate compost into your lawn and garden beds** – it helps our clay soils retain more water, and adds good bacteria to your soil.
- **Wash your car on your lawn** – this way the dirty wash water soaks into the grass instead of the storm drain and straight to a stream. You can even use water from your rain barrel for washing!

Celebrate Earth Month by adopting one of these practices in your own backyard!

POND PREP

Spring Pond Maintenance

If you have a pond, now is the time for Spring clean-up!

Here are a few things you can do to maintain the balance of nutrients in your pond, and ensure a healthy ecosystem for fish and other aquatic wildlife.

- **Vegetation Management:** Control aquatic vegetation – weeds grow rapidly as the water warms.
- **Pond Dye:** Add no later than early April to help shade out early algae growth.
- **Herbicide Application:** Use an aquatic herbicide to remove unwanted vegetation. Water temps must be 55–60 degrees F, and Make sure there is no rain in the forecast! Read labels carefully and check out the [Ohio Pond Management Handbook](#) for more detail.
- **Remove Debris:** Remove accumulated leaves and debris from the fall to prevent sludge buildup and excess nutrients.
- **Restart Filtration & Aeration:** Clean and reconnect pumps, bio-filters, and aerators. Aeration is critical to bring oxygen into the water to break down organic matter.
- **Bank Maintenance:** Check the pond edge for erosion, specifically damage to headwalls or pipes from freezing and thawing.
- **Stock Assessment:** Assess fish populations and consult experts regarding the addition of weed-eating fish like Grass Carp (Amur).
- **Add a wildlife planting:** Attract birds, pollinators, and more by adding a planting near the pond's edge.



[Find more pond resources on our website.](#)

APRIL IS OHIO NATIVE PLANT MONTH!

Check out OhioNativePlantMonth.org
for more information.

SWAMP WHITE OAK

One of the best hardwoods
for wet soils but adapts to
dry and average soils



EASTERN REDBUD

Smaller ornamental tree
with small pink flowers in
the spring



PURPLE CONEFLOWER

Perennial flower that
spread easily and attracts
many pollinators



NORTHERN SPICEBUSH

Shrub that blooms with
yellow flowers in the early
spring and red berry-like
fruit in the fall



EMPLOYEE SPOTLIGHT



Nick Balzer

Nick is the newest member of our team, having started in February. Most recently, Nick spent time living in Asheville, NC, but is a Delaware County native. He received his bachelor's degree from Ohio University in Applied Plant Biology in 2021. He brings experience working in large-scale commercial greenhouse plant production and in the landscaping sector. He enjoys spending his free time with his girlfriend, family, and friends. Fishing, spending time outdoors, and listening to music are a few of his favorite activities.

Welcome to the Soil & Water team, Nick!

EMPLOYEE SPOTLIGHT



Scott Stephens

While Nick is the newest member of our team, Scott is the oldest member of our team! He has no doubt earned his title as District Administrator, which he has held for the last 10 years. As you can see, Scott brings lots of laughs to our office!

Scott started with the District in 1990 as an intern. He returned the next summer and continued working part-time, while also attending OSU and completing an active-duty military tour with his Ohio Air National Guard Unit during Operation Desert Storm.

Upon graduation from both Hocking Technical College and OSU in March of 1993, Scott knew that he had found his "forever home," and began working as our first-ever full-time technician. Our staff at that time was small with only an administrator, secretary, a part-time USDA Field Technician, and one USDA Conservationist.

For the next several years the SWCD continued to grow, most notably in 1998 when we were asked by the Delaware County Engineer's Office and the County Board of Commissioners to manage the County's Drainage Maintenance Program. This set the course for the SWCD to become recognized as one of Ohio's best and largest conservation district Drainage Maintenance programs.

Scott was honored to take the helm as District Administrator in 2016. He's proud to have been part of the SWCD team and bring soil and water stewardship messages and projects to the citizens of our County. He feels truly grateful and blessed to have had the opportunity to work alongside so many dedicated and accomplished board members, coworkers, and agency partners.

In his own words, Scott says, "When I reflect on the last 36 or so years, the honor started that first day I stepped through the door as an eager, clueless kid with eggshell still on my head!" Well, we're glad you did, Scott!