

CONSERVATION COMMENTS

Preble Soil and Water Conservation District

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FEBRUARY 2010

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Preble SWCD
Web Address:
www.prebleswcd.com

2010 Tree Seedling Sale

The Annual Tree Seedling Sale is now underway at Preble SWCD, offering 16 different species of conifers, hardwoods, small trees and shrubs, as well as groundcover. These trees can be planted for windbreaks, landscaping, reforestation, and wildlife habitat. There are no restrictions on where these seedlings may be planted, or how many trees may be ordered.

The 1-2 year old seedlings are bare-rooted and sold in packages of 5 to 10 trees, depending on the species. Each package is dipped in a preservative gel to keep the roots moist, and then placed in a plastic bag. The seedlings should be planted as soon as they are received.

Orders will be taken until Friday, March 19. Payment must accompany the order in the form of cash or check. No orders will be taken by fax or e-mail. This year's pick up date will be Tuesday, April 6th, at the Preble SWCD office. A reminder postcard will be sent out prior to the pickup date.

If you would like more information about the plants for sale or their suitability for planting, please contact the office at (937) 456-5159.



Upcoming Contractor's Meeting

Later this winter, Preble SWCD and NRCS will be hosting a Contractor's Meeting to discuss updates for the CRP Waterway construction process in 2010. The demand for waterways is still very strong among farmers and landowners, and our goal is to coordinate with contractors to put as many waterways on the ground in 2010 as time allows for.

Preble SWCD will soon be sending out a mailing to contractors in the area with more details about the meeting.

WETLANDS RESERVE PROGRAM (WRP) – Restoring Ohio’s Wetlands

Is it Right for You?

“I’ve sat in the cab of my harvester and watched the yield monitor hover at 200 bushels an acre. I’ve also sat in the cab, driving through 6 inches of water, trying to save what’s left before the flood takes it all....” If you can relate to this statement, WRP might be for you.

Ohio has lost over 90% of its’ original wetland area due to development pressures from human settlement. Wetlands perform many critical environmental functions, which include providing habitat for fish and wildlife; improving water quality by filtering sediments and chemicals; reducing flooding; recharging groundwater; and protecting biological diversity. Creating wetlands through WRP can also offer farmers battling marginal or wet land an opportunity to relieve the burden of cropping that ground and gain economically from a conservation easement.

The Wetlands Reverse Program (WRP) is a voluntary restoration program that provides technical assistance to restore and improve wetland resources on private lands. NRCS pays all acquisition costs – appraisals, surveys, title work, and recording fees. Once all the legal work is done, NRCS’ technical staff can follow through on restoration plans and let the wetland come alive. WRP contracts last as long as you want – 10 years without an easement, 30 years with an easement...or FOREVER!

In addition, landowners retain ownership of the land, control access to the land, may use the land for recreational purposes such as bird watching and hunting, and may sell the land. There are two aspects of eligibility for WRP, one is landowner eligibility and the other is land eligibility.

Landowner Eligibility:

1. Own the property for at least 7 years (there are some limited exceptions granted), and
2. Adjusted gross income less than 1 million dollars, and
3. No wetland violations or highly erodible land violations.

General Land Eligibility:

1. Land must have an agricultural use history (row crops, pastureland, hayland, orchards, etc) and contain at least 50% hydric soils, or
2. Riparian areas that connect two protected wetland areas, or
3. Previously restored wetland areas.

WRP operates under a continuous sign-up, applications are accepted anytime. However, if you are interested in trying to secure 2010 funds you will need to apply by February 15, 2010.

To discuss the program and complete an application, please contact your local NRCS Field Office at (937) 456-4211 ext. 3 or visit us on the web at www.oh.nrcs.usda.gov

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Permit #342
Eaton, OH 45320

Return Service Requested

PREBLE SWCD TREE SALE

Look inside for the 2010
Tree Sale flyer.

All programs and services of the Preble SWCD are offered on a nondiscrimination basis, without regard to race, color, national origin, religion, sex, age, or handicap.

Great Backyard Bird Count at Preble County Historical Society Farm

Take a mid-winter nature break with the Great Back Yard Bird Count February 12-15, 2010 from 9 am - 5 pm each day at the Preble County Historical Center, located at 7693 Swartsel Road, Eaton, Ohio (about six miles Southeast of Eaton and one mile Northwest of Gratis off St. Rt. 122).

Join in the fun, hike the trails; it's a great winter family-oriented activity. Guided hikes will be offered each day, or hike at your leisure on the six miles of trails throughout the Center's grounds. Children's activities will be offered: make a bird-house, suet, bird feeders, bird puzzles, bird word search, coloring pages, and plenty more! All children must be accompanied by a parent or guardian.

Participants in the free event will join tens of thousands of volunteers of all levels of birding experience to count birds.

Each checklist submitted by these "citizen scientists" helps researchers at the Cornell Lab of Ornithology and the National Audubon Society learn more about how the birds are doing—and how to protect them. Last year, participants turned in more than 93,600 checklists online, creating the continent's largest instantaneous snapshot of bird populations ever recorded.

“Taking part in the Great Backyard Bird Count is a great way to get outside with family and friends, have fun, and help birds—all at the same time. Anyone who can identify even a few species can provide important information that enables scientists to learn more about how the environment is changing and how that affects our conservation priorities,” said Audubon Education Vice President, Judy Braus. “Everyone who participates in the GBBC—families, teachers, and young people—will get a chance to hone their observation skills, learn more about birds, and make a great contribution to the future!”

For updates about the Great Back Yard Bird Count sponsored by the Preble County Historical Society on February 12-15, call (937) 787-4256, or email: preblecohistsoc@brecnet.com, or visit their web site: <http://www.pchs.preblecounty.com>.