Preble Soil & Water Conservation District

Conserving our Natural Resources

August 2025

2789 US Rt. 35 E.
West Alexandria, OH 45381
(937) 456-5159
www.prebleswcd.org

CONSERVATION COMMENTS

BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

Mike Broermann
Brian Deaton
Kip Denlinger
Donald Hays
Josh Ruebush

DISTRICT STAFF

BJ Price - District Administrator & Technician
Jason Chappel - Technician
Bobby Hansford - District Tech/Wildlife Specialist

NATURAL RESOURCES CONSERVATION SERVICE

Jeff Barnes - District Conservationist
Chris Lutz - Soil Conservationist
Erin Schritz - Soil Conservation Tech
Tyler White - Resource Conservationist

PHEASANTS FOREVER FARM BILL BIOLOGIST

Renee Buck

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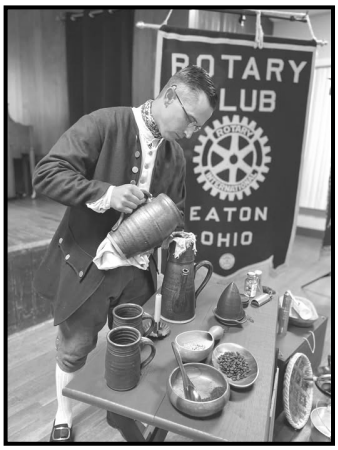
Get updates on our website:
www.prebleswcd.org

Annual Meeting and Banquet



Even though last year's big anniversary celebration will be hard to top, please make plans to join us at Seedtime Acres on August 26th for our 76th Annual Meeting and Banquet. The election for the Board of Supervisors will take place from 5:30 p.m. until 6:30 p.m. A delicious meal will be served by Shoelaces Catering beginning at 6:00 p.m., followed by our keynote speaker Ben Anspaugh who will perk up the meeting by speaking on the history of the coffee industry. Our Conservation Hall of Fame and Outstanding Cooperator award winners will be announced, followed by the ever-popular Conservation Trivia. The banquet portion of the meeting will end with door prizes and the announcement of the results of the supervisor election. It's all free of charge, and all you have to do is RSVP.

Who: All are welcome!

What: Preble SWCD 76th Annual Meeting

When: Tuesday, August 26th. Doors open at 5:30 p.m.

Where: Seedtime Acres, 759 Stephens Rd, West Manchester, OH 45382

How to RSVP: Call Preble SWCD at 937-456-5159 no later than Friday, August 15th.

2025 Fish Fingerling Sale

Our Annual Fish Sale is going on now! We have a large selection of fish species and sizes available. You can also find out more information about each species and stocking rates on the back of the order form. Order forms and payment to: Preble SWCD are due Friday, September 12th. Please mail your form and payment to: 2789 US Rt. 35 E., West Alexandria, OH 45381. Additional forms are available in our office or on our website at www.prebleswcd.org.

The pick-up date for fish orders is: Wednesday, October 8th at 2:00 p.m. Please be on time but don't be too early. Reminder postcards for the pick-up will be mailed in late September. For questions or additional information, please call our office at (937) 456-5159.

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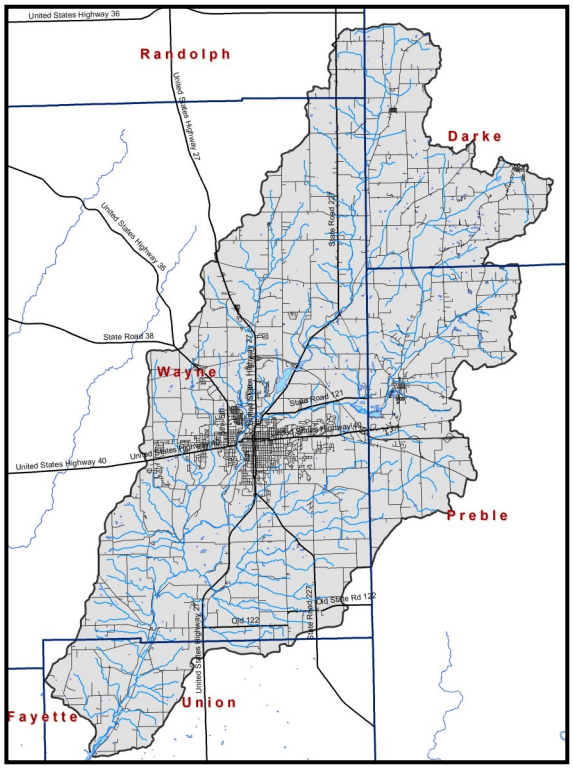
Seeking Public Input on the Upper East Fork Whitewater River Watershed

The Wayne County (Indiana) SWCD is leading efforts to develop a watershed management plan for the Upper East Fork Whitewater River Watershed. This plan will address natural resource concerns in the basin and set goals to protect and improve water quality. Individuals who live, work, farm, or play in the East Fork Whitewater River Basin are invited to share their valuable input.

This initial stage of the project aims to gather data and information, develop the project steering committee, and begin formulating the gathering of public opinion. Your perspectives on the Whitewater River, its lakes, streams, and watershed are crucial. The Upper East Fork Whitewater River Watershed project is in its early stages, with planning efforts just beginning in the community. Getting involved in a watershed project offers a direct opportunity to contribute to the health and sustainability of the local water resources that impact your community, from drinking water and recreation to the natural environment.

Over the next several months, water sampling of creeks in the watershed will occur twice monthly through October. Sampling will occur every other month through the winter and conclude with biweekly sampling again in the spring. The analysis of the data collected will help pinpoint those areas of concern and help establish goals for the watershed. Over the next two years, the watershed management plan will be developed. The development of this plan will allow those living and working in the watershed to request funds to help implement the plan and meet plan goals in the future.



Map of the Upper East Fork Whitewater River Watershed

In addition to water sample analysis and plan development, it is also beneficial to hear from a multitude and a variety of stakeholders in the watershed to best understand the natural resource concerns. If you were to list the top ten natural resource concerns around you, what would they be? Some might list soil erosion, river access, or algae blooms. Others might say lack of wildlife habitat, still others may say too many non-native invasives. If you'd like to share your thoughts and suggestions regarding water quality, quantity, stream and lake quality, recreation, or other related topics; receive copies of water chemistry data results; or join an event or upcoming meeting, please reach out to Sara Peel, Watershed Coordinator at speel@arionconsultants.com.

BJ's Philosophy Box

You are smarter than the smartest cow on your place.

-Bob Hendershot, on good pasture management

ELECTION NOTICE

The Ohio Soil and Water Conservation Commission will cause an election of Supervisors of the Preble Soil and Water Conservation District (SWCD) to be held in accordance with Chapter 940 of the Ohio Revised Code. Individuals who own or occupy land within the Preble Soil and Water Conservation District and are 18 years of age or older may vote for Supervisor.

There are three ways an eligible voter can cast a ballot:

1.) At the SWCD office, 2789 US RT 35 E, West Alexandria, OH 45381, from 7/28/2025 until 8/25/2025 during normal business hours; or

2.) At the SWCD Annual Meeting, which will take place at Seedtime Acres, 759 Stephens Rd, West Manchester, OH 45382, on 8/26/2025 from 5:30 p.m. to 6:30 p.m.

3.) Voting absentee from 7/28/2025 until 8/25/2025, by requesting the ballot application and election ballot from the SWCD office at the following address: 2789 US RT 35 E, West Alexandria, OH 45381, by calling (937) 456-5159, or email bjprice@prebleswcd.org. Absentee ballots must be received by the SWCD office by 8/25/2025 at 3:30 p.m.

One Supervisor will be elected to a three-year term commencing January 1, 2026 and ending December 31, 2028.

Nominees are:

Donald Hays

Nathan Simmons

Supervisor Candidates

Donald Hays

Donald Hays and his wife, Sarah, live in Jackson Township and have two sons, Caleb and Jackson. Donald manages the farming operations of Geeding Farms and operates a seed sales and treatment business. He is also a partner in Flying Farmers Ag Services, where they offer agricultural drone sales and service and also offer spray drone custom application. Donald has a Bachelor's of Science Degree in Crop Science with a minor in Animal Science and Agriculture Education from The Ohio State University. He is an active member of Eaton First Church of God where he has served on the Facilities Team. He has a heart for conservation improvements and has aided in numerous conservation projects including several large grassed waterway installations.

Nathan Simmons

Nathan and his wife, Jennifer, live in Dixon Township and have three children: daughters Lauren and Elise, and son Mitchell. He owns an 80-acre grain farm southwest of Eaton where he employs no-till to grow corn and soybeans. He has recently planted native plant species on his farm to improve plant diversity. Nathan is currently the Director of Pharmacy at Tri-Health/McCullough Hyde Memorial Hospital, and he holds a Doctor of Pharmacy degree and has a Master of Business Administration degree. He and his family attend First Christian Church in Oxford and he is a member of Rotary International. He recently served as Chairman of the Board for the Talawanda Oxford Pantry & Social Services (TOPPS) .

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Dates to Remember:

August 20 - Board Meeting
August 26 - SWCD Annual Meeting
September 1 - Labor Day (office closed)
September 17 - Board Meeting
October 8 - Fish Sale pickup at office

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.
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Recent Pasture Walk

On Thursday, July 17th, graziers (that's a fancy name for people who graze livestock) from across Preble County gathered at the Price Farm north of Eaton to learn about ways to improve their own pastures. Participants represented cattle, sheep, and goat grazing operations. Ohio Department of Agriculture Grazing Specialist Bob Hendershot spoke from down in a soil pit, demonstrating the rooting depth of the forages, exposing earthworm channels, and describing characteristics of the different types of grasses and broadleaves seen in the pasture. He challenged the participants to diversify their forage species, improve soil fertility, and better manage the timing of grazing to increase forage production and have less weed pressure.

Bob Hendershot in his element

Ohio Department of Agriculture Grazing Program Manager Jarrod Hittle brought along his goody bag of fencing supplies to demonstrate, including wood and poly posts, insulators, and various types of movable fencing.

The District appreciates the Ohio Department of Agriculture's support of our education work in Preble County.

Milkweed Pod Collection

This fall, we are again hosting our annual Milkweed Pod Collection through the Ohio Pollinator Habitat Initiative (OPHI). Milkweed is essential to the survival of Monarch butterflies, and the seeds collected through this effort will be used to establish new plantings across the state. This program also allows our office to offer free packets of milkweed seed to our customers.

Milkweed pods may be ready to harvest by early September. To determine when milkweed pods are mature, it is best to open a pod and look inside. Pods are not ready to harvest if the seeds are still white and milky. They are ready to harvest when the seeds have turned brown. The pods should be collected before they pop open and the silky white fluff flies everywhere! It is best to store them in paper bags to allow pods to air dry. Do not use plastic bags, as they will trap moisture and cause the pods to rot. Store seed pods in a cool, dry place until you deliver them to our office.

Please bring your pods to our office at 2789 US Rt. 35 E., West Alexandria, OH. We are located in Glenwood, halfway between Eaton and West Alexandria. A collection bin will be available in our lobby from beginning in early September through October. Our lobby is open Monday through Friday, 7:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

Ohio Pollinator Habitat Initiative