



Perry Soil and Water Conservation District  
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Non-Profit Organization  
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 Somerset, OH 43783  
 Permit No. 6

Mission: To increase public awareness and provide technical assistance in conserving our soil, water, and other natural resources.

All SWCD & NRCS programs and services are offered on a non-discriminatory basis, without regard to race, color, national origin, age, sex, religion, political beliefs, sexual orientation, marital status, or handicap

**PERRY SWCD MAILING LIST**

The Perry SWCD will be working on cleaning up their newsletter mailing list. If you would like to continue to receive the newsletter delivered to your home, please call the district office or email me at penny.cox@oh.nacdnet.net by **June 15th**. If we do not hear from you, you will be taken off the list. You also have an option to have the newsletter emailed to you. You can email your information to Penny.

**INVENT YOUR FUTURE~ Plant a garden!**

*By David Snider*

A wise soul once said that “the best way to predict the future is to invent it!” I could not agree more. We have once again learned the hard way, that government, in spite of its best intentions and seemingly unlimited access to money, cannot take care of our every need. The largely successful globalization of our economy has left certain elements vulnerable to production and distribution regimens. Our grandparents and great grandparents would have known exactly what to do in a crisis. They would have planted a garden! It hasn’t been that long ago that virtually every family in Perry County had a garden and there are still plenty of them around and plenty of practitioners prepared to offer advice and ideas. Gardens can be anywhere from an acre sized truck patch to 2 clay pots on a patio!

Gardening is America’s number one hobby because it pays such huge dividends. Being outdoors is good for the body and soul and planting, harvesting and storing the fruits of your labor makes it the best. Start small, plant what you like, talk to your neighbors about varieties and have at it. Hardware, grocery and garden stores have everything you need. The internet is brimming with tools, equipment and know-how. The best part is growing your own food and sharing it with friends, families and neighbors. Excess can be dried, canned and frozen for winter use. There aren’t too many things better in the dead of winter than making a savory soup or stew out of produce you raised the previous summer. Gardening will not solve all of our problems but it does allow us to actively shape and control at least a small part of our future. Have at it!

May 2020

**PERRY SOIL AND WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT**

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**USDA Continues Conservation Planning and Programs for Ohio’s Farmers**

*NRCS Services Available by Telephone Appointment Only*

USDA’s Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) field offices in Ohio are open by telephone appointment only until further notice. NRCS staff are available to continue to provide one-on-one, customer-specific advice to producers to help them meet their unique conservation and business goals.

All USDA Service Centers, including those with NRCS field offices, are not currently accessible to customers in person.

NRCS staff are working with customers through telephone, mail and online communications, and field work continues with appropriate social distancing to help producers with conservation planning and financial assistance through Farm Bill programs.

“Our team is here to work with you and we are looking at every possible option and flexibility to support the conservation needs of Ohio farmers,” said acting NRCS State Conservationist Jon Bourdon. “We want to continue our customer assistance while also taking precautionary measures to help prevent the spread of the coronavirus.”

NRCS offers year-round continuous signup for its Farm Bill programs such as the Environmental Quality Incentives Program, Conservation Stewardship Program and the Agricultural Conservation Easement Program. Call your local NRCS field office about sign up and application submission options.

Additionally, NRCS continues projects with partners, including universities, local and state governments, nonprofits, and others. NRCS will continue to award projects and to call for proposals for the Regional Conservation Partnership Program and Conservation Innovation Grants.

Online NRCS services are available to customers through the [Conservation Client Gateway](#) link which can be found at [www.nrcs.usda.gov](http://www.nrcs.usda.gov). Customers can track payments, report completed practices, request conservation assistance and electronically sign documents.

Online services are also available to customers with an eAuth account, which provides access to the [farmers.gov](http://farmers.gov) portal where producers can view USDA farm loan information and payments and view and track certain USDA program applications and payments. Customers who do not already have an eAuth account can enroll at [farmers.gov/sign-in](http://farmers.gov/sign-in).

For the most current updates on available services and USDA Service Center contact information, visit [farmers.gov/coronavirus](http://farmers.gov/coronavirus).

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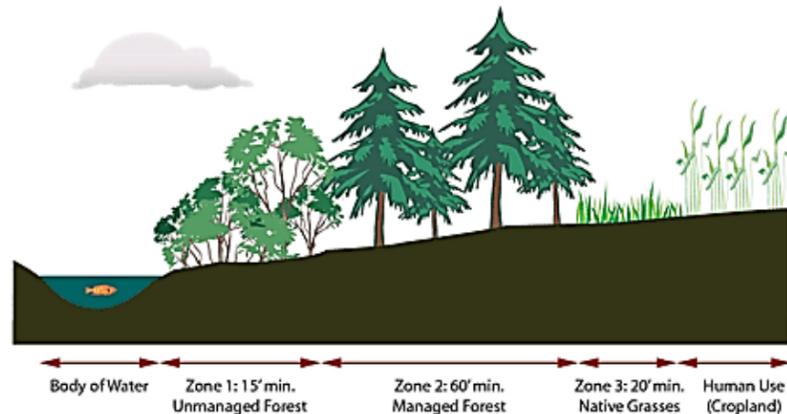


### TREES AND WATER QUALITY

Woodlands that immediately border water bodies like lakes, ponds, rivers, streams, and wetlands are called riparian forests. Riparian forests provide many benefits for water resources. They are good buffers between water bodies and open land uses such as crops, pastures, and parking lots.

Woodlands remove excess nutrients, pollutants, and soil from rainwater runoff and snow melt. Trees also reduce flooding by absorbing water directly; by improving soil structure, which increases the amount of water they soak up; and by simply slowing the movement of flood waters. Riparian forests also shade rivers and streams, which keeps water temperatures cool for aquatic plants and animals.

When riparian forests are cleared or divided, water quality often decreases and the frequency and intensity of flood events can increase. The recommended width of a riparian buffer can be anywhere from 75 ft. to 300 ft. on each side of a river, depending upon soil types, slope, and other values (e.g., scenic or ecological).



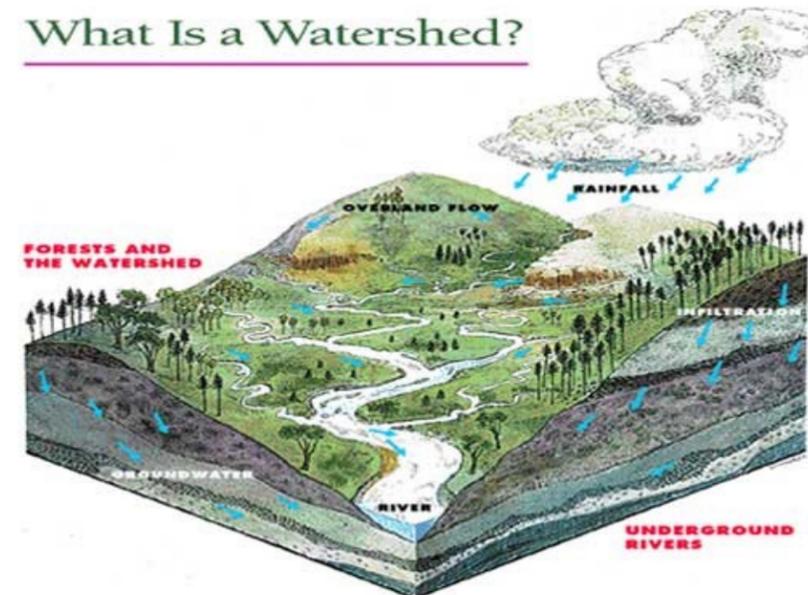
### Back to the Basics: Watersheds

by Sebastian Teas

If you're reading this newsletter from the Perry Soil & Water Conservation District, then you probably already know what a watershed is. It's a measurable area of land where any water that falls on its surface drains toward the same, single point. No matter where you live on Earth, you live in a watershed. Whether that water drains toward a creek, stream, lake, or ocean, it is flowing somewhere. Nowhere on the planet is perfectly flat, and water always flows downslope. Even in the desert, water falls from the sky and drains toward the lowest point of elevation. Watersheds are simple concepts but when life overwhelms us, sometimes it's easy to overlook and appreciate the simple things. So I'd like to devote a little space in this newsletter to give you some facts maybe you didn't know about watersheds:

- There are watersheds within watersheds. Jonathan Creek in northern Perry County has its own drainage basin. All of the land that surrounds the creek funnels its waters into it, before it merges with the Moxahala Creek and dumps into the Muskingum River. The Muskingum River, on the other hand, takes in all of Jonathan Creek's waters, as well as many other streams and rivers. That's a lot of land to drain. Jonathan Creek is what we call a sub-watershed to the larger Muskingum River watershed. It rests within the Muskingum's drainage boundaries.
- If you drop something into your backyard stream, it might end up in the Gulf of Mexico! Due to watersheds converging and combining, a good portion of all the water in the eastern half of the US eventually finds its way to the Gulf. The Muskingum River flows into the Ohio River which then flows into the Mississippi River. That includes excess fertilizer runoff and eroded soil. Think about all of that debris washed out from the fields of 31 states (and 2 Canadian provinces), and you can imagine why the water down there is considered a dead zone (i.e. it cannot support aquatic life during the summer).
- Those who work with water quality deal with Hydrologic Units Codes. These are numbers that identify which watershed we are working in. The longer the number, the smaller the watershed. A HUC-2, for example, contains 2 digits and may represent an entire region, like the Ohio Region (everything that drains to the Ohio River). There are 21 HUC-2s in the United States. A HUC-12 contains 12 digits and represents local subwatersheds, like the headwaters of Jonathan Creek. There are 90,000 HUC-12s in the US.

### What Is a Watershed?



Watersheds are just another way in which we are all connected, to each other and to the land. No matter where we go, the water there will always flow somewhere!

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