



Ottawa Soil & Water CONSERVATION DISTRICT

Your agriculture & conservation resource

Winter/Spring 2025

OTTAWA COUNTY AG BREAKFAST

March 21st at 8:00am at St. John's Lutheran Church

JOIN.

Celebrate Agriculture

March 21st at 8:00am at St. John's Lutheran Church; 122 W. Ottawa St., Oak Harbor
Cost: \$5.00
RSVP by March 14 - 419-898-1595 or olivia.rahm@ottawaswcd.com

LEARN.

Brian Baldrige, Director of the Ohio Department of Agriculture

Brian Baldrige provides leadership for the agriculture industry and oversees numerous regulatory, food safety, and consumer protection programs for the great State of Ohio.

DISCOVER.

Past & Future Agriculture

We will announce our scholarship winners! See the future of our agriculture and conservation fields.

EAT.

Pancake Breakfast

Enjoy a delicious pancake breakfast made for you by our very own staff!!



To celebrate agriculture and honor our local producers, the Ottawa Soil & Water Conservation District, Natural Resources Conservation Service, Farm Service Agency, OSU Extension, and various sponsors are hosting an Agriculture Community Breakfast. Our speaker will be Brian Baldrige, director of the Ohio Department of Agriculture. The 2025 Breakfast will be held on **March 21st at 8:00 a.m. at St John's Lutheran Church in Oak Harbor**. The cost for the all-you-can-eat scrambled egg, pancake and sausage breakfast is **\$5.00**. All proceeds go back into the community through scholarships to be awarded to High School students residing in Ottawa County that are pursuing a career in agriculture, wildlife, forestry, or soil and water fields.

Call Ottawa SWCD to get your ticket: 419-898-1595

Deadline to RSVP: March 14

PROJECT WILD & AQUATIC WILD WORKSHOP

Are you a K-12 formal or informal educator looking for fun, wildlife-based activities? This is for you!

Project WILD is a supplemental curriculum that emphasizes awareness, appreciation, and understanding of wildlife and natural resources. It's for everyone, no matter your background!

WHAT YOU GET:

- 2 Curriculum & Activity Guides
- Certificate of completion
- Various wildlife resources and publications
- Eligibility to apply for Division of Wildlife's Education Grant

FREE!

Register by
March 14!

Magee Marsh Visitor Center
13229 SR 2, Oak Harbor, OH 43449

March 21, 2025 8:30am - 2:30pm



Questions? Want to register? Contact Sarah Schott at 614-519-2986 or sarah.schott@dnr.ohio.gov.



Staff

Michael Libben, District Administrator

Becky Simpson, Fiscal Manager/Environmental Educator

Joe Uhinck, Wildlife Specialist

Jarred Molesky, District Technician

Jason Laubacher, District Technician

Kylie Nissen, District Technician

Olivia Rahm, Administrative Assistant and Outreach Coordinator

NRCS Partners

Clint Geldine, NRCS District Conservationist

Sarah St. John, NRCS Soil Conservationist

Emma Jahns, NRCS Soil Conservationist

Joe Rumschlag, NRCS Engineering Technician

Supervisors

Bill Hartman, Chairman

Jim Sass, Vice-Chairman

Roland Sandrock, Treasurer

Todd Hecht, Secretary

Josh Behnke, Member

Have an interest in conservation? Want to help guide the district? We are looking for candidates for our Board of Supervisors.

Contact the office for more information!

Find us on: **facebook.**




240 W. Lake Street
Oak Harbor, Ohio 43449
419-898-1595
ottawaswcd.com

Women In Conservation!

The Ottawa SWCD will once again host the “Women in Conservation” series in 2025. The goal of these workshops is to introduce different environmental topics and activities to women in a safe and fun environment. We are currently working on topics for our 2025 workshops that are held once a month April Thru September. Past sessions have included: brewery & orchard tour, fermentation class, wildlife photography, archery, canoeing, shooting and gun safety, fishing, and much more! If you would like to receive a brochure on the program once it is finalized, and have not attended for the past 3 years, please contact Becky Simpson at 419-607-4027 or email becky.simpson@ottawaswcd.com.



Welcome our new employees!



Sarah St. John started with NRCS in December 2024. Prior to joining the NRCS team in Ottawa County, she worked in Wood County as the H2Ohio Technician with Soil and Water, and the CRP Technician with FSA before that. She might be new to the office, but isn't new to the county! Sarah grew up showing horses in 4-H at the Ottawa County Fair and was active in FFA before moving away after college. She's grateful for the opportunity to be back in the area to help address resource concerns and promote conservation close to home.



Olivia Rahm started with Ottawa SWCD in January 2025. Olivia is an Ottawa County native. Growing up she was active in 4-H and FFA along with many different sports. Her love for agriculture runs deep as she and her family have started raising show goats where they hope to get many interested kids involved in showing! Olivia is excited to be at the SWCD Office to help grow the soil and water community!

Day on the Wild Side

Date: July 24, 2025

For the past 15 years, the Ottawa SWCD in cooperation with Winous Point Marsh Conservancy, ODNR Division of Wildlife, and U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service have invited **youth in grades 5th- 8th** to spend “A DAY ON THE WILD SIDE.” Participants have had an opportunity to learn many different outdoor skills in a safe and fun environment. Some of the activities have included: **archery, bird banding, fishing, canoeing, shooting, wildlife law enforcement, and learning the importance of habitat.**

If your student (5th—8th grade) has never attended in the past, and you would like to receive future correspondence regarding this event, please send an e-mail to becky.simpson@ottawaswcd.com or contact Becky Simpson at 419-607-4027.



Coming up next

<u>March</u>	<u>June</u>
8: Pheasants Forever Banquet	2-4: State Envirothon
13: Ottawa SWCD Board Meeting	12: Ottawa SWCD Board Meeting
21: Ag Breakfast	18: Women in Conservation
21-27: National Ag Week	19: Office Closed
<u>April</u>	<u>July</u>
10: Ottawa SWCD Board Meeting	4: Office Closed
16: Women in Conservation	10: Ottawa SWCD Board Meeting
17: Tree Pick Up	13-20: Ottawa County Fair
23: Area 1 Envirothon	16: Women in Conservation
<u>May</u>	24: Day on the Wildside
8: Ottawa SWCD Board Meeting	
13: Fish Sale Pick Up	
15: Women in Conservation	
26: Office Closed	

Thank you Rich!

Rich Thorbahn served on our board of supervisors for 19 years! Thank you for your service to our board Rich!



Welcome Josh!


We welcome Josh Behnke to our Board of Supervisors! Josh has an extensive background in agriculture and we are excited to have him serve on our Board.

Chad Gargas: 419-340-1202





Thank You
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Oak Harbor, Ohio 43449
419-898-1595
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Office: (419) 663-2457
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419-680-3760

MIKE HARDER
419-680-5962

H2Ohio Updates and New Signup

Ohio farmers remain dedicated to improving water quality through the use of **H2Ohio** Voluntary Nutrient Management Plans (VNMPs), which use soil testing to determine the right amount of nutrients needed on farmland. VNMPs are the foundation of H2Ohio and are a requirement for all H2Ohio participants.

This summer Ottawa SWCD will be rolling out a new H2Ohio contract for current producers, and farmers interested in signing up for crop years 26-27. There will be some changes to the new contracts including streamlined practice enrollment and program requirements, taking the number of BMPs offered from seven to four. Best management practices include overwintering cover, manure management, subsurface placement, and precision application.

We will also be implementing MyFarms, a new software program introduced by ODA this year. This program will help with development and implementation of the online application, and makes accessing and uploading producer data a more streamlined process. With this program H2Ohio will be going to an all-electronic process where you will need an accessible email address.

For interested participants please verify with your ag retailer that your soil tests are from 2022 or newer. We cannot accept fields with outdated soil samples. Also, start thinking about crop rotations for the 26-27 crop year. Our goal for this upcoming sign up is to add an additional 12,000 acres to our current H2Ohio numbers. As of 2024, Ottawa County farmers have enrolled 48,261 acres in H2Ohio practices and were paid approximately \$1,063,480.00. Please call our office with any questions or if you would like to be on the mailing list for additional information on the upcoming signup.

Impacts of Litter

Although all types of aquatic trash and marine debris can negatively impact aquatic ecosystems, plastics are the greatest concern because they are widely used and often persist in the environment. Plastic does not degrade as quickly as paper or wood, but breaks down into smaller and smaller pieces called microplastics. These substances are found abundantly, with roughly 10,000 tons of plastic entering the Great Lakes each year.

What are some risks associated with plastics in freshwater ecosystem like the Great Lakes?

- Choking or entanglement of wildlife.
- Chemicals such as phthalates, which have been shown to interfere with normal hormone production in wildlife.
- Allows persistent organic pollutants to become attached and consumed by wildlife.

What is also troubling is that humans are also consuming plastics by eating fish and wildlife that have been exposed to pollution. The long-term effects of plastic consumption in both wildlife and humans are still unknown.

Mindfully disposing of your trash, including plastics, keeps them out of our waterways.

Information provided by Lake Erie Starts Here, a committee of the Toledo Metropolitan Area Council of Governments (TMACOG).



FARM STRESS?
We've Got Your Back

Too wet, too cold, too hot, too dry. Input uncertainty. Crop prices fluctuating. Sounds like a typical farming season in Ottawa County doesn't it? This all adds up to stress for the farmer, their spouse, their family, and can take a toll on a farmers mental wellbeing. The Ohio Department of Agriculture and partners have developed the **Ohio Agricultural Mental Health Alliance** focusing on mental health in agriculture to ensure Ohio's farmers, families, and communities are better equipped to deal with stress.

Everyone experiences stress – challenges on the farm, chronic disease, or an argument with a loved one. Stress may cause physical complaints, such as headaches, back pain, indigestion, or heart palpitations. It may appear as poor concentration and difficulty making decisions. Emotional symptoms of stress include crying, irritability, and edginess.

In this small farming community, we know our neighbors and many farmers from across the county. When you are out and about, keep an eye out for your fellow farmers and neighbors. Have there been unusual changes to their property? Not kept up as well? Equipment left out when it is normally stored away? Might be a reason to stop in and say hello and make sure they are doing ok.

Visit agri.ohio.gov/gotyourback to learn more. In the meantime, let's look forward to a lower stress planting season this spring!



Join us at the Ottawa County Fair for the kids fishing derby on July 20th at 9:30 am!



Having Land and Improving It — Michael Libben, District Program Administrator

Ownership of land and the ability to do with it as you chose fit is one of the hallmarks of being an American. Since the days of Ottawa County being founded, the use of our land has changed as generation after generation have worked the farms and found the best return on investment from different means. We no longer have a dairy farm in Ottawa County, or pork production. Farms that were dominated by orchards, livestock, and vegetable crops have come and gone from our landscape. Now grain crops of corn, soybeans, wheat, and alfalfa dominate our production.

Historically, Ottawa County soils are well known for poor drainage and landowners have struggled to improve the land. Since men and women have worked this land, ditches have been dug, surface drains added, clay tile installed at 100 feet, at 50 feet, plastic tile at 40 feet and now even down to 20 feet. Pumps have been added. In the last 20 years, grass filter strips have been added to control runoff, drainage control structures have been added to meter out the water, and miles and miles of ditches have been improved and added to the ditch maintenance program.



Sometimes those improvements are not enough. While there are programs available to restore the land back to the natural wetlands that were here, that option is typically a last option for the land that has been difficult to drain. Many times the next generation of ownership is no longer associated with farming and see wildlife and wetlands as an improvement from the hard to drain and not profitable farm.

As farmers, we have the ability to improve the land we farm. Conversations with landlords on what can be done to improve the land and make it better for farming are key. For over 70 years the Ottawa Soil and Water Conservation District has been part of that discussion to make those improvements. Poor drainage is what we know and what we know how to improve. Sometimes, improvement for the land is restoring that original black swamp wetland. But, as long time Ottawa SWCD employee Mike Gargac always said, "there is nothing that can not be drained." Give us a call and let us help you in placing soil and water conservation practices on the land to preserve our natural resources for future generations.



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visit ottawaswcd.com

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240 W. Lake Street
Oak Harbor, Ohio 43449
419-898-1595
ottawaswcd.com

Ottawa Soil & Water Conservation District
2025 Tree Sale

# PER PACKET	VARIETY	SIZE	AMOUNT	# ORDERED	COST
10	Colorado Blue Spruce	9"-15"	\$10.00/packet		
10	Norway Spruce	14"-20"	\$20.00/packet		
10	Shellbark Hickory	12"-18"	\$25.00/packet		
10	Bald Cypress	12"-18"	\$15.00/packet		
10	White Cedar	7"-12"	\$10.00/packet		
10	Wildlife Tree Pack (Native)	6"-12"	\$25.00/packet		
10	Pollinator Tree Pack (Native)	12"-18"	\$30.00/packet		
10	Nut Tree Pack (Native)	12"-18"	\$30.00/packet		
1	Green Rocket Hybrid Cedar	14"-26"	\$15.00/each		
1	River Birch	5-6 ft.	\$30.00/each		
1	Redbud	4-5 ft.	\$30.00/each		
1	Red Oak	5-6 ft.	\$30.00/each		
1	Swamp White Oak	5-6 ft.	\$30.00/each		
1	Red Maple	5-6 ft.	\$30.00/each		
1	Black Cherry	5-6 ft.	\$30.00/each		
1	Sycamore	5-6 ft.	\$30.00/each		
1	Tulip Poplar	4-5 ft.	\$30.00/each		
1	Black Walnut	2-3 ft.	\$30.00/each		
1	American Elm	5-6 ft.	\$30.00/each		

Deadline for ordering is
Friday, March 28, 2025

Numbers are limited. To assure receiving
your selection, we suggest ordering
promptly.

Pick up day will be April 17, 2025.
A text reminder will be sent to you
in early April.

NOTICE:

Trees not picked up within 1 week of assigned
pick-up day will not be eligible for a refund.

*****New this Year, due to limited quantities, orders must be placed online at ottawaswcd.com or
in person at our office located at 240 W. Lake St. Unit B, Oak Harbor, OH 43449*****

2025 Spring Fish Sale

SPECIES	PRICE	AMOUNT	TOTAL
Bluegill – 2-4"	1.10 each		
Hybrid Bluegill - 2-4"	1.10 each		
Channel Catfish – 4-5"	.90 each		
Fathead Minnow—1-3"	.10 each		
Largemouth Bass – 2-3"	1.40 each		
White Amur – 8-10" (Grass Carp)	17.00 each		
Perch – 2-3"	1.10 each		
Red Ear Shellcracker (Sunfish) - 2-4"	1.10 each		
Japanese Koi - 5-7"	14.00 each		
Nature's Pond Conditioner—1 Gallon (treats 1/4 acre)	95.00		
****Go to ottawaswcd.com to order online or to print an order form!!!*****		Subtotal	
		Sales Tax 7%	
		TOTAL (with Sales Tax)	

Or
ORDER ONLINE!
ottawaswcd.com

Order deadline: Friday, May 2nd Pick-up Date: May 13th 1:30-3:00pm

Please mail your check (made payable to Ottawa SWCD) and this form to
240 W. Lake Street, Unit B, Oak Harbor, Ohio 43449.

WE REQUEST THAT ALL ORDERS BE PREPAID – THANKS!

Name: _____

Day Phone: _____

E-Mail: _____

Cell Phone: _____



240 W. Lake Street
Oak Harbor, Ohio 43449
419-898-1595
ottawaswcd.com

NOTICE:

You will need to bring your own container, filled with pond water. A trash container
(with a plastic trash liner) is ideal. A 5-10 gallon (clean) bucket is adequate for 100 fish.

For more info call 419-898-1595