



Preble Soil & Water Conservation District

Conserving our Natural Resources

February 2022
2789 US Rt. 35 E.
West Alexandria, OH 45381
(937) 456-5159
www.prebleswcd.org

CONSERVATION COMMENTS

Tree Sale Branches Out

This year's tree sale has several old favorites and some new offerings as well. The back of the form has detailed descriptions of each species, and I trust that you, the reader, will do your homework to figure out exactly what works best in your part of the world. With that in mind, here are the highlights and the lowdown on this year's sale.

Why don't we offer more conifers? Disease issues, my friend. Diplodia, Rhizosphaera, and a whole bunch of other maladies that are hard to pronounce. Not many conifers are a perfect fit for southwest Ohio, thus many of our go-to species from ten years ago such as blue spruce and Austrian pine have been struck from the list. Take special note of Bald Cypress. If our pines, spruces, or firs dropped all of their needles at once, we might call them dead. With Bald Cypress, we call it deciduous, meaning it drops all of its needles each fall and grows new ones in the spring.

Our large tree category includes the bulletproof shagbark hickory. These (and many other species) would make a great replacement for your Ash trees that were decimated by the pesky Ash borer. Sycamores thrive in wet areas but will grow just about anywhere. With that said, I don't recommend planting them in your dooryard, or anywhere near the house for that matter. Between the falling twigs, huge leaves, and seed balls, they can be a real mess to clean up after.

Sawtooth Oak, Shingle Oak, and Swamp White Oak are being offered in #3 pots. These pots are roughly three gallons in volume and measure around 11 inches in diameter. Many of you who have planted bare-root seedlings with large tap roots have probably observed that they have an enormous tap root and a few smaller fibrous roots. Not so with these potted trees. While they still do have the large tap root, they also have numerous fibrous roots to help get them off to a good start. Most of our bare-root plants come from out-of-state, but these potted plants come from just over the border in Montgomery County. These potted plants do come with a price tag, so it's up to you to decide whether or not they are worth the extra bucks.

In the small trees and shrubs department are several natives with (more or less) edible fruit. Black Elderberry makes great jelly and is known for its medicinal qualities. While paw paw and persimmon are both edible to humans, just how palatable they are is up to you. Case in point: The paw paw bread I made years ago was edible but definitely not very palatable. We decided there had to be a better use for flour and sugar. That said, raccoons, other wildlife, and some children will eat paw paws like candy.

Red twig dogwood does well in wild areas but can be tamed as an ornamental near the house. The striking red color of its new growth stands out in the winter when much of the rest of the landscape has taken on variations of brown and gray.

New this year is the 'Arapaho' Thornless Blackberry. If you want blackberries but don't want the trouble of wading through a thorny bramble patch to get them, these may be for you. The berries are quite large and the plants are disease-resistant.

Only a wet baby likes change, but one final change for this year is the addition of sales tax on our retail items. For our customers who plan to use their tree sale purchases for tax-exempt agriculture, horticulture, or floriculture production, a Sales and Use Tax Exemption Certificate can be filled out and returned with your order. These can be found at the office or on our website at www.prebleswcd.org. Otherwise, please add on the 7.25% sales tax. For questions in regards to what is considered a tax-exempt purchase, please talk to your accountant. The last thing we want is for you to get crossways with the tax man. Check out the Tree Sale Form tucked inside this newsletter.

\$1,000 College Scholarship Available

The Preble SWCD is offering a \$1,000 college scholarship to a resident of Preble County entering his or her sophomore year or above at an accredited college. Students pursuing an associate or bachelor's degree in the field of agriculture or natural resources are eligible.

Applicants must be registered to attend classes during the fall of 2022. A current, official transcript must accompany the application. The scholarship is based on grade point average, field of study, community involvement, and future goals.

The scholarship application and supporting material are due by 3:30 p.m. on Friday, April 1st. The application can be found at www.prebleswcd.org or by visiting the office. For more information, please call (937) 456-5159.

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2022 & 2023 CRP Grassed Waterway Re-Enrollment

The Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) and Preble Soil & Water Conservation District are preparing for site visits to grassed waterways that could be re-enrolled in the Conservation Reserve Program (CRP). If your CRP grassed waterway is nearing its 10 or 20 year anniversary, you may be eligible! Cooperators with CRP contracts expiring in 2022 should have received a letter about re-enrolling their grassed waterway in the program. If you wish to continue in the program, please call the Preble SWCD office at (937) 456-5159 or NRCS at (937) 456-4211 ext. 3 to confirm your interest. For contracts that will expire in 2023, please be prepared for our District or NRCS staff to visit and review your grassed waterway. Here are some proactive tips to ensure the eligibility for re-enrollment:



- Fix any tile holes that may be present in or near the waterway
- Remember to mow the grass to maintain the grass stand and control weeds
- Clear out any brush growing in the waterway and in rock inlets or outlets
- Take a look for silt that may have been washed into the waterway

For questions about CRP re-enrollment, please contact one of the offices listed above or stop by the District office, located at 2789 US Rt. 35 E., West Alexandria. We are located next door to Long's Truck and Trailer on the North side of the road.

Conservation Day Camp is Coming!

Conservation Day Camp 2022 is on the calendar! We are making plans for three big days at the Preble County Historical Farm from June 21st through June 23rd. Registration information will be released in April, so keep an eye out! In the meantime, we are in need of camp counselors for our seventh

annual day camp. We are looking for outgoing and energetic junior high and high school students who would like the chance to earn community service hours, gain valuable experience in leadership and teaching, or are in need of recommendations for colleges or job applications.

Students willing to become camp counselors must fill out an application and submit it to the Preble SWCD office by April 22nd at 3:30 p.m. Those selected as a camp counselor must attend a Camp Counselor Training Meeting and must commit to attending all three days of camp. For the camp counselor application or more information, please call BJ at 937-456-5159 or email bjprice@prebleswcd.org.



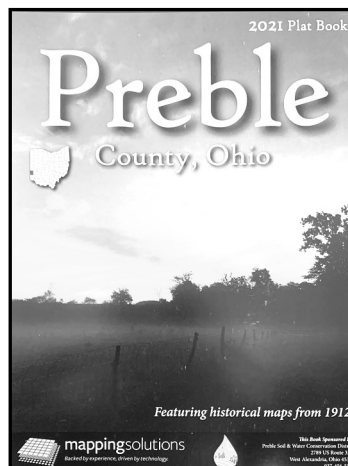
Conservation Contractor List

Need a contractor for your next spring project? Want to build a pond this summer? Need information about septic systems? Looking for someone to tear down and salvage your old barn? Trying to find a local tree service, a land surveyor, or a fence builder? You've come to the right place! Visit our website at www.prebleswcd.org to access our Conservation Contractors List under the "Farmer Resources" tab. It provides up-to-date contact information for local companies and contractors that may be able to help you out with just about everything under the sun.

BJ's Philosophy Box

A well-fed country has many problems.
A hungry country has one.

2021 Preble County Plat Book



The 2021 Preble County Plat Book is here! This is one edition you don't want to miss. Within these pages, you'll find up-to-date land ownership maps, with side-by-side aerial views. You'll also find historical plat maps from 1912 of each township in Preble County! This is a book full of rich Preble County history that will become a historical collectible itself. Copies of the plat book are available for \$27 each, including tax, payable by cash or check, at our office located at 2789 US Rt. 35 E., West Alexandria, OH. You can also pick one up at the Land Use Management Office in the Preble County Courthouse. For more information, please call the office at (937) 456-5159.

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2789 US Rt. 35 E.
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To be removed from our mailing list or add someone new, call (937) 456-5159 or email bjprice@prebleswcd.org.

Dates to Remember:

February 21 - Washington's Birthday (Office Closed)
February 23 - Board Meeting 7:00 a.m.
March 16 - Board Meeting 7:00 a.m.
April 5 - Board Meeting 7:00 a.m.
April 6 - Tree Sale Pickup

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. USDA is an equal opportunity provider, employer, and lender

Private Pesticide and Fertilizer Applicator Recertification Course Held

Our Sixth Annual Private Pesticide and Fertilizer Applicator Recertification course was held on January 25th at the Eaton First Church of God. The class was our largest ever, with over 130 cooperators in attendance.

A special thank you to all of our guest speakers, including Bill Bowers, Matt Hileman, Drake Copeland, Martin Joyce, Rex Brubaker, Ryan Konkel, and emcee Jimmy Price. We appreciate their time and informative presentations for this event. Thank you to Charlotte Akers of Charlotte's Catering for serving a wonderful meal to all of our cooperators.

For those who attended the course, any questions or concerns can be directed to our office or to the Ohio Department of Agriculture - Pesticide and Fertilizer Division at: (614) 282-1955.



Conservation Reserve Program and Grassland Reserve Program Signups for 2022

Agricultural producers and landowners can now sign up for the Conservation Reserve Program (CRP), a cornerstone conservation program offered by the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA). The General CRP signup will run from Jan. 31 to March 11, and the Grassland CRP signup will run from April 4 to May 13.

CRP Signups

General CRP helps producers and landowners establish long-term, resource-conserving plant species, such as approved grasses or trees, to control soil erosion, improve water quality, and enhance wildlife habitat on cropland.

Meanwhile, Grassland CRP is a working lands program, helping landowners and operators protect grassland, including rangeland and pastureland and certain other lands, while maintaining the areas as working grazing lands. Protecting grasslands contributes positively to the economy of many regions and provides biodiversity of plant and animal populations.

More Information on CRP

Landowners and producers interested in CRP should contact our office to learn more or to apply for the program -- for General CRP before the March 11 deadline, and for Grassland CRP before the May 13 deadline. For more information, contact the Preble County Farm Service Agency at (937) 456-4211.

