

Upcoming events

December

5-Todd's Fork Technical Subcommittee (see LMRP website for details)

11-LMRP Membership Meeting at Cincinnati Nature Center, Rowe Woods

17-LMRP Technical Committee-2pm to 4 pm Clermont County Planning Department

January

30-Hamilton County Wet Weather Initiative-Hamilton County Environmental Services Center



LITTLE MIAMI RIVER PARTNERSHIP

NEWSLETTER

VOL. 5 • No. 3

Fall 2002

Clinton County Youth Leaders Assist in Watershed

In an innovative attempt to involve youth in the watershed planning process, the LMRP has partnered with the Youth Collaborative of Clinton County on the Todd's Fork Watershed Plan. Teams of students from five area high schools will assist in the watershed inventory portion of the Todd's Fork plan development. Participating schools include Blanchester, Clinton-Massie, Wilmington, East Clinton, Lural Oaks and area home-schooled students.

Students will use local resources such as County Engineering, County SWCD, Health District, GIS, Emergency Mangement SErVICES and Chamber of Commerce to research information on agriculture, sprawl development, emergency management of situations that threaten water resources and local government response to federal and state environmental mandates. Students will also look at parks and recreation and citizen participation in environmental issues.

Students will report on their findings at their graduation from the leadership program next spring. Student reports must utilize innovate technologies such as Geographic Information Systems (GIS), desktop publishing, Internet, presentation software and hardware and digital photography and videography.

The Youth Leaders and their advisors will be assisted by the Southwest Ohio Area Assistance Team which includes representatives from USDA NRCS, Ohio EPA, ODNR, Miami Valley RC&D, OSU Extension and the area's Soil and Water Conservation Districts.

Project Coordinators for the Youth Collaborative are Kathleen Blake, Clinton County Leadership Institute and Kristen Haley, Youth Collaborative of Clinton County. Stated LuAnn Winkle Watershed Coordinator for the Little Miami River Partnership, "We are excited about this opportunity to involve student and community leaders in the Todd's Fork Project. Their perspective is unique, making their insight all the more valuable."



Watershed Coordinator, LuAnn Winkle, presents project goals to youth leaders of Clinton County.

The next General Membership meeting of the Little Miami River Patnership is December 11 at the Cincinnati Nature Center. See page 2 for details.

IN THIS ISSUE

- Annual Meeting.....2
- WQ Symposium.....2

IN EVERY ISSUE

- Grant News.....2
- Coordinator's Corner.....2
- Our Partners' News.....3-4
- A River Runs Through It.....5
- How to Join5
- Upcoming Events.....6

Our Mission

To build partnerships that promote environmental quality and healthy and prosperous communities in the Little Miami River Watershed.

At-Large Member

Ernie Stecker

At-Large Member

Vacant

East Fork Committee Chair

Vacant

Todd Fork Committee Chair

Vacant

Upper Little Miami Committee Chair

Steven Miller

Caesar Creek Committee Chair

Vacant

At-Large Member

Ron Volkerding, Treasurer

Lower Little Miami Committee Chair

Anne Lyon, Vice-President

At-Large Member

Bruce Smith, President

2002 Officers

Return service requested

NON-PROFIT ORG.
US POSTAGE PAID
CINCINNATI, OH
PERMIT NO. 4403

Little Miami River Partnership
77 Columbus Avenue, Suite 5B
Cincinnati, Ohio 45036



Coordinator's Corner

Annual Meeting Announced

The 2002 LMRP Annual Meeting and Report to members will be held on Wednesday, December 11 at the Cincinnati Nature Center, Rowe Woods. Following the quarterly business meeting, Bill Hopple of the Cincinnati Nature Center will brief LMRP members on the Center's activities. Andy Dickerson, Valley View Foundation Board, will conduct an optional tour of the Valley View Foundation's Clean Ohio Fund Open Space project site in Milford.

A fond farewell...

The LMRP Board of Directors and the East Fork Collaborative bids a fond farewell to **Ryan Taylor**, East Fork Watershed Coordinator. Ryan has left his Coordinator position to pursue his doctorate at Oregon State University at Corvallis, Oregon. Ryan's many contributions to watershed planning efforts are valued and laid a firm foundation on which to implement watershed protection and restoration strategies.

The Board also bids farewell to At-large Member **Erin Grady**. Erin is pursuing professional opportunities out of state.

Best wishes to Ryan and Erin in their future endeavors!

Massie Creek Citizens Organize

A number of concerned residents have organized to urge a timely resolution to the problem of an over-burdened wastewater treatment plant in Cedarville. The group, calling itself "Concerned Citizens for Massie Creek", met on November 12 to identify their issues and concerns regarding the situation. The group appointed a subcommittee that met on November 14 to take those identified issues and develop a list of interim measures to protect public health and safety until a permanent upgrade to the system is online. The completion of a permanent upgrade is anticipated to take approximately 18-24 months. The group will be presenting its recommendations to local public officials in the upcoming weeks. Among their recommendations are warning signs along the creek, increased water quality monitoring, public education and outreach, private well testing for riparian landowners, a community-wide water conservation program and a moratorium on sewer hook-ups until the plant is upgraded.

Water Quality Symposium



The Little Miami River Partnership, in cooperation with The Ohio State University Extension, is planning a water quality symposium for March, 2003. **Linking Research to Restoration: A Watershed Approach**, will feature speakers and panelists discussing existing and needed research to support and facilitate restoration efforts in the Little Miami River Watershed. Luncheon Keynote Speaker will be Brent Sonjen, OSU Extension, who will present an overview of nutrient trading as a tool for meeting TMDL requirements and reducing phosphorous loading. Panelists representing agriculture, political subdivisions, environment organizations, regulatory agencies and wastewater treatment plants will participate in a discussion of nutrient trading as a possibility in the Little Miami River Watershed.

Luncheon Keynote Speaker will be Brent Sonjen, OSU Extension, who will present an overview of nutrient trading as a tool for meeting TMDL requirements and reducing phosphorous loading. Panelists representing agriculture, political subdivisions, environment organizations, regulatory agencies and wastewater treatment plants will participate in a discussion of nutrient trading as a possibility in the Little Miami River Watershed.

Grant News

Communities that are required to develop and implement a Phase II stormwater management plan may partner with their local Soil and Water Conservation District to apply for a **Stormwater Specialist** for six years on a declining grant program. This program, overseen by Ohio Department of Natural Resources is designed to provide communities with technical assistance in the form of a full time employee to implement the stormwater management plans. Deadline to apply is December 17, 2002. Interested communities may contact the Watershed Coordinator or their local SWCD for more information.



Remember to recycle!

A River Runs Through It

Upper Little Miami & Caesar Creek

The Upper Little Miami Watershed Improvement Group continues to meet regularly to implement the TMDL plan developed for these two watersheds. The TMDL has been approved by the Ohio EPA and it is one of only three watersheds in Ohio to earn US EPA approval. For more information about these two sub-watersheds, or to join the Group, please contact the Watershed Coordinator at info@littlemiamiriver.org or (513) 695-1187. Visit their website at www.littlemiamiriver.org/upper.htm.

Todd Fork

A Sub-Watershed Committee is organizing in the Todd Fork watershed to conduct the natural resources inventory that will form the basis for the subwatershed plan. The inventory must include physical, biologic, habitat and use characteristics of the watershed on a subwatershed basis. This data will support the identification of impairments and sources and the development of goals for restoration and protection of the watershed. If you are interested in knowing more about the Todd Fork watershed inventory or have data or information to share, please contact the Watershed Coordinator at info@littlemiamiriver.org or (513) 695-1187.

East Fork

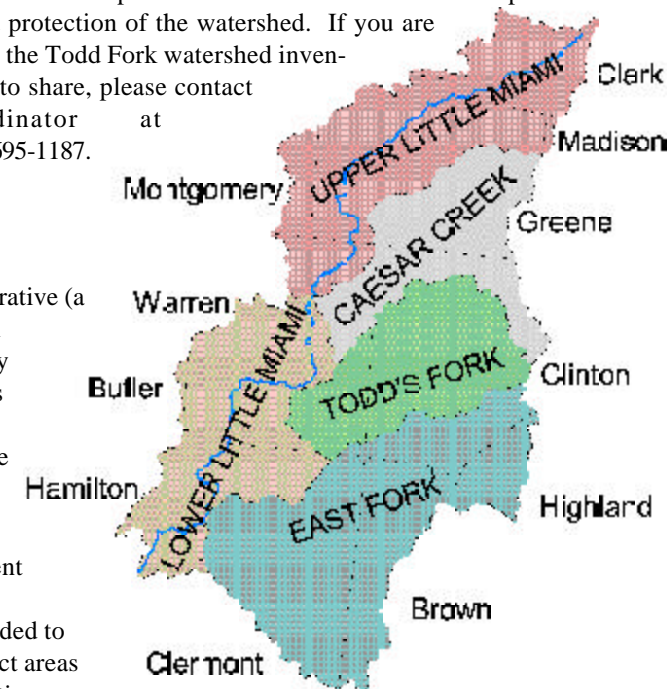
The East Fork Watershed Collaborative (a 4-county cooperative effort), with support from the Clermont County Office of Environmental Quality, is currently creating management plans for different segments of the East Fork Little Miami River watershed.

Rather than create one management plan for the entire 500 square mile watershed, the Collaborative decided to create separate plans for 13 distinct areas resulting in more manageable sections (subwatersheds). This also enables local villages and townships more input in, and ownership of, the plans being developed.

To date, action plans have been developed, and public meetings have been held, for the Lower East Fork, Shayler Creek, and Upper and Lower Stonelick Creek subwatersheds

Each action plan includes a list of recommended management strategies to address non-point source pollution resulting from agricultural practices, centralized sewers and on-site treatment systems, construction activities, stormwater runoff and other sources. The recommendations within each plan are developed jointly by the County, municipalities, townships, and other entities within the particular watershed.

Once draft management plans are completed, the East Fork Watershed Collaborative will schedule public meetings to present the plans and accept input. Watch www.oeq.net for information on upcoming meetings. Copies of each plan and comment form, as they are completed, are also posted on the web site. If you are unable to download any of the documents, you can request a copy by sending an e-mail request to oeq@co.clermont.oh.us, or by calling (513) 732-7894.



HOW TO JOIN

You can help support the activities and efforts of the Little Miami River Partnership by becoming a member. Members will enjoy periodic mailings and in-depth information and issues affecting the Little Miami River.

Everyone who lives in the Little Miami River Watershed is encouraged to join!

Annual Membership Rates are ONLY:

Student	\$10
Individual/Family	\$25
Gov't./Nonprofit	\$50
Corporate/Business	\$75
Lifetime	\$250

Please send your membership to:

LMRP
777 Columbus Avenue
Suite 5B
Lebanon, Ohio 45036

The Little Miami River Partnership is a non-profit, tax-exempt organization and does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, religion, sex, age, handicap, political beliefs, sexual orientation, or marital/family status.

Little Miami River Partnership Newsletter

Vol. 5 No. 4
Fall 2002

The Newsletter is a quarterly publication of the Little Miami River Partnership. Please send comments, questions, or changes to:

Little Miami River Partnership
777 Columbus Ave., Ste. 5B
Lebanon, Ohio 45036
(513) 695-1187

It is distributed to over 500 readers and is available for anyone seeking information regarding the Little Miami River watershed.

Editor:
LuAnn Winkle

Our Partners' News

Clermont County OEQ Receives U.S. EPA Grant

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency has awarded **Clermont County Office of Environmental Quality** a \$30,000 grant to upgrade a unique computer software program. This program is designed to help developers and planners evaluate how different stormwater and erosion control measures impact water quality before they are incorporated into plans for new development.

Under EPA's Phase II Stormwater regulations, as well as the County's Water Management and Sediment Control ordinance, developers must install certain "best management practices," (BMPs) designed to minimize soil loss, pollutant runoff, and stormwater released from a construction site.

The software tool allows developers to predict BMPs effectiveness while still in the planning stage. Developers can compare expected success with the cost to construct and make informed decisions on which controls will achieve the desired environmental results in the most cost-effective manner.

A copy of the current version of the software program is available for download at www.oeq.net. Through this grant, the County will update the program so that it is easier to use and provides more information in a more understandable manner. It is hoped that this assessment tool will become a permanent part of the planning and approval process for new developments.

Throughout the software development process, OEQ will be looking for input from interested parties. Anyone interested in receiving updates and progress reports should send an email to oeq@co.clermont.oh.us.

Miami Valley RC&D promotes "Livable Landscapes Program"

A coalition of agencies, units of government and private industry representatives are in the final stages of organizing a program to promote the development of open space subdivision designs in Southwest Ohio.

The program undertook its first official activity in August when the group sponsored a bus tour to the Cleveland area. Forty people from around the region participated in the two-day tour. Participants toured eight housing developments to see how open space was incorporated into the subdivision designs.

Developments ranged from 40% to 60% open space and the tour helped participants to visualize why 40% open space has been set as the minimum for conservation subdivisions. Participants were also able to hear from and ask questions of several developers at these sites. "It was interesting to hear developers tell us what worked and what they would do differently next time," stated John Kellis, Coordinator of the Miami Valley RC&D Council. A common comment from developers was that they would NOT do it again unless the county and/or township had done their work in the area of regulations and ordinance development. With those essential elements in place, developers stated that they would do it again in a heartbeat.

The tour first stopped in Wayne County to hear about the development of that county's comprehensive plan. Planners talked about the need to coordinate zoning ordinances and subdivision regulations as a tool to carry out a comprehensive plan. Without regulations in place, the plan cannot accomplish its stated goals. Wayne County has an open space subdivision that has been successfully marketed there.

After touring several subdivision sites the first afternoon, the group met with officials of the Western Reserve RC&D Council and Kirby Date of the "Countryside Program" to discuss how their program has worked in northern Ohio. Countryside is viewed as a model for the program being developed in Southwest Ohio. Having promoted the application of open space subdivision principles and practices, Countryside has effected the look of Northeast Ohio.

Participants on the tour saw that there are examples of good conservation developments throughout that part of the state, unlike Southwest Ohio, where very few examples are on the ground. Partly because of the Countryside Program, dozens of counties, municipalities, and townships in Northeast Ohio have changed their subdivision regulations and zoning ordinances to allow conservation subdivisions to be put into practice.

As "The Livable Landscapes Conservation Development Program" continues to develop its programming ideas, the Board of Directors and the advisory committee anticipate developing workshops and additional tours to educate planners, elected officials and regulators about the benefits of conservation subdivisions. For additional information call the Miami Valley RC&D office at (513) 695-1187.

(Continued on next page)

Partners' News Con't

Watershed Project Working for Clean Water

Nearing its third year of existence, the Upper Little Miami and Caesar Creek Watershed Project is catching the attention of conservation-minded homeowners and farmers within the Upper Little Miami and Caesar Creek watersheds. Taking a two-phased approach, the Project serves to increase knowledge and understanding of water quality issues in watershed residents. The Project also provides cost-share incentives, or cash assistance, for conservation practices that will reduce non-point sources of pollution in the rivers and streams.

The Watershed Project is funded through a grant from the Ohio Environmental Protection Agency (OEPA) and serves to address Section 319 of the Clean Water Act of 1972. Section 319 focuses on non-point source (NPS) pollution, which is run-off pollution in the form of sediment, pesticides, herbicides, lawn fertilizer, gasoline, oil and other pollutants that originate from agricultural fields, residential communities, parking lots, city streets and other areas that receive human use. The Project is taking the first steps toward abating NPS pollution in two of the five subwatersheds of the Little Miami River Watershed.

Serving portions of Clark, Clinton, Greene, Montgomery and Warren Counties, the Project reaches individuals ranging from farmers and livestock producers to residential homeowners, contractors and developers.

Farmers and homeowners in the Upper Little Miami and Caesar Creek Watersheds have received more than \$54,000 for practices including:

- 31 homeowners have participated in the Septic Pumping Program which offers a \$100.00 reimbursement payment for pumping on-site home septic systems that have not been pumped in four or more years. OEPA considers full or failing septic systems as a notable contributor to unnaturally high levels of phosphorus and other nutrients in streams in the watersheds.
- 1.25 acres of grassed waterways (water drainage systems in agricultural fields and livestock pastures) have been reconstructed using project cost-share funds.
- An alternative watering source for livestock has been established utilizing natural spring water that is now pumped to a watering tank via a gravitational pump. This has reduced the amount of sediment running off to a receiving stream and pond as the cattle now drink from a managed location.
- One residential streambank stabilization project has been completed through the project, reducing the amount of sediment to the adjacent stream and loss of acreage to the landowner.
- Seven (7) grassed waterways totaling 4.2 acres and two (2) grade stabilization or outlet structures have been reconstructed using Project cost-share funds.
- Ten (10) water and sediment control basins (WASCOB) have been installed. WASCOBs are water drainage systems in agricultural fields that improve farming conditions and reduce the amount of run-off sediment lost to receiving streams.
- Five (5) acres of trees have been planted through the Tree Planting Program. Each landowner has taken advantage of the Project tree planter, which is available for use free of charge.

The Watershed Project has gotten off to a good start in making positive strides to improve the health of the northernmost subwatersheds of the Little Miami River, the Upper Little Miami River and Caesar Creek Watersheds. The Watershed Project has a lot of exciting opportunities coming in the next few months. Please contact Project Coordinator, John Mueller, at 937-372-4478 if you wish to learn more about the Watershed Project or to determine your eligibility for assistance.



Tree planting site along riparian corridor