

How did Soil and Water Conservation Districts come into being?

The worst dust storm in the nation's history on May 12, 1934 forced Congress to pass the Soil Conservation Act of 1935, which established the Soil Conservation Service (SCS) within USDA. This newly created agency, as a branch of the federal government was set up to work directly with landowners. There had been little direct contact between landowners/farmers and USDA. This office was created to act as a local connector between rural dwellers and the federal government.

Congress passed a resolution giving individual states the power to channel soil and water conservation assistance from USDA to land users through an enactment of law establishing a state soil conservation agency and procedures whereby districts could be organized.

By 1837, 22 states had enacted such a law. Ohio entered this arrangement on June 5, 1942 when Governor John W. Bricker signed the Ohio Soil Conservation District Enabling Act. This act laid the foundation for the formation of county-based conservation districts.

The Miami SWCD was organized in December of 1943 as the 15th District in Ohio. The first members to serve on the Miami SWCD board were Emmet Brush, Bert Favorite, Dr. Harry Ronicker, William Thompson and Ernest Warner. Of particular note, the Miami SWCD provided a president in both the Ohio Federation and the National Association of Conservation Districts~ the late Sam Studebaker, Sr.

CONSERVATION PRIORITIES

Technical Assistance to Land Users

Water Quality

Soil Integrity

Conserving Agriculture

**Assisting Stormwater/Urban Needs
relating to drainage & water quality**

Environmental Education

Marketing Conservation

Promoting Best Management Practices

Promoting District Programs



**MIAMI SOIL & WATER
CONSERVATION DISTRICT**

- Office Hours -

8:00 AM—5:00 PM

Monday—Friday

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**MIAMI SOIL & WATER
CONSERVATION DISTRICT**

DO YOU KNOW US?

**► A Guide to your
Conservation District**

**Miami Soil and Water
Conservation District**

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- VISION -

To be responsible leaders in promoting innovative stewardship of natural resources through the development of conservation partnerships to enhance the quality of life.

What is a Soil and Water

Conservation District?

Soil and Water Conservation Districts (SWCDs) are legal subdivisions of the state of Ohio. Administrations of each district is the responsibility of a five-member board of supervisors. Members of the board must reside in the county they represent. They are elected to staggered three-year terms and serve without pay.

What services does an SWCD provide?

The staff of a conservation district is trained to provide answers and education relating to soil erosion and soil quality, sedimentation, flooding/drainage, water quality, ag, rural and urban management practices in order to conserve, maintain or improve soil, water and natural resources.

Who assists with program development?

Conservation Districts work with their federal partners, the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) to put conservation on the land. Program development assistance is also provided by the Ohio Department of Natural Resources (ODNR) and other local and federal agencies.

How is an SWCD funded?

SWCDs operate with funding from their local county commissioners, the State of Ohio, and proceeds from product sales such as the Tree Seedling Sale, Fish Fingerling Sale, rain barrel, bird boxes and feeder sales.

Technical Assistance Offered

Miami County landowners may request technical assistance for many conservation concerns which include:

- ◆ **Grassed Waterways**
- ◆ **Filter Strips**
- ◆ **Animal Waste Storage Facilities**
- ◆ **Wetlands**
- ◆ **Ponds**
- ◆ **Drainage**
- ◆ **Conservation Farm Planning**
- ◆ **Wildlife Habitat Development**
- ◆ **Woodland Management**
- ◆ **Erosion Control Practices**
- ◆ **Conservation Tillage Practices**
- ◆ **Soils Suitability**
- ◆ **Stream Bank Stabilization**
- ◆ **Farm Windbreaks**



***The USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service, and the Ohio Department of Natural Resources offer cost share and incentive programs for a number of the programs listed above.*

Education Outreach

Any audience may benefit from education outreach efforts of the Miami SWCD.

The Miami SWCD strives to coordinate environmental education programs with local, state and federal organizations and offer their services to land users, schools, civic groups and the general public.

The District publishes a monthly Cooperator Newsletter and several Environmental Education issues distributed to local educators. Also, social media is utilized through Facebook and periodic cable news shows and radio programs. Press releases and articles are also used to relay information related to and opportunities available from the District.

Qualified staff members are available as speakers to schools and community groups. Our Conservation Education Area allows Miami County Fairgoers to learn from displays and examine conservation practices like a rain garden, pervious concrete and porous pavers.

Classroom aids demonstrating water quality, stream characteristics, watersheds, ground water flow and more are available to teachers and other groups.

Along with an abundant selection of material for free in our office, rain barrels, bird boxes and feeders are always available. Also, on an annual basis, tree seedlings and fish fingerlings are offered for sale. Proceeds support our education programs.