2012 Annual Meeting

The Annual Meeting of the Blanchard River Watershed Partnership will be held on Thursday, November 15, 2012, from 7:00 - 9:00 a.m. at the Hancock County Ag. Center located at 7828 CR. 140 west of Findlay. Breakfast will be provided starting at 7:00 a.m. Please RSVP by calling Phil Martin at 419.422.6487 by October 31, 2012, (space is limited to 70 people). Come and learn more about the Blanchard River watershed and what the Partnership is doing to improve Water Quality in the watershed.

Board of Directors Elections

Voting for three Board of Directors position will occur. The following positions are open for elections: At-large #2, Headwaters Representative, and Ottawa Creek Representative. To be eligible for the At-large position, you must live or work in the watershed. To be eligible for one of the Representative positions, you must live or work in that subwatershed. If you are interested in running for one of the positions, please call Phil Martin at 419.422.6487.

Who will be the speakers?

Tim Brugeman, president of the BRWP, will talk about the BRWP and its role in the watershed. Phil Martin, watershed coordinator, will discuss the activities of the BRWP in 2012 and give a look forward to what may happen in 2013.
The Blanchard River Watershed Partnership has been directly or indirectly involved in bringing in over $1,000,000 in 2012 into the Blanchard River Watershed. These grants have presented tremendous opportunities for the stakeholders in the Blanchard River Watershed to help the BRWP improve water quality in the watershed.

- **$126,000 ODNR State Implementation Watershed Coordinator** grant to fund the coordinator position for three years starting July 1, 2012.
- **$284,750 for Sediment and Phosphorus Reduction in the Upper Riley Creek watershed (Hancock County) and the Putnam County portion of the Lower Riley Creek watershed.** This is a three year grant was from the Great Lakes Commission for installing Agricultural BMPs.
- **$15,000 Healing Our Waters (HOW) grant from Freshwater Futures for a Feasibility Study on the Village of Houcktown on how to address the failing Home Septic Treatment Systems.
- **$160,000 Water Pollution Control Loan Fund from the Ohio EPA** to help repair/replace low income family Home Septic Treatment System in Hancock County. The BRWP wrote the grant with help from the Hancock County Board of Health. The grant was submitted through the Hancock County Commissioners. The BRWP and the Hancock County Board of Health are administering the grant. As of October 26, 2012, nine systems have been contracted totally nearly $90,000 with two more systems in the bid stage.
- **$414,765 to the Nature Conservancy for Nutrient Reduction in the South Findlay Area of the Upper Blanchard Watershed:** The project will reduce nutrient loading to the Upper Blanchard River Watershed, south of Findlay, Ohio, through the use of two-stage ditches, buffer strips and cropping systems which will filter nutrients and trap sediment. This project is expected to prevent 1,644 tons of sediment, 5,647 pounds of nitrogen and 3,406 pounds of phosphorus from reaching Lake Erie during the first three years after the erosion control measures are implemented. The coordinator worked with The Nature Conservancy in gathering data for the grant. This grant was eligible based on the Lye Creek Watershed Action Plan that was fully endorsed in June 2011. This resulted in the Upper Blanchard being name a focal watershed for Great Restoration Initiative funding.
- **$193,923 to The Ohio State University to Increase Nutrient Management Plan Expertise in the Blanchard Watershed:** The project will increase the technical skills of agricultural professionals working in the Blanchard River watershed in Ohio, particularly pertaining to the development of Nutrient Management Plans (NMPs) for farms. NMP implementation will be focused on fields with the greatest potential to address dissolved reactive phosphorus loading in the Blanchard Watershed. This grant was eligible based on the Lye Creek Watershed Action Plan that was fully endorsed in June 2011. This resulted in the Upper Blanchard being name a focal watershed for Great Restoration Initiative funding.

**Watershed Report Card - 2012…**

The Blanchard River Watershed Partnership has created its first edition of the *Blanchard River Watershed Report Card - 2012*. The report contains data and information compiled from state reports on each of the six 10-digit watersheds. The identified impairments in each of the watersheds are listed, along with a map of each watershed and demographic data. A discussion of what you can do to help are listed. If you are interested in receiving a copy of the Report Card, please contact Phil Martin at 419.422.6487 or email the Partnership at brwp1237@gmail.com.
Focus “Practice” of the Quarter - The 4R Nutrient Stewardship...

What is the need for the 4R Nutrient Stewardship?... Historically, commercial fertilizer phosphorus was considered immobile on or in the soil. However, new data suggests fertilizer phosphorus left on the surface when followed by heavy rainfall can also be a major source of phosphorus loading. Research suggests current agricultural practices within the Western Lake Erie Basin contribute to the growing algal crisis in Lake Erie, with more than 50 percent of the phosphorus load potentially attributed to agriculture. Lake Erie had a mild algal bloom in 2012 compared to 2011. Why? The major reason was the lack of heavy rainfall in the Western Lake Erie Basin. The Blanchard River has not had a large enough rain event to “flush” the river since February 2012. No “flush” leads to very little phosphorus loading from agriculture.

4R nutrient stewardship provides a framework to achieve cropping system goals, such as increased production, increased farmer profitability, and enhanced environmental protection. To achieve those goals the 4Rs utilize fertilizer best management practices that address the Right Nutrient Source, at the Right Rate, the Right Time, and in the Right Place. The following describes the principles generally, and their specific application to lake-friendly P management.

**RIGHT SOURCE:** Ensure a balanced supply of each of the essential nutrients in plant available forms, utilizing all available sources. Specifically, choose sources of P that can be placed in the soil.

**RIGHT RATE:** Assess and make decisions based on soil nutrient supply and plant demand. Specifically, soil test and determine the P rate appropriate to the crop.

**RIGHT TIME:** Assess and make decisions based on soil nutrient supply and plant demand. Specifically, avoid applying over snow or frozen soil during mid-winter, and consider replacing fall applications with spring applications where possible.

**RIGHT PLACE:** Place nutrients where they are accessible to crops, addressing root-soil dynamics and managing spatial variability within the field. Specifically, place P in the soil for each crop, in ways that attain the goals of conservation tillage.

There is no single practice to solve the problem. Each farm has different circumstances such as soil type, surface drainage, tile drainage, soil test levels, and tillage programs, which can be modified to make a difference. Farmers can play a critical role in reducing the algal blooms in Lake Erie!!!

*(source for this information: The Nature Conservancy - www.nature.org/wleb and the Nutrient Stewardship www.nutrientstewardship.com)*

What Can You Do???

**Agriculture Areas**
- develop a **Nutrient Management Plan** for your farm.
- use **Cover Crops** every year.
- Avoid spreading phosphorus just prior to heavy rainfall.
- use **Filter Strips/Riparian Buffers**
- have your **septic tank pumped** and system inspected regularly
- Check our web site for other BMPs.

**Urban Areas**
- use **Phosphorus Free Fertilizer** - your lawn will be fine without the Phosphorus
- **wash** your **car in the yard** or at a car wash
- **pick up** after your pet
- have your **septic tank pumped** and system inspected regularly
Summer Activities of the BRWP...

The BRWP was very active during the summer months with water quality monitoring, river clean-up, county fairs, and revision of Riley Creek Watershed Action Plan.

Water Quality Monitoring - 22 sites were monitored on Lye Creek (4), Riley Creek (6), Little Riley Creek (3) and the Blanchard River (9). Results can be seen on the web site by mid December.

River Clean-up - On August 18, 2012, the BRWP sponsored a river clean-up in Findlay on the Blanchard River. Approximately 25 freshman from the University of Findlay, 6 local volunteers, and 4 BRWP members clean the river from Riverside Park west to CR 140. Trash removed amounted to 37 tires and one ton of other trash. Special thanks to Pat Westrick and HO services for their help.

County Fairs - The BRWP had a display at the Allen, Hancock, Hardin, and Putnam County fairs.

Watershed Action Plan - The Ohio EPA and ODNR responded to the Riley Creek Watershed Action Plan that was submitted for endorsement this past May. There were a few problems that needed to be addressed. These problems were addressed and the revision was sent to the EPA and ODNR on October 24, 2012. Word on the plan should be received by the middle of November.

Ottawa Rain Garden - The Partnership has been supporting the efforts to build a Rain Garden in the Village of Ottawa Park. Thanks to Phyllis and Tom Macke and others for their time and effort. Stop and check out the Rain Garden.

BRWP Activities....

November

- November 15th - Annual Meeting at Hancock County Ag. Center 7-9 a.m. RSVP by October 31, 2012 to Phil Martin, 419-422-6487.
- November 22nd - Happy Thanksgiving from the BRWP.

December

- December 13th - Social get-together. Call Phil Martin at 419-422-6487, if interested.
- December 25th - Merry Christmas from the BRWP

January

- January 5 - Planning meeting 9-12 noon

Membership - New and Renewals...

The BRWP will be starting our Annual Membership Drive. The BRWP hopes that all present members and many new members will join the BRWP in 2013. The money from membership is used and needed to help cover the daily operations of the BRWP. Membership rates are:

- $15 - INDIVIDUAL MEMBERSHIP
- $25 - FAMILY MEMBERSHIP
- $50-$249 -MEMBERSHIP PLUS!!!
- $250 and up - CORPORATE/BUSINESS

Check our web site for more details and options: Please consider renewing or joining the BRWP!!!

Hancock Park District
Sponsor of the Quarter!!
Thank You HPD!!

BRWP Contact Info...

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