

2023

Activity Report



Celebrating 17 Years of Success! 2006 - 2023



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Eagle Creek Representative
Ottawa Creek Representative
Riley Creek Representative
Cranberry Creek Representative
City of Findlay Representative
Village of Bluffton
Village of Ottawa Representative
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Joe Sehlhorst
Vacant
Vacant
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Jane McCleary
Pete Reynolds
William Doyle
Amy Downing
Lauren Sandhu*

*non voting

2023 Executive Committee

President, Bob Connour
Vice President, Don Croy
Treasurer, Dick Kozlowski
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2023 Contact Information

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Web Site: www.blanchardriver.org
Facebook: Blanchard River Watershed
Partnership



Thank You to Our Supporters

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City of Findlay
Putnam County Commissioners
Village of Ottawa
Village of Bluffton
Maumee Watershed Conservancy District
Dick and Jane McCleary
John and Janet Pilarowski

Putnam SWCD
Hancock Park District
Hirzel Canning Company
Beerco
Millstream Area Credit Union
Allen SWCD

Partnership Activities this past year!

January 2023

- ◇ The BRWP met with NOAA to receive feedback regarding the BRWP's August 15, 2022 application to receive funding for the Ecological Restoration of the Riverside Dam and Reservoir area.

February 2023

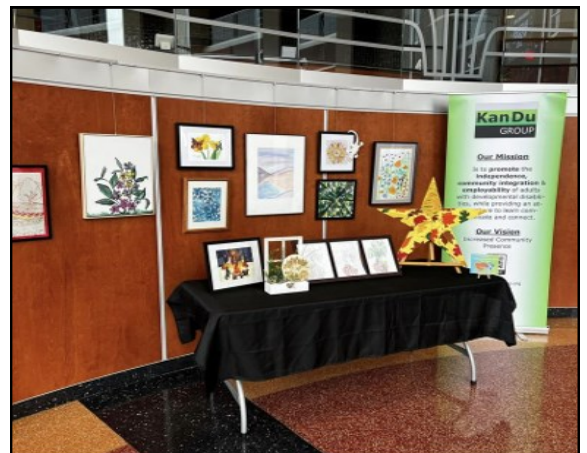
- ◇ The BRWP met with Mayor Muryn and the Findlay Brewing Company to begin planning for Findlay's first Earth Week.

March 2023

- ◇ The BRWP was invited to present at the Findlay-Hancock County Public Library. This presentation focused on the benefits of incorporating native plants into the landscape, and highlighted several BRWP projects.
- ◇ The BRWP was asked to create a nature display for the main display case at the Findlay-Hancock County Public Library.
- ◇ The BRWP was invited to announce Findlay's first Earth Week at the Hancock County Hospitality Council Quarterly Meeting and Fresh Brewed Business Meeting
- ◇ The BRWP met with the Ohio EPA to discuss funding opportunities for the Ecological Restoration of the Riverside Dam and Reservoir project.
- ◇ The BRWP met with the Hancock County Commissioners and the Hancock County Engineer's office to finalize construction plans for the 7-acre restored floodplain on TR 89
- ◇ The BRWP worked with City Apparel and the Findlay Brewing Company to design t-shirts and tote bags for Earth Week.

April 2023

- ◇ The BRWP was invited to present at the Findlay-Hancock County Public Library. This presentation focused on litter in our waterways, and showcased the Litterati phone app.
- ◇ The BRWP was invited to present to the Girl Scouts of Hancock County to celebrate their Earth Day Litter Clean-Up event. The Girl Scouts picked up over 1,314 pieces of litter, which were documented with the Litterati app.
- ◇ The BRWP launched Findlay's first ever Earth Week celebration, which was held from April 22 - April 29. During Earth Week, 93,000 pounds of trash were collected and over 1,500 tires were recycled.
- ◇ The BRWP facilitated Earth Week litter clean-ups for the following groups during Earth Week: Girl Scouts of Hancock County, Marathon Center for the Performing Arts, Hancock Youth Leadership Class of 2023, Findlay High School Boy's Hockey Team, Whirlpool of Ottawa, Litter Walk with Mayor Muryn
- ◇ Earth Week art installation were created by Kan Du Group Inc. and the Kindness Klub at the Hancock Hotel and the Marathon Center for the Performing Art. All artwork was made from recyclable materials.



April 2023

- ◇ The BRWP partnered with the following businesses to celebrate Earth Week: Findlay Brewing Company, City Apparel, Journey Salon and Day Spa, Silver's Cut, Style, and Makeup, Urban Market, Hand and Home Co., Elida Candle Company, Burlwick and Co., River and Road
- ◇ The Findlay Brewing Company released the Blanchard River Brew and Green Goddess drink to celebrate Earth Week. BRWP tote bags, t-shirts, and native seed packets were available for sale.
- ◇ Verdantas and the BRWP presented the final findings of the Riverside Dam and Reservoir Area engineering study in the Findlay City Council Chambers. A fish passage design option was selected by city officials and stakeholders at this meeting.
- ◇ The BRWP was asked to present an update on the Riverside Dam and Reservoir Area project at the Findlay City Council meeting on May 16th. An update was provided by Lauren Sandhu at this meeting.



May 2023

- ◇ The BRWP was invited to give a presentation at Ohio Northern University. This presentation highlighted the Ecological Restoration of the Riverside Dam and Reservoir project.
- ◇ The BRWP partnered with Putnam SWCD to host Wetlands Day. Middle school students from Ottawa-Glandorf and Pandora-Gilboa Schools traveled to the Quarry Farm Nature Preserve and learned how to conduct macroinvertebrate sampling. from Watershed Coordinator, Lauren Sandhu,
- ◇ The BRWP partnered with the Hancock Park District, Donnell Middle School, the ODNR, and BGSU to host seventh grade students at the Oakwoods Nature Preserve H2Ohio Wetland. Students installed hydrology gauges, conducted macroinvertebrate sampling, and kayaked and canoed with ODNR staff.
- ◇ Construction of the 7-acre restored floodplain on TR 89 in Findlay began.



June and July 2023

- ◇ Spring macroinvertebrate sampling was conducted throughout the BRWP's sixteen sampling sites.
- ◇ The BRWP had a table display at the Putnam County Fair in Ottawa, Ohio.
- ◇ Construction and seeding was conducted and completed at the 7-acre restored floodplain on TR 89 in Findlay.
- ◇ The BRWP partnered with Allen SWCD, Putnam SWCD, Defiance SWCD, Paulding SWCD, and Van Wert SWCD to host the 3G Teaching Workshop in Ottawa, OH. Teachers who participated in the workshop received graduate credit from the University of Findlay, contact hours, and copies of the curriculum books for Project WET, Project WILD, and Aquatic WILD.



June and July 2023

- ◇ The BRWP was featured with the Findlay-Hancock County Community Foundation by 13abc News.
- ◇ The Courier published the article, “Better fishing ahead at Riverside Park” which featured the BRWP and the Riverside Dam and Reservoir Area project
- ◇ The BRWP was featured by 13abc News in a video segment highlighting the 7-acre restored floodplain on TR 89.

August 2023

- ◇ The BRWP met with ODNR and H2Ohio staff at Riverside Park to provide an update on the Ecological Restoration of the Riverside Dam and Reservoir project. H2Ohio funding opportunities were discussed.

September 2023

- ◇ Fall macroinvertebrate sampling was conducted throughout the BRWP’s sixteen sampling sites. University of Findlay biology students Audrey Buskirk, Lauren Anderson, Taryn Martin, Samantha Klug, and Alexandra Arnholt assisted Watershed Coordinator, Lauren Sandhu, with sampling and data analysis.

October 2023

- ◇ The BRWP partnered with Donnell Middle School to host a ribbon cutting and field day event at the 7-acre restored floodplain on TR 89 in Findlay. The middle school students who had contributed design ideas to the Verdantas Engineers and the Nature Conservancy back in May of 2022, were invited to see how their ideas were incorporated into the newly completed TR 89 project site.
- ◇ Watershed Coordinator, Lauren Sandhu, worked with Verdantas and Jennifer Williams Nonprofit Consulting to create an application package for NOAA’s “Restoring Fish Passage through Barrier Removal” funding opportunity. The BRWP’s application package was successfully submitted via grants.gov on October 16th.
- ◇ The BRWP worked with Civil and Environmental Consultants, Inc. to prepare an application to receive funding from the OPEA to write two NPS-IS Plans. The application was submitted to the OEPA on October 18th.

November and December 2023

- ◇ The BRWP hosted its 2023 Annual Meeting on November 16th. Meeting attendees were presented with an overview of the BRWP’s activities in 2023. Mr. Lee Swisher of the Hancock County Emergency Management Agency was the featured speaker.
- ◇ Signage will be installed at the 7-acre restored floodplain on TR 89. Site signage was created by and funded by the Nature Conservancy.
- ◇ The BRWP is screening applicants to fill the role of Watershed Coordinator. The BRWP’s current Watershed Coordinator, Lauren Sandhu, accepted a full-time instructor of biology position at the University of Findlay. She will step down from her role as Watershed Coordinator in December of 2023. The new Watershed Coordinator will begin his or her duties in January of 2024.



BRWP Grants update November 16, 2023

GRANTS AWARDED	AMOUNT	DESCRIPTION	GRANT WRITER AND ORGANIZATION	IMPACT Acres, etc.	ENDING DATE
Great Lakes Commission GLSNRP-09-19-08	\$142,020	This grant will allow producers to be trained in using the Nutrient Tracking Tool (NTT) program. Producers will submit a data sheet which will be entered into the NTT program. Data entered will be: amount, method and time of fertilizer application, type, date, time and method used to establish crop, total yield and harvest date of each crop, and tillage method used. The program will produce a cost benefit analysis which will allow producers to see how BMP's will affect their yields.	BRWP, NCWQR	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1,429.84 acres of cover crops have been installed • 521.88 acres of cropland have been soil tested • 1,648.59 acres of cropland have undergone conservation tillage 	9/30/2023
Great Lakes Commission GLSNRP 11-06	\$129,070	This grant will allow for 7-acres of flood-prone cropland to be converted into a restored floodplain.	BRWP	7 acres of flood-prone cropland was converted into a restored floodplain.	9/30/2024
Findlay –Hancock County Community Foundation	\$750.00	These funds allowed the BRWP to purchase the Earth Week t-shirts and tote bags	BRWP	T-shirts and tote bags were purchased from City Apparel	4/30/2023
Hancock County Visitor's Bureau	\$250.00	These funds supported the purchase of Earth Week t-shirts, tote bags, advertising, and gift cards for litter clean-up winners	BRWP	T-shirts, tote bags, and gift cards were purchased. An Earth Week webpage was created in Visit Findlay	4/30/2023
Findlay Service League	\$516.00	This grant was used to purchase environmental champion medals, which were awarded to the Donnell Middle School students who helped design the TR 89 7-acre restored floodplain.	Jane McCleary	200 medals were purchased	10/31/2023

BRWP Grants update November 16, 2023

GRANTS AWARDED	AMOUNT	DESCRIPTION	GRANT WRITER AND ORGANIZATION	IMPACT Acres, etc.	ENDING DATE
ARPA Funds—City of Findlay	\$80,000	These funds were used to facilitate a full engineering study of the Riverside Dam and reservoir area in 2022. The engineering study was conducted by Verdantas.	BRWP	The Riverside Dam and reservoir engineering study began in March of 2022, and was completed in the spring of 2023.	1/31/2023
Flood Mitigation Funds—Hancock County Commissioners	\$80,000	These funds will be contributed to the pre-construction phase of the Riverside Dam and reservoir area project. In 2023/2024.	BRWP	None yet	TBD

2024 Projects

- Continue implementation of all active grants.
- Secure funding to support the pre-construction and construction phases of the Riverside Dam and reservoir area project.
- Provide support for partners in seeking grants for projects such as:
 1. agriculture BMPs to reduce sediment and nutrient loadings
 2. restoration of brownfield and riparian areas
 3. other projects as identified by our stakeholders and / or partners
- Continuation of existing BRWP projects:
 1. water quality monitoring
 2. community outreach/education
 3. river and litter clean-ups
- Write at least two NPS-IS Plans.
- Seek funding for the BRWP. Our main source of support is from our membership dues and sponsorships.

How can you help?

• Become a member and volunteer!

How Can You Stay in Touch?

• Follow us on Facebook at:

Blanchard River Watershed Partnership

• Visit our website at:

www.blanchardriver.org