



Ohio Department of Natural Resources Division of Soil and Water Conservation



NEWSPOINTS

January 2009

Vinton SWCD's Cody Hacker Named 2009 Ohio Tree Farm Inspector of the Year

This year, the State Tree Farm Committee has chosen Cody Hacker, Technician for Vinton SWCD as the "2009 Ohio Tree Farm Inspector of the Year". The Ohio Tree Farm program is the application of the **American Tree Farm System (ATFS)** in Ohio and is operated by volunteers through the Ohio Tree Farm Committee.

Since 1941, ATFS has educated and recognized the commitment of private family forest landowners in the United States. Currently, ATFS has certified 24 million acres of privately owned forestland and 90,473 family forest owners who are committed to excellence in forest stewardship, in 46 states. Tree Farmers share a unique commitment to protect wildlife habitat and watersheds, to conserve soil and to provide recreation for their communities while producing wood for America. These individuals hold the key to the kinds of forests, forest activities and forest resources future generations of Americans will enjoy. ATFS has established standards and guidelines for property owners to meet to become a Certified Tree Farm. Under these standards and guidelines, private forest owners must develop a management plan based on strict environmental standards and pass an inspection by an ATFS volunteer forester every five years.

Annually, the Ohio Tree Farm Program utilizes the services of over 100 Foresters, trained in the process of inspecting Tree Farms and enrolling new Tree Farms that meet the standards of certification. All of this work is completed on a volunteer basis, with the support of numerous agencies, businesses and employers.

Historically, the Board of Supervisors governing the Vinton SWCD has been an advocate of the Tree Farm Program and has encouraged its staff to promote this landowner outreach. Cody Hacker was chosen as the "2009 Ohio Tree Farm Inspector of the Year" after officially becoming an Inspector in 2006. The Ohio Tree Farm Committee will send Hacker to the National Tree Farm Convention held in Washington, D.C. in the fall where the regional and national winners will be announced. Cody Hacker will be entered into the regional and then the national competitions. Current SWCD employees serving as Tree Farm Inspectors are Nathan Taylor of Belmont SWCD, David Schott of Guernsey SWCD, Jason Garey of Hocking SWCD, Matt Scharver of Lake SWCD, Richard Sorg and Clayton Rico of Muskingum SWCD, Kevin Yost of Pike SWCD, and Cody Hacker of Vinton SWCD.



Nicole Hafer of Muskingum SWCD Named 2008 Educator of the Year



Nicole Hafer from Zanesville, Ohio, has been named the National Wild Turkey Federation's 2008 Conservation Educator of the Year. Hafer is the Muskingum Soil and Water Conservation District's Education Specialist.

Hafer teaches outdoor education to local youth from grades K-12 as well as teaching a nature interpretation course at Zane State College, a requirement for its Park, Recreation and Wildlife Association degree program. Hafer's entire career has been dedicated to helping her students gain a better understanding and appreciation of the natural world around them. Hafer makes learning fun for her students by making wild turkey calls, planting trees and butterfly gardens and constructing bluebird trails. She also likes to incorporate games into her lesson plans to keep her students' interest. "It's really thrilling to see my students get excited about nature," Hafer said. "I teach a diverse range of students, but it is especially rewarding for me to see children from urban areas become amazed

at seeing something in nature for the first time that many of us might take for granted. Giving our youth the

opportunity to experience the outdoors is something that NWTf staff, volunteers and I are all passionate about—that's why I'm so proud to receive this award."

As Conservation Educator of the Year, Hafer was awarded a \$500 grant, which she says will be used to purchase materials for her Wild Turkey Education classroom program. The remainder of the grant will be used to purchase seed mix for wildlife food plots, which her students will plant in Ohio's Blue Rock State Park as part of Hafer's Kids Conservation Campers program. She will also receive a paid trip to the NWTf's 33rd annual Convention and Sport Show, held Feb. 19 to Feb. 22, 2009, at the Gaylord Opryland Hotel in Nashville, Tenn.

When asked if she had any advice on how other teachers can incorporate nature into their lesson plans, Hafer suggested that simply taking their classes outside can make a difference in how students learn. "Activities focused on nature can be worked into nearly every subject and content standard and help students develop critical thinking and problem solving skills," Hafer noted. "Plus, kids prefer being outside to being in the classroom, and that's inspiring to any educator."

To learn more about the Conservation Educator of the Year Award program or to nominate a special educator for 2009, contact NWTf Education Supervisor Christine Rolka at crolka@nwtf.net or call 1-800-THE-NWTf.

Erie and Ottawa SWCDs Host North Central Ohio Wildlife Management Conference

The 3rd Annual North Central Ohio Wildlife Management Conference will take place on Saturday, January 31, 2009 at the EHOVE Career Center, near historic Milan. Among the keynote speakers for this year's conference is Michigan's own Ed Spinazzola, a Quality Deer Management Association (QDMA) founder and member, author and wildlife food plot expert. Ed will be talking about "Food Plot Basics to Cutting-Edge Site Layouts". Also featured during the morning session will be staff members from Zink Calls. Founded in 2001 by Ohio native, Fred Zink, this company remains a leader in waterfowl calling, as Fred himself is a nationally recognized goose caller. Chuck Hanck, Vice President of the Western Basin Sport Fisherman's Association, will be offering "Jewelry for Fish: Tying Tips and Harness Setups...". This session will offer the hands-on experience of tying a night crawler harness and other commonly used fishing knots. Another afternoon breakout session will feature Tom Bartlett, talking about the use of "Bird Banding" as a valuable tool for the study of Ohio birds. A licensed bird bander since 1972, Tom has banded over 40,000 individual birds of more than 150 species. He is certified by the North American Banding Council as a passerine and near-passerine bird bander and trainer. Attendance will be limited to the first 100 registered and the deadline is **January 23rd**. For more information regarding the 3rd Annual North Central Ohio Wildlife Management Conference, contact the Erie SWCD office at 419-626-5211 or the Ottawa SWCD at 419-898-6431.

Firelands Coastal Tributaries Featured in National Magazine BioCycle

A rain garden installed at Old Woman Creek Reserve this past June was featured in an article titled "Compost in the Rain Garden Mix". Rain events were causing flooding and washouts at the Reserve's Visitor Center so Barnes Nursery, Inc. in Huron and the Old Woman Creek Reserve (OWCR) teamed up with the Erie SWCD to install a rain garden at the Visitor's Center to manage the storm water. This project was part of a new local "watershed approach" initiative, begun in 2008 by the Firelands Coastal Tributaries Watershed Program to educate homeowners in Erie and Huron Counties on how to reduce storm water pollution on their own property. To ensure that visitors could fully experience the rain garden, a path of stone pavers was added through the center and plants were tagged to reference their species names. "We also put up signage explaining the uses, benefits, and design specifications of the rain garden," says Breann Hohman, watershed coordinator for Erie SWCD. Five workshops have been conducted on rain gardens as part of the Firelands Coastal Tributaries Watershed Program, including two during construction of the OWCR garden. "Barnes Nursery will be partnering with Erie SWCD to provide additional trainings on rain garden designs with demonstrations like the Old Woman Creek rain garden," says Sharon Barnes of Barnes Nursery.

NewsPoints Mailing

The NewsPoints will be mailed only to the SWCD offices in the future to reduce printing costs. Please print off a copy of the NewsPoints to share with your local supervisor board members at your next monthly board meeting. Thank you for your assistance in helping us implement this cost-savings measure!