

**IN THE COMMON PLEAS COURT OF LICKING COUNTY, OHIO**

**IN THE MATTER OF:**

**SOUTH LICKING WATERSHED  
CONSERVANCY DISTRICT**

**Case No. 68 CV 54569**

**ANNUAL REPORT OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

**DECEMBER 1, 2018 THROUGH NOVEMBER 29, 2019**

**BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

**Daniel Blatter, President  
Linda Nicodemus, Secretary/Treasurer**

1. Directors Daniel Blatter, Linda Nicodemus and Robert Cumbow served as members of the Board of Directors of the South Licking Watershed Conservancy District (Conservancy District) during the period covered by this report until Mr. Cumbow's resignation on July 28, 2019. Directors Blatter and Nicodemus continued to serve as members of the Board.
2. Brian Reed and Christopher Meyer served as legal counsel.
3. The Directors held one annual and twelve regular business meetings during the period covered by this report.
4. Denise Brooks, Licking County Soil and Water Conservation District, provided assistance to the Conservancy District.
5. The regularly scheduled meeting night of the Conservancy District was the second Monday of each month at 6:00 PM; meetings were held at the Village of Hebron Municipal Complex, 943 West Main St., Hebron, Ohio 43025.
6. Conservancy District records are held by Directors Blatter and Nicodemus.

### **DEVELOPMENTS DURING THE REPORTING PERIOD**

The Conservancy District has contacted all cities, villages, and townships within the watershed to advise them of our renewed existence and invite them to the District's meetings.

The Conservancy District has identified a number of issues to address, in addition to South Fork flooding, which continues to be a priority:

- A log jam in the South Fork Licking River, located east of The Newark Ohio Industrial Park, continues to have our attention. The Conservancy District continues to support efforts by the Licking County Soil and Water Conservation District (SWCD) and Licking County Commissioners to develop a Stream Restoration Plan including debris removal and bank stabilization. Consultants have estimated the cost for this section at \$910,000. Grants from the Muskingum Watershed Conservancy District (MWCD) are being sought as well as engineering consultation and a plan to expand the program to include clearing and snagging and leaner-tree removal for a longer reach—such as from Kirkersville to Newark—while not adversely affecting sensitive streambank areas such as in Heath.
- The Buckeye Lake dam rehabilitation project has been completed and additional related initiatives have begun such as the addition of silt traps within the Kirkersville Feeder and riparian improvements. The Ohio Department of Natural Resources (ODNR) has contracted a study of the Kirkersville Feeder's condition; preliminary reports are anticipated soon. The Conservancy District is quite interested in the outcome of the study as that may impact the direction ODNR takes towards any rehabilitation of the Feeder, thus impacting Buckeye Lake and the South Fork Licking River.
- A North Buckeye Lakes Drainage Improvement Project area is focusing efforts to areas north of Buckeye Lake to identify drainage issues that have come to light since the Buckeye Lake Dam rehabilitation. The South Licking Watershed Conservancy District (SLWCD) is present in these discussions and working to help develop solutions.

- The Buckeye Lake Area Watershed Coordinator, a grant-funded position the Conservancy District supported, and under the direction of Perry SWCD has written the 9-element implementation strategy for the Buckeye Lake HUC-12 (hydrologic unit). That document is now under formal review. This HUC is within the SLWCD boundary so will be incorporated into our plan.
- The Board submitted letters of support the Licking County SWCD's grant application for the position of a Watershed Coordinator that was posted this year by the Ohio Department of Agriculture (ODA). We were disappointed Licking County SWCD was not successful in obtaining the grant from ODA.
- The City of Heath is mitigating the stream bank erosion of the South Fork near the confluences of Ramp Creek and Dutch Fork. This erosion, though distressing to Heath and the value of their potential well field can be expected as it is within the natural stream corridor. Engineering estimates were \$503,000 for the project; Heath is performing the work in-house as materials become available.
- With Mr. Cumbow's resignation from the Board it was necessary to find another qualified individual. We recommend Kevin Elder who resides in Perry County to fill Mr. Cumbow's unexpired term as Director of the South Licking Watershed Conservancy District and feel he is highly qualified.

There was a wide-spread flood event in early July 2019 that impacted the Conservancy District; debris blocked some bridges, flooding occurred over St. Rt. 40, and an off-ramp of I-70 was closed. Additionally, flooding of cropland in some flood-prone areas occurred and wet weather severely delayed planting. Localized areas also experience some heavy rains resulting in flooded basements and flooding of rural roads and washed-out road culverts.

## **BOARD ASSESSMENTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

The Board spent considerable time in evaluating the overall mission of the District and the Board's role in providing effective leadership, stewardship and positive contributions to the community it serves. Currently the board operates without a dedicated funding source, a 1980's Watershed Plan and without any enforceable regulations. The Board has concluded that to move from an entity that primarily serves as a sounding board for issues within the South Licking Watershed Conservancy District to a Board with the ability to accomplish specific initiatives within the district, it is necessary to address these areas.

The Board is working toward adoption of the recently revised Licking County NPDES Phase II Stormwater Management Program (Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System—MS4) for the entire South Licking Watershed Conservancy District. This would provide consistent regulatory oversight for all areas within the District which are currently not covered by regulation due to size, boundaries or other considerations. Presently Licking County SWCD manages the Licking County joint permit. Fairfield County has Urbanized Areas under permit, and discussions with Perry County are favorable. We ask the continued support of the Conservancy Court for final adoption and implementation.

The Board has also applied for assistance through the United States Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) for a Watershed Study of the entire South Licking Watershed Conservancy District. This is a long term process and will require support from many partner agencies with either in kind approved services or dedicated funding for the \$100,000 match requirement. This study is necessary to have a better understanding of ecological integrity of the watershed.

The District's 1980's Watershed Plan needs reviewed and updated. Requirements are for a 9-element non-point-source implementation strategy for each HUC-12 within the watershed, there are approximately 14, one of which is nearly completed. According to MWCD, costs for these strategy reports are \$10,000 per HUC. Funding sources may include: self-funding, seeking grants, loans, or

partnerships with local governments within the watershed. We ask for discussion and direction from the Conservancy Court on this matter.

### **RECORDS AND ACCOUNTS**

Pursuant to statute, minutes of the meetings of the Board of Directors have been reduced to writing and are recorded in a three ring binder marked as the official minutes of the South Licking Watershed Conservancy District. The Directors prepare monthly financial reports for approval. The records and accounts remain open for public inspection by appointment. A financial report covering the reporting period is a part of this report. The funds of the Conservancy District are currently on deposit with the Park National Bank. A representative of the Auditor of State reviewed our records for 2005 and decided not to do an audit because of the limited account activity. No other auditing activity has occurred since then.

### **PUBLIC RELATIONS**

The regular monthly meetings that were held in 2019 by the Board of Directors were open to the public. During the reporting period, members of the public attended these regular monthly meetings.

This Annual Report is respectfully submitted by:

BOARD OF DIRECTORS,  
SOUTH LICKING WATERSHED  
CONSERVANCY DISTRICT

DATED: December \_\_, 2019

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Daniel Blatter

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Linda Nicodemus

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This report was prepared by:

Linda Nicodemus, and Daniel Blatter, Directors

Contact:  
Daniel Blatter, Director  
141 Reserve Dr.  
Granville, OH 43023

**Financial Report**  
***South Licking Watershed Conservancy District***

November 30, 2018 – November 30, 2019

**ASSETS**

**Checking Account**

Balance as of November 30, 2018	\$1,741.80
Interest Receipts:	
November - November	.12
Deposits:	
November – November	0
Disbursements:	
Media Network of Central Ohio – Monthly meeting Advertisement	\$ 121.60
Linda Nicodemus –APG Media – legal notice- Perry County Tribune	\$ 36.40
Bank Balance – November 29, 2019	<u>\$1,583.92</u>
Encumbrances- unpaid	
Annual Meeting notice and 2019 meeting notice	
Media Network of Central Ohio:	
Newark Advocate	\$ 62.35
Lancaster Eagle Gazette	\$ 52.45
APG Media of Ohio	
Perry County Tribune	<u>\$ 28.00</u>
Total	<u>\$142.80</u>
Total Posted Assets	<u>\$1,441.12</u>