

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, 2019 THROUGH NOVEMBER 30, 2020

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

**Daniel Blatter, President
Linda Nicodemus, Secretary/Treasurer
Kevin Elder, Member**

1. Directors Daniel Blatter, Linda Nicodemus, and Kevin Elder served as members of the Board of Directors of the South Licking Watershed Conservancy District (Conservancy District) during the period covered by this report.
2. Brian Reed and Christopher Meyer served as legal counsel.
3. The Directors held one annual and ten regular business meetings during the period covered by this report.
4. Denise Brooks and other staff of the Licking County Soil and Water Conservation District (SWCD) 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

Kevin Elder was appointed to fill the Director vacancy by the Conservancy Court at last year's Annual Meeting.

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 supporting efforts by the Licking County Soil and Water Conservation District (LCSWCD) and Licking County Commissioners to develop a "Stream Restoration Plan" to address the issues that have existed in this reach of the river for decades. Consultants have estimated the cost for this section at \$910,000. Limited progress has been made toward this effort in 2020.
- Grants from the Muskingum Watershed Conservancy District (MWCD) are being sought as well as engineering consultation to develop the program that includes clearing and snagging and leaner-tree removal from the South Fork, Raccoon Creek, and other major tributaries, while not adversely affecting sensitive streambank areas such as in Heath. The LCSWCD has assisted us by remotely identifying over 400 stream obstructions – from individual fallen-trees to nearly-complete stream blockages. We have received strong community support for having begun this inventory with the intent of including such clearing and snagging work in a revised Watershed Work Plan.
- The meeting with the MWCD staff in Judge Marcelain's court room prior to their Annual Meeting was a learning experience, allowing us to learn from their experiences with regards to considering "sub-district" status, and learning there are other methods besides dikes and dams to mitigate flooding.
- The Conservancy District has been in communication with the Army Corps of Engineers and has submitted a Letter of Intent requesting assistance for a Section 179 Watershed Assessment with the idea we will learn more completely where problems in the watershed exist. We have receive

notice of acceptance pending Federal funding. We have also submitted a Letter of Intent for their Section 208 program to address clearing and snagging for flood control as well as a request for their FPMS (flood program management service) with the idea that these programs can work together. Both 179 and 208 programs can provide up to \$100,000.00 of Army Corps work, and then they are on cost-share bases beyond that.

- 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. Some remediation has been accomplished by a Fairfield County Petition Ditch project. A number of other individual projects have been discussed. 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, under the direction of Perry SWCD, is in the process of implementing the Ohio Environmental Protection Agency (OEPA) approved 9-element implementation strategy for the Buckeye Lake HUC-12 (hydrologic unit). This HUC is within the SLWCD boundary so will be incorporated into our plan. A second 9-element plan for the HUC on the western end of Buckeye Lake, including the Kirkersville Feeder, has been submitted by the Coordinator for OEPA review.
- The Ohio Department of Natural Resources Kirkersville Feeder Assessment Report has recently been released. It recommends Feeder inspection protocols, identifies current critical issues, proposes actions to be taken, and indicates a need to develop priorities to address longer-term issues. The integrity of the Feeder is a high priority.
- Fairfield County's Board of Commissioners has recently allocated some funds for our continued operation and we greatly appreciate their support.

Flood Events in 2020:

There was a wide-spread flood event on March 20, 2020, that impacted the Conservancy District; debris blocked some bridges, flooding occurred over York Rd., US Rt. 40, St. Rt. 37, closing of sections of I-70, and washing out a culvert on St. Rt. 79 (Hebron Road) in Heath. Lower lying areas of Heath and Newark also flooded including areas outside the FEMA-mapped flood plain. Flooding in Granville, from the Raccoon Creek, was near “major flood” stage according to the stream gage at Moots Run Rd. Stream gages on the South Fork recorded levels at or near major flood stage including “major flooding” in Heath about noon on March 20. The gage at I-70, near Buckeye Lake, recorded a gage height about 1.8 feet above the major flood level at 5:15 am on March 21.

Another event in May reached flood stage at I-70, near Buckeye Lake, and at Granville, but downstream gages did not record elevations to be at “flood stage” in those locations.

BOARD ASSESSMENTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The Board continues to evaluate the 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 will also move towards 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, political boundaries, or other considerations. Presently Licking County SWCD manages the Licking

County MS4 joint permit. Fairfield County has Urbanized Areas under permit, and discussions with Perry County are favorable.

The District's 1980's Watershed Plan remains in need of review and update prior to moving forward with that plan and we believe that obtaining the Watershed Assessment with help from the Army Corp will help us update that plan. 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 has been completed and a second in process. 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, direction, and continued support from the Conservancy Court on these matters.

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

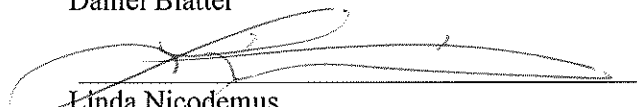
All regular monthly meetings held in 2020 by the Board of Directors were open to the public. During the reporting period, members of the public attended most regular monthly meetings.

This Annual Report is respectfully submitted by:

BOARD OF DIRECTORS,
SOUTH LICKING WATERSHED
CONSERVANCY DISTRICT

DATED: December __, 2020


Daniel Blatter


Linda Nicodemus


Kevin Elder

This report was prepared by:

Linda Nicodemus, Kevin Elder, and Daniel Blatter, Directors

Contact:
Daniel Blatter, Director
141 Reserve Dr.
Granville, OH 43023
740-398-8122

Financial Report
South Licking Watershed Conservancy District
November 30, 2019 – November 30, 2020

ASSETS

Checking Account

Balance as of November 30, 2019	\$1,583.92
Interest Receipts:	
November - May	.06
Deposits:	
November – November	0
Disbursements:	
Media Network of Central Ohio – Monthly meeting Advertisement	\$ 114.80
APG Media – legal notice- Perry County Tribune	\$ 31.00
Bank Balance – November 30, 2020	<u>\$1,438.18</u>
Encumbrances- unpaid	
Annual Meeting notice and 2020 meeting notice	
Media Network of Central Ohio:	\$ 135.60
Newark Advocate	
Lancaster Eagle Gazette	
APG Media of Ohio	
Perry County Tribune	<u>\$ 37.80</u>
Total	<u>\$173.40</u>
Total Posted Assets	<u>\$1,264.78</u>

