**Erie Basin RC&D**

**Overview 2023**

**The Erie Basin RC&D Office is located at 180 Milan Ave., Norwalk, Ohio 44857 with Storage on Fair Road; Serving Ashland, Crawford, Erie, Huron, Ottawa, Richland, Sandusky, Seneca, Wood, and Wyandot Counties.**

**Our Vision – Sustainable today for growth tomorrow.**

**Our Mission – To promote economic and social development in a way that protects natural resources and serves as a catalyst for conservation programs in the Erie Basin RC&D 10 county service area.**

[**www.eriebasinrcd.org**](http://www.eriebasinrcd.org) **and including** [**www.ohwildlife.org**](http://www.ohwildlife.org) **email:** **eriebasinrcd@yahoo.com**

Erie Basin RC&D is a unique non-profit organization that helps people care for and protect their natural resources in a way that improves North Central Ohio’s economy, environment, and living standards. Working with citizens, local organizations, and county agencies; the Erie Basin Council sets goals and priorities to meet local needs. The Council is committed to empowering people and creating solutions for land conservation, community development, and environmental enhancement.

 Projects include:

* Revolving Loan Fund to provide GAP financing for Small Business startups/expansion to create/retain jobs in our service area.
* Downtown Revitalization Loan Program to prepare a building for Small Business occupancy.
* SWCD field days / The Ohio Wildlife Project / Farm Bill programs of the National Association of RC&D on behalf of USDA NRCS.
* S K Worm Animatronics Soil Education / Operation Soil Education / Mini-Grants
* RD RBDG RLF grant opportunities

**RC&D Revolving Loan Fund (established 1994)**

While the RC&D Council RLF Committee was unable to close any loans last year, they spent time loan servicing. We had 4 loan payoffs. Our outstanding loans currently total $549,700. We have approximately $190,000 on hand to loan. Since 1994 the Council has approved 97 loans totaling $3,059,698 which helped to create / retain 300 jobs.

**Education Mini-grants:**

Ohio Small Business Basics Seminars at Terra State - $500; Huron SWCD 4th Grade Conservation Day - $250; Ottawa SWCD Annual Meeting - $50. This totals to $800.

**S K Worm Animatronics for Children 2023:** S K Worm was “on the road again”. (info and video on our website)

* In 2023 SKW was operated by The Huron SWCD for 4th Grade Conservation Day
* There are 52 trained volunteers to operate it. Our SWCD partners and others have done a great job keeping it doing what it does best – teach the importance of soil for every aspect of our daily life.
* After 13 years of service, we have spent a total of $1,750 in labor and parts to keep it looking new and working properly. Our S K W Committee members are Janet Freeman, Angie Palmer and Greg Small.
* Sponsors such as The Ohio Farm Bureau, Natural Resources Conservation Service, the Ohio Lake Erie Buffer Team and SWCD’s have provided over 65,000 Activity and Coloring Books for free to children.
* Donations for this cause are always welcome.

**Operation Soil Education 2023: S K Worm books** have been distributed to kindergarteners and third grade students in more than nine counties – Ashland, Crawford, Cuyahoga, Erie, Huron, Lorain, Lucas, Marion, Ottawa, and Sandusky. Thanks SWCD’s and Vicky Patterson.

**The Ohio Wildlife Project** has over $3,000 on hand for an ODNR purpose.

**Angie Palmer,** Tech. Service Provider maintains our website and updates our information postings. She does other assigned duties.

**Vicky Patterson,** Tech. Service Provider is finding ways to utilize the 2019 EXPO games that we have in storage.