

## In This Issue...

Renewable Energy Sources.....	2
Flood Mitigation Role .....	3
Leadership Changes .....	4
Spring Programs .....	5
Solar Eclipse at MWCD .....	6
Master Plan Update .....	6
Ranger Recognition .....	7
Employment .....	8

# Lake Views

**MUSKINGUM  
WATERSHED**  
CONSERVANCY DISTRICT

SPRING 2024 | VOLUME 43 - ISSUE 1

## Looking Back, Moving Forward: MWCD Celebrates 90 Years With LakeViews Newsletter Fresh Look

In 2023, MWCD celebrated its 90th anniversary and it was a special year for us! Anniversaries create a special moment to reflect. Reflect on the past, reflect on the present, reflect on the future. To remember your story and your value, and to share that importance with future generations. MWCD has a rich history that has had a significant impact on the lives of millions of Ohioans. We tend to take our past for granted, but it is anniversaries that make us remember that we did not get here overnight and that our work is not yet finished.

Celebrating milestones is also a great opportunity to refresh various materials and aspects of an organization. For MWCD, this means a newsletter redesign. In honor of our 90th anniversary, we are launching a fresh look for our LakeViews newsletter that resonates with the dynamic spirit of MWCD as we continue to provide a more energetic and informative newsletter.

MWCD has published and distributed LakeViews for over 40 years. It is an opportunity for us to engage residents, property owners, visitors and guests of the District, keeping readers informed on Conservancy news, projects, and events. Its modern design embodies the spirit of our journey over the last nine decades. LakeViews is more than just updates; it is a celebration of the incredible moments and memories we have shared with each reader.

To make sure you stay updated on all MWCD news, sign up for our newsletter at [www.MWCD.org](http://www.MWCD.org).







# MWCD's Renewable Energy Sources Benefit the District and its Communities

By Paige Hay, MWCD Sustainability Coordinator

Among MWCD's conservation and sustainability goals is the identification and implementation of clean energy sources that can be beneficial to the District and its communities to reduce their emissions. Common renewable energy sources include solar, wind, hydroelectricity, and trees. However, there are other beneficial sources such as anaerobic digesters, bioenergy, and biochar that are changing the landscape of renewable energy.

Renewable energy is a reliable source of clean energy but may have restraints such as lack of sunshine or wind. However, the energy created when those sources are available can be stored in batteries for use when sources are limited.

Renewable energy sources are a terrific way for high-use areas to help offset the demand for energy use on electric grids, allowing for surrounding communities to use the energy from the grid with limited disruptions during peak demand, such as hot summers or very cold winters.

**Wind energy** is gathered from large wind turbines or windmills. As the blades move, the energy created from the movement is transferred to the grid in the form of electricity. One small wind turbine

can produce enough energy to power a single-family home, while large wind farms can power thousands of homes with ease. Wind farms can be connected directly to the grid or the energy from the wind turbines can be stored in batteries.

**Solar energy** is harnessed by the sun and collected by a system of solar panels called an array. Arrays are situated at ground level or a building's roof top. One panel can produce roughly two kilowatts a day in ideal conditions and has a life span of 20 to 30 years. Arrays may have a tracking system that can follow the sun as it crosses the sky during ideal conditions. Fixed arrays must be angled southward to be most successful in gathering energy throughout the day.

MWCD will be installing solar panels to reduce the energy demand from the grid during peak periods. Additionally, communities surrounding MWCD parks and marinas will receive energy without potential disruptions. This clean energy effort aligns with MWCD conservation and sustainability goals of reducing carbon emissions. Solar panels will be systematically be placed throughout the District over the next several years with

the potential opportunity to help the communities by having solar fields supply clean energy to the electric grid.

**Trees** are a great renewable energy and carbon sequestration source. When trees are burned, they create a heat source that can be used to heat homes and cook meals. As a tree grows, they absorb carbon dioxide from the atmosphere and produce sugar through photosynthesis. Sugars are stored within the trunk, branches, roots, and surrounding soil. Not all trees sequester the same amount of carbon dioxide and there is the chance of releasing carbon dioxide back into the atmosphere during decay. Implementing best management practices — deciding when and what trees to cut down through select cutting — can help decrease the release of carbon dioxide. Reforestation projects can potentially increase carbon sequestration by 20%. MWCD reforestation projects utilize best management practices when any type of harvesting is being done throughout the District. These efforts remove trees at the end of their life while considering the health of the trees around them.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 4

# MWCD's Role in Flood Mitigation

By Dave Lautenschleger, Chief Engineer

## What exactly is Flood Mitigation?

Residents and visitors of the District often hear MWCD identify flood mitigation as a priority. Staff, especially the Engineering Department, discuss this important topic weekly, but have you ever given it much thought? Flood mitigation, simply put, reduces the chances of floods impacting communities, infrastructure, natural resources, and the quality of life in the Muskingum River Watershed.

Flood mitigation can be viewed at various scales. The larger scale of course would be the MWCD system of 16 dams that are run by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE). When a large rain event occurs, they must determine when and where to impound water to avoid District-wide flooding. But what about smaller, more localized flooding events? How can MWCD help communities reduce the impacts of flooding in these smaller and more frequent events?

We often refer to the three-legged stool of MWCD: flood reduction, conservation, and recreation. Over the next several LakeViews I will be discussing the flood

reduction/mitigation leg and how Best Management Practices within our Partners in Watershed Maintenance (PWM) program help make this possible.

Here are a few items that can be directly tied to flood mitigation and how it can benefit communities:

### Protection of Lives and Property:

The Great Flood of 1913 killed at least 467 and nearly 250,000 were left homeless. Implementing updated storm systems and relocating communities can greatly reduce property damage.

### Economic Stability/Insurance Cost

**Reduction:** Floods cause significant damage to homes, businesses, and agriculture. Improving flood storage can reduce the recovery and rebuilding costs. Insurance premiums for properties located in flood zones is expensive. Flood mitigation measures can reduce these chances and lead to lower insurance premiums.

**Infrastructure:** Floods damage essential infrastructure such as roads, bridges, and utilities. This can cause a disruption in emergency services and vital

communications. Reinforcing infrastructure, elevating roads when appropriate, and implementing flood warning systems, can help minimize disruptions.

**Environmental Protection:** Floods often have negative effects on the environment, causing erosion and contaminating water sources. As stated before, utilities such as water and sanitation operations can be impacted by creating unsanitary conditions. Flood mitigation approaches such as restoring/creating wetlands and installing green infrastructure can help negate these and reduce environmental impacts.

In conclusion, since MWCD's flood reduction system was created in the 1930s, it is estimated to have prevented over \$10 billion in flood damages. Providing flood mitigation has numerous benefits, ranging from protecting lives and infrastructure to creating environmental protection. Over the next several issues, we will take a closer look at several successful techniques that have been funded by the MWCD PWM program and the efforts to reduce flooding in the Muskingum River Watershed.





# MWCD Announces Leadership Changes

## David Lautenschleger Named Chief of Engineering

MWCD has appointed David Lautenschleger as Chief of Engineering, responsible for the supervision of all dams and reservoirs within the MWCD and its subdistricts. He will oversee ongoing construction projects and utility operations. With MWCD since 2009, Lautenschleger brings expertise as a professionally licensed surveyor and certified GIS professional. He holds degrees from the University of Akron and Penn State University, with prior experience in academia and industry. Craig Butler, MWCD Executive Director, commends Lautenschleger's leadership, expressing confidence in his ability to lead new initiatives. Lautenschleger emphasizes his commitment to building on existing partnerships and overseeing construction projects. In his role, he will oversee MWCD's capital improvement projects exceeding \$200 million. He will also manage watershed action plans, project priorities to enhance flood mitigation, and improve water conservation and quality in the Muskingum River Watershed.



## Peter Novotny Joins MWCD as Chief of Recreation

MWCD has named Peter Novotny as Chief of Recreation to spearhead recreation-related strategies and efforts for its five million annual visitors across parks, lakes, and marinas. Novotny, formerly Assistant Chief at Ohio Department of Natural Resources Division of Wildlife, brings expertise in team building and public engagement. He's a recognized national advocate for the use of public lands as chair of the Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies' Hunting and Shooting Sports Participation Committee. MWCD Executive Director Craig Butler praises Novotny's alignment with MWCD's mission and expects his leadership to enhance MWCD's recreational programming. Novotny expresses enthusiasm for connecting people with Ohio's natural resources. In this role, he will oversee parks, marinas, and docking and collaborate across MWCD to expand recreational offerings, building on the District's tradition of quality outdoor programming.



## Renewable Energy cont.

**Hydroelectricity** harnesses the power of moving water that turns blades of a turbine to create electricity. Many hydroelectric power plants are dams or impoundment facilities that hold back water in reservoirs and when electricity needs to be generated, water gets released. However, there are other ways to create electricity by channeling river water through canals towards the turbine. Pump-storage facilities collect energy from other renewable sources and pump water uphill from a lower pool to a higher reservoir. When energy is in high demand, the water is released from the higher reservoir that turns the turbine creating energy.

Of the 16 dams located within MWCD, 15 are earthen dams which cannot produce hydroelectricity. Concrete structures with large flowing rivers are needed to produce this renewable energy. MWCD's sole concrete dam, the Dover Dam on the Tuscarawas River, does not have constant, high-volume water to support hydroelectric either.

New renewable energy resources include anaerobic digesters, bioenergy, and biochar, which rely on by-products and alternative materials to produce energy. These sources create enough energy to power engines and equipment, heat homes, and provide fuel to generate electricity.

Additionally, they reduce waste entering landfills, improve water quality, capture greenhouse gases, and enhance soil conditions. Traditional and new sources of renewable energy are regarded as clean energy sources that can help eliminate greenhouse gases from being emitted from other energy sources. They take advantage of gases, fuels, and natural occurring energy sources and turn them into energy sources that can be used or stored for later use during peak demand. As stewards of the environment, MWCD continues to research and identify ways to implement renewable energy resources that benefit the District and the communities that call MWCD home.



# MWCD Lake Park Programs Make Spring Fun

Some programs require pre-registration.  
Program details can be found online at  
[www.MWCD.org/events](http://www.MWCD.org/events)

Spring is here and we are all looking forward to warmer weather and programs at the lake! Our programs are open to campers, boaters, day visitors, and community members. Mark your calendars for these fun events and be sure to follow us on social media to stay up to date with our program calendar.

## Meet the Easter Bunny and Hunt for Eggs

Celebrate Easter and springtime with Easter egg hunts and more on March 30 at Atwood, Charles Mill, Pleasant Hill, Seneca, and Tappan Lake Parks. Details for each location can be found on the website calendar of events.

## Camp With Us on Welcome Back Weekend

April 1 marks the first day of the official camping season! Spend the first weekend of the season April 5-7, at the campground to meet staff, prepare your camper, and enjoy a variety of programs at Atwood, Charles Mill, Pleasant Hill, Seneca, and Tappan Lake Parks. Charles Mill, Pleasant Hill, Atwood, and Tappan will also offer solar eclipse programs that weekend!

## Join the Earth Day 2024 Cleanup Challenge

Raise awareness for litter prevention and celebrate Earth Day at all parks and campgrounds! All you need to do is grab gloves and trash bags to pick up litter at a MWCD lake from Saturday, April 20 through Sunday, April 28. Post photos of the cleanup on MWCD Facebook and Instagram pages using #MWCEarthDay2024 and tag the park or marina to be entered into a drawing for a cooler filled with MWCD prizes and gift certificate. Or visit a park on the date listed below to earn coupons for a free night of camping by filling a trash bag. For details visit the website calendar of events.

- **April 20: Atwood, Charles Mill, Piedmont, Seneca, and Tappan**
- **April 27: Pleasant Hill and Clendening**

## Attend an Ohio Boater Education Course

Spring is the perfect time to get ready for boating season. Make sure to renew your registration through ODNR, purchase a new MWCD docking decal, if needed, and take the Ohio Boater Education Course. While this course is required for those who will operate a boat over 10 horsepower and were born after January 1, 1982, it is a great course for all boaters. There are many ways to complete the course – online, home study, or in-person classes. MWCD Rangers will be offering in-person courses at the following locations (registration required online).

**April 20: Tappan Lake Marina | April 27: Atwood Lake Park | May 4: Seneca Lake Park**

## Get a Jump on Summer Camp Registration!

Day camps are designed to provide a fun and safe place for kids, ages 5-16, to explore nature, have fun, and learn a new skill. Camps are offered at Atwood, Charles Mill, Pleasant Hill, Seneca, and Tappan Lake Parks, with a special theme and age-appropriate activities for a full day at the lake. Camp information and registration is available at [www.MWCD.org/events](http://www.MWCD.org/events).

## Take a Hike

MWCD Lakes offer a variety of hiking trails for beginners or experienced hikers. Get outside and search for signs of spring and get rid of the winter blues. Follow our social media pages for guided hike announcements or explore the trails on your own. View hiking maps at [www.MWCD.org/trails](http://www.MWCD.org/trails).



# Solar Eclipse at MWCD 4.08.24

## There's No Better Place to View the Solar Eclipse Than the Great Outdoors!

Experience the total solar eclipse at one of our lakes and campgrounds Monday, April 8! During the eclipse, the moon will completely block out the sun, turning day into night presenting a beautiful display of nighttime skies and sounds of nocturnal creatures. A total solar eclipse has not passed over Ohio since 1806 and the next one will not occur until 2099, making this a once-in-a-lifetime experience.

Pleasant Hill and Charles Mill Lake Parks are located near Mansfield and are within the 100% coverage path. They will experience over three minutes of totality. Additional viewing opportunities are available at Atwood Lake which will experience 99.4% coverage, Tappan Lake will see 98.8% coverage, and Seneca Lake will have 97.8% coverage. The view will be great from wherever you choose to watch!

Visitors are invited to extend their stay and enjoy a weekend full of the great outdoors with hiking trails, fishing, and guided programs. Atwood, Charles Mill, Pleasant Hill, and Tappan Lake Parks will offer programs Friday, Saturday, and Sunday, including solar art, wagon rides, campfire and stargazing, guided night hikes, and more! Limited edition solar eclipse t-shirts will be available for purchase and tie dye.

Each lake offers a variety of campsites. Visitors can also stay in comfort at one of Pleasant Hill Lake Park's luxury log cabins and enjoy modern accommodations in quiet forests. The cabins feature outdoor hot tubs and gas fireplaces, while sleeping six or eight people. Each reservation includes a complimentary pair of solar glasses. Additional glasses will be available at programs throughout the weekend.

There is no fee to enter the park on Monday, April 8, making the MWCD lakes a great and affordable destination for the entire family.

To make a reservation or learn more about upcoming events visit [www.MWCD.org](http://www.MWCD.org).

## Master Plan Update Spotlights Current Project Activity

By Eric Stechschulte, Deputy Chief - Planning and Projects

### Atwood Lake Park

**Activity Center:** This project will give a facelift to the existing activity center including new siding, roof structure, additional room to the central gathering area and a covered outdoor patio. The renovation will reorganize the existing kitchen layout and retail space, as well as the nature center. The building is currently under construction. **Scheduled completion:** 2024.



### Charles Mill Lake Park

#### Beach Area Campground and Amenities

**Development:** Campground improvements include the demolition of existing restrooms, RV sites upgrades, and pavilion shelters. Campsite renovations include new RV campsites, utility upgrades, new electric-service pedestals, water, and sanitary hookups and the restoration of existing roads. Amenity improvements include a new shower/restroom building, an amphitheater, an ADA fishing pier and kayak launch, a playground, splashpad, shade structures, mobile concession area, courtesy docks, observation decks, new sport courts, replacement of the existing large shelter, and the renovation of an existing restroom facility. **Scheduled completion:** 2026.

### Clendening Lake Park

#### Marina Building and Site Improvements:

A new marina building is being designed to include retail space for bait and tackle, snacks, ice cream, novelties, and boat rentals, administrative offices, restroom, laundry area, storage/inventory room, break room, and conference room. The building will provide separate exterior access for the public to family-style restrooms and laundry room. The new building location will be adjacent to the existing maintenance facility. **Scheduled completion:** 2025.

### Seneca Lake Park

**Amenity and Activity Area:** Situated between the Parkside Central Campground area to the west and rolling hills to the east, the Seneca Lake Park beach improvements extend both passive and active recreational activities along the shoreline, create new entry points, and address stormwater drainage and erosion. The featured activity will be a destination-sized splashpad nestled into the hillside adjacent to the existing beach house. The beach improvements include a splashpad, seating areas, shade structures, sports courts, and space for lawn games. At the courtesy docks, a new abutment will be constructed to support relocation of an existing dock to this area. Pedestrian access between the courtesy docks and the beach will include a concrete trail. **Scheduled completion:** 2024.



### Tappan Lake Park

**Welcome Center Project:** Construction of the new welcome center is underway. Once completed, the facility will provide an iconic view when entering the park. It will be similar, visually and functionally, to the Atwood Lake Park Welcome Center, and will house the administration and Ranger staff offices. The building will also include a retail area for various camping items and souvenirs. **Scheduled completion:** 2024.

**Activity Center Area Amenities:** Amenity improvements include a new open play area, sport courts, trail connections, replacement of the existing large shelter, stream enhancements, providing access to the stream to create educational opportunities for interaction with the water, provide parking along the activities center road to campground Areas 3 & 4, the conversion of existing gravel storage lot to green space, entrance landscaping, including planting plan for screening of parked vehicles, and site lighting. **Scheduled completion:** 2025.



# MWCD Rangers Recognized for Attainment of Full Compliance and Recertification

MWCD's 34-member team of Rangers achieved full compliance from the Ohio Collaborative Law Enforcement Agency, meeting State standards and receiving final recertification for group one standards including use of force, recruitment, and hiring; group two standards which include hiring, community engagement, body-worn cameras; and group four standards which include vehicular pursuits. Certification for group three standards will continue to be pursued.

Chief Ranger Patrick Brockmeier emphasizes the dedication of Rangers in ensuring safety and service excellence. MWCD Rangers are required to be certified police officers within the State of Ohio and have full police powers on MWCD property and adjacent property. To become a certified Police Officer, they must graduate from the Ohio Police Officer Training Academy and complete training on Ohio laws, search and seizure, self defense training, use of force training, firearms, pursuit driving,

human behaviors, de-escalation techniques, diversity, first aid, and numerous other topics. The MWCD employs 34 Rangers who are guided by professional policies that are written by Lexipol and are nationally recognized as Best Practices for Law Enforcement Agencies.

The job duties for a MWCD Ranger can vary daily from patrolling camp areas, cottage areas, and lakes, to providing Ohio Boater or Hunter Education Courses to the community. They also conduct safety checks, respond to noise complaints, criminal violations, and assist other nearby agencies. Lake Rangers complete vessel inspections, investigate boating accidents, and patrol the waterways to ensure safety.

The certification reflects MWCD's commitment to professional standards and community safety. MWCD Executive Director Craig Butler commends the Rangers' professionalism and ongoing training efforts to uphold policing standards and foster community relationships.

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SPRING 2024 | VOLUME 43 ISSUE 1

## *Lake Views*

# CATCH A LINE ON MWCD EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES



The Muskingum Watershed Conservancy District has a variety of full-time and seasonal employment opportunities. Whether you are in high school, college, or advancing your career, we have opportunities for everyone.

Types of positions include: park and marina staff, law enforcement and security services, engineering, maintenance/grounds keeping, gate attendant, cleaning staff, and beach attendant.

For more information, please visit [www.MWCD.org](http://www.MWCD.org).