



Dear Friend,

On a sunny, snowy November morning in the Sunday Creek Watershed, erratic does not seem like a less fitting descriptor for the current times. Less than 48 hours before this season's first snowfall, I was harvesting still-fresh Calendula blossoms and Mulberry leaves. With warming temperatures and rain forecasted soon, I know the world is asking us to adapt to ever more uncertainty and challenges. Fortunately, resilient and hopeful equally describe our reality. Despite chaotic weather patterns, leaves still fall to the ground, blanketing roots, reptiles, and larvae settling in for rest. Where there is hunger, loss, and need, there is a community committed to providing nourishment. As Autumn turns to Winter, it is my hope that we can receive our hemispheric invitation to a season of quiet and stillness; that we can join in this earthly rhythm, shedding, slowing, and healing ourselves and each other.

With gratitude and hope,

Jo

Southeast Ohio Regional Director



Regional Events

November 21 & 22: | [all is full of love: Calliope Fall Concert](#) | Athens First United Methodist Church (2 S. College St.) | 7:30 & 4:30 PM

Saturday, November 30: | [Boots on the Trail: Trail Sunday](#) | Vista Point Trailhead, Strouds Run State Park | 2:00 – 5:00 PM

Tuesday, December 2: | [Monthly Meetup to Sew Cloth Totes](#) | Athens Public Library (30 Home St., Athens) | 5:30 – 7:30 PM

Wednesday, December 10: | [Herb Hub Open House](#) | ACEnet Nelsonville (296 S. Harper St., Nelsonville) | 4:00 – 7:00 PM

Friday, January 16: | [Tea Tasting and Plant Swap](#) | The Plains Public Library (14 S. Plains Rd., The Plains) | 4:00 – 5:30 PM



Regional & Partner Updates

FIGHTING FOR CLEAN WATER AND HEALTHY COMMUNITIES

We're collectively celebrating a monumental achievement in the City of Marietta, where City Council passed three major resolutions in response to public concern over injection wells and their threats to drinking water. Among them, a historic resolution asking the state for a [three-year moratorium](#) to pause injection well activity within Washington County, Ohio, until further study is completed, hand-delivering the resolution to the Governor's office and state legislators.

This achievement was nothing short of a [tireless collective effort](#) by residents, business owners, oil and gas well owners, environmental groups and supportive allies fighting for the health of water, land, and people. Read more about the effort, the people who made it possible, and where to go from here at [Buckeye Environmental Network](#).



AN EYE ON FRACKING & CARBON CAPTURE

Recently, researchers and advocates from [Fieldnotes](#), [Buckeye Environmental Network](#), and the [Ohio River Valley Institute](#) shared an informative and alarming [presentation on carbon capture and storage development in Ohio](#). The webinar reviews carbon management basics, sheds light on the oil and gas industry's legislative influence and explains what's at stake for Ohioans.

The County of Athens, Ohio and Rural Action are seeking to better understand flooding and erosion hazards throughout Athens County. To make this successful, we need your contributions to document community experiences of flood hazards.

COMMUNITY MAPPING of FLOODING, EROSION, & SEDIMENTATION

Want to help?

Put your observations on the map! To get started, open the browser page on your computer or smart phone.

Scan the QR code or visit <https://bit.ly/3JXIW8g>

Add an Observation
Drop a pin to mark flooding, erosion, or sedimentation. Let us know what you've noticed, and upload photos!

Upvote Observations
Review existing reports and 'upvote' with a thumbs up.

Helpful Hints for the Map:

- Re-open map instructions anytime by clicking the info icon at the top of the page.
- Find your location by searching an address or click the 'Find my location' icon in the upper left.

Event Schedule:

- Sept. 15 4:30-5:30 PM Nelsonville Public Library
- Sept. 16 4:30-5:30 PM Wells Public Library
- Sept. 17 4:30-5:30 PM Coolville Public Library
- Sept. 23 6:00-7:00 PM Athens Public Library
- Sept. 29 4:30-5:30 PM The Plains Public Library

Flooding: water covers land that is usually dry, due to causes like heavy rain

Erosion: loss of sediment and soil, especially from water flow

Sedimentation: sand, gravel, or soil deposited after high water

Learn more about the project at ruralaction.org/athens-county-watershed-modeling

Mapping is open until October 31, 2025

ATHENS COUNTY Rural Action

ATHENS COUNTY FLOOD MAPPING – AND PLANNING FOR THE FUTURE

With input from community members, Athens County and Rural Action are seeking to better understand local flooding and erosion hazards. This important undertaking will help guide future planning and projects like Riparian Tree plantings designed to improve the health of our Watersheds for generations to come. The project was featured in a recent [Ohio Newsroom story](#); more information can be found on [Rural Action's website](#), including guidance on how to use and help improve [the map](#). Although mapping officially closed on October 31, residents are encouraged to reach out to ryan@ruralaction.org with any questions or additional information.

REVITALIZING RUSH CREEK

Since 2021, a team of partners including Upper Rush Creek Revitalization (URCR), Rural Action, Perry County Soil and Water Conservation District (SWCD), ODNR Division of Mineral Resources Management (DMRM), Ohio University's Voinovich School of Leadership and Public Affairs, and Ohio EPA have been [working on a plan to restore the health](#) of the Rush Creek Watershed. Draining over 230 square miles that includes almost 6,000 acres of land with abandoned pre-regulation surface and underground mines, approximately 12 miles of Rush Creek are so scarred by Acid Mine Drainage that they are considered biologically dead—unable to support fish and other aquatic wildlife, like macroinvertebrates.

The mining impacts addressed through this project are all pre-regulation, which means they occurred before federal regulations were created in 1977 that mandated the restoration of coal mining sites. Construction is currently wrapping up, and the resulting reclamation project should be operational by late fall of 2025. Read the full report on this story and more in [November's Rural Rambler](#).

MEASURING LAND STEWARDSHIP IMPACTS

With the help of expert ecologist Gary Conley, of Green Reach LLC, and financial support from the Foundation for Appalachian Ohio, the Ohio Environmental Council (OEC) partnered with Rising Appalachia to develop a Forest Health Metrics protocol to track changes ecosystems over time through Forest tending strategies being implemented to increase food production, carbon sequestration, accessibility, and other community benefits. Rural Action, The Nature Conservancy, and Athens Conservancy staff members joined Rising Appalachia and the OEC for an initial Forest Metrics Training on Solid Ground Farm in late October with the intention of training future "Land Management Providers" and members of the public interested in using the protocol and metrics to track goals and assess the health of stewarded Ecosystems over time. As part of the initiative, "protocol kits" were developed to be shared with community members; there are currently four kits that can be checked out. The Forest Health Metrics protocol is being used to monitor the impacts of a 6-acre Oak-Hickory Forest Prescribed Burn lead by Rising Appalachia and Ohio Burn Master and Forester, [Badger Johnson](#). [Learn more here](#).





SINGING FOR THE GAULEY RIVER

Jenny Morgan shared [her new song](#) in support of Arc of Appalachia's effort to protect and preserve five miles of the legendary [Gauley River](#) in West Virginia. In addition to this important campaign, the Arc of Appalachia is engaged in [significant conservation efforts](#) across Central Appalachia—including creating [public accessibility for Sylvan Deep](#), a breathtaking 99-acre old-growth Hemlock-Oak Forest in Jackson County—making incredible strides in the crucial work of creating intact, contiguous, resilient ecosystems for our region.



RURAL ACTION HOSTS 12th ANNUAL APPALACHIAN GREEN TEACHERS CONFERENCE

In early November, over 70 attendees convened at Camp Oty'Okwa in Hocking Hills for two days of presentations, talks, and hands-on sessions. Topics included the efforts of local youth to combat microplastics, strategies for leading observational trail hikes, an introduction to portable resource kits housed at Ohio University and available for teachers to check out, the salience of Appalachian identity when working and teaching in the region, how the Appalachian Ohio Tick Project teaches students about DNA sequencing, and more! The 13th annual conference is tentatively scheduled for November 5-6, 2026. [Stay connected with Rural Action's Environmental Education program](#) to learn more!

THERE'S STILL TIME TO TURN YOUR PLASTIC WASTE INTO A BENCH FOR BURR OAK!

[Burr Oak Alive](#) is accepting donations of film plastics that will be used to create a bench for Burr Oak State Park. Clean plastic bags, including those made for produce, ice, sandwich-style, and box liners, are being accepted, along with bubble wrap and case overwrap (plastic bags/film with metallic backing are not acceptable materials). Drop off at Glouster post office, Glouster Public Library, or the United Bank locations in Glouster and Nelsonville.

Ohio Environmental Council Updates

GIVING TUESDAY

Every day, we strive at the Ohio Environmental Council to fight for the future Ohioans' needs. We fight for cleaner and affordable energy, for safe drinking water for all families, for public lands to remain public goods, and for a democracy where our voices make an impact.

We are facing a moment in history where it is vital to protect everything we have earned up to this point, and we aren't going anywhere. This #GivingTuesday, we invite you to join us and unleash our collective power as Ohioans. **Our goal: raise \$25,000 to power our advocacy**, so that we can continue to win local protections and hold leaders accountable in Ohio. **Every dollar we raise will be matched, doubling the impact that you can make!**

[Donate Today!](#)

HEALTHY WATERS COALITION

More than 120 local, state, and national conservation organizations launched the [Healthy Waters Coalition](#) to restore and protect the interconnected waters of the Ohio River Basin. This new coalition seeks to secure a [regional restoration plan](#) and the federal funding to implement it—goals that align with a broad collaboration underway in the region that is calling for more to be done to protect the waters that 30 million people depend on for their drinking water. [Read the full story.](#)

ACTION ALERT: OPPOSING AEP RATE HIKES

People all around the country have been feeling the squeeze of higher electricity bills and here in Southeast Ohio, is no different. [AEP is currently asking for another rate increase](#) and

we at the OEC oppose this increase.

But we need your help! We are asking our members to attend the public meeting and share public comments opposing this increase.

SEO PUBLIC MEETING

December 5, 2025, 6:00 p.m.

Washington State College

Arts & Sciences Building Room 227, 710 Colgate Drive,
Marietta, Ohio 45750

For tips on preparing a public comment, check out our [Advocacy Toolkit](#) and article [Delivering on Giving Public Testimony](#). These are great resources to make the most of your time and to ensure your voice is heard.

As part of this request, AEP Ohio is seeking additional funding to increase its vegetation management practices in Southeast Ohio. However, AEP's current practices often create conditions where invasive species thrive, cause harm to nesting birds, pollinators, and other crucial species, and threaten the overall health of our ecosystems. Read more about AEP's practices in my [testimony](#) to the PUCO.

Upcoming Events

We have a variety of exciting events happening all the time, so we encourage you to keep up to date with our [events page](#).

December 17 | [Law Center Webinar Series: The History of Ohio's Air Nuisance Rule: Our Secret Weapon Against Air Pollution](#) | Virtual | FREE for General Admission! \$25 for CLE Credit

December 11 | OEC's Annual Meeting | Virtual | FREE

Save the date! 2026 Green Gala will be Saturday, May 9 at the Columbus Zoo Africa Events Center.

Education & Advocacy



BREAKING NEWS

PUCO \$250 MILLION PENALTY AGAINST FIRST ENERGY

Including customer restitution

FirstEnergy ordered to pay more than \$250 million for misconduct in sweeping Ohio bribery scheme: “In fining FirstEnergy over \$250 million, the PUCO has sent a message to Ohio’s electric distribution utilities: corruption will not be tolerated,” [Karin Nordstrom, the Ohio Environmental Council’s clean energy attorney](#), said in a statement. “At a time when Ohioans’ electric bills are skyrocketing, the commission has finally acted to hold FE accountable for HB 6, forcing FirstEnergy to repay its customers for money it unduly collected.” [Read the full report in AP.](#)

Stand Up for Solar: Across Ohio, county commissioners, local residents, and the Ohio Power Siting Board (OPSB) are making decisions that will shape our energy future. To help you stay informed, the Ohio Environmental Council has launched a new resource: [the Ohio Utility-Scale Solar Trends](#) page and the [Stand Up for Solar](#) email list.

OEC Joins Lawsuit to Protect Air Quality: On Thursday, October 30th, the Ohio Environmental Council, Sierra Club, SOBE Concerned Citizens, Donna Ballinger, and the Freshwater Accountability Project filed a lawsuit against the State of Ohio and the Ohio Environmental Protection Agency. Their complaint alleges that select sections of H.B. 96, Ohio's state budget passed this summer, violate the One-Subject Rule of the Ohio Constitution. [Read the full press release.](#)



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