



Portage Soil and Water Conservation District

6970 ST. RT. 88 • RAVENNA, OHIO 44266
PHONE: (330) 297-7633 • FAX: (330) 296-5917



2014 Soil Health Education Mini-Grant Final Report ***Soil Health Through the Seasons: How to Naturally Nourish Your Lawn***

On August 19, 2014 the NEOPIPE (Northeast Ohio Public Information and Public Education) working group held a soil health workshop titled: **Soil Health Through the Seasons: How to Naturally Nourish Your Lawn.** The goal of this workshop was to have participants (mostly homeowners) learn how to naturally manage their lawns and gardens to 1.)Improve soil health and 2.)Reduce chemical inputs. Each workshop participant received:

- A pre-paid soil test kit and instructions on how to conduct and interpret a soil test
- A one- pound bag of winter-kill cover crop seed mix and inoculant
- A 2015 calendar titled “Keep Your Yard Green and Our Waters Clean”. This calendar is a monthly guide of yard and garden maintenance practices that will improve soil health and water quality and was provided by N.E.O.P.I.P.E. partners and the Ohio EPA
- Participants also received hand-outs with general information about natural lawn care and cover crops.



Our first presenter, Ann Brandt of Walnut Creek Seeds, talked about the importance of no-till farming and use of cover crops to improve soil health. She also performed a Slake Test which illustrated the highly erodible condition of tilled soils as compared with the structural integrity of non-tilled soils that have remained cropped and covered for years. Attendees were so interested in talking further with Ann that she stayed for the second presentation and long after. It was clear that gardeners were very interested in improving their soils and were eager to try cover crops in their home gardens. We had many requests for a follow-up program that would allow more time for the topic of cover crops.

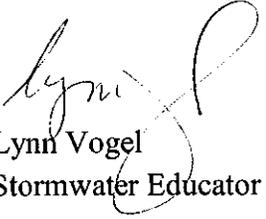
Our second presenter , Alec McClennan, of Good Nature Organic Lawn Care, was also very well received. Alec very clearly explained how to install a new lawn utilizing natural lawn methods. He also explained several methods of transitioning from a traditional, chemical lawn care program to a natural lawn care maintenance program. He covered soil testing and amendments, seed selection, weed tolerance and suppression, mowing,

and natural fertilizers use. Participants remained long after the program ended to talk further with each of our presenters.

Enclosed please find the workshops registration forms, agendas, budget summary, and evaluation copies.

We sincerely appreciate the resources provided by your grant program and look forward to the healthier soils that await us.

Respectfully submitted,



Lynn Vogel
Stormwater Educator



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Budget Summary

| <i>Item</i> | <i>Grant</i> | <i>Cash Match</i> | <i>In-Kind Match</i> | <i>Total</i> |
|--|-------------------|-----------------------|--------------------------|--------------------|
| Soil Testing Kits (\$7.20 each Penn State - 50 minimum / 120 kits) | \$ 864.00 | | | \$ 864.00 |
| Cover Crop Seed Mix (\$4.00 each Walnut Creek Seeds 120pkts) | \$ 480.00 | \$20.00 | | \$ 480.00 |
| Speaker Stipends (\$100.00 per speaker) | \$ 200.00 | | | \$ 200.00 |
| Healthy Lawn Care Calendars for Homeowners (\$.81 each / 120 calendars) | | \$ 97.20 | | \$ 97.20 |
| Copies & handouts (120 sets @ \$1.50/set = \$180.00) | \$ 57.00 | \$123.00 | | \$ 180.00 |
| NEOPIPE personnel | | | \$8,600.00 | \$ 8,600.00 |
| TOTALS: | \$1,601.00 | \$240.20 | \$8,600.00 | \$10,441.12 |

| AGENCIES | HOURS | RATE | TOTAL \$ |
|-----------------------------------|------------|---------|--------------------|
| Medina SWCD | 64 | \$25.00 | \$ 1,600.00 |
| Cuyahoga SWCD | 40 | \$25.00 | \$ 1,000.00 |
| Geauga SWCD | 40 | \$25.00 | \$ 1,000.00 |
| Lake SWCD | 40 | \$25.00 | \$ 1,000.00 |
| Summit SWCD | 40 | \$25.00 | \$ 1,000.00 |
| Portage SWCD | 40 | \$25.00 | \$ 1,000.00 |
| Cuyahoga County Board of Health | 20 | \$25.00 | \$ 500.00 |
| City of Avon Lake | 20 | \$25.00 | \$ 500.00 |
| Tinker's Creek Watershed Partners | 20 | \$25.00 | \$ 500.00 |
| Chagrin River Watershed Partners | 20 | \$25.00 | \$ 500.00 |
| | 344 | | \$ 8,600.00 |

SPECIAL WORKSHOP EVENT

SOIL HEALTH THROUGH THE SEASONS

How to care for a chemical-free lawn, keep your soil healthy, and protect our environment.

TUESDAY, AUGUST 19, 2014 • 6–8 P.M.
Twinsburg City Hall, Council Chambers, 10075 Ravenna Road

Featuring special presentations by guest experts:

- How to Naturally Manage Your Lawn
Alec McClennan, Owner, Good Nature Organic Lawn Care
- Using Cover Crops to Optimize Soils and Manage Weeds
Ann Brandt, Co-Owner, Walnut Creek Seeds

Free and open to the public, including homeowners, landscapers, public officials, parks staff, community planners, and economic development managers. Registration required by calling Mary at (330) 722-9322 or maungst@medinaco.org by AUGUST 12.

Sponsored by the Northeast Ohio Public Involvement and Public Education (NEOPIPE) work group; funded in part by the Ohio Department of Natural Resources "Healthy Soil Grants."





Soil Health Through The Seasons

August 19, 2014

6:00 PM – Welcome

6:05 PM – Using Cover Crops to Optimize Soils and Manage Weeds

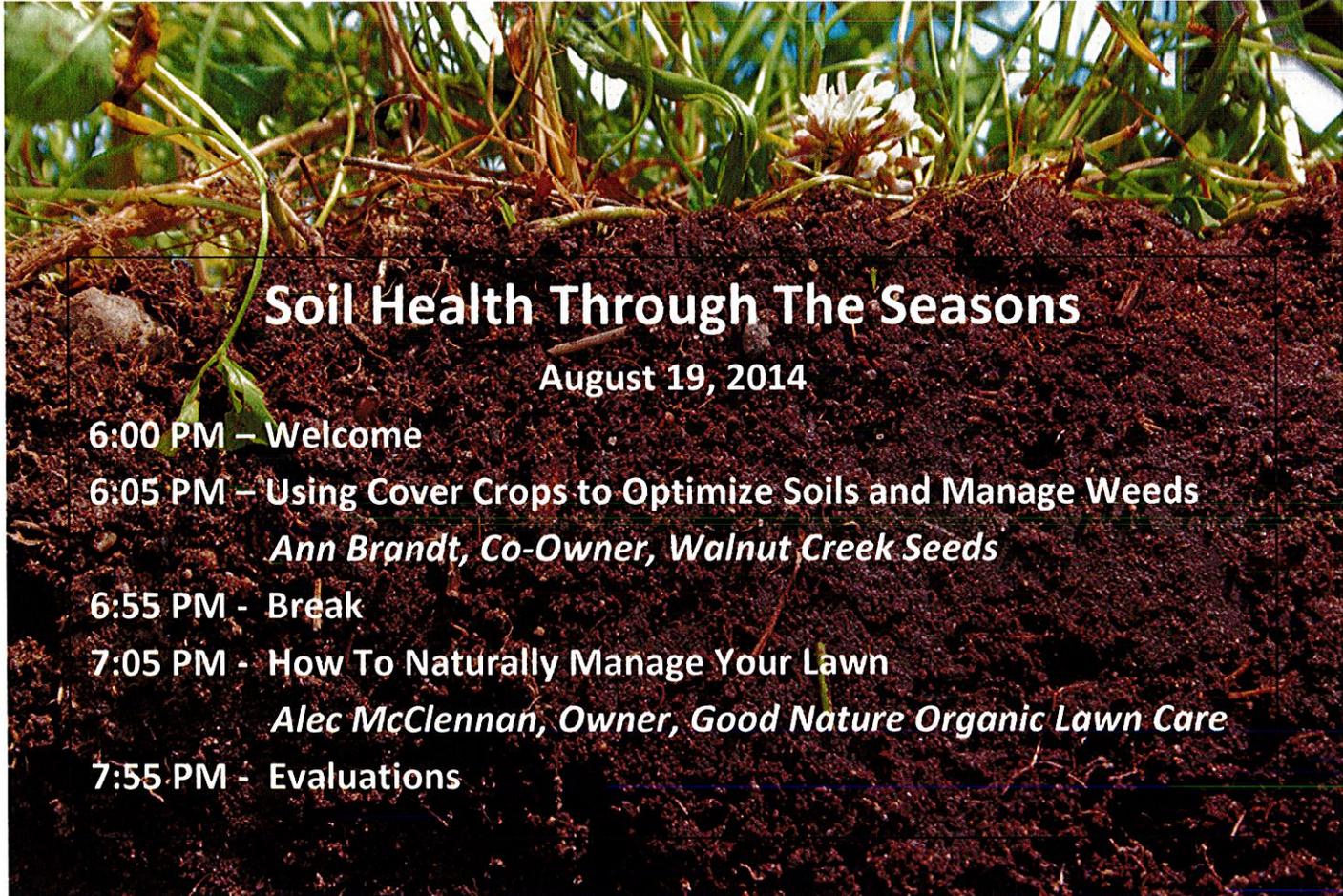
Ann Brandt, Co-Owner, Walnut Creek Seeds

6:55 PM - Break

7:05 PM - How To Naturally Manage Your Lawn

Alec McClennan, Owner, Good Nature Organic Lawn Care

7:55 PM - Evaluations



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