

Respondent:

**Mercer County SWCD
Mr. Rick Muhlenkamp, Chairperson
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Question From Summit Or From Audience Cards	Response
There currently are several groups working toward one common goal of improving water quality in Grand Lake. What is the single most important thing that all of these groups could do to advance that goal?	The most important thing is for all of these groups to work together and communicate with one another. We can't jump to conclusions and we must listen to all points of view. Public education is critical to improving the water quality in Grand Lake.
What is SWCD doing to educate producers about the best management practices available to limit or eliminate sediment or effluent from finding its way to the Lake?	The Mercer SWCD has taken a multi-faceted approach to public education regarding best management practices including public meetings, press releases, newsletters, and one-on-one contact with producers. We strive to make all cooperators aware of current regulations and recommendations regarding erosion control and manure management practices. We partner with other agencies to secure cost share funds for landowners to install best management practices.
What is SWCDs role in water quality in Mercer county. Is it a regulatory role, is it an education role, is it both?	The Mercer SWCD has NO regulatory authority but rather offers voluntary technical assistance to producers. In extreme circumstances, the SWCD can request enforcement from ODNR-DSWC and/or OEPA.
What are producers and landowners doing to promote conservation?	Many producers in the county participate in the conservation programs available through the 2002 Farm Bill. Producers also spread the word to others regarding the importance of conservation and participation in educational events including field days and public meetings.
What are the priorities for the local SWCD? Tile projects or water quality in the Grand Lake watershed?	The Mercer SWCD Board of Supervisors revised their Long Range Plan in 2002. The priorities listed in that plan (in no particular order) are animal waste management, water management – drainage, erosion control, water quality improvement, woodland and wildlife habitat improvement, and public education and information.
How many acres of filter strips would it take to do	This would depend on the width of the strips.

<p>all the stream miles in the water shed? How many miles of streams are in the watershed?</p>	<p>There are 140 stream miles in GLSM watershed. Approximately 41% have less than 10' of protection, approximately 16% have 10-25', and approximately 43% have greater than 25'.</p>
<p>Does SWCD do any stream monitoring on a regular basis or at all?</p>	<p>No, not at this time. There was a volunteer monitoring program in the watershed several years ago; however, it was determined that the data was not considered "credible". The GLWWA is trying to put together a program to train individuals to become credible data collectors. This training is provided by the OEPA and is not available at this time.</p>
<p>Explain the mission of the Mercer SWCD and scope – limitations?</p>	<p>The mission of the Mercer SWCD is "to protect and improve the soil, water resources, and natural habitats in Mercer County; and, to enhance the quality of life for present and future generations." The Mercer SWCD has NO regulatory authority but rather offers voluntary technical assistance to producers.</p>
<p>Do the Mercer and Auglaize County soil and water conservation districts have a specific plan to outreach to agricultural producers and promote conservation practices that improve water quality? What do other Districts do?</p>	<p>Yes, each year the districts develop Annual Plans of Work to guide our conservation work. Other districts have similar outreach efforts.</p>