

# CAUV

## Partnership



The Jefferson Soil and Water Conservation District has provided over 75 years of conservation technical assistance and education to landowners within the county to help preserve agriculture and forested lands with our wide use of resources.

The Jefferson County Auditor's Office and the district office have partnered to provide the guidance and the technical expertise that will best support landowners that are currently enrolled or those that will be making their first application into the CAUV program.

CAUV, the Current Agriculture Use Value, is agriculture land that is devoted to agriculture usage. CAUV is valued based on the agriculture use rather than the full market value. Landowners within CAUV will see a reduced amount on their taxes each year that they are on the program.

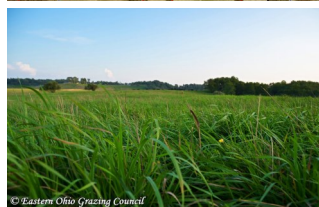
This program is an incentive program designed to give farmers the opportunity to retain their acreage and re-invest in their land done through a tax reduction based on what is set by the Ohio Department of Taxation. This program helps farmers and woodlot owners save money to enhance their farm or woodlot for programs such as EQIP through NRCS.

If your land is devoted to agriculture use, woodland production, or in a federal program you will automatically qualify! If your land is less than 10 acres it will qualify, with proof that you as a landowner made a \$2,500 gross annual income off the land for 3 years

prior to applying. For a woodlot you must have a Forestry Management Plan.

Within the last year, the district office has helped assist new applicants as well as renewal applicants with on-site technical assistance to help retain agricultural and silvicultural practices. The district helps these landowners to better assist them with the tools to install and maintain the best conservation management practices for the goals of their properties. While visiting with these landowners it is the best time to let them know of other programs that may help them like our soil testing program, EQIP (Environmental Quality Incentive Program) through NRCS, as well as the Woodlot Resource Packet that is given to all applicants that are fully forestry.

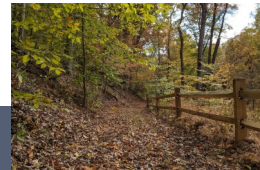
Applications are taken from January 1<sup>st</sup> to the first Monday in March. If you have questions about the program contact Kirsten Zwick, Ag & Natural Resources Technician, by phone (740) 264-9790 or by email at [kzwick@jeffersoncountyoh.com](mailto:kzwick@jeffersoncountyoh.com).



**Pasture Beekeeping Forestry Fruits Vegetables Sod Flowers Crops Poultry**

# Appalachian Community Grant

Contents from article written by Linda Harris  
"Internationally known landscape architect takes a tour of the area". *Herald Star* (August 21, 2023)



## Landscape Ethics

At 71 and an internationally known landscape architect, photograph and author, Rick Darke didn't have to sign on as consultant to a proposal that hasn't even been funded. But Darke, who lives in Eastern Pennsylvania, said he was sold on Jefferson Soil and Water Conservation District's Heart of Appalachian Ohio project as soon as he saw the pictures and brochure they sent him of what is there now — and what they hope it could be.

"I got the inquiry from Aaron (JSWCD Project Manager Aaron Dodds) he included a PDF with images and it had language - the images were just drop dead gorgeous and the language was just as pretty and poetic," Darke said.

"I thought, 'this is a person after my own heart', and then I saw the title of the project and it just seemed really authentic and it seemed really smart. And I thought I'd like to work with these people, so instead of emailing them back, I called them because you can do so much more talking with somebody rather than texting or breaking thoughts into little bitty things (for) Twitter. We had a wonderful conversation, by the end of that conversation I just thought, 'This is the kind of stuff I live for'."

Soil and water's Heart of Appalachian Ohio project spans 17 counties and incorporates more than two dozen activities tied together with they describe as a "common thread" — pollinator areas or activities that will assist development and sustainability of a pollinator trail. Projects in five additional counties are currently under consideration.

To pay for it, they're hoping to secure funding through the Appalachian Community Grant program, created by Gov. Mike DeWine last year to spark revitalization and collaboration throughout Ohio's 33 Appalachian counties. More than \$300 million in grant money is available, with applications due no later than Dec. 9.

The Jefferson County commissioners picked up the tab for Darke's consulting fee and expenses, figuring that the lessons JSWCD learns from working with him would be applicable even if they don't get the grant funding.

His focus was the Quaker Ridge, Helbender Preserve and Piney Fork properties: Together with JSWCD he walked all three properties, spending 14 hours a day taking stock of the opportunities he saw, creating a photographic catalog of everything he saw and helping the staff develop plans. Darke said he focuses on what he knows will entice people to be outside and look at the beauty around them.

"I call my work 'landscape ethics,' because it's about the ethical constructs by which people interact with their environment and I think it's just a very, very current thought," he said. "And it's an easy thing to love."

Dodds said working with Darke was illuminating. "We talked about how to 'edit' the bad or the unnecessary out of landscapes, and we began to sketch out ideas and work on design elements of the sites in the field," Dodds said, adding those are concepts that could be applied to other

activities in their Heart of Appalachian Ohio project.

He said Darke told them "the uniqueness and beauty of the region was spectacular and prime to take its place on the world stage" and said Darke "really gravitated toward the Piney Fork property and the Roosevelt Inn," where JSWCD wants to build a trail, redevelop the old railyard, and restore the historic inn. "But he felt there was great potential in all of the projects."

"He said he particularly loved the history of Piney Fork and feels (plans for it) will be monumental and will be able to place the site, along with Quaker Ridge and Helbender Preserve, on an elevated stage and attract visitors from worldwide," Dodds said.

Darke told them their goal should be to get people "to look a little deeper, look more often" at the beauty nature provides, Dodds said.

"He said we need to build a palimpsest meadow garden that does not erase the history of the site," Dodds recalled. "He said we want to embrace the touchstones of the land that shows the resiliency of the people and place of Piney Fork and Jefferson County. We want to leave reminders of the coal industry and railroad, but also highlight it's now, it's our time."

Darke, he said, "brought a depth of experience and vision that is rare to find, which is why he has been consistently in demand throughout the world."

"He also brings with him a deep richness of collaborators and partners that he can call upon to help refine visions and make them realities," Dodds added. "By bringing Rick Darke to Jefferson County to evaluate our projects, we have begun a monumental task that will elevate the projects to a worldwide audience and give something the residents of Jefferson County and Appalachian Ohio a place to enjoy and grow with for generations to come."

"We feel the need to scarify the landscape of the past and tear down vacant buildings and old industry to attract the new," he said. "We fail to see the beauty of the history and the blend of the wild and man-made world — a vibrant red eft crawling along an abandoned railroad track and the rich texture of a fern sprouting from the crack in the metal of a derelict stone bridge pier is as beautiful as any artwork you would find in a museum. We need to preserve the story of Jefferson County and Appalachian Ohio and repurpose these areas in order to save the story of the people and the region."

"While (he) helped collaborate, develop, and plan for the Appalachian Community Grant application, the development of these sites will not be contingent on the grant funding," Dodds said. "JSWCD had pledged before Darke's arrival to see the projects through and are now more committed than ever to creating these spaces for the benefit of the people of Jefferson County, the Appalachian Ohio region, and beyond."