

Clean Water Cooperator of the month – July, 2019

Gene and Laurie Francis, 1057 Kings Way, Lake Sherwood
Natural Shoreline Property

Gene and Laurie have been residents for many years. In 2009, they took notice of the change at Lake Sherwood. Homes abounded and fertilized lawns to the water's edge were the norm. Weeds increased and water clarity decreased. They became aware that a change in habit and behavior was necessary if the lake was to return to its former glory. So, in the early spring of 2010, Laurie bought a \$5 box of wild flower seeds from Walmart and worked the seeds into the existing grass in an area adjacent to the lake front, measuring approximately 3' x 23'. The seeds blossomed that summer into an area of native wildflowers. The next spring, Laurie bought more seeds from an area native nursery, and worked them into the grass in an expanded area. By 2015, the end result of her work transplanting, adding native plants, bushes and non-native plants, and with the help of birds spreading seeds, was an area of plants and bushes adjacent to the water's edge measuring 35' x 80' with ample area for lake and dock access. This area is now a beautiful addition to Gene and Laurie's yard that requires minimal maintenance and provides a haven for wildlife. They stopped the use of fertilizer, relying instead in the nutrients contained in the lake water used for sprinkling. Their lakefront provides that buffer at water's edge to filter runoff, and a deeper-rooted soil structure to eliminate erosion of legacy phosphorous into Lake Sherwood. It's proof that you can have a beautiful yard and still protect lake water quality

While Gene and Laurie took on this project on their own 10 years ago, our 14 Mile Creek Watershed Joint Committee can help you obtain DNR Healthy Lakes assistance grants that provide expertise and cover much of the cost to create

your own clean water cooperator habitat. You too can be a part of the solution to our lake water quality issues. Contact Dave Trudeau @ 715-570-0828 or dtrudeau@wctc.net.

After all, how can we expect our upstream ag neighbors to do their part in reducing runoff and erosion if we are unwilling to reduce our own impact?

