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## **Ross Co. Students/Future Farmers Go Electrofishing with Ohio EPA, Learn How to Protect and Restore Quality of Deer Creek and Scioto River Watersheds**

Students from Zane Trace High School in Chillicothe and members of Future Farmers of America (FFA) gathered at a Ross County farm this morning to interact with Ohio EPA biologists and water quality experts on the banks of Deer Creek near the confluence of the Scioto River. Ohio EPA gave a live electrofishing demonstration in a stretch of Deer Creek designated as a superior high quality water. This outdoor classroom allows the Agency to explain the [Deer Creek](#) and [lower Scioto River](#) watershed studies it launched earlier this year. The studies are part of the Agency's continuous effort to monitor and report on the quality of rivers and streams throughout Ohio.

Ohio EPA's learning laboratory offered students and other guests a chance to closely observe fish and aquatic insects. An abundance and diversity of species, including those sensitive to pollution, reflect better water quality. Ohio EPA collects biological data in the field from fish, aquatic insects and other macroinvertebrates to measure water quality; this includes the practice of electrofishing (during which fish are caught, measured, recorded and then released).

Ohio EPA teamed up with Ross County OSU Extension/4-H and a local farmer to highlight farm conservation practices that are important to protect water quality. Today's event was held on a farm where approximately 190 of the 340 acres are enrolled in the Scioto River Basin Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP); CREP offers farmers economic incentives for conservation practices such as planting streamside buffers that reduce agricultural runoff into local waterways.

Ohio EPA partners with agencies like county extension offices and soil and water conservation districts to encourage farmers and homeowners to implement land management practices that help maintain or improve water quality. Ohio EPA also regulates industries and municipal wastewater treatment systems.

Ohio EPA is encouraging residents of the Deer Creek and lower Scioto watersheds to get involved in preserving and restoring local water quality to protect human health, fishing and other recreational activities and aquatic life. Information is [online](#) for creating a watershed group that could help engage the public in different ways such as offering rain barrel workshops and educating school groups.

More information about the Deer Creek and lower Scioto River watersheds (including photos, maps, Ohio EPA reports and suggestions for starting an action group) is in an online media kit at: [www.epa.ohio.gov/pic/media/DeerCreek\\_Scioto.aspx](http://www.epa.ohio.gov/pic/media/DeerCreek_Scioto.aspx).