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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**Franklin Soil and Water Conservation District to Host Open House
June 21**

Soil and Water Conservation Districts are often misunderstood. Some think we are a nonprofit organization like watershed groups are. Others think we can regulate just about every activity involving land or water use. And sometimes people call us about their water bill. None of these views are accurate. Come find out for yourself what we are and what we do during our **First Day of Summer Open House**, June 21 from 11:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.

Soil and water conservation districts are subdivisions of the State of Ohio, organized along county boundaries. There is discretionary state match funding based on the voluntary funding from county and local governments. Our work is directed by a board of five publicly elected supervisors who volunteer their time, energy and expertise. Regulations governing soil and water districts are in Ohio Revised Code 1515 and are overseen by the five appointed members of the Ohio Soil and Water Conservation Commission.

As to what we do . . . We provide technical expertise in a number of areas involving soil and water resources. We have a nationally recognized GIS and natural resources mapping program that is used by many local governments. We lead watershed plan implementation activities in partnership with watershed groups, local governments and other agencies. We inspect construction sites on behalf of local governments, providing assistance to construction companies in erosion and runoff issues and providing data to local zoning authorities. We manage one of the largest stormwater education and rain barrel distribution programs in the country. We provide conservation education to thousands of Franklin County school children every year. We founded and support the Central Ohio Rain Garden Initiative, another nationally recognized program. We manage a conservation easement program for Franklin County to minimize property loss from flooding and maintain healthy waterways. Our Backyard Conservation program provides information to landowners on rainwater harvesting, rainwater infiltration practices, landscaping with native plants, improving wildlife habitat and improving soil health through composting. We partner with our USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) district conservationist to assist agricultural producers protect soil health and improve water quality by using cover crops, grassed waterways,

stream buffers, two-stage drainage ditches, exclusion fencing and other agricultural best management practices.

If any of these topics interest you, please visit us and find out more! Speak to staff and Board of Supervisors' members.

WHAT: First Day of Summer Open House

WHERE: 1328 Dublin Road, Suite 101, Columbus Ohio 43215

WHEN: Friday, June 21, 2013 from 11:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. (Yes, come on your lunch hour, sandwiches, snacks and drinks will be provided!)

WHO: Anyone interested in finding out more about our work and providing feedback

HOW: Just come! Registration is not required.

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The mission of Franklin Soil and Water Conservation District is to promote responsible land use decisions for the conservation, protection and improvement of soil and water resources by providing information assistance through effective partnering, technical guidance and education.

Mary Ann Brouillette
Communications Specialist

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Creating Conservation Solutions for Over 60 Years