



Buckeye Lake for Tomorrow accomplishments 2025

2025 saw the return of the **annual Carp Roundup**. It was held Father's Day weekend; the same weekend the state of Ohio allows fishing without a license. We had over 50 participants and rounded up 2400 pounds of carp. **Why do we roundup carp?** Buckeye Lake is 200 years old; it has lots of silt built up over the years which contain high amounts of nutrients like nitrates and phosphorus that feed the algae in the lake. Over the years we have worked with farmers and home owner associations to reduce the nutrients in run off coming into the lake. The problem is the silt, when disturbed, recharges the water table with nutrients feeding the algae. Carp during the spawn disturb the bottom, and we have tens of thousands of them in the lake. Most fisherman just throw the carp back in and they live for 25-30 years. We need to reduce the population a bit each year to keep them from taking over and destroying other fish habitat.

Buckeye Lake for Tomorrow maintains 25 aerators including the ones at our beaches. There are 31 aerators currently being operated on the lake in canals, dead end coves, and at our beaches. **Why aeration?** Blue-green algae are anaerobic; in other words, it does not do well in the presence of oxygen. Buckeye Lake is shallow and the water temperature can get to 90 degrees Fahrenheit; it is currently at 89 degrees. High temperatures help deplete oxygen levels in the lake causing fish kills and contributing to algae blooms. The aerators help increase oxygen levels in the lake and help to reduce blue-green algae.

Developing wetlands with many partners over the years; including Licking, Fairfield, and Perry County Soil and Water groups, the Ohio department of Natural Resources, Ohio EPA, the Nature Conservancy, MAD Scientists, Buckeye Lake Regional Corporation, BLACA, Buckeye Lake Regional Chamber of Commerce, Eagles, and the Buckeye Lake Water shed Coordinator to name a few. **Why Wetlands?** Wetlands like the one completed at Brooks Park help to clean nutrients and silt out of the water flowing into Buckeye Lake which helps to control algae blooms and improves our water quality. Wetlands are also great for our wildlife, from birds to tadpoles. Two more wetlands will break ground this year thanks to our Partners at Licking County Soil and Water especially Executive Director Kristy Hawthorne. Slim Creek wetland will indirectly affect our water quality; it is located off the South Licking River and will help control some flooding as well as clean nutrients out of water. The flooding in this area typically floods across farmers field to the main feeder or Kerkersville canal. The second wetland also in Licking County is located off Cristland Hill and will clean the stream that dumps into Maple Bay directly affecting our water quality. Buckeye Lake for Tomorrow has been working on this project for 8 years as this stream has the highest nitrate pollution of any stream in our watershed. Finally, we are working on the Honey Creek Wetland restoration and Park. The Honey Creek project could restore 20 acres of wetlands that were removed in 1969 when Honey Creek was dug out. By restoring the wetlands, we would directly affect water quality in Buckeye Lake, help to control flooding in the area, restore part of the banks on Honey Creek, clean the fallen trees out from Honey Creek Road to the lake, and save the Eagles' nest located on the property. Buckeye Lake for Tomorrow is writing grants and trying to raise the 3 million dollars needed for this project. The land is currently for sale. The Honey Creek Wetland restoration is a top priority for our group. You may give to cause at Buckeyelakefortomorrow.org.

Water testing continues in association with Licking and Fairfield County Soil and Water groups, as well as with the Lake Keepers and Ohio Beach Guard. Licking and Fairfield soil and water groups test the tributaries to the lake for nutrients, Ohio Beach Guard tests Crystal and Fairfield beach putting results on their website. Lake Keepers test water around Buckeye Lake sending results to the Buckeye Lake watershed coordinator to record and manage results. **Why do we test?** We test to track nutrient amounts, temperature, and turbidity so we have numbers for grants and maintain a history.

Canada Geese control in the Buckeye Lake watershed. **Why Control Canada Geese numbers?** Eight years ago, in mid-summer Buckeye Lake for Tomorrow took water samples from the middle of lake on the recommendation of a professor

from Washington State who suggested we have the E-coli typed to find the source. Ohio State typed the samples and it showed that on all samples 65% of the E-coli was from Canada Geese. Since we were hitting of 200ppm in E-coli each summer, the warning level, we took action to reduce the population of Canada Geese in our watershed. It was estimated there were over 1,000 geese in the watershed at the time. An adult goose produces 3 pounds of waste a day. These Canada Geese do NOT migrate. So, 1,000 geese times 3 pounds a day is 1.5 tons a day times 365 days that is over 500 tons of waste in our watershed a year. Working with Ohio Wildlife, Ohio Department of Natural Resources, and our Park Manager; we were able to reduce the population to manageable level and now just work to maintain that level through hunting, egg addling on uninhabited islands like the bog, and the occasional roundup. When geese were rounded up the meat was donated to Perry County food pantries. Buckeye Lake for Tomorrow has also worked with groups on education and controls such as using green lasers (we have provided over 100 to date), use of dogs, lines, and vegetation as deterrents to keep the Canada Geese out of parks and other spots on the lake. **Last summer 2024 was the first year that we did not hit 200ppm in E-coli in the lake.**

Water quantity has also been on our list for 14 years and moved up the list again during 2024 drought. **Why Water Quantity?** Low quantity of water actually is detrimental to water quality as nutrients stirred up from the bottom have less water to dilute them. ODNR had a study done at our request 7 years ago showing they own the feeder or Kirkersville Canal and listed multiple things that needed done to maintain it. They took some action last year, but still need a lot of things done including removing 3 debris piles on the feeder canal which Buckeye Lake for Tomorrow kayakers identified again this year. These piles are holding water back and backing it up in farmers fields, reducing the amount coming to the lake. North of I-70 near Bloody Run there is a weir totally buried in silt stopping the flow of water from the north. Farmers in the area have redone their tile to go to the South Fork of Licking River instead of to the feeder canal for Buckeye Lake. Eventually we want to reattach to south fork of the Licking River so we have some flow in summer.

Dredging. Why dredging? Dredging helps remove nutrients that have collected in the bottom of the lake for 200 years. As many of you know, we worked with all Counties, State Officials, and local officials to get a new dredge and place to put the material dredged from the lake. Now we need to get the state to use the dredge 50 hours a week not 38. It is estimated 5 million cubic yards needs removed and only 100,000 have been removed so far. At the current rate it would take 70 years. There are approximately 25,000 cubic yards of silt coming into the lake annually. Buckeye Lake for Tomorrow and others are trying to get the state to commit to a 5-year, dredge plan. We are also working to find more locations for dredge material. If you have land withing half a mile of lake 10 acres or bigger available let us know.

River Roundup. September 6th, the Saturday after Labor Day we meet near Buckeye Lake McDonalds in the morning and have groups walk no name creek picking up trash to keep it from flowing into the South Fork of Licking River. The creek runs from old spillway, past Ryan Park, behind fire station, under Route 79 by McDonalds and over to the South Fork of the Licking River. Volunteer on line, at Licking County Soil and Water, <https://lickingswcd.com/how-to-help/river-round-up.html>.

HOW CAN YOU HELP:

Give your time, volunteer to be lake keeper and take water samples. Volunteer to work on Carp roundup committee (volunteer at the actual roundup weighing fish, raising funds for prizes or advertising the event). Volunteer on Geese control committee, help addle eggs or do round ups, walk and use your green laser to keep them off the dam and out of parks. Volunteer for River Roundup, walking the river and picking up trash. For the Wetland committee, we need experienced grant writers as well as folks with knowledge to do flow studies of tributaries and with engineering knowledge to review plans. If you have a strong interest in any of the above call or text Matt Baumann, 513-509-7164.

DONATE, go to Buckeyelakefortomorrow.org and you can give via credit card or pay pal. Also checks can be mailed to Buckeye Lake for Tomorrow, P.O. Box 676, Buckeye Lake Ohio, 43008.

Don't dump grass clippings and leaves in the lake. Don't over fertilize your property or let others do it.

Thanks for showing up to support continued improvement of our water quality at Buckeye Lake.