Hunter’s Run Conservancy District

A Brief History of the District
The Beginning

• The flood of 1948 occurred in the early morning hours
• Damage exceeded one million dollars, some estimates higher
• 400 homes affected with some residents trapped in their homes.
• Foundations collapsed on new homes being built on Pierce Avenue
• 18 bridges destroyed within the county; US 22 bridge on Lincoln Ave was destroyed.
• Water was estimated at over 14 feet deep in several areas along George and West Wheeling Streets submerging cars and moving buildings from foundations.
Homes Along Pierce Avenue
West Side Home
Flooded Vehicles on South George Street

This daylight view, looking south on George-st from Wheeling-st, shows four parked automobiles half-submerged. At 3 a.m. the water was over their tops.
Unidentified Location on the West Side
Bridges Destroyed and Railroad Impassable
The Flood of 1948

Lancaster could spare itself a repetition of the “flash flood” disaster of last July 22 by building dams on the Hocking River and Hunter’s Run, in the opinion of a citizens committee named by City Council to investigate the causes of the flood and possible preventative measures.

“Lancaster is not a safe place to live until something is done. This last flood was worse than the one in 1936. The next one may be more disastrous. It can happen in a minute. Let’s do something now!”
The Night That Topsoil Flowed in Ollie Smith’s Living Room, He Went to Work
Creation of the District and Implementation

• The Fairfield County Common Pleas Court established the Hunter’s Run Conservancy District (HRCD) in March 1952.
• The primary purpose was to act as local sponsor to implement the Work Plan prepared by the U.S Department of Agriculture.
• Hunter’s Run and Upper Hocking watershed encompass 49 square miles.
• The May 1954 Work Plan as amended called for the construction of eight flood control structures and twenty-two sedimentation control structures, to:
  • Reduce and retain potential flood waters
  • Reduce soil erosion and sediment transport
  • Improve local economic conditions
• The twenty-eight structures, currently owned and operated by HRCD, were completed between 1954 and 1961.
Projects Completed

• Completed engineering studies on two dams to determine need and recommend most economical means of repair
• Decommissioned one sediment control dam that was no longer needed
• Completed hydrologic and hydraulic (H&H) studies on six dams
• Replaced inlet riser on Dam R-46 on Betz Rd.
Projects In Progress

• NRCS continues engineering analysis for the rehabilitation of Dams No. 4 and No. 9 (Approximately $1.2 million dollars with commitment from HRCD to follow through with rehabilitation at a 35% local cost share

• Continuing with hydrologic and hydraulic (H&H) study of Dam 6 to determine impact of flooding in the event of failure of the dam during a historic rainfall event. Information will be used to develop the Emergency Action Plan (EAP) for Dam 6
Rock Mill at Normal Pool
Rock Mill June 20, 2019
Rock Mill After The Water Recedes
Rock Mill Downstream
Dam No. 4 Downstream
Reassessment Study in Progress

• The District was incorporated under Ohio Revised Code 6101
• The Code provides for an assessment process that requires the economic benefit to be determined for each property.
• Current assessment involves approximately 2300 parcels with most being within Lancaster, along with the City, County and larger corporations.
• There has never been a reassessment conducted since the first one in 1958
• Economic Benefit Analysis is in its final stages
• Goal is to assess all properties within the watershed, both the direct and indirect beneficiaries.
Continued

• The County provided $139,000 from the American Rescue Act for this study

• The study requires economic benefit analysis, some engineering assessment, appraisal of benefit by our Board of Appraisers, public hearings and public relations activities

• More public education will be provided during open house events in 2023
Hunter’s Run Conservancy District Website

www.huntersruncd.org