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September 21, 2009

**County Council Member at Large, Ilene Shapiro Highlights
National Reserve Resource Conservation & Development (RC&D) Week**

Summit County At-Large Council Member Ilene Shapiro, a local member of the Western Reserve Resource Conservation and Development Council, today highlighted “National Reserve Resource Conservation & Development Week” (RC&D). During the week of September 20-26, The National Reserve Resource Council will join 375 RC&D Councils across the country in celebrating “RC&D Week.” RC&D week was declared in recognition of the anniversary of the designation of the first 10 RC&D areas. In the past 44 years, the program has grown from 10 designated areas to 375 designated areas that cover over 85% of the United States and its territories. The Western Reserve RC&D Council is a unique regional organization that has non-profit status and receives federal authorization from the U.S. Department of Agriculture, Natural Resources Conservation Service.

Locally, the Western Reserve RC&D Council, in existence since 1992, has worked in partnership with federal, state, local, and private organizations to raise millions of dollars in grant funding for projects to benefit the region. RC&D Councils leverage federal funding at an approximate 5:1 ratio making RC&D Councils an effective tool for the region. The Western Reserve RC&D has been actively involved in projects relating to water quality protection, erosion control, farmland preservation, controlling urban sprawl, conservation of sensitive lands, job creation, environmental education, business retention and growth, and the promotion of agricultural as an industry.

Most recently, Western Reserve secured grants to develop a Collaborative Learning for Environmental Action Network Project (CLEAN) to focus attention on environmental stewardship issues concerning Northeast Ohio and the Great Lakes Basin.

The project facilitates college and university staff to develop internships for students in environmental and science careers here in Northeast Ohio.

The Western Reserve RC&D Council has also been instrumental in securing funding for land protection projects in the region especially along sensitive streamside areas. The Council has received grant awards from various Foundations such as the Gund and Cleveland Foundations to facilitate conservation development practices and farmland preservation in an attempt to control urban sprawl.

The Western Reserve RC&D Council is comprised of County Commissioners, County Council Members, Soil and Water Conservation District Supervisors, and members-at-large from the Northeast Ohio counties of Ashtabula, Cuyahoga, Geauga, Lake, Lorain, Medina, Portage, Summit, and Trumbull. Further information about the Council can be obtained at 440-350-2034 or online at:

<http://www.oh.nrcs.usda.gov/programs/RCD/westernreservehome.html>

The next quarterly Council meeting which is a public meeting will be held Thursday October 8th at 9am to noon at the McKinley National Birthplace Memorial located at 40 N. Main Street, Niles, Ohio 44446.

Councilwoman Shapiro states that, “the National RC & D week is an excellent opportunity to showcase the importance of protecting and maintaining our natural resources across the nation and how vital it is to use our land and water areas wisely as we continue to develop areas in the future.”

For more information, please contact the Summit County Council Office at (330) 643-2725.

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