



**Franklin Soil and Water
Conservation District**
Creating Conservation Solutions for Over 60 Years

Hellbranch Meadows Restoration Project

Funding provided by the Ohio EPA through WRRSP

Hellbranch Meadows is an approximately 200-acre site located in Prairie Township southwest of Columbus, Ohio. Coldwater was retained by FSWCD to develop conceptual designs for ecological restoration and educational/park amenities on the Site. As concepts were being developed, Coldwater also assisted FSWCD with a Water Resources Restoration Sponsorship Program (WRRSP) application to Ohio EPA for a substantial portion of the stream, wetland, and upland restoration components. The application was successful, resulting in nearly \$3 million of funds for ecological restoration.

Conceptual designs for the site include stream restoration along Hellbranch Run and on-site tributaries using natural channel design techniques; wetland restoration and enhancement; upland riparian and prairie establishment; removal of invasive species (bush honeysuckle, Callery pear, olive, and reed canary grass); and educational/park amenities. Educational/park amenities include observation platforms, hiking trails, educational signage, agricultural drainage demonstration, handicap access, and parking facilities. These amenities will provide the tools necessary to hold educational programs on the site, highlighting not only the variety of ecosystems present, but also the techniques employed to restore them. The final report also includes conceptual cost estimates and potential funding sources for various design components to aid with securing funding for improvements that will not be covered through the WRRSP grant.

Coldwater also helped FSWCD with preparation of the draft WRRSP restoration plan and environmental covenant, which are required to secure funding. The restoration plan describes, in detail, impairments to the water resources on-site and proposed improvements to address those impairments. Coldwater is currently assisting FSWCD with field assessments and detailed project design, and will provide assistance with permitting, bidding assistance, and construction oversight.



Portions of Hellbranch Meadows are being restored to native prairie.



Much of Hellbranch Run has been channelized and is in need of restoration.

