



United States Department of Agriculture

Forest Service

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News Release

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Release No.: FY18091404

Keep Ohio Beautiful Presents Environmental Awards

Nelsonville, Ohio (Nov. 13, 2017) – On Nov. 1, 2017 in Columbus, Keep Ohio Beautiful (KOB), a state affiliate of Keep America Beautiful, recognized an Athens County law enforcement officer and a nonprofit organization for their support in making southeast Ohio a better place to live, work, and play.

The organizations 2017 Law Enforcement Recognition Award went to Detective Doug Crites from the Athens County Sheriff's Office for his work as an Environmental Deputy.

Crites was recognized for executing an Ohio Department of Transportation roadside litter cleanup reimbursement program. Under his supervision, approximately 7.89 tons of litter has been collected since December 2016. After discovering that 90% of the litter could be recycled, he redirected the materials to the Athens-Hocking Recycling Center for processing.

Crites is also responsible for strengthening relationships with partners that assist in the investigation of illegal open dumping and other environmental crimes.

"I am grateful for the recognition. My accomplishment would have not been possible without the interest of Sheriff Rodney Smith and my coworkers," said Crites. "The entire department understands the importance of my work in investigating environmental crimes in Athens County."

Athens-Hocking Recycling Centers, Inc. (AHRC) was awarded the Industry/Business Award.

They received the award for their leadership in recycling. They have processed over 60%, or nearly 2000 tons more material in 2017, than they did in 2013. In 2016, they constructed a new materials recovery facility (MRF) that now accepts single stream recycling at a level far beyond what the existing facility managed.

The organization has also expanded its service area to rural areas and implemented a new collection system for more than 20 public recycling drop-off locations across Athens and Hocking Counties.

"The move to single stream recycling has really been a game changer for recycling in southeast Ohio," said Bruce Underwood, AHRC executive director. "I want to thank all of our customers for their support in realizing the potential in capturing and diverting materials from the landfill. Our growth is also supporting employment for many local residents."

The Athens County Sheriff's Office and Athens-Hocking Recycling Centers, Inc. are partners of Keep Southeast Ohio Beautiful, which is an affiliate of Keep America Beautiful and managed by the Wayne National Forest.

About Keep Ohio Beautiful

Keep Ohio Beautiful (KOB), a 501(c) 3 nonprofit organization, believes that everyone deserves to live in an environment that is healthy, safe, clean and beautiful. As a state affiliate of Keep America Beautiful, Keep Ohio Beautiful serves as Ohio's umbrella organization for 30+ local affiliate organizations throughout Ohio. By growing the local affiliate network, providing a strong support system and sharing best practices, Keep Ohio Beautiful enables volunteers in communities throughout Ohio to improve waste handling practices, litter prevention, recycling, beautification and community greening efforts. <http://keepohiobeautiful.org/>

About Keep Southeast Ohio Beautiful

In 2012, the U.S. Forest Service, Wayne National Forest and the non-profit organization Keep America Beautiful formed a partnership to establish the affiliate "Keep Southeast Ohio Beautiful" to encourage communities and partners across a 13 county area to build and sustain vibrant communities. Today, with the help of more than 20 affiliate partners, Keep Southeast Ohio Beautiful engages individuals to take greater responsibility for enhancing their environment, thereby creating a healthier place to live, work and play. Learn more <http://www.kab.org>

For more information, visit our website at <http://www.fs.usda.gov/wayne> . Follow the Wayne National Forest on Twitter: [@waynenationals](https://twitter.com/waynenationals) and also on [Facebook](https://www.facebook.com/waynenationals).

The U.S. Forest Service is an agency of the U.S. Department of Agriculture, a mission of sustaining the health, diversity and productivity of the nation's forests and grasslands to meet the needs of present and future generations. The Forest Service's Eastern Region includes twenty states in the Midwest and East, stretching from Maine, to Maryland, to Missouri, to Minnesota. There are 17 national forests and one national tallgrass prairie in the Eastern Region. For more information, visit www.fs.usda.gov/R9.

The U.S. Forest Service manages 193 million acres of public land, provides assistance to state and private landowners, and maintains the largest forestry research organization in the world. Public lands the Forest Service manages contribute more than \$13 billion to the economy each year through visitor spending alone. Those same lands provide 20 percent of the nation's clean water supply, a value estimated at \$7.2 billion per year. The agency has either a direct or indirect role in stewardship of about 80 percent of the 850 million forested acres within the U.S., of which 100 million acres are urban forests where most Americans live. For more information, visit www.fs.usda.gov/.

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