In Appalachian Ohio, we remain in the midst of a recession that has endangered the entire country and dates to 2008. The past year could be characterized as one of extremes, though you might not know that by just looking at the data. The stock market plunged in July but it rebounded like a champ and ended roughly where it started. In 2011, most realized that the real estate crash was even worse than everyone had thought and predicted. The job market was characterized by more people with jobs, but those without jobs found them difficult to find and the search process was drawn out. Unemployment in rural Ohio was even more challenging than other places.

Despite the economic woes, 2011 at Rural Action saw our staff, budget and programs grow. The demand for our work is increasing every year and although we remain on good financial footing, the troubled economy and shrinking public dollar pool means every dollar matters and our wise use of grants and gifts is critical to our operation.

Rural Action continues to be focused on its work which encompasses a range of approaches and activities that aim to improve the welfare and livelihoods of people living in rural Ohio. These approaches pay attention to the seven forms of community wealth: financial, natural, social, individual, built, intellectual, and political capital.

The following highlights are just a small overview of the work that we have been involved in over the course of 2011. It goes without saying that our successes could not have been possible without the hard work of our dedicated staff, the faithful members that continue to stand by the organization, our AmeriCorps members, and the many volunteers we count on every day.

Michelle Decker
Executive Director

John Kotowski
Chair of the Board

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<tr>
<th>Staff + Associates</th>
<th>Rural Action Staff</th>
<th>Environmental Education Program Coordinator</th>
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<td></td>
<td>Joe Brennan</td>
<td>GRO Wood Products Specialist</td>
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<td>Rick Bush</td>
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<td>Michelle Decker</td>
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<td>Bob Fedyshki</td>
<td>Local and Institutional Food Liaison</td>
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<td>Tanner Flye</td>
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<td>Amherst Forster</td>
<td>Monday Creek Watershed Group Coordinator</td>
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<td>Kyle O'Keefe</td>
<td>Appalachian Ohio Zero Waste Initiative Coordinator</td>
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<td>Susi Rankis</td>
<td>Sustainable Forestry Administrator</td>
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<td>Tim Hadler</td>
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<td>Susan Roth</td>
<td>Development and Communication Director</td>
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<td>Nathan Schloss</td>
<td>Monday Creek Water Quality Specialist</td>
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<td>Mike Steinhaus</td>
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<td>Linda Thornton</td>
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<td>Sarah Warda</td>
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<td>Maureen Wise</td>
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<td>Carol Witheren</td>
<td>Finance and Administration Assistant</td>
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<td>Michele Shaw</td>
<td>AmeriCorps/Human Resources Director</td>
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<td>Tim Sykes</td>
<td>Appalachian Ohio Zero Waste Initiative Administrative Assistant</td>
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<td>Elizabeth Atwell</td>
<td>Appalachian Ohio Zero Waste Initiative</td>
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AmeriCorps Members
- Emily Ankney
- Tereza Amy
- Lauren Arment
- Susanna Bingman
- Kimberly Breitvar
- Elisa Gupte
- Lynn Grabowski
- Leah Graham
- Emily Hammon
- Amy Ketner
- Rose Keyes
- Kris Kinder
- Sarah Landers
- Richard Lutz
- Lisa Prince
- Molly Jo Stanley
- Joe Steinbrunner
- Joe Stitt
- Nora Sullivan
- Jennifer Wallace
- Kara Walton

Board Members
- Paul Benedict
- Shana Byrd
- William Carroll
- Leslie Dunn
- Mary Finney
- Gary Goosman
- Amy Grove
- John Kotowski
- Scott Miller
- Susan Loughridge
- Rebecca Valquez-Skilings
- Travis West

Board Vice Chair
- R. William Carroll

Secretary
- Board Chair
- Board Treasurer
2011 FINANCIALS

GIVING SOCIETY

The Rural Action Giving Society was established in 2004 to create a more sustainable funding structure for the organization and give community members an opportunity to contribute to our work on a long-term basis.

Our 2011 November Breakfast raised $13,770 and increased the total multi-year gifts to over $100,000.

Listed below are Rural Action's current Giving Society members:

“Rural Action’s comprehensive work addressing the diverse environmental needs of our community has no equal. Their broad reaching programs working with forests, watersheds, agriculture and education have made lasting and positive contributions which have benefitted our entire region.”

Ann Brown | Rural Action member and volunteer
Athens County
The CPA has been a good thing for young people and for people without jobs here in our area. It’s giving people an opportunity, its encouraging people to better themselves, it’s bringing the buyers to us, and it’s encouraging people to become sellers and to become involved in local agriculture right here in our community. It’s created an opportunity when so many of our agricultural markets have disappeared.

Warren Fussner | Rural Action member and volunteer
Morgan County
“Rural Action knows the region and how to implement programming that effectively impacts the region. The Commission views Rural Action as a forward-thinking organization that never loses sight of its core mission. We value this partnership and the role that national service can play in creating successful results for the region.”

William Hall | Executive Director Ohio Commission on Service and Volunteerism
Franklin County
Rural Action is an extraordinary non-profit organization with an inevitable vision. They get it. They see the big picture and have been willing to work with us to accomplish our mission. I'm confident in knowing that we have a partner for progress. I'd like to imagine that, if Henry David Thoreau were alive today he'd be a member of Rural Action.

Belle Everett | Rural Action member and volunteer | Tuscarawas County
Rural action is a driving force in bringing folks together so that they can create better communities for their kids and grandkids in rural Ohio. They understand the importance of leveraging local assets and building them up by strengthening partnerships. ARC is very pleased to have Rural Action as a partner in the region.

Earl Gohl | Federal Co-Chair Appalachian Regional Commission
STAY CONNECTED

Visit our website: www.ruralaction.org and click the button to sign up to receive our bi-monthly e-newsletter.

“Like” us on Facebook to see what we’re up to. Check out photos from recent events, see us in the news and find out about upcoming events.

Jump on YouTube to view videos we’ve produced as well as educational videos we find valuable to our members.

Follow Rural Action Executive Director, Michelle Decker on her travels around the country. www.twitter.com/RuralActionExec