



The Geauga Soil and Water Conservation District (SWCD) is excited to announce the 2019 Geauga County BIG TREE Contest and is currently seeking nominations! This voluntary contest promotes the beauty and benefits provided by our county's biggest and oldest trees, along with their contributions to clean water and healthy soil. The 2019 featured tree species is the **American Sycamore** (*Platanus occidentalis*). Known as "guardians of the stream," Sycamores are easily recognized by their large size, proximity to water, and strikingly smooth, white bark mottled with brown and gray. Buffering the banks of rivers and streams, they are masters of runoff reduction by intercepting sediment and pollutants, stabilizing channels, slowing stormwater, and reducing erosion. Among many wildlife benefits, their roots and branches provide food and shelter to birds and bass, mussels and mayflies, to name a few.

Participants will submit a nomination for an American Sycamore tree which they believe might be the largest in the county. After all nominations are submitted, qualified personnel will verify the measurements using the ODNR Division of Forestry's Big Tree Program procedures. Each tree will receive a score based on trunk circumference, crown spread, and total height to determine the winner. In addition, the District will consider each tree's ability to capture stormwater along with other economical benefits. For example, one American Sycamore with a diameter of 45 inches can absorb as much as 7,538 gallons of stormwater runoff each year.

The objectives of this contest are:

- To engage residents in the recognition, management, and enhancement of our county's tree populations
- To showcase the critical roles that trees play in sustaining healthy soil and clean water
- To recognize that each healthy tree in our county reduces flooding and improves water quality by soaking up stormwater runoff and filtering out pollutants

## **BIG TREE Contest Guidelines:**

- Nominated trees must be American Sycamore trees located in Geauga County. (Visit the Ohio Division of Forestry's website [forestry.ohiodnr.gov/sycamore](http://forestry.ohiodnr.gov/sycamore) to review characteristics.)
- Only one nomination per individual tree. The first nomination received will be entered into the contest.
- The tree does not have to be on the property of the nominator; however, permission from the landowner must be obtained prior to nomination.
- Nominations must be submitted to Geauga SWCD no later than **Thursday, August 1<sup>st</sup> - 3:30 pm**. Please email to [gprunty@geaugaswcd.com](mailto:gprunty@geaugaswcd.com) or submit in person or through the mail to the Geauga Soil and Water Conservation District, PO Box 410, 14269 Claridon-Troy Road, Burton, OH 44021.
- Qualified District personnel will verify all nominated tree measurements and use the tree benefits calculator ([treebenefits.com/calculator/](http://treebenefits.com/calculator/)) to provide the stormwater runoff reduction capability. The decision of the District will be final.
- Geauga County's BIG TREE will be recognized and awarded at the District's Annual Meeting in the fall.

**For more information contact Geauga SWCD at [geaugaswcd.com](http://geaugaswcd.com), 440-834-1122, or [gprunty@geaugaswcd.com](mailto:gprunty@geaugaswcd.com).**

## 2019 BIG TREE Nomination Form

**1) Tree Species** American Sycamore (Platanus occidentalis)

**2) Owner Information**

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Home Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Cell \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_ City \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_

**3) Nominator Information (if different than owner)**

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Home Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Cell \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_ City \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_

**4) Tree Location/Address** \_\_\_\_\_

City/Township \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

**Location Description:** Please attach a map or sketch of the tree's location on the property. If the tree is especially difficult to locate, please mark it and include any other information (GPS coordinates, photos etc.) that might be helpful in finding the tree.

**Other remarks about the tree:** (health, historical significance, etc.)

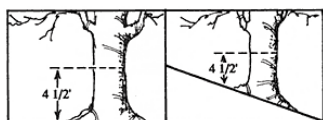
**5) Annual gallons of runoff saved** \_\_\_\_\_ **Annual savings \$** \_\_\_\_\_

(This information can be found at [treebenefits.com/calculator/](http://treebenefits.com/calculator/))

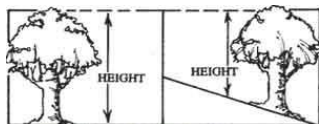
**6) Estimated Tree Measurements** Taken by: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**Circumference** of trunk (inches) \_\_\_\_\_

(Measure at 4 1/2 feet from the ground on uphill side of tree)

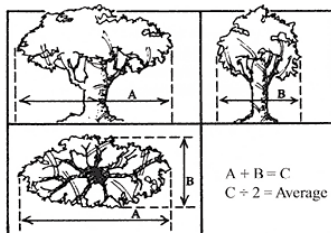


**Total Vertical Height** (feet) \_\_\_\_\_



**Diameter of the Spread of the Crown** (feet) \_\_\_\_\_

(Measure the spread of the crown in two directions and divide by two)



**FOR OFFICE USE ONLY**

Circumference (inches):

\_\_\_\_\_

Height (feet):

\_\_\_\_\_

Crown (feet):

\_\_\_\_\_

Tree Index: \_\_\_\_\_

To calculate the Tree Index:  

$$\frac{\text{Circumference}}{\text{in inches}} + \frac{\text{Height}}{\text{in feet}} + \left( \frac{\text{Spread}}{4} \right)_{\text{in feet}} = \text{Tree Index}$$

Notes: