



Geauga County **2021 BIG TREE Contest**



Canadian Woodworking &
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Mike Del Rizzo

The Geauga Soil and Water Conservation District (SWCD) is excited to announce the 2021 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 2021 featured tree species is the **Black Cherry** (*Prunus serotina*). Easily recognized by its dark, flaky bark, the Black Cherry trunk is often described as covered in burnt cornflakes. It's gorgeous, fine-grained, mahogany heartwood is in high demand for furniture, flooring, and cabinets. Named for its ripened black cherries relished by birds and mammals in late summer, the enormous ecological benefits this native tree provides is truly the cherry on top! It's nectar and pollen sustain countless insects and pollinators, and it serves as a critical host plant to over 450 species of butterflies and moths! Their caterpillars depend on Black Cherry leaves and, in turn, these caterpillars are the mainstay of most North America birds. Though currently common throughout the state, the US Forest Service predicts an unfortunate decline of the Black Cherry species in Northeast Ohio due to the impacts of climate change.

Participants will submit a nomination for a Black Cherry 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 Champion 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 economic benefits. For example, one Black Cherry with a diameter of 45 inches can absorb as much as 1,074 gallons of stormwater runoff each year.

The objectives of this contest are:

- To engage residents in the 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

BIG TREE Contest Guidelines:

- Nominated trees must be Black Cherry trees located in Geauga County.
(Visit ohiodnr.gov/wps/portal/gov/odnr/discover-and-learn/plants-trees/broad-leaf-trees/black-cherry-prunus-serotina to review characteristics.)
- Only one nomination per individual tree. The first nomination received will be the official entry.
- 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 **Monday, September 6th**. Please email to gprunty@geaugaswcd.com or submit in person or through the mail to the Geauga SWCD, 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/) to provide the stormwater runoff reduction capability. The decision of the District will be final.
- Geauga County's Biggest Tree will be recognized and awarded at the District's Annual Meeting in the fall. If on public land, the biggest tree on private land will also be recognized.

Questions? Contact geaugaswcd.com, 440-834-1122, or gprunty@geaugaswcd.com

2021 BIG TREE Nomination Form

1) Tree Species Black Cherry (Prunus serotina)

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/)

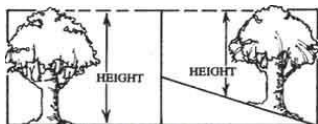
6) Estimated Tree Measurements Taken by: _____ Date: _____

Circumference of trunk (inches) _____

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

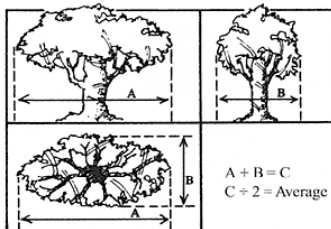


Total Vertical Height (feet) _____



Diameter of the Spread of the Crown (feet) _____

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



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Circumference (inches):

Height (feet):

Crown (feet):

Tree Index: _____

To calculate the Tree Index:

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

Notes: