Challenge of 21st Century

1994 Annual Financial Report

IIIM Budget (voluntary cost-share program)	ALLOCATION/ EXPENDITURE
1973-74	$15,317.83
1974-75	11,521.44
1975-76	23,668.47
1976-77	31,282.84
1977-78	46,250.00
1978-79	43,633.00
1979-80	46,320.00
1980-81	45,000.00
1981-82	77,662.12
1982-83	54,833.72
1983-84	96,753.61
1984-85	144,251.75
1985-86	147,916.82
1986-87	122,828.44
1987-88	92,429.64
1988-89	83,564.58
1989-90	45,980.76
1990-91	49,536.29
1991-92	56,156.50
1992-93	26,577.00
1993-94	21,925.00
1994-95	21,925.00
TOTAL	**1,305,334.81**
No-interest Loan (6)	48,248.05
IM budget (office supplies & commissioner travel/training) Allocation/expenditure	2,775.00
ACCOMPLISHMENTS	
Farms contacted	824 No.
Individuals & groups applying practices	268 No.
Contouring	4,763 Ac.
Contour strip cropping	20 Ac.
Terraces	22,455 Ft.
Sediment & water control basins	7 No.
Reduced erosion on cropland 123,435 Ton saved on 14,379 Ac.	
Field border	130,522 Ft.
Grade stabilization structure	3 No.
Grassed waterway	234 Ac.
Conservation tillage	11,562 Ac.

All District programs and services are offered on a nondiscriminatory basis without regard to race, color, national origin, religion, sex, age, marital status, or handicap.

Hardin Soil & Water Commissioners

Carroll J. Hobson of Eldora, front row left, serves as chairman and John Gilbert of Iowa Falls, front row right, as vice chairman of the Hardin County Soil & Water Conservation District Commissioners. Other commissioners are back row, l to r: Mark Seward of New Providence, James Martin of Hubbard and Mark Balvanz of Eldora.

Profit Potential In
Controlled Grazing

JOHN GILBERT
Commissioner

Interest in controlled grazing is growing as more producers realize the profit potential from improving pasture management.

This is good news because enhanced profits from grazing means permanent sod will protect the soil and water resources on some of the most vulnerable acres. Economic returns from well managed grazing can be competitive with row cropping. This creates viable alternative uses for CRP acres when the 10 year contracts expire.

Grazing is the harvest of a feed source by animals, along with the corresponding natural dispersal of manure. Traditional grazing management was long on keeping the fences up and the weeds down. Better understanding of plant species interaction with each other and grazing livestock have led to management techniques which improve stock health, performance and attitude. Additionally, improved management permits plant species to be more varied, vigorous and productive. The bottom line is improved stock performance with less supplemental feed.

One of the first comments made by producers as they begin managing their grazing is they don't know where the clovers or a number of other plants are coming from, because they didn't plant them. Continuous grazing means only the few species tolerant of close grazing will survive. Introducing rest permits other varieties to return and survive. This provides a number of benefits, such as fewer bare spots and more competition making weeds less of a problem. Also, as legumes return, the nitrogen they fix makes existing grass varieties more productive, reducing fertilizer costs.

The rule of thumb in improving pasture management is "plant nothing but posts for at least three years." The preferred method of renovating pasture is with frost seeding. When soil disturbance is necessary, the impact of excited animal's hooves is a good alternative.

The short-duration grazing a manager follows in controlled grazing mimics the passage of the large herds of animals present in nature (such as the herds of buffalo which once flourished on the American plains.) Permitting stock a few hours to two to three days on a given small tract of pasture insures they will not weaken the plants they desire most. Given two to four weeks rest, these plants will be productive and at their most nutritious on the next grazing.

Most graziers report spending only a few minutes a day moving stock, and report the investment in fencing and watering systems is offset by increased performance, carrying capacity and reduced supplemental feed costs. Also, most stock become easy to handle because of the constant association of people with new feed.

Most Iowa pastureland offers considerable improved financial potential in return for learning new management techniques. The capital outlay to improve pasture management using modern electric fencing is relatively small and is useable for many years. Those are conditions most new developments in agriculture cannot equal.

Your Hardin County Natural Resource Conservation office can recommend where you can learn more. Also, cost share assistance is available for developing pasture fencing if at least two paddocks of warm season grass can be included.

Attendance at grazing meetings has been strong this winter, meaning more will be held. Attending field days or pasture walks where managed grazing is practiced are good ways to learn more. Talking with experienced graziers is always a good means of learning more. The first step is to realize you can improve the profitability of your pastured livestock enterprises.

Emphasize Value Of
Waterways, Borders

JIM MARTIN
Commissioner

We as farmers need to commend ourselves for the progress we have made in soil conservation in recent years. As I look around my community and other parts of the state, plowed and bare fields are much more uncommon than they used to be. Residue and cover slow water velocity and reduce soil loss!

As equipment becomes larger we remove fences and make field sizes larger. Now even with protective residue once water becomes concentrated from a watershed area, it can pick up speed simply from the long distance it can now travel, taking residue with it. Once that cover is gone, soil is exposed and cuts begin even in no-till.

These areas need protection with waterways and field borders. A properly constructed and maintained waterway will slow water velocity, by spreading it out over a wider channel. Field borders accomplish a similar function.

The question arises why take so much land out of production for a waterway or a field border? These areas are often the least productive areas in a field. Turn rows get most of the equipment traffic, are the most compacted and become the weediest from reduced plant population. Areas that need waterways also are weedy from herbicides being washed away and they are hard to cross with equipment. As technology improves, we can now pinpoint those least productive acres in fields. Economically it makes more sense to idle those areas for a useful purpose than to apply expensive crop inputs and receive a negative return. We can still harvest a crop from waterways and field borders as hay or bedding.

We have come a long way, but many more acres need protection. Even non highly erodible land and flat fields need waterway and field border protection. Water will concentrate by the force of gravity and we need to provide a channel for it to flow in.

Value of Trees

MARK I. SEWARD
Commissioner

Do you want to be remembered?

Think for a moment about the value of 10, 20, 30, or even 40 acres of trees. If your grandparent had planted them for you, imagine what they would be worth.

The beauty alone is of aesthetic value, but it's also a place for hundreds of birds and animal life to call home. A place for you to walk with your children and grandchildren. A place to teach them about nature. A place to leave memories of yourself and the special quiet times. If all this is not enough to leave behind, think about some large walnut trees being ready for harvest valued at $5,000-$10,000 a piece.

There are some programs in place in both the CFSA office in Iowa Falls and the NRCS office in Eldora, to assist with the planning and cost of planting. It is also possible to get assistance on improving an existing timber. The undesirable species would be culled to favor the selected trees. Why not do something for everyone you know and love. **Plant some trees!**

Name Change
Natural Resources Conservation Service

GARY L. HILLMER
District Conservationist

The Soil Conservation Service is now the Natural Resources Conservation Service. On October 20, 1994, the Secretary of Agriculture established this agency as part of USDA reorganization.

What does this change mean to you and others concerned with conservation? It means that while some things will change, others will stay the same. Our new name better reflects our role in helping people conserve all natural resources on private lands. It reflects a streamlined agency that provides quality service more efficiently.

The new agency is built on a solid foundation of 60 years of experience, our scientific and technical expertise, and our partnerships with conservation districts and others. It combines most of the authorities of the old agency, as well as five natural resource conservation cost-share programs formerly administered by other USDA agencies.

While we have focused on soil conservation in the past, we are also the key federal agency to offer technical help on private lands to improve water, wildlife habitat, forest lands, grasslands, and other resource related to the land.

In our new role, we want to work side-by-side with you to ensure healthy land that brings benefits to city people as well as rural communities. The NRCS is committed to conserving the nation's resources, not just for this generation but for generations to come.

Natural Resources Conservation Service Staff Members

Natural Resources Conservation Service staff members are, left to right: Yolanda Butler (Soil Conservation Technician), Kent H. Holmgaard (Soil Conservation Technician), Karen Cole (Volunteer), Gary L. Hillmer (District Conservationist), Susie L. Reece (Secretary), Roger R. Wolf (Environmental Specialist) and Cristine Birks (Soil Conservation Technician).

Pine Creek Water Quality Project
Landowners Making Strides

ROGER WOLF, Environmental Specialist

The Pine Lakes, along with the Iowa River and its greenbelt area, are thought of locally as prized "jewels" for the community. These jewels are very special to local residents as they provide areas of enhanced recreational value and scenic quality.

Since the early 1920's when J.S. Newcomer presented the idea of building the Lower Pine Lake, many individuals, groups, businesses and government agencies, have worked together to make the Pine Lakes and the entire area a reality. Today these efforts continue.

The following article provides an update of the progress made with the Pine Creek Water Quality Project.

Landowners participating in the Pine Creek Water Quality Project are making significant strides with on-going efforts to protect and improve water quality. Fortunately, their efforts not only improve the water quality leaving their farms, but the combined impacts from all of their efforts will improve the water quality for the Pine Lakes.

Physical examples of progress are visible throughout the watershed. The following list of people should feel proud of the work they completed as part of the Pine Creek Project.

Project Cooperator	Practice(s)
Wayne Paige	Grassed Waterways
Chuck Smoldt	Grassed Waterways
Garry Schwarck	Grassed Waterways
Henry L. Eckhoff	Grassed Waterways
Hazel Harms-Pence	Grassed Waterways and Grade Stabilization Structure
Marcella Creps	Grassed Waterways
Philip Prosser	Grassed Waterways
Balvanz Farms	Grassed Waterways and Grade Stabilization Structure
Paul Primus	Grassed Waterways
Primus Farms	Grassed Waterways
Curt Crosser	Water and Sediment Control Structure
Mary Wubben/ Terry Gast	Grassed Waterways
Henry Peters Trust	Grassed Waterways
Lloyd Siert	Grassed Waterways
George Ackles	Water and Sediment Control Structures
Lloyd Eeckhoff	Terraces
Frances Geerdes	Grassed Waterways
George and Henry VandeeVort	Grassed Waterways
Janssen Farms	Grassed Waterways

The following chart denotes Best Management Practices (BMP's) planned and scheduled sometime during 1993 thru 1997. Implemented year to date (YTD) includes practices which have been reported as completed or implemented during the time period April 1993 thru January 1995.

BMP Standard Title	Planned	Implemented YTD
Cons. tillage (no-till only)	2149 ac	1311 ac
Contour Farming	435 ac	355 ac
Cover Cropping System	133 ac	56 ac
Nutrient Management	4099 ac	3794 ac
Pest Management	4099 ac	3794 ac
Record Keeping	4099 ac	3794 ac
Waste Mgmt. System	146,562 Cu. Ft.	0
Grassed Waterway	50 ac	19 ac
Grade Stab Struct.	3	3
Terraces	10,000 Ft.	3700 Ft.
Water and Sed Basins	4	4
Critical Area Planting	5 ac	5 ac
Livestock Exclusion	53 ac	53 ac
Wildlife upl Hab Mgmt	27 ac	0
Wildlife Wet Hab Mgmt	7 ac	0