

ANNUAL REPORT

of

DES MOINES COUNTY SOIL CONSERVATION DISTRICT

Period Ending December 31, 1954

The annual report of the district activities and accomplishments for the past year seems to leave out a great deal of progress that has been made in the county. You will not find in these pages the changed attitudes of the average older farmer; nor the fresh new ideas of the young farmer as regards a determination to keep the farm in high production as long as he needs it, and leave it in as good condition as he found; nor the change in the livestock feeding habits; nor even the improvement in the seeding mixtures and methods.

Progress is being made toward the goal of conservation on every farm in Des Moines County, also toward the final goal of the use of each acre of land within its capability and the treatment of each acre of land in accordance with its needs for protection and improvement.

An election was held on January 21, 1954, for District Commissioner. Walter Eyre was elected to a six year term to replace Kenneth Redfern, retiring Commissioner. Hugh Jamison was appointed Chairman of the District Commissioners for the year 1954. Eleven District Commissioners' meetings were held during the year.

The Burlington Chamber of Commerce held its annual Conservation Recognition dinner on January 29, 1954, for the contestants in the 1953 conservation contest. Dr. James H. Milton, president of Iowa State College, was the principal speaker at the dinner. Thirteen winners in

the contests were honored and also received a prize from the district.

In conjunction with this dinner the Farm Institute was held in the morning, at which Jim Wallace, manager of the Foundation Farms, showed slides and talked of the work with these farms. The corn yield contest held in 1953 was not held in 1954 due to the fact there were only four entries, not enough to hold the contest.

During the year the district staff spent considerable time on the ACP program. This tended to reduce the time available for getting the district work accomplished. This is not altogether a bad feature, as it did give opportunity to work with non-cooperators and interest them in other conservation needs, and to improve the quality of the application on conservation measures paid for from ACP funds.

The time spent on ACP tile jobs is considerable and very little, if any, conservation is accomplished. This practice, if deleted from the ACP approved practices, would (we feel) increase instead of decrease the needed soil conservation practices that actually conserve soil.

The local ACP office set up the full 5% fund and the district used the entire amount and some ACP work was paid for by regular P-46 funds. The district has enjoyed very fine cooperation on the part of the local ACP office.

A forage field day set up by the extension service and the district was rained out on three different days and finally abandoned.

The District helped sponsor four rural school teachers to the Springbrook Conservation School during the summer. The tuition for Mrs. Alma Lundeen of Mediapolis, Mrs. Zelma Hillman and Mrs. Cleo Henry

of Burlington was paid for by the district. The tuition of Mrs. Rothel Walker was paid by the Mediapolis Sportsman's Club.

A new Supplemental Memorandum of Understanding with the Soil Conservation Service was signed as directed by the District Commissioners on May 24, 1954 and recorded in the minutes of the Commissioners' meeting of that date.

Victor Siems, the Des Moines County entry in the third annual Soil Conservation Award Program sponsored by the Iowa Retail Farm Equipment Association, was one of six entries to receive a certificate of recognition for outstanding work in helping to promote soil conservation and good land use.

Five Des Moines County 4-H Club boys won an all-expense paid trip to Iowa State College and toured the agronomy building and soil testing laboratory as an award for their work in soil conservation projects. The Des Moines County Soil Conservation District made the awards. They went to Gene Krekel, Howard Keitzer, Martin Wirt, Leonard Lane and Paul Jones. Hugh Jamison, Chairman of the District Commissioners, accompanied the boys to Ames and took them to the football game.

The District Commissioners and the Extension Service held two pasture tours during July, which some sixty farmers attended and viewed some very good birdsfoot trefoil seedings and pastures. Renovated pastures are appearing throughout the county on cooperator and non-cooperator farms alike.

Two District Commissioners' Regional Meetings were held during the year. The first, at Mt. Pleasant on March 18, was attended by the

District clerk and R. H. Audsley, Work Unit Conservationist. The second was held in Burlington on December 17 and due to slick roads in surrounding counties a small group was present. There were some seventeen present from six counties. James C. Hodges, local county extension director, and R. H. Audsley, Work Unit Conservationist, represented the local district. The county extension director had a previous engagement which took him away about the time the regional meeting started.

The following are the amounts of practices accomplished through personnel help from the Des Moines County Soil Conservation District. This does not include conservation practices not actually helped on by local personnel--for example, the district staked out 1175 acres of contouring, but there was approximately 6000 acres of contouring in the county.

<u>Practice</u>	<u>Unit</u>	<u>Quantity</u>
Contouring	Acres	1175
Pasture improvement	"	286
Land clearing	"	125
Wildlife area improvement	"	45
Woodland stand improvement	"	11
Fish pond improvement	No.	43
Farm Drainage	Acres	345
Tile Drainage	L. Ft.	148,112
Terrace & Diversions	Mi.	6.1
Ponds	No.	50
Concrete Dams	"	10
Drop Spillways	"	17
Water Course	Acres	17

Initial Agreements	32	5147 Acres
Basic Plans	36	5192 "
Total Basic Plans to Date	330	
Total Cooperators to Date	419	

Personnel located at the Des Moines County Soil Conservation District office, provided by the Soil Conservation Service, and the proportion of the year's time spent in the local county is as follows:

R. H. Audsley	Farm Planner	100%
Jack Jacobs	Conservation Aid	100%
Harold Sandelius	Agricultural Engineer	57%
Stanley Simmons	Engineering Aid	35%

Harold Sandelius and Stanley Simmons are shared with two other counties. Larry Kelley, Technical Aid, 75%. Larry was paid by state appropriation and by ACP 5% money provided to help defray extra expenses of determining the need, practicability, application and certification of the ACP practices. Mrs. Isabelle Fuller, District Clerk, 100%. Larry Kelley started work at the District office in April.

The Des Moines County District Commissioners wish to thank the following cooperating agencies for their help in the conservation work in the county: Des Moines County Extension Service, Soil Conservation Service, Agricultural Stabilization and Conservation, Iowa State Conservation Commission, Vocational Agricultural Group, Farm Home Administration, Isaac Walton League, Burlington Chamber of Commerce, 4-H Clubs and State Soil Conservation Committee. The District takes this opportunity to show its gratitude for the financial assistance to the District

from the State of Iowa.

Also, the Commissioners wish to thank the Burlington Hawkeye-Gazette and the Mediapolis New Era for the publicity and news items carried by these papers.

Respectfully submitted,

DES MOINES COUNTY SOIL CONSERVATION DISTRICT


By: Hugh Jamison, Chairman

Homer Woodward

Walter Eyre