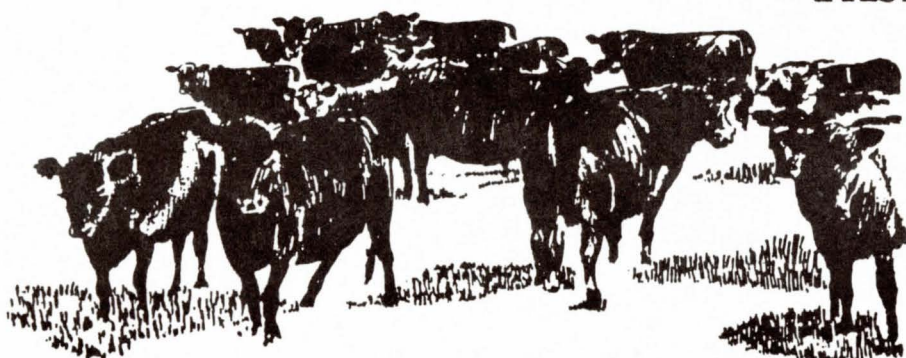




**50 YEARS OF CONSERVATION PRACTICES**

**1944-1994**



**EROSION CONTROL STRUCTURES**

**PASTURE IMPROVEMENTS**

**PASTURE ROTATIONS**

**STRIP CROPPING**

**WATER SHEDS**

**WIND BREAKS**

**CONTOURING**

**WATER WAYS**

**TERRACING**

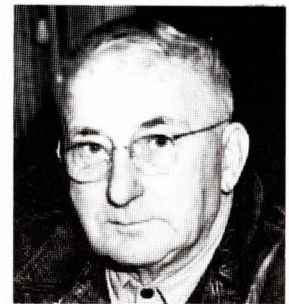
**NO TILL**

**C.R.P.**



Pearl W. Spilman  
1944-1958

DAVIS COUNTY SOILS COMMISSIONERS  
1944 - 1994



Fred Melvin  
1944-1951



Dale Blackwell  
1944-1962



Harold Baughman  
1951-1966



Clay Barnett  
1958-1964



Sam Botts, Jr.  
1962-1974



C. Iles Heady  
1964-1970 1972-1978



Charles Chickering  
1966-1972



Lionel Herteen  
1970-1978



LaVerne Weilbrenner  
1970-present



Phillip Melvin  
1970-1984



Robert Boatman  
1975-present



Don Herteen  
1974-1984



Don Chickering  
1979-1990



Wayne Birchmier  
1984-1987



Ray More  
1985-present



Gerald Forsythe  
1987-present



Sherry Birchmier  
1991-present

# Davis County Soils District Formed In 1944

The dust bowl storms of the 1930's, the serious gully problems, a result of the water erosion and the mining of the soil fertility, awakened Americans to the fact that they were rapidly losing their greatest resource--soil.

Because erosion was a national problem, legislature was introduced into Congress, passed and signed by President Roosevelt, that committed the national government to a policy of soil conservation. This Act, known as PL-46, became law on April 27, 1935. It specifically established within the U. S. Department of Agriculture, a Soil Conservation Service, for the development and prosecution of a long-range program of soil and water conservation.

Secretary of Agriculture, Henry A. Wallace, determined it would be best to administer the soil and water conservation program through a new unit of government. On May 13, 1936, a Standard State Soil Conservation Districts Law was published and released for the guidance of the states in passing the necessary legislation.

In May 1939, the Iowa legislature passed the enabling law that was necessary for the formation of the Soil Conservation Districts and stated that they would be legal sub-divisions of the state.

In order to establish a district, at least twenty-five land occupiers had to petition the Iowa State Soil Conservation Committee. Then a public hearing on the petition had to be held, the boundaries of the proposed district defined, and the referendum held in which the majority of the votes cast had to be in favor of the district.

A county wide referendum and an election for commissioners was held in Davis County on September 9, 1944. The referendum stated that, "the territories of the district will include all land within the boundaries of Davis County exclusive of towns and cities. It will serve as an association of farmers for the purpose of bringing about better land use and

soil conservation practices." The referendum was conducted at eight polling places throughout the county. The majority of the 398 votes cast voted in favor of establishing the Davis County Soil Conservation District.

The original commissioners elected were Dale Blackwell, P. W. Spilman and Fred Melvin.

Iowa District's Law was later changed to include all cities and towns, to increase the number of commissioners from three to five and to provide for the names of candidates for commissioners to be placed on the general election ballot.

Educational meetings were held throughout the district under the leadership of the Extension Service.

A request for technical assistance was made and on April 1, 1945, Leland A. McCord was named the first Soil Conservationist in the county. He served in this capacity until June 1954 when he left the Service and went with the State Department on assignment to Bagdad, Iraq.

During the first year, contouring and terrace demonstrations were held at several locations. Fifteen group meetings were held resulting in 120 farmers making application for assistance.

There were no limestone quarries in the county. Since the addition of lime to the acid soils of Davis County was necessary for good crop growth and was needed for the establishment of alfalfa seedings, the commissioners determined that a new and adequate source of agricultural limestone was top priority. Under the leadership of the commissioners, a quarry site on the D. K. Nedrow farm near Selma, Iowa, was located and leased. Kaiser Construction Company of Adel, Iowa, was selected to operate the quarry and the production of ag line was started in 1946.

The 1945 Annual District Report stated that 656 acres were contoured, terraces built on 57 acres, 9,250 lineal feet of diversion constructed and ten conservation plans completed.

Continued next page

## Farmer's Recognition

During the past 50 years the Davis Soil Conservation District Commissioners have recognized many farmers and landowners for their conservation efforts. They include:

**1948** - Russell Swift, Jr., Eugene Francis, E. L. Younkin.

**1949** - Gerald Van Horn, Lionel Herteen, Konrad Goettsche.

**1950** - D. C. Bollman, Carlton Cary, Ursel Hubbartt.

**1951** - Kenneth McCarty, Charles Mustard, Eugene Grim.

**1952** - Austin Davis, Ival Hining, Dewey Harper.

**1953** - Delbert Scott, Robert Singley, LaVerne McMains.

**1954** - Iles Heady, J. A. Baughman, J. J. Carey,

**1956** - Barton Cary, Ed Amstutz, Robert Tomlin.

**1957** - Charles Chickering, Clair Roberts, Kendall Johnson.

**1958** - Galen Cook, Leo Fitzgerald, Richard Birchmier.

**1959** - Walter Grim, Denver Biles, Chester Mustard.

**1960** - Elmer Weilbrenner, LaVern Kincart, Floyd Newell.

**1962** - Charles Harsch, Wayne Bain, Sam Roulet, Harvey Roulet, Phillip Melvin, Robert Boatman, Don Walley.

**1963** - Roy Stookesberry, Mrs. J. Paul Wilcox, Jacob and Eddie Birchmier.

**1964** - Walter Shelton, Dean Roemerman, Neal Clyman.

**1965** - Ernie Bohi, Robert Chickering, Herman Bachman.

**1966** - Glen O. Smith, Orlo and Dee Brake, Raymond Townsend.

**1967** - Harry Battin, William Wuthrich, Vernon Wheeldon.

**1968** - Roy Baker, Mrs. Eunice Tucker, Charles Tucker, Jack Greiner.

**1969** - Tim Hooper, Bill Grim, Dewey Grim, Stanley Robinson.

**1970** - Ray Tharp, Darrell McClure, Lester Lough.

**1971** - Henry Burkman, Dean Henderson, Austin Davis.

**1973** - Sam Botts, named Watershed Man of the Year.

**1973** - Ed Amstutz, named for Most Nearly Completed Conservation Plan. Robert Boatman, named for Best Livestock and Pasture Improvement Program.

**1974** - Barton Cary, Dean Grim.

**1976** - Roe Tharp, honored as the local and state winner in the SCSA Pasture Management Awards Program. Robert Boatman, honored as Watershed Man of the Year for the State of Iowa.

**1977** - Iles Heady, Outstanding Commissioner of Region 9 (13 Districts).

**1978** - Dean Amstutz.

**1980** - Roscoe Jones.

**1981** - Gary Horn; Exchange Bank, Owner-Dean Eakins, Opr.; Dean Houghland; Robert Boatman, the Byron Lodwig Pasture Management Award.

**1983** - Jim Botts, honored for Isaac Walton League Windbreak Award.

**1984** - Richard Nyswonger, honored as Outstanding Forage Producer.

**1986** - Mike More, Millard Mulcahey, John May; Eunice Tucker, honored as Outstanding Lady Landowner and Landlord; Myron and Dale White, honored as Outstanding Forage Producers, and Alan Henderson, Conservation Farm Manager.

**1991** - Keith Sullivan; Joan Steinway, owner - Tim Hooper, operator; Rex Blackwell; Sloan Farms; Gerald Van Horn; Orval Stevenson; Lewis Horn, Forage Producer Award.

**1992** - Gary Lagerstrom; Bob Taylor; Jon Wettstein; Bell Estates, owner - Alan Henderson, operator; Ray More, Watershed Achievement; Jerry Mazingo, Woodland Award.

**1993** - Dean Amstutz, honored with Take Pride in America Award. Rodney Baughman, John McMillin, Dave Howk, Keith Amstutz.



## Davis County Achievement Winners

From 1953 through 1973 the Des Moines Register and Tribune sponsored a Soil Conservation Achievement Contest. The three divisions in the contest were:

Division I - Owner-Operated

Division II - Owner-Tenant

Division III - New Cooperator

The local Bloomfield Newspapers also annually presented awards to these achievement winners.

1953

I. Konrad Gottesche.

II. Mrs. J. W. Lanman - Glen Lanman.

III. Cleo Rinkenberger.

1954

I. Dewey Harper.

II. Mrs. Myrtle Singley-Robert Singley.

III. Wendell Nicklin.

1955

I. Cargile Bollman.

II. Dr. Edwards-Gene Hoffman.

III. Glen Smith.

1956

I. Earl Traschel.

II. Ed Burchette-Omer Daugherty.

III. Grover Gillespie.

1957

I. W. W. Swaim.

II. Mrs. Ralph Baker-Glen Christy &  
Wayne Proctor.

III. Hugh Augspurger.

1958

I. Edward Amstutz.

II. Wendell Ernst-Harold Snowbarger.

III. John & Victor Swartzendraver.

1959

I. Richard Birchmier.

II. Hugh Seabury-Don Price.

III. Loren Benge.

1960

I. Charles Swaim.

II. Fredrick Lauder-Wade Archer.

III. Charles Ramseyer.

1961

I. Rex Blackwell.

II. Dale Dixon-Teddy Dixon.

III. Chester Adams.

1962

I. Iles Heady.

II. Mrs. J. Baughman-Stanley Baughman

III. No entry.

1963

I. Raymond Howard.

II. E. V. Christy-Don Walley.

III. Marion Roberts.

1964

I. James & Phillip Melvin.

II. Ralph Baker-Roger Fry.

III. No entry.

1965

I. Pearl & Dean Spilman.

II. & III. No entry.

1966

I. Dwight White.

II. No entry.

III. William Sloan.

1967

I. Robert & Steve Evans.

II. & III. No entry.

1968

I. John Swartzendraver.

II. Marvin Logan-Phillip Herteen.

III. No entry.

1969

I. Elmer Weilbrenner.

II. Lee Barnett-Roscoe Brown.

III. No entry.

1970

I. Gerald Forsythe.

II. & III. No entry.

1971

I. Floyd Newell.

II. & III. No entry.

1972

I. Don Chickering.

II. & III. No entry.

1973

I. Vernon Wheeldon

II. & III. No entry.

## SPEECH CONTEST WINNERS

A Conservation Speech Contest was sponsored for several years by the Davis Soil Conservation District Commissioners. Winners were:

1963 - Sharon Newell

1964 - Pam Stockham

1965 - Linda Kinnamon

1966 - Duane Sprouse

1967 - Steve Van Horn

1968 - Phillip Bolin

1972 - Ginger Bradford

1973 - Susan Wyatt

1974 - Charles Wix

1976 - Tracy Harl

# PROBLEM LOCATION AND PLAN

## BIG WYACONDAH

DAVIS COUNTY



The Iowa portion of the Big Wyacondah watershed contains 36,275 acres and runs from northwest of Bloomfield in a southeasterly direction into Missouri.

Farmers living in the watershed were concerned about the gully and sheet erosion damage to the upland and floodwater damage to the bottomland. In June of 1956, the farmers organized and selected Walter Grim, Dale Dixon, Teddy Dixon, Roy Bohi, Jack Finley and Harold Cruikshank as their watershed board of directors.

In March 1957, an application for watershed assistance under the Watershed Protection and Flood Prevention Act (PL 566) was submitted to the State Soil Conservation Committee and received their approval in October 1957. Sponsors of the Watershed Application were the Davis County Board of Supervisors and the Davis County

Soil Conservation District. Supervisors at this time were Emmert Howk, Glen Wilkinson and Lawrence Spurgeon. Commissioners were P. W. Spilman, Dale Blackwell and Harold Baughman.

The work plan developed by the U.S. Soil Conservation Service was presented to and approved by the local sponsors on April 25, 1962.

The project called for 59 structures, 16 acres of structural waterway and 3.9 miles of channel work. The estimated total cost was \$1,088,292 with \$815,632 Federal and \$272,660 as Non-Federal money.

# ANNED STRUCTURAL MEASURES

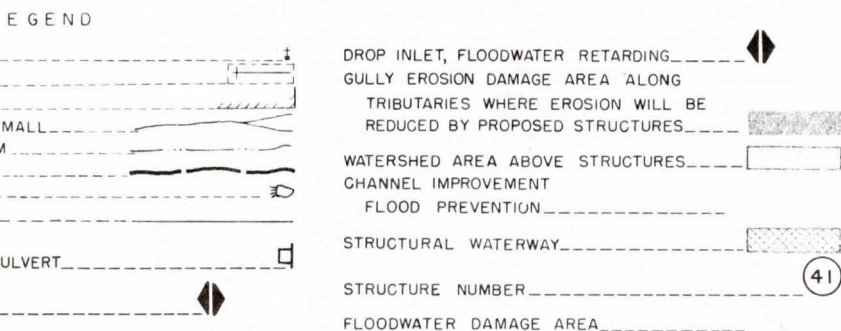
## DAH WATERSHED

OUNTY, IOWA

SOIL CONSERVATION SERVICE

U. S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

1-17-62



lack of easements or not having needed land treatment were: 1A, 14-B, 14-C, 14C-1, 21-1, 27-A1, 31-1, 31-B, 38-B and 52. Also eliminated was the 3.9 miles of channel work.

The final contract totaling \$401,428 for twelve structures was awarded to contractor Russel Saxton in 1975.

A total of twelve construction contracts were awarded at a cost of approximately \$704,000.

Dedication of the completed watershed was held September 10, 1976 at Structure Site 26.

The completed project including land treatment measures has reduced water damage to areas below the structures, has reduced gully erosion on many farms and benefitted the county at some 20 bridge and culvert locations. The 281 acres of water in the permanent pools have provided water for livestock, habitat for fish and other wildlife and recreation uses.

On March 25, 1963, the Davis County Board of Supervisors gave approval of the quarter mill levy on all agricultural land in the county for maintenance of watershed structural work.

The first construction contract totaling \$16,841 was awarded in December 1963 to contractors Robert McConnell and Henry Burgher. The four structures were on the Walter Dixon, Dale Dixon, Aura Barnett, Frank Shively and Z. W. Hubbartt farms.

Ten structures that were eliminated from the original plan for

# Then And Now

Some of the most profound changes in agriculture have occurred in the 50 year period between 1944 and 1994.

In 1944, America was still engaged in World War II. Rationing of sugar, coffee, tires, gasoline, etc. was still in effect. War Bond sales were soaring, scrap iron drives were held in nearly every community, and farmers were in an all out production for the war effort. Cars and tractors weren't being produced and farmers were using all of their skills to keep older machinery in operation.

According to the Assessors Annual Farm Census for 1944, there were 1,933 farms in Davis County with an average size of 166 acres. Sixty-one percent were owner-operated and 39 percent were rented by the operators. The total land in farms was 320,221 acres. Of this total 172,211 acres were in pasture; 72,279 acres were listed as plowable; 40,736 acres were in woodland, and the balance in other uses. Most of the pasture land was in blue grass.

The 1944 Census lists 47,275 acres in corn with an average yield of 40 bushels per acre; 12,579 acres in soybeans with an average yield of 19 bushels per acre; 12,365 acres in oats with an average yield of 20 bushels per acre, and 41,292 acres were in hay. Only 6,270 acres of this hayland was in alfalfa with the balance in clover and/or timothy.

In 1944, much of the flat land (Edina Silt Loam) along Highway No. 2, between Milton and West Grove, was in timothy. It is interesting to note that in 1944 nearly 5,000 acres of timothy was harvested for seed with the yield of 3.8 bushels per acre. After the seed was threshed the balance of the crop was used primarily as hay for the horses.

In 1944, Davis County farmers had 764 tractors, 92 grain combines, 74 corn pickers, 16 pickup hay balers and 111 motor trucks. Only 6 other counties in Iowa had reported a smaller number of tractors on farms.

Davis County was known as the "Sheep Capital of Iowa" with nearly

40,000 lambs being born in 1944. Nearly every farm had chickens and milk cows. The 1944 Census lists 281,753 chickens raised with 173,317 hens and pullets of layer age; 9,147 cows and heifers kept for milk; 13,591 calves born on the farm; 5,396 sows bred for spring farrowing, with a total pig crop of 46,114 head. Of this total, 31,645 head were spring pigs and 15,069 head were fall born pigs. Also, 235 horse and mule colts and 792 turkeys were born on the farm in 1944.

Davis County land values have had wide up and down swings during this 50-year period. The average price of farmland in 1944 was approximately \$40.00 per acre. During the 1970's, land prices climbed rapidly and peaked at \$1,202.00 per acre in 1981. Because of weather and economic reasons, land values started dropping and bottomed out in 1986 at an average value of \$440.00 per acre. By 1993, land values had climbed up to an average value of \$694.00 per acre.

The 1992 Iowa Agricultural Statistics Report lists 900 farms in Davis County with an average size of 343 acres and a total of 309,000 acres in farm land.

The 1992 year was probably one of the best crop years that Davis County farmers have had--43,900 acres of corn harvested with an average yield of 128 bushels per acres, 28,900 acres of soybeans with an average yield of nearly 42 bushels per acre, 1,200 acres of oats with an average yield of 48 bushels per acre, and 39,100 acres of hay with an average yield of 2.5 tons per acre. Davis County farmers currently have 43,865 acres in the government Conservation Reserve Program (CRP).

The livestock industry in Davis County also has changed considerably in the past 50 years. The beef cow numbers and the head of grain fed cattle marketed has decreased significantly in recent years. The 1983 beef cow numbers were 23,700 head and in 1993 were only 17,880 head--a drop of 25%. There was a 20% drop in the number of fed cattle

Continued next page.

### THEN & NOW continued.

marketed from 3,200 head in 1983 to 2,550 head in 1994.

The 1989 year end report listed 42,000 head of all cattle and calves on the farm. Of these 18,300 were beef cows and 1,800 were milk cows.

The sheep numbers have declined even more than the beef cow numbers. The 1983 number for sheep and lambs was 26,000 and dropped to 11,500 head in 1993--nearly a 45% decline. Fed lambs marketed also had declined from 8,500 head in 1985 to 4,700 head in 1993--a 45% decline.

While the sheep and beef cattle enterprises have both had significant decreases in the past 10 years, the number of hogs marketed has increased. The number marketed in 1983 was 70,000 and in 1993 was 80,000 head--a 13% increase.

In 1944, Davis County farmers applied 20,085 ton of limestone and 1,145,463 pounds of commercial fertilizer. In most cases the lime was hauled to the farm by a truck and dumped into a pile. The farmer shoveled the lime onto a high wheel wagon, and then shoveled it into a broadcast spreader attached to the rear of the wagon and driven by a sprocket and chain arrangement. Horses usually provided the power to pull the wagon and spreader across the field. Except for starter fertilizer, much of the fertilizer used was spread the same way.

Also in 1944, there was no reported crop damage from hail.

It is fairly certain that the next 50 years will also bring many changes to Davis County agriculture.

No one can foretell what Davis County agriculture will be like 50 years from now (2044), but it is fairly certain that there will be many changes. Hopefully most of them will be for the good of all living in Davis County.

### CONSERVATION QUEENS

The Davis Soil Conservation District commissioners sponsored a Conservation Queen Contest from 1956 through 1976.

1956 - Donna Payne, dau. of Mr. & Mrs. Cleo Payne.

1957 - Susan Stoker, dau. of Mr. & Mrs. William Stoker.

1958 - Jane Ann Whirrett, dau. of Mr. & Mrs. Glen Whirrett.

1959 - Barbara Johnston, dau. of Mr. & Mrs. Verle Johnston.

1960 - LaVera Smith, dau. of Mr. & Mrs. James Smith.

1961 - Diana Miller, dau. of Mr. & Mrs. Curtis Miller.

1962 - Kay Clyman, dau. of Mr. & Mrs. Neal Clyman.

1963 - Sharon Newell, dau. of Mr. & Mrs. Floyd Newell.

1964 - Linda Forsythe, dau. of Mr. & Mrs. Gerald Forsythe.

1965 - Joy Rudd, dau. of Mr. & Mrs. Forrest Rudd.

1966 - Joan Heady, dau. of Mr. & Mrs. Iles Heady.

1967 - Lois Horn, dau. of Mr. & Mrs. Russell Dean Horn.

1968 - Linda Newell, dau. of Mr. & Mrs. Floyd Newell.

1969 - Rebecca Whitacre, dau. of Mr. & Mrs. Ray Whitacre.

1970 - Jodi Stevenson, dau. of Mr. & Mrs. Glen Stevenson.

1971 - Janice Eakins, dau. of Mr. & Mrs. Gerald Eakins.

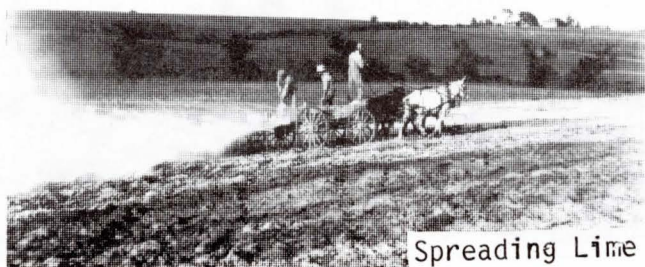
1972 - Ginger Bradford, dau. of Mr. & Mrs. Sam Bradford.

1973 - Suzanne Bradford, dau. of Mr. & Mrs. Sam Bradford.

1974 - Karla Wilson, dau. of Mr. & Mrs. Herbert Wilson.

1975 - Sabeth Barnett, dau. of Mr. & Mrs. Charles Barnett.

1976 - Debra Bales, dau. of Mr. & Mrs. William Bales.



Spreading Lime



Haying--1940's

## PERSONNEL

The following have served as DISTRICT CONSERVATIONISTS:

Leland McCord... Apr. 1945 - Jun. 1954.  
Clay Barnett.... Oct. 1954 - Oct. 1958.  
Verle Arnold.... Oct. 1958 - Jan. 1980.  
Fred Hainline... Feb. 1980 - -----.

The following have served as DISTRICT SECRETARIES:

|                  |                 |
|------------------|-----------------|
| Myrtle Sheumaker | Shirley Lorton  |
| Shirley Archer   | Loretta Jarvis  |
| Rowena McMains   | Christine Botts |
| Virginia Pinnell | Sandra Warning  |
| Donna Dunlavy    | Becky Hopkins   |
| Joan Huffman     |                 |

## EMPLOYEES

Many personnel, in addition to District Conservationists and Secretaries, have worked in the Davis Soil Conservation District during the past 50 years. The jobs ranged from Soil Conservationists, Conservation Aides, Technicians, Student Trainees, and Temporary Employees. To the best of our knowledge, they were:

Vance McCracken, Dwight Gates, Charles Gandy, Lester Veatch, Teddy Dixon, Jack Chamberlain, LaVerne Weilbrenner, Larry Harper, Burdette Stamps, Harvey Clover, George Smith, Eugene Francis, Roger Fry, Jimmy Dixon, Stewart Melvin, Jerry Pirtle, Jerry Kincart, Lloyd McCallister, Madison Bogert, Ed McDonough, Richard Cordes, Greg Martin, Vernon Luers, David White, David Krsnak, Raymond Dake, Julie Falcon, Edwin Cossell, Kevin Bolin, Tony Houston, Jerry Storke, Wayne Mason, Connie Ramirez, Archie Rupe, Darren Wiegand, Ed Altheide, Margaret Cope, Larry Jones, Jamie Johnson, Craig Scott, Lori Altheide, Scott Swanson, Peggy Moore, Bill Brechbill, Buck Padget, Karen Hadley, Randy Herteen, Shawn Wilson, Peggy Arnold, Jerald Scott, Robert Overstreet, Jacque Arnold, Patty Hainline, Kathy Sorenson, Marc Lay, Cory Garrett, Jason Wells, Wilma Sample, Mike Sloan, Brett Birchmier, Elmer Hopkins, Joel Stansberry, Jerry Mazingo, Dustin Moss, Teddy Cary, Charles Scott and Dean Bailey.

Conservation is farming to eliminate erosion.

## THE FOLLOWING HAVE SERVED AS ASSISTANT COMMISSIONERS

|                     |                    |
|---------------------|--------------------|
| Charles Chickering  | Charles Chickering |
| Pearl W. Spilman    | Mary Runkel        |
| Lionel Herteen      | Tim Hooper         |
| Sam Botts, Jr.      | Wayne Birchmier    |
| Dale Blackwell      | Don Chickering     |
| Tom Hardy           | Ted Cary           |
| Stanley Baughman    | David Gibson       |
| Floyd Newell        | Philip Melvin      |
| LaVerne Weilbrenner | Ray More           |
| Dwight White        | Gary Lagerstrom    |
| C. Iles Heady       |                    |

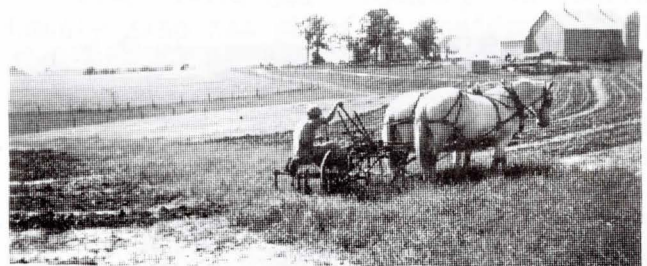
## TEACHER SCHOLARSHIPS AND AWARDS

The Davis Soil Conservation District Commissioners sponsored scholarships for local teachers to attend Conservation Camps. Recipients were:

1954 - Dorothy Pearl Evans, Edith Gibson, Glennis McCullough  
1957 - Mrs. Harvey Parks, Mrs. Walter Glasgow  
1959 - Mrs. David Hughes  
1962 - Mrs. Don Davis  
1963 - Keith Lagle  
1964 - Mr. & Mrs. Bernard Gravett, DeWitt Shelton  
1965 - Mrs. Dean Spilman, Mrs. Loren Bengé  
1966 - Mrs. Russell Boley, Mrs. Olen McMains  
1968 - Vera Small  
1973 - Mrs. O. J. Scott  
1974 - Gail Wortman, Richard Squires  
1978 - Marian Ferringer  
1980 - Dorothy Gentry  
1984 - Sharon Moritz  
1985 - Del Ashmead, Betty Spilman

Recognized as CONSERVATION TEACHERS OF THE YEAR were:

1968 - Olive Dabney  
1970 - Isabel Boatman  
1973 - Robert Bigsby



## PATHFINDER RC&D

The Pathfinder Resource Conservation and Development Area, Inc. (RC&D) is a non-profit rural development corporation formed for the purpose of advancing soil conservation work and community projects.

The Pathfinder RC&D has provided technical and some financial assistance since the late 1970's to a six county area in Southeast Iowa which includes Davis County.

The Pathfinder RC&D Board of Directors include one member of the Board of Supervisors from each county, one member from each Soil and Water Conservation District, and one member at large from each county.

Current members representing Davis County are Max Leyda, Dave Yahnke and Ted Cary. Dale Kraus, an employee of the Soil Conservation Service, is coordinator for the Pathfinder RC&D and is headquartered at Fairfield, Iowa.

Some of the projects or proposals in which the Pathfinder RC&D have provided assistance to Davis County are:

- \* Floris Sewage District System
- \* Structures replacing county road bridges
- \* Bloomfield Municipal Pool
- \* Floris Fire Station
- \* Davis County Tourism Project
- \* McGowen Recreation Area
- \* City of Pulaski Sewer System
- \* City of Drakesville Sewer System

### 50th ANNIVERSARY PLANNING COMMITTEE

The planning committee for the 50th Anniversary Observance of the Davis County Soil Conservation District included: Verle Arnold, Dale Blackwell, Harley Sloan, Christine Botts, LaVerne Weilbrenner, Phillip Melvin, Robert Boatman, Ray More, Gerald Forsythe, Don Chickering, Sherry Birchmier, Iles Heady, Fred Hainline and Becky Hopkins.



Plowing on contour--then.

## FIRST BASIC FARM PLANS

The first basic farm plans written and approved by the commissioners included:

Dale Blackwell, Chester Garrett, H.D. Robertson, Dr. George Prentice, E.R. Engle, George Yahnke, Lloyd Young, Perry Russell, Ervin Wilfawn, Lionel Herteen, Miles Taylor, Willis Harris, Konrad Goettsche, Dewey Harper, Doyle Schmitter, Clark Hufford, Otis McGee, William Kinder, P.W. Spilman, Oda Weede, E.L. Younkin, R.S. Denny, Walter Grim, Effie Hardy, Leslie Brockert, Stanley Lamb, C.J. Fresh, Earl Whitmer, Ernest Wimp, Alva Chandler, Eugene Francis, Ralph Beggs, J.J. Carey, Harold Spicer, Emery Prevo, J.C. Ware, R.G. Hardy, J.J. Birchmier & Son, U.G. Hubbartt, Harold Terrance, Harry Walborn, Ralph N. Baker, Dewey Goode, C.C. Roberts, C.A. Mustard, Mrs. J.W. Lanman.

## SOIL SURVEY

The Davis County Conference Board agreed in 1973 to cooperate and cost-share on a soil survey of the county. The cost of the survey to be \$15,000 per township. One-third of the cost to be from the county funds, one-third from the Iowa Division of Soil Conservation and the balance from the Federal Soil Conservation Service.

Mapping of the county by Soil Scientists of the Soil Conservation Service was started in 1980 and completed in 1987.

The soils material was published in 1991 and the data presented at several informational and educational meetings. Copies and information about the report are available at the SCS Office in Bloomfield, Iowa.



Binding oats on contour.

# SOAP CREEK WATERSHED

Flooding of Soap Creek has long been a problem for many Davis County farmers who live on or farm in the Soap Creek bottomland.

The first request for group assistance to the newly formed Davis Soil Conservation District came from farmers in the Soap Creek watershed.

During the ensuing years many group meetings were held involving Soap Creek landowners, the District Commissioners and Soil Conservation Service personnel.

In July 1971, an application for watershed assistance that included the entire Soap Creek watershed was submitted to the State Soil Conservation Committee. They approved the request on September 2, 1971. Sponsors of the application were Boards of Supervisors and Soil Conservation Districts in Appanoose, Davis, Monroe and Wapello Counties.

The total drainage area of the watershed is 162,000 acres: 37,780 acres in Appanoose County, 66,580 acres in Davis County, 21,160 acres in Monroe County and 36,480 acres in Wapello County.

Major problems identified were in the 14,150 acre flood plain where floodwater and sediment cause damage to roads, crops, pastures, bridges and farmland.

The Chief of the Soil Conservation Service granted Planning Authority for the Soap Creek Watershed on March 18, 1985.

A watershed plan was developed with the assistance of the Soil Conservation Service. The plan was accepted and approved in the fall of 1988

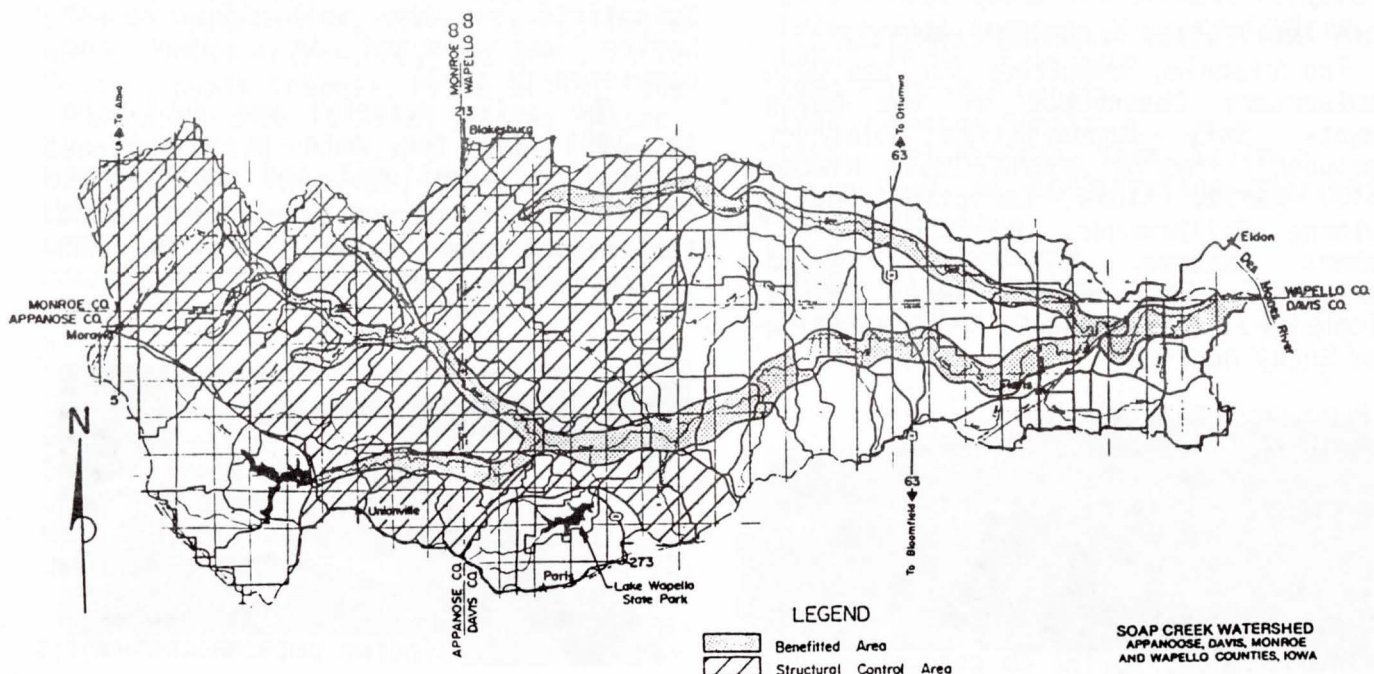
by the sponsors in the four county area and approved by the Soil Conservation Service on November 15, 1988.

This plan as proposed called for the construction of 154 flood water retarding dams that would control flow from about 33% of the watershed. The dams will reduce agricultural damage by 71% and non-agriculture damage by 74% annually. Road and bridge maintenance costs and flood damages will be reduced at 100 locations and flood damages will be reduced at 27 private farm roads and crossings. The completed 154 dams will create 960 acres of water.

The estimated cost of the project is \$6.5 million, which will be shared by the Soil Conservation Service and the local sponsors. The SCS will pay the cost of construction. The local sponsors are responsible for acquiring land rights for construction. Operation and maintenance costs for the 50-year life span of the project will be provided by the sponsors.

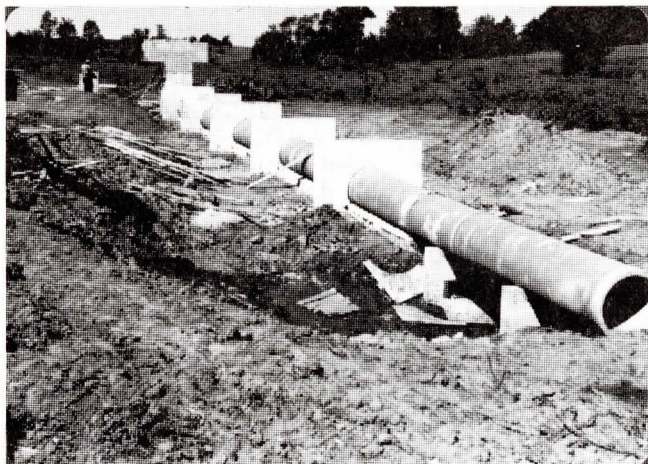
The estimated construction period for completion of the watershed is 15 years.

Eight structures located in Appanoose County were completed in 1991. Four structures, three in Appanoose and one in Monroe County were completed in 1992. Six structures were contracted for 1993 construction--three in Wapello, two in Davis and one in Monroe County. All but one structure was completed in 1993. Construction planned for 1994 includes four sites in Davis County and one site in Appanoose County.

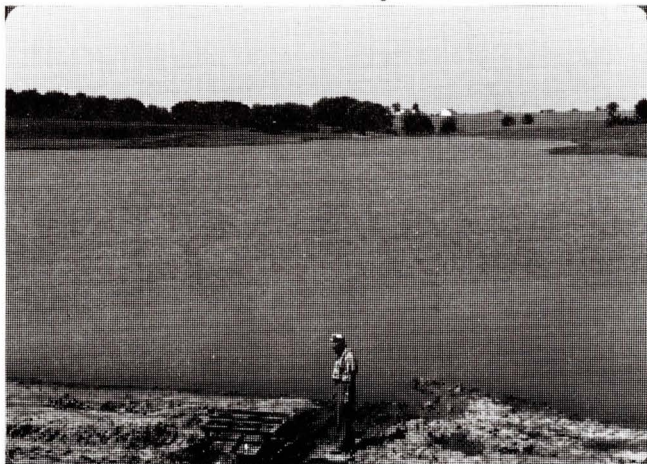




L.R. Verle Arnold, Eugene Francis, Christine Botts, Roger Fry--Former Office Staff, 1974 photo.



Drop inlet, site 27H, Big Wyacondah Watershed--Frank Shively farm.



Eugene Francis standing by hood inlet, site 21C, Big Wyacondah Watershed--Jack Moore farm.



L.R. Becky Hopkins, Fred Hainline, Margaret Cope, Wayne Mason--Present Office Staff, 1994 photo.

#### **SPECIAL BOOKLET FOR ANNIVERSARY**

This special 12 page booklet has been designated to note some of the highlights for 50 years of accomplishments and activities of the Davis County Soil Conservation District.

The DISTRICT COMMISSIONERS hope that the readers will enjoy the publication and would like to give a very special "THANK YOU" to Verle and Peggy Arnold for compiling this booklet.

#### **EXPRESSION OF THANKS**

We express our thanks and appreciation to all of those who have given us support in the conservation efforts of the past 50 years. Among those were: Soil Conservation Service, Iowa Dept. Soil Conservation, Extension Service, ASCS, FMHA, county, city, schools, FFA, 4-H, Voc-Ag, Isaac Walton League, County Conservation Board, Ministerial Assoc., Rotary Club, Lions Club, Chamber of Commerce, Jr. Chamber, contractors, banks, insurance agencies, Bloomfield Newspaper for special plaques, Hubbart Insurance for speech cash awards, and most of all the farmers and landowners who applied the practices.

LaVerne Weilbrenner  
Robert Boatman  
Sherry Birchmier  
Ray More  
Gerald Forsythe

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