

Des Moines County Soil and Water Conservation District



DISTRICT ACTIVITIES DURING 1996

JANUARY
-Election of Officers for 1996 resulted as follows: Chairperson- Jeff Bergman; Vice Chairperson- Sherman Smith.

-Appointments for 1996 resulted as follows: Treasurer- Jeff Bergman; Secretary- Jamie Fair; Assistant Commissioners- Laura Wagner-Ertz, Arlyn Musselman, Rick Querna, Mike Schwenker, Brad Weiss; RC&D Executive Board- Sherman Smith; County RC&D Board- Jeff Bergman; Education Committee- Tom Birkenstock, Mike Schwenker, Laura Wagner-Ertz; Long Range Plan Committee- Sherman Smith, Tom Birkenstock, Arlyn Musselman, Mike Schwenker; 50th Anniversary Committee- Frank Hedges, Brad Weiss; REAP- Jeff Bergman.
-Civil Rights Memo of Understanding was reviewed.
-Charles Nealey was selected to represent the District as "Cooperator of the Year" for the Goodyear Award.

-Mike Lewitke, DC, attended Total Quality Management (TQM) training in Fairfield.

FEBRUARY
-Don Lounsbury was appointed to the Flint Creek Advisory Committee.
-NACD & IASWDC dues were paid.
-John Horan, SCT, and Jamie Fair, SS, attended TQM training in Burlington.
-The District applied for grant funding for Little Flint and Knotty Creek Watersheds.

MARCH
-The District celebrated its 50th Anniversary with an Open House on March 1 at the District office.
-Jeff Bergman and Mike Lewitke attended the Spring Regional meeting in Albion on March 7.

-Tiffanie Huson was chosen as the Des Moines County winner of the IASWDC Auxiliary Scholarship.
-A \$500 donation was given to the Tri-State Agricultural Education Foundation for a scholarship.

APRIL
-Frank Hedges was elected Vice Chairperson.
-Soil and Water Stewardship Week was April 28-May 4.
-Wyatt Peterson, a student from Winfield-Mt. Union, job shadowed in the NRCS office April 18.

MAY
-The long range plan was approved and sent to the Division for approval.
-A Memo of Understanding between the District and FSA County Committee was approved.

-Jeff Bergman presented Tiffanie Huson with a \$100 scholarship May 6 at BHS Awards Assembly.
-Drew DeLang, SCA, was transferred to the Jefferson County Field Office as a Soil Conservationist effective May 28.

-Jamie Fair attended a state employee meeting May 21-23 in Des Moines.
-Mike Lewitke and Drew DeLang gave presentations for area school field days.

JUNE
-Jeff Bergman was selected to serve on a state TQM committee.
-Justin Binder started as a Soil Conservation Aide on June 3.
-Little Flint and Knotty Creek were approved for priority watersheds.

JULY
-Brad Weiss resigned as assistant commissioner.

AUGUST
-Justin Binder's last day was August 17.
-A meeting between FSA County Committee and the District was held to discuss EQIP Interim funding.

-Mike Lewitke, John Horan and Jamie Fair attended TQM training in Fairfield.
SEPTEMBER
-Michelle Maderak started as Soil Conservationist September 3.

-Lewis Major started as Soil Conservation Aide September 3.

-Jeff Bergman and Mike Lewitke attended Annual Conference on September 4-5 in Des Moines.

-Mike Lewitke volunteered at the Des Moines County Hazardous Material Clean-up Day September 28.

OCTOBER
-Todd Heckenberg was appointed Assistant Commissioner.

-Don Lounsbury was appointed to the RC&D Executive Board.

-A Mutual Agreement between USDA-Natural Resources Conservation Service, State of Iowa and the District was approved.

-Mike Lewitke attended COE wetland training October 7-11.

NOVEMBER
-A public meeting was held November 14 to get input on priority areas for 1998 EQIP funding.

-Myranell Dockendorff and Laura Wagner-Ertz were elected to the board.

-Myranell Dockendorff began her term and replaced Tom Birkenstock on the board.

-A Mutual Agreement between USDA-NRCS, Division of Soil Conservation, State Soil Conservation Committee, and the District was approved.

-A model riparian buffer strip was constructed on Wilma Groe's EWPR land.

DECEMBER
-Laura Wagner-Ertz attended the Fall Regional meeting in Oskaloosa on December 5.

-The Long Range Plan was approved from the state.

-Lewis Major's last day was December 5.

OFFICE STAFF

Michael F. Lewitke, District Conservationist
Michelle L. Maderak, Soil Conservationist (started September)
John J. Horan, Soil Conservation Technician
Tyler W. Messer, Soil Conservation Aide
Drew F. DeLang, Soil Conservation Aide (January-May)
Justin B. Binder, Soil Conservation Aide (June-August)
Lewis A. Major, Soil Conservation Aide (September-December)
Jamie L. Fair, State & District Secretary

AREA OFFICE STAFF

Bruce W. Trautman, Area Conservationist
Mark R. LaVan, Area Resource Soil Scientist
Douglas D. Morningstar, Civil Engineer
Sue M. Long, Civil Engineer
George Schaefer, Agricultural Engineer
Ron P. Wilson, Civil Engineering Technician
Kerry K. Richards, Computer specialist
Suzette D. Betts, Area Administrative Coordinator
Darlene G. Lauder, Area Secretary

COMMISSIONERS

Jeff S. Bergman - Chairperson, Treasurer
Frank C. Hedges - Vice-Chairperson
W. Donald Lounsbury
Sherman A. Smith
Thomas R. Birkenstock (January-October)
Myranell Dockendorff (started November)

ASSISTANT COMMISSIONERS

Arlyn L. Musselman
Michael W. Schwenker
Richard A. Querna
Laura S. Wagner-Ertz
Bradley J. Weiss (January-July)
Todd D. Heckenberg (started October)

Annual Report



Wetlands: Bringing wildlife & improved water quality to the surrounding community



by Michelle Maderak

In years past wetlands were converted to cropland, but as wildlife habitat becomes more important to the public and to the owners of this land there becomes a need to get as much information as possible to the public about the benefits of wetland restoration.

There are several valuable functions that wetlands serve for the community. Some of these functions include an increase in wildlife habitat, improved water quality, filtering of sediment, the reduction of soil erosion, and the reduction of flooding. Wetlands are also aesthetically pleasing.

Wetlands in the United States support 5,000 plant species, 190 species of amphibians, and a third of all native bird species. A good example of the contributions of wetlands to wildlife is the fact that two-thirds of America's wild ducks are hatched in prairie pothole marshes which are an integral part of wetlands. Planting wildflowers offers a showcase of color and beauty. This area is also an excellent attractant for songbirds and butterflies and will encourage a wide range of wildlife.

If you are interested in restoring wetlands in your neighborhood please contact Natural Resources Conservation Service at 319-753-6221 for more information.

Riparian Wetland Restored Along Flint Creek

By Mike Lewitke - NRCS

A good thing happened to some land in Des Moines County last fall because Wilma Groe wanted it, many volunteers did it. Trees Forever supported it, and several different governmental agencies cooperated.

It started back in '93 when floodwaters from Flint Creek tore through a levee on Wilma Groe's farm. The current ravaged the cropland, leaving deep scour holes, sandbars, and trash behind.

By fall of 1994 the levee was restored to protect a majority of the low lying cropland. But around 14 acres on the creek side of the levee, although still farmable, remained vulnerable to future flooding.

Following the '93 floods, federal legislation established the Emergency Wetlands Restoration Program (EWPR). EWPR was to provide private landowners an alternative to continued farming of flood-prone land. Under EWPR landowners could voluntarily remove cropland from production, permanently, in turn for a one-time easement payment. Wetlands would be restored on EWPR easement lands that would help alleviate future flooding as well as providing the many other environmental benefits of wetlands.

Wilma entered those 14 acres adjacent to Flint Creek into EWPR. Under agreement of her contract the land could be allowed to naturally re-vegetate. This process works and keeps program costs to a minimum, but it takes time. It would be many years of natural succession before a stable and diverse plant community would form. Wilma and many dedicated volunteers decided to lend nature a helping hand.

In November 1996 the Des Moines County Soil and Water Conservation District Commissioners approved a REAP (state cost-share) application for tree planting on Wilma's EWPR land. Craig Smith representing Trees Forever made a cash contribution to the project, enabling the purchase of larger, more expensive trees better fit to withstand flooding in the year of establishment.

On Saturday, November 16, under Sherm Lund's leadership, the project came together. Lewis Major of NRCS coordinated the hand planting of 225 trees and 1450 shrubs. Volunteers who planted included Burlington High School students (BHS Ecology Club, Student Council, and Water Testing Committee), the Elfin Society from GE, and Pam Plin of the Flint Creek Advisory Committee. The trees were Northern Redwoods, Pin Oaks, and Swamp White Oaks. All are tolerant of our climate and flood conditions. Shrubs add to the diversity and provide wildlife food and cover. Nature will fill in the rest with willows, cottonwoods, and other wet-tolerant species. In time nature would have done as good or better on her own. The volunteers simply gave her a jump-start.

There is a local organization called the Flint Creek Advisory Committee. Its purpose is to monitor the water quality of Flint Creek through regular sampling and testing, providing information to the public on its findings, and to advise the county on possible steps to improve the quality of the creek. This committee will refer to Wilma Groe's riparian restoration project as a model of good land use along streams. If riparian areas existed all up and down the stream corridor, the water quality would improve. It's nature's natural filter of silt, animal wastes, and other nutrients that wash off our landscape following each rainfall event. These riparian corridors are also important wildlife habitats, providing food, shelter, and travel lanes.

The true success of the project rests not on how many of the trees survive but on how many other landowners follow Wilma's lead in doing the right thing for the land. Thank you, Wilma, the volunteers, and all who contributed.

CONSERVE Our Land



Left to right: Andrew Carhoff, Jason Denning, Eric Rothen, Jeremy Kane, Matt Weber, Sarah Seitz.

Carhoff Receives Scholarship

Andrew Carhoff of Sperry is the 1996 recipient of a \$500 scholarship given by the Des Moines County Soil and Water Conservation District. The money was contributed to the Tri-State Agricultural Education Foundation which helps promote agriculture in the three state area.

The Foundation was established to assist students enrolling in Southeastern Community College agriculture programs.

Other organizations who made substantial contributions toward the 1996 scholarship fund are Americant Cyanamid, Des Moines County Farm Bureau, Don Nelson Memorial, Querna Seed Company, Raritan Bank, and Twomeys Company.

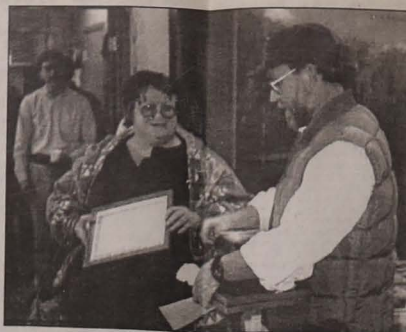


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Roger Kling of Mediapolis and Area Conservationist Bruce Trautman look over documents from when the District was formed. Roger's dad, Edwin, was one of the first three commissioners elected to serve on the board. The other two were Noah Schrock and John Blaul.



Chairperson Jeff Bergman presents a plaque and certificate to Carol Staff. Carol was a local winner in the New Cooperator Division of the Iowa Soil and Water Conservation Awards program.

50th Anniversary of District Celebrated

The Des Moines County Soil and Water Conservation District Commissioners celebrated the 50th Anniversary of the District with an open house on Friday, March 1, 1996.

During a program held at noon, certificates were presented to Carol Staff and Charles Nealey as local winners of the Iowa Soil and Water Conservation Awards

program. Nealey also was honored with plaques for his selection as Regional winner of the awards program.

Guests attending enjoyed picture displays and free memorabilia. The District also has hats available for a donation. The hats include the District's name and anniversary date and are available in hunter green, black, navy, and burgundy.

Ag Waste Management

By John Horan, Technician

There has been a lot of attention given lately to ag waste, both pro and con. This article is being written to help land users understand what is available for them, both in the capture and storage plus the utilization of ag waste.

The State of Iowa has a cost-share program for ag waste called Organic Nutrient Management Program (ONMP). ONMP is available to help interested individuals construct ag waste systems and better utilize ag waste.

By capturing the waste and applying it in an appropriate manner, the waste is better utilized by crops and prevents the contamination of both surface and underground water supplies.

There are many types of structures that can be used to accomplish this. It may be as extensive as a pond or lagoon type structure used to store waste or as simple as a settling basin at the lower end of a lot area to prevent the solids from

entering a stream. A dry stacking facility is another structure which may be used or a combination of the above mentioned structures.

The availability of nutrients (nitrogen, phosphate, and potash) in ag waste can also be calculated. This is known as an ag waste utilization plan. These calculations prevent the over-application of ag waste to the soil. As mentioned before, this makes it possible for plants to better utilize the nutrients because they have been applied in the proper amounts for productivity. It also prevents the excess nutrients from being washed into a stream or leached into your underground water supply.

Anyone interested in signing up for ONMP funds or having a problem with ag waste management, may contact the NRCS office for more information.

REVOLVING FUND ACCOUNT

July 1, 1995 - June 30, 1996

Balance on hand, July 1, 1995	\$2360.88
Receipts:	
Flag & Scale Sales	33.00
Dues Reimbursement	400.00
State Reimbursement	1887.99
Donations	1780.00
50th Anniversary Hat Donations	57.00
Interest	44.99
	\$4202.98

Expenses:	
Supplies & Postage	1241.28
Equipment	159.92
Subscriptions & Ads	66.00
IASWCDC Dues	500.00
NACD Dues	300.00
Commissioner Brochures	129.07
50th Anniversary Open House	227.83
50th Anniversary Merchandise	584.09
Plat Books	24.00
Dot Scales	85.50
Sales Tax	2.28
IASWCDC Scholarship	100.00
Awards & Frames	50.00
Tri-State Education Scholarship	500.00
	\$3969.97
Balance on hand, June 30, 1996	\$2593.89

DISTRICT ACCOMPLISHMENTS

July 1, 1995 - June 30, 1996

	Amount	Unit
New District Cooperators on 2047 acres	23	No.
Individuals or Groups Assisted	296	No.
Individuals or Groups Applying Practices	76	No.
Conservation Cover Established	200	Acres
Conservation Tillage	240	Acres
Grassed Waterways Established	53	Acres
Terraces Constructed	31995	Ft.
Water & Sediment Control Basin Constructed	2	No.
Field Borders	13320	Ft.
Cropland Acres Treated	1536	Acres
Woodland Improvement	95	Acres
Farmstead Windbreaks Constructed	1	No.
Tree Plantings Completed	105	Acres

No-Till Incentive Payments Available

If you are interested in trying no-till for the first time, the Des Moines County Soil and Water Conservation District has IFIP funds available as incentive payments. The one-time payment is \$10/acre for a 60 acre maximum area. You

will then be required to complete the performance agreement by continuing the practice for the following two years. The deadline to sign up is April 1. If you would like more details, call the NRCS office.



EXPENDITURES

July 1, 1995 - June 30, 1996 Expenditures of funds provided by State of Iowa for Commissioners' Expenses, Office Supplies and Expenses, Iowa Financial Incentive Program (IFIP), Resource Enhancement and Protection Program (REAP), and Organic Nutrient Management Program (ONMP)

1M Budget & Operating expenses	
Allocation	\$2500.00
Commissioners Expense	802.29
Office Expense	1297.71
IASWCDC Dues	280.00
NACD Dues	150.00
Balance	-0-

REAP Practices 1995-96	
Allocation	\$11538.90
Timber Stand Improvement, 64 ac completed	5388.90
Timber Stand Improvement, incomplete	712.50
Tree Planting, incomplete	5437.50
Balance	-0-

REAP Forestry/Native Grasses 1995-96	
Allocation	\$7820.00
Timber Stand Improvement, 34.6 ac completed	2595.00
Windbreak, 1 completed	439.50
Tree Planting, 13.9 ac completed	3000.00
Tree Planting, incomplete	1453.50
Balance	332.00

REAP Practices 1994-95	
Allocation	\$6286.00
Tree Planting, 16 ac completed	5709.72
Returned to DSC	558.28
Balance	-0-

REAP Forestry/Native Grasses 1994-95	
Allocation	\$3198.00
Tree Planting, 4 ac completed	1427.43
Timber Stand Improvement, 12.2 ac completed	916.00
Returned to DSC	855.57
Balance	-0-

REAP Practices 1993-94	
Allocation	\$6096.00
Conservation Cover, 40 ac completed	3000.00
Timber Stand Improvement, 234.8 ac completed	17612.00
Tree Planting, 77.7 ac completed	25628.84
Windbreaks, 4 completed	2479.39
Returned to DSC	12614.87
Balance	-0-

REAP Forestry/Native Grasses 1993-94	
Allocation	\$5586.00
Timber Stand Improvement, 23.9 ac completed	1792.50
Tree Planting, 5.0 ac completed	1526.35
Returned to DSC	2267.25
Balance	-0-

IFIP 1995-96	
Allocation	20380.00
Waterways, 2300 ft completed	2974.13
Waterways, incomplete	7009.00
Terraces, 1300 ft completed	2519.23
Terraces, incomplete	6007.64
Water & Sediment Control Basin, 1 completed	1685.00
Balance	-0-

IFIP 1994-95	
Allocation	\$46793.00
No Till, 131.8 ac completed	1318.00
Terraces, 7820 ft completed	15241.53
Terraces, incomplete	19308.50
Waterways, 1550 ft completed	2527.00
Water & Sediment Control Basin, 1 completed	1247.50
Grade Stabilization Structures, incomplete	6936.12
Returned to DSC	214.35
Balance	-0-

IFIP 1993-94	
Allocation	\$18793.00
Terraces, 9105 ft completed	16283.33
No Till, 207.8 ac completed	2078.00
Returned to DSC	431.47
Balance	-0-

ONMP 1994	
Allocation	8640.00
2 projects completed	8640.00
Balance	-0-

ONMP 1995	
Allocation	\$1122.00
Returned to DSC	1122.00
Balance	-0-

ONMP 1996	
Allocation	\$16568.00
Returned to DSC	16568.00
Balance	-0-



Scholarship Recipient

Tiffanie Huson was chosen as the 1996 recipient of the Des Moines County Soil and Water Conservation District scholarship in conjunction with the Iowa Association of Soil and Water Conservation District Commissioners Auxiliary scholarship.

Tiffanie was chosen from the applications received from seniors throughout the county. Tiffanie graduated in May from Burlington High School and started college in August at Montana State University in Bozeman, Montana. Tiffanie is the daughter of Richard and Marcene Huson of Burlington.