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Soil Conservation Issue

April 24, 1985

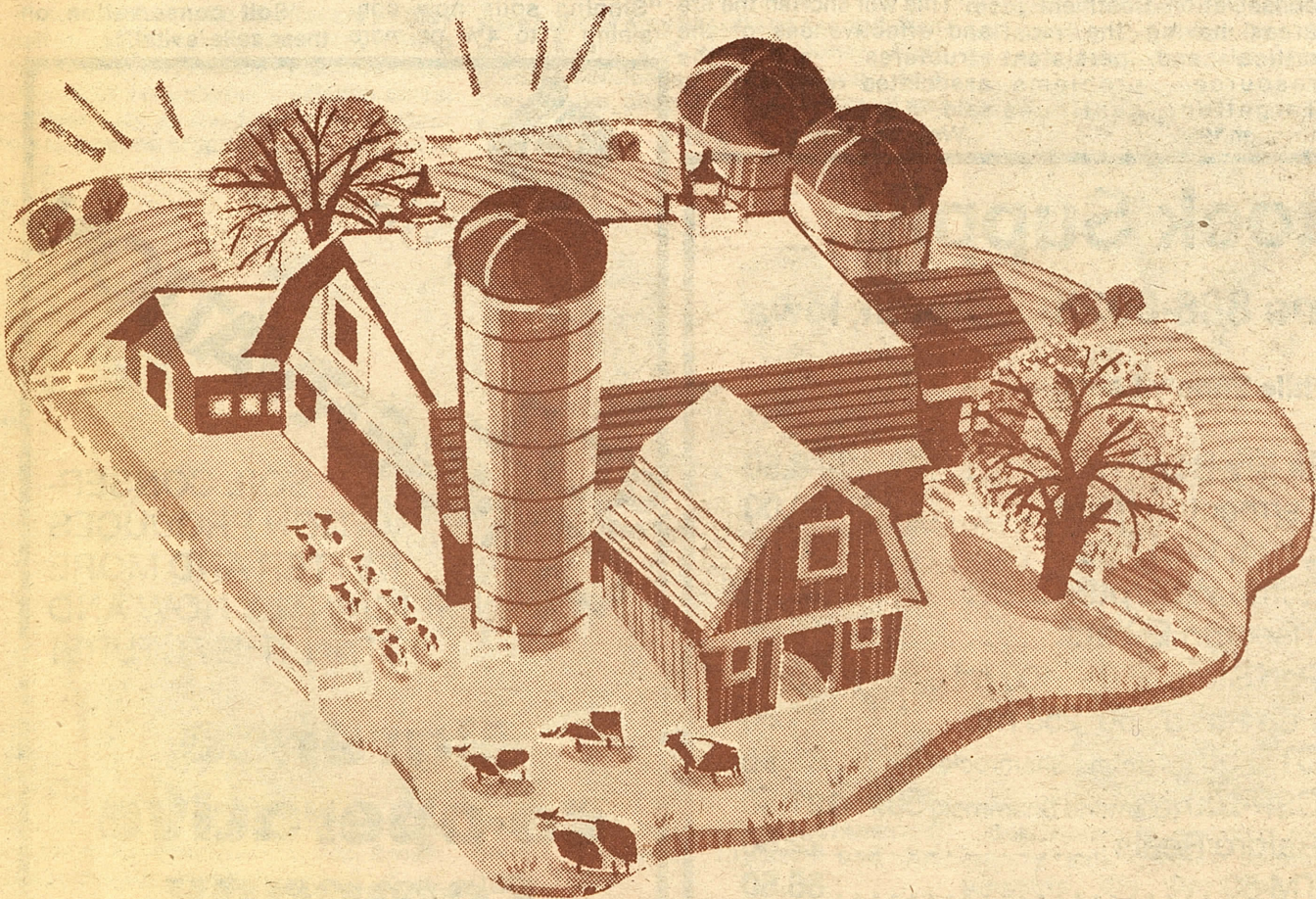
Soil Conservation

50th

Anniversary

of the

SOIL CONSERVATION SERVICE



Soil Conservation Works

1985 Cedar County Conservation publication staff:
Stuart Clark, Joe Giannini, Sally Taylor, Pat Kroemer and Linda Giles

Soil Conservation - Proud Tradition For 50 Years

The Golden Anniversary of the Soil Conservation Service will be observed April 27, marking a milestone in a voluntary conservation movement that has involved more than 2 million farmers, ranchers, and other land users.

"SCS can be proud of what it has done," said Peter Myers, Chief of the agency. "It has helped to reduce soil erosion, conserve water, reduce flooding, improve rangeland, and protect other natural resources. Today, 2 out of every 5 acres of farmland are adequately protected against soil erosion."

In the Cedar Soil Conservation District, more than 900 farmers are cooperators with the district. "Our farmers have steadily applied the more expensive practices like terraces and ponds, and they've also been leaders in the use of management practices like conservation tillage and no-till," says Kurt Hoeft, District Conservationist for SCS. Nationwide, farmers used conservation tillage on 29% of the cropland in 1984. The figure is 26% in Cedar county.

"I'd be the first to say that we have a long way to go yet in getting soil losses in the

county under control," says Hoeft. "But I also think we need to pay tribute to the farmers who have done that job, or most of it, on their land. More than ever, as we look to the next 50 years, it will take a team effort," Hoeft says.

"Everyone in the United States has benefited from the protection of soil productivity and a cleaner environment," Hoeft said. "It's time for celebration as we observe 50 years of soil conservation and it's time for renewed commitment as we look ahead."

rehabilitation of disaster-damaged agricultural land, emergency protection against high water, loan of equipment, and assistance in transportation.

Sept. 1966

SCS is authorized to provide soil surveys and interpretations to assist states and other public agencies in community planning and resource planning.

June 1967

Conservation Districts assisted by SCS surpasses 3,000, covering 95% of the nation's farmland.

July 1969

Secretary's Memorandum 1665 assigns SCS leadership for Resource Conservation and Development.

Nov. 1977

Congress passes the Soil and Water Resource Conservation Act (RCA) to appraise the condition of the soil, water, and related resources on the nation's nonfederal land and to develop a program to maintain or improve their condition.

Oct. 1982

Soil Conservation Service initiates "targeting," a USDA program accelerating conservation treatment in areas having the most critical and persistent resource problems. associated reservoir," he Targeting continues through 1985.

Soil Practices Protect Soil, Save Money

Good management of soil and water not only protects the soil resource within field boundaries, it also has many off-site benefits, according to Stewart Melvin, Iowa State University extension agricultural engineer. These benefits include cost savings to taxpayers, and more and better water supplies for the state's inhabitants.

"Most of the sediment produced by a badly eroded field is deposited in a lower area within the field boundary," Melvin said. "But the small portion of sediment that does move out of the field often results in high off-site costs."

"This sediment is deposited in natural or man-made drainage systems--road ditches, culverts or drainage ditches--and slow-moving bodies of water such as ponds, lakes or small streams, before it is carried to a major river or stream."

How much off-site sediment deposits cost taxpayers each year isn't known, Melvin said. But most experts estimate the cost in millions of dollars in Iowa alone.

Major costs are incurred by transportation authorities in maintaining open road culverts, dredging rivers to maintain navigation channels, cleaning ditches and repairing roadbed damage resulting from saturated roadfills and overtopping. Additional costs are incurred during dust storms resulting from wind erosion and after roadbed flooding, sediment deposition or scouring of roadbeds.

Water supplies, both public and private, also may be affected by soil erosion. Melvin said some major river-impoundment reservoirs in Iowa are being filled with sediment at a faster rate than expected at the time of construction.

"This will shorten the life and effectiveness of the structures and the associated reservoir," he said.

Water quality also is af-

ected by excessive erosion from off-site sources in water bodies.

Sediment-laden water often carries nutrients and pesticides into water bodies where natural cycling processes occur, Melvin said. This may result in excessive algae and other plant growth in summer.

"The more organic growth there is in the water, the more ammonia there is, and the less oxygen there is," Melvin said. "These con-

ditions can cause adverse effects in aquatic life."

For example, sediment loads in rock bottom streams can destroy game fish habitat and breeding areas.

"But there are many other impacts that result from excessive off-site erosion," Melvin said. "No longer can we only consider the effect of conservation practices on the land where they are installed because many downstream areas often are affected as well."

organic matter will have insignificant increases during the same, highly managed 8 to 10-year period."

In order to maintain long-term productivity in favorable soils, Miller says farmers must bring soil erosion down to less than 5 tons per acre per year. This means less tillage, building more terraces and instituting other conservation practices, such as rotating crops with sod-based grasses and legumes and contour farming.

Other soils in Iowa have either unfavorable or fragile subsoils. Soils with unfavorable subsoils include those with a rooting depth of 40 inches or more and a clay content of more than 40%. Many of the soils in south-central Iowa are in this group.

Fragile soils are on slopes of 2% or more and have a rooting depth of less than 40 inches. Examples of fragile soils include those with rock, gravel, boulders, and coarse sands within 40 inches of the ground surface. In Iowa, most fragile soils are located in the northeastern counties.

"Any loss of productivity in soils with unfavorable subsoils is permanent," Miller said. "And continued loss of soil in areas with fragile soils could lead to a loss of nearly all productivity."

"When most soil material above rock or coarse sands is removed by erosion, there is little left for plant roots to grow in," he said.

"Soil conservation on these soils is vital."

SCS Celebrates 50 Years - 1935 to 1985

Sept. 19, 1933

The Soil Erosion Service is established in the U.S. Department of the Interior. Hugh Hammond Bennett, transferred from the U.S. Department of Agriculture, is appointed Director.

May 1934

First great dust storm in the Great Plains sweeps soil particles over Washington, D.C., and 300 miles further east into the Atlantic Ocean.

March 1935

Second great dust storm in Kansas, Colorado, Texas, and Oklahoma sweeps soil particles over Washington, D.C., and other eastern cities. Soil Erosion Service is transferred from the Department of the Interior to the Department of Agriculture.

April 27, 1935

The 74th Congress enacts the Soil Conservation Act establishing the Soil Conservation Service by a unanimous vote. Hugh H. Bennett is named Chief.

Dec. 1935

SCS reaches peak (498) of Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) Camps operated for conservation work in rural areas around the nation.

Feb. 1937

The President urges all state governors to pass state legislation to form Conservation Districts.

Nov. 1939

SCS is assigned responsibility for flood control on agricultural lands.

Nov. 1952

SCS is assigned responsibility for all Soil Survey activities of USDA.

April 1953

SCS is assigned responsibility for administering all USDA flood control and river basin investigations.

Aug. 1954

Public Law 83-566, the Small Watershed Protection and Flood Prevention Act, is approved by the President. It assigns primary responsibility in USDA for cooperation with local organizations to provide flood control assistance to rural communities.

April 1956

SCS is assigned responsibility for the National Inventory of Soil and Water needs on nonfederal lands.

March 1963

SCS is assigned responsibility for technical assistance in the

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Kroemer Uses Conservation Practices On Century Farm

Four generations of the Kroemer family have farmed the home place east of Clarence in the past 107 years and Terry Kroemer says that it is essential for soil conservation to be used to keep the land productive. "This is a century farm and I'm the 4th generation Kroemer to live here," Terry Kroemer said. "I have to save the soil. If I don't, it won't take too many more generations before it will all be gone."

Terry and his wife, Pat, and their 2 sons, Cam, 10 and Ethan, 7, are carrying on the Kroemer family tradition on the home place, but they are not traditional in their land use practices. In an effort to save soil, money and time, Terry began using no-till last year. This year he will have 300 of his 390 rented acres in no-till or ridge till corn or beans.

Terry was satisfied with his no-till production last year, but admits that he had a few problems with root worms and was bothered by a lack of rain. But he thinks he can take care of the root worm problem with crop rotation and he can hope for better weather.

He was the winner of the conservation tillage division award in Cedar county last year and he has big plans for the 1985 crop season. This year he is trying something new on part of his land. He is using the ridge till method.

Terry built ridges in his fields last June with a special cultivator. The Noble cultivator he used was the first one in this area and he says he knows of only one other person in Cedar county who is using ridge till.

With ridge till the farmer does not touch the ground in the fall or spring. Terry says he will just go right into the field with his special planter, outfitted with ridge till sweeps.

A coulters splits the ground and 2 disc blades take 2 to 3 inches of residue and soil off the top of the ridge before the seed is planted.

Terry says the residue keeps the ground below moist and the discs leave bare ground on the ridge. He says he doesn't have to worry about soil being too dry to plant in because it has been covered with crop residue.

When Terry decided to go with ridge till, he said he wanted to get the crop residue off the top of the row because it can cause stunted growth of the new crop. He also said ridge till allows him to plant in mellow soil.

The ridges he uses in his fields are 36 inches apart. Terry says his pet peeve with the SCS is the amount of money spent on building terraces. He says that he can save more soil using ridge tilling than can be saved with terraces and he can do it for much less money.

He says it is true that heavy rains can cause ridges to break, but other ridges will catch the soil and keep it on his land. On other property, he says the land ends up somewhere in Louisiana.

During the spring, Terry says the hardest thing for no-tillers to watch is other farmers discing up their fields. He says it is called recreational tillage and he goes fishing while others practice it.

This year Terry will plant about 50 acres of soybeans into corn ground and the remainder will be corn into bean ground, corn into corn or corn into sod ground.

In addition, he will have about 40 acres of reduced till ground and 50 acres seeded down in hay and oats. He says he is in the 1985 set aside program "all

the way."

The Kroemers also produce about 150 head of cattle and 500 hogs a year on their farm.

As a young farmer, Terry says he had to find ways to save money and no-till has been one way to go. He says young farmers cannot afford big new equipment and many that do have big tractors "go out and beat the daylight out of the ground."

He says any young farmer can start out today with about \$15,000 in used equipment.

He also says that he can put a crop in the ground using just 3/4 of a gallon of fuel per acre, while others are using up to 5.

Terry also says that he hasn't found any need for greater use of chemicals with his no-till crops.

Although he has found no-till corn yields are not quite as good as those from conventional ground, he says no-till beans have better yields.

He is a member of the Cedar County No-Till Club and says the club has been of great help to many young farmers and to people who want to learn more about no-till before they try it.

Ridge Farming Benefits Outweigh Burdens: ISU

Ridge farming requires more management than other conservation tillage methods but the benefits outweigh the disadvantages, according to an Iowa State University Extension agronomist. Benefits of ridge farming include less soil and water loss as well as less fuel, labor and time.

"The concept of farming on ridges is not new," Min Amemiya, ISU Extension agronomist, said. "But it is proving to be especially attractive to those who wish to use conservation tillage on poorly drained soils that remain cold and wet in the spring."

Amemiya said crops planted with no-tillage or strip tillage on unridged land are subject to wet and cold soil conditions because the seed is planted in a furrow into which water can accumulate. By planting on the ridge built when the previous crop is laid by, farmers can prevent water from standing over the rows. Excess water drains from the higher ridge to the lower, row middles.

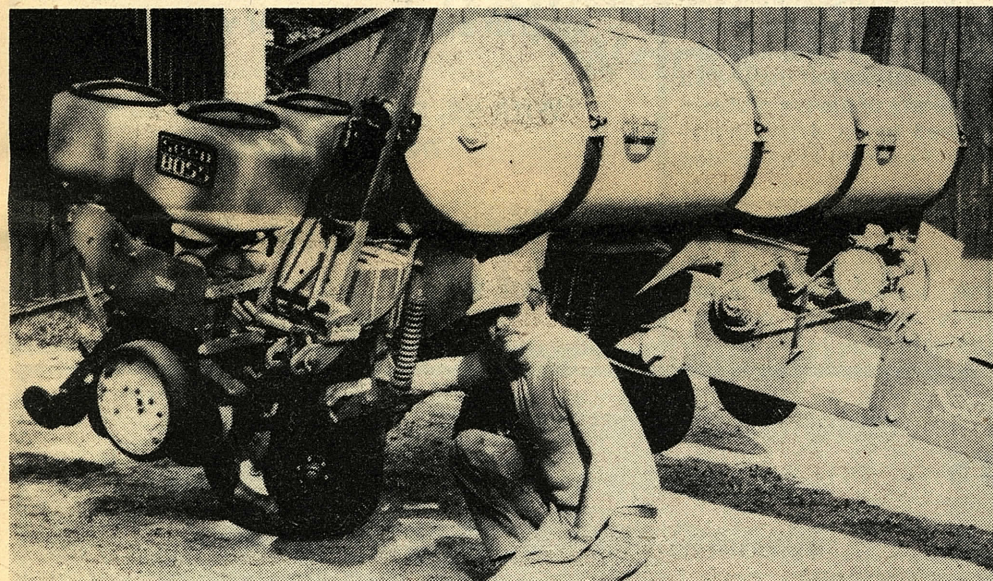
On sloping land, ridges that follow the contour of the land also act as mini-terraces, providing erosion control benefits, the agronomist said.

"By using ridge farming to institute effective conservation tillage on even poorly drained soils, farmers can save time and money," Amemiya said. "One-pass tillage and planting systems by definition reduce field operations by eliminating fall and early spring work. This means a reduction in time, fuel and labor needs, and in most instances, a reduction in equipment inventory."

Despite the system's many benefits, ridge farming has some drawbacks.

Amemiya urges farmers to consider the following tradeoffs before implementing ridge farming on their land:

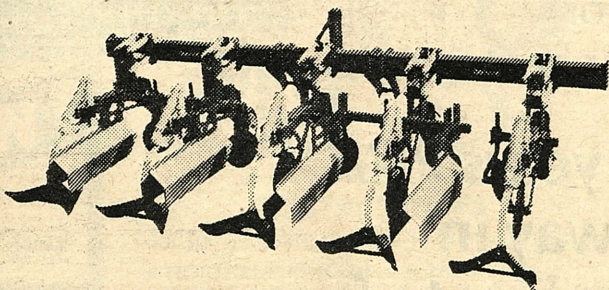
- When ridge farming, herbicide options are reduced, and there is no opportunity for preplant incorporation.
- Using this system, farmers must cultivate for weed control in the row middles and to rebuild ridges. A rolling cultivator or sweep-disk hiller-type cultivator should be used on dry soils-- instead of a regular shovel-type cultivator -- to avoid residue blockage. On wetter soils, disk hillers can create slabby conditions and cause crop damage. But Amemiya said sweeps modified with vertical wings can be used to push soil from the middle to the rows without crop damage.
- The ridges must be maintained throughout the year. Wheel spacing on equipment needs to be modified so no traffic is allowed on ridge tops. During harvest, axle loads of combines, wagons and trucks can cause excessive compaction. During spring, the loads of equipment associated with herbicide and fertilizer application can cause similar problems. During winter, farmers should not let livestock graze on the harvested fields.
- All crops in a rotation must have the same row width. Ridges are not suited to row widths less than 30 inches.
- Ridging soybean land before harvest may cover low-setting pods or may result in low-setting pods being too close to the ground for efficient harvest. Amemiya said some farmers delay ridging on soybean land until after harvest to prevent such losses.
- During planting, extra care must be taken to keep the planter on the ridge. The use of stabilizer coulters, cone wheels or angled wheels running against the sides of the ridge may be needed to hold the planter on the ridge.



Terry Kroemer, Lowden, proud of his family's century farm feels it's up to him to save the soil for future generations. Kroemer plans on using the ridge till method of no-till planting. This is believed to be the first ridge till planter set up in Cedar county.

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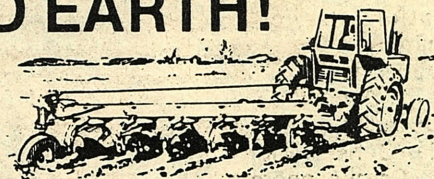
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Steve Driscoll Has Been Conserving Soil For Years

"I want to sell corn down the Mississippi, not soil," says Cedar county soil commissioner, Steve Driscoll.

The Mechanicsville farmer, who became a soil commissioner Jan. 1, also has this to say about soil conservation: "My goal is to teach landlords not to move the soil around so much before getting ready to plant."

Driscoll has practiced what he preaches for the last 7 years. He has put his plow away and started to slow the soil down. Now he maintains he saves the soil on his land instead of sending it to Louisiana.

"I found out this is the way to go," he says about no-till.

Driscoll, who is using no-till on 200 acres this year, got into the method through a combination of factors. "I didn't have a lot of money when I first started farming. Also, I ran out of time for planting."

His cousin convinced him to try no-till and, he adds, "I came out with a pretty fair yield." He admits he has had "some ups and downs" over the years, but things have been "mostly good enough to stick with no-till."

His advice to farmers, however, is, "Start out slow and ease into it." Again, that's what Driscoll did and indeed is still doing. Of the 500 acres he will plant with corn this year, half is no-till

while the other half is conventional till.

He has discovered, though, that yields have stayed the same from the 2 methods. And he points out, "I'm getting closer to no-tilling everything." An added advantage to converting totally is that, according to Driscoll, "chemicals are getting better too."

He is also an agent for Wyffels Hybrids and this is another reason he is likely to switch to no-till completely. "It's very important to get a vigorous seed and Wyffels is a top vigorous corn as far as I'm concerned - it comes out of the ground fast."

Driscoll has put his money where his mouth is regarding no-till. He bought a 4-row planter which "cost a lot of money, but saved me a lot too." He has also found he saves on tractor fuel costs by as much as half and that he spends less hours on the tractor.

Furthermore, he does custom work for other farmers with his no-till planter.

Driscoll hopes to begin planting about now and expects to be through in 10 days. He rents 160 acres from his mother at RR3, Tipton, and 256 acres in Johnson county.

Of the Cedar county land, 65 acres will be under no-till, while 135 acres are involved in Johnson county. He plans to plant a total of 500 acres of corn and 14 acres of beans.

His equipment consists of the planter with coulters and liquid fertilizer attachments, a John Deere 4230 and a sprayer.

Despite his work, Driscoll still finds time to devote to his new job as soil commissioner. It's a voluntary position he will hold for the next 6 years. He attends monthly meetings, as well as neighborhood meetings, all in an effort to swell support for the no-till cause.

He's also involved in the Cedar county no-till club, which meets the first Monday of each month in the courthouse basement. There, speakers from the extension office, fertilizer and seed corn companies talk to new no-till farmers.

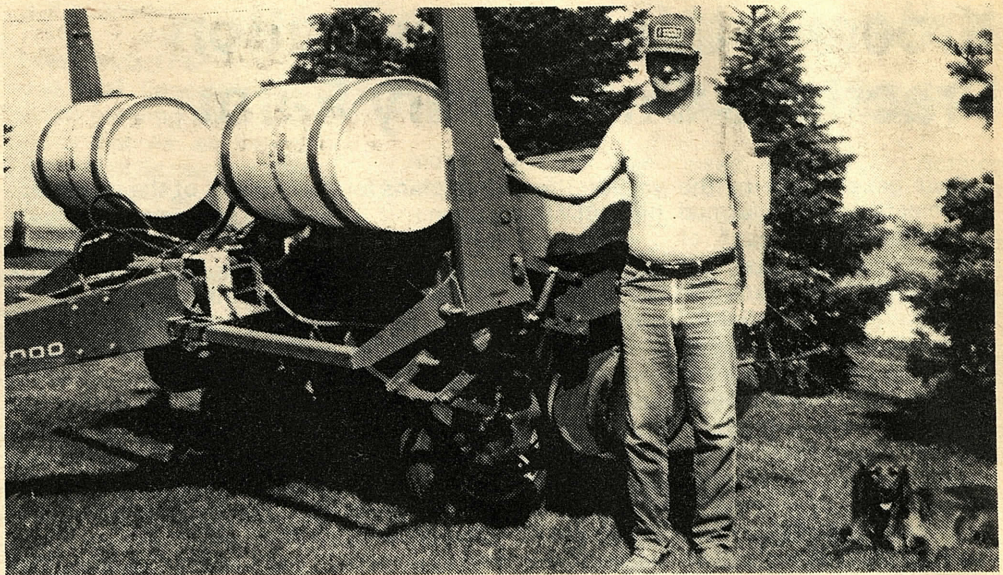
All this activity is paying off, according to Driscoll. "It (no-till) is real popular," he says. "It's coming real fast." And he predicts, "In the next 5 years there'll be over half the ground in no-till."

An indication of this is that applications for the \$200 grant given to farmers the first year they try no-till are "tremendous" this year.

Driscoll refers to another sign of the times: "Landlords want me to rent their ground because I'm a no-till farmer." He says he is happy they are looking at saving their soil and adds, "Farmers are finally starting to wake up."

Farmers Voice Concern About Water Quality

Iowa farmers are beginning to get concerned about the quality of the state's water, according to the fall



Steve Driscoll and his dog pose beside the farmer's 4-row planter. Driscoll uses the planter on his own land and does custom work for other farmers. He says the 4-year old machine cost him a lot of money, but saved him a lot too.

1983 Iowa Farm and Rural Life poll.

Of 2,011 Iowa farmers randomly sampled in the poll, 47% felt water quality was a problem in Iowa. Thirty percent said their community had a severe or moderate water quality problem, and 20% felt they had a water quality problem on their farm.

In general, respondents viewed the problem as being much worse the farther it was from home, Paul Lasley, Iowa State University Extension sociologist, said. But further analysis of survey responses showed that farmers' perceptions of water quality problems vary across the state.

For example, almost one-third of the farmers in the Creston and Ottumwa extension areas felt they had a moderate or severe problem on their farms. Areas in north and eastern Iowa tended to report less water quality problems.

The amount of available drinking water was not as great a concern to the farmers as water quality, Lasley noted.

About one-third of the respondents felt Iowa had a water quantity problem, but only 18% felt their community had a water availability problem. Fourteen percent said they had a problem with water availability on their farm. From these results, water specialists said.

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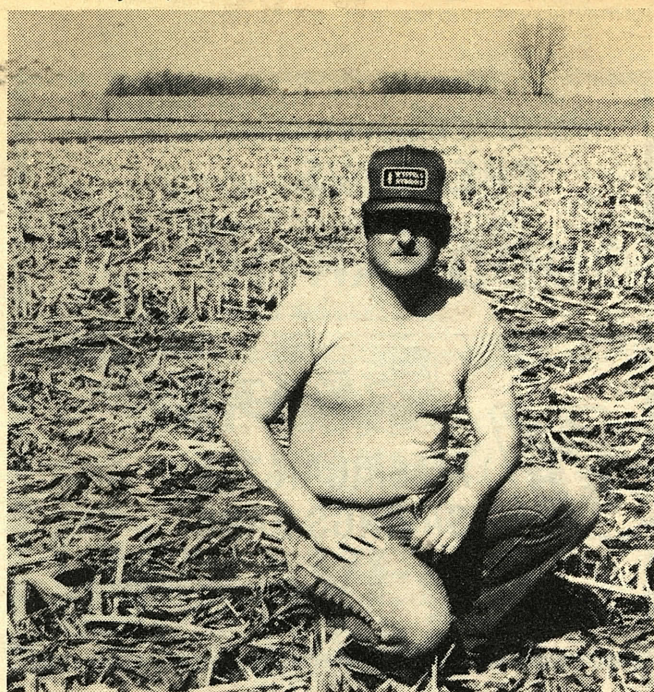
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No-till advocate Steve Driscoll is shown on the land on which he is practicing soil conservation. The land, at RR3, Tipton, consists of 160 acres, of which Driscoll is planting 65 using no-till.

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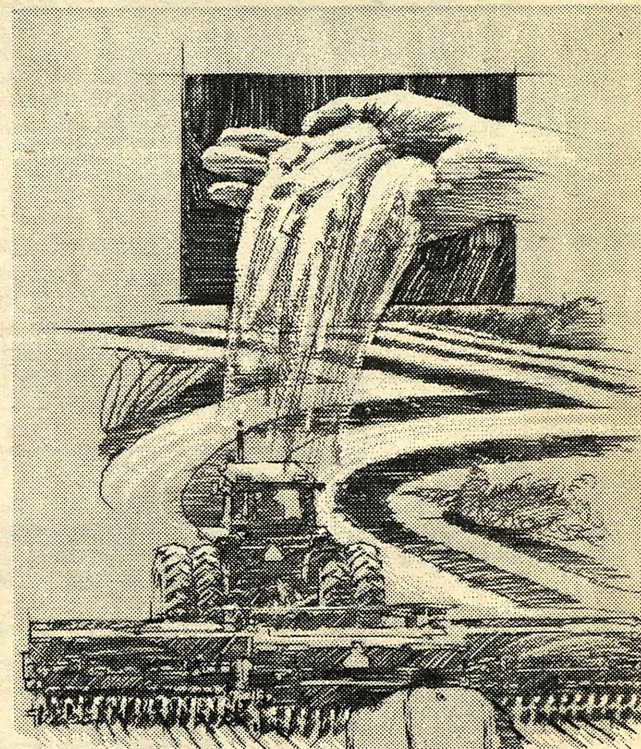
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Roland Fox Receives SCS Help On Farm Pond Project

After a hard day in the field Roland and Marlene Fox, Lowden, can now sit down in the shade of their farm home and look out over their beautiful clear blue pond.

After looking at a ditch full of junk and trees for over 30 years and having water run through the ditch during most seasons, the Foxes decided they either had to do some extensive tiling or have a pond built. The idea of the pond was more appealing, so they put their names on the list with the Soil Conservation Service, where it stayed for 2 years.

The SCS has funds available to use for projects that can help conserve the soil in the area, such as terracing, no-till planting and ponds. The government will pay up to a predetermined percentage of the cost of the project. The SCS paid \$3,500 of the Foxes' bill or 75%. This percentage greatly depends on the funds that are available each year and the number of people wanting the funds.

"Things happened pretty fast when the SCS decided

to do the job," said Roland Fox. "We had to get someone in to clear the area of the junk and trees before work on the pond could be started."

Judy Eiselstein of the SCS office looked over the area and designed the pond, which covers 1.1 acres.

Weaver's Custom Earth Moving, Tipton, was contracted for the job since they had worked on similar projects of this type.

"Weaver's have been out to check their work on the pond twice since it was finished in September," said Fox. "It's nice to see someone take pride in their work."

The 10 foot deep pond was dug out on the bottom to form a bowl shape. This design is used to slow the formation of algae.

"The pond filled faster than anyone expected," commented Fox. "Just as the equipment was being loaded it began to rain. We did lose some of the soil that had been hauled out of the pond and up into the hollows, but it will be worked down again and then

reseeded."

The area around the pond is now in government set aside acres and only a strip between the road and the pond will have a crop of hay. The rest will be mowed and left. There will be no livestock in the pasture around the pond.

One little snag that came up after the project began was the need for a state permit. Since the Foxes' farm is within 2 miles of the town of Lowden, they had to apply for a special permit to build from the State Department of Water, Air and Waste management. This was needed in the event the dam would ever burst and carry the water into town. The pond, filled now, would have to raise 10 feet before it would run out of the spillway. Fox said that was unlikely to happen.

This fall and next spring the Conservation Commission will stock the pond with bass, bluegill and catfish. The Foxes were told the catfish usually don't reproduce in farm ponds, but if the water was clear, cool and deep enough they



Roland Fox, Lowden, enjoys walking down to his new pond and watching the ducks and geese who have stopped by for the evening. The pond is to be stocked in August with bluegill, bass and catfish.

might reproduce. In other cases the ponds are restocked with catfish.

"We've been told it will take 2 years for the fish to be large enough to fish out," Fox said. "The fish will have to be watched so the bluegill don't overtake the bass

population. But the bluegill are needed since they are what the bass feed on."

"We also had to take out extra insurance now in the event that someone would get hurt out there, Fox said. "Although the project was partially funded by the

government, the Foxes are not required to open the pond to the public.

"We aren't done out at the pond yet," Fox said, as he walked near the pond. "We want to plant some trees and shrubs out here and make it a real nice looking pond."

Plan Your Farm — Farm Your Plan

by Kurtis F. Hoeft
District Conservationist

Cedar county has long had a major role in producing food for foreign and domestic markets, but it cannot continue with the present rate of soil erosion. When our topsoil is gone, our capacity to produce goes with it.

What should farmers shoot for?

Farmers should aim for the highest production consistent with the use of the soil on a sustained basis. The answer is more conservation, including conservation tillage, terraces and other soil and water management practices.

Reduced tillage, terraces,

no-till, and contouring are conservation practices especially suited to Cedar county. The graph shows the increase of no-till the last 5 years. No-till can fit most farm operations in the county.

Getting a soil and water conservation plan is the first step in deciding how to treat your farm. The plan gives the farmer a detailed look at the soils on his farm, estimated soil loss with his present cropping practices and alternatives he may consider to reduce soil loss to acceptable levels.

The conservation plan is a good tool for making farm management decisions. It can indicate areas where row crops can be grown intensively while maintaining soil productivity.

There is no cost or obligation attached in having a conservation plan developed for your farm. Interested farmers should contact the S.C.S. office.

The soil and water conservation movement is 50 years old and its primary objective has been and still is to reduce soil erosion.

Soil Conservation Pays



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This 1.1 acre pond north of Lowden on the Roland Fox farm has taken the place of a ravine filled with junk and old trees. The pond, designed by the SCS, was 75% funded by the Soil Conservation Service.



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Soil Scientist

West Branch, Iowa
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1984 District Activities and Projects

January
Commissioners held their regular meeting Jan. 9, elected officers and appointed assistants: Joel Brown, chairman; Robert Niermeyer, vice-chairman; Ken Muller, secretary; Melanie Schott, treasurer and assistants Richard Kreinbring and Darrell Brown.

A follow-up week for farmers was held Jan. 23-27. District commissioners donated \$50 toward purchase of tree seedlings with the Cedar County Sportsmans Club.

The Eastern Iowa Conservation Tillage Show was held in Cedar Rapids Jan. 31 and Feb. 1. Commissioner Jim Bowie gave a presentation.

February
District Conservationist Kurt Hoeft gave a presentation on wildlife and windbreak plantings to the Women of Farm Bureau on Feb. 7.

KGAN-TV interviewed DC Hoeft and Soil Conservation Technician Judy Eiselstein on wind erosion in the county.

Commissioners held their regular meeting Feb. 13. Follow-up day in Pioneer township was held on the 15th for landusers who received conservation folders.

DC Hoeft and Commissioner Randall Shaul attended a forage marketing meeting in DeWitt on the 15th.

Commissioners William Davidson II and Randall Shaul assisted with the district's first Iowa Soil 2000 meeting in Stanwood Feb. 22.

Education committee activities being promoted this year: youth leadership camp, essay contest, and seedling trees for class activity.

March
Annual Soil Conservation District and Master Corn Growers banquet was held March 1.

The county contractors meeting was held on the 7th. Commissioner Joel Brown assisted with the meeting.

Spring regional meeting was held March 7 in Iowa City. Commissioners Joel Brown, William Davidson, DC Hoeft and Extension Director Ken Muller attended.

Cedar County No-Till Club met March 14. The club sponsored a no-till planter leasing program through the district with John Deere -- Cedar County Equipment Company.

The District Commissioners held their regular meeting on March 27. Steve Driscoll was appointed as assistant commissioner. The board reviewed the annual plan of work.

The District newsletter was distributed to county landowners and operators and V.I.P.'s in March.

April
DC Hoeft and Commissioner Randall Shaul attended the rural development meeting in Des Moines April 4.

A "Kill The Rose" meeting was held April 17. Assistant Commissioner Darrell Brown attended.

The District's interseeder was made available to 5 county farmers.

The 1983 annual report was published in a supplement with the Tipton Conservative in the last week of April.

The Commissioners met for their regular meeting April 24.

May
District's education committee met on May 3.

DC Hoeft was active on a 3 member panel discussing environmental concerns in Cedar county on the 8th.

The no-till soybean planting field day was held May 15.

The third year of publication of the district's newsletter began in May.

Commissioners held their regular meeting May 22. Outstanding cooperator awards were nominated as follows: New Cooperator - Robert Flockhart, Landlord/Tenant - Raldo Riedesel and Richard Kreinbring, and Owner/Operator - Dennis George Driscoll.

The Hay Marketing Association held their first meeting in Cedar county on the 24th.

Commissioner Joel Brown and SCS Staff ate lunch with newly appointed State Conservationist J. Michael Nethery.

Don Miner, green thumb employee, distributed soil stewardship materials to churches in the county.

June
The multiflora rose task force met June 7. The county will have \$10,000 or rural assistance funds available for cost-sharing on chemicals. The soil conservation district agreed to certify areas where rose control is completed. Cost-share rates are 25% or up to \$200 per farm unit per year.

Commissioners held their regular meeting on the 14th and met with the board of supervisors concerning the silting problems in county road ditches. The commissioners reviewed their annual plan of work.

A follow-up no-till soybean twilight tour was held at the Robert Schott farm June 26.

July
The district commissioners met for their regular meeting July 24. Two guests were present: Duane Kuehl of Tipton and Andrew Wildenberg of West Branch attended the youth leadership camp at Springbrook State Park and were sponsored by the soil conservation district and county conservation board.

A terrace seeding plot was developed on the Don Rathjen farm. Don Miner, green thumb employee, assisted in seeding the plot.

District commissioners reviewed and adopted the memorandum of understanding with ASCS county com-

mittee and soil conservation district, and also the memorandum of understanding between the soil conservation service and the soil conservation district.

August
A no-till twilight tour was held Aug. 2 at the Terry Kroemer farm.

The Cedar County No-Till Club held a meeting on the 16th.

The following cooperators signed up for the plant materials packet from Elsberry, Mo.: Daisy Wingert, Cedar county fairgrounds, and an outdoor classroom packet for the Cedar county conservation board to be planted at the Bennett park.

The regular commissioners' meeting was held Aug. 28. The board decided to develop and distribute Iowa Soil 2000 folders for Springfield Township.

September
The educational display board was updated to celebrate the 50th Anniversary of Soil & Water Conservation.

A multiflora rose control twilight tour was held at the Forest Johnson farm Sept. 18.

No-till soybean plot harvest day was held Sept. 21 at he Robert Schott farm.

The district commissioners met for their regular meeting Sept. 25. Ken Herring was nominated for the Izaak Walton League windbreak award.

October
The regular commissioners meeting was held Oct. 23 and the annual plan of work was reviewed.

November
Randall Shaul was re-elected and Steve Driscoll filled William Davidson's expired term as commissioner in the general election.

DC Hoeft gave a presentation on soils to the third graders at Tipton school Nov. 14.

The Commissioners held their regular meeting Nov. 27. Wayne Frederick was nominated and filed application for the Chevron Chemical company's no-till hall of fame award.

The first hay and straw auction was held on the 30th.

December
The District held a tree planning day for all landusers interested in windbreaks, wildlife habitats, and tree plantings. Two experts were on hand for the day: Timothy Thomsen, wildlife management biologist with the Iowa Conservation commission and Jim Troendle with the county conservation board.

The District Commissioners met for their regular meeting Dec. 12 and made a field visit to evaluate some narrow-base terraces.

1984 Soil District Annual Report

NEW DISTRICT COOPERATORS
David L. Timmerman, Arlin Esbaum, Vernon Voss, Joseph Risius, Carrell Yutesler, Raymond O. Linder, Robert T. Andera, Kleppe Stop By Farm, Ltd., Lewis Mussig by Mrs. Alva Proctor, Mabel L. Woods, Lillyan Tenley, Neil Bieber, Dale Bixler, Mary Endsley, Thomas Bahner by Harold McNurlan, Steve Burnett, E. E. Fisher by K. G. Garton, Mike W. Kessler, Frederick Kaefring, John A. Moffit, Herman C. Baker, Sara J. Murtagh, Terry R. Dies, Owen J. Nebergall, Marshall McDonald, Violet Hoy, William Coan, Roland Fox, Ronald K. Ehlers, Lester and Edith Arp, Wildex Farms by George Nopoulos, Jim Yanacek, and Jack Reichert.

1984 DISTRICT COMMISSIONERS
Joel Brown, Chairman Pioneer Township
Robert Niermeyer, Vice-Chairman. Fairfield Township
Randall Shaul Red Oak Township
Jim Bowie Center Township
William Davidson II Fremont Township

ASSISTANT COMMISSIONERS
Darrell Brown Center Township
Richard Kreinbring Inland Township
Steve Driscoll Cass Township

FIELD OFFICE STAFF
Kurtis F. Hoeft District Conservationist
Judy Hagan Eiselstein . Soil Conservation Technician
Don H. Miner Soil Conservation Aid
Melanie B. Schott District Clerk

S.C.S. AREA PERSONNEL
Lyle W. Asell Area Conservationist
Dean L. Pettit Resource Conservationist
Kent Rice Civil Engineer
Douglas Morningstar Civil Engineer
Susan M. Long Civil Engineer
Ronald P. Wilson Civil Engineering Technician
David R. Kennedy. ... Civil Engineering Technician
Raymond L. Dake. ... Civil Engineering Technician
Darlene Lauder Area Clerk

Suzette Betts Area Secretary

OTHER AGENCIES
Ken Muller County Extension Director
Steve Swinonos District Forester
George Warford Assistant District Forester
Bob Middendorf Fishery Biologist
Timothy Thomsen . Wildlife Management Biologist
Jim Troendle County Conservation Board
Donald Conrad. . . ASCS County Executive Director
Randall Campbell FmHA County Supervisor

EXPENDITURES OF FUNDS PROVIDED	
FY 1984	
1-M Budget Allocation	\$2,308.64
Commissioner Expenses	\$791.57
Office Supplies	291.86
Prizes For Contests	276.12
Office Expenses	949.09
111-M Budget Allocation	\$57,845.00
Amount Spent	\$41,907.34
Amount Obligated	9,141.39
Released 12/31/84	6,796.27

SOIL DISTRICT ACCOMPLISHMENTS		
The following indicates the district's accomplishments reported for the 1984 fiscal year ending Sept. 30, 1984:		
Tile Outlet Terraces	8,665	FT
Sediment & Water Control Basins	37	NO
Conservation Tillage & No-Till	4,950	AC
Windbreaks	16	NO
Pond	1	NO
Multiflora Rose Control Assistance	314	AC
Contouring	118	AC
Pasture & Hayland Planting	34	AC
Cropland Benefited	5,327	AC
Otherland Benefited	615	AC
Individuals & Groups Assisted	394	NO
Individuals & Groups Applying		
Conservation Practices	144	NO
Conservation Planning	1,619	AC

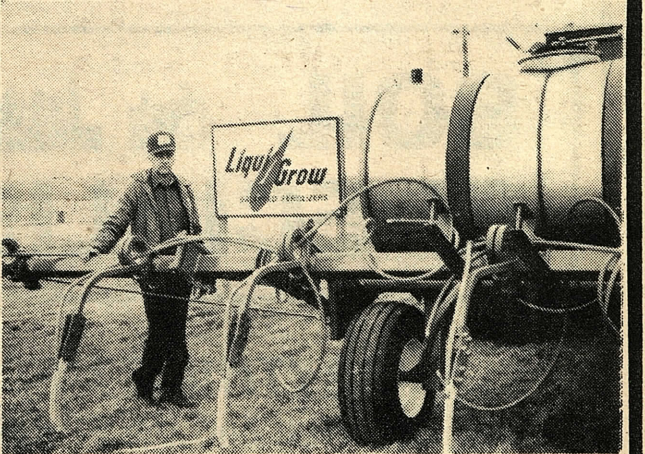
Conservation Alternatives Given	1,001	AC
New Cooperators	21	NO
	4,260	AC

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1985 Cedar Conservation Practices

PIONEER TOWNSHIP

John Moffit - No-till
Gary Robinson - No-till & multiflora rose control
Robert Jay Hartman - No-till
Keith Conner - No-till & Terraces
John Kohl - No-till
Larry Kohl - No-till
Glenn Kurth - No-till
J. William Jilovec - Multiflora rose control
Herb Platner - Terraces
Puffer Farms - Multiflora rose control

FREMONT TOWNSHIP

D & D Litscher - No-till
Oldorf Farms - No-till
Richard Tenley - No-till
Edwin Davidson - No-till
Wm. Mike Hoy - No-till
Jackson Land Ltd., No-till
George Driscoll - Brush management & No-till

DAYTON TOWNSHIP

Dale Bixler - No-till
Virginia Robinson - Windbreak
Larry Harr - No-till

MASSILLON TOWNSHIP

Clarence Marek - No-till
Terry Kroemer - No-till
Kenneth Burmeister - No-till
Marvin Goldsmith - No-till
James Meyer - No-till
Elvin Smith - Pasture planting
Henry Meyer - Terraces
Roland Fox - Pond & pasture planting

LINN TOWNSHIP

Neil Bieber - No-till Robert Stork - No-till
Paul Kirstein - Windbreak
Ciha Farms - No-till
David Hubler - No-till
George Snyder - No-till & multiflora rose control

RED OAK TOWNSHIP

Arnold Rochau - Windbreak
Vern Schroeder - Terraces
Paul Crock - No-till & Terraces

FAIRFIELD TOWNSHIP

Ronald Robinson - No-till
Jerry Goldsmith - Windbreak renovation
LaVern Schwen - No-till
Melvin Deerberg - Windbreak
Ken Frey - No-till

SPRINGFIELD TOWNSHIP

Larry Quinn - No-till
Robert Wiedenhoff - No-till
Duayne Walter - No-till
Harold Horman - No-till
Terry Dies - No-till
Richard Kreinbring - Pasture planting
Perry Schroeder - Windbreak
Louis Hillmann - No-till
Keith Hartwig - Windbreak

CASS TOWNSHIP

Merle Gronewald - No-till
Lillian Tenley - No-till
Roy Ellerhoff - No-till
Michael Walter - No-till

CENTER TOWNSHIP

Kenneth Schott - Contouring & field borders
Henry Harden - No-till
Cedar County Farm - Terraces
Maynard Helmold - No-till
Kevin Kelly - Multiflora rose control
Robert Schott - No-till
Don Meier - No-till
Ray Crock Jr. - No-till

GOWER TOWNSHIP

Robert Donohoe - No-till
Ronald Madsen - No-till
Richard Anderson - No-till
Jim Barnhart - No-till
Barry Anderson - No-till
Karl Jennings - No-till
Gerald Stout - No-till
Brown Family Ltd. - No-till
Donald Barnhart - No-till
Charles Krall - Multiflora rose control

Owen Nebergall - No-till
Ron Wingert - Wildlife habitat
Robert J. Lehman - No-till
Wilma Belitz - Multiflora rose control
Lloyd Hein - Multiflora rose control
David Dahl - Multiflora rose control

INLAND TOWNSHIP

Wayne Ralfs - Windbreak
Vernon Voss - Windbreak
Kleppe Stop By Farms - No-till
Gaylon Rekemeyer - No-till
Siegfried Petersen - Multiflora rose control
Edgar Hetzler - Multiflora rose control

ROCHESTER TOWNSHIP

Harold McNurlan

SPRINGDALE TOWNSHIP

Edwin T. Pence - No-till
Roy Mayhew - Windbreak renovation
Kenneth Slach - No-till
Steven Burnett - No-till
Kenneth Fawcett - No-till
Richard Wieneke - Wildlife habitat

IOWA TOWNSHIP

Thomas Bailey - Contouring
Cleo Pedersen - Windbreak
Kenneth Mather - Windbreak renovation
Anders Mather - No-till
Kenneth Regennitter - No-till
Donald Rathjen Jr. - Terraces
Cecil Carlisle - Multiflora rose control
Marshall McDonald - No-till
Ray Clemmens - Multiflora rose control

No-till & Tree planting
John Zaruba - No-till
Calvin Schmidt - No-till
Gene Eiselstein - Wildlife habitat
GRN Company - Terraces

SUGAR CREEK TOWNSHIP

Ron Ehlers - Terraces
George Nopoulos - Terraces

FARMINGTON TOWNSHIP

Donald Schlapkohl - Terraces
Erwin Petersen - Windbreak
Richard Pahl - No-till
Steve Leazer - Multiflora rose control

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Think Twice Before Converting Marginal Land

Economic pressures, such as high land prices and low returns on feeder calf production systems, have made more producers consider farming their marginal lands. But Stewart Melvin, Iowa State University extension agricultural engineer, says farmers, especially southern Iowa producers, should think twice before plowing up their pastures.

"Much of the land being converted in southern Iowa experienced severe erosion during the late 1800s and early 1900s," Melvin said. "This land has a very shallow topsoil overlying a relatively unproductive subsoil."

"Given the current condition of the land, even low erosion rates will create crop productivity problems, poor soil moisture retention and a lack of natural fertility for years to come."

"Many of the gullies that formed in southern Iowa during the previous intense farming period have stabilized," Melvin said, "but only because the land has been covered with grass. Conversion to row crops will increase the potential for higher surface runoff."

"An increase in runoff could start the gully erosion process all over again. Old gullies may become more active; new ones will probably form to further dissect the land."

Even careful conservation tillage techniques may not be enough to prevent severe erosion in converted marginal land, Melvin says.

"The development of

machinery and pesticides has made possible the direct planting or row crops into permanent pasture to produce grain," he said. "If a good soil cover exists, the probability of an accelerated erosion rate is relatively low for the first year."

"But even with slot planting or no-till with a corn-soybean rotation, the erosion rate is increased 16 times over the permanent grass condition. And the erosion rate would increase 146 times if the land were converted to continuous soybean production and was fall plowed."

If row cropping must be done on marginal land, the engineer says to use terraces and other carefully planned conservation practices while the land is under production and to re-establish a permanent cover crop as soon as possible.

Soil Erosion Is Not Always Visible

What farmers can't see can hurt them when it comes to soil erosion.

Heavy rains in Iowa this past spring caused some of the worst soil erosion ever in the state, and most of this erosion was quite visible. USDA Soil Conservation Service (SCS) officials estimated about 4 million acres lost 20 tons or more soil per acre.

Quite often, however, the average loss of soil can go unnoticed. Sheet erosion, for example, removes such a thin layer in one year that it's hard for farmers to see its loss and add up its progressive disappearance, according to Mike Nethery, state conservationist for SCS.

He points out that the average annual loss of soil

in Iowa is 9.4 tons per acre. Those in charge of the land, primarily farmers, need to try to visualize this average yearly soil loss, he said. "If they can't visualize it, they won't understand why soil conservation practices are so important."

One way to conceptualize the average yearly soil loss is to spread the lost 9.4 tons over an entire acre. Spread evenly, the cumulative soil loss would be about one-sixteenth of an inch deep.

"If you take that loss for 16 years, you have lost 1 inch of topsoil," Nethery said. "If the loss occurs over 100 years, you've lost 6 inches of topsoil."

"When you consider that 100 years ago there were 14 to 16 inches of topsoil in places where there are now only 6 to 8 inches of topsoil, the fact that we lose one-sixteenth of an inch per year or 1 inch every 16 years becomes even more realistic."

The SCS and Iowa State University are currently conducting erosion-productivity studies to determine how long-term soil losses on different soils across the state will affect yields.

But before any corrective action can be taken, Nethery is convinced farmers and others involved in agricultural policy must first believe that erosion-visible or not-is a problem.

Soil Conservation Works

Iowa's Land Use Law Protects State Ag Land

Where town and country meet, conflicts over land use can and do occur. But, according to Iowa's current land use law, the Iowa farmland lost in the struggles must be accounted for.

The land use law protects Iowa's farmland in 4 specific ways:

--It creates county land preservation and use commissions;

--It requires county land use inventories;

--It gives counties the option of developing land use plans and policies; and

--It gives farmers the right to form agricultural areas.

"Each Iowa county has already created its own land preservation and use commission," Stuart Huntington, Iowa State University Extension planning and development specialist, says. "This commission, composed of members representing the county, cities in the county, the Soil Conservation Commission and the Extension Council, was responsible for putting together the county's land use inventory."

Each county land use inventory includes information on the amount of land used for agriculture, public facilities, open space and other purposes in the county, Huntington says. County land that was converted from agricultural use to other uses since 1960 must be identified in the inventory.

After the mandatory land use inventories were completed, some Iowa county commissions opted to develop a county land use plan or to list ways they would work to preserve their agricultural land, the specialist says.

"In Iowa, broad support exists for land use planning, particularly as it relates to the preservation of agricultural land. Studies done in 1980 and 1981 reveal that 77% of farmers and 87% of urbanites surveyed favor land use planning," according

to Huntington.

A provision of the Iowa Land Preservation and Use law also enables an owner or a group of farmland owners to submit a proposal to the county board of supervisors for the creation of agricultural areas. A description of the proposed agricultural area and its boundaries needs to be included in the proposal.

"The proposed area cannot be located within the corporate limits of a city, and it must include at least 500 acres of farmland," Huntington says. "The territory should be as compact and as adjacent as feasible, and all landowners within the proposed area must consent to the area's formation."

Huntington said the use of land in agricultural areas is limited to farm operations, residences constructed for occupation by a person engaged in farming or in a family farm operation, nonconforming pre-existing residences, and telephone company or utility properties.

In exchange for accepting these restrictions, the law offers landowners some protection from nuisance suits, special tax assessments and certain state regulations. Agricultural areas also are granted limited water priority by the new law.

According to Huntington, several agricultural areas have already been formed in Iowa. Some involve thousands of acres.

"The development of agricultural areas has been especially popular among farmers in certain areas of the state, such as southeast Iowa," he said. "In fact, the first agricultural area was formed in Muscatine county."

For more information about the Iowa Land Preservation and Use law, ask your county extension office for a copy of PM-1079, "Iowa Land Use Law Explained."

New Changes In Iowa Hunting and Fishing Laws

There are some new changes in the 1985 hunting and fishing license requirements. The biggest change is regarding the taking of furbearing animals.

Trapping licenses have been discontinued and replaced by fur harvester's licenses which are now required to hunt all furbearers, except coyote and groundhog, and to trap any furbearing animal. A hunting license is no longer required when hunting furbearers, except coyote and groundhog. All furtakers are required to have a fur harvester license, regardless of age. A hunter safety certificate is therefore not required to purchase a fur harvester license since a person must be at least 12 years of age to complete a Hunter Safety Course.

The following are classified furbearers under Iowa Code: beaver, badger, mink, otter, muskrat, raccoon, skunk, spotted skunk or civet cat, weasel, wolf, coyote, groundhog, red fox and grey fox. Anyone hunting coyote or groundhog however is required to possess a hunting license, not a fur harvester's license.

This will impact young residents under 16 and persons over 65, even if those over 65 have a lifetime hunting license. They will now be required to have a fur harvester's license when hunting furbearing animals, except coyote and groundhog.

The habitat stamp is now required when using a hunting license or a fur harvester's license.

Also, anyone training dogs on fox or raccoon will be required to have a fur harvester's license. Anyone training dogs on coyote or game will be required to have a hunting license. Anyone participating in a field trial does not need a hunting license provided they possess a field trial permit. A fur harvester's license will be required of anyone participating in a field trial where a furbearing animal is pursued.

Another change involves trout fishing. Residents under 16 and nonresidents under 14 are now required to possess a valid trout stamp to fish for trout, or they must fish for trout with a licensed adult who possesses a valid trout stamp and limit their combined catch to the daily limit established by the Iowa Conservation Commission.

All annual and lifetime hunting licenses for the disabled or those 65 and older have been discontinued. Nonresident pheasant and raccoon stamps are no longer required.

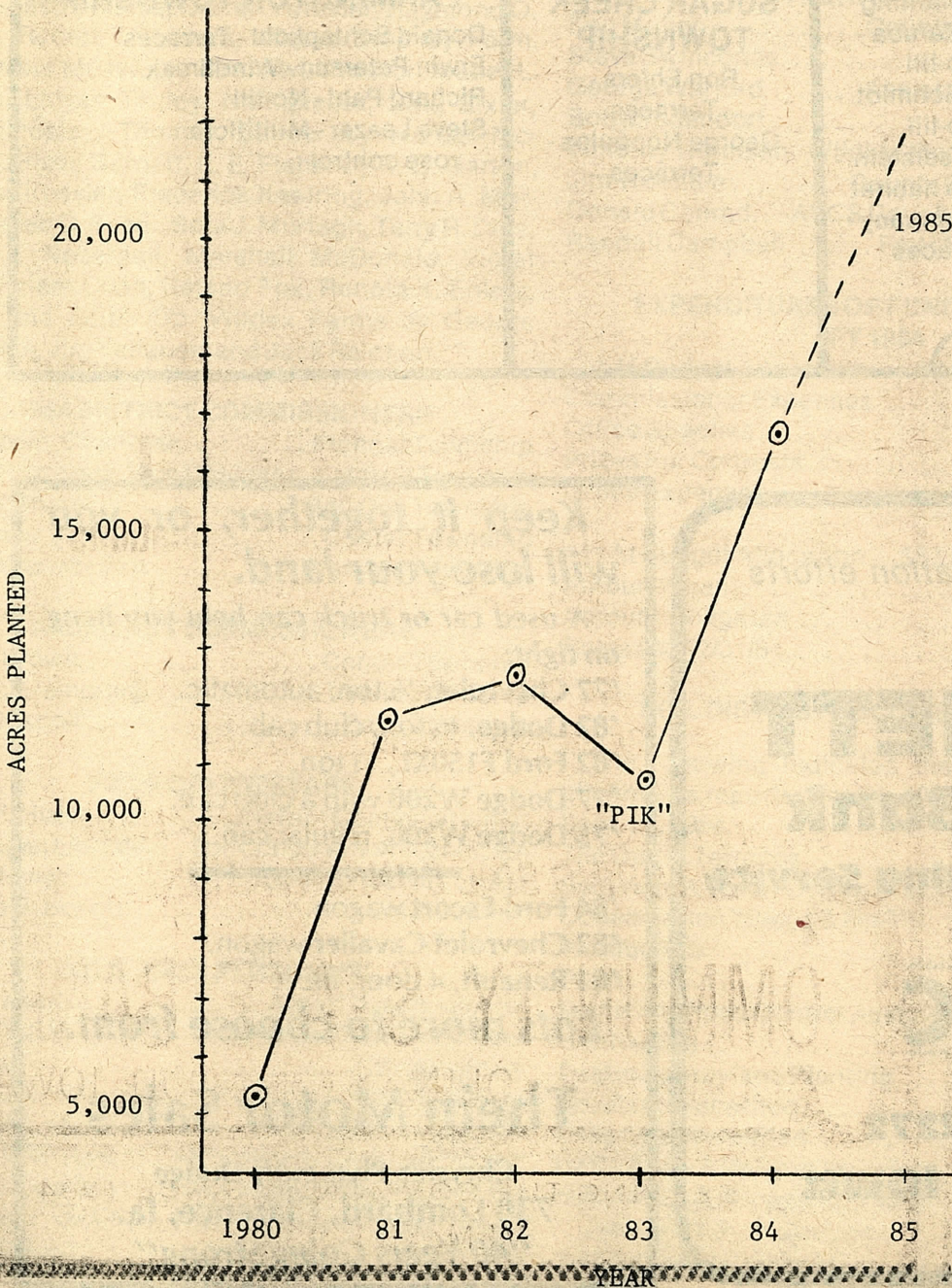
Annual hunting, fishing and fur harvester licenses are now valid from the date of issue through Jan. 9 of the succeeding year. A license cannot be issued before Dec. 15 of the preceding year. For example, a 1985 license may have been sold Dec. 15, 1984 or later and is valid from the date of issue through Jan. 9, 1986.

If you have any questions regarding these new laws or need any further information regarding hunting and fishing laws, contact the Cedar County Conservation Board at 886-6930, or your local Conservation Officer.

1985 LICENSE FEE SCHEDULE

License Type	License Fee
Resident fishing	\$8.50
Resident hunting	8.50
Resident combination	15.50
Resident lifetime fishing disabled or 65 and older	8.50
Resident lifetime combination disabled or 65 and older	15.50
Resident 3-day fishing	4.50
Nonresident 3-day fishing	5.50
Nonresident season fishing	15.50
Nonresident hunting	47.50
Nonresident shooting preserve hunting	5.00
Resident fur harvester under 16	2.50
Resident fur harvester 16 and older	15.50
Nonresident fur harvester (available only at Conservation Commission, Wallace Building in Des Moines)	150.50
Waterfowl (duck) stamp	5.00
Trout stamp	8.00
Habitat stamp	3.00
Deer bow and arrow license	20.00

NO-TILL PLANTING IN CEDAR COUNTY



Conservation Costs Higher Income Farmers Less: ISU

Landowners can reduce the cost of installing expensive permanent soil conservation practices on their land in many ways. But, according to research conducted by Robert Jolly, Iowa State University Extension economist, higher-income farmers can generally reduce their project costs more than lower-income farmers.

The programs aimed at reducing a landowner's investment in conservation practices take 2 forms—tax-based incentives or direct transfer of funds to farmers, the economist said.

The tax-based incentives include those that relate directly to conservation projects, such as the deduction of conservation expenses, and those that are more general, such as the deduction of interest and depreciation. Direct transfer payments include cost-sharing programs and Iowa's no-interest loan program.

"Cost-sharing programs are usually established to pay a fixed proportion of the initial investment costs of a conservation project," Jolly said. "In Iowa, cost-sharing of 50% to as high as 75% of the project cost may be available. Both federal and state governments make cost-sharing funds available."

Iowa's no-interest loan program was established in August 1983. Jolly says this program created a revolving fund, from which loans can be made to farmers for conservation practices. These loans can be paid off in equal installments over a maximum 10-year period with no interest charge.

"Eligibility for the no-interest loan program is restricted to farmers with net worths of less than \$300,000," he said. "It was the intent of this legislation to create a conservation funding instrument that would be attractive to lower-income farmers."

"The revolving fund also was expected to eventually reduce the demand for new state appropriations for direct cost-sharing."

To help farmers judge what conservation programs would provide them the most effective cost-share rate (ECSR) given their financial status, Jolly analyzed 4 funding options available to Iowa farmers:

receiving tax-based incentives only, 50% cost-sharing, 75% cost-sharing and receiving a no-interest loan. He compared these options over 3 marginal tax rates—10%, 30% and 50%.

"The ECSR measures the percent reduction in a project's cost when a specific set of funding options are employed," he said.

The results show that private project costs are highest when only tax-based incentives are used.

"The effective cost-share rate for this funding option is roughly equal to the marginal tax rate," Jolly said. "But the difference in project costs between the high- and low-income farmers is \$495 per \$1,000."

"The 50% and 75% cost-share options produce similar results. Higher-income producers have a greater effective cost-share rate."

Jolly says the gap in project costs between the high- and low-income farmer is \$228 per \$1,000 using the 50% cost-share option and

\$94 per \$1,000 using the 75% cost-share option.

As expected, private costs are less when cost-sharing than when receiving tax incentives. But the costs to taxpayers are significantly higher when farmers cost-share than when they receive tax incentives.

"The costs to taxpayers of the no-interest loan are considerably lower than the 50% cost-sharing option," Jolly said.

"But the effective cost-share rate for the no-interest loan program is slightly biased in favor of higher-income producers. The difference in the private project costs between high- and low-income farmers is \$324 per \$1,000."

Jolly also found that first-year cash outflows are largest for tax-incentive options and lowest for the no-interest loan program. After a few years, however, cost-sharing options have the smallest cash outflow. All options create lower cash outflows for higher-income producers.

Iowa Soil Is In Double Trouble

Iowa soil is in double trouble, according to the latest inventory of natural resources that estimates average yearly losses due to erosion.

The 1982 Natural Resources Inventory (NRI) shows the average water-caused soil erosion in Iowa is 9.4 tons an acre each year. This is nearly double the 5 tons that conservationists say is tolerable and is more than double the national average of 4.4 tons an acre a year.

"To make matters worse, the 9.4 tons per acre of annual average soil loss only includes losses from sheet and rill erosion," Mike Nethery, state conservationist, USDA Soil Conservation Service (SCS), said. "When you include wind erosion, we have an average loss of 12 tons per acre per year on our cropland."

Nethery said Iowa's NRI average soil loss figures are based on information gathered by the USDA SCS from 6,000 primary sample units and nearly 20,000 specific points.

"We don't measure average yearly soil loss with rulers or anything like that," he said. "We look at the

conditions, soils and cropping patterns in selected Iowa locations. From this data, we predict Iowa's erosion rates using a soil loss formula called the universal soil loss equation."

In the 1982 survey, the USDA SCS found that about 26 million acres were in rowcrop in Iowa. At 9.4 tons per acre, Iowa cropland lost about 248 million tons of soil that year.

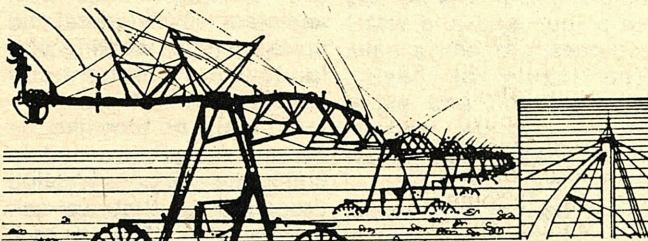
"There also is the misconception that we measure our soil loss each year," Nethery said. "Our estimates are for the erosion we expect for an average year, based on the conditions we find in the survey year."

The USDA also did a survey in 1977. The soil loss estimated at that time in

Iowa was 9.9 tons an acre a year. Nethery says Iowa's 1982 loss represents some improvement in erosion control and reflects increases in use of conservation tillage in the state.

"But for the most part, there wasn't much change from 1977 to 1982," he said. "And the 1982 figure is certainly higher than we want it to be. It shows that we have a lot of work to do before we get our soil erosion problems under control."

Another inventory is scheduled for 1987. Nethery said the inventory helps government agencies keep abreast of the status of the nation's natural resources. It also helps them set priorities for targeting soil conservation funds and plan future conservation programs.



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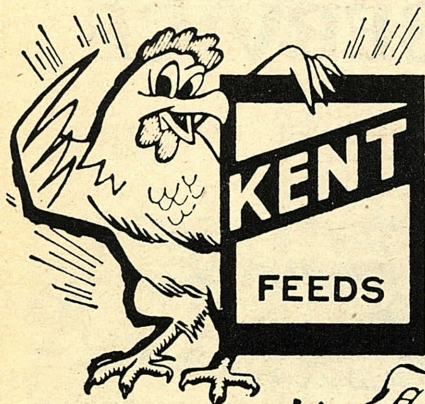
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Soil Stewardship Week May 12 to 19

"Tomorrow Together" is the theme for Soil Stewardship Week to be observed May 12-19 in Iowa and throughout the nation.

The week is observed annually to emphasize society's responsibility to protect and conserve soil, water and other natural resources, according to Min Amemiya, Iowa State University extension agronomist. He said the thrust of this year's observance is based on the premise that "we can't return to the good ole days."

"We face the continuing challenge of making wiser decisions concerning the use of our land and water resources," Amemiya said. "The luxury of having unlimited soil and water resources to be used indiscriminately no longer exists."

For the past 31 years, leaders from Iowa's 100 soil conservation districts, part

of more than 3,000 districts across the nation, have participated in the week's activities, Amemiya said. The prime concern of conservation districts, involved clergy and lay leaders is to encourage citizens to participate in the Soil Stewardship Week programs.

"Maintaining our capacity to renew food and fiber supplies for future generations is an important task," Amemiya said. "We must not lose sight of the need to protect our capacity to meet human needs on a continuing basis."

Conservation measures are accomplished with assistance from federal and state agencies working with landowners through soil conservation districts.

"There is no time like the present to get involved in soil and water conservation programs so that we can approach 'Tomorrow Together,'" Amemiya said.

Farmers Recognize Benefits of Conservation

Iowa farmers listed a few complaints about conservation tillage when responding to the fall 1983 Iowa Farm and Rural Life poll. But, on the whole, Paul Lasley, Iowa State University extension sociologist, said the results show that producers feel positively about the system, and they recognize its ability to protect the state's soil and water resources.

The 2,011 Iowa farmers who participated in the survey were asked to evaluate 14 dimensions of conservation tillage on a 6 point scale. The scale ranged from a "considerable advantage" to a "considerable disadvantage." Conservation tillage was defined as a set of practices in which at least one-third of the previous crop residue was left on the surface.

Ninety-one percent of the polled farmers viewed the prevention of soil loss as the most significant advantage of conservation tillage. Eighty-six percent felt fuel savings was a considerable or moderate advantage when using the system.

About 8 out of 10 producers listed time spent in the field, labor savings and moisture conservation as benefits of the system. Nearly 70% cited reduced soil compaction as an advantage. About one-half said equipment needs, investment in machinery and profitability made conservation tillage appeal to them.

And 64% of the respondents believed yields are about the same using conservation tillage as when using conventional tillage methods.

But the survey also identified some farmer concerns regarding conservation tillage, Lasley said.

Six out of 10 cited weed control as a considerable or moderate disadvantage. About 1/2 felt insect and disease control were problems with conservation tillage. More than 30% said fertilizer placement and germination were disadvantages of conservation tillage systems.

Well-Managed Woodlands Soak Up Rain

The best way to limit soil erosion by water is to soak up falling raindrops where they fall, and a well-managed, fully stocked woodland does a better job of that than pastured or grazed woodlots, according to William Farris, assistant state forester with the Iowa Conservation Commission.

Runoff water from sloping unprotected hills causes erosion, Farris said. In pastured woodlots, unprotected soils are bombarded by the impact energy of raindrops hitting the soil surface at full speed.

"The splash itself removes soil," the forester said. "And the steady pounding packs the soil surface, allowing little water infiltration. The resulting standing water runs down the slope, increasing in speed and removing more

soil as it moves downhill."

In well-managed woodlands, the protective tree leaf canopy and the close growing undergrowth cover act as an umbrella that protects nearly 100% of the soil surface from rain drop splash erosion, Farris said.

When landowners keep livestock out of their woodlots, the undisturbed, deep duff layer that gradually develops on the soil surface acts as a sponge. "One inch of duff can store up to a 3-inch rain," he said.

Other advantages of not grazing woodlands include better infiltration of rain water and increased productivity.

Farris said untrampled timber soils are loose enough to allow percolation of trapped surface water into the root zone at rapid rates. And the nutrient value of the duff layer provides the plant food necessary to assure maximum woodland productivity.

Several studies support the use of ungrazed woodlots to reduce soil loss.

A 6 year study at LaCrosse, Wis., on land with a 25% slope showed a dramatic difference in water runoff between grazed woodlands and woodlands protected from grazing.

Grazed woodlands had an average water runoff of 2.31 inches per year (11.7% of annual rainfall), while protected woodlands had only .05 inches of water runoff (.2% of annual rainfall). Open, managed pasture had an average water runoff of .79 inches per year or 4% of annual rainfall.

A 9 year study at Zanesville, Ohio, compared average annual soil loss for 3 different land uses on 14% slopes with 37 inches of annual rainfall.

Cropland (corn-oats-meadow rotation) lost 17.18 tons of soil per acre per year. Fertilized bluegrass lost .10 tons, and managed timber lost only .01 tons.

The water loss, measured by average percent of yearly rainfall, was also minimized by the timber cover. Cropland had runoff of 20.6% of the annual rainfall; pasture, 13.8% and timber, 3.2%.

Combine Conservation Practices, Cut Losses

by Judy Hagan Eiselstein
Soil Conservation Technician

One of the most widely used practices for controlling erosion in Cedar County is no-till. On your flatter ground no-till alone is able to cut soil losses down to the tolerable limit of 5 tons/acre/year. Unfortunately, this does not hold true on our steeper ground. True, no-till does considerably cut your soil loss, but it usually takes another practice along with no-till to get your soil loss down to the tolerable limit of 5 tons/acre/year or less.

One practice that can be used on steeper ground with no-till is contouring. Even with no-till if you are planting up and down hill you get little rills in between your rows. When you go around the hill instead of up and down you are creating little mini-dams with your rows and this slows the water down.

Contouring, in some cases, can cut your soil loss in half. Contouring is the cheapest and easiest erosion control practice

used. It costs you nothing but a little time and patience to do this practice.

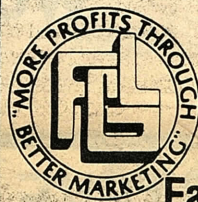
Another practice that can be used with no-till is crop rotation. With economic times the way they are now, people have been getting away from planting oats and hay. More beans have been put on steep slopes and these fields have suffered greatly because of this. Eliminating beans and adding hay and oats into the rotation every now and then with no-till can greatly reduce your soil loss.

Another thing to consider with no-till is terracing. Some of the time with no-till you have cut your soil loss down to 5 tons/acre/year, but you still have a gully forming in your waterway. This is where a terrace works to take the water underground and outlet at a stable outlet.

If you are using no-till now and still feel you have a problem or just want to know what your soil loss is, just give our office a call (886-6214) and we will be happy to help you.

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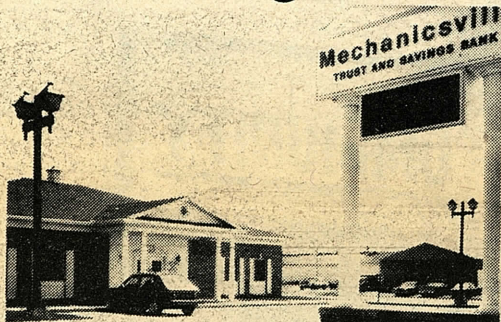
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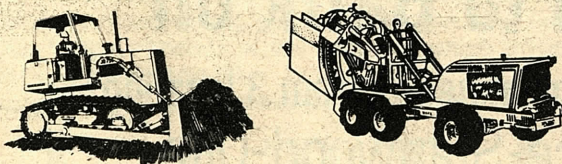


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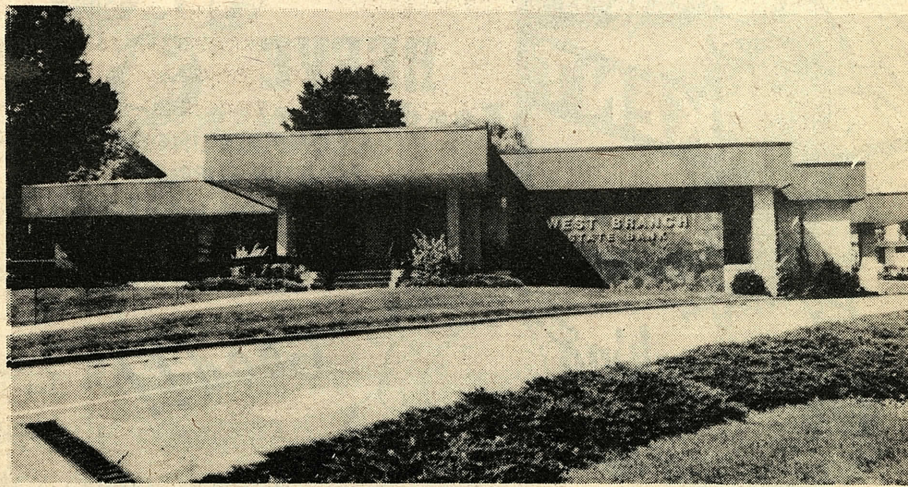
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Conservation Practices Increase Wildlife

by Tim Thompson
Wildlife Biologist
Iowa Conservation
Commission

Soil conservation and wildlife management work hand in hand. Most good soil conservation practices increase wildlife abundance. For instance, a crop rotation of oats-hay-corn maintains soil fertility while providing nesting cover for pheasants, quail and songbirds during the years of oats and hay. Stream banks and steep sloped areas that should be in permanent cover to stop soil erosion also serve as wildlife cover.

Something as simple as a fence around a shelterbelt to exclude livestock extends the life of the shelterbelt, plus provides winter cover for wildlife. Leaving a strip of permanent cover along a stream decreases soil loss and water pollution while providing a secure area for wildlife.

Conservation tillage can provide more nesting habitat for wildlife by leaving cover on the ground all year. In Iowa, nest densities have been as much as

8 times higher on no-till fields. One Iowa study found 37 bird nests in a 247 acre no-till field, but only 4 in a nearby conventionally tilled field of the same size.

A switchgrass cost-share program is available in Cedar county in 1985-86. The Iowa Conservation Commission will pay 50% of the cost of establishing switchgrass pastures for qualifying landowners.

Switchgrass is a warm-season grass which becomes most productive during July and August when cool-season grasses such as orchard grass, bluegrass, and brome grass are dormant. Switchgrass pastures are readily accepted as nesting cover by pheasants and songbirds. And, when properly managed, they are free from disturbances by cattle and hay harvest until after most nesting has been completed.

If I can be of assistance to improve wildlife habitat on your land, contact me at 517 Southgate Ave., Iowa City, or phone 354-8343 or just leave a message at your SCS office.

'Pheasants Forever' To Preserve Ringneck

Many of you may have already heard of a relatively new program that is finding its way into Iowa called "Pheasants Forever."

Pheasants Forever is an organization of concerned sportsmen and women dedicated to the restoration and preservation of the ringneck pheasant. Its goal is to improve pheasant habitat, pheasant populations and pheasant hunting. Pheasants Forever was originally organized in Minnesota in 1982. Members of chapters can now be found in 5 states, including Iowa.

From the onset, Pheasants Forever members have understood that the pheasant, the nation's most exciting and most beautiful game bird, is threatened by almost continual assaults on its environment. Nesting cover is destroyed prematurely. Winter cover is being eliminated. And, too few crops are left standing to help the birds survive winter.

Most chapters are organized on a county or regional basis. The organization operates like

the nationally organized Ducks Unlimited organization, with one major exception. Unlike D.U. all monies generated from local fund raisers, exclusive of a \$15 individual membership fee, remains within that chapter. These funds are then used by the local chapters to obtain, improve and manage pheasant habitat in the local area.

Iowa's pioneer chapter was organized in July 1984 and includes members from Cerro Gordo, Chickasaw, Floyd and Mitchell counties. This chapter successfully held their first fund-raising banquet Nov. 1, 1984. The funds generated from this and future fund-raising events will remain in the 4 county area to be used specifically for pheasant habitat improvement.

There appears to be a great deal of interest for forming other chapters throughout Iowa. Anyone interested in forming a Pheasants Forever chapter in Cedar county or simply obtaining more information

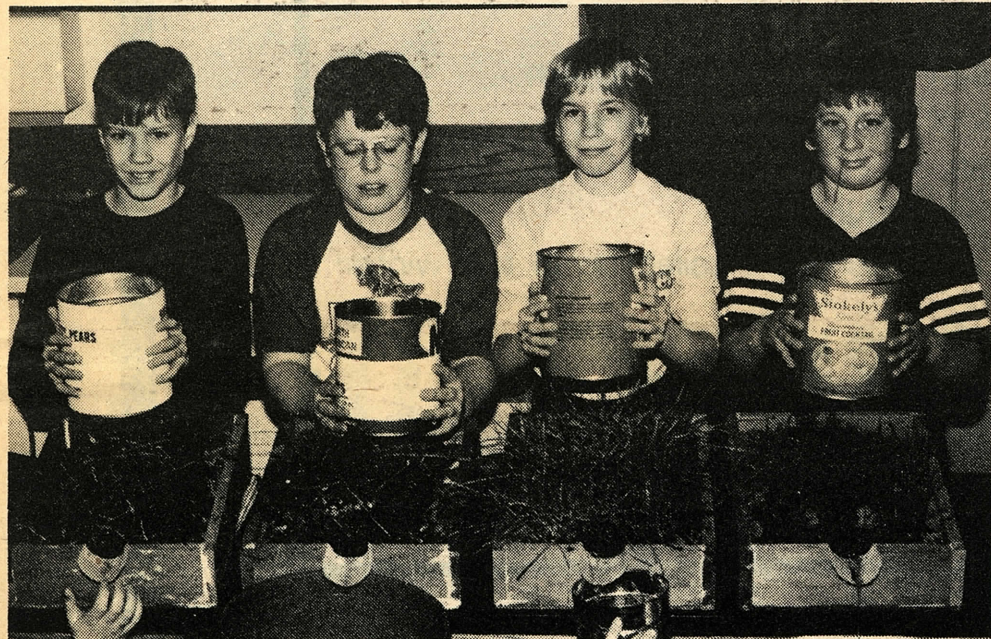
about the organization can contact Jim Troendle, executive director for the Cedar County Conservation Board at 886-6930.



Save Soil



Pictured is the Cedar soil conservation district display board to celebrate 50 years of soil and water conservation. Pictured with the display are members of the Cedar S.C.D. education committee: Darrell Brown, assistant commissioner; Linda McHard, West Branch; Marie Sides, Tipton and Elaine Behrens, Durant.



Pictured are Lincoln 5th graders as they finish up a soil conservation unit by testing run-off on different kinds of residue cover in Margaret Sadeghpour's science class. The class used up and down rows, contour rows and a cover crop of rye. The soil boxes

were built by Amy Shaul and her dad, Randall Shaul, soil commissioner. Fifth graders conducting the tests are, l to r, Chris Butler, Mike Billick, Amy Shaul and Eirik Kepler.



Every 3rd grader in Cedar county recently received a green ash tree from the Cedar County Soil Conservation Service in recognition of the 50th anniversary of the soil service and Arbor Day. Students in Susan Aude's 3rd grade class in Tipton are

shown with some of the trees. Pictured, l-r, are Bryce Schultzy, Brandy Williams, Amy Stiff, Teacher Susan Aude, Jenny Tate and Buddy Ray. Students in this class each adopted a tree to take home and gave their tree a name.



Cedar County Soil District Commissioners for 1984 were, l-r, Joel Brown, Mechanicsville; Randall Shaul, Stan-

wood; William Davidson, Stanwood; Robert Niermeyer, Clarence and Jim Bowie, Tipton.



Bob Niermeyer, chairman of the Cedar county soil district commissioners, presents Bill Davidson with the

distinguished service award for his 12 years as a district commissioner.

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77 Bales of Mixed Grasses, mostly Tickle Grass.
72 Bales of Rag Weed, Sour Dock, Cocklebur Hay. [No Rain]
4 Mineral Deficient Cows. They are gentle, used to being tailed up in the winter.
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2 Springing Heifers - Would spring over the barn to be fed.
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17 Hens, used to roosting in trees.
Other articles too worthless to mention.

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