

A Quality Environment

DICKINSON SOIL & WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT

SPIRIT LAKE, IOWA 51360 712-336-3782, EXT. 3

2008 ANNUAL REPORT

The Dickinson Soil and Water Conservation District Commissioners are pleased to present their 2008 Annual Report. It represents the efforts of many individuals and groups working together to improve our environment through conservation programs.

The Commissioners invite the public to contact the office to learn more about our current projects, programs and cost-share opportunities.



Back row: Chris Hoffman, Scott Mitchell and Curt Smith, Commissioners; Front row: Mark Ingwersen, Commissioner, Phyllis Nielsen, Assistant Commissioner
Not present: John Myhre, Commissioner; Orville Berg, Earl Muilenburg and Keith Van Kleek, Assistant Commissioners

Field Office Staff:

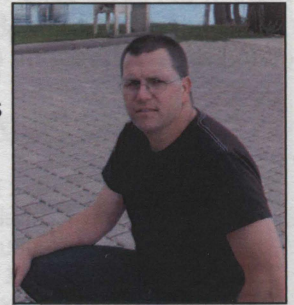
Carroll Oskvig, District Conservationist
Tim Moran, Soil Conservation Technician
Betty Romero, Soil Conservation Technician
Maxine Butler, State Secretary

District Staff:

Steve Anderson, Urban Conservationist
John Wills, Clean Water Alliance Coordinator
Ryan Ransom, Silver Lake Watershed Coordinator

New District Employees for 2008

2008 began with **Steve Anderson** accepting a new position in our office as one of four new Urban Conservationists for the State of Iowa. The urban conservationist positions were created by Secretary of State Bill Northey, who saw first-hand while he was a Commissioner in Dickinson County that there is a significant need for urban conservation as well as agricultural.



While the majority of Steve's time is spent in Dickinson County, he spends a quarter of his time working with urban issues in surrounding counties.

John Wills is no stranger to Dickinson County. Wills



worked on the Iowa Great Lakes Clean Water Project from 1993 to 1999 and re-joined the effort to improve the Lakes as the Clean Water Alliance Coordinator in 2008.

One of John's first projects is to complete the writing of the Iowa Great Lakes Watershed Assessment, in order to be able to write a new 319 grant in 2009.

Check out the Clean Water Alliance website at www.cleanwateralliance.net for news and updates on current and on-going projects.

The Osceola and Dickinson SWCD's recently hired

District Commissioners

Mark Ingwersen Chris Hoffman Scott Mitchell
John Myhre Curt Smith

Assistant Commissioners

Orville Berg Earl Muilenburg Phyllis Nielsen
Keith Van Kleek

District Mission Statement

The Dickinson SWCD will serve its customers and the needs of the District's natural resources through education, promotion, and demonstration.

Harris native, **Ryan Ransom** as coordinator of the Silver Lake Watershed Improvement Project.



In 2008, the Osceola SWCD received a nearly half million dollar grant from the State of Iowa Watershed Improvement Review Board (WIRB), in a joint effort with the Dickinson SWCD and the Silver Lake Park Improvement Association (SLPIA). This grant was earmarked to provide incentive payments to land-owners in the Silver Lake Watershed for enrolling existing wetlands, or restoring farmable wetlands into the Wetland Reserve Program (WRP).

2008 District Activities

January

Election of officers: Mark Ingwersen, Chair; Chris Hoffman, Vice Chair; Scott Mitchell, Secretary-Treasurer
Orville Berg, Earl Muilenburg, Phyllis Nielsen and Keith Van Kleek are appointed Assistant Commissioners
Steve Anderson accepts position as Urban Conservationist

February

March

John Wills accepts position as Clean Water Alliance Coordinator
CDI Regional is attended

April

Commissioners distribute trees for each 6th grade student in Dickinson County to the schools
Stewardship material distributed to area churches

May

Kay Oskvig was the recipient of the Jo Groves Memorial Scholarship and Emily Schwaller was the recipient of the SWCD Foundation Scholarship

June

Participated in the annual Teacher Academy

July

August

District Newsletter published

September

30th Annual Outdoor Classroom was held at Kettleston Hogsback with 197 6th graders from Okobojo, Spirit Lake and Terril School Districts participating
CDI Regional meeting attended

October

November

December

SWCD Foundation Tree Sale begins
District Newsletter published
Interviews are held for Silver Lake Coordinator position with Ryan Ransom to begin in January

District Financial Report **July 1, 2007 – June 30, 2008**

State funds provided by the Iowa General Assembly are allocated to the SWCD by the Iowa Department of Agriculture and Land Stewardship/Division of Soil Conservation.

1M – Commissioners Expenses Fund

Commissioner Expenses Fund is provided by the state to pay Commissioners and Assistant Commissioners expenses, as well as office supplies, state and national dues and other expenses. The SWCD Foundation supplements the state allocation with funds raised by selling trees and shrubs each year.

Total Allocation from IDALS	\$ 2,124.81
Less:	
Postage	\$ 420.79
Commissioner Mileage & Expense	\$ 759.31
Printing	\$ 54.71
Meeting Expenses/CDI & NACD Dues	\$ 890.00
	\$ 0.00

Commissioner Funds used to cover additional expenses:

Postage	\$ 64.92
Commissioner Mileage & Expense	\$ 257.89
Membership Dues-Local Organizations	\$ 1,175.00
Donations	\$ 240.00
Misc.	\$ 490.00
	\$ 2,227.81

Iowa Financial Incentives Program Funds

Iowa Financial Incentives Program Funds (IFIP) budget provides 50% cost-share assistance for installing permanent soil and water conservation practices to improve water quality and/or help stop soil erosion. Some practices include: terraces, grassed waterways, water and sediment basins.

No till/strip till incentive program – A one-time payment of \$10/per acre with 80 acre maximum for operators trying no till, strip till or ridge till for the first time.

Allocation for 2007/08 totaled	\$ 23,616.52
Obligated/Spent	\$ 9,918.52
Balance unspent	\$ 13,698.00

REAP Funding

Resource Enhancement and Protection (REAP) is divided into forestry/native grasses and practices.

Cost share payments of up to 75% of the cost to establish windbreaks, with a maximum cost-share of \$1,500. A plan will be need to be completed by NRCS.

50% cost share is available through this program to establish or improve pastures, through the establishment of native grass components, fencing and water systems that provide rotational pasture system.

REAP Forestry/Native Grasses

Allocation for 2007/08 totaled	\$ 5,290.00
Obligated/Spent	\$ 4,224.49
Balance unspent	\$ 1,065.51

REAP Practices

Allocation for 2007/08 totaled	\$ 17,777.29
Obligated/Spent	\$ 4,400.00
Balance unspent	\$ 13,377.29

IFIP and REAP funds were used to complete: a no-till incentive

payment, a sediment basin, a grassed waterway, a planned grazing system, a pasture and hayland planting, a tree and shrub establishment, and three (3) windbreaks.

Publicly Owned Lakes

Publicly Owned Lakes provides for 75% cost-share in the Iowa Great Lakes Watershed. A water and sediment control basin was built.

Allocation for 2007/08 totaled	\$ 19,444.00
Obligated/Spent	\$ 8,810.63
Balance unspent	\$ 10,633.37

Low Interest Loan Programs for Water Quality Improvements

Low interest loans are available to producers for the installation of conservation practices that improve water quality. The Interest rate on this loan is 3% with terms up to 10 years on soil erosion practices and up to 20 years for water quality improvements for eligible existing livestock facilities.

Two (2) low interest loans were completed.

3% loans are also available for Low Impact Development (LID) practices, such as rain gardens and pervious paving.

Grant/Project Funds as of December 30, 2008

Low Impact Development (LID) Funds (Education)

Allocation	\$ 1,056.95
Obligated/Spent	\$ 631.67
Balance unspent	\$ 425.28

Backyard Conservation / Help A Habitat

Allocation	\$ 1,706.72
Obligated/Spent	\$ 1,706.72
Balance unspent	\$ 0.00

CWA Misc. Funds

Allocation	\$ 797.00
Obligated/Spent	\$ 0.00
Balance unspent	\$ 797.00

Dickinson County Tree Reserve

Allocation	\$ 2,610.53
Obligated/Spent	\$ 0.00
Balance unspent	\$ 2,610.53

WIRB Urban Retrofit (LID)

Allocation	\$400,166.41
Obligated/Spent	\$297,334.13
Balance unspent	\$102,832.28

Thirty (30) cost-share applications for rain gardens, bioswales, infiltration trenches and pervious pavers were completed.

Easement Funds

Allocation	\$ 20,750.00
Obligated/Spent	\$ 20,452.00
Balance unspent	\$ 298.00

Silver Lake Development Funds

Allocation	\$ 16,440.00
Obligated/Spent	\$ 14,088.96
Balance unspent	\$ 2,351.04

IGL Watershed Assessment

Allocation	\$ 93,248.00
Obligated/Spent	\$ 48,248.00
Balance unspent	\$ 45,000.00

WQC-Infiltration Based Storm Water

Allocation	\$ 47,415.50
Obligated/Spent	\$ 22,375.00
Balance unspent	\$ 25,040.50

District Employee funding as of December 30, 2008

CWA

Funds available	\$ 61,720.86
Spent	\$ 35,771.85
Balance unspent	\$ 25,949.01

Partnership Funds

Funds available	\$ 216.14
Spent	\$ 0.00
Balance unspent	\$ 216.14

UC

Funds available	\$ 93,766.25
Spent	\$ 72,722.96
Balance unspent	\$ 21,043.29

SL

Funds to be managed by Osceola County

Natural Resources Conservation Service

EQIP

Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) funding was used to provide cost-share and incentive payments for an Animal Waster Facility (monoslope building for 990 beef), Comprehensive Nutrient Management, Pest Management and Technical Service Provider assistance.

WRP

The Wetland Reserve Program (WRP) is a USDA program administered by NRCS. This voluntary program offers landowners an opportunity to restore wetland basins and upland buffer areas with up to 100% cost share and up to full agricultural value to place the land in an easement with NRCS. Easements may be either for 30 years or permanent. Ten year cost share agreements are also available to landowners who wish to restore wetlands on their land, with financial and technical assistance from NRCS.

In 2008, 2 easements were funded in Dickinson County. Also in 2008, restoration work was completed on 5 easements. Currently in Dickinson County there are 23 WRP easements, 2 ten year cost share agreements and 4 funded applications which are in the process of closing.

Pilot No-Till or Strip-Till Announced

A pilot No-Till or Strip Till program has been announced for six northern Iowa counties including Clay, Dickinson, Emmet, Kossuth, Palo Alto and Pocahontas.

This program is for producers interested in learning the benefits of no-tilling or strip-tilling. **An incentive payment of \$50 per acre with a maximum of 200 acres for a three year commitment to no-till or strip tillage is available this spring.** Limited funds are available.

The Dickinson SWCD is taking applications for this program through April 1, 2009. Please contact the Dickinson SWCD at 712-336-3782, Ext. 3 or stop in the USDA Service Center at 2412 17th Street, Spirit Lake, to learn more about this pilot program and review the necessary rules for qualifying for this incentive payment.

Three pilot no-till / strip-till applications were accepted in 2008.

Challenges Bring Opportunities

**by James Gillespie, Bureau Chief
Division of Soil Conservation**

Well, what can we say about what happened this past year? Who would have guessed we would have had the weather we all experienced, the damage it caused and how it impacted both rural and urban areas?

We saw record snowfall in parts of northeast Iowa and heavy rainfalls across most of the state all summer. This was the fourth wettest year on record in 135 years of recordkeeping. All but one county was declared a disaster area by either the Governor of Iowa or the President of the United States.

Damages to conservation practices totaled over \$40 million dollars. 2,284,000 acres suffered erosion of 20 tons per acre or more, and there were 636,000 acres of bottomland scouring. Numerous sites suffered infrastructure damage and homes and businesses were flooded. A lot of these damages are still out there and are in need of financial and technical resources to help repair and restore.

As a community, rural and urban, we need to think about our actions and their consequences. The Iowa Department of Agriculture and Land Stewardship, and our conservation partners are committed to building a "Culture of Conserva-

tion" across the state. We all need to consider our "footprint" on the Iowa landscape. Evaluate the land use for current and future needs and wants. There is a reason a floodplain is called a floodplain; it is prone to flooding. We must all manage the land as consistently as possible to its natural capabilities. We cannot expect the land to produce more than it is reasonably able to nor should it be used in ways that do not maintain soil quality and provide conservation benefits. Consider your "hydrologic footprint"; what happens to the rainfall that lands on your property? We should try to absorb as much as possible to slow runoff to minimize flooding and improve water quality.

Contact your local soil and water conservation district to discuss these challenges and take advantage of opportunities to reduce these types of resource concerns in the future. Iowans have taken great pride in protecting the resources of this state. Let us continue to build a "Culture of Conservation" that will sustain us in the future. Thank you for what you do and what you can do!

Scholarship Winners

Emily Schwaller, daughter of David and Karen Schwaller of Milford was the 2008 recipient of the District Foundation Scholarship in the amount of \$500. This scholarship can be used for any agricultural or natural sciences based study. Emily is attending South Dakota State University with her career goals including majoring in animal science and a minor in either agronomy or ag business.



Kay Oskvig, daughter of Carroll and Martha Oskvig of Milford, was the 2008 recipient of the Jo Groves Memorial Scholarship in the amount of \$500. This scholarship is not limited in the course of study. Kay is attending Iowa State University with her career goals including majoring in education or educational psychology and a possible minor in Spanish.

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) prohibits discrimination in all its programs and activities on the basis of race, color, national origin, age, disability, and where applicable, sex, marital status, familial status, parental status, religion, sexual orientation, genetic information, political beliefs, reprisal, or because all or a part of an individual's income is derived from any public assistance program. (Not all prohibited bases apply to all programs.) Persons with disabilities who require alternative means for communication of program information (Braille, large print, audiotope, etc.) should contact USDA's TARGET Center at (202) 720-2600 (voice and TDD). To file a complaint of discrimination write to USDA, Director, Office of Civil Rights, 1400 Independence Avenue, S.W., Washington, D.C. 20250-9410 or call (800) 795-3272 (voice) or (202) 720-6382 (TDD). USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer.