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Conservation Progress*



"STANDARD SOIL SURVEY BEGINS!"

Thirtieth
ANNUAL REPORT
of the
Des Moines County, Iowa
Soil Conservation District
1975

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EDITORIAL - CHANGE AND CHALLENGE

by Ralph E. Dewey, District Conservationist

Helping put together this annual report fits the current trend of nostalgia for this writer. It completes a career as a district conservationist assisting soil conservation districts.

A backward look across nearly thirty years would reveal so many changes that one can hardly recognize the district program as being the same. We could boast of the hundreds of miles of terraces, the thousands of acres of erosion control practices over which we have shared some responsibility . . . and it would be pleasant to reflect.

Then we could take a look at present land damages, taking their toll of our resources as never before . . . and wonder - "Has it been worthwhile?" - very humbling.

These are tangible things - plusses and minuses along the route that tell a person how he is scoring in the gradebook of life. But the real sense of accomplishment this conservationist feels upon leaving a position he has thoroughly enjoyed is that of having met, worked with and influenced hundreds of people connected with our effort to tame erosion and make wise use of the land.

A hundred or more district commissioners have worked with me in as many ways to help land users to help themselves. The professional people of SCS have always impressed me as "tops" - fine people to know as friends, and competent in their work.

District "cooperators" have provided all manner of challenges to keep the DC job from ever becoming dull and routine. And the cooperating people of other agencies have broadened the scope of the work to make it most meaningful.

In moving to a new career challenge, there is a natural reluctance to leave the old and familiar. But years as a district conservationist prepare a person well to live with change.

And I'm certain the future changes of this soil conservation district will be met by its leaders as strongly as ever.

"FRONT COVER PHOTO"

At the Don Nelson farm, VIP's observe Dr. John Pesek explaining the soil type found at the "first acre" ceremony.



Chairman Wm. Vierling, far right calls a brief meeting at Annual Awards Ceremony. Standing is Treasurer Horace Sutton, seated are Secretary Harold Linder and Commissioners Jack Jacobs, Joe Beckman, Dwight Stucker and Ray Pilling. In the background, Area Conservationist Eldon Weber.

THE DISTRICT IN 1975

Cost share programs of the state became more stabilized this year as the district and ASCS agreed to share at a 50 percent rate, but to keep the programs separated. With ACP available January 1 and new state funds appropriated July 1, farmers were offered a continuous flow of cost share through the field work season. This resulted in all time highs in terrace construction, aided by a long autumn construction period.

Conservation education was high in priority in 1975. commissioners, as usual, provided the latest SCSA booklets to schools as they became available. Finances for teachers Sue Baldwin and Jo Rabe were approved as they represented the area in state and regional conservation education workshops. In August Sue and Jo were named as assistant commissioners with responsibilities in education and revision of an outdoor teaching guidebook.

Continuing interest in creating a sound land use policy was shown in contacts with legislators. Chairman Bill Vierling joined others in a panel on the subject on Radio KBUR, to field questions from the public.

Start of the standard soil survey and attendant ceremonies were well appreciated by the district. Members met with the county conference board to secure county funds as the work began. Rev. Roy Satre and Don Nelson were presented Certificates of Distinguished Service for their hosting of "First Acre" events. Commissioners hosted visiting dignitaries at a luncheon following the field tour.

Cooperation with the county conservation board progressed as the district contributed \$100 to the board for posters supporting their new "Acres for Wildlife" project. A joint effort is being made to preserve a small native grass area near Dolbee Cemetery as an educational area.

Support was given to teacher Betsy Pollock of Madison Middle School in Burlington, and she received a grant of \$1500 to develop a four acre outdoor classroom adjacent to the school grounds. Mrs. Pollock and Mrs. Beverly Lundy attended a fall workshop at EWALU and Sue Baldwin and Jo Rabe helped instruct at the Luther workshop. Sue also promoted conservation education at the summer meeting of Region 9 commissioners at Ottumwa.

Commissioners attended regional meetings at Fairfield and Ottumwa as well as the Annual Conference in Des Moines.

Ed Beardsley and Dan Lindquist of the Iowa Development of Soil Conservation helped explain procedures in developing a resource plan for the Iowa-Cedar River Basin. This involves about half of the district at this time and will take about two years.

From this report it appears our five commissioners have had a busy year, with a good deal of accomplishment.

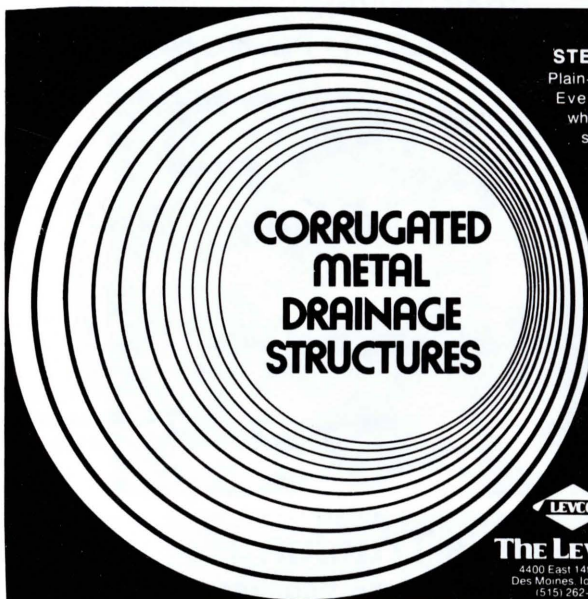
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Assistant district commissioners Susan Baldwin and Jo Rabe were appointed to carry out activities in the conservation education field.



Every year SCSA (Soil Conservation Society of America) presents an award for outstanding service to conservation by representatives of the media. The 1975 winner is Cletus Paul of Radio KBUR, receiving his plaque from Past SCSA President Howard Hughes at Ames in October.

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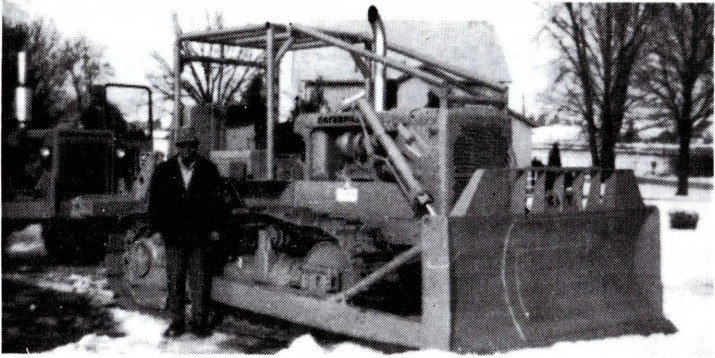
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FIRST ACRE CEREMONIES - STANDARD SOIL SURVEY

Probably the highlight of the year's district activities was in May when the official "first acre" of soil was surveyed under the cooperative standard soil survey. Soil scientists Mel Brown and Bennie Clarks, Jr. had operated from their office in the Federal Building since March, and were getting a rapid start on the project.

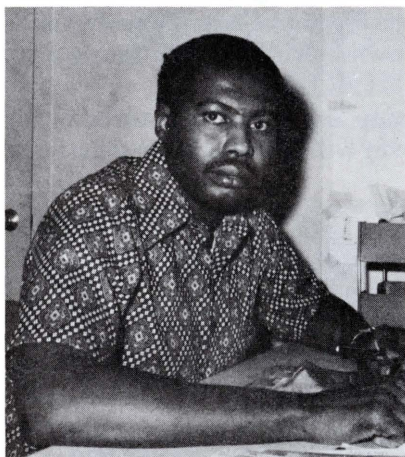
A site north of Danville on the Don Nelson farm was chosen as a central and typical soil to begin the survey. In a suitable ceremony, sponsored by the district about forty people gathered to commemorate the start of this four year survey.

The Iowa Experiment Station, an arm of Extension Service has joined with Soil Conservation Service to map every acre of Iowa, county by county. Featured speaker at the ceremony was Dr. John Pesek, representing the station.

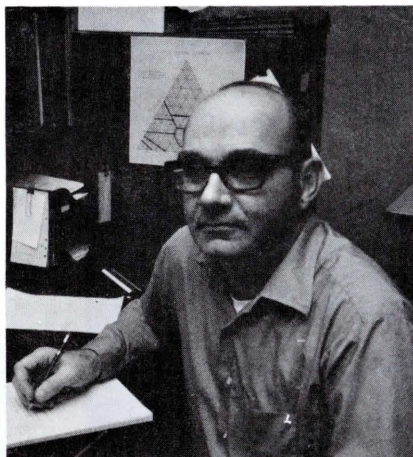
Iowa Army Ammunition Plant and Des Moines County supervisors have both committed cost sharing funds to support the survey. They were represented by Capt. Connelly and Winston C. Cooper, and Supervisors Merle Kelly, Robert Gerdner and Lester Hamilton.

Leon Foderberg of Des Moines brought a message from the state Department of Soil Conservation, vitally interested in the survey as a basis for sound conservation planning. And State Conservationist Wilson T. Moon of Soil Conservation Service welcomed the opportunity to share the joys of the occasion just prior to his retirement.

A short service tying the soil survey to Soil Stewardship Week was provided by Rev. Roy Satre at Prairie Grove Church before the group gathered at the Nelson farm for the ceremonial "auguring" of the "First Acre."



Bennie Clarks, Jr. has surveyed soil in Iowa for the past eight years. A graduate of Southern University, Ben hails from Louisiana. He moved here in March with his wife Linda and one child.



Soil survey party leader is Mel Brown living now with his family in West Burlington after 13 years of experience in Madison, Howard, Mitchell and Benton Counties. Mel is an ISU graduate in Agronomy.



Soil Surveyors Bennie Clarks, Jr. and Mel Brown explain the divide between topsoil and subsoil to State Conservationist Wilson T. Moon and Supervisor Lester Hamilton.

DES MOINES COUNTY SOIL SURVEY

The Des Moines County Soil Survey was begun in April of 1975. A total of 58,095 acres were soil mapped during the rest of 1975 by Melvin Brown and Bennie Clarks, Jr., soil scientists for the Soil Conservation Service. The area walked over and mapped so far includes all of Washington Township, about two thirds of Pleasant Grove Township and all of the Iowa Army Ammunition Plant.

The soil maps of the area completed so far are available in the Soil Conservation Service office in Burlington. The soil maps show the soil type, slope, degree of erosion if any, and the drainage pattern. Detailed information is available for each type of soil indicating its productivity, physical characteristics, organic matter content, its potential for various uses, and if it is susceptible to certain problems such as flooding or high water table.

Brown and Clarks plan to finish work on Pleasant Grove Township and begin mapping in Huron and Jackson Townships during this spring and summer.

The field work for the Des Moines County Soil Survey is planned to be completed by the end of 1978 and the survey will be available in some form soon after that.



County Extension Director James Hodges talks shop with Dr. John Pesek at Prairie Grove Church as "first acre" day begins.

Don Nelson proudly shows a foot of topsoil taken from his farm during the "first acre" proceedings to IAAP Plant Agronomist Winston C. Cooper and Captain Connelly. The soil is Ladoga silt loam on about a four percent slope.

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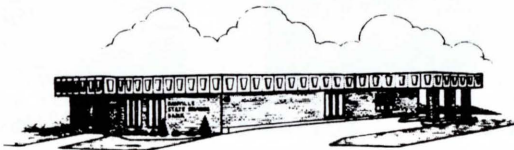
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Dwight Stucker, New London Commissioner
Ray Pilling, Mediapolis Commissioner
Joseph T. Beckman, Sperry Commissioner
Jack Jacobs, Burlington Commissioner
Harold Linder, Sperry Secretary
Horace Sutton, Jr., Burlington Treasurer
Mrs. Susan Baldwin, Burlington Asst. Commissioner
Mrs. Jo Rabe, Burlington Asst. Commissioner
Mrs. Dorothy Davis District Clerk

SOIL CONSERVATION SERVICE PERSONNEL

BURLINGTON FIELD OFFICE

Ralph E. Dewey District Conservationist
Oren Champ Conservation Technician
Larry Hunt (transferred Aug. '75). Soil Conservationist
Debra Brus. Soil Conservationist
Mark Simmons Conservation Aid
Melvin Brown Soil Scientist
Bennie Clarks, Jr. Soil Scientist

AREA 6 STAFF

Eldon C. Weber. Area Conservationist
Margaret Dickey. Area Clerk
Tom Brown Area Engineer
Stan Simmons Engineer Technician
James Seaholm Soil Scientist
Lonnie Miller Soil Scientist

DISTRICT ACCOMPLISHMENTS - FISCAL 1975

PRACTICE	UNIT	AMOUNT
New Cooperators	No.	39
Basic Conservation Plans	No.	40
Revised Conservation Plans	No.	20
Farms Serviced	No.	382
Farms Applying Practices	No.	241
Group Conservation Jobs	No.	13
APPLICATION OF PRACTICES		
Conservation Cropping Systems	Acres	4,097
Contour Farming	Acres	1,882
Crop Residue Management	Acres	6,840
Diversions	L.F.	3,450
Farm Ponds	No.	4
Erosion Control Dams	No.	34
Waterways	Acres	44
Pasture Planting	Acres	1,459
Open Drains	L.F.	7,400
Tile Outlet Terraces	L.F.	46,750
Tile Inlet Terrace Pipes	No.	116
Drainage Tile	L.F.	112,785
Tree Planting	Acres	100
Wildlife Habitat Management	Acres	47
Land Adequately Treated	Acres	1,561

FISCAL 1975 FINANCIAL REPORT

	<u>1-M Budget</u>	<u>2-M Budget</u>
Commissioners Expense	\$ 710.04	
Office Supplies	310.77	
Printing	32.35	
Prizes for Contests	62.01	
Office Expense	224.31	
Meeting Expense	58.84	
Clerical Expense		\$6915.94
Travel		157.26
Release to State	1.68	150.80
	<u>\$1400.00</u>	<u>\$7224.00</u>

3-M COST-SHARE BUDGET

(including Long Term Agreements)

Terraces	\$ 350.00
Erosion Control Dams	3924.39
Grassed Waterways	587.40
Total Paid	<u>\$4861.79</u>
Funds Obligated	<u>4138.21</u>
	<u>\$9000.00</u>

NEW COOPERATORS

July 1, 1974 thru June 30, 1975

L. J. Bauer
Charles Hutchcroft
Q. R. Denato
Robert W. Beck (2)
Kenneth Wasson
Robert Hill
Edward Isett (2)
Frank H. Schramm
Harold Kroll
Robert W. Frank
Donald Chicken
Humane Society
Elsie Miller
Leroy Rauhaus
Donald Nelson (4)
Daniel Anderson
Kenneth Wehage

LeRoy A. Stukerjurgan
Milford Kester
Richard Rothzen
Doris L. Anderson & Frances Terry
Garland Gordon
Verald Fritz
Herbert Dodds
Kenneth Taeger
Wilma W. Dutton
IAAP
William Fortin
Henry Huiskamp
Hazel Grim
Craig Delzell
C. C. Taeger
Wilbur Pfeiff
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REVISIONS

July 1, 1974 thru June 30, 1975

IAAP (14)
Melvin Nelson
John Mecklenburg
C. B. Nelson

Clyde Scherer
Christ Episcopal Church
Lillian Huiskamp

BASIC PLANS

July 1, 1974 thru June 30, 1975

Mabel Dodds
Curtis Coppes
Leroy Rauhaus
Edward Isett (2)
Donald Nelson (3)
Jesse Moehle
Bruce A. Fladt
Kenneth Wehage
Willard Loper
Milford Kester
Richard Anliker
Daniel Anderson
J. Walter Lane
Meyers Bros.
Doyle Spears
Ray Reinke
William Grinstead
Harold Abel

David Wilson
Marvin Lange
Gertrude Abel
Richard Rothzen
LeRoy A. Stukerjurgan
Donald E. Ludeman
Lloyd L. Massner
Doris Anderson & Frances Terry
Carl Beckman
Alvin Dockendorff
F. Mildred Blakeway
Richard M. Smith
Carl Meller
IAAP
Herb Dodds
Wilbur Pfeiff
Craig Delzell
Henry Huiskamp

RESOURCE INVENTORIES FOR GOVERNMENT UNITS

Soil Capabilities of Neilson Sub-division
Relationship of Soil Conditions to Health-Southeast Iowa Health Planning
Maple Hills Project
City Sanitary Land Fill Sites
Soils on Proposed Lakeside Acres
Rolling Knolls Subdivision - City of Burlington
Agricultural Quality & Capabilities of Underdeveloped Land, Environs of Burlington
Septic Field Limitations in Burlington Area
Limitations of Burlington Area Soils for Construction
Pond Inventory - Des Moines County SCD
County Landfill Site
Green Acres Subdivision
Wittkamp Subdivision
Abandoned Wells & Cisterns - Rural Development Committee



This charming couple includes Debra Brus, training since June as soil conservationist. Deb will shortly be able to take on a soil district as the first woman district conservationist in Iowa. With her, Conservation Technician Oren Champ appears pleased at the prospects.

Larry Hunt served Des Moines District until August, when he moved to Louisa County as soil conservationist.

PERSONNEL

The Des Moines SCD office has seen many personnel changes over the year. Since June, Soil Conservation Technician Oren Champ, has been giving half his time to Louisa County and the other half to Des Moines County due to personnel shortages.

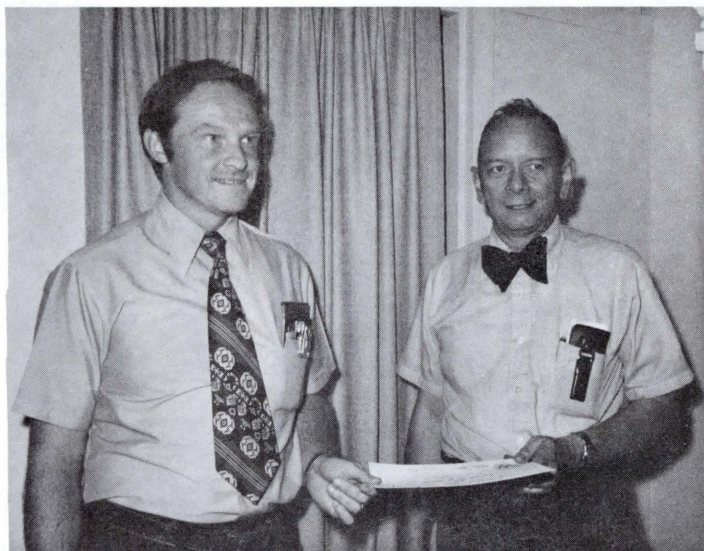
Also, in June, Soil Conservationist Larry Hunt began work in Louisa County where he has been acting district conservationist since the transfer of Harry Bryant in August.

On June 30, the staff was strengthened by the arrival of Debra Brus. Deb is a May, 1975 graduate of Iowa State University with a degree in Agronomy. She serves the district as a soil conservationist, assisting in the planning, design and layout of conservation practices.

Mark Simmons, WAE aide, continued to work part time while attending SCC. He helped Oren draw erosion control plans and take surveys.

District Conservationist Ralph Dewey had his administrative territory expanded to include supervision of the Louisa County office in the interim between Harry Bryant's transfer and designation of the new district conservationist there.

Now after 6½ years of service to Des Moines County, Ralph will be stepping out of his district conservationist position up into that of the Geode Wonderland RC&D coordinator. His area will include Des Moines, Henry, Lee and Louisa Counties. For details, see the article on the Geode Wonderland project.



Area Conservationist presents DC Ralph Dewey a Certificate of Merit from SCS, signifying outstanding work in getting Geode Wonderland RC&D under way. This event was in July and the project became a reality in December.



DISTRICT STAFF

District Conservationist Ralph E. Dewey, District Clerk Mrs. Dorothy Davis, Soil Conservationist Deb Brus and Soil Conservation Technician Oren Champ.



Awards Banquet Ceremonies. Alan Parrott receives a plaque and a handshake from Chairman Bill Vierling for work well done on a rented farm.

Past Commissioner Rex Troute looks like he couldn't be more pleased to receive an award as outstanding owner-operator on awards night. Rex continues to promote sound erosion control, although he is not actively on the board.

AWARDS IN 1975

November 13, 1975, climaxed the award activities of Des Moines district as ninety friends of conservation gathered at Pleasant Grove for the Annual Awards Banquet. Ladies of Shinar Presbyterian Church reminded commissioners and guests of how great a country church supper can be.

Highlighting the evening was a talk by Dr. Roy Overton of Des Moines, representing the Izaak Walton League of Iowa. Dr. Overton devotes his spare time promoting sound land use and conservation of natural resources. He informed the group of the "Save Our Streams" project of the Ikes. This is an opportunity for small groups to adopt a part of a stream to improve it environmentally.

A major feature of this annual affair is awarding certificates to outstanding conservation farmers and teachers. Past commissioner Rex Troute of Burlington was honored for his excellent conservation work on his farm as well as his concern for the district.

In the division honoring tenant-landlord farms, Alan Parrott of Danville received the award as tenant. Mrs. F. Mildred Blakeway is the owner. This farm controls about 100 acres of Geode Watershed.

In the teacher divisions Mrs. Betsy Pollock was awarded for outstanding work at the secondary level for her efforts in outdoor classrooms at James Madison Middle School in Burlington. Mrs. Beverly Lundy was elementary school winner representing Corse School in Burlington.

Not directly connected with district, but with district approval, farm news director of Radio KBUR, Cletus Paull received the annual award from the Iowa Chapter of the Soil Conservation Society of America for his years of boosting conservation over the air.



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Awards were given to outstanding teachers, also. At the secondary school level Mrs. Betsy Pollock has led the teaching staff at James Madison Middle School to a greater appreciation of the environment and a desire to teach these values to the students. Through her efforts as a social studies teacher, Betsy has located and planned a three acre outdoor classroom next to her school.

Grade teacher Mrs. Beverly Lundy promotes conservation education at home, at school and everywhere she goes. Her efforts on behalf of the environment have helped save some choice outdoor classroom spots from "extinction" by the bulldozer.



Past commissioner Henry Dockendorf and Secretary Harold Linder are probably discussing natural organic farming with speaker Dr. Roy Overton.

Speaker at the Awards Banquet was Dr. Roy W. Overton of Des Moines. His casual presentation of the "Save Our Streams" program of the Izaak Walton League was well accepted by those attending. "Save Our Streams" is a way for groups to actively clean up America.

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GEODE WONDERLAND RC&D

Resource Conservation and Development became a reality December 18, 1975, in Southeast Iowa, when Congressman Ed Mezvinsky announced the authorization of the Geode Wonderland project. As of that date USDA Secretary Earl Butz approved this four county area along with nine other RC&D's across the country.

Leaders of Geode Wonderland feel relieved and a bit proud that this project was one of ten chosen from a field of over sixty applications. The application was filed just thirteen months before.

Chairman Jim Hawkins of Argyle, a soil district commissioner, is rapidly organizing his committees to develop the first phase of the planning process - the plan design. Scheduled for completion about April 1, 1976, this will authorize RC&D funds to be spent in Des Moines, Henry, Lee and Louisa Counties.

District Conservationist Ralph E. Dewey, who has assisted Des Moines SCD for six and a half years assumes the job of project coordinator on February 29. He will still be assisting the district, in a different way, as the district is a sponsor of Geode Wonderland.

Dewey and state level SCS planners have toured the project area to locate "early start" project measures for immediate planning action. The first measure likely to receive priority will be one creating protective silt basins above the proposed Franklin Township Lake. With good luck this work may be underway within the year.

Many other project measures are being sought by local people, including construction of recreation lakes, seeding critical areas on scenic drives, inventories of water areas for recreation and rural water supply, bicentennial special projects, studies of woodland needs and marketing potential. An open ended program, RC&D provides a starting point for hundreds of needed development activities.

Offices of Geode Wonderland will be located four miles west of West Burlington on Highway 34 in the building operated by the Machinists Union.

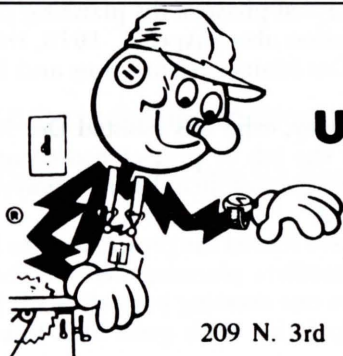


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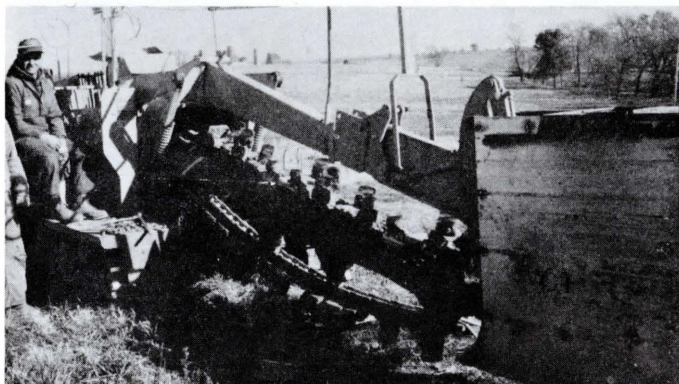


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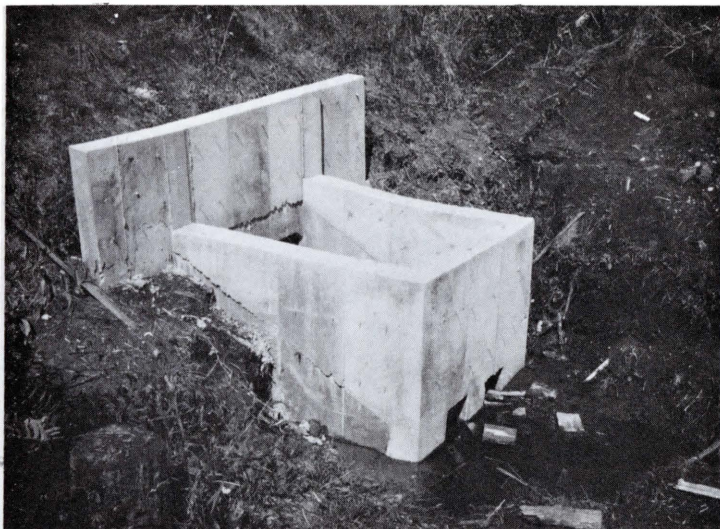
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ASCS ANNUAL REPORT

The Des Moines ASC County Committee received \$47875.00 for the 1975 annual Agricultural Conservation Program. Funds were approved and earned as follows:

Practice	Applications Appr.	Amt. Approved	% of Allocation
Terracing	23	\$24054.00	50%
Erosion Control Dams	13	15186.00	32%
Est. Sod Waterways	4	2857.00	6%
Tiling	8	5685.00	12%

Three Long Term Agreements (LTA's) were approved for: \$6353.00; \$4797.00; \$12,600.00; totaling \$23900.00. Farmers receiving approval under this program must complete all practices required by the SCS Conservation Plan of Operations and should have the conservation problems for their farms solved in a period from 3 to 10 years.

Application's filed by Des Moines County farmers for cost-sharing of needed soil conservation practices greatly exceeded funds available. Working closely with the Soil Conservation Service personnel, the County Committee generally approved those applications believed to have the greatest benefit in solving conservation problems for dollars expended. The situation appears to be unchanged for 1976.



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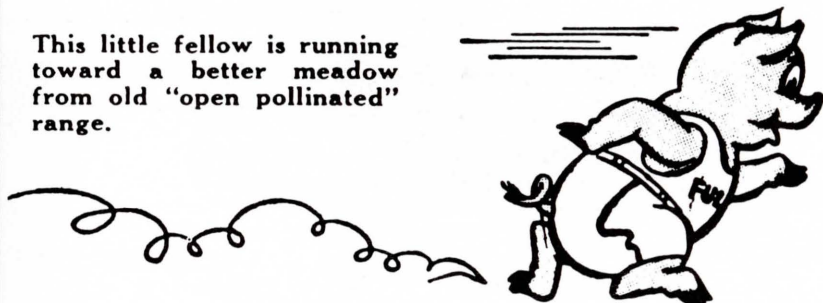
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