

Challenge of 21st Century

7-Hardin County Index, Friday, March 31, 1995

1994 Annual Financial Report

IHM Budget	ALLOCATION/EXPENDITURE
1973-74	\$15,317.83
1974-75	11,521.44
1975-76	23,668.47
1976-77	31,282.84
1977-78	46,250.00
1978-79	43,633.00
1979-80	46,320.00
1980-81	45,000.00
1981-82	77,662.12
1982-83	54,833.72
1983-84	96,753.61
1984-85	144,251.75
1985-86	147,916.82
1986-87	122,828.44
1987-88	92,429.64
1988-89	83,564.58
1989-90	45,980.76
1990-91	49,536.29
1991-92	56,156.50
1992-93	26,577.00
1993-94	21,925.00
1994-95	21,925.00
TOTAL	1,305,334.81
No-interest Loan (6)	48,248.05
IM budget (office supplies & commissioner travel/training)	
Allocation/expenditure	2,775.00
ACCOMPLISHMENTS	
Farms contacted	824 No.
Individuals & groups applying practices	268 No.
Contouring	4,763 Ac.
Contour strip cropping	20 Ac.
Terraces	22,455 Ft.
Sediment & water control basins	7 No.
Reduced erosion on cropland 123,435 Ton saved on 14,379 Ac.	
Field border	130,522 Ft.
Grade stabilization structure	3 No.
Grassed waterway	234 Ac.
Conservation tillage	11,562 Ac.
All District programs and services are offered on a nondiscriminatory basis without regard to race, color, national origin, religion, sex, age, marital status, or handicap.	



Hardin Soil & Water Commissioners

Carroll J. Hobson of Eldora, front row left, serves as chairman and John Gilbert of Iowa Falls, front row right, as vice chairman of the Hardin County Soil & Water Conservation District Commissioners. Other commissioners are back row, l to r: Mark Seward of New Providence, James Martin of Hubbard and Mark Balvanz of Eldora.

Emphasize Value Of Waterways, Borders

JIM MARTIN
Commissioner

We as farmers need to commend ourselves for the progress we have made in soil conservation in recent years. As I look around my community and other parts of the state, plowed and bare fields are much more uncommon than they used to be. Residue and cover slow water velocity and reduce soil loss.

As equipment becomes larger we remove fences and make field sizes larger. Now even with protective residue under water becomes concentrated from a watershed area, it can pick up speed simply from the long distance it can now travel, taking residue with it. Once that cover is gone, soil is exposed and cuts begin even in no-till.

These areas need protection with waterways and field borders. A properly constructed and maintained waterway will slow water velocity, by spreading it out over a wider channel. Field borders accomplish a similar function.

The question arises why take so much land out of production for a waterway or field border? These areas are often the least productive areas in a field. Turn rows get most of the equipment traffic,

are the most compacted and become the weediest from reduced plant population.

Areas that need waterways also are weedy from herbicides being washed away and they are hard to cross with equipment. As technology improves, we can now pinpoint those least productive areas in fields. Economically it makes more sense to idle those areas for a useful purpose than to apply expensive crop inputs and receive a negative return. We can still harvest a crop from waterways and field borders as hay or bedding.

We have come a long way, but many acres need protection. Even non-erodible land and flat fields need waterway and field border protection. Water will concentrate by the force of gravity and we need to provide a channel for it to flow in.

Profit Potential In Controlled Grazing

JOHN GILBERT
Commissioner

Interest in controlled grazing is growing as more producers realize the profit potential from improving pasture management.

This is good news because enhanced profits from grazing means permanent sod will protect the soil and water resources on some of the most vulnerable acres. Economic returns from well managed grazing can be competitive with row cropping. This creates viable alternative uses for CRP acres when the 10 year contracts expire.

Grazing is the harvest of a feed source by animals, along with the corresponding natural dispersal of manure. Traditional grazing management was long on keeping the fences up and the weeds down. Better understanding of plant species interaction with each other and grazing livestock have led to management techniques which improve stock health, performance and attitude. Additionally, improved management permits plant species to be more varied, vigorous and productive. The bottom line is improved stock performance with less supplemental feed.

One of the first comments made by producers as they begin managing their grazing is they don't know where the clovers or a number of other plants are coming from. Continuous grazing means only the few species tolerant of close grazing will survive. Introducing rest permits other varieties to return and survive. This provides a number of benefits, such as fewer bare spots and more competition making weeds less of a problem. Also, as legumes return, the nitrogen they fix makes existing grass varieties more productive, reducing fertilizer costs.

The rule of thumb in improving pasture management is "plant nothing but posts for at least three years." The preferred method of renovating pasture is with frost seeding. When soil disturbance

is necessary, the impact of excited animal's hooves is a good alternative.

The short-duration grazing a manager follows in controlled grazing mimics the passage of the large herds of animals present in nature (such as the herds of buffalo which once flourished on the American plains.) Permitting stock a few hours to two to three days on a given small tract of pasture insures they will not weaken the plants they desire most. Given two to four weeks rest, these plants will be productive and at their most nutritious on the next grazing.

Most graziers report spending only a few minutes a day moving stock, and report the investment in fencing and watering systems is offset by increased performance, carrying capacity and reduced supplemental feed costs. Also, most stock become easy to handle because of the constant association of people with new feed.

Most Iowa pastureland offers considerable improved financial potential in return for learning new management techniques. The capital outlay to improve pasture management using modern electric fencing is relatively small and is useable for many years. Those are conditions most new developments in agriculture cannot equal.

Your Hardin County Natural Resource Conservation office can recommend where you can learn more. Also, cost share assistance is available for developing pasture fencing if at least two paddocks of warm season grass can be included.

Attendance at grazing meetings has been strong this winter, meaning more will be held. Attending field days or pasture walks where managed grazing is practiced are good ways to learn more. Talking with experienced graziers is always a good means of learning more. The first step is to realize you can improve the profitability of your pastured livestock enterprises.

Value of Trees

MARK L. SEWARD
Commissioner

Do you want to be remembered? Think for a moment about the value of 10, 20, 30, or even 40 acres of trees. If your grandparent had planted them for you, imagine what they would be worth. The beauty alone is of aesthetic value, but it's also a place for hundreds of birds and animal life to call home. A place for you to walk with your children and grandchildren. A place to teach them about nature. A place to leave memories of yourself and the special quiet times. If

all this is not enough to leave behind, think about some large walnut trees being ready for harvest valued at \$5,000-\$10,000 a piece.

There are some programs in place in both the CFS office in Iowa Falls and the NRCS office in Eldora, to assist with the planning and cost of planting. It is also possible to get assistance on improving an existing timber. The undesirable species would be culled to favor the selected trees. Why not do something for everyone you know and love. Plant some trees!

Pine Creek Water Quality Project

Landowners Making Strides

ROGER WOLF, Environmental Specialist

The Pine Lakes, along with the Iowa River and its greenbelt area, are thought of locally as prized "jewels" for the community. These jewels are very special to local residents as they provide areas of enhanced recreational value and scenic quality.

Since the early 1920's when J.S. Newcomer presented the idea of building the Lower Pine Lake, many individuals, groups, businesses and government agencies, have worked together to make the Pine Lakes and the entire area a reality. Today these efforts continue.

The following article provides an update of the progress made with the Pine Creek Water Quality Project.

Landowners participating in the Pine Creek Water Quality Project are making significant strides with on-going efforts to protect and improve water quality. Fortunately, their efforts not only improve the water quality leaving their farms, but the combined impacts from all of their efforts will improve the water quality for the Pine Lakes.

Physical examples of progress are visible throughout the watershed. The following list of people should feel proud of the work they completed as part of the Pine Creek Project.

Project Cooperator	Practice(s)
Wayne Paige	Grassed Waterways
Chuck Smoldi	Grassed Waterways
Garry Schwank	Grassed Waterways
Lloyd Eckhoff	Grassed Waterways
Hazel Harms-Pence	Grassed Waterways
	and Grade Stabilization Structure
Marcella Creps	Grassed Waterways
Philip Prosser	Grassed Waterways
Balvanz Farms	Grassed Waterways
	and Grade Stabilization Structure
Paul Primus	Grassed Waterways

Project Cooperator	Practice(s)
Primus Farms	Grassed Waterways
Curt Crosser	Water and Sediment Control Structure
Mary Wubben	Grassed Waterways
Terry Gast	
Henry Peters Trust	Grassed Waterways
Lloyd Sier	Grassed Waterways
George Ackles	Water and Sediment Control Structures
Lloyd Eckhoff	Terraces
Frances Georles	Grassed Waterways
George and Henry VandeeVort	Grassed Waterways
Janssen Farms	Grassed Waterways

The following chart denotes Best Management Practices (BMP's) planned and scheduled sometime during 1993 thru 1997. Implemented year to date (YTD) includes practices which have been reported as completed or implemented during the time period April 1993 thru January 1995.

BMP Standard Title	Planned	Implemented YTD
Cons. tillage (no-till only)	2149 ac	1311 ac
Contour Farming	435 ac	355 ac
Cover Cropping System	133 ac	56 ac
Nutrient Management	4099 ac	3794 ac
Pest Management	4099 ac	3794 ac
Record Keeping	4099 ac	3794 ac
Waste Mgmt. System	146,562 Cu. Ft.	0
Grassed Waterway	50 ac	19 ac
Grade Stab Struct.	3	3
Terraces	10,000 Ft.	3700 Ft.
Water and Sed Basins	4	4
Critical Area Planting	5 ac	53 ac
Livestock Exclusion	53 ac	0
Wildlife upl Hab Mgmt	27 ac	0
Wildlife Wet Hab Mgmt	7 ac	0

Name Change

Natural Resources Conservation Service

GARY L. HILLMER
District Conservationist

The Soil Conservation Service is now the Natural Resources Conservation Service. On October 20, 1994, the Secretary of Agriculture established this agency as part of USDA reorganization.

What does this change mean to you and others concerned with conservation? It means that while some things will change, others will stay the same. Our new name better reflects our role in helping people conserve all natural resources on private lands. It reflects a streamlined agency that provides quality service more efficiently.

The new agency is built on a solid foundation of 60 years of experience, our scientific and technical expertise, and our partnerships with conservation districts and others. It combines most of the authorities of the old agency, as well as five natural resource conservation cost-share programs formerly administered by other USDA agencies.

While we have focused on soil conservation in the past, we are also the key federal agency to offer technical help on private lands to improve water, wildlife habitat, forest lands, grasslands, and other resource related to the land. In our new role, we want to work side-by-side with you to ensure healthy land that brings benefits to city people as well as rural communities. The NRCS is committed to conserving the nation's resources, not just for this generation but for generations to come.



Natural Resources Conservation Service Staff Members

Natural Resources Conservation Service staff members are, left to right: Yolanda Butler (Soil Conservation Technician), Kent H. Holmgaard (Soil Conservation Technician), Karen Cole (Volunteer), Gary L. Hillmer

(District Conservationist), Susie L. Reece (Secretary), Roger R. Wolf (Environmental Specialist) and Cristine Birks (Soil Conservation Technician).

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Hardin Producers Meeting

6-Hardin County Index, Friday, March 31, 1995

Recognized For SCS Service

Knutson, Walters

GARY L. HILLMER
District Conservationist

I want to take this opportunity to thank a couple of farmers in our community - Caleb Knutson of Radcliffe and Gary Walters of New Providence - for their many years of public service.

These gentlemen have given of themselves to assist our county producers. As conservation leaders they have helped shape and guide soil and water conservation program that promotes responsible and reasonable resource management. Hardin county farmers apply a very strong land ethic in their operations.

As Gary and Caleb end a 20 year plus position on the district board, Mark Bal-

vanz of Eldora and Mark Seward of New Providence are beginning. Welcome and thanks for accepting the call to service.

The district board is dedicated to assisting the public over and above federal mandates. However, we need public input. I would ask the citizens of Hardin county to talk to any one of the district commissioners or field office staff members. Tell us what you would like to see in the soil and water conservation arena.

When early conservation leaders first envisioned local conservation districts, it was to satisfy the needs of local citizens by their own people. As a board and field office staff, we are ready, willing and able. Please help us.

Improved Profitability

Goal Of Pine Creek Water Quality Project

ROGER WOLF
Environmental Specialist

Beginning in the fall of 1993, twenty-eight farmers agreed to begin the individual planning process for the development of comprehensive farm/site specific Water Quality Resource Management Plans (WQRMPS).

Through the planning process, each WQRMPS was designed with input from the farm owner and operators. Also, on-site visual walk-overs were made. The walk-overs were done to evaluate current physical characteristics and identify the

resources available to work with.

The WQRMPS process, from a project planner's standpoint, has the primary objective of protecting the water resource base by reducing pollutant loadings. Improvements in the water resource begin when problems have been identified and corrective solutions are implemented. From a farmer's standpoint, the WQRMPS is a schedule and selection of guiding ideas or practices to not only protect the resource base but also to maintain and hopefully improve the profitability of their farming operation.

Multi-Species Riparian

Buffer Strips Functional

MARK BALVANZ
Commissioner

Last August, I had an opportunity to visit a multi-species riparian buffer strip located on Bear Creek in Story county. The twilight tour started by showing pictures taken in March, 1990.

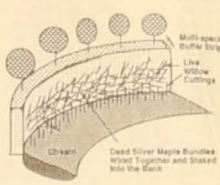
These pictures showed an over-grazed blue grass pasture with a few trees, mostly dying, and shuffling creek banks, some that had tried to be repaired with rip-rap. There were also eroded gullies leading to the adjacent cropland.

What I saw that evening was a beautiful multi-species buffer strip. Starting from the stream bank there were five rows of trees, followed by two rows of shrubs, then a strip of switchgrass.

The first zone (trees) consisted of one-three rows of fast growing riparian species such as willow, cottonwood, hybrid poplar and green ash. The next two rows were more moderate growth species such as hackberry, hickory, white oak and pin oak.

Zone two (shrubs) also showed a mixture of species. They included chokecherry, nitchback, redosier, gray dogwood. Species are selected for their specific wildlife benefit and adaptability to different sites.

Zone three (grass) functions to dissipate the surface runoff, trap sediment and ag chemicals. Switchgrass was used because of its dense cover and stiff stems. Others such as Indian grass and big or little blue stem could be used along with



switchgrass. The final option would be to stabilize the actively cutting streambank using a combination of willow posts and anchored dead tree revetments. Cost estimate to install a buffer strip is \$350-400 per acre.

Seeing this buffer strip nearing the end of the fifth growing season showed how beautiful and functional it can be. One more added benefit would be to harvest the grass and trees.

This riparian buffer strip research is being conducted by the Iowa State University Agroforestry Research Team: Dick Schultz, Joe, Colletti and Tom Isenhardt.

With some luck this spring a couple of these buffer strips will be started in the Pine Creek area. If you have more interest, the Natural Resource Conservation Service office in Eldora has publications on how to design and make a multi-species riparian buffer strip.

Recognize 217 Hardin County Farmers

Two hundred seventeen farmers from Hardin county were publicly thanked for their soil and water conservation efforts in a first-of-its-kind effort. These farmers have made substantial progress in caring for our soil and water. It was time to say thank you.

You can see the results as you drive across the county. The use of heavy crop residue, newly seeded waterways, field borders, strips of grass and roadside management practices help prevent erosion and improve the land.

The Hardin County Soil and Water Conservation District commissioners and staff hosted a "conservation appreciation event" in December. Lee Kline, WHO radio farm director, was the keynote speaker. Staff and commissioners prepared and served an omelet brunch to those in attendance.

Those selected to be honored were nominated by commissioners and county farm organizations. The honorees were:

George Ackles, James Amundson, Lee Amundson, Velma Arnold, Dale Bahr, Harold Bahr, Jim Bahr, Robert Bahr, Jeannette Baker, Margaret Lundy Baker, Mike Bales (Farm Manager), Don Balvanz, Scott Balvanz, Steve Balvanz, Jim Bartling, Lloyd Bates, Don Beach, Ed Bear, Loyd & Rexine Beecher, Paul Berling, Bob Blome, Robert & Roberta Boeke, Lynn Bollinger (LinMar Farms), Mike Bostrom, John Bradley.

Mark Bradley, Alan Braga, Randy Brinkmeyer, Lowell Brower, Martin Broer, Mike Broer, Phil Broer, Tim Broer, Gene Bunte, Jerry Butler, John L. Butler, Homer Calkins, Randy Carr, George & June Chamberlain, Les Clamplitt, Alvin Clark, Wendell Clark, Agnes Clemons, George Clemons,

Louise Cobb, Bryce Coburn, Leland Coburn, Kim Collins, Frank Cook, Ken Cook, Lisle Cook, Rick Cook, Robert Cook, Bob Crosser, Curt Crosser, Gary Crosser, Richard Crosser.

Robert DeNeu, Leota DeVries, Diamond Brothers, Tony Doolard, Gordon & Mary Dreier, Gene Dubberke, Lloyd Eekhoff, Dennis Eller, Kent Eller, Kurt Eller, Elvern Ellwood, Roger Englekes (Manager), Dennis Faris, Kim Faris, Jon Faust, Curt Ferris, David Fischer, George A. Folkerts, Bill Follett, Darrell Freese, Steve Frerichs, Wayne Frerichs, Howard Frey (in honor of), Dennis Priest, Ronald Galloway, Laverne Gast, Bill Gelhaus, John Gilbert, William Gilbert.

Rex, Tim, Kevin Gogerty, George Goshcke, Brent Granzow, Marvin Granzow, Vern Greimann, Jay Hadley, Neil Hadley, Corey Hake, Elvern Hake, Handsaker Brothers, Gary Hansen, Hazel I. Pence Harms, Arvin Haywood, Charles Haywood, Charlie Haywood, Harris Haywood, Steve Haywood, Adolph Herbrechtmeier, Hertz Farm Management, Larry Hindman, Brian Hobson, Carroll Hobson, Mark Hobson, Glen Hodnefield, Rufus Hoelscher, Gary Hoffman.

Jessie Lu Hopkins, Gary Houck, Calvin Hyland, John Jaspers (Manager),

Jeff Jeske, Mark Jeske, Robert Jeske, Allen Johnson - Johnson Ag Farms, Marcella Jornding Trust, Allen Kadolph, Georgia Keller (in honor of), Duane Klosterman, Caleb Knutson, Kenneth Kramer, Norm Kulow, Don Kumrow, Dale Land, Rick Landt, Steve Landt, Dale Lauenstein, Brian Lauterbach, Charles Lawler, Mary Lawler.

Rex Lawler, Richard Lawler, Bill Lawless, Dale Lawless, Harry Lawless, Harold Lloyd, David Lloyd, Marvin Luiken, John Lundy (Elco, Inc.), Delmar Magnuson, David Manetter, Marvin Maron, Bob Martin, David Martin, Jim Martin, John Martin, Ralph Martin, Wallace Martin (in honor of), Mike McCartney, Willard (Butch) McCartney, David McClellan, Ray McDowell, Meckley Farm Corporation, Dennis Meints, Larry Meints, Richard Meyer, David Minier.

Lyle Minier, Les Mooi, Barbara Jo Morgan, Dave Morgan, Dick Morgan, Robert Muff, Harold Muller, Doug Musson, Dan & Roscoe Nelson, Dennis Neubauer, Nelsley & Nissley, Mildred Norris (in honor of), Melvin Oppold (in honor of), Rick Ostrem, Wayne Paige, Ed Palmer, Kay Palmer, Iona Marsh Perisho, Steve Perry, Dave Petty, Alfred Piel, Oscar Piel, Melvin Powers, Ben Primus, Claus Primus, Paul C. & Jane Primus, Rollin Primus, Phil Prosser, Jerry Rash, Joe Rash, Ken Reece.

Kent Reinert, Shorty Reinertson, Gregg Reisinger, Harris Reiter, Jim Richtmeier, Jim Riekken, Larry Riekken, H. C. Hicks, Jr., Gene Roberts, Jeff Roberts, Dick Rolling, Dick Roll, Paul Rodgers, Morris Sailor, Robert Schager, Bill Schnormeier, Martin Schnormeier, Don Schuneman, Dwight Schuneman, Gary Schwarck, Marty Schwarck, Mark Schwarck, Ronald Seward, Garnita & Irwin Seward, Mark Seward, Kevin Sheldahl, Larry Sheldahl.

Rick Sheldahl, David Shurts, John Siert, Lloyd Siert, George Smith, Jeff Smithean, Chuck Smoldt, Rev. David Splitter, Dean Stalzer, Raymond Stock-

dale, Stolee Brothers, Roger Struck, Duane Swart, David & Annette Sweeney, Tim Teske, Don Thelke, Steve Thelke, Allen Tibbs, Lauren Tibbs, Alan Tidman, John Tidman, William L. Tinjer, Jr., David Topp, Matt Topp, Robert Topp, Bill Trampe, Jr., Bill Trampe, Sr., Dorothy (Dale) Ulich, Keith Van Patter.

Salute Appreciation Event Donors

Thank You

The Hardin County Soil and Water District commissioners and staff would like to offer a special thank you to the following organizations, businesses and individuals who donated funds, door prizes and time to sponsor the "Conservation Appreciation Event" recognizing Hardin County conservation producers.

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Marvin Veld

We Can Be Thankful!

GARY D. WALTERS
Past Commissioner Chairman

Many thanks to the voters that allowed me to be their commissioner of the Hardin County Soil and Water Conservation District for the last 20 years. It has been a rewarding experience in the educational scope as well as personal friendships acquired during those years locally and state-wide.

Over the years, many talented and conscientious NRCS and DSC staff members have done their best implementing federal, state and county soil and water conservation programs along with the commissioners. Their technical expertise made it a privilege for the commissioners to approve the plans put before them at our monthly and many special meetings.

Natural Resource Conservation Service Change In Focus

CARROLL J. HOBSON
Commissioner

There have been many rewards in the nearly 30 years I've worked with soil and water conservation. Among the finest rewards was meeting so many high quality people and seeing miles and miles of terraces built in this county, particularly around the Pine Lakes. If terraces are maintained they will last a long time.

Many other practices like grassed waterways, full flow structures, concrete outlets, ponds and several others are all work to be proud of. Erosion tests made by the Agricultural Resource Service in the 1960's and 70's on the Ray McDowell farm were fundamental research made available for all time in colleges around the United States. I am especially proud of that work.

The Soil Conservation Service, which once did everything they could to help farmers save soil and water, are no longer the Soil Conservation Service. They are now the Natural Resource Conservation Service headed by Paul Johnson from northeastern Iowa. Mr. Johnson has long been associated with environmental, biological and preservation interests. His organization reflects his views.

Frankly, I liked the Soil Conservation

Service much better. I think a substantial turnover in soil commissioners in the state of Iowa is apparent. Not every soil commissioner can adjust from being a farmer friendly helper to a trustee officer intent on finding new wetlands, flaws in farm relations, and recommendations to withhold farm program payments, etc., which would also destroy farmer's abilities to buy crop insurance. The farm family livelihood can be put at risk.

Instead of withdrawing, I have determined to work with what we have in hopes to improve it. I hope we can improve staff work as well as our relations with farmers. I intend that we do our best, both staff and soil commissioners, to improve office efficiency, to exercise reasonable tolerance and if all else fails, to complain to Washington, D.C., domain of Mr. Johnson, where there is a chance to make our weight felt.

Natural Resource Conservation officials and staff are trying to do what they are told to do, which is not always easy. Superimposed over all these problems are the various personalities of both staff and farmers; both of them overstressed at times. I will look forward in 1995 to hearing compliments for our soil and water conservation district and honest complaints as well.



During the appreciation program, hand crafted pewter ornaments sculptured by internationally-known pewter artist Michael Ricker were presented to the honored farm cooperators. In left photo, Agnes Mary Oppold receives an ornament on behalf of her late husband, Melvin Oppold, from Commissioner Jim Martin. And, at right, Harry Lawless (seated) is presented his award by Commissioner Gary Walters.

Two hundred seventeen persons from Hardin county were recognized for their soil and water conservation efforts during a Conservation Appreciation Event hosted by the Hardin County Soil and Water Conservation District commissioners last December.

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