

ANNUAL REPORT

IDA COUNTY, IOWA, SOIL CONSERVATION DISTRICT

1955

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DISTRICT COMMISSIONERS

W. F. BUROW, CHAIRMAN	BATTLE CREEK, IOWA
WM. ROSSOW	BATTLE CREEK, IOWA
C. C. CHALLMAN	GAIVA, IOWA

TREASURER

RAY BRESNAHAN	IDA GROVE, IOWA
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SECRETARY

LYNN M. FITSIMMONS, EXTENSION DIRECTOR	IDA COUNTY
SHIRLEY GATES, STATE CLERK	IDA GROVE, IOWA

TECHNICIANS

KENNETH H. BURNETT	SOIL CONSERVATIONIST
BRUCE W. MARCUE	SOIL CONSERVATIONIST
GEORGE W. WITTERS	CONSERVATION AID
CHARLES P. BODHOLDT	CONSERVATION AID

SOIL FERTILITY CANNOT BE IMPROVED
WITHOUT CONTROLLING SOIL EROSION

DISTRICT ADMINISTRATION

The following is the 10th annual report of the activities of the Ida County Soil Conservation District. It covers the 1955 calendar year. The officers of the District are; W. F. Burow, chairman, Battle Creek; Wm. Rossow, commissioner, Battle Creek; C. C. Challman, commissioner, Galva; R. D. Bresnahan, treasurer, Ida Grove; and L. M. Fittsimmons, Ida Grove is our Secretary. Mr. Fittsimmons was appointed secretary when he became County Extension Director during the year. Twelve regular and two special meetings were held in 1955. The commissioners have had only three absences at meetings during the year. The secretary was appointed in April and has been able to attend only four meetings because of conflicts and ill health.

The following assignments of work have been made:

W. F. Burow

1. Chairman of District.
2. Representative to the Little Sioux Works Committee.
3. District Advisory Member - Iowa Association of Soil Conservation Districts.

Wm. Rossow

1. Chairman of committee to develop a Soil Conservation program for 4-H clubs.
2. Chairman of committee to prepare 1955 annual report.

C. C. Challman

1. Chairman of committee for preparations for 1956 annual meeting.

For the year 1955, the resolutions of major importance passed by the District Governing Body are:

1. An ammendment to the District Work Plan bringing policy in line with current thinking on District assistance for Flood Control (the alternate plan), substitution of terraces and land treatment for structures.
2. A resolution to recognize outstanding work in Soil Conservation by 4-H club members.
3. A resolution adopting basin terraces as a recognized practice.
4. Granting priority for farm planning to Korean Veterans enrolled in the "Veteran-on-the-farm" training school.
5. Resolution entering the District in the Sioux City Program for Permanent Agriculture.
6. Acceptance of all flood prevention work completed by the Soil Conservation Service in the Perion and Kirkholm watersheds. The major portion of East Aldrich was also accepted.
7. Adopted as policy, standard maintenance plan together with a set of forms for the setting up of this maintenance plan.
8. A resolution setting forth the District's approval of the 1956 ACP program for Ida County.

The District is responsible for the administration of two funds. A general fund for general receipts and expenditures and a maintenance fund for moneys held in trust. This trust fund can be used only for the maintenance of structures in sub-watersheds organized under the Little Sioux Flood Prevention Program.

GENERAL FUND

Balance, December 31, 1954	-	\$	39.10
Receipts, 1955	-		156.25
Expenditures, 1955	-		145.34
Balance, December 31, 1955	-		50.01

MAINTENANCE FUND

Cash on hand, Dec. 31, 1954	-	\$	104.29
Receipts, 1955	-		540.81
Expenditures, 1955	-		3.45
Cash on hand, Dec. 31, 1955	-		641.65
Bonds on hand, Dec. 31, 1954	-		6004.00
Bonds on hand, Dec. 31, 1955	-		6004.00

Meetings, watershed tours, demonstrations, exhibits, etc. dealing with soil and water conservation for adults and others were held last year as follows:

<u>NO.</u>	<u>KIND</u>	<u>CONDUCTED, ARRANGED OR SPONSORED BY -</u>	<u>ATTENDANCE</u>
1	Annual Meeting	District	75
2	Watershed Meetings	Cooperators	27
1	4-H Terrace Demonstration	4-H Club	8
1	Terrace Demonstration	District & Ida Grove Implement Dealers	350
4	Watershed Tours	District	125
1	Radio Tape Recording	Station KSCJ	---
1	Radio Tape Recording	County Extension Dir.	---
1	Newsletter to Cooperators	District	300
1	Model Farm at 4-H Fair	District	---
5	Fertility, Rotations, and water conservation meetings	Vocational Agr. Instructor	81

The County Extension Director has helped to organize a special 4-H club project in Soil Conservation. He was the individual responsible for seeing that the information about this project reached 4-H members. He was also appointed secretary of the District.

The Vocational Agriculture classes in the Ida Grove Public School spent most of their time allotted to soils on soil judging. As a result of this training the soil judging team placed first in the Sac-Calhoun Soil Judging contest and third in the State Soil Judging contest. Under farm management the students are making their own land capability maps and the farm conservation plans to go with them.

The "Veteran-on-the-farm" training instructor reached 50 individual students and 45 of their land-lords with an educational program. This program was centered around planning the farm operation for an acceptable soil loss. The students made farm conservation plans for their individual farms taking into consideration soil type, slope and degree of erosion. All accepted soil conservation practices were considered in making the farm plans.

FARM PLANNING PROGRAM

The District believes that the proper approach to sound soil conservation lies through the preparation of a basic farm conservation plan. In general, such a plan should include the land use map, a map showing operating fields, and a cropping plan. This plan should be in sufficient detail to permit the operator to plan year by year how to plant his crops and where to install practices so that planned land use and field layout can be achieved.

During 1955, 24 basic farm plans were completed. This was considerably below the goal of 42 set for the District. It is felt that 40 or 50 plans per year would be a sound annual goal. During 1955 the call for ACP assistance was so large that under existing policy our goal of 42 could not be reached. We are proposing in 1956 that the District will not guarantee to have available at all times more than 50% of its work unit staff for application work. During the peak periods of layout work this percentage may be increased somewhat to be offset during the slack months.

APPLICATION OF CONSERVATION PRACTICES

There are sufficient contractors available to the cooperators of this District to install most of the practices desired. The main problem in this regard has been getting the cooperator to make his arrangements far enough in advance. The 1955 road building program in Iowa created some temporary shortages. There is also a tendency on the part of some contractors to put off this type of work which they consider unimportant, in favor of larger jobs such as road building.

For the first time in 1955, Ida County ASC hired program service men to lay out contouring. As a result the District responsibilities for the layout of this practice were reduced about 25%. This service will be provided again in 1956.

During the year, 306 referrals were made to the work unit office by Ida County ASC. Of the referrals who were contacted about 25% were interested but did not install the practice, a few even after design and layout had been completed. This represents considerable lost motion. Ways must be found to screen these referrals and eliminate the waste.

One of the outstanding application jobs this year was a cooperative job involving Orlan Ehler, a district cooperator, the Ida County Board of Supervisors and the District. The job involved installing two drop inlet structures on a county road to protect gully heads on Mr. Ehlers farm and a culvert flowing into his farm through another road. The County furnished right of way, materials, except earth, and labor for installation. Mr. Ehler furnished the necessary earth for fills plus a cash contribution to the County and an easement for the impoundment of water on his land. The District furnished plans, specifications and supervision for the installation for the structures. The County has agreed to maintain the structures as a part of its regular maintenance program. These structures contributed to a more economical and more favorable road than could have otherwise been provided.

As of December, contract work had been practically completed on the East Aldrich Creek Watershed. This involved three drop inlet structures, two drop spillways and two risers on existing culverts plus about 37 miles of level terraces and the shaping and grading of eleven major gullies. The general feeling among cooperators in this watershed is more favorable now that the work is completed. Most of them have expressed themselves that the substitution of terraces for structures was wise. Protection of the hillside slopes is becoming more and more important to them.

Work unit personnel have developed a method for building level terraces with a bulldozer mounted on a farm tractor, a mold-board plow and a spring tooth harrow. These are all implements readily available to our cooperators. Preliminary cost studies indicate that the cost will vary from 3¢ per linear foot on gentle slopes to 5 to 6¢ per foot on steeper land. The secret of the operation lies in plowing the land before bulldozing, in plowing the right number of furrows at one time and in the placement of the furrows with respect to the terrace ridge for easy construction. We feel that this method is superior to that of using the plow alone.

The District has rendered on-site assistance in laying out and supervising the installation of soil conservation practices as follows:

Contour Farming	5911 Acres
Strip Cropping	352 Acres
Field Reorganization	2947 Rods
Tile Lines	51045 Feet
Open Drains	.98 Miles
Farm Drainage	101 Acres
Terraces	43.31 Miles
Waterways	15.80 Acres
Drop Inlets	7 No.
Check Dams	3 No.

The following assistance was furnished to the District in 1955;

U. S. Department of Agriculture, Soil Conservation Service;

Soil Conservationist	GS-9	-	12 months service
Soil Conservationist	GS-7	-	12 months service
Conservation Aid	GS-5	-	5 months service
Conservation Aid	GS-4	-	19 months service

Transportation and office supplies of this personnel was furnished by the Soil Conservation Service

Office space, light and heat is furnished by the General Service Administration

Ida County Agricultural Stabilization and Conservation Committee;

\$3215.00 in off-set funds for the 1955 Agricultural Conservation Program

\$ 439.97 Agriculture Conservation Program service funds for three men to assist in laying out contour guide lines on 90 farms.

Iowa State Soil Conservation Committee;

Appropriations through State Soil Conservation Committee	-	\$ 500.00
Clerical Help	-	1 man year

Ida County Extension Service

-20 man days

Vocational Agriculture Instructor, Ida Grove Public School

-13 man days

Veteran Instructor, Ida Grove Public School

-60 man days

RESOURCES OF THE DISTRICT

QUANTITY

Cash Expenditures in General Fund	-	\$ 145.34
Camera for educational purposes	-	1
Cherokee Scouts for contour layout	-	2
Markers for marking contour lines	-	2

PROGRESS SUMMARY
IDA COUNTY SOIL CONSERVATION DISTRICT
ESTABLISHED - FEB. 19, 1945
Work Unit Office Opened - March 13, 1946

	<u>In 1955</u>	<u>To Date</u>
Sub-Watershed Groups Organized	0	14
Soil Conservation Surveys (Acres)	7328	100837
Basic Conservation Plans (No.)	24	276
(Ac.)	4433	49599
Initial Conservation Plans (No.)	35	100
(Ac.)	7783	20753
Acres Contour Laid Out	5911	---
Miles Terraces Built	43	196
Education Meetings Held (No.)	6	128
(Attend)	108	4095
Tile Lines (Feet)	51045	258477
News Articles	20	322
Demonstrations and Tours (No.)	8	59
(Attend)	483	1219
Radio & TV Talks	2	6
Birthday Party (No.)	1	9
(Attend)	75	1605

W. F. BUROW, CHAIRMAN
IDA COUNTY SOIL CONSERVATION DISTRICT