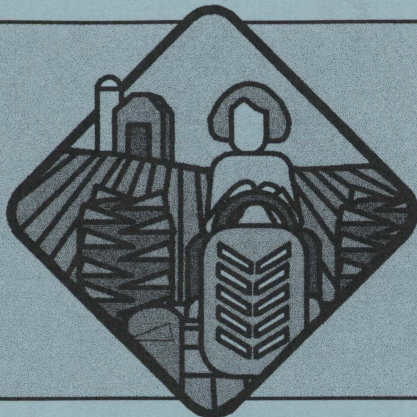




SOIL & WATER CONSERVATION UPDATE

A Newsletter from the Dickinson County SWCD

October 1996

COST SHARE FUNDS AVAILABLE

The State has allocated the 1997 cost-share funds to the Soil & Water Conservation District for best management practices. The following is a list of funds available and a description of practices that the funds can be used for:

☒ **Voluntary fund**

- used primarily for waterways, sediment basins, terraces...
- cost-share is 50% of the estimated/actual cost
- applications must be approved and work started by Dec. 31, 1997

☒ **Management practices**

- used as a No-till/Ridge till/Strip till incentive
- cost-share is \$10/acre with an 80 acre max.
**this is a one-time (per producer) incentive
- applications must be approved by Dec. 31, 1997

☒ **REAP fund**

- used primarily for waterways, sediment basins, terraces...
- cost-share is 50% of the estimated/actual cost
**land must be located within the Silver Lake Watershed—check with office
- applications must be approved by June 30, 1997

☒ **REAP - Forestry/Native Grasses fund**

- used primarily for farmstead and field windbreaks
- cost-share is 75% of estimated/actual cost, \$700 max.
with funding available for plants & fencing
- applications must be approved and work started by May 31, 1997 with plants in by June 15, 1997

☒ **Iowa Great Lakes Clean Water Project fund**

- used for waterways, sediment basins, easements, vegetative cover, CRP/WRP incentives, and wetland restoration projects
- cost-share is 75% of estimated/actual cost
**land must be located within the Iowa Great Lakes Watershed—check with office
- applications must be approved and work started by June 30, 1997

☒ **Dickinson County Conservation Tree Reserve fund**

- used to establish acreage windbreaks — specifically for those not eligible for REAP funds (Non-Ag.)
- cost-share is 50% of estimated/actual cost with a \$500 maximum per acreage

All funds are available on a first come, first served basis

NEW STAFF



CARROLL OSKVIG,
DISTRICT
CONSERVATIONIST

We are pleased to welcome Carroll Oskvig to Dickinson County ! Carroll was raised on a corn and soybean farm near Alden, IA. He attended Iowa State University and earned a Bachelor of Science degree in Agronomy. He started out working with the SCS as a student trainee in Malvern, Nevada and Bedford, IA in the summers while still at ISU. He went on to become a Soil Scientist and Party Leader in Indiana and Minnesota. In 1988, he was asked to consider becoming a District Conservationist & has been in that position ever since.

Carroll and his family reside in Milford and are pleased to be back in Iowa.



Commissioners

- ♦ Keith Van Kleek, Chairperson
- ♦ Chris Hoffman, Vice-Chair
- ♦ Tim Hemphill, Secretary
- ♦ Orville Berg, Treasurer
- ♦ Mark Ingwersen, State VP
- ♦ Lance Heikens, Assistant

Staff

- ♦ Carroll Oskvig, District Conservationist
- ♦ John Wills, Project Coordinator
- ♦ Ann Ditsworth, State Secretary
- ♦ Heath Dodge, Conservation Aide

Current Partners

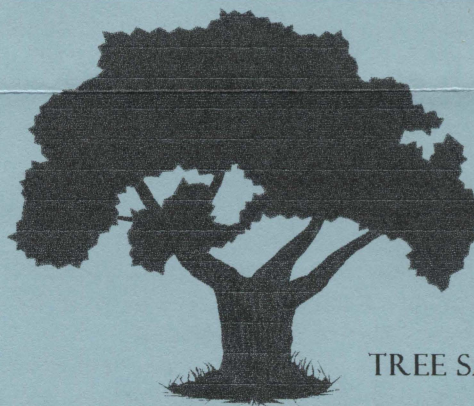
- | | | |
|---------------------------------------|---|--|
| ◇ Dickinson County Conservation Board | ◇ Iowa Department of Agriculture Land Stewardship | ◇ Natural Resources Conservation Service |
| ◇ Dickinson County Farm Bureau | ◇ Iowa Department of Natural Resources | ◇ Pheasants Forever |
| ◇ Dickinson County Supervisors | ◇ ISU Extension | ◇ Rural Development |
| ◇ Ducks Unlimited | ◇ Lakes Protective Associations | ◇ US Fish & Wildlife Service |
| ◇ Farm Service Agency | | |

WETLANDS RESERVE PROGRAM

CARROLL OSKVIG

The sign-up for this USDA program will be announced soon. The USDA will be streamlining the process to shift the administration burden from the landowner to the USDA and the closing agent for permanent and 30 year easements. Again, more updates are expected but some announced changes include: accepting lands with less cropping history than for previous sign-ups and making rangeland and buffer areas around wetlands eligible for the program. USDA will pay 100% on permanent easement restorations. The WRP will be based on an acreage rather than a dollar allotment, which hopefully will make more dollars available for landowners in Dickinson County.

I feel these changes will show that WRP provides a good means of enhancing wildlife habitat and still receive a good payment for these easements. I feel that many landowners would have land eligible for this program in Dickinson County. Please contact us at the USDA Service Center about the program.



TREE SALE - '97

Planning for the 1997 Tree Sale is under way. Staff recently attended a training session provided by the Region's DNR Forester, Joe Schwartz, on trees and shrubs well suited for this area as well as an update on regional problems with disease. Last winter's ice storms caused many trees to die and the cool spring/summer provided the appropriate environment for diseases to spread. These diseases are not a nursery stock problem, rather an environmental effect. The Forester explained that certain trees and shrubs are more resistant to these diseases. We have also received some requests for different stock from you, the customers. Therefore, we will be making some changes this year in the stock that we offer in order to provide you with the strongest and most disease resistant stock. Keep an eye out for the 1997 Tree Sale Flier in mid-November.

"A lake is the landscape's most beautiful and expressive feature. It is the earth's eye; looking into which the beholder measures the depth of his own nature."

—Henry David Thoreau

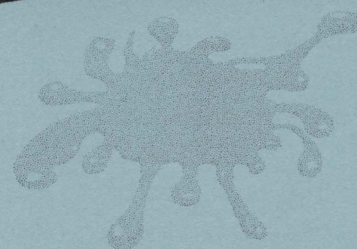
Pools of Thought

Insert

Fall 1996

The Iowa Great Lakes Watershed newsletter is published twice yearly. The Iowa Great Lakes Watershed Clean Water Project is supported by the Iowa Department of Agriculture and Land Stewardship, Division of Soil Conservation, through funds from the Iowa Department of Natural Resources through a grant from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. Technical Assistance is provided by the U.S. Department of Agriculture, Natural Resource Conservation Service.

Project Accomplishments and Activities

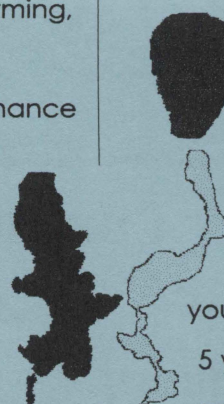


The Iowa Great Lakes Clean Water Project has had a tremendous year. We could list accomplishments for this entire page, but we are just going to hit the highlights of the year. Some of the greatest accomplishments were done this year by the farmers of the watershed. Several of these farmers are finishing their last year of the Water Quality Incentive Project, one of the best projects to date. Many times these farmers completely changed their farming practices in order to participate in WQIP. Grassed waterways were

built on Big Spirit and East Lake Okoboji. The waterways protect the Iowa Great Lakes. Because of the tremendous ruts and gullies that were forming, a great savings of equipment maintenance and repair costs will be achieved. We are once again looking for a banner year to construct conservation practices in the watershed especially because grassed waterways are going to be an acceptable practice for CRP, which is explained further in the newsletter. This year the MAX

Program is a huge part of the project and we are currently offering some terrific bonuses for you to participate in it. The MAX draws

information about your farming practices and can then show how profitable you were based on a 5 year average. We are still accepting applications to participate in this program, please contact John Wills, MAX coordinator, at (712) 336-2604 if you are interested.



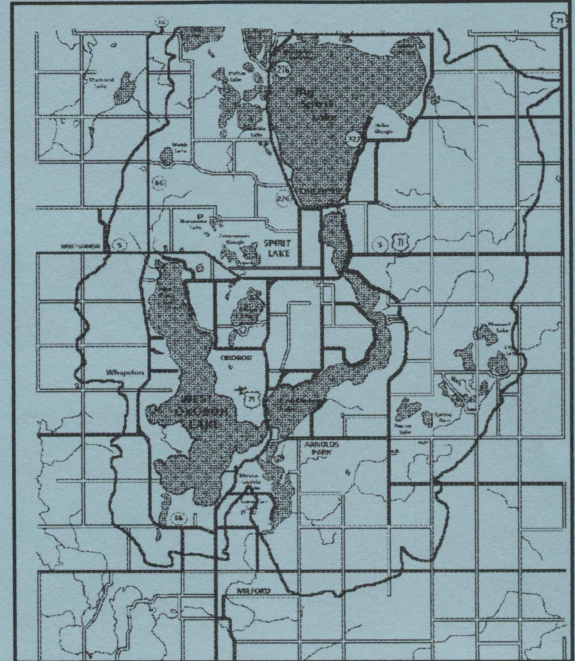
LETS GET ONE THING PERFECTLY CLEAR...WATER!

The Iowa Great Lakes continues to have success after success protecting the Iowa Great Lakes Watershed through voluntary methods. The project uses voluntary methods to work with landowners, farmers, and urban people to improve the water quality of the Iowa Great Lakes.

Many of the projects that have been completed to date have been on farm ground. In the future the project will concentrate about 50% of the time in the urban sector. Many of the projects that will be done on urban ground include; storm sewer stenciling, construction site erosion control, business awareness, and environmental friendly to the lake lawns.

The Dickinson SWCD, the projects sponsor, is very involved with the protection of the Iowa Great Lakes. In fact, the District is one of the main forces which keep the project going and give direction to the project.

The Iowa Great Lakes Clean Water Project is funded from many sources. But the major funding comes from two main places; 1. EPA section 319 funds and 2. Resource Enhancement and Protection Funds (REAP). The interesting thing is that both of these funds come from tax dollars that you pay in. These tax dollars come back to the Iowa Great Lakes Area and are used to protect our lakes. The dollars are spent to help farmers and landowners offset the cost of conservation practices and then are probably spent in the area to purchase equipment, seed, and other items. The project is very important to the area for many reasons.



The Iowa Great Lakes Watershed is outlined above, notice that the water drains from a considerable distance into the Lakes. This illustrates the need for both rural and urban cooperation within the watershed to preserve water quality.

CRP — Continuous Sign-up now available

As of September 4, 1996 a continuous sign-up of certain CRP practices began. The purpose of the continuous sign-up is to provide management flexibility to farmers to implement certain conservation practices on their cropland. Land will be automatically accepted into the program provided the acreage and producer meet certain eligibility requirements.

To be eligible for the continuous sign-up in CRP, the land that is physically and legally capable of being cropped must have been termed 'planted to an agriculture commodity' in any 2 of the 5 1992-1996 crop years. Practices that are eligible for the continuous sign-up include:

- * field windbreaks
- * filter strips
- * grassed waterways
- * living snowfences
- * riparian buffers
- * shelter belts
- * shallow water areas for wildlife

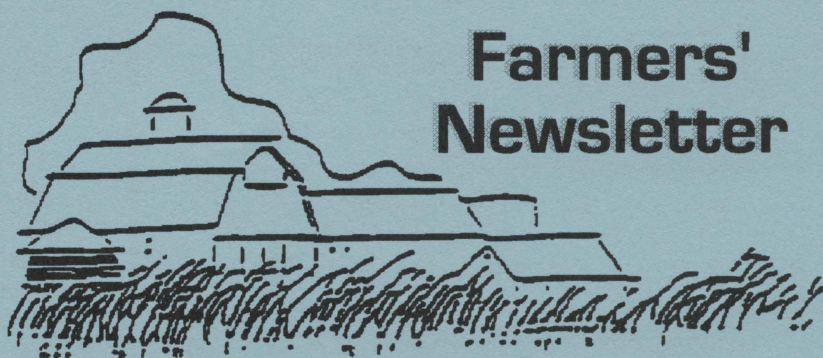
To be an eligible participant, landowners must have owned the acreage, or operators must have leased the acreage, for one year before offering the acreage for CRP. The payment rates will be based on the local prevailing cash equivalent rental rates and will be posted in the FSA office. In many instances an additional incentive is offered. This is an outstanding conservation program; not only will you be able to build a grassed waterway to make your land more productive, you will also receive a 'rental payment' for the next 10 years. Come in for more info, CRP has numerous options!

FSA

Farm Service Agency

Dickinson County

FSA Committee
Walter Brunsvold
Neal Delaney
Tim Hemphill



Farmers' Newsletter

Jct. Hwy. 9 & 71

Box H

Spirit Lake IA 51360

[712] 336-3782

October 22, 1996

Nominate & Vote for Farmers of Your Choice



Producers in Westport, Okoboji, Milford and Lloyd townships have the opportunity to nominate persons they feel would best serve their farm community on the FSA County Committee. Farmers in these townships who are interested

in serving as members of the County or Committee Committee or who know someone they would like to have serve, are encouraged to file a nomination petition in the FSA office by October 28, 1996. A farmer is eligible to be a committee member if they live and have farming interests in the community in which the election is being held.

Nomination petitions are available for anyone interested in serving in Westport, Okoboji, Milford or Lloyd townships by simply stopping in to the Dickinson County FSA Office or by telephoning the office at [712] 336-3782 to request we mail you a form.

The completed petitions must be returned to the Dickinson County FSA Office by October 28, 1996.

Important Dates:

- Oct. 3** - Request nomination forms from the FSA County Office and beginning nominations
- Oct 28** - Last day to file nomination forms
- Nov 18** - Ballots mailed to eligible voters
- Dec 2** - Last day to return voted ballots
- Jan 1** - Elected committee members/ alternates take office

Commodity Loan Rates

Corn.....\$1.73
Soybeans.....\$4.76

October Commodity Loan
Interest Rate — 6.875%

Planning to do some Drainage Work?

Contact the Dickinson County FSA Office if you are considering tiling or draining any land. Before any tiling or drainage activity takes place, you must first come to our office and file a new sodbuster form. NRCS will then make a wetland determination on the area to be affected. If you tile, drain, alter or manipulate a wetland in any way, you will be in violation of swampbuster provisions. Such violations will make you ineligible for USDA benefits on all land in which you have an interest.

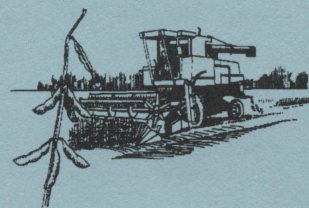
1996 Corn & Soybean Loans

One of the farm program benefits available to you through your Farm Service Agency is 9 month Commodity Credit Corporation loans. 1996 crop commodity loans are available for all crops which include: corn, soybeans, grain sorghum, wheat, barley and oats.

The Farm Service Agency provides farmers the opportunity to seal grain with Commodity Credit loans in order to obtain cash to meet financial obligations or needs while the farmer maintains ownership/title to the grain for potential future market price improvement, or other options that are related to grain ownership.

The commodity loan application process is greatly simplified from what it has been in previous years and provides for a farmer to obtain the loan proceeds in a very short period of time.

Another benefit of the commodity loan is there is no repayment penalty. The loan can be repaid at any time by simply paying principal and accrued interest as of the date of repayment. The variable interest rate charged against the loans is extremely competitive running at 6.875% for loans applied and disbursed during the month of October 1996.



FSA Newsletter

Agriculture Market Transition Act (AMTA)

Year 2 of the AMTA Program begins on October 1, 1996 and ends on September 30, 1997. This period is referred to as the "97" program year.

1997 advance PFC payments will be issued to eligible producers on either December 15, 1996 or January 15, 1997, based on a producer's request. Program regulations prohibit issuance of advance payments after January 15, 1997.

If you have not designated 1997 shares on your Contract (this is the case with all leased farms enrolled in 1996, unless there was a binding multi-year lease for the farm), you **MUST** sign a new Contract to designate the 1997 payment shares. This must be completed by January 15, 1997, to receive an advance 1997 payment.

You must notify this office of changes in your farming operation that may effect your eligibility for the PFC payments. Changes in your farming operation such as a change of owner, operator or other producer sharing in the crop, increase or decrease in the amount of land being operated, or any revision of a lease that changes the way the crops are shared will affect a producer's eligibility for payments and must be reported as soon as the change is effective.

Planting of fruits and vegetables on Contract acres will effect program benefits. Contact the Dickinson County FSA Office before you plant, or lease land for the production of fruits or vegetables.

Planning to do some Fall Tillage?

Producers must be in compliance with Highly Erodible and Wetland provisions in order to be eligible for AMTA benefits. You should review your farm's conservation plan before performing fall tillage on your highly erodible land this fall. Fall tillage could be a violation of your plan. Producers planning fall tillage on any Highly Erodible land including land coming out of CRP should contact NRCS for questions on their conservation plan, specifically, those producers who would need to have their plan changed or revised.

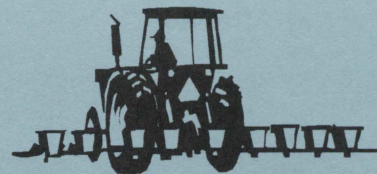
— Larry D. Lago, County Executive Director

SOIL & WATER CONSERVATION UPDATE



NEW PROGRAM

The Environmental Quality Incentive Program (EQIP) is a USDA program being offered to landowners which replaces the Agricultural Conservation Program (ACP), Water Quality Incentives Program (WQIP) and a few other programs which were used in other parts of the US. EQIP provides flexible technical, financial and educational assistance and earmarks 50% of the money to be spent on livestock related natural resources concerns. Priority areas will be set up at the State and National level to direct input from the public by the establishment of local work groups convened by the Dickinson County Soil & Water Conservation District Commissioners. Please feel free to contact the staff at the USDA Service Center in Spirit Lake or one of the SWCD Commissioners if you would like to assist in setting these priority areas in Dickinson County. It's important that we have a lot of public support at these local work group meetings to help our county to receive the allocation which accurately reflects our conservation needs. Data such as soils, climate, geologic features, threatened and endangered species, types of practices which could be installed or are being installed to protect major resource concerns, topography and cultural resources will be part of the assessment of these priority areas during the local work group meetings. As you can see, these broad areas of environmental data will require a lot of local input, because no one person or group could address all of these for Dickinson County.



NO-TILL/RIDGE TILL/STRIP TILL INCENTIVES

Have you received a Conservation Tillage Incentive? Funds are available, as mentioned on the cover, for any producer who is implementing Conservation Tillage Practices on their land. If you have not yet received this incentive, here are the guidelines:

- ✓ This is a **one-time** incentive
- ✓ The incentive is \$10/acre with a maximum of 80 acres **(\$800)**
- ✓ You may No-Till, Ridge-till, or Strip-till, whichever is most suitable for your land

The funds are available on a first come, first served basis. Stop in today to sign-up or call the NRCS at (712) 336-2604 for more information.



Since the days, America's producers have nation's natural challenges —



Dust Bowl agricultural met our

resource convincingly.

They have enhanced their cropland for wildlife habitat and began using a number of practices to improve water quality. They have adopted tillage methods on millions of acres of cropland that left residues from the previous year's crop on the soil surface to protect the land from soil erosion. In the last ten years alone, they have build the most impressive record for natural resource care on agricultural land of any period in history.

The 1996 Farm Bill puts natural resources care more squarely on the shoulders of agricultural producers than previous farm bills. Your local USDA Service Center, Conservation District, and Extension Service will be there to help, as in the past. But the primary responsibility to make and

carry out decisions to care for the land and water rests with farmers and ranchers.

We believe that voluntary conservation, with incentives, is the best approach to widespread use of conservation measures by farmers in this country. The 1996 Farm Bill offers us the opportunity to prove that. We've shown over the years that we are responsible stewards of the land and water. We need to keep demonstrating that those of us closest to the land, those of us who farm it, have the greatest stake in caring for it.

When this Farm Bill expires, we'd like to look back with satisfaction that we sustained the gains made in natural resource care over the years, and, better yet, improved on that record.

It's in our hands.

Visit our home page on the Internet at:
<http://www.ia.nrcs.usda.gov/county/dickinson.html>

IOWA WATER A DECADE OF PROGRESS

In 1997 a statewide cooperative effort of government, business, nonprofit organizations, and citizens will recognize the voluntary water protection and enhancement activities that have taken place during the past 10 years. This will be the biggest water celebration in Iowa ever!

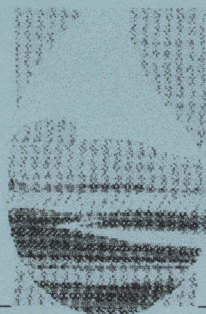
The *Year of Water* will celebrate Iowa initiatives that have led to protection and enhancement of Iowa stream, lake, watershed, and groundwater resources. Through sharing of success stories, model programs, and educational efforts, Iowans will increase their awareness of and appreciation of our unique water resources.

The landmark Groundwater Protection Act became law on July 1, 1987 and established a framework for Iowa to address water contamination and to prevent pollution from a range of sources including agricultural activities, solid waste landfills, underground storage tanks, and commercial and household hazardous waste. The impact of this law has been

multiplied by a host of voluntary initiatives throughout the state on the part of government and nonprofit organizations as well as individuals.

The celebration goals include:

- ◆ recognizing the accomplishments of Iowa citizens resulting from initiatives supported by the Groundwater Protection Act
- ◆ maintaining Iowans' enthusiasm and support for water resources throughout Iowa by sharing water protection and enhancement success stories
- ◆ identifying future opportunities to protect and enhance our water resources
- ◆ motivating Iowans to continue protecting these resources



Did you know...

- ...that growing a day's food for one adult takes about 1,700 gallons of water?
- ...that 2% of the Earth is fresh water?
- ...your brain is about 80% water?

For more information on the **1997 Year of Water** celebration contact the Dickinson County Soil & Water Conservation District office at (712) 336-2604 or visit the web site at:
<http://www.ag.iastate.edu/yearofwater/>



Really want them to own the farm someday?

Conservation tillage systems leave 30% or more crop residues, after planting, and offer the following economic and environmental benefits:



Find out how conservation tillage pays!

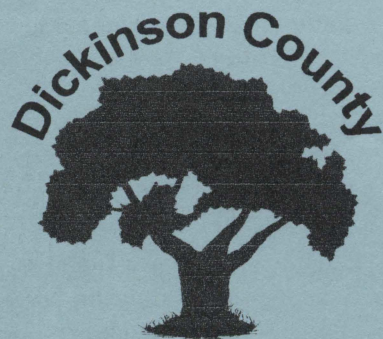
Visit the Conservation Technology
Information Center web site at
<http://www.ctic.purdue.edu>

- ☒ Reduced labor requirements - As little as one trip for planting compared to two or more tillage operations plus planting for conventional tillage.
- ☒ Time savings - On a 500-acre farm, the time savings can be as great as 225 hours or almost four 60 hour work weeks.
- ☒ Reduced machinery wear - Fewer trips save an estimated \$5 an acre on machinery wear and maintenance costs — a \$2,500 savings on a 500 -acre farm.
- ☒ Fuel savings - Save an average 3.5 gallons per acre or 1,750 gallons on a 500-acre farm.
- ☒ Reduced soil erosion - Soil erosion can be reduced by up to 90%.
- ☒ Improved surface water quality - Crop residues help hold soil particles and associated nutrients and pesticides on the field. Herbicide runoff can be cut in half on some sites.
- ☒ Improved long-term productivity - Carbon accounts for about half of the organic matter in the soil. The latest research shows the less you till, the more carbon you keep in the soil to build organic matter and promote future productivity.

***Results will vary depending on the conservation tillage system used, as well as field- and weather- specific conditions.*

USDA
Hwy 9 & 71
Spirit Lake IA 51360

Bulk Rate
U.S. Postage Paid
USDA-FSA



...a quality environment