

MILLS COUNTY SOIL CONSERVATION DISTRICT
ANNUAL REPORT
FY 1975

We would like to take this opportunity to say "THANK YOU" to the Department of Soil Conservation, Soil Conservation Service, Agricultural Stabilization Conservation Service, County Extension, Schools, Service Clubs, Banks, Churches, Newspapers and all the many other groups in Mills County who helped us carry out a successful Soil and Water Conservation Program. A very special "THANK YOU" goes to the more than 110 individuals in Mills County who sent donations to help further our program.

PERSONNEL CHANGES -- During the last year we have seen many faces come and go at the Mills County Soil Conservation Service Field Office. Spring brought new buds, rains, corn planting and Leslie Betts. Les is a Soil Conservationist and was stationed in Malvern in April. He will assist Press Grissom, District Conservationist in conservation planning. In the month of June the seasons changed again and there was also a change in our soil survey party. Willie Bragg, who had worked on the Mills County Soil Survey for 2 years, accepted a graduate assistantship at Oregon State University. About the same time Willie left for Oregon, Hollis Oelmann, Soil Scientist summer trainee arrived. Hollis is a student at Iowa State University, but this summer he has proved to be a valuable asset to the Soil Survey Party. June 23rd, Jerry Niehoff became the fourth member of our Soil Survey Party. Jerry is a graduate of the University of Wisconsin at Stevens Point. We are sure he will provide excellent assistance in continuing our soil survey.

Good bye and good luck to Willie and Hello and welcome to Jerry and Hollis.

By: Pat Pisarik

STANDARD SOIL SURVEY -- The soil survey of Mills County is approximately 40% completed, with 104,556 acres mapped out of a total of 285,670 acres.

The purpose of the soil survey is to determine what kinds of soil are in Mills county, where they are located and how they can best be used. The soil survey is a cooperative project of the County, State and Federal Governments.

John Nixon, Soil Scientist with the Soil Conservation Service is in charge. Pat Pisarik and Willie Bragg, S.C.S. Soil Scientists, Gerald Niehoff, Research Associate from Iowa State Experiment Station and Hollis Oelmann, Student Trainee round out the rest of the survey team.

BY: John R. Nixon

We would like to take this opportunity to say "THANK YOU" to the
Department of Soil Conservation, Agricultural Services, Agricultural
EXPENDITURE OF STATE FUNDS
I-M BUDGET

Total Allocation	\$1801.01
Commissioner Mileage	\$860.99
Office Supplies	399.94
Prizes for Contests	197.50
Materials for demonstrations	43.42
Office Expense	289.08
Meeting expense	<u>10.08</u>
TOTAL EXPENSES	\$1801.01

2-M BUDGET

Total Allocation	\$16,266.42
Salaries (Clerk & Aide)	\$14,289.86
Travel	142.44
State Share FICA	835.97
State Share IPERS	500.15
State Share Health Insurance	426.00
State Share Life Insurance	<u>72.00</u>
TOTAL EXPENSES	\$16,266.42

COST-SHARE BUDGETS

73/74 Total Allocation	\$22850.00
Total spent	\$22711.27
Balance unobligated	138.73

74/75 Total Allocation	\$14,997.00
Total spent	\$14,787.54
Balance unobligated	209.46

74/75 LTA Total Allocation	\$ 9603.00
Total spent	\$3410.75
Total obligated	6192.25
Balance unobligated	00.00

PONY CREEK WATERSHED -- To date, all but one of the 22 grade stabilization structures have been completed. The one left to be done is the road structure where the 4.3 miles of channel will begin. This is expected to be started in 1976.

WAUBONSIE CREEK WATERSHED -- During Fiscal year 1975, the Soil Conservation District Commissioners and the Waubonsie Creek Watershed Board of Trustees have been busy obtaining easements. The work centered on Site 9-1 and bid invitations were sent out. A tour of the site was conducted. A bid opening was set for July 10, Fiscal year 1976. All but two easements have been obtained for sites 11-1 and M-1. A target date for contract letting was in December of Fiscal year 1976.

The drill rig was busy drilling 10 sites for future structures.

This information will be used in designing all of the structures.

The outlook for next fiscal year is very promising. At least one structure should be completed and two others started.

BY: Leslie Betts

COST-SHARE -- Cost-share was provided for the farmers participating in a soil conservation program on their farms. A 50% cost-share with a limit of so much per unit was set up by the ASCS County Committee.

During the 1974-75 Fiscal year, the State also had money to cost-share with. This in turn gave the landowners a right to earn approximately 75% of the total bill incurred on their conservation work.

Some of the practices that were eligible for cost-share rates were: Establishing permanent vegetative cover; Improving permanent vegetative cover; Planting trees; Improving stand of forest trees; Water impoundment reservoirs; Strip cropping; Constructing terrace systems (this included bench, level and broad base in farmable terraces); Diversion terraces; Permanent wildlife habitat; Sediment retention; Erosion or water control; Sediment, chemical or water runoff control; Shelterbelts.

Cropland terraces were top on the priority list and most of the cost share money went for this erosion control practice.

BY: Leo VanFosson

FROM THE DESK OF THE DISTRICT CONSERVATIONIST --

F.Y. 1975 was a very fruitful year for the conservation program in Mills County Soil Conservation District as more land is being row cropped, the need for more conservation practices is also a necessity. One program now available to aid in this is the L.T.A. or Long Term Agreement Program. Two District Cooperators were signed under this program during F.Y. 75. A total of 1039 acres are involved in these two farms. As a result of this program, the 1039 acres will be completely adequately treated with conservation practices when the agreement is completed.

In addition to this accomplishment, a total of 63 conservation resource plans were prepared totaling over 5000 acres plus very valuable resource information to the town of Malvern.

The above planning has resulted in the following conservation practices being applied to the landscape in the Mills District, conserving the precious top soil that all have strived to save. If it had not been for the nearly 30 miles of terraces built during the 1975 F.Y., thousands and thousands of tons of that precious top soil, fertilizer and chemicals would have left the area. If this loss was put into dollars, the amount would be staggering. In addition to the terraces, 14,673 acres of conservation cropping systems was applied, 9,287 acres of contouring and 13,097 acres of crop residue. These practices alone contributed to saving the soil and keeping it in the original location. Over 50 acres of critical area planting was done, besides the erosion control it provided a home and food for wildlife.

Minimum tillage has been increasing each year. This proving to be a very popular conservation practice. The first objective is of course, control erosion. This is done when the residue left on the surface stopping the velocity of the rain drops. Rain drops hitting one acre in a one inch rain, would have the impact equal to 1/2 ton of T.N.T. One can see then why the residue left on the surface is so important. Also, much fuel can be saved by this practice.

The Mills County S.C.D. and S.C.S. personnel are more than ready to assist you with the planning and application of any conservation you may have. It is essential to have planning, application and cooperation from all concerned citizens to make the conservation program work as it is in Mills County. As stated above, the watershed program, Soil Survey, Cost-share programs are worth while and work well, however, this would not happen without planning, application and cooperation.

BY: Pres Grissom