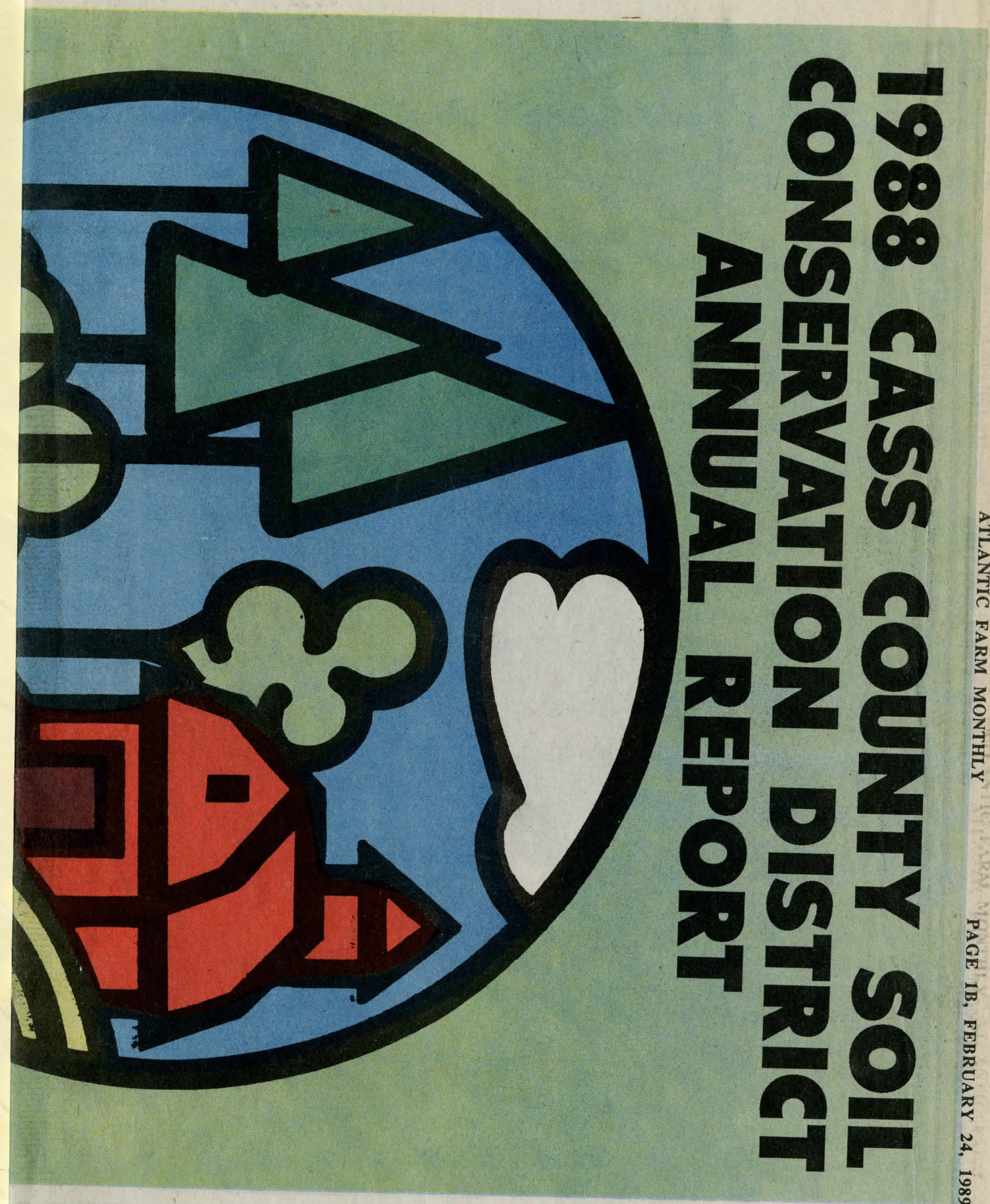


1988
Forty-sixth Annual Report
CASS COUNTY SOIL & WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT
Atlantic, Iowa

1988
8861

1988 Annual Report

- 1 Office
- 2 James Gulliford (Department of Soil Conservation)
- 3 Steve Stover (Soil Conservation Service)
- 1 Senator Jack Hester; Rt. 1, Box 136; Honey Creek, IA 51542
- 1 Senator Charles Grassley, U.S. Senate, 135 Hart Senate Building
Washington, DC 20510
- 1 Senator Tom Harkin, 705 Hart Senate Building, Washington, DC 20510
- 1 Congressman James R. Lightfoot, 1609 Longworth Building, Washington,
DC 20515
- 1 Regional Director: Francis Ballou; Rt. 3, Box 106; Exira, IA 50076
- 1 Davis Conservation Library; P.O. Box 776; League City, TX 77573
- 11 SCDs in the following counties: Monona, Crawford, Carroll, Harrison,
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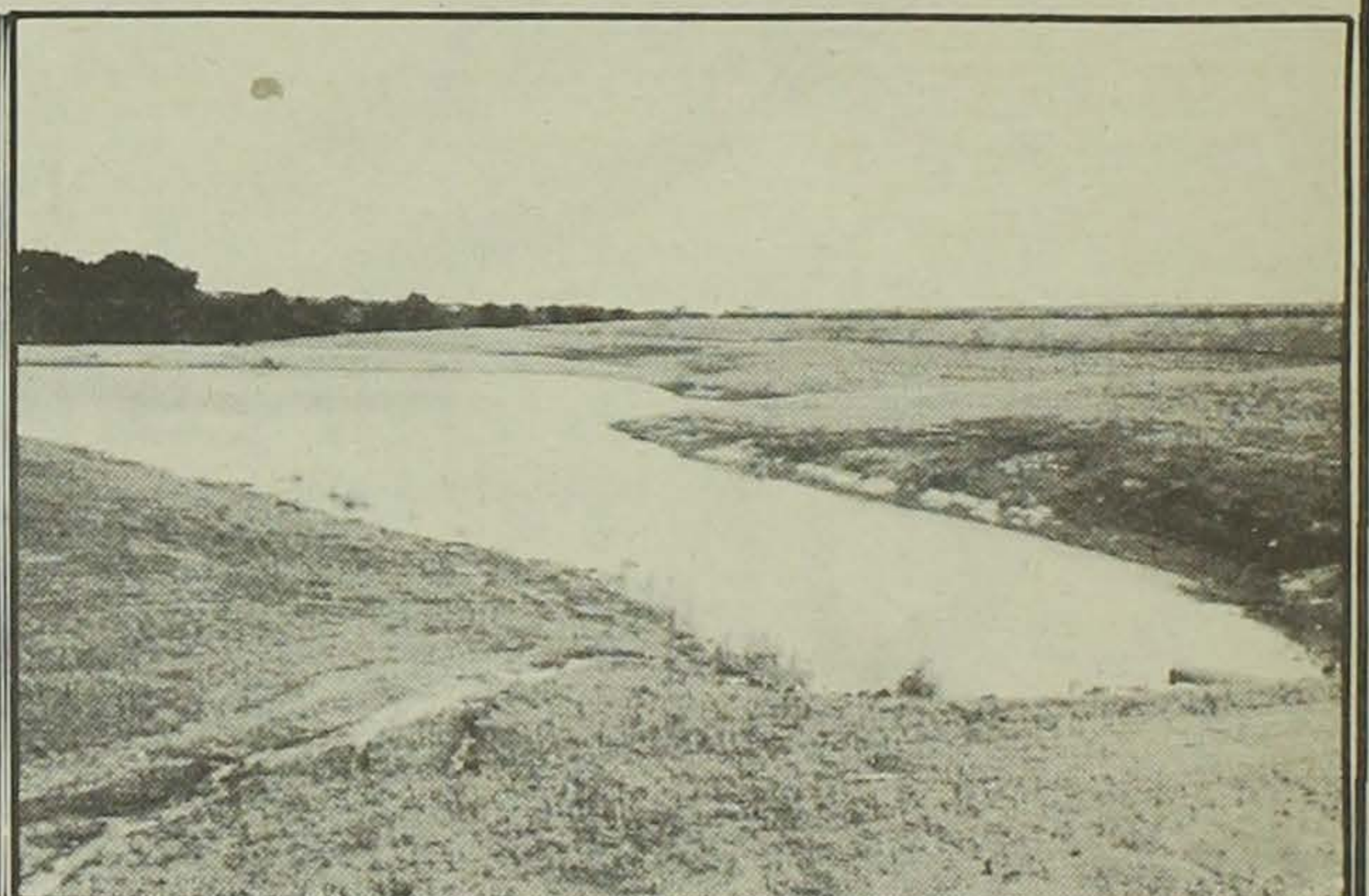
Check Over Construction Of Pond Near Cumberland

Gene Eyberg and Shirley Frederiksen of the Cass County Soil Conservation District office look over the first part of the construction of a pond on the Helen Erickson farm near Cumberland. The pond was less than a half acre in size. Eyberg said construction of ponds has declined in the last few years.

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Evaluate Economics Of Conservation Alternatives

Farmers can evaluate the economics of conservation alternatives using either a partial budget approach or whole farm plan.

Partial budgeting is the easiest method, but it is not appropriate for analyzing all changes, according to Mike Duffy, extension economist at Iowa State University.

He suggests partial budgeting for relatively minor conservation changes, such as contouring or new tillage practices that do not require major machinery changes.

Duffy cautions that any change will affect costs and revenues. In partial budgeting, the farmer carefully estimates the cost of those changes. A simple way to estimate costs is to make two lists. The first list contains decreases in costs or increases in revenue and the second, increases in costs or decreases in revenue.

Subtract the second list from the first. If the result is a positive number, the conservation change would be advantageous.

Whole farm planning is more complex, but more accurate. All farm families should go through this exercise every four or five years regardless of whether major changes are contemplated, Duffy says.

Whole farm planning looks at all aspects of the business. In whole farm planning, the farmer evaluates such things as changes in profitability, cash flow, labor use, risk and business goals.

Duffy suggests whole farm planning when conservation alternatives involve major changes in the operation or financial structure. For example, whole farm planning should be used for changes in crop rotations or livestock operations, building terraces and major machinery changes.

The specialist says local county Extension Service staff can help with whole farm planning by providing worksheets as well as a computerized analysis called FIN-PACK, which evaluates several alternatives quickly and easily.

When analyzing conservation alternatives, be sure to account for risk, Duffy advises. "Some changes will be far more risky and less desirable than others. You could select a lower average return alternative if it is less risky."

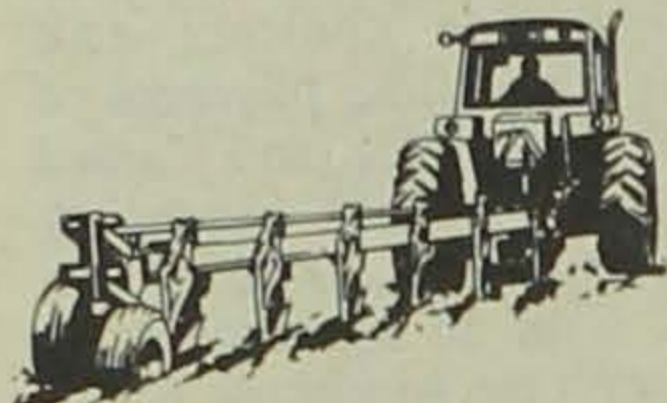
There is a difference between private costs and returns of conservation practices and social costs and returns, Duffy says. Private ones are what you pay or receive. Social costs or benefits are what the public-at-large pays or receives.

For example, the cost is private if erosion lowers the productivity of your farm. But erosion also clogs waterways, silts reservoirs, ruins fishing and does other public damage. Society or taxpayers must pay these costs.

The private and social issues raise many interesting questions, Duffy says. "Who has the right to do what? Who pays for what? And so on. Also, a question of time arises. If I am 70 years old with no heirs, for example, why should I worry about possible effects 50 years from now?"

This whole area of public versus private issues is controversial, Duffy says. The economics of conservation alternatives is far more than a dollar price. Some farmers value conservation very highly and are willing to sacrifice short run gains to achieve it. Others are not.

"As you evaluate your conservation alternatives, remember there are other benefits and costs. Careful planning and using the right tools will help you make the best decision," Duffy says.



Area Farmer Adds To Soil Conservation Efforts

Raymond Burnham, a farmer who lives three miles west of Lyman, is constantly adding to his soil conservation practices by installing terraces.

His latest venture came this fall when he put in 1,900 feet of them.

Burnham, who has lived on his current farmstead since 1960, began terracing in the fall of 1977. He added more in the summers of 1979 and 1983 before his project last fall.

With the constant additions, one would figure Burnham was always a big enthusiast of terracing. This was not always the case, though.

"I never used to like terraces," he explained. "This is because the old ones used to have point-rows, sometimes where your best land was. The point-rows made it very hard to farm and I felt the terraces in these cases just ruined



Raymond Burnham, who farms and lives three miles west of Lyman, stands near one of his fields, with several of the terraces he has installed over the years in the background.

a place."

The more recent models of terraces, however, have allowed for parallel rows, which lead to easier farming.

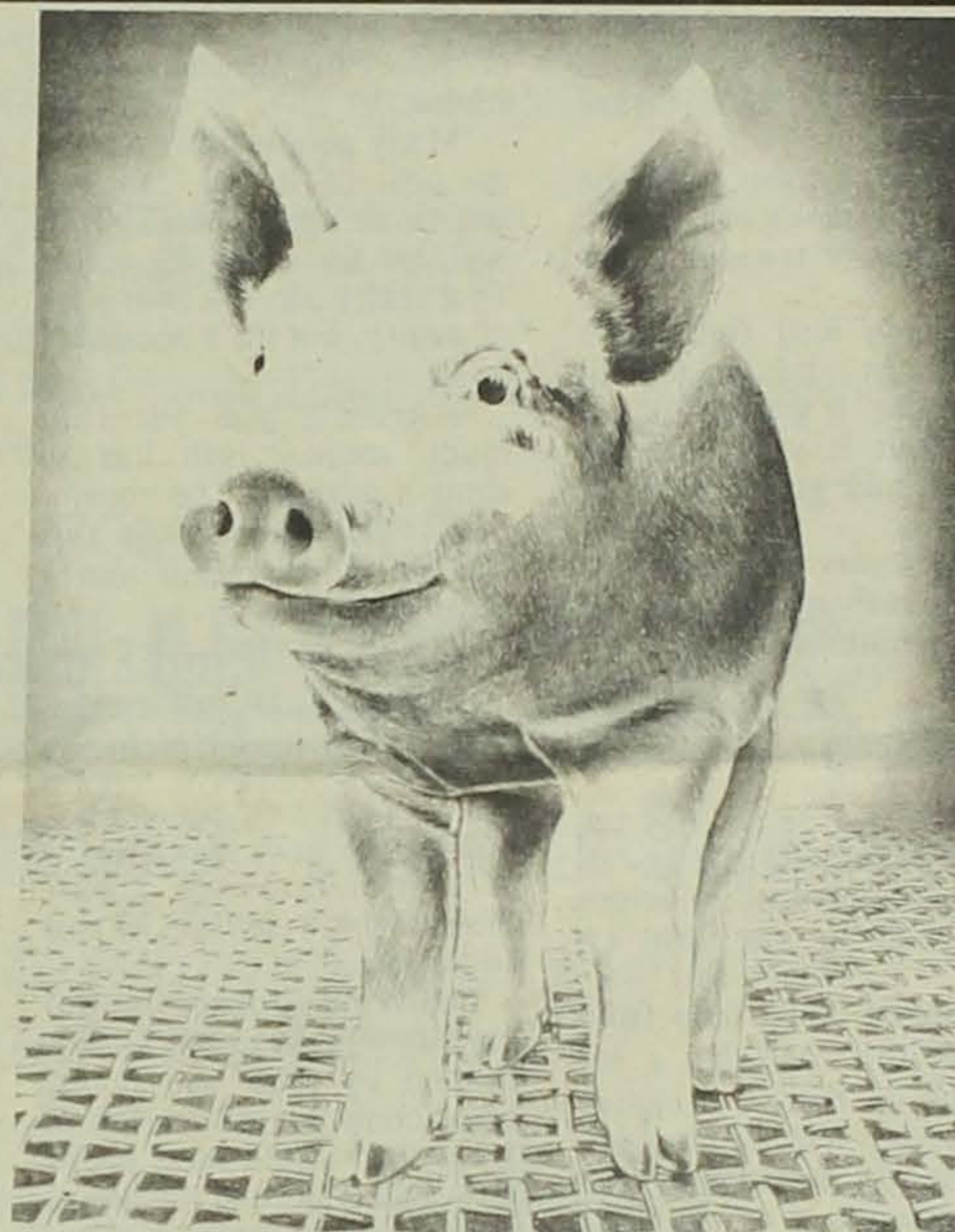
"These newer ones are good

because the parallel rows allow you to farm between the terraces easier."

Burnham, who farms 395 acres, said he first felt terrac-

(Continued On Page Four)

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Larsen Builds Terraces To Help Future Generations



Dale Larsen, who lives and farms 4 1/2 miles north of Marne, poses on one of his terraces that he recently installed.

Dale Larsen, who lives and farms 4 1/2 miles north of Marne, is doing his part in conserving soil not only to help himself, but future generations.

Last fall, Larsen, with the help of his landlords, added 10,000 feet of terraces to his land.

Not only will this move help him in retaining topsoil and getting a good yield of crops, but it will help his children and grandchildren, too.

"I feel every farmer should take the responsibility for future generations," Larsen explained. "Once the topsoil is gone, it's gone. It's not something you can just go out and buy like fertilizer."

Larsen said the idea of terracing is something he was already accustomed to before he moved to his farm in 1977.

"I moved down here from Kimballton and it's a lot rougher up there," he said. "So you saw a lot of terracing up there which made me used to the practice."

"Terracing is something that we've all got to get used to," he continued. "It's something we're going to have to live with if we want

to save the soil."

Larsen said a future problem that could occur is a lack of money for all who wish to terrace.

"Many people don't realize the cost of it. It can run anywhere from \$15,200 to \$20,000 for every 80 acres. That really can run into a lot of money, but it's a necessary item."

"Anything you put that much money into has to show a payback," he continued. "The payback on this will be more topsoil and a better yield."

A unique program helps control wind-caused problems along Iowa roadways, reports Ken Bruene, field representative for the Iowa Department of Agriculture and Land Stewardship's division of soil conservation.

The Wind Erosion Control Incentive Program (WECIP), funded by road use taxes, helps control wind erosion in areas that would have problems of silt in road ditches or reduced visibility from blowing dust, he explains.

For the first few years of the program, eligibility was limited to north-central Iowa, where wind erosion is preva-

Larsen added that besides the funds from the county, the generosity of his landlords helped a lot in putting in the terraces.

"I've got two of the best landlords in the country. They can see we need to save the soil."

He went on to say that he has heard of a 10-year program which is essentially a no-interest loan from the government. This, he added, is a good idea and should be expanded further.

Wind Erosion Control

lent due to the relatively flat topography and lack of woodlands or other objects to break the wind. Now, the entire state is eligible if certain criteria are met.

To be eligible, a soil and water conservation district must cooperate with the county engineer and the Department of Transportation resident engineer to develop a map indicating segments of roadway that are subject to excessive and damaging wind erosion. After this map is developed, the district can take requests from landowners and operators with land adjoining the designated roadways for

financial aid to control excessive wind erosion.

Control methods include reduced tillage, permanent grass strips and field windbreaks consisting of trees and shrubs. Field windbreaks and grass strips are planted according to Soil Conservation Service specifications. Tillage practices can vary, but they must result in 50 percent of the ground being covered after crops are planted in the spring. In some cases, generally after a crop of soybeans, fields would have to be no-till planted.

Funding rate and contract length vary depending on practices. For example, tillage practices require a 5-year contract and earn a one-time payment of \$30 per acre; the grass strip requires a 20-year maintenance contract and earns a one-time payment of \$500 per acre for land planted to grass; the field windbreak also requires a 20-year contract with an agreement to maintain the windbreak for 29 years and earns a payment of \$1,000 per acre for land planted to trees.

Although the program was designed to combat and control wind erosion, it also has been valuable in preventing snow from drifting onto the roadways, according to Bruene.

"Motorists can see some

very dramatic results from the program each winter while driving the state's roadways. Less drifting also lowers the cost of snow removal," he added.

"The Wind Erosion Control Incentive Program is an excellent example of different units of state government working together to solve problems of public concern."

Area Farmer Adds To Soil Conservation Efforts

(Continued From Page Three)

ing was necessary because of water runoff in one of his fields.

"I knew I had to slow up the runoff because there was always a ditch at the bottom of a hill in the field, and I could never cross that ditch," Burnham related.

Terracing worked for Burnham and this sold him on the idea, as he added more to steep and long hills that he farmed.

"It got to washing pretty bad on some of those hills before I terraced."

Burnham added that continued terracing and other conservation methods will be needed in the future.

"If we don't do something, we won't have anything left. It will all wash away."

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Toepfer Anxiously Waiting For Construction Of Pond

By TERESA GLEASON

Farming practices may have changed somewhat since Gail Toepfer moved to his farmstead east of Atlantic in 1931, but his belief in the necessity for conservation practices hasn't.

"I took vocational agriculture classes when I was in high school, as I guess I always knew I wanted to be a farmer," he said. "Conservation is a good thing, and I decided to jump on the bandwagon when everyone else did."

For many years, Toepfer, along with a brother who has since passed away, ran a large cattle operation.

The bulk of the herd was sold 12 years ago, however, and the Toepfer property has been seeded down since that time. "I've been renting it out for pasture ever since," he said.

During those years, the brothers also did a considerable amount of ditch filling on their land, seeding down the leveled earth and allowing the subsequent growth to form its own natural barrier to the wind and rain.

"I think that 99 percent of the people today are interested in conservation - they'd be foolish if they weren't," Toepfer said.

So, when officials from the Cass County Soil Conservation Service approached Toepfer about constructing a dam and pond on his property as part of the Turkey Creek Watershed Project, he said he'd give it some serious thought.

"I think that 99 percent of the people today are interested in conservation - they'd be foolish if they weren't."

Gail Toepfer
rural Atlantic farmer

What is a watershed?

Quite simply, the conservation term can be compared to the drainboard that carries rinse water into your kitchen sink.

On the land, water that doesn't evaporate or soak into the soil usually drains into ditches, streams, marshes, or lakes. The land area from which the water drains to a given point is known as a watershed.

Small watersheds make up the larger ones. The Mississippi River, for example, drains a watershed of about 1,243,000 square miles. This large watershed is made up of thousands of smaller ones.

Although much smaller in scale, the Turkey Creek Watershed Project covers a large area - 86,000 acres of land in Cass, Audubon, and Adair counties - and calls for the construction of 109 structures.

"They started talking about the project five or six years ago, and I finally decided to sign up for it last spring. I talked to quite a few of my neighbors about it, and some were for it and some were against it, so I had to decide for myself," Toepfer said.

This summer, a fleet of caterpillars and other dirt-moving equipment will clear 12 acres of Toepfer's property in preparation for the construction of a dam and a 7-1/2-acre pond.

"I can't hardly wait until they get started - it's really quite a site to see," Toepfer said.

When the project is completed, the dam and pond will not only function as an important link in the overall project, but will serve as a wildlife habitat as well.

"At this point, they plan on planting shrubs and trees around the edge of the pond. It's really going to be something," Toepfer said.

The Importance of Watersheds

Water may be a friend or it may be an enemy. If it runs off the land too fast, it cuts gullies and carries off topsoil which should be kept on the farm to produce food and clothing. This soil, along with other debris the water carries into streams and lakes, may spoil fishing.

It may also reduce the amount of water the stream or lake can hold and thus decrease the water supply for your town and your bathroom.

Such sediment carried downstream by runaway water may greatly increase the cost of filtering the water you get from the kitchen faucet. It can interfere with the hydroelectric plant that produces your electricity. This may make your electric bills higher.

If too much water runs away too rapidly, it causes a flood that damages farms, ranches, crops, property, homes, highways, and utilities. It may take lives. Stream channels may be choked with sediment. Then the flood is more serious because the choked-up channels carry less water.

Sediment deposited in reservoirs after heavy rains reduces the amount of water that can be stored for use in short-water areas.

Program To Aid Disadvantaged Start Farming

The Farmers Home Administration (FmHA) has a new loan program designed to help members of socially disadvantaged groups, including minorities, acquired land for farming in Iowa, reports Robert R. Pim, FmHA state director.

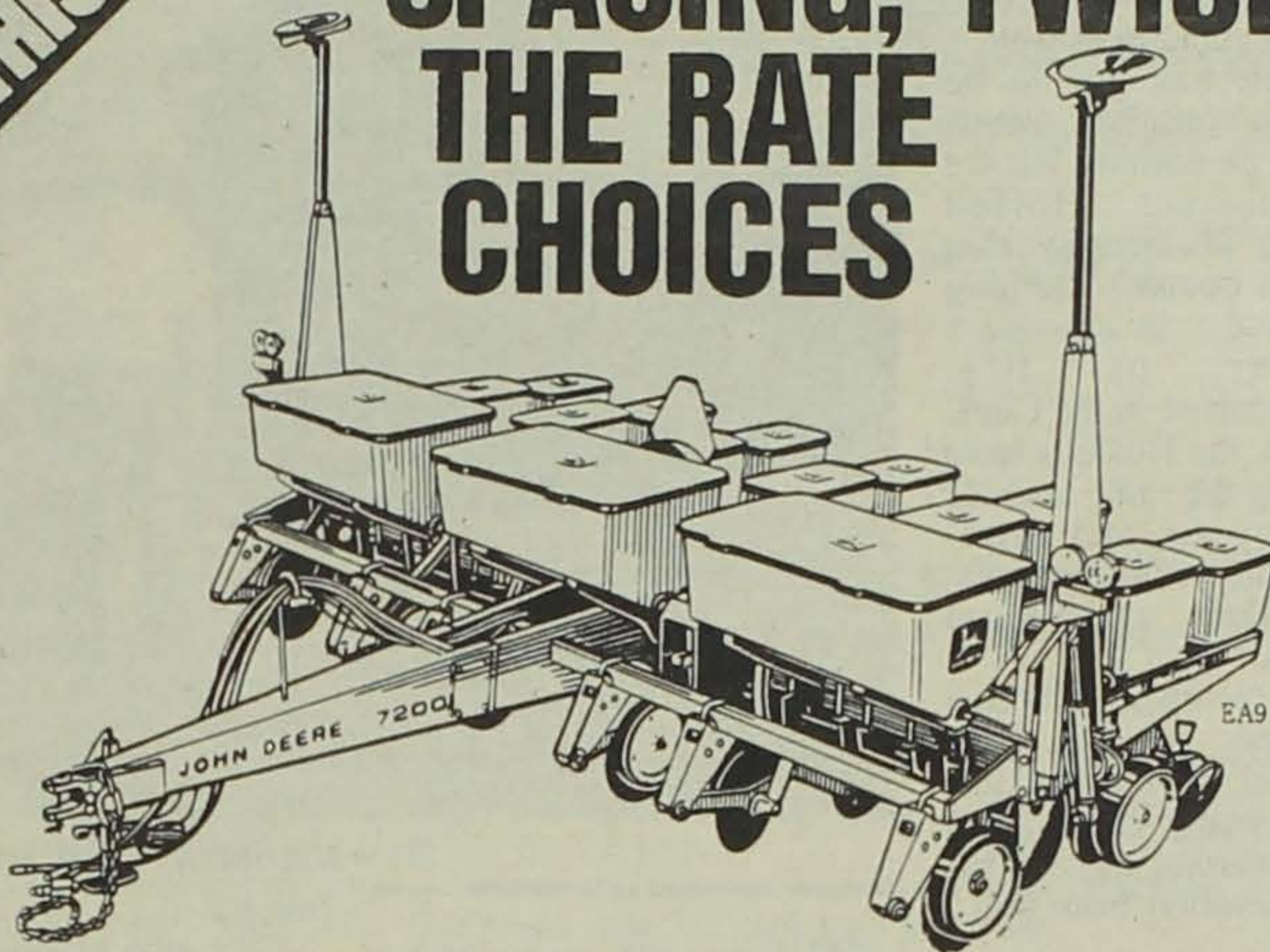
FmHA will try to find persons in those categories who are interested in farming and can qualify for an FmHA ownership loan. The agency is prepared to sell or lease to them a farm held in its inventory if any are available in their county, or make a loan for purchase of land on the open market, Pim said. Up to \$84,000 in loan funds are available for this program in Iowa.

Social disadvantaged population groups are Hispanic, Native Americans, Blacks, Asians and Pacific Islanders.

Persons who think they might be eligible and who are in farming or who would like to become farmers are urged to contact the Farmers Home Administration county office serving their area, Pim said.

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Massena Couple Enthused With Windbreak And Conservation Practices

By TERESA GLEASON

The Colorado blue spruce and Black Hill spruce trees that line the farmstead of Mr. and Mrs. Gene Hosfelt of Massena do more than add to the beauty and fragrance of the area - they provide a valuable service to the soil they stand in as well.

"Everyone has got to be conservation-conscious, otherwise they'll be nothing left for future generations," Hosfelt said of the philosophy that governs the couple's farming operation and - in a sense - their way of life.

Born and raised in the Cumberland area, the Hosfelts have been farming the same land for the past 30 years, and developed their interest in conservation from their agricultural backgrounds.

"My dad, George, has been a commissioner for the Cass County Soil Conservation District for many years, and I think I've learned quite a bit about conservation from him," Hosfelt said.

When the couple decided to tear down their old home and replace it with a new structure during the early 1970s, they also discussed the idea of creating a windbreak.

"Our home sits on quite a hill, so we get a good deal of wind up here," Mrs. Hosfelt said.

After carefully mapping out a plan and arranging partial funding with the county soil conservation service, the couple started their tree-planting project from the ground up.

They dug 47 holes with a post-hole digger and planted 47 spruce trees, some of each variety, in two staggered rows.



Gene and Shirley Hosfelt in front of windbreak.

"With all of this rolling ground, the soil blows away with the wind and runs away with the rain, and it just takes forever to get it back unless you do something to keep it in place."

Gene Hosfelt
Massena farmer and
conservationist

Each tree was planted approximately 20 feet apart in compliance with the conserva-

tion plan.

They also planted a row of 300 to 400 honeysuckle bushes behind the two rows of trees for another layer of added protection.

"That first summer was very dry, so we watered them every week," Hosfelt said.

During the windbreak's second summer, rainfall was plentiful, but Hosfelt said he had to spray the trees for spidermites.

"They probably grow about a foot a year. We didn't really notice any difference for the first few years, but then all of a sudden, they (the trees) made all the difference in the world," Hosfelt said.

The forest fortress serves as a

barricade to blowing wind and snow and an anchor to the precious soil underneath.

"With all of this rolling ground, the soil blows away with the wind and runs away with the rain, and it just takes forever to get it back unless you do something to keep it in place," Hosfelt said.

The health and growth rate of the windbreak has been exceptional, as Hosfelt said they didn't lose any of the trees until last summer, when they lost two.

"I think the drought just took its toll on them," he said, noting that they plan to replace the pair this spring as soon as the weather permits.

"The trees are really pretty in

the spring, and we get a prettier variety of birds than we used to - pheasants and quail also," Mrs. Hosfelt said.

In addition to the windbreak, the couple employs a number of soil conservation practices on their farm, including terracing, crop rotation, grass waterways, ponds, and contouring.

"I wouldn't know how to farm straight or on the level," Hosfelt said.

"You have to go at it (employing conservation practices) slow because it's so costly, but it's all well worth it in the long run."

In December of 1987, the Cass County Soil Conservation Service presented the Hosfelts with the "Windbreak Award" from the Izaak Walton League of America - defenders of soil, woods, waters, air, and wildlife.

The inscription read, "In recognition of an exemplary windbreak planting program that is helping to conserve America's natural resources."

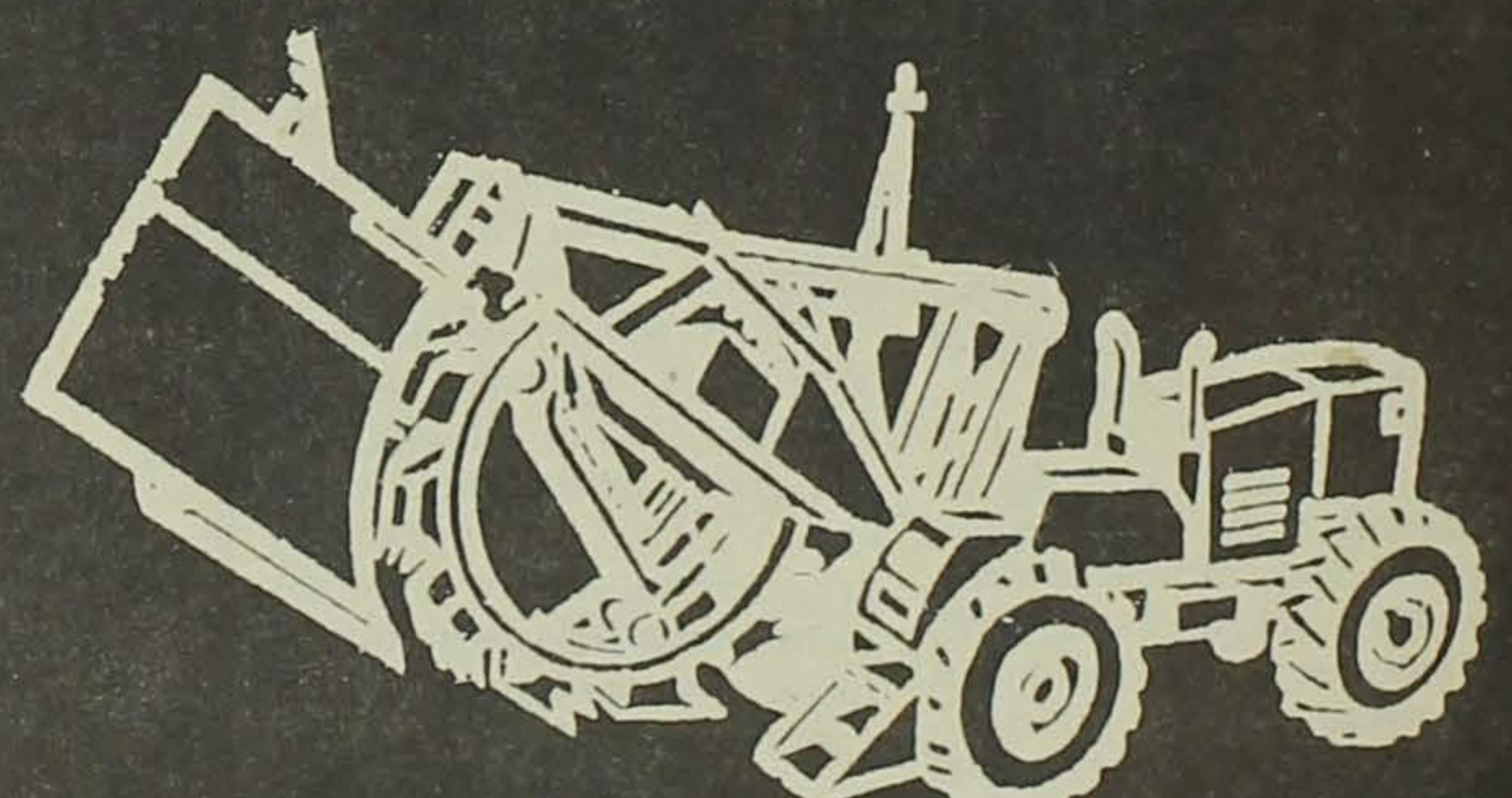
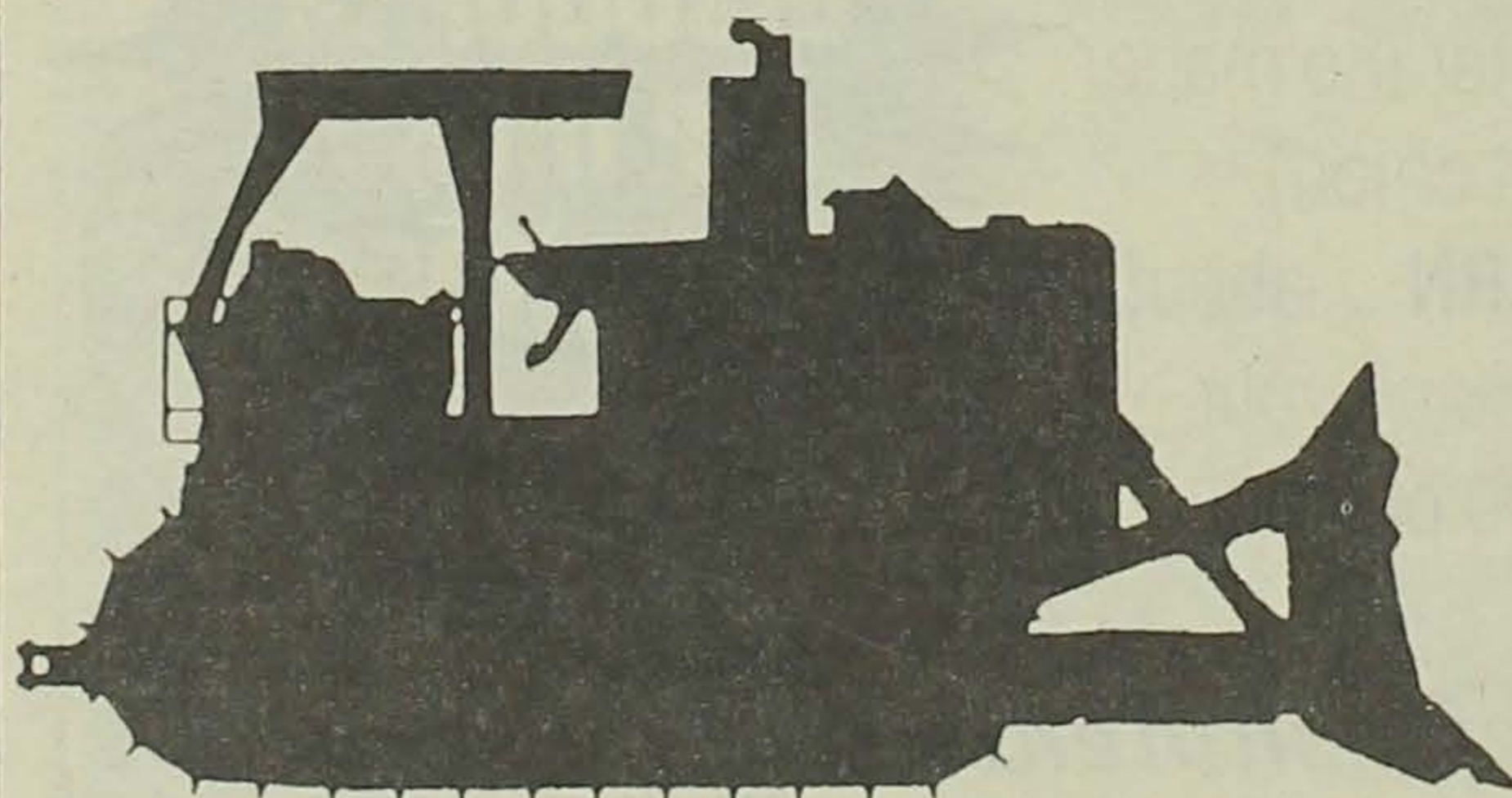
In the future, the couple hopes to plant a few more trees on their property and dig several additional ponds to continue their long-range conservation efforts.

"There's a lot of people who keep going to corn and beans, and I don't think they're thinking about the future. We have to if we want to have something to give to our children," he concluded.



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Retiree Interested In Soil Conservation For New Home

By TERESA GLEASON

When Bob Jones retired after 37 years of forestry work for the Commonwealth Edison Power Company of greater Chicago, IL, he could have moved to any city in the world.

Today, when he looks out the big picture window that neatly divides his living room wall, it's the rolling hills of southwest Iowa, namely the Anita-Atlantic area, that meet his gaze.

"At the time I decided to retire, this place became available, and being able to buy it definitely put the icing on my retirement," Jones said.

A native of Atlantic, Jones served in World War II after graduating from Atlantic High School.

His interest in nature and the land led him to obtain a degree in forestry from Iowa State University in 1950, and eventually to his 37-year career with the Illinois company.

"All the time I was in Illinois, I couldn't figure out what was wrong, and then it finally dawned on me - it's flat country there, no hills. That's what brought me back home to this part of the state," he said.

"I've always been interested in the outdoors, and I don't like to waste anything - certainly not our natural resources. We need to have an appreciation for the land, air, and water that people in this part of the state are so fortunate to have."

In addition to his current farmstead, Jones owns land that lies directly north of his new home.

With the exception of about 10 acres of cropland, his property is seeded down in grass and hay, and he, along with Clair and Dawn Marnen, run a cow-calf operation.

"I couldn't do anything without Clair and Dawn, and because we both held full-time jobs, we were able to eliminate production for a year to seed the land down to pasture and hay," Jones said.

Soon after he purchased his new property, Jones contacted the Cass County Soil Conservation Service to talk about beginning another conservation project.

"I knew they had been wanting to build a dam and pond on the new property for years, so I called and told them I was interested," he said.

The structure is an integral link in the Turkey Creek Watershed Project, which involves 86,000 acres of land in Cass, Audubon, and Adair counties. The project calls for the construction of 109 structures overall in the watershed area.

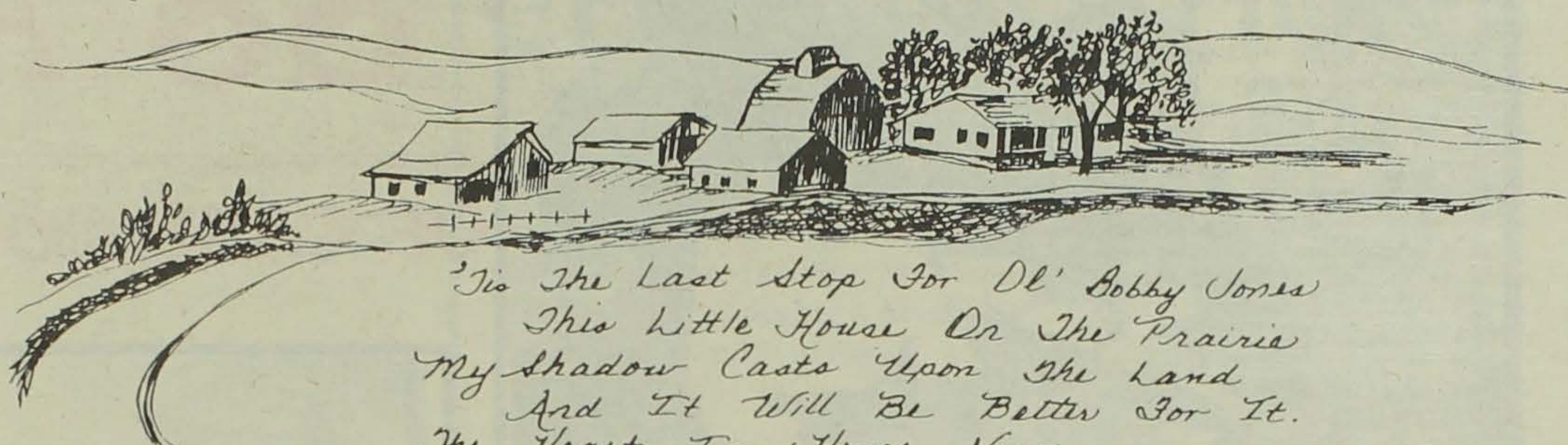
According to Cass County District Conservationist Bill Willis, the structures have two main two purposes: 1) to control gully formation, and 2) to hold back large volumes of water to protect the downstream acres from flooding.

The dam and pond that will be constructed on Jones' property is one of 10 structures in the project whose primary purpose will be flood control.

"It's going to create a permanent pool of 19.2 acres which will double in size in flood stage," Willis said.

The watershed process is a unique three-way arrangement. The landowners provide the land rights, the Soil Conservation Service and United States Department of Agriculture provide the technology and construction funds, and the

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My Shadow Casts Upon The Land
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The Heart Is Home Now
And Friends Will Be Always Welcome*

If you doubt Bob Jones' appreciation of the land, just take a look at his home-made stationary. He penned the poem himself,

and had his niece, Anita Henegar of Atlantic, sketch his new farmstead.

"I've always been interested in the outdoors, and I don't like to waste anything - certainly not our natural resources. We need to have an appreciation for the land, air, and water that people in this part of the state are so fortunate to have."

Bob Jones
Anita

district commissioners and boards of supervisors take care

of the long-term maintenance.

Work on Jones' portion of the project is scheduled to begin this summer and should be completed by mid-summer of 1990.

"It's going to be like an earthen dam, all grassed down, and in back of it will be about 20 acres of water," Jones said.

Once the pond structure has been completed, trees and bushes will be planted around its perimeter to provide a natural habitat for wildlife and waterfowl.

"It will be a little bit of the north country right here in Iowa," Jones said.

As far as his association with the county's district commissioners on the water-

shed project is concerned, the cattle producer has nothing but praise for the group.

"These are just some really fine people who are dedicated to

the conservation of our resources here. It's going to be a really nice project, and the land will be better for it," Jones said.



**SOIL CONSERVATION
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The Cass County Soil Conservation District Personnel

Pictured left to right are district conservationist Bill Willis, soil conservationist Wayne Shafer, cooperative agreement employee Bob Anderson, soil conservation technician Duane Ortgies, soil conservation technician Gene Eyberg, state engineering aide Gary Wolfe, soil conservationist Shirley Frederiksen, and state clerk Carolyn Wilson.

SOIL CONSERVATION DISTRICT PERSONNEL

Carolyn Wilson District Clerk
Gary Wolfe Engineering Aide II

USDA—SOIL CONSERVATION SERVICE (SCS)

Bill Willis District Conservationist
Shirley Frederiksen Soil Conservationist
Wayne Shafer Soil Conservationist
Gene Eyberg Soil Conservation Technician
Duane Ortgies Soil Conservation Technician
Robert Anderson

..... Cooperative Agreement Employee
EXTENSION SERVICE

A. Daniel Merrick County Extension Director
LaVon M. Eblen Extension Home Economist
Mary E. Ottmar Ext. 4-H and Youth Leader
Bev Gunderson Office Assistant
Diane Allen Part-time Office Assistant

AGRICULTURAL STABILIZATION AND CONSERVATION SERVICE (ASCS)

Elaine Martens County Executive Director
OFFICE PERSONNEL: Sharon L. Boken, Jamie A. Newbury, Diane M. Carspecken, Julie L. Anderson, Jackie Pelzer, Marcella J. Waltz, Jeanine R. Christensen, Mona Ballinger, Sharon Crane.

ASCS COUNTY COMMITTEE

Richard Follmann Folmer Nelson

Lawrence Wohlenhaus

FARMERS HOME

ADMINISTRATION (FmHA)

Alan Seehusen County Supervisor
Allan E. Olson Assistant County Supervisor
Madonna Nisson County Program Technician
Julie A. Hansen County Office Assistant
Gary W. Ludington District Director
Forrest D. Vermillion Asst. District Director
Shirley A. Winston District Loan Specialist
Merlyn Rees District Loan Specialist
Diane Larson District Loan Technician
Joyce Heaton District Loan Technician
Marvin Eblen Construction Inspector

'88 Annu

OF CASS COUNTY SOIL



Gilbert Wehrman

Assistant Commissioner, active in SCD efforts to maintain existing watershed structures, recipient of the Omaha World Herald Certificate of Merit, 1979; former District Conservationist for Cass County, Soil Conservation Society of America member.



Wendell Pellett

Assistant Commissioner and State Representative; District Commissioner for 18 years and Assistant Commissioner for the past 15 years; Past Director of the Iowa Association of Soil Conservation District Commissioners (3 years); Member of the State Soil Conservation Committee (8 years); Outstanding ISU Alumni; State Soil Conservation Committee Award.



Ed Rabe

Ed Rabe has been appointed to fill an unexpired term as a District Commissioner. Site 39 of Turkey Creek Watershed was built on the Rabe farm in 1975. This land was recognized as an outstanding conservation farm in 1977 by the IASDC — Region 5.



Bill Fudge

District Commissioner since 1980; Assistant Commissioner, 1974 to 1980; Goodyear Award, 1970; Iowa Conservation Award, 1960; Omaha World Herald Certificate of Merit, 1978; Outstanding Commissioner Award, 1984; Watershed Achievement Award, 1986.

SCS Office

Gene Eyberg, Gary Wolfe, Duane Shafer, Bob Anderson, Shirley Frederiksen

This Land is Our Legacy
CONSERVATION

al Report

NSERVATION DISTRICT



Tom Magill

Assistant Commissioner for the last 5 years; District Commissioner for 6 years; Member of the Cass County Conservation Education Committee; Member of the Cass County Conservation Board.



George Hosfelt

District Commissioner; Commissioner since 1952 (34 years); Outstanding Commissioner Award, 1958; Outstanding Commissioner Award, 1976; Honorary Member of Iowa Association of Soil Conservation District Commissioners, 1977; Omaha World Herald Certificate of Merit, 1979.



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Max Miller

District Commissioner since 1964; Assistant Commissioner for four years; Region 5 Outstanding Commissioner Award, 1981; Member Cass County RC&D Committee; Cass County delegate to Land Preservation Policy Committee.

Staff

Ortgies, Bill Willis, Wayne
eriksen, and Carolyn Wilson

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This Land is Our Land-Protect It Through CONSERVATION

ACCOMPLISHMENTS

New cooperators	No.	19
Landowners requesting assistance	No.	1333
Landowners applying a practice	No.	118
New conservation plans	Ac.	2602
Terraces	Ft.	270,300
Tile drainage	Ft.	93,457
Grassed waterway	Ac.	5
Contouring	Ac.	715
Conservation tillage	Ac.	275
Farmstead and feedlot windbreak	Ac.	2
Wildlife habitat	Ac.	2

EXPENDITURE OF FUNDS

1-M BUDGET

Allocation	\$2,260.00
Commissioner mileage	2,069.60
Office supplies & expense	145.90
Amount released to state	44.50
Total	2,260.00

3-M BUDGET

86-87 Allocation	\$108,157.90
Cost-share warrants paid	108,085.90
Released to state	72.00
Total	108,157.90

87-88 Allocation	\$95,141.34
Cost-share warrants paid	95,095.68
Released to state	45.66
Total	95,141.34

88-89 Allocation	\$110,807.41
Cost-share warrants paid	75,840.81
Obligated but not paid	12,324.00
Unobligated balance	22,642.60
Total	110,807.41

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'88 Annual Report

OF CASS COUNTY SOIL CONSERVATION DISTRICT



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SCS Office Staff

Gene Eyberg, Gary Wolfe, Duane Ortgies, Bill Willis, Wayne Shafer, Bob Anderson, Shirley Frederiksen, and Carolyn Wilson

**This Land is Our Land ~Protect It Through
CONSERVATION**

Use Of Grasses And Legumes On Increase

Grasses and legumes have always been effective soil savers, but their use has decreased in Iowa during the past 20 years as corn and soybean acreages have increased.

Conservation provisions of the 1985 farm bill are changing that trend, according to Bob Dayton, state agronomist with the U.S. Soil Conservation Service.

"We're already seeing the effects of the farm bill. When you drive across Iowa, you see grass field borders, grass waterways and contour buffer strips that you didn't see a year ago," he says.

"We'll see much more use of grasses and legumes in soil conservation programs over the next few years than we've seen in the past 30 years," Dayton predicts.

He points out that the Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) has resulted in about 1-1/2 million acres of highly erodible cropland in Iowa being seeded to grasses and legumes.

Rowcrops such as corn and soybeans, he explains, can leave the soil unprotected. Grasses and legumes provide a permanent protective cover for the land and control erosion on steep lands.

"The best erosion control is when the entire sloping area is seeded to grass, as in the CRP," Dayton says, "but there are other ways to use grass and legumes. A crop rotation program, for instance, leaves the land in grass or legumes some years but in crops in other years."

Grass field borders are being used increasingly on the most erosive areas of fields.

"Many farmers grow crops across the slope, except at the end of a field, where the end rows are planted up and down hill," Dayton says. "Seeding these end rows to grasses and legumes is a great idea that is being used much more now."

Contour buffer strips are strips of grasses or legumes on a hillside between larger strips of corn or soybeans. The strips of grass break up longer unprotected slopes. They function similarly to contour stripcropping, in which equal width strips of row crops and legumes are planted alternately on a hillside.

Another important place for grasses or legumes is in depressional areas where water concentrates and runs off a field. These areas may become gullied unless they're protected. Such areas are either left in grass or shaped and seeded as grassed waterway.

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Hensley Saves Soil For More Than 40 Years

Although many of us have just begun realizing the dire need to save soil with various conservation methods, one area farmer has known this, and has done something about it, for over 40 years.

Larry Hensley, who lives in Edna Township south of Cumberland, said that his family had been using terracing as a means of soil conservation since the 1940s.

"That's back when we pushed the terraces up ourselves instead of having someone else do it," Hensley explained.

Over the years, Hensley added more terraces to his land, which includes the century farm where he works with his sons Joe and Nick.

Another step in Hensley's soil conservation practices was added last fall, when 5,200 more feet of terraces were added to the family's land.

Hensley said that although he has terraced for a number of years and the process is not new, it is quickly becoming used as a way to conserve topsoil.

He went on to say that many ideas influenced him in his efforts to save the soil, including the fact that this is the idea he was brought up with. However, a particular story Hensley related also made him realize conservation methods must be used.

"I've seen a few heavy rains over the years," he said. "I happened to be at the right place at the right time once and I saw soil come off hills in the fields in sheets six inches thick. That's something that's really hard to be-



Larry Hensley (middle) has helped in terracing efforts on the family farm since the 1940s. Pictured with Hensley are his sons and co-workers, Joe (left) and Nick.

lieve unless you see it. It's something that happens about every 15 years, but you realize that if you can hold a lot of that water you can save the soil."

The conservationist went on to say that lack of knowledge and action in previous years led to the loss of much soil.

"We lost a lot of soil in the first 50 years of this century," he explained. "We didn't conserve soil in any way.

Water led to the loss of a lot of it."

He added that terracing, along with other conservation methods, eventually went into practice and have helped. The cost seems to be a major concern, though.

"It's not going to be economically feasible to terrace all land," he said, adding that farmers still must do what they can.

Hensley also said that any more many farmers are get-

ting into the act of saving soil.

"Most farmers like to see the land better than they found it," he said. "They hate to see a loss of soil and hate being responsible for it."

"I've seen a lot of terracing in recent years, and this shows that farmers are more soil-conservation minded. Once a farmer loses a lot of soil from his land, he becomes quite conscious of conservation."

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Conservation Plans Due By End Of 1989

By TERESA GLEASON

If you own or rent rolling farmland, the most important meeting you attend within the next year could be the meeting you have with your local soil conservationist.

"Farmers with highly erodible cropland must have a conservation plan on that land by Dec. 31, 1989 if they want to continue to receive benefits from the U.S. Department of Agriculture," says Mike Nethery, state conservationist with the U.S. Department of Agriculture Soil Conservation Service.

In Cass County, district conservationist Bill Willis said approximately 350 conservation plans have been written to date, and 1,950 more have to be written and filed by the December deadline.

In order to help accomplish this task, a total of seven soil conservation service officials from neighboring counties will spend two weeks in the Atlantic area to assist the local office in completing the remaining plans.

The seven are Brad Harrison from Adel, Tony Maxwell from Audubon, Tom Buman from Carroll, Dean Hargens from Denison, Don Carrington from Guthrie Center, Ed Seidel from Logan, and Mike Eisele from Onawa.

"We will be set up in the new Wiota Fire Station from March 6 to 17, and we'll be calling in approximately 40 farmers a day," Willis said.

The soil officials are budgeting time slots of two hours for each farmer.

As a producer with highly-erodible land, individuals must decide whether they intend to continue receiving farm program benefits.

According to Nethery, the farmer will be expected to:

1) contact ASCS before the planning session to be sure he agrees with all field boundaries and acreages, which can make a difference on highly erodible land classification;

2) study the conservation options available, and;

3) be prepared to make decisions on which conservation options he chooses to put in his conservation plan.

In order to help the farmer plan for his conservation work, he'll receive:

1) maps of his farm showing where highly erodible land is located;

2) form CPA-026 listing the tracts and acreages of land that are highly erodible and need a plan, and;

3) a listing of possible conservation treatment alternatives for his land.

In each session, the conservation planner will discuss what conservation measures the farmer is willing to use on his fields that have been designated as highly erodible.

The SCS records his decisions, and gives the farmer a conservation plan.

"Time is running short. Our offices will need to work with hundreds of landowners before the deadline, so the sooner a farmer meets with his local soil conservationist, the better," Nethery said.

Benefits that could be lost include price and income supports, crop insurance, loans,

Baier Reviews History Of Area Conservation

By G. M. Baier
District Commissioner

Time has gone by very fast. It has been 15 years since the soil conservation districts of the governor's Region Planning Area 13 were organized to see what was available to this part of Iowa.

SWIPCO (Southwest Iowa Planning Council) had not come into being, but MAPA was already working and we asked for and received representation to their council.

Here, we did gain some insight into how area planning was going to work, although, today planning has advanced further than we ever thought possible.

The Metropolitan Area Planning Agency was taking care of Pottawattamie and Mills counties in Iowa. The other six county soil conservation counties thought we needed an organization to do planning.

We also knew that the rest of southern Iowa was being successful with resource conservation and development, so we started organizing Golden Hills RC&D. It did not take long to write a constitution and bylaws and to select a name, but it took years to get approved for financing an office and for a coordinator.

Richard Bolli arrived as the first coordinator. Since he had prior experience things moved along very quickly. The eight counties or nine soil conservation districts were asked to submit project proposals.

These turned up a whole menagerie of things that needed doing such as the Massena water project, Griswold flood

control plan, grade stabilization structures on roads that were being damaged by erosion, the Glenwood city park's Indian house, Arrowhead Park, the hay growers, the apple growers, alternative crops, Walnut Creek stream bed degradation and many other projects.

I left the Golden Hills executive council Feb. 20 at

the annual meeting. I would like to say it has been a great pleasure to have been involved in this important work. I have met and worked with some very dedicated people and I will have many fond memories.



J. Michael Nethery

grain storage payments, and other commodity-related payments.

"Many farmers have been surprised to find that there isn't as much conservation work needed at they thought. The planning meeting is a relief to them, to know exactly where they stand in the erosion control work needed on their farms," Nethery said, cautioning farmers not to wait, as he sees no indication the deadlines will change.

"The people who passed this conservation compliance provision believe it's the most significant conservation legislation in 50 years. There's a lot of sentiment for the idea that a farmer should be expected to protect the soil if he or she expects to receive government benefits," the state conservationist said.

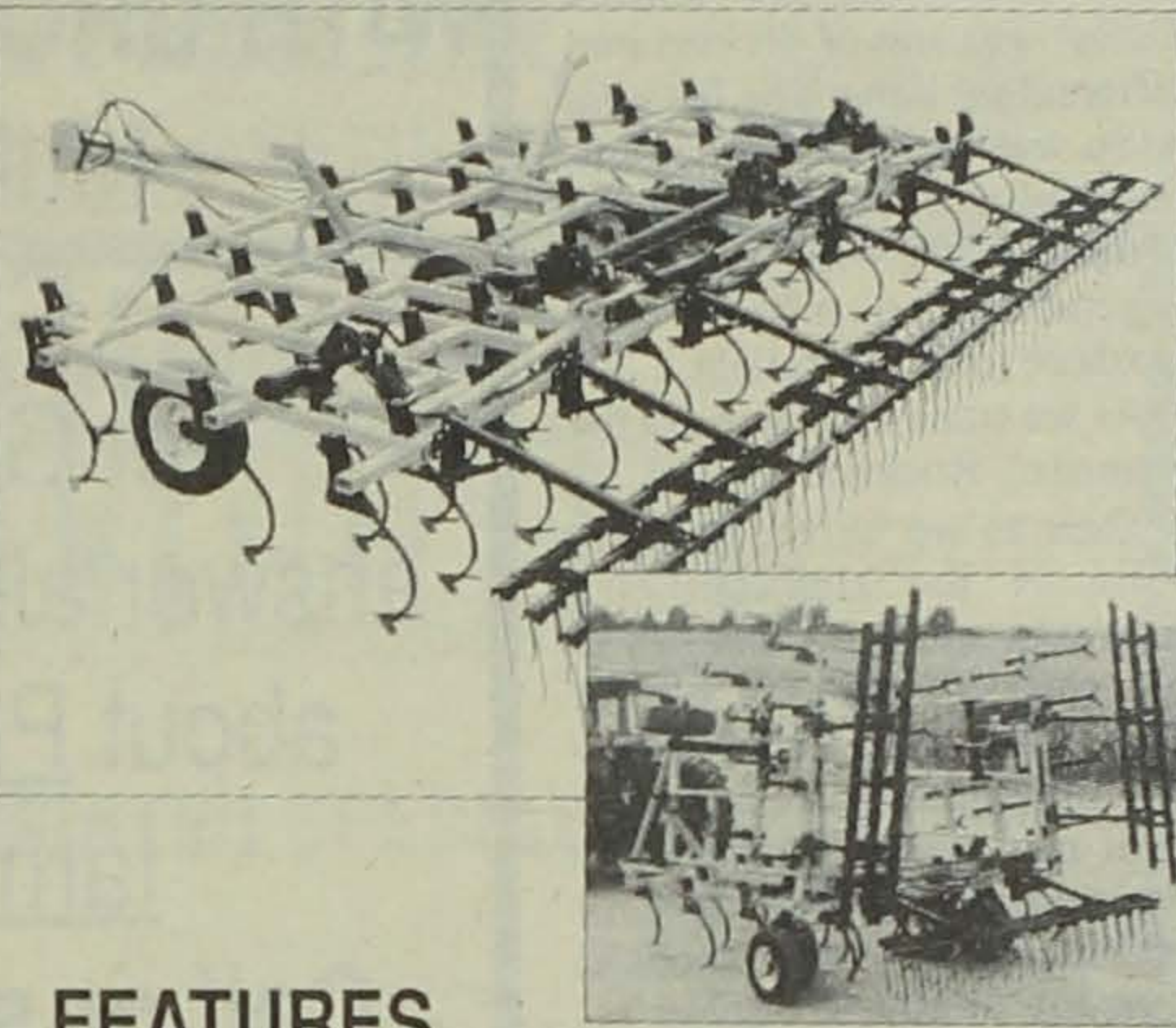
In Iowa, some 12.5 million acres will need a conservation plan, which is nearly half the cropland in the state.

As of June 1988, the soil conservation service had worked with Iowa farmers to develop conservation plans on about four million acres.

For more information about the March meetings, contact the Cass County Soil Conservation Office at 243-3180.

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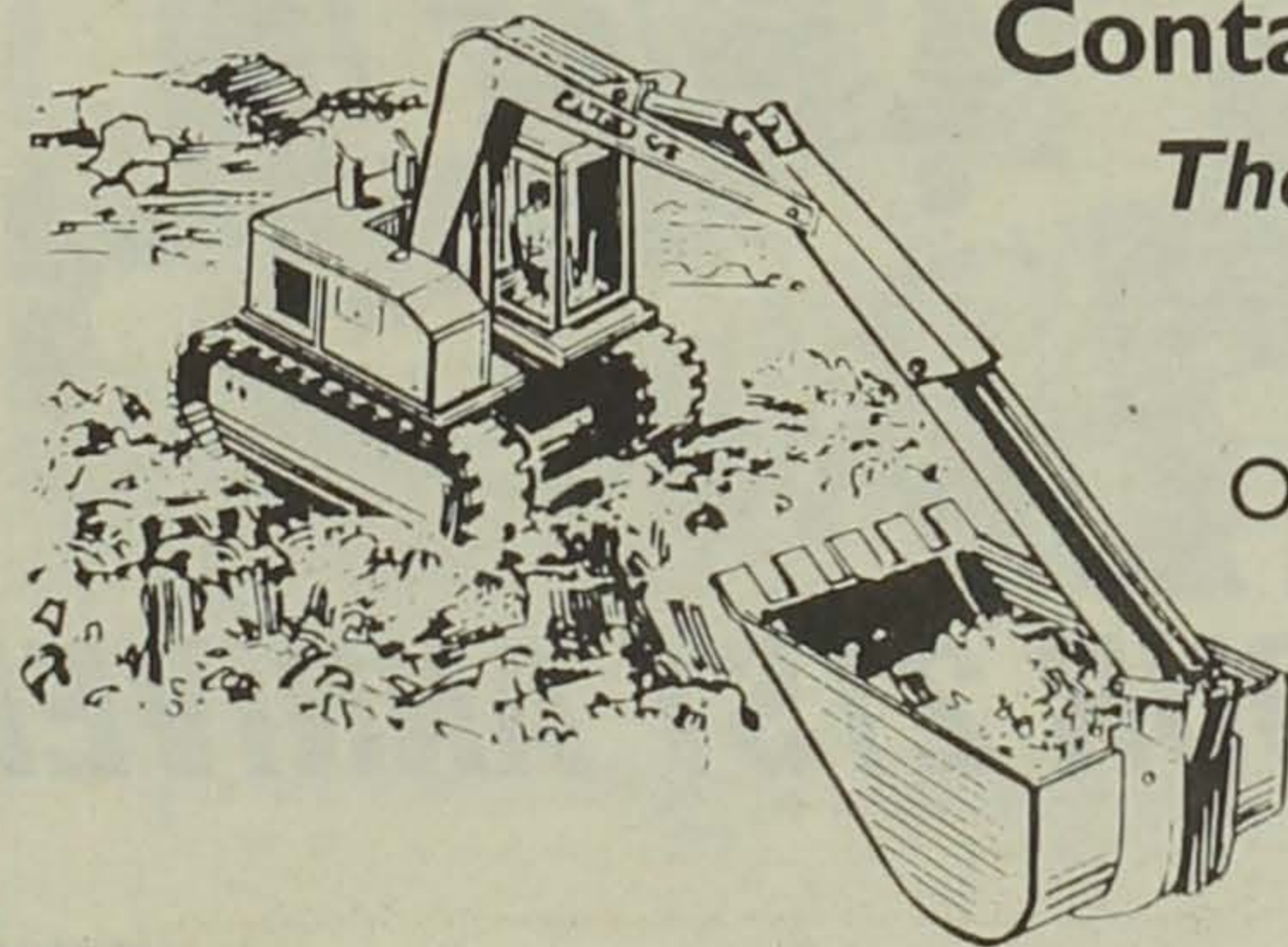
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AT7

Commissioner Reviews Soil Practices

By William Fudge
District Commissioner

1989 is upon us and there is a lot of confusion as to the farm program which the government is putting in force. This requires soil conservation in place by Jan. 1, 1995.

When white men arrived, here in America, the country (now known as the United States) was sort of divided into different sections. The far west had a warmer climate so it was more suitable for recreation and growing of fruits and vegetables. It also had a long seashore for water freight.

As we came east there are the beautiful Rockies.

Then as we moved on east there is the rich soil of Nebraska and Iowa that lies in the center of the bread basket of North America. Iowa was a beautiful place to live and grow until men added his desire to tear up the natural seeding or prairie grasses to raise foods to feed his family. In doing so, the white man was a little rough on the soil and didn't protect the soil as well as he could have.

In the early forming of the soil the corn was planted with a team of horses and always started a field with a straight side or next to a fence. So

much of the time these rows went straight up and down the hills. This sure was a way to lose the soil at times of heavy rains.

When the horse drawn planter went out to give way to the tractor era some of the fields were still planted as it had been for 75 years--straight rows and the soil loss was greater because land was torn

up deeper and there were tractor tires to make places for the water to follow.

Now the government says if you want crop insurance and want to be able to seal corn and beans, this land has to have its proper treatment by 1995.

If you don't have a farm plan, I suggest you go to the Soil Conservation Service Office and see about one.

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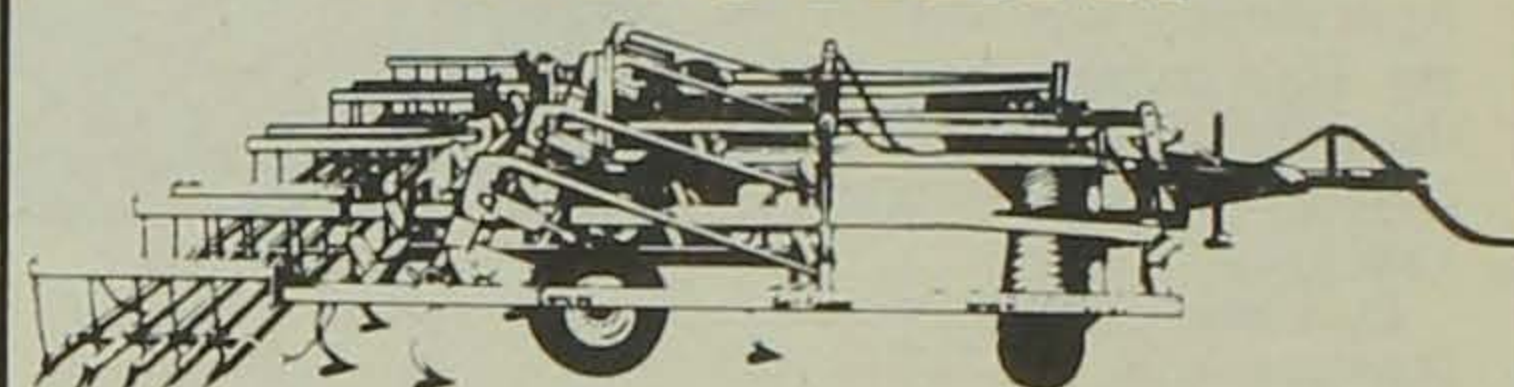
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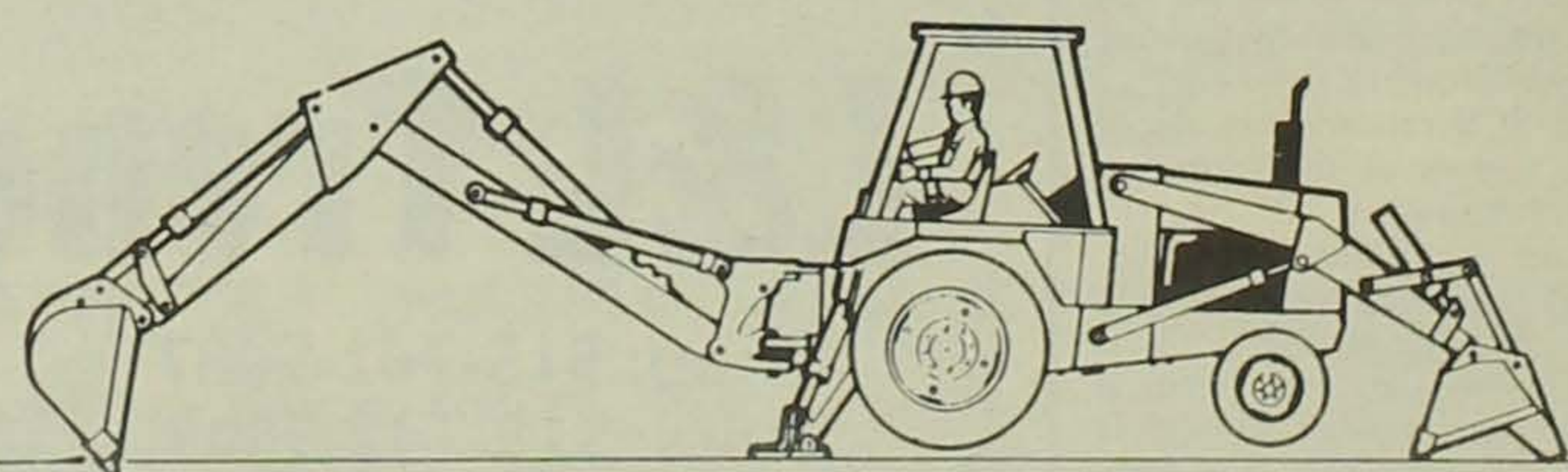
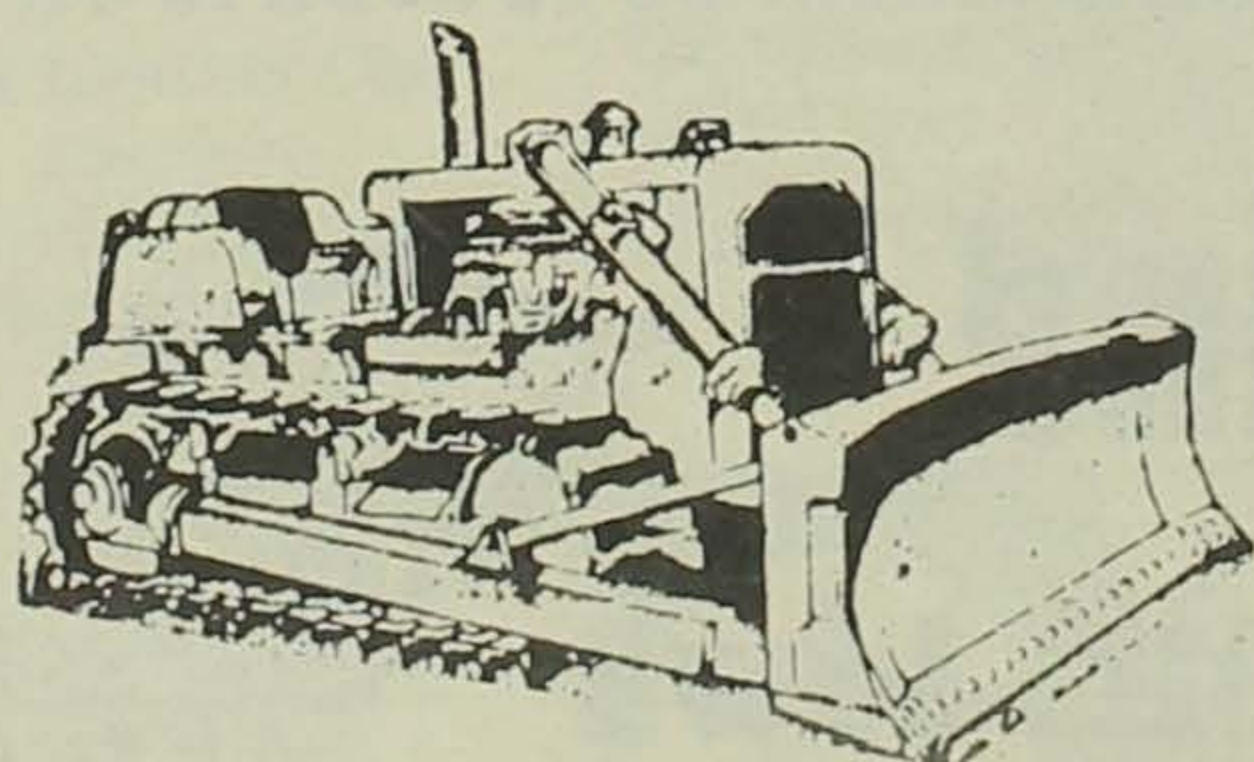
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Wildlife To Benefit From Program

There has never been a better time for wildlife in Iowa than right now, according to officials of the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA).

"In addition to improved state programs, the USDA's Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) is providing long-term habitat for wildlife," said Mike Nethery, state conservationist for USDA's Soil Conservation Service (SCS).

The CRP is a contract between the government and owners and operators to enroll highly erodible cropland in programs to conserve and improve soil and water resources. Contracts provide annual rental payments to owners and operators in exchange for retiring land to grass or trees for 10 years.

"The program offers a unique opportunity to provide excellent wildlife habitat for an extended period," according to Bill Welker, SCS biologist. "It takes about three years for grasses to provide food and shelter at a level that will benefit deer, pheasants and other wildlife. That's why CRP land is ideal. It locks in the grass seeding for 10 years, which gives the grass time to become established."

Land should contain a mixture of tall and short grasses, Welker said. A combination of alfalfa and brome grass makes a good mix. Also, a mixture of native grasses provides a good cover for ground nesting birds such as pheasants and quail.

Because of drought, hay was harvested from some CRP land in 1988. Welker said there should not have been a big loss in nesting birds even with the hay cutting.

"The peak nesting time is early to mid-June in southern Iowa," he said, "and mid- to late June in the Northern part of the state. The loss would have been higher had haying been allowed three weeks earlier."

The dry weather is actually better for nesting, Welker said. Even with protection from the grass, rain can flood the nests. The dry weather allowed the birds to nest, and the grasses protected them from the hot sun, he said.

The CRP is part of the 1985 food security act, which contains several other provisions that help wildlife. The conservation compliance provision requires landowners to protect their land with conservation practices to receive most USDA benefits. Many landowners are installing grass buffer strips and field borders. These areas will be permanently grassed and will provide nesting cover and food for pheasants and quail.

The swampbuster provision also benefits wildlife. It protects existing wetland areas across the state. Many years ago, Iowa had about 7 million acres of wetlands. Today there are less than 28,000 acres. These wet areas provide a variety of food and cover for animals, including deer, pheasants and muskrats. Waterfowl and song birds that have been reduced in numbers in many areas of the state will have

nesting grounds and will return, Welker said.

The sodbusting provision discourages landowners from flowing pasture land or other

grassland to grow crops unless they have written conservation plans for the land.

"The CRP has the major role in increasing our wildlife

habitat for the next several years," Nethery summarized. "Along with the other conservation provisions, it should help a good deal to

protect the soil, and we should see the benefits to wildlife as well."

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AT7

Conservation Plan For Farms Due End Of Year

"Farmers have less than a year to get a conservation plan approved for their farmed highly erodible acreage," according to the East Pottawatomie County Agricultural Stabilization and Conservation Service.

To remain eligible for USDA program benefits, producers who farm highly erodible cropland must have a conservation plan by the end of this year.

"Farmers who do not get their plan approved in time will forfeit program benefits on more than just their highly erodible acres," said the committee. "Loss of eligibility applies to all of the land that a person farms, not just highly erodible acreage."

Under provisions of the Food Security Act of 1985, anyone who farms highly erodible land must develop a conservation plan for the land and have it approved by Dec. 31, 1989, by their soil conservation district in order to remain eligible for USDA farm program benefits.

Those benefits include price and income supports, crop insurance, Farmers Home Administration loans, facility loans, Conservation Reserve Program annual payments, and other USDA commodity-related programs.

If producers have highly erodible land that needs a conservation plan, it is important to act now to get a plan, so as to allow sufficient time for technical assistance in developing the plan.

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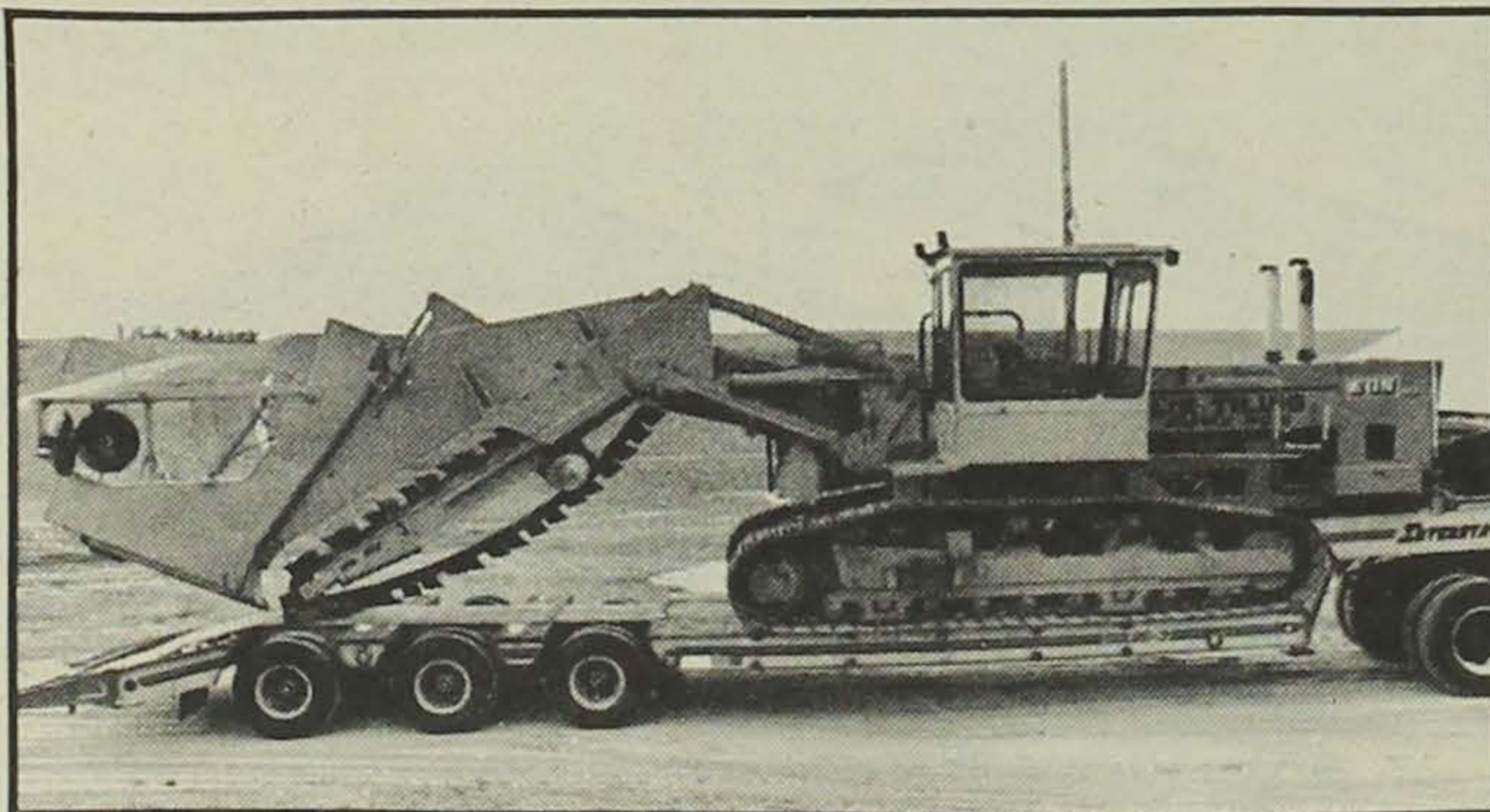
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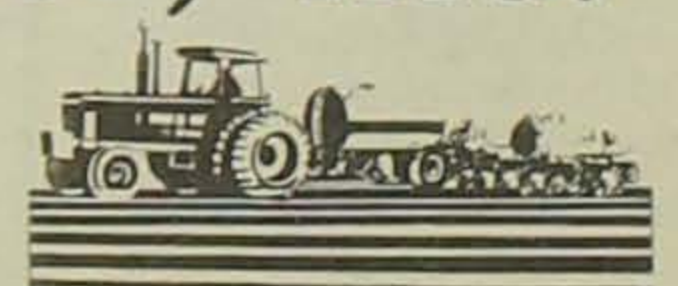
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George Hosfelt Marks 36 Years In Conservation Work In Cass County

By TERESA GLEASON

If you want to know anything about soil and water conservation in Cass County, then George Hosfelt of rural Massena is the man to ask.

Hosfelt has been a district commissioner for the Cass County Soil Conservation District since 1952, and was elected to serve another six-year term last month.

"In the 36 years I've been a commissioner, I've only missed one county meeting," Hosfelt said.

In order to be a good commissioner, the veteran said he feels one should attend all the county, state, and national meetings he or she can.

"There are times that you go to meetings when you have 40 other things you should be doing, but when you attend them, you get the knowledge of other people's experiences that you can put with your own - that's what makes it pay," he said.

In the early 1950s when the commissioner was still wet behind the ears, each county district had a total of three commissioners, and only those county residents directly involved in agriculture were eligible to vote.

Today, each district has a total of five commissioners, and all eligible, registered voters are able to participate in the election.

"The nice thing about the organization is that it's non-partisan - everyone is involved strictly to promote and increase soil and water conservation in their areas," Hosfelt said.

In Cass County, Hosfelt said the district has done a substantial amount of work with two watershed projects - Turkey Creek and Troublesome Creek.

"We're still working on several of the structure sites right now, as it's quite a project," he said.

Each time a producer or landowner in the county wants to sign up for a specific conservation project, such as terrace building, the district commissioners have to okay the project, but not before they



George Hosfelt

make sure they have the funds to do so.

"We used to be able to help farmers with half the cost of their projects, but last year we were only able to fund up to \$3,500 per project," Hosfelt said.

"The cooperation in this county between the ASCS Office, the Extension Office, and

the SCS Office is good, and the other district commissioners are a great bunch of people to work with. It makes my job a whole lot easier," he added.

In 1976, Hosfelt was named Outstanding Soil Conservation District Commissioner for Region 5 and also for the State of Iowa.

In 1978, he was awarded an honorary membership in the Iowa Association of Soil Conservationists for all his years of devotion to the cause.

As far as the future is concerned, Hosfelt said he would like to see the proposed Massena Lake Project become a reality in his lifetime.

"The City of Massena has always had a water shortage problem, and the proposed dam and 220-acre lake would take care of these needs as well as provide a great recreational spot for the area," he said.

Interest in the project is at an all-time high, and Hosfelt said local officials are meeting with the necessary state officials to

push the progress ahead.

"If we get the lake, then the whole county will be well-protected," the district commissioner said.

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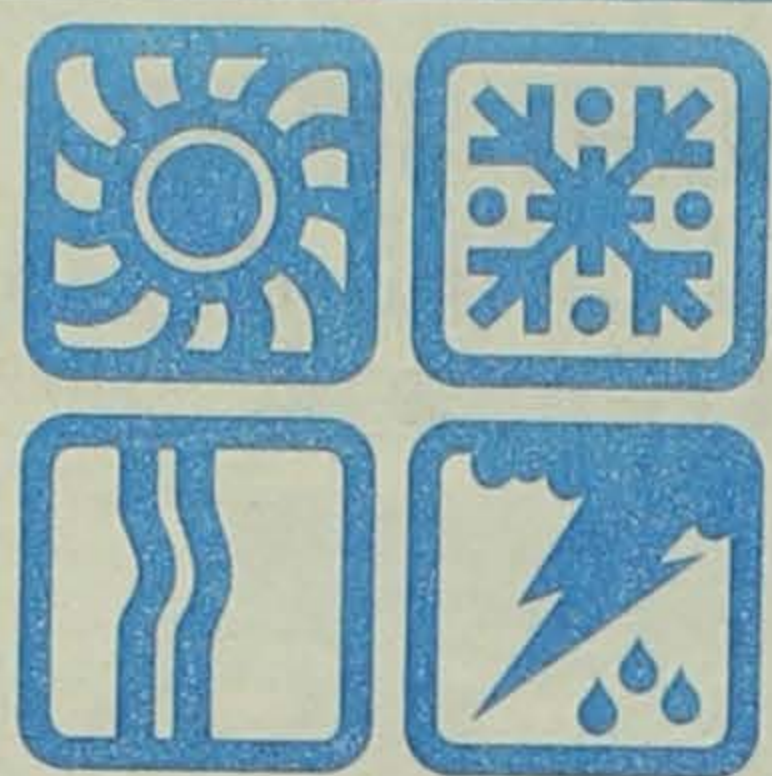
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