

HARDIN COUNTY SOIL CONSERVATION DISTRICT

inches from disaster?

by
Steven Manternach
District Conservationist

The 1980's finds Hardin County inches away from disaster. The disaster is a result of what's been happening down on the farm. Approximately 75,000 acres of cropland are within a few inches of being permanently ruined by soil erosion.

Soil erosion, like baldness, has been sneaking up on us. The loss of both is gradual. You might not notice the daily or yearly hair loss but after 20-30 years, you have a bald spot. Topsoil is removed in very thin layers and a farmer probably doesn't notice that he has lost 1/12 of an inch of soil in a year. But after 12 years, an inch is gone. After 24 years, 2" and so on until the hills are also bald. You can't replace topsoil, or hair.

Currently, law makers are attempting legislative cures for soil erosion. However, it is difficult to solve the problem. In fact, like baldness, it may be impossible to cure.

It is necessary to realize that there is a problem, before a cure can be found. No one would take medicine for a cold before catching one. A farmer is not going to conserve soil until the erosion is obvious, but by then it will be too late. Soil conserving laws will not be effective until education on soil erosion is provided to each landowner.

Farms, like people, vary in their looks and resources. The human body can't function very long if it is not cared for. Each farm is different. Land will not produce crops very long if the soils are not cared for. An eroded farm, like a sick person needs extra special care, such as extra fertilizers to produce. Each farmer needs to be educated on the soils on his farm and what he needs to do to control his soil losses.

Education alone will not insure that every landowner

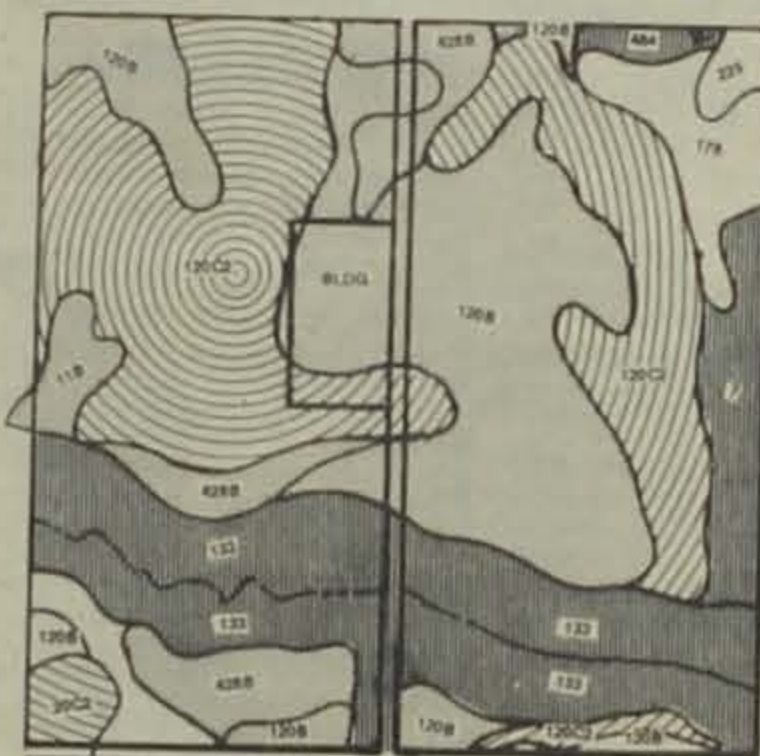
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THE MAP SHOWN AT THE RIGHT COULD BE YOUR FARM.

The soil survey will provide soil information on all the farms in Hardin County. Soils can vary in their structure as well as their conservation needs. A soil map will help you determine what conservation practices your farm needs.



No-till means planting crops in last years crop residues without any primary tillage. Shown is a planter working in extremely heavy residues.



Soils have severe water erosion problems if cropped intensively. Terraces and conservation tillage are needed.

Soils have moderate water erosion problem. Contouring and conservation tillage will control soil losses in these areas.

Soils are nearly level in these areas. Drainage may be a problem. Tile drainage is needed, plus conservation tillage to control wind erosion.



Special attachment such as fluted coulters are available to adapt planters to work in heavy crop residues.



Conservation tillage - crops residues are needed on all cropland to reduce wind and water erosion. Residues should be left until after planting time.

Erosion control structures - the structures are needed to control gully erosion, that can occur along ditches and streams.

Financial Report for July 1, 1978-June 30, 1979

1,780.00	IIIM Budget 1978-79	
	District Allocation	
	Terraces - 13 farms	25,816.04
	Structures - 3	7,696.06
	Released back to the State	687.90
	Balance	.00
	IIIM Cost Share Funds 1977-78	
	District Allocation	27,000.00
	Supplemental Allocation	20,525.00
	TOTAL ALLOCATION	47,525.00
	Released back to the State	25.83
	Balance	.00
22,575.00	REVOLVING ACCOUNT	
	July 1, 1978 Balance	276.17
	June 30, 1979 Balance	150.75
.00		

CONSERVATION CLUB ACCOUNT

July 1, 1978 Balance	672.83
Income -	
Club Donations	461.00
Barquet Tickets	1,115.00
Miscellaneous	272.79
TOTAL	1,848.79
Total Balance on hand and receipts	2,520.62
Expenses -	
Cooperator Banquet	1,093.75
Soil Booklets - 6th Grades	62.00
NACD Dues	275.00
IASCD Dues	100.00
Soil Stewardship material	90.52
Miscellaneous	36.62
TOTAL	1,657.89
June 30, 1979 Balance	862.73
Total Balance on hand and expenses	2,520.62

SUMMARY OF WORK FOR 1979

New Cooperators	18 No.
Recipients of Technical Assistance	204 No.
Cooperators' Contacts	1,027 No.
Conservation Plans	2,309 Ac.
Conservation Plans	
Revised	889 Ac.
Parallel Terraces	46,200 Ft.
Tile	57,658 Ft.
Windbreaks	16.1 No.
Land Adequately Treated	1,627 Ac.
Grassed Waterways	7 Ac.
Conservation Tillage	400 Ac.
Sediment and Water Control Structures	2,320 Ft.

Continued from Above.

will practice soil stewardship. Mandatory controls must be included in soil conservation laws to insure that procrastinators will get started on soil conservation program.

The 1980's will bring a whole new outlook on soil conservation. Laws as well as public interest and education, will insure that those few inches will last for generations to come.

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Hardin County will help you solve your problems. Ernest Hoffa, state engineering aide, typist II; Steven Manternach, district conservationist; Fred Rosenkrans, W.A.E.