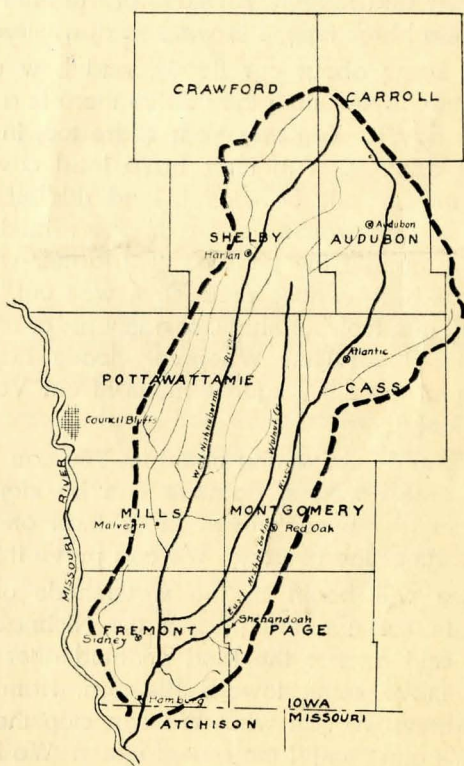


The NISHNABOTNA RIVER WATERSHED

This is our land
-and our problem!



Issued by
NISHNA VALLEY
FLOOD CONTROL ASSOCIATION

why we must do something . . .

There are about 110,000 of us here in the Nishna Valley. Most of us make our living, directly or indirectly, from the land. Whether we work in town or on the farm, all of us have a personal stake in the agriculture of this Valley—our Valley.

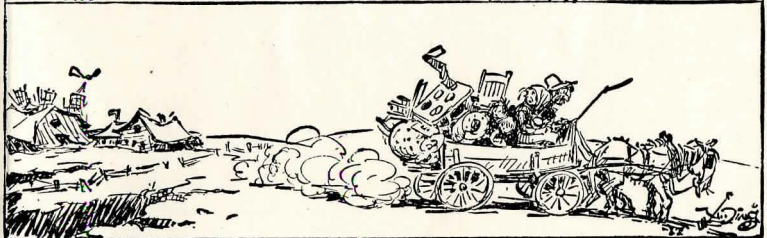
For many years the land of our Valley and the prosperity of all of us has been under attack. Ours is a double enemy composed of erosion and floods. Year after year it has gained ground. From one end to the other you can see how the enemy is winning and we are losing. There are gullies cutting into our landscape, growing deeper and wider and longer. Hillsides are turning yellow as the black topsoil is washed downstream.

You know about our floods, and how often they come. Every time they strike there is a cost and we pay it. You pay your share too, in one way or another. You may have land covered with sand or silt or gravel, land riddled with gullies, a road washed out, a bridge ruined. Or you may handle the produce of a farmer whose land was hurt—whose production was cut. You may sell him tools, or shirts, or gasoline, or render professional service. Wherever floods happen throughout the 2,900 square miles of our Valley, we all feel it.

We can do something about it. You can help. Erosion, high waters, damage can be stopped. That fact has been proved more than once in other parts of the country. We can prove it here.

If we will begin in the watersheds of the creeks in the northern part of the Nishnabotna Valley and anchor the land on field after field as we move south toward Riverton, Hamburg, and Sidney, we can win. We can stop the soil loss. We can control the run-off water. We know what needs to be done. The working scientists who can help us, like the field experts of the Soil Conservation Service, have the "know-how." We need more of them assigned to our Valley. Farmers organized soil conservation districts here years ago. They have made a fine beginning and deserve great credit. It is no more than a beginning. Much more needs to be done, and done soon.

AS LAND GOES, SO GOES MAN



Courtesy New York Tribune Syndicate and Des Moines Register

Flood control structures like levees can't give us real protection until the upper parts of the watersheds throughout the Valley are tied down with soil and water conservation measures. The Army Engineers say so. The Soil Conservation people say so. The evidence on our land says so.

If we tie down the land in our watersheds, from the uppermost fields on down, then we can go ahead with assurance on the rest of the flood control work downstream. But first things come first. That means beginning on the upper parts of all our watersheds.

why YOU are affected . . .

The Nishnabotna Valley Watershed is ours. Approximately 110,000 of us live in the area drained by these rivers. There are approximately 2,900 square miles in the Iowa part of the basin. The following table shows the square miles in each county.

County	Sq. Miles	County	Sq. Miles
Page	105.5	Pottawattamie ..	450.5
Fremont	387.0	Shelby	431.0
Mills	268.7	Audubon	413.4
Montgomery	226.7	Guthrie	38.1
Adair	13.6	Carroll	107.5
Cass	341.1	Crawford	116.3
		TOTAL	2,899.4

what is the past damage?

Prior to 1940 drainage ditches and levees constructed by local interests cost more than 2½ million dollars. Hundreds of thousands of dollars have been spent since 1940.

The silt load on the Nishna was 5,300 acre feet between April 1, 1939 and March 31, 1940, a period of considerably less than normal run-off. This silt came from the uplands, and has been deposited on the bottomlands of the Nishna, Missouri, Mississippi, and delta of the Gulf of Mexico.

In the floods of May, June and July of 1947, 70,300 acres of land were flooded in Fremont, Page, Mills and Montgomery counties. Crop loss was estimated at 3 million dollars. Enormous damage was done to highways, highway bridges, railroads, railroad bridges, utilities, homes and barns. Sixteen hundred acres of land were covered with sand. One thousand acres were ruined by scouring. Sixteen hundred acres were lost by widening of streams. Soil loss on unprotected uplands was from five to one hundred tons per acre.

In 1947 the estimated flood damage in Montgomery county was \$1,534,650. Damage to road bridges in Pottawattamie county was \$113,200, in Mills county \$317,700, Page county \$91,700, Carroll county \$5,000, Fremont county \$200,000, and Cass county \$18,220. Total damage at Hamburg 2½ million.

what has been done . . .

Last September 16, 1948 about 100 men composed of farmers, soil conservation district commissioners, and newspapermen met at Atlantic, Iowa and formed an organization to be known as the Nishna Valley Flood Control association. Temporary officers are: chairman, Julius Lensch of Harlan; vice-chairman, Gilbert Lacy of Cumberland; secretary, Barr Keshlear of Shenandoah; and treasurer, Jack Lewis of Harlan. A board of directors consisting of one commissioner from each district has been appointed. An executive committee and other committees will be named from this group.

The purpose of this association is to promote a program of flood and erosion control in the Nishna watershed.

what must be done now . . .

Flood control funds are appropriated by Congress. The residents of the Nishna watershed will have to present evidence to Congress that there is a flood and erosion problem. The Army Engineers and the Soil Conservation Commission have some information on the problem. Some individuals have information.

Some organization must collect this information, must fit it together properly, hold meetings to inform the people, prepare authentic news stories for the papers, call on agencies such as AAA, Soil Conservation Service, Corps of U. S. Engineers, local organizations, state government, and finally transmit the evidence to the Congress.

All of this will cost money. Each of us is busy with his own business. We should hire one or two men to do the work for us. Some watershed associations are spending thousands of dollars per year to gather and disseminate information. Half a dozen individuals have already spent several hundred dollars to show their faith in the Valley. There is much work yet to do.

Someone in each soil conservation district will ask you for financial assistance soon. Will you help?



Flood Scene Near Red Oak June 1947

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