

MILLS COUNTY SOIL CONSERVATION DISTRICT
PROGRAM AND WORK PLAN

First Revision 1963

MILLS COUNTY SOIL CONSERVATION DISTRICT

PROGRAM AND WORK PLAN

The following is the first revision of the Mills County Soil Conservation District Program and Work Plan which was originally formulated on August 26, 1941. The District Commissioners feel it is important to develop and maintain a program which meets the needs of modern-day agriculture and therefore deem this revision necessary.

Mills County consists of 438 square miles or 280,320 acres with 269,045 of these acres being considered as farm land. The 1961 farm census shows that 3,983 persons live on a total of 1090 farms which average 247 acres in size. Fifty-nine percent of the farm land is tenant operated.

Eighty-two percent of the land in Mills County is gently to smoothly rolling with slopes from 0 to 12 percent including the Missouri River bottom. The remaining 12 percent includes the steeper slopes and the bluff area along the western part of the county where slopes may be found to exceed 30 percent.

Soils in the county are of deep loess origin and predominately Marshall, Monona and Ida silt loams on the rolling land and largely Haynie, Onawa and Salix on the Missouri River bottom.

The predominate type of farming in this area is a combination of livestock and grain. Hogs and cattle feeding are the main livestock enterprises. Corn is the principal grain crop with small grain being used in rotations as needed.

In preparing the district program and work plan for Mills County Soil Conservation District, the commissioners have tried to analyze the problems as they exist. It is evident that some of the problems which exist require immediate attention while others fit better into a long range program.

Development of Conservation Farm Plans remains foremost in the district Program and Work Plan for only through such a plan can the farmer realize the full benefit of conservation in his farming operation. Insofar as possible and practical, planning priority will be given to such groups as organized watersheds. Erosion is seldom a one man problem so the commissioners feel it is desirable for farmers to work together in such groups.

Charts, maps, statistics, etc. will be made available to the farmers as may be needed in developing a sound land use program. This data will be gathered from existing county planning committees such as Rural Area Development, Conservation Needs committee, Agricultural Stabilization and Conservation Service reports, the Iowa Extension Service and Experiment stations, U. S. Department of Agriculture, Soil Conservation Service, Farm Home Administration and activities developed by the commissioners. From time to time it will be necessary to request information from other Federal, State and Local Agencies.

In some areas throughout the county, soil losses from sheet and gully erosion is occurring at excessive rates. Some means of reaching these people and acquainting them with the values of soil conserving practices is needed. This information will reach the farmers through a variety of methods including the use of group meetings, demonstrations, tours, news articles, contests, schools, individual counseling, television and radio. Acceptance of soil and water conservation practices can also be brought about by encouraging the use of new and improved practices, and the use of cost sharing assistance through the Agricultural Stabilization and Conservation Service and the use of conservation loans through the Farm Home Administration. The above program will be carried out by the district commissioners, County Extension Service, Community groups, ASCS, FHA, and SCS technicians.

Permanent pastures in the county are generally poor with sparse stands of productive grasses. Controlling of weeds and fertilization would be of great help but there is also a need for more adapted species (especially legumes) which are of longer endurance. Cooperation with the SCS and State Experimental Farms in developing and testing new plant materials will be encouraged, especially on any species which look like they may have some economic value for farmers of this area. Part of this program will also be to encourage

farmers to plant good adapted varieties of seed, to use good seed bed preparation, method, time and rates of seeding and soil treatments such as fertilizers and herbicides.

Livestock programs as a rule are out of balance with needed land use. The number of livestock to utilize forage is limited, which leaves little desire for forages needed in many of the rotations. The district commissioners feel that the best solution lies in encouraging the use of more livestock through cooperation with the Extension Service in presenting educational meetings on livestock production and by encouraging the use of government loans through the Farm Home Administration.

More of the farms are becoming tenant operated, making it more difficult to adapt a soil and water conservation program. There seems to be less desire on the part of tenants of short tenure to apply needed practices and consequently less desire on the part of the owner to see them done.

The commissioners will encourage land owners and tenants to work together in planning a good land use program for the tenant-operated farms. If the land owners and their tenants will plan their farms in cooperation with one another, the commissioners feel that both the land owner and the tenant will be benefited. This should also bring about longer time leases which will result in greater security for both.

Since the development of wildlife and recreational areas have found a definite place in a good land use program, the district commissioners have taken a new look at recreational possibilities within the county. The commissioners will work with and ask assistance of the State Conservation Commission, Mills County Conservation Board, Soil Conservation Service, and all other groups interested in developing private and public recreation and wildlife areas. The commissioners also feel that recreation and wildlife areas can be a definite benefit derived from the local watershed programs.

At the present time there are three active watershed groups within the district consisting of the Mule Creek Watershed, Pony Creek Watershed, and the Waubonsie Creek Watershed.

The commissioners feel that the watershed concept is the answer for an accelerated program for getting conservation applied to the land. The commissioners have also adopted the watershed approach as a complement to the farm planning technique in achieving proper land use. Whenever feasible, priority for farm planning and application of conservation practices will be given to groups within organized watersheds.

The commissioners realize that certain phases of the above mentioned items must also be included as part of a long range program due to the time required to make conversions and adjustments. These conversions and adjustments which need

to be made are printed up in the Conservation Needs Analysis which was formulated by the Conservation Needs Committee. These needs are to serve as a guide in completing the soil and water conservation job remaining to be done including practices to apply, land use and land conversions.

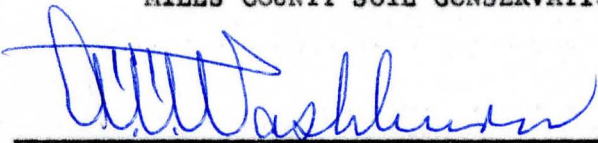
Several other agencies and groups such as the County Board of Supervisors, Schools, Boy Scouts, FFA, 4-H, State Highway commission and churches have included soil and water conservation as a part of their programs. The district commissioners are ready to cooperate in any way possible to help these groups to develop and practice soil and water conservation as a part of their programs.

Among the newer phases which have become a part of the district program are Rural Area Development, Civil Defense, Land Conversion programs and urban area assistance. The commissioners welcome and are ready to cooperate in any program which they feel is beneficial in helping the general welfare within the county.

The commissioners of the Mills County Soil Conservation District feel that the most important components of their program and work plan are included herein. These are the components which they feel are necessary to develop and carry out a satisfactory soil and water conservation program in the district. The commissioners also realize that as the district program develops and progresses, new goals and problems will arise and the program will need to be revised and amended.

MILLS COUNTY SOIL CONSERVATION DISTRICT

By

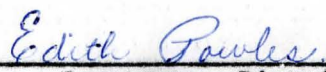

Chairman, District Commissioners

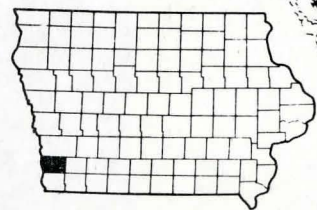
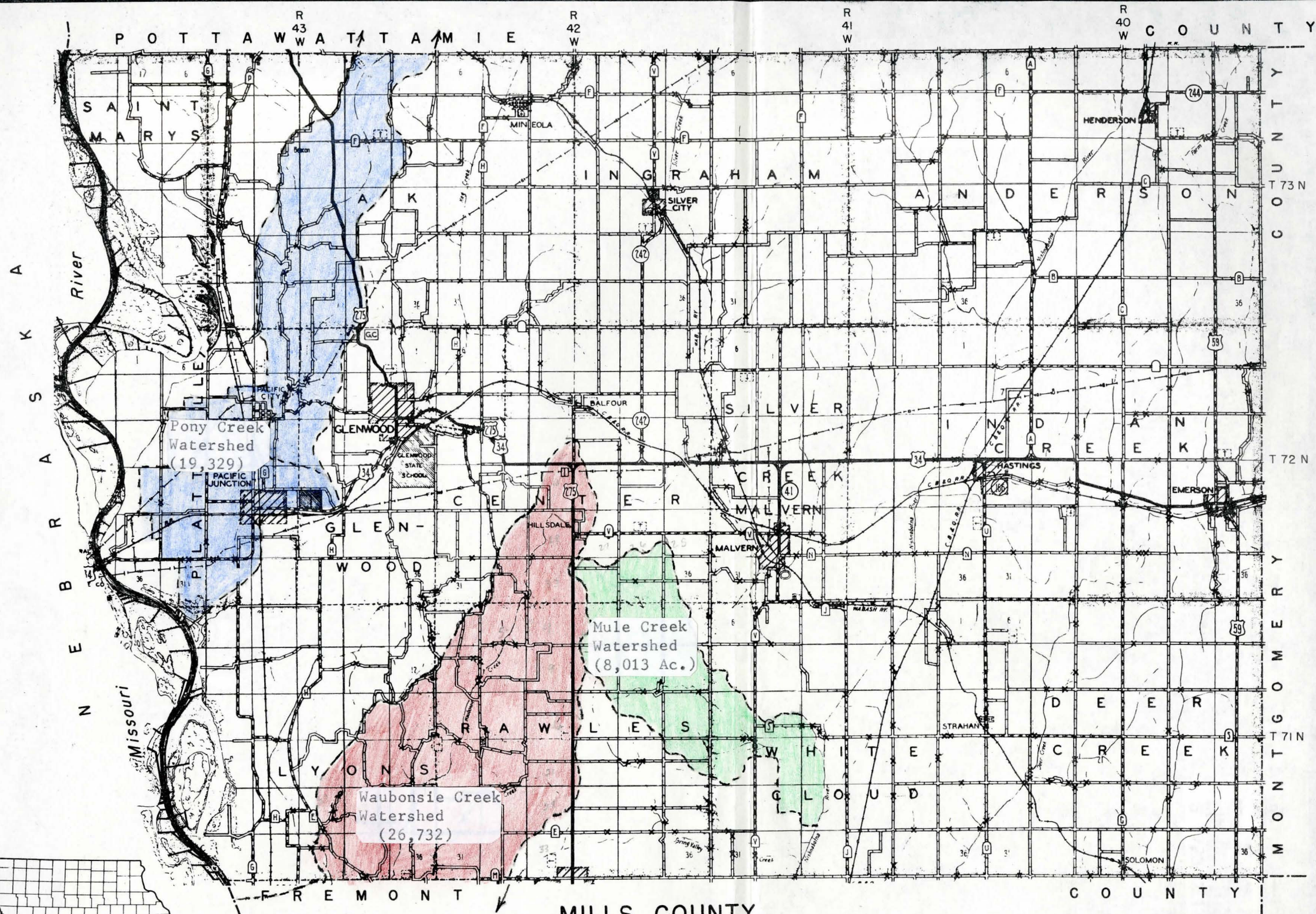
Date

April 9, 1963

The signing of this district's program was authorized by a resolution of the District Commissioners adopted at a meeting held on April 9, 1963 1963.

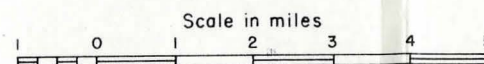
By


Secretary, District Commissioners



LOCATION IN IOWA

MILLS COUNTY SOIL CONSERVATION DISTRICT



Total acreage 264,758 approximately.
District includes all of Mills County,
exclusive of towns and cities.

EXCLUDED AREA 



4877-C

From The Leader, Malvern, Iowa

Please make cut X pica ems

$\frac{1}{2}$ half sheet

~~Air Mail~~

See. Return by June 27

(list #) administrator for S.C.S. & Dec 1

