

U. S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
SOIL CONSERVATION SERVICE

INFORMATIONAL ACTIVITIES

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COMMISSIONER SAYS IN ANNUAL REPORT — — —

Soil Conservation District Role Is Changing As 1970's Approach

As the 1970's approach, more and more emphasis will be put on a place to live if the Hardin Soil District is to meet the needs of all its people, says Carroll J. Hobson, district chairman.

Hobson's statement is carried in the annual district report issued last week. He said the district not only has maintained an active interest in application of conservation practices, but has also re-directed some of the conservation programs.

Hobson expanded the theme in an interview. "You can sum it up in two words — community planning," he said. "We've got to clean up our water, our polluted air and our transportation, to name some of the problems," he said.

Thus conservation commissioners will be shifting away from their traditional role of direct land projects such as the tiling, contour farming, and terracing that usually is connected with their program.

This doesn't mean agricultural emphasis won't be continued, because it will. But the scope of the program will be considerably wider, Hobson indicated.

For example, many rural homes are being left vacant with the shift of population to urban areas. As a result, the district helped prepare an inventory of rural Hardin homes last year.

Many of the homes are in good condition and can be used—if the public knows about them.

Still another example is that the district helped prepare a curriculum guide for grade school study of conservation.

Urban planning, especially land surrounding communities, will come into play.

Soil district commissioners are not paid. "For this reason, we feel that we are about as unbiased as any concerning planning," Hobson noted. While the district may not play a leading role in urban planning, it will be there for consultation and assistance.

The scope even extends to the district commissioners aiding programs to gain new industries, he noted. Thus urban residents can be expected to take a larger role in the district organization which traditionally has been relegated to farm operators.

With Hobson as district commissioners are Caleb Knutson of Radcliffe, Kermit Whitehead of New Providence, Paul Primus of Steamboat Rock and Ted Cutler of New Providence. Hobson is from Eldora.

ACTIVITIES

Some of the activities listed in the report are:

—A new agricultural research station constructed by the Agricultural Research Service on the Arthur McDowell farm. The farm is one-half mile east of Eldora. The station measures rainfall, intensity of the rain, run-off plant nutrient loss and soil loss.

RESOURCES

—Officials of Ackley, Wellsburg, Parkersburg and Aplington met with commissioners to discuss community and resource development.

—The Pine Lake Wildlife Club financed printing of 4,000 copies of the Hardin County Municipal Recreation Facilities Inventory which lists and describes parks in Hardin communities.

—The district initiated an extensive inventory of public and private drains in the county. Ultimate goal is to improve agricultural drainage in the county.

—The Iowa Conservation Field Days and Plowing Matches were hosted by the district Sept. 5-6, east of Eldora.

—A total of 997 conservation workbooks were distributed to students in the sixth-eighth grade classes of Ackley, Alden, Eldora, Hubbard, Iowa Falls, New Providence and Steamboat Rock Schools.