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*      ANNUAL REPORT
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*      IDA COUNTY, IOWA, SOIL CONSERVATION DISTRICT
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*      1951
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*      DISTRICT COMMISSIONERS
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*      Ross E. Baumann, Chairman          Cushing, Iowa
*
*      Henry Dall                          Battle Creek, Iowa
*
*      H. L. Elk                           Galva, Iowa
*
*      TREASURER
*
*      Ray D. Bresnahan                    Ida Grove, Iowa
*
*      SECRETARY
*
*      Paul Peterson, Extension Director   Ida County
*
*      TECHNICIANS
*
*      Kenneth H. Burnett                  Soil Conservationist
*
*      Bruce W. Marcue                     Soil Conservationist
*
*      Willard H. Roeske                   Conservation Aid
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INTRODUCTION

The Ida County Soil Conservation District submits the following report of activities for the calendar year of 1951. The first step to build up Soil Conservation practices in the District includes interest among farmers in Soil Conservation. Several methods were used to develop this interest, which will be listed later.

A definite plan for Soil Conservation is the second step in the work of the Conservation Service, which is followed closely throughout the year.

Accomplishments of the Soil Conservation Service in the District are enumerated in detail as to participants, acres under plans, acres contoured, terraces built, grassed waterways constructed, etc.

The problems of the District are also listed, for by recognizing our problems we may overcome them by a more efficient approach and careful planning.

Credit is also given to cooperating and assisting agencies, firms and individuals who contributed much to the work accomplished by the Soil Conservation Service and the Ida County Soil Conservation District.

The following direct assistance was given the District in 1951:

From the U.S. Department of Agriculture, Soil Conservation Service:

Soil Conservationist GS-7 - 12 months service
Soil Conservationist GS-5 - 11 months service
Conservation Aid GS-4 - 12 months service
Transportation, office space and supplies for the above.
(U. S. Post Office Department furnished office space.)

The Ida County Farm Bureau, Extension Service, and the Iowa State Extension Service cooperating with the U.S. Department of Agriculture:

Assistance of the County Extension Director in arranging meetings, laying contour guide lines on farms of prospective cooperators, and acting as secretary for the District Commissioners.

From the Ida County Production and Marketing Administration:

Assistance in laying out contour guide lines
Much favorable newspaper publicity.

From the State Soil Conservation Committee:

\$1794.26 for Clerical and Technical assistance
203.27 for miscellaneous expense

Assistance in coordinating our activities with those of other Districts.

DEVELOPING INTEREST IN SOIL CONSERVATION

Special effort has been made, during the past year, to connect Soil Conservation with all good farming practices. This has led to a wider acceptance of those things this District is fostering. Where possible, the Ida County Extension Director has conducted demonstrations on farms that were practicing good Soil Conservation. First Knowledge of Soil Conservation by many people has been gained in this manner.

A gradual change to the group action approach from the individual approach has taken place this year in this District. The complete change-over will be accomplished by 1953. District manpower will be conserved and better application of Soil Conservation practices will be the result of this change-over.

Since the District was established in 1945, an annual Birthday Party has been held. In 1951, this was expanded to include a 4 day Land Use Training School. One of these sessions was used also as a District Annual Meeting. The school was highly successful and will be continued and expanded in 1952. The outstanding parts of the school were Ed Dyas' talk on The Use of Forages and George Harmons' session on Balanced Farming.

Two tours were conducted by the District during the summer. Both of these were over the two watersheds where flood control structures had been installed and good Soil Conservation practices were in use. These tours were a part of Iowa State Teachers College summer Conservation Camp.

Advantage has been taken of various projects of other organizations to advance the cause of Soil Conservation, in addition to the activities of the Soil Conservation District that have been initiated and conducted by the District.

The Veterans Training Program is the first of these. The instructors of these groups are all interested in Soil Conservation and helped to create interest among these young farmers and contributed much to the activities of and interest in soil conservation in the District. During the year, veterans in the training program have been given priority in order that they could have well established conservation programs on their farms.

The Sioux City Program of Permanent Agriculture is a second, sponsored by the Sioux City Chamber of Commerce and Sioux City Journal-Tribune Publishing Company, who present awards for various phases of a soil improvement program. Awards were given to David Brueck, Battle Creek; Elvin Leonard, Holstein and Marvin Volkert, Washta for the best Soil Conservation and Soil Use programs in operation in the District. Leonard also won the "Short Course Award" of Missouri River Division of the Mississippi Valley Association for outstanding all-round conservation in Northwest Iowa.

The Ida County Agricultural Improvement Council has been replaced by the Ida County Agricultural Mobilization Committee, set up under Secretary of Agriculture's Memorandum #1278. The District is represented on this committee by the Work Unit Conservationist. This committee is primarily concerned with routine matters. Under the same memorandum the Ida County Agricultural Resources Committee is instituted this year. The District is represented here by all three of its Commissioners. The committee concerns itself with local land conservation policy.

One of the principal assistants in the District program has been the Ida County PMA. The rate of general acceptance of practices have been greatly increased by payments for conservation practices applied. Many contour lines have been laid out by the local PMA committee. Individuals interested in the District program have been referred to the District.

One of the best means of reaching the public, pertaining to Soil Conservation, are the newspaper stories. A noteworthy contribution has been made in this field by the newspapers in this District.

The Little Sioux Flood Control activity in the District has made it possible for us to reach additional farmers. The gully problem is still first in many of their minds. Priority of defense spending has slowed this activity to the extent that farm operators are now waiting on the program.

EDUCATIONAL ACTIVITIES

The Ida County Farm Bureau and County Extension Service gave their fullest cooperation and participation in the County Agricultural Development Council Program which dealt with problems concerning soil conservation. They also gave their fullest cooperation to any program sponsored by the District. Soil Conservation as written in the education program of work for the period of October 1, 1950 to September 30, 1951 received major emphasis among the problems facing rural people in the County Extension Educational Program.

As secretary of the Ida County Soil Conservation District, the County Extension Director attended the regular monthly meetings of the District Commissioners, assisted in carrying out the program as planned and assisted with events sponsored by the District.

With the assistance of the county extension educational program development committee, the extension land use committee, the District Commissioners and members of the agricultural agencies in the county the first annual Land Use Leaders Training School was held.

Subjects discussed at the four-day school held on the four Thursdays in February included good land use, soils and soil management, crop rotations, contouring, terracing, strip cropping, gully control and grassed waterways, soil testing and fertilizers, balanced farming, production and utilization of forages and grass and legume silage, seed testing, use of recommended varieties of crops, principles of farm management, legume and grass seed production, making the farm business profitable, planning the production program of the farm according to the farm resources, what's ahead for farmers in public affairs and the responsibilities and program of agricultural agencies.

Twelve farmers from each township were selected on the basis of community leadership, willingness to cooperate and activity in farming to attend the school. An invitation announcing the school, relating the topics to be discussed and purpose of event was sent to these farmers with an enclosed enrollment blank for them to return if they desired to attend. As a result 90 farmers sent them back indicating they wished to attend.

Farmers reached by one session - 110; two days sessions - 85; three sessions - 67 and all four sessions - 45 were the attendance results. The 85 farmers who attended at least two sessions have received the subject matter information and reference kit and have received credit for completing the course.

The objective of the training school is to provide 12 rural leaders in each township each year with the complete and latest information on good land use, soil management and crop production and utilization. Too many fail to realize the importance of conserving our natural resources. The land use leaders training school is being held to get information to rural people in the most effective and quickest way; to get people to adopt generally the recommendations to combat the problem.

Statements made by farmers attending the school were: excellent as a refresher course; should be continued as a part of the educational program, best event ever held in the educational program.

The Extension Director gave assistance to the District Commissioners in planning for the Soil Conservation District Annual short course by publicizing the event in the county newspapers and over the radio. He served as master of ceremonies for the days program. The event was held in connection with the second session of the land use leaders training school.

The County Extension Director was an active member of the County Agricultural Mobilization Committee and the County Agricultural Resources Council.

Twelve contour layout and soil sampling training schools were held in April with 70 farmers attending.

Concerning soil conservation week, the extension director sent a letter concerning the observance with a copy of Governor Wm. Beardsleys proclamation requesting that it be posted. A letter was also sent to all of the ministers in the county with the Governors proclamation and information on soil conservation and requesting their cooperation.

During 1951, 127 soil samples from 48 farms were sent to the soil testing laboratory at Iowa State College. Approximately 65 samples were tested for lime in the county extension office.

Because of wet weather and retardation of farm operations, it was impossible to hold a fall field day or a twilight tour as had been planned.

PLANNING FOR SOIL CONSERVATION

As of December 31, 1951 this District had 220 active farm conservation plans. This does not include plans cancelled because of change of ownership.

The content of a plan is as follows:

1. A farm soil inventory map (sometimes called soil conservation survey), showing extent and seriousness of erosion.
2. A land use map showing how the farm land will be used and the location of special soil saving practices.
3. A cropping plan showing how to plant the crops to change from square fields to contour fields.
4. A plan of conservation operations which includes detailed instructions for the application of practices agreed upon.
5. Recommendations of practices not agreed upon, but deemed desirable by the farm planner.

Besides the two sub-watersheds in the Little Sioux Flood Control Project completed in 1950, the District has easements for construction on a third. There are four other sub-watersheds being developed for Flood Control assistance at this time. The international situation at present would indicate that flood control activities will be curtailed for at least the next year.

APPLYING SOIL CONSERVATION PRACTICES

In 1951 the District was instrumental in establishing major soil saving practices in the following amounts:

Contour Farming	7204 acres
Terracing	6 miles
Contour Field Boundaries	10,685 rods
Adequate cropping systems planned	3859 acres

The Ida County PMA reports the following establishment of conservation practices in this District. This is based upon total practices reported and not just those upon which payments were made:

PRACTICE	UNIT	1951	1950
Standard terraces	Mile	5	10
Contour plow and plant	Acre	11 705	8 877
Contour plant only	Acre	10 641	8 511
Contour plant row crop	Acre	22 346	17 388
Seeding waterways	Sq. Yd.	674 166	919 375
Lime spread	Ton	1 580	3 548
Fertilizer spread	Ton	993	995
Green Manure crops	Acre	45 291	33 367
Grassed headlands established	Lin. Rod	18 051	24 719
Above normal seeding	Acre	1 581	17 077

PROBLEMS

1. The practice of adjusting crop production by changing acreage has not been very successful and may be better accomplished by more use of fertilizer and greater care in general operations. Of course an increase of grass to reduce grain crops is always advisable where less grain is needed.

2. The shortage of manpower for educational purposes.

3. The difficulty of maintaining long-time land use and soil conservation plans where there is a rapid turnover of owners and operators.

4. Many farmers overlook the need of a good rotation, the seeding of legumes, the replenishing of humus in the soil to assist contouring and terracing practices in following a good soil management program. However, this problem, while still evident is gradually becoming less of an obstacle in the establishing of a sound soil program on the cooperating farms of the District.

5. The lack of funds available in the Ida County Board of Supervisors for roads. This problem becomes critical where the Little Sioux Flood Control Program calls for a large number of structures on public roads.

6. The indiscriminate straightening of watercourses is producing many problems. Gullies especially on major streams and their immediate laterals.

7. Costs per acre benefitted in Little Sioux Flood Control are very high. The success of the program will depend on finding ways of accomplishing the objects with less cost.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Space will not permit the naming of all individuals and groups to which this District is indebted for assistance and cooperation. Many farm operators have carried on Soil Conservation practices without our knowledge. However, it is desirous to name the following organizations and persons, and to express appreciation for all assistance rendered.

Sioux City Chamber of Commerce
Ida County Farm Bureau
United States Soil Conservation Service
Iowa State Soil Conservation Committee
Ida County Production and Marketing Administration
Iowa Agricultural Experiment Station
Iowa Agricultural Extension Service
Ida County Superintendent of Schools
Production and Marketing Administration
Sioux City Journal Tribune
Battle Creek Times
Galva Tribune
Holstein Advance
Pioneer-Record (Ida Grove)
First State Bank (Battle Creek)
Arthur Trust and Savings Bank
First Trust and Savings Bank (Galva)
Holstein State Bank
Ida County State Bank (Ida Grove)

1951 OPERATING COSTS

IDA COUNTY SOIL CONSERVATION DISTRICT

Expenses Paid by Soil Conservation Service

Personnel		
Regularly Assigned (3 persons)	\$10	532
Specialist, Agronomist & Engineer	1	850
Other, Soil Scientist & Administration	3	500
Other Costs		
Automobile Expense (12,942 mi. @ .07)	906	
Telephone (estimated)	75	
Equipment & Supplies (Estimated)	150	
TOTAL COST SOIL CONSERVATION SERVICE		\$17 013

Expenses Paid by Iowa State Soil Conservation Committee

Personnel (Clerical & Technical)	1	794
Commissioners Expenses & Office Expense	203	
TOTAL COST STATE COMMITTEE		1 997

Gratuities given District Without Payment

Commissioners Time (43 day @ \$9.00)	387	
Rent, Heat, Light (U.S. Post Office)	900	1 287
12 mo. @ \$75		
GRAND TOTAL OPERATING		\$20 297

PROGRESS SUMMARY
IDA COUNTY SOIL CONSERVATION DISTRICT
ESTABLISHED - FEB. 19, 1945
Work Unit Office Opened - Mar. 13, 1946

	<u>In 1951</u>	<u>To Date</u>
Sub-Watershed Groups Organized	1	13
Soil Conservation Surveys (acres)	9,181	71,329
Farm Conservation Plans Completed (NO)	38	220
(Acres)	6046	37,895
Acres Contouring Laid Out	7204	
Miles Terraces Built	6	48
Acres Definite Crop Rotation Planned	3859	27,125
Educational Meetings Held (NO)	8	100
(Attend)	434	3167
News Articles	15	149
Demonstrations (NO)	6	38
(Attend)	49	337
Radio Talks	0	3
Birthday Party (NO)	1	6
(Attend)	100	1150

Ross Baumann

ROSS BAUMANN, CHAIRMAN
Ida County Soil Conservation
District