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Fayette SWCD Annual Report

The Grannis Creek Watershed Project

by **Royce Bowman**
Project Coordinator

My wife Laura and I graduated from Upper Iowa University in May of



Royce Bowman is the Grannis Creek Watershed Project Coordinator.

Grannis Creek is currently the focus of a watershed project aimed at improving the water quality of this popular trout stream. During the three year period of the grant, cost share dollars are made available to landowners and producers in the watershed to implement smart conservation practices that will reduce the amount of sediment and nutrients being delivered to the stream.

Grannis Creek is a tributary of the Volga River located in the eastern portion of Fayette County. Grannis is labeled as one of northeast Iowa's 25 highest priority cold water streams. The designation originates from the Northeast Iowa Rivers Basin Study conducted by the NRCS in 1986. The Iowa DNR lists Grannis Creek as a class B cold water HQR (high quality resource) stream. This designation means Grannis Creek has, "exceptional recreational and ecological importance". Cold water trout streams like Grannis are truly unique and fragile habitats.

The Fayette SWCD hired Mike Henderson in 2001 to write the initial grant proposal. After receiving approval for funding, Henderson's hard work as the coordinator shifted the Grannis Creek Watershed Project into high gear. Mike Henderson has since moved on to Allamakee County filling an NRCS position and I was hired as the new watershed project coordinator.

2002. I received a Bachelor of Science degree majoring in conservation management. Laura currently teaches high-school english at MFL MarMac School. We live near Wadena and my love of hunting, fishing and the outdoors will not likely allow me to ever leave this beautiful area.

As the new project coordinator, my transition into the position has been made easy with all the great help of the SWCD and NRCS staff as well as the great landowners and operators utilizing the project funding. The project is approaching the halfway mark toward its completion and there has been a lot of interest and action taken within the watershed.

The Claassen's own property on Grannis Creek and initiated a project that stabilized 1900' of eroding streambank and incorporated 28 lunger bankhides for trout habitat. The project received assistance from the DNR because the Claassen's allow public fishing access to the stream on their property.

Levern Thyer constructed a grade stabilization structure (pond) at 75% cost share on one of his farms in the watershed. Levern has shown interest in many of the practices offered through the watershed project including water and sediment control basins, filter strips, buffer strips, pasture management, exclusion fencing and tree planting. Thyer is also currently exploring his

options for improving storage and handling of animal waste on his dairy farm while the project cost share dollars are available.

Pat Rochford operates on the Gladys Anderson farm located in the watershed. Pat has agreed to no-till on the farm and is also enrolled in the nutrient management program. The Anderson farm had 4200' of terraces constructed and nearly 10 acres of waterways seeded down. Ron Seedorf, farm manager, and Pat have expressed interest in the construction of another waterway in the near future.

Jack Frey and Jon Sickelka, farm manager for Janet Hertz Trust, have signed up for 22 acres of CRP contour buffer strips that span two farms operated by Jack Frey. Jack has signed up for the nutrient management program also. Contour buffer strips applied within the Grannis watershed have an additional \$100/acre incentive through the project funding. The Hertz farm will receive a filter strip and two riparian tree plantings on marginal pasture in the near future.

Vernon and Rayner Hoffman are planning to build a pond next spring and they have also completed 2 water and sediment control structures in the watershed.

The Jellings have a large water and sediment control structure project planned within the watershed and have also agreed to no-till more than 200 acres of cropped land.

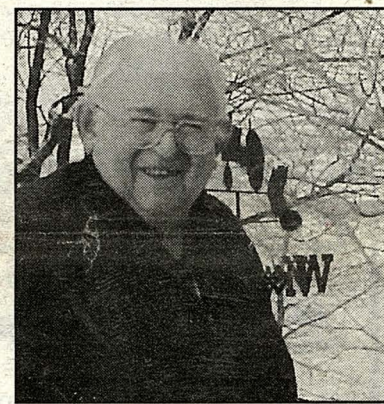
A few other producers have expressed interest in projects like constructing terraces and ponds. I try and let them know the opportunity to complete these types of projects at 75% cost share rate won't last forever, the percent of cost share probably will never be better, and when the project is over unused dollars will be recalled.

Grannis Creek pumps an estimated \$180,000 into the local economy each year when anglers visit from near and far. The 1996 Trout Angler Survey showed that the stream received more than 9000 annual fishing trips. The unique and fragile cold water streams in Fayette County like Grannis Creek need protection and enhancement.

Water quality effects all of us, not just trout. With the cooperative efforts of landowners and producers, we can correct the wrongs that have occurred over the years and delay or prevent restrictive environmental regulations from being passed and enforced.

Schmelzers grassland conservationists in Volga Lake Watershed

By **LaVonne Koch**
Soil Conservation Technician



Jim Schmelzer farms southeast of West Union in Fayette County. He is a grassland conservationist in the Volga Lake Watershed.

Jim and Virginia Schmelzer purchased 159 acres in 1965 east of West Union. Cropland totals 130 acres and 27 acres of timberland. Their four children enjoyed being raised on the farm. They are now blessed with four grandchildren. They started farming by milking 14 to 18 dairy cows, raising 250 to 300 swine, farrow to finish, and also raised chickens from which they sold eggs.

Jim and Virginia have always been concerned about soil erosion from his farm entering the Volga Lake. When Jim purchased the

farm from his parents, no more than 50 acres of corn had been planted a year on these acres. On the top of the hill, 4 acres of beans were planted, in which he called a college fund. During these years, Jim had the Soil Conservation Service lay out contours and proposed terraces to prevent soil erosion. He left the cropland in grass because the cost and lay out were not feasible in the type of topography. When the Volga Lake Project began, Jim had his farm in grass reducing the soil loss to lower levels.

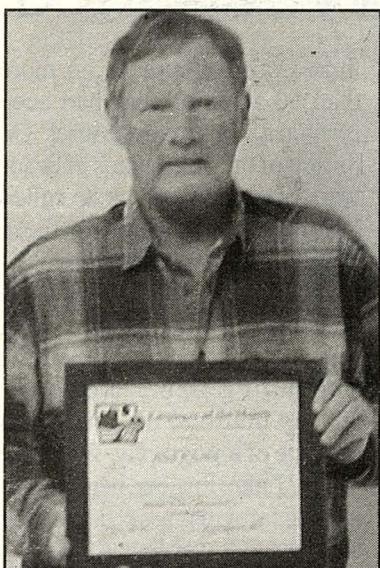
In 1968, Jim took an off the farm job, working at Landas Fertilizer as bookkeeper and in 1970 started working at the Post Office. He switched his farming to 45 to 50 beef cows, calves, and grass. Jim retired from the Post Office in 1992 and kept farming with beef cows, calves and grass. In 2000, Jim retired from farming by selling the cows and calves and leaving the farm in grass.

The goal that Jim has for the farm is to maintain grass as a protective cover. He also plans to improve the quality of forage by interseeding legumes into the existing grass. The farm is organic and is under the best conservation program by growing grass.

The Grannis Creek Watershed Project is supported in part or in total by the Iowa Department of Agriculture and Land Stewardship, Division of Soil Conservation, through funds of the Watershed Protection Fund and by the Iowa Department of Natural Resources through a grant from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency under the Federal Non-Point Source Management Program (Section 319 of the Clean Water Act). Technical assistance is provided by the U.S. Department of Agriculture, Natural Resources Conservation Service. All programs and services are offered on a nondiscriminatory basis, without regard to race, color, national origin, religion, sex, age, marital status, or handicap.



The Fayette County Soil and Water Conservation District Commissioners are pictured above. Front row, from left- Will Ogle, assistant commissioner, Joyce Trotter, Joe Wingert, assistant commissioner, and Paul Nuss. In back- Bill Bennett, John Grafenberg, Dick Jensen, and Rod Marlatt, assistant commissioner. Absent: Deb Dessel and Judy Bennett.



Alan Crowe was awarded IDALS-DSC (Division of Soil Conservation) Employee of the Month for October 2002. Alan was recognized for his accomplishments in planning and applying grassed waterways in Fayette County. CRP waterways have increased tremendously in recent years.

Thank you!

The Fayette County Soil and Water Conservation District would like to say "Thank You" to all the cooperators in the county who have refrained from tilling soybean ground this fall. By not working up soybean ground in the fall, soil erosion in the county has been greatly reduced. The number of fall tilled soybean acres has decreased from last year.

Studies show that there is no economic advantage or benefit of doing fall tillage on soybean ground. We'd like to ask all of those who do this to please stop. By discontinuing this practice, you will not only be benefiting the environment, but also saving yourself fuel cost and time.

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Excellent in the field - and on the farm

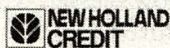
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Encouraging trout population trends in Ensign Hollow

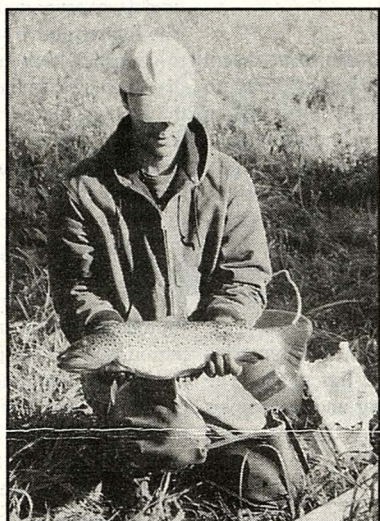
By Eric Palas
Ensign Hollow
Project Coordinator

The quality of a stream is the reflection of its watershed. In Iowa, less than 15 of the 106 coldwater streams consistently support naturally reproducing populations of trout. Coldwater stream resources are limited in number and worthy of our protection. They can be used, to a degree, as indicators of the overall health of available groundwater.

Ensign and Hewett Creeks, in southeast Fayette and southwest Clayton counties, comprise the two distinct streams that are commonly referred to as Ensign Hollow. Ensign Creek, flowing east from the spring at Thomasville, has historically supported natural reproduction of brown trout. Natural reproduction has never been documented in Hewett Creek below the confluence with Ensign Creek.

Sediment is the major cause of trout habitat damage. To ensure successful reproduction, a stream must be free of silt with a steady temperature. Silt from eroding fields and streambanks fills pools and reduces the overhead cover where trout live. Trout also depend on insects for food. Sediment smothers the rocky habitat required to produce their insect foods and prevents them from spawning and reproducing.

Trout like cool water temperatures. Eroding sediment has the long-term result of causing shallow stream channels that are easily warmed by the sun. Cold groundwater spring flows are essential to support trout, especially during periods of drought. Stream quality can be improved naturally, in part, by controlling upland erosion. The conservation practices that are utilized today, (such as residue management, contouring, buffer strips, and terraces) have the common goal of holding water where it falls. Controlling surface runoff reduces delivery of soil and



Eric Palas displays a 20" brown trout caught in Hewett Creek during the population assessment in 1999.

nutrients to a stream, and allows water to cool as it is filtered through the groundwater system.

The Ensign Hollow II Watershed Project was an effort to demonstrate how people can voluntarily work together to create water quality improvements. Since 1999, a wide variety of conservation practices have been implemented and utilized by landowners and farm operators in the 6,000-acre watershed. The work complemented an earlier project completed on the Ensign Creek portion of the watershed (700 acres) from 1991-1994. A variety of practices were completed:

- 22,820 feet of Terraces
- 12 Water & Sediment Control Basins
- 3 Grade Stabilization Structures
- 40 acres of Contour Buffer Strips
- 685 feet of Streambank Protection
- 281 acres of Timber Stand Improvement

- 64 acres of Tree Planting
- 225 acres of Pasture Improvement
- 6,700 feet of Resource Protection Fencing
- 11,500 feet of Grassed Waterways
- 2 Animal Waste Management Systems
- 80 acres of Wildlife Habitat Management

The watershed projects coincided with other important efforts to improve the streams. In 1991, Ensign Hollow was designated as a special regulation fishing area. All trout caught must be immediately released alive and possession of trout is prohibited. Anglers are required to use artificial lures only. The Iowa Department of Natural Resources and the Hawkeye Fly Fishing Association also completed extensive streambank protection and trout habitat improvement work on 15 sites along the state owned portion of Hewett Creek in 1992.

The impact on the trout populations has been encouraging. On one particular stretch of Ensign Creek, observed trout numbers increased from 3 in 1991 to 618 in 1999. The 1999 assessment also led to the discovery of the natural reproduction of rainbow trout in Ensign Creek, making it one of only four streams in Iowa where this has been documented. In 2002, a large number of trout fingerlings (<4" in size) were sampled in Hewett Creek, indicating that there may have been some natural reproduction of brown trout.

It is difficult to determine what the trout population has responded to the most. The catch and release regulation, the habitat improvement work, and the efforts of landowners to protect the streams have all had a positive effect. What becomes obvious is that there is a delicate balance between crop and livestock production and the impacts on our natural resources; and that the conservation practices that we implement today can have a huge influence on the future of our stream resources.



The NRCS staff – Front, from the left, Lori Kohlmeier, state secretary; Angie Freilinger, soil conservationist; LaVonne Koch, soil conservation technician. In back, Royce Bowman, Grannis Creek Coordinator; Jerry Muff, DC; Tom Sperflage, Upper Maquoketa Coordinator. Not pictured are district employee Joe Wingert and state technician Alan Crowe.

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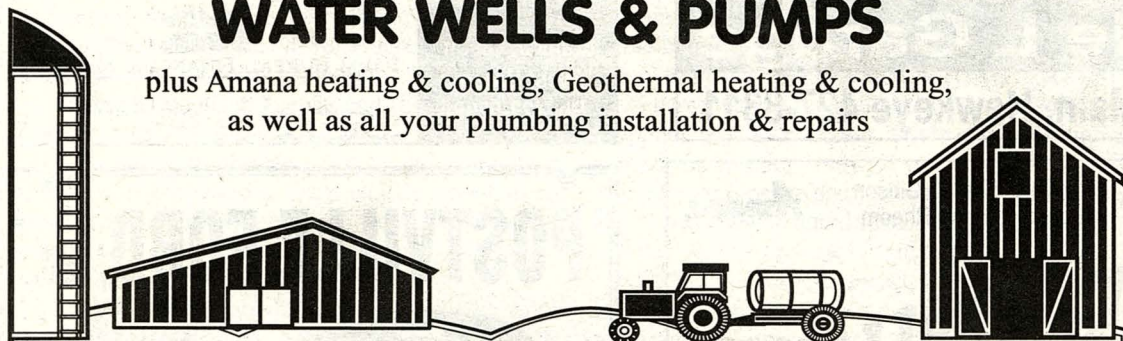
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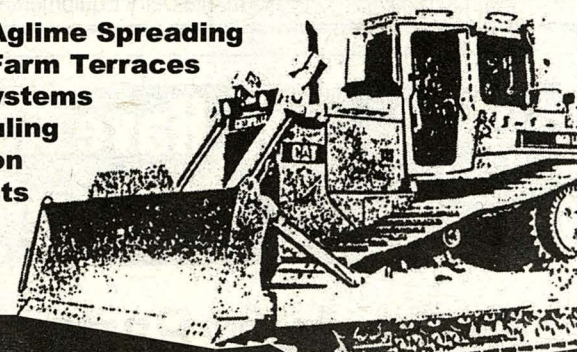
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Terry Szabo, President

Reduced N rates perform well in high-yielding season

Record corn yields were harvested from nitrogen, phosphorus and manure management demonstrations hosted by Maquoketa River watershed producers during crop year 2002.

The greatest surprise was the 200 bushel-per-acre average yield from the conservative 60 pounds of nitrogen (N) per acre application rate on seven small-plot corn-following-soybean demonstrations. Average yields on these plots ranged from 206 to 215 bushels per acre with N rates of 90, 120 and 150 pounds of N per acre.

Over the past few years, the trend has been to increase soybean acres in the Maquoketa River Watershed and producers observe that a reduced amount of N is needed for corn following soybeans in the conventional rotation.

That's an added benefit for growers who included soybeans to their rotation primarily in response to the farm program and commodity prices, and to break the weed, insect and disease cycles associated with continuous corn production.

During the last three crop seasons, 16 Maquoketa River Watershed producers have hosted small-plot, various-rate N and phosphorus (P) demonstrations of their farms. These corn-following-soybean demonstrations were fertilized with N rates of zero (check), 30, 60, 90, 120 and 150 pounds per acre. These sites also had replicated treatments of P2 O5 at zero, 46 (crop removal rate) and 92 pounds per acre (two-year crop removal rate).

Demonstrations in the Arlington and Preston areas had treatment averages that topped 200 bushels per acre. Figure 1 shows the average yields for each of the N

treatment rates across the 16 sites.

The average return to dollars spent for N fertilizer, priced at 20 cents per pound, and corn at \$2.00 and \$2.40 per bushel is shown in figure 2. The best return to N fertilizer was the 120 pounds N per acre in the high-yield 2002 crop year. Demonstrations conducted in 2000 and 2001 showed 90 pounds N per acre to be the most profitable rate. Above the rate, there was no additional return on the N investment.

Residual nitrate-N in the cornstalks following corn maturity was measured for all N treatments as shown in figure 3. The check, 30, 60, and 90 pounds N per acre treatments did not have enough N available to optimize corn production. Both the 120 and 150 pounds N per acre rates were within the optimum range of 700 to 2,000 parts per million (ppm).

There has been no yield response to the one and two-year crop removal rates of added P during the three years of demonstrations, as shown in figure 4. Again, the cost of this added P was significantly greater than the income from the additional corn yields, as shown in figure 5.

Iowa State University recommends fertilizing with P when soil tests fall below the high range (less than 21 ppm P), with an option to use a low rate of P in starter fertilizer when P tests are in the high soil test range.

Maquoketa Watershed Project staff wish to thank these producers for hosting the demonstrations: Bill Dallenbach and Larry Hiemes, Arlington; Mike and Russell Streeper, Onslow; Gene Grant and Mark Bormann, Preston; Warren Moeller, Miles; and Rich Feddersen, Andover.

Upper Maquoketa River Water Quality Project completes three years of sampling

By Tom Sperflage
Environmental Specialist

The Upper Maquoketa River is a cold water trout stream that runs through the southeast corner of Fayette County, to Backbone Lake, and eventually, the Mississippi River. As a natural resource, the cold water trout fishery is important to the local economy.... approximately \$1.6 million is annually generated because of the fishing opportunities the river provides.

The Fayette, Clayton, Delaware and Buchanan SWCD's, and the Headwaters Council, are hosting a water quality project on the 40,000 acre Upper Maquoketa watershed that starts in Arlington. One major goal of the project is to substantially reduce sediment and nutrient loading to the river.

To determine a baseline or starting point, three years of daily water sampling was conducted by ISU-Extension. The sampling cost approximately \$250,000 per year, and the samples were analyzed at the lab on campus in Ames. The following chart will describe the results.

Sediment	1999	2000	2001
	7,834 tons (avg=391#/ac)	11,902 tons (avg=594#/ac)	5,811 tons (avg=290#/ac)
Nitrogen	1999	2000	2001
	793 tons (avg=39.6#/ac)	741 tons (avg=37#/ac)	725 tons (avg=36.2#/ac)
Phosphorus	1999	2000	2001
	18 tons (avg=.9#/ac)	22 tons (avg=1.1#/ac)	19 tons (avg=.95#/ac)

These figures are what was actually delivered or transported through the sample station just north of Backbone Lake, therefore it measured the whole 40,000 acre watershed. What was delivered is always less than what originated in the beginning. It's just like our paycheck, we never get the full amount.

There are several interesting points to be made about the sampling information. In the late 1990s the Friends of Backbone Lake club sponsored the dredging of Backbone Lake. At that

time it was estimated around 150,000 tons of spoil was removed. The figures above suggest that nearly 26,000 tons of soil was re-deposited back in the lake for the three year time period. At that rate, what is the frequency of re-filling? Again, this was the amount that was transported or delivered — the amount was even greater at a field level. The average per acre figure represents all acres in the 40,000 acre watershed, whether those acres were the roof of Starmont Schools, the crop field down the road or the paved (graveled) roads.

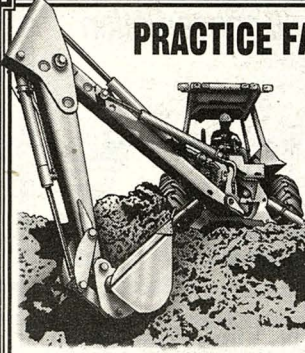
The nitrogen figures should be an eye opener as the tonnage figures are tremendous. The data suggest the average acre lost over 35# of nitrogen for each year of the three year period. If the total amount of nitrogen lost is summed up over the sampling period, something like 2,259 tons of product was transported through the sampling station. The dollar value of this amount of product (assuming \$.14 per pound, similar to an anhydrous price) is roughly \$632,000. Even if half of the lost nitrogen is attributed to agriculture, over 1,129 tons of product valued at \$316,000 was wasted.

The phosphorus figures, in comparison to the nitrogen are substantially less, however the magnitude of the problem is just as concerning, if not worse. It doesn't take very much phosphorus to seriously degrade water quality. It's a case of too much being too much. The total amount of phosphorus product delivered through the sampling station during the sampling period was nearly 60 tons. The dollar value for this lost product (assuming \$.29 per pound, similar to a DAP formulation) is roughly \$34,000.

While it is not necessarily easy, the cost of lost materials can be quantified. Can our landscape, economy (personal, local, state and national), society and environment stand these kind of losses? The question is debatable. Conserving and protecting natural resources depends on all of us doing the little things that add up to big things.

A wise man once said "we do not inherit any land from our Fathers, we only borrow it from our children."

The Upper Maquoketa River Water Quality project is supported in part or in total by the Iowa Department of Agriculture and Land Stewardship, Division of Soil Conservation, through funds of the Water Protection Fund and, by the Iowa Department of Natural Resources through a grant from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency under the Federal Nonpoint Source Management Program (Section 319 of the Clean Water Act). Technical assistance is provided by the U.S. Department of Agriculture, Natural Resources Conservation Service. All programs and services are offered on a nondiscriminatory basis, without regard to race, color, national origin, religion, sex, age, marital status, or handicap. The publication of this document has been funded in part by the Division of Soil Conservation, Iowa Department of Agriculture and Land Stewardship, and by the Iowa Department of Natural Resources through a grant from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency under the Federal Nonpoint Source Management Program (Section 319 of the Clean Water Act).



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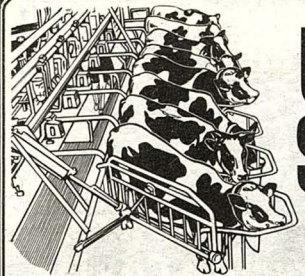
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Area corn growers evaluate nitrogen management

Fayette, IA — Ten corn growers in Fayette and Clayton counties have taken the nitrogen application rate question to their own fields. They joined 40 southern Minnesota growers in a crop year 2002 nitrogen (N) management study that has the goal of farmers doing their own on-farm data collection combined with pooled data to decide the optimum economic N rate for corn production.

Cooperators, with assistance from Iowa State University Extension Maquoketa Watershed staff, applied N rates of 0, 60, 90, 120 and 150 pounds per acre in Global Positioning System (GPS) geo-referenced blocks within 50-acre fields that had soybean grown the previous year. At harvest, they used GPS yield monitor-equipped combines to collect yield data for each N treatment. Geographic Information Systems soil maps and the cooperators' harvest data will be combined to determine the economic optimum N rate for soil types represented in the fields.

Figure 1 shows the average yield from the N application rates on 10 northeast Iowa farms. Residual nitrate N (NO₃-N) in the lower cornstalk after plant maturity is an additional indicator of N management efficiency and profitability of various N application rates, shown in figure 2. The optimum range for post-maturity NO₃-N in the lower cornstalk is 700 to 2,000 parts per million.

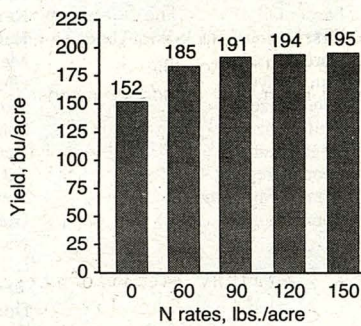


Figure 1. Ten-site average corn yields, field-scale N demonstrations, crop year 2002.

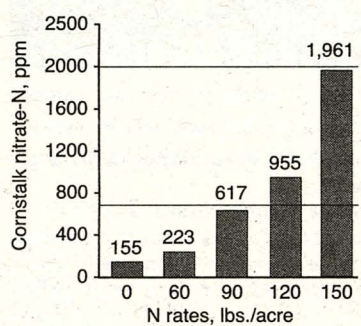


Figure 2. Ten-site average cornstalk nitrate-N, field-scale N demonstration sites, CY 2002. Optimum range is 700-2,000 ppm.

Staff at the University of Minnesota Sustainable Agriculture computer center are analyzing yield data from 30 soil types on the 10 Iowa farms and additional data from soil types on Minnesota farms to determine the optimum N rate for each

soil type. These findings are projected to be available early in March.

Funding for yield loss and project management was coordinated through the Center for Agricultural Partnerships (CAP) in Asheville, N. C., and Blue Earth Consulting, Lake Crystal, Minn. Providing financial support were the Shell Marine Habitat Program, the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation in partnership with the Shell Oil Co., the Environmental Protection Agency, the McKnight Foundation and CAP.

The Iowa Corn Growers Association recently allocated funding to continue in 2003 the on-farm producer-led demonstrations.

In 2003 and beyond, Corn Grower members and 2002 cooperators wish to investigate some additional questions, including the appropriate N rate following a record per-acre yield for corn following corn and corn following soybeans; the environmental and economic impacts of fall versus spring N application and N inhibitors used in N management; and the N value and yield impact of manure applied at various rates.

Field-scale N management cooperators in 2002 were Gary Soules, Tim and Jim Recker, Rand-Rod Farms, Collin Jensen, C&J Farms, Rick Cole, Tim and Jim Burrack, Verle Jones, Loran Steinlage and Nolan Knight.

What's better—Livestock manure or commercial fertilizer?

By Dan Burkhardt
Fayette County Extension
Education Director

Manure application agreements are required by Iowa environmental regulations before large livestock facilities can be built or expanded. As larger livestock operations become more numerous in Fayette County, more crop acres will be needed for manure application.

As a result, many crop farmers have the opportunity to replace some or all of their commercial fertilizer needs with livestock manure. The cost to the crop farmer varies with the individual agreement. Some agreements provide the manure at no cost for the nutrients and application. Most charge for application costs and still others charge for the fertilizer nutrients and the cost of application.

No matter what agreement a crop farmer might be involved with, they need to know exactly what they are getting. Book values are averages from the analysis of hundreds of samples. They might or might not be even close to your actual values.

The only way to know for sure is to send a manure sample to one of several independent testing labs for analysis. When you get your analysis back, make sure you know what the values for N, P and K are on a wet basis. You will have the pounds of N, P₂O₅ and K₂O per ton or per 1000 gallons. It is important that you know what the moisture level is so you can adjust application rates and manure credits corrected for water content.

Another uncertainty of manure application is uniformity of application. It may be necessary to apply commercial fertilizer in field corners or portions of odd shaped fields due to application equipment size. Use of solid manure may be limited by the tons per acre equipment can apply while over application by liquid application equipment can lead to crop growth problems and violation of Iowa's Manure Law.

If you are basing your application rate on crop Nitrogen requirements, how the manure is applied is also very important. If the manure is injected as a liquid, the N loss by volatilization could be as low as 2 percent. If it is applied on the soil surface and not covered, losses could be 25 percent and odor could be an issue. If solid manure is applied without covering, losses can be as high as 30 percent. In addition, only 65 percent of the N will be available to crops the first year with solid poultry manure and 85 percent with liquid swine manure. Only 35 percent will be available from solid cattle manure.

So, what's better—livestock manure or commercial fertilizer? If applied uniformly at a rate equal to crop requirements and proper credits are taken, livestock manure can meet a crop farmer's nutrient needs. However, you must know the manure nutrient analysis, remember to adjust for moisture content and for the amount of nutrients available to the crop. For more detailed information contact the Fayette County Extension Office in Fayette at 563-425-3331 or email dburk@iastate.edu with questions.

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The Fayette SWCD is grateful for the contributions made to the SWCD in 2002. As a result of state budget cuts to the SWCD IM funds (funds allocated to the SWCD to help incur district commissioner and office expenses), it has become necessary for the Fayette SWCD to absorb the cost of some of these otherwise covered expenses.

The District Commissioners and office staff work to educate and inform the public of the programs available to them. It is necessary to have the materials and financial support necessary to promote conservation and to assist our landowners, operators, teachers, students, churches, and citizens of Fayette County in their efforts to learn more about and prosper from our natural resources.

Below you will find names of individuals and businesses of Fayette County and beyond who have made our programs possible. Please acknowledge these people for their contributions. Through continued conservation efforts, we can all make a difference.

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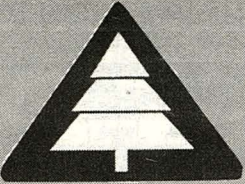
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CENEX LAND O LAKES CENEX

SUMMARY: 3-YEAR CORN PLANTING DEPTH STUDY, 2000 - 2002

Gilbertson Conservation Park, Elgin, IA

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Soil type: Dorchester silt loam, 0 to 2% slope, 2 to 3% organic matter, CSR 85.

Soil test, 2001:	pH	P, ppm	K, ppm	Zn, ppm
North plot	7.9	39 (VH)	138 (Opt)	1.2 (H)
Center plot	7.8	56 (VH)	135 (Opt)	1.1 (H)
South plot	7.9	52 (VH)	147 (Opt)	1.0 (H)

Statistical design: Randomized complete block with 3 replications. Each research plot is about 5 acres. Individual treatments ranged in size from 0.2 to 0.3 acre.

Crop Rotation: Continuous corn since 1988.

Tillage: Fall chisel plow, planted zone-till.

Planting dates: April 28, 2000; April 27, 2001; April 26, 2002.

Soil insecticide: Regent, 2000; Force, 2001; Aztec, 2002. All provided acceptable control.

Herbicide: Roundup applied POST, one-pass in 2000 & 2001, two-pass in 2002.

Fertilizer: 150 lb/A N broadcast preplant as 28% (UAN) + 150 lb/A 10-26-26 starter.

Hybrid: DeKalb 493 BtRR, 2000; DeKalb 5333 RR, 2001; Dekalb C53-34 RR, 2002.

Spring climate:	Year	Soil moisture	Growing degree days
	2000	below normal	slightly above normal
	2001	above normal	slightly below normal
	2002	slightly below normal	below normal

PLANTING DEPTH STUDY RESULTS

Harvested on October 21, 2000

Treatment	Yield, bu/ac. adjusted to 15.5% moisture	Grain harvest moisture, %
1-inch depth	124 a	14.0 a
1.75-inch depth	147 b	13.5 c
2.5-inch depth	151 b	13.8 b
LSD 0.05	8	0.2

Treatments with the same letter are not significantly different from each other.

Harvested on November 7, 2001

Treatment	Yield, bu/ac. adjusted to 15.5% moisture	Grain harvest moisture, %
1-inch depth	181 a	13.6 b
1.5-inch depth	184 a	13.2 a
2.0-inch depth	181 a	13.6 b
2.5-inch depth	181 a	14.6 c
LSD 0.05	5	0.4

Treatments with the same letter are not significantly different from each other.

Harvested on October 31, 2002.

Treatment	Yield, bu/ac. adjusted to 15.5% moisture	Grain harvest moisture, %
1.0-inch depth	204 a	17.4 a
1.5-inch depth	215 b	17.4 a
2.0-inch depth	212 b	17.3 a
2.5-inch depth	204 a	17.2 a
LSD 0.05	4	0.3

Treatments with the same letter are not significantly different from each other.

Conclusion / Discussion:

The various spring climates affected initial seedling development differently. The dry spring in 2000 was detrimental to shallow seed placement, while the wet spring in 2001 had little affect on the shallow seed placement, but slightly delayed maturity and dry-down for the deepest seed placement. In 2002, the cold spring had a negative affect on both the shallow and deep seed placement. This was visible in reduced stand counts for these treatments compared to the middle-range seed depths. Overall, and consistent with other research, it is best to plant corn at about 1.75 inches deep, plus or minus a little.

Thanks to the following cooperators to make these research plots possible:

Fayette County Conservation Board for use of the land.
Ben Hunsburger for tillage, planting, and harvesting field work.
Chris Strong, NE Iowa Cooperative and Chuck Kolbet, DeKalb/Asgrow for the seed & weigh wagon.
Northeast Iowa Cooperatives for application of the nitrogen and herbicide.
Mark Thompson, Monsanto, for the Roundup Herbicide
Rick Boos, Adventis, for the Regent Insecticide

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Forestry Field Day	576.00
Grannis Reimbursement	208.40
DALS Buffer Option 1	10,000.00
ISU Nitrogen Study	750.00
Miscellaneous Income	149.00

Expenses	
Money Market Transfers to Checking	52,050.00
Supporter Club	2,301.50
Tree Sales	6,870.62
Upper Maquoketa Reimbursement	647.46
Total Income	\$ 84,347.65

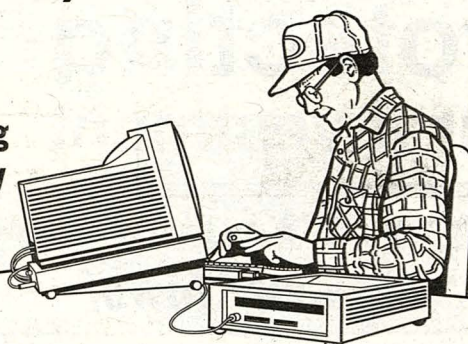
IM Commissioner Expense	1,520.53
IM Office Expense	2,024.10
ATV	8,663.24
Donations	200.00
Education	5,788.08
Fabric Machine Expense	5,039.70
Gifts Given	55.65
GPS	5,257.70
Grannis Creek Expense	380.36
Houg Education Farm	14,753.92
Meeting Expense	1,473.60
Memorials	44.26
Office Supplies	5,243.43
Payroll	23,907.00
Sales Tax	557.77
Trees	7,268.54
Upper Maquoketa Expense	1,069.68
Total Expenses	\$83,247.56
Ending Balance on 06-30-02	\$ 1,100.09

Savings	
Beginning Balance on 07-01-01	\$ 647.04
Interest Earned	13.17
Ending Balance on 06-30-02	\$ 660.21

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From left: Jerry Burrack, Glenda Campbell, and C.J. Lensing

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GILBERTSON CONSERVATION EDUCATION AREA

Gilbertson Park, Elgin, IA

Research and Demonstration Results, 2002

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Soil type: Dorchester silt loam, 0 to 2% slope, 2 to 3% organic matter, CSR 85.

Soil test, 2001:	pH	P, ppm	K, ppm	Zn, ppm
North plot	7.9	39 (VH)	138 (Opt)	1.2 (H)
Center plot	7.8	56 (VH)	135 (Opt)	1.1 (H)
South plot	7.9	52 (VH)	147 (Opt)	1.0 (H)

Statistical design: Randomized complete block with 3 replications. Each research plot is about 5 acres. Individual treatments ranged in size from 0.2 to 0.3 acre.

Planting date: April 26.

Corn hybrid: DeKalb C53-34RR.

Fertilizer: 150 lbs N per acre as 28% applied April 24.

Herbicide: Roundup applied last week of May and third week of June.

Insecticide: Aztec applied T-band at planting.

2002 NORTH PLOT – Potassium Fertilizer Fall Banding Study

Cropping system: Continuous corn, no-till, zone-till planter.

Treatments: Fall 2001, deep band knife-in 80 lbs/ac. KCl (0-0-60), 48 lbs/ac actual K₂O.
Fall 2001, deep band knife without potassium fertilizer (Check with knife).
Fall 2001, surface band 80 lbs/ac. KCl (0-0-60), 48 lbs/ac actual K₂O.
Check, no potassium fertilizer or knife activity.

Results: Harvested on October 31, 2002.

Treatment	Yield, bu/ac. adjusted to 15.5% moisture	Grain harvest moisture, %
Deep band knife with K	206 a	17.7 a
Deep band knife, no K	205 a	17.7 a
Surface band K, no knife	207 a	17.9 ab
No K, no knife	201 b	18.1 b
LSD 0.05	4	0.3

Treatments with the same letter are not significantly different from each other.

Conclusion:

With the K soil test at "Optimum", the standard recommendation is to apply crop removal rates. The K fertilization apparently gave a small crop response, although the knife action in fall without K gave a similar response. Fall knife activity (rippers, anhydrous, etc.) in no-till operations sometimes help with soil warm-up during cooler spring weather patterns. The spring of 2002 was cooler than normal.

Soil Conservation Report • February 2003

2002 CENTER PLOT – Starter Fertilizer Study

Cropping system: Continuous corn, no-till, zone-till planter.

Treatments: Check, no starter fertilizer.

Starter fertilizer, 20-0-0 lbs/ac.

Starter fertilizer, 20-50-0 lbs/ac.

Starter fertilizer, 20-50-50 lbs/ac.

Results: Harvested on October 31, 2002.

Treatment	Yield, bu/ac. adjusted to 15.5% moisture	Grain harvest moisture, %
Check	202 a	18.7 a
20-0-0	212 b	18.7 a
20-50-0	213 b	18.6 a
20-50-50	210 b	18.6 a
LSD 0.05	5	0.4

Treatments with the same letter are not significantly different from each other.

Conclusions:

Starter fertilizer had a positive affect on yield. The cooler than normal May weather may have influenced this. The response may have only been do to N in the starter. ISU research has shown an average yield response to starter, relative to P and K soil test levels of: 1.6% with a Very High soil test; 2.2% with a High soil test; 3.5% with an Optimum soil test, 11.8% with a Low soil test; 13.6% with a Very Low soil test. In this study, the P soil test level was Very High and the K soil test was Optimum. Other research has shown that an N-P starter or N-P-K starter tends to work better than just an N starter.

2002 SOUTH PLOT – Planting Depth Study

Cropping system: Continuous corn, fall chisel plowed, zone-till planter.

Treatments: Seed planted at 1.0, 1.5, 2.0, and 2.5-inch depths.

Results: Harvested on October 31, 2002.

Treatment	Yield, bu/ac. adjusted to 15.5% moisture	Grain harvest moisture, %
1.0-inch depth	204 a	17.4 a
1.5-inch depth	215 b	17.4 a
2.0-inch depth	212 b	17.3 a
2.5-inch depth	204 a	17.2 a
LSD 0.05	4	0.3

Treatments with the same letter are not significantly different from each other.

Conclusion:

Consistent with other research, it is best to plant corn at about 1.75 inches deep plus or minus a little.

Thanks to the following cooperators to make these research plots possible:

Fayette County Conservation Board for use of the land.
Ben Hunsburger for planting, harvesting and deep banding field work.
Chris Strong, NE Iowa Cooperative and Chuck Kolbet, DeKalb/Asgrow for the seed & weigh wagon.
Northeast Iowa Cooperatives for application of the nitrogen and herbicide.
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Tellins practice contour farming near Maynard



Dennis and Jeanie Tellin farm west of Maynard. In the background, the Tellins have contour buffer strips in the Conservation Reserve Program. The contour buffer strips reduce soil loss by slowing the velocity of water during a rainfall and act as habitat for the wildlife

Dennis and Jeanine Tellin started farming in 1974 west of Maynard. They have three children, two daughters and a son. Rhonda, married to Nick Cue, who lives in Oelwein with their daughter, Jane. Sarah, married to Scott Kendall, who lives in Charles City, with their son Devon and Raymond, who lives in Independence and works at Rowley Implement.

After seeing all the soil erosion that occurred after nine inches of rain on May 16th, 1999, we decided to put contour buffer strips and filter strips on the farm. The Fayette County NRCS office laid the plans out for us in the fall of 2000. In the spring, we applied the entire field with anhydrous and fertilizer. We worked the field with the field cultivator. Then Dennis planted corn in the twenty inch rows, following the contour, leaving the strips that needed to be seeded down, not planting but marking the strips with the marker so the strips would coexist with our planter. After the corn had started to spike, we worked the ground that needed to be seeded down. The strips were seeded to brome, red clover, and oats. The first year Dennis mowed the strips twice to help keep the weeds down. The contour buffer strips and filter strips are designed to hold soil in place, which is the result we hope to achieve with the strips.

Maquoketa River delivers substantial amounts of sediment to the Mississippi River

By Tom Sperflage
Environmental Specialist

Soil erosion and water quality affect all of us, directly and indirectly. Loss of soil from our crop fields reduces short and long term yields, tends to lower property value and rental rates, and degrades downstream natural (and other) resources like trout streams, lakes, road ditches, etc..

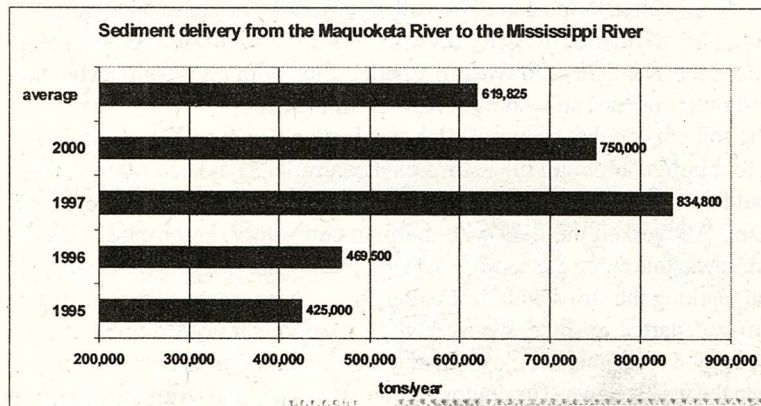
Soil loss is not the only factor in water quality. Other products like nutrients, bacteria, manure, pesticides, and even things like excessive heat can seriously harm water quality and/or the organisms living in that water. The Maquoketa River has been in the news quite a bit lately, particularly for recent flooding events in the Cascade and Maquoketa areas.

In the past several years the Maquoketa River has drawn a fair amount of attention from environmental agencies because, for lack of a better way to say it, the Maquoketa River as it hits the Mississippi, is the dirtiest river, for a river its size, that feeds the Mississippi. The graph below documents sediment delivery over a several year period. Sampling was conducted by USGS at the mouth of the Maquoketa.

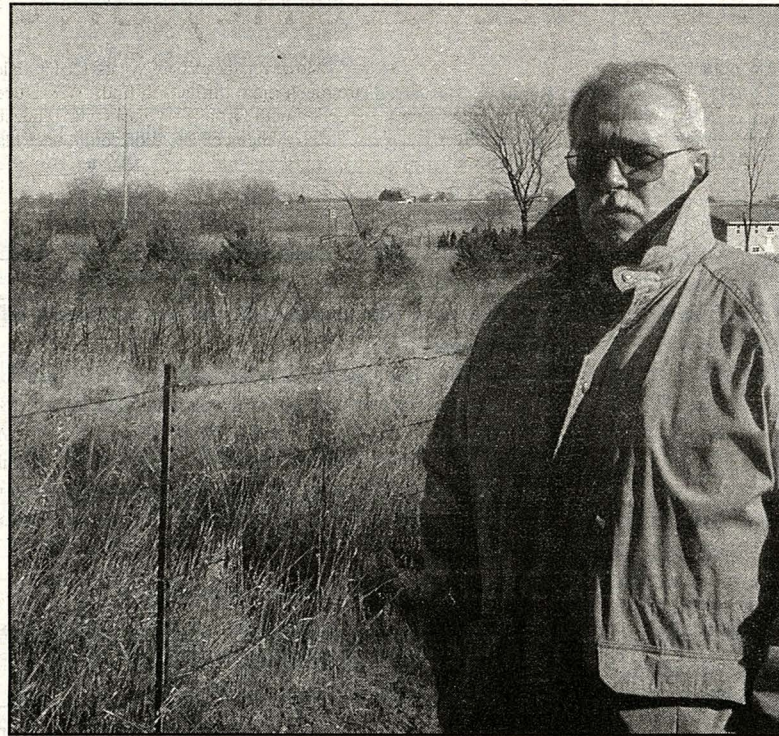
For comparison purposes, the Mississippi River from its point of origination in Minnesota to the confluence with the Maquoketa River, carries about 1,000,000 tons of sediment annually. The Maquoketa, on average, contributes another 62% to that amount — quite a dramatic increase.

As the sediment (and other contaminants) move down river, marina's, locks and dams, back water channels and other attractions become silted full and choked with floating mats of algae. Fish and other organisms can find it difficult to live and reproduce if stressful conditions exist for a long enough period.

Which brings us to the end of the Mississippi River, the Gulf of Mexico. Ultimately all that the River carries ends up here. We have all heard about the "dead zone" that has been present in the Gulf. The dead zone is an area of very low oxygen levels, due to heavy pollution loads. As a result, fish, shrimp, lobster, clams, etc. have to either tolerate the conditions, migrate away from them, or die. The Gulf of Mexico provides approximately 50% of all the seafood products consumed in the United States. As a result, economic impacts will be high if water quality cannot be improved.



Updegraffs receive Izaak Walton Windbreak Award



Jim Updegraff stands next to the six-acre windbreak that was planted seven years ago on his farmstead about two miles south of West Union. With a variety of bushes and evergreen trees, the windbreak provides cover for a variety of wildlife.

Providing cover for a wide range of animals, Jim Updegraff's six-acre windbreak was planted seven years ago after the farmstead's old windbreak became too mature to stop much wind.

Planted in the 1940s, the original windbreak is made up of mature ash, white pine, walnut, and box elder maple trees — most of which are too tall to slow the force of winds or gusts blowing toward the house. The trees were even too mature to provide cover for wildlife on the ground.

Jim and Sue Updegraff purchased the 20-acre farm about two miles south of West Union on Highway 150 in 1983.

"When we [moved in the windbreak] was terribly overgrown," Jim Updegraff said.

They cleared out the dead trees and the jungle of brush that had accumulated over the years and created a pasture for a couple of horses. Situated between the house and the new windbreak, the pasture includes many of the mature trees on the farm.

Seven years ago, he decided to put in the new windbreak and contacted the FCSWCD for their assistance. Conservation workers created the plan and put in the trees, he said.

Since the seedlings were put in the ground, the windbreak has grown virtually untouched, he said.

Updegraff said he has seen a lot of wildlife living in the windbreak since it was planted, despite its close proximity to the house. A den of foxes, at least one deer, several raccoons, and a variety of other animals live amongst the trees and bushes, he said.

While there are several evergreens in the windbreak, most of the trees are actually bushes, he said.

"The idea is the spruce break the wind and the bushes catch the snow," he said.

Nestled between the seventh and eighth farthest row of trees from the house in the nine-row windbreak, a 50-foot wide snow catch area is designed to help keep snow from drifting on the acreage.

The first row is made up of Red Osier Dogwoods followed by two rows of Black Hills Spruce trees. The fourth and fifth rows are made up of Scotch Pine and Red Cedar trees. Siberian Crabapples and Wild Plums make up rows six and seven respectively. Across the snow catch area are the remaining two sets of trees, another row of Red Osier Dogwoods and a row of High Bush Cranberries.

Interspersed with the bushes are wild grasses that provide excellent cover for wildlife, he said.

About six acres on the farm are devoted to the windbreak, four acres are taken up by buildings and developed areas, and the balance is seeded to alfalfa for hay for the couple's horses.

Jim Updegraff is a West Union attorney and in his free time, has enjoyed memberships with Pheasants Forever and Ducks Unlimited.

While Pheasants Forever partially funded the windbreak which provides habitat for a variety of animals, he said "the irony is, I've never seen a pheasant out there."

Jim and Sue have two daughters, both of whom are grown and are pursuing careers. Sue is an AEA consultant with Keystone in Elkader.

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IDNR and NRCS strengthen partnership

The Iowa Department of Natural Resources (IDNR) Wildlife Bureau and the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) have teamed together to provide more technical assistance in northeast Iowa. With significantly more opportunities for conservation with the 2002 Farm Bill, a Private Lands Biologist, Terry Hainfield, has been assigned to the NRCS Area Office in West Union. As a DNR Wildlife Bureau employee, Hainfield will be a member of the NRCS staff in West Union.

Partnering efforts for the protection and enhancement of Iowa's natural resources is not something new for these agencies. All across Iowa are examples of wetlands, prairies, and tree plantings that have IDNR and NRCS signatures of cooperation.

Primary responsibilities of Hainfield's position are planned to be:

- Provide biological training and technical support to 20 NRCS/ Soil and Water Conservation District (SWCD) field offices (from Mitchell to Tama to Jackson to Allamakee counties).
- Coordinate the NE Iowa DNR Wildlife Unit's private lands efforts (covering 25

counties).

- Act as a liaison with conservation organizations and other agencies to promote and increase private land natural resource protection (ex. Pheasants Forever, County Conservation Boards, SWCD, Iowa Natural Heritage Foundation, etc.).

- Assist landowners with habitat planning, establishment, and management.

The Wildlife Habitat Incentives Program (WHIP) is one of many programs slated for conservation on the landscape. If they qualify, landowners could receive 75 percent cost share for implementing practices such as planting native prairie, enhancing woodlands, and trout stream habitat restoration.

"The IDNR Private Lands Program is a great opportunity for landowners who would like better conservation on their land," Hainfield said. "Combining the IDNR Wildlife Bureau efforts with NRCS programs will, no doubt, help Iowa landowners in conserving Iowa's soil, water, woodlands, fish, and wildlife along with other natural resources."

Hay/soybean acreage trends in Fayette County affect erosion

By Jerry Muff
NRCS

When we first moved to Fayette County in 1980, I was impressed with the diversity of farm operations here, especially the eastern portion of the county. Contour stripcropped fields (alternating strips of row crops and forage crops) were not only effective conservation practices but were also scenic and unique features of Northeast Iowa. This seemed to be a great way to apply an effective conservation system just in the way a farmer planted his crops. Back then it was also common to see hay or oats established most anywhere but more typically on the steeper fields.

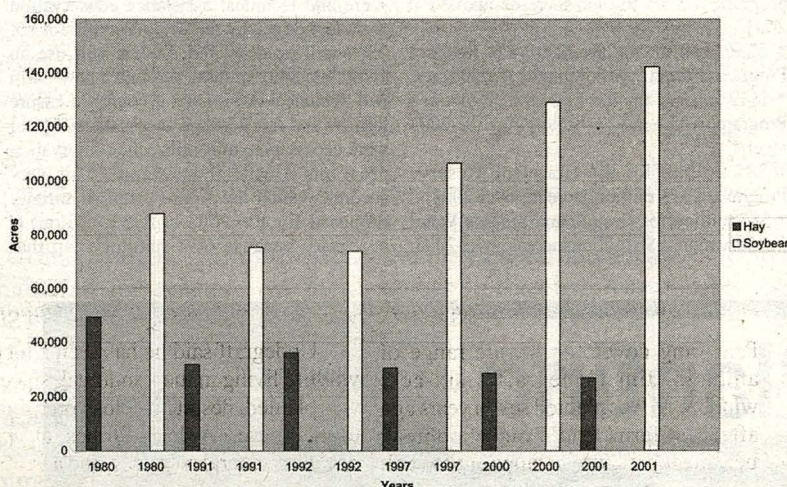
However, the past few years, the hayfields are much more difficult to find. We've been meeting with farmers regularly who request a revision of their conservation compliance plan to substitute soybeans for the hay they previously had in their plans. Many of these farmers are surprised to find that it is not all that simple. A corn-soybean rotation using a standard mulch tillage system has an erosion factor of 2.5 times that of a corn-corn-oats-hay rotation also using mulch tillage, so needless to say on the steeper slopes, additional conservation will be required to keep the field in compliance.

Now, in 2003, the contour stripcropped fields and large hayfields have become somewhat rare. Soybeans are commonly found

on sloping land where in the past, farmers would have never dreamed of raising soybeans on steep slopes. The illustration accompanying this article shows graphically, the comparison of soybean versus hay acreage. The prairie, or gently sloping portion of Fayette County has not changed in cropping that much because it has been intensively row cropped for over the past 20 years. Therefore, most of the increase in soybean acreage has been at the expense of hay and corn acreage in the hills which comprise roughly 40% of the county. The graph shows almost 100% increase in soybean acreage from 1992 to 2001 and only one-half of the acres of hay planted in 2001 compared to 1980.

As with many other modern agricultural trends occurring, not all of them are positive in a conservation sense. However, as we work with producers making the change to soybeans they seem to understand and accept that additional conservation measures are required to remain in compliance on their highly erodible fields. No-till farming, contouring, contour buffer strips or terraces are a few of the options available to producers making the change. Our field office staff is willing to assist producers in revising their conservation plan and we will also provide information on available incentive programs associated with these conservation practices. We also provide technical assistance in getting the practice(s) on the land.

Fayette County Crop Changes Over Time



CRP maintenance guidelines

- Seed and fertilizer requirements must be followed. No soil test is required for native prairie seeding. Soil tests are required within last three years from an FSA approved soil testing lab on some practices. Contact NRCS if you have questions.

- All areas must be accessible for maintenance and spot checks.

- Oats must be clipped at the time of seed head emergence. No permission is needed.

- Okay to clip or spray weeds at any time during establishment period (usually 2-3 years - this is required if there is weed pressure. Need to keep weeds from going to seed.

- Okay to clip or spray weeds after establishment period except from May 1st through August 1st (primary nesting season). Permission from COC and NRCS is required during this period.

- Noxious weeds must be controlled.
- Clipping or spraying for cosmetic purposes is not allowed.

- Food plots must provide a food source for wildlife during winter months each year of the CRP contract. Contact NRCS for a plan unless already in your CRP plan.

- Livestock exclusion is required. Some practices may be grazed with COC approval and 25% annual payment reduction.

- Manure application is not allowed on most CRP practices - contact NRCS for specifics.

- Travel patterns must be varied - dirt lane are not allowed.

- If all guidelines are not followed you potentially will have to pay back all monies received (cost-share and annual payments) plus interest and liquidated damages.

- Native Prairies - mow at 8" or higher. Periodic burning may be beneficial on native grass plantings. A prescribed burn plan is required with a minimum of two-year establishment.

- Grassed Waterways - can mow any time outside of primary nesting season if stated in your CRP plan. Some waterways do not require mowing - check your CRP plan.

- Tree/Shrub Plantings - weed control required until trees/shrubs are taller than competing vegetation. Cost-share is available for 2nd application of chemical for weed control (must be done within 24 months of planting).

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President Bush to propose record-level \$3.9 billion for conservation programs

Veneman Releases Proposed Rules for Environmental Quality Incentives Program

NASHVILLE, Tenn., Jan. 30, 2003—Agriculture Secretary Ann M. Veneman today announced that President Bush will propose a record \$3.9 billion, an increase of \$582 million over the FY 2003 level, for conservation programs to strengthen environmental stewardship on the nation's farmlands. The FY 2004 funding request is \$1.9 billion higher, or more than double the funding for these activities, when the Bush Administration came into office just two years ago. During an address to cattle producers and ranchers at the National Cattlemen's Beef Association annual convention, the Secretary also announced the release of proposed rules for the Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP).

"This Administration has worked hard to ensure strong environmental programs are available to our nation's farmers and ranchers," said Veneman. "Farmers and ranchers are the best stewards of the land and we will continue to ensure these programs are administered

effectively and in the best interest of producers and the environment."

Nearly \$3.5 billion of the President's record-level proposal will be used for financial assistance or other direct payments to farmers. Highlights of the budget include:

- * \$2 billion for the Conservation Reserve Program for rental and other costs on new and old acreage, an increase of approximately \$140 million over 2003;
- * \$850 million will be provided for the EQIP program, a \$255 million increase above FY 2003;
- * \$250 million for the Wetlands Reserve Program to enroll an additional 178,000 acres;
- * \$112 million for the Farmland Protection Program, which is \$27 million over the 2003 level;
- * \$85 million for the Grassland Reserve Program, a \$13 million increase over 2003;
- * \$51 million for Ground and Surface Water Conservation, a \$6 million increase over 2003;

* \$42 million for the Wildlife Habitat Incentives Program, an increase of \$16 million over 2003;

* \$19 million for the new Conservation Security Program on which an Advanced Notice of Proposed Rule (ANPR) is expected shortly; and

* \$8 million for water conservation and water quality enhancements in the Klamath Basin of Oregon and California.

This budget ensures that all of the cost-share and technical assistance conservation work authorized by the 2002 farm bill for FY 2004 will be delivered. USDA will use an additional \$432 million, through a new Farm Bill Technical Assistance account, to ensure farmers and ranchers can access the technical work necessary to fully utilize the conservation programs' financial assistance. This new account, which the Administration initially proposed for FY 2003 at \$333 million, is necessary because of a statutory cap that

restricts USDA's ability to pay for technical assistance from farm program funds.

"In the short time this Administration has been in office, we are more than doubling our investment in environmental and conservation programs that not only benefit farmers and ranchers, but communities throughout the country," said Veneman. "This record-level request illustrates the priority the President places on conserving natural resources by providing landowners the tools they need for private land management."

The Secretary also announced that the proposed rule for EQIP, reauthorized in the 2002 Farm Bill, is being released today for publication in the Federal Register for public comment. This will allow farmers and ranchers the ability to utilize program funding in the coming year.

Highlights of the revised EQIP proposal include a reduction in the amount of planning requirements needed to develop a contract; provides up to 90 percent cost share for limited resource and beginning producers; provides livestock producers with cost share assistance for waste storage facilities regardless of size, but must develop and implement a comprehensive nutrient management plan; allowance of producers to have more than one contract per tract at any given time; allocates 60 percent of EQIP funds towards livestock related practices; and, eliminates the program's dual administration by delegating EQIP to the Natural Resources Conservation Service.

"Conservation incentive programs for working lands, in combination with technical assistance, help reduce the regulatory burden on farmers and ranchers faced with air and water quality restrictions," Veneman said. "The team at USDA has worked to ensure these proposed rules are producer-friendly and will achieve the intended results of these programs."

Comments on the EQIP proposal will be accepted for 30 days after publication. Additional information on EQIP and other conservation programs is on the Web at <http://www.nrcs.usda.gov/>

During her remarks, Secretary Veneman also discussed other issues of importance to cattle producers, including animal disease protection programs, risk management tools, trade, food safety, country-of-origin labeling, and forest management. For a transcript of her remarks, as well as a summary of USDA's mid-term accomplishments, visit <http://www.usda.gov/>

Iowa Farm Bureau's FFA Environment First grant program

by Richard Jensen

I would like to share with you why I have undertaken my first attempt to write a grant request of \$2,000 from the Iowa Farm Bureau.

The Iowa Farm Bureau's FFA Environment First Grant Program seeks to promote and enhance educational programs related to the importance of improving our environment. If this grant is judged to be worthy it will mean that \$2,000 will be funded to the North Fayette High School FFA Chapter in West Union.

This money would be used to fund a series of "hands on the land" activities enabling FFA students to carry out soil, water, forest and human conservation practices on the 200 acre tract of land owned by the Fayette Soil and Water Conservation District (SWCD). This tract of land was willed to the Fayette SWCD by Ralph Houg to be used as an educational learning center. The biotic diversity of this land offers a multitude of opportunities to teach the ethics of land use.

Fewer children are raised and nurtured on the farm, and a healthy respect for the land has been ignored or eliminated. The net effect is that we are producing a generation of youth that are more or less aliens of their environment. This learning activity will encourage logic of stewardship of the land. The current teaching methods result in a land use ideology that dictates profit and plenty. We will teach a concept of land use ethics that obligates man to preserve and protect the lands beauty and diversity. This will be a wet feet, dirty hands effort that will transform students to think and behave with an ecological sound mind. Students will be embraced with nature by actively participating in pond and watershed management, tree planting, forestry management, stream bank stabilization, wildlife and fish habitat restoration, native vegetation planting, and creating recreational areas. The intimacy with nature that this work will involve will have a positive long lasting affect on the students and land.

The Fayette SWCD with several other conservation agencies will cooperatively set the agenda, priorities, monitor, and evaluate the project. By involving the vigor and vitality of the FFA, more conservation awareness can be finally achieved. This awareness will promote logic that our land should be loved and cherished because it gives definition and meaning to life not just economic benefits.

If this grant becomes a reality, the SWCD can not only continue the education field day for third grade students, but also add outdoor classrooms for high school students.

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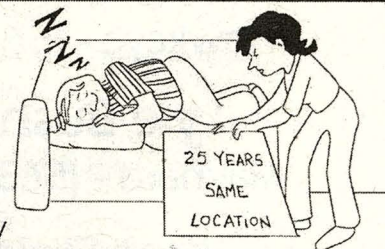
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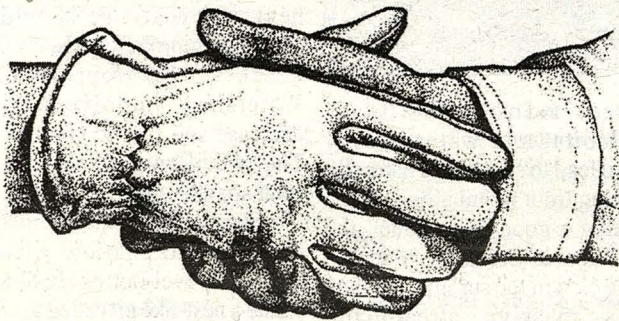


B.B. Brown

Too Much Time on your Hands? Become an Earth Team Volunteer

Did you know you can volunteer with the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) and become a part of a nationwide network of conservation professionals dedicated to conserving our natural resources? You must be at least 14 years of age to become an Earth Team volunteer and may work indoors, outdoors, part-time, full-time, and on short term or long term assignments. High school students can gain hands-on experience in the conservation field that could benefit them in their future plans for college. All age groups could benefit by improving their basic computer skills or other new technologies we are currently using in our office including GIS and GPS. Whatever the job, volunteers can and do make a difference. If you are interested in volunteering or would like more information, contact the NRCS office at (563) 422-3868 Ext. 3

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Winter ideal time to review compliance plans

Winter is the ideal time for landowners to review conservation compliance plans, according to the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS), the U.S. Department of Agriculture's lead conservation agency.

The NRCS encourages landowners to review their compliance plans for highly erodible land and wetlands now, while making plans for spring planting. "Reviewing compliance plans now will allow landowners to ensure they have practices in place to maintain eligibility for USDA programs," says Leroy Brown, State Conservationist for the Iowa NRCS.

Conservation compliance remains an integral part of the 2002 Farm Bill even though it was implemented in the 1985 Farm Bill.

Landowners interested in participating in conservation and commodity programs that were reauthorized or created in the 2002 Farm Bill will be required to follow compliance provisions previously established for highly erodible land and wetlands. "By reviewing compliance plans now

landowners will be ready to participate in Farm Bill programs when funding is received," says Brown.

In order to be eligible for USDA program payments, landowners with highly erodible land (HEL) are required to maintain a fully applied conservation system, outlined in their conservation plan.

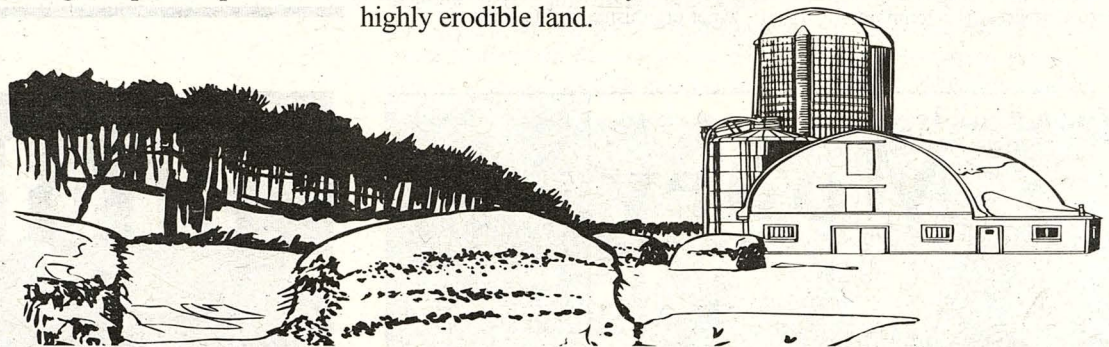
Wetland compliance requires landowners that are considering altering a wet area (by removing trees, tiling, dredging, etc.) to receive a wetland determination from the NRCS prior to beginning any work. If a wetland determination is made on the land, landowners have the option to leave the wetland unchanged, or to request mitigation. Mitigation allows the landowner to alter a wetland as long as equal wetland values are replaced in another location.

Since implementation of the 1985 Farm Bill, NRCS has provided assistance to producers to develop conservation compliance plans on highly erodible land. Ultimately it is the producer's responsibility to implement and maintain conservation systems on highly erodible land.

Local NRCS office staff can provide landowners with information on acceptable conservation practices included in their compliance plans or alternatives necessary to achieve and maintain compliance. Landowners considering changes to their farming operation on highly erodible land or wet areas should contact their local NRCS office. Changes in ownership may also require plan revisions.

Compliance reviews are conducted annually by the NRCS to determine if producers have applied and are maintaining approved conservation systems. Tracts of land are randomly selected for review from a national database of farm program participants. Additional tracts may be reviewed as a result of a report to the NRCS or other USDA agency of possible non-compliance. Producers scheduled for reviews will be notified in the spring, and the reviews are typically conducted right after planting.

Brown encourages landowners with questions or concerns about their compliance plans to contact their local NRCS office.



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Grannis Creek water quality monitoring

Submitted by Rick Klann
Upper Iowa University

Upper Iowa University conducted initial water quality monitoring on Grannis Creek from April through November of 2001. Monitoring recommenced in July of 2002 and will continue through November of 2004. Samples are collected monthly from three sites along the creek. Additionally, samples are collected immediately following significant rain events (more than 0.6 inches of rain in a 12 hour period).

Each sample is analyzed for the following physical and chemical parameters of water quality: temperature, pH, conductivity, dissolved oxygen and turbidity are measured on site, while samples returned to the lab are analyzed for suspended solids, fecal coliform bacteria, ammonia, nitrate-nitrite, total nitrogen, soluble reactive phosphorus and total phosphorus.

Twice a year (May and September), each site is sampled for benthic macroinvertebrates (primarily insects and scuds that live on the bottom). Since different species of benthic macroinvertebrates vary with respect to their ability to tolerate pollution, they can be very useful as indicators of water quality. Specifically, they can indicate input of pollution that may be missed by a monthly sampling regime.

Monitoring to date indicates that the water quality of Grannis Creek is very good. This allows Grannis Creek to support trout, which require cool, clear water with plenty of dissolved oxygen. In fact, Grannis Creek is one of a handful of streams in the state that supports natural trout reproduction. The factor that distinguishes Grannis Creek from so many other streams is temperature. Trout

cannot tolerate water temperatures above 75 degrees Fahrenheit. In our monitoring we have not detected temperatures above 65 degrees Fahrenheit. Warmer temperatures are associated with low stream flow in late summer.

The benthic macroinvertebrate data indicate some organic pollution. This appears to be primarily associated with rain events where the soil becomes saturated and significant amounts of sediment are carried into the stream. Turbidity monitoring provides an excellent example. Normally, turbidity measurements range between 1 and 5 nephelometric turbidity units (NTU). After a significant rain event, turbidity typically increases to 5 to 10 NTU. On August 21 of 2002, however, when the watershed received a saturating rain, turbidity values between 100 and 625 were measured. A normally dry creek bed was observed to be carrying in large amounts of sediment.

This sediment has many detrimental effects. First, it can bury benthic macroinvertebrates, disrupting the food chain. Second, it can bury trout eggs, impeding trout reproduction. Third, it brings in pollution in the form of chemicals and manure washed in from agricultural operations. Finally, sedimentation creates a more shallow stream with a muddy bottom, which absorbs more sunlight compared to sand or gravel. This is a recipe for warmer waters which are lethal to trout.

Clearly at this time, sedimentation from runoff is the most significant threat to Grannis Creek. The implementation of land use practices that reduce sedimentation can insure that Grannis Creek remains suitable habitat for cold-water organisms, such as trout.

A bright future for brown trout in Grannis Creek

By Royce Bowman
Grannis Creek Watershed
Project Coordinator

This summer I assisted the DNR fisheries management staff survey the fish population on a portion of Grannis

Grannis Creek has been receiving stockings of catch-able sized trout from Big Springs Hatchery near Elkader, from April to October. Not all these "put and take" trout find their way into frying pans, many hold over

The Claassen's property on the stream lies between two DNR parcels in the lower fishable portion of Grannis Creek. The Claassens allow public fishing access to the stream on their property, and intend to in the future. This kind of agreement is voluntary on the part of the Claassen's and we fisherman owe them many thanks and a pat on the back for the improvement to the stream.

The project shaped and rocked 1900 feet of eroding streambank and incorporated 28 "lunker" bankhides for trout habitat. Bankhides are large box-like wood structures constructed on site, tucked into the bank that is being repaired and covered with large rock. Bankhides provide the overhead cover trout need to escape predators (sometimes fisherman) and ambush their prey in the stream. The bankhides were donated and installed by DNR fisheries staff. Fisheries Biologist, Bill Kalishek says, "In the next few years we should see a dramatic improvement in the Grannis Creek brown trout population. Watershed improvements will decrease soil loss to Grannis Creek. This will mean more clean gravel for trout spawning".

Brown trout spawn in the fall moving into shallow riffles and fanning gravel out of small areas to create a nest-like pit called a redd. The fertilized trout eggs drift into crevices in the gravel where they lie to incubate. Trout eggs are extremely

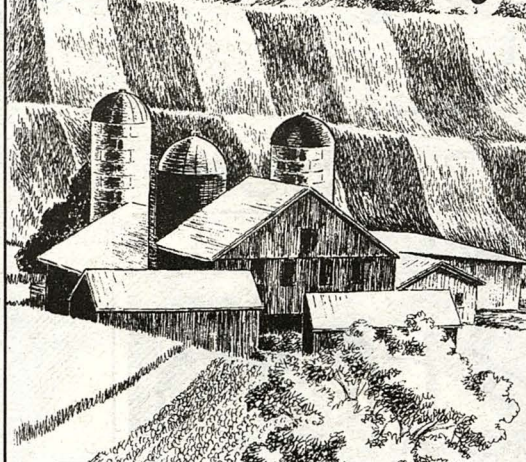


Creek. What we discovered was something new and exciting in the stream, numerous brown trout fingerlings. As we sloshed upstream in chest waders, 4-5 inch brown trout darted out of mats of submerged vegetation and overhanging grasses. Brown trout had experienced sporadic natural reproduction in Grannis during the fall of 2001.

in the stream and mature on a natural diet. Habitat and water quality combined lead to successful naturally reproducing trout populations.

Making a good thing better, the trout in Grannis Creek were dealt a favorable card in the summer of 2002 when a massive streambank stabilization and trout habitat project was completed on the Claassen property at Grannis Creek.

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continued from previous page

vulnerable while lying on the streambed. Aquatic invertebrates and other fish prey on them, but their greatest adversary is silt.

Silt can settle over the eggs suffocating them or the invertebrates that young fish feed on. The most productive trout streams in northeast Iowa that sustain populations of naturally reproducing trout have clean silt free substrates.

Watershed projects like this one for Grannis Creek address soil loss in the watershed and offer cost share incentives for landowners to apply conservation practices to their farms. The goal is to hold the soil and nutrients in place so they can farm it, rather than allowing it to reach the stream. Practices like terracing, waterways, filter strips and buffer strips in a watershed have a tremendous positive impact on the amount of silt that enters a stream and ultimately the success of the fish and aquatic life that live in it.

With the cooperation of the landowners in the Grannis Creek watershed I predict a bright future for the stream and its trout population. Fayette County is blessed with many beautiful and unique cold water trout streams. These streams put smiles on fisherman's faces and dollars into our local economy.

I would like to encourage everyone to take a child or young person to Grannis Creek and go fishing, or just walk around and enjoy the beautiful scenery and sounds of the stream. Let your children experience these natural areas that surround us in Fayette County, and they will reward us all with future stewardship of these valuable natural resources.



The proposed handicapped sidewalk site.

Handicap accessibility coming to Grannis Creek

By Royce Bowman
Project Coordinator

The Fayette SWCD is excited to announce a first of its kind project. A handicap sidewalk is proposed for Grannis Creek and is in the early stages of development. The sidewalk will hopefully provide easy access for disabled and elderly people to reach the stream and fish for trout.

The sidewalk would start at the DNR parking lot on the upper end of the stream and continue along the bank for approximately 500 feet. The walk will widen out at fishable areas where trout habitat and bank stabilization projects were completed in the summer of 2002.

Few trout streams in Iowa have handicap accessible walks. Fayette County and Grannis Creek will soon provide people with special needs that extra accessibility for trout fishing. This may "hook" a few more people into the sport of fishing and surely attract additional anglers into Fayette County.

Keeping an eye on water quality

A water quality monitoring program is in place for Grannis and Mink Creeks organized by the Grannis Creek Watershed Project with the cooperation of Upper Iowa University. Water quality data is being voluntarily collected by Dr. Rick Klann, a biology professor at Upper Iowa University. Tests are being conducted from April to November once a month and after significant rain events. Significant rain events are defined as rainfalls that equal 0.6 inches in a 24 hour period. The sampling will provide baseline data on Grannis and Mink Creeks and likely provide evidence to show water quality improvements resulting from watershed protection projects.

The water quality in these streams is being assessed in two ways. First by sampling the chemical and physical parameters of the water in the stream. The water parameters that were tested include temperature, pH, specific conductance, dissolved oxygen, turbidity, nitrogen, phosphorous, suspended solids and fecal coliform bacteria. A second assessment consists of sampling the populations of benthic invertebrates (bottom dwelling bugs) that are indicators of water quality simply by their presence or absence in a given stream. Many of these tiny aquatic creatures are intolerant to pollution in the water they live in, some species more so than others.

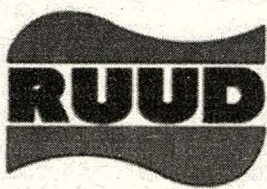
Benthic invertebrates were collected from riffles at 3 sample sites using a very fine mesh net held in place while the gravel and rocks in the streambed are disturbed or "kicked around" upstream. Invertebrates are dislodged from the bottom and flow downstream where they are collected in the net. Once collected the invertebrates

are sorted and identified. Families of invertebrates have been assigned a tolerance value between 0 (least tolerant) and 10 (most tolerant). A combined value is calculated and compared to the Family Biotic Index (FBI) then you have a general idea of the water quality for a particular stream based on its inhabitants.

To briefly summarize the results of the tests, Grannis Creek tested excellent, much better than Mink Creek on all aspects; both streams need improvements within the watersheds. Both streams show signs of organic pollutants and the likely cause is runoff from agricultural operations. Dr. Klann says, "The biggest threat to Grannis Creek is sediment brought in by runoff. Improved land use practices that reduce sedimentation by runoff would be great for Grannis Creek". Silt and nutrients entering the streams are the main culprits as they effect many water parameters like temperature, dissolved oxygen and turbidity. The water quality testing program will continue to monitor the two streams for the remaining two years of the Grannis Creek Watershed Project.

Setting all "Bottom Bugs" aside, water quality impacts more than just trout populations, it effects all of us. We use it, need it and often take it for granted every time we turn the faucet on and good clean water flows from it. Some of the contaminants tested for in this study find their way into our wells. The time to act is now! Everyone has a responsibility and opportunity to positively effect our environment for future generations. Decisions made now to improve our land use and water quality will create ripples future generations will notice downstream.

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McMillans named owner/operators of the year



Behind John and Hank McMillan are terraces used to help mitigate soil erosion. Recently named owner/operators of the year, the family has practiced a variety of conservation techniques for years in northeast Fayette County.

By Jeremy Varner
Newswriter

Soil conservation is a necessity in the rolling hills of eastern Fayette County. Recently named owner/operators of the year, John and Hank McMillan have been practicing soil conservation farming techniques for decades.

The McMillan family began farming in the Elgin area in the early part of last century. John's father, John E., and uncle, Hank, were each born into the profession and raised farmers starting work at the ages of 9 and 11 respectively following their father's death. In 1940, the two formed a partnership.

In 1971, John and Hank created two corporations — Henry M. and John C. McMillan, Inc. for the land and McMillan Bros., Inc. for the operation itself. In total, they own 900-1,000 acres of land and operate a 6,000-feeder pig and 375-beef cow calf operation.

While these days Hank primarily manages the bookkeeping end of the operation, John and four employees (1 full-time and 3 part-time) raise the livestock and farm the crops.

John credits his late father with instilling a conservation ethic in him while he was growing up. Over the years, John E. established miles of terraces and utilized a variety of conservation practices to mitigate soil loss.

One of the most unique methods used by the family to control soil erosion is the planting of rye in the fall on highly erodible areas. John's wife, Kathy, said very few farms in the county plant a winter ground crop to help control erosion.

In addition to creating acres of terraces, the McMillans either no-till or minimal till all of their corn fields, John said.

Thirty years ago, they started using a chisel plow and today all but a few experimental no-till areas are minimal-till.

The family also uses crop rotation to help minimize soil loss. John said most fields are planted with oats for a year, followed by three years of alfalfa then three years of corn. Sometimes a year of beans is substituted for a year of corn, he said.

The family is also involved with other conservation efforts including protecting woodlands.

The McMillans have 50-60 acres in timber reserve and recently the timber stands were improved through weed tree removal.

The family's 155 acres of pasture is separate from the woodland reserve area.

To better provide ample water for the beef herd, four ponds were created. One of John and Kathy's sons, Pat, spent time in high school redeveloping a farm pond that was filling with silt from heavy rainstorms.

John and Kathy's farmstead is divided by Golden Road between West Union and Elgin. The barn and hog facility are located on one side and the house, machine shed, and cattle barn are on the other.

Married 31 years, John and Kathy have three children, Chris, Mary, and Patrick.

Hank has one son, Mark. John is an Upper Iowa University graduate in business and accounting and Kathy was a registered nurse for 25 years before retiring because of a medical condition.

NAME: _____
ADDRESS: _____
CITY: _____ STATE _____ ZIP _____
PHONE: _____

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Species	Price Per Bundle	Number of Bundles	Total Cost
American Arborvitae (12-18")	\$35.00	x	=
American Arborvitae (18-24")	\$45.00	x	=
Black Cherry (12-18")	\$35.00	x	=
Black Hills Spruce (12-18")	\$35.00	x	=
Black Walnut (2-3")	\$35.00	x	=
Blue Spruce (12-18")	\$35.00	x	=
Blue Spruce (18-24")	\$45.00	x	=
American Cranberry (5-12")	\$30.00	x	=
Lilac Common (8-24")	\$35.00	x	=
Norway Spruce (12-18")	\$35.00	x	=
Norway Spruce (18-24")	\$45.00	x	=
Red Oak (2-3")	\$35.00	x	=
Red Osier Dogwood (8-24")	\$30.00	x	=
Sugar Maple (12-24")	\$35.00	x	=
White Oak (12-18")	\$45.00	x	=
White Pine (12-18")	\$35.00	x	=
Evergreen Package			
5 White Pine 12-18"; 5 Blue Spruce 12-18"; 5 Norway Spruce 12-18"	\$5.00	x	=
Nut Tree Package			
3 Northern Pecan 18-24"; 3 American Chestnut 18-24"; 3 Hazelnut 12-18"; 3 Walnut 2-3"; 3 Butternut 18-24"	\$55.00	x	=
Shade Tree Package			
3 Chinkapin Oak 2-3"; 3 White Oak 2-3"; 3 Red Oak 2-3"; 3 Bur Oak 2-3"; 3 Swamp White Oak 2-3"	\$55.00	x	=
Wildlife Shrub Package			
3 Serviceberry 2-3"; 3 Hazelnut 18-24"; 3 American Plum 3-4"; 3 Red Osier Dogwood 3-4"; 3 American Cranberry 8-24"	\$55.00	x	=

Total of Above _____
Add 6% Sales Tax _____
Total Payment Due _____

Financial Statement July 1, 2001 through June 20, 2002

IM BUDGET		Spent or Allocated	40,861.80	Allocated	\$9,750.00
Allocation	\$1,500.00	Recalled	999.61	2002 Upper Maquoketa 319 Allocation	
Supplemental	920.00	Balance	\$1,771.59	\$25,000.00	
Total Allocation	2,420.00	2002 REAP Practices Allocation		Allocated	13,458.10
Commissioner Expenses	1,019.46	\$26,323.00		Balance	\$11,541.90
Office Supplies & Expenses	\$1,400.54	Spent	14,425.01	2002 Upper Maquoketa WPF Allocation	
3M BUDGET		Reallocated under 2003 Funds		\$110,270.00	
COST-SHARE PROGRAM		11,755.75		Spent	54,229.07
2001-2002 Allocation	\$43,659.00	Recalled	\$142.24	Recalled	\$56,040.93
Spent or Allocated	39,921.20	2002 REAP Forestry Allocation		2001 Grannis Creek WSPF Allocation	
Balance	\$3,737.80	\$15,469.00		\$60,815.00	
2000-2001 Allocation	\$43,663.00	Spent	12,061.00	Spent	40,427.94
Supplemental Allocation	23,408.00	Reallocated under 2003 Funds		Recalled	\$20,387.06
Total Allocation	67,071.00	3,345.00		2001 Grannis Creek WPF Allocation	
Spent or Obligated	64,924.89	Recalled	\$63.00	\$36,640.00	
Balance	\$2,146.11	2002 Volga Lake Allocation	\$23,437.00	Spent	26,692.36
1999-2000 Allocation	\$43,663.00	Spent	13,687.00	Recalled	\$9,947.64

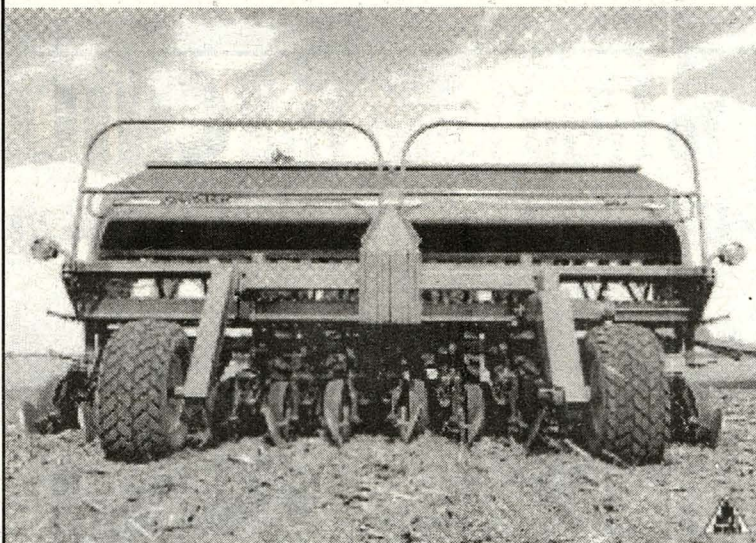
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Practice	Number	Acres/Feet
Comprehensive Nutrient Plans	3	8,454 ac.
Conservation Plans Completed		22,961 ac.
Conservation Reserve Program	1,601	234 ac.
Contour Buffers Strips		(1,170 ac. benefited)
Field Windbreaks		20 ac.
Filter Strips		817 ac.
Grassed Waterways		214 ac.
Riparian Forest Buffers		179 ac.
Conservation Systems Applied		5,444 ac.
Conservation Tillage (no-till)		2,610 ac.
Continuous CRP	221	1,190.9 ac.
Contour Farming		1,250 ac.
Cropland Benefited		7,763 ac.
Grade Stabilization Structure	2	
Manure Storage Structure	2	
Nutrient Management Applied		2,210 ac.
Pasture Management		172 ac.
Streambank Protection		80 ft.
Terraces		20,860 ft.
Timber Stand Improvement		140 ac.
Trees & Shrub Plantings		41 ac.
Wetlands Created or Restored		64 ac.
Upland Wildlife Habitat Management		3,836 ac.

Native American contributions: More than bows and arrows.

November is Native American Awareness month. The Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) honors various ethnic groups throughout the year by sending out bulletins of information about them. The following information is about our Native Americans.

Did you know that American Indians have contributed many things to the American way of life today? Things that you have used or do now, are those that many American Indians have been using and doing for many, many years.

A lot of the time, we only think about things we can readily identify as representing American Indians, such as their fine art work. Yes - the people of the Southwest are known for their beautiful silver and turquoise jewelry. The people of the Northwest Coast are known for their fantastic woodcarvings, and the Plains Indians are well known for their beautiful beadwork.

But other than art, the American Indians have influenced many areas of American living. Some of these things were begun long before the arrival of the European settlers, on North American land.

Did you know that one of the most important aspects of American Indian life is ecology?

People today have just begun to think about this. The American Indians have always had a deep respect for the land. There was a love for every form of life. The American Indians did not kill anything they could not use, and they never killed an animal or a fish for the sport of it. Fishing and hunting were a way to survive. The American Indians lived in harmony with nature and did not abuse the natural world. American Indians were ecologists long before the word was ever used.

Did you know that many of the foods we eat today were first grown by American Indians?

American Indians learned to grow and use many different kinds of foods that many people eat today, never

considering that they first came from American Indians. Some of these include potatoes, beans (14 varieties), corn, peanuts, pumpkins, squash, tomatoes, peppers, nuts, melons, sunflower seeds, chewing gum, popcorn, wild rice, cranberries, maple sugar and syrup, turkeys, clam bakes, pemmican, jerky (dry meat), pineapples, avocado, tapioca (manioc) and chocolate (cacao). They also helped the European settlers survive in the New World by sharing their farming methods with them.

Did you know that many of the games you play today came from the American Indians?

Canoeing, snowshoeing, tobogganing, lacrosse, relay races, tug-of-wars, kayaking and ball games are just a few of the games early American Indians played and still enjoy today. Many youth groups such as Boy Scouts, Girl Scouts, Campfire and YWCA Guides have programs based largely on American Indian crafts and lore.

Did you know that the idea for the U.S. government was adopted from the American Indian?

Benjamin Franklin said that the idea of the federal government, in which certain powers are given to a central government and all other powers are reserved for the states, was borrowed from the system of government used by the Iroquoian League of Nations.

Did you know that many words we use every day came from the American Indians?

Countless American Indian words and inventions have become an everyday part of our language and use. Some of these include barbecue, caribou, chipmunk, woodchuck, hammock, toboggan, skunk, mahogany, hurricane and moccasin. In addition, some items include tipi, leather clothing, mukluks, tobacco, cigars, pipe smoking, cradle boards (baby carriers), cotton, rubber, quinine and cocaine. Many towns, cities and rivers also have names of American

Indian origin. Just a few of these include Seattle, Spokane, Yakima, Pocatello, Chinook, Flathead Lake, Milwaukee, Wichita, Miami, Ottawa and Kalispell.

Did you know that American Indians developed and communicated with sign language?

A system of hand signals was developed to facilitate trade and communication between different tribal communities, and later between American Indians, trappers and traders. The same idea is used today for communicating with those people who are deaf and unable to speak. The signs are different, but the idea is the same. In 1621, the first Thanksgiving was held to celebrate the pilgrims first successful year in the New World with the help of their Native American friends. As NRCS employees, we are given a time to reflect the longstanding Native American Heritage in November.

South Dakota artist, Sandy Swallow-Morgan, designed this year's poster. She has incorporated many traditional items from her Oglala Lakota/Northern Cheyenne heritage. The buffalo was important to the Northern Plains tribes by giving food, clothing, shelter and tools. The tipi represents the importance of family. Each feather represents different symbols to the tribes. In order, they are the Sun, Devils Tower, Medicine Wheel, Bear Butte, Honored Warhorse, Teton Mountains and the Cheyenne Morning Star. If Iowa receives posters, they will be shipped to each office under separate cover.

There are many things we can all learn from the Native American culture. I would urge you to take time to do so as we are honoring the Native American Heritage through the month of November. If you have questions regarding Native American Heritage month, the Iowa NRCS contact is Kristie McKinley, who can be reached at (712) 374-2014.

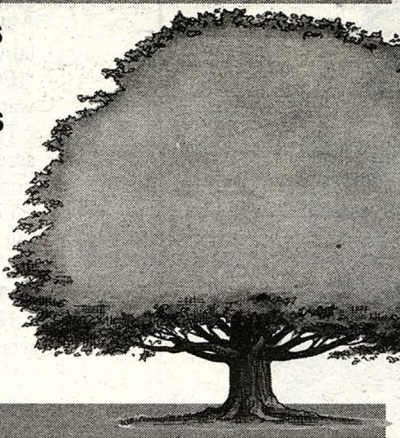
/s/ Leroy Brown
State Conservationist

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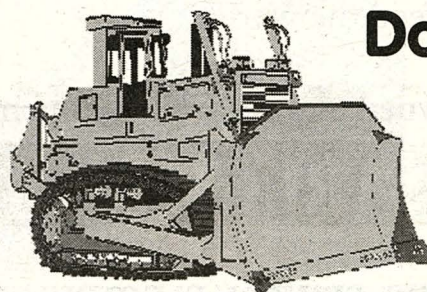
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Fort Atkinson

Fayette SWCD 2002 Activities

By Bill Bennett - Commissioner

The Fayette Soil & Water Conservation District Commissioners had another busy year. In addition, to regular duties of approving or rejecting cost share project applications and assuring completed projects meet NRCS specifications, approving cooperator agreements, reviewing CRP contracts, assuring maintenance agreements are complied with; commissioners attended training schools in Decorah, Strawberry Point and Marshalltown.

The district, in cooperation with the Clayton SWCD finished the Ensign Hollow II Watershed Project and continued to work on the Upper Maquoketa River Water Quality Project in cooperation with the Clayton, Buchanan and Delaware SWCDs and ISU Extension. The Fayette District continued work on the Grannis Creek Watershed Project in cooperation with Upper Iowa University.

Commissioners worked with Congressman Jim Nussle and Senators Tom Harkin and Chuck Grassley on the conservation title of the farm bill. On the state level, commissioners worked with state legislators to try to keep conservation a part of the Iowa budget and make everyone aware that conservation is important to anyone that breathes, eats, drinks, or is buried in a flood plain.

The district investigated two soil loss complaints and accepted a Conservation Easement from the Steege family. Commissioners helped host and present the Fayette County Forestry Field Day and a training session for consulting foresters. Commissioners gave presentations to the Keystone Area science teachers at a workshop at North Fayette High School. The district again held, over a three-day period, the field day of third grades. Soil Stewardship workbooks were again given to all second grade students and teachers. The district had a booth at the Fayette County Fair and gave presentations with their enviroscape and some GPS equipment.

The annual tree sale was held, fabric was laid, native grass seeding was done and letters were sent to cooperators to raise funds for operation. Without the Supporter Club and these other activities the district would not have the funds to carry on the educational activities, update the technology in the office and the equipment used in the field by the staff or pay the salaries of district employees.

The district's 4-wheeler and the GPS (Global Positioning System) were used to speed up lay out and more accurately measure the practices applied to the land. The backpack unit was also used in this work. The district also approved adding a

hand held GPS unit to the equipment used by the staff.

The office staff increased with the addition of a NRCS Soil Conservationist and the district lost their Grannis Hollow Watershed Coordinator, as he was hired by NRCS as a Soil Conservationist in the Allamakee District. The district then hired a new coordinator, as another article will tell you.

Commissioners helped develop RMS (Resource Management Systems) for their own farms. These plans address the needs of Soil, Water, Air, Plants, People and Animals. These RMS plans are needed to qualify for the CSP (Conservation Security Program) part of the farm bill and fits everything together to give additional benefits to all of us.

District Activities

7-1-01 through 6-30-02

JULY

* Bennett attended the NACD North Central meeting in Minneapolis.

* Memos of Understanding were approved for United States Post Office and Forest Service.

AUGUST

* Commissioner Fall Regional meeting was held at the Country Junction in Dyersville.

* Ensign Hollow II Project Coordinator presented information and slides at the

SWCD meeting.

* Upper Maquoketa bust tour was held.

* SWCD received \$6,806 in REAP practices and \$2,619 in REAP forestry funds.

* Bids were submitted for the construction of a shallow water pond on the Houg Education Farm.

* SWCD applied for the Buffer Initiative Grant Option 1.

SEPTEMBER

* The Annual Education Field Day for 395 third grade students was held at the Richard Jensen farm.

* Upper Maquoketa Watershed Annual meeting was held.

* Grannis Creek Watershed Annual meeting was held.

* SWCD IM Budget and Spending plan was approved.

* SWCD received \$1,500 for IM funds.

* SWCD received \$43,659 in voluntary cost-share funds.

* SWCD received \$23,437 in Volga Lake cost-share funds.

* SWCD received a \$10,000 grant through the Buffer Initiative Option 1.

* Mark & Denise Nelson were chosen as owner/operators of the year for the state of Iowa.

* SWCD made a donation to the Food, Land, and People workshop for Fayette county teachers to attend.

* The District Forester did fencing projects on different types of tree plantings

at the Houg Education Farm.

OCTOBER

* SWCD received \$500 for third place in the Buffer Achievement Award.

* SWCD applied for \$1,000 through the Buffers 4 program with Pheasants Forever.

* Mike Henderson was hired as the Grannis Creek Watershed Coordinator.

NOVEMBER

* \$ 1,185.00 in IM supplemental funds was received.

* SWCD received \$1,845 in supplemental REAP funds.

* Annual Conference was held.

DECEMBER

* SWCD received \$1,046.26 in grant funds from the National Fish & Wildlife Foundation for technical assistance.

* Angie Freilinger was hired as the Soil Conservationist for the Natural Resources Conservation Service at the West Union field office.

JANUARY

* Election of Officers, appointment of Treasurer, and appointment of Assistant Commissioners was held.

* Grannis Creek Plan of Operations and Supplement to Project Agreement was approved.

* CDI & NACD Dues were paid.

* Cost-share policies were set for the voluntary cost-share program.

* Jerry Muff, DC, reviewed EEO, Civil Rights, Memos of Understanding, and Supplemental Memo of Understanding with the SWCD.

FEBRUARY

* SWCD received \$920 in supplemental IM funds.

* Soil and Water Stewardship materials were ordered for second grade classes and teachers in Fayette county schools.

* Four county contractor meeting was held at Jackson Heights Golf Course.

* SWCD received \$23,408 in supplemental voluntary cost-share funds.

* EQIP priorities were set for no-till and water quality.

* The Turkey Federation approved a 2.5-acre direct seeding on the Houg Education Farm.

* Eight forestry applications and 1 grazing application were approved for EQIP.

* Slough bill applications were approved.

MARCH

* Houg Education Farm property taxes were paid.

* Upper Maquoketa nutrient pest management vouchers were approved.

* Upper Maquoketa water protection funds of \$45,305.78 were recalled.

* Grannis Creek information meeting was held in Fayette.

* Award Banquet was held at United Methodist Church in West Union.

* SWCD was notified of State budget cuts.

APRIL

* Forestry Field Day was held at the Houg Education Farm.

* Upper Maquoketa 2003 budget was approved.

* Grannis Creek 2003 budget was approved.

* SWCD applied for a grant to purchase an EnviroScape non-point source pollution model and riparian kit.

MAY

* Nominations were submitted for Ruth Wagner award, Izaak Walton windbreak, watershed achievement award, and owner/operator award.

JUNE

* Bennett and Ogle presented information to the Keystone Area Education Agency K-5 teachers about the Houg Education Farm.

* The SWCD received a letter from the Fayette County Board of Supervisors on a soil loss complaint.

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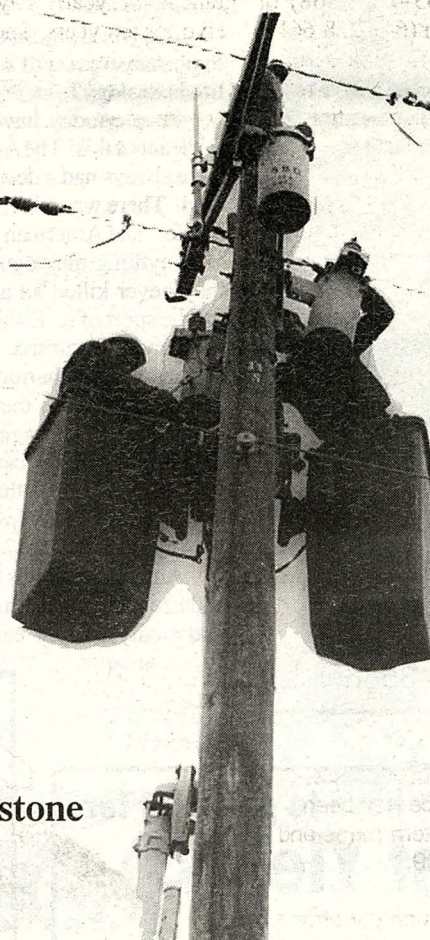


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Continuous CRP Programs Do you need waterways on your farm?

In Iowa there has always been a strong relationship between the people and the land and over the last few years Iowans have shown a greater concern for the quality of the environment and natural resources. One of the ways they have done this is through the use of the Continuous Sign Up, Conservation Reserve Program (CRP). Some of the practices that are available include riparian buffers, field windbreaks and shelterbelts. These plantings have increased water quality, reduced erosion and provided better wildlife habitat.

With the new Farm Bill in limbo, none of us are sure what the future holds for CRP, but we do know that the continuous CRP programs that have been so beneficial to Iowans in the past are still available and can continue to improve water quality and the environment. The following information highlights three tree planting programs that the Continuous CRP program has to offer. Riparian Buffers (CP-22)-

The Riparian Buffer Program gives landowners the opportunity to enhance the quality of their property by planting a mixture of trees, shrubs, and grasses next to a stream, river, or body of water.

It has been shown that properly located plant buffers (grass or a mixture of trees, grasses, and shrubs) next to bodies of water can reduce soil erosion, filter contaminants, increase wildlife habitat, and improve water quality. Planting these buffers is also a great way to promote land stewardship, and in some cases tree planting can provide future financial benefits.

To qualify for the Conservation Reserve Riparian Buffer Program a landowner must own pasture or cropland immediately adjacent to a perennial creek or river. For grass buffers the minimum width is 20 feet and the maximum width is 120 feet, while the riparian tree buffers need to be a minimum of 35 feet wide and can have a maximum width of 180 feet. If the property qualifies for the program, landowners receive cost-share funds to establish buffer plantings (up to 90%), plus an annual payment for each acre in the program for a period of 10 or 15 years. This annual payment is around \$80 per acre for pasture ground and varies depending on soil type for ground with a cropping history. Field Windbreaks (CP-5A)-

Field windbreaks and shelterbelts also provide many benefits to landowners and the environment. They provide wildlife habitat, protect crops, livestock and homes from damaging winds and control snow. They are also very beneficial from a financial standpoint. A good windbreak can reduce your energy costs by 20 to 40%, conserve moisture in agricultural fields and provide better growing conditions for

livestock. A well designed windbreak can provide wind protection up to 10 times the height of the windbreak.

To qualify for a field windbreak, the area has to have a cropping history and you need to plant a minimum of 2 rows and maximum of 8 rows of trees. The trees and shrubs need to be along the north and/or west side of the area to be protected. If the area you wish to enroll qualifies for the program you will receive cost share funds (up to 90%) to plant the windbreak along with an annual payment for 10 to 15 years. The amount of this annual payment is based on soil type. Shelterbelts (CP-16)-

Shelterbelts are very similar to field windbreaks but need to be protecting a farmstead or livestock operation. To plant a new shelterbelt you need a minimum of 3 rows and can have a maximum of 16 rows. You can also add to an existing shelterbelt. This planting also has to have a cropping history and will receive the same cost share rates and annual payments as a field windbreak.

If you are interested in any of these or other CRP programs you should get in touch with the Fayette County NRCS (563-422-3868) or your District Forester (641-228-6611) and set up a time to look at your property. These planting will not only benefit you and your operation, but will provide protection and beauty for generations to come.

Greg Heidebrink
Assistant District Forester

Alan Crowe, State Technician

Are you one of the many producers in Fayette County who has been contemplating establishing new waterways, but keep putting it off? If so now is a good time to get started.

The continuous CRP waterway program has remained one of the most lucrative and popular of the various CRP programs. In fact since the start of 2002, the NRCS office has received 78 new applications for waterways.

The reasons for this are numerous. For one, the cost-share is great. The cost-share rate for earthmoving is 50%, figuring \$2/lineal foot = \$1/lineal foot cost-share. The majority of earthmoving contractors in Fayette county have been constructing waterways for \$1.50-\$1.75 a lineal foot or less. Earthmoving bills based on hourly rates, (which is preferred) has yielded similar results. Participants may qualify for the practice incentive payment (PIP) also. This means that a producer could conceivably receive additional cost-share beyond the 50% for construction of a waterway. Other necessary components such as seed, fertilizer, seedbed preparation, etc. are cost-shared on a flat rate basis.

Another great aspect of this program is the yearly payment you receive for ten years. The great majority of existing contracts in Fayette county are paying \$165-\$180 per acre, depending upon the soil types in the waterway. Few producers can turn a net profit like that year after year.

To be eligible, a producer needs to implement conservation practices that have projected soil loss down to "T". This means that on the flatter slopes (2%-5%) reduced tillage is a must. On steeper slopes, contour farming, no-till, or contour buffer strips may be required. A stable outlet such as a flat grassed area, pasture, etc. is needed. We can't end a waterway at a

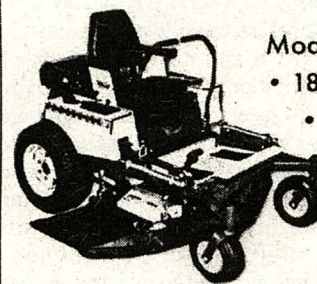
drop off. Any existing grassed waterway is not eligible.

If you're looking for cost-share on waterway construction, this program can't be beat. If you would like more information or to apply for the program, please stop by the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) located at the USDA Service Center south of West Union.

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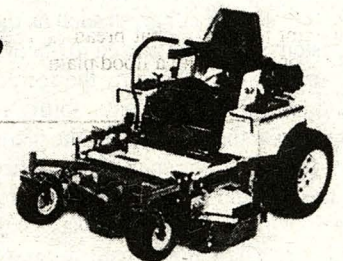


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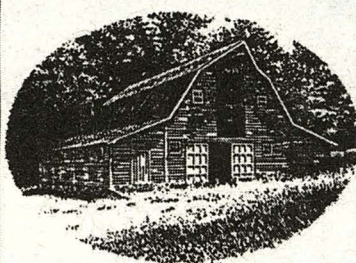
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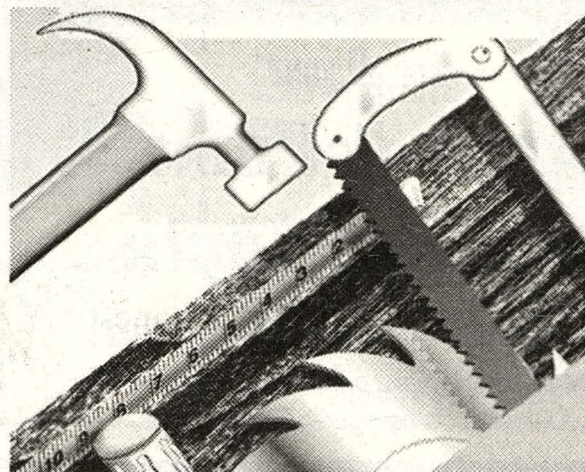
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Residual key to pasture productivity

By Jim Ranum, Grassland Specialist

The amount of residue that remains after livestock are removed from a pasture directly affects the pastures future productivity. This is commonly referred to as residual.

Remove too much and the plant will lose root mass or remove too little and the dead material slows plant regrowth.

Residual is often measured by plant height. How much residual should ideally remain varies by pasture species. A cool season short grass such as bluegrass or perennial ryegrass should be grazed to about a two-inch residual. A cool season tall grass such as orchard, smooth brome grass or reed canary should be grazed to about a four-inch residual. A warm season tall grass such as big bluestem should be grazed to about a six-inch residual. Leaving the correct residual affects the plants ability to regrow. On the other end of the plant, root growth and survival is closely tied to the amount of residual left after grazing. The rule of thumb take half and leave half holds true for most species. Leaving adequate green leaf area after livestock grazing is the sunlight collector that allows for rapid regrowth in most grass species. Root reserves are very important for legumes and rhizomatous grasses. Research has shown that removing 50 percent of the leaf area in smooth brome grass will reduce root growth 13 percent. Increase the removal to 70 percent and the stoppage goes up to 75 percent.

Probably the more important reason to leave the correct residual is the affect it has on water infiltration. Research done in Nebraska shows that excellent pasture on a 10 percent silt loam soil absorbed 90 percent of a 3 inch 90 minute rainfall event, while an overgrazed pasture absorbed only 25 percent. What will be the value of the extra moisture in the soil profile in July and August? It may well be the difference between having pasture or feeding hay. As Jim Gerrish the foremost expert in grazing management says "Most of the droughts in the Midwest are man made not acts of nature."

Residual affect animal intake, bite size is dramatically reduced when there is not an adequate amount of forage remaining in the pasture. When to take animal off a pasture has more effect on intake then when to start grazing.

For assistance with a grazing system that will maximize your pastures potential contact the NRCS office at West Union at 563 - 422 - 3868

NRCS anticipated new opportunities

By Leroy Brown
State Conservationist,
Natural Resources
Conservation Service, Iowa

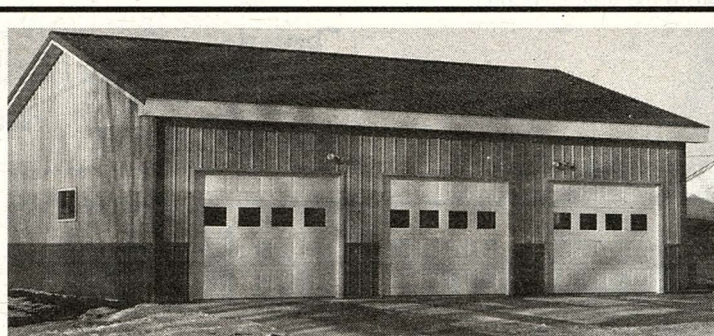
This past year was quite an exciting year in conservation. Watching the conservation title unfold and signed into law May 13, 2002 was a very interesting experience. While the Farm Bill was evolving the Natural Resources Conservation Service worked with partners to develop strategies to best handle the additional workload and new opportunities that we anticipated.

One tool we have discussed in great length this past year with Soil and Water Conservation Districts and other partners is Tech Service Providers. I see these professionals working closely with NRCS and districts to help us tackle additional work the new Farm Bill will generate. We will work hard together to provide seamless service to Iowa's landowners. It will take time to develop a new and effective working relationship required by this opportunity, but with good communication and cooperation the end result will be more conservation planning and healthier natural resources in Iowa.

The new Farm Bill also emphasizes our need to refocus on the locally-led process that drives our conservation efforts. In fiscal year 2003 it is our joint challenge and responsibility to bring

stakeholders to the table. We need local work groups to advise us and help guide the process. These local groups, involving stakeholders representing diverse interests in the agriculture and natural resource areas, will be making recommendations on cost share rates, how to fund program applications, and other local priorities. Local stakeholder involvement is critical to successful implementation of many of the programs provided in the 2002 Farm Bill. We need to support local stakeholders. I encourage you to reach out to new and diverse groups in your community and to encourage their active participation.

We are now faced with the reality of the 2002 Farm Bill and all that it provides for private landowners and the conservation partnership. We are ready. And that is because of the talented, capable, and dedicated individuals that make up Iowa's 100 Soil and Water Conservation District Boards and staffs, the Conservation Districts of Iowa, the Iowa Dept. of Agriculture and Land Stewardship, the Natural Resources Conservation Service, and the many other conservation professionals with whom we partner each day. I am proud to work with each of you and be part of the conservation effort in Iowa. I look forward to working together to care for Iowa's soil, water and wildlife, and wish you great success in reaching your conservation goals in 2003.



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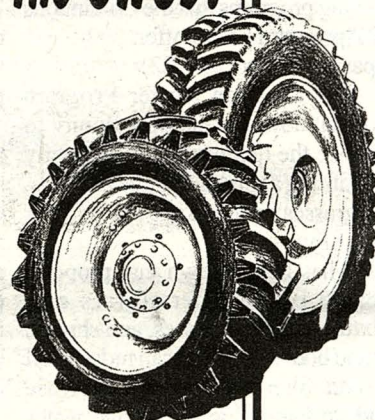
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Conservation/agriculture can coexist

Submitted by Bill Ehm
Director, Division
of Soil Conservation

Today, untold numbers of organizations, alliances, and coalitions espouse their desire to bring improvements in our environment. Many hold environmental issues as their main focus while others honor their members for being good stewards of our natural resources. Recently, I found myself in a meeting with several individuals who considered conservation and production agriculture to be completely incompatible. In their minds, crop production could not coexist with conservation on the land. I have to admit that I was taken aback, because these individuals all worked for an agricultural agency.

The fact of the matter is that in Iowa 95% of the landscape is privately owned and 90% of it is in some sort of production agricultural use. If we are to make progress with conservation in our state, then we will have to do it with private landowners as our partners. Our federal, state, and local partnership can point to many successful stories where agricultural landowners have incorporated environmental stewardship into their operations. Buffers and periodic livestock exclusion can improve the habitat of our streams. No-till, contour buffers, and terraces can save soil and prevent siltation in our streams and lakes. Strategically placed wetlands can stop nutrients and pesticides from entering our

waterways. Grassed waterways and structures prevent gullies and stop their direct deposition of silt. And all of this can take place right alongside a thriving agricultural operation.

Our goal must be to conserve and enhance our natural resources all the while we promote private working lands. Our partnership is dedicated to this and our state depends on it. We need agriculture and we need an environment that attracts non-agriculturalists to live here. Agriculture, environmental improvement, and economic development are not mutually exclusive. In fact, they are all complimentary. We need to embrace all three and use common sense and cooperation to foster the advancement of each.

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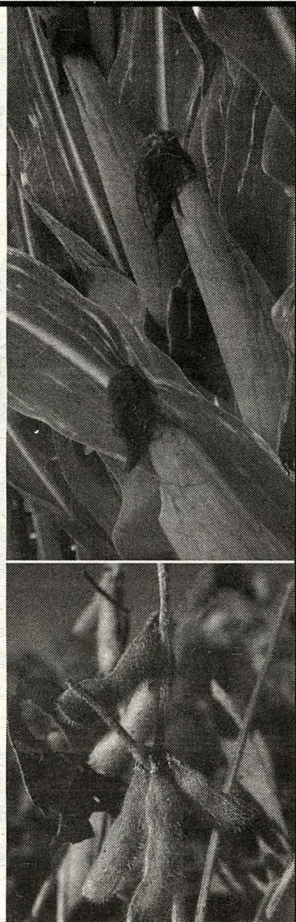
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Electronics recycling program started in Fayette County

Fayette County initiated an Electronics Recycling Program in October of 2001. Items accepted include personal computers, monitors, keyboards and mice, printers, copiers, disk drives, servers and mainframes, audio visual equipment, computer manuals, software, VCRs, stereos, telephones, fax machines, circuit boards, cable and satellite equipment, computer cables and wires, and other electronic equipment.

One of the primary reasons Electronics Recycling was started was that the toxins which they contain can pollute the soil and groundwater. Toxins in electronics and their adverse effect on people include:

1. Lead—causes a host of nervous system ailments, high blood pressure and even brain damage.
2. Cadmium—is easily absorbed by plants growing in contaminated soil and attacks the liver and kidneys if digested by humans.
3. Barium—causes heart, stomach, liver, kidney and other organ problems.
4. Brominated flame retardants—cause heart, respiratory, and central nervous system disorders.
5. PVC coated copper cable and plastic computer casings—when burned release toxic dioxins and furans, which effect skin, liver, and the immune system.

6. Mercury—causes nervous and reproductive system disorders.
7. Poly chlorinated biphenyls—can taint skin, eyes, hair and body odor.

Recycling electronics is also important because of the valuable metals and components which can be salvaged and reused and the landfill space which is saved. Approximately 20,000 lbs. of electronic waste have been diverted from the Fayette County Landfill since the program was started.

Electronics disposal is available at no charge to Fayette County residents for all items except computer monitors and televisions. Residents who recycle whole computer systems are charged \$8.00 per monitor, while monitors alone are charged \$15.00. The charge for all televisions is \$15.00 also. The reason for the charge is fact that the cathode ray tube in monitors and televisions and heavy leaded glass, which results in disposal costs for the recycling center.

Electronic waste can be dropped off at Fayette County Recycling at 18525 Lane Road, Fayette, Iowa or at the Fayette County Landfill at 10275 Kornhill Road, Fayette, Iowa between the hours of 8 a.m. and 3 p.m.

Any questions about electronics recycling can be directed to Fayette County Recycling at 422-3712.

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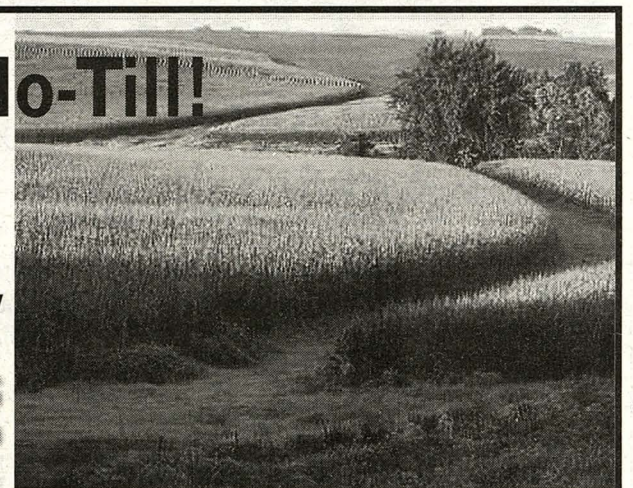
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Collaboration needed to address challenges

A report on no-till and conservation buffers in the Midwest gathered information that will be useful for several reasons, according to one of its authors, Dan Towery.

First, it's a good inventory on the extent to which these conservation techniques have been adopted in NACD's North Central Region and Great Lakes Basin.

Second, it addresses the key challenges to continuous no-till – and points out why the soil-building benefits are worth their effort.

Finally, it suggests that growers and conservation experts alike can learn much from the collaboration that has brought great success to the conservation buffer arena.

"The objective was to find out where we are with the adoption of no-till and conservation buffers," said Towery, natural resources specialist at CTIC, which produced the report. "These two practices are highest on the chart as far as protecting the soil and improving water quality."

Adoption varied, as did soil type, topography, compaction, fertility and water issues and land use. "The topography lends itself well to buffers in Illinois, Iowa and Minnesota," Towery noted. No-till was most widely adopted in Ohio and Indiana, where 60 percent of soybean acres are no-till planted.

"The CTIC publication picks up on the theme that we've been stressing," said Max Schepf, coordinator of the National Conservation Buffer Initiative.

"From the outset of the Conservation Buffer Initiative, we have emphasized that buffers were not an end-all. They need to be combined with other supporting practices," he said. "In the Great Lakes Basin, where sedimentation and soil erosion is a significant concern, buffers and no-till are a good place to start."

But there are barriers, particularly to adopting no-till. Future efforts need to focus on reducing these concerns, Towery said:

• **Yield reduction is a factor, especially in corn.**

Corn hybrids have improved, but developing varieties that perform well in cool, wet no-till soil continues to be a challenge. Seed corn coated with a polymer, which delays germination until the soil temperature reaches 55 degrees, holds promise. However, more research is needed to determine the best fit for this technology, Towery said.

Growers need consistent results, he said. "Eight out of 10 years isn't good enough."

• **Cold, wet springs can keep no-till fields too wet to plant in a timely fashion.**

Strip-tilling or zone-tilling appears to be the most promising modification. A narrow band of soil is disturbed in the fall, drying and warming soil temperatures by 5 to 10 degrees F. Others use rotary harrow-like devices in the spring to fluff up crop residue. Further refinement of this technology is key to adoption of continuous no-till, Towery said.

Incorporating residue at any depth can reduce the buildup of organic matter. Until a particular process is officially recognized as no-till, employing any may affect eligibility for certain farm programs or incentive payments.

• **More management is necessary to combat fertility issues, weeds, insects and diseases.**

Herbicide-tolerant corn and soybeans have simplified weed management. Seed breeders have screened for resistance to diseases common to no-till, such as grey leaf spot. Modified genes protect against pests like the corn borer.

But new problems can surface. Slugs, for example, became a significant problem in Ohio after an extremely wet spring this year, requiring some growers to replant, Towery said. He is

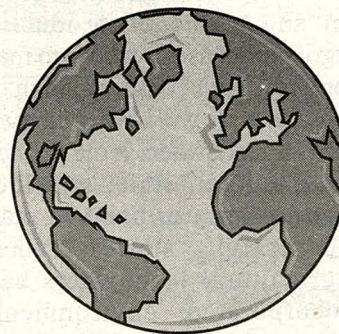
working with NRCS, Extension, the Agricultural Research Service and agri-business to develop better controls and soil management solutions. Tilling would be the easy solution, he noted. Collaboration is essential to the overall adoption and long-term success of no-till.

"One of the reasons some areas have a higher adoption rate is that a local team works together to find and promote solutions. The innovative growers, the soil and water conservation districts, NRCS, the chemical reps, the ag retailer, implement dealers and technical experts all work together. They were there when there was a bump in the road, they were there to give a pat on the back," Towery said.

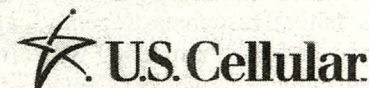
Conservation buffers provide a good example. Pheasants Forever, Turkeys Forever, Trees Forever and lake associations are among dozens of organizations that have shared the costs with landowners to develop buffers. "With buffers, the real successes were in the partnerships formed to explain and sell buffers and continuous CRP and CREP (Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program)," he said.

Towery anticipates similar private partnerships in the future with carbon sequestration contracts. Private industries or the government could pay farmers to keep their carbon in the soil, which occurs with continuous no-till farming. Conventional tillage releases carbon dioxide into the atmosphere. This would offset carbon dioxide that the companies release in the air.

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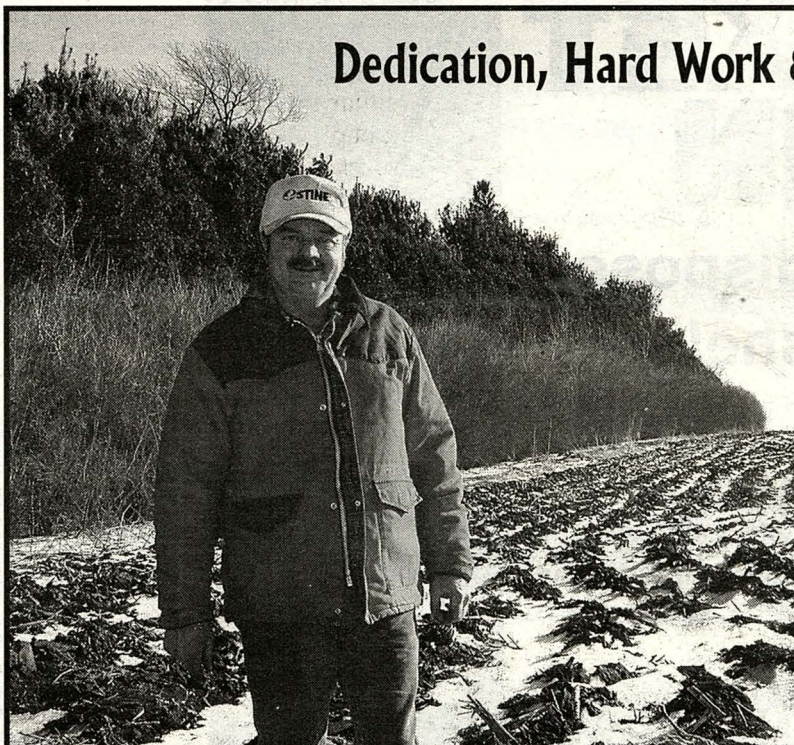


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Brian and Connie Stewart Manure Settling Basin:

Brian and Connie's manure settling basin is located southeast of West Union. The manure storage settling basin was constructed below their dairy barn this past year with cost-share assistance through the Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP). NRCS Area Engineering staff provided engineering technical assistance for the structure. The manure settling basin provides storage for lot and barn manure. Brian stated that, "This has been a nice addition to my existing storage. The storage I now have means I don't have to haul during the winter months and when field conditions aren't right." Brian went from minimal storage to at least 4 to 6 months storage.

"Locally Led Process" at Work in Fayette County

The Fayette SWCD has begun a process where they are actively seeking input from various individuals and organizations for guidance in determining conservation needs, priorities and related issues. Two meetings were held at the Farmers Savings Bank in West Union in 2002 for this purpose. Representation of the commodity groups, agricultural related agencies and local units of government attended the meetings. Bill Bennett, SWCD Chairperson, was impressed with the turnout of meetings and felt that the input from the group was had real merit.

NRCS staff provided the group with resource information relating to soil, water and livestock situation for the county. The group's initial task was to address several assignments relating to the 2003 Environmental Quality Incentive Program (EQIP). They first tackled challenging tasks including completing a questionnaire along with reviewing and modifying a proposed ranking formula. Through a lot of discussion, consensus was achieved on the ranking of projects requesting cost share assistance through the EQIP.

We are awaiting NRCS approval of the county's ranking system and national development of program rules.

We'd like to thank all of those individuals who have participated in this venture and look forward to continuing the effort.



SWCD Chairperson, Bill Bennett demonstrates the Environscape to interested Fayette County Fairgoers. The Environscape is an educational tool that portrays the complexity and importance of water quality practices.

State budget cuts affect Fayette County cost-share funds

Are you aware that according to the Iowa Department of Economic Development, agriculture contributes more than 25% to Iowa's economy? Yet at the same time the State Legislature has chosen to contribute less than 1% of Iowa's budget back to protect Iowa's natural resources.

What does this mean to you? Severely reduced state funding to implement conservation on the land. This is a loss in funding of approximately \$17 million to the Division of Soil Conservation-Iowa Department of Agriculture and Land Stewardship AND a potential loss to Fayette County of \$150,000.

We encourage anyone concerned about the environment and especially those of you who have benefited from the state's financial assistance in the past to contact your legislator and ask them to fund and support soil and water conservation work in the State of Iowa.

Everyone needs to be concerned about protecting our environment for future generations.

House District 18, Representative David Lalk, 23858 110th St., Westgate, IA 50681. david.lalk@legis.state.ia.us

House District 24, Representative Roger Thomas, 17658 Domino Rd., Elkader, IA 52043, 563-245-1084. roger.thomas@legis.state.ia.us

Senate District 8, Senator Bob Brunkhorst, 419 3rd Ave SW, Waverly, IA 50677. 319-352-0065. bob.brunkhorst@legis.state.ia.us

Senate District 12, Senator Kitty Rehberg, 2279 310th St., Rowley, IA 52329. 319-938-2659. kitty.rehberg@legis.state.ia.us.



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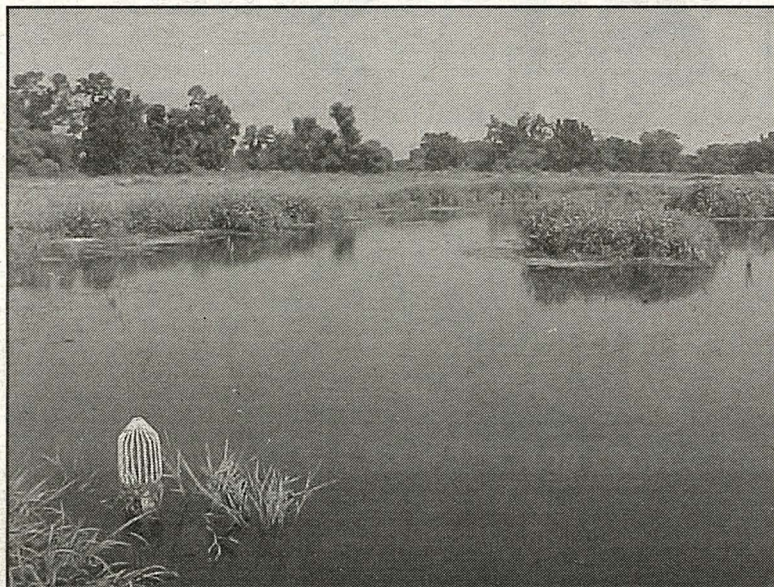
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Jean and Robert Leech, Conservation Reserve Program Shallow Water Wetland Structure, Jean and Robert's farm with this shallow water wetland is located near Westgate. This shallow excavation is fed by field drainage tile and surface runoff. Water quality is greatly improved through the surprising filtering effects of wetlands. Shallow water wetlands are also superb areas for wildlife habitat.

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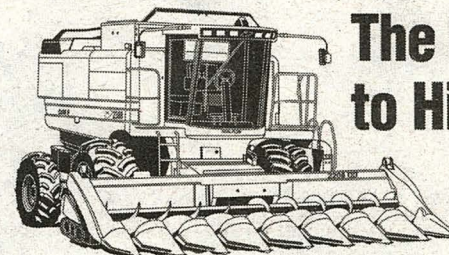
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