

Ida County Soil Conservation District

1960 ANNUAL REPORT

HIGH LIGHTS OF 1960

FULL-TIME PERSONNEL



KENNETH H. BURNETT
Work Unit Conservationist
Salary provided by SCS



GEORGE W. WITTERS
Conservation Aid
Salary provided by SCS



MRS. GLADYS THORNHILL
State Clerk
Salary provided by State of Iowa

The outstanding conservation highlight of 1960 was the installation of three miles of parallel terraces on the Bernard Collins farm, Milroy Dethlef, operator. A field day was held in conjunction with this installation, giving many farm operators a chance to see this type of terrace installed. It is hoped that parallel terraces will take their place in the list of conservation practices now being used in the District. It is also hoped that the parallel feature will increase the use of terraces in the District.

One major farm structure was installed during 1960 on the farm of Clark Crane, together with one mile of level terraces. Three-fourths mile of level terraces on the neighboring farm of Ralph Walters also support this dam.

Thirty-six new cooperators made application with the District for assistance. After cancellations due to change of ownership, there are now 516 District cooperators.

Twenty-nine new soil conservation farm plans were prepared. This, after cancellations, leaves a total of 418 farm conservation plans in operation. The conservation plan continues to be one of the primary tools used by the District in getting soil conservation practices on the land.

The following problems, most of them continuing, have been encountered during the past year:

1. Too many farmers still do not recognize soil erosion as a problem on their farms. Part of this stems from the fact that on many farms in the District the erosion problem is of such proportions that even though it is ignored, the results are not immediately drastic.
2. Changes in ownership and farm tenancy continue to undo too large a portion of the conservation work already accomplished. Even a vigorous follow-up program can overcome only a small portion of this.
3. The present high value of agricultural land in this District, has influenced many owners and operators to clean brushy land and plant it to crops. This has been aided by the easy availability of bulldozers to get the job done. As a consequence, the acreage of land occupied by wild life cover is diminishing annually. In consequence wild life populations are likewise diminishing with the possible exception of the pheasant.
4. In 1960 the District again used all available IA Funds. If expanding services to an expanding number of cooperators is to be accomplished, more IA Funds will be needed.
5. In 1960 the declining net farm income accounted, at least in part for a reduction in the amount of terracing and major structures. Increases in the ACP cost-shares for 1961 may offset this to a degree.

The District had entries in two contests, namely the Sioux City Permanent Agriculture Program, sponsored by the Sioux City Journal Tribune Publications and Sioux City Chamber of Commerce, and the Iowa Soil Conservation Awards Contest, sponsored by the Des Moines Register and Tribune. District entries in the Sioux City contest were: Roger & Enid Schmidt, Holstein, John Irwin, owner, Robert Brenahan, operator, Ida Grove, Ransom Leonard, Holstein and Marion Druivenga, Arthur. The entries in the Register & Tribune contest were: H. C. Greenwald, Battle Creek, John Irwin, Robert Brenahan, Ida Grove and Roger & Enid Schmidt, Holstein. These contests have been a material factor in increasing interest in soil conservation.

During the year 140 ACP referrals were received in the District office, where Ida County farmers were seeking cost-shares for conservation practices installed. More than three-fourths of all conservation practices installed with District assistance also received ACP cost-shares. The value of these cost-shares must not be overlooked in assessing accomplishments of the District. If cost-shares were eliminated the amount of conservation practices applied to the land would be seriously reduced.

The Ida County Extension Service continues to render service to the District thru council on planned activities, participation in educational meetings and the referral of specific soil conservation problems to the District. The County Extension Director has been present at most of our monthly meetings and has rendered other valuable services.

The newspapers, both local and regional that are read in the District have carried many fine news stories and feature articles concerning District activities and conservation accomplishments of the farmers of the District. This service is still one of the best means of getting the conservation story to land owners, operators and others.

Radio station KAYL, Storm Lake carried a seven minute monthly feature prepared by the Work Unit Conservationist. This, too, has been a valuable assistance in presenting the conservation story.

In April, television station KVTY, Sioux City, carried a fifteen minute program prepared by the County Extension Director, with the assistance of the Work Unit Conservationist.

Mr. Dale Mills, who joined our staff in January, resigned in June to accept other employment. The District is still looking for a replacement.

The Pleasant Valley Watershed, 3,700 acres, located southeast of Battle Creek, continues to progress towards the construction phase. During the past two years more than 26 miles of terraces have been installed in the Watershed. Of the 33 farms, all or in part in the Watershed, 22 now have farm plans, and 1 will be planned soon. Almost 80% of the area is now covered by farm plans.

The District now inspects annually all major structures installed under the Little Sioux Flood Control program. Annual inspections result in timely repair of all deficiencies noted. No major repairs were required in 1960.

Commissioners Funds

General Fund

(From Various Sources)

Balance - December 31, 1959	\$ 187.35
Receipts - 1960	883.67
Expenditures - 1960	198.16
Balance - December 1960	60.69

Maintenance Fund

(Held in trust by the District for the maintenance of watershed structures)

Cash on Hand, December 31, 1959	\$ 360.55
Receipts - 1960	883.67
Expenditures - 1960	* 238.95
Cash on Hand, December 31, 1960	945.27
U. S. Government Bonds on hand	
(Purchase Price) December 31, 1960	9,679.00
U. S. Government Bonds on Hand	
(Surrender Value) December 31, 1960	11,208.30

* Includes \$294.39 refunds of Initial Payments, East Aldrich Creek Watershed.

1 - A Budget

(Received from the State of Iowa for Commissioners Expenses)

Office Supplies	129.61
Commissioners Expenses	148.27
Office Expenses	77.23
Printing	100.00
Rentals	25.00
TOTAL Expended	\$ 480.11

2 - A Budget

(Received from the State of Iowa for Clerk Salary and Equipment)

Equipment	\$ 191.40
Clerk Salary	2,857.72
TOTAL Expended	\$ 3,049.12

Parallel Terraces



These parallel level terraces, the first in Ida County, provide superior soil and moisture conservation. The dotted lines show that the top three terraces are spaced equidistant, thus eliminating point rows. The bottom three terraces in the background are also parallel. Arrow indicates the only terrace interval on this slope which will have point rows. These terraces are located on the Bernard Collins farm in Garfield Township.

Crane Structure



This structure on the Clark Crane farm, will control a deep gully and provide a water supply for the pasture in the foreground. Additional protection to the contributing watershed is provided by level terraces on this farm and neighboring farm of Ralph Walters. The pond will be deep enough to provide excellent fishing when stocked.

Accomplishments and Goals

		ACCOMPLISHED		GOAL
		In 1960	Since 1945	For 1961
New District				
Cooperators	Number	36	516	50
	Acres	6,039	94,500	10,000
Basic Conservation				
Plan	Number	29	418	32
	Acres	4,211	75,334	6,400
Revised Conservation				
Plan	Number	3		10
	Acres	720		2,000
Follow-Up Calls	Number	172		200
Contour Layout	Acres	4,184	40,909	5,000
Contour Strip				
Cropping	Acres	60	1,565	100
Level Terraces	Miles	18	413	45
Parallel Terraces	Mile	3	3	2
Diversion Terraces	Miles		5	1
Tile Drains	Mile	4	56	2
Grassed Waterway				
Shaping	Acres	39	543	45
Gully Control				
Structures	Number	1	28	5
Contour Field				
Boundaries	Rods	1,832	58,401	2,000

Acknowledgment

The District recognizes the assistance rendered by many groups and individuals. This cooperation has made possible most of the progress that has been made.

The District is ready and willing to help the land owners and operators of the Ida County Soil Conservation District solve their soil conservation problems.

Chester G. Chailman, Chairman
Wm. Rossow, Vice Chairman
W. F. Burrow, Commissioner
Ray Brenahan, Treasurer
Arnold Putensen, Secretary
Ray Brenahan