

Henry County Soil & Water Conservation District
709 S. Iris Street, Suite 101
Mt. Pleasant, Iowa 52641
319-385-2824, Ext 3

2011 Annual Report
July 1, 2010 to June 30, 2011

"Our mission is to provide leadership and administer programs to help people conserve, improve and sustain our natural resources and environment."



**Jim Gillespie selected as
IDALS Division of Soil
Conservation Director**



See page 5 for introduction

- **District Commissioners:**
Jan Anderson, Allan Barnes, Harlan Miller, Darrell Mullin, Rick Mallams.
- **Assistant commissioners:**
Chuck Allen & Rob Smith, Ross Tweedy, Jeff Olson
- **IDALS DSC Staff:**
*Barb Shelman, Secretary
Michael Allen, Technician
Caleb Waters, Geode Coordinator*
- **NRCS Staff:**
*Doug Ensminger, District Conservationist
Josh Sieren, Soil Conservationist
Dale Schmeiser, Soil Conservation Technician
Randy Robb, Wetland Specialist*

**Conservation Districts of Iowa &
Richard D. Gholson Memorial
Scholarships**

DeAnn Scott, Mt Pleasant High School, was selected to represent Henry County for the CDI Scholarship. As a result of being selected for the CDI Scholarship she was also awarded the Richard D. Gholson Memorial Scholarship of \$1000. DeAnn is attending Iowa State University, Majoring in Agricultural Business.

FORESTS FOR PEOPLE

MORE THAN YOU CAN IMAGINE!

Soil & Water Stewardship Materials purchased by the Henry County Soil and Water Conservation District were provided to New London, Mt. Pleasant, Waco and Winfield-Mt. Union School Districts. Thirteen teachers used these materials to promote soil and water conservation to their students. Posters created for the 2011 Poster Contest featured the theme **"Forests For People More Than You Can Imagine"**. Grinnell Mutual Reinsurance Company, Conservation Districts of Iowa, and the Henry County SWCD co sponsor the SWCD contest. Winners of the 2011 Poster Contest were:



WMU



**Morgan Grell-1st Place
& Isaac Schurr-2nd Place
Grades K - 1st**

Waco



**Jordan Wyse &
Darius Shumaker
Grades K - 1st**



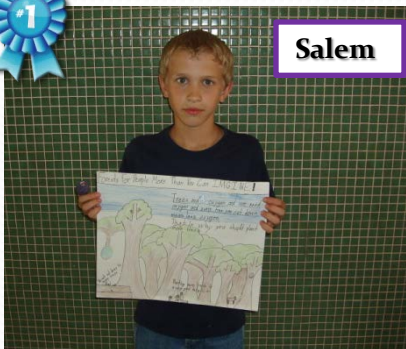
Salem



**Logan Lee
Grades 2 - 3
1st Place**



Salem



**Justin Rauenbuehler
Grades 4 - 6
1st Place**

New London



**Evangelina Hernandez &
Aidan Pealer
Grades 2 - 3**

Mt. Pleasant



**Veronica Griffin
Grades 4 - 6
2nd Place**

Mt. Pleasant



**Breanna Keidgord
Grades 4 - 6**



**SWCD Chairman Allan Barnes presents Regional awards to Morgan Grell
1st Place winner in K-1st and Logan Lee 1st Place winner in 2-3**

District Financial Report of State Funds & Accomplishments: July 1, 2010 to June 30, 2011

Budget-Operating Funds

Commissioner and Office Expenses

Total Allocations	\$2,810.00
Commissioner Meeting Expense	\$697.80
Office Expenses	\$285.77
CDI & NACD Dues	\$1,150.00
Educational Materials/Awards	\$ 240.10
Postage	\$ 437.02
Total Expenditures	\$2,810.69
Balance	\$ (0.69)

REAP

Resource Enhancement And Protection 75% Cost-Share Funds

Cedar Creek Priority Watershed Practices Fund

21,300 L.F. Terraces & 0.7 ac. Waterways

2010 Projects Rolled Over	\$27,142.12
Initial Allocation	\$9,827.53
Supplemental Allocation	\$29,482.59
Total Allocations	\$66,452.24
Projects Complete & Paid	\$54,992.87
Funds Rolled Over to 2011	\$11,290.00
Funds Recalled as of 6-30-10	\$169.37

Forestry/Grasses Fund

Timber Stand Improvement 95 ac. Tree Planting 5.0 Ac.

2010 Projects Rolled Over	\$10,200.00
Initial Allocation	\$3,276.90
Supplemental Allocation	\$9,830.70
Total Allocations	\$23,307.60
Funds Complete & Paid	\$15,498.00
Funds Rolled Over to 2011	\$7,809.60
Funds Recalled as of 6-30-10	\$0.00

Local Watershed Protection Program (LWPP) 3% Loans: 12 Projects Completed 8.2 Ac. Waterways, 1 Livestock Facility, 1 Livestock Watering System & Fence, 2 Grade Stabilization Structures. 1 Basin

Loan Funds Allocated	\$532,423.75
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State Cost-Share Funds

Terraces 16,950 L.F., 4 Basins, Waterways 3.2 ac.

2011-Cost Share

2010 Practices Rolled Over	\$60,114.72
Initial Allocation	\$ 0.00
Supplemental Allocation	\$6,072.00
Total Allocations	\$66,186.72
Projects Complete & Paid	\$62,438.33
Projects Rolled Over to 2011	\$2,160.00
Funds Recalled as of 6-30-10	\$1,588.39

State Bonding 2 Cost-Share Funds

Terraces 70,500 L.F

2011-Bonding 2 Funds

2010 Practices Rolled Over	\$0.00
Initial Allocation	\$37,048.37
Supplemental Allocation	\$111,145.11
Total Allocations	\$148,193.48
Projects Complete & Paid	\$113,290.88
Projects Rolled Over to 2011	\$33,600.00
Funds Recalled as of 6-30-10	\$1,302.60

2011 Storm Damage Repair Bonding Funds 211 Projects Repaired

2011-Storm Damage Repair

Total Allocations	\$554,743.26
Projects Complete & Paid	\$329,726.07
Projects Rolled Over to 2011	\$65,938.89
Balance carried to FY12	\$51,896.08

State Revolving Fund--No-Interest 0% Loans 2 Grade Stabilization Structures Constructed

2011 Allocation	\$60,000.00
Projects Complete & Paid	\$40,000.00
Projects Rolled Over to 2011	\$20,000.00
Funds Recalled as of 6-30-2011	\$0.00

All services and programs are offered on a
nondiscriminatory basis.

Watershed Reports

❖ Cedar Creek Watershed

The District has targeted Cedar Creek Watershed as a priority for REAP Practice funds. Landowners in this watershed can apply for 50% cost share funds to construct soil & water conservation practices on their land. See the REAP-Practice funds above for practices completed in this Watershed in FY11.

❖ Geode Watershed

Special Lakes Funding: Landowners in Lake Geode Watershed (Baltimore Twp., sections 13, 23, 24, 25, 26, 35 & 36) can apply for 75% cost share funds to construct practices.



❖ Heather Branch Watershed

A Watershed Management Plan was completed on the Heather Branch Watershed. Funding was received from the Henry County Pheasant's Forever Chapter to purchase native grass seed for the area in front of the USDA Office. The watershed is being reviewed due to the high potential for human contact through town and below the Old Threshers grounds.



FY2011 Lake Geode Public Owned Lakes:

One project was approved in Henry County for Special Lakes Funds for 1100 LF of terrace construction. Above: A terrace re-build project that has been completed on Irene Dohrmann's farm in Des Moines County. Due to the milder winter contractors have been able to continue working.

❖ Wayland Hydrology Study

Snyder & Associates for Ankeny, Iowa completed the assessment of hydrology for the Wayland watershed. The final plan calls for several bioretention/rain gardens, ponds, a grade stabilization structure and a swale improvement. A copy of the final report is on file in the SWCD Office.





Preparing for the Future By Jim Gillespie

I want to take this opportunity to introduce myself as the new Director of the Iowa Department of Agriculture & Land Stewardship's Division of Soil Conservation. I look forward to working with everyone, and am eager to build on the theme for this year's soil and water conservation efforts in "Preparing for the Future."

- I have been involved with agriculture and the environment my whole life. I grew up on a farm in western Nebraska, went to high school and junior college in Creston, Iowa, received my degree in Vocational Agriculture at Northwest Missouri State University and taught Vocational Agriculture for the Earlham Community School District, in Earlham, Iowa for four years before I came to work for the Department of Soil Conservation in 1983. In 1987, the Department of Soil Conservation became a part of the Iowa Department of Agriculture, and the name was changed to the Department of Agriculture and Land Stewardship. In total, I have worked with soil and water conservation issues for over 28 years; first as Field Representative in western Iowa, then serving as Bureau Chief for Field Services. In December of 2011, the Iowa Secretary of Agriculture, Bill Northey offered me the opportunity to serve as the Director of the Division of Soil Conservation and I gladly accepted.
- I am pleased to have this opportunity, and want to help our state continually improve and build upon the legacy of soil and water conservation efforts we have achieved thus far. Iowa has always been a leader in conservation efforts, and been looked at by other states and nationally for direction. This has only been accomplished through the efforts of a lot of dedicated people. We have had strong partnerships with all of our Soil and Water Conservation Districts and the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service for over 60 years; these partnerships have done a lot for conservation. As always, we will continue to foster partnerships with other federal, state and local partners to provide the best opportunities for Iowans to put get conservation on the land.
- None of this would have been possible without farmers and landowners willing to protect the land through implementation of conservation practices. These practices have maintained productivity of our land, and kept soil and nutrients out of the water.
- In my new role, I want to help our staff, commissioners and other partners to help all of our customers protect the soil and water of Iowa. We will need to continue working together as the future brings increased demands placed on our state's resources. It is important that we do everything we can to keep Iowa as productive as possible if we are going to help feed an ever growing population. We can all work together to do just that in a sustainable way.
- I look forward to the future because I see Iowa's future being bright and even more important in the global economy. Thank you all for everything you do!

Soil and water conservation districts work closely with a number of local, state and federal agencies, as well as with local groups and organizations. In particular, the Iowa Department of Agriculture and Land Stewardship, Division of Soil Conservation and the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Services have close ties with the districts. The Division helps districts administer state and local programs, including financial incentive programs and assigns state technical and secretarial people to districts. The NRCS works through districts, providing technical soil conservationists and other natural resource specialists as well as office space for the local district. Districts work closely with other entities including the Iowa Association of Soil and Water Conservation District Commissioners, USDA Farm Services Agency, USDA Rural Development, State Soil Conservation Committee, Iowa Cooperative Extension Service, Iowa Department of Natural Resources, county conservation boards, county boards of supervisors, drainage districts and levee districts.



Maximizing Yields In Harmony with the Environment By Rich Sims NRCS State Conservationist



Iowa's 99 counties make up a little more than 36 million acres. And as every farmer knows, not all those acres are created equal when you consider their productivity or "farmability."

The current farming culture is pushing these acres beyond their capabilities. This causes more ephemeral gully erosion and sediment issues, increases nutrient runoff and damages soil quality.

According to the National Resources Inventory (NRI), nearly 75 percent of Iowa's land was used to grow crops in 1985. But after conservation compliance was introduced by the 1985 Farm Bill, these acres started to drop as less suitable land came out of row crop production and was converted to other uses like trees, pasture and CRP. Cultivated cropland acres eventually dropped nearly 2 million acres by 1992 to 23.9 million acres.

Since then, we've seen a slow and steady increase in the number of cultivated acres. The most recent NRI study shows Iowa farmers planted 24.4 million acres of cropland in 2007, about one million shy of the peak in the 1985 NRI.

I would guess, based on all of the newly installed tile, and piles of cleared trees and old fences, the next NRI will show the number of cultivated acres will be near the 1985 mark or even higher.

This reversal is not good for Iowa's natural resources. It's not good for the long-term sustainability of our state.

Despite market pressures to maximize acres to bring bigger profits, conservation compliance is still a requirement. Farmers need to be cautious about wetland provisions when installing tile, clearing trees or completing other land altering measures. If they aren't, they could lose their farm program benefits according to the conservation compliance provisions of the 1985 Farm Bill.

NRCS understands that farmers need to make money. They are in the business of earning a profit. That is why a farmer's economic goals are one of the factors considered in our nine-step planning process. But through this process we ask producers to balance their need for profit with the needs of the environment.

For example, let's look at tiling. At NRCS we understand many producers are using tile as a management tool to help maximize yields. We want farmers to maximize yields in harmony with the environment.

We all know tile lines can be a direct link for nutrients to reach surface water. Therefore, more tile lines, mean an increased possibility of damaging water quality with excess nutrients. But there are some mitigating practices farmers can install to help reduce the risk to water quality.

These measures would include:

Installing tile at 2.5 feet in depth verses the traditional 3.5 feet. Installing bioreactors to help filter nutrients from tile water before it enters surface waters.

Following the 4Rs, or a nutrient management plan that considers the right fertilizer source at the right rate, at the right time and in the right place.

I understand we are in an era of tremendous farm income. And it's these opportunities for profit that are driving farmers to plant as many acres as they can. It's my hope farmers can chase those dollars while doing good things for the environment at the same time.

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Barb Shelman receives DSC Employee of the Month Award from Vince Sitzmann, Field Rep.



Dale Schmeiser, Soil Conservation Technician started in Mt Pleasant in September



Randy Robb, Easement Specialist said "good-bye in December.



Barb and FSA ladies dress as gnomes for Halloween



Marilyn Scott, FSA and Cheri Byrum, RD both retired August 31st.



Tom Vilsack , Secretary of Agriculture visits USDA Office