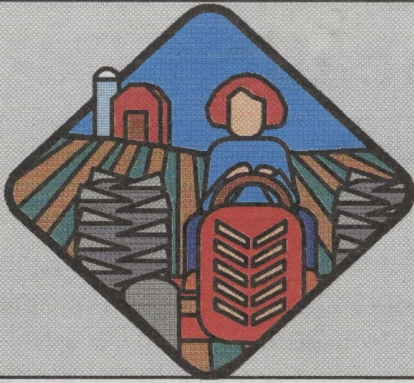




SOIL & WATER CONSERVATION UPDATE

A Newsletter from the Dickinson County SWCD

May 1998

Here's what EQIP can do for you...

The Environmental Quality Incentive Program (EQIP) is the new Farm Program that provides monetary support for applying conservation practices to your land. The EQIP program is available for the whole county, but there are three priority areas in Dickinson County. The three priority areas are:

- ◆ Iowa Great Lakes Watershed
- ◆ Silver Lake Watershed
- ◆ One mile from the Little Sioux River

EQIP is a good program for farmers because it allows the farmer to use more flexibility in protecting their land. The EQIP is used to help the farmer his or her farm no matter what the problem. Some of the main practices that are cost shared with EQIP include:

- ◆ Animal Waste Pits
- ◆ Pasture Management
- ◆ Integrated Crop Management
- ◆ Organic farming

There are many other practices that are cost - sharable under EQIP, but those are the most popular selections. This is the first time since Farm Bill began that items such as pasture management and watering systems are available for cost share. It should be a great incentive for animal farmers.

If you are interested in improving your farming operation in any way, give us a call. We can help by providing information, cost share, advice. EQIP is an innovative conservation program, it can help solve all the problems on your farm or just a few but it provides valuable resources to get the job done.

Anyone with farmland is eligible to participate in EQIP. You may contact either the Natural Resource Conservation Service at (712) 336-2604, or the Farm Service Agency at (712)336-3782.

District Commissioners

Mark Ingwersen — Chairperson
Keith Van Kleek — Vice Chair
Tim Hemphill — Secretary
Orville Berg — Treasurer
Chris Hoffman
Lance Heikens — Assistant

~~~~~

### District Website

Dickinson SWCD

[www.ia.nrcs.usda.gov/county/dickinson.html](http://www.ia.nrcs.usda.gov/county/dickinson.html)

### District Mission Statement

~~~~~

The Dickinson SWCD will serve it's customers and the needs of the District's natural resources through education, promotion, and demonstration.

Environmental Education

Our EE efforts continue to grow and we are pleased to share this year's results with you.

Envirothon ~ this national competition is available for High School Teams across Iowa, and the Dickinson SWCD sponsors interested Teams by covering their entry fee.

Marc Benedict and 2 Terril High School Teams went to Regionals where 1 Team took first place and advanced to the State Competition in Madrid, IA. They continued their success and will be representing the State of Iowa at the National Competition during July in Michigan! Congrats!

College Scholarship ~ offered each year by the District to a Dickinson County graduating senior planning to pursue a college course of study in ag. or environmental sciences.

Michael Lambert (Okoboji) was selected as the recipient of the 1998 Award.

Stewardship Poster Contest ~ sponsored by the District encouraging students in grades K-12 to show their interpretation of the year's Stewardship theme.

Three winners were selected in Dickinson County to advance to the Regional level, and they are:
Alex Miles - Spirit Lake, 1st Grade; **Kay Oskvig - Okoboji**, 2nd Grade; **Sarah Marsh - Okoboji**, 4th Grade.

Conservation Staff

Ann Ditsworth — State Secretary
Paula Koster — Conservation Assistant
Carroll Oskvig — District Conservationist
Willard Punt — Soil Conservation Technician
John Wills — Environmental Specialist
Jim Bell — Earth Team Volunteer
Clarence Call — Earth Team Volunteer
Maurice Dougal — Earth Team Volunteer

Wonders of Wildlife Gardens ~ event

held at each Elementary School in the County during Earth Week. The

District teamed up with the County Conservation Board with to establish a wildflower area that can be an environmental learning area for the students.

Shore Patrol '98 ~ the District is among the sponsors of this event in which the H-LP, Okoboji, and Spirit Lake Middle School students help prepare lakeshores and State Parks for the summer season.

These projects would not be possible without the willingness of the County's Schools to allow their students to participate. We appreciate this partnership and look forward to continued EE support in 1999.

Maintaining Windbreaks

Windbreaks are susceptible to livestock damage, insect damage and diseases, as well as weed competition.

Livestock should be excluded from windbreaks to avoid browsing and trampling of seedlings. Soil compaction may occur as a result of livestock grazing near trees & shrubs.

It is important to identify insect damage and disease early to prevent immediate or delayed damage to windbreaks

Weed competition is the leading cause of failure for newly planted windbreaks. At a minimum, a 3' diameter area around each tree should be kept free of grass and weeds for 3-5

years. Pre-emergent herbicides and cultivations help in minimizing cultivation. Areas subject to erosion can be protected by planting annual crops between rows. If you have questions about windbreak maintenance, call us at (712) 336-2604.

