

Soil Conservation Report

Spring Farm Edition
Section C

The Bloomfield Democrat
April 3, 1975



1974 Commissioner's activities

January

C.I. Heady attended the Short-Course for soil commissioners at Ames.

February

Mr. and Mrs. C.I. Heady, Mr. and Mrs. Sam Botts and Mr. and Mrs. Charles Chickering attended the NACD Convention in Houston, Texas.

March

Conservation Education Committee met March 18 with 2 new members—Quentin Johnson and Debbie Baughman. There were 91 Soil Conservation Art Posters prepared by grades 5, 6, 7 and 8 submitted to the office for judging. Judges were 3 retired teachers—George Williams, Cliff Cronk and Enid Stober. These were later displayed at Uncle Bob's Ice Cream Shop. (Uncle Bob sponsored this contest.)

Iles Heady met with the county ministerial association and gave them the soil stewardship week materials they requested for use in the churches of the county.

Some shrubs and seeds were given to the Davis County Community School for use in the Outdoor Classroom project.

Twenty-five per cent State Cost-sharing on the Long Term Agreements which are to receive 50 per cent federal cost-sharing on, was approved by the commissioners after special meeting with the ASC County Committee to discuss the LTA program.

April

A supplemental allocation of 3-M cost-sharing funds (\$3639.07) was received for the 1973-74 fiscal year, making total allocation of \$13,900 for the fiscal year.

The District Soil Conservation Speech contest was held April 29 at the Davis County Community High School with 5 contestants. Charles Wix was the district winner and represented the district in regional competition in July. Cash awards were presented to the three top contestants by Clifford Foster, local insurance agent.

May

The two Earth Science teachers at Davis County Community School—Gail Wortman and Richard Squire—attended the 1974 Iowa Teachers Conservation Camp session at the Ottumwa Indian Hills Community College Campus. They were each given \$50 scholarships by the local Izaak Walton Club.

June

After visiting several farms

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"Our soil is not just dirt. It is a factory where everything needed to feed plants, animals and human beings is made."

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"God has lent us the earth for our life. It belongs as much to those who are to come after us as to us, and we have no right to anything we do or neglect, to involve them of the benefit which was in our power to bequeath."

—Ruskin

Commissioner's Message

The Davis County Soil Conservation District presents its 30th annual report to the cooperators of Davis County as a part of the Bloomfield Democrat's April 3 publication, featuring farming and farmers of Davis County.

Along with our report of regular accomplishments, we call attention to the awards program for youth of the district in the form of various contests:—the annual soil judging contest for sophomore ag students; the 5th, 6th, 7th and 8th grade Soil Conservation Poster contest; the Queen of Conservation Contest; the Soil Conservation Speech contest. We feel education in the field of soil conservation for our youth is vital if we are to assure future generations a continuing abundance of farm produce.

We must realize the God given quality soil of Iowa requires our best stewardship if we are to continue to provide food in abundance. As commissioners for the district, we must continue to educate the people of the need for establishing the best soil conservation practices for the particular soil problem. Our stewardship of the soil is essential if we are to help alleviate the starving in the world.

Our heavy spring rains in 1974 caused some of the most severe soil erosion in many years. These weather conditions also pointed out vividly the value of established soil conserving practices—where minor soil erosion was evidenced.

We urge the farmers of Davis County to discuss with the soil conservation office personnel any conservation problem they may be having. Our technical staff is eager to provide the technical help you request. Stop in at the office in Bloomfield before the 1975 farming season and have the staff help you plan for your farming operations this year.

Your Commissioners—

C.I. Heady, Lionel Herteen, Sam Botts, Robert Boatman, Phillip Melvin and LaVern Weilbrenner

in the district, the commissioners decided not to submit any entries in the 1974 Iowa Conservation Awards program.

Four farmers signed LTA's on their farms and plans were adopted for the long term application of practices on these farms.

July

A Davis County Pasture Inventory and Evaluation was completed by Verle Arnold and given district approval.

The commissioner election nominating committee (Herman Bachman, Allen White, John Swartzendruber,

Bob Chickering and Floyd Newell) nominated Phillip Melvin, Bob Boatman, Donnel Berryman and Joe Dean Berryman and Joe Dean Wells as candidates for two 6-year terms to succeed Sam Botts and Phillip Melvin, whose terms expire this fall. Sam Botts declined to run for the office again.

The district voted to help finance rental of a tent to use for agriculture related exhibits at the local county fair July 18, 19 and 20.

C.I. Heady, Lionel Herteen, Phillip Melvin, LaVern Weilbrenner and Charles Chickering and their wives

attended the Region 9 SCD meeting in Ottumwa July 12th.

August

Because of the inability to obtain easements or the needed land treatment applied, the commissioners requested deletion of 10 grade stabilization structure sites (1-A, 14-B, 14-C, 14-C-1, 21-1, 27-A-1, 31-1, 31-B, 38-1, and 52) in the Big Wyacondah Watershed.

September

The annual inspection of completed Big Wyacondah Watershed structural practices was conducted September 5 by the commissioners and the county supervisors. Very little maintenance repair is needed at these installations.

Eleven applications were approved for the installation of terraces and structures with state cost-sharing provided from our 1975 3-M cost-sharing funds of \$13,900.

One hundred booklets (Plants, Animals and Man—Sharing the Earth—An Ecology Story) were purchased for use in the 6th grade science classes of Davis County Community Schools.

Homer Rysdam, local dirt contractor, completed the needed repairs and reseeding of the area at Sites 27-H, 27-H6 and 8 in the Big Wyacondah Watershed.

Mr. and Mrs. C.I. Heady, Mr. and Mrs. Charles Chickering, Mr. and Mrs. LaVern Weilbrenner, Mr. and Mrs. Phillip Melvin and Mrs. Christine Botts attended the State SCD Conference for commissioners and clerks September 8, 9 and 10 at Fort Dodge, Iowa.

October

The Bloomfield banks again agreed to finance the farmer conservation awards and present them at the November Cooperator banquet. Mr. and Mrs. Barton Cary and Mr. and Mrs. Dean Grim were selected to receive

the awards.

Forty-five sophomore agriculture students participated in a Soil Judging contest October 23 with these winners named—Jeff Wuthrich, first; Tom White, second; David Rysdam, third, they were guests at the November banquet and were presented with engraved plaques.

November

C.I. Heady, LaVern Weilbrenner, Phillip Melvin and Verle Arnold attended the November 13 meeting at Ottumwa Industrial Airport to discuss the possibility of organizing the counties of Davis, Jefferson, Wapello, Mahaska, Keokuk, and Van Buren in a Resource Conservation and Development project.

The annual cooperators banquet and commissioners election was held November 17 at the American Legion Hall. Allan Seim, Area Extension Agronomist, was the guest speaker. Elected to serve 6-year terms as commissioners for the Davis district were Phillip Melvin and Robert Boatman. Election judges were Carl Games, Vern Randolph and Lester McClure.

December

The district commissioners re-organized for the coming 2-years with the same officers re-elected: Chairman, C.I. Heady; Secretary, LaVern Weilbrenner; Treasurer, Phillip Melvin.

A request from Bloomfield Mayor Nardini for assistance from the district to supply soils information in regard to sewer facilities for the city, was approved and the technical guidance will be furnished.

State cost-sharing bills were received and approved for payment on 18 farm agreements in 1974 and several practices were completed, except for the seeding practice, which is delayed until spring of 1975.

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Financial report

DISTRICT REVOLVING FUND

(Calendar year 1974)

Balance on hand January 1, 1974\$711.07

INCOME

Royalty from rock quarry lease\$390.05
 State Comptroller (Reimbursement)773.49
 Banquet Ticket money277.36
 Davis Co. Savings Bank & Exchange Bank
 (Farmer Awards)42.06
 Flags resold15.00
 Uncle Bob's for Conservation Poster Awards14.14

EXPENSE

Office Supplies and materials381.09
 State and National Dues250.00
 Commissioners Expense288.46
 Soil Stewardship Materials48.06
 Meeting Expense79.56
 Prizes and Awards174.69
 Other Expense40.48
 Balance on hand December 31, 1974\$593.58

I-M BUDGET (Fiscal Year 1974)

The I-M Budget (determined each year through state legislation) pays the District Commissioners expenses while conducting district business, some office expense, printing expense, meeting expense and contest awards. The State Department of Soil Conservation determines the allocation each district receives.

Allocation for 1974 Fiscal Year\$1,200.00
 Commissioners Expenses\$576.31
 Office Supplies144.38
 Contest Awards94.87
 Office Expense273.38
 Meeting Expense35.01

Balance on hand June 30, 1974\$76.05

II-M BUDGET (Fiscal 1974)

The II-M Budget is allocated through the Department of Soil Conservation (by state legislation) to enable full time employment of a clerk and state aide and some office equipment maintenance.

Allocation for 1974 Fiscal Year\$15,165.18
 Gross earnings\$13,299.00
 Travel expense86.71
 District Share IPERS465.47
 District Share FICA778.00
 District Share Life Insurance72.00
 District Share Health Insurance360.00
 Equipment Maintenance104.00

Balance on hand June 30, 1974\$000.00

III-M BUDGET (Fiscal 1974)

The III-M Budget is a "first of its kind" in Iowa and is the leader for the nation in recognizing that needed soil conserving practices must be placed on the land to assure the people of a continued abundance of agricultural products being available. This budget was set up through an appropriation of funds by the state legislature and allocated through the Department of Soil Conservation to each of the 100 Soil conservation districts of Iowa to help cost-share on soil conservation practices. The practices to receive cost-sharing assistance were determined locally by the 5-man board of soil district commissioners.

Total Allocation for Fiscal 1974\$13,900.00
 Amount paid to farmers by June 30, 1974
 (11 practices)\$7987.31
 Amount Obligated for 9 practices not complete at
 at the close of the fiscal year5912.69

Balance on hand June 30, 1974\$1.15

We, the commissioners, wish to express our thanks to the state legislature for their continued interest in the soil conservation program of Iowa and to the Department of Soil Conservation for their capable guidance in our efforts to establish the needed soil conserving practices within our district.

New Cooperators

Davis SCD New Cooperators
1974 Fiscal Year

Dean Amstutz
 Daniel Beachy
 Jacob Beachy
 Doran Bollman
 F.H. Boyd
 Ronald Campbell
 Tom Chenoweth
 Ronald G. Cook
 Wayne Davis
 E.D. Dixon
 Jimmy Dixon
 John & Gene Duffield
 Florence Erhardt
 Wayne Garrett
 Dewey Gingerich
 Rodney Good
 Doran Gravett
 Richard Green
 Donald E. Grim
 David Haffner
 James W. Hawk
 Lane Heckethorn
 Don A. Horn
 Lewis R. Horn
 Ben Howk
 R.C. Johnston
 Robert J. Jones
 Lawrence Klicker
 Roger C. Knapp
 Kenneth Lammert
 Carroll A. Lanman
 Robert C. Lee
 Donald Martin
 Paul Matheney
 Carl Robert Miller
 Elijah W. Miller
 Garmon Morse
 Robert Northup
 Terry Paris
 Virgil Sheppard
 M.D. Spurgeon
 David Swaim
 Donald Tharp
 Duane Thies
 Robert Ussery
 Mrs. D.W. Van Horn
 Clinton Vanny
 Jack & Don White
 William Wuthrich
 Jim F. Yenger

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 "If you're not part of the
 solution—you're part of the
 pollution."

SCD staff

1974

30th ANNUAL REPORT OF DAVIS COUNTY SOIL CONSERVATION DISTRICT COMMISSIONERS

C.I. Heady Chairman
 LaVern Weilbrenner Secretary
 Phillip Melvin Treasurer
 Lionel Herteen Member
 Sam Botts Jr. Member (Jan-Nov.)
 Robert Boatman Member (Dec.—)
 Charles Chickering Ass't. Commissioner

SCS OFFICE STAFF

Verle Arnold District Conservationist
 Eugene Francis Conservation Technician
 Roger Fry Conservation Aide
 Christine Botts Clerk-Typist

AREA SCS PERSONNEL

Eldon Weber Area Conservationist
 Margaret Dickey Area Clerk
 Tom Brown Civil Engineer
 Jim Seaholm Soil Scientist
 Stanley Simmons Cons. Engineer Technician
 Roderic Howarth Cons. Engineer Technician

Basic, revised plans

Basic Plans (Fiscal Year 1974)

Earl Brooke
 Hickory Knoll
 Doran Bollman
 DeVere Savage
 Wayne Davis
 Gary Scott
 Gloria Baughman
 Richard Ward
 Lewis Horn
 Otis Dearborn
 Laddie Archer
 Denny Cole
 Ron Cook
 Carroll Lanman
 Ronald Campbell
 Wayne Schooley
 John Graves
 Bill Grim
 Garry Klicerck
 Bill Wuthrich
 Robert Woodward
 Robert Ussery
 Robert Taylor
 Mike Spurgeon
 Dennis Archer

Jimmy Dixon
 Dick McGowen
 Gordon Appenzeller
 L.R. Smith

Revised Farm Plans (Fiscal Year 1974)

Max Proctor
 Keith Johnson
 David Eaton
 Arch Marshall
 Joan Steinway
 Chester Adams
 Dean Grim
 Myron White
 Raymond Townsend
 Phil Herteen
 Gerald Bescoe
 Ed Amstutz
 Robert Boatman
 O.J. Scott
 Frank Shively
 Ronald Shively
 Exchange Bank
 Rex Miller
 Charles Kinnamon
 Jimmy Dixon

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Set watershed contract letting

Plans have been completed for 12 structure sites in Big Wyacondah Watershed and the construction contract is scheduled to be let soon after the first of July 1975. The district commissioners and the supervisors of Davis County met with the SCS watershed planning party and eliminated structure sites that did not meet the needed land treatment requirements or that easements had not

been obtained from. Since federal environmental impact provisions have become a part of planning watershed work, the method of improving the channel work as planned in the workplan could not be done, as planned. Because of the cost-benefit ratio being excessively high (under required changes), the Little Wyacondah channel construction work was deleted from the workplan by

the sponsoring organization after much discussion.

At this time, plans are to let the final contract for Structure Sites 7, 10, 13, 16, 21-B, 21-B-1, 21-C, 27-H, 27-2, 27-H, 28, 38-E and 38-G-1. Sixteen acres of wildlife plantings were added to the workplan, to replace any wildlife habitat which may have been destroyed at the structure sites.

This 16 acres of wildlife

plantings (a requirement workplan modification as a result of federal environmental impact rulings) may be located any place within the watershed. A minimum of one acre may be set aside on any farm in this area. The area may be at a pond or structure site or an odd area. The areas will be fenced and seeded or planted with watershed funds financing the costs involved

for materials and labor.

These plantings could be located at the proposed watershed construction sites, but other locations may be just as desirable. If your farm is located within the Big Wyacondah watershed and you have an area of one acre or more you would like to have planted for wildlife habitat, you are urged to contact the SCD Office.

For conservation—

Long term agreements

By CHRISTINE BOTTS

In 1974 every Davis County farmer was presented with the opportunity to establish a complete conservation program on his farm with a Long Term Agreement. This agreement is a joint venture between you (the farmer) and the federal government which guarantees cost-sharing assistance for the completion of a full fledged conservation program on your particular unit of land, regardless of the number of acres involved. The time allowed to complete the agreement ranges from a minimum of three years to a maximum of ten years.

This is the way the program worked. You (the farmer) make the decision to enter the program. We (the soil conservation district personnel) start preparing a conservation plan of operations. This is a record of the farmers decisions to adequately treat every acre on his land unit. After we have decided together on the needed practices on your farm, we plan for the proper

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The 1969 census of agriculture reported 621 farms operated by corporations. Of that number, 553 had 10 or fewer shareholders which earlier studies suggest are primarily family operations. In terms of number of farms, corporations make up just over one-half of one per cent of all farms in Iowa. And these farms account for about one per cent of the land.

sequence of installing these practices, in line with your wishes and financing. This is for a period of three years or more. Now you have a plan of what you intend to do and what year you plan to do it.

Next, we estimate the cost of installation in the year the installation is planned and until all practices can be applied. Some adjustments may be necessary over the period of years of the agreement.

Now that all of the plans are made, the estimated cost-sharing help for each year is determined. The federal government cost-shared on a 50 per cent basis with a maximum of \$2500 per farm per year for the 1974 agreements in our county. The district commissioners agreed to help the farmer get started the first year of application by funding 25 per cent of the installation costs for the 1974 practices—leaving 25 per cent of the installation cost for the farmer to pay this year.

In the 1974 program, the Davis County ASC Committee and the Davis County Soil Conservation District Commissioners approved Long Term Agreements for four farmers. The 50 per cent federal cost-sharing funds is provided for as many years as required to complete the needed practices, but the district commissioners approved the 25 per cent state cost-sharing funds for the first year of the contract only. The federal funds will be provided for each year of the

contract even if there is not an annual cost-sharing program for conservation practices.

If you were one of the farmers who signed contracts in 1974 for this Long Term Agreement (LTA), you are aware of the benefits and have started completing the conservation program on your farm. If you did not contract for the 1974 LTA and if the program is again made available, we hope you will consider the benefits and prepare to start an LTA for 1975 on your farm.

Some of the advantages to consider of the LTA are:

1. Practices applied according to a Conservation Plan.
2. Funds assured for the term of your LTA.
3. Only one sign-up for the complete program.
4. Cost-shared referrals issued each year as agreed to in the LTA.
5. A long-term plan the farmer can count on through the term of the agreement.
6. Helps farmer meet the Iowa legal requirements of the soil erosion and sediment law.
7. Assures the farmer of the technical assistance as he needs it.
8. Provides long-term benefits for the community.

If each farm in the state of Iowa could be assured of LTA's similar to the 1974 program, the erosion and sediment losses of the state would be held well below the soil loss limits established by the state law.

Record crops are dangerous

Farmer intentions for planting a record acreage of corn and soybeans this year has brought warnings from soil conservationists that the increased acreage makes another potentially dangerous year for soil erosion.

Erosion in Iowa Davis County was the worst last year it had been in 25 years, and the potential is there this year unless precautions are taken, they advise.

"The trend to intensive rowcrop has steadily increased erosion possibilities in recent years," says C.I. Heady, chairman of the Davis County Soil Conservation District. In Iowa, corn and soybean acreage planting intentions for this year are 20.4 million acres, a 1.4 per cent increase over last year. It's a 33 per cent increase in these row crops from 10 years ago. Davis County figures follow the same pattern of total increased row crop acreage. However, the big increase has been in soybeans. According to the census reports, Davis County farmers planted only 10 per cent more acres of corn but over 50 per cent more acres of soybeans in 1974 than they did in 1965. Many of these increased row crop acres were on land that is quite rolling and hilly and subject to severe erosion.

"Last year's wet spring and then drought in the summer caused a shortage of forage, and many took corn stalks off their fields for winter feed. This opens up even more chance for erosion on cropland," says Verle Arnold,

District Conservationist of the Soil Conservation Service.

Most conservation practices take time to become established, like terraces, ponds, windbreaks and others. But one practice, conservation tillage, takes effect immediately and can be practiced this spring. Leaving the plow in storage and using a disk, chisel, or other machine to prepare land for planting is the first step. "These operations help to leave crop residue on top of the ground to protect against erosion," Arnold says. "But they can be overdone. Too many trips with a chisel or disk can cover residue, and that defeats their purpose. The true test is whether enough residue is left on the soil surface. Generally, 3,000-4,000 pounds of residue per acre left on top of the soil reduces erosion by half."

You can get recommendations on how to produce more on intensive rowcrop while you protect your soil from the soil conservation district office at 106 North Dodge Street, Bloomfield.

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