



Des Moines County Soil and Water Conservation District

73rd Annual Report

Vince Sitzmann

IDALS DSCWQ Field Services Chief



When I was a kid growing up on the farm, I remember mom and dad used to take us kids for an evening drive around the countryside. At the time, I never really understood the purpose, but I enjoyed them none the less. My dad was in his own little world, arm out the window, commenting occasionally how great Jim's beans looked or what a great stand of corn Roy had. Mom even seemed to get a little peace and quiet during these drives, as my brothers and I were mesmerized by the cool breeze and the orange glow of the sunset in the horizon. On one of these excursions, I remember asking my dad what those grass lines in the field were. "Those are terraces" he replied without hesitation. At the time, his explanation of why they were out there didn't make much sense to a 10-year-old, but he was my dad and he knew everything.

Now that I'm older and work in the conservation field, I've seen lots of new technologies that make farming and livestock production much more efficient and productive. Technology and research has led to the development of new practices, such as bioreactors, saturated buffers and nitrogen mitigating wetlands, but technology and research has also confirmed that many of the practices farmers and landowners were building back in the early forties are still effective today.

The Iowa Department of Agriculture and Land Stewardship has partnered with farmers and landowners for more than four decades, to support the adoption of proven conservation practices. Recently, the Department partnered with Iowa State University, Iowa Department of Natural Resources, Iowa Nutrient Research Center, and the National Laboratory for Agriculture and the Environment, to complete a statewide effort to identify and map six types of common conservation practices. The study is the most comprehensive inventory of conservation practices in the nation. An analysis of the results shows the value of this public and private investment in conservation would be 6.2 billion in today's dollars. Additional analysis work is underway to quantify the water quality impacts these practices are having in terms of reduced sediment and phosphorus loads to Iowa's lakes, rivers and streams.

The initial number of practices identified throughout the state by the mapping project include: 114,400 pond dams; 327,900 acres of grassed waterways; 506,100 terraces stretching 88,874 miles; 246,100 water and sediment basins stretching 12,555 miles; 557,700 acres of contour buffer strips; and 109,800 acres of strip cropping.

These numbers reflect a tremendous amount of conservation work that has been completed on Iowa's productive farm ground. Today, as I'm driving down the highway with my kids, I'm always quick to point out the cover crops and conservation practices I see in the countryside, particularly the newly constructed ones. I'm not sure if I do it to educate my kids about agriculture and conservation or if it's more for my gratification, knowing that conservation work is still being done. I suppose it's a little of both.



2018 Des Moines County Soil and Water Conservation Commissioners: (standing) Andrew Mason (Assistant), Bob Hinson, Brian Messer, Troy Nelson; (seated) Maureen Hutchcroft and Jason Hinson. Not pictured Jeff Burgus and June Morgan (Assistants).

Find more information and current news about the SWCD on Facebook at "Des Moines County Soil and Water Conservation District"

SWCD FINANCIAL ACCOUNTS July 1, 2017 – June 30, 2018

Checking General Account Balance, July 1, 2017	\$ 15,387.66
Receipts:	
Seed Sales	\$108,983.71
Cookbook Sales	46.00
Bluebird Boxes Sales	96.30
Rain Barrel Sales	358.45
Checking Account Interest	8.62
1M Reimbursement	2,100.00
Voided Checks Not Cashed	50.00
Contractor Meeting Donations/Reimbursement	132.97
Seed Rebate	4,251.85
TOTAL	\$116,027.90

Expenditures:

Postage	\$ 159.44
Sales Tax	7,389.00
Geode	17.59
Commissioner Travel	1,056.82
Poster Contest Prizes	240.00
PF Seed	98,402.50
Dues	1,150.00
Intern Travel	136.43
Office Supplies	92.78
Scholarship	350.00
High Tunnel Field Day	28.92
PF Banquet Sponsor	500.00
Shed Sealant	15.47
Rain Barrels	189.00
Contractor Meeting	240.93
ISU Foundation Donation	500.00
TOTAL	\$110,468.88

Balance, June 30, 2018	\$ 20,946.68
Special Projects/Payroll/Geode Account Balance, July 1, 2017	\$ 51,723.49

Receipts:

Account Interest	\$ 15.28
IDALS – payroll & supplies - Geode	67,453.85
Intern Program	6,568.00
TOTAL	\$ 74,037.13

Expenditures:

Payroll - Geode	\$ 37,607.45
Payroll - Intern	6,552.76
PF FB Biologist	2,500.00
Taxes, IPERS, payroll fees	28,838.41
Geode - conference/training	551.78
Geode - postage	365.79
Geode - supplies	350.43
Geode - printing	550.39
Geode Funds Refund	46.65
Intern Funds Refund	114.65
TOTAL	\$ 77,478.32

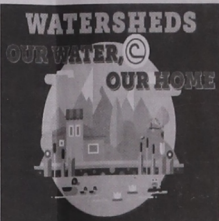
Balance, June 30, 2018	\$ 48,282.30
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High Tunnel Workshop

The Des Moines County Soil & Water Conservation District, ISU Extension and NRCS co-hosted a High Tunnel Workshop on June 4, 2018, at Homestead 1839 in Burlington. Tobin and Mollie Krell received EQIP funding from NRCS to construct their high tunnel. The Krells explained the process of building the high tunnel, pros and cons, and organic farming.

Annual Contractor's Meeting

The Des Moines and Louisa County SWCD's held a joint contractor's meeting on February 6, 2018, at the St. Mary's Church of Dodgeville Parish Center for local earthwork and tiling contractors. Speakers included Iowa Department of Transportation, NRCS, and Division of Soil Conservation & Water Quality.



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Healthy Soils Are Full of Life

The Des Moines County Soil and Water Conservation District, in partnership with Grinnell Mutual Reinsurance Company and Conservation Districts of Iowa, sponsored the annual poster contest for all students in the county. The 2018 theme was *Watersheds: Our Water, Our Home*. A watershed is an area of land that drains rain water or snow into one location, such as a river or lake. These water bodies supply our drinking water, water for agriculture and manufacturing, offer opportunities for recreation and provide habitat to numerous plants and animals.

The contest consists of five divisions—Division 1 is kindergarten and first grades; Division 2 is second and third grades; Division 3 is fourth-sixth grades; Division 4 is seventh-ninth grades; and Division 5 is tenth-twelfth grades. Judging criteria includes conservation message, visual effectiveness, originality, and universal appeal.



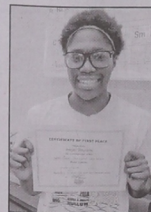
Division 1 winners, from Great River Christian, were Ephraim Hallgren-third; Gresham Walker-second; and Ava Granquist-first.



Division 3 winners, from Mediapolis, were Makenna Hein-first; Alton Wonderlich-second; and Joel Stoller-third.



Division 3 winners, from Great River Christian, were Courtney Boyer-third; Jordan Ferneau-second; and Nina Baier-first.



Division 5 winners were, left to right, Angel Baylark, Burlington High School-first; Spencer Ellsworth, Burlington High School-second; and John Ferneau, Great River Christian School-third.

Soil Health Field Day

Local landowners and producers attended a soil health field day at Southeastern Community College in November. Those attending learned of a new option to seed cover crops, using a Hagie sprayer. Partners for the field day included NRCS, Des Moines SWCD, Green Valley Seed, SCC, Tri Oak Foods, Mediapolis Savings Bank, Des Moines County Conservation, Air Advantage Inc., Iowa Corn, Iowa Farm Bureau, Casey's General Store, SRS, and Iowa Learning Farms.

Des Moines SWCD Financial Report Of State Funds July 1, 2017 – June 30, 2018	
Budget & Operating Funds	
Total Allocation	\$ 2,100.00
Commissioners Expense	\$ 1,026.87
Office Expenses, Awards	\$ 302.22
Dues	\$ 825.00
Balance	\$ (54.09)
REAP PRACTICES	
Windbreak – 1.5 acres	
Funds Paid in Des Moines County	\$ 2,962.50
REAP FORESTRY & NATIVE GRASSES	
Forest Stand Improvement – 30.8 acres	
Tree Establishment – 4.2 acres	
Site Preparation for Natural Regeneration – 4.5 acres	
Funds Paid in Des Moines County	\$ 6,756.00
COST SHARE	
Terraces – 20,373 feet	
Water & Sediment Control Basin – 1 no.	
Funds Paid in Des Moines County	\$39,224.41
LAKE GEODE – PUBLIC OWNED LAKES, WSPF, 319	
Cover Crops – 628 acres	
Grassed Waterway – 4.4 acres	
Water & Sediment Control Basins – 2 no.	
Septic System Upgrades – 4 no.	
Strip Till – 328 acres	
Funds Paid in Des Moines County	\$52,319.61
WATER QUALITY INITIATIVE	
Cover Crops – 2,377.8 acres	
Strip Till – 367 acres	
No-Till – 34.4 acres	
Nitrification Inhibitor – 160 acres	
Funds Paid in Des Moines County	\$50,465.00



Personnel During 2018

DISTRICT COMMISSIONERS

Maureen Hutchcroft, Chairperson & Co-Treasurer
Brian Messer, Vice-Chairperson & Co-Treasurer
Bob Hinson
Jason Hinson
Troy Nelson

ASSISTANT COMMISSIONERS

Jeff Burgess
Andrew Mason
June Morgan

BURLINGTON FIELD OFFICE STAFF

Drew Delang, District Conservator
Shiloh Bradley, Resource Conservator
Kindra Pruett, Soil Conservation Technician
Caleb Waters, Geode Watershed Coordinator
Erica Yost, Pheasants Forever Farm Bill Biologist (thru June)
Holly Shutt, Pheasants Forever Farm Bill Biologist (started August)
Shawnee Hartman, Summer Intern (May - August)
Jamie Stewart, State Conservation Assistant

Thanks for Your Help

The Des Moines County Soil and Water Conservation District is a governmental subdivision that relies heavily on donations, whether it is cash donations from landowners or product donations from businesses.

Businesses donating goods or services to the SWCD during 2018 include: Mediapolis News—prints our Annual Report every year; Des Moines County Fair—booth space for one day; Casey's General Stores—cookies for cover crop field day; Tri-Oak Foods—meal for cover crop field day; Mediapolis Savings Bank—refreshments for pollinator field day; Farmers Savings Bank—refreshments for pollinator field day; Iowa Farm Bureau—refreshments for cover crop field day; Des Moines County Conservation—meeting space for pollinator field day; Agri Drain Corp—contractor meeting door prizes; Hickenbottom Inc—contractor meeting donation, door prizes; Precision Intakes—contractor meeting door prizes; REC—contractor meeting door prizes; Midwest Pipe Supply—contractor meeting donation; and Coleman Moore Co—contractor meeting door prizes.

The Des Moines County Soil & Water Conservation District thanks every one of you! If you would like to donate, please call the SWCD at 319-753-6221 Ext. 3.

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