

Black Hawk

Soil & Water Conservation

District Newsletter & Annual Report

March 2008

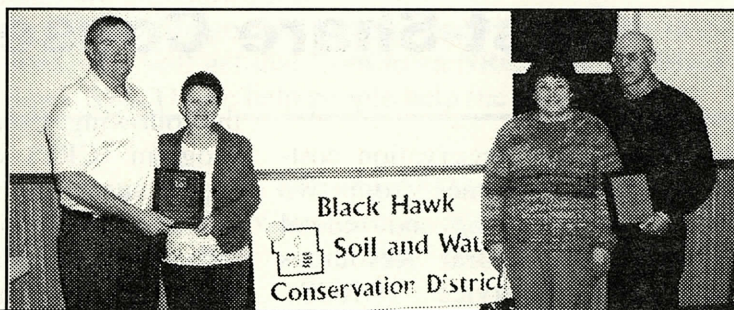
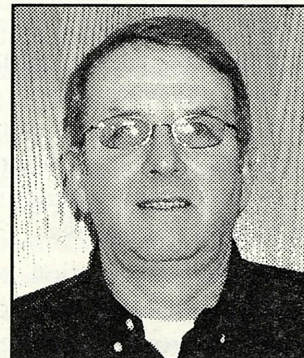
Board Chairman Message

by Robert Hansen, 2008 Chairperson

The year 2008 has started off to be one to remember. We have had a very harsh winter with lots of snow and ice. I always enjoy our seasons, but this winter is one I am ready to see leave and I am eagerly awaiting spring, warmer weather, and the anticipation of another planting season to begin. I hope we will be blessed with better weather and a healthy and prosperous year.

In these times of higher crop prices, we still need to remember CONSERVATION. The current high prices can have a negative impact on the cash returns for following certain conservation practices and programs—such as buffer strips, field borders, etc.. However, we must reaffirm the conservation message to be good stewards and managers of the natural resources of water, air, and soil that we have available for our use. With proper use and care, we will be able to pass these valuable resources on to the next generations for their use and care as well. Please do not let a few dollars affect our decisions to be good and faithful stewards. Everyone will be rewarded by our caring concerns.

Your Commissioners and office staff worked to organize and have an awards banquet on Feb 21st. No one remembers how many years it has been since BHSWCD has held a banquet, but we would like to try and have one every year. We met at Bieman's Chuckwagon in Cedar Falls for a wonderful meal and evening activities. We honored Henry and Meri Kay Shepard as the Black Hawk Conservation Award Winner for 2007. They use nutrient management, pest management, no-till, grassed waterways, filter strips, and terraces in their corn and soybean operation. Henry is also very actively involved in the SEE MESSAGE/Page 10



Elections Held

Black Hawk Soil and Water Conservation District held their elections on January 2, 2008. The results were as follows:

Robert Hansen, Chairperson
John Hoffman, Vice-Chairperson
Sherman Lundy, Treasurer
Nicholas Meier, Commissioner
Jon Mixdorf, Commissioner
Robert Hundley, Assistant Commissioner
Kathleen Scholl, Assistant Commissioner
Brett Meyers, Assistant Commissioner
Vern Fish, Assistant Commissioner

Current Staff Members:

Shaffer Ridgeway, District Conservationist
Julie Falcon, Soil Conservationist
Elaine Hammer, Soil Conservation Technician

Rebecca Kauten, Watershed Coordinator
Emily Luttrell-Narigon, Conservation Program Assistant
Leslie Grundy, State Secretary



Front Row: Julie Falcon, Shaffer Ridgeway
Back Row: L-R; Emily Luttrell-Narigon, Rebecca Kauten, Leslie Grundy, Elaine Hammer

Conservation Measures Work Best Together in Systems

by Shaffer Ridgeway
District Conservationist

Webster's defines conservation as: "the controlled use and systematic protection of natural resources, as forests and waterways". This definition pretty much sums up our thoughts of conservation – the controlled use and systematic protection of natural resources.

A single conservation practice may solve a problem, but conservation practices work best together — in a resource management system. The benefits of conservation practices are generally additive- for instance; small gullies can usually be stopped

with grassed waterways or small structures. But the chosen practice will last longer and be more effective if the drainage area above the gully is managed to absorb more rainfall and reduce runoff. Or, cropland protected by contouring is even better protected if crop residues, or mulches, are left on the soil surface or if row crops are rotated with small grain, grass or legumes. This kind of farming promotes better soil and water quality as well as wildlife habitat. The use of several practices to solve multiple problems is called the "systems approach" to conservation. Ask your local conservationist for help in designing a complete conservation

system for your land.

The Black Hawk County Soil and Water Conservation District (SWCD) and the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) encourage producers to conserve the soil on the land they operate. Review your current conservation plan and contact us if it needs updated, or if you need help establishing a new plan.

This article was partially taken from a publication titled "Complete Conservation" from the Natural Resources Conservation Service.

Cost-Share Conservation Programs

By Cliff Foster

The funding for conservation cost-share programs comes from two sources, state funding and federal funding. The Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS), Division of Soil Conservation (DSC), and the Soil and Water Conservation District (SWCD) staff located at the USDA Service Center in each county in Iowa can assist landowners with free technical advice. Conservation technical assistance is provided on a voluntary basis to protect the soil, water, wildlife, and other natural resources. Information included in this article was obtained from the Guide to Conservation Programs available on the NRCS website listed later in the article.

Federal assistance programs include

the following: Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) which is used to reduce erosion, increase wildlife habitat, and improve water quality through the application of conservation plans. The Conservation Security Program (CSP) is used to reward farmers and landowners for past conservation work and provide technical assistance to develop plans that address specific natural resource concerns. The Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) provides technical and financial assistance to landowners to develop and implement plans that address specific natural resource concerns. The Grassland Reserve Program (GRP) used to develop and implement a grassland resource management plan to help private landowners and operators restore and protect

grassland, including rangeland and pastureland. The Wetlands Reserve Program (WRP) is to develop and implement a restoration plan for wetlands that were previously altered for agricultural use. The Wildlife Habitat Incentives Program (WHIP) is used to develop and improve fish and wildlife habitat on privately owned land through the application of a conservation plan.

State assistance programs include the following: State Cost-Share provides funding or incentives for permanent and management conservation practices to control erosion and reduce sediment. The State Loan Program can provide no interest or low interest loans to eligible landowners for constructing permanent soil conservation practices under a

SEE COST-SHARE/Page 3

Black Hawk SWCD prohibits discrimination in its programs on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, religion, age, disability, political beliefs and marital or family status. Black Hawk SWCD is an equal opportunity employer.

Al Ehley, Assistant State Conservationist for Field Operations, Black Hawk County Column

The staff of USDA's Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) is here to serve the farmers and landowners of Black Hawk County. That commitment to serve is highlighted in the conservation work found throughout Iowa and specifically in Black Hawk County. Terraces, grassed waterways and a host of other conservation practices are clear reminders of the public and private partnership that helps conserve our soil and natural resources.

Your Soil and Water Conservation District Commissioners and District Conservationist Shaffer Ridgeway, NRCS and State employees, district staff, and partners have worked hard on conservation projects this past fiscal year. This effort is illustrated in these accomplishments: conservation plans were written on **4,743** acres of county land; **9,436** acres had a new conservation practice applied that improves soil quality and **12,669** acres have a new conservation practice applied that improves water quality.

There is no doubt that helping to conserve resources on private lands serves the public good. Regardless of where they live, everyone across the country benefits

from productive soils, clean and abundant water, healthy plant and animal communities, clean air, an adequate energy supply, and working farms and ranch lands. Therefore, every acre and every landowner counts in our effort to effect change on the land.

There are challenges ahead. There is a new Farm Bill. High prices are encouraging farmers to plant more corn. There is the ongoing debate that compares no-till with other tillage systems. Common questions being asked in the countryside include: Do I really need to till the ground? What is the savings in equipment and diesel costs with no-till? Which system will give me the best yield? Which system will give me the best return?

We can help you answer those questions. Our staff and partners can help you come to informed decisions that are the best for you, your land and the environment. We will use Web-based tools where appropriate, but we also offer the on-site, hands-on planning and technical assistance we are known for.

At NRCS, our goal is to help landowners make decisions. You will get that from Iowa NRCS and the Black Hawk SWCD. We help people help the land.

Cost-Share

Continued from page 2

conservation plan. The Iowa Water Protection Fund (WSPF) provides funding for water quality improvement practices in watersheds above priority lakes and streams, and to protect groundwater. The Resource Enhancement and Protection (REAP) funds provide cost-share or incentives to address local water quality protection needs.

Practices and rates available for each program vary, contacting local conservation offices can assist landowners in determining the best program to utilize. The Iowa Department of Natural Resources (DNR) also has Private Lands Biologists located throughout the state, that assist landowners to improve wildlife habitat. There are numerous other organizations and agencies that provide conservation assistance or programs including local Pheasants Forever Chapters, Ducks Unlimited, the Nature Conservancy, the Iowa Natural Heritage Foundation, Iowa State University Extension, and Resource Conservation and Development offices.

The following is a list of conservation agencies and website links to contact staff at these offices or obtain additional information.

NRCS - USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service

www.ia.usda.gov - 641-484-2702 (in Tama County)
SWCDs - Soil and Water Conservation Districts
(See DSC website) - 319-296-3262 (in Black Hawk County)

DSC - Iowa Department of Agriculture and Land Stewardship

Division of Soil Conservation

www.agriculture.state.ia.us/soilconservation.html

1-515-281-5321

FSA - USDA Farm Service Agency

www.fsa.usda.gov/ia - 319-296-3185 (in Black Hawk County)

DNR - Iowa Department of Natural Resources

www.iowadnr.gov - 515-281-5918

FWS - U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

www.fws.gov - 800-344-9453

Project coordinator, Rebecca Kauten taking water samples of runoff from an untreated parking lot draining into Dry Run Creek



Watershed Project Coordinators Receive Erosion & Sediment Control Certification

Additional technical resources and support available to local contractors, developers and land owners in two Iowa counties

WATERLOO AND STORM LAKE – Two Soil & Water Conservation Districts in Iowa are home to certified technical resources in construction site erosion and sediment control. Project coordinators from Buena Vista SWCD and Black Hawk SWCD recently received certification through the University of Minnesota Erosion and Sediment Control Certification Program.

The certification program is part of the University of Minnesota Bioproducts and Biosystems Engineering program and sponsored by the Minnesota Department of Transportation. For all courses offered through the program, a score of 70 percent or higher is needed to certify, and certification is for a three-year period.

Courses offered through the program include:

Erosion & Sediment Control Inspector/Installer: a one-day course designed for those who install or inspect quality control for the installation of erosion/sediment control devices and the establishment of vegetation

Design of Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plans: a two-day course for those who are involved with the design of construction site erosion/sediment control

plans.

Erosion & Sediment Control Site Management: a two-day course designed for those who supervise, run, or direct grading work, culvert replacement work, and bridge construction work over rivers and streams.

Kimberly Proctor of Storm Lake received a 97 percent score on the exam to certify as an erosion and sediment control quality inspector and installer. Rebecca Kauten also received a 97 percent score on the inspector and installer course. Both attended the one-day workshop January 9 in Rochester, Minnesota. Kauten also received an 86 percent on the Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan design course. She attended the two-day course November 13-14 in Mankato, Minnesota.

The University of Minnesota Erosion and Sediment Control certification courses include real-world examples where individuals are asked to recommend and incorporate a series of best management practices to manage erosion and sedimentation on active construction sites. Courses are intended for design team leaders, engineers, engineering assistants, and technicians who prepare or oversee the preparation or consultant and/or design/build stormwater pollution prevention plans and erosion and sediment control plans.

To Bee or Not to Be

Pollination occurs when pollen is moved within flowers or carried from one flower to another of the same species by birds, bees, bats, butterflies, moths, beetles or other animals, or by the wind. This transfer leads to fertilization and successful seed and fruit production. Nearly 80% of our world's crop plants require pollination.

Pollination is vital to our survival and the existence of nearly all ecosystems on earth. Pollinators, almost all of which are insects, are indispensable partners for an estimated 1 out of every 3 mouthfuls of food, spices and condiments we eat, and the beverages we drink. They are essential to the fibers we use, the medicines that keep us healthy, and more than half of the world's diet of fats and oils. Insect pollinators, including honey bees, pollinate

products amounting to \$20 billion annually in the U.S. alone.

Without pollinators, humans and ecosystems cannot survive. Due to biodiversity threats such as land development, pollution, and pesticide poisoning, we are losing pollinators around the world at an alarming rate. If you want to do more to increase the number of native bees pollinating your crops, you can plant hedgerows or windbreaks with a variety of flowering plants and shrubs, reduce or eliminate your use of pesticides, or work with your neighbors to protect natural areas around your farm. For more information on what you can do to help, go to www.pollinator.org.

Enviro Facts

- The United States produces and uses a third of the world's paper. Forests in the southeastern US now supply a quarter of the global total. *Worldwatch Institute, 2004*
- Environmental Defense estimates that if the entire US catalog industry switched its publications to just 10 percent recycled content paper, the savings in wood alone would be enough to stretch a 1.8 meter-high fence across the United States seven times. *Worldwatch Institute, 2004*
- The average US citizen uses more than 300 kg of paper annually, and the average Japanese citizen uses 250 kg of paper per year. In contrast, people in developing countries use only 18 kg of paper per year on average. (The United Nations estimates that 30-40 kg of paper is the minimum needed to meet basic literacy and communications needs. *Worldwatch Institute, 2004*
- The energy saved from recycling one aluminum can will operate a TV set for three hours. *Tree People*
- Americans represent only 5 percent of the world's population, but generate 30 percent of the world's garbage. *America Recycles Day, 2003*
- About 86 percent of US landfills are currently leaking toxic materials into lakes, streams, and aquifers. Once groundwater is contaminated, it is extremely expensive and difficult, sometimes even impossible, to clean it up. *EPA, 2003*
- Urban stormwater runoff is the largest source of impairment in US coastal waters and the second largest source of water pollution in US estuaries. *Environmental Protection Agency, 2000*
- Rainforests cover 2% of the Earth's surface yet house over half of Earth's plant and animal species. *Rainforest Action Network, 2003*
- Seventy percent of the plants identified by the National Cancer Institute as useful in cancer treatment are only found in the rainforest. *Rainforest Action Network, 2003*

Newsletter Sponsorship

Since the Black Hawk Soil and Water Conservation District is a non profit organization, we are seeking businesses to help offset publication costs. Your contribution will be greatly appreciated and your business will be recognized for your generosity. Please call the office at 296-3262 for further details.

Manure Management: The Simple Facts

by Julie Falcon, Soil Conservationist

Manure has both a nutrient and momentary value; it's not just from the back-end of an animal. Don't discount this resource, it may lower your commercial fertilizer costs but there are items to remember before you use manure for your crops nutrient needs.

To utilize manure to its fullest value, start with an up-to-date soil test. By taking a good soil sample you will then know what the present levels of Phosphorus (P) and Potassium (K) are. If the P and K levels are at high and very high levels (ISU pamphlet 1688) don't apply any extra P or K, use the levels that the crop will remove during the growing season for the rotation.

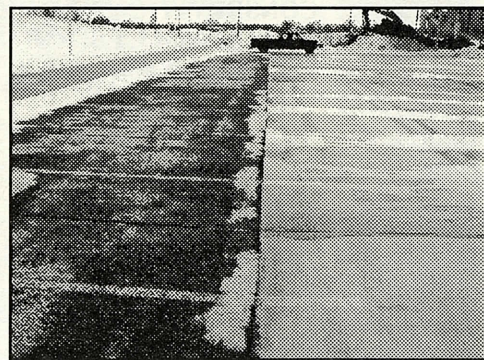
Determine what crop nutrients will be needed for the next growing season. Have a realistic yield goal in mind. (There are some soils that are not capable of producing a 200 bushel corn yield even with a big nutrient jolt.) Apply only the nutrients needed for that crop year or the nutrients can be applied in one year for a two or even three year crop rotation. The only nutrients that should be applied for multiple years of the rotation are P and K. Nitrogen is water soluble and can be carried away with water before it is utilized by the plants so that is why it is applied in the year it will be used.

To determine the nutrient content of the manure, a sample will need to be taken. ISU pamphlet 1558 explains how and what time of year to take samples. After the sample results are back from the lab, finish the calculations to determine how much manure is applied to the acre

Take the time to understand soil sample tests, yield goals, crop rotation nutrient needs, and crop removal rates. Also knowing how to take manure samples and interpreting those tests to apply the correct amount of manure for the rotation will save money on commercial fertilizers while using a valuable resource at hand.

If you need more information about applying manure, contact this office or ISU Extension.

Snow melting this winter on the pervious concrete parking lot adjacent to the new McLeod Center at UNI



Financial Report

BLACK HAWK SOIL & WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT REPORT OF REVOLVING FUNDS JULY 1, 2006 – JUNE 30, 2007

REVOLVING FUNDS

RECEIPTS

FY07 Allocation Black Hawk County	2000.00
Contributions	909.00
Flags	21.00
1-M Reimbursement	127.18
RC&D Deposit	50.00
Postage Reimbursement	650.00
CDI	200.00
Other	
BH Meeting Refund	6.42
Registration, Sherman Lundy	10.00

TOTAL RECEIPTS\$3973.59

EXPENDITURES

Postage	872.01
Office Supplies	120.98
Checks	12.00
Conference Registration	10.00
Printing	1622.20
Transfer to Technical Assistance	1503.33
Miscellaneous	
Quick Book Training	375.00
Iowa Show Productions Registration	55.00
Randall's Catering	138.01
Sherman Lundy/Table Rent Reimbursement	90.00

TOTAL EXPENDITURES\$4798.53

BEGINNING BALANCE JULY 1, 20062018.75
RECEIPTS3973.59
DIVIDENDS14.76
TOTAL RECEIPTS\$6007.10
LESS TOTAL EXPENDITURES-\$4798.53

BALANCE JUNE 30, 2007 \$1208.58

BLACK HAWK SOIL & WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT REPORT OF ANNUAL USE OF 1M FUNDS JULY 1, 2006 – JUNE 30, 2007

1M ACCOUNT

RECEIPTS

FY07 Allocation	2100.00
District Savings (Correction from 1M account)	46.41

TOTAL RECEIPTS\$2146.41

EXPENDITURES

Postage	525.63
CDI Dues	725.00
NACD Dues	100.00
Home Show Registration	55.00
Dubuque SWCD Registration	40.00
Clayton SWCD Registration	20.00
Checks	12.00
BHSWCD Revolving fund Balance 1M fund	94.18
Reimbursement for mileage to Jon Mixdorf	61.20

TOTAL EXPENDITURES\$1633.01

BEGINNING BALANCE JULY 1, 200632.07
RECEIPTS2146.41
DIVIDENDS5.70
TOTAL RECEIPTS\$2184.18

LESS TOTAL EXPENDITURES-\$1633.01

BALANCE JUNE 30, 2007\$551.17

BLACK HAWK SOIL & WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT REPORT OF ANNUAL USE OF TECHNICAL FUNDS JULY 1, 2006 – JUNE 30, 2007

TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

RECEIPTS

District Savings	1503.33
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TOTAL RECEIPTS\$1503.33

EXPENDITURES

Personnel	\$1081.87
IPERS	479.59
Treasurer State of Iowa	933.11
Hellman's	85.00

TOTAL EXPENDITURES\$2579.57

BEGINNING BALANCE JULY 1, 20061140.19
RECEIPTS1503.33
DIVIDENDS2.18
TOTAL RECEIPTS\$2645.70

LESS TOTAL EXPENDITURES-\$2579.57

BALANCE JUNE 30, 2007\$66.13

BLACK HAWK SOIL & WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT REPORT OF UPPER MILLER CREEK FUNDS JULY 1, 2006 – JUNE 30, 2007

UPPER MILLER CREEK

RECEIPTS

WIRB Allocation1500.00
Watershed Project6000.00
Transfer (Per Veridian Statement)14.36

TOTAL RECEIPTS7514.36

EXPENDITURES

Payroll 1346.00
Roadside Buffers700.00
Express Mail31.40
Misc.25.19

TOTAL EXPENDITURES2102.59

BEGINNING BALANCE JULY 1, 200611025.17

RECEIPTS7514.36

DIVIDENDS93.25

TOTAL RECEIPTS18539.53

LESS TOTAL EXPENDITURES-2102.59

BALANCE JUNE 30, 2007.....\$16530.19

BLACK HAWK SOIL & WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT REPORT OF ANNUAL USE OF DRY RUN CREEK FUNDS JULY 1, 2006 – JUNE 30, 2007

DRY RUN CREEK

RECEIPTS

WIRB Allocation\$116396.00
Conference Registration1000.00
Conference Fees2050.00
City of Cedar Falls100.00
Tiedt Nursery100.00
TOTAL RECEIPTS.....\$119646.00

EXPENDITURES

Personnel32937.06
Business Cards33.93
IA Association of Municipal Conference2559.61
WET Supplies65.94
Signs & Designs144.00
Hartman Reserve130.00
Iowater Equipment693.95
CTIC Conference Registration285.00
Mileage Reimbursement603.54
Iowater Snapshot Reimbursement44.99
IECA CPESC345.00
Two CD's Purchased (each \$50,000)100000.00
IAMU Conference Registration195.00
Reimbursement for Supplies363.22
Hy-Vee Meals for Erosion Control Conference824.76
NWC Conference & Registration355.00
Reimbursement2014.96
Presentation & Training1551.55
Monitoring Equipment1192.00

TOTAL EXPENDITURES\$144339.51

BEGINNING BALANCE JULY 1, 200681080.72

RECEIPTS119846.00

DIVIDENDS833.13

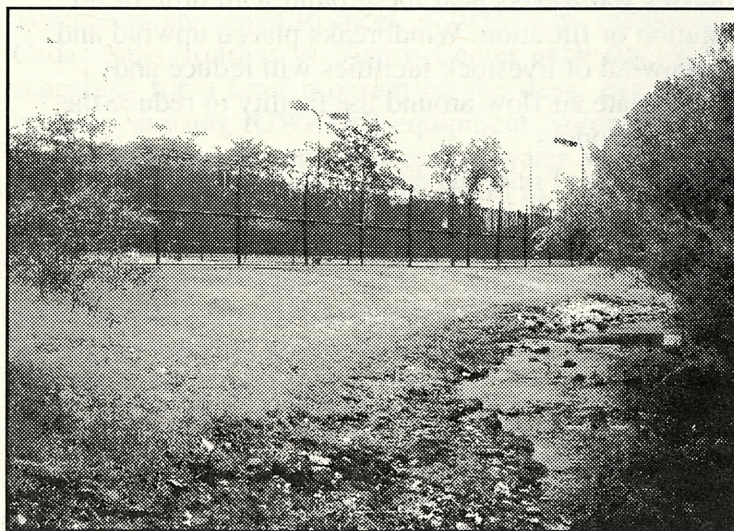
TOTAL RECEIPTS\$201759.85

LESS TOTAL EXPENDITURES-\$144539.51

BALANCE JUNE 30, 2007.....\$57220.34

Below left: A “Before” image of one of the banks stabilized along Dry Run Creek.

Below right: An “After” image of the same bank.



Trees Can Make a Difference

Submitted by Elaine Hammer
NRCS Technician

Some of us have heard it referred to as the “smell of money,” but some people just think it stinks. It is part of any livestock operation, sewage treatment plant, or landfill..... **odor**. The good news is that conservation practices like windbreaks and shelterbelts can help.

Livestock odor is becoming an increasingly controversial issue, primarily for two reasons:

Livestock operations are continuing to grow in size, and more people are moving into rural areas next to these livestock operations.

These two changes over the past couple of decades have created a collision course between farmers and non-farmers as well as neighbor against neighbor. People do not like unpleasant smells especially from sources that do not provide them direct benefit.

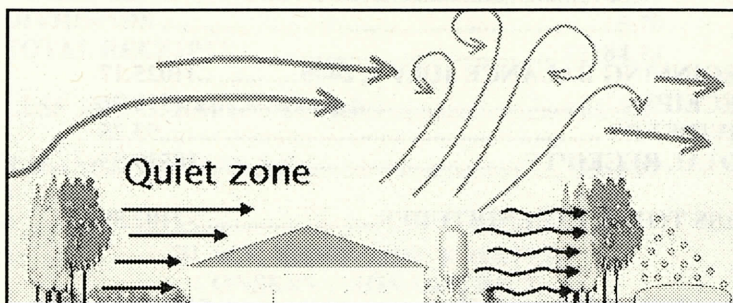
Just in Black Hawk County, there are an estimated 60 confinement operations that have been built within the last several years and they are scattered throughout the county.

Although the idea of planting windbreaks and shelterbelts around agricultural buildings and farm fields is not new, additional benefits from them continue to be learned and tested. Windbreaks alone will not prevent odor problems associated with intensive livestock production but may provide livestock producers with one more tool to help reduce negative visual perceptions and detection of smell by neighbors and surrounding communities.

There are six ways that windbreaks and shelterbelts can reduce the effects of odor and improve visual perception of production buildings:

1. Dilution and dispersion – Without windbreaks and wind management, odor is picked up by passing air masses and travels near the ground with little or no dilution or filtration. Windbreaks placed upwind and downwind of livestock facilities will reduce and manipulate air flow around the facility to reduce the spread of odors.
2. Deposition of odorous dusts – Reduced wind speed in the quiet zone that is created downwind from a windbreak allows odorous dusts and particles to settle to the ground, similar to what happens with settling and drifting of snow. Windbreaks should be located 75 – 100 feet away from barns. (See diagram below)
3. Collection and storage of pollutant odors within trees – In air pollution research, odorous gases and particles can be absorbed into the foliage of conifers and deciduous trees during the growing season.

4. Physical interception of odor particles – Like the air filters of home furnaces, windbreak trees, especially conifers (foliage year-round), physically catch wind-borne odorous particles.
5. Windbreak design and planting – Tree varieties and placement for the windbreak should be planned to minimize odor for each particular site.
6. Aesthetic appearance – Trees create a visual barrier to livestock barns, make cropped fields and pastures more pleasing to the eye, and represent an ‘environmental statement’ to neighbors that the producer is making every effort to resolve odor problems.



In addition to odor management, windbreaks also act to reduce the cost of heating and cooling of farm buildings without disrupting ventilation in livestock barns. Windbreaks may also reduce the spread of infectious diseases of livestock by blocking, intercepting or diverting wind-borne infectious organisms away from buildings.

Now that you have been informed of all the GREAT reasons to establish a windbreak or shelterbelt for your livestock operation, let's talk about technical and financial assistance for you to get it accomplished. NRCS staff can assist in planning and designing a windbreak at no cost to you. There is financial assistance through the local Black Hawk Soil and Water Conservation District (SWCD) for tree costs and if this funding does not get spent this year, it is very possible that it will be greatly reduced or eliminated for our county. There is also funding through the Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) which includes cost share assistance for establishing it and an annual payment/acre amount, if site meets eligibility requirements.

If interested in either or both of these programs, please contact the Black Hawk SWCD office and the staff will be ready to assist you. Winter months are the best time to discuss and plan windbreaks for the spring. No better time than the present to get trees started for the future!
PLEASE GIVE US A CALL!

Calling all Teachers:

Free IOWATER Certification Available Through Black Hawk SWCD

Thanks to a grant awarded by the Waterloo Exchange Club, Black Hawk SWCD is able to send up to 20 area teachers to be IOWATER certified as volunteer water monitors.

IOWATER, Iowa's volunteer water quality monitoring program, empowers citizens to take a proactive approach to water quality. Participants attend a two-day certification workshop where they receive approximately \$300 worth of gear and equipment to use as each sees fit to monitor area lakes, rivers and streams.

As IOWATER volunteers use up or wear out monitoring equipment, Iowa Department of Natural Resources will replace each item at no cost to the volunteer. In addition, volunteers are also given the freedom to monitor wherever and whenever each person chooses to monitor.

The program brings people closer to the landscapes that surround them and encourages them to develop a sense of place within the watersheds in which they live. This tie between ourselves and the water resources that give us life will lead to the understanding, respect, and protection of Iowa's water bodies long into the future.

To register for an IOWATER Level One Workshop please contact Rebecca at 296-3262 and mention that you are a teacher in Black Hawk County.

What's New in the Watershed?

Dry Run Creek Watershed experienced an unprecedented BMP implementation season in 2007. We saw more than ten different infiltration-based practices and monitoring installations during the construction season. Also, the project was able to collect samples from 35 different storm events to monitor the performance of infiltration-based practices such as bioretention cells and permeable transportation surfaces.

Word has gotten out about our project. This winter, Rebecca Kauten, project coordinator for the Dry Run Creek project, has presented information to statewide audiences at events like the Iowa Water Monitoring Conference, Iowa Women in Natural Resources and the Iowa Stormwater Conference. In addition, the project received international acclaim as a featured technical session during the 2008 International Erosion Control Association conference in SEE WATERSHED/Page 12

City-Wide Water Monitoring Snapshots for 2008 Scheduled in Cedar Falls

Cedar Falls will be part of three city-wide water quality "snapshots" in 2008. IOWATER, the Iowa Department of Natural Resources (DNR) volunteer water monitoring program, is partnering with Black Hawk Soil & Water Conservation District (SWCD) to gather water quality data from the four branches of Dry Run Creek.

Dates for this year's Saturday snapshots are April 26, July 26 and October 4. Volunteers are asked to help collect water samples and data as part of this event.

Forty locations throughout town are marked with blue flags and a site ID number. Data collected from each site includes the physical conditions of the stream and its banks. Also, volunteers will be supplied with IOWATER testing equipment to measure nitrate/nitrite, dissolved oxygen, chloride, transparency levels and the temperature of the water.

Sample bottles will also be filled at each site. These bottles are then shipped to the State Hygienic Laboratory where they will be analyzed for nutrients such as nitrates and phosphates and also for bacteria.

"This event is an opportunity to learn more about our neighborhoods, our environmental surroundings and how we are all connected." Kauten works with the Black Hawk SWCD on various projects related to water quality and the health of the Dry Run Creek watershed. "Knowing the health of Dry Run Creek allows us to more accurately treat sources of pollutants and work toward a measurable impact on improving the quality of all urban water bodies, including Dry Run Creek."

Volunteers are asked to meet at 10:00 a.m. outside the Cedar Falls Tourism & Visitor Center each day of the snapshots for a brief program on the days' events and training on using IOWATER equipment. Volunteers will then depart into the city and collect water samples and data. Once complete, the groups return to the Tourism & Visitor Center with data and equipment.

Area residents who are IOWATER certified are encouraged to participate in the snapshot. However, IOWATER certification is not required. This event is organized by the Watershed Advisory Committee for the Dry Run Creek watershed and Black Hawk SWCD.

If groups want to monitor specific locations or want to work as a group, a call to SEE MONITORING/Page 12

Tillage Not Necessary for Planting Corn-on-Corn

The following is an editorial from Ken Tow, Director, Iowa Department of Agriculture and Land Stewardship – Soil Conservation Division (515-281-6153); Deb Ryun, Executive Director, Conservation Districts of Iowa (641-774-4461); and Rick Van Klaveren, State Conservationists, USDA – Natural Resources Conservation Service (515-284-6655).

For Immediate Release May 2, 2007

USDA's Prospective Planting report released in late March shows Iowa farmers intend to plant 1.3 million more acres of corn than in 2006. By upping their corn acres, Iowa farmers hope to take advantage of corn prices, which have risen 50 percent in the past year. From a business standpoint, planting more corn acres makes sense for many producers. Farmers are simply trying to supply a product the market wants and needs. But from an environmental standpoint, the corn acres forecast is concerning to many members of the conservation partnership

The three of us represent Conservation Districts of Iowa, the Iowa Department of Agriculture and Land Stewardship-Division of Soil Conservation and the USDA's Natural Resources Conservation Service. We want farmers to succeed. We also want producers to consider making planting decisions that will not lead to loss of farm program eligibility or to more soil erosion which pollutes our lakes, streams and rivers.

Research conducted by Iowa State and other universities shows that planting corn-on-corn does not, in most cases, require tilling the ground. Reduced yield is a concern

when comparing no-till to tilling corn-on-corn, but, when figuring inputs, no-till corn-on-corn usually makes the producer more money while reducing soil erosion.^[1]

And in some cases, producers experience increased yields in their operations when planting no-till corn-on-corn and reduced input costs.^[2]

As a team, our local, state and federal specialists educate and help producers, landowners and organizations with technical assistance and programs that conserve soil, water, and other natural resources to benefit all Iowans. We can help producers consider planting and tillage options. Our technicians can advise producers how to keep in compliance with their conservation plan.

If there is a tillage or corn-on-corn question, producers should visit their local USDA Service Centers. The experts there are working to help farmers succeed while protecting our state's air and water quality and wildlife habitat.

[1] Source: Dr. Mahdi Al-Kaisi, Asst Professor, Dept of Agronomy, Iowa State University

[2] <ftp://ftp-fc.sc.egov.usda.gov/IA/news/NoTillCorn.pdf>

Conservation Districts of Iowa, CDI, is a nonprofit 501(c) 3 organization mainly of soil and water district commissioners devoted to providing educational programs on the conservation of soil, water, and other natural resources. Working with commissioners, USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) and Iowa Department of Agriculture and Land Stewardship-Division of Soil Conservation address local natural resource concerns.

Message

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Miller Creek Watershed program. Congratulations Henry and Meri Kay. Our runner

ups for the 2007 award were the Jim Barz family and the Richard Blough family. We offer our congratulations to these families as well. Commissioner Sherman Lundy recognized Paul Meyermann from the University of Northern Iowa for his service on the advisory committee of the Dry Run Creek Watershed Project. He is such a valuable asset and has led UNI to be involved as a great working partner in many stormwater management projects to improve water quality. UNI has many walking tours of several management sites. We cannot thank Paul enough for his help on this project. Since the District did not have a banquet in 2006, we wanted to publicly honor Ms. Carol Boyce as the Black Hawk Conservation Teacher of the Year for 2006. Carol teaches at Orange and Kittrell Elementary Schools and has a long record of involvement with conservation and environmental education. BHSWCD submitted her resume for considera-

tion for a state award. She was chosen as the 2006 Division 1 Conservation Teacher of the Year by the Iowa Department of Agriculture and Land Stewardship. Congratulations again to Ms. Carol Boyce. We also had a very interesting and informative talk on alternative energy, presented by Mr. David Lyons, the Chief Business Development officer for the Iowa Farm Bureau Federation. Everyone found his presentation to be very pertinent and on the cutting edge of alternative energy with concerns to food, fuel, and fiber. We felt very fortunate to have him speak to our organization.

As we prepare for the spring season, I ask everyone to practice farm safety, remember and practice conservation, and enjoy all the blessings of life that we have for our enjoyment and use. I personally ask that we all remember our armed forces personnel, their families, and the families of those who have given the ultimate sacrifice for our precious freedom. We have so much to be thankful for!

The Black Hawk Soil & Water Conservation District helps you and your neighbors conserve our most valuable natural resources – our soil and water. We believe that promoting soil and water conservation is everyone's job and we invite you to help. Although outside funding is received for certain urban and rural programs under our purview, there are several projects and activities performed by the office staff and District Commissioners that we must rely on local contributions to fund. Examples of these include conservation materials for schools, local conservation awards, the district newsletter, and conservation field days. Listed below are the 2007 contributors for which we are very thankful, and hope these individuals and businesses, along with others, will continue to support our efforts in 2008. To show our appreciation to those contributing, a certificate will be now be issued to those contributing at the *Stewardship* and *Conservationist* levels (\$50 or more).

**PLEASE CONSIDER A TAX DEDUCTIBLE DONATION TO
HELP WITH OUR LOCAL CONSERVATION EFFORTS.**

**2007 CONTRIBUTOR'S CLUB
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I want to support the *Black Hawk Soil & Water Conservation District*. I have enclosed a check to join the **2008 Contributor's Club** at the following membership level:

_____ *Sponsorship* Level (\$25 - \$49)
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Watershed

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Orlando, Florida. Kauten was one of only several case study presenters at this event, and audience members hailed from all parts of North America and also Asia.

Plans for 2008 include wrapping up many of the practices to be installed as part of the Watershed Improvement Review Board grant. In addition, the District is hopeful to continue the project in Dry Run Creek. Grants to do additional streambank work and expanding BMP performance monitoring have been submitted to two different funds in the State of Iowa. We are hopeful that the Dry Run Creek watershed project is only the beginning of what may be many successful stormwater management projects in Black Hawk County.

Monitoring

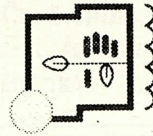
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participate is requested. For more information or to RSVP for the snapshot, contact Rebecca at 319-610-7507 or rebecca.kauten@ia.usda.gov.

For information on IOWATER and IOWATER certification visit www.iowater.net.

Live and work to make a difference, to make things better, even the smallest things. Give full consideration to the rights and interests of others. No business is successful, even if it flourishes, in a society that does not care for or about its people.

Eugene C. Dorsey
Journalist and philanthropist



Black Hawk Soil & Water Conservation District
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