

Mills County Soil Conservation District

P. O. Box 567

Malvern, Iowa

Phone 2321



LOST SOILS - LOST SOULS

District Commissioners

D. N. McGrew, Chairman
Emerson, Iowa

J. F. Wearin, Jr.
Hastings, Iowa

S. C. Lincoln, Sr.
Pacific Junction, Iowa

Richard S. Goos, Secretary
Malvern, Iowa

Lillian A. Campbell, Treas.
Malvern, Iowa

Soil Conservation Service Personnel

Ray W. Jones
Unit Conservationist

Richard L. France
Farm Planner

Gerald I. Bower
Conservation Aid

Leo Van Fosson
Conservation Aid

Lawrence A. Jones
Conservation Aid

Charles E. Haney
Conservation Aid

OUR GOAL: A COMPLETE CONSERVATION PLAN ON EVERY FARM

ANNUAL NEWS LETTER

Malvern, Iowa
Dec. 31, 1956

The Mills County Soil Conservation District Commissioners extend a greeting to all the people of the County who are interested in Soil and Water conservation. To those of you who are not directly interested, we would invite your perusal of this report. We feel that the trends and accomplishments will increase your interest.

We are indebted to Ray W. Jones and his capable staff for assisting in supplying the following information.

During the year we have been ably assisted by the Assistant Commissioners. We are very grateful for their interest, suggestions and loyal attendance at our meetings. These men are appointed for one year terms and are — Albert Washburn, Hastings, Iowa, Harold McCain, Malvern and Dale Lincoln, Pacific Junction.

We, as a Board still hold that the primary job in the District is — Soil and Water Conservation. Along with this, is a goal for the development of a complete conservation plan for every farm. As a result we have not entered into other activities which would use up valuable personnel time.

"Trends" which we mentioned are a result of our own and district personnel observations and office records. They are giving us much concern.

We have a much higher percent of new cooperators who wish to start their farm plan with mechanical practices. Previously we have held out for good land use ahead of mechanical practices, as practices are most effective in conjunction with good land use, but the price squeeze, loss of seedings due to 3 years of drought condition and the corn acreage allotment, has left the higher percent of our farmers much out of line with their very definite five year rotation, which previously could be seen in all corners of the county.

As a result many farmers have turned to substitute crops for corn, pasture and hay. This along with an increased use of commercial fertilizer has left even our old cooperators in a extremely difficult and costly position in carrying out their good land use program.

Successful spring seedings which we could obtain for so many years previous to the last three have been given up for the now more successful fall seedings.

With A.C.P. assistance in 1956 above 50%, popularity for level terrace construction has increased. Our records show that more than 50% of these have been constructed on farms with little or no previous land use plans.

As Ray Jones says, "Perhaps this is only a normal condition, but it seems to deserve consideration before it becomes an agriculture panic of production." Our thought is — May the weather man and our ability to combat adverse conditions soon return us to a normality, so that we may not be saying of our land use program — "Where do we go from here?"

Larger layout jobs were evidenced in 1956, farmers showing an inclination to build more terraces in one year. The largest job of terracing completed during the year for one farm was over seven miles. Due to four row equipment coming into general use the pattern of terraces has changed, 98% of the terraces are now being built with dozers. These are much wider on back slope, top and channel. This not only adds to their farmability but also adds to their water holding capacity.

Preparation for drainage and irrigation still show a mounting interest in the county. Those who went into the irrigating work with proper preparation have been well reimbursed.

Numerous well failures have stressed the importance of water conservation. An increased interest in flood control structures as an additional water supply for livestock is being manifested.

One of the highlights of the year was the Iowa Premiere showing of the movie, "With Our Own Hands," produced by Allis Chalmers Company. The film shows the development of the Mule Creek Pilot Watershed and was first shown in Glenwood and Malvern on March

17, 1956. At that time the Allis Chalmers Company presented a copy of the film to the Mills County District. To date, our copy has been shown to 22 local groups, with an attendance of 1681 persons.

On 10-16-'56 Dale Harper, A.C. dealer at Glenwood was presented with award certificate for being an outstanding implement dealer of the year in Soil and Water conservation. He and other dealers of the county have contributed much to conservation.

Mule Creek Pilot Watershed was given close scrutiny by members of the House Subcommittee on Agricultural Appropriations Thursday afternoon, Sept. 20, when three of them made a very thorough tour of the area.

Sub committee members were — Ben Jensen of Iowa, Fred Marshall (D-Minn) and H. Carl Anderson (R-Minn). They were accompanied by Don A. Williams of Washington, D. C., Chief of the Soil Conservation Service; C. W. Chalin, state director for Georgia of the SCS and the sub-committee secretary, Frank Merrill.

They arrived in Mills County shortly after noon and joined a group of SCS personnel from here and Shenandoah and several Iowa Farm Bureau officials, officers of the Mule Creek Watershed Assn., and the Mills County Soil Conservation District commissioners for dinner at the M & M Cafe.

During the year three TV films and three radio transcriptions were made in the District. For these we extend thanks to the Iowa Farm Bureau, WOW-TV, KMA-TV, WOW, KMA and KFAB. J. F. Wearin, Jr. and Albert Washburn attended the Conservation Short Course held at Ames during January.

The Mule Creek Pilot Watershed has drawn a maximum of attention to Mills County and as a result twelve conducted tours of the district were made during the year. The groups were mostly from Iowa Districts that were interested in developing similar projects. One of the out of state groups came from Memphis, Missouri and was conducted by Turner R. Haden, who spent two years working in Mills County District about ten years ago.

The flood control structures in Mule Creek program were completed in September 1956. These stabilizing structures consist of twenty-three pipe drop inlet dams and one chute structure. Four of the drop inlets and chute were constructed on or connected to County road right-of-way, and were constructed jointly by the County and Federal Government. Farmers in Mule Creek Watershed have completed 70% of their planned practices and with normal conditions will complete their program in 1957 and 1958.

The organization of the Mule Creek Watershed Conservancy District was completed in 1956, the County Board of Supervisors appointed an Appraisal Board to determine the benefits for each 40 acres or portion thereof, and the final hearing on assessments was held on October 5, 1956.

The land owners in Mule Creek Watershed organized the Conservancy District for the purpose of assuming the responsibility for maintenance of the stabilizing and sediment control structures located on private lands, and the annual maintenance cost will be provided by the land owners of the Conservancy District on the basis of the benefits accruing to each parcel of land in proportion to the total.

An election will be held on March 23, 1957, at which time the landowners in Mule Creek Watershed will select three Trustees, owning land within the Watershed, to govern the Conservancy District.

OUTLOOK FOR 1957

In going over our work sheet for 1957 we are faced with the fact that every year demands more personnel. Funds from all available sources indicate that not more than the equivalent of six full time men will be available. Requests are for new plans, revised plans, survey and layout work, follow-up work, ACP needs, layout, supervision and compliance checking and if done in season would require more men.

This problem as in previous years has meant that some seasonal work has not received

its full share of attention. Our changing condition of climate makes follow up work very important. We do, however, wish to give special credit to the District personnel for their ability to handle overloads. We again suggest that you contact the office for work that you wish done — much in advance of the busy season. Work can then be grouped in areas and both time and travel expense can be saved. Ray still says that a week's notice is better than a phone call as the dozer is being unloaded at your farm.

This year, as in previous years, we have received generous cooperation from the — Soil Conservation Service, Fish and Wildlife Service, State Soil Conservation Committee, State Conservation Commission, Mills County Board of Supervisors, Mills County Extension Service, Mills County Farm Bureau, Mills County A.S.C., Radio Stations — KMA, KFAB, WOW, TV Stations — WOW-TV & KMTV and from Omaha World-Herald, Malvern Leader and Glenwood Opinion Tribune, from Mills County Churches and Civic Groups and many Commercial organizations. We thank them for their interest and hope our accomplishments for 1956 have justified their support.

SUMMARY OF CONSERVATION ACTIVITIES 1956

	1956	To date
District Cooperators, Number	49	515
Acres	10,780	117,103
Farms Serviced, Number	352	
Soil Surveys, Acres	5,320	222,176
New Contouring, Acres	7,868	84,417
Terraces Completed, Miles	195.7	2,469.6
Diversion Terraces, Miles	3.	47.6
Drainage, Open Ditch, Miles	2.7	106.7
Drainage, Tile, L.F.	0	35,668
Sod Waterways, Acres	223.7	2,008.1
Structures, Number	2	52
Group Demonstration, Number	0	137
Attendance	0	2,304
Conservation Information Meetings, Number	22	198
Attendance	1,681	9,389
News Articles, Number	6	246
Radio Broadcasts, Number	4	30
TV Broadcasts, Number	3	8
Commissioners Meetings, Number	6	132
Commissioners Talk to Boy Scout Meeting	1	1
A.C.P. Referrals	151	
Water holding capacity of our 2,469.6 miles terraces, acre feet	3,580	

FINANCIAL STATEMENT

RECEIPTS

Balance on hand January 1, 1956 (Malvern Bank)	\$ 344.84
Balance on hand January 1, 1956 (Mineola Bank)	690.01
Service Charges—	
Terraces	\$ 636.08
Drainage	276.43
Other	33.98
Total	946.49
State 2-A Budget — (Personnel)	4,589.34
State 1-A Budget	478.71
A.S.C. — Personnel & Mileage)	4,127.93
Total	\$11,177.32

DISBURSEMENTS

Rodmen—			
State	2,009.86		
A.S.C.	4,127.93		
Total			6,137.79
Clerical—			
State	2,579.48		
District	467.00		
Total			3,046.48
District Operation—			
State	\$478.71		
District	617.62		
Postage	58.42	Office Supplies	47.69
Dues and Subscriptions to		Fuel & Utilities	580.18
Field Supplies	33.60	Organizations	18.75
Photographic Supplies	59.24	Printing	185.88
Office Equipment	15.45	Office Furniture	170.87
		Total	1,170.08
TOTAL DISBURSEMENTS			10,354.35
Balance Cash Dec. 31, 1956 (Malvern Bank)			206.71
Balance Cash Dec. 31, 1956 (Mineola Bank)			616.26
TOTAL			\$11,177.32



In conclusion we would like to again express our appreciation for a successful year's work to Ray W. Jones, Unit Conservationist; Dick France, Farm Planner; Lillian Campbell, Office Clerk and Treasurer; Richard S. Goos, Secretary and Conservation Aids, namely — Gerald I. Bower, Leo Van Fosson, Lawrence A. Jones and Charley E. Haney.

May we quote from the Report of Iowa Study Committee of Water Rights and Drainage Laws: "If we are to continue to advance agriculturally and industrially we must make the best of every drop of water which falls on our soil. Great strides have been made in the direction of both water and soil conservation. Good soil conservation practices are the basic requirements of good water conservation. The soil itself is the best storage reservoir for water and the manner in which soil is managed and conserved is the fundamental approach to a wise water policy."

The Mills County Conservation District Commissioners hope 1957 to be more climatic favorable, but if not, we can assure you of the District personnel's willingness to do their best in helping you combat adverse conditions.

Yours for more Conservation.

District Commissioners

D. N. McGrew, Chairman

Gene
Omaha Neb.
645 Emerson Blvd.

Joe Van Horn

Mills County Soil Conservation District
Malvern, Iowa

