

Extra

THIRTY-FIRST ANNUAL REPORT
of the
WEST POTTAWATTAMIE COUNTY
SOIL CONSERVATION DISTRICT
Council Bluffs, Iowa
1975

WEST POTTAWATTAMIE COUNTY
SOIL CONSERVATION DISTRICT
Box 936, Room 238 Federal Bldg.
Council Bluffs, Iowa 51501
Phone 328-2489

THIRD CLASS

Eldon Ravlin
Eldon Ravlin, Chairman

FOREWORD

The West Pottawattamie County Soil Conservation District Commissioners are proud to present this 31st annual report to you, of the activities and accomplishments of the district during the year 1975.

Being in the second year of drouth and limited funds, farmers continued to apply increasing acres of conservation practices that were much needed. We hope these conservation practices will continue to be applied as fast as possible in each succeeding year.

Included in the accomplishments of which we were most proud was the winning of the World Herald Western Iowa Soil Conservation Award. This award is given for accomplishments in soil and water conservation and in participating in other activities to benefit the county as a whole.

The district entered the Allis-Chalmers Environmental Education Contest and won first place in the Iowa State competition. The district also placed second in the Upper Mississippi Region competing with entries from 6 states.

We also had a booth at the Iowa State Fair for the first time.

The District sponsors an Environmental Education Council. This committee is made up of teachers from our school systems, Conservation Personnel, District Technicians, District Commissioners, and Iowa Western Community College. The Committee sponsors the 6th grade campout, the Teachers Fall Workshop, and Speech Contest.

The commissioners want to take this opportunity to thank each and everyone involved in helping to make this district program an effective tool for better soil and water conservation.

Eldon Ravlin, Chairman
West Pottawattamie SCD

DISTRICT GOVERNING BODY

Eldon Ravlin, Chairman, 1222 Harrison St., Council Bluffs
Derald Blois, Vice-Chairman, Honey Creek
Floyd Fischer, Commissioner, Rt. 1, Council Bluffs
Lloyd Brokman, Commissioner, Rt. 1, McClelland
Clint Goos, Commissioner, Rt. 1, Council Bluffs
Louie Fahrenkrog, Assistant Commissioner, Carson
Stanley Grote, Assistant Commissioner, 367 Kenmore, Council Bluffs
Phillip Lustgraaf, Assistant Commissioner, Rt. 4, Council Bluffs
Gale Brown, Assistant Commissioner, Neola
C. W. McManamy, Assistant Commissioner, Rt. 3, Council Bluffs
Cliff Johnson (County Extension Director) District Secretary

STATE EMPLOYEES

Mrs. Oneta Riggs, State Clerk
Leslie Betts, State Aide (Trans. to Malvern 4-11-75)
Warren Vorthmann (employed 1-16-75)

SOIL CONSERVATION SERVICE EMPLOYEES ASSISTING THE DISTRICT

Cal Cox, District Conservationist
Donald Barnhart, Conservation Technician (retired 11-16-75)
Kendell W. Olin, Area Conservationist
Mrs. Eileen Moore, Area Clerk
Norman Koester, Area Engineer

 ATTEND!

 the
 CONSERVATION AWARDS BANQUET
 at
 Underwood Community Hall
 February 18, 1976 - 6:30 P.M

DISTRICT PROGRESS

	<u>1974</u>	<u>1975</u>	<u>Goals for 1976</u>
NEW COOPERATORS	54	34	25
FARMERS ASSISTED	226	185	290
FARMERS APPLYING PRACTICES	115	137	150
CONSERVATION PLANS PREPARED	38	40	30
CONSERVATION PLANS REVISED	11	21	10
GROUPS ASSISTED	2	4	4

MAJOR CONSERVATION PRACTICES APPLIED

	<u>1974</u>	<u>1975</u>
GRADE STABILIZATION STRUCTURE	5	5
CONSERVATION TILLAGE	144,303 ac.	3,581 ac.
TERRACES	101,810 ft.	154,110 ft.

OTHER ACTIVITIES

MEETINGS HELD	12
SPECIAL MEETINGS	15
OFFICE CALLERS	480
PHONE CALLS	1,040
RADIO TALKS	6
TALKS TO SCHOOLS & CIVIC GROUPS	8
TEACHERS FALL WORKSHOP	44 teachers attended
OUTDOOR CLASSROOMS	1,200 students attended
6th GRADE CAMPOUT	235 students attended, with a sponsor for every 5 students

WEST POTTAWATTAMIE SOIL CONSERVATION DISTRICT
FINANCIAL REPORT
Fiscal Year 1975 Budgets

Soil Conservation Districts receive funds from the State of Iowa to assist them in carrying out local programs. These funds are allocated to the districts (sub-governmental units) by the Department of Soil Conservation on a need basis evidenced by work loads and budgets submitted by District Commissioners.

The allocation is broken down into two separate funds. They are, the 1M Budget used for commissioners expenses, office supplies, printing and other office expenses; and the 2M Budget which is used to employ a clerk and full time aide to help with field work.

	<u>1M Budget</u>
ALLOCATION	\$ 1,500.00
COMMISSIONERS EXPENSES	
(mileage & meals)	834.53
OFFICE SUPPLIES	482.48
OFFICE EXPENSE	113.93
MEETING EXPENSE	42.51
CONTESTS	6.00
PRINTING EXPENSE	14.00
TOTAL EXPENDED	1,493.45
Returned to Department of Soil Conservation	6.55
	<u>\$ 1,500.00</u>

	<u>2M Budget</u>
ALLOCATION	\$15,195.00
SALARIES - Clerical and Technical	13,420.36
CLERKS & AIDES TRAVEL	100.62
DISTRICT EQUIPMENT	110.79
DISTRICT SHARE OF IPERS & SOCIAL SECURITY	1,254.81
STATE EMPLOYEES INSURANCE	264.00
TOTAL EXPENDED	15,150.58
Returned to Department of Soil Conservation	44.42
	<u>\$15,195.00</u>

The District has a revolving fund to help them finance programs for which the 1M and 2M funds cannot be used. Some of the programs are: Conservation Education materials, information programs, and dues to State and National Associations of Soil Conservation Districts:

WORKING BALANCE 12-31-74	\$ 1,008.54
1975 Receipts	298.93
1975 Expenditures	239.36
Balance on hand 12-31-75	1,068.11

WATERSHED REPORT

Watershed projects are, in a manner of speaking, jewels in a Conservation District's crown. A watershed project encompasses more than one farm, ordinarily involves a number of structures and always requires a greater than usual amount of cooperation between the landowners involved.

Because of these things watershed projects are high profile, broad image, tangible elements of conservation. Elements that all can see, measure and appreciate. So it is that a district with a successful watershed project record is in turn a successful district with a strong record of achievement. West Pottawattamie is such a district.

Probably the show piece among the West Pottawattamie District projects is the Indian Creek Watershed. This project was first authorized in the fall of 1961. It is scheduled for completion this year---1976. Those intervening 15 years have been both deeply frustrating and highly rewarding. The fact that completion is assured stands today as a tribute to the dedication and steadfastness of the many people who have contributed so much in time and effort to this worthwhile venture. The Indian Creek project is peculiar unto itself in that it serves not only to protect and serve an agricultural area but does the same for the city of Council Bluffs.

Companion, in age, to the Indian Creek project is the Ryan-Henschel Watershed. This was also authorized in 1961 and this one also should be completed in 1976. This is entirely an agriculturally oriented watershed, but one which has already proven its worth in terms of both conservation and recreation.

North Pigeon Watershed was authorized in 1969. After a rather slow start, work in this watershed has moved along well and completion is now more than just a dream. This watershed is in one of the rougher geographic areas of the district and has presented some problems both in structure construction and upland treatment. The fact that these problems are present is the best possible evidence that the need for the watershed program is great indeed.

Simon Run is the baby of the authorized watershed projects in the district with a birth date of 1970. Although no structures have, as yet, been started in this watershed there has been considerable progress in upland treatment.. Substantial effort is also being made to secure the remaining land easements needed for construction. The present schedule calls for initial contracts to be let during 1976.

In the embryo stages are the Twin Ponies Watershed and the Mamie Creek Watershed projects. Both have been incubating for quite some time. Some of the preliminary steps have been completed, particularly in the Twin Ponies case. Both projects however will require a renewed display of interest and desire on the part of the residents of the areas. However with several of the initial projects nearing completion more time can now be devoted to the promotion of these two proposals.

A few statistics of interest: Total estimated costs in the four watersheds now in active stages runs \$2,333,889. Of the more than 50 structures already planned, nearly 40 are completed, underway or under contract.

Most importantly of all perhaps is the fact that the four currently active watershed projects in the West Pottawattamie District will affect, in whole or in part, some 176 farms. That these effects will be positive is a foregone conclusion.

C. W. McManamy
Assistant Commissioner

STANDARD SOIL SURVEY

The Soil Survey of Pottawattamie County started in September of 1974, and continued until the fall of 1975.

During this time approximately 90,000 acres were soil surveyed in West Pottawattamie Soil Conservation District. The Missouri River bottomlands and some of the uplands adjacent to the bottomlands were completed.

The soil maps can be used to determine the erosion hazard, crop adaptability, moisture holding capacity, and water infiltration rates, and other information useful to the farmer in determining what crops can be grown successfully on the different soils.

Other uses of the soil survey are planning highways, sanitary landfills, sewage disposal, housing development, and other rural and urban uses of land.

John Nixon, Soil Scientist, is in charge of the Standard Soil Survey, and is assisted by Patrick Pisarik and Mary Ann Barger. Hollis Oelman and Carrol Osknig, student trainees from Iowa State University, spend the summer months on the soil survey staff.

The soil survey is a cooperative project of the County, Extension Service, and the Soil Conservation Service.

DISTRICT COST-SHARE

The Iowa Department of Soil Conservation had a successful year (1975-76) with its cost-share program. West Pottawattamie, alone, was allocated \$24,460.00 by the State Department of Soil Conservation. The money was spent in sharing the cost of installing erosion and sediment control practices for farmers.

Any farmer can apply for cost-share assistance, providing he is a District Cooperator with the Soil Conservation District. To be a District Cooperator, you agree to develop and follow through with a conservation plan for your farm. Assistance in developing this plan is provided by the Soil Conservation Service. You must also agree to maintain those practices for which you receive cost-share payment.

The \$24,460.00 spent by the District was applied to terracing projects. The money is allocated on a first come - first serve basis, with priority going to those in watershed areas. If there are any questions, you can ask the State Clerk while signing up for cost-share assistance and she will be happy to explain the procedure and answer any questions you might have.

THINGS HAVE CHANGED
by
CLIFFORD JOHNSON, CED

Conservation methods and peoples attitudes towards soil and water erosion have changed over the years.

In the "good old days" with horses and mules and small machines, people were more concerned about breaking up the ground and producing enough food per farm for 5 to 6 people. Now, one farmer is responsible for producing enough food for 50 or 60 people; and we have words like pollution, ecology, and environment, creeping into our system.

In 1923 the Extension Service held a soil erosion control demonstration, it wasn't our present kind. It was a V shaped woven wire system placed in a ditch to hold the soil---where? In the ditch, not on the land. In 1939, contours started to be the fashion and then there was the walking the farm, of laying out a contour or a minor with a level put on the tractor to get somewhere near a contour line; levels were placed on stakes for sighting level lines, and in 1941, a new term came about. The word "terrace" was considered and farmers started plowing "ditches" around the slopes to help hold soil and water. The C.C.C. Camps helped plant 45,000 trees in the county for erosion control.

We used to see fires burning in our fields at night to eliminate the plant growth on the soil to make it easier for horse drawn equipment to till the ground---we were really burning organic matter and affecting soil structure.

But things have changed. Farmers signed up in big numbers to request a soil conservation district during 1942 and 1943, and by April 28th, 1944, the Secretary of State issued a certificate, starting the West Pottawattamie Soil Conservation District. The application was presented by Ernest Harms, Don Anderson, Glen Craft and Clifford Johnson.

Lots of things have happened affecting our soil over the years, like the spring flood of 1943, the big flood of 1952, environmental protection requirements, knowledge of why we all need adequate soil and water conservation.

Terraces have changed from the plow method, to wider based terraces, to broadbase terraces and to grassed backslope terraces. This really helped avoid point rows and made it possible to use larger machines for cropping.

Recently new terms have developed on the farm front---mulch tillage; conservation tillage; etc.

All of these developments of soil and water pollution control have been good for all of society. It provides for more and better food, cleaner air and water, and a better living for all.

CONTESTS

The commissioners enter several contests, such as the Permanent Conservation Practice Program sponsored by the Iowa Department of Soil Conservation and the Iowa Association of Soil Conservation District Commissioners; the NACD-Allis Chalmers Environmental Education contest; the Goodyear Contest; the World Herald Soil Conservation Recognition Program; and the Soil Conservation Speech contest sponsored by the Ladies Auxiliary of the Iowa Association of Soil Conservation District Commissioners and Grinnell Mutual Reinsurance Company. These contests and awards are given on local, regional, state, and national levels.

The Iowa Soil Conservation Permanent Practice Program, had three division winners for 1975: Alfred Miller, Silver City, Owner-Operator; Tenant Operator was Frank Seidler, Council Bluffs, with J. Frederic Schlott, Council Bluffs (Farm Owner); the New Cooperator division winner was Alma Schnepel, Treynor. The J. Frederic Schlott, Owner-Tenant operated farm was over-all winner in the district. These farmers are to be congratulated for their work in soil conservation.

The West Pottawattamie Soil Conservation District received 1st place in the World-Herald Soil Conservation Recognition Program. The contest is based on the districts activities and accomplishments, and the standard of performance in which it carries out its program.

The NACD-Allis Chalmers Education Awards Program has two winners: 1) a teacher in grades K-12 who has been personally responsible for implementing an outstanding environmental conservation education program in his or her school system. Evelyn Hopper, Harrison School Teacher, was nominated for this award. 2) A conservation district that has carried out an outstanding Environmental Conservation Education Program in local school systems. The District sponsors a Fall Teachers Workshop, and a 6th grade campout. These activities helped this district to place first in the State, and second place in the Upper Mississippi Region, competing with entries from 6 states.

The Districts Speech Contestant, Merle Rasmussen, from the Underwood Community School, won first place in the regional competition and third at the state level.

WORKING WITH OTHER ORGANIZATIONS

As you probably know, District Commissioners are elected every six years. In six years time, a lot of different things can and do happen. Since its beginning in 1944, the District's program of activities has expanded tremendously. The District is involved with Environmental Education, MAPA, and Region 13 Soil Conservation Districts. We work with such organizations as: Iowa Department of Soil Conservation, Conservation Commission, SCS, FHA, Extension, NACD, County Board of Supervisors, ASCS, Rural Development Committee, ARS, and many others.

Our jobs are becoming more important with new laws being passed, such as the Iowa Conservancy District Law. We work with all these organizations, as well as running our own fundamental organization.

Deciding who gets cost-share assistance and how much; who is accepted as a cooperator; who is cancelled; and working with watersheds, are normal business.

The commissioners wish to extend their gratification to all organizations for their cooperation in helping make the district a success.