

ANNUAL REPORT

CHEROKEE COUNTY, IOWA
SOIL CONSERVATION DISTRICT

1946

- - - - -

District Commissioners

C. C. Martin, Chairman	Cherokee, Iowa
Louis C. Bengston	Aurelia, Iowa
James R. Fee	Washta, Iowa

CHEROKEE COUNTY
SOIL CONSERVATION DISTRICT

ANNUAL REPORT

FOR

1946

INTRODUCTION

The goal of the district is a soil and water conservation plan in operation on every farm in Cherokee County. With the increased activity, because of the Little Sioux Flood Control Program, the attainment of this goal (in as short a time as possible) becomes more important. Almost all of Cherokee County lies within the Little Sioux River Watershed.

An indication of the job ahead can be gained from the following figures: There are 357,116 acres in farms in Cherokee County. At present, district conservation plans are being applied on 18,021 acres in the county. About 64% of the practices planned have been applied on these farms.

The district work plan states that the Cherokee County Soil Conservation District will aid in flood control activities on the Little Sioux River and recommended the following: using practices which will increase absorption of water where it falls; controlling or guiding the movement of surplus water; the use of structures. The benefits that will accrue to individual farmers will more than repay the cost of such a program and at the same time lay a foundation for a successful flood control program on the entire watershed.

The district commissioners have approved a "usage plan" for flood control assistance as authorized in House Document #268. They have also approved the proposed farmer-district cooperative agreement form and the proposed maintenance agreement form to be used where flood control assistance is obtained.

PROGRESS IN ESTABLISHING FARM PLANS:

The 88 district cooperators have made the following progress during 1946 in establishing their soil and water conservation plans:

Contoured	-	5470 acres
Terraced	-	16.2 miles
Grassed waterways	-	72771 ln. ft.
Seeded headlands	-	121 acres
Seeded new pastures	-	92 acres
Improved pastures	-	100 acres
Built diversions	-	1692 ln. ft.
Limed	-	743 acres
Fertilized new seedings	-	786 acres
Built contour fence	-	1411 rods
Contour field divisions	-	29 farms

A check was made on the progress of cooperators in establishing practices by sending out a questionnaire the first week in December. A sample of the progress made by individual farmers in establishing their soil and water conservation programs may be gained from the next page (this is a tabulation of the results reported in the first 25 questionnaires returned.)

OTHER FARMS ASSISTED:

In addition to the cooperators listed, other farmers were assisted in establishing the following practices:

Contouring	-	2387 acres on 49 farms
Contour field divisions	-	7 on 4 farms
Contour fence built	-	80 rods on 1 farm

It is estimated that 26,500 acres were contoured in Cherokee County during 1946 (this figure was obtained in cooperation with the Cherokee County Agricultural Conservation Association.)

GOALS FOR 1947:

The following goals have been set for the establishment of conservation practices during 1947:

Terracing	-	18.5 miles
Contouring	-	6000 acres
Grassed waterways	-	82000 ln.ft.
Grassed headlands	-	120 acres
Contour field divisions	-	82 farms

DISTRICT ACTIVITIES DURING 1946:

Conservation plans were developed by 48 farmers with district assistance during 1946. These plans total 8,787 acres.

To date, 88 farmers have developed farm conservation plans (a total of 18,021 acres).

The distribution of district farm conservation plans in Cherokee County, by townships, is as follows:

Marcus 0	Liberty 1	Cedar 1	Spring 1
Amherst 4	Sheridan 0	Cherokee 6	Afton 5
Tilden 3	Rock 9	Pilot 10	Pitcher 12
Grand Meadow 7	Willow 12	Silver 15	Diamond 2

The goal for 1947 is the development, with district assistance, of 60 farm conservation plans.

PRACTICES ESTABLISHED ON 25 FARMS IN 1946

SIZE FARM ACRES	ACRES CONTOURED	ACRES LINED		NEW SEEDINGS FERTILIZED ACRES	WATERWAYS ESTABLISHED		HEADLANDS SEEDED		BUFFER STRIPS SEEDED		CONTOUR FENCE BUILT	TERRACES BUILT	PERMANENT PASTURES SEEDED
		CROPLAND	PASTURE		NO.	RODS	LENGTH RODS	WIDTH FEET	NO.	ACRES			
320	115	105										3000	
200	85	16.2			2	60	1300	20			100		
120	55	13			3	180	860	16					
240	93	75		25	3	145	960	22	5	2.5		2450	
240	95	14			2	100	80	30			25		14
160	87	27			3	120	200	20					
120	50	18		14	1	120							
480	135			80								3000	
240	80	20	27		5	120	780	20	7	8	50		
240	73						120	33					8
120	30	30		20	1	20							
200	55			55			130	24	2	2			
160	70	18			3	150	640	16.5					4
160	80	70		18	3	200	400	16.5			240	10130	
160	35	30		43	4	18	182	33			175	1100	
160	68	20					240	20					
240	142	30			2	160	140	33			15		
1071	60	35		40								14550	
240	65	16					670	20					
160	65						500	10			200		2
320	101			116			540	20					
400	80			100			80	20					
120	40	18		15.5								3200	
160	95				2	240	340	20			20		9.5
312	130		25		3	180	160	20	1	1.5			

CONSERVATION SURVEYS:

Conservation surveys were completed on 17,204 acres during 1946. This makes a total of 25,914 acres covered by these surveys since the organization of the district.

WATERSHED DEVELOPMENT IN COOPERATION WITH FLOOD CONTROL PROGRAM:

The district commissioners have given a priority to seven sub-watersheds in Cherokee County. If the farmers in these watersheds develop conservation plans as anticipated, they will be the first to receive available flood control assistance. These priorities are subject to review and change.

At present the status of the first four sub-watersheds is as follows:

Mortenson Watershed: 13 farms - 1161 acres

4 farms have completed soil and water conservation plans and are applying them. 643 acres of the 1139 acres in these farms lies within the watershed (they comprise 55% of the watershed area.) Soil and water conservation plans are practically complete on another 18% of this watershed.

Fee Watershed: 11 farms - 910 acres

3 farms have completed soil and water conservation plans and are applying them. 376 acres of the 560 in these farms lies within the watershed (they comprise 41% of the watershed area.) Additional plans are now being developed.

Simonsen Watershed: 9 farms - 1003 acres

4 farms have completed soil and water conservation plans and are applying them. 727 acres of the 1667 acres in these farms lie within the watershed. (They comprise 72% of the watershed area.) Additional plans are now being developed.

Martin Watershed: 14 farms - 1520 acres

Plans are now being developed in this watershed area. 5 farms already have conservation practices in effect.

EDUCATIONAL ACTIVITIES:

Moving Pictures Shown - the sound moving picture "The River" was shown to 4 groups with a total attendance of 267.

General Educational Meetings - 11 meetings of these type were held with a total attendance of 15.

Group Planning Meetings - meetings were held with 6 groups with a total attendance of 38.

Newspapers - a total of 45 news articles on soil conservation work were printed by local papers during the year.

District Bankers Association Meeting - a soil conservation meeting for the Bankers' Association was held at Cherokee. The morning session was a tour of the Stiles farm which has a complete soil and water conservation plan in effect. The afternoon session was a discussion meeting. Total attendance of 85.

Advertising - The Cherokee State Bank, the First Trust & Savings Bank of Aurelia and the Farmers' National Bank of Aurelia sponsored advertisements featuring soil conservation during the year. The Cherokee State Bank is running a series of ads featuring soil conservation in Cherokee County.

TILLAGE STUDIES:

Tillage studies (comparing yields on surface planted, listed, disked and sub-surface tilled corn, with and without fertilizer) were carried on in Cherokee County during 1946. The plots were located on the James R. Fec, Louis Longston and Fred Rupp farms. The work was made available through the cooperation of the Iowa Experiment Station and the Soil Conservation Service. The district feels that these studies should be continued in order that an authoritative answer can be obtained as to the relative merits of the different methods of planting corn. This is important in western Iowa where there is much interest in methods of planting and tending corn that will hold the soil where it belongs.

EQUIPMENT AVAILABLE:

Terracing equipment in the county is becoming more plentiful. There are now three disk plows in the county (all owned by cooperators). Also, a whirlwind plow whose owner is doing custom terraces and waterway work.

COOPERATION WITH OTHER AGENCIES

Cherokee County Farm Bureau - the district appreciates the assistance given by this organization in furthering soil conservation work in the county; especially through the educational programs on soil conservation at the township farm bureau meetings.

Extension Service - the district is indebted to the Extension Service for the assistance given in its educational program. Special note should be taken of the work done in the county by John Maddy and the work of the County Extension Director in encouraging soil conservation projects among the 4-H Club members.

AAA - The Cherokee County Agricultural Conservation Association has assisted in the district program through the promotion of soil conservation practices; the district appreciates the help given by the members of the local county organization.

Banks - Cherokee County banks have been outstanding in their support of the soil and water conservation program and the district is highly appreciative of this aid.

NEWSPAPERS - The local newspapers have been of much help in giving news coverage to soil conservation activities in the county; it has helped a great deal in acquainting more people with district activities.

SCHOOLS - Cherokee County schools are using soil and water conservation information in their class work which is an excellent way of getting a more complete understanding of soil and water conservation programs throughout the county.

SOIL CONSERVATION SERVICE - The district has received much assistance from the Soil Conservation Service and, through the Little Sioux Flood Control program, will receive much more. This gives an excellent opportunity to speed up the application of soil and water conservation practices in Cherokee County.

SUBMITTED BY THE COMMISSIONERS OF THE CHEROKEE COUNTY SOIL CONSERVATION DISTRICT: