

First Watershed - Recreation Project In Madison County

A first in Iowa's outdoor recreation projects was started last year when the State Conservation Commission joined with three soil conservation districts and the Madison County Board of Supervisors to incorporate a recreation area into the Badger Creek Watershed complex.

The Badger Creek Watershed is the first attempt to combine recreation and watershed projects in Iowa, according to E. B. Speaker, State Conservation Commission Director.

Erosion control, flood protection, water conservation, reforestation, wildlife habitat and outdoor recreation are just a few of the benefits to be derived from the project.

Located in Warren, Madison and Dallas counties, the watershed covers a total area of 34,346 acres. It was originally designed as a flood and soil erosion control project in 1960.

The idea of incorporating a recreation area was proposed after federal cost-sharing for watershed projects became available in 1962.

Consequently, recreation was included and the Conservation Commission became a co-sponsor with the Madison, Dallas and Warren county soil conservation districts. The Soil Conservation Service is cost-sharing the recreation project with the Commission and will administer the program. The target date for completion of the program is 1969.

A 276-acre lake will be the main attraction of the Badger Creek recreation area. It will serve as both a water "playground" and a flood control device. From the recreation standpoint, the lake will provide fishing, boating, and other water sports such as swimming. Boat ramps, bathing beaches and bath houses will be built at various points around the lake.

Adjacent land will be acquired to provide land for outdoor recreation. Camping and picnic grounds are planned. Wildlife areas will be developed, and hunting will be allowed in certain zones. Recreation extras such as water and sanitary facilities, park benches, shelter houses and fireplaces will also be included.

Recreation facilities mentioned so far might be considered intensive or "high-use" facilities, Speaker said. He pointed out, however, that extensive or "low-use" areas will also be set aside. These will provide hunting, nature study or just a place to "get away from it all."

The location of the Badger Creek Watershed, a 20-minute drive from Des Moines, will make it available to a larger number of people.

Speaker continued that Iowa is badly in need of recreation land. Much of the state's rich



Main attraction of the Badger Creek Watershed will be a 276-acre lake that will provide water sports such as fishing, boating, and swimming.

fertile soil is too expensive to use solely for recreation.

To provide the facilities Iowa demands, recreation must be combined with other land uses, he said. Speaker feels the success of the Badger Creek Watershed will lead to a better and more extensive variety of outdoor recreation for all Iowans.

The law allows landowners, counties, cities, towns and state and federal governments to cooperate in planning and carrying out complete conservation programs on any natural drainage area.

Under this program over 11 million acres of Iowa farm land are in some stage of watershed development. Over 6,000 farmers are applying conservation treatments. Fourteen watershed applications for 363,500 acres have been approved by the State Soil Conservation Committee and are awaiting priority for work plans.

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Both research and lay people added Mendell, have wanted to study water behavior and soil loss on a fully terraced watershed.

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Aerial view of the Badger Creek Watershed showing parallel terrace systems.

Iowa Watershed Projects Are Progressing Rapidly

Iowa's watershed projects have progressed rapidly since passage of the Small Watershed Protection Law in 1954, according to State Conservationist Frank H. Mendell.

The law allows landowners, counties, cities, towns and state and federal governments to cooperate in planning and carrying out complete conservation programs on any natural drainage area.

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Conservation Districts Aid In Rural Beauty Progress

The recent White House Conference (May 20) on "National Beauty of America" stressed the role of rural people in beautification of our American countryside. Since that time several Iowans, including State Conservationist Frank H. Mendell, have cited the tremendous contribution made by conservation farmers in Iowa's 100 soil conservation districts to the rural beauty of the Iowa countryside.

Mr. Mendell said, "Soil and water conservation measures are now being installed by over 30,000 Iowa farmers and operators, helping to make Iowa and America a beautiful place in which to live."

Mr. Mendell made reference to the many soil conservation practices which can be seen from the highways and the airways. The 20,000 level like farm ponds dot the curving quiltwork of contoured, terraced, and strip cropped fields. All this, including the graded waterways and erosion control structures, wind breaks and rolling green pastures and woodlands aid in reducing erosion, the unsightly gullies and sedimentation and enhance the beauty of the countryside.

"Unfortunately," says Mendell, "in these same trips by plane, train, or car we see a contrasting scene of the scars of erosion, gullying, sedimentation, and floods and the tremendous job which remains to be done on 13 million of our 34 million acres of farm land. These 13 million acres are in row crops that expose the soil to erosion. Then, too, less than half of the farms in Iowa are operated according to a conservation plan."

"The public has a fundamental interest in careful custodianship of the land and water resources within the boundaries of privately-owned farms—John F. Kennedy."

There are between four and five million acres of farm land in Iowa. There is no need in rushing by machine around on the

trees are conserved. The broad ridge, a type of "push-up" slope, type, daily adapted open since the terrace ridge is a 2:1 slope, and not a 4:1 slope and this in both is becoming according to try to improve a parallel terrace are a conventional

You get the most for your fuel dollars when you farm around the hill. Extra energy needed for steep climbs comes from your fuel tank.

Farming around hills lets your tractor pull a uniform load at a steady speed. Tests show this cuts your fuel bill as much as 10 percent. Contour farming reduces erosion and may save as much as 2-3 inches of soil moisture a year. This means as much as 12-13 percent higher yields.

It pays to farm on the contour. And it pays to use Mobil fuel for the performance you expect from your tractor.

Such a project began in 1961 near Macedonia, Cooper. One of the project are the right handers in the watershed, the East Pottawattamie County Soil Conservation District and five governmental agencies.

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FARM AROUND THE HILL AND CUT YOUR FUEL BILL