

WEST POTT. SWCD

1992 ANNUAL

REPORT

COMMISSIONERS

Mark Schnepel - Cho.
Gary Geise - V. Cha.
Clint Goos - Comm.
Dan McGinn - Comm.
Mike Dea - Comm.

DISTRICT PERSONNEL 1991

Lyle C. Peterson - D.C.
Dale DuVal - S.C. (Jan. - Aug.)
Dawn R. Brittain - Secretary
Greg Mathis - County Planner (Jan. - Oct.,
S.C. (Oct. - Dec.)
Ed Marshall - Technician
Lois Crawford (Nov. - Dec.)
Greg Hollins - County Planner (Oct., - Dec.)
Marshall Delavan - W.A.E.
Julie Rhoades - W.A.E.
Tom Bottoms - W.A.E.

DISTRICT ACTIVITIES

January - Commissioners held a special meeting to elect officers for the upcoming year. Mark Schnepel is the Chairman, Gary Geise serves as Vice Chairman, Dan McGinn is the treasurer, and Dawn Brittain was elected Secretary. Clint Goos and Gary Geise were re-elected as commissioners, and Mike Dea was elected a new commissioner. West Pottawattamie received a \$100.00 check for submitting J.A.R. Farms in the Landowner/Farm Manager Award program sponsored by the Iowa Chapter of American Society of Farm Managers and Rural Appraisers. Gary Thein, Farm manager, and J.A.R. Farms were state winners.

February - Received Spring allocation of \$ 21,838.00 for terrace construction. Funds were allocated. Bernie Bolton, Regional director for Area 4 attended the commissioners meeting.

March - District's annual Awards Banquet was held. Over 500 people attended. This years banquet was held at Iowa Western Community College. Contractors meeting at the Mile-Away Hall with a noon meal sponsored by Caterpillar, Fehrs Equipment Company, and Joe Thomas Equipment Company.

April - Conservation Reserve Plan (CRP) applications were approved. Connie Geils, director for the retired senior volunteer program visits with the District Conservationist, Lyle C. Peterson about the program.

May - Received No-Interest Loan allocation of \$ 18,000.00 for terrace construction.

June - Held annual No-Till tour on June 11th. There were 75 people in attendance. Tentatively approved applicants for summer cost-share.

July - Commissioners held annual picnic in Treynor. Spot awards were given to Ed Marshall, technician for his outstanding terrace layout accomplishments. Greg Mathis received a spot award for his coordinating efforts with the No-Till Tour.

August - Dale Duval, Soil Conservationist, transfers to Sioux City. Commissioners and staff held a going away dinner for Dale DuVal at the 64-Club.

September - Commissioners attended Fall Regional meeting. Greg Mathis discussed soil loss complaint with commissioners.

October - Approved applicants for fall terrace construction. Approved 1992 CRP seeding plans. Two soil loss complaints reviewed on site. Greg Mathis selected as new Soil Conservationist.

November - Greg Hollins state aid for East Pottawattamie become the County Resource Planner at West Pottawattamie Soil and Water Conservation District. Lois Crawford from Shelby County accepts full time technician job here in West Pottawattamie.

December - Commissioners held annual Christmas dinner at the Rose in Treynor, Iowa. Held regular board meeting.

ASCS REPORT

The West Pottawattamie County Committee approved 39 applications for the 1991 Agricultural Conservation Program (ACP). The allocation was \$ 57,677.00.

The Long Term Agreement allocation was \$ 10,500.00. Two applications were approved. These agreements are for a minimum of three years.

Total cropland acres bid into the Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) was 6,219 acres. This was an increase from the 5,684 acres in 1990, and includes sign-ups through number eleven.

DISTRICT BUDGET REPORTS 1990-91

1-m Budget (Commissioners and office expense)
Total Allocation \$ 3,590.00
Office Supplies and Printing \$ 1,350.00
District Dues \$ 500.00
Commissioners Mileage and Expense \$ 912.42
Release to DSC \$ 588.17

3-m Cost-Share (1988-89)
Total Allocation \$121,100.05
Total Spent \$121,052.75
Released to DSC \$ 7.30
Released to DSC \$ 40.00
Total Expenditures \$121,100.05

3-m Cost-Share (1989-90)
Total Allocation \$ 64,512.00
Total Spent \$ 62,106.71
Released to DSC \$ 4.79
Balance Unobligated \$ 2,400.50
Total Expenditures \$ 64,512.00

3-m Cost-Share (1990-91)
Total Allocation \$121,415.35
Total Spent \$109,759.76
Funds Obligated/work not complete \$ 9,500.00
Released to DSC \$ - 0 -
Balance Unobligated \$ 2,155.59
Total Expenditures \$121,415.35

3-m Cost-Share (1991-92)
Total Allocation \$ 77,759.42
Total Spent \$ 20,625.00
Funds Obligated/work not complete \$ 51,500.00
Released to DSC \$ - 0 -
Balance Unobligated \$ 5,634.42
Total Expenditures \$ 77,759.42

County Allocation Received for 1991 \$ 12,500.00

STAFF CHANGES

Julie Rhoades

The Soil Conservation office staff has changed. We welcome Lois Crawford and Greg Hollins as new additions to our staff. Lois was hired as a Soil Conservation Technician on November 18th. She has three years of previous experience in Shelby County as a technician.

Greg Hollins is our new County Resource Planner. He joined the West Pottawattamie office on November 25, and has four years experience for the Soil Conservation Service. He was a technician for two years and the County Resource Planner in East Pottawattamie.

Greg Mathis, our previous County Resource Planner, is now a full-time Soil Conservationist. Sharon Chamberlain, Soil Conservationist, left in January to become the District Conservationist in Winterset, Iowa. In August Dale DuVal, Soil Conservationist, transferred to the Woodbury County Field Office in Sioux City.

During the summer, three W.A.E.'s worked in the office. Tom Bottoms completed the FSA SX status reviews. Marshall Delavan helped with terrace lay-outs, and Julie Rhoades assisted with clerical duties and computer input.

ABANDONED WELL CLOSURES
Greg Hollins

Ten abandoned wells have been properly plugged since the initiation of the district well plugging program which began July 1, 1991. Greg Hollins is the designated county agent in charge of overseeing well closures in the West Pottawattamie district.

Most wells plugged so far were hand dug averaging 3' in diameter and around 100' deep. The wells are filled with sand up to the water line. A layer of bentonite is then layed in for a seal at the water line to prevent contamination from entering the ground water. Sand is used again to fill the remaining space to about 4' from ground level. Another protective layer of bentonite is set in and then about 3' of soil. A properly closed well restores the natural protection originally provided by the soil preventing contaminates from polluting the ground water.

Abandoned wells provide easy entry for nitrates and coliforms to collect. Contamination of ground water is a big environmental concern, but another concern is the possibility of losing a human life from falling into one of these pits. An abandoned well is just an accident waiting to happen.

If you have an abandoned well on your property which needs to be plugged, the West Pottawattamie SWCD offers cost-share money for this purpose. For more information on plugging abandoned wells, stop-in or call the scs office.

COMPUTER SOFTWARE UPDATES
Lois Crawford

During the past year, SCS has provided field offices with several software improvements. Planning capabilities have expanded and allow SCS to provide a more customized plan, soil loss report, and new printed plan format that is easier to understand.

Engineering software developments have increased the accuracy of terrace design. Landowners and contractors are provided with more detailed construction information and yardage estimates. These programs are currently being used on all of our terrace designs.

AWARDS BANQUET
Greg Mathis

The 1990 Awards Banquet was held on March 4, 1991. The changes in the District's Annual Awards Banquet resulted in overwhelming approval from the 500 plus people who attended. For the first time, it was held at the Iowa Western Community College's cafeteria.

The entire focus of the banquet is to recognize conservation award winners. Over 180 awards were presented during the banquet. We would like to thank those who attended last year and invite all who are interested in soil conservation to the 1991 Awards Banquet.

The District wishes to thank all of the people and organizations who contributed to the banquet's success.

FSA COMPLIANCE
Greg Mathis

The easy part is over. Your conservation plan is on paper. Now the hard part - implementation. The Soil Conservation Service Staff is here to help you install your chosen practice for the land. Because it is your responsibility to keep your farm in compliance, you will need to implement the practices specified in your conservation plan by the scheduled date. This will keep your farm in compliance and you will remain eligible for all USDA programs.

If you have any questions about FSA compliance, your farm plan, or need to make revisions, please call or stop in the office to schedule an appointment.

NON-COST-SHARE TERRACES IN 1991
Ed Marshall

West Pottawattamie Soil and Water Conservation District landowners built a record number of non-cost-share terraces. During the last construction season, 77 landowners installed 169,700 feet of terraces without cost-share assistance. These terraces are installed to the same standards and specifications as cost-share terraces.

Since 1989, 397,336 feet of non-cost-share terraces have been built. We commend these landowners, and the West Pottawattamie SWCD presents each with a plaque at the annual awards banquet. Each landowner who completes non-cost-share terraces also picks up 1/3 of a point per year when applying for state cost-share assistance.

FIELD BORDERS - THE WAY TO GO
Ed Marshall

Field borders help control erosion and protect edges of the field which are used as "turnrows" or travel lanes for farm machinery. These borders are a strip of perennial vegetation established at edges of crop fields instead of rows up and down the hill.

Field borders should be at least 16 1/2 feet wide. If a strip is going to be used for a turn strip, the width should be increased to meet the needs of the size of the machinery. For FSA compliance, field borders need to be installed on slopes of 5% and greater. Once field borders are established, they should not be mowed until after July 1. This allows a place for ground nesting birds to leave their nests.

You should seriously consider incorporating field borders into your total resource management system.

1991 TERRACE FUNDING

In 1991 the West Pottawattamie Soil and Water Conservation District received \$ 99,597.42 in state cost-share funds from Iowa, and \$12,500.00 from the county. These funds were used to construct 120 miles of terraces in our District. This marks a significant increase from 1990 when 90 miles were constructed.

Landowners fill out cost-share applications and are approved based on a point system. There is not enough money to service all applications, but more and more landowners have constructed terraces without cost-share funds.

NO-TILL TOUR
Greg Mathis

The spring rains broke long enough last June 11 for the District to sponsor a successful no-till tour. The people who went on the tour visited, observed, and discussed on the farms of Joe Constant, Arnie and Joe Howard, Rod Graalf, and Bob Soloth. An outdoor barbecue meal was provided at Soloth's to 120 people. No-till has become so popular that we are considering two tours next year. They will cover separate parts of the county.

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