

Annual Report 2009

Cass County Soil & Water Conservation District

NRCS/IDALS-DSC



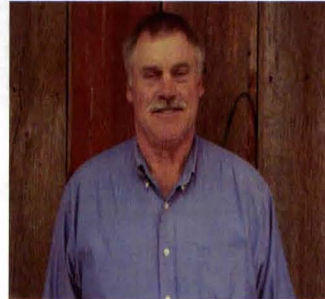
Celebrating Soil Conservation

Cass County SWCD Commissioners

It has been a busy year with the Cass County Soil and Water Conservation District. We have had new Commissioners learning the roles and duties of commissioner, along with the Secretary learning her position. We have also had some staff changes in the Natural Resources Conservation Service office also. Jeff Sporrer, Soil Conservationist, accepted a new position as Resource Conservationist and will be splitting his time between the Cass and Audubon County field offices. Jack Bucklin has joined the Atlantic field office staff as Soil Conservationist. Jack came to the Atlantic field office from Guthrie County, where he was a technician for 5 years. The District board has also acquired a couple of Assistant Commissioners in 2009. Alan Peterson of Atlantic was appointed in July and Tracy Marshall of Lewis was appointed in November 2009. Welcome to all, and Congratulations on your accomplishments. The Cass County SWCD administers the state cost share programs, Low Interest Loan programs. The District is also a partner in the operation and maintenance of watersheds in Cass County. The Cass County Soil & Water Conservation District meets the 4th Thursday of each month.

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L-R: Ray Wilson, Curt Behrends, Greg Zellmer, Fred Kay, Brian Follmann, Alan Peterson, Tracy Marshall

Watershed Tour

The Cass County SWCD sponsored a watershed tour in the Turkey Creek Watershed. The Cass County Commissioners invited the Cass County Supervisors to show them the importance of their continued partnership in these watersheds for support of operation and maintenance of these structures. Turkey Creek Sites 58D, 50D and 57 were visited. Jim and Kathi Mailander were available at their site to visit with the group about the their site, and the protection that the town gets from this structure during the large rain events. The SWCD sincerely appreciates the work that landowners do to preserve these sites.



F- Duane Ortgies, Ray Wilson, Greg Zellmer, Curt Behrends

B- Alan Peterson, Frank Waters, Duane McFadden, Fred Kay

Resource Conservationist



Jeff Sporrer has accepted the position of Resource Conservationist. His responsibilities have been expanded to both

Cass & Audubon Counties. His duty station is now in the Audubon field office, but will be traveling between the two locations as necessary. You may contact him at either office: Audubon(712)563-4248 or Atlantic (712)-243-3180 or by email jeff.sporrer@ia.usda.gov. He will

schedule time to meet you at the office of your preference.

Soil Scientist



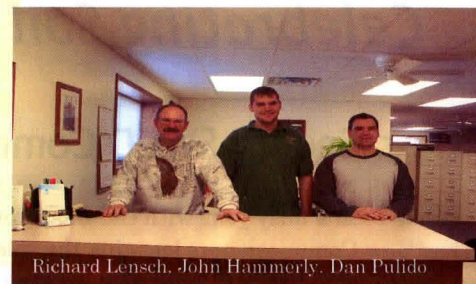
John Hammerly, from the Storm Lake area will be working in the Atlantic office on the soil survey update of Dickinson and Cass Counties, as well as other special soil related projects in western Iowa. John is originally from Newton, Iowa. In his spare time he enjoys biking, hiking, and fishing. John looks forward to meeting new people and discovering the many opportunities Atlantic has to offer.

Atlantic Field Office Staff



Jeff Sporrer, Jack Bucklin, Steve Fluckey, Randall Larsen, Jana Coughlin, Scott Breach, David York

NRCS Soils Staff



Richard Lensch, John Hammerly, Dan Pulido

Earth Team Volunteers

Students at the Griswold Community School Web Design class were recognized for their efforts in creating a website for the SWCD. Students were given the same information and they each came up with their own design. The SWCD picked a website and Chairman Fred Kay and Ray Wilson presented Earth Team Volunteer certificates and provided rolls and juice to all the students who participated. View our newly created website at: cassswcd.org.



"Get involved, be a Earth Team Volunteer"

Contractors Meeting



The Cass & Audubon County SWCD held a joint contractors meeting February 17, 2009 at the Pizza Ranch in Atlantic. Presentations were given by David York, Kevin Holcomb, Iowa DOT, and many suppliers provided information and door prizes. Field office technicians provided information about how to complete construction notes for proper processing. Cass & Audubon County SWCD supported this meeting by providing a meal to all the contractors who attended the meeting.

RENTAL EQUIPMENT

The Cass County SWCD has a Great Plains No-Till drill that producers in Cass County can rent to seed warm and cool season grasses. This drill was designed for native grasses, but works equally well for contour buffer strips and filter strips.

Cost to rent the drill is \$10.00 per acre, with a \$50.00 non-refundable deposit that is applied to your bill. Contact our office to make application at:

503 W.7th Street, Ste 1

Atlantic, Iowa 50022

Or download a rental agreement off our website at: Cassswcd.org

Envirothon Workshop

The Cass & Adair County SWCD co-sponsor a Envirothon Workshop for youth from Adair & Cass County to attend to prepare for the Envirothon competitions. The workshop was held March 4th at the American Legion Hall in Massena. Julie McMichael, NRCS Soils, Randy Goerndt, DNR Forestry Don Siervers, DNR Aquatics and Micah Lee and Lora Schwendinger, Cass ACCB. CAM and Orient- Macksburgs schools brought their teams to participate. Cass County SWCD provided cookies and drinks during the workshop.



Low Interest Loans

The Iowa Finance Authority has a Iowa water quality loan fund in which producers can access to fund their portions of construction projects. This can be used by itself or in conjunction with State and Federal cost share programs. Loans terms

- Loans from \$5,000 to \$50,000
- Terms up to 10-20 years for livestock facilities
- 3% fixed rate for life of loan
- Can fund up to 100% of the actual cost
- Applications accepted year-round
- Available through lender of your choice

If you are interested in participating contact our office or you may view information online at www.ifaprograms.com

Fair Activites



Cass County SWCD sponsored a fair booth in which the public could get information about the NRCS and SWCD. Daily drawings were held for candy jars and trees in which; Nakia Brown, Luke Frisbie, Colin Ring, Drew Sleckerber won the candy jars and Eva Coatney, Bill Sandbothe, John Carlson, and Gene Eyberg won trees that they will receive in mid April during the district's tree sales program. Thanks to all who registered.

How Do I Measure Up?

By James Gillespie, Bureau Chief

Iowan's have faced a lot of challenges this past year, but have stepped up to confront those challenges and taken conservation to heart. Protecting the soil and water of this state are ever apparent by looking at the landscape and water quality. Over 95% of this land is in private ownership and most of it is used for some form of agricultural production. The balance is in urban, roads, utilities and infrastructure that keep our people and commodities moving. All of these things are needed because I don't think there are many other states or parts of the country that rely on all of their land and its resources to do this. That is why it is so important that all of us (rural and urban) alike do all we can to protect the soil and water. You all have tremendous resources available to you locally in your Soil and Water Conservation District and the USDA, Natural Resources Conservation Service to assist you with your conservation needs. These people have both the technical assistance and financial opportunities that can help address your concerns. Your district has over 50 years of expertise in working with soil and water resources and the sound technical solutions to resource concerns. If you have a conservation plan, it is a great time to review it to see if it still addresses all of the resource concerns and your land use objectives. If you don't have a plan or can not find yours, contact the local office for assistance. As you begin this next year, (2010), take some time to walk around your property, looking at your land use decisions, and are there some conservation needs that need to be addressed. Do you have erosion occurring and is that sediment leaving your property? Have you identified your land with the watershed that you live in, and are you having any impact on that watershed from your land?

If you had to evaluate your own resource issues, how would you say I'm doing? What would your peers think of what I'm doing? Am I doing all I can to protect the soil and water, while maintaining the productivity and use of my property? **EVALUATE YOURSELF AND YOUR LAND USE TO SEE HOW YOU MEASURE UP!**

TREE PROGRAM

The Cass County SWCD conducts a annual tree sale, which supports our Scholarship Program to area youth in Cass County. Anyone can purchase trees from the district. Early orders are encouraged to assure the quantities. Orders of less than \$100 are due in full when the order is placed. Orders over \$100 or more require a minimum deposit of 50% with the balance due on the day of pick-up. Inquire at our office or use our website at cassswcd.org for more information.

We're on the web
Cassswcd.org

HARVESTING TREES

By Jeremy Cochran
District Forrester

Oakland - Call Before You Cut is a new resource and consumer protection campaign that encourages Iowa woodland owners to seek professional advice before harvesting trees. By calling 800-865-2477, landowners can receive *A Landowners Guide for a Successful Harvest*, an information kit and advice on good harvesting practices, at no cost

"This packet will provide information to woodland owners that will help assure the health and value of their woods," said Paul Tauke, State Forester.

The information packet can also be obtained online at www.callB4Ucut.com, which features information about Iowa's harvesting rules and guidelines.

"When a tree should be cut depends on many things, such as its age and maturity, its contribution to your woods' health, the market price of different timbers, and your own goals and needs," said Tauke.

"Make sure that your 'select cut' is based on all these things and not just the size of the tree."

Using Cover Crops to Heal the Land

by Thomas Hurford
Area Resource Conservationist

In the last two years Iowa has received exceptionally high rainfall. Much of this rainfall has come in very intense events which have caused extremely high amounts of erosion. As a result, rills and ephemeral gullies have shown up in areas where they have not been a problem in the past. This has prompted many to perform spot tillage in fields to smooth these areas out in order to plant. The problem with this is that the tillage has further loosened the soil and made these areas even more susceptible to erosion when the next extreme rainfall event occurs. Thus in many of these fields we are caught in a vicious cycle of erosion, tillage to smooth out the effects of the erosion, and even more erosion when the next event occurs. The first question that should be asked is: Is this erosion truly caused by extreme events unlikely to occur in the future to the extent they occurred over the past few years? If the answer to this question is no, than grassed waterways should be planned and installed. If the answer is yes, than at a minimum, consideration should be given to seeding a cover crop such as oats, wheat, or rye to provide temporary cover in order to allow the soil to re-consolidate after tillage. By far the best option is to plant either winter wheat or rye in the fall early enough to allow so fall growth prior to the onset of winter. For this to work, the cover crop should be seeded prior to the middle of October. If this is not possible, than the second best alternative is to seed a small grain cover crop in the early spring. Any small may be seeded, however in the spring; a higher seeding rate should be used than is normally recommended for cover crop purposes. Two to three bushels of oats to the acre would be the recommended seeding rate.

The crop can be planted through the cover crop but should be allowed to grow until it provides sufficient cover to control erosion, generally until it reaches 8 to 12 inches in height.

The cover crop can then be killed with the first post emergent herbicide application.

"If a farmer wants to only seed down a filled in ditch, a grass cover such as rye can be an effective choice. It grows very aggressively and has less risk to the crop by being on only a small area". This according to Steve McGrew of McGrew Brothers Farm located in Mills County Iowa. The McGrew Brothers have successfully used cereal rye cover crops for several years now, to heal ephemeral gullies.



We've Come A Long Way

By Steve Fluckey
State Technician

Recently I had the good fortune to come across some rather interesting reading material. Being a conservationist for the last 30 odd years, I often receive various conservation and farming books from family and friends. This year I acquired some pamphlets dating back to the late 1930s that were put out by the University of Missouri Agricultural Extension Service. I enjoyed reading the up and coming "trends" of the time: *Conserving Soil by Contour Farming* and *Water Management for the Farm*. It makes a person stop to think how far we've come with conservation practices. As I look out my back door, I see a pond that was built by the C.C.C. (Civilian Conservation Corps) during the Depression. The dirt was moved by hand with shovels and wheel barrows. The pond was one of the first in the area. Very few of those ponds still exist today. Conservation practices were poor back then, and they were soon filled with silt. Conservationists, and farmers alike, soon realized conservation practices would be needed in the watersheds to prevent the same thing from happening on future sites. The trouble was, not all farmers wanted to hear it. Their sons heard, however, in Ag classrooms across the state where contour farming and seeding waterways were hot topics. Today, ponds, structures, and terraces are built in a fraction of the time with equipment available now. A variety of programs are available to farmers and landowners with the goal of conserving our natural resources. We can't imagine looking across a field to see gullies so large "that you could hide a two story house in some of them" as my neighbor explained. Our children couldn't imagine digging a ditch by hand, much less an entire pond.

Yes, friends, we've come a long way in the last 70 plus years. It makes me wonder what conservation will look like in another 70.

HIGH TUNNEL AGRICULTURE

By Randall Larsen
Federal Technician

What is a High Tunnel? A high tunnel is a simple, inexpensive, naturally ventilated Quonset or gothic shaped structure constructed of metal purlins attached to metal pipes with six mil plastic. These structures work well to extend the growing season for soft fruit and vegetable production. Growing soft fruits and vegetables in a high tunnel enhances crop growth, yield and quality. A High Tunnel lets you produce disease free produce and market it fresh for a longer period of time. Organic producers and farmers market producers can use a High Tunnel to produce more top dollar crops in a longer growing season. Some Advantages of using a High Tunnel are:

- Improved quality of produce
- Extended growing season
- 6 Ft. building heights allows access with machinery
- Wind protection for plant seedlings
- Insect protection
- Plant foliage stays dry because of drip irrigation
- Water needs of plants are easily managed

Some disadvantages of using a High Tunnel are:

- Requires fairly regular attention to control internal temperature of the High Tunnel
- Snow must be removed from base areas along the side of the High Tunnel
- Disposal cost of the plastic covering after the lifespan of the covering
- The cost per square foot of production area.

Here in Cass County, Iowa, the Natural Resources Conservation Service (N.R.C.S.) will have cost share dollars available for High Tunnel Systems for crops through our Environmental Quality Incentive Program. High Tunnels will be added to our list of eligible practices for the 2010-2011 year if there is interest or need for it. If anyone is interested in High Tunnels, you may stop in the N.R.C.S. office at 503 W 7th St., STE 1, Atlantic, Iowa and pick up information or you could go to the Iowa NRCS website at <http://www.ia.nrcs.usda.gov>

As a District Employee my job is to assist the technicians with layout of terraces, waterways, and ponds. When I'm not in the field I also report all of the terrace and waterways once the project is completed. I work on Conservation Reserve Programs as needed. The end of spring construction season and all the bills are in from the previous fall construction season we figure average costs for dirt work, tile etc. This information is used to help the SWCD commissioners set the cost share rates for the state programs for the next year.

Agriculture Along the Tropical Frontier

By Jack Bucklin
Soil Conservationist

I was raised on the family farm between Scranton and Bayard, Iowa in Greene County. Upon graduating from Jefferson Community High School in 1968 I enlisted into the Marine Corps. After military service I attended Iowa State University and graduated with a BS degree in Animal Ecology in 1981. After a couple of years working for the US Forest Service and the National Park service I entered into the Peace Corps and worked with them for two years in Guatemala. After leaving the Peace Corps I continued to work in Guatemala for 15 years. Ten of those years were with a local Guatemalan non-profit organization working for the establishment and management of national protected areas (national parks, forests and multiple use zones).

I worked in wildlife conservation and agriculture extension. The "multiple use areas" where I worked are mostly made up of small tracts of private land where people live and eke out a meager living by growing corn, black beans, chickens and sometimes pigs and/or cattle. Their animals range freely to forage on their own within and along the forest edges and the cropped areas as well. If the corn yields more than 15 bushels to the acre then it's doing fairly well. A lot of poor planning and policy on the part of the government has the rural population forced into this precarious living situation. The soils are not suitable for corn or bean production. Forestry or tree products are more productive alternatives, but nearly 80 to 90% of the people's daily efforts are self subsistence in nature. Everything they eat they grow. And nearly everything they grow they eat.

Precarious indeed. The overwhelming priority is food to feed the family. An interesting phenomenon I observed was that these crops of corn and beans are grown within a mile of the deforestation frontier. The forest is cut down and burned baring the soil where the crops are planted. This cleared land is only good for corn and beans for a limited amount of time. It is a constant battle to keep the regenerating forest at bay while the soil produces small amounts of edible crops. As the farmer battles with the trees the grass starts to invade. The nutrition of the soil drops with time until corn will not grow (somewhere around 5 years). The grass then takes over and the cleared area becomes pasture as long as tree invasion is held in check. Cattle grazing becomes the land use alternative but still requires a good deal of landscape maintenance. Cattle ownership is not in reach of most of the families so this land is rented or sold. More land for food crop production needs to be deforested. So corn is grown close to the forest. This land is usually appropriated by just "squatting on it" or just claiming it by possession. It's easier to do this on public land but this type of appropriation is done on both public and private land. This situation has contributed greatly to Guatemala's reputation as a violent society.

In the area where I worked land holdings by the farmers were usually less than 20 acres. It's one man and his family working with no other tools than an ax, a machete, and a stick he uses to plant corn or beans. In any one cropping season he's going to plant no more than a few acres of corn and an acre of beans. But there are two cropping seasons in one year. The land where I worked was very low in fertility. Letting land lay fallow for a few years is part of the rotation pattern. A very thick grow of regenerating trees will take over during the fallow time providing fuel to burn off the regenerating forest once again before planting. The foundation I worked for was successful in introducing a green manure legume into this rotation that proved to be a benefit to corn production.

The challenge for the foundation is trying to introduce permanent crops such as black pepper, oranges, cacao, rubber, and lumber into the already appropriated and deforested private land holdings. The idea is that the permanent crops will allow the farmer to remain permanently in one spot then he won't have to advance the agricultural frontier into forests that the foundation is in charge of protecting. An important program operated by the foundation is land ownership and legalization. The foundation has been successful in getting legal titles for the farmers. The introduction of permanent crops has proved to be a daunting challenge indeed. These crops are not food crops, a big disadvantage. The yield of these permanent crops on the part of the farmers has been remarkable in general but market development for these crops has proven to be a formidable obstacle to cropping success. Investments into marketing and processing has not been forthcoming so bountiful crops have sat on the farms until they rot away. The situation is still very dicey. Stabilizing the agricultural frontier has been an elusive goal.

The people of the multiple use areas understand the conservation idea and tentatively support the foundations efforts. But all realize that when set opposed to each other eating out trumps conservation. Conservation needs to be offset from eating in order to be done successfully. It remains to be seen how this will be accomplished.

Lately, I've heard a commercial on the radio that talks about managing risk for farming operations. I suppose this company is likely talking about things like forward contracting grain and other tools to help the financial "bottom line". This has gotten me to think that perhaps conservation programs could be used as tools to manage risk. We all know even the best farms have areas that don't produce as well. These areas might be hillsides where the soils are not the best to floodplains that flood and cause issues growing crops. There might even be cases where a field that has been in pasture for many years was brought into crop production for the first time. Whatever the situation, we have a conservation program that could help.

The Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) is a good program that allows us to take small areas out of corn and soybean production and seed those down to a mixture of grasses and legumes. We can even take those wet areas with the right soil types and restore the wetlands that used to be there. The restoration can be as little or as much as the landowner wishes to do. These areas will require some sort of mid contract activity to be performed once or twice during the contract period. Specific activities include burning, spraying, interseeding, and disking. Combinations of these activities are also available.

Speaking of restoring wetlands, the Wetland Reserve Program (WRP) is a program that provides a more long term solution to some of these wet areas. This program is a little different than the CRP program in that we are required to completely restore the functions and values of the wetland area. This program offers thirty year and permanent easements. Easements values are determined by an appraisal of the agricultural value of the land. Once an easement is purchased, the landowner continues to own the property.

The Environmental Quality Incentive Program (EQIP) is the Federal Government's cost share program. Through this program, we are able to provide cost share assistance to help improve pastures, or improve row crop land. For pasture land, we help producers install practices such as watering systems, fencing and interseeding. These practices help producers utilize their forage more efficiently and also lessen the damage the animals can do to the land. In row crop land, installing practices such as terraces and waterways can help prevent damage caused by rain and snow melt. Also available to row crop producers is an incentive to install conservation practices during the summer. The Iowa Financial Incentive Program (IFIP or State Cost Share) and the Resource Enhancement and Protection (REAP) program are the State Government's cost share programs.

These programs are very similar to the EQIP program but really are tailored to smaller projects. REAP also has a forestry and native grass component to it as well. These programs help landowners and producers manage risk in their farming operations just as other tools do. I believe they should be considered just as other tools are considered during the year. If you want to discuss your options, don't be afraid to stop by our office and visit with us.

Cass County Soil & Water Conservation District

FY09 Budget & Finance

Period covers July 1, 2008 to June 30, 2009

1-M Budget

(Office Supplies/Expenses/Commissioners Expenses)

Fiscal Year Allocation	\$3000.00
Total Expenditures	<u>\$4,648.10</u>
Balance	-1648.10

*Any amount over allocation was paid from District's Revolving Fund

District Revolving Fund

Balance on hand July 1, 2008 \$11,271.02

Receipts

1M Allocation	\$3,000.00
Tree Sales	\$4173.61
Watersheds	\$200,052.02
Cass County Auditor (Payroll)	10,000.00
O & M Reimbursement	3041.41
DSC-Farm Bill	<u>8760.00</u>
Total Receipts	\$229,027.87

Expenditures

Postage	\$494.12
Miscellaneous .Supply	1,554.04
Commissioner Mileage/Expense	730.86
Entry Fees	105.00
Scholarships	1200.00
Sales Tax	689.84
Fair Booth	119.96
District Payroll	4,0000
Tree Expense	2,116.29
Dues & Memberships	1,645.00
Watershed Expenses	<u>200,109.84</u>
Total Expenditures	212,764.95
Balance on hand June 30, 2009	27,533.94

Drill Fund

Balance on hand July 1, 2008	6,557.90
Total Receipts	4,596.50
Total Expenditures	2,799.97
Balance on hand June 30, 2009	8,354.73

Iowa Financial Incentive Program

Conservation Practices

IFIP Budget 2008-2009 Allocation	\$170,579.95
Cost-Share Warrants Paid	\$102,092.30
Obligated Expenditures	\$68,380.00
Balance of Unobligated 2008-2009 Funds	107.65

REAP-P (Practices)

2008-2009 Allocations	20,326.26
Cost-share warrants paid	11,717.13
Obligated Expenditures	8,430.00
Balance of Unobligated 2008-2009 Funds	179.13

REAP-F (Forestry/Native Grasses)

2008-2009 Allocations	4,811.70
Cost-share warrants paid	3,042.00
Obligated Expenditures	1,768.50
Balance of Unobligated 2008-2009 Funds	1.20

March -Celebrating Soil and Water Conservation

Changes in the Soil and Water District



Pictured (from left) Commissioners Ray Wilson, Curt Behrends, Greg Zellmer, Fred Kay and Brian Follman.

It has been a busy year with the Cass County Soil and Water Conservation District. We have had new Commissioners learning the roles and duties of commissioner, along with the Secretary learning her position. We have also had some staff changes in the Natural Resources Conservation Service office also. Jeff Sporrer, Soil Conservationist, accepted a new position as Resource Conservationist and will be splitting his time between the Cass and Audubon County field offices. Jack Bucklin has joined the

Atlantic field office staff as Soil Conservationist. Jack came to the Atlantic field office from Guthrie County, where he was a technician for five years. The District board has also acquired a couple of Assistant Commissioners in 2009. Alan Peterson of Atlantic was appointed in July and Tracy Marshall of Lewis was appointed in November 2009. Wel-

Soil see page 2

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measure up?
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Cass County Soil Survey Update nearing completion

By Richard Lensch
Soil Scientist

The staff at the USDA-Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) Southwest Iowa Soils Office is happy to report that the field work for the Cass county soils survey update is nearing completion. To date over 99 percent of the field work has been completed. Richard Lensch, Cass County Project Leader commented, "A few field visits this spring will be needed to wrap-up a few loose ends, then we will be finished".

Soil scientists are now making digital edits to the soil maps using the data and information gathered through the field investigations. The changes seen in the soil survey update will include a new soil map unit naming scheme, employing soil series that were set-up after the original survey was completed, increased level of detail in the mapping scale, and changes to the soil delineations where the soil properties have changed or need to be combined. The goal is to complete the digital editing by July of 2010 at which time the digital soils information will be sent to the digitizing unit in Madison, Wisconsin for quality assurance checks.

Once the information has been reviewed, the soil survey maps and interpretative data will be published in three forms: hard-copy soil survey book, DVD, and through the internet. The new soil survey books will be published in limited quantities with larger maps and improved management and engineering data. The DVDs will include an interactive program called SoilView, which allows users

Survey..... see page 3

Resource Conservationist-Jeff Sporrer

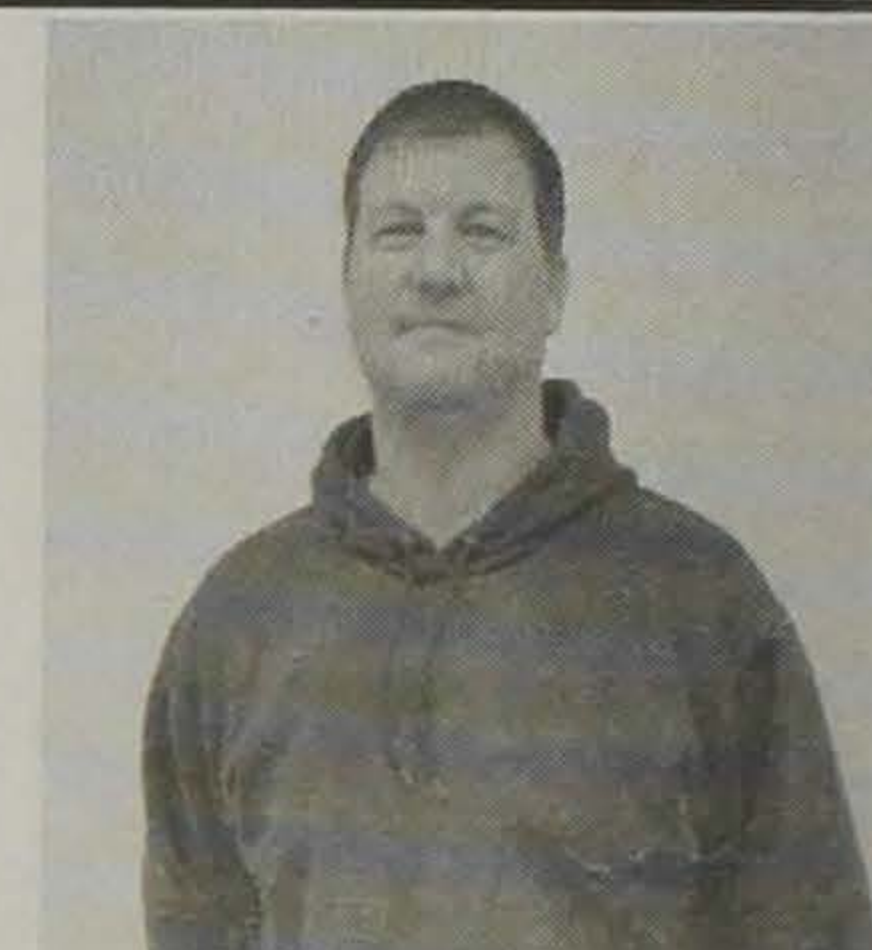
I have accepted a new position with NRCS as a Resource Conservationist. My responsibilities have been expanded to both Cass

County and Audubon County. My duty station is now in the Audubon office but I will be traveling between the two locations as necessary.

Please contact me at either office: Audubon 712-563-4248, Atlantic 712-243-3180, or by email jeff.sporrer@ia.usda.gov I can schedule

time to meet you at the office of your preference.

(Pictured at left)
Jeff Sporrer



Soil... From page one

Nichols Bulls For Sale

"Nichols Bulls remain the safest and best investment in the seedstock business. They sire soggy, heavy calves that usually top the market. Their daughters are durable, problem free and function regardless of weather and the ups and downs of fickle markets."



Dave Nichols



Nichols Farms features bulls for every herd size and need.

Nichols customers include the major A.I. Bull Studs, large commercial ranchers, mid-sized farmers, and small breeders who work in town.

ANGUS...powerful, muscled, marbling, breed's best EPDs
SIMMENTAL...moderate framed, muscled, polled & black
NICHOLS SX1.....heterosis, thick muscled, polled & black
NICHOLS XL2.....heterosis, maternal, polled & black
NICHOLS DS2..... heterosis, carcass, polled & black

Good - \$2000 Better - \$2500 Best - \$3000

\$100 off the price if you pick up your bulls

- ✓ Nichols keeps your bull(s) until you're ready for them
- ✓ Negative for AM & NH by pedigree or test
- ✓ Volume discounts
- ✓ Health & Death Warranty
- ✓ Pay for your bull when you get him

BULL SALE Catalog at
www.nicholsfarms.biz

Give Us A Call --

Office: 641-369-2829

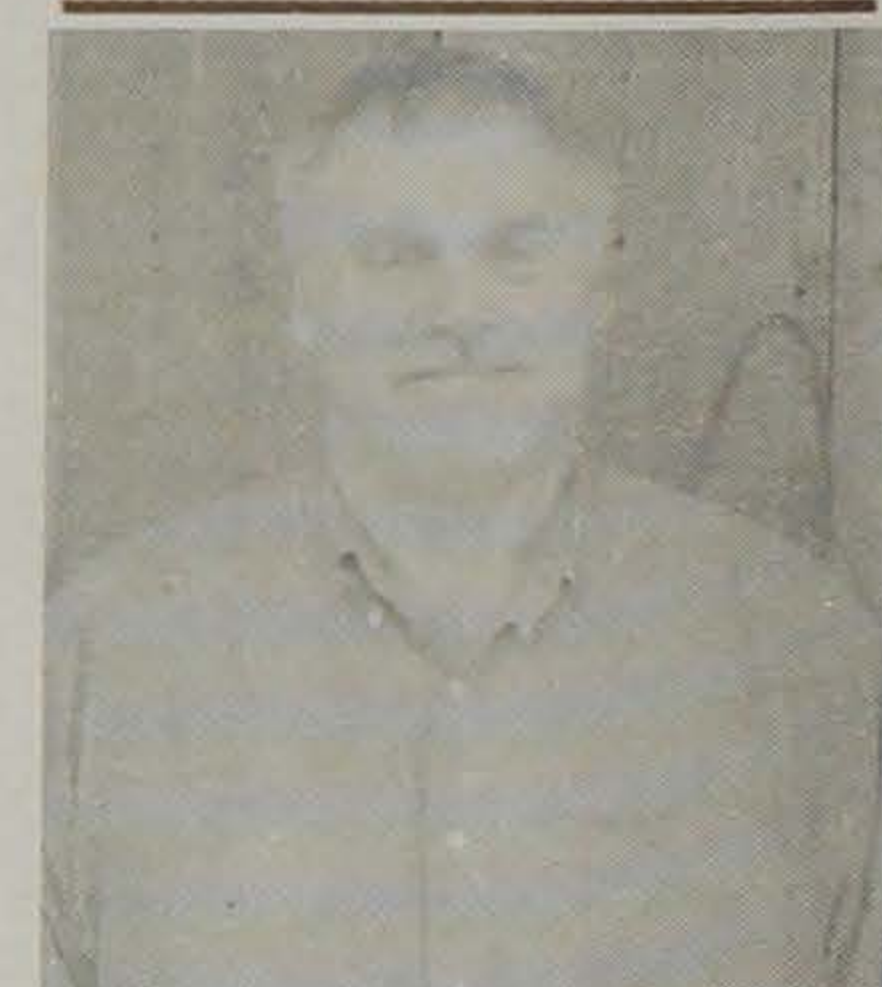
Ross Cell: 641-745-5241

Dave Home: 712-762-3810

nichols@nicholsfarms.biz

Nichols Farms
 Superior Beef Genetics

2188 Clay Avenue
 Bridgewater, Iowa 50837



(Above) Alan Petersen and
 (Below) Tracy Marshall.



come to all, and Congratulations on your accomplishments. The Cass County SWCD administers the state cost share programs, Low Interest Loan programs. The District is also a partner in the operation and maintenance of watersheds in Cass County. The Cass County Soil and Water Conservation District meets the fourth Thursday of each month.

NRCS/Cass County Soil and Water Conservation District Field Office Personnel



Pictured are NRCS/Cass County Soil and Water Conservation District Field Office Personnel (from left) David York, District Conservationist, Scott Breach, District Employee, Jana Coughlin, State Secretary, Randall Larsen, Federal Technician, Steve Fluckey, State Technician, Jack Bucklin, Soil Conservationist, Jeff Sporrer, Resource Conservationist.

Photo contributed

NRCS Soils Staff



Pictured from left are Richard Lensch, John Hammerly and Dan Pulido.

Photo contributed

SurveyFrom page one

to find soils information for specific areas and generate interpretive soil maps. They will also include an electronic reproduction that matches the hard-copy soil survey page for page called Web Soil Survey.

In August of 2005, the USDA launched the Web Soil Survey (<http://websoilsurvey.nrcs.usda.gov>) to provide the public with a way to access and analyze the data in the National Soils Information System. The first information released from the Cass County soil survey will be through Web Soil Survey. The benefit of using the Web Soil Survey is that the user is assured of getting the most up-to-date published soils information available, that is, any changes

made to the soils information for Cass County will be updated here immediately, whereas the DVD and hard-copy versions will be updated less frequently.

The finished digital product is expected to be available in late 2010 and publishing of hard-copy books and DVDs will become available in sometime 2011. People with questions regarding the soil survey and soils information can contact Richard Lensch at the USDA-NRCS Southwest Iowa Soils Office. It is located within the Cass County USDA-NRCS Service Center at 503 W. 7th St., Ste. 3, Atlantic, IA or call (712) 243-1576.

New Soil Scientist

John Hammerly, from the Storm Lake area, will be working with Dan Pulido and Richard Lensch on the soil survey update of Dickinson and Cass counties, as well as other special soil related projects in western Iowa. Originally from a family farm outside of Newton, John went on to Iowa State University where he graduated in 2007 with a Bachelor of Science degree in Agronomy. After graduation, he began working for the Natural Resources Conservation Service as a soil scientist in Storm Lake. In his spare time, he enjoys biking, hiking, and fishing. He also likes listening to music, and watching movies. John is looking forward to meeting new people

and discovering the many opportunities Atlantic has to offer.



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- 150 Acres, m/l: Located 2.5 miles northeast of Cumberland. Cropland/pasture combination. Two-story home and full set of buildings. \$3325 per acre.
- 117 Acres, m/l: Located 4 miles south west of Griswold. 84.0 crop acres with 76.3. Nishnabotna River bottom. \$3550 per acre.
- 2200 Acres, M/L: Located one mile north of Little Sioux, Iowa. 2,102.5 crop acres with appr. 1,100 irrigated. CSR = 57.7. Excellent investment property. \$4,691 per acre. Property can be split.
- 121 Acres, M/L: Located appr. 5 miles S.E. of Brayton. Currently about half good quality cropland with average CSR of 64. Balance good, open pasture. \$3200 per acre.
- 200 Acres, M/L: Located 1 mile south of Red Oak. 167.6 cropland acres. Remodeled 2-story home, 6 acre building site. \$3800 per acre.

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Cass County Soil and Water Conservation District FY09 Budget and Finance

1-M Budget (Office Supplies/Expenses/ Commissioners Expenses) July 1, 2008 through June 30, 2009	Meeting Registrations \$40 Printing and Printed Materials \$82.12 Advertisement \$120.81 Meeting and Workshop Ex- penses, Dues \$1,717.18 Fair Booth \$110.46 Total Expenditures \$4,648.10 *Any amount over allocation was paid from District's Revolv- ing Fund	Tree Sales \$4173.61 Watersheds \$200,052.02 Cass County Auditor O & M Reimbursement \$3041.41 DSC-Farm Bill \$8760.83 Total Receipts \$229,027.87 Expenditures Postage \$494.12 Miscellaneous Supply \$1,554.04 Commissioner Mileage/Ex- penses \$730.86 Entry Fees \$105.00 Scholarships \$1,200.00 Sales Tax 689.84	Fair Booth \$119.96 District Payroll \$4,000.00 Tree Expense \$2,116.29 Dues and Memberships \$1,645.00 Watershed Expenses \$200,109.84 Total Expenditures \$212,764.95 Balance on hand June 30, 2009 \$27,533.94 Grass Drill Fund Balance on hand July 1, 2008 \$6,557.90 Total Receipts \$4596.50 Total Expenditures \$2,799.67 Balance on hand June 30,	2009 \$8,354.73 Iowa Financial Incentive Pro- gram Conservation Practices IFIP Budget 2008-2009 Allo- cation \$170,579.95 Cost-share warrants paid \$102,092.30 Obligated Expenditures \$68,380.00 Balance of Unobligated 2008- 2009 Funds \$107.65 REAP-P (Practices) 2008-2009 Allocation \$20,326.26 Cost-share warrants paid \$11,717.13 Obligated Expenditures \$8,430.00 Balance of Unobligated \$179.13 REAP-F (Forestry/Native Grasses) 2008-2009 Allocation \$4,811.70 Cost-share warrants paid \$3,042.00 Obligated Expenditures \$1,768.50 Balance of Unobligated \$1.20
Annual Report - 2009 Budget and Finance				
Fiscal Year 2008 Allocation \$3,000.00				
Postage/Bulk Mailing \$494.12	District's Revolving Fund (Period covers from July 1, 2008 to June 30, 2009)			
Miscellaneous Supplies \$1,353.09	Balance on hand \$11,271.02			
Mileage and Expenses \$730.32	Receipts 1M Allocation \$3,000.00			

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the stories
and
pictures for
the Farm
Monthly**

Conservation sponsors watershed tour

The Cass County Soil and Water Conservation District sponsored a watershed tour on Wednesday, June 24. The Cass County Supervisors were also invited to attend the tour of sites located in Turkey Creek Watershed so they can see how important it is to continue in partnership in the operation and maintenance of the structures that help in flood control for the surrounding area. Turkey Creek sites that were toured were; 58D belonging to Jim and Kathi Mailander, 50D belonging to Art Hoskins, and 57 belonging to Brad Suhr. When the commissioners visited the Mailander property, Jim and Kathi Mailander were on site to show the commissioners what improvements to the property they had made to ensure the integrity of the site. Jim and Kathi has recently done a extensive tree planting around the property. All their dedication to conservation is greatly appreciated.

Earth team volunteers

Students at the Griswold Community School Web Design class were recognized for their volunteer efforts in creating a website for the Cass County Soil and Water Conservation District. Eric Baker, Business and Technology teacher, helped the students along with information being provided by the Cass County Soil and Water Conservation District. The students created many versions of



sites, and the District choose one to use. These students have become Earth Volunteers in which any time they use to do updates to the site is tracked for their volunteer hours. The Cass County Soil and Water Conservation District Chairman, Fred Kay and Commissioner, Ray Wilson presented the students with certificates and provided rolls and juices to the group at the Griswold Community School. Visit our website at cassswcd.org to keep updated on programs and announcements.



2009 Contractors Meeting

The Audubon/Cass County SWCD's held a joint contractors meeting Feb. 17, 2009 in Atlantic at the Pizza Ranch. Technicians in the field offices contacted suppliers along with having the Iowa DOT available for area contractors to get information on products and regulations. David York, District Conservationist, with the NRCS presented information on Civil Rights, and Programs available through the office. Kevin Holcomb, Civil Engineering Technician with the Area office provided information about Quality Control/Assurance of projects. Field office technicians provided information about how to complete construction notes for proper processing. The Audubon/Cass County SWCD commissioners supported this meeting by providing a meal to all the contractors who attended the meeting.

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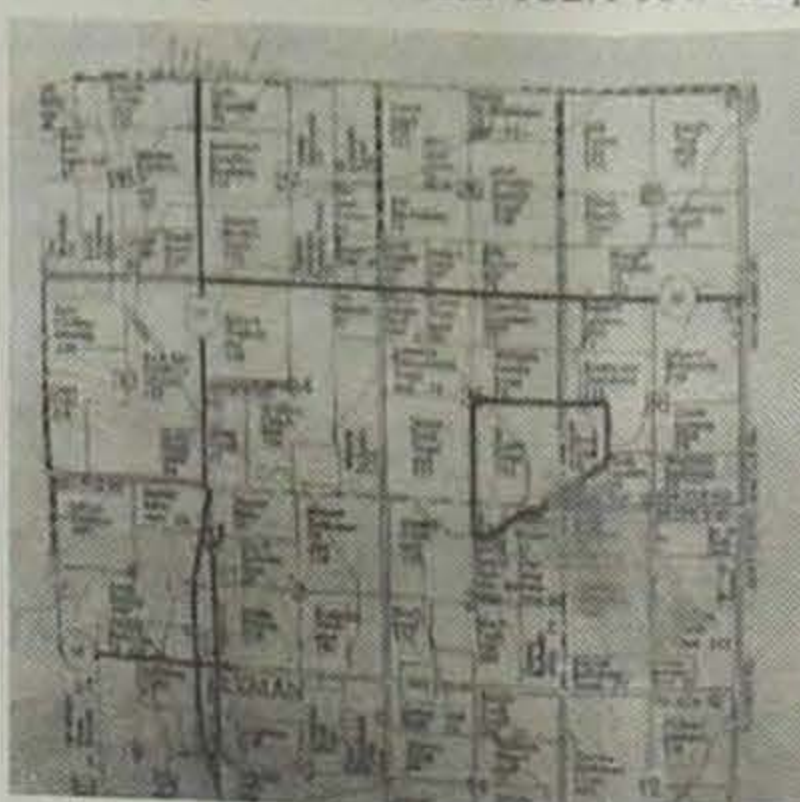
FARM LAND AUCTION

237 Acres M/L Bear Grove, Noble TWP • Cass County, Iowa

Tuesday March 23, 2010 10:00 AM

***Sale Location: Cass County Community Center, Atlantic IA**

Property Location: 8 miles South of Atlantic IA on Hwy 71 to Hwy 92, East 2 miles to 650th St, South ½ mile. From Cumberland IA: South to Hwy 92, West 4 miles to 650th St, South ½ mile. From Lyman IA: 2 miles north on Hwy 71 to Hwy 92, east 2, south 2. (Sections 35 & 36 Bear Grove TWP and Section 2 Noble TWP) Brief Legal: SE ¼, Sec 35 T-75-N R-36-W and SW ¼, SW ¼, Sec 36 T-75-N R-36-W and 24.6 acres N ½, NE ¼, 2 T-74-N R-36-W • FSA: Farmland 237 acres - Cropland 207.1 2009 Crop Certification: 182.1 row crop



25 acres CRP \$4095 / Yr. Expires: 2017
Farm # 4599. Tracts 6294 & 6509

Court House: 230.9 Taxable Acres \$4082 / Yr

Note: This is a very nice tract of bare farmland with an average CSR of 73.2. There is 140.7 acres with CSR of over 80 (92/A has a 91 CSR) (Approximate, obtained NRCS USDA) Stalk ground has been chisled and NH3 has been applied to bean stubble. Buyer will agree to pay for the NH3 product at closing.

Buyer to have full Possession for 2010 Crop Year

TERMS: Successful Bidder will sign real estate contract immediately after the sale and deposit 10% of the total sale price, earnest money to be held in Broker Trust Acct. Balance will be due on or before April 20, 2010 in exchange for Deed and Abstract showing merchantable title subject to any easements of record. Full Possession to be given at closing. Buyer may enter property April 15, 2010 at their own risk. Buyer will be responsible for their own Title Opinion. Bids are not subject to finance. Financing arrangements must be made before auction date. Property taxes prorated to closing date. Note: Property Connection Real Estate represents the Sellers

at this auction. Any announcements made sale day will take precedence over all printed material. All information provided was gathered from sources deemed reliable but not guaranteed by Property Connection Real Estate. Bidders are urged to inspect the property and verify any information to their satisfaction.

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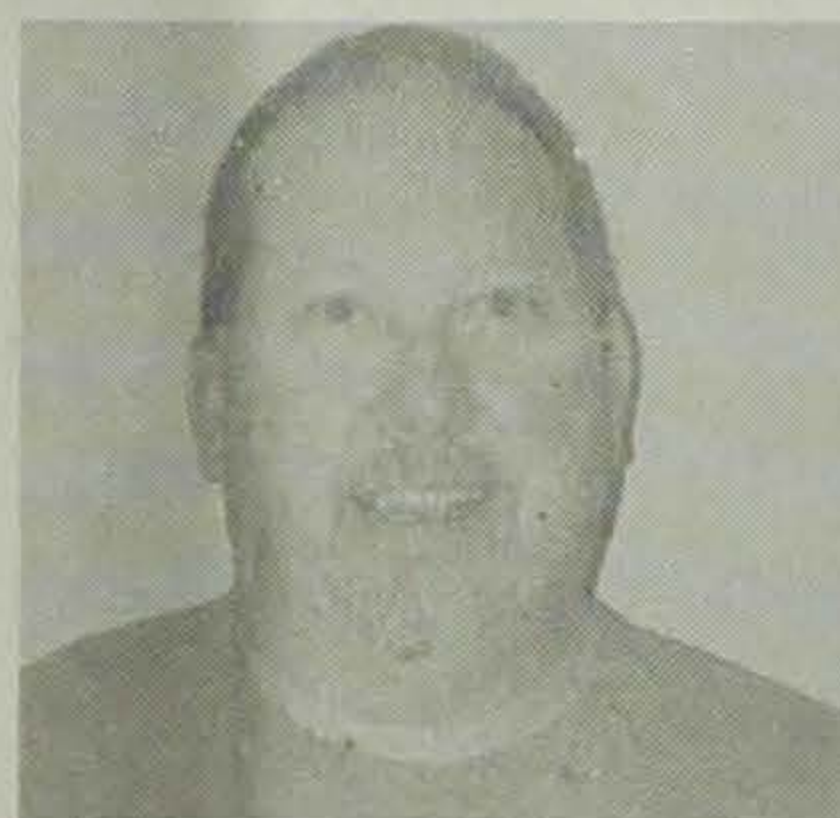
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Down on the Farm



By Tom McLaren

March- Lamb, Lion or Fish?

We have all heard the adage about March comes in like a lion and goes out like a lamb or vice versa, I really don't care as long as spring is close. This year someone might want to add a fish or amphibian of some sort to the equation because of all the water. I know by now I should expect it after that tremendous snowfall we have had, but wow! I don't think the farmers will have to worry about subsoil moisture this spring - there seems to be plenty. Those mudholes that you had to sneak around cautiously - well this year you better stay the heck away because it will be - "I sunk her to the axles and there was no moving anywhere" time.

March always make me think of basketball because of the many

cold Sunday afternoon in the barn playing basketball. Dick Anstey had a huge barn that we used to play full court in. The reason I remember this in March is because that was the first month that it wasn't so blasted cold. We played through the winter, but sometimes it was just so darn cold when you would be going up and down the court you couldn't see for your breathe. I had the opportunity to play basketball with many different characters and friends in the true "barn." My dad played- I still haven't decided if he was very good or not but he got up and down the court okay. One of my favorites was always Kent Berry who remains a good friend and fellow hoopster for many years after we moved up to the YMCA old guys noon league. Kent always played very hard and he fouled hard too as I recall. There is also a misnomer out there that I might have fouled a bit as well. Of course there was the home court favorites Tim, Kevin and Bob Anstey - for a shorter guy old mouse (Tim) could really shoot on too, impressive. Every once in awhile Bob and I were convinced that we as eighth and ninth graders could whip old Kent, sometimes when you are young you should think things through just a little bit more, because suffice it to say we couldn't whip him, in any-way shape or form. There were also guys like Byron Dinkla, Dan Becker, and Steve Edwards who played all good players however

Byron and Steve seemed to need a few more cigarette breaks than the rest of us thought necessary. I even remember Larry Swartz playing a time or two. There was usually some screaming and an occasional profanity uttered loudly but all in all it was a good time. I often attribute my flat shot when I was younger to playing in the barn because of the cold, it was hard to get arch on your shot with no feeling in your hands. Speaking of the cold, it was always interesting after you got into the warmth to see which fouls, usually from Kent, hurt the worst because you weren't numb anymore, the pain came out. I have to give Kent credit- he showed me that there were no easy shots in the lane, if you came in there you paid the piper, part of the game that came in handy later on. Kent also coined me with the name Lloyd, as in Lloyd Free, the 76ers guard from the 80's who was an awesome scorer. I think he was just jealous of my pretty shot- he maintains that it was because I shot too much. However as I told young Evan Schuler last weekend at a youth tournament good shooters have to shoot their way out of a slump. I never saw a shot I didn't like.

It's almost April and the good lord willing, even though the creek is rising it will be warm by next month and everyone will be hot and heavy in the field. Be safe and be ready to go while the goings good.

Envirothon Workshop

The Adair and Cass Counties SWCD sponsored at workshop for youth from Adair and Cass County to attend to prepare for the Envirothon Competitions. The Workshop was held on March 4 at the American Legion Hall in Massena. The following people presented information: Julie McMichael, NRCS-Soils, Randy Goerndt, DNR-Forestry, Don Sievers, DNR-Aquatics, Micah Lee and Lora Schwendinger, Cass ACCB-Wildlife. Schools from CAM and Orient Macksburg attended the workshop. This workshop gives the students a chance to review information and also test on information to prepare for the Regional Competition. The Cass County SWCD provided funding for schools in Cass County that entered a team in the Regional Competition.

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Using cover crops to heal the land

(Information provided
by Thomas Hurford Area
Resource Conservationist)

In the last two years Iowa has received exceptionally high rainfall. Much of this rainfall has come in very intense events, which have caused extremely high amounts of erosion.

As a result, rills and ephemeral gullies have shown up in areas where they have not been a problem in the past.

This has prompted many to perform spot tillage in fields to smooth these areas out in order to plant. The problem with this is that the tillage has further loosened the soil and made these areas even more susceptible to erosion when the next extreme rainfall event occurs.

Thus in many of these fields we are caught in a vicious cycle of erosion, tillage to smooth out the effects of the erosion, and even more erosion when the next event occurs.

The first question that should be asked is: Is this erosion truly caused by extreme events unlikely to occur in the future to the extent they occurred over the past few years?

If the answer to this question is no, than grassed waterways should be planned and installed.



If the answer is yes, than at a minimum, consideration should be given to seeding a cover crop such as oats, wheat, or rye to provide temporary cover in order to allow the soil to re-consolidate after tillage. By far the best option is to plant either winter wheat or rye in the fall early enough to allow some fall growth prior to the onset of winter. For this to work, the cover crop should be seeded prior to the middle of October. If this is not possible, than the second best alternative is to seed a small grain cover crop in the early spring. Any small may be seeded, however in the spring; a higher

seeding rate should be used than is normally recommended for cover crop purposes. Two to three bushels of oats to the acre would be the recommended seeding rate.

The crop can be planted through the cover crop but should be allowed to grow until it provides sufficient cover to control erosion, generally until it reaches eight to 12 inches in height.

The cover crop can then be killed with the first post emergent herbicide application.

"If a farmer wants to only seed down a filled in ditch, a grass cover such as rye can be an effective choice. It grows very aggressively and has less risk to the crop by being on only a small area." This according to Steve McGrew of McGrew Brothers Farm located in Mills County. The McGrew Brothers have successfully used cereal rye cover crops for several years now, to heal ephemeral gullies.



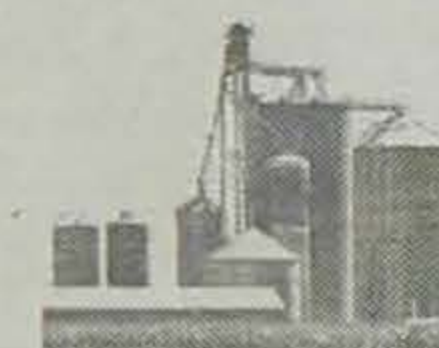
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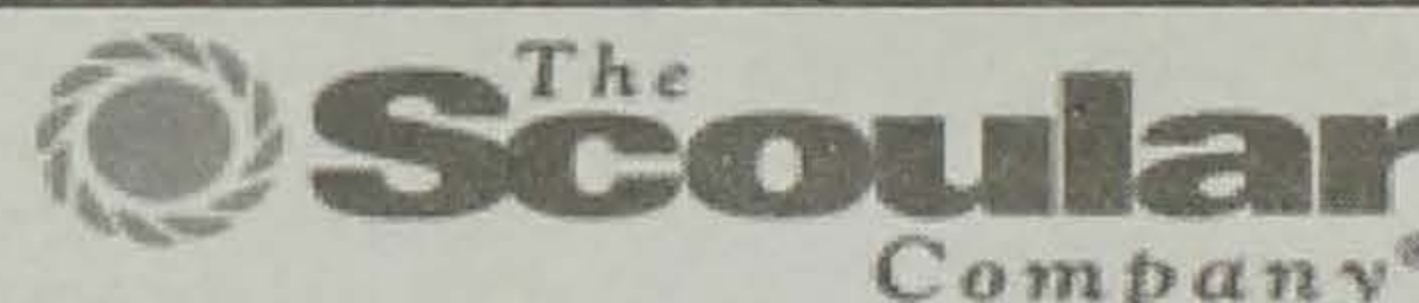
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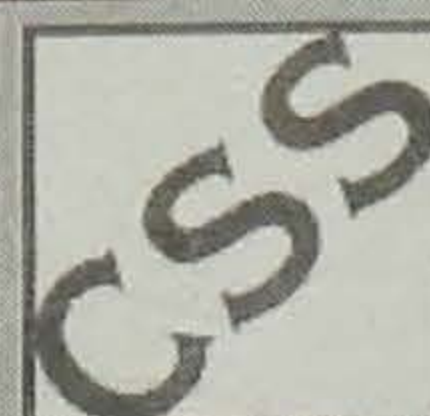


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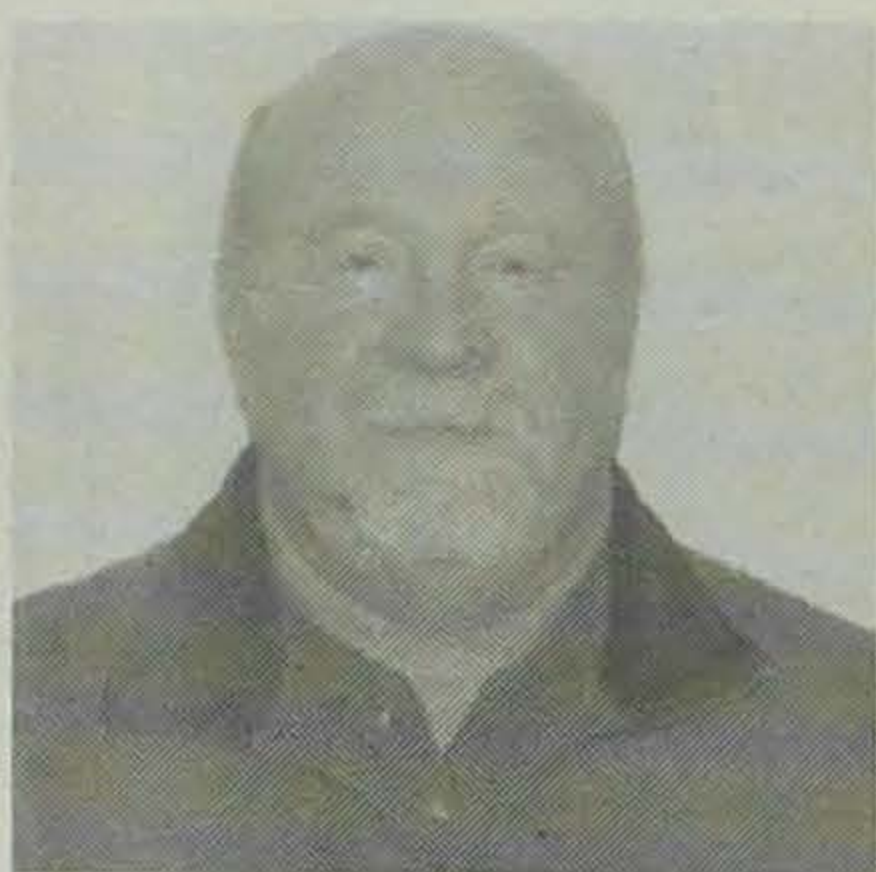
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How do I measure up?



By James Gillespie
Bureau Chief

Iowans have faced a lot of challenges this past year, but have stepped up to confront those challenges and taken conservation to heart. Protecting the soil and water of this state are ever apparent by looking at the landscape and water quality.

Over 95 percent of this land is in private ownership and most of it is used for some form of agricultural production. The balance is in urban, roads, utilities and infrastructure that keep our people and commodities moving. All of these things are needed because I don't think there are many other states or parts of the country that rely on all of their land and its resources to do this.

That is why it is so important that all of us (rural and urban) alike do all we can to protect the soil and water. You all have tremendous resources available to you locally in your Soil and Water Conservation District and the

USDA, Natural Resources Conservation Service to assist you with your conservation needs. These people have both the technical assistance and financial opportunities that can help address your concerns.

Your district has over 50 years of expertise in working with soil and water resources and the sound technical solutions to resource concerns. If you have a conservation plan, it is a great time to review it to see if it still addresses all of the resource concerns and your land use objectives. If you don't have a plan or can not find yours, contact the local office for assistance.

As you begin this next year, (2010), take some time to walk around your property, looking at your land use decisions, and are there some conservation needs that need to be addressed. Do you have erosion occurring and is that sediment leaving your property? Have you identified your land with the watershed that you live in, and are you having any impact on that watershed from your land?

If you had to evaluate your own resource issues, how would you say I'm doing? What would your peers think of what I'm doing? Am I doing all I can to protect the soil and water, while maintaining the productivity and use of my property? Evaluate yourself and your land use to see how you measure up!

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