

1976

ANNUAL REPORT

CEDAR COUNTY SOIL CONSERVATION DISTRICT

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TIPTON, IOWA



1872

1977

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Cedar County District Conservation, left to right, Darrell Brown, Willard Eiler, Elmer Wilke, and Bill Davidson. -2

We, the Commissioners of Cedar County, would like to express our thanks to all the individuals and organizations who helped make this report possible. We could not give a complete report such as this without the financial support we receive from them.

There will be many problems in the future. Water and air pollution is facing our nation. Our Cedar County Soil Conservation office staff, Warren Johnson, Clarence Beyer, and the District Commissioners, are always ready to help with your problems.

Elmer Wilke, Chairman

Cover Picture

Through the cooperation of the Tipton Vo Ag Department, the District sponsored a conservation tillage demonstration plot. This shows John Powell's sidewinder, one of the five implements used on the demonstration.

PRIME AGRICULTURAL LAND

By Warren Johnson
Soil Conservationist

A very popular term that has been kicked around a lot lately is "Prime Agricultural Land." I have yet to find a clear-cut definition of this term, but I usually take it to mean those areas most suitable for the production of food. Specifically the best land for growing corn and soybeans.

The major concern about prime agricultural land is that we are losing it to other uses such as highways, houses, factories, or parking lots. Unfortunately, most soils that are good for corn are also the most ideal areas for road fill, foundations, or septic systems and this is creating the problem. Each year we are losing a considerable amount of acres of farmland to other uses so the concern is certainly well founded. As more and more demands are being placed upon our farm lands to produce food, it seems illogical to allow these lands to be depleted.

There is another point that comes to mind when thinking about preserving Prime Agricultural Lands. That point is, what measures are being taken to maintain this land in its prime productive capacity? Are we doing all we can to preserve the thin layer of topsoil that has made the land the source of our livelihood? Or, are we seeing it wash and blow away year by year and not realizing it or doing anything about it?

We have already lost about half of the original layer of topsoil. On a Cedar county farm that would probably rate as prime agricultural land, one could expect to find Tama-Muscataine soil types with a 4% slope; at least 400' in length. By fall plowing up and down hill and using a corn-soybean rotation, you would be losing around 20 tons of soil per acre per year. At this rate you would be losing the same inch of topsoil in 10 years that it took nature to produce in 250-1000 years. Since there would be about 8" of topsoil left on this field today to start with, one can foresee problems in the near future. In addition, that 20 tons per acre lost each year is polluting streams and rivers with chemicals and filling your ditches, ponds and lakes with sediment.

There are many ways to produce crops and reduce soil erosion at the same time. Many farmers have changed from the moldboard plow to another method of tillage which leaves crop residues on the soil surface. These residues break the impact of falling raindrops and helps hold soil in place and reduce moisture loss.

More and more farmers in the county are installing tile-outlet-terraces to break up the length of slopes and control the water run off from their fields. These terraces are parallel and designed to accommodate the size of equipment the farmer uses. A combination of terraces and conservation tillage would offer the most complete solution to soil erosion and still allow continuous row cropping.

Contouring alone will cut erosion approximately in half. However, this becomes less effective as the slopes become steeper. A crop



Cedar County District Staff, left to right, Warren Johnson, Soil Conservationist; Hilda Carey, District Clerk; and Clarence Beyer, Conservation Technician.

rotation is still an effective conservation measure and contour strip cropping will do an excellent job.

New ways to solve soil erosion problems are being developed each year. Once farmers become accustomed to leaving cornstalks on the surface and see how effective they are, no-till methods of farming will probably be the next step. If you are concerned about conserving that valuable black topsoil on your farm, contact us at the Soil Conservation Office and we will try to work out a plan that will reduce the soil erosion on your farm.

BENNETT

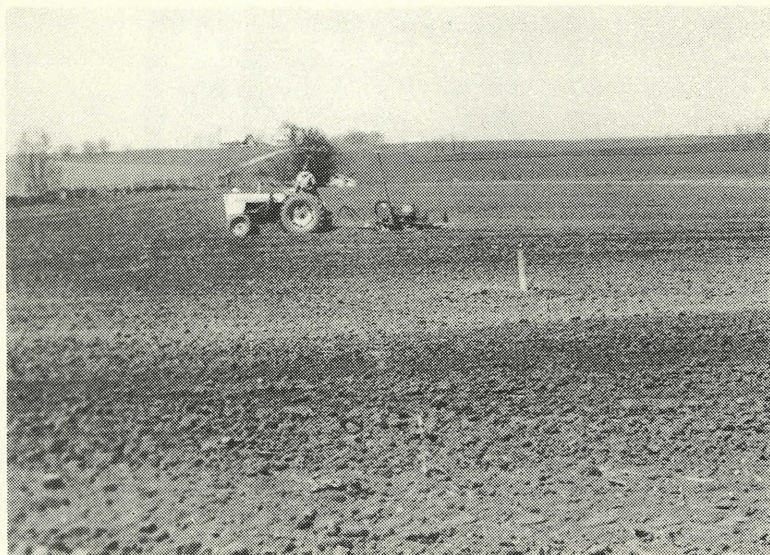
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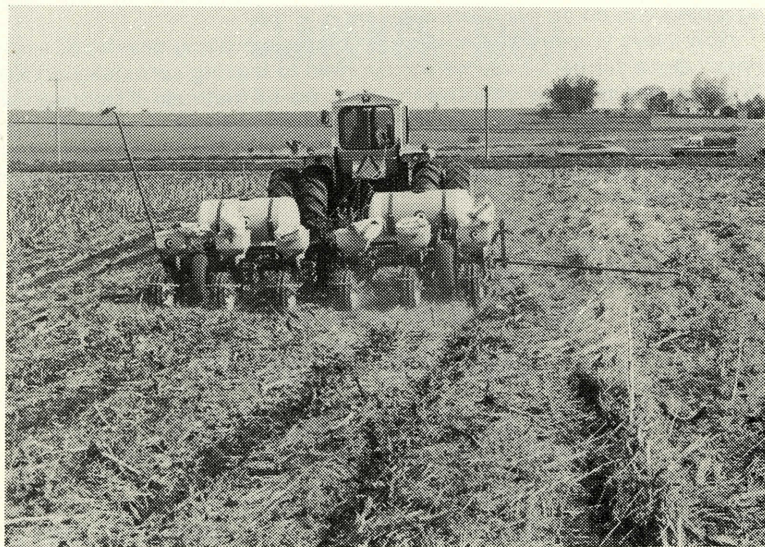
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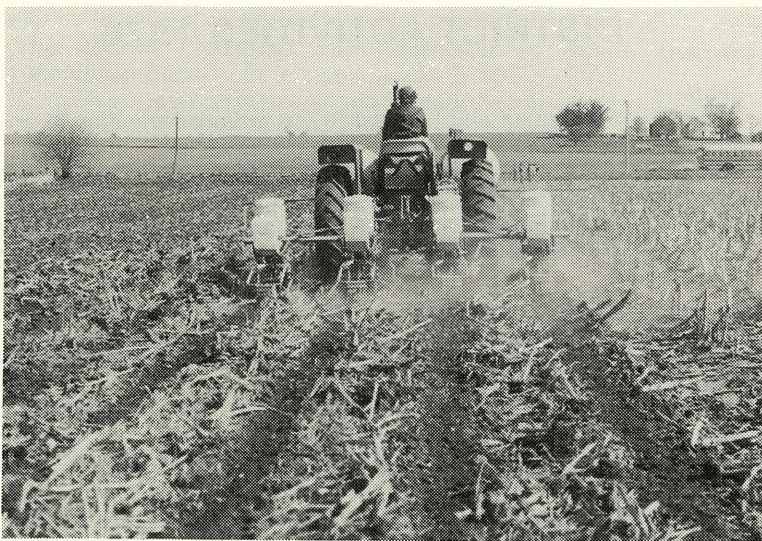
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BENNETT, IOWA

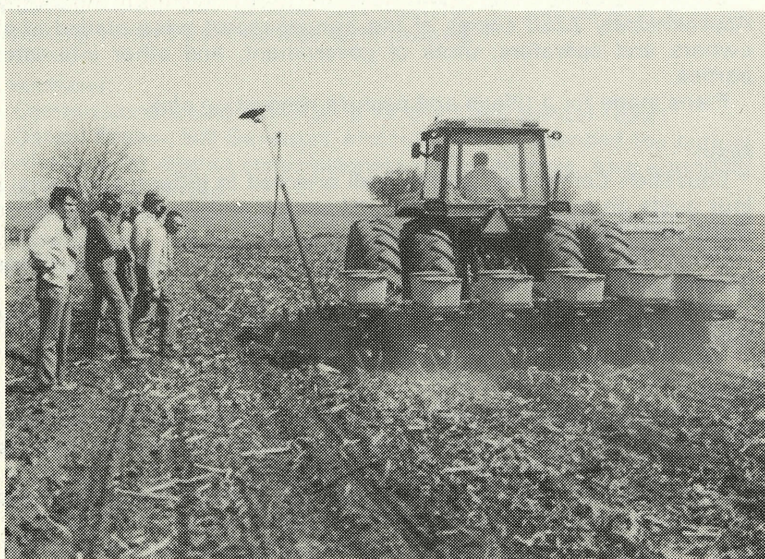


Conservation Tillage is the most popular soil conserving practice being used in the county. These plots on the FFA ground in Tipton give farmers a chance to see and compare different tillage operations. Top shows conventional tillage on terraces. Bottom shows Bud Daufeldt's White No-Till planter in action.





Above: Richard Jensen shows Buffalo-Till planter working in standing corn stalks. Below: Bob Schott uses his John Deere Max-Emerge planter working in ground that had been chiseled and disked,



DISTRICT ACTIVITIES 1976

January:

Two commissioners and Howard Bright attended the annual commissioners short course at Ames.

Commissioners authorized payment of \$200 for national dues.

Memo of Understanding with ASCS was signed.

Rural Development Meeting held. It was proposed to have this committee serve as the Soil Conservation District Resource Coordinating Committee.

February:

Howard Bright gave a slide presentation on SCS Careers to the Bennett High School.

Contractor school session held at Kirkwood was well attended by local contractors and SCS personnel.

Commissioners authorized payment of \$100 for State Dues.

March:

Warren Johnson reported for duty March 15. Howard Bright transferred to Burlington March 29.

Elmer Wilke was elected chairman of the district commissioners. Steve Nash was appointed as an assistant commissioner.

Ten contractors attended the contractor's meeting.

April:

Soil stewardship material was delivered to all ministers in the county. Approximately 2250 copies of the annual report were mailed to all owners and operators, units of government, and other interested parties.

Plans made for a tillage and pasture renovation plot.

May:

Education Committee getting well oriented in different projects: a tour guide on conservation, resource packet and youth conservation corps work being done in the area.

Cedar Co. SCD and Extension Service held a minimum tillage demonstration at the FFA property.

SCS took ASCS Co. Committee on a tour of conservation practices that they had cost shared on.

June:

An inventory & evaluation was made of the population resources of the MissMaWapCe five-county area. This inventory was requested to facilitate plans for an RC&D project proposal.

Memo of Understanding between the Soil Conservation District and the northeast Iowa Conservancy District was signed.

July:

The district sponsored Ruth Detweiler to attend Teachers Conservation Camp at Emmetsburg, July 5-23.

Commissioners met to review and up-date their long-range program. Commissioners attended the 208 planning meeting.

August:

Howard Davis replaced Don Davidson as chairman of the Cedar County Resource Coordinating Committee.

September:

Fifty copies of the district's long-range program were printed.

Clerk and technician attended a meeting in Iowa City concerning the new management information system and ethics.

October:

Annual soil judging contest was held. Fifty-four students participated. Prizes were given to the top individual from each school and a plaque to the winning school.

District speech contest held. Nine contestants took part. The winner represented the county at the Regional contest.

November:

The Commissioners Regional Meeting at Iowa City was attended by Darrell Brown, Elmer Wilke, Bill Davidson and Jim Bowie. Soil Conservationist Warren Johnson and District Clerk Hilda Carey, also attended.

James Bowie was elected commissioner in the general election replacing Willard Eiler, whose term expired.

December:

Commissioners sold advertising for the 1976 annual report.

Darrell Brown, Bill Davidson, and Hilda Carey attended the annual conference for district commissioners in Des Moines. Also attending was Warren Johnson.

Darrell Brown and Warren Johnson met with resource people in the MissMaWapCe Association of district commissioners. Goals for 1977 were discussed.

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Norman C. Kroemer, Vice-Chairman
Forest W. Johnson, Member

County Executive Director:

Donald M. Conrad

Clerks:

Betty E. Morris
Marjean A. Mente

In setting down a few comments for the 1976 SCS Annual Report, I reviewed some of the articles written in the past several years. It is interesting to note that each of the last several years has been quite different in weather and brings forth a different conservation problem.

1977 is shaping up as a year that will be different than the two preceding years in that as we start 1977, we have low soil moisture carry-over and almost everyone is predicting a below-moisture availability for the 1977 year. This will undoubtedly create some new conservation problems for us to ponder and correct.

Whatever problems might arise in the conservation field, we stand ready to help you with a federal cost share program available through our service. In many cases, this works hand-in-hand with conservation cost share funds available through the Soil Conservation Service.

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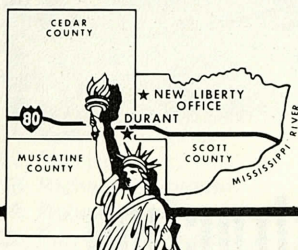
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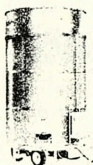
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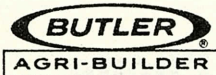
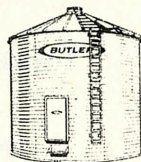


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3. Richard Krall
4. Leroy Lafrenz
5. Henry Niermeyer
6. Herbert Parry
7. Donald Wilson
8. Garry Clark
9. Gerald Williams
10. Frank Dvorak
11. Earl Howe
12. Harold Shotwell
13. Hasselbusch & Emmons
14. George Bowie
15. Kenneth Regennitter
16. William Barnhart
17. Robert Clark
18. Richard Showalter
19. Robert Hasselbusch
20. Paul Hasselbusch, Jr.
21. Rex Minor
22. Donohue & Wright
23. Louis Licht
24. Edward Bauman, Jr.
25. William Lilienthal
26. Norman Kotz
27. Bryce Werling
28. Cedar Co. Historical Society
29. Robert & Stan Severin
30. Liberty Porkers, Inc.
31. Michael Moes
32. Charles Jasperson
33. Michael Hogan

Resource Conservation Plans and Revisions For 1976

1. Richard & Charles Krall
2. Charles Krall
3. Tom Barnhart
4. Steve Nash
5. Bryce Healy
6. Louis Miller
7. Thomas Bailey
8. Dr. George Mountain
9. Leroy Lafrenz
10. Earl Martin
11. Sidney Cook
12. Jack Hanks
12. Herbert Parry
14. Warren Fredericks
15. James Bowie
16. Henry Niermeyer
17. Edith Walenta
18. Garry Clark
19. Lyle Waters
20. Roy Ellerhoff
21. Gary Kline
22. Don Stafford
23. Edward Bauman
24. Robert Laucamp
25. Jim Cahill
26. William Penningroth
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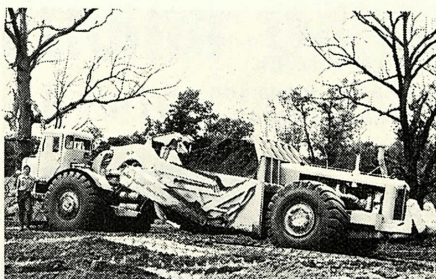
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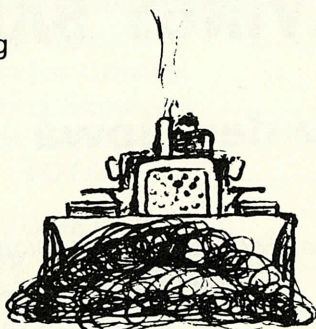
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CONSERVATION TILLAGE

By Clarence Beyer

When the word soil conservation is mentioned, you immediately think of terraces, contouring, strip cropping, ponds, waterways, etc. The Soil Conservation Service recognizes that these practices can not be adapted to all farms or by all farmers. However, there is one practice that could be used on every farm in Cedar county. This is conservation tillage.

Conservation tillage is being accepted by more farmers each year. The summary of a 1976 state survey reports in Cedar county 500 farmers chisel plowed and planted 90,000 acres, 38 farmers used till or no-till on 9600 acres. Other tillage (no moldboard plow), discing, etc. was used by 110 farmers on 2500 acres. However, conservation tillage has not been accepted as fast by farmers in the northeast part of the county as it has been in the southwest part. Approximately 90 percent of the farmers in the southwest 1/3 of the county are presently using some form of conservation tillage.

The Tipton FFA has had a demonstration plot the last two years using different methods of tillage. The results for 1976 are: chiseled and disced 151 bu. per acre, buffalo till 146.7 bu. per acre, sidewinder 134.3 bu. per acre, no till 136.6 bu. per acre, conventional tillage 100 bu. per acre.

Rain has a terrific impact on the soil. Tests have shown that raindrops from a one inch rain on an acre of bare soil produced energy equal to 1/2 ton of T.N.T. To reduce this impact and control both wind and water erosion, it is very important to have at least 3000 lbs. of residue on the surface after planting. Additional benefits from conservation tillage are - saves time and energy, allows you to plant earlier, saves moisture and saves money.

In problem areas where 3000 lbs. of residue is not adequate for erosion control, it might be necessary to use till planting or no till planting. These practices are increasing at a slower rate than chiseling and discing, but the farmers using no till tell us they are real pleased with the results. One no till plot we observed southeast of Tipton was 6 acres of corn in alfalfa sod planted May 11th and picked October 18th, the yield was 188 bu. per acre on a #2 basis. Fertilizer rate was 120-40-60. Only 3 field operations were used, spraying, planting, and harvesting. One point emphasized by this farmer was, that amount of herbicide need not be increased, but it was very important to increase the water. He believes at least 40 gallons of water per acre are needed as a carrier.

Terraces are still needed and are being applied at a faster rate each year, but the increased demand for food does not give the SCS time to get the total amount needed installed before it's too late. I personally would like to see all moldboard eliminated. I believe this should be done on a voluntary basis.

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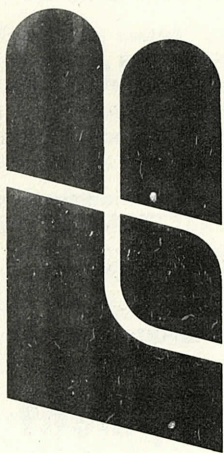
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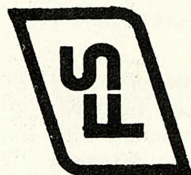
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The Farmers Home Administration is the rural credit branch of the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

Loans are made for many worthwhile purposes. All loans are made to rural families who are unable to get conventional financing. The loans are set up for repayment according to the families' ability to repay.

A three man County Committee reviews applications for loans to determine loan eligibility. The County Committee members are Chester Vincent, West Branch; John Sauer, Mechanicsville; and Kenneth Pasvogel, Tipton.

Some of the loans FmHA makes are described as follows:

Farm Operating Loans: Loans are made to qualified applicants to purchase livestock, machinery, and operating expenses. Debts can be refinanced if collateral is given. There is a \$50,000 maximum of this loan type. Many young men have been "Scratch Starters" with this loan. This is a 7 year loan which enables a farm family to spread out its overhead and get a good start in farming.

Farm Ownership Loans: Loans are made to tenants to become land owners and operators. The applicant must be in a good financial situation to get his loan. These loans are made in conjunction with loans with other long term lenders. The maximum loan is for 40 years with a total real estate indebtedness of \$225,000.

Emergency Loans: These loans are made to a farmer when a natural disaster strikes such as wind, hail, blight, and drought. These are made to keep the family on the farm and give him operating credit at a reduced interest rate and suitable terms. A substantial loss must have been suffered to get this type of credit.

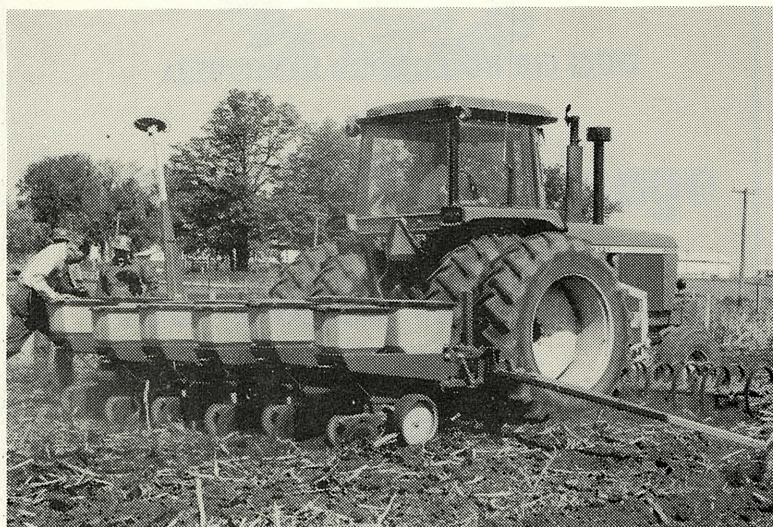
Soil & Water Loans: These loans are made to finance soil and water conservation practices such as ponds, dams, erosion control structures, wells and other items consistent with good farming practices.

Rural Housing: Loans are made to build new homes or upgrade existing homes. Facility loans are made for grain storage, improved farm water systems, and livestock production facilities.

The Cedar County Office is located in Tipton in the USDA Building. Office hours are each Monday from 8:00 to 5:00.



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I-M BUDGET

Commissioner's Expense	\$524.23
Office Supplies	296.45
Prizes for Contest	29.22
Meeting Expenses	60.83
Office Expense	541.79
TOTAL	\$1452.52

II-M BUDGET

Salary - Clerk.....	\$7436.02
State Retirement	310.38
Health Insurance.....	249.00
Federal Retirement (Social Security)	435.01
Life Insurance	36.00
Travel.....	76.61
Equipment.....	44.33

TOTAL **\$8,587.35**

III-M BUDGET

Allocation July 1, 1975.....	\$25,000.00
Amount disbursed as of	
12/31/76.....	20,727.57
Released to Department	
12/31/76.....	4772.43

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ACCOMPLISHMENT SUMMARY

The following indicates the District's accomplishments reported for the 1976 Fiscal year ending Sept. 30, 1976.

Tile Outlet Terraces	79,390 Ft.
Contouring -	2,499 Acres
Minimum Tillage -	3,055 Acres
Grassed Waterway	50 Acres
Tile Drainage	110,154 Ft.
Pasture Planting	320 Acres
Wildlife Areas	176 Acres
Windbreaks & Tree Planting	41 Acres
Land Adequately Treated	1,868 Acres
Agricultural Waste Systems	6
Ponds	8

We feel that either directly or indirectly we are influencing the conservation thinking of every citizen in the county. If we continue to do so, our natural resources will be preserved.

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Scotch Pine Planting planted in 1972.

WILDLIFE MANAGEMENT BIOLOGIST

By Donald Pfeiffer

The Wildlife Section of the Iowa Conservation Commission will provide the technical assistance to landowners to prevent the further "erosion" of our wildlife resource. As a wildlife management biologist, I am prepared to assist individuals or groups to recognize and salvage existing wildlife habitat. I will even prepare a complete plan to retain or increase wildlife numbers on your land. This assistance is available to those who wish to enjoy having wildlife present on their land.

Wildlife numbers serve as a good barometer of the environment. Economic conditions are forcing a reduction in the odd corners or usual waste areas on the farm. As the habitat diversity is reduced so will the animal diversity and number be reduced.

Secure nesting cover is the limiting habitat type for wildlife in Cedar County. A drive across most of the county in January and February will reveal the hardships that the animals have obtaining protection from winter storms and more so the lack of grassland that will hide the pheasant hen as she attempts to nest in May and June. An alfalfa-grass mixture is preferred by nesting pheasants, rabbits and ground nesting songbirds. Small areas can provide a winter sanctuary with the addition of some pines or shrubs.

If you are not a landowner, locate an odd area and offer to plant it for wildlife benefits. The landowner may provide the seed or shrubs and trees if you provide the labor to care for the area for two years. Many of these waste areas require only a fence to make it attractive to wildlife. By fencing off such areas as creek banks and hillsides, you can solve a soil erosion problem also.

If I can be of assistance to you contact me through the SCS District Office, or write me at Iowa Conservation Commission, 517 Southgate Ave., Iowa City, Iowa 52240.

DISTRICT FORESTER

By Ed Gardiner

The original survey of Iowa conducted from 1832-59 showed Cedar County had 76,000 acres of timber. This represented nature's plan for preservation of the earth's surface. Timber covers the most erosive and unstable soils.

A survey in 1974 shows Cedar County having 15,200 acres of commercial timberland. In our zeal to produce agricultural crops and livestock we are trying to "Fool Mother Nature" on 60,800 acres in Cedar County. These are the acres that we have taken out of timber production by clearing the trees and farming or grazing the land.

The Iowa Conservation Commission in an effort to preserve the remaining 15,200 acres of timber in Cedar County and get some of the 60,800 that has been cleared planted back to trees employs a Forester. The forester is based in Anamosa and covers 6 Eastern Iowa Counties including Cedar.

The forester offers technical advice for landowners who are interested in reforestation or improving a young stand of trees by pruning, thinning and fencing to eliminate destructive grazing.

Cedar County has been selected as one of 16 counties in Iowa to take part in the Forest Incentive Program. Under this plan the ASCS can furnish financial assistance for those landowners that want to plant or improve over 5 acres of timber.

The Iowa Conservation Commission maintains the State Forest Nursery at Ames which produces trees and shrubs for reforestation, erosion control and wildlife. These are seedlings and not suitable for ornamentals or windbreak plantings.

You may obtain the order blanks for state trees from the Soil Conservation Office, the wildlife conservation officer or the District Forester, Box 46, Anamosa.



Black Walnut planting on the Carl Mitzner farm southwest of Tip-ton. Trees are approximately 25 yrs. old.

NON-POINT POLLUTION

In the next few years, Cedar County residents will be charged with the responsibility to clean up the waters of the county. This responsibility is the result of Public Law 92-500 which was passed by Congress in 1972. Section 208 of this piece of legislation deals with what is known as non-point pollution. Non-point pollution can be defined as materials which enter streams and lakes in a diffuse manner such as sediment, animal wastes, fertilizers, and pesticides. Since most of the water originating in Cedar County is agricultural runoff, this law could have a direct effect on Cedar County farmers. Congress has said that the nation's waters will be fishable and swimmable by 1983. Through this and other acts of Congress plus several court decisions, 208 and non-point pollution control is a reality. The questions to answer are, what needs to be done? How will we do it? Who is going to do it? Where do we start, and who's going to pay for it?

The machinery to answer this problem has been set up. The state has been divided into 6 river basin or watershed areas. Cedar County is part of the Iowa-Cedar river basin drainage with the northeast part of the county going to the northeast river basin.

Each of these 6 river basin districts has the responsibility to develop a plan to control non-point pollution. This plan must be developed by November 1978.

Each Conservancy District has an advisory committee made up of one representative from each county involved. These representatives are responsible for transferring information from the local county to the advisory committee.

At the present time several things are going on in regard to 208. The Iowa-Cedar Conservancy District is attempting to locate 4 or 5 watersheds with which to do in depth studies to determine what measures should be used to control non-point pollution. These have yet to be established but will be identified in the near future. In addition, the State is working on a general soil association map which will be used to determine soil resource areas and soil loss problem areas. These will be used on a county basis and each county will be responsible for identifying critical areas which are most in need of treatment.

Currently, there are still many unanswered questions concerning non-point pollution. The potential is there for decisions that will have a direct effect on Cedar County residents. The more local input that can be obtained on these matters, the better off everyone will be. Those people and agencies that are working most directly with 208 are:

Howard Davis, West Branch - Cedar County's representative to the Iowa-Cedar River Basin Advisory Committee

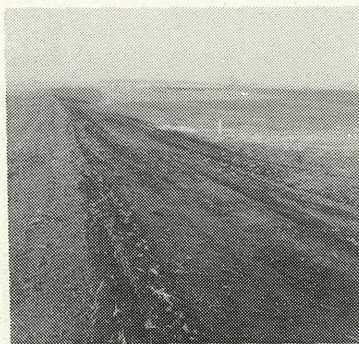
Bob Severin, Lowden - Cedar County's representative to the Northeast Iowa River Basin Advisory Committee

Iowa Department of Environmental Quality

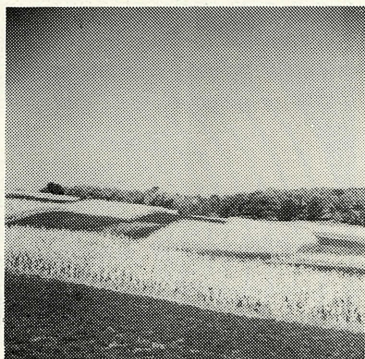
Iowa Department of Soil Conservation

Steve Probst, Marion - 208 Coordination with the Iowa-Cedar River Basin

The Cedar Soil Conservation District, Tipton, Iowa

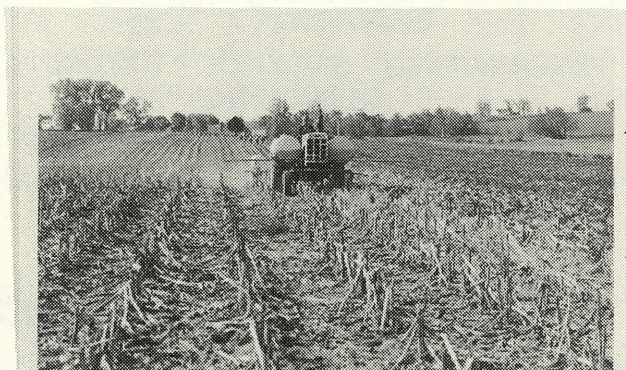


Parallel Tile Outlet Terraces

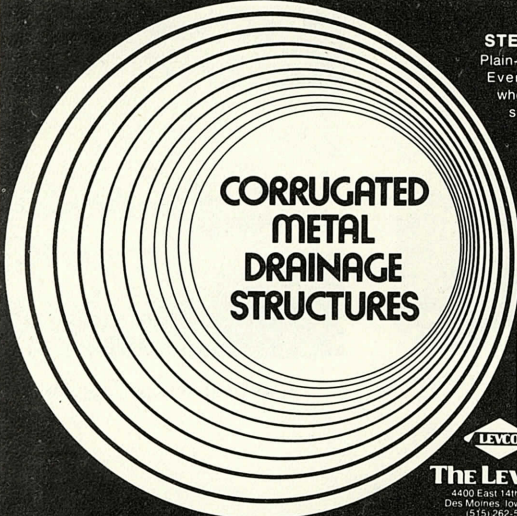


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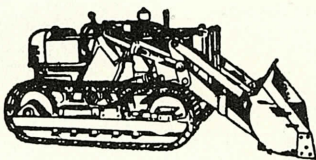
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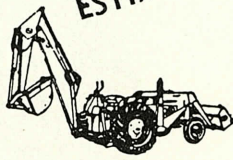
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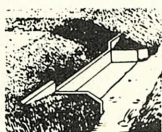
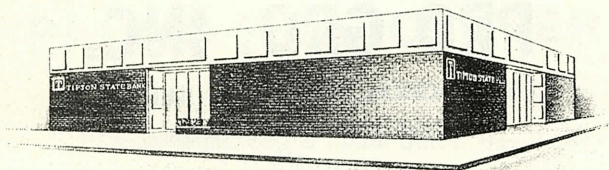


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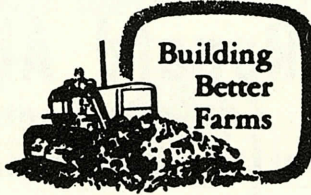
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SEDIMENT IS SERIOUS POLLUTION PROBLEM

**Kenneth D. Muller
Cedar County Extension Director**

Cedar County's most significant pollution problem is sediment from excessive soil erosion. Sediment clogs streams, channels, affects aquatic life, increases stream water turbidity and reduces the capacity of lakes and reservoirs. Sediment also carries nutrients, agricultural chemical residue, animal waste residue and other pollutants.

Compulsory soil conservation appears to be getting closer as farmers are drawn deeper into the issue of pollution abatement. The stage was set by the 1972 amendments to the Federal Water Pollution Control Acts.

Livestock feeders, industries, and communities were the first to feel the effects of "point source" pollution directives--permits, standards, specifications, fines.

Now there's a push to control "non-point" source of pollutants--those whose origins are hard to identify. Soil sediment entering ditches and lakes is a prime example.

Federal guidelines requiring states to analyze their non-point source pollution problems and to develop control programs is already in motion. Iowa has initiated study committees.

Some farmers feel if it hadn't been for the unusually hard rains in the spring and summers of 1974 and 1975 that there would not be a problem. Mulch tillage is catching on and some permanent conservation structures are being applied by concerned farmers. The fact that less than 45% of Cedar County's land is now adequately treated for soil loss and sedimentation, makes it obvious that we are part of the problem.

The job of a Soil District Commissioner will get more difficult in the next several years in dealing with sediment as a pollutant. It will mean dealing with complaints from farmers and non-farmers, required conservation practices, setting standards and timetables, and possibly enforcement of standards. Dealing with SEDIMENT cannot be avoided and will require cooperation from individuals and agencies at all levels.



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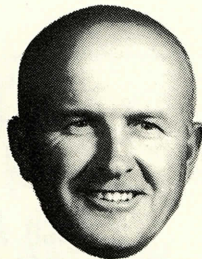
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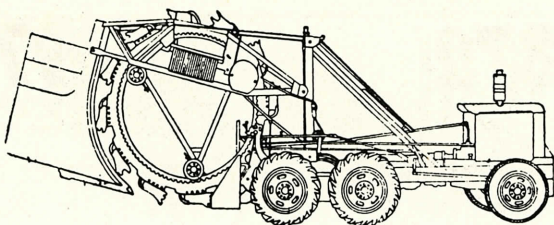
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