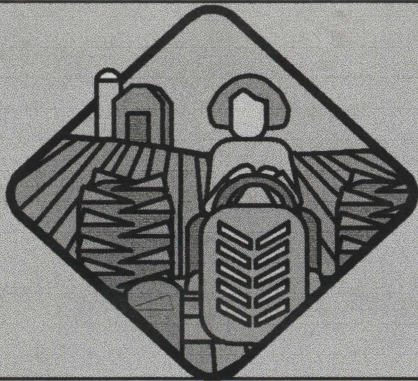




SOIL & WATER CONSERVATION UPDATE

A Newsletter from the Dickinson County SWCD

February 1998

'97 MAX program a success in Dickinson County

The MAX Program for 1997 was a huge success. In fact, the Iowa Great Lakes had the most participants than any other watershed in the entire nation. We had over 200 entries or 15% of the nation's entries.

The MAX Program is not a contest, rather it is a learning and teaching tool. It is sponsored by the Conservation Technology Information Center, Bayer, Case IH, Monsanto, and the United Soybean Board.

Over the years the MAX has focused upon profit based on tillage passes. This year numerous comparisons were made showing some very interesting results. Some of the comparisons we made included:

- * tillage
- * planting date
- * row widths
- * nitrogen application
- * bio-engineered vs non-bio-engineered seed
- * and seeding rates.

This year we found that those who applied less than 100# of Nitrogen made a profit nearly 25% more than someone who added 150# of nitrogen. We also noted that the planting dates for different tillage passes showed that those who were generally done planting their crops first were the no-tillers. A popular argument has been that you must no-till plant later because of the cooler soil conditions. According to this study, it doesn't necessarily turn out that way.

As farming becomes more and more competitive, farmers must become more efficient and active in the process. The MAX Program is one avenue that farmers can use to evaluate their program. The Dickinson SWCD plans to offer the MAX Program next year, let us know if you are interested.
~ John Wills, Clean Water Project Coordinator

Conservation Staff

Ann Ditsworth — State Secretary
Paula Koster — Conservation Assistant
Carroll Oskvig — District Conservationist
Willard Punt — Soil Conservation Technician
John Wills — Environmental Specialist
Jim Bell — Earth Team Volunteer
Clarence Call — Earth Team Volunteer
Maurice Dougal — Earth Team Volunteer
Keith Van Kleek — Earth Team Volunteer

Envirothon

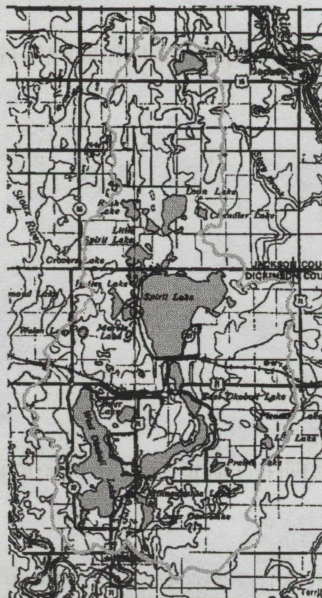
The national Envirothon is an annual competition held for high school students throughout North America. Designed as a way to teach kids about environmental education, the five subjects are: Wildlife, Forestry, Soil, Aquatics, and Current Environmental Issues. To get to the national competition, each state has a 'local' competition. The District Commissioners are willing to sponsor any interested teams from schools to 4-H groups in this event. This year 2 teams from the Terril School will be representing Dickinson County in the 'local' competition. We wish them great success!

EQIP ~ Dickinson's Priority Areas

In 1997 the Dickinson County Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) Core Group reviewed comments from the public before submitting three project applications for 1998. These included applications for land located in the Iowa Great Lakes

watershed, Silver Lake watershed, and for an area located one mile on either side of the Little Sioux River. The EQIP Core Group is made up of the Dickinson County Soil & Water Conservation District Commissioners, Farm Service Agency County Committee members, Larry Lago and myself.

1998 EQIP project applications have been ranked at the state level, but are pending approval from

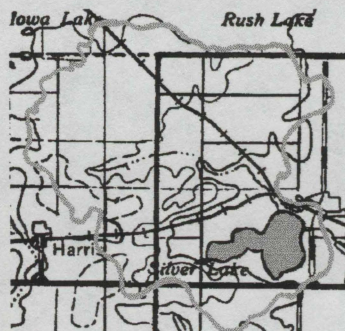


Iowa Great Lakes Watershed

the national level. It is expected that final approval for these project applications will be made in February, with a projected sign-up starting shortly after the applications are approved.

EQIP provides technical assistance and cost-share payments, incentive

payments, and education to producers who enter 5 - 10 year contracts based on conservation plans. If you have any questions concerning EQIP, feel free to give us a call.



Silver Lake Watershed

~ Carroll Oskvig, District Conservationist

Web sites to visit

Dickinson SWCD

www.ia.nrcs.usda.gov/county/dickinson.html

State of Iowa

www.state.ia.us/

USDA-Natural Resources Conservation Service

www.ncg.nrcs.usda.gov/

Pheasants Forever

www.pheasantsforever.org/

Ducks Unlimited

www.ducks.org/

National Envirothon

www.nacdnet.org/education/envthon.htm

EEK! — Kids Environmental Ed. page

www.dnr.state.wi.us/org/other/EEK/

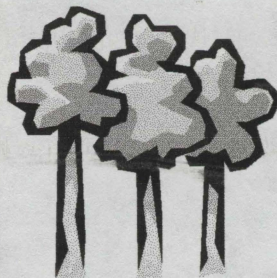
District Tree Sale Update

The District sale is going very well, which means we are running out and short on a few items. They are as follows:

Out: American Plum, Bur Oak, Amur Maple, Chokecherry, Honeysuckle & Nanking Cherry

Low: Black Walnut, Hackberry, Red Oak, Rebrum Maple, Sugar Maple, Buffaloberry, Caragana, Cotoneaster, Cranberry, Austrian Pine and Scotch Pine

There are still cost-share funds available if you are interested in planting an acreage, farmstead, or field windbreak. Please contact the District office at (712) 336-2604 for more information.



We encourage you to place your tree orders at your earliest convenience for best selection, the final order date is set for March 10, 1998.

Thanks for your support!