

CHEROKEE COUNTY
SOIL CONSERVATION DISTRICT

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ANNUAL REPORT

FOR

1948

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We, the Commissioners of the Cherokee County Soil Conservation District, submit this report of our activities and accomplishments during 1948, to the people of the District, to the State Soil Conservation Committee and other assisting agencies.

DISTRICT COMMISSIONERS:

C. C. Martin, Chairman	Cherokee, Iowa
L. C. Bengston	Aurelia, Iowa
James R. Fee	Washta, Iowa

FARM PLANNING ACTIVITIES TO-DATE:

Since the organization of the District, 178 farmers have developed conservation plans (with District assistance) for a total of 35,889 acres. About 50% of the practices planned have been applied on these farms.

The distribution of farms with conservation plans in Cherokee County, by townships, is as follows: (the greatest concentrations of conservation farmers are in the more rolling townships)

Marcus 1	Liberty 4	Cedar 4	Spring 7
Amherst 11	Sheridan 4	Cherokee 13	Afton 6
Tilden 8	Rock 12	Pilot 17	Pitchee 16
Grand Meadow 14	Willow 27	Silver 29	Diamond 5

PROGRESS MADE BY THE 178 DISTRICT COOPERATORS IN ESTABLISHING
PRACTICES OUTLINED IN THEIR CONSERVATION PLANS.

Contouring	16,384 acres
Permanent Pastures Improved	100 acres
New Pastures Seeded	183 acres
Headlands and Turn Rows Seeded	514 acres
Trees and Shrubs Planted for Woodland and Wildlife	15 acres
Terraces Constructed	43 miles
Diversions Constructed	1 mile
Waterways Tiled	9,150 lineal feet
Open Ditch Constructed	0.2 miles
Waterways Established	53 miles
Contour Fence Built	3,311 rods
Contour Field Divisions Established	31,150 rods
Cropland Limed	3,175 acres
New Seedings Fertilized	3,581 acres
Soil Saving Dams Built	1 each

In Addition:

Steele State Bank has constructed approximately 42 miles of
terraces on their farms.

PROGRESS IN APPLICATION OF SOIL CONSERVATION PRACTICES: An indication of the rate of progress can be obtained from this summary of 20 of the earlier District cooperators.

SIZE FARM ACRES	CONTOURING 100% ESTABLISHED		CONTOUR FIELD BOUNDARIES, RODS			TERRACING MILES				CONTOUR FENCE RODS				HEADLANDS SEEDED ACRES				GRASS WATERWAYS ESTABLISHED RODS			
	YEAR	ACRES	% EST.	YEAR	AMOUNT	1945	1946	1947	1948	1945	1946	1947	1948	1945	1946	1947	1948	1945	1946	1947	1948
240	1947	195	100%	1946	195		0.4		*0.2			240	30		8.0	1.0	0.5	150	145	20	
120	1947	79	100%	1947	250									1.0	0.3	1.0		72			
240	1946	99	100%	1947	180				*						5.0			320		30	
160	1947	122	50%	1948	160				*					3.0	3.0			252	40		40
120	1945	76	75%	1948	200		0.6							2.0			2.0	60			
100	1946	77	100%	1947	250					90	70			2.0			1.0	60			
160	1947	119	90%	1948	210									2.0	2.0	3.0		180			54
240	1947	198	90%	1948	210					15				2.5	1.0	2.5	2.0		160	150	25
200	1947	151	100%	1947	245				*	100				2.0	8.0			60	60		
160	1947	150	100%	1948	540		3.4	1.7	0.5	240			140		2.5	3.5		60	200		
240	1946	153	100%	1946	310									5.0			1.0	190			
160	1946	84	100%	1947	590		0.3		*0.6	175			200		2.0	2.0		49	18		
240	1947	134	100%	1947	370					50					6.0				120	110	60
1107	1948	258	100%	1947	460		2.7	6.5	*1.0					9.0	4.0		7.0		60	60	40
160	1947	120	100%	1947	385										4.0				150	190	
120	1948	94	100%	1948	225										1.0	0.5			120	45	
320	1948	257	100%	1947	460		0.7	1.9	*1.4					12.0					40	80	80
160	1948	125	100%	1947	220											1.0		300			
120	1947	92	100%	1947	115										2.0	3.0		80	180		
120	1945	79	100%	1946	210					20				3.0		2.0		40	20		

*Have stated they plan on building terraces in 1949.

BUFFER STRIPS ACRES				NEW PASTURE SEEDED ACRES				TREE & WILDLIFE PLANTINGS ACRES				LIMING CROPLAND ACRES				FERTILIZING NEW SEEDINGS ACRES			
1945	1946	1947	1948	1945	1946	1947	1948	1945	1946	1947	1948	1945	1946	1947	1948	1945	1946	1947	1948
5.5	2.5												75	34	35		25	38	25
													15	15	16		16	16	16
													16	12	12			10	20
														12	54				10
													18				15	40	20
				6.0									75				20	30	13
													20	8	15			43	28
													30	40	25				40
													17	18					
						12.0							70		30		18		50
													40	20	26				
	14.0									2.0	5.0		30	12	15		43		25
	8.0												20	33	66			17	15
											8.0		35	125			40		
						65.0							53	12	55		60		28
													18	20	29		14		21
		2.0											105	90					
													18	15					47
													30	15			20	15	15

THE FOLLOWING GOALS HAVE BEEN SET FOR 1949:

Development of farm conservation plans	60 new cooperators
Contour Farming	5341 additional acres
Contour Field Divisions	7600 rods established
Terracing	33 miles
Grassed Waterways Established	23 miles
Headlands and Turn Rows Seeded	227 acres
Planting Trees and Shrubs	7 acres
Diversions Constructed	0.3 miles
Tile Drainage	9,200 lineal feet

The farm planning activities, during 1949, will be planned to facilitate the development of the greatest possible number of sub-watersheds with practices established on as close to 100% of their acreage as possible.

An attempt will also be made to develop new groups where they will fall into sub-watershed developments.

SOIL CONSERVATION SERVICE:

During 1948, the Soil Conservation Service provided the following technical assistance to the Cherokee County Soil Conservation District:

- 1 - Planning Technician (12 months)--Harvey Lindberg
- 1 - Junior Planning Technician (5 months)--Robert Huffman
- 1 - Conservation Aid (9 months)-----Edwin Clow

It is anticipated that, during 1949, the District will have the full time services of the above listed technical staff.

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The District reports the following accomplishments during 1948 (as a result of the assistance furnished by the Soil Conservation Service):

30 farmers developed complete conservation plans with district assistance (a total of 5,460 acres)

139 farmers cooperating with the District established the following conservation practices on their farms:

- 5,934 acres of contoured row crops
- 252 acres of headlands, turn rows and new pastures seeded
- 15 acres of trees and shrubs planted
- 9.5 miles of terraces constructed
- 0.7 miles of field diversions constructed
- 9,150 lineal feet of drain tile staked out
- 0.2 miles of open drains staked out
- 22 miles of waterways seeded
- 1,640 rods of contour fence staked out
- 7,015 rods of contour field divisions laid out
- 2,182 acres of cropland limed
- 2,480 acres of rotation seedings on which phosphate fertilizer was applied
- 1 soil saving dam constructed

59 farmers, who (it is anticipated) will become district cooperators, received district assistance in establishing the following practices:

- 1,820 acres of contoured row crops
- 1,900 lineal feet of waterways seeded
- 1.5 miles of terraces constructed
- 300 lineal feet of diversions constructed
- 180 rods of contour fence staked out
- 1,324 rods of contour field divisions laid out

In Addition:

Steele State Bank constructed about 30 miles of terraces on their farms during 1948.

EXTENSION SERVICE:

The Extension Service, through the County Extension Director, has assisted the district materially in furthering the use of soil conservation practices in the county through its educational and publicity program in Cherokee County.

This county is fortunate in being one of the few counties in which the Extension Service has assigned extra personnel (an assistant county extension director for soil conservation) to aid in the soil conservation educational program.

A special sub-committee of the county extension program planning committee has developed a special program on soil conservation (emphasizing a well balanced farm plan) in which is outlined the extension program for the year. One soil conservation district commissioner and two other farmers make up this committee.

Some of the other activities carried on during the year are:

1. Information meetings were held in potential watershed areas to explain the Little Sioux Flood Control Program and the manner in which it would be applied in sub-watersheds.
2. Aided in securing cooperation of the local ministerial association, business clubs and local newspapers for the purpose of promoting soil conservation week. Ministers cooperating with items on church bulletin board or short talks from pulpit. Mats were also furnished to newspapers.
3. Assistant County Extension Director served as member of Friends of Land educational committee; worked with county school superintendent in planning soil conservation educational program in schools.
4. Arranged for extension specialists to assist with the Pilot Rock Plowing Matches and Farm Renovation Day.
5. A terracing demonstration was held in April on the I. Johnson farm (demonstrating whirlwind terraced and disk tillers for terrace construction).
6. A treeplanting demonstration was held in April on the Simonsen farm (demonstrating tree planting methods, care and use of treeplanting machine).
7. Making arrangements for a soil conservation tour for the Cherokee Kiwanis Club.
8. Maintained a weekly column on soil conservation in the Farm Bureau Spokesman.
9. Assisted in running contour lines and laying out terraces during spring rush season.
10. Assist with promotion of Sioux City Program for Permanent Agriculture.

FRIENDS OF THE LAND:

In August of 1948, the Commissioners of the Cherokee County Soil Conservation District joined with the other agricultural and business leaders of the county to organize the first chapter of Friends of the Land with headquarters in Iowa, known as the Little Sioux Chapter with headquarters in Cherokee, Iowa.

Dr. Hugh H. Bennett, Chief of the U. S. Soil Conservation Service, gave the address at the Charter meeting on the evening of August 18th. The buffet supper which preceded the address was under the sponsorship of the Cherokee Chamber of Commerce. Present were seventy-seven charter members and eighty-nine out-of-town guests from eighteen states and the District of Columbia.

Three large meetings open to the public with nationally known conservation speakers are planned for 1949. The Friends of the Land organization seems to interest individuals in conservation who could not be reached in any other way.

The officers of the Little Sioux chapter are: Washburn Steele, president (banker), Whitfield Adamson, vice-president (farmer), Archie Nelson, 2nd vice-president (lawyer), and Rev. H. G. McCoy, Secretary-Treasurer - all of Cherokee, Iowa.

The Little Sioux Chapter joined with the Chamber of Commerce in sponsoring a meeting of farmers and business men (in September) with George Lamp, Asst. State Conservationist (Flood Control) as speaker.

An inspection tour of the Kirkholm Sub-Watershed (in Ida County) which is in the process of construction was sponsored with a \$10.00 award camera contest for the best conservation picture taken.

The organization helped sponsor a Contour Fencing Demonstration on Election Day. Everyone voted and then came to the demonstration to see how a different type of fence was constructed, and for free coffee and doughnuts.

Four Chapter Land Letters have been sent to the membership since August and the Educational Committee is working with the State and County educators to initiate conservation education for every school child in the county.

PILOT ROCK PLOWING MATCH ASSOCIATION:

On August 19th and 20th, 1948, the above named association, with the assistance and support of other county organizations, businessmen and farmers, staged an agricultural show whose theme was soil conservation. The District commissioners were happy to approve the use of all available facilities of the District that could be used in making this show a success. It was felt that a show of this kind could be very effective in presenting soil conservation information to a great many people and would probably reach many who are not contacted in the normal course of the district's education and information program.

The two day show, all of which was held on the Frank Werthman farm near Cherokee, consisted of the following events:

1. Pilot Rock National - a terrace building contest for special terracing equipment pulled by a farm tractor.
2. State Plow Terrace - a terrace building contest to qualify a winner to the national plow terrace event.
3. District Contour Plowing - a contour plowing contest (the winner to qualify for entry at the WHO plowing event).
4. Junior Contour Plowing - a contour plowing contest for boys and girls under 18 years of age.
5. 4-H Livestock Show and Sale
6. Farm Machinery and Heavy Equipment Show
7. Horse Show
8. Renovation of the Frank Werthman farm by installing the following conservation practices:
 - a. Terraces (2.5 miles)
 - b. Grassed Waterways (280 rods shaped, limed, fertilized, seeded and mulched).
 - c. Grass Headlands (400 rods limed, fertilized and seeded).
 - d. Tiling (1700 lineal feet of drain tile installed).
 - e. Road Banks Seeded (180 rods of road ditch sloped, limed, fertilized, seeded and mulched).
 - f. Contour Fence (170 rods built; all fence rows limed, fertilized and seeded).
 - g. Leveling old fence rows (70 rods leveled).
 - h. Diversion dikes (2250 lineal feet constructed).
 - i. Earth fills with pipe spillway (1 constructed).
 - j. Stock Watering System (1 constructed in conjunction with earth fill).
 - k. Farmstead Improvement (new driveway put in to buildings, lots leveled and filled, diversion constructed to lead water away from buildings).

Through the cooperation of the Extension Service, the Soil Conservation Service and local district cooperators, the Plowing Match Association was able to station experienced men at all points on the farm to explain the work that was going on (a portable loudspeaker system was used).

Commissioners Martin and Foe served as plowing and terrace contest judges. Commissioner Bengston served as field chairman for the contour plowing events. Commissioner Benston was also elected President of the Pilot Rock Plowing Match Association for 1949.

There were 50 contestants in the four contest events. The show was very well attended; not only by Cherokee County residents but by many from other counties and other states. Distinguished guests included Dr. H. H. Bennett, Chief, Soil Conservation Service. The Pilot Rock Plowing Match Association is to be commended for this successful and worthwhile show.

CHEROKEE COUNTY SCHOOL SYSTEM:

The District appreciates the assistance given it by the Cherokee County school system. To give an idea of the cooperation we have received we are including the following statement, from Earle F. Berkler, County Superintendent of Schools, in our annual report:

"This is to report to you Conservation Activities of the Cherokee County School System.

The County School Superintendent is a charter member of the "Little Sioux Chapter of the Friends of the Land", a National Non-partisan Society for the Conservation of Soil, Rain and Man. At the 1948-49 organization meeting of the Cherokee County School Masters' Club, the County Superintendent, who is a member of the Education Committee of the Friends of the Land, presented to that group the advantages of schools and school personnel associating themselves with the organization.

The State Department of Education is very sympathetic to the Friends of the Land and Conservation of all the Good in Nature. The department prepares a science course of study which may be used in the teaching of science in the Rural Schools. This course of study includes a unit for each the fall, winter and spring term to teach Conservation with particular emphasis on Soil Conservation. These units have been placed not only in the Rural Schools but also the Town and Consolidated Schools of the County and the schools have been inspired as to the service they will give.

A hearty invitation by the Cherokee County School Masters' Club was extended to Mr. Washburn Steele, President of the Local Chapter of Friends of the Land, and Mr. Harvey R. Lindberg of the Local Soil Conservation Office to attend one of its meetings to inform them of what correlation can be made between the schools and their agencies for incorporating Soil Conservation into the school programs. The invitation was accepted and both men presented interesting discussions to the school officials. All agreed that Soil Conservation is a vital consideration of utmost concern. The guests offered a large supply of valuable library materials to the schools. They offered to provide field trips for schools; to serve at Educational meetings of teachers, parents, and pupils; to promote contests for schools; and to serve in any capacity where they might be of service. The Superintendents expressed friendly appreciation and thanks in their acceptance of these opportunities and made known that Conservation will be incorporated wherever possible in the school curriculum and activities.

At the present time Mr. Bruce Florea, Assistant Cherokee County Extension Director and representative of the Iowa State College Extension Service, and the County Superintendent's Office are setting up an instruction unit entitled "Soil Conservation" for use in the schools in which students and parents carry on a cooperative study.

During this month schools of the county are participating in a State and County Essay Contest, "Importance of Conservation in Iowa" being conducted by the Cherokee County Pilot Rock Chapter of the D.A.R. under the direction of Mrs. H. W. Hanson, Regent, Larrabee, Iowa.

Cherokee County is fortunate in having its able County Extension Director, Mr. A. R. Griffith; its Little Sioux Chapter of the Friends of the Land with Mr. Washburn Steele, President; its Federal Conservation Office with Mr. Harvey R. Lindberg, Director; and its Assistant County Extension Director. These agencies work in close harmony in doing actual Contour Farming, Terracing, Structural Reclamation and Preservation of Iowa Land. The Pilot Rock Plowing Match has been for years an annual event of national fame in Cherokee County. These groups as a unit have served this event in modernizing a farm in a single day in the employment of these practices. These things have provided a wonderful and rich opportunity for this type of Education. This unit works in close harmony with the County Superintendent's Office and thereby to the schools of the county, thus, promoting this phase of Education which is receiving State and National attention.

The schools of the county have been reminded of these things and special request has been issued that we be taught to be able to employ in our vocabularies such terms as, Erosion, Terracing, Contouring, Pond Management, Development of Wildlife, Production of Fish, Watershed, Spillway, Water Cycle, Aqueducts, and other related topics.

We feel that your program is very closely associated with and the ultimate outcome leads to the Conservation of Human Health. We are endeavoring to carry on an intensive and extensive program of Health Education and Practices.

We are very happy with this whole program. In these things we consider our Philosophy of Education as has been said "Our nation, our state, our county, our township, or our farm is no richer than the land of which it is made." "It is a sacred heritage to be passed on from generation to generation, so --- let's all cooperate to the fullest to preserve and improve this trust."

SIoux CITY PROGRAM FOR PERMANENT AGRICULTURE (sponsored by the Sioux City Chamber of Commerce and The Sioux City Journal-Tribune Publications):

The Cherokee County Soil Conservation District participated in the above named program in 1948.

In Cherokee County, fifty-eight farmers were nominated as outstanding conservation farmers. The procedure used to select the three outstanding farms was as follows: the Ass't. County Ext. Director and S.C.S. personnel selected thirteen farms from the group of fifty-eight; the commissioners viewed these thirteen farms from the air and checked their accomplishments, selecting seven as outstanding. The commissioners then arranged for the Plymouth County District to send over three judges to select the top three in Cherokee County from the list of seven.

A dinner, in honor of the fifty-eight entries, was sponsored by the Cherokee Chamber of Commerce in September. The district chairman and the county winners attended the dinner in Sioux City in their honor.

The commissioners arranged for three Cherokee County judges to go to the Plymouth County District and help select their three top farms.

The district wishes to express its appreciation to the sponsoring groups and assure them that it will participate in their 1949 program.

THE GOODYEAR TIRE AND RUBBER COMPANY SOIL CONSERVATION CONTEST FOR DISTRICT COMMISSIONERS.

The district participated in this program in 1948 and has voted to participate in this program in 1949.

The real value in an event of this type is the opportunity to evaluate the district program and organization.

The commissioners attended the recognition dinner in Des Moines which was sponsored by the Goodyear Tire & Rubber Company.

The Cherokee County District Commissioners appreciate the recognition given them in this program.

PMA - The active soil conservation program of this organization has been an aid in promoting District activities. In Cherokee County, the District has received direct assistance from committeemen in laying out contour guide lines during rush seasons.

CHEROKEE COUNTY FARM BUREAU - Soil Conservation information has always been included as an important item in the Cherokee County program. One District commissioner serves on the county agronomy planning committee.

BANKS - Cherokee County bankers have taken an active interest in the District soil conservation program. They have encouraged many farmers to adopt conservation plans and also encourage it through their farm management activities. The Bankers Association had an excellent soil conservation exhibit at the 1948 Plowing Match. The Steele State Bank of Cherokee cooperated with the Friends of the Land in sponsoring a contour fencing demonstration and also a soil conservation tour.

NEWSPAPERS - The local newspapers have given District activities excellent news coverage. During Soil Conservation Week, special effort was made to print feature stories and ads on soil conservation activities. Reporters make regular stops at the district office.

FARM MACHINERY COMPANIES - Local dealers have and are doing a great deal toward promoting soil conservation. They have aided in obtaining equipment for demonstrations and were a big factor in the success of the Farm Renovation Day during the 1948 Pilot Rock event.

CHEROKEE CHAMBER OF COMMERCE - The District wishes to take this opportunity of expressing their appreciation to the local Chamber of Commerce for the help received during 1948. The Cherokee Chamber of Commerce sponsored the dinner that preceded the organization meeting of the local chapter of Friends of the Land; they also sponsored a dinner honoring 59 Cherokee County farmers for outstanding soil conservation work.

INDIVIDUAL ASSISTANCE - The District feels that there is one group who play a vital part in the soil conservation program that receives all too little recognition. The district refers to local farmers who play a leading part (giving much time) toward making group and small watershed developments successful.

LITTLE SIOUX FLOOD CONTROL PROGRAM:

The District is emphasizing the completion of farm conservation plans with cooperating farmers on a group basis that will facilitate the development of complete erosion control measures on entire small watersheds. The District feels that this is a very practical method of reducing flood damage on the Little Sioux River. The District program is in accordance with policies worked out through the Little Sioux Works Committee.

Briefly, District progress in development of sub-watersheds is as follows:

1. Four watersheds, totalling about 3700 acres have from 70% to 95% of their acres under a farm conservation plan in cooperation with the District. These are called the Martin, Mortenson, Fee and Simonsen Watersheds. They have all been allocated construction priorities by the Little Sioux Works Committee. It is anticipated that installation of flood control structures where needed will be started on two of these watersheds during 1949.
2. The 4-Mile Creek Watershed which consists of all or part of 43 farms with a total of 5600 acres in the watershed is well started with owners of 63% of the land in the watershed cooperating with the District in establishing conservation practices.
3. Stratton Creek, Perry Creek, Patterson and Ralston also have made a start (with owners of from 10% to 40% of the acres in these watersheds applying conservation practices on their land).
4. Work is being done in starting more groups with the view of ultimately combining them into small watersheds where possible.

The District is encountering problems in the development of small watersheds which are not ordinarily considered a stumbling block in the normal course of individual and group farm planning. To be effective on a watershed area basis, soil and moisture conservation measures must be applied on a high percentage of the watershed area. In our experience with watershed development so far, we have found that 50% of the farmers in a watershed are very much interested and cooperative. In the course of interest and planning meetings and contacts, another 10% to 25% usually become interested. The effort to arouse interest in the remaining farmers requires considerable effort and is not always successful; it is our thought that, given time, interest will develop in many cases.

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In looking forward, the District commissioners feel that education in soil conservation must continue to be intensified if the application of soil conservation practices on the land is to be speeded up.

The educational program is the basis of successful District operations; it must be continued and expanded until all farmers are farming the land according to its capabilities.

The farmers who have a good understanding of the principles of soil conservation readily become District cooperators.

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