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On The Cover...

Bill Bennett, SWCD commissioner; practices 'win-win' soil conservation

By CHARLES WITTMAN
Managing Editor

ELGIN — Bill Bennett can trace his roots in Fayette County back past the middle of the 1800s, back to his great-great grandfather, coincidentally also named William.

That 19th-century Bill Bennett entered the county between Wadena and Volga, the younger Bill says, left for a short time to try his luck in the California gold rush (1849) and, finding little luck or gold, returned to Iowa to try his hand another risky business, farming.

Great-great grandfather Bennett had another occupation, gunsmithing, a task shared with his son, Ira. In fact, great-great grandfather William Bennett had a gun shop right across the road from the home of the current Bill Bennett.

The two ancestral Bennetts, great-great grandfather Bill and great grandfather Ira together produced rifles, and great-great grandson Bill has one of the last muzzle loaders the pair made, a tangible reminder of his family's past.

"There's quite a few of these Bennett rifles around," says Bill, hefting the gun. Imprinted on the cold, dark steel of the barrel is "Wm. N. Bennett, Elgin, Iowa." The barrel, the metal work was the product of great-great grandfather William, while the wood, now smooth and lustrous from all the hands that have touched it since it was hewn from tree, was shaped by his great grandfather.

After Ira came Earl Bennett, Bill's grandfather, then Cleve, Bill's father, who still owns his farm "not too far down the road" from his son's.

While the land the Bennetts farm has not all remained in their hands all the time, the longevity of their stewardship may have something to do with Bill's respect for the soil.

Now beginning his fourth year as a Fayette Soil Conservation District commissioner, Bill Bennett has been practicing and advocating soil conservation for as long as he's been farming.

Continued on page 2

INSIDE

This issue of RURAL is bigger than usual because it's the annual soil conservation edition, with articles on Soil Conservation Service programs as well as soil and water conservation. Among those you'll find inside are:

Page 4: Bill Bennett, this week's cover subject, writes on woodland management and SCD policy.

Page 5: Conservation compliance, what will it mean, and current ACP practices eligible for cost-sharing.

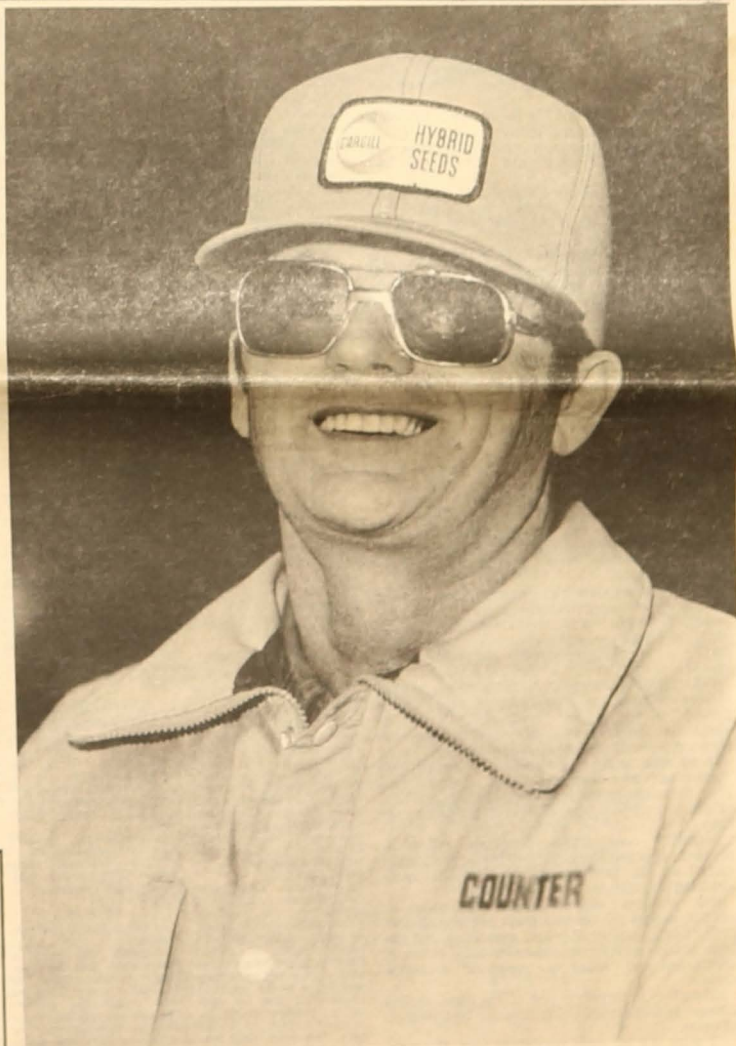
Page 6: First steps in conservation compliance, and Conservation Reserve Program eligibility.

Page 7: Contouring and conservation tillage, government benefits, and wildlife food plots.

Page 8: The annual report of the Fayette County Soil Conservation District.

Page 9: The Groundwater Protection Act of 1987.

Page 12: Scrapbook from the 1987 Cuddehill field tour.



Bill Bennett

Photo by Charles Wittman

Bill Bennett ... (Continued from Page 1)

Born in West Union and raised near his present rural Elgin farm, Bennett graduated from Clermont-Elgin High School. In 1956, he bought some 70 acres adjacent to the family farm's 140 acres, marking his first venture into farming his own land. After a brief stint in the Marine Corp., he returned home to southern Pleasant Valley township, added another 200 acres of land, and went into partnership with his dad.

Then came marriage, and more land, adding first 283 acres, then another 280, until the Bennetts were farming 975 acres.

(Bill was out of farming from 1975, when he sold his farm buildings, until 1983, but returned because "I enjoyed it more.") The land remained in the family during the time, though.)

The whole farm is "highly erodible land," explains Bill, and conservation practices have always been a part of Bennett philosophy.

Bill's father, Cleve, began contour farming long before Bill was involved in the farm, he recalls, and there was a lot of rotating of crops.

"I started planting corn when a freshman," he'll recall, "and we were planting contour then."

With help from the Soil Conservation Service, which laid out the fields, the Bennetts changed the layout of the farm, removing fences to accommodate contours.

Then, in the mid-1960s, the Bennetts started using the chisel plow for their primary tillage.

"We'd been having some erosion problems," he explains, "we had waterways, but we still had problems."

While there were other practices, other conservation concepts at the time, it was herbicides that allowed the use of the chisel to become practical, Bill explains.

The first terraces, grass-backed slopes with tile outlets, came in the late 1960s-early 1970s, as the Bennetts continued to deal with erosion problems (loss of waterways and ditches).

(It is a problem endemic to the rolling hills of northeast Iowa, says Bill. One 200 acre farm, he recalls, had three deep ditches, including one that held three cars, cars that were invisible until you were standing next to the ditch.)

While those first terraces were built with contractors, Bill has taken over the construction chores himself on later terracing. He's also made other more subtle changes, such as "compromising" on the strict contours to accommodate the machinery.

And he's tried different types, such as narrow-based on about 100 acres ("I like those better," he says, explaining that they are easier to farm) and grass back-slope terraces on about 70 acres.

The remainder of the farm is on the contour, using mulch tillage, and "some no till."

"I have good results no tilling into sod and no tilling into bean ground," he explains. However, no till on corn ground hasn't proved quite as successful, he says.

Other conservation practices include contour waterways and some rotation of crops.

Bennett uses only a mulch tiller (chisel disc) and a field cultivator — "those are really all my tillage tools" — for both economic and conservation reasons, or what he calls a "win-win situation."

Bill would like to try ridge tilling, because he likes its erosion control and reduced spring work, and the prospect of better yield (compared to no-till on corn). But, he'll have to figure the economics of ridge tillage before he tries it.

In addition to the soil techniques, Bennett uses "somewhat" of a crop rotation on the farm. This year, for example, there will be corn, oats and hay-alalfa ground on a 3-4 year to one year to 2-3 year ratio.

Bennett's conservation practices reflect a practical approach to farming: "If you can't make money on the ground, you can't afford to do anything else with it."

One "problem" with conservation practices, he admits, is that the benefits don't become obvious until after a number of years, something that has been at odds with the emphasis on rapid return of investment and "today vs. tomorrow" economic factors.

Education is therefore one of his roles as Soil Conservation District Commissioner that Bennett stresses.

"I think it's the most important part. If people don't get educated on the problems they won't do anything about them, and if people can't get educated on how to solve the problems, they can't



Although covered with snow, the terraces on these fields at Bill Bennett's farm southwest of Elgin are still visible. Bennett has done anything about them.

Like his roots in the county, Bennett can also trace his involvement with the SCS — at least back to his father, who served six years as a soil commissioner.

In 1984, he recalls, he read that the SCD was having problems getting people to run for commissioner. Concerned about soil conservation, he decided to run.

"I think that's the way it was with everyone in Fayette County who's run... or they'd never run."

Other important roles of the commissioners, he says, is to support and encourage farmers to take action on their soil conservation plans, and to come up with a work plan.

The 1988 annual work plan has nine long range objects (beginning with adequate treatment of agricultural land "before productivity is significantly reduced by loss of topsoil") and ending with assisting the development of conservation plans. Each of the commissioners have their own roles spelled out; for Bill Bennett, these include cropland, wildlife and water resources; working

practicing soil conservation techniques since he started farming with his father three decades ago. (Photo by Charles Wittman) with no-till groups and individuals, promoting terraces, and working with landowners on implementation of the Food Security Act.

(The latter includes just plain visiting with county residents, an activity Bill enjoys. "I usually get asked a lot about the Food Security Act. I think all of us (members of the commission) like to have people tell us" how they feel about the programs.

In addition to serving on the commission, Bennett is also a volunteer with the SCS. "He serves two roles," says Jerry Muff, SCD district conservationist, working with the economic yield contest and the ConserTill Club as well as with the Forestry Field Day and regular duties as commissioner.

Bennett has been a member of the Fayette ConserTill Club for "about as long as it's been going," he says, and a member of the board since Jan. 1. In addition, he's president of his church board, and on the board of RC&D.

Bill's wife, Judy, is employed at Torkelson Motors in Elgin. They have two children, Brian who attends the University of Iowa, and Teresa, who graduated from Valley of Elgin last spring.

Provisions of Food Security Act

Several provisions of the Food Security Act of 1985 — the 1985 farm bill — make the goals of U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) farm and conservation programs more consistent. These new provisions encourage the reduction of soil erosion and the retention of wetlands, and will reduce production of surplus commodities. The provisions are known as the Conservation Reserve, Conservation Compliance, and Swampbuster, and Swampbuster.

The Conservation Provisions

Conservation Reserve: The Conservation Reserve offers producers help in retiring highly erodible cropland. The Agricultural Stabilization and Conservation Service (ASCS) will share up to half of the cost of establishing permanent grasses, legumes, trees, windbreaks, or wildlife plantings on your highly erodible cropland. Under annual contracts, ASCS will make annual rental payments to you as long as the terms and conditions of the contract are met.

Conservation Compliance: Conservation compliance applies if you continue planting annually tilled crops on highly erodible fields. To remain eligible for certain USDA program benefits, you must develop and be actively applying a locally approved conservation plan for those highly erodible fields by January 1, 1990. You must have the plan fully implemented by January 1, 1996.

Swampbuster: Swampbuster applies if you plant annually tilled crops on a highly erodible field that was not used

for crop production during the period 1981-85. If you plow out such a highly erodible field, you must do so under a conservation system approved by the local conservation district in order to remain eligible for USDA program benefits.

Swampbuster: Swampbuster applies if you convert naturally occurring wetlands to cropland after December 22, 1985 (the date the farm bill was signed). With some exceptions, to remain eligible for certain USDA farm program benefits you must discontinue production of annually tilled crops on newly converted wetlands.

USDA Programs Affected

- Price and income supports
- Crop insurance
- Farmers Home Administration loans
- Commodity Credit Corporation storage payments
- Farm storage facility loans
- Conservation Reserve Program annual payments
- Other programs under which USDA makes commodity-related payments.

Options

As an agricultural producer, you may:

- Develop and apply a conservation plan for your highly erodible fields, in cooperation with SCS and the local conservation district. The plan will help you reduce soil loss to levels that are technically and economically achievable. You will retain eligibility for USDA farm program benefits.
- Plant permanent cover on land where annually tilled

crops cannot be grown because of excessive erosion. If you choose this option, you may want to consider entering the land into the Conservation Reserve and planting permanent grasses, legumes, trees, windbreaks, or wildlife cover. You still would have other USDA programs open to you.

—Produce crops on a highly erodible field without using a locally approved conservation system, but you would lose eligibility for USDA program benefits.

—Produce crops on newly converted wetlands, but lose eligibility for USDA program benefits.

For Help

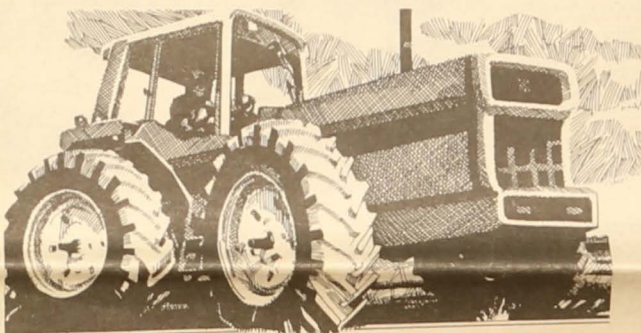
For more information about the conservation provisions or for conservation planning assistance, contact the local SCS field office. SCS conservationists can tell you if you have wetlands or highly erodible fields, and they will help you prepare a conservation plan. Local conservation districts approve all plans. The Agricultural Stabilization and Conservation Service has information about the effects of various conservation provisions on USDA farm programs. All of the USDA staffs would like to help you continue to qualify.

Management of CRP acres for wildlife

The Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) has retired about 14 million acres of erodible cropland in Iowa to date. "Permanent seedlings planted on CRP acres should provide long-term improvements in wildlife habitat and increase numbers of pheasants, quail and ground nesting game and nongame birds," said Art Roseland, wildlife biologist for the Department of Natural Resources.

According to Roseland, nurse crops in the initial year should be mowed as high as possible to minimize the disturbance of nesting birds. "This also will prevent too heavy a layer of mowed plant material from hampering seedling growth," said Roseland. "Once these seedlings have been established, and on acres that

THE GOOD EARTH: PRACTICE FARM CONSERVATION



The Fayette County Soil Conservation Commissioners are proud of the District's accomplishments for Fiscal Year 1987 as many articles in this issue will express. This work could not be possible without the work and cooperation of our Earthwork Construction and Draining Tiling Contractors who are listed below.

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Woodlands or wastelands?

By BILL BENNETT
Fayette County
SCS Commissioner

ELGIN — Have you ever visited the Badlands of South Dakota? How would you like to farm that land? The way some of us are managing our farm operations some day our land may be another Badlands. We have people treating woodlands as "wasteland." We have people treating permanent pasture as "wasteland."

What are we doing to cause this? We are pasturing woodland. This kills off the natural regrowth of trees and what little grass that is growing on this land, after this

cover is gone when it rains the soil is washed away leaving gullies. Also the cattle walk in the same tracks and start additional gullies. If this land isn't pastured it can be put into timber reserve to cut taxes and can still have timber harvested and produce income. The district forester can help you manage this woodland for you and everyone else benefits. You can have it all, productive land, attractive land, and cut erosion.

How can we protect pasture land that is being turned into "wasteland?" We can fence off and not pasture highly erodible areas, we can limit the numbers of livestock in the pasture to prevent

overgrazing. We can ring hogs to prevent rooting. We can hard surface or rotate feeding areas. We can renovate and fertilize the pasture to improve production and provide more cover. If we can keep our land under cover, we can keep it from washing away and polluting our water and filling our ponds and lakes.

We, each one, have to do our part to keep from having a badlands here in Iowa. I would rather visit the Badlands than live in them. Your children and my children have a place to live where they and their children can have a good life. We must each try to leave this earth a little better than we found it.

Fayette Co. woodland policy adopted statewide

By BILL BENNETT
Fayette County
SCS Commissioner

ELGIN — The woodland policy of the Fayette Soil and Water Conservation District is now the policy of all soil and water conservation districts in Iowa. This year the state meeting of the Iowa Soil and Water Conservation District Commissioners' Association voted to adopt this policy.

The policy is: Soil and Water Conservation District Commissioners will not approve any soil conservation plan or cost-share application for land

which involves the clearing, reducing quality of or the conversion of woodland to other land uses. "Woodland" as used in this policy refers only to wooded areas which meet the vegetative cover criteria described as eligible for the timber reserve program as of May 20, 1967 Chapter 161-196, Code of Iowa—"Forest, Than 200 Growing Forest Trees Per Acre."

Excluding from this policy are those small areas where the clearing of woody vegetation is necessary to make farming in a conservation manner practical for

adjacent cropland areas (E.G. - Clearing of Narrow Drains May Be Needed To Allow For Contouring Of Row Crops Through The Drainage Ways).

Your District Commissioners feel this policy will help us all. It will help maintain timber production which is needed and help prevent more over production of row crops. It will also help prevent soil erosion and water pollution. We believe that there is NO WAY that clearing woodland for crop production can be a benefit to people, animals, soil, water or air.

Conservation alternatives

AMES — Farmers interested in conserving soil and water can evaluate alternatives to help determine the best conservation methods for their farms, according to Mike Duffy, an Iowa State University Extension economist.

All farmers who farm erodible land must have an approved conservation plan by Jan. 1, 1990, to remain eligible for government program benefits. These plans must be fully implemented by Jan. 1, 1996.

Stewart Melvin, ISU Extension agricultural engineer,

said several alternatives are available. These include terracing, minimum tillage, strip-cropping, contour planting and crop rotations. He said the best alternative depends on characteristics of the individual farm.

"There is no best method for everyone," Melvin said. "It will depend on the farm, the cost of the system and how much is earned for the commodities."

He said positive features of terracing include the farmer being able to continue with a corn and soybean rotation and the high probability of erosion

control. Some negative considerations include the initial expense and the physical restrictions for farm equipment.

Melvin said using various forms of conservation tillage systems allows farmers to use more intensive row cropping while reducing production expenses. However, specialized equipment may be needed and soil abuse may occur in the future if conservation tillage systems are discontinued.

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SCD COMMISSIONERS — Fayette County Soil Conservation District commissioners Carl Nuss and Richard Jensen (seated) and Paul

Nuss and Bill Bennett (standing). Not shown is George Halslead, chairman of the commissioners. (Photo by Cathy Kittelson)

conserve soil is compatible with the current government program. It allows diversification of crops and there are not physical restrictions on machinery. However, crop rotation may reduce the future row crop base of the property and soil abuse could occur in the future if the rotation is not strictly followed.

Duffy said the first step in determining the best alternative is estimating soil loss under current conditions. When determining costs, Duffy suggests amortizing the investment over the expected life of the alternative to determine annual costs.

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By JERRY MUFF
District Conservationist
Soil Conservation Service

WEST UNION — The conservation compliance provision is the most important piece of soil conservation legislation passed in the last 50 years. This is because it requires conservation treatment on all cropland fields that are

considered highly erodible. It is estimated that Fayette County has approximately 150,000-200,000 acres that are highly erodible.

Conservation compliance means many things to many people. To farmers it means having a conservation plan developed by 1990 and implementing it by 1996.

To many who farm highly erodible land (ELH), it will

mean that conservation in some form will need to be applied in order to remain eligible for USDA farm program benefits.

No till, ridge till, or some other form of conservation tillage may be necessary. Perhaps contouring or contour strip cropping may be the alternative selected by the farmer. It is obvious that the farmers who need to make the

most dramatic changes are the ones who would benefit the most by having their conservation plan soon. For instance, those who will need to change field boundaries to begin strip cropping or those who require a dramatic change of tillage (e.g., to no till) will require more time to work into their new system.

To Soil Conservation Service personnel, this provision

means a huge workload with little time left to complete it. To get this job done within the designated time frame requires that we set new priorities, which unfortunately involves halting unrelated activities or services which the public has received from us in the past. Because intense scheduling has begun, we may

not be as free to accept unscheduled office visits as we have in the past. Hopefully, as the planning workload winds down, we will be able to resume the previous services.

And finally, to the general public and future generations it may mean that our soil and related resources will be around to time to come.

Conservation compliance - what will it mean?

CRP options

by ART ROSELAND,
Wildlife Biologist, DNR

Most acres enrolled in Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) "join" as complete units of highly erodible fields, or even all lands that qualify on a farm unit. CRP though, could well be an efficient management tool for farmers who want to continue cropping at near maximum levels. Options under Conservation Compliance, for example, might be improved by selective use of CRP on limited acreage.

Consider the following applications of CRP. They may work for you.

1. As permanent headlands on your contoured fields.

2. As permanent erosion control strips on contoured fields, or strip-crop systems.

3. As highly erosive, parts of fields, rather than entire field units.

4. As 66-99 foot wide strips along (a) permanent and intermittent streams or (b) wetlands, lakes, etc., over five acres. This is a new provision and applies to all qualifying cropland at these locations regardless of erosion hazard. This is a good option for landowners with streambank erosion problems.

5. Assign CRP, where applicable, to a small crop area surrounding your farmstead and plant a shelterbelt.

Think the CRP is not for you as you want to keep a maximum acreage? Think again, CRP may be a valuable tool to improve your crop management options.



District conservationist Jerry Muff at his desk at the Fayette County Soil Conservation Service district office. (Photo by Cathy Kittelson)

John Steege
SCD Commissioner
Assistant

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AC practices

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1988 ACP COST SHARE RATES:
SL-1 — Permanent Vegetative Cover Establishment, Cost Share Level and Limits 10 percent; SL-2 — Permanent Vegetative Cover Improvement 10 percent; SL-3 — Strip-Cropping Systems, \$15.00/acre; SL-4 — Terrace Systems, \$6.00/acre; SL-5 — Diversions, 60 percent; SL-6 — Field Windbreak Restoration or Establishment, 75 percent; SL-7 — Forest Stand Improvement, 60 percent; SL-8 — Forest Tree Stand Improvement, 60 percent; SL-9 — Permanent Wildlife Habitat, 75 percent; SL-10 — Shallow Water Areas for Wildlife, 75 percent.

WCI-1 — Water Impoundment Reservoirs, 75 percent; WP-1 — Sediment Retention, Erosion or Water Control Structures, 75 percent; WP-3 — Sod Water Ways, 75 percent; FR-1 — Forest Tree Plantations, 60 percent; FR-2 — Forest Tree Stand Improvement, 60 percent; WL-1 — Permanent Wildlife Habitat, 75 percent; WL-2 — Shallow Water Areas for Wildlife, 75 percent.

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Farmstead shelterbelt program available

By ART ROSELAND
Wildlife Biologist, DNR

Anyone who's had a full-season experience with a rural Iowa winter knows about shelterbelts. Located north and west of farmsteads, these tree and shrub plantings are better known as windbreaks.

Whatever the name though, it takes no imagination to appreciate how they ward off the north wind and blowing snow. During winter, tree and shrub shelterbelts may reduce home energy needs by up to 36 percent, increase feed conversion by livestock and greatly reduce snow accumulation around the farmstead.

In summer, the plantings add beauty to the farm home, and breeding habitat for many song birds. Later, when winter storms threaten, wide shelterbelts provide Iowa wildlife with critical winter shelter.

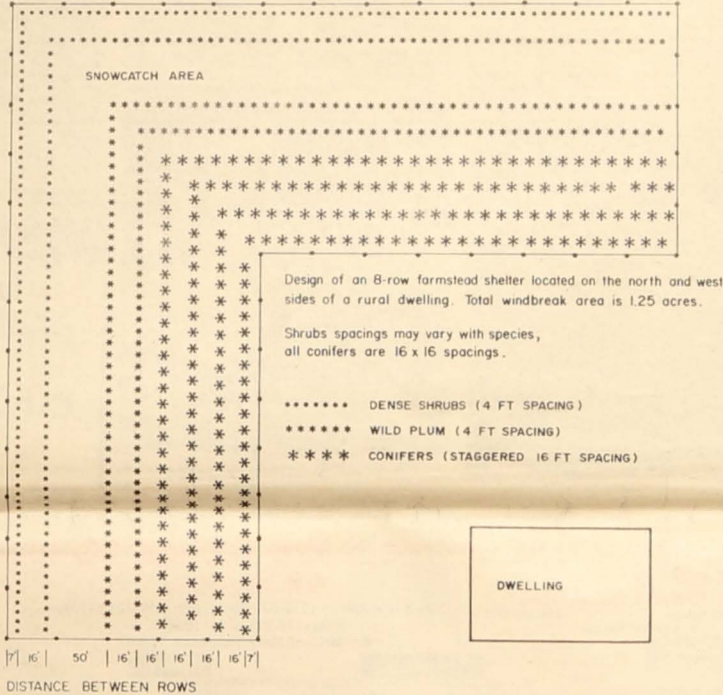
Because of these important wildlife values, the Iowa DNR has made available a Farmstead Shelterbelt cost-sharing program that's aimed to benefit both the landowner and wildlife.

The program provides cooperators with 25 percent of the cost of shelterbelt establishment, not to exceed \$500, if planted according to DNR specifications.

The program is designed to complement, or "piggy-back" other programs as the ASCS, ACP, WI-1 practice, Permanent Wildlife Habitat, or the Windbreak practice. By combining cost-sharing provisions with both programs, a landowner willing to establish a minimum eight-row shelterbelt may be reimbursed for up to 50 percent of costs. Additional assistance, such as planting, might be available from County Conservation Boards or private groups as Pheasants Forever or Isaac Walton Leagues.

If you're interested in developing wildlife habitat by planting more rows in a new windbreak, or adding rows to an existing planting, contact the Wildlife Biologist or Soil Conservation District Office for more information.

A shelterbelt example



Wetland restoration and the Conservation Reserve Program

By ART ROSELAND
Wildlife Biologist

Landowners with a liking for wetlands and wildlife have been working with Department of Natural Resources biologists to restore marshes on Conservation Reserve Program acres. Last fall, 21 farmers restored 36 wetlands of 20 acres, most on CRP. Marsh restoration was usually a no cost to the landowner.

Wetland restoration does not stop CRP payments. Also, as man-made areas, they can be drained and cropped in future years without violating.

The new DNR program is coupled with a 10-year landowner agreement. The DNR will complete and pay all costs of marsh development. If the landowner does not want to sign an agreement, the DNR will provide free technical assistance.

Wetland projects are completed on areas where development costs will be minimal. Most projects are on small drainage basins of 1-15 acres requiring limited dirt work and material in-

vestment. Water depths are usually one to three feet. Surface drained basins may only require an earthen plug. Tile drained areas involve breaking the tile line, replacing 50 feet of tile with solid tubing and connecting it to the downstream tile line. The upstream end of the new tile will be raised to the elevation of desired marsh and serve as an inlet. An earth plug completes the project.

To develop a marsh on CRP, permission is secured from ASCS. A plan meeting SCS specification is completed by the DNR Biologist and filed with SCS. The landowner can then begin development, or sign a 10 Year Agreement with the DNR whereby they will complete the work.

Benefits of this program are many: water storage and erosion control, beautification, increasing wildlife populations, turbarrier trapping and income from fur sales and hunting. After the 10-year contract period of CRP, the land can be very easily restored to crop production if the landowner wishes. In-



Art Roseland, Wildlife Biologist, is shown with a landowner who is interested in wetland restoration. The DNR biologist will complete the work.

Conservation is everyone's business

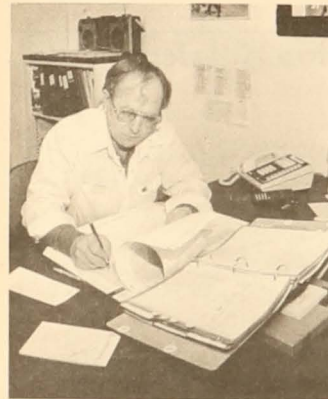


As farmers we have a responsibility to keep the land thriving, and to preserve it for the future. We do this by replenishing what we take, planting with care, and treating the land like the valuable treasure it is. Lets work together TODAY.



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Bud Siebrecht of Clermont is a soil conservation technician in the SCD office, where he's been helping farmers with resource planning for 12 years. (Photo by Cathy Kittelson)

Wildlife food plots, the missing link

WEST UNION — With 20,000 acres enrolled in the Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) in Fayette County there is bound to be a dramatic benefit to the wildlife habitat base. Although all wildlife will benefit small mammals and birds will benefit the most. Their basic needs include undisturbed nesting and brooding areas, food, water and cover. CRP acres must be permanent, seedings, or planted to trees thus potentially creating a monoculture. It does provide excellent nesting and brooding cover and it provides both food and cover until it is covered with snow.

Diversity is the key to maximizing wildlife habitat so by adding food plots the monoculture is broken up. Food plots may be the missing link which will maximize the wildlife populations by providing winter cover and a high energy food source.

A wildlife food plot is a new practice with the expressed purpose of creating and maintaining food supplies for the general wildlife populations. They are available to all lands enrolled in the CRP program. Food plots can be added to existing contracts by revising the

conservation plan of operations. The local Soil Conservation Office will assist landowners with the details.

Food plots have to be within certain guidelines. They will be at least one quarter of an acre with a maximum of five acres per field. Not more than 25 percent of a field or 10 percent of the total CRP acres on the farm can be a food plot. Photos should be placed on the least erosive areas of each field and reduced or no-till planting is encouraged. Fall seeded preparation is not allowed. Cultivation is allowed to control weeds. Herbicides that would endanger adjacent seedings are not allowed. If food plots are discontinued or rotated the vegetative cover will have to be reestablished. Planting dates and species will be listed in the planting plan. Corn or sorghum are recommended and they may be left two years without reseeding.

Food plots will be established at the landowners expense. Wildlife groups or other agencies may have some programs to help offset the cost so watch for any future publicity on wildlife food plots. You have the program which will allow you to maximize the benefits of the CRP acres and wildlife. The opportunity is yours.

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FAYETTE

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Contouring and conservation tillage

By BUD SIEBRECHT
Soil Conservation Technician

WEST UNION — Many landowners and operators who have come in for their new plan on their highly erodible land for Conservation Compliance have asked the same question, will I have to terrace everything? I have completed many farm plans and so far nobody needs to terrace.

We at the Soil Conservation Service office have until October 1, 1989, to make a plan on all the highly erodible land.

If you do need terraces, we have until 1990 to put them in, but we can buy some time by just contouring and using conservation tillage. For example, if you take any rotation and tillage method you will cut the soil loss in about half just by going on the contour. Adjusting the amount of residue on the soil surface will help. For example, if you are still not down to the tolerable soil loss limits, a small change in the rotation will help. For example, if you have a corn and bean rotation

and you contour leaving a good amount of residue and still are over the soil loss limit, maybe a corn-corn-bean rotation would do it. If you have hay in your rotation one extra year of hay will also help. As the years go by and you decide to go to a more intense rowcrop rotation and terraces are needed, you just have to give us a call, and we will work with you to get your terraces in and stay in compliance.

One thing I hope every landowner and tenant will remember when you come in

with your new farm plan, we are here to help you stay in compliance. You can help by being on time for your appointment and help us stay on the subject of your farm plan. We at SCS want to get as many farm plans completed as we can before spring work starts. We are doing plans for the people who have FMHA loans first and then on a first come basis. Please help us out by calling SCS at 422-3179 between 7:30 and 5:00 Monday-Friday and setting up an appointment for your new farm plan today.

Conservation tied to government benefits

By MIKE NETHERY
State Conservationist
Soil Conservation Service

DES MOINES — Conservation farmers have been saying for years that government programs shouldn't encourage soil erosion. In the past few years, a majority of Iowa farmers have said that taking care of the land should be a requirement for participation in other government programs.

That's exactly what the 1985 Farm Bill has delivered. Passed into law the Food Security Act of 1985, the bill offers the most dramatic change in soil conservation policies in the United States since the Dust Bowl days of the 1930s.

The soil conservation legislation, which was heavily supported in Congress, says that anyone who plants crops on highly erodible land needs to have a conservation plan by 1990, and he needs to have the conservation work it calls for completed by 1995. If those two provisions aren't met, the farmer would be ineligible for most U.S. Department of Agriculture program benefits.

The act also says anyone who breaks highly erodible land out of sod or trees to plant a crop could be ineligible for the programs right now. The same is true for anyone who grows crops on wetlands.

The program involved include price supports, disaster payments, crop insurance, storage payments, loans and others administered by USDA.

While the law says you have until 1990 to begin a conservation plan, there are several reasons you should contact your local soil conservation office this year. For one, if you get a plan now or update one you already have, you'll avoid the inevitable rush in 1989. Secondly, you'll be able to take some time to work the practices into your operation, whether it's reducing tillage more,

building terraces, or changing crop rotations.

Another good reason is that there is still a conservation reserve, where the steepest land can be put to grass or trees for a rental fee from USDA. There is no guarantee how long this program will be offered.

There's also no guarantee how long government cost-share programs will be offered.

Remember the 1990 and 1996 dates. Better yet, get in touch

with your local soil conservation office now, and get started on a conservation plan for your highly erodible land. That's the best way to insure your eligibility for future programs.

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1987 Fayette County Soil Conservation District Annual Report

FINANCIAL STATEMENT

July 1, 1986 to June 30, 1987

Original Allocation.....	\$ 1,370.00
Commissioners Expenses.....	973.90
Office Supplies and Expenses.....	184.80
Remaining Balance June 30, 1987.....	\$ 211.30

1987-1988 BUDGET COST-SHARE PROGRAM

1987-1988 Original Allocation.....	\$ 44,511.00
Obligated.....	13,054.50
Spent to Date.....	9,982.02
Remaining Balance June 30, 1987.....	\$ 22,374.48

1986-1987 Original Allocation.....	\$ 44,212.00
Spent to Date.....	42,076.26
Returned to State.....	2,135.74
Remaining Balance June 30, 1987.....	0-

1985-1986 Original Allocation.....	\$ 60,191.00
Spent to Date.....	59,538.25
Returned to State.....	660.75
Remaining Balance June 30, 1987.....	0-

FROG HOLLOW LAKE (90%)

Original Allocation.....	\$186,000.00
Spent to Date.....	123,332.05
Returned to Iowa Conservation Commission.....	\$ 62,667.95

FROG HOLLOW LAKE (75%)

Original Allocation.....	\$ 29,277.00
Spent to Date.....	0-
Remaining Balance June 30, 1987.....	\$ 29,277.00

HIGHLIGHTS OF DISTRICT ACTIVITIES

JULY 1, 1986 - JUNE 20, 1987

JULY

- The Fayette County Conservation Board was the recipient of the Millard Gilbertson Estate.
- An Economic Yield Contest Committee was set up.

AUGUST

- District Clerk, Lori Kohlmeier, was held full-time.
- Fayette Soil and Water Conservation District set up and operated a fair booth at the Fayette County Fair.

SEPTEMBER

- The Fall Regional was held at the Red Fox Inn at Waverly.
- Muff attended the Farm Bureau Annual Banquet and gave a slide presentation on the Outstanding Conservation Farmer - Tom Mann.
- Muff discussed the Resource Conservation and Development with the County Board of Supervisors.
- Resource Conservation and Development meeting was held at the Cliff House in Decorah.

OCTOBER

- Kristy Alcorn was hired as a Soil Conservation Aid.
- Muff gave a presentation to the Federated Women's Club in Fairbank.
- Three Frog Hollow Lake areas were discussed with three more to do this spring.

NOVEMBER

- The 40th Annual Conference for Soil Conservation District Commissioners was held in

Des Moines

JANUARY

- The Annual Fayette County No-Tillers meeting was held at Garbee Hall - Upper Iowa University in Fayette.
- The Fayette County Corn-Soybean Profit Clinic was held at Garbee Hall - Upper Iowa University in Fayette.
- The Annual Short Course was held in Ames on January 20 and 21.
- Annual Tree Sales Program was held.
- Jon Steege was elected as an Assistant Commissioner.

FEBRUARY

- The 4th CRP sign-up was held.
- The Annual Report was published.
- Commissioner Training Meeting on Leadership Development was held at Peoples State Bank in Elkader.
- The Economic Yield Contest Banquet was held at the Sportsman in Oelwein.

MARCH

- Spring Regional was held at the Valhalla in Clermont.
- An appreciation dinner was held in honor of Jon and Kathy Steege.
- Muff gave a presentation at the Agra-Expo in Fayette.
- Fayette Soil and Water Conservation District held their Appreciation Day and Open House on March 14 with 80-90 people attending.
- Contractors meeting was held at the Valhalla in Clermont.

APRIL

- Volga Lake Forestry Field Day was held with approximately 100 people attending.
- CRP group meeting was held at Upper Iowa University in Fayette.
- Slough Bill applications were processed and approved.

MAY

- Muff attended the Consortil Association Board Meeting at the Extension Service in Fayette.
- Winners of the Essay Contest were chosen. They are as follows:

JUNIOR DIVISION

- 1- Ursula Allen
- 2- Lori Soules
- 3- Scott Kelley

SENIOR DIVISION

- 1- Valerie Schmidt
- 2- Stephanie Walz
- 3- Lisa Soules

CONSERVATION ACCOMPLISHMENTS

NAME	NUMBER	ACRES
Conservation District Cooperators.....	18	2,829
Individuals and Groups Assisted.....	337	
Individuals and Groups Applying Practices.....	203	
Conservation Plans.....	198	14,411
Conservation Tillage System.....		4,294
Contour Farming.....		1,512
Grassed Waterway.....	5	
Contour Stripcropping.....		534
Terraces.....		29,797
Grass and Sediment Control Basin.....	7	
Cropland Benefitted.....		1,487
Conservation Reserve (1st - 5th sign-ups).....	258	17,339

Integrated pest management

By DAN BURKHART
Fayette County Extension
Agriculturalist-Director

FAYETTE — Integrated pest management — what is it and how can it be used in managing annual set-aside acres or the conservation reserve program?

IPM is a philosophy of pest control where all available strategies are utilized for obtaining optimum yields

while causing minimal environmental damage. When dealing with annual set-aside and CRP acres, IPM would mean doing only what's necessary to control noxious and/or undesirable weeds, without using unnecessary mowing or herbicide spraying.

Many people forget the difference between annual, biennial and perennial weeds and how they may or may not

affect future crops grown in the field.

Normally, foxtail is almost always present in the set-aside seedling year after a corn or soybean crop. Even if you have a thick foxtail in the field, perennial grasses and legumes will eliminate foxtail in the first year after seeding. Most foxtail seed will only last 3-4 years in the soil under a sod. That's why farm operators do not have to use an annual grass herbicide in first-year corn after sod.

Foxtail as wildlife food and cover in the seedling year and over the first winter can more than outweigh the effects of foxtail seed production. Even if foxtail is mowed, new heads will form close to the ground. Seed production cannot be completely eliminated. If the field is cropped the next year, many herbicides are available to control foxtail in corn or soybeans.

Each weed needs to be analyzed the same way as I've done with foxtail to answer the question, Do I really need to control this weed in my set-aside or CRP acres?

If you had lots of cocklebur or buttonweed (velvetleaf) in the seedling year, a 2,4-D herbicide would be justified. However, if you wanted to keep a forage legume in the CRP or set-aside, clipping would be your only alternative. Since cocklebur and buttonweeds are annuals (like foxtail), there would be no problem after the seedling year. It would be critical to control those broadleaves because cocklebur and buttonweeds can stay viable approximately seven years and buttonweeds can stay viable for 10 years. Growers need to identify

EXTENSION STAFF members include Helen Welsh, Fayette, secretary (seated), Paul Dillon, Sumner, home economist, youth advisor, and Kathy Steege, office assistant. (Photo by Kathy Kittelsen)

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Dan Burkhardt
specific weeds in annual or 10-year set-aside. They should be able to determine whether a

"weed" problem is really a long-term problem or a one-year problem, and whether benefits to wildlife and reduced soil erosion outweigh the need for widespread mowing. Especially when spot spraying or spot mowing could solve the problem.

Agriculture officials also need to be aware of the alternatives so that unnecessary requirements and restrictions will not cause unnecessary expense, environmental damage to idled land, and destruction of wildlife.

If weed control on idled acres is necessary, spot mowing or spraying only between July 15 is suggested. This is the best dirt you could

ever give to a pheasant or turkey hen on a nest with a brood of chicks.

Conservation is
everyone's
business



Fayette County Pheasants Forever

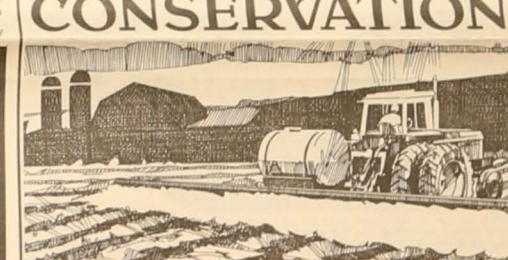
supports the efforts of the Fayette County Soil and Water Conservation District to protect our most valuable natural resource from erosion. And we appreciate the use of the District's tree planter.

Many of our good soil conservationists are also good wildlife conservationists, and we appreciate the opportunity to work with you.



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By VERNON and
KAREN SHAW

WADENA When SCS Commissioner Paul Nuss and SCS employee Bud Siebrecht stopped by the farm, we thought it was nice that they stopped to help split wood. However, they came to request that we write an article about our terraces. Here is our attempt to do so.

As we both are from northeast Iowa, Karen from Garrettsville and the Shaws from Arlington, we wanted to purchase a farm in the area that had timber, water, tillable land and a good house. This we found on the home place between Arlington and Volga in 1976.

As the governments program of crops fence-row to fence-row was in effect, all fence rows had been bulldozed and the tillable ground was 100 percent corn with very few grass waterways. The slopes were such that before you could get a good waterway started the seed and soil had washed away. We were constantly repairing creek fences, as the run-off was so fast that any more than three inches of rain took them out.

We viewed other farms with terraces and worked with SCS who did all the layout, etc. (or grass back terraces). We hired one contractor for the tiling and a different one for the dozer work. Although the dozer contractor said he worked well with the tiling contractor this caused us lots of grief, as the tiling contractor simply had taken on too much work and made too many promises. He did not show up on schedule, therefore he was tiling after the corn

was planted which meant removing rocks, filling in ditches, etc., with a crop in the ground.

We would recommend to anyone that they have one contractor to do both the tile and the dozer work, so they can't point fingers at one another when difficulties arise or schedules are not met. Just because a contractor has done tiling in the prairie does not mean he should be chosen for installing tile for your terraces, as a different experience is required.

We used 4-inch tile, as is the size SCS will cost share. On future projects we paid the extra dollars and went to a 5-inch tile, due to the increased flow. This is cheap insurance against a downturn as we lost some terraces that first year, as during a 5-inch plus storm. Five-inch tile may have prevented the loss.

In 1985 we installed pushup terraces above the grass backs. This was done to catch the water on top of the hill and from road run-off. Several people wondered why we would add terraces on top of the slope. We had already lost terraces once and another 5-inch plus downpour could have the same result. By installing these pushups we would hold the water at the top of the slope and prevent the domino effect that occurs after an upper terrace over-flows and floods the lower terraces. The downpour that occurred in 1987 proved the worth of our decision. Our terraces held and prevented the loss of top soil that occurred on most of the farm.

In 1986 we purchased the farm adjoining us and worked with SCS on a conservation plan. Previous operators had plowed up and down the hills leaving few waterways. SCS estimated that the soil loss was 55 ton per acre per year. How anyone could feed this was a fair trade for 130 bushels of corn is beyond us. This had been occurring in excess of 10 straight years and in some of those years beans had been planted on these slopes.

The lesson to be shared with land owners is that if you rent you better make sure the tenant is going to follow good conservation practices. Although some are good, others simply want a dollar return and have little concern for the soil loss on the farm. Land owners should be willing to rent to conservation-minded operators at reduced rate, as the return to the operator may be less in the short term.

Again our choice was terraces as the fence rows were gone and little grass existed. SCS laid them out and we bought the extra insurance and installed 5-inch tile. We chose a local contractor who did both the tiling and the dozer work.

Unfortunately, before we could get the terraces built the downpour of '87 hit just after the renter had worked up the ground and planted corn. The downpour took all the topsoil as deep as the disc had gone. Some of our neighbors' ditches were full of topsoil. We had only to look at the horizon place with terraces and compare it to this adjoining farm to see the worth of terraces.

As we worked in the spring and fall, 90 percent was completed in 1987 which will take care of the major erosion areas. The

other 20 percent will be completed in 1988. We used a combination of grassbacks and pushups per SCS recommendation.

We believe the government will force owners and tenants to follow good conservation practices to qualify for government programs in the future. We also thought it best to get the work done now as contractors may be extremely busy as conservation plans are completed during future years.

We found that sowing oats, brome grass and pasture mix on the terraces in the early spring while it is still freezing and hawing to be the most effective. The brome grass takes over in succeeding years. Getting a good stand took patience with spot reseeding for two to three years.

It is worth noting that without off-farm income, which we receive, terracing would not have been affordable. The government should expand participation or the small farmer will have difficulty affording terraces. Our government paid to clear the land and plant fence row to fence row and will have to carry the major financial burden for soil conservation.

Editor's Note: Julia Ingamells column, Rocks and Rainbows, will not appear in this week's issue of RURAL due to space considerations. The column will return next week.

neighbors in Clayton County to see the rewards of a longer term commitment to terracing.

We'd like to take this opportunity to thank the state and federal commissioners and the people at SCS and ASCS offices for working with us these last ten years.

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Fayette County ConSertill Association 1987 field tour



THE CONSERVATION Association's tour of the Big Springs watershed project, held last summer. Above, Roster Koster, project



Koster explains the karst area sinkholes in the Big Springs watershed. The Big Springs project is a cooperative venture involving



Nitrogen fertilizer management on cropland has a significant effect on water quality. Above, the demonstration plots in the Big Springs watershed.



Lunch center: Dick Jensen famous conservation burgers were a highlight at the tour. Helping out are Dick's son Gentry and Bill

Forestry Field Day



FORESTRY FIELD DAY — The Department of Natural Resources and the Iowa State University Extension Service held a forestry



field day at the Volga River Recreation area, during which ISU Extension forester Paul Wray demonstrated proper tree planting

Soil conservation techniques and water quality

AMES — Using conservation techniques can help protect surface water from the effects of soil erosion, according to an Iowa State University Extension weed science specialist. Richard Fawcett said soil erosion has many detrimental effects on water quality.

"Eroding soil carries nutrients and pesticides that contaminate surface water," he said. Sedimentation of lakes and streams reduces the usefulness of these areas for recreation and navigation and harms wildlife.

"Many techniques are effective in protecting surface water from the effects of soil erosion," Fawcett said. "These include terraces, contour planting, strip cropping, growing perennial

forage crops and conservation tillage, which has recently become popular. He said although conservation tillage is effective in reducing soil erosion, there are some concerns.

"Some people believe there may be a trade-off that occurs with the adoption of conservation tillage," Fawcett said. "The benefits of reduced soil erosion with conservation tillage may come at the expense of increased pesticide use, and possibly more contaminated water."

Misunderstandings about current pesticide practices are partly responsible for fears about increased chemical use with conservation tillage. Fawcett said conservation tillage may change the types

of weeds found in fields and therefore change the kinds of herbicides used. But national and regional surveys have shown that on the average, herbicide rates per acre with conservation tillage are similar to those used with conventional tillage.

"Because some soil conservation techniques, such as terraces and conservation tillage, can increase water infiltration, some people fear leaching of nitrates and pesticides may also be increased," Fawcett said.

Newly initiated studies should tell if these practices increase the risk of groundwater contamination. Early research results show that using no-till can reduce nitrate leaching, compared with

conservation tillage. Research shows that selecting products that are strongly absorbed in soil particles, low in solubility and short in persistence greatly reduces risk of leaching and is especially important where soils are sandy and groundwater is shallow.

A major concern in some areas of Iowa, according to Fawcett, is contamination of groundwater through surface water runoff into natural sinkholes or into agricultural drainage well inlets.

Fawcett said that in these areas, soil conservation techniques, such as con-

servation tillage, terraces and grass strips, can reduce the amount of eroded soil and runoff water reaching sinkholes and drainage wells. This is especially important in reducing contamination by agricultural chemicals.

"The use of soil conservation practices along with sound management decisions on the use of fertilizers and pesticides is necessary to protect surface water and groundwater. Efficient use of pesticides, fertilizers and soil conservation makes economic sense as well as environmental sense," Fawcett said.

Plan ahead on conservation plan

By RICK CORDES
Area Conservationist

If you're like most Iowa farmers, you know you'll need to protect your sloping land against soil erosion to be eligible for USDA benefits. You may also know you need a conservation plan by the end of next year — Dec. 31, 1989.

But from there, things get a little fuzzy for most farmers. What's in a plan, and how do you get ready for a conservation planning session with the Soil Conservation Service?

A number of SCS offices are holding pre-planning information meetings for farmers this winter. These "group meetings" are designed to: 1) give you first-hand information on USDA's conservation rules; 2) give you most of the information you need to decide on how you will protect your land; and 3) get you to make an appointment with SCS to develop your conservation plan.

What SCS Gives You
Each local office operates a



Rick Cordes
Area Conservationist

little differently, but most will furnish either by mail or at a meeting.

—A map of your farmstead that indicates which of your fields are designated as highly erodible. These are the fields for which you need a conservation plan.

—A list of the conservation options to choose from for the highly erodible fields. —A soils map of your farmstead. It indicates what soils are on your farm, where they are, and how steep the slopes

are. Slope steepness is a key factor in determining highly erodible land and how to treat it.

You can take the first step by contacting your local SCS office for a conservation plan, or you can wait for them to contact you. In some cases, SCS offices are sending letters to farmers with a highly erodible land as soon as the office makes the determination; in other cases, the office waits until it is prepared to have a group meeting or a conservation planning session. In either case, offices welcome a contact from you and will put your name on a waiting list for a conservation plan.

If you have highly erodible land, even if you have soil erosion control, you need a conservation plan. But the plan will require very little adjustment on your part if you've been practicing soil conservation.

The Conservation Reserve Program is still a good option for steep land that shouldn't be cropped heavily. The next sign-up is February 1-19.

RC&D - helping northeast Iowa

By BILL BENNETT
Fayette County
SCS Commissioner

ELGIN — Resource Conservation and Development for Northeast Iowa, Inc. Is this name familiar to you? We hope it will be. It is an independent, non-profit, tax-exempt organization operating out of Postville and serving Allamakee, Clayton, Fayette, Howard and Winneshiek counties. RC&D is working individuals, businesses, organizations and government bodies to improve the quality of life of the people of Northeast Iowa.

Rick Zarwell is executive director and Teresa Steffens is office manager. All other people are volunteers. A ten member board of directors guide the activities of the RC&D. President of the board is Don Menken of Elkader, vice-president is Les Miller of Elgin, with John Schultz of Postville being secretary-treasurer. Other board members are Bill Burke of

Allamakee County, Oliver Larson of Clayton County, Bill Bennett of Fayette County, Bill Seale and Tom Barnes of Howard County, and Ward Budweg and Don Kemp of Winneshiek County. The board members were appointed by the county supervisors and district soil & water commissioner in each of the five counties.

The board of directors after reviewing and evaluating many possible goals selected five areas to target the efforts of the RC&D. The five areas of work are: Tourism, Forest Lands, Water Quality, Small Businesses, and Agricultural Diversification. During 1987, sixty-six projects in these areas were in various stages of development. The number of projects in each area ranged from six to nineteen. Of the sixty-six projects six had been completed by year-end, with the others in various stages of development.

The supervision of VISTA (Volunteers In Service To America) workers has come

under the RC&D's guidance. These six people are doing much to help people in Northeast Iowa. Plans are being made to help VISTA become an even better aid to the people of our five counties.

In cooperation with Kirkwood Community College the RC&D has presented classes on rural diversification in both Cedar Rapids and Postville. Other ways the RC&D helps people is with: Organization Help, Grant Writing Help, Specific Detailed Technical Help, Referral Help, Broad Five County Planning Help, and Information/Education Help.

RC&D of Northeast Iowa, Inc. is an entrepreneurship by local people for greater human, financial and natural resources. RC&D does not have bureaucratic restrictions.

If you feel the RC&D can help you or that you can help the RC&D call the office in Postville. The telephone number is 964-7112.



COUNTY ASCS STAFF — Left to right, Joan Swenka, Fayette; Jill Shannon, Oelwein; Shawn La Carte, Stanley; Luann Amundson, Clermont; Karla Kuennen, West Union; Kay

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Some examples of what happened during the spring and summer of 1987, when severe erosion occurred in several areas of the county. During the spring, a heavy rainstorm hit the Arlington-Wadena area, taking its toll in topsoil erosion. Not only does the erosion take away the best topsoil, but the runoff fills road ditches with silt and also affects water quality downstream. At right, a dry spell last spring resulted in spotty stands of corn on eroded hills and sandier soils.



FAYETTE — In March of 1986 a true leader in the field of conservation passed away. Millard Gilbertson of Elgin was so concerned with and involved in conservation that he helped to create the Elgin County Conservation Board. The purpose of this gift was to make his 327 acre farm an area of diverse recreational and education opportunities. The park is entering its second year of operation. Some projects were completed in 1987 and will be opened in the spring. One of these is a trail for the blind and handicapped. This trail begins at the already established canoe access and winds its way along the always beautiful Turkey River. Visitors will find a concrete walkway with handrails and interpretive centers so that they can learn more about the environment in which we live. Although it is called a blind and handicapped trail, it is enjoyable for all and can be used by everyone.

WEST UNION—There's no doubt that annual settlements of the ACR will be a prominent feature of the landscape. With a high percentage of a farm's corn base out of production, the impact of the ACR is more important than ever before. Giving some thought to managing your land to produce per acre dividends to the landowner, the soil, and to wildlife.

Wildlife will respond to several management methods on an ACR.

Seeding to small grains in the fall or early in the spring

Another facility to be opened in the spring is our petting zoo. This facility located near the rangers house will be home to a number of young farm and domestic animals. Visitors will be able to watch the animals as well as mingle amongst them when it is supervised by one of our staff people. Although farm animals are not a big deal to us in the farming community, they are a real attraction to tourists and city dwellers who will be visiting our area.

We have a number of projects scheduled for 1988 and should be completed and opened yet this year.

The most important of these will be the campground. Construction will begin as soon as old man winter allows it and hopefully be completed in time for the summer season. This campground will accommodate fifty camping units with areas for tents and

modern set-ups alike. The sight will have individual water and electrical hook-ups, pads, tables and grills. The grounds will also have a modern restroom facility complete with showers.

Other projects for 1986 will be construction of trails for horses, hiking and cross-country skiing.

So what lies ahead? Still to come on the area are

The Fayette County Conservation Board and the Gilbertson Trust is very excited about the future of this project and believe that it will have a major impact on the area as well as Northeast Iowa.

Food plots? Wildlife food and cover plots can be planted

and cover crop can be planted on annual setaside, even with program crops as corn and sorghum. Check with ASCS office for details, size limits, management, etc.

Assistance for management of your ACR might be available from the Fayette County Pheasants Forever Chapter or the Department of Natural Resources. Remember, let your ACR acres work for wildlife, while protecting the soil resource.



A ROAD CUT along a highway on Highway 18 shows the contact between the Cretaceous and Paleogene strata.

may project west differences of
or and texture

topsoil and subsoil.

FAYETTE COUNTY SOIL & WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT'S 1988 TREE ORDER FORM					
Name	Phone No.				
Address					Zip
Tree Species	Size	Bundles Ordered	Price Bundle	Amount	
Tree Species Green Ash Fast growing shade tree; good firewood tree	12-18"	x	\$19.50	+	
American Arborvitae Very hardy; thick foliage; dark green; excellent windbreak tree; 15-25 feet tall	8-16"	x	\$34.50	+	
White Oak Large timber tree; planted on drier soils	6-12"	x	\$17.50	+	
White Pine Large, long-lived; well- adapted to NE Iowa 3" to 8" long; soft and blue- green	6-12"	x	\$19.50	+	
Black Hill Spruce Very dense shapely tree; excellent for windbreaks	6-12"	x	\$19.50	+	
Norway Spruce Fast growing; best on drier soils; dark green	6-12"	x	\$19.50	+	
White Spruce Prefers moist soils; good wildlife tree; short- wildlife tree; short blue- green needles	6-12" 12-18"	x	\$19.50 \$34.50	+	
Black Walnut Valuable timber tree; good nut tree	12-18"	x	\$17.50	+	
Native Nut Package This native nut tree package is offered to help with growth and develop- ment of native reforesta- tion			\$34.00	+	
These trees are good for both lumber and firewood and also produce excellent fruits for both the owner and wildlife. These trees are selected for adaptability to Northeast Iowa and com- sist of four each of the following trees: Northern Pecan Hickory, Thomas Walnut, and American Hazerel The 16 trees have a total value of \$67.20 when purchased separately. Order the Native Nut Tree Package for \$34.00					
Autumn Olive Spreading shrub 12' high; silvery foliage & red ber- ries; fragrant spring flowers	12-18"	x	\$14.75	+	
Colorado Blue Spruce Prefers dry, well-drained soils; excellent orna- mental tree	6-9"	x	\$24.00	+	
Douglas Fir Blue Moist, well-drained soils; dense foliage; soft needles	8-12"	x	\$12.75	+	
East Anglia Scotch Pine Fast growing; short needles; good Christmas tree	9-12"	x	\$14.50	+	
French Blue Scotch Pine Well-shaped tree; winter hardy; ornamental or Christmas tree	6-9"	x	\$ 9.00	+	
Northern Red Oak Fast-growing; large shade tree; food and shelter for wildlife	12-18"	x	\$20.00	+	
Red Osier Dogwood Distinctive red bark; well adapted to wet soils; 6-10 ft. in height	12-18"	x	\$15.00	+	
Silver Maple Ornamental shade tree; silver green foliage; grows on moist soils	12-18"	x	\$13.00	+	
			SUBTOTAL		
			4% SALES TAX		
			TOTAL		
All sales are made in bundles of 25 except the Nut Packa- which is a bundle of 16. Trees have healthy root system however; we cannot guarantee survival. Orders will be filled on a first come, first serve basis. We have a limited number trees allotted to us, so it would be advisable to order as soon possible. All orders must be accompanied with full payment. The deadline for ordering is March 1, 1988. Delivery will be the next spring. We will notify you of the pick-up date. No checks payable to: Fayette SWCD.					

WAUCOMA "We've always believed in conservation, but this is the biggest step we've taken to conserve our land," says Mark and Janice Balk, Fayette County farmers, said they planted 13 acres of trees in 1982 and earlier this year was a new experience for their family. They plan to plant an additional 8.5 acres next spring.

The Balks became interested in planting trees through the National Conservation Reserve Program (CRP). Mark Balk says that half the land was in timber when he started farming in 1928, but most of it was destroyed by a tornado in 1954. The CRP provided an opportunity to

restore the land to the way it was before the tornado.

They planted about 8,600 trees on the 13 acres, more than 100 per acre, Balk said. The trees will help shade the ground quickly to kill off weeds and grass. They plan to thin the growing trees, using the wood for fuel. Some trees will be lost to pests, drought and disease.

"On a scale this size, you can't really prevent rodents and other animals from damaging the trees," Balk said.

The initial investment for the CRP was \$100 per acre, with half of that funded by the Agricultural Stabilization and Conservation Service. The CRP also provides seed, soil preparation and

By GARY BEYER
District Forester

CHARLES CITY
downers have two
make for cover on

CHARLES CITY Landowners have two choices to make for cover establishment on land under the Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) - grass and trees. Trees have the advantage of adding value to the land over the 10 year period of the CRP, which is similar to the way trees are valued as they grow in a savings account. Just as corn in July has value because of its future value in the fall, young trees have value because of their potential value in the future.

We've been led to believe that it takes 80 to 100 years to grow high quality trees. This is what natural stands of timber have done, but with no management. Proper weed control and thinning will grow the same size of tree in one-half the time. Well managed walnut plantings on good sites can yield a 18-12 percent return on investment over a 40-60 year period. This does not include inflation. Adding a 2-3 percent inflation rate would compare to a 10-15 percent investment. You would have to search a long time to find a comparable place to put your money.

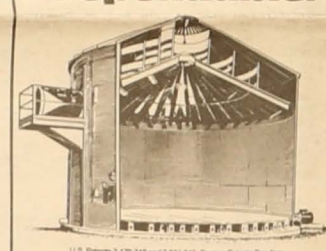
If your land is not economical to row crop, trees can provide a crop for the land and an IRA for younger members of the family. The steeper land and fields with light soils may not be economical to farm under the guidelines of the 1985 farm bill. The bill requires that all cropland be farmed with erosion below excessive limits.

After the 10-year program period is completed, areas planted to trees which are at least two acres in size, will qualify for property tax exemption under the Forest Reserve Law. Contractors are available to plant the trees and apply weed control. Also many county conservation boards, Kansas Forever Chapters and other organizations are assisting with tree plantings.

There's a good chance that qualification guidelines for lands that will be planted to trees will be relaxed. If you are interested in planting trees, have the SGS check your land for eligibility. If it does not qualify before may be eligible under the new guidelines. I will be happy to assist you with recommendations for your planting program. It's an excellent way to make your marginal land gain value.

[illegible]

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