

USDA soil strategy target of criticism

2-24-80

By JAMES RISSE

Of The Register's Washington Bureau

WASHINGTON, D. C. — Far-reaching proposals to redirect the nation's soil and water conservation efforts are contained in a U. S. Department of Agriculture study that is beginning to draw fire from some farm organizations.

At the heart of the suggestion for a national conservation "strategy" is greater government enforcement, in an area that up until now has mainly seen government financial aid to farmers who want to take part in voluntary conservation efforts.

Despite 40 years of such efforts, wind and water erosion continue to strip billions of tons of topsoil from croplands each year, threatening future production and carrying silt, chemicals and animal wastes into rivers and lakes.

Among the possible elements of a new conservation "strategy" envisioned by the USDA report are tighter government regulations, including fines and taxes on farmers who do not obey government-imposed conservation orders; a "cross-compliance" rule that would deny farmers price supports, loans, and crop insurance if they fail to practice soil conservation; and natural resource "contracts" and "bonus" arrangements between government and farmer.

These ideas are part of a massive three-volume USDA study known as "RCA," from the title of the law that authorized it — the Soil and Water Resources Conservation Act of 1977.

All are aimed at alleviating an erosion situation that some experts say is, in certain areas of the U. S., becoming worse than in the Dust Bowl days of the Great Depression.

A public hearing on the proposals will be held at the Hyatt House in Des Moines on Tuesday, from 2 p. m. to 5 p. m. and from 7:30 p. m. to 10 p. m. It is one of 18 such hearings around the country.

At one of the first hearings, held last Wednesday in Washington, the American Farm Bureau Federation attacked, in varying degrees, all seven of the "alternative strategies" suggested in the study.

Bruce Hawley, the organization's assistant national affairs director, said Farm Bureau will "oppose any effort" to impose government regulation over farmers' conservation practices, and is against the cross-compliance proposal.

The USDA study is "weak and naive" in suggesting "appeals to the farmer's sense of social responsibility to motivate him to adopt conservation practices," the Farm Bureau statement said. Farmers are motivated toward soil conservation because they want to protect the productivity of their own land, not because they want to stop water pollution, protect fish and wildlife, or conserve energy, the organization asserted.

"The function of the soil and water conservation program, and the Department of Agriculture's role therein, is service to production agriculture," said the Farm Bureau.

Another witness, Ronald Michieli, government affairs director for the National Cattlemen's Association, also criticized some of the RCA findings, and said "the least palatable strategy is cross-compliance."

The cattlemen reject the idea that land needs to be managed "in the public interest," if that implies government controls over how a farmer uses his land, said Michieli.

The association has set up a task force that will make specific recommendations on RCA proposals, but for the moment the cattlemen doubt that the suggested strategies could be financed and believe USDA is "politicizing" the soil conservation issue as a way to get more funds for its programs, he said.

Conservation organizations generally appear favorable toward the RCA study, and are resigned to a long struggle to get what they consider the best features enacted into law. Besides the certain political opposition from some groups, conservation leaders are skeptical that Carter administration budget officials will approve any extensive new programs — most of which would cost large a lot.

The present timetable, perhaps too optimistic, is for USDA to review the testimony from the public hearings, and come up with final proposals in time for President Carter to submit them to Congress in August. Even if that takes place, Congress is unlikely to act before next year.

At its recent annual convention, the National Association of Conservation Districts adopted a policy statement

CONSERVATION

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Conservation challenge: Restore confidence in agriculture future

CONSERVATION

Continued from Page One

on RCA saying that the "real challenge" is to restore confidence in the future of agriculture and to eliminate conflicts between crop production goals and soil conservation.

"The level of the 'conservation ethic' is unacceptably low and is getting lower," said the association. "Too many people are using the land for short-term benefit. Too few are

using it as though they and their children and grandchildren will need its bountiful production in the future."

This has occurred not because of loss of "personal pride or morality" by farmers, but "is the result of three decades of farm policies that have encouraged farmers to leave farms, encouraged land to be wasted, and created an 'impermanence syndrome' among farmers," the organization

said. Neil Sampson, the organization's executive vice-president, told last week's hearing that "the conservation ethic is not dead, but it gets battered around when people feel that their tenure on the land is limited" by rising costs and high taxes. He said "a stable agriculture is more likely to be a conserving agriculture."

The association is promoting a so-called "Green Ticket" approach, which would have local conservation districts issue to farmers who practice conservation a green-ticket certificate. It would recognize their work and make them eligible for a variety of government economic incentives — such as tax breaks, lower crop insurance premiums, or cheaper government loan rates.

As part of its RCA study, the Agriculture Department commissioned a poll by Louis Harris and Associates which showed surprising public support for greater soil conservation efforts. Half of all those polled in the nationwide survey said they regard loss of farmland and misuse of soil and water resources to be "very serious" problems.

Almost 40 percent said continued improvement in soil and water protection is so important that it should be carried on regardless of how much it costs.

The survey has encouraged USDA officials into hoping they can persuade Carter to undertake a big, new conservation push, once the RCA planning process is completed.

GRIST MILL

Mississippi Valley co-op hits net worth high

Mississippi Valley Milk Producers Association reported record sales of \$206 million in 1979 along with a net worth all-time high of \$16 million at its recent annual meeting in Davenport, Ia. Elmer F. Paper of Stockton was re-elected president of the co-operative.

Summer jobs

Nearly 150 summer jobs are open to young people interested in working with the Iowa State University Extension Service's educational programs. Interested parties should contact Donald H. Goering, 109 Curtiss Hall, at ISU here no later than March 31. The pay is \$3.75 per hour for a 40-hour week.

Angus group scholarships

The Iowa Angus Auxiliary will award a pair of \$300 scholarships along with two \$150 scholarships in its annual awards program this year.

Interested persons should contact Mrs. Robert Schlutz, Box 269, Columbus Junction, Iowa 52738.

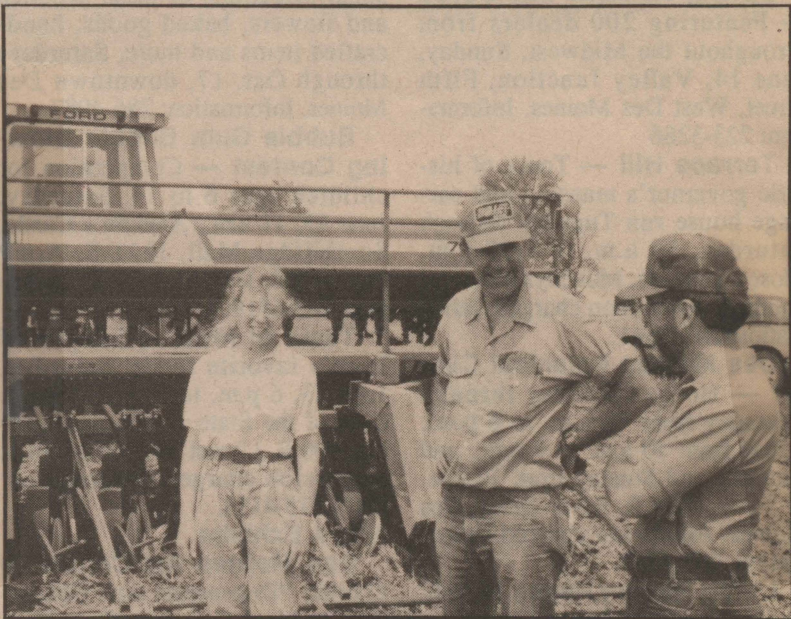
Conservation award

Michael Gartner, president and editor of The Des Moines Register and Tribune, was given the 1980 Communications Award by the National Association of Conservation Districts.

The award is presented annually to a person in the communication industry "who has made an outstanding contribution to better public understanding of resource conservation and the goals of the nation's soil and water conservation districts," according to Lyle Bauer of Harper, Kans., president of the national conservation group.

Conservation book

The Soil Conservation Society of America has published a 214-page book titled, "Farmland, Food and The Future", which focuses on the loss of farmland to non-farm uses and related problems. The book's 16 chapters were written by national authorities. The book is available for \$8 from the Soil Society, 7515 Northeast Ankeny Road, Ankeny, Iowa 50021.



No-till drill

Marvin Mahr is shown custom planting soybeans with a no-till drill on a visit from Soil Conservation Service employees Lisa Niedermayen from the Indianola field office and Tom Oswald, area agronomist. The farm is operated by Kent Ruble and is located south of Palmyra.

Photo submitted

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11-13-80



Chris Mowen (second from right) was the first-place winner in the Soil Conservation Speech Contest held Thursday. Mowen, the daughter of Dorothy and George Mowen of Norwalk, will advance to the regional contest Nov. 29 in Des Moines. Other participants and winners, from left, were: Leslie Blake; Donna Warren, second place; Mark Nation, third place; Mowen; and Lisa Shehane.

RHT staff photo by Mark Davitt

5-22-78



Henry Staubus, right, conservationist for the Warren County Soil Conservation District, tells a group of sixth graders from Indianola Middle School about various soil types found in the county.

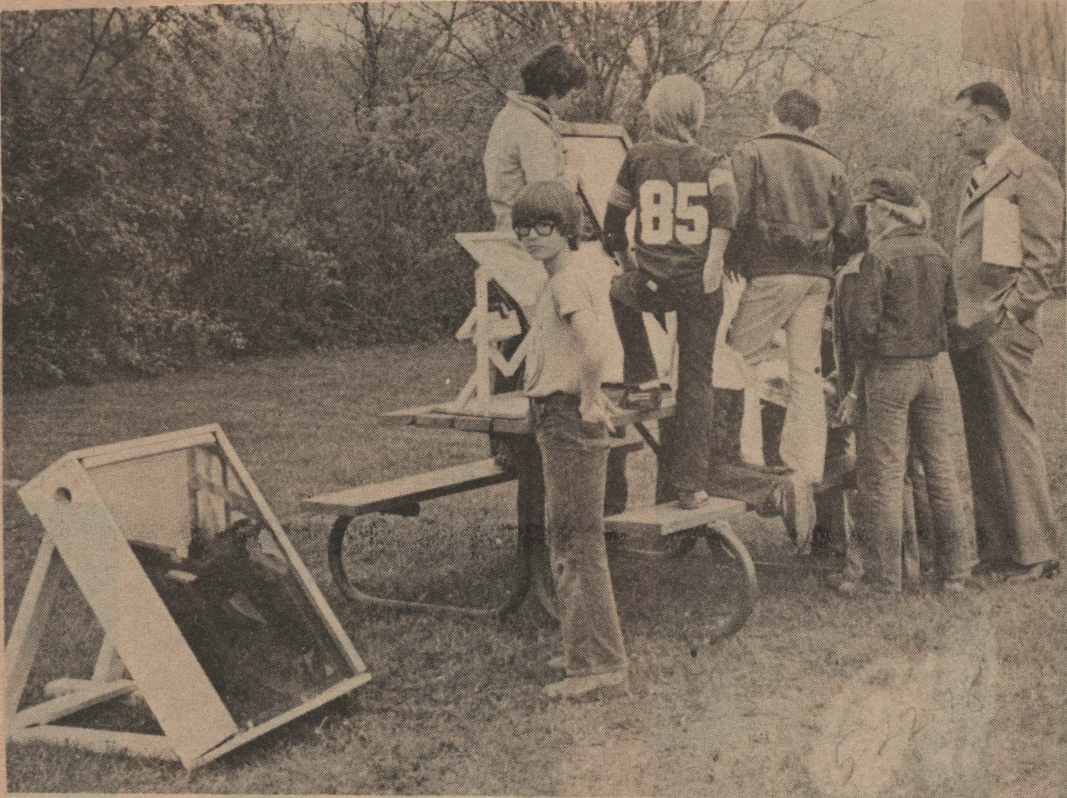
Staubus lectured to several groups during a Conservation Field Day Wednesday, May 17. This particular group met near a spring in the Hooper Game Area

Photo by Mary Streeter.



Gladys Black of Pleasantville, ornithologist, and Rick McGeough of Indianola, conservation officer for Warren and Marion Counties, conducted sessions on the bird community during the Conservation Field Day. Divided into five groups, the more than 200 students heard resource people concerning soil, water, forestry, birds and energy.

Photo by Marty Streeter.



522-78
Sue Stein, camping program specialist for the Iowa State University Extension Service, discusses solar energy with sixth graders. At the right is Merle Reisner, Middle School principal. Maxine Henry, social studies teacher, was in charge of the energy group. Others assisting were Dr Ronald Warnet, chemistry professor at Simpson College, and Mr and Mrs Bernard Nash, who demonstrated a solar furnace.

Photo by Mary Streeter.

Defining Prime Agriculture Land

Definitions of prime agricultural land vary within states, communities and counties because it is such an intuitive definition, says Gerald Miller, extension agronomist at Iowa State University.

People are familiar with what surrounds them and what crops are grown in their area, whether it be corn, sugar beets or cotton, so everyone thinks their land is prime, he added.

To have a nation definition of prime farmland, we would probably have as many definitions as there are congressmen, because each would have a definition that fits land in his particular district, Miller said.

Prime agricultural land can be defined by qualitative or quantitative means or by a combination of factors including physical properties, productivity potential and economic criteria.

Over 45 years ago a national classification system was devised that classified agricultural land into five grades based on the natural productivity of all land for crops. Physical conditions that influence productivity such as soil type, slope, natural rainfall and temperature were taken into consideration when classifying.

This classification system identified 101, 038,000 acres of land in the United States as Grade 1, or the best, of which 25,983,000 acres are in Iowa.

Land Capability

More recently, the U.S. Department of Agriculture devised a land classification method known as the Land Capability Classification system. Land is placed in one of eight classes and identified on the basis of its limitations and hazards for agricultural use.

The system gives major consideration to the physical attributes of land - slope, wetness, the presence of rocks, stones and sand -- and minimizes the natural productivity of the soil, temperature and rainfall, Miller noted.

The USDA is in the process of publishing maps of prime farmland based on the land capability system.

Using this method, a recent ISU study shows that North

Dakota has 21,754,000 acres of prime agricultural farmland and Iowa has 18,350,000 acres.

"This system has fallacies because if you don't look at the productivity units, you do not get the real picture," Miller said.

Iowa System

An Iowa-devised system identifies prime agricultural land based on the productivity potential of the soil resources, Miller said. The purpose is to identify and preserve the best land for row crop production.

This system is especially useful in urban areas where there is a need to make a decision on what land to use for urban growth and what land to keep as farmland.

Known as a numerical or productivity index and termed Corn-Suitability Rating, (CSR), this system gives major consideration to the natural productivity of the soil, slope, rainfall, temperature, available soil moisture and organic matter present in the surface horizon.

Even more important to the user of this system, the CSR assigns a numerical value to each soil mapping unit. This

AG LAND

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Ag Land

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allows for a quantitative value of the productivity potential of the land rather than a less precise qualitative value, Miller said.

Average CSR Rating

Using the CSR system, soil scientists at Iowa State University have calculated the average CSR rating for each county in Iowa.

Under this system, Warren County has been given a mean suitability rating of 54. Ratings in Iowa vary from 85 for Grundy County to 36 for Appanoose County. The state average is 62.6.

A soil survey for Warren County is expected to be available in December. It is a cooperative effort through the Soil Conservation District with participation by the Warren County Board of Supervisors, Iowa Department of Soil Conservation and the ISU Extension Service.



Most Ridiculous float in the Annual Ridiculous Day parade Saturday, Sept. 6, and winner of the grand prize

was this entry by the Men's Garden Club of Indiano RHT photo.

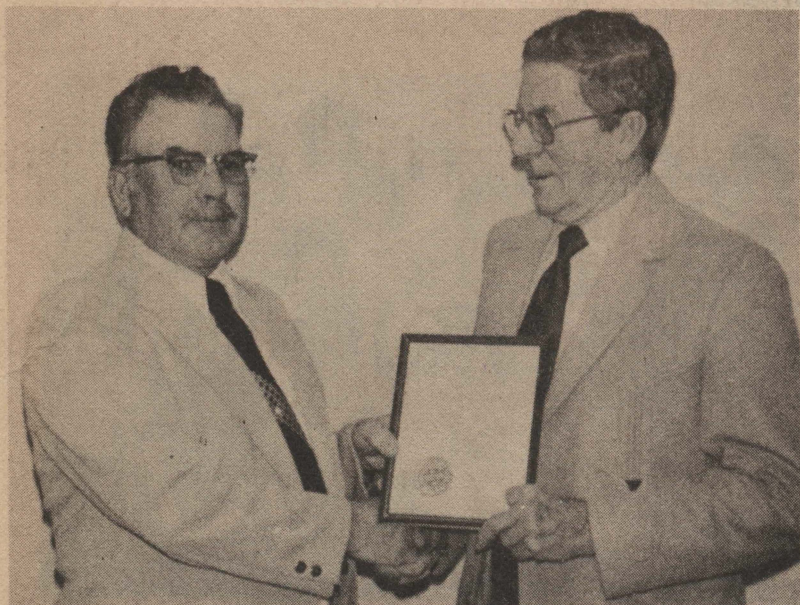
*Most ridiculous ???
Looks pretty natural.*



Darrell Goodhue (right) receives an Outstanding District Commissioner Certificate for his seven years of service from O. R. Pehrson, chairman of the Warren County Soil Conservation District. Goodhue's term expired in January and he is now serving as assistant commissioner.

Photo submitted

51983



Robert Morrison (right), assistant commissioner of the Warren County Soil Conservation District, is presented the Izaak Walton Windbreak Award by O. R. Pehrson, chairman of the district. The award is given in recognition of individuals who establish windbreaks.

Photo submitted



ord-Herald and Indianola Tribune
Nov. 21, 1983

Ray Pehrson, left, presented the Iowa Soil Conservation Award to Ed Shaw.

Chamber of Commerce

worked enthusiastically in many administrative capacities as a member of his church.

"The students of the Indianola Public Schools, members of the Simpson Community, and citizens of Indianola have benefitted immeasurably by his untiring efforts and we present this award as a small token of our appreciation.

Ray Pehrson, chairman of the Soil Conservation District Commission, presented the conservation award to Shaw who farms 160 acres northwest of Indianola.

Shaw has used a total resource management system including 13,500 feet of terraces, contours and 17,000 feet of drainage tile. He uses no-till and has installed a farm pond.

Retiring chamber president Vicki Swarts asked the heads of chamber committees to give a brief summary of the past year's activities.

Hugh Tobler of the Industrial Relations Committee issued a challenge to Indianola to encourage the construction of a motel with meeting facilities in the community. He said it would help attract additional industry to the area.

"I put up an awful lot of people in Des Moines," Tobler said about finding accommodations for out-of-town people who do business with his company.

"I'm not downgrading the rooms we have in town," he said. "But we need meeting rooms and a facility where they can stay."

While encouraging the development of new industry, Tobler urged citizens to be conscious of the importance of existing industry.

"About 80 percent of industrial growth comes from existing industry," he said. "That's easy growth."

"Don't forget the industry we have and let's get growth from that area," he added.

Also giving committee reports were Mike Coppess, agriculture; Bill Geiger and Bob Crouse, fundraising; Norma Baughman, ambassadors; Pam Merritt, education; John Hartung, membership; Don and Marcia Miller, retail; Norma Harmison, special activities, and Cheryl Vesey, community betterment.

9-30-83

Conservation scholarships offered

The Warren Soil Conservation District Commissioners will provide scholarships for teachers who want to attend fall conservation workshops.

Dates and locations for workshops are:

- Sept. 30 — Oct. 1 — Camp Wyoming environmental educa-

tion workshop (near Wyoming, Iowa).

- Oct. 7-9 — Springbrook Conservation Education Center (Springbrook State Park, Guthrie Center).

- Oct. 28-29 — Forest Lake Camp (south of Ottumwa)

The district commissioners will provide \$60 in scholarships not to exceed \$15 per teacher.

Any teacher interested in attending one of these workshops may contact the Warren County Soil Conservation District office, 1206 E. Second, Indianola, 961-5264, by Oct. 3.

Conservation tillage can make bad times better

12-12-83

Next to controlling erosion, holding moisture for crops is one of the greatest benefits of conservation tillage.

"Reports I've received say that, generally, the 1983 crops that were under some form of conservation tillage, particularly no-till, were in better shape than those under conventional tillage," said Peter Myers, Chief of U.S. Department of Agriculture's Soil Conservation Service. Improved moisture-holding capacity is one of the greatest benefits of conservation tillage in a drought year like this one.

Conservation tillage can make the bad times better and make the best of the good times, said Myers in the October issue of Soil and Water Conservation News. Farmers using conservation tillage and researchers studying demonstration plots have learned that:

- Crops under conservation tillage show signs of stress five to 10 days later than conventionally tilled crops. Delaying stress during pollination and critical

growth stages often mean higher yields.

- Crop residue delays evaporation of moisture and allows the rainfall to soak in.

- During stress periods, there can be as much as two inches or more of soil moisture available for crops with conservation tillage and no-till than with conventional tillage.

- In dry years, crops under conservation tillage, particularly no-till, yield better than conventionally tilled crops. In the Midwest, corn under conservation tillage yielded 10 to 25 bushels more per acre than conventionally tilled corn.

The plant residue left on the surface by conservation tillage helps hold moisture by covering the surface to reduce moisture evaporation and decreasing runoff to allow more infiltration of water into the root zone. As the organic matter content increases in the seeding zone, the water holding capacity of the soil improves.

Indianolans earn essay honors

10-31-83

Ray Higgins, a senior at Indianola High School, and Rachael Goodhue, a seventh grader at Indianola Junior High School, were first-place winners in the Warren County Soil Conservation Essay Contest held Oct. 14.

Higgins was the winner in the senior division and Goodhue took top honors in the junior division.

Barbie Wachter of Southeast Warren placed second and Tim Goode of Southeast Warren placed third, both in the senior division.

Eleven contestants submitted essays. The topic for the contest was "HELP — Help Enforce Land Preservation."

Higgins' and Goodhue's essays will advance to the regional contest. Their essays follow:

"How Soil and Water Conservation Affects Our Future"

By Ray Higgins

A large part of the true wealth of Iowa is its "Soil and Water." If their value is not fully appreciated, it is because there has been enough soil and usually enough water to grow all the food and fiber needed. Most years Iowa has had an abundance and fed the many people of foreign countries and still had enough left over to create a worrisome surplus.

Iowa has more fertile cropland than 18 other states combined. One-hundred years ago Iowa had 14-18 inches of topsoil. Today she contains only 6-8 inches. Where did all of our soil go? The land has severely eroded. Iowa

has an average soil loss of 13 tons per acre per year, or one-twelfth of its topsoil a year. At that rate the rest could be gone in the next 100 years.

According to SCS reports, Iowa has more soil erosion above acceptable rates than any other state in the United States. Water is one of the main causes of erosion, but it also creates another, flooding. Heavy rains run off the land, tearing away topsoil and creating hazardous floods. In some parts of Iowa people are prepared for those rains; they've organized watershed projects.

Watersheds help prevent flooding. Dams are built for flood control, and release water slowly after heavy rains.

Terrace systems reduce sheet erosion on cropland fields. The runoff when caught can give a real boost in dry years and can reduce lowland floods in wet years.

Reduced tillage systems decrease soil erosion and can save the farmer's soil, moisture, fuel, time and money.

No-till planting increased from 800 acres in 1980 to more than 3,000 acres in Warren County last year. Farmers in the county have demonstrated that high yields can be obtained under well-managed no-till systems. Crop residues and pastures are other ways farmers in watershed projects keep soil in place.

Soil Conservation Districts



Essay winners

Ray Pehrson (center), chairman of the Warren County District Soil Conservation Commissioners, presents the first-place awards to essay winners Rachael Goodhue and Ray Higgins.

RHT photo by Gary Bonnett

were formed after spectacular dust storms of the 1940s to find more ways to save our soil. SCS programs help farmers finance 50 percent of their conservation projects.

At the rate we are going now, it will take 150 years to resolve the soil problems in Iowa. We only have one-third of our Iowa cropland adequately treated with conservation measures now. And we have lost half of the original topsoil from our farms.

More recently the government came up with a program called PIK. This program was designed to keep soil out of production for it to be fallow for a year.

Although the PIK program may never be repeated, the government should consider other programs which require the preservation of the land. Individuals in society also must be supportive of programs if the future is going to hold any promise at all.

It is this generation that needs to commit itself to the preservation of our soil. If the responsibility is not taken, we will have failed in our stewardship of our land and have failed to meet the needs of our people.

"Help Enforce Land Preservation"

By Rachael Goodhue

HELP! "... Iowa has the worst soil erosion of any state." Each year the amount of topsoil lost is equivalent to one-fifth of an inch of topsoil.

In most parts of Iowa today, the topsoil depth is six to eight inches, only half of what it was 100 years ago. HELP! How may this rate of soil erosion be slowed so that our rich Iowa soil is preserved? Iowa's soil is our No. 1 state resource, and Iowans rated soil erosion as their most serious concern in a poll conducted in 1978.

Some soil conservation methods are being used on part of Iowa's farms. We see contour farming and parallel terraces replacing the old way of farming

up and down the hills. More tilling is being used to control water erosion. Leaving crop residues is helping to control wind erosion. No-till farming is becoming more popular than ever before, though it is still not used as much as it could be.

Some soil conservation methods are expensive. In many instances farmers cannot afford to use the method of conservation best suited for protecting each field. They need HELP.

State and national funding could be increased substantially. Low-interest or interest-free loans could be advanced to the farmers who need them most,

depending both on their financial condition and the state of the soil. The most seriously eroded farms would be given immediate attention.

Iowa and other states, or the federal government, could give owners of fields with permanent conservation practices some tax breaks. For instance, the taxes could be forgiven for the first year and then reduced for the next three years or so. Not only the farmer but everyone would benefit from this, as we all need food to live. Iowa farmers feed our nation and the world. We must preserve our precious rich, black soil for the many generations to follow.

"I conceive that land belongs to a vast family — of which many are dead, few are living and countless numbers are unborn."

— Nigerian chieftain

HELP. Let's give our farmers the aid they need. If you are concerned, as I am, about soil conservation, write your congressman expressing your views and urging him to "Help Enforce Land Preservation."

12-15-83



Ray Higgins

Higgins earns another essay award

Ray Higgins, 18, of Indianola was awarded second place in the 1983 Region Six Soil Conservation Essay contest.

Higgins had advanced to regional competition against nine other county winners after he won the Warren County contest.

The contest, titled "HELP — Help Enforce Land Preservation," was sponsored by the Ladies Auxiliary of the Iowa Association of Soil Conservation District Commissioners and Grinnell Mutual Insurance Co.

Essays were judged on originality, aptness of thought and accuracy of information.

Higgins, a senior at Indianola High School, is the son of John and Mary Higgins of RR 1 Indianola. He will receive a \$30 award for the second-place.

Record-Herald and Indianola Tribune
Monday, July 4, 1983

Klimowski is county's VIPS

Tom Klimowski, a recent graduate of Simpson College, is Warren County's first Volunteer in Protecting Soil.

The program, administered through the United States Department of Agriculture Soil Conservation Service, offers volunteers job experience along with personal satisfaction while accelerating soil conservation without budget increases.

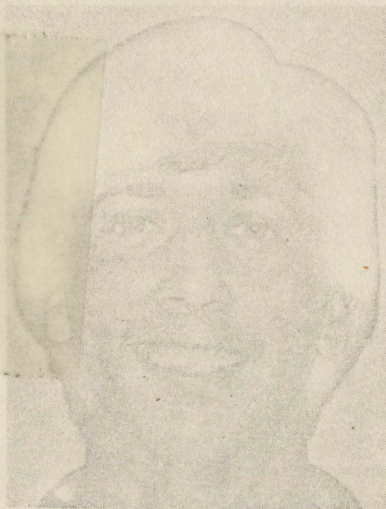
Scott Huso, county district conservationist, said, "We need more people like Tom who are

concerned about soil erosion and are willing to devote their personal time and efforts toward reducing soil losses."

Huso says Klimowski will devote his time to preparing a localized slide tape about no-till farming.

His duties will include taking slides, gathering data and producing a narrative slide set.

Huso says he expects the project will require 200 hours of Klimowski's time over a year.



Tom Klimowski

Warren County lags behind statewide no-till trend

Area farmer touts no-till with bumper stickers

Warren County ranks below the state average in the percentage of land not tilled last fall, according to the USDA Soil Conservation Service.

"In Warren County, we estimate that 50 percent of the soybean land wasn't tilled last fall, and 80 percent of the corn ground wasn't plowed with a moldboard plow," says SCS District Conservationist Scott Huso. "The corresponding statewide figures are 80 percent for soybean ground and 82 percent for corn ground."

Across the state, there was less tillage last fall than probably any year, because of the weather and changing farmer attitudes, according to the SCS District Conservationist.

"The plowing of corn stalks and tillage of soybean ground were singled out for the survey because of their impact on soil erosion," Huso explained. "If there were no moldboard plowing of cornstalks, and been ground was planted into directly with no-till, we'd have a significant amount of soil savings."

Huso is urging farmers who didn't till their ground last fall to follow up with reduced tillage this spring.

Meanwhile, farmers who are pleased with no-till results now have a way to wear their emotions on their sleeve—or at least on their bumpers.

Several area farmers and farm groups have joined together to design bumper stickers urging no-plow.

Each of three stickers contains a circle with a slash, similar to "no parking" symbols, and a silhouette of a farm with its thick black soil running off the outside edge of the circle. Slogans accompanying the circles are "I'm a Residue Farmer," "Try No-Till," and "Save the Stubble—Bury the Plow."

The stickers were designed by Norwalk area farmer Ben Kern, and representatives of the Iowa Farm Bureau Federation, the Iowa Department of Soil Conservation, the Iowa Association of Soil Conservation Districts, and the USDA Soil Conservation Service.

It remains to be seen whether area farmers use the bumper stickers on their pickups and cars—or whether the preferred location for displaying the strips is on their tractors.

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No-interest loans offered for soil conservation practices

10-13-83

The Warren County Soil Conservation District is now taking applications for no-interest loans for the construction of permanent soil conservation practices.

Landowners can borrow up to \$10,000 at no interest for up to a 10-year period. Loan funds received may not be used in combination with any other public

cost-sharing or incentive program for soil and water conservation practices.

To be eligible, a landowner must have a net worth of less than \$300,000, be able to secure the loan and be capable of repaying the loan in equal annual installments.

Legislation passed in the 1983

session of the Iowa General Assembly authorized the program and provided \$1 million for this year and next.

As announced, the program will allow each district a minimum of \$5,398 in available loan funds, with some receiving as much as \$20,000.

No-interest loans offered for soil conservation practices

10-13-83

The Warren County Soil Conservation District is now taking applications for no-interest loans for the construction of permanent soil conservation practices.

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As announced, the program will allow each district a minimum of \$5,398 in available loan funds, with some receiving as much as \$20,000.

Friday, June 17, 1983

No-Till Crop Tours Scheduled

Crop producers will have the opportunity to visit with farmers that have done some no-till planting this spring on June 22 and 23. Joe Narigon, Warren County Extension Director has announced the following schedule: June 22, 7 p.m. - Tour of Herbicide Plot on No-till Soybeans at Ben Kern's, a half mile south of Norwalk on Highway 28. Sorrel Brown, Area Crop Production Specialist, will discuss weed control using different herbicides. Herbicides used on the plot include Paraquat, Roundup, Lasso, Lexone, Lorox, Poast, and Fusilade in different combinations.

June 23, meet at S.E. Warren High School in Liberty Center at 6:15 p.m. for a tour of various no-till plantings. These will include corn in sod, corn on corn, and soybeans on corn.

For more information, contact the Warren County Extension Office, 961-6237.

Two soil commissioner positions up for election

8-2-84

The terms of two Warren County Soil Conservation District commissioners, Roy Davey of Milo (Belmont Township) and O. Ray Pehrson, Indianola (Otter Township) will expire at noon on Jan. 2, 1985. Successors will be elected at the general election on Nov. 6.

Any qualified elector residing in the soil conservation district, which is all of Warren County including cities and towns, is eligible for the office of commissioner, except that no more than one commissioner may be a resident of any one township. Incumbent commissioners are Ben Kern of Norwalk

(Linn Township), Marvin Mahr Jr. Indianola (East Lincoln Township), and Dick Davitt, Indianola (Washington Township); therefore, residents of these townships would not be eligible for office at this time.

Prospective candidates seeking the office of soil conservation district commissioner must file nomination petitions in the same manner as for other elective positions at the general election, except that no political party is designated. Nomination petitions may be obtained from the county auditor.

These petitions, signed by 25 eligible electors, must be filed with the county auditor at the Warren County

Courthouse no later than 4:30 p.m. on Sept. 12.

Individuals elected in November 1984 will serve a term of six years commencing January 2, 1985. Soil conservation district commissioners serve without salary and guide the overall soil and water conservation program in the county.

For more information, contact the Warren County Soil Conservation District office, 1206 E. Second, Indianola, phone 961-5264.

Conference scholarships available

9-20-84

The Warren Soil Conservation District Commissioners will provide \$20 scholarships for Warren County teachers who plan to attend The Midwest Regional Environmental Education Conference at the Conservation Education Center at Springbrook State Park north of Guthrie

Center on Sept. 27-30.

Teachers interested in attending this conference should contact the Warren County Soil Conservation District office, 1206 E. Second, Indianola, 961-5264, or contact Paul Regnier, Warren County Conservation Board, 961-6169 by Sept. 26.

6-28-84

County receives allocation

The Warren County Soil Conservation District has received the 1984-85 state cost-share allocation.

The State of Iowa will cost-share 50 percent of the total cost to apply tile outlet terraces on unprotected slopes in Warren County. Landowners in the Lake Ahquabi watershed can receive up to 75 percent cost-share for the construction of tile-outlet terraces and water-impoundment structures.

Farmers are encouraged to plan for summer construction on diverted acres oats or hay land when tiling and earth-moving contractors are more available.

Anyone interested in the construction of terrace projects should sign up at the Warren Soil Conservation office before July 1, at the USDA building, 1206 E. Second Ave., east on Highway 92 in Indianola.

1984 soil conservation essay contest slated

3-19-84

The Warren County Soil Conservation District will sponsor a 1984 Soil Conservation Essay Contest open to students in the county.

There will be a junior division for grades six, seven and eight and a senior division for grades nine, 10, 11 and 12.

The essays on "Trees — A Neglected Resource," must have a

maximum of 500 words. Prizes for each division will be \$25 for first place, \$15 for second and \$10 for third.

Entries should be in the SCS office, USDA building, 1206 East Second Ave., Indianola no later than May 16.

For more information, contact the Soil Conservation Service office at 961-5264.

7-23-84



Marvin Mahr Jr., the district commissioner of the Warren County Soil Conservation District, presents Tad Waller, a seventh grader at Indianola Junior High School, with a certificate for first place in the junior division of the essay contest sponsored by the district. Barb Wachter, a sophomore at Southeast Warren High School (left), won the senior division of the contest. Each received \$25 and advanced to regional judging in competition with 10 other soil districts in south-central Iowa.

RHT staff photos by Mark Davitt

Wachter, Waller garner top soil conservation essay honors

Barb Wachter, a sophomore at Southeast Warren High School, and Tad Waller, a seventh grader at Indianola Junior High School, were first-place winners in the Warren County Soil Conservation Essay Contest June 29.

Wachter competed in the senior division and Waller was in the junior

division.

Seven contestants submitted essays. The topic for the contest was "Trees — A Neglected Resource."

Wachter's and Waller's essays will advance to regional judging in competition with 10 other soil districts in south-central Iowa.



Farming to win

Robert Fridley farms these acres south of Indianola. His terracing, gully control and other conservation methods visible here made him the top winner in the owner-operator division in the south-central Iowa area of the Iowa Soil Conservation Achievement Award competition.

Submitted photo

Robert Fridley farm named regional conservation winner

The Robert Fridley farm has been named as a regional winner in the Iowa Soil Conservation Achievement Awards program.



Robert Fridley

The Fridley farm south of Indianola was selected as the winner in the owner-operator division in a 10-county south-central Iowa area.

Conservation accomplishments include nine farm ponds, pasture renovation, two large water impoundment type gully-control structures, grassed waterways, contouring and several miles of terracing.

Robert Fridley and operators Ron and Don Hunerdosse will be honored at a regional district soil commis-

sioners meeting in Des Moines on Sept. 6. The award will be presented by the Iowa Farm Bureau Federation.

Fridley also is a broker associate with Peoples Co. of Indianola, heading the real estate division.

Funds available for conservation projects

The first meeting of the Warren County Resource Enhancement and Protection Committee (WCREP) is scheduled for Thursday, Jan. 18, at 7:30 p.m., at the Indianola Public Library, 207 North B St.

This committee was formed to review proposed plans for state funds received by the county under the Resource Enhancement and Protection Act (REAP). Cities, counties and soil and water districts may request funds under the REAP Act. These requests are to be reviewed by the resource

enhancement committee.

The REAP Act provides competitive grants to cities and county conservation boards for the development of conservation and open space areas.

Committee members are the mayors or their designees from each city, school board presidents or their designees, Warren County Board of Supervisors Chairman Bill McClymond, the chairman of the Warren County Conservation Board, the chairman or designee of the local soil

and water conservation district and other conservation organizations recognized within the county.

For more information call Conservation Board Director Paul Regnier at 961-6169.



Runoff

Soil washed down Warren County hillsides during June's heavy rains gathers at the foot of

sloping fields.

Photo submitted by Soil Conservation office, Indianola

June's heavy rains carry county topsoil into rivers

By Ginger Kuhl

The six to seven inches of rain that soaked Warren County in the first two weeks of June came at a critical time. Much of the soil had been worked in preparation to planting crops. The soil was loose and subject to washing. And wash it did.

The Iowa Conservation Commission estimates that Warren County had 15,000 acres with a more than 20-ton-per-acre soil loss. Another 75,000 acres is estimated to have lost between 10 and 20 tons per acre.

Dale Faulkner, director of the Warren County Soil Conservation Service, said people question these figures and see the service as exploiting the erosion problem in Iowa.

"They don't have an understanding of what 20 tons of soil loss represents," Faulkner said. "Whenever erosion is noticeable, it usually exceeds a 10-ton-per-acre rate."

In other words, where the small gullies or rills can be seen in the fields, there has been significant soil loss.

Loss of soil means loss of fertilizer nutrients, including nitrogen, phosphates and potash, which may be approximately \$6 to \$7 per acre with a 20-ton-per-acre soil loss.

"Loss of topsoil and organic matter is even more significant in relation to nutrient availability and response to herbicides," Faulkner said. "A 20-ton-per-acre, per-year rate of erosion spread evenly over an acre amounts to a loss of one inch of topsoil in a 7½-year period."

Faulkner said he credits conservation practices used by Warren County farmers for keeping flooding and erosion from being much worse than it was. The Warren Soil Conservation District has more than 2,000 ponds built for gully control and

livestock water. "Without these water impoundments, flooding and sediment damage would be much greater," Faulkner added.

"There are soils being farmed in the county that are badly eroded and not profitable for farming," he said.

Conservation tillage practices such as leaving crop residue, tiling and contour plowing that help reduce flooding and soil erosion were praised by Faulkner.

A survey taken after planting in Warren County showed that more than 50 percent of the corn and soybean fields had enough crop residue to help reduce erosion.

An estimated 16,000 acres of corn and soybeans in Warren County were flooded or late planted because of rains. This does not include the 2,500 additional acres that are Red Rock flood easement land. An estimated 5,000 cropland acres were flooded.

Final figures on flooding and crop losses from late planting will not be available until after harvest.

"There is still a great need in this county for a lot more drainage, especially on side-hill seep areas," Faulkner said.

In this area, said Faulkner, tiling is a bargain compared to some other areas. The spread in the cost of tiling varies a great deal.

"The cost of installing tiles seems to be a little less than in other parts of Iowa, about \$100 less per acre," Faulkner said.

Saying that it was difficult to put a cost per acre on tiling because the condition of each field could call for a different solution, he said bottomland tiling with 60- to 80-foot spacings could range from \$580 to \$436 an acre.

Terraces built within the last year or less were reported to have been damaged because it takes a few

months for the soil to settle.

Some terraces full of sediment had holes cut in them by the heavy rains. Faulkner said the condition, known as overtopping, can happen very quickly in a downpour.

Terraces built in the last six months with the back sides seeded to grass are particularly vulnerable to overtopping until the grass is established.

"The first year is pretty critical," Faulkner said.

Warren County has about 210,000 tillable acres and more than 100,000 acres have soils with slopes that exceed a five-percent grade. The expected annual soil loss if conventional tillage is used in these areas without soil conservation practices is more than 10 tons per acre.

"If erosion rates average 10 to 20 tons per acre on our 100,000 of hillier topography," Faulkner said, "we can expect to lose six inches of topsoil in the next 50 to 100 years. If this happens, this 100,000 acres will no longer be productive and profitable to row-crop farm."

Conservation cropping systems that rotate row crops with oats and hay also are effective in reducing soil erosion.

"Many of our cow-calf farmers are our best conservationists because they rotate row crops with pasture and hayland," Faulkner said.

Traditional farmer goes no-till route

16-4-84

By Ginger Kuhl

Moving from traditional farming to no-till methods takes a change in philosophy that fewer than 100 Warren County farmers have made. It's a leap of faith for some and a matter of economics and soil conservation for others.

Jay Hess of Lucas decided to do something about his farm problems and started by selling about \$150,000 worth of farm equipment and purchasing a six-row no-till planter for \$13,000. Hess, 41, farms about 160 acres, most of which is in Warren County.



Jay Hess

It wasn't an easy decision to make and a few days before he was going to plant, Hess called a well-known soil conservationist, Ray Pehrson, and told him he didn't know if he could follow through.

"Ray told me, 'I tell you what I'd do, I'd just go out there, drill and plant the corn,' and that's what I did," Hess said. The result has been some of the most-talked-about fields in Warren County this year.

People especially are asking about the Emma Sutherland farm that Hess operates. The field is bordered by Highway 65.

"It was quite a mess to start with and people didn't even think it was planted until the corn started coming up," Hess said.

Given good conditions, a little rain and cool nights at the right time, Hess anticipated this stand of corn

might bring 150 bushels minimum to the acre. But the dry weather may have reduced the yield by 15 to 20 percent, he said. In last year's drought, corn planted in the field produced less than 30 bushels an acre.

"I planted about 23,800 corn kernels this spring and I probably have about 22,300 stalks standing," he said. "There is hardly any sign of residue in the field. The stand is uniform, and the corn has good color."

Hess usually cultivates a field once or twice in addition to treating with fertilizer and herbicides. Equipment for weed control and fertilizer was added to the no-till planter.

Cattle had been turned into the fields in the winter to forage and trample the stalks. A cutter was not necessary this year, but Hess said it may be necessary to add one to the planter in subsequent seasons.

"The biggest saving was on fuel consumption, machinery repair and cost," Hess said. "I'll stay with no-till definitely, if only to save the investment in machinery. The costs on seed and chemicals — herbicides and fertilizer — are about the same as before."

The climate conditions helped, too. "I have the best weed control I've ever had in my corn fields," Hess said.

"We're not out of the critical area yet," he said about his financial situation. He lost money in grain in an Oskaloosa elevator that folded, and high interest rates have created two years worth of heavy debt. But going to no-till farming may have made it possible for Hess to handle the situation.

"I've been quite surprised at the results," he said.

2-1-84

Funds available for land tile

Landowners who need financial assistance to construct tile outlet terraces this year should apply at the Warren County Soil Conservation office in the USDA building, east on Highway 92 in Indianola

The State of Iowa will cost share 50 percent of the total cost to apply tile outlet terraces on unprotected slopes in Warren County. Last year 18 terrace projects totaling 55,630 feet were completed.

Land use commission to meet Friday, Feb. 17

The Warren County Land Use and Preservation Commission will meet Friday, Feb. 17, at 9:30 a.m. at the extension office on Highway 92 east.

The commission will discuss a proposal for recommendations on land use in the county, said Ruth Hardin, chairperson. The commission held a public hearing Jan. 24 on its recommendation, which doubles the minimum land area from 40 to 80 acres for a single-family dwelling on agricultural land.

The meeting Friday is open to the

public. It is not, however, a public hearing on the recommendation. Law requires only one public hearing even if the commission changes its recommendation.

The commission is required by state law to propose to the Warren County Board of Supervisors a county land-use plan for unincorporated areas.

Members of the Warren County commission are Dan Porter, Indianola City Council; Henry Staibus, soil conservation commis-

sion; Marvin Mahr, a farmer appointed by the ASCS; Dean Van Ryswyk, zoning board; Joe Narigon, county agricultural extension director; and Ruth Hardin, county board of supervisors.

Iowa law establishes appointment of the County Land Preservation and Use Commission with balanced representation of soil conservation interests, country residents, city government and active farmers.

'Million dollar' rain brings smiles

By Ginger Kuhl

Rain at the right time can bring a smile to any farmer's face.

The combination of warm days, cool nights and gentle rain brings the corn up in Warren County — in some places as high as four inches. If the weather continues to cooperate, it could bring economic salvation to some of the county farmers.

"It was a million dollar rain for sure," said Neale Sinclair, coordinator of operations for Laverty Elevator in Indianola. "There was up to three inches in the southern part of the county, but it came as gently as could be. There was very little runoff."

The rain, which ranged from 1½ to three inches around the county, came at the perfect time for farmers, Sinclair said. The corn crop is 70 to 90 percent planted, said Sinclair and Dale Faulkner, district soil conservationist for Warren County.

"The rain will make soil conditions a lot better," Faulkner said. "It will help break up clods and make a better seed bed."

Steve Cortum, Farm Services crop specialist, said some of the corn first planted took more than a week to germinate and emerge, but now that the ground has warmed, it's taking four to five days.

"Saturday morning after the rain, the farmers all had smiles on their faces," Cortum said. "They had 12 solid days of daylight to dark to work. They were running the whole time, and so were we."

The wet weather was followed by a spell of rapid drying that found farmers starting to lay beans on dry dirt. "They were sure hoping for rain," Cortum said.

"The rain came at the right time," he added, "and it was the right amount and the right kind."

Farmers could still use a few more days of dry weather to finish spring planting, especially on low ground where the soil is retaining moisture. Some ground that was worked while really wet developed a crust that the weekend rain will make easier to break up with a rotary hoe or disc, Faulkner said.

"If it would wait about 2½ weeks and give us another of Saturday's rains, we'd be set," said Cortum.

No-interest loans available for soil conservation

6-2584

The Warren County Soil Conservation District is now taking applications for no-interest loans for constructing permanent soil conservation practices.

Landowners can borrow up to \$10,000 at no interest for up to a 10-year period.

Anyone interested in constructing permanent soil conservation prac-

tices should sign up before July 1 at the Warren Soil Conservation District office, USDA building, east on Highway 92 in Indianola.

No-Till

Planting

Suggested

5-18-84

Warren County District Conservationist, Dale Faulkner, reports "that conditions this spring are favorable for farmers to experiment with planting no-till corn or soybeans.

Because of last year's drought, many fields have very little corn stalk or soybean residue and this makes it easier to no-till plant. Newer style planters equipped with disc-openers will work very well on last year's undisturbed soybean ground or where corn has been harvested as silage."

Also, due to the wet soil conditions, farmers may find it is easier to no-till plant rather than use conventional tillage. Conventional tillage on wet soils can cause compaction problems and yields and weed control may be actually better if farmers wait and no-till plant.

The Warren Soil Conservation District has a no-till grain drill which can be rented by farmers wanting to no-till plant soybeans.

Anyone wanting information on no-till farming is encouraged to contact the Soil Conservation District office in Indianola.

Pretty flower is pretty noxious

By Ginger Kuhl

Warren County is about to take on an attractive enemy of farmers and cattle raisers. It's the multiflora rose that grows with wild abandon on an estimated 10,000 acres of county farmland.

"Cattle won't come close to it," said supervisor Bill Anders. "And chemicals to control it are pretty expensive."

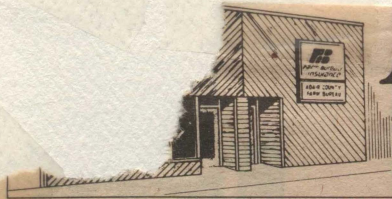
The Iowa Legislature recently appropriated \$50,000 to be distributed as an incentive toward counties developing a multiflora rose control program. The money has to be used between July 1, 1984, and June 30, 1985. Counties applying have to appoint a commission and develop a plan to get the thorny problem solved.

The Warren County Board of Supervisors appointed Dick Davitt, Marvin Smart, Don Berry, John Keeney and George Taylor, all Warren County farmers, to serve on the commission.

The county must submit a grant application for \$1,000 of the state

funds by July 15. The supervisors agreed to cost share the application by providing \$3,000 if the state funds are appropriated. If the county receives the funds, local farmers may apply for cost sharing and apply the money to chemicals or other controls.

By July 1, 1987, the state will formally declare the multiflora rose a noxious weed, similar to the musk thistle. A countywide control program then will be mandatory. No details of a control plan or distribution of funds has yet been worked out.



Adair

COUNTY

Virginia Cannon, Page Editor

PO Box 238, Greenfield, IA 50849

515-743-6154

SCD offers Outlook 1984 workshops

The Adair County Soil Conservation office announces the Outlook 1984 workshops for all Adair county teachers.

Registration for Outlook 1984 has begun and teachers are signing up for one of the 7 weeks Outlook will be offered this summer at Springbrook. Early registration is encouraged. The total cost of the workshop for food, lodging, materials and tuitions is \$225; however, stipends will be available to cover \$150 of the cost.

Therefore, a teacher's out-of-pocket cost will be only \$75. The local Adair Soil Conservation District commissioners have a limited amount of funds available to help with the out-of-pocket expenses for teachers in Adair county interested in attending the workshops.

Two hours of graduate credit, one for each of the two separate courses offered, is available from the University of Northern Iowa, transferable to the University of Iowa, Iowa State University and Drake University.

These series of 7 one-week in-service training sessions will be held this summer at Springbrook Conservation Education Center near Guthrie Center in cooperation with the Iowa Conservation Commission. The scheduled capacity is 70 teachers for each of the 1-week sessions.

The goal is to provide in-service training to 500 teachers during the summer. The two courses will provide a basis for understanding the Outlook approach to environmental education and how to integrate

Outlook into any present curriculum.

A major goal of the Outlook program is to produce more environmentally aware and responsible citizens for the future. The teacher is the key — especially a well-trained and concerned teacher. Workshops include 11 topic/issues focusing on air, population dynamics, community responsibility, human habitats, mineral resources, soil, heritage, water, production and distribution, land use and natural habitats.

These 11 issues are integrated with six underlying themes of aesthetics, life-style, energy flow, stewardship, interdependency and cultural evolution. Each session is limited to 35 participants. Early registration will help ensure your first choice.

WSCD sponsors poster contest

3-12-84

The Warren Soil Conservation District will sponsor a poster contest for students in Warren County. This year marks the 50th Anniversary of soil conservation in America, and the posters should tie in with the 50-year mark.

Entries for each school district will be divided in three groups:

Grades 4-6; Grades 7-9; Grades 10-12.

Posters will be judged at each school district. Poster selection will be based on: tie in with 50th anniversary of soil conservation in America (a must); soil conservation content and artwork technique.

The top five from each group are

to be in the soil conservation office by May 4 to be judged.

First prize in the contest is \$50, with \$35 second and \$20 third for each group.

For further information contact the Soil Conservation District office, USDA Building, 1206 East Second, Indianola, 961-5264.

WSCD sponsors contest 3-19-84

The Warren Soil Conservation District will sponsor a poster contest for students in Warren County. This year marks the 50th Anniversary of soil conservation in America, and the posters should tie in with the 50-year mark.

Entries for each school district will be divided in three groups: Grades 4-6; Grades 7-9; Grades 10-12.

Posters will be judged at each school district. Poster selection will be based on: tie in with 50th anniver-

sary of soil conservation in America (a must); soil conservation content and artwork technique.

The top five from each group are to be in the soil conservation office by May 4 to be judged.

First prize in the contest is \$50, with \$35 second and \$20 third for each group.

For further information contact the Soil Conservation District office, USDA Building, 1206 East Second, Indianola, 961-5264.

Conservation essay contest under way

3-12-84
The Warren County Soil Conservation District is sponsoring a 1984 Soil Conservation Essay Contest open to students in the county.

The contest includes a junior division for grades six, seven and eight and a senior division for grades nine, 10, 11 and 12.

The essays on "Trees — A Neglected Resource," must not exceed 500 words. Prizes for each division will be \$25 for first place, \$15 for second and \$10 for third.

Entries should be in the SCS office, USDA building, 1206 East Second Ave. in Indianola, no later than May 16.

For more information, contact the Soil Conservation Service office at 961-5264.

Conservation poster contest being held

The Warren Soil Conservation District is sponsoring a poster contest for students in Warren County. This year marks the 50th anniversary of soil conservation in America, something which the posters should include.

Entries for each school district will be divided into three groups — grades 4-6, Grades 7-9 and Grades 10-12.

Posters will be judged at each school district. Poster selection will be based on tie in with the 50th anniversary of soil conservation in America, soil conservation content and artwork technique.

The top five from each group must be in the soil conservation office by May 4 to be judged.

First prize in the contest is \$50. Second prize is \$35 and third is \$20.

For more information, contact the Soil Conservation District office, USDA Building, 1206 East Second, Indianola, 961-5264.



Conservation poster winners

These Warren County students were named winners in the recent poster contest sponsored by the Warren County Soil Conservation District. The contest centered on the 50th anniversary of organized soil conservation in America. In the front are Stacie Van Wyk (left), a sixth grader at Indianola Middle School who won third place in the grades four to six division; and Daniel Bender, a fourth grader at Martensdale-St. Marys who took first place in the grades four to six division. In the back are (from left) Canh Hua, an eighth grader at Norwalk Middle School who won first place in the grades seven to nine division; Jane Sereg, a seventh grader at Indianola Junior High who took second place in the grades seven to nine division; Buzz Malone, a fifth grader at Indianola's Irving Elementary School, who took second place in the grades four to six division; and Steve McCall, an eighth grader at Indianola Junior High, who took third place in the grades seven to nine division. Prizes awarded were \$50 for first, \$35 for second and \$20 for third along with certificates. The first-place posters will be displayed at the Department of Soil Conservation booth in the Agriculture Building during the Iowa State Fair in Des Moines.

RHT staff photo by Gary Bonnett

Program scholarships available

5-21-84

The Warren Soil Conservation District Commissioners will provide \$15 scholarships for high school students who want to attend the Youth Leadership Conservation Program June 25-28 at the State Center at Madrid and Aug. 6-9 at the Conservation Education Center at Guthrie Center.

The cost of the four-day, three-night program is \$55. High school students interested in attending the Youth Leadership Conservation Program should contact the Warren Soil Conservation District at 1206 E. Second, Indianola, or call 961-5264 by June 15.

'Slough Bill' provides tax exemptions

4-9-84

Final sign-up date for tax exemptions under the "Slough Bill" is April 15. The Warren Soil Conservation District is taking applications.

Iowa House File 2351, known as the "Slough Bill," provides property tax exemptions for wetlands, native prairies, timber, all sizes of streams and their banks, grasslands, recreational lakes and other forms of wildlife habitat. The bill is intended to improve wildlife habitat and

decrease soil erosion throughout Iowa.

Participants in the program this year will have no tax obligations for these areas in 1985.

Priorities for tax exemptions for the slough bill include open prairie, forest clover, river and stream or river and stream banks, wetlands and recreational lakes.

If you have any questions regarding the program call 961-5264.

Soil week set May 27

Soil Stewardship Week, May 27 to June 3, is a nationwide observance that emphasizes man's responsibility to protect and conserve soil, water, and other natural resources. This year's theme is, "Conserva-

tion: A Common Commitment." Ministers and laypeople throughout the county will focus on humanities stewardship obligation in managing the resources of our community.

The district provides bulletins for churches throughout the county in observance of Soil Stewardship Week.

5-17-84

Trees available from state

11-28
11-28-84

The Iowa Conservation Commission's 1985 tree application forms are now available at the Warren County Soil Conservation Service office, USDA building, east on Highway 92 in Indianola.

The average height of the seedlings are from 8 to 16 inches and average in cost of \$7 per hundred. The minimum order is 500 but can be ordered in units of 100.

Some of the species are white pine, scotch pine, red pine, ponderosa pine, black walnut, green ash, white ash and silver maple. In addition, a wildlife packet of 200 plants for \$17 may be ordered and a songbird packet of 20 shrubs may be ordered for \$10.

'America's Heartbeat' needs to be strengthened

Through many programs, Extension Service dedicated to helping farmers

By Joe Narigon

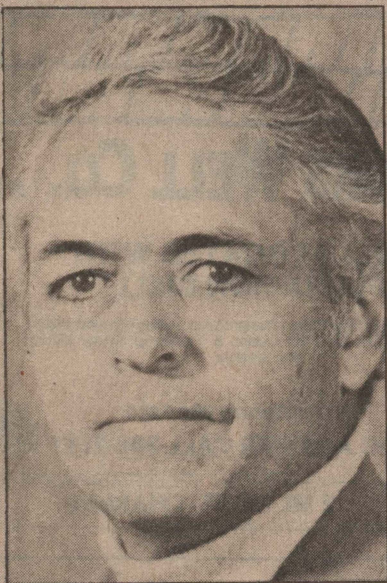
The theme for the 1985 Agriculture Day, "Agriculture — America's Heartbeat," is probably a very fitting theme. However, the heartbeat may be a weak one if the current financial condition for agriculture cannot be strengthened.

There has been a lot of press this winter about agriculture's financial condition and I would agree most of it is true. It is difficult for anyone to be sure of the exact number or percent of farmers that will not be farming in 1985

or 1986, but it will be less than in 1984.

What impact this will have on the agriculture community is hard to predict but one can be sure in some areas it will continue to hurt business, schools, churches and all activities that rely on people. Iowa will be different 10 years from now and due a lot to this period of depression in agriculture.

What caused this problem and what can be done have been discussed by business and agriculture



Joe Narigon

leaders, university professors and government officials. They come up with a variety of answers on what happened, but few real solutions.

The Extension Service and University Research programs have been criticized for our part in increasing agriculture productions through efficiency, expansion and other new developments, and we must accept some as being a just criticism. But if one can compare life on the farm today with that of the 1920s, I'm sure people would accept today's lifestyle. So there has been some good from our efforts.

Today the University and Extension Service are dedicated to continue helping people help themselves through their problems. We do have a computer program available to help farmers with future plans. This program allows a comparison of various enterprises and quickly determines predicted profit or loss.

A county committee of concerned citizens has been formed to advise on educational meetings, serve as peer counselors and work with individuals or families needing assistance.

The Extension Service is working with state government and agriculture business to operate a Rural Concerns Hot Line — 1-800-447-1985. People at this number are trained to answer questions and refer people to the proper place for help.

I'm sure agriculture will continue to be of major importance to Iowa and Warren County, and I'm hopeful there are many brighter days for those involved.

If the Extension Service can help, give us a call at 961-6237.

Joe Narigon is director of the Warren County Extension Service.

H-1-85 Conservation service to celebrate

April 27 will mark the golden anniversary of the Soil Conservation Service — a milestone in a voluntary conservation movement that has involved more than 2 million farmers, ranchers and other land users.

"SCS can be proud of what it has done," said Peter Myers, chief of the agency. "It has helped to reduce soil erosion, conserve water, reduce flooding, improve rangeland and protect other natural resources. Today, two out of every five acres of farmland are adequately protected

against soil erosion."

In the Warren County Soil Conservation District, more than 1,472 farmers are cooperators with the district. "Our farmers have steadily applied the more expensive practices like terraces and ponds and they've also picked up on the management practices like conservation tillage and no-till," said Dale Faulkner, district conservationist for SCS. Nationwide, farmers used conservation tillage on 29 percent of the cropland in 1984. The figure is 45 percent in Warren County.

"I'd be the first to say that we have a long way to go yet in getting soil losses in the county under control," said Faulkner. "But I also think we need to pay tribute to the farmers who have done that job, or most of it, on their land."

Faulkner also feels the unique local, state and federal partnership in soil conservation has promoted soil conservation in Iowa. "More than ever, as we look to the next 50 years, it will take a team effort," he said.

County soil conservation district cost share is revealed

The Warren County Soil Conservation District has received the 1985-86 state cost share allocation.

The state will pay up to 50 percent of the total cost to apply tile outlet terraces on unprotected slopes. Tile outlet terraces are a popular conser-

vation practice used to control runoff and reduce erosion.

Because of economic conditions, the SCS is now promoting narrow-base type terraces which cost less than farmable-type terraces. With narrow-base terraces, less land is

disturbed, and it's easier to farm around because the intake is close to the earthfill.

There are advantages to all types of terraces. However, narrow-base terraces offer a way to get more acres controlled with less dollars. The average cost per acre for narrow-based terraces is between \$100 and \$150 after cost sharing, compared to \$200 and \$300 for the

8-21-85
grassed-backslope terraces. Farmers faced with unending soil erosion problems and limited resources can take advantage now of the narrow-based terraces.

Anyone interested in the construction of terrace projects may sign up at the Warren Soil Conservation District office, USDA building, 1206 E. Second Ave., east on Highway 92, Indianola.

Editorials

RHT Opinion

The Record-Herald and Indianola Tribune
Monday, April 15, 1985

Page 6A

Letters

Solution to farm, federal debt woes: Pay parity prices

This letter was written by Francis L. York, 711 N. Seventh, Indianola.

To the editor:

It is amazing how much ignorance some people can accumulate in such a short period of time. I am referring to the article by Amy Duncan that appeared in this paper March 27 in which Neale Sinclair discussed the talk at the annual convention of the National Grain and Feed Association in New Orleans March 17-20.

The discussion as reported was nothing more than the Reagan farm policy that is presently being promoted by Agriculture Secretary John Block, Under-Secretary Frank Naylor, former Secretary Earl Butz, former Interior Secretary James Watts, Budget Director David Stockman and a host of others.

Basically, this philosophy is to eliminate all present farm programs over a five-year period that will

lower prices for farm commodities to market-clearing levels in the world market. This, say the promoters, will again make farming profitable and eliminate any need for payments to agriculture from the Federal Treasury.

Nothing could be further from the truth. There is no way that farming can become profitable on still lower prices. Also, as farm commodity prices go down, there is less nationally earned income and to offset that loss of national income, the government has to borrow more and therefore the deficit grows larger and larger.

Twenty-three years ago, 1962, the Committee for Economic Development, which I immediately renamed the Committee for Economic Destruction, was promoting a similar program. There are too

LETTER

Continued on Page 7A



In today's My Turn! column, Pauline Baxendale reminds us of the April blizzard of 1973. But even in Iowa, springtime is sure to arrive and this week's Living History reminds us of really gorgeous Iowa weather. This postcard-photo of the old Warren County courthouse, part of Edith Conn's collection at the

Warren County Historical Museum, was postmarked in 1938. Jim Weinman tells us that the car at lower left is a 1936 Buick, and also pictured are several Model A's. Jim said he would go to the top of the old courthouse and could see the State Capitol in Des Moines. The current courthouse was dedicated in 1939.

The Record-Herald and Indianola Tribune
Wednesday, August 21, 1985

Area farmers build ponds

This is the season for farm pond construction, according to Warren County Soil Conservation District. Weather conditions have been favorable and ponds have been recently completed on the farms of James Penick, Allen township; Paul Irving, Palmyra; Gene Turk, Squaw.

These are multi-purpose ponds built to provide erosion control, water supplies for livestock, recreation and wildlife habitat.

Contractors are nearing completion of a pond on the Jerry Middleswart farm near Lake Ahquabi. Other Lake Ahquabi watershed farmers planning to build ponds are John Long, Luther Middleswart, and James Vail. These ponds will help control erosion and keep sediment out of Lake Ahquabi.

More than 2,000 ponds have been

built in Warren County since the Soil Conservation District was organized in 1944.

Farmers wanting assistance with pond construction should contact the Soil Conservation Service in Indianola, 1206 East Second Ave. Technical help is provided with planning, surveys and design at no cost to the landowner. Cost share is also available and rates vary from 50 percent to 75 percent for farms in the Lake Ahquabi watershed.

Dale Faulkner urges landowners to evaluate conservation needs

5-3-85

By Dale Faulkner

Erosion is now noticeable, especially on soybean ground that was fall chiseled. Our first spring rain came when the frost was "going out" and this is a critical time for erosion to occur. Erosion problems should be evaluated and conservation planning decisions made.

Tile outlet terraces are a popular conservation practice used to control runoff and reduce rill and gully erosion. Because of economic conditions, we are now promoting narrow-base type terraces which cost less than farmable type terraces.

There are advantages to all types of terraces, and narrow-base terraces offer a way to get more acres controlled with less dollars. We recommend that farmers plan complete resource

management systems.

Terraces alone will not completely control erosion. Terraces are most effective when used with other conservation practices such as conservation tillage, grassed headlands, contouring, grassed waterways, stripcropping, or crop rotations with oats and meadow.

Both state and federal cost-share funds are available providing 50 percent incentive payments. About 40 Warren County farmers built terraces in 1984 and we expect about an equal number again in 1985.

We encourage farmers to plan ahead and contact this office for projects they want to do now or in the future years.

Dale Faulkner is the district conservationist for Warren County.

3-20-85

Lavery nominated for 'Friends of Agriculture' Award

Charles Lavery of Indianola has been nominated for the Friends of Agriculture Award by the Warren County Soil Conservation District. A late winner will be announced on Wednesday March 20.

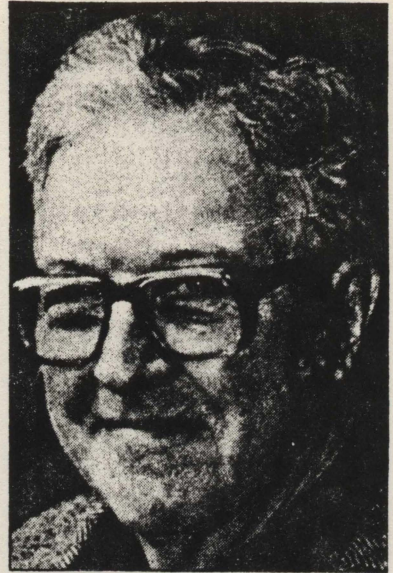
Some of the qualifications needed to be nominated were contributions to agriculture at home and abroad; character qualifications, including integrity and initiative; and community involvement, including family, church and service club activities.

Lavery was born and raised on a Warren County farm and was graduated from Iowa State University in 1941.

He started building an agri-supply business in the mid-1940s with a portable fanning mill which he designed to clean wheat and oat seed for area farmers and eventually dealers statewide. All the business entities that he currently owns developed from this business: Lavery Elevator Inc., Lavery Sprayers Inc., Lavery Supply Inc., plus a farming operation of seed production and purebred Simmental cattle.

During this time he has remained active in state and community affairs. These include serving as state senator from 1968-72 and serving as a member of the Simpson College Board of Trustees.

The Friends of Agriculture Award is to recognize outstanding contribu-



Charles Lavery

tions of men and women in agriculture. It is sponsored by the Iowa Chapter of National Agri-Marketing Association in cooperation with the Iowa Department of Agriculture.

10-1-84

Take action now to improve pastureland

Now is a good time to make decisions on pasture improvement. If pasture appears overgrazed and weeds are a problem, management needs to start now to improve pastureland for 1985.

Management practices necessary for good weed control also will improve grass production. One of the best ways to improve a bluegrass pasture with a weed problem is to apply liquid nitrogen, tank mixed with one-half pint of 2-4-D per acre.

A rate of not more than 60 pounds of nitrogen is recommended on lighter soils. A 30-pound rate split applied in the spring and fall is best for both grass production and weed control.

Nitrogen and 2-4-D should be applied when the temperature is near 55 degrees. After weeds are controlled, bluegrass pastures can be further improved by interseeding legumes such as birdsfoot-trefoil, alfalfa, clover or other grasses such

as brome grass or orchard grass.

Other management practices to improve pasture production are:

- Don't graze bluegrass or any cool-season grass until it is four to six inches tall in the spring.

- Mow or clip once or twice a year.

- On grass-legume pastures, soil testing is recommended and phosphorus and potash should be applied to help maintain the legume in the stand. Legumes are best if not grazed from Sept. 15 to Oct. 15 to restore root reserves.

- Use electric wire or other fencing and rotate cattle to avoid overgrazing.

- Avoid overstocking. An example would be a well fertilized brome grass pasture may support up to two cows per acre, but unimproved bluegrass pasture with brush and weed problems may require up to five acres per cow.

- Plan a pasture management

system with both warm and cool season grasses for maximum beef production. Warm-season grasses such as switchgrass provide excellent summer pasture.

X The Warren Soil Conservation District wants to promote pasture and hayland management to improve the quality of the resources and reduce soil erosion. It's estimated that about 20,000 acres presently row-crop farmed in Warren County are highly erosive and should be converted to pasture and hayland.

The Warren Soil Conservation District has an interseeder available for use by landowners interested in establishing or improving existing pastures.

~~Fall seeding should be done now~~ and anyone wanting information on pasture improvement is encouraged to contact the Warren Soil Conservation District office at 1206 E. Second Ave. in Indianola at 961-5264.

10-30-85



Roger, Marvin and Ken Kester.

Kester's rye cover methods curb erosion

By John Comer

The hilly topography of Warren County has, for years, been something that farmers have had to contend with. Erosion loss tends to be more severe in this area than in other areas of the state. So what's a farmer to do?

Well, Marvin Kester of RR 3, Carlisle, can tell you that there's more than one way to prevent erosion. Kester has employed a method of no-till farming which uses a rye cover crop on 20 acres of his hilliest land.

As Kester said, "This land has severe sloping and lots of clay. It's hard to work in the spring." To counter these problems, Kester, along with his two sons, Roger and Ken, decided to try the rye cover.

Kester said the idea "just came to him" to try this method, which is gaining usage in Iowa and across the country. The method relies on the planting of the rye in fall. The rye is then sprayed to kill its growth, yet retain the soil. By doing this, the land is much easier to work, and also suffers less erosion in the months of April, May and June, when the corn is too short to provide a canopy.

Kester is pleased with what he's seen so far: "I'm satisfied. But I'd like to impress on people that I'm not advocating no-till for all situations. It's different for every farmer and every field. It worked in this situation."

Soil Conservation Commissioner Dale Faulkner said that he would like to see more of these type of conservation measures employed.

However, he also realizes that with the current farm economy, there is apprehension to try new methods.

These fears can be calmed somewhat by the fact that rye cover methods would not be beyond most farmers' means. He estimated that it would take approximately 1½ bushels of rye seed per acre at a cost of roughly \$5-\$6 a bushel. While by no means cheap, the cost of this isn't great if used only on the hilliest areas, which is what Kester had done.

Kester is also involved in a no-till corn contest sponsored by Chevron Chemical Company. He's been using no-till methods to a certain extent for two years, although he said, "In '83 it was too dry to tell, and last year was the first year for the no-till tillers."

SCS offers loan processing help to FmHA 3-11-85

In response to farmer demand for credit this spring and the backlog of loan applications of the Farmers Home Administration, the U.S. Soil Conservation Service has offered help from its employees.

Late last week, SCS Chief Peter Myers and FmHA Acting Associate Administrator Dwight Calhoun signed an agreement authorizing SCS assistance.

"In response to the need of farmers for credit this spring and the demand for services from FmHA, I have agreed to assist FmHA by making SCS field personnel available to them to help service loan applications," Myers said in a bulletin to all SCS state conservationists. Myers said that SCS will cooperate to the maximum extent possible in helping farmers get necessary credit this spring.

State FmHA Director Robert Pim

and SCS State Conservationist Mike Nethery met on Monday to discuss the role SCS might play in helping process loan applications to help reduce backlogs.

"The soil conservation districts across the state and the Agricultural Stabilization and Conservation Service have already offered clerical help," Nethery said, "so we might

expect soil conservationists to help with some other tasks." Nethery said the help needed will vary by office, and adds that the FmHA will use SCS personnel for jobs they can do without time-consuming training.

Both agencies anticipate the help will be needed most this month, before the spring field work for soil conservation practices begins.

No-till acreage up in 1984

3-685

No-till farming, the "cadillac" of conservation tillage methods for soil conservation purposes, continued rapid growth in Iowa in 1984. Estimates show more than 600,000 acres were no-tilled in 1984, compared to 400,000 in 1983.

"That's a 50 percent increase in a year, and is also six times as much as the acreage in 1980," said Mike Nethery, state conservationist for the USDA Soil Conservation Service. The SCS worked with other agencies in making the survey cooperatively with the National Conservation Tillage Information Center at Fort Wayne, Ind.

The bulk of the acreage was corn, with 522,500 acres planted by no-till. Another 95,500 acres of soybeans were planted by no-till.

"We're pleased to see the increase in this soil-saving practice, and

we're especially pleased that the increase came from all areas of the state," Nethery said. No-till planting is done without disturbing the land, thus leaving the past year's crop residues on the soil surface for soil protection.

Ridge-till, a method of planting on ridges that is gaining in popularity, increased slightly in 1984. The estimate is 227,650 acres in 1984 compared to 220,340 in 1983. Strip-till, a method similar to ridge-till but where the crop is not planted on ridges, was used on 57,000 acres in 1984 compared to 64,380 in 1983.

Mulch tillage, which disturbs the entire soil surface in preparation for planting, was used on 8,388,500 acres in 1984 compared to 8,678,260 in 1983.

Overall, acreages of conservation tillage have been down in Iowa the past two years. SCS agronomist Bob

Dayton attributes the reduced acreage to changes in the reporting requirements and to reduced rowcrop acres with the 1983 PIK program.

Totally, about 9,291,000 acres of corn and soybeans were planted with conservation tillage in 1984. The estimate compares to 9,379,000 acres in 1983.

Dayton points out that a national definition was made of what qualifies as conservation tillage in 1983. "Now, we look at corn and bean fields after planting, and everything we report as conservation tillage has at least 30 percent of the ground covered by the previous year's residue," he said.

National figures currently are being compiled by the Conservation Tillage Information Center.

No-Till Show scheduled at state fairgrounds

The fourth annual Mid-Iowa No-Till Show will be held Thursday and Friday, Jan. 17 and 18, in the 4-H building of the Iowa State Fairgrounds in Des Moines.

Exhibits will be open from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. both days with a speaker program planned from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m.

This year the program includes presentations by 12 farmers with 50 years of combined no-till experience. Topics range from "No-till Double Cropping" to the "Economics of No-Till Farming."

Two Warren County farmers will be on the program. Bruce Brockway of New Virginia will speak on "Planting No-Till Corn in Sod" on Friday afternoon, Jan. 18. Also on Friday, Ray Pehrson of Indianola will speak on "No-

Till Corn and Soybeans in Rye Stubble."

Those attending also will find out how to locate free sources of no-till information, how to modify no-till equipment and how to control weeds in no-till fields.

More exhibits and farmer presentations are expected in this year's event. In addition, a door prize donated by various area agribusinesses will be given away. Admission to the show is free. Families are welcome and food will be available in the building.

The event is sponsored by the Soil Conservation Districts, the Soil Conservation Service and the Extension Service of Boone, Dallas, Jasper, Madison, Marshall, Polk, Story and Warren counties.

No-till show scheduled Jan. 17, 18 at fairgrounds

1-785

Central Iowa farmers looking for detailed information on no-till farming could get a boost Thursday and Friday, Jan. 17 and 18, at the Mid-Iowa No-Till Show in the 4-H Building of the Iowa State Fairgrounds.

"Many agencies, companies and farmers are cooperating on this show," said Keith Glandon, area conservationist for the Soil Conservation Service. "Because of that involvement, we think it's going to be one of the best programs a no-till farmer could attend."

The speaker program will be from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. each day, and exhibits are open from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. Many of the speakers will be central Iowa farmers who

have experience in no-till or ridge-till farming methods. Iowa State University specialists and conservationists are also on the program.

Among the topics to be presented are matching tillage methods to soils, no-till drilled beans, "invisible" erosion, a banker's view of no-till, economics of conservation tillage, fertilizer placement, landlord-tenant no-till agreements, controlling weeds, planting on ridges and modified no-till equipment. Ten speakers are planned for each day.

Central Iowa farmers scheduled to speak include Jerry Johnson, Polk County; Larry Lust, Jasper County; Don

Sandell, Boone County; Francis Howard, Story County; Don McKibben, Marshall County; Dwight Johnston, Marion County; Dave Jacobson, Marshall County; Leon Bos, Polk County; Bill Fjelland, Story County; Bruce Brockway, Warren County; Ray Pehrson, Warren County; and Bob Morris, Dallas County.

Sponsors of the show are the soil conservation districts, Soil Conservation Service and Extension Service of Boone, Dallas, Jasper, Madison, Marion, Marshall, Polk, Story and Warren counties. More information on the program and exhibitors is available from any of those offices.

6-10-85

Soil Conservation Districts announce '85 photo contest

The Warren County Soil Conservation District is sponsoring a photo contest.

The colored snapshot must depict soil conservation in Warren County. Contestants may enter as many colored snapshots as desired and the Warren Soil District will request the three winners' negatives.

Prizes for the contest are \$50 for first place, \$35 for second and \$15 for third. Anyone may enter.

The deadline for the contest is Sept. 30. The Warren Soil District will take entries anytime between now and Sept. 30 at 1206 E. Second Ave., USDA building, east on Highway 92.

Soil District holds photo contest

The Warren Soil Conservation District held a photo contest viewing soil conservation practices in the county.

The winners were: first place,

Jason Wachter of Milo; second place, Lynda Richards of Hartford; and third place Marilea Chase of Milo. They received checks for \$50, \$35, and \$15, respectively. Henry

10-30-85
Staubus and Jim Middleswart served as judges.

The winners' photos will be displayed in the Soil Conservation Service office.

is to recognize outstanding contribu-

Agriculture.

Soil Conservation District sponsoring photo contest

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Several recognized for service to community 11-27-85

Several area residents were recognized for special service to the community at the annual Indianola Chamber of Commerce banquet Friday night.

Indianola Librarian Charles Ginter was given the chamber's employee of the year award, while the volunteer of the year award was presented to Record-Herald Publisher Georgia Voysey.

Barb Overton and Bob and Ardene Downing were honored with the Distinguished Service

Award bestowed annually by Simpson College.

Chamber President Jane Whalen presented a plaque of appreciation to Judy Porter who served as interim director while the chamber was deciding its future direction.

The Iowa Soil Conservation award for good soil stewardship went to Dean and Willis VanderLinden of Milo. Willis and wife Ruth were present to accept the award from O.R. Pehrson, chairman of the Warren County Soil Conservation District.

In nominating Ginter as employee of the year, Fred Evans said he had provided a special brand of leadership during construction of a new library. He spent many personal hours helping to educate the public on the need for a new facility, raise money and oversee details of construction, wrote Evans.

"A more dedicated and conscientious public servant and steward of the public interest is hard to imagine," Evans said.

In nominating Voysey as volunteer of the

year, Pam Merritt said she was the kind of person who has the "ability to step into a job, organization, even a community and see its strengths and weaknesses in the broad picture and then make the commitment to apply her talent and resources to help that community build on those strengths."

Simpson President Bob McBride said Bob

RECOGNITION
Continued on Page 7A

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Wednesday, November 27, 1985



Bob and Ardene Downing, Simpson Distinguished Service Award.



Charles Ginter, employee of the year.



Barb Overton, Simpson Distinguished Service Award.

Scholarships available for workshops

The Warren County Soil Conservation District will provide scholarships of \$75 each for two teachers from Warren County to attend the Outlook Environmental Education Enrichment Workshop in June at Springbrook Conservation Education Center near Guthrie Center. The deadline for pre-registration is May 15.

If any teacher from Warren County plans to attend this workshop, notify the Warren Soil District office, 1206 E. Second, USDA building east on Highway 92, (phone 961-5264) by May 1.

1-30-85

Final sign-up for 'Slough Bill' is April 15

Final sign-up date for tax exemptions under the "Slough Bill" is April 15. The Warren Soil Conservation District is taking applications.

Iowa House File 2351, known as the "Slough Bill," provides property tax exemptions for wetlands, native prairies, timber, all sizes of streams and their banks, grasslands, recreational lakes and other forms of

wildlife habitat. The bill is intended to improve wildlife habitat and decrease soil erosion throughout Iowa.

Participants in the program this year will have no tax obligations for these areas in 1986.

Priorities for tax exemptions for the slough bill include open prairie, forest cover, river and stream or

river and stream banks, wetlands and recreational lakes. Applications for the county will be accepted for not more than 3,000 acres in any one year and not more than 50 percent in any one category.

If you have any questions regarding the program call 961-5264.



Essay winners

Ray Pehrson (left), chairperson of the Warren County Soil Commission, presented the winners of the Warren County Soil Conservation District essay contest. They are (from left) Garrett Davey, first, Scott Mitchell, second, and Wendy Penick, third. All are from the Southeast Warren area.

SEW students sweep soil essay awards

6-10-82

The Warren County Soil Conservation District sponsored an essay contest on May 13. The title of the essays were, "Clean Water — What is the Answer?"

The winners of the contest were first place, Garrett Davey, son of Mr. and Mrs. Leo Davey; second place, Scott Mitchell, son of Mr. and Mrs. Don Mitchell; and third place,

Wendy Penick, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Gary Penick.

All students are from Southeast Warren High School and received \$25 first place, \$15 second place, and \$10 third place awards plus certificates.

Davey's essay has advanced to regional competition with 10 other soil districts in south-central Iowa.

Soil essay contest under way

3-11-85

The Warren County Soil Conservation District is sponsoring a 1985 Soil Conservation Essay contest open to students in the county.

The contest includes a junior division (grades six, seven and eight) and a senior division (grades 10, 11 and 12).

The title of the essay, "Clean Water — What is the Answer?" must not exceed 500 words. Prizes for each division will be \$25 for first place, \$15 for second and \$10 for third.

Entries should be in the SCS office, USDA building, 1206 E. Second Ave. in Indianola, no later than May 10.

For more information, contact the Soil Conservation Service office at 961-5264.

Soil Stewardship Week! **scheduled for May 12-19**

5385

"Tomorrow Together" is the theme for Soil Stewardship Week to be observed May 12-19 in Iowa and throughout the nation.

The week is observed annually to emphasize society's responsibility to protect and conserve soil, water and other natural resources, said Min Amemiya, Iowa State University Extension agronomist. He said the thrust of this year's observance is based on the premise that "we can't return to the good ol' days.

"We face the continuing challenge of making wiser decisions concerning the use of our land and water resources," Amemiya said. "The luxury of having unlimited soil and water resources to be used indiscriminately no longer exists."

For the past 31 years, leaders from Iowa's 100 soil

conservation districts, part of more than 3,000 districts across the nation, have participated in the week's activities, Amemiya said. The prime concern of conservation districts, involved clergy and lay leaders is to encourage citizens to participate in the Soil Stewardship Week programs.

"Maintaining our capacity to renew food and fiber supplies for future generations is an important task," Amemiya said. "We must not lose sight of the need to protect our capacity to meet human needs on a continuing basis."

Conservation measures are accomplished with assistance from federal and state agencies working with landowners through soil conservation districts.

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Shoulder-high switchgrass

Pete Grissom surveys his 48-acre stand of switchgrass located on Scotch Valley Farms in northern Warren County. Grissom and his partner, Max TenHagen, planted the stand three years ago. They burned the stand in early spring and

fertilized it with 50 pounds of liquid nitrogen and three pounds of Atrazine. The native prairie grass has grown to a height of more than five feet this summer.

RHT staff photo by Todd Clark

Farmers switch to switchgrass for forage

Durability, high yield make it attractive

By Todd Clark

Hundreds of years before pioneers moved west and began to settle the plains of the Midwest, switchgrass grew rampant over the plains of Iowa.

And though much of the native prairie grass fell victim to progress when farmers plowed the land for row crops, switchgrass is making a comeback of sorts right here in Warren County.

Switchgrass is a native prairie grass that grows in bunches and matures during the late summer months. This last feature is drawing increasing attention from farmers such as Pete Grissom.

Grissom farms in northern Warren County, where he is in a livestock partnership with Max TenHagen. The two raise Angus cattle on the Scotch Valley Farms and Grissom leases about 600 acres for row crops. The remaining 500 acres is in pastureland, and in a 48-acre plot, Grissom and TenHagen have established a stand of switchgrass.

They developed the stand three years ago after TenHagen heard about the good forage prospects of the grass. The two purchased seed from The Bluestem Seed Co. in Missouri.

Thus far, Grissom has been quite pleased with the young stand, although he admits raising the grass is a new experience for him.

"I really don't know what to think about it yet," said Grissom. "It's still very new to us. We planted it

three years ago this spring. The first year we didn't do anything to it and the second year we spread 3,000 pounds of seed over it. This year we combined it and got 100 pounds of seed per acre."

The fact that switchgrass matures late in the year drew Grissom to it. "It's a hot-weather grass," he said. "It will produce a lot of feed for cows in July and August. Bluegrass is burned up that time of the year. But the switchgrass thrives — even without rain."

Grissom had hoped to get a crop of hay out of the stand this season, but he underestimated how fast it grew. By the time he found time to harvest it, the heads had sprouted and the grass was too big.

Switchgrass is a relatively low-maintenance crop as well. Grissom applied three pounds of Atrazine and 50 pounds of liquid nitrogen this spring to help keep foxtail in check. But as the stand develops, Grissom doesn't believe the fertilizer will be necessary annually.

"We used it basically to get the stand established," Grissom said. "But I think you'll only need the fertilizer every other year once the stand gets established. It grew on the prairie for hundreds of years and nobody fertilized it."

A yearly burning is also part of its maintenance, which can be a real touch-and-go situation. The grass should be burned in early spring — around late March or early April — before it starts to shoot.

When Grissom burned the grass

this spring, he almost didn't make it out of the field. "We drug a burning burlap bag behind a pickup down the south edge," said Grissom. "Then we went up the west side, over the north edge and back down the east side to establish a back fire. We came within about 30 seconds of getting trapped."

Switchgrass can be used to combat erosion. It grows in bunches and the roots intertwine to establish a good anchor mat for fragile soil. "And there is nothing better for wildlife," Grissom said.

Grissom recommends switchgrass for other farmers, but a certain amount of planning is necessary. "You want to have enough to graze cattle for about eight weeks during July and August," he said. "You also want to plan your stand so that it's fenced and the cows can get to it easily. But you can't get too worried if your stand isn't the best the first year."

The grass is drawing a growing number of followers across the state. In a survey distributed by the Iowa Conservation Commission, 32 of 37 cooperators who participated in the switchgrass cost-share program responded.

Seventy-five percent rated switchgrass as "good to excellent" as a grazing forage crop. Sixty-six percent of the responders planned to continue their current acreage and would highly recommend switchgrass to other landowners as forage. Seventy-five percent of those responding also felt that switchgrass provides a good wildlife habitat.



Sworn in

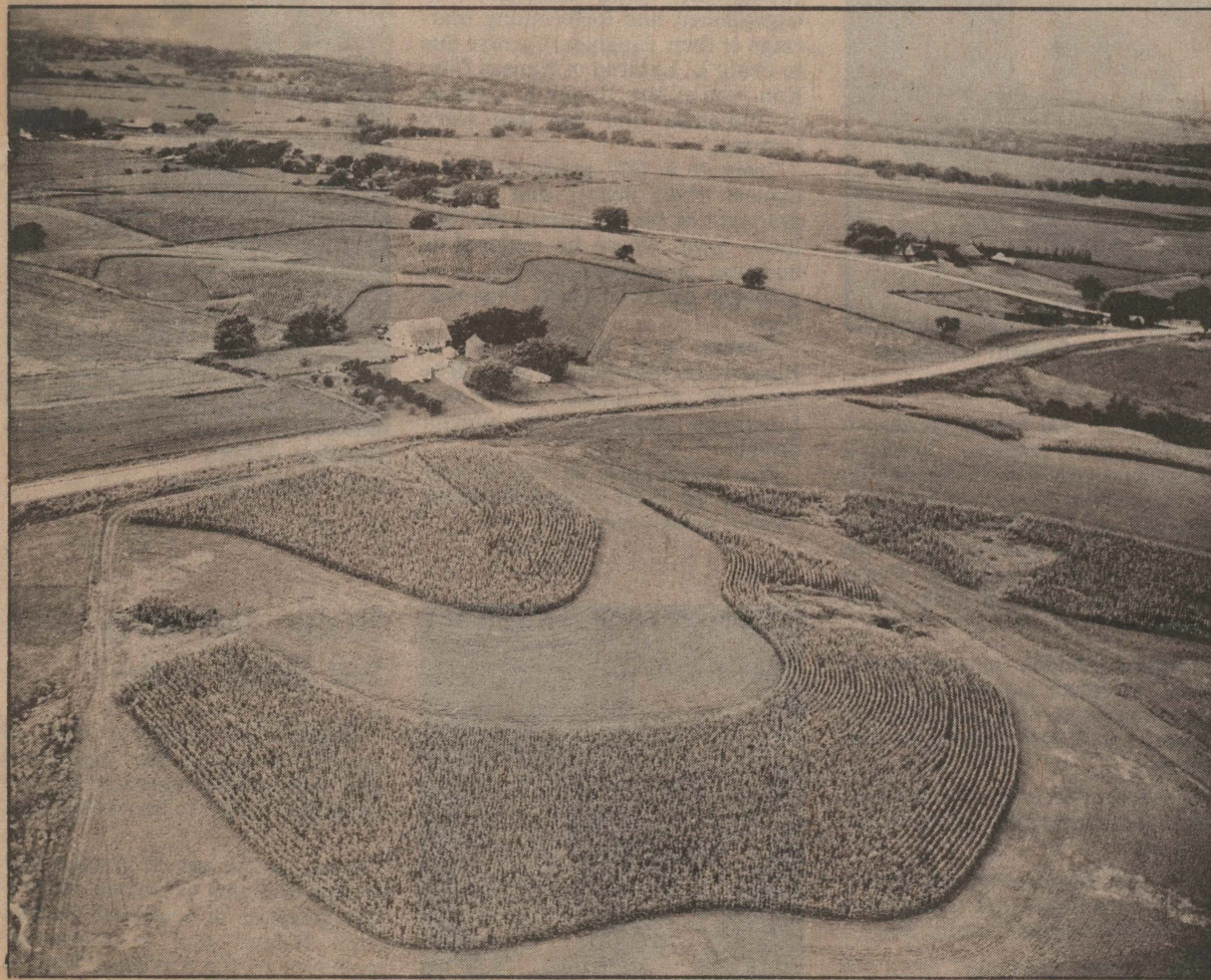
Four newly elected Warren County officials were sworn in Jan. 2. Judge Morris Herrick read the oath of office to supervisor Bill Anders, Liberty Center, auditor Beverly Dickerson, Indianola, supervisor John McKee, Carlisle, and

soil commissioner O. Ray Pehrson, Indianola. Arlan Becker, Milo, was also elected soil commissioner, but was not sworn in until later that day.

RHT staff photo by Mark Davitt



The Record-Herald and Indianola Tribune
Wednesday, July 17, 1985



The Arlie Tillotson farm near Martensdale

Tillotson farm nominated for award

The Arlie Tillotson farm two miles south of Martensdale has been nominated by the Warren Soil Conservation District for the Outstanding Forage Producer Award.

The Iowa Forage and Grassland Council is sponsoring the Awards Program to recognize farmers who are managing and utilizing forages in soil conservation programs.

Tillotson has maintained his contour strip-cropping system since 1955. He also was one of the first farmers in Warren County to renovate pastureland with Birdsfoot Trefoil.

Soil to be featured during wildlife week

3-11-85

This year, National Wildlife Week holds special significance for Iowans. Being celebrated March 17-23, the week features soil and its importance.

"In Iowa, I think we have a special understanding of what the soil means to us," said Jim Murphy, president of the Iowa Wildlife Federation. "We're happy to see this year's national theme of 'Soil—We Can't Grow Without It'."

Murphy said the Iowa Wildlife Federation is distributing 15,000 educational packets to Iowa schools. The packets include background information on soils, a glossary, a 16-picture poster, learning activities for all grade levels and an educator's guide.

The IWF also is sponsoring a poster contest on the importance of

soil. National Wildlife Week, sponsored by the NWF and state affiliates, began in 1938 by proclamation of President Franklin Roosevelt.

"Since that time, we've intended for it to be an occasion for more public education on important natural resource concerns," said Murphy. "This year's theme is especially appropriate because it

coincides with the 50th anniversary of the founding of the Soil Conservation Service by President Roosevelt."

SCS helped develop the educational materials for this year's packet and is helping tie National Wildlife Week to soil conservation educational efforts.

"We know landowners make the decisions on the land that affect

wildlife habitat and wildlife," said Dale Faulkner, district conservationist for the SCS in Warren County. "Soil conservation and wildlife go hand in hand. A good soil conservationist is usually a promoter and provider for wildlife, too. We see the tie of the two in our daily work, and we're delighted the wildlife federation has chosen to feature soils this year."

8-11-86

Candidates sought for Soil Conservation Commissioner

The terms of two Warren County Soil Conservation District Commissioners, Marvin Mahr Jr. of Indianola (East Lincoln Township) and Ben Kern of Norwalk (Linn Township), will expire at noon Jan. 1, 1987. Successors will be elected at the general election Nov. 4, 1986.

Any qualified elector residing in Warren County is eligible for the office of commissioner.

No more than one commissioner

may be a resident of any one township. Incumbent commissioners are Ray Pehrson, Otter Township; Dick Davitt, Washington Township; and Arlan Becker, Belmont Township. Therefore, residents of these townships would not be eligible for office at this time.

Prospective candidates seeking the office of soil conservation district commissioner must file nomination petitions in the same

manner as for other elective positions at the general election, but no political party is designated. Nomination petitions can be obtained from the County Auditor.

These petitions, signed by 25 eligible electors, must be filed with the County Auditor at the Warren County Courthouse no later than 5 p.m. Sept. 10, 1986.

Individuals elected in November

1986 will serve a term of six years commencing Jan. 1, 1987. Soil conservation district commissioners serve without salary and guide the overall soil and water conservation program in the county. For more information about the responsibilities of a commissioner, contact the Warren County Soil Conservation District Office, 1206 E. Second Ave., Indianola, phone 961-5264.



Photo by MaryBette Slusarski

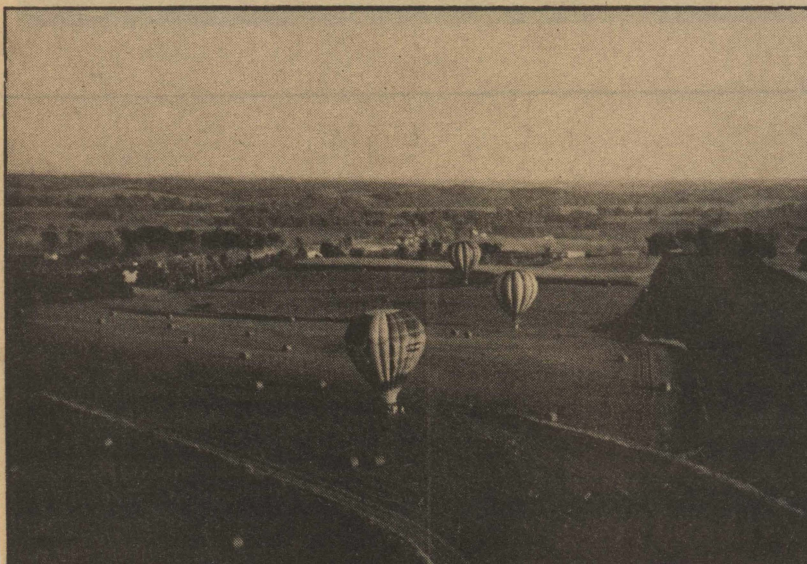


Photo by Marc Faulkner

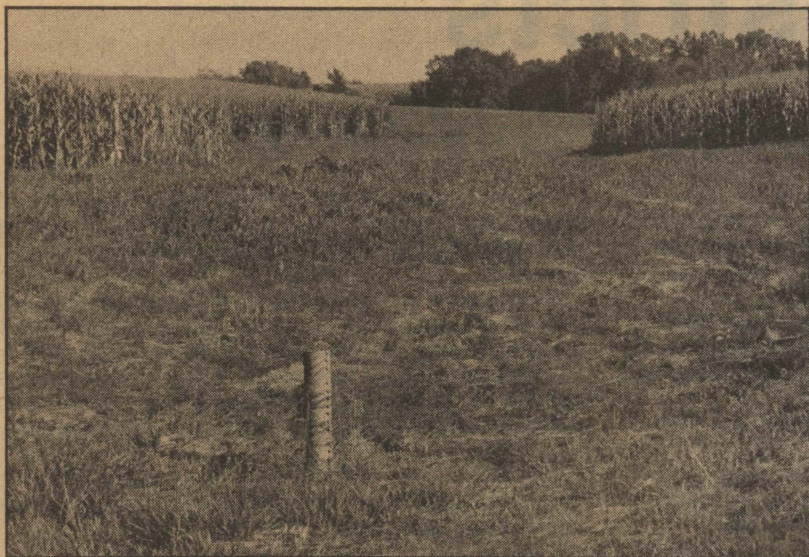


Photo by Dave Grissom

Conservation winners

Winners of the Warren County Conservation District photography contest have been announced. The winners are, MaryBette Slusarski of Ackworth, first place; Marc Faulkner of Indianola, second place; Dave Grissom of Milo, third place. The photographs will be on display at the district office.

9-15-86

Study shows high cost of sedimentation

Soil erosion on farm fields is costly because of lowered agricultural production, but the eroded soil that is dumped downstream may be even more costly, an Iowa study shows.

The study, called "Off-Site Costs of Erosion," estimates sediment damage in Iowa at more than \$47 million a year.

"We're looking at costs of cleaning sediment out of drainageways and road ditches, loss of recreation value in our streams and lakes, extra costs for treating drinking water--costs that we can get some kind of estimate on," according to Mike Nethery, Soil Conservation Service state conservationist.

The SCS heads an interagency team that began gathering cost data 1985.

"We've always known there were downstream costs associated with soil erosion," Nethery said, "but this is the first time we've made a concentrated effort to get specific damage estimates."

The Center for Agricultural and Rural Development (CARD) at Iowa State University gathered cost data from county engineers, state agencies, city water treatment officials and others, and is analyzing and projecting estimates statewide.

Preliminary results estimate the annual damage at more than \$47 million: \$22 million to transportation; \$10 million to recreation, fish and wildlife; \$1 million to municipal

water supplies; and more than \$13 million to agricultural land because of sediment buildup and blocked drainage.

"But those estimates tell only part of the story," Nethery said. "They represent current annual expenses to ease the problems, not eliminate them. In most cases, at least twice as much should be spent to correct the problems."

Nethery said road culvert cleanout by counties is done on a priority basis. Only the most severe cases are addressed.

The \$47 million, mostly public funds, is more than is being spent each year to control soil erosion in Iowa. Federal, state and county cost-share funds are about \$15 million a year, or a third of the amount being spent trying to ease sediment problems.

"Sediment damage affects each of us," Nethery said. "Money is a concern because it usually takes tax dollars to ease the problems. But there are also aesthetic problems with sediment. We don't want to swim in a muddy lake or stream, or even picnic by one. As our lakes fill with sediment, we lose the capacity of the lake. The problems go on and on."

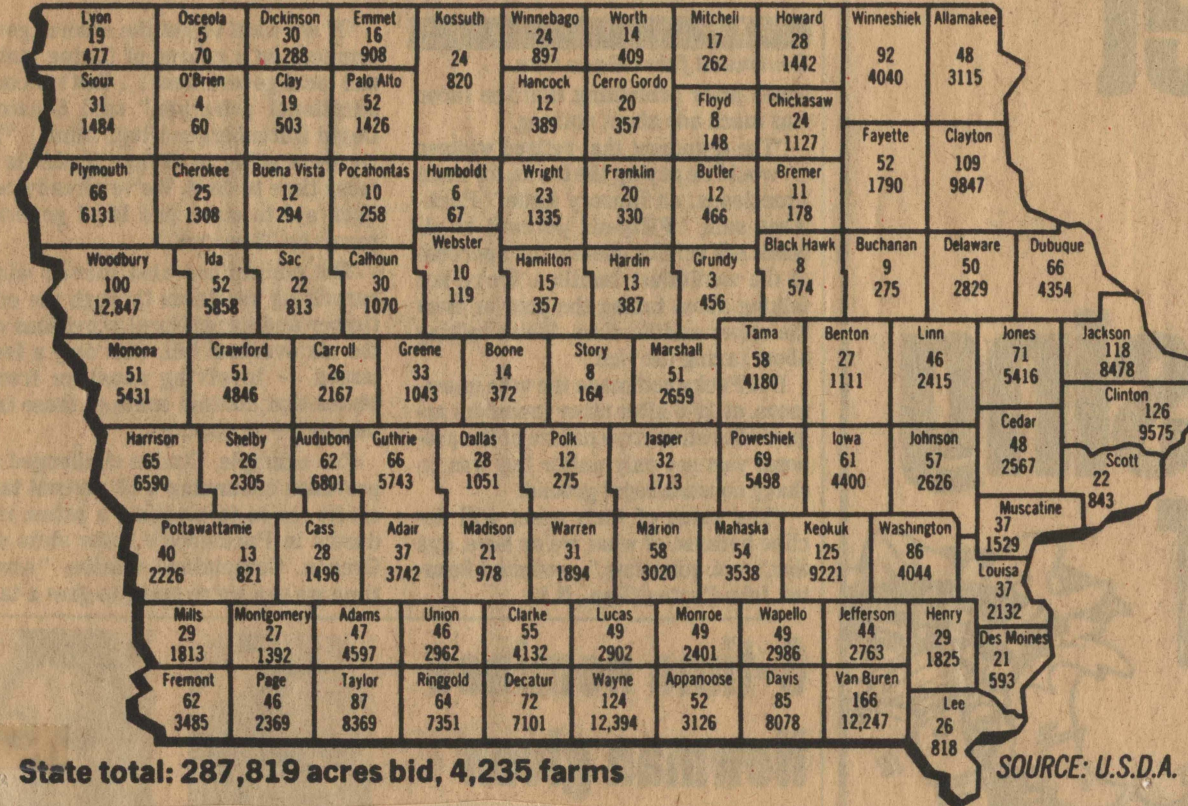
The study, to be completed later this year, details the kinds of damage caused by sediment and estimates dollar amounts for specific problems.

Iowa Conservation Reserve Signup

REGISTER MAP BY LOREN DOPPENBERG

Top figure: Number of farms submitting bids

Bottom figure: Acres of land bid



State total: 287,819 acres bid, 4,235 farms

SOURCE: U.S.D.A.

Six million acres in state designated highly erodible

SOIL

Continued from Page One

first major multi-year cropland retirement program to be made available in several years. Provisions establishing the reserve were a part of the 1985 farm bill.

In Iowa, seven counties received 100 or more bids. They are Van Buren (166), Clinton (126), Keokuk (125), Wayne (124), Jackson (118), Clayton (109) and Woodbury (100).

Woodbury County farmers offered to idle the most land — 12,847 acres. Wayne County was second with 12,394 acres, while Van Buren was in third with 12,247 acres.

The smallest number of farmer bids came in Grundy County, where only three were submitted. Other counties with fewer than 10 bids were O'Brien (4); Osceola (5); Humboldt (6); Floyd, Black Hawk and Story, all with eight bids; followed by Buchanan, with nine. The smallest amount of acreage was in O'Brien, where only 60 acres was submitted, followed by Humboldt, with 67 acres.

Iowa led the Corn Belt States in total bids submitted, with 4,235. Missouri led in the amount of land offered, 316,154 acres, followed by Iowa with 287,819 acres. Here are the bids for some other major farm states: Minnesota — 3,303 bids, 274,000 acres; Nebraska — 2,153 bids, 226,515 acres; Illinois — 2,618 bids, 219,700 acres; Kansas — 2,100 bids, 174,000 acres, and Indiana — 1,481 bids, 61,900 acres.

After the U.S. Department of Agriculture determines which bids will be accepted, a second round of bids will be accepted with a new enrollment period for farmers and land-owners by early summer. Annual enrollments will be held through 1990 in this program, with a goal of removing 40 million to 45 million acres of erodible cropland from production.

No-till farming: Keeping raindrops where they fall

By Danny Rund

There aren't many things that aggravate George Fischer, but farmers who elect to plow up their land following their harvest is one of them.

For this reason, Fischer, who farms north and east of Norwalk, will be one of 10 central Iowa farmers who will lecture about the hazards of fall plowing and other soil destroyers at the 1986 Mid-Iowa No-till Show. The two-day show is scheduled for Jan. 16-17 at the Iowa State Fairgrounds in Des Moines.

Fischer, 60, has been no-till farming for about 10 years, but his devotion toward soil conservation has roots which reach back into his childhood. And to him, it's like keeping the raindrops where they fall.

"I remember when I was just a kid, cultivating corn behind a team of mules," Fischer said. "I'd ride over these ditches in the field and say to myself 'where's the soil going? It has to be going somewhere.'"

"As I grew up, I always kind of wondered about it. But in those days, soil conservation was just in its infancy, and folks weren't too concerned about saving the soil."

According to Fischer, several things have come along which have helped the plight of the American farmer. But, on the other hand, Fischer says, man has invented other things which, on the outside, appear to be useful tools, but on the inside, have stolen something from the farmer which can't and won't be replaced in their lifetimes.

"In my estimation, the mold board plow has cost Iowa at least half of its topsoil in the last two generations," he said. "As I see it, there's no scientific reason to justify plowing, in the fall or anytime."

"Mother Nature never plowed the soil, so why should man? That's the thing; our soil was a relatively undisturbed commodity until man came along, and now our topsoil is almost gone. The mold board plow is the farmers' worst enemy."

But getting farmers to reject this

practice is more easily said than done. But what's done, is done, and Fischer said the time is here to start thinking about the future.

"I believe in preserving the land for our grandchildren," said Fischer. "It's unfortunate, but most farmers are in such a financial bind these days that they have to squeeze every bit they can out of the ground just to pay the bills, and I don't think that's right."

"I've got neighbors who say I'm a terrible farmer, but they're entitled to their own opinion, and I'm entitled to mine."

"I've strained some friendships because I'm an outspoken advocate of no-till farming. Farmers who plow in the fall ought to be penalized; it should be mandatory."

Fischer said Iowa farmers are the last of the Midwesterners to catch on to the positive reasons for no-till farming, not just because they're farming more acres today than in the past, but because they have more to lose.

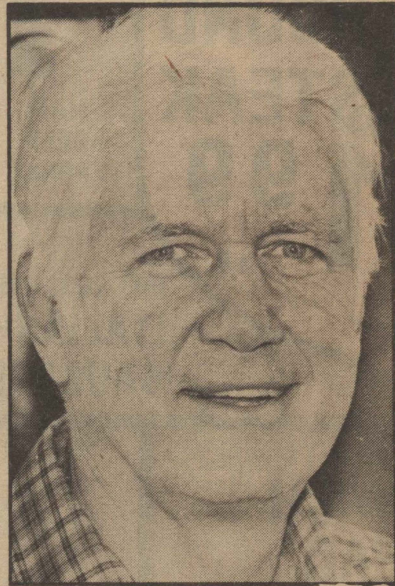
It's Fischer's opinion that the advantages of no-till vastly outweigh any of its disadvantages.

According to Fischer, the No. 1 advantage is soil conservation, followed by time and fuel savings and less horsepower needed to finish the job.

He said a farmer should be able to put in a crop for less than a gallon of fuel per acre. Fewer trips across the fields also mean a huge reduction in soil compaction. He says compaction is becoming "the foremost and biggest problem facing agriculture today."

Non-tilled soil tends to hold more moisture than tilled fields. "You conserve an awful lot of moisture with no-till," he said. "We got only 3½ inches of rainfall this year on our farm, and where the neighbors were complaining about no rain, we still had plenty of moisture."

Fischer said the old wives tale that the frost takes care of compaction problems is just that — an old wives tale. He says the University of Minnesota has studied compaction and



George Fischer

found frost does not reverse it.

Another key to no-till is the mulch on top of the soil. Fischer said this residue not only helps hold moisture, but it impedes weed population and also prevents soil erosion.

Disadvantages include speed and time. If the farmer drives faster than five miles per hour he'll have problems.

Farmers also have to plant a higher population of seed, perhaps 1,000-2,000 more plants per acre.

But is it too late to save what topsoil is left? Fischer says no, but trying to bring back what's gone is impossible.

"What's gone, is gone," he said. "Trying to replace what's gone is like trying to find the Fountain of Youth for an old man."

"You can't make an old man young again, and you can't replace the topsoil that's gone. From that aspect, yes, it's too late."

Fischer said at least 50 percent of our topsoil has been lost in the last two generations, but hinted the most has been lost since the boom period following World War II.

"The earth is our birthright," he said. "Those who work the soil in the fall are wantonly allowing our topsoil to disappear into the winter air and spring rains."

"These people are truly taking the bread out of our grandchildren's breadbasket. And they should be severely punished or put in jail."

No-Till Show to focus on farming for profit

Farming with a profit is the focus of the 1986 Mid-Iowa No-Till Show, to be held Jan. 16 and 17 at the Iowa State Fairgrounds in Des Moines.

Ten central Iowa farmers and three Iowa State University specialists are scheduled to speak on various aspects of no-till farming. The two-day show will feature talks on the economics of no-till farming, including drilling soybeans, slot-planting on ridges, soil compaction, fertilizer placement, "regenerative" farming, and weed control.

The speaking program will be from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. each day. Machinery and chemical exhibits will be open from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. The show will be in the 4-H building in the southwest corner of the fairgrounds.

Speakers scheduled include Larry Lust, Jasper County; Brad Fox, Dallas County; Ben Kern, Warren County; Steve Jennings, Story County; Rick Kruse, ISU; Ron Friedrichson, Polk County; Craig Fleishman, Dallas County; Sorrel Brown, Extension Service; George

Fischer, Warren County; Richard Thompson, Boone County; Mike Owen, ISU; Will Prather, Marion County; and Don McKibben, Marshall County.

Master of ceremonies include Rod Swoboda, Wallaces Farmer; Keith

Kirkpatrick, WHO Radio; and Don Muhm, Des Moines Register.

No-till farming, involving a method of planting without tilling, has grown rapidly in Iowa. The acreage is now eight times what it was in 1980.



No-till tour

Farmers inspect a no-till planter during a conservation tillage tour sponsored June 23 by the Warren County Soil Conservation District. Stops on the tour included the Edwin and Allen Henry

farm, Poverty Hollow farm operated by Kevin Graham and the Carpenter Trust farm operated by Tom Hanks.

Submitted photo

8-11-86

Candidates sought for Soil Conservation Commissioner

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Prospective candidates seeking the office of soil conservation district commissioner must file nomination petitions in the same

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Terrace funds available

9-24-86

The Warren County Soil Conservation District has funds available for terrace projects. Landowners can receive up to 50 percent of the total cost for tiling, installing intakes and earthmoving.

The Conservation District is promoting narrow base-type terraces. These terraces can be built for approximately half the cost of conventional grassed backslope terraces,

making it possible to protect twice the amount of land for the same cost.

Lake Ahquabi funds are available until Oct. 1 at 75 percent of the total cost for tiling, installing intakes and earthmoving.

If you are planning a terracing project this fall, contact the Warren Soil Conservation District Office, USDA Building, 1206 E. Second Ave., Indianola.

Warren County Soil Conservation District wins award

17-2-86

Warren County Soil Conservation District was one of four Iowa Soil Conservation District grand award winners at the 39th annual Goodyear Conservation Awards program.

The other winners were Linn Soil Conservation District and Plymouth Soil Conservation in the northern section of Iowa and East Pottawattamie Soil Conservation District in the southern section.

The Iowa districts were among the 106 top prize winners nationwide in the competitions sponsored by The Goodyear Tire and Rubber Company in cooperation with the Na-

tional Association of Conservation Districts (NACD).

An independent judging committee of state agricultural leaders selected the winners on the basis of the districts' accomplishments in soil and water conservation, according to Ray Oviatt, awards program director.

Ray Pehrson will represent the Warren Soil Conservation District on the grand awards tour, an expenses-paid, vacation-study trip in December to the Wigwam Country Club resort. Litchfield Park, Ariz. Mr. Pehrson will be joined by

representatives of the other winning districts from throughout the United States.

The grand award-winning districts also will receive plaques recognizing their achievements in presentations at a meeting of the Iowa Association of Soil Conservation District Commissioners. In addition, plaques will be presented to the outstanding cooperators selected by all of the competing districts in the state.

Agriculture is the industry America can count on

The U.S. is continually falling behind in world trade and industry. U.S. companies are losing markets to such countries as Japan and other quickly developing industrial nations. Foreign competition is making it even more difficult for American manufacturers to sell their own products in their own country, not to mention the difficulties for these companies to sell abroad.

There is one industry the U.S. can depend on. The largest and most important industry in the world, agriculture. As Lee Iacocca quoted his father as saying, "When times are tough, be in the food business, because no matter how bad things get, people shall have to eat." Not only does agriculture provide food items that can be easily marketed

within the U.S., but those which can be marketed in foreign nations where the land cannot produce enough crops for these countries to be independent in food production.

Agriculture is the key to the U.S.'s future and as Iowans know, conservation is the key to agriculture. Henry Wallace said it best. "The nation that destroys its soil destroys itself."

Iowans must realize that good soils exist across the Earth. In areas of Russia, Germany, South America, China, and indeed in other states of the U.S. as well. In short, Iowa doesn't have a monopoly, by any stretch of the imagination, on good soil.

Water is an important factor too. The rivers and streams of Iowa are the major source of our water supp-

ly. In Iowa streamflow is a direct result of rainfall and as we all know the rainfall is unpredictable for an entire growing season. This is why the Iowa government invests in dams and reservoirs to store and save water until it is needed.

It is only through the conservation of our soil and water that we can provide a better future for ourselves!

John Goodhue of Carlisle, son of Darrell and Eve Goodhue, received first place in the 1987 Warren County Conservation essay contest on "Soil and Water — Key to Our Future." He is in the seventh grade.

Computer to help plan erosion control systems

EROSION

Continued from Page 14

insurance and things like that."

The SCS concentrates its efforts on helping farmers manage land already in production. "If land's marginal, the easiest thing to do is follow the contour when farming," said Faulkner. "That's a little tougher these days because of the large machinery. Also there's reduced tilling and no till farming.

"Following rotation is another way. Planting oats and hay, getting out of row crops is very helpful. I don't know what it is about soybeans, but they break up the soil and make it more erodible."

Faulkner said the SCS plays a role in helping farmers control erosion and it plans to expand its role over the next decade.

"We help plan conservation systems, giving guidelines based on erodibility," he said. "Supposedly by 1995, all farmers will have to have approved plans with us. Nobody's ever going to be locked into something for the rest of their life; it's open

to change.

"It will increase the workload of our office. We've got a computer coming in June or July, and it'll analyze what we'll feed it on composition and slope and show options in planting."

Additionally, the SCS office has plans and supplemental funding — up to \$3,500 — available for farmers who would like to work their land to make it less erodible.

"Our priority is terracing and ponds, so we're looking at gully control structures and farm ponds," said Faulkner.

His office wants to help farmers in planning such projects.

"We want workload," he said.

"Soil conservation practices help the land, that's the main reason," said Luther Middleswart, who farms about 210 acres in White Oak Township, and has had extensive terracing done to his land.

"We're saving the farmland for future generations. Besides, it's something we'll be forced to do if we don't do it ourselves. With the combination of farm prices and everything else, we couldn't do without it."

'We're saving farmland for future generations. Besides, it's something we'll be forced to do if we don't do it ourselves.'

— Luther Middleswart



Middleswart had grass-backed terraces designed for lands with a low slope. He stands next to the drainage tile on one of his terraces.

Fifth conservation sign up announced

A fifth sign-up period has been announced for the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Conservation Reserve Program (CRP), and it runs through July 31. The 1987-88 signup will be at the Agricultural Stabilization and Conservation Service county offices.

The CRP is a USDA program that asks landowners to "bid in" their highly erodible cropland and receive annual rental payments for 10 years for converting the cropland to grass or trees.

The CRP has a five-year sign-up period. The first two years have been funded. However, the funding for the next three years must be appropriated and USDA officials say there is no assurance on future signups.

Mike Nethery, state conservationist for the Soil Conservation Service in Iowa, said, "Landowners should consider all factors in making their decisions. If they are interested in a CRP contract, they should get enrolled in this next signup. There are no guarantees there will be another signup."

Nethery said landowners should use the CRP as a way to stay eligible for other USDA programs. By 1990 land users will need an approved conservation plan on highly erodible land. All soil conservation practices called for in the plan must be installed by 1995 to maintain eligibility.

"The CRP is a worthwhile option to address soil saving needs on highly erodible soils," he said.

The maximum acres a county can enroll in CRP is 25 percent of its cropland acres. Decatur, Ringgold, Taylor and Wayne counties are getting close to their limits and may be limiting new contracts.

Producers wishing to put land into the program can receive cost-share payments of up to 50 percent of the cost to establish a cover crop. The total amount of rental payments for any fiscal year may not exceed \$50,000, or its equivalent if in-kind payments are made.

The land that goes to CRP may not be grazed or mechanically harvested during the 10 year contract.



Conservation sign-up is underway

The fifth Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) sign-up will begin July 20 and end July 31, Connie J. Kinser, Warren County ASCS Executive Director has announced.

Warren County farmers may submit bids for land to go into the 10-year reserve program during that period. Farmers have two options in the coming bidding period, but bids for a particular piece of land cannot be submitted for both options.

The first option is to bid to be a part of the 1987 program to be effective beginning the date a Commodity Credit Corporation (CCC) representative signs the agreement.

The second option is a 1988 program agreement which would be effective beginning, at the latest, Oct. 1, the date the 1987 crop is harvested or when a CC representative signs the agreement.

Kinser said there will be no bonus annual rental payments on land during the fifth sign-up period and that the agreement will be amended in the near future to incorporate a new annual wildlife food plot practice.

Dale Faulkner, director conservationist, said people with eroding land should consider the Conservation Reserve Program because the Food Security Act requires a conservation plan be developed by 1990 and be implemented by 1995.

Kinser said the establishment of permanent vegetative cover is being relaxed to allow for the establishment later during the contract period where existing vegetative cover, either tame or native species, will continue to adequately control erosion until an approved cover can be established more economically with cost-share assistance.

An interim rule will soon go into effect that will amend the highly erodible land eligibility criteria and change the liquidated damages provisions for future agreements.

Land designated for 1988 may not be grazed after Oct. 1. Gleaning for 1987 grain or crop residue is considered part of the harvesting operation.

For agreements effective this year, no harvesting, including haying, for crop year 1987 shall have occurred on the designated areas.

The maximum acceptable rental rates will again be established by the Secretary of Agriculture as soon as possible after all offers have been evaluated at the national level. The maximum acceptable rental rate will limit bid acceptances as will the maximum 25 percent limitation for individual counties.

For the 1987 programs, land

designated in other programs may not be designated for the CRP. Land devoted to a program crop that is signed up under the annual commodity program cannot be harvested and must be disposed of by the latest of the following: disposition date for the crop, before the crop reaches the hard dough stage for small grains and 10 days after the agreement is accepted unless the producer requests a waiver and is granted an extension.

Producers wanting in the 1987 CRP may withdraw from CC-477 without liability for liquidated damages. They may also revise CCC-477 to reflect the reduced CABs. The operator must dispose of any crops planted exceeding the permitted acreage and, if necessary, revise ASC-578.

Producers are not eligible to receive CRP payments and FCIC payments on the same land. Land designated under a 1987 CRP that was devoted to a crop for which 1987 FCIC payments are made is eligible for CRP only if the FCIC payment is refunded. Producers are not eligible to receive CRP payments and deficiency payments for failed acres on the same land.

Farmers, Kinser said, should obtain eligibility determination and have conservation plans approved by the Warren County Soil Conservation Service before submitting bids.

She said viable native or tame grass that now adequately controls erosion, but may not last for the entire contract period may be considered adequate temporary cover. The conservation plan, however, must include the establishment of a permanent vegetative cover late in the contract period and before the presence of an erosion problem. The temporary cover may be used until the applicant is eligible to receive cost-share assistance at the time of establishment of permanent vegetative cover.

Weeds, crop residue, etc., she said, are not acceptable permanent cover. "If a permanent practice cannot be established within the time span provided, a suitable temporary cover will be established according to the approved conservation plan."

Producers will be encouraged to consider trees, permanent wildlife practices, annual temporary wildlife food plots and windbreaks in addition to native or tame grasses and legumes as cover for the CRP acres. A combination of such practices will be permissible if completed according to an approved conservation plan.

Conservation tillage may increase small game populations

Dwindling small game populations throughout the Midwest and other areas that use intensive crop tillage may be reversed as the adoption of conservation tillage continues to spread. Conservation tillage and in particular, the no-till practice is the planting of crops in the residue of the previous crop.

Conservation tillage is rapidly gaining acceptance, says Dale Faulkner, District Conservationist of the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Soil Conservation Service. Thirty percent of America's row crops are now planted under some form of conservation tillage. The USDA predicts that by the year 2000, more than 80 percent of

America's farmers will have adopted some type of conservation tillage system. The Corn Belt and Great Lakes States lead the nation in total acreage.

Research on the benefits of conservation tillage and its relation to wildlife are ongoing throughout the country. In Indiana, a cooperative study between the Indiana Department of Natural Resources and the USDA's Soil Conservation Service are examining the effects of no-till farming on small bird and mammal populations, and the influence of nitrogen-fixing cover crops.

Biologists are concentrating their efforts on such species as bobwhite quail, ring-necked pheasants, rabbits and song birds.

Most Indiana wildlife experts believe that the improved wildlife habitat produced by winter cover crops and residue from no-till may hold and produce wildlife in areas where intensive farming had removed suitable habitat and discouraged wildlife.

The first year's work showed 33 different kinds of birds, in the 21 fields being studied. No-till fields had the largest variety and number of birds.

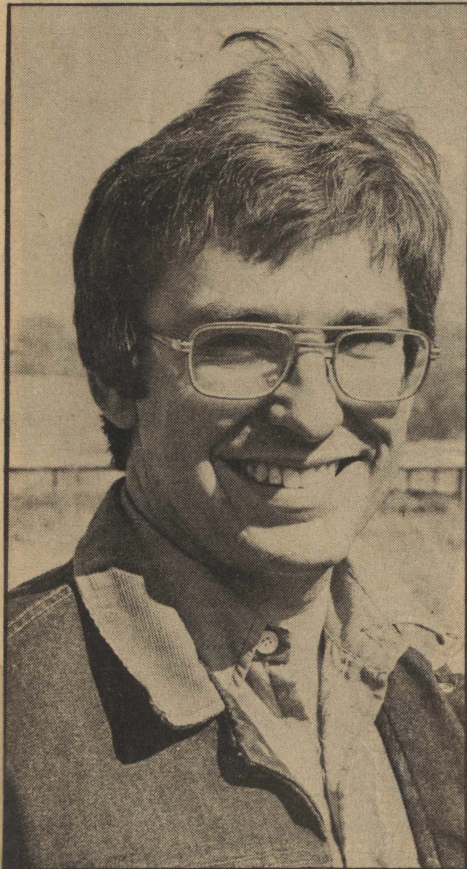
Field data gathered that fall chisel tillage significantly reduces the number of desirable wildlife species about as much as fall moldboard plowing. No-till corn shows the highest winter use by wildlife. Ground nesting species favor no-till fields with

cover crops for spring nesting.

Farming methods affect wildlife habitat in many ways. Growing the same crop year after year reduces the diversity of plant cover and the variety of wildlife. Moldboard plowing, the practice which is falling from favor throughout many parts of the country, buries grain and residues that can provide food or cover for wildlife. Overgrazing by domestic livestock also results in less food and cover for wildlife.

For more information and conservation practices that benefit wildlife, contact the local office of the U.S. Department of Agriculture's, Soil Conservation Service.

'Farming is a whole new ball game,' says one of state's top businessmen



Ben Kern

By Andrew Mason

Anyone who's curious about whether farming has changed over the past few years will no doubt receive a "yes" answer from most farmers. And that's definitely the case if one asks Ben Kern.

"It's a whole new ball game," he said. "PIK certificates mean you have to do so much work with the Agriculture Stabilization and Conservation Service (ASCS)."

Kern, 32, lives with Caroline, his wife, on the Kern family's Century Farm just south of Norwalk. He not only well-known around Warren County, but around the state as well.

On March 10 he finished his second one-year term as president of the Iowa Soybean Association. According to Kern, both terms were interesting nonetheless.

"The last two years have been interesting with the changes in farm policy and farm policy debate," Kern said. "I've appeared at hearings and committee meetings before the Iowa House and Senate.

"It's been a good term. I wouldn't say I have any regrets. After two years, though, you start to burn out. I felt I did a better job during the first year of my term than during the second."

Kern says the presidency involved many duties. "You're the farmers' spokesman for the organization," he said. "You represent the organization in resolutions at the national level. We (Soybean Association

presidents) go to Washington, D.C. in the Spring and make lobbying visits to congressmen."

Now that he's completed his run as ISA chief, his other duties include being the Warren County Soil Commissioner as well as a member of the Rolling Hills Farm Service Board.

His involvement with national agriculture allows him to reflect on ag policy, how it affects farmers locally and what to expect.

"I've heard so many complaints from people about the PIK program," Kern said. "It's made marketing much more complicated.

"I view it as a temporary thing. At some point, reason's going to need to come back in, and we probably won't have such complicated procedures."

Debt restructuring for South American countries can help farmers in this country, he said.

"Twelve million metric tons of beans are exported by Brazil every year," Kern said. "Brazil's starving its people to sell all that grain. So 60 percent of their people are malnourished. If they could restructure their debt, they'd be able to sell it domestically."

Kern states, however, that the net result would mean less competition with the United States.

Domestically, farm chemicals, equipment and erosion have become concerns of his as well as other farmers, too. "Everybody now is looking at inputs, look at what you're doing and whether putting more on is a good idea," he said. "The cost of herbicides has gone down, but people are still looking closely at their operations.

"We all bought too much equipment during the '70s, so now we're cutting back. No-

KERN

Continued on Page 4

'It's been a good term. I wouldn't say I have any regrets. After two years, though, you start to burn out. I felt I did a better job during the first year of my term than the second.'

— Ben Kern

Federal farm bill cuts production, reduces erosion

By Deb Belt

The major objectives of the 1985 farm bill are to cut production and reduce soil erosion, said Dale Faulkner, district conservationist for the Soil Conservation Service's (SCS) Warren County office.

Several programs were created to encourage the idling of highly-erodible land.

Out of 160,000 acres of Warren County farmland annually planted in corn and soybeans, about 110,000 are classified as highly-erodible, said Faulkner.

Land in that category has a slope of 5 percent or more.

Warren County's topography lends itself toward erosion, Faulkner said. "If you had to pick the 25 worst counties in Iowa," he said, "I'm sure we're one of them."

Conservation practices need to increase to slow the amount of sediment leaving Warren County and depositing in Lake Red Rock, said Faulkner. He suggested farmers convert highly-erodible land from crops to pasture or hay to slow erosion. Other conservation practices include contour plowing, terraces, proper crop rotations and conservation tillage systems.

Contouring and conservation tillage are the easiest and least-expensive methods, he said.

The 1985 farm bill pays farmers to idle highly-erodible land through the Conservation Reserve Program (CRP).

Warren County farmers enrolled in CRP agree to idle the land for 10 years and receive annual payments of \$70 per acre, said Faulkner. About 15,000 acres are in the program so far, and the United States Department of Agriculture will accept bids to enter the program again in July.

CRP land may not be used for pasture or

hay unless there is an emergency such as a drought.

Sodbuster legislation prevents farmers from bringing virgin highly-erodible land into production, said Faulkner, unless a conservation plan is followed.

For example, a farmer could grow corn for two years on previously untilled land, but it would then have to be planted with grass and legumes.

Pasture land can be farmed if it is not classified highly-erodible, he said.

A similar program, known as swampbuster legislation, prevents wetlands from being drained for farming.

Farmers with river bottom land are prohibited from clearing trees or installing tile and other drainage projects.

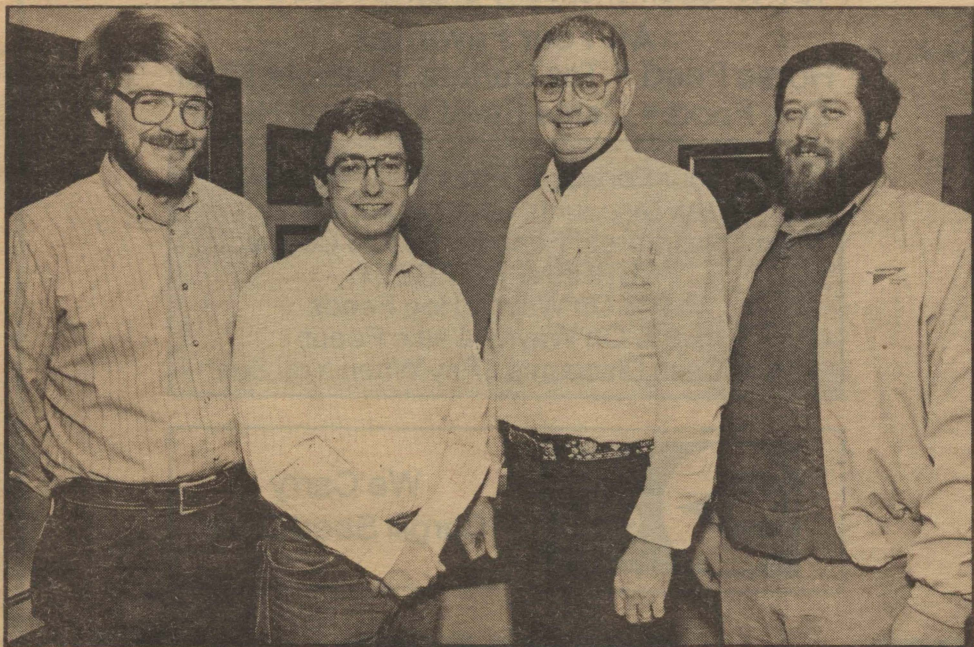
"We want to alert them (farmers) that if they have land that hasn't previously been farmed, there are restrictions on it if they're in federal farm programs," said Faulkner.

The conservation compliance program requires participating farmers to develop a conservation plan for their land by the end of 1989. Plans must be implemented by 1994.

SCS officials identify the highly-erodible acres on a farm, notify the farmer and help develop a conservation plan such as contour farming.

The program "has created quite a workload for this office," said Faulkner. "It involves lots of paperwork. In the next two years, we have to get this information out to all farmers in the county."

Reaction to the farm bill has been mostly positive, Faulkner said. "Better conservationists say this was something we should have been doing 40 years ago," he said. "Those who develop compliance plans usually leave our office feeling they're not as restricted as they thought they would be."



Commissioners for the Warren County Soil and Water Conservation District for 1988 are, from left, Mike Fink, Ben Kern, Richard Davitt and Kevin Graham. Not pictured: Arlan Becker.



Ben Kern makes some minor adjustments on his no-till corn planter in preparation for the up and coming planting season.

Maintenance required on conservation and diversion land

Warren County producers enrolled in the 1987 Acreage Reduction (ARP) and Paid Land Diversion (PLD) Programs or the 10-year Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) are required to maintain an eligible cover and control noxious weeds on this idled land.

Land idled as Acreage Conservation Reserve (ACR) under the 1987 ARP and PLD is required to have an adequate, approved cover established and maintained through Dec. 31.

Examples of an approved cover are oats that were to have been clipped by hard dough stage or June 30, whichever was earlier, legumes and/or grasses, or a combination of these.

Noxious weeds must be controlled prior to seed formation. Failure to maintain a cover and control noxious weeds could result in maintenance default penalties.

Land idled under the 10-year CRP is required to have cover established in accordance with a Conservation Plan of Operations developed by the Soil Conservation Service (SCS).

Some CRP acreage may have been required to have a temporary cover established because of a herbicide carryover problem, to protect the land from wind and water erosion, until a permanent cover of grasses and/or legumes could be established.

Nurse crops, such as oats, established in conjunction with a permanent CRP seeding, are re-

quired to be clipped or shredded at the time of seedhead emergence. Noxious weeds on CRP acreage must be controlled prior to seed formation at all times throughout the 10-year contract period.

Producers are not permitted to graze or harvest cover from CRP acreage at any time.

Producers not complying with these contract guidelines could be forced to refund all payments received with interest and forfeit all right to future payments or pay liquidated damages equal to 25 percent of the contract annual rental

payment.

Spotcheck of both ACR and CRP acreage are being conducted at this time and are conducted throughout the year to determine compliance with contract requirements.

Producers who have questions concerning their responsibilities under these contracts should contact their ASCS office.

7-22-87



Bud Butler, left, Bill Schnelle and Dora Guffey are new employees at the Warren County Soil Conservation District office.

RHT staff photo by Andrew Mason

Soil conservation office hires three new employees

Warren County's Soil Conservation District has hired three new employees to take up an increased work load from setaside programs, according to Dale Faulkner, director.

Bill Schnelle, Bud Butler and Dora Guffey have been hired at the office.

Schnelle and Butler will be making determinations for farm land in the county targeted as highly erodible.

Guffey is a soil conservation trainee and will be learning all aspects of office management and

field application of conservation practices.

Butler previously worked in feed sales at Indianola Feed Co. He and his wife Phyllis live in Indianola and have two grown children.

Schnelle is a retired educator. He and his wife Mary live near Indianola and have three grown sons.

Guffey previously worked for the city of West Des Moines and for Payless Cashways in Des Moines. She and her husband Dennis live in Hartford.

New laws protect grasslands, wetlands

EROSION

Continued from Page 13

in most cases, but it's not usually a money-maker."

Faulkner added that most farmers are in agreement with the program. Tom Brommel is one of them.

"I think it's a good program," said Brommel, a St. Charles farmer with 104 acres in CRP. "It will probably save more land than any other program because that land's out of production for 10 years.

"It's got to be the best program ever."

Most farmers use brome grass on the idled land, since it creates a dense mat after a season of growth that won't let rain erode the soil.

Brommel warns, however, that it's hard to find brome grass seed now because of the high demand. He suggested other seeds, such as orchard grass, annuals and rye grass.

The reserve program brought two laws

with it Faulkner said, designed to halt putting more land into production and making it open to erosion.

"There's the sodbuster law, which prohibits plowing pasture on erodible land," he said. "You can't abuse the land by putting more corn and soybeans on it year after year.

"The other one is what we call the swampbuster law. It prohibits bringing land classified as wetland into production. You can't go in and drain something and plow it."

Violating the laws does not call for any criminal charges, he said, although it does leave farmers who break the law in uncomfortable situations.

"You can still go clear the land," he said, then warned, "but if you do, you're not eligible for farm programs and government assistance like FmHA loans, crop in-

EROSION

Continued on Page 15



An example of contour strip cropping along the G-24 pavement in Greenfield Township.

Soil and water — the key to Iowa's future

By Rebecca Goodhue

Soil and water — the way they are conserved will largely determine Iowa's, our nation's and our world's future.

Soil and water are indeed the key to Iowa's future. If we don't act now Iowa's main source of income will be gone.

Keys are for opening doors. Just like keys, soil and water will open doors for Iowa's and the world's future if we conserve them through conservation practices.

Soil and water are Iowa's most important natural resources. In conservation, soil and water must be considered together. If the soil is unprotected, water will wash it away. If the water is wasted or polluted there will not be enough for plants, people, animals or industry.

Conservation programs for conserving our soil are many. A few examples are contour strip cropping, crop rotations, diversion, grass waterways, water and sediment control basins, contouring and grass headlands.

Contour stripcropping is done by planting alternating strips of row crop, small grain and meadow on the contour. This can cut soil loss by $\frac{1}{4}$ that of up-and-down hill farming.

Crop rotations are used because

some land is too steep to be used for row cropping year after year. By using a crop rotation, which includes small grains and hay land, the land gets a periodic rest from cultivation. It also improves soil tilth and fertility.

Diversion is a water runoff control practice that protects land below it from soil erosion and flooding. A diversion looks like a large terrace and is usually built at the base of a slope. The land above the diversion is in pasture, hay, woodland or other non-cropland use. The land below is cropland. The diversion intercepts the runoff from the slope and directs it to a natural or man-made drainage-way, avoiding the concentrated flow of water that would cause erosion on the land below.

Grass waterways are often the best means for carrying concentrated runoff water away from a field to avoid small gullies. They work well with contour farming, terraces and strip cropping. They require careful maintenance to work properly and usually need to be tilled.

Water and sediment control basins can be used in drainage-ways to control runoff. These basins work like small dams. They stop runoff water temporarily and release it slowly through underground outlets.

Contour farming, compared to up-and-down hill farming, can cut sheet and hill erosion in half. It is most effective when complemented by conservation tillage, terracing, grass waterways or strip cropping. It makes all of these practices more effective.

Another practice is grass headlands on the edges of fields. Protecting these edges with grass is a good alternative to up-and-down hill farming or as turn or end rows.

It has been said that the greatest cure for water pollution is the elimination of soil erosion. If we control our water from eroding the soil and protect our water from being filled with extra nutrients and sediment and conserve our soil and water, we will insure our state's, our nation's and our world's future. Because we are protecting the key, soil and water, we will be able to unlock the door that insures our future.

Rebecca Goodhue, daughter of Darrell and Eve Goodhue, received second place in the 1987 Warren County Soil Conservation essay contest. She is a sixth grader at Indianola Middle School.

Conservation methods featured at Ag Expo *9-14-88*

The 1988 World Ag Expo at the Amana Colonies Sept. 7-10 won't be without conservation activity.

Conservation tillage field demonstrations, a hill of five slopes, the size of a football field, a conservation farmer booth, a soil conservation play and several exhibits will be part of the four-day show.

"We think we've got several conservation activities that will interest people," said Mike Nethery, state conservationist for the Soil Conservation Service. Among them:

- No-till and ridge-till planting demonstrations will be coordinated through various machinery companies. The demonstrations will show companies operating their machinery side-by-side. Ridge-building equipment and drills are included. Demonstrations are each afternoon.

- A "Hill of Slopes," with each of five slopes being 100-feet long, has been built near the Ag Expo Welcome Center. The hill will enable visitors to view 2-, 5-, 9-, 14- and 20-percent slopes side-by-side. "We intend to give farmers a better idea of how steep their land is for conservation purposes," Nethery said. The hill was built by the Southeast Iowa District of the Land Improvement Contractors of America.

- More than 40 experienced conservation tillage farmers will take turns appearing at a question and answer booth in the soil conservation display in the All-Iowa Ag Tent.

- On Wednesday, Friday and Saturday of the Expo, a soil conservation play called, "Planting in the Dust" will be presented in the Expo's Welcome Center. The half-hour drama about a farm woman's story will be shown at 2 p.m. Sponsors of the play are Gutwein Seeds, Pioneer Hi-Bred, Land Improvement Contractors of America and the Soil and Water Conservation Society.

- The soil conservation booth in the All-Iowa Ag Tent will be manned with SCS personnel to answer conservation questions, including those on the conservation provisions of the 1985 Food Security Act. A representative of the Division of Soil Conservation of the Iowa Department of Agriculture and Land Stewardship will answer questions on state conservation programs. Soil district commissioners of Iowa and the Soil and Water Conservation Society will also work in the booth. Conservation tillage models and an interesting three-dimensional view of a rain-drop splash will be included in the exhibit.

Drainage tile deadline set for Sept. 19

Iowa farmers who began a drainage or tile project in a wetland before Dec. 23, 1985, may be able to finish the drainage work without losing U.S. Department of Agriculture benefits.

"Swampbuster" provisions of the 1985 Food Security Act restrict the conversion of wetlands to farmland, but if the work was begun before the act, the landowner can continue the work," said Mike Nethery, state conservationist for the USDA's Soil Conservation Service.

"The key is to file a request for commenced determination with your local ASCS office," Nethery said.

The deadline for filing such a request is Sept. 19, he said.

Documentation that drainage work was begun on the project before the Dec. 23, 1985 can include: signed contracts, canceled checks for supplies already purchased, etc.

Any landowner who wants to resume a drainage project begun before the 1985 date, should contact SCS to find out if the land is classified as a wetland. If it is, file the request for a commenced determination with ASCS before Sept. 19, Nethery said.

Conservation Reserve sign up set

The sixth sign-up period for the Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) will be Feb. 1-19, said Dale Faulkner, district conservationist.

The Conservation Reserve is a USDA program enabling landowners to take highly erodible land out of production and receive rental payments for 10 years for converting cropland to grass or trees. In Warren County, approximately 14,000 acres were accepted into the program at a maximum rate of \$70 per acre in 1986 and 1987.

Two new rule changes concerning eligibility criteria are:

- Fields containing one-third

highly erodible land (currently two-thirds) are eligible, providing the land is planted to trees.

- Filter strips planted to grass or trees not to exceed 1.5 chains wide (99 ft.) are eligible on non-highly erodible cropland next to creeks or perennial streams.

Wildlife Food Plots have also been approved on CRP acres to improve habitat. Up to 5 acres per field, not to exceed 10 percent of the total CRP acres on a farm, may be planted to corn or grain sorghum. The Warren County Pheasants Forever Chapter, cooperating with the Iowa Department of Natural Resources, will be

providing free seed and other possible incentives to promote wildlife food plots.

For more information, call 961-5264.

2-3-88



Conservationists

Roseanna and Jerome Dittmer of rural Lacona received the Warren County Soil Conservation award for outstanding accomplishments in soil conservation from Arlan Becker, vice chairman of the Warren County Soil Conservation District, at the Chamber's annual banquet Friday, Jan. 15. 1988

RHT staff photo by Mark Davitt

10-5-88

Farmers must meet with soil conservationist

"If you own or rent rolling farmland, the most important meeting you attend within the next year could be the meeting you have with your local soil conservationist."

That message is from Mike Nethery, state conservationist of the U.S. Department of Agriculture Soil Conservation Service.

"Farmers with highly erodible cropland must have a conservation plan on that land by Dec. 31, 1989, if they want to continue to receive benefits from the U.S. Department of Agriculture," Nethery said.

"Time is running short," he warned. "Our offices will need to work with hundreds of landowners before the deadline, so the sooner a farmer meets with the local soil conservationist, the better."

Benefits that could be lost include price and income supports, crop insurance, loans, grain storage payments and other commodity-related payments.

"At the meeting, a Soil Conservation Service conservationist will show the landowner which fields are highly erodible and explain the conservation options available," Nethery said. "It's up to the lan-

downer to decide which of the options he or she chooses to use to reduce soil erosion."

The conservation plan that's developed at the planning meeting must be carried out by Dec. 31, 1994.

"Our local offices are contacting landowners to ask them to meet and develop their plan. If they aren't interested at this time in getting plans, they go to the bottom of the list," Nethery said.

1-20-88



Retire

After his retirement from farming, Ray Pehrson, right, has also retired as district commissioner of the Warren County Soil Conservation District. He recently received a plaque in honor of his term served from 1981-87 from Ben Kern, chairman of the district. Mike Finck, a farmer from New Virginia, is completing Pehrson's term as commissioner, which ends in November.

Photo submitted



RHT staff photos by Mark Davitt

'Planting in the Dust' reminds audience that nothing lasts forever

By Amy Duncan

"Everything I always thought was forever is eroding," says Annie, as she watches dust rise up from the wheels of a neighbor's tractor.

Annie is the only character in the one-woman play "Planting in the Dust." The play, which discusses soil erosion, conservation and other issues, was presented at Simpson College Feb. 23.

Written by Nancy Paddock of Minnesota, it focuses on various issues of land stewardship. "The land belongs to itself," says Annie. "If anything, we belong to it. We rise up and sink back into it. We borrow our lives from it."

Jody Hovland, an Iowa City actress, has played Annie for two years. "I was very sympathetic to the issues discussed," she said. "Doing the play is a way to come back to those issues through my craft. It's a perfect marriage between my career and my roots."

Annie is a modern character, but she looks at the land through the eyes of her great-grandparents, who first settled it through the

eyes of her grandparents, who first protected it; and through the eyes of her parents, who farmed it fence to fence.

"I've inherited the history of this place," she says. "And the job of making it whole again."

That isn't an easy job, agreed members of the audience during a discussion following the performance.

Spectators agreed that increased rental, poor times for farmers and a general lack of knowledge all contribute to soil loss.

"I don't think farmers realize what they lose," said Ben Kern, chairman of the Warren County Soil Conservation Commission and Norwalk farmer. "A ton of soil taken off an acre is the thickness of a dime."

Hovland's roots lie in Ada, Minn., where her father farmed. She later attended the University of Iowa and now works with Riverside Theater, Iowa City's only resident professional theater. She also teaches and directs at Cornell College in Mt. Vernon.

Hovland performs "Planting in

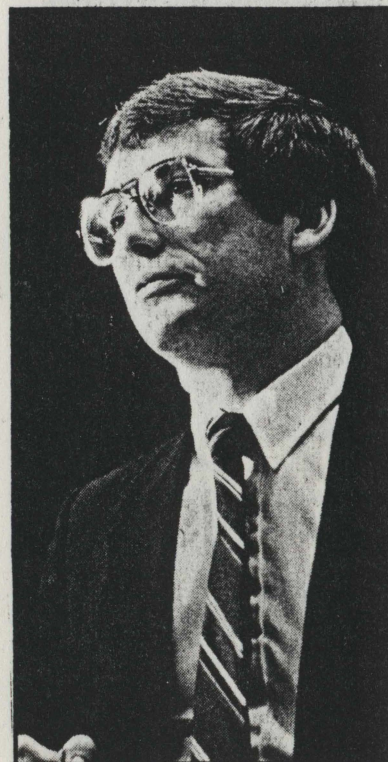
the Dust," a half-hour production, about 10 times a year, she said. The show is also done by actresses in Minnesota, North and South Dakota and South Carolina.

The play retains its popularity, Hovland said, because "it's accessible. The character is accessible instead of intimidating, but she still brings up some good political issues."

Performances are usually followed by discussions with area soil conservation officials, she said. She doesn't often take part in those discussions. "I'm an actor," she said. "I don't want anyone to consider me an expert, I can only speak from my heart."

The play was sponsored locally by the Warren County Conservation Board, the Soil Conservation District, Simpson College and the Norwalk-Cumming State Bank.

Performances of "Planting in the Dust" can be scheduled through the Land Stewardship Project at 512 W. Elm St., Stillwater, MN 55082.



Ben Kern

Annie, played by Jody Hovland of Iowa City.

Red Rock group seeking funding for erosion control

By Jim Garrison

A group calling itself the Lake Red Rock Project for Sediment Control selected officers and attempted to provide itself with an operating structure Sept. 20, despite the possibility it will not receive funding.

The group is seeking a \$100,000 federal grant and additional local funding to finance terracing to help with flood protection and erosion control.

Organizers said that Lake Red Rock is in danger of filling up with run-off silt. Warren County farmland constitutes the major portion of the watershed.

"I wish I could bring good news," said Ellen Huntoon, a representative for U.S. Sen. Tom Harkin's office. "But the issue is still on the appropriation's bill.

"There are many good issues on that appropriation's bill right now. It is difficult to get money for new projects."

"Red Rock's always been a pro-

blem area. It was a poorly-designed project in the first place. It's not only Red Rock that's the problem. All of our federal projects are in serious jeopardy. If we do lose the \$100,000, I'd like to see the Iowa Delegation go back in and try to get it."

Despite the uncertainty, the group selected the Warren County representative, Ben Kern of Norwalk, as chairperson; Madison County's Cy McDonald, Earlham, as co-chairman; Marion County's Bob Van Zee, Pleasantville, as secretary; and Clarke County's Richard Carson, Osceola, as treasurer.

In addition to the four counties represented as the officers, the board includes representatives from Adair, Dallas, Guthrie, Jasper, Lucas and Polk counties.

Jim Reel, leader of water resource planning for the state Soil Conservation Service, said a socio-economic study is in the works to determine if the project receives support from farmers, recreationists and the

county governments.

"Gail Dishongh, a sociologist, is a member of our staff," said Reel. "If we do get some money, we're going to be ready to go. We could have a broad coalition with farmers, hunters and recreationists.

"We can't hope to make it if we just get help from the soil conservationists, or just state funding, or just local funding. But, if we get all those together, we can make a big impact. It's just a matter of whether you want a mud hole or a resource you can use and your kids can use."

Madison County Supervisor Richard Hanrahan, Cumming, suggested an additional \$2,000 to \$3,000 from each county to aid the project. This suggestion met with some apprehension.

"We had 911 forced upon us, then we supported the Bill of Rights for the handicapped," said Clarke Coun-

RED ROCK
Continued on Page 2A

The Record-Herald and Indianola Tribune
Wednesday, September 28, 1988

Supervisor questions plans

RED ROCK
Continued from Page 1A

ty Supervisor Kent White, Osceola. "I don't mean to throw cold water on the plans, but our budgets are tight."

Reel said in order for the counties to work together, a board of governors would have to be formed since the counties would have no legal authority to act on Red Rock. Beverly Dickerson, Warren County auditor, said multi-county agreements are common.

Still, there was uncertainty.

"If a county spends \$2,000 to 3,000 on a project, we want to know how the money's being spent," said White. "Marion, Polk and Warren counties will be the big benefactors, but the other counties will have contributed an equal share."

Reel disagreed, however, saying the benefits would be assigned back to the drainage areas through better soil conservation and flood control.

"We have to solve the problem upland," said Reel. "Damage is upstream and preventing that damage is an economic benefit."

Watershed program designed to stop silt deposits in Lake Red Rock

By Deb Belt

Efforts to stop soil erosion in Warren County could also prolong the lifespan of Lake Red Rock.

County supervisors and soil conservation commissioners from Warren and seven surrounding counties will meet next month to discuss a watershed program for the Des Moines River drainage area, said Dale Faulkner, district conservationist at the Soil Conservation Service.

Soil erosion along the Middle and South Rivers plus Whitebreast

Creek is responsible for most of the silt building up in Red Rock, Faulkner said.

To treat the problem throughout the drainage area and secure federal funding, a joint venture is needed between area boards of supervisors and soil commissioners, he said.

September's meeting in Indianola, as yet unscheduled, is the first step in asking for a government study of the area. Those attending the meeting will decide how the dif-

ferent county groups should be represented in the project.

"I've been here four years and I've always thought it was a natural project that would be done in time," Faulkner said. "It looks like it's around the corner. Red Rock is filling up much faster than projected.

It's not a total save-the-lake project, it might be too late to save the lake."

If the group should secure federal funds for a study, plans could then be made for terracing incentives, water impoundment structures and other means of slowing the erosion.

The federal government should

pay 65 percent of farmers' costs for terracing in the watershed area, Faulkner said, and all costs involved in a drainage pond.

If ponds are constructed along the rivers to hold water and let soil settle, they would probably range from one to 15 acres in size, he said.

Considering all the paperwork necessary, it will be at least two years before a watershed study can begin, he said.

"The worst thing we can do is nothing," Faulkner said. "We have everything to gain and nothing to lose."



Conservation

Ben Kern, chairman of the Warren County Soil Conservation District, presents the Warren County division of the Iowa Conservation Award to Elaine and Harold Brown. The award qualifies them for the district and state level contest. The award was presented during the Indianola Chamber of Commerce annual dinner Friday evening.

RHT staff photos by Mark Davitt

1-25-89

Conservation practices yield more than just soil

By Lisa Stone

Record-Herald Staff Writer

Bart Brummer takes a philosophical approach to conservation farming. He wants to make sure his farm is around years down the road for his family.

"I have five boys who range in age from 14 to 5. My goal is to do what I can do to preserve the quality of the farm we've got, so if they choose to live there they can," Brummer said.

His philosophy and concern is paying off. Bart and Cindy Brummer and their sons, Zach, Weston, Dillon, Cody and Seth, were awarded the Warren Soil and Water Conservation District 2001 Conservation Achievement Award in August. The family has farmed what was once known as the Warren County Poor Farm since 1992.

He said conservation farming takes a long-term approach to the profession. Many of the practices such as terracing, tiling, buffer strips and building ponds may be expensive and cut into a farmer's profits in the short term, but in the long run it actually saves money by increasing the amount of good soil so crops yield more.

"You have to focus on the long-range benefits, not the short range," Brummer said.

Brummer uses a variety of conservation practices on his 360-acre farm. He has built ponds, put in grassed waterways and field borders, constructed a dry dam, uses no-till farming and doesn't do any fall farming such as plowing fields. The practices, both simple and complex, all help keep his land and soil healthy.

He said the whole concept of protecting and preserving Iowa's good black top soil hits home when he's out replacing old tile on a hill. At the top of the hill, Brummer said, sometimes the tile is practically exposed and the earth is more clay than soil because of wind and rain erosion. Then at the bottom of the hill, Brummer said sometimes he has had to dig through several feet of good black top soil to find the old tile.

"Conventional farming in the last 45 years has



The Brummer family, Bart and Cindy, back row, with their five boys, from left, Cody, Dillon, Weston, Seth, and Zach. The Brummers recently received the 2001 Conservation Achievement Award.

Photo submitted

done that," Brummer said. "What's it going to be like in another 45 years if we don't do something about it."

A simple practice like terracing hillsides can save 4 to 5 tons of good top soil a year, according to Brummer. Without it, that soil would be lost to wind and water erosion.

Finding value in many of the conservation practices besides the obvious is also important to Brummer. Ponds don't just prevent soil erosion,

he said. They also provide a place for his family to fish, for the boys to build their rafts, water for livestock, and ice skating and fishing in the winter.

Using conservation practices is also a lesson Brummer hopes his boys pick up on.

"Kids see you do that type of stuff, and kids see you get that award; they begin to put value in that, too."

Conservation reserve program sign up ends Aug. 4

The U.S. Department of Agriculture has announced the ninth sign up for Conservation Reserve Program for the period of July 17 through Aug. 4.

The previous eight sign ups have resulted in 16,000 acres designated for CRP in Warren County.

The CRP pays landowners rent every year for ten years to idle highly erodible cropland, filter strips along streams, floodplain areas subject to scour erosion, and certain wetland and farmed wetlands that meet cropland criteria as identified by ASCS.

Landowners replace crops with perennial legumes, grass, trees, shrubs, or a mix of these.⁸⁸

Landowners will be asked to submit sealed bids during the sign-up period. These bids must state their

per acre price for idling the land. The USDA then decides where land is eligible for CRP based on all USDA criteria.

District Conservationist Dale Faulkner said that this sign up presents an opportunity for landowners to bid wetland and floodplain areas that were not eligible before the last sign up.

The Food Security Act of 1985 re-

quires the designation of farmed wetlands for preservation and protection. These wetlands, if they were cropped during the period 1981-1985, may be eligible for CRP.

Faulkner says this sign-up period and the next, tentatively scheduled for February 1990 may be the last opportunity for entering land into CRP. The original five-year period for CRP ends Dec. 31, 1990, and

7-19-89
there are no sign-up periods scheduled after February 1990.

Statewide, the eight previous CRP sign ups have resulted in about 1.8 million acres being accepted into CRP. The conversion of those crop acres to grass and trees prevents about 33 million tons of topsoil erosion each year in Iowa. Nationally, there are 30 million tons of soil erosion per year.

Farm chemicals more than a rural problem, says Moffitt

To the editor:

Some 25 years ago, the banks of Indianola wanted all farmers in Warren County to attend a local meeting. We were told at that meeting that people were starving in the world and that we farmers needed to gear up to produce more. In order to do this, we were advised that we might need to use chemical fertilizers and sprays. They were readily available and it was claimed that we could farm more ground with them. Now, the farm programs are set for the grain farmer and big farmer because the livestock producer has to rotate his ground so as to have feed available for his animals. This in turn has caused all the hills and valleys to be plowed up to make more corn base to fit the government program. It has also been fertilized to the maximum for the biggest yield.

This has upset the soil that God has provided us with, because one cannot put things on the ground that are poisonous without expecting poison back in some way. "God is not mocked." He has given us the earthworm to aerate the soil and rebuild it. If there are seven or eight earthworms per square foot, they will bring up one-eighth to one-quarter inch virgin soil each year. If we would feed the worms more and not kill them by using chemicals, our soil would be getting better every year instead of worse.

Just to point out the difference between corn grown chemically and organically, my average yield for corn this drought year was 65 bushels to the acre. I have heard others' yields were anywhere from 0 to 18 bushels an acre, chemically-grown. This shows that ground without chemicals will hold more moisture than ground with chemicals, and when it does rain, the water will soak into the soil.

I suspect you have all realized by this time, that I am farming organically and have been — 100 percent — the past 24 years. I never have used chemical fertilizers and I've not used anything but a rare application of non-toxic spray material on my crops since 1964. There are no antibiotics in the feed I give my animals, either.

Now we hear that some Warren County farmers are adding sewage sludge from Des Moines to their farmlands. There is no doubt in my mind that sludge fertilizer will just add to our problems. If it's unsafe to

put on gardens, it's unsafe — period.

We have heard that some of this sludge comes from hospital waste. How do we know that dumping sludge on our fields will not cause people to get AIDS? Do we have to kill everybody with diseases born by this waste to get the problem solved?

There is a way of farming with products that can be used which will not affect our ground water and make our soil safe for cereal grains, too. Sludge fertilizer is not one of them. Do we want to eat corn flakes, Wheaties and Cheerios from grain grown on sludge?

It is becoming obvious what the causes of the problems are and I think it is time to call a halt to them. For better health for our children, grandchildren and animals, we must ban chemical and sludge fertilizers.

Remember, this is not just a rural problem. Everyone who eats is going to be affected unless you raise all the food you eat. Jogging or exercises won't take care of this problem. All food comes from the soil some time — not just from the grocery store. "If ye be willing and obedient, ye shall eat the good of the land: But if ye refuse and rebel, ye shall be devoured with the sword: for the mouth of the Lord hath spoken it." (Isaiah 1: 19 & 20.)

Homer E. Moffitt
Ackworth

(-11-89)

Mo
Mo

For this man, soil conservation is a way of life

By DON MUHM
Register Farm Editor

"If we are to have any soil left for future generations, then every effort has to be made to preserve what soil we've got now."

Iowa farmer Thomas Gillespie speaks from a special vantage point. The 43-year-old resident of Clare is an avid soil conservation promoter who can claim to be working a farm which, on paper, is fully protected from erosion.

That kind of soil conservation doesn't come cheap.

"It costs big bucks," says Joe Hammer, a Webster County farmer who owns the farm operated by Gillespie

Gillespie says that 78 percent of the land is farmed using conservation tillage, reducing the potential for soil losses. Five percent of the land is covered by terraces, which represent the most expensive kind of conservation treatment. The Webster County farmer reports, however, that the building of new terraces may "hurt" crop yields for three to five years. But then crop yields rebound, because of reduced soil loss and greater retention of plant nutrients and moisture.

Another 11 percent of the land is farmed on the contour and features grassed waterways. In addition, there is a 5-acre farm pond, a soil erosion control structure or earthen dam, and a wildlife habitat.

Experimentation with new soil-saving technology isn't ending for this award-winning landlord-tenant operation. This year, they made the switch to ridge-till planting on every acre of corn and soybeans on the farm operated by Gillespie. Hammer also plans to convert to this same reduced-tillage program on five other farms in 1985.

"It's new, and it looks like it's got potential," Hammer said about planting on ridges rather than on flat seed-bed surfaces. The ridge system tends to warm up the soil more quickly, hastening germination, and also lends itself to better placement of materials such as fertilizer and herbicides.

Both farmers say "yields must hold up" before they will give a final endorsement to the ridge-planting system, and soil losses must be held down.

"When erosion is held down, you keep the chemicals from going into the creek," Hammer explained.

"We've got to keep in mind that EPA [the Environmental Protection Agency] is getting tough on chemical pollution," added Gillespie.

The Gillespies also have a hog operation at the Clare farm, finishing out feeder pigs for the butcher market.

Gillespie and his wife, Rosalie, have six children: Chris and Barb, who are both married; Kevin, 19, who is in military service; Terry, 16; Debbie, 13, and Patrick, 5. The parents are both natives of the Clare area, and began farming in 1961 on a place home-steaded by a grandparent.

They still operate that farm in partnership with a relative, Robert Condon, along with the land they've rented from Hammer for about a dozen years.

Conservation work is something to add to gradually over the years, with a little work done every season, says Gillespie. In his own case, Gillespie's interest in conservation has increased while serving as an officer of the Webster County Soil Conservation District.

A "fringe benefit" of holding such unpaid offices as soil district commissioner, Gillespie pointed out, "is the chance to get an insight into what other farmers are doing to conserve soil, and how things are working out for them."



Thomas and Rosalie Gillespie

COUNTRY LIVING

By DON MUHM



and who has financed the soil conservation improvements added by his tenant. Hammer, who is also from Clare, estimated he has put up roughly \$200,000 for soil saving measures at the 613-acre farm run by Gillespie and his family.

Those efforts by Hammer and Gillespie were rewarded last week, when the farm was selected as the best example of soil conservation in the state, in a competition sponsored by the Des Moines Register and Tribune Company. The winner is selected through local and regional competitions supervised by the Iowa Farm Bureau.

The farm owned by Hammer and farmed by his tenant took first place, besting eight other regional Iowa finalists.

Gillespie, who served as an assistant soil commissioner for three years, was recently elected to a 6-year term as a Webster district commissioner. But he credits Hammer with fostering his still-growing interest in soil saving.

"I wouldn't be involved in this if it hadn't been for my landlord," Gillespie said after receiving the state conservation award last week in Des Moines.

Hammer says his own commitment and interest in conservation began when he returned to Iowa in the mid-1940s after he got out of the military service. He was greeted by a family farm in pretty rough shape, one where "a lot needed to be done" in the way of soil conservation.

Over the last four decades, Hammer has spent a small fortune for terraces, erosion control dams, drainage tile and such on that farm. The result from a conservation viewpoint is a farm virtually immune from the forces of wind and water erosion, setting it above and apart from most farms in the state.

Iowa prices

For week of Nov. 26-Nov. 30

CASH LIVESTOCK

	Last week	Week ago
Feeder pigs (50-60 lbs.)	\$47.12	\$46.75
Hogs	50.28	49.88
Slaughter steers	66.95	66.38
Kansas City feeder cattle	65.80	65.50
Shorn lambs (choice)	65.50	66.50

LIVESTOCK FUTURES

	Last week	Week ago
Live cattle (Feb.)	\$66.52	\$67.10
Feeder cattle (Jan.)	71.20	70.92
Live hogs (Feb.)	53.92	53.20

CASH GRAIN

	Last week	Week ago
Corn, No. 2 (Central Iowa)	\$2.43-2.49	\$2.44-2.50
Forward contract (Mar.)	2.51-2.55	—
Soybeans, No. 2 (Central Iowa)	\$5.91-5.96	\$5.93
Forward contract, (Mar.)	5.94-6.00	—

GRAIN FUTURES

	Last week	Week ago
Corn (Mar.)	\$2.78 3/4	\$2.80
Soybeans (Jan.)	6.09	6.10 1/4

POULTRY

	Last week	Week ago
Large eggs (doz.)	51.60c	53.00c
Spent hens (lb.)	10.25c	9.75c
Turkeys (f.o.b.) (lb.)	96.56c	91.00c

CHICAGO FUTURES

CHICAGO commodity Chicago	(AP) Board of futures	— this Trade	The past range was :	of the week :	on the 9th
			High	Low	Wk. Close Wk. Chg. Open Interest
WHEAT					
5,000 bu	minimum;	dollars	per	bushel	
Dec		3.61 1/2	3.50	3.53 1/4	-08 1/2 7,456
Mar		3.59 1/2	3.52 1/4	3.53 3/4	-07 1/4 19,687
May		3.52 3/4	3.47 1/4	3.49	-04 1/2 6,970
Jul		3.42 1/4	3.38 1/2	3.39 1/2	-02 1/4 8,807
Sep		3.45 1/4	3.43 1/4	3.44 1/4	-02 421
Dec		3.57 3/4	3.55 1/2	3.55	-02 1/2 58
Fri. Total	to open	Thurs. sales	51,176		
		interest	43,399		
CORN					
5,000 bu	minimum;	dollars	per	bushel	
Dec		2.69	2.64 1/2	2.65 3/4	-04 1/2 22,441
Mar		2.80 1/2	2.76 3/4	2.78 1/4	-01 3/4 65,494
May		2.87 1/2	2.83 1/4	2.84 1/2	-03 3/4 22,664
Jul		2.91 3/4	2.87	2.88 1/2	-03 3/4 17,614
Sep		2.88 3/4	2.84 3/4	2.85 1/2	-03 2,110
Dec		2.86 1/2	2.81 3/4	2.82 3/4	-02 3/4 4,257
Mar		2.95	2.91 1/4	2.92	-02 1/4 98
Fri. Total	to open	Thurs. sales	234,906		
		interest	134,678		
OATS					
5,000 bu	minimum;	dollars	per	bushel	
Dec		1.88	1.82 1/2	1.87 3/4	+03 824
Mar		1.82 3/4	1.78	1.82 3/4	+02 1/2 2,225
May		1.79 3/4	1.76	1.79	+00 3/4 966
Jul		1.77	1.73	1.76 3/4	+01 1/4 277
Sep		1.77 1/2	1.75 1/2	1.77	-01 10
Fri. Total	to open	Thurs. sales	3,671		
		interest	4,302		
SOYBEANS					
5,000 bu	minimum;	dollars	per	bushel	
Jan		6.10	5.93 1/2	6.09	-01 3/4 36,666
Dec		6.23 1/2	6.08 1/2	6.22 1/4	-03 14,241
Mar		6.37	6.23	6.34 1/4	-05 3/4 9,105
May		6.47 1/2	6.34 1/4	6.43 3/4	-06 1/2 7,790
Jul		6.47 1/2	6.35 1/2	6.43 3/4	-07 1/4 1,045
Sep		6.37 1/2	6.26	6.31 1/2	-08 298
Nov		6.37 1/2	6.24	6.31 1/2	-07 3/4 2,483
Jan		6.50	6.40	6.45 1/2	-08 1/2 23
Fri. Total	to open	Thurs. sales	142,388		
		interest	71,651		
SOYBEAN OIL					
60,000 lbs.		dollars	per 100 lbs.		
Dec		28.00	26.28	27.97	+31 8,971
Jan		26.30	25.06	26.25	-04 12,419
Mar		25.30	24.10	25.06	-20 12,474
May		24.90	23.78	24.55	-35 5,090
Jul		24.70	23.65	24.30	-45 2,785
Aug		24.30	23.60	24.05	-45 464
Sep		24.10	23.60	23.85	-40 244
Oct		24.00	23.40	23.80	-25 129
Dec		24.00	23.30	23.75	-15 262
Fri. Total	to open	Thurs. sales	75,717		
		interest	42,838		
SOYBEAN MEAL					
100 tons;		dollars	per ton		
Dec		150.50	148.10	150.20	-70 7,980
Jan		153.80	151.50	153.40	-80 16,230
Mar		160.00	157.70	159.50	-60 11,194
May		165.50	163.00	164.80	-140 6,546
Jul		170.50	168.00	169.70	-160 4,070
Aug		172.50	170.00	171.00	-200 892
Sep		173.50	171.00	173.00	-200 287
Oct		174.50	171.50	173.50	-210 378
Dec		177.00	172.00	174.70	-150 267
Fri. Total	to open	Thurs. sales	75,689		
		interest	47,844		

Dahlberg takes post as Seed Association chief

Robert Dahlberg of Pioneer Hi-Bred International Inc. has been elected president of the Iowa Seed Association at the organization. Elected first vice president was Bill Latham, Alex-

ander. Dennis Strayer of Hudson was elected second vice president. The organization named Iowa Secretary of Agriculture Robert Lounsberry an "honorary member" at its meeting.

Hartford News

by Lynda Richards

HARKIN INSPECTS WATER DAMAGE



Senator Tom Harkin visited with a group of farmers on the Larry Hunt farm east of Hartford Sunday, June 24 to see for himself the damages to terraces caused by torrential rains of June 1990. The terraces were a result of plans mandated by the U.S. Department of Agriculture under the conservation compliance provision of the 1985 Food Security Act. Farmers had to develop a conservation plan by December 31, 1989 and

have it in place by December 31, 1994 or no longer be eligible for the USDA program benefits such as price and support payments for ASCS, disaster payments, crop insurance, FmHA loans, Commodity Credit Corporation storage loans, farm storage loans, or any other programs under which the USDA makes commodity-related payments, including Conservation Reserve Program annual payments.

Hunt and other area

farmers who already have their terraces in place must now make repairs without USDA assistance due to the depleted emergency funds spent on victims of hurricane Hugo, and also the heavy rainfall flooding experienced in the southern states earlier this year.

"Now that Iowa needs help, there is nothing left to help with," stated Senator Harkin. "This (damage) is a graphic illustration (of Iowa's needs)!"

Hunt will need to repair 17 terraces, Marvin DeGoey 15 and Ivan and Leland McCormick between 15-20.

"There are many other farmers out there who have losses, but we won't hear from them until there is help available," said Dale Faulkner, USDA District Soil Conservationist.

On Tuesday, June 19, the Warren County ASCS Committee requested \$64,000 for the repairs of terraces through the

Emergency Conservation Program. This was a preliminary request and would need to be funded by a supplemental appropriation. Terraces built with state funds are not eligible for repair under current ECP regulations. Harkin stated he would work toward changing this regulation.

There was additional discussion on flooding from Lake Red Rock. There are continuing problems of flooding frequency above and beyond the original Corps of Engineers estimates on easement ground. This has resulted in a negative economic impact on the Hartford-Carlisle community including not only farmers, but also small business, banking and school funding.

The group appreciated Senator Harkin's interest

'How-to' videotape offers soil conservation tips

12-12-89

A videotape featuring tips to help farmers do much of the soil conservation work needed to be eligible for USDA programs has been produced by the USDA Soil Conservation Service.

The eight-segment videotape, "Conservation On Your Own," shows farmers how to: measure and manage crop residues, make contour lines and use field borders, lay contour buffer strips, lay out wind strips, use grass to control small gullies, plant and maintain field windbreaks and keep terraces working. It will also outline points to consider in contour stripcropping.

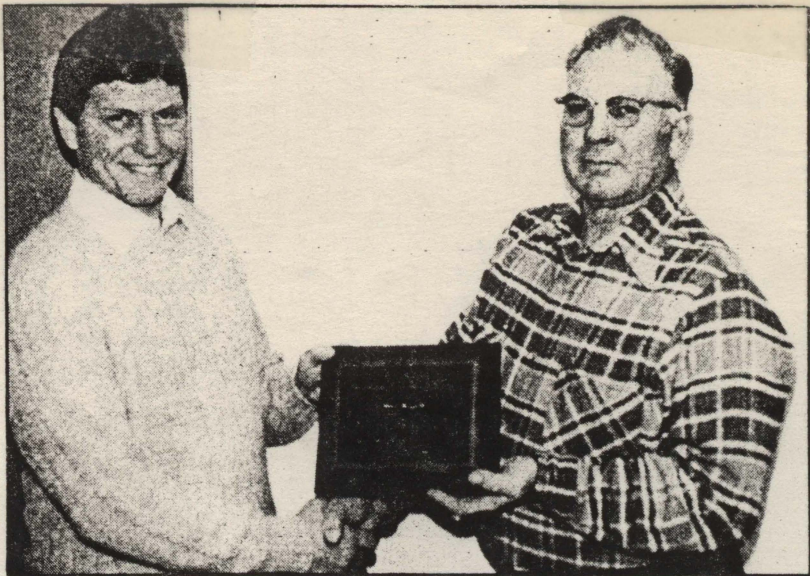
Each of the segments will discuss what to consider before beginning, tools needed, how the practice works

and "how to" details.

The videotapes will be available by mid-December. In Iowa, the videotapes will be available for loan from local Soil Conservation Service offices, agribusinesses and agricultural organizations. The tape also may be purchased from the National Association of Conservation Districts.

"Each county will get 30 copies, so it should be easily accessible for any farmer," said SCS State Conservationist Mike Nethery. Local soil and water conservation districts are arranging loan out programs.

The soil conservation practices featured on the videotape have been included in the conservation plans of thousands of farmers to protect highly erodible land.

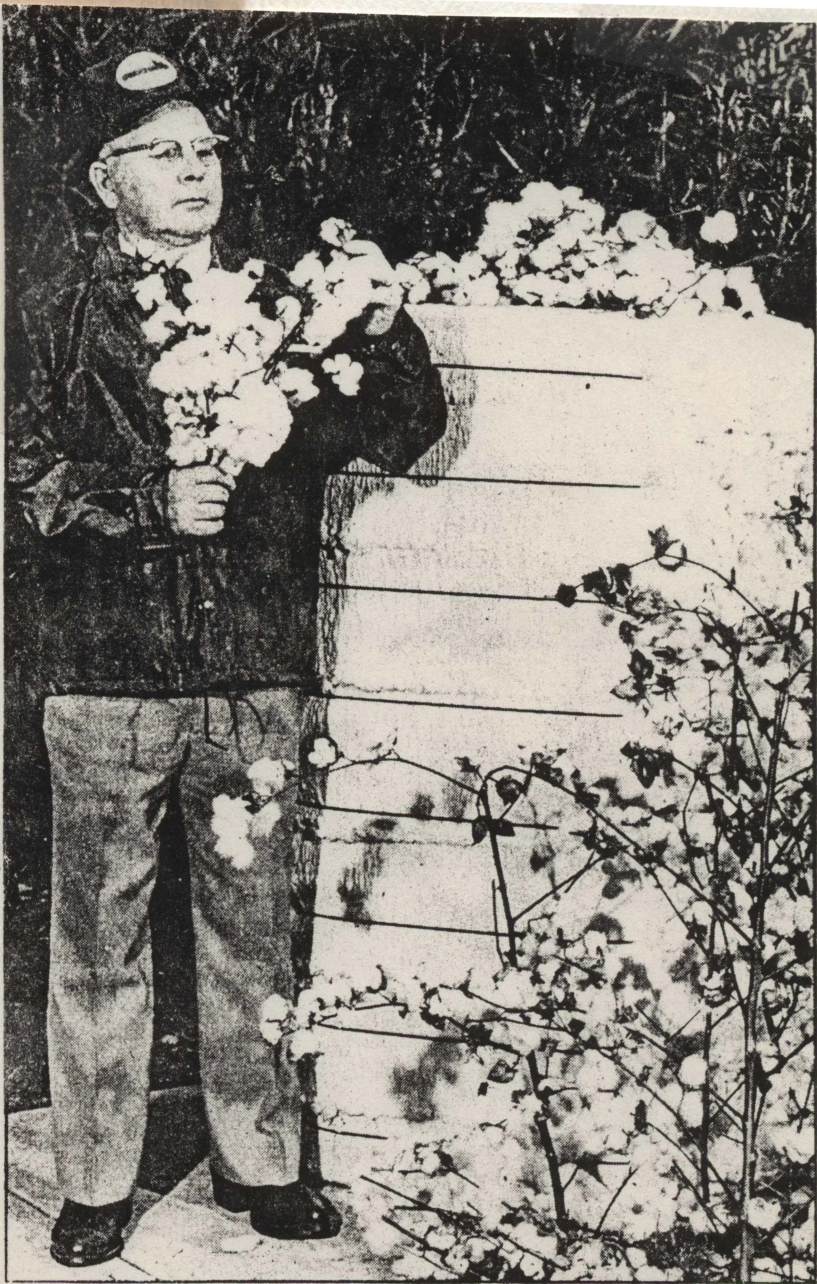


Outstanding

Paul Rogalla receives the Outstanding Soil Conservation Teacher Award from Ray Pehrson, chairman of the Warren County Soil Conservation District. Rogalla teaches seventh grade life science, high school biology and health at Indianola High School.

2-25-87

Photo submitted

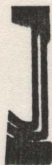


Winner's trip

After receiving the Goodyear Soil Conservation Grand Award, Ray Pehrson, Indianola, won an all expense paid vacation-study trip to the Goodyear farm in Litchfield Park, Ariz. Pehrson examines long staple cotton plant that was the original crop when the desert was cleared for farming in 1917. Pehrson is a board member representing the Warren County Conservation District.

2-23-89

Photo submitted



The Record-Herald and Indianola Tribune
August 9, 1989

\$100,000 grant to fund siltation answer at Red Rock

By Dan Silvia

A \$100,000 grant from the U.S. Soil Conservation Service will help fund a study of the siltation problem at Lake Red Rock by the Iowa State University Sociology department.

A new group made up of from the Soil and Conservation Districts and Board of Supervisors from nine Iowa counties has been formed to try to solve the siltation problems at the lake.

The counties involved are Guthrie, Adair, Madison, Dallas, Clarke, Lucas, Marion and Polk counties as well as Warren County.

The Board of Governors of the Uncontrolled Drainage Area of Lake Red Rock hopes to return the lake to a more productive position.

"The lake has lost about half of its capacity since it was built 20 years ago," said Ben Kern, chairman of the group.

The lake has been filled with silt

from the Middle River, South River and Whitebreast Creek. The soil erosion has reduced the capacity of the lake from around 10,500 acres to 6,500 acres, Kern said.

Further study by the SCS should help identify major areas of soil erosion.

"A river basin study should identify which areas are losing the most soil," Kern said.

The Board could then begin to work with farmers to build terraces, flood control and dams after the study.

The siltation has also reduced the recreational space available at the lake.

"The DNR will stock the lake if they have a surplus of fish, but the water quality is so poor that the survival rate is very low," Kern said.

Two positions on the board have been left open for business and recreational interests.

Swampbuster rules murky for Iowa farmers

By Dale Johnson

A year and a half ago, Greene county farmer Earl Wright decided to replace a plugged tile that used to drain 2.5 acres of cropland.

However, he soon ran into the swampbuster law passed as part of the Food Security Act of 1985. Under the law, unless wetlands were converted to farmland use prior to Dec. 23, 1985, they cannot be drained. The penalty for doing so is a loss of farm program benefits and eligibility for other federal loan programs.

Wright now finds himself in violation of the swampbuster law in a dispute which is being appealed to federal officials in Washington, D.C.

The local soil conservation district and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, which has no jurisdiction in swampbuster, ruled that Wright's 2.5 acres was a wetland even though he'd cropped it enough that it qualified as set-aside acres under the feed grain program.

Classifying wetlands

Under swampbuster, wetlands receive one of five classifications (see table). They are natural wetland, abandoned wetland once altered and farmed, converted wetland drained after Dec. 23, 1985, farmed wetland that's partially drained or altered to produce crops, and prior conversion of wetlands to crop use before Dec. 23, 1985.

The SCS has established rules regulating what farmers can do with land under each classification.

In Wright's case, he had to first prove his tile existed. He thinks it was broke when High-



Gray

way 30 was constructed prior to the mid 1950s.

"I had to dig a hole to show them that tile existed," says Wright. "But they still ruled it was a farmed wetland when it's a prior conversion and is exempt."

He installed new tile, which is allowed under federal rules. However, local officials said he installed too much in violation of swampbuster rules.

Wright contacted Iowa Sen. Charles Grassley who emphatically says that calling cropland with tile under it a wetland was not the intent of the law, nor was preventing repairs of existing drainage. Wright's dilemma is not unique.

Gray areas in rules

A gray area exists in interpretation of the rules and it's resulted in numerous calls from Iowa farmers, admits a SCS official. At issue is whether wetland with tile under it is farmed wetland or prior conversion, and also what can farmers do with farmed wetland.

According to Mack Gray, assistant to the chief of the U.S. Soil Conservation Service (SCS), there should be no confusion. Any wetland with tile under it prior to passage of the law is exempt, he says.

"The act says that if it was manipulated in such a way as to make possible the production of an agricultural commodity and if that was done prior to Dec. 23, 1985, the land is exempt," he states.

Gray, a SCS biologist and a SCS legal counsel were scheduled to be in Iowa July 24 to clarify the swampbuster rules with local and state SCS officials. "I suspect this all is a gray area from county to county. We have to get everyone on the same wavelength," he says.

Gray says the rules are clear. If tile existed in cropped wetlands prior to Dec. 23, 1985, the

farmer can do anything he wants, including installing larger tile. Even if the land still retains wetland characteristics, is farmable and had tile under it prior to Dec. 23, 1985, it's called a prior conversion, he adds.

"A stopped-up tile line does not a wetland make," he states.

Tile elevation

However, if a natural wetland complete with hydrophytic plant life still exists within previously converted land, Gray says the elevation of the tile line cannot be altered to drain the remaining natural wetland.

Gray says that farmed wet-

lands are supposed to be land that has not been (completely) drained but in many years the land is dry enough to raise a crop. Drainage can be maintained only to the degree that existed prior to Dec. 23, 1985.

"It really wasn't manipulated enough to make possible production of an agricultural commodity because it still retains wetland characteristics. That's in our rules and regulations. It sounds obvious, but that's not always necessarily so," he says.

"But if it's got a tile under it, obviously has a tile under it and obviously in most years that tile drains it enough to farm it even though if you let the tile stop up

or didn't farm it you'd get some hydrophytic weeds growing on it, in that case, to me, it is a prior conversion wetland and ought to be exempt," Gray says.

What about jurisdiction of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service in swampbuster? "There's nothing in that law that ever implied they have veto power," Pete Conroy, an aide to Sen. Grassley, says of wetland rulings.

Gray concurs, saying that the role of the service is "only to consult with the SCS." He says that only local, state and national SCS personnel have authority to rule on wetland determinations.

Wetlands on your farm?

These definitions apply to wetlands as defined by the 1985 Food Security Act. Follow the use, maintenance and improvement guidelines to avoid swampbusting and stay eligible for USDA benefits.

Wetland Definition	Use Allowed	Drainage Maintenance Allowed?*	Additional Drainage Allowed?*
Natural Wetland (W) An area of predominately hydric soil which can support a prevalence of water-loving plants. Cattails, willow trees, sedges, rushes, some smartweeds, or other water-loving plants are often present.	May be used to produce ag commodities when weather permits, if no altering of the wetlands takes place.	None.	No.
Abandoned Wetland Wetlands that were once altered and farmed, but have been abandoned as cropland. No attempt was made to maintain the area as cropland for at least five successive years, and it now supports water-loving plants.	Same as natural wetlands.	None.	No.
Converted Wetland (CW) A wetland (area of hydric soil) drained or altered after 12/23/85 to enable production of an agricultural commodity.	Planting an ag commodity will cause a person to be ineligible for USDA benefits.	None. Same as natural wetland.	
Farmed Wetland (FW) A wetland that was partially drained or altered to produce crops prior to 12/23/85. The land was not completely drained, and may have potholes or seasonally flooded areas that still meet wetland criteria.	May be farmed as it was prior to 12/23/85.	May maintain the degree of drainage that existed prior to 12/23/85.	No.
Prior Conversion (PC) Wetlands that were converted to cropland use before 12/23/85. This cropland was completely drained or otherwise altered to make it possible to produce crops, and it no longer meets wetland criteria of saturated soil- or water-loving plants.	Produce ag commodities.	Produce ag commodities.	Yes.

*Maintenance refers to maintaining any previous drainage to the same level.

**Additional drainage refers to improving drainage from a previous condition.

2-1-89

RHT Busin Agricu

Page 6A



Conservation award

Bob R. Turner of Indianola was one of two people picked as a winner of the Conservation Stewardship Award for the Southwest District of Iowa. The Land Improvement Contractors Association

of the Southwest District sponsored the award. Turner was awarded for terracing and tilling projects he performed on his farm in Warren County.

RHT staff photo by Mark Davitt

Wetlands eligible for conservation program 2-1-89

For the first time, some cropped wetlands will be eligible for enrollment into the U.S. Department of Agriculture's 10-year Conservation Reservation Program.

USDA's eighth signup period for the program will be Monday, Feb. 6, through Friday, Feb. 24.

"Criteria for entering highly erodible land and filter strips in CRP will be the same as the first seven signups," says Mike Nethery, state conservationist for the Soil Conservation Service in Iowa. "But now certain cropped wetlands and erosion-scoured floodplains are also eligible."

For wetland criteria, eligible fields must first be determined by SCS to include wetlands or farmed wetlands. Those wetlands or farmed wetlands must occupy one-third of the field; be in a pothole region with a wetland density of one wetland per six acres; or be in a six- to nine-acre field with a wetland of any size.

Intent of the scour erosion provision is to protect land along a stream that is scoured by floodwaters on a regular basis. A field is eligible if the land between the scoured area and the stream makes up at least a third of the entire field. If a field with scour erosion is less than nine acres in size, the entire field is eligible.

"The SCS office will use a soil

survey to determine the other requirement. That is, whether flooding is expected to occur at least once every 10 years," Nethery says.

To be eligible for the scour erosion criteria, one-third of the field must have suffered damage from water that has flooded over it. Also, the USDA soil survey will be used to indicate whether the flooding is expected to occur at least once every 10 years.

In addition, all fields must meet USDA's cropping requirements. A field must have been planted to an annual agricultural commodity crop for two of the five years from 1981 through 1985 to be eligible.

"The new criteria will give an economic option to landowners who want to return farmed wetlands to their natural state," Nethery says. The SCS estimates there are more than 4 million acres of farmed wetlands eligible for CRP.

"We expect reduced flooding, increased wildlife habitat, a water filter effect, and other benefits from entering wetlands in CRP," Nethery says.

Iowa landowners enrolled about 1.6 million acres in CRP in the seven signups conducted since 1986. Nationally, more than 28 million acres have been enrolled.

Croplands enrolled in CRP are planted to trees or grass. "We'd like to see more trees planted, both on highly erodible lands and along floodplains," Nethery says.

The USDA's Agricultural Stabilization and Conservation Service administers the CRP signup. ASCS will provide up to 50 percent cost-share assistance to CRP participants for the establishment of acceptable cover.

The Soil Conservation Service in cooperation with ASCS and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, will make

scour erosion and wetland area eligibility determinations. SCS will also help farmers and other landowners prepare and implement a conservation plan for the CRP enrolled land.

Landowners submit bids to USDA to receive annual payments for idling land in the CRP program.

Anyone wanting information or assistance in determining if their land is eligible is encouraged to contact the Soil Conservation Service at 1204 E. Second Ave. in Indianola or call 961-5264.