

ANNUAL REPORT
DES MOINES COUNTY SOIL CONSERVATION DISTRICT
STATE OF IOWA

Period Ending December 31, 1953

The Des Moines County Soil Conservation District submits its report of the very eventful year of 1953. Although short handed during the spring and early summer, a great deal of conservation practices were applied on the land during the year.

A summary of practices applied shows 2684 acres contoured, 2.0 miles of terraces and diversions, 28 farm ponds constructed, 13 erosion control structures, 20 miles of tile laid, 1 mile of open drain ditch, 414 acres of pasture renovation and 30,000 feet of hedge row plantings.

In addition to practices applied, 53 basic plans were approved by the Commissioners and 31 farmers were added as Initial and Advanced conservation agreements.

More silos are going up and being filled with legume grass for winter feed. The lengthening of rotation has provided more hay and rotation pasture and many farmers are finding land actually producing more meat or milk to the acre.

Pasture improvement has been increasing each year and neighbors of Cooperators are taking up the practice of renovation.

More farmers are feeding cattle on grass than in former years.

The District again cooperated with the Burlington Chamber of Commerce on its annual conservation contest. Farmers and their wives, that have excelled in some phase of the conservation program are invited to an

annual dinner and presented with a token of recognition by the Chamber. The District supplements these with a small prize to each of the winners. A program of interest to farmers will begin about 10:00.

This year Jim Wallace will be the speaker in the morning session and another is scheduled for the after dinner speech. The dinner will be held on January 29, 1954. In conjunction with the recognition of soil conservation contestants, four farmers will be presented certificates of merit, awarded them as the Des Moines County winners in the Soil Conservation Achievement Awards program for Iowa farmers. Also, the winners in the annual 10 acre corn yield contest will be recognized at this same gathering.

There will be some 150 to 200 people present at the institute and dinner.

Considerable time is spent on discussion of practices, inspection of sites and designing of structures for ACP participants, that are never constructed. This tends to reduce the time for District Cooperators or complete programs for the farms.

The technician is very often requested to check tile up to the amount paid for by the PMA but not asked even to look at additional tile being installed on the same farm or even in the same field. The contact with AeProgram of PMA does have the advantage of technicians meeting and interesting additional farmers in conservation, and in improving the quality of application of conservation practices applied to the land.

The local ASC office has set up funds for use by the SCS. However, due to the competitive wage scale in this area it has been difficult to employ adequate help. The District has enjoyed very fine cooperation on the part of the local ASC offices.

The Commissioners during the year were Chairman Kenneth Redfern with Hugh Jamison and Homer Woodward the two other members. The Secretary is James C. Hodges, Extension Director, Horace Sutton Jr. is treasurer, R. H. Audsley, Farm Planner and Jack Jacobs is the Conservation Aid.

Engineering Specialist Harold R. Sandelius, operating in three counties, is located at the local office. This should increase the engineering work in the county and give the local SOS staff additional help on engineering problems.

Due to the reorganization of the SOS the District lost the local District Conservationist who relieved the remaining local technician of a great deal of the administration and reports of the local office. We also lost, in the shuffle, an SOS Clerk and replaced her with a clerk paid from State funds which leaves us very little State money to hire an aid to help in layout work. The District has been quite short handed in 1953 and will be a little worse off in 1954.

We Commissioners hope for more favorable weather for the construction of terraces in the coming year and the continued yearly increase in the number of permanent ponds and structures and pasture renovation.

Respectfully submitted,

DES MOINES COUNTY SOIL CONSERVATION DISTRICT

Kenneth Redfern
By: Kenneth Redfern, Chairman