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Quad-District Conservation Newsletter



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New, unique designs used in W. Pott project

by Lou Walte
NRCS/AIS

When John and Evelyn Dimon purchased their farm in Garner Township in 1961, they immediately became aware that serious erosion problems would need to be addressed. Their land laid east and west, and a deep ditch was encroaching further from south to north each year.

Complicating the problem were underground springs at the head of the ditch, which made difficult any efforts the Dimons made to alleviate the damage. Also, there were no terraces on the steep slopes to help control runoff water. As time went on, the ditch threatened to cut the farm in half!

Evelyn Dimon remembers that there was a dam which the previous owner had attempted to construct across the gully, which was then probably from 80 to 100 feet deep and 100 to 200 feet wide. "But the dam was breached before it was barely completed," she said, with a rueful grimace, "and never repaired. The remnant is still there, but has never served the purpose for which it was intended. I am not so certain it would have, even if it had been completed!"

"As we watched conditions worsen, we knew we had to have some help," Evelyn continued. "We could envision erosion taking our entire farm. We knew of two other adjoining farms which had had to be abandoned when their wells went dry. We were putting in a few terraces each year, but we could see that we needed a more comprehensive plan of action."

So in 1986, John and his neighbor Robert Wilson, who shared the concern, went to what was then the West Pottawattamie Soil and Water Conservation District office to see what could

be done about the ever-deepening gullies on their farms.

Lyle Peterson, District Conservationist, recalled, "When we went to inspect the area, it was readily evident that a serious problem existed. Actually, the erosion extended over the properties of four separate landowners, with gullies and related problems extending from one to or through another. We discussed the concerns and possible solutions with the owners, and told them we would work with them to find the best method of controlling the ongoing erosion."

The major project lay dormant for several years, although Tom Bottoms, Soil Conservation Technician, continued to monitor the situation and draft plan possibilities.

A sad fact is that John Dimon died in February, 1993.

In the fall of 1993, the project activities intensified, became "more serious" in 1994 because the ditch was very active, and construction was to begin in the fall of 1995. The weather did not cooperate, however, and it was spring before the project actually "got off the ground".

"In order for the project to be effective," Tom said, "we knew it was very important to get all the landowners involved. Several others had asked for assistance, and there was concern that the county road above the ditch would be endangered in a few years."

"We had early-on done the necessary preliminary surveying, compiled cost-estimates, etc. and felt that instead of solving only the gully problem, a complete terracing system encompassing the four farms would be the only way to completely control the erosion and water problems."

"I was a little overwhelmed



This completed terrace on the Dimon farm was especially designed to not only control the gully which had been seriously encroaching, but also provide roadway access to the fields beyond the structure.

and couldn't really understand the concept of it all", Evelyn said, with a smile and a lift of her eyebrows, "but Tom took me to Harrison County, and showed me a similar project on the Merle Christiansen farm there. Kevin Holcombe (Harrison NRCS Technician) was very helpful in explaining what had been done and why it was done. I was really impressed, and told Tom to go ahead and carry out his ideas for me."

"The reason I wanted her to see the Christiansen site," Tom explained, "was because she was concerned about putting in the dam included in the original plan. The visit was to show a terracing system that did not use dams, but was equally effective and less expensive."

"I wanted to be able to cross the ditch," Evelyn explained. "I was really impressed when Tom revised the plan and designed a terrace to take the place of a dam, with a wider top to provide access for machinery."

Tom explained that the expense of the extra width was not included in the cost-share, but paid by Mrs. Dimon. Otherwise, state and county cost-share funds were used to complete 50% of the project, with Mrs. Dimon supplying the other 50%.

Tom incorporated a new and unique technique for drainage in the area. Rather than toe drains, "Multi Flow" tubing was used, perhaps for the first time in western Iowa. Multi Flow is a series of small plastic tubes,

fabricated to be stacked one on top of the other, like miniature tile lines, and wrapped with fiber glass filter material. A 150-foot roll of the product was placed in a vertical trench in the seepage area at the down-stream base of the terrace, then backfilled.

"The springs in the area created more of a problem than we had anticipated," Tom admitted, "and I wanted to try the Multi Flow system. So far, it has been very effective, and we have found it controls or relieves the seepage. With the advantage of having the fiberglass filter already installed, the soil does not melt or wash into the Multi-Flow tile line."

Also unique to the project might be the extent of cooperation of four different landowners involved. In addition to 3500' of terraces on the Dimon farm, 1600' were built by Grant Mass, 1700' by Robert Wilson and 200' on the land owned by Joel Volantine.

"I am so grateful to all of them," Evelyn commented, "and appreciate everyone else involved. I know more terracing will be needed on my farm to further control some smaller ditches. But without the other landowners willingness to cooperate, this project would never have been completed. I couldn't have done it on my own. I especially want to thank Robert Wilson, who shared the original common concern and interest with us, and was very helpful to me after John died."

Tom Bottoms, who was

involved with the project for almost three years, commented that he also was very appreciative of the cooperation he and his office have received, and that he "takes a great deal of pride in what was accomplished".

Ernie Aust, Watershed Coordinator for the State of Iowa, commented, "It takes not only neighborhood cooperation, but leadership and commitment to get the job done for something like this to happen. We can help and provide some financial assistance, but we don't hire the contractor and pay the bill."

Evelyn still lives in the attractive, flower-surrounded ranch-style home which overlooks a pleasant view of fields and tree-covered rolling hills. From her patio, she can see the "arroyo" which should no longer encroach upon the scene. Her mother, Hazel Treft, has lived with her since 1986.

Evelyn is kept in close contact by her sons, Richard, his wife Helen and four children of Glenwood, and John, wife Diane and one child of Omaha. She is a proud great-grandmother of one.

After retirement from the Omaha Norwest Bank in 1987, she kept busy as a volunteer at the Henry Doorly Zoo, and as a member of the American Sewing Guild, but now concentrates on caring for her mother, a semi-invalid, and more "in-house" activities.

Evelyn is an avid square dancer, and member of the local



Evelyn Dimon and her beloved "tin lizzy".

Continued on page 3

Sorensen charter member of N. Pigeon Creek Watershed



Virgil Sorensen relaxes on a swing under a shady tree, and surveys a pleasant backyard scene.

by Lou Waite
NRCS/AIS

The North Pigeon Watershed in West Pottawattamie County was authorized in August 1966 under Public Law 566, implementing the Small Watershed Act.

What is a watershed? Many times those who deal with them forget that the layman reading these articles might be unaware of just what constitutes a watershed in the first place.

Dale Schroder of Boomer Township could tell you. He has been in close association with the Soil Conservation Service, and North Pigeon Watershed since 1945.

The definition of a watershed is simple when you remember the well-known theory that all water runs downhill, or seeks the lowest level it can reach.

On land, water that does not evaporate or soak into the soil usually drains into ditches, streams, marshes or lakes. The land area from which the water drains to a given point is a watershed. Since smaller streams flow into still larger streams, all the land through which the water eventually drains

into North Pigeon Creek is included in that particular watershed area.

Dale was one of the first members of the watershed board, having been recruited early on by Ernest Rodenburg, at that time a local farmer, and most likely the person who started the watershed movement. Rodenburg, through his association with what was then SCS, was aware of the different programs offered by the district to aid in protecting the land from erosion. Walter Weiss, a former SCS District Conservationist, was a "key person in getting the project off the ground and setting up the watershed board," Dale noted.

"Back in 1945, ASCS and SCS were sort of all in one," Dale recalled. "So the guy getting us to sign up for terraces was the same one who came and laid them out. My dad was talked in to building a couple that year and he was one of the first in the county to do it. He was one of the first to start contouring, too."

"When I was a kid, I remember my uncle listing in the corn up and down the hills. Then it would rain and wash it all out, so he would go out and plant it again. Everybody planted up and down the hills then. But some

would make a drainage ditch catty-cornered across the field so the water wouldn't follow the rows. But you know what happened? Then they had a big catty cornered gully! Think of the tons of soil which were lost before someone got smart enough to figure out they should go around the hillsides!"

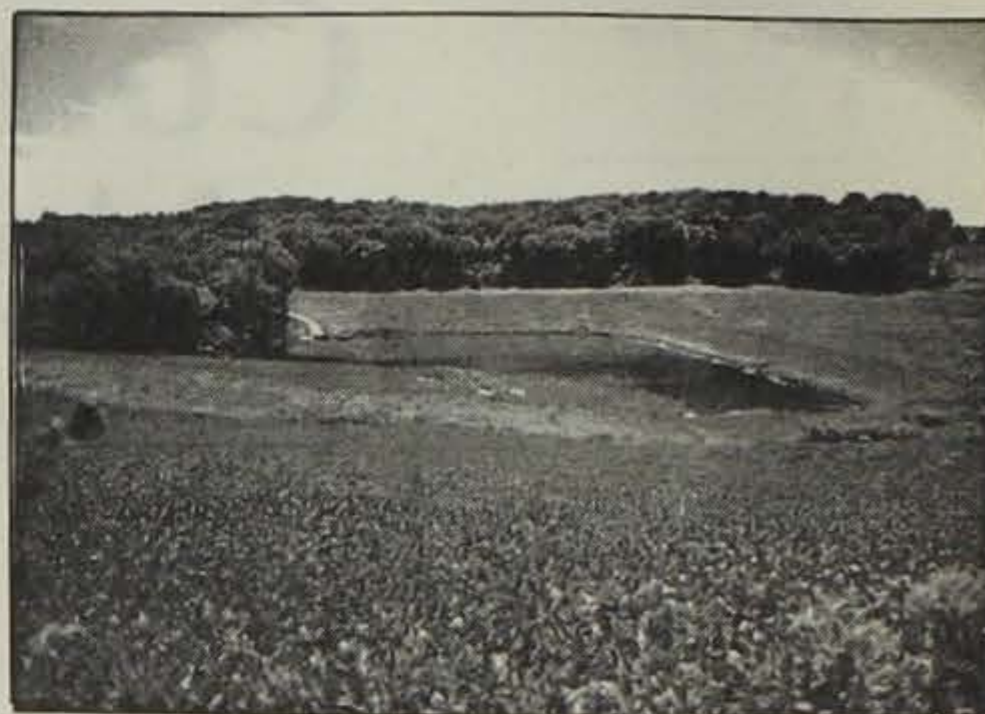
Dale still lives on the 230 acre farm where his father first became concerned about conservation, but the land is rented to Don Genereaux. Don grows corn and beans, using no-till and minimum till. The pasture is rented to the owner of a number of horses. There are also 20 acres of brome grass, which is hayed and sold to "whoever needs it."

Most of the terraces on the farm are in the watershed, but some are not, and are holding water which doesn't drain into Pigeon Creek. Lyle Peterson, District Conservationist, recalls the day Dale came into the field office and said he wanted to build a terrace on some grassland. "I told him that if he did that, it would be considered sodbusting and have a more stringent plan. Then I suggested that he put in a basin terrace, but warned if he did that, he would have to leave the land in grass for 20 years. I'll never forget what Dale said, 'Good,' he said, emphatically, 'That's just what I want. That ground should never be farmed!'"

Dale said he liked the basin terraces the best. "Actually, you don't lose as much ground putting in one large basin terrace as you do if you put in three smaller grassed-back slope terraces. I liked to have the terraces installed ahead of all the dirt (field) work. That way, I didn't have to plow in all the ditches after a rain, like I did before."

Dale grinned a bit, looked at the young NRCS technician standing nearby, and dryly commented that while his long association with SCS (now NRCS) had been pleasant for the most part, there were exceptions.

"I used to argue with Tom (Bottoms, the technician) a few times, so he would go bring back Lyle, and then I'd have to argue with both of them! But we always



A North Pigeon Creek watershed site, one which also may be used for recreation, such as fishing, swimming, watching wildlife, and other pleasant pursuits.

worked it out. They do a good job."

Gesturing toward the fields in the distance, Dale said that the watershed treatment had made it possible to irrigate, something he never would have believed possible. "We irrigated 20 acres last year," he said, "and the water supply (from Pigeon Creek) was never depleted."

Then with a faraway look in his eye, Dale said, "My dad would have loved to be around today. I am amazed at the amount of wild game which has come back since the watershed was put in. There are wild turkeys, ducks, geese, deer, beavers, bass in the creek . . . just about everything that was here originally. My dad loved to hunt and fish. Back when he was here, rabbits and squirrels were about all that was around, and maybe a carp in the creek. 'Course the darned deer are getting so thick

they are almost a nuisance, and I guess the beavers cause some problems. You can't have everything, though, can you?"

Dale's wife and "right hand" Cecile works part-time as a postal service clerk at Modale. Their daughters, Kathy, Karen and Jean all have their own homes and families. Two grandchildren complete the immediate family.

While semi-retired, Dale serves as Boomer Township Clerk, and is a member of the Grange Cemetery Association. He and Derald Blois often spend time straightening and repairing the tombstones, and providing other maintenance at the site.

As one of the "pioneers" in the watershed, and an obvious believer in the need to protect and preserve this land and all creatures large and small, Dale is to be commended for his dedication and effort.



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Bloises long time promoters of Pigeon Creek Watershed



Derald and Gladys Blois, with some of the many terraces existing on their farm shown in the left background.

by Lou Waite
NRCS/AIS

Derald Blois was raised in Nebraska, and came to Iowa when 12 years of age. He is proud of the fact that four generations of his family have been farmers. And he is justifiably proud of his participation in and association with the North Pigeon Creek Watershed, having served as a member of the first committee to direct that program.

Derald and Gladys Blois's farm lies within the watershed in Boomer Township, West Pottawattamie County. Lyle Peterson, District Conservationist, commended Blois, saying that he had been "a great motivator for that area, and very influential in getting the watershed completed."

But in telling his story, Derald began by giving credit to someone else. Here is his account, in his own words:

"Our neighbor, Dale Schroder, has spent most of his 72 years living next to North Pigeon Creek, except for a couple of years in the service. I have lived within the watershed boundary for 46 years. Two years of our married life was lived by the county shed just three miles down the road, but that land also drained into the main Pigeon Creek.

"I guess having lived within this area that long, we would have to observe main aspects of the erosion which has gone on in the 50-some years spent here.

"I used to have a trapline and did some hunting along these creeks during my high school years. Some of these creeks have consumed many corners of roads and crossings since that time. When I moved to the area in 1941, many of these tube crossings had wooden bridges. Many times when the tubes were put in, the design said to lower the tubes to the bottom of the gullies. Eventually, someone must have seen the light, and decided to raise them high enough to at least fill in a portion of the gully.

"Somewhere around 1960, people living within the watershed started meeting to discuss ways to

use Public Law 566 so as to terrace enough to qualify for the Small Watershed Program. And, after 36 years have passed, the last dam was built a couple of years ago.

"One contract was in 1972, and included 5 or 6 structures; the one in 1978 included one near this farm. Another contract was let in the 1980's, and one or two in the 1990's.

"I feel that I personally gave 2000 hours to this project. No, I don't want a medal for that, but I did feel this would do the area quite a bit of benefit.

"There are 14 or 15 earthen structures on the 4500 acres of land within the watershed.

"The area, with all its shades of green this year, is really showing off what it has to offer. You see new houses popping up all over, with about seven under construction at the present time. All this within a relatively small area.

"I remember when Ernest Rodenberg came to our farm one day, all those years ago, to talk to me about the watershed. He didn't find anyone about, so he waited in his pickup. When I got back, I found him sound asleep, still waiting for me. He was so influential in getting the watershed going, but he never got to see it finished. I'm sad to say he died from a brain tumor when he was 50.

"The ones who worked so hard to get the watershed going were three or four generations ago. But the younger generations are reaping the benefits. I wonder if they realize that? But that's why we did it. I made it a personal goal to work for the watershed, and I feel good about what has been accomplished."

Derald and Gladys are technically "retired", and tenant Brian Witt now does the farming on their 240 acres. The farm is almost completely terraced, the latest being built this spring. Derald admitted that he may have been reluctant at times to acknowledge the benefit of the terracing, and says he still likes the level ones best to farm. But he realizes the narrow base are effective and less expensive to

construct.

The cropland is no-tilled, and Derald readily promotes that method as being the best soil-saving tillage system.

"I am glad I have been able to enjoy the tremendous benefits of conservation," Derald said in a serious tone of voice. "When I think that now I can cross the ditches I used to have to go around, it makes me stop and realize how things have changed." Then with a rueful grin, he continued, "My cows knew it first, however, and they sneaked across those ditches before I realized they were out!"

Traveling has become an enjoyable pastime for the couple. Last year they went to New York and this year they plan trips to San Francisco and Portland. Otherwise, they are involved in activities at St. John's Lutheran Church, located in a beautiful country setting not far from their home.

They are obviously proud of their family, Kay and husband Phil Wing of Shenandoah; Nancy and husband Ted Derscheid of Elston; Julie and Husband, Rev. John Battern of Pearson and seven grandchildren.

Derald served as a SWCD commissioner for 16 years, and is a former chairman. He speaks of his relationship with SCS and later NRCS with warmth and respect. Tom Bottoms worked with him on the most recent terrace program, and Derald complimented Tom for his services, saying he was "very pleased."

But for now, Derald and Gladys may be content to sit on the deck at the rear of their lovely home, overlooking a panoramic view of the verdant countryside. She perhaps would contemplate her beautiful flower beds, and he dream of catching a 40-pound catfish that a "neighbor kid" swears is in one of the ponds.

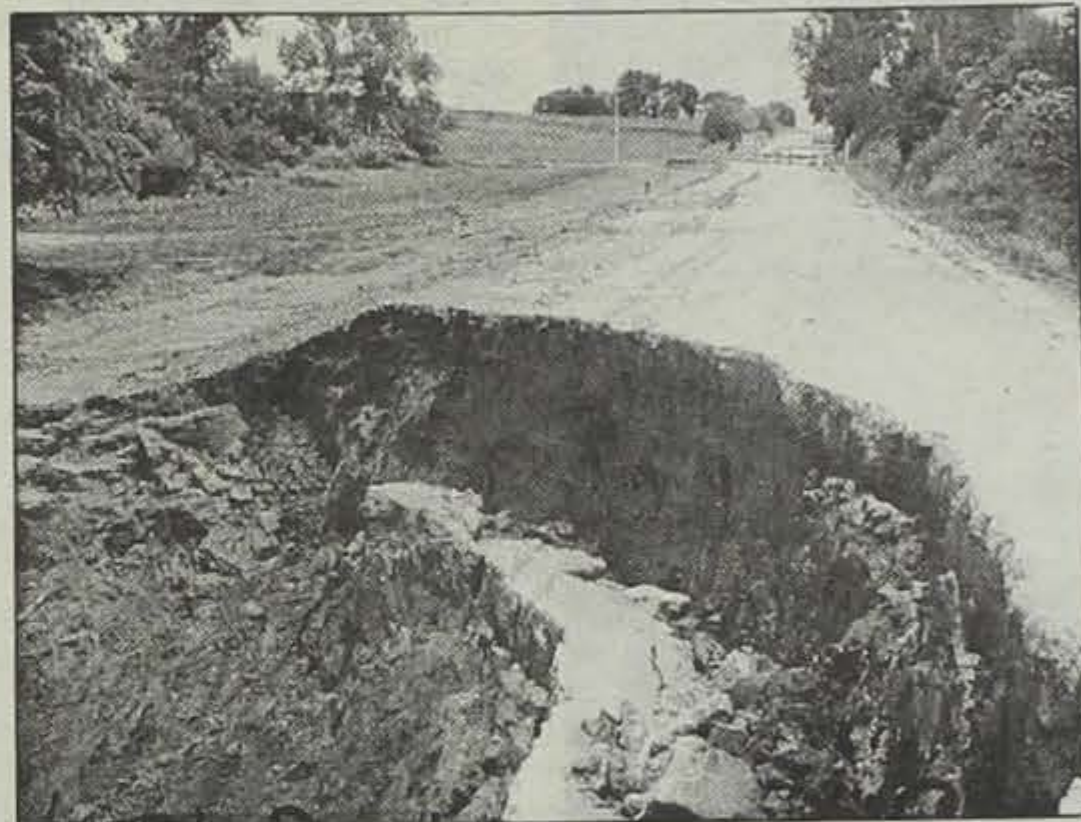
West Pott project

Continued from front page

square dance club. She also belongs to the Early Chariots Antique Car Club, and is proud owner of a 1923 Model T touring car and a 1923 Model T roadster. The cars were restored by her husband, after his retirement from Union Pacific, also in 1987. She can and does drive both vehicles, attending various car shows or participating in touring events.

She in fact treated this writer to a spin in the roadster following the interview. Both experiences were a pleasure indeed!

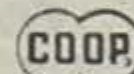
It is conscientious, caring people like John and Evelyn Dimon, making the effort to preserve and protect this good earth, who set a prime example for all to follow. And Evelyn, in carrying on following the loss of her husband, deserves a special commendation.



An example of the damage which can occur when deep gullies are not controlled by structures. Road L-36 north of Crescent was so badly damaged that it had to be closed. Such problems impact both urban and rural dwellers.



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Angeroth very aware of Watershed's importance



Charles Angeroth

by Lou Waite
NRCS/AIS

Charles Angeroth of rural Council Bluffs says there is "not a level foot of ground" in Hazel Dell Township, where his farm is located. He should know, for his family has been farming the hills there for three generations.

Not only that, but Charles has served as contracting officer for many of the watershed projects in the district, including some in Indian Creek Watershed, of which his farm is a part. He is also a former West Pottawattamie SWCD commissioner, and has served as chairman of the board.

The watershed was authorized through Public Law 566 in February, 1961, with 15 grade stabilization structures planned. The watershed encompasses 9,792 acres, with 5,092 of these being

in urban Council Bluffs.

PL 566 authorized the Small Watershed Act, making it possible for local sponsors to join with the Soil Conservation Service in developing a comprehensive erosion control plan for affected areas. After due process is carried out and the plans completed, the structures and their use are returned to the landowner. The sponsors, who may be the SWCD District, the County Board of Supervisors, etc., retain only the right to inspect and repair the site. Other access is only by permission of the landowner.

Charles commented that all the structures in the Indian Creek Watershed were completed before he became a commissioner. "Actually, the watershed was put through for flood control for the city of Council Bluffs," Charles said, "but there was not enough upland treatment in place out in the rural areas. I put in terraces, small ponds and things of that nature on my farm, and our focus as commissioners was to encourage that process. I'd say the watershed itself is complete now, but maintenance is important, and very necessary."

"I shudder when I hear talk of budget cuts and hacking" (for the PL 566 program), he said emphatically. "This is not the place for the government to cut funding! This 'not environmentally friendly' opinion had to have come from someone who hasn't even been out to see a watershed, so they don't know the difference. It (the watershed) is just the opposite! They don't know what they're talking about!"

All of Charles' fields drain into the watershed, and he recalls that a creek on the farm was ever

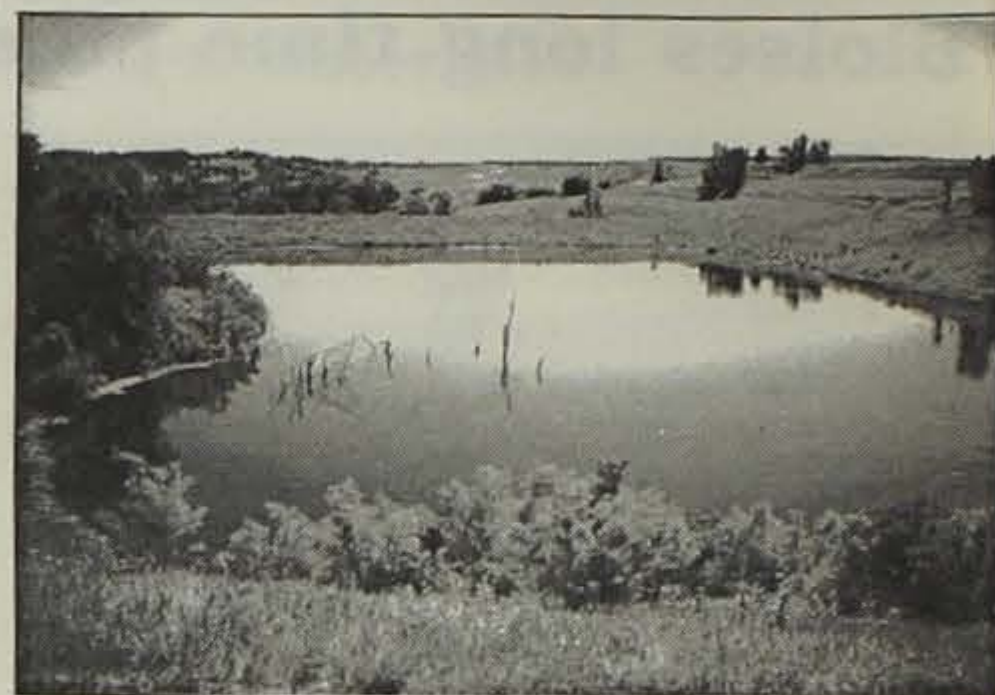
encroaching and carrying away the soil. Now it is controlled and no longer a concern. But there are other problems upstream, he said, which could affect the circumstances.

"We have been spared the 'goose downers,' he said, with a smile, "even in 1993, we did not get the heavy rains which fell in other areas. Oh, we have had them from time to time, but I don't recall ever having more than a 6-inch rainfall. But I have seen a big improvement in the overall conservation movement since I was a kid. I remember shucking corn with my dad, and not being able to cross the deep ditches, even with a high-wheeled wagon. It was the same when plowing the fields -- we couldn't lift the plow high enough to cross the ditches. So each time, we had to go around. That isn't true today, but we still have too much erosion. It isn't like it was 40 years ago, but it's still washing away."

Charles gave the SCS (now the NRCS) much credit, saying they "bend over backward" in cooperating with the landowners. "They have been very influential in getting farmers to comply and put structures on their farms. They are good to work with, and don't try to 'pull the wool over our eyes'. I have dealt with a lot of them, and appreciate all they have done and continue to do."

Charles admitted to being more aware of erosion problems because most of his land is of the steeper variety. It lends itself best to raising oats, "lots of alfalfa" and cattle.

"I've always had cattle," he said, "but in the last few years I gave up the stock cows. Now I buy open heifers, have them bred,



This idyllic pastoral scene is similar to many which exist in local watersheds, providing beauty as they protect the landscape.

and sell them before they calf." Then with a grin, he admitted, "It's the lazy man's way of raising cattle, so I guess I got lazy. This way, I don't have to go through the calving process."

At one time, he used a rotational grazing system, establishing paddocks and moving the cattle at intervals, etc., but later discontinued it. "I didn't keep records of the rate of gain, but I was satisfied with it at the time," he said.

He no-tills the corn he grows, and has since 1981. "I have had some marginal successes, some great successes, and some almost failures with weed control. He recalled. "But the chemical companies have made improvements in the last years, so it isn't as bad." A 30-inch planter with a splitter is used to plant narrow-row beans. There are 230 acres of cropland involved in a corn-bean rotation.

Charles and his wife Zola have four children: Rodney, a civil engineer with the NRCS in Norfolk, NE; Rhonda of Minden; Renae of Des Moines; Cynthia of Vermillion, SD; and five grandchildren.

The Angeroths attend the

RLDS Church in Crescent, where he serves as an Elder.

Next year, they plan to enter their farm into CRP, Charles noted. They are ready to "take it easier . . . do a little golfing, a little fishing, and a lot of traveling."

Lyle Peterson, West Pottawattamie District Conservationist, commented:

"I knew Charles before I came to this office, and I know his son Rod. Charles was an outstanding contracting officer and commissioner. He is a very sincere person and a good farmer, with an excellent stewardship ethic. He has no flatland, true, but his land is well maintained."

"He mixes his practices efficiently. He no-tills, does rotations, has terraces, and did a good job at pasture management when he had the paddock system. He is an excellent livestock man. He is looking at planting his CRP land coming out of contract with cool season and native grasses, to benefit pheasants and other wildlife."

"He is very active in his church, and I understand that is why he gave up being a commissioner."



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Bench, narrow base, broad base . . they're all terraces? (Yep!)



An early view of the gully site on the Dimon project during the clearing of trees and ditch debris.

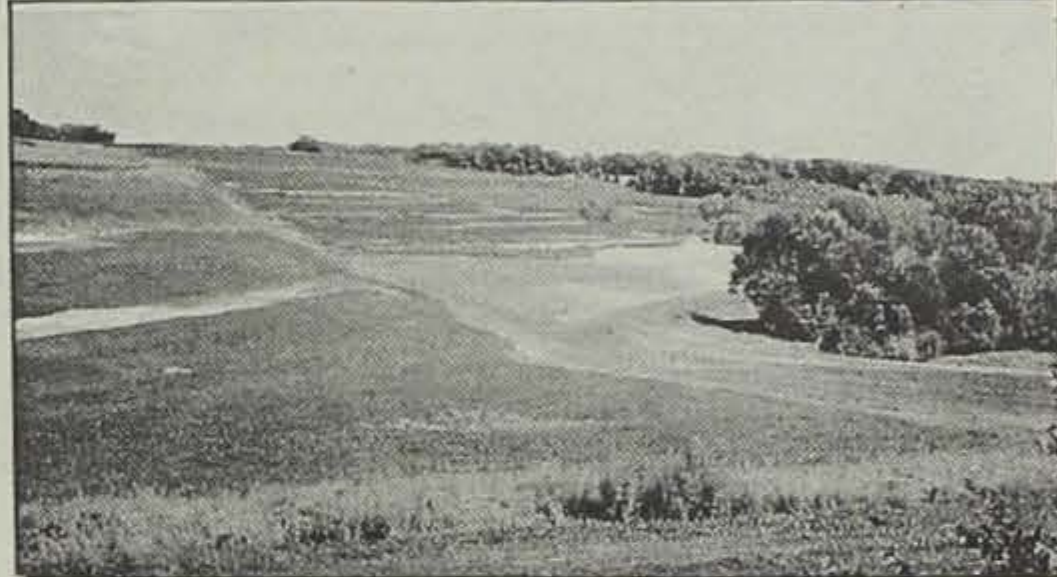
the road -- especially now with our wedding coming up in a few weeks.

The reason we were talking about terraces is because a few weeks before, I had the chance to follow around a few people at the West Pottawattamie Natural Resources Conservation Service.

I learned about erosion control programs which they set up for farmers. They showed me the variety of resources available to them in their office. But, for the most part, we spent our time on the road, going to farms, talking to farmers, walking through fields, and exploring possibilities.

Terraces which were designed in their office were made into a reality in the field. I followed different people throughout the week and discovered a variety of tasks that they perform. One day I was with a person who staked out a terrace to be built, staking out both a parallel and a contour terrace design, then discussing it with the contractor and farmer before coming up to an agreement on which one should be built.

Other days, we surveyed terraces that had already been built, examined an erosion control project which was nearing completion, checked crop residues



Pictured are some of the terraces on the Dimon (right) and Wilson (left) farms.

left on fields, and talked to a farmer who was interested in stopping erosion which was occurring on his farm, but needed to know more about options available and the costs.

I not only learned about what the people at the Natural Resources Conservation Service did, but who they were and why they choose to work at NRCS: they wanted to work with people, liked to be outdoors, had worked with soil erosion experiments in school and saw how it could destroy an important resource, or enjoyed working in agriculture.

I learned a lot that week, and when Kathy wanted to know what

I did, I greatly reduced it down into "I worked with terraces."

Later, as we were driving down a road, I pointed out wide-based terraces, narrow-based terraces, and bench terraces. It became a game identifying the types of terraces we saw.

The reason Kathy and I went to northwest Iowa to my folks place was to finalize some of the wedding plans with my sisters and parents. We stayed the weekend and Sunday afternoon, we were headed home, south, through LeMars, Sioux City, past Sloan, Mondamin, Missouri Valley.

"There's a bench terrace." "Yep."

Note: The following was written by Craig A. Riemersma, FFA instructor at Underwood High School, who spent a week observing the activities at the NRCS office as part of a class assignment for Iowa Western Community College.

"There's a bench terrace." "Yep."

A paper is blowing back and forth in the rear window of the car, and Kathy turns around and gets it. She stuffs the paper into the glove compartment and puts her seat belt back on. It is July and hot; the wind coming in through the open windows feels good.

"Bench terrace", Kathy points out.

"Yep."

"What do wide-based terraces

look like again?"

"You can farm over a wide-based terrace."

We continue down the road, around a curve, up a hill.

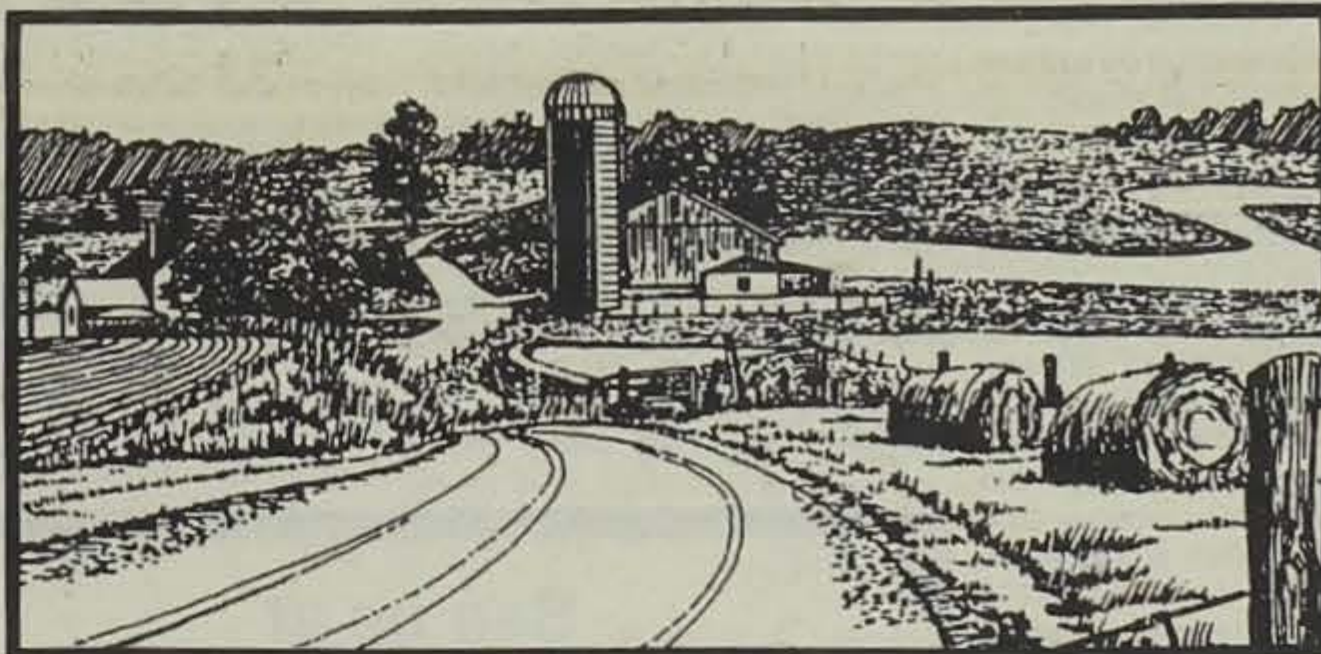
"You don't see very many wide-based terraces."

"Not on this road. I think they don't stick out as much either, though."

"Mostly there are bench terraces."

"There are some narrow-based terraces, too, but narrow-based terraces can be turned into bench terraces when they fill up with soil."

We make our way to Interstate 29 and head north, toward Sioux City. As we get near Sheldon, the land has leveled off into gently rolling hills, and our talk of terraces has stopped. It is not our typical topic of conversation, as we drive down



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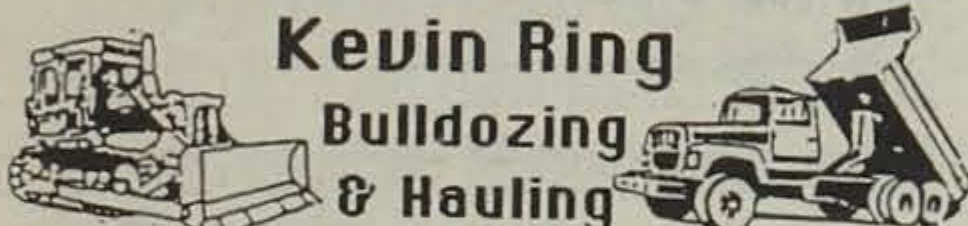
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Enviroscape used to demonstrate water contamination & soil loss



Pam Cates and Naturalist intern Ron Schwery prepare the Enviroscape for another demonstration.

by Lou Waite

One of the popular displays at the recent county fair was that of Pam Cates, Naturalist, and her demonstrations of the "Enviroscape".

Pam, who is an information specialist with the Harrison County Conservation Board, wrote a grant to the Department of Natural Resources, and received approval for funding for the project through auspices of the Harrison Soil and Water Conservation District.

The Enviroscape is basically a styrene model of a miniature landscape upon which is represented rural, urban, commercial, recreational, construction, natural and other areas which in reality would be affected by or contribute toward water pollution and soil erosion.

The model is designed to demonstrate both point and non-point source pollution, Pam informed. For example, if a liquid is poured in one area of the Enviroscape, it will flow through the model from one point to another. Various products such as cocoa, soft drink mix of several hues, etc. are used to represent soil, pesticides, fertilizers and so forth. "Residue" might be a sprinkling of oatmeal, or coconut, or some texturite granule. Some obvious creativity is required on the part of the demonstrator, in finding something which achieves the desired effect.

Terraces and dams are represented by forming modeling clay into basic structural shapes and placing where needed on the model, just as they would be constructed on an actual farm to control runoff water, or stop gully encroachment.

Pam explained the procedure as follows: "First we place on the

farm operations, although they unfairly get most of the blame.

"Once all the 'pollutants' are on the model, we spray water onto the entire surface, representing rainfall. It can be seen just how pollution from the various sites represented are carried by the water, flowing into the streams, and eventually reaching the underground aquifer, or water supply..

"There is a 'lake' on the country club grounds, and since we use a different colored solution to represent each substance, that lake becomes dark and 'yucky' after everything reaches it and is mixed together. I think the lake more than anything shows the kids just what happens when nothing is done to prevent erosion or pollution.

"After the model is cleaned, all the things which represent management practices are put in place. This might include fences to contain the cattle, modeling clay terraces or dams, residue, buffer strips, a marsh, rip-rap for shoreline stability, barrier fences and proper disposal at construction or factory sites, and much more."

Pam went on to relate that when the scene is once more sprayed and the water flows through all the sites, the difference is very evident. Much of the runoff soaks in or is retained by the conservation measures represented, and the water in the lake is much more clear.

"It's a dramatic example for the kids," Pam said, "and they quickly realize the benefits of conservation and preservation of soil and water.

"They love the miniature replicas used on the model... the buildings, the animals, tractors, cars, fences, trees... and they enjoy adding to or moving all these around to suit themselves. They like to put on all the materials used, or build the terraces and dams. It gives them a 'hands-on' part in

the demonstration, and I think they learn more from it this way."

It is obvious that Pam enjoys working with the youth, and is committed to teaching them that in helping to preserve the earth's natural resources, they are preserving their own future as well.

Russ Kurth, District Conservationist, commented:

"The Natural Resources

Conservation Service and the Harrison SWCD are very pleased with Pam's use of the Enviroscape. She uses the model very effectively to promote soil and water conservation to the youth of our county. The demonstrations also show how all of us, not only in the rural but also urban areas, could have some effect on the water quality and in how we control the runoff."



Nature enhances whatever and wherever it can, as it shown by this Morning Glory vine which has almost covered the hydrant located at Willow Lake near Woodbine.

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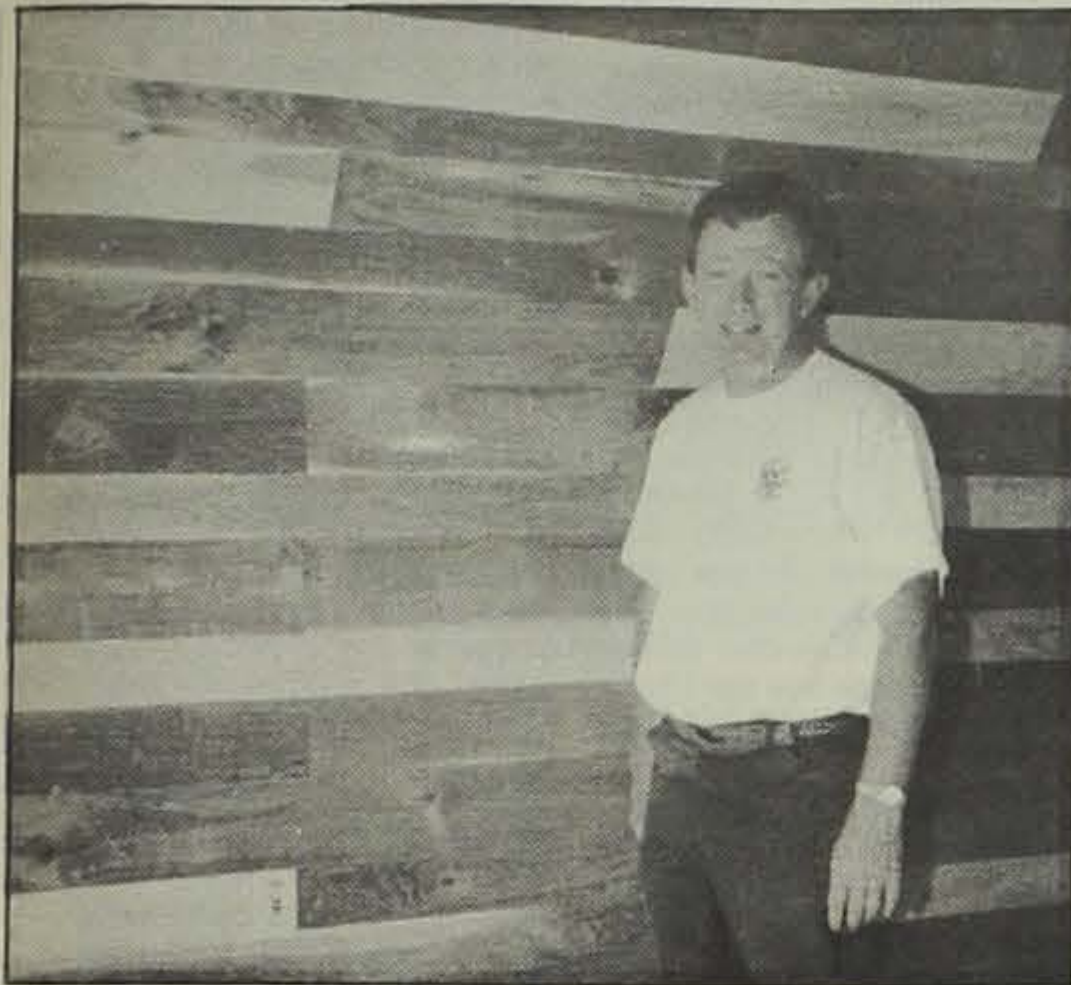
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GOOD DEALS...AND A GOOD DEAL MORE

New cabins at Willow Lake to be ready and available for rent by hunting season



Tim Sproul is pleased with the interior of this new cabin at Willow Lake, which is lined with black walnut and white ash.

by Lou Waite
NRCS/AIS

Tim Sproul, Director of the Harrison County Conservation Board, says that even after 18 years, he finds his job to be a continuing challenge and still "fun". He admits that at times he has had to be "creative" where funding is concerned, and constantly on the alert for ways and means to improve and enlarge upon the recreational areas in the county.

One of these is the Willow Lake Recreation area near Woodbine. From its beginning as an undeveloped tract of 94 acres purchased in 1976, the area has expanded to 222 acres and become a popular place to camp, hike, picnic, swim, fish and just enjoy nature in general.

In the spring of this year, the Harrison County Conservation Board of Directors approved a plan to construct three camping/sleeping cabins. The opportunity was made possible in part by the awarding of a \$13,000 grant from the Rural Development Through Forestry Program.

"Initially, Marty Braster of Golden Hills Resource Conservation and Development, Inc. provided impetus for the project," Tim said, "when he approached us as one of the agencies he felt could utilize the funds still available. Marty wrote the grant, requesting Rural Development Through Forestry money be awarded to RC & D, and specifying that Iowa forest and state-made products be used."

"A committee of Tom Bruegger, Director of the Monona County Conservation Board; Brent Olsen, State Forester; Russ Kurth, Harrison District Conservationist; Gary Gage, Iowa State Extension Director; Lorne Miller, Monona District Conservationist; Sharon Sullivan of the Harrison County Development Corp.; Barry Deuel

the committee.

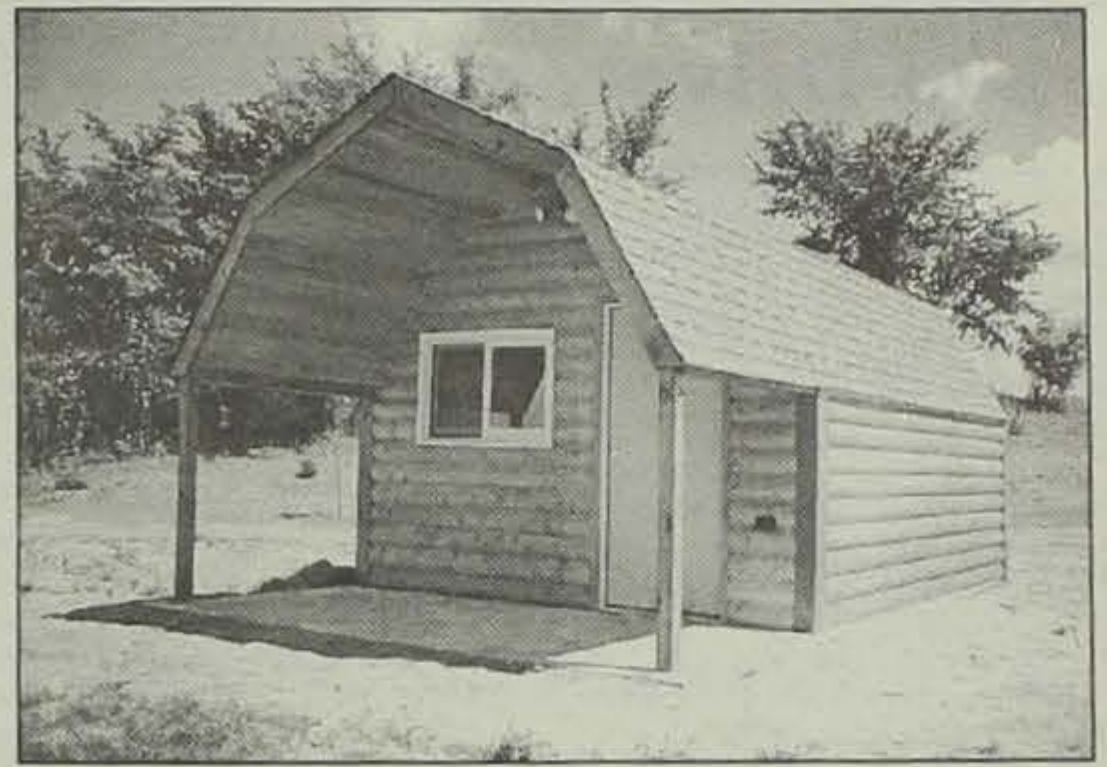
"It's an involved process," Tim said, a bit ruefully, "and there is a lot of competition for the available funds, so we felt very fortunate to have received the grant. I had had this idea (of building cabins) in the back of my mind for a long time, but hadn't had time to really finalize it. When the funding opportunity arose, the whole thing sort of fell together!"

Tim noted that another grant was received from the Iowa Young Adult Conservation Corps work project. This is a program competitively based, to provide individuals 19 through 24 jobs in a natural resources setting. Four college age students therefore were assigned to Willow Lake, and assisted with the building of the cabins and were involved in other activities. One student, a naturalist, also worked with Pam Cates. Sixty-five percent of their wages will be repaid through the grant, and the remaining 35 percent by the conservation board.

"So we had grant 1 to buy the materials for the cabins," Tim enumerated, "and grant 2 to provide the labor. The interns have been invaluable as workers, and very involved in the design as well as the construction process."

The two cabins which have been completed are 12' wide by 16' long, of split log siding, with an attached 6' covered patio. Provided are sleeping accommodations for up to 6 persons, with heat/air-conditioning available and a water hydrant outside the door. A charcoal grill and picnic table will be added to each patio area in the near future, as well as a campfire site.

The interior of one of the cabins is faced with red oak and



The cabins, one of which is shown above, will later have a picnic table and chairs on the patio, and a barbecue grill nearby.

the other with black walnut and white ash, interspersed in a random pattern. Both interiors are beautifully striking to the eye, and more impressive because native lumber was incorporated throughout.

The Iowa forest products used in the construction of the cabins were also processed in the state. The hardwoods were cut at the Department of Natural Resources (DNR) sawmill at Yellow River State Forest, for example.

The view from the cabins is a pastoral panorama, overlooking much of the entire lake and camping area. The structures are situated high enough to catch any vagrant breeze, but are protected enough so that chill winds should not permeate. Since it is hoped to have the cabins available for rent all year, this

factor is of considerable value.

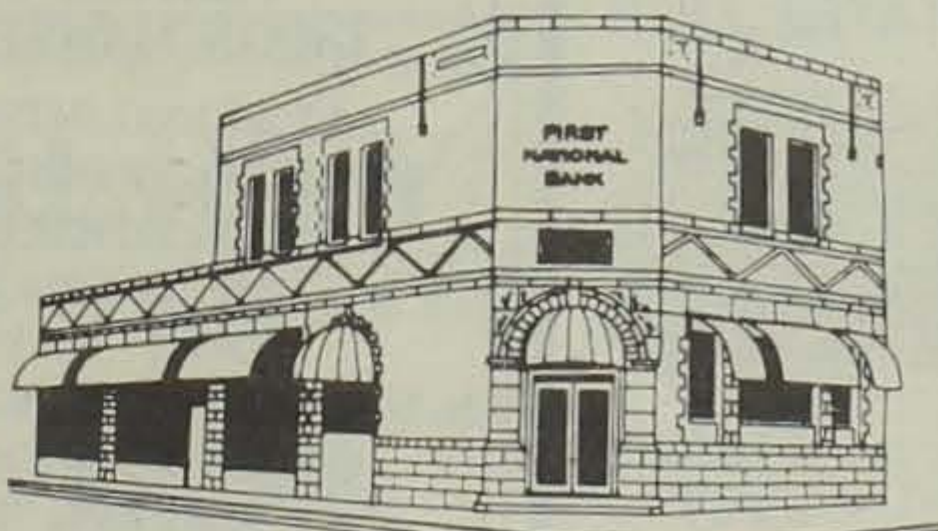
The third cabin, standing between the other two, is of whole log design and now in the process of being completed.

At first, no additional bathroom facilities were to be included in the project because it is only a short distance to the modern restroom-shower facility. But we may be able to provide a "unisex" rest room, with those wishing showers still having to walk down the hill a short distance."

Tim confided that it is hoped to have the cabins completed by late fall, since there have been inquiries by hunters about renting them at that time.

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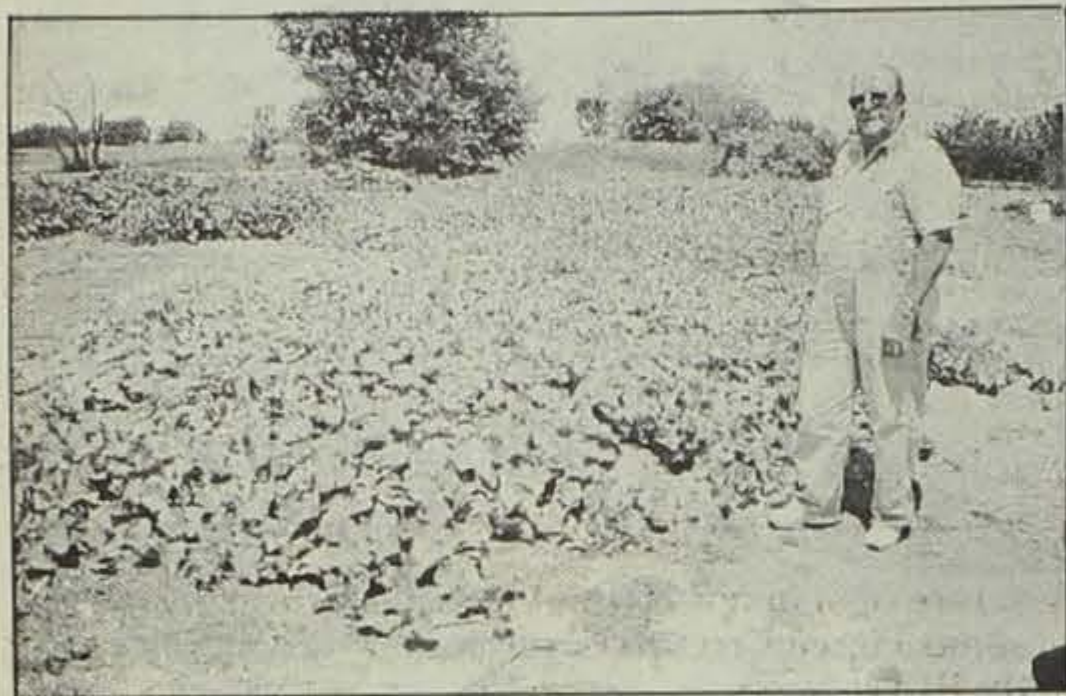


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Leo Driver, always a promoter and practicer of no-till



Leo Driver finds his melon vines have run rampant, but he doesn't mind a bit!

by Lou Walte
NRCS/AIS

Leo Driver of Missouri Valley grew up on a farm, and that was the occupation he chose to follow after becoming an adult. But in 1954, after his health was affected by a severe kidney ailment, his doctor said "You had better find something else to do."

"Farming was all I knew," Leo reminisced, "and I wanted to do something which could keep me in touch with it. So I borrowed \$20,000 and started a business where I could work with and serve farmers." Then with a reflective lift of the eyebrows, Leo added, "You know when I sold that business, it was grossing over one and a half

million dollars a year. Don't tell me that hard work and honesty don't pay off!"

The business, of course, was Missouri Valley Farm Supply, which Leo operated for, as he expressed it, "37 farm seasons." He retired in 1990.

In 1971, Leo heard about a 113-acre farm which was being auctioned, and he later inquired as to who may have purchased it. He learned that the bidding was started at \$200 per acre, with only one raise to \$210, so the farm was not sold.

"I knew the place had been neglected," Leo recalled, "but I also knew it could be a good farm with some improvement. So I offered \$225 an acre for it, and by golly I got it!"

"Oh, it was bad, all right," he continued, with a grin, "there were trees to be removed, and ditches which needed fixing. There wasn't a terrace on the place, and it was almost taken over with shattercane."

Gradually, all these problems were remedied, however, and the farm became very productive; the corn crop averaging 150 bu. per acre over a number of years. "All no-tilled, of course," Leo added. When asked what the value of the farm might be today, he estimated that it could bring from \$1600 to \$1700 dollars per acre, the way land has been selling. "Of course, I spent some money on it to get it there," Leo said, with a chuckle.

Another farm was purchased sight unseen, and Leo swears this is true. "I saw an ad in the Nonpareil listing a farm for sale in the Pigeon Creek Valley, Union Township, and after some talk with those handling the sale, I agreed to buy it without ever having seen it. I knew the area, and knew it should be good farm with some attention." After the attention was given, terraces and other structures installed, Leo said his prediction was correct, it was and is a valuable asset.

A long time advocate and promoter of no-till, he first became interested in that residue management system around 1976. As he expressed it, "After manufacturers of farm implements finally came out with some no-till equipment which was efficient enough to do the job, no-till was on its way!"

Leo promoted no-till from his business, even before he himself was a landowner. He thoroughly educated himself on the process so that he could recommend to the farmers the most effective fertilizer and chemical programs. He sponsored seminars and no-till tours annually, and also hosted yearly "appreciation days" events.

I was kind of unusual, I guess," Leo said, "because I promoted no-till to my tenants. Back then it was usually the other way around. Do you call that reverse psychology or something? And another thing which was unusual was that I had success by never using anhydrous ammonia . . . only liquid fertilizers. I found it to be easier and cheaper, and it left the ground in better condition. Others have successfully followed this method, and also found it one they preferred."

"Actually, Gail and Duane Witt were my first no-till customers," Leo said. "They came in one day and said they wanted to no-till about 30 acres corn as a trial run. The next year, they no-tilled 300 acres. Now they are complete no-till, corn and soybeans."

Leo grinned as he reminisced that one year the Witts wanted to no-till into some alfalfa ground, and asked how they should do it. Leo told them it might be best to use 2-4 D LV-4, plus 1 pound

Atrazine and 3 pounds Bladex (tech) to kill the alfalfa quickly. "But I said, don't do it yet, because 2-4 D is a foliar killer (kills upon contact) and your alfalfa has to have some growth first," Leo recalled.

About 3 weeks or so later, the Witts came back, and asked if they should now treat the alfalfa ground. "I said, oh boy, you mean you haven't done that yet," Leo chortled. "Well, you may as well go ahead and try it!" The field was along a well-traveled road, Leo remembered, so the Witts got a lot of attention using a sprayer and a planter in it, instead of a mower and a baler. "The alfalfa must have been about a foot tall by then," Leo continued. "But in a week the alfalfa was dying and in three weeks, there were beautiful rows of corn, with the ground never having been stirred. It was the talk of the neighborhood, I can tell you!"

Leo owns four farms, totaling 600 acres, and the only tillage system he uses is none at all!

"You can see that after all the rain, I have no problem with water ponding in the terraces, because with no-till, the water is absorbed into the ground. With no-till, the soil is filled with earthworm tunnels, and if you don't destroy them, they tunnel

Continued on page 9



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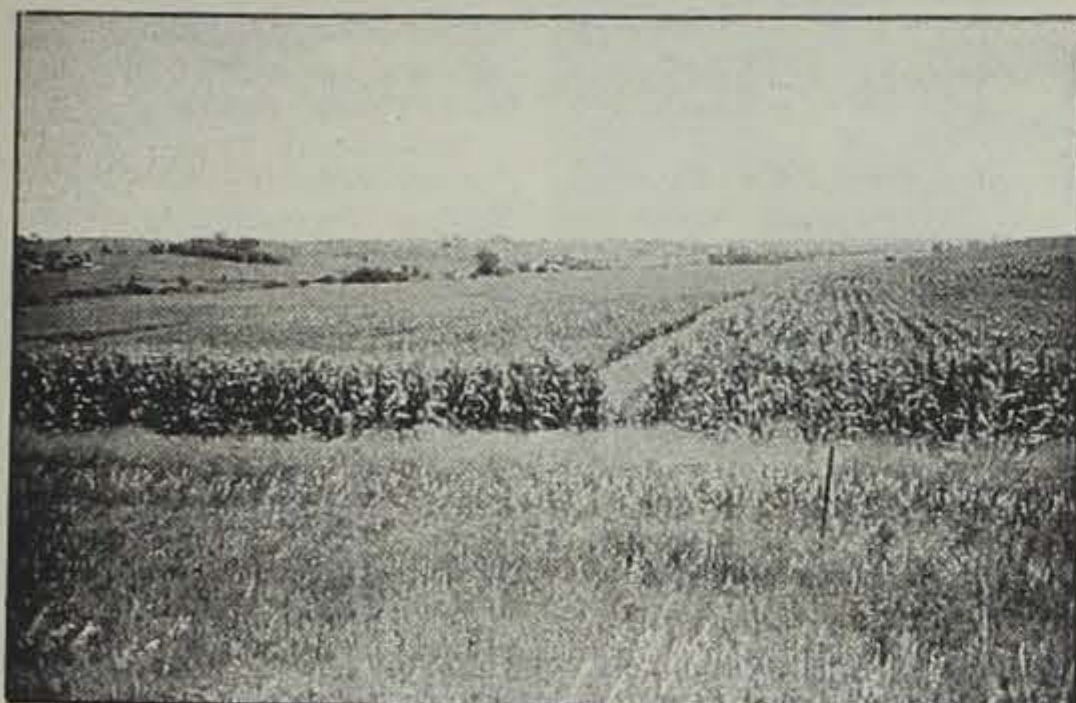
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Terraces protected this field on one of Leo Driver's farms from erosion, following the early summer rains.

Leo Driver Continued from page 8

the water down. Did you ever pull a soybean plant and look at the root? Those roots go way down deep, so if you leave the plant there to decompose, the holes where the roots were serve as a channel for the water to follow.

"People say it is hard to control weeds using no-till. But think about this: with no-till, those weed seeds stay right on top of the ground, where they are easier to kill when germinating than if they are turned under to come up from 3 or 4 inches underground. With no-till, you can use a good post-emerge chemical which kills on contact, and plant the crop the same day! You save soil, you save time, you save wear and tear on machinery, and most of all, you save money. What more could you want?"

Leo hastened to add that he gives much credit for the success of the no-till operation to his tenants, the Witts, who he said were "the best". He also expressed his great satisfaction

with the capabilities of his other tenant, Roger Driver. "When my tenants want to try something new or different, I trust them to make the difference," Leo stated. "I have always been willing to change with the times. You are never too old to learn something new!"

Leo also commended the staff of the National Resources Conservation Service, (which he said to him will always be "SCS", and he doesn't understand why they changed it!)

"I have always found SCS to be very cooperative and helpful," Leo said. "I am proud to have received an award for building a lot of terraces without cost-share, but the guys designed and laid them out."

Leo especially complimented Gayland Hall and Kevin Holcome, having dealt with Gayland in the earlier years, and Kevin during more recent times. "I found I could trust them all the way," Leo affirmed, "and I have always had that trust justified. I probably worked with Kevin the

most, and we've never had an argument or a disagreement. Not all of my terraces were without cost-share, but I have always been very satisfied with the results.

Leo admits to having been good-naturedly teased about his "no-till garden", however. It is an acre "laid out" on one of his farms. The ground has not been disturbed for the last five years, and this writer can attest to the garden's lush opulence of vegetables and flowers. There are onions a big as saucers -- one weighed over a pound -- 40 plants loaded with maturing tomatoes; peppers, beets, beans, carrots and peas. Vines from 120 hills of watermelon cover half a gentle hillside, and on another are the vines of 70 hills of muskmelon. There are pumpkin vines, and gourds, and much more. There are some of the largest and most beautiful gladioli ever seen, as well as other flowers.

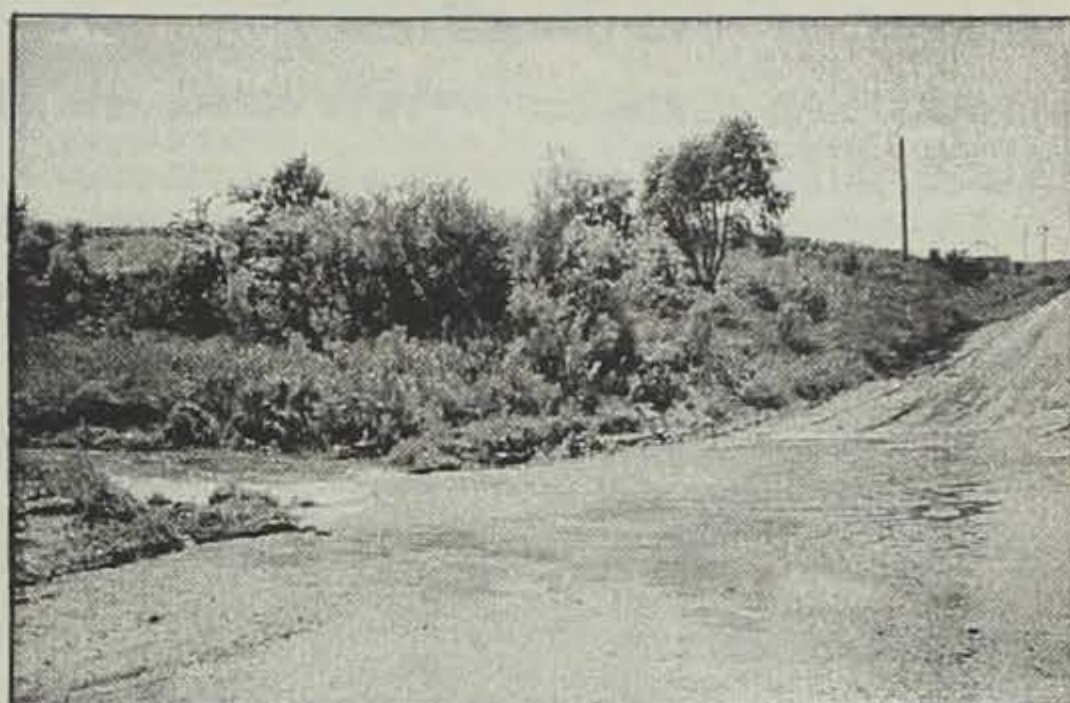
Leo laughed when he said there were 22 hills of cucumbers, due to his thinking the first planting was not going to come up, planting more, and then having both plantings eventually appear.

"But that's OK," Leo said, "for I give away everything that Bernice (his wife) does not pickle, freeze or can. She does a lot of that, and our kids usually benefit from what we don't use."

Bernice also is a flower lover, and an expert at growing them. Leo is proud of her decorating abilities as well, and the interior of their attractive home reflects her talents. Bernice was formerly employed at the J. C. Penney store in Missouri Valley for 15 years.

Other than gardening, Leo does woodworking; crafting many yard and hanging ornaments, brightly painted and well detailed. He is currently working on a small wooden replica of an elderly couple, sitting on a porch swing. This will be mailed to a customer in New Zealand.

The Driver's have four children, Dorothy, Delmar, Phyllis and Lenora, who with their spouses have provided 7 grandchildren and 2 great-grandchildren, who are Leo and



A rare sight in Iowa is this "Missouri Crossing", which allows Pigeon Creek to run across the road near one of the Driver farms.

Bernice's "pride and joy."

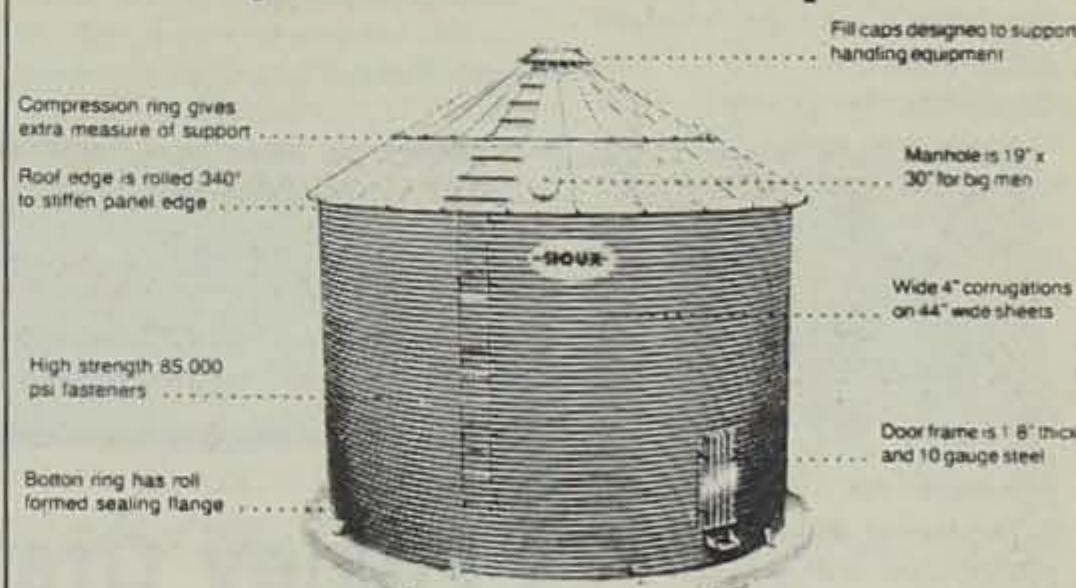
Russ Kurth, District Conservationist and long-time mentor of Leo's farming operations, commented:

"Leo is a good conservationist, promoting it best by his own example and his

willingness to talk to others about his operation. Leo has all his farms completely terraced. I especially remember the year he built over 27,000 feet of terraces without cost-share. I call that true commitment to protecting the soil."

Jesus was the ultimate conservationist. John 6: 11-12: And Jesus took the loaves; and when he had given thanks, he distributed to the disciples, and the disciples to them that were set down; and likewise of the fishes as much as they would. When they were filled, He said to his disciples, "Gather up the fragments that remain, that nothing be lost."

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Changes in conservation program to add more "fairness and flexibility"

Secretary of Agriculture Dan Glickman announced recently several changes to conservation programs designed to make the programs more effective, more flexible, and more science-based.

The changes announced will improve the administration of the swampbuster and conservation compliance provisions. The USDA worked with conservation partners across the nation to find ways to reduce farmer's regulatory burdens while still protecting natural resources. The changes support President Clinton's goals for protecting America's wetlands and, over time, will help achieve a net gain in the functions and values of these valuable resources. Glickman said that farmers and ranchers have made "great strides" over the years to reduce erosion and protect wetlands, and he is committed to working with them to continue this positive trend.

"The changes are built on a foundation of local participation, flexibility, good science and common sense," Glickman said. "They will make our conservation programs more equitable and flexible without compromising environmental protection."

He also said that USDA is working with other federal agencies to minimize duplication on wetland issues and provide "one-stop shopping" for farmers and ranchers.

USDA is seeking comments from the public during a 6-day comment period, which ends November 5, and any received will be considered before a final rule is made. The changes include those required by the 1996 Farm Bill in response to information received from the public during nine public forums held around the country in April.

A brief highlight of the changes is as follows:

a) There will be assurance that penalties for violations of swampbuster and conservation compliance will be fair and reasonable, and reflect the seriousness of the violation.

b) Greater flexibility will be provided to mitigate the loss of wetland functions and values through restoration, enhancement or creation of wetlands.

c) Wetland delineations will be kept in effect until the person with the delineation requests a new one.

d) A process will be established to identify practices which have a minimal effect on wetlands, speeding up the review and approval process and eliminating unnecessary delays.

e) There will be more flexibility in improving existing drainage systems when conditions change.

f) Landowners will be provided more options for mitigation, working with NRCS, conservation districts and others.

g) The concept of "abandonment" will be revised, to assure producers that cropland

with a certified delineation (such as wetland, or farmed wetland) will always maintain that status, as long as the land is in use for agriculture.

h) Producers will be assured they can ask for USDA technical assistance without fear of being found in violation of conservation compliance on highly erodible land.

i) Farmers and third parties will be allowed, under appropriate conditions and with effective safeguards, to certify that residue levels are in compliance on highly erodible land.

j) Producers will be assured that conservation compliance variances which are needed because of weather, pests or disease problems will be expedited.

USDA news releases are available on the Internet, including the full explanation of the above brief summaries.

New Environmental Quality Incentives Program to involve area and local people

Conservationists in Iowa are asking for local involvement in a new federal cost-sharing program designed to help landowners protect natural resources. The Environmental Quality Incentive Program (EQIP), established in the 1996 Farm Bill, encourages local involvement through a flexible, locally-led process to assess resource conditions and needs, identify conservation priorities and develop proposals for priority areas.

The program, which will be funded at \$200 million nationally in 1997, will place special emphasis on areas with serious natural resource concerns, such as soil erosion, water quality, manure management, wildlife habitat and others. Fifty percent of the funding will be targeted toward livestock production conservation, which

may include grazing land protection, practices, livestock ponds, manure management practices and streambank fences.

There are numerous opportunities in state and federal programs for landowners to receive financial and technical assistance for natural resources conservation. Leroy Brown, State Conservationist for NRCS in Iowa, said: "EQIP is just one of the many tools available to address resource concerns in Iowa. The provisions of the new Farm Bill outline other resource programs, such as the CRP, WRP, WHIP and many others. We encourage producers to look into these federal programs as well as state programs, to see which best suits their operation and resource goals."

Although EQIP will be



Wild flowers flourish in the native prairie plot on the LoMa elementary school grounds. The area was seeded two years ago during an outdoor classroom project headed by Mary Lynn Espenmiller, instructor.

Access is USDA Home Page on the World Wide Web at <http://www.usda.gov>.

Information on the 1996 farm bill conservation programs may be found at <http://ncg.nrcs.usda.gov/>

The complete information is also available at your local NRCS office.

administered by the Natural Resources Conservation Service in concurrence with the Farm Service Agency, it will allow Iowans to continue to have a voice in agriculture and conservation issues in the state, said Tom Grau, State Executive Director for the Farm Service Agency (FSA) in Iowa. "Soil and Water Conservation Districts, FSA County Committees, agricultural producers and other local stakeholders will all have a role to play in the local program implementation," Grau said.

NRCS at the local level will chair work groups, convened by the SWCD and involving FSA County committees, other local groups and interested citizens. These groups will address resource issues, set the program directions, and have flexibility to adapt county conservation priorities, Brown said. A State Technical Committee, formed earlier this year, will also offer advice on establishing criteria and priorities at the state level. The committee includes representatives from agricultural and commodity groups, environmental organizations, local state and federal government agencies, producers, and many others concerned.

In this transition year, the

East Pottawattamie SWCD/NRCS

Puppets promote conservation

The week of September 1 through 7 was Soil and Water Conservation Week.

Michelle D. Zimmerman, County Resource Planner for East Pottawattamie Soil and Water Conservation District, presented a puppet show, with special guests Connie Conservation and Sammy Soil Saver.

The show dealt with preserving most valuable resources: soil and water. It was presented to all preschool, Kindergarten and second grade students at Riverside, AvoHa and Walnut Community Schools.

An apple, which signified the earth, was used to show fourth-graders the makeup of soil on the earth's surface. Different sized apple slices represented the percentages of oceans, arctic areas, etc. and a very small piece was left to show what is tillable for food.

The show illustrated the importance of soil and water in providing food for the world.

program will not reflect all elements of the locally-led conservation process which NRCS will use to guide activities in the future, it was said. Due to time constraints involved in fiscal year 1997, NRCS, in cooperations with FSA, and the State Technical Committee, will make some of the decisions local working groups will make in the future.

All the factions involved are currently coordinating an EQIP implementation plan, outlining temporary geographic priority areas (those with common resource problems which merit special consideration) and developing priority concerns of statewide issues outside of proposed geographic priority areas).

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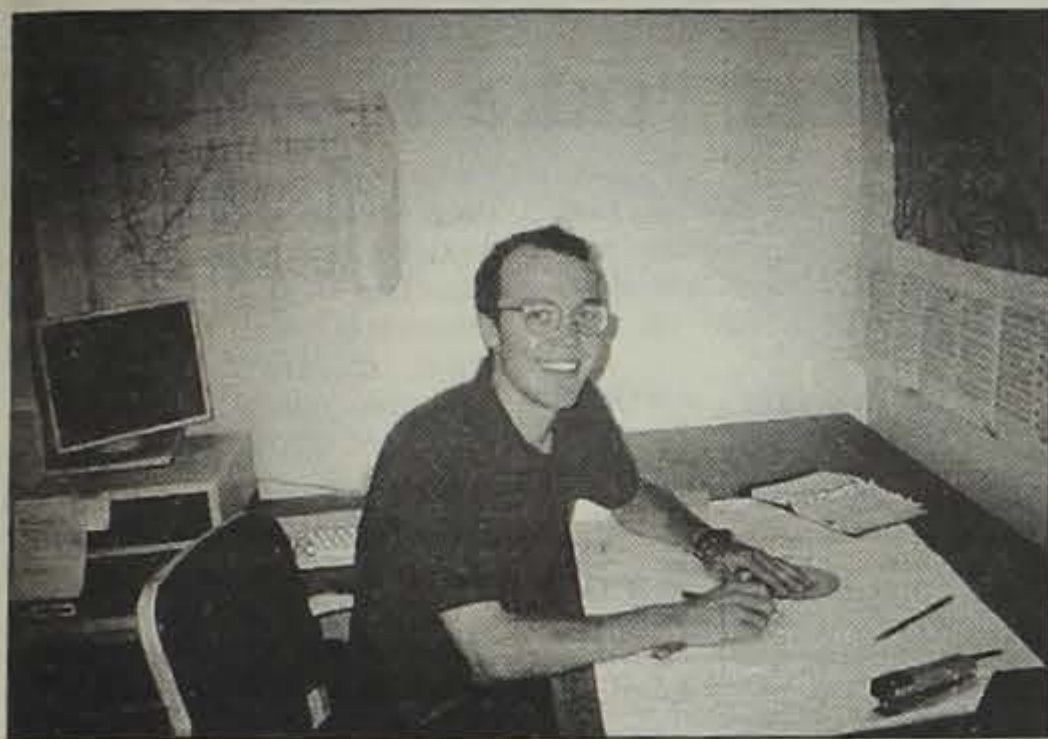
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Tyler Woods pauses in the day's occupation

Meet Tyler Woods

The East Pottawattamie NRCS field office in Oakland has hired Tyler Woods as a full-time Soil Conservation Technician.

Tyler completed a Senior Honor Thesis on using hydraulic jetting of willows to stabilize stream banks while earning his BS in Geology at the University of Iowa, Iowa City.

A native of Council Bluffs, Tyler is hoping to gain valuable experience with the district, which will provide him with a solid base as he continues his career in conservation.

Stop in and meet Tyler, or any of the staff. They are all willing and able to assist with conservation projects.

by Tyler Woods
Conservation
Technician
and Michelle
Zimmerman

If we could go back 150 years to when Iowa officially became the 29th state to join the union, you would see rolling hills covered with native prairie grasses and wildflowers. Wetlands would be scattered throughout the state, providing environmental and ecological control, as well as wildlife habitat.

Fertile soils once allowed Big Bluestem, Black Eyed Susan and Pale

landowner or person in charge of the land must sign a complaint. The complaint is necessary for a chance of winning the case in court. An officer cannot testify as to whether or not permission was granted. Only the person in charge of the land can do so.

Conservation officers are willing to respond to trespassing complaints whenever possible. But remember, they may be working some distance away from the area where the complaint is received, so it may take some time for them to respond. Or, they may not be on duty at the time the complaint comes in. If they cannot be reached, then call the sheriff's office.

Last of all, those calling an officer must be prepared to sign a trespass complaint. Officers have a multitude of things to do during the fall hunting season, so they should not be called if the caller does not mean business!

Whose rights are right?
Farmers and hunters want to know

Whose rights are right?

by Carl Priebe
Wildlife Biologist

In the fall when hunting seasons begin, there always seems to be a question from both hunters and farmers about their rights. What are they?

In fact, the law regarding trespassing and landowner rights is quite simple.

Hunters are trespassing unless they receive express permission from the landowner or whomever is in charge of the land to hunt upon it. That is, unless the hunters were given direct permission to hunt, they are trespassing. One exception is that they can enter private land unarmed, by the most direct

route, to retrieve game legally shot while on adjacent property.

In addition, receiving permission to hunt one day does not entitle a hunter to return another day without again requesting permission. This is unless the landowner or person in charge of the land directly told them it was all right to return.

The person in charge of the land has the right to ask trespassers for identification. Common sense says that if the trespassers are too belligerent, it is better to call the sheriff's office or local Conservation Officer for assistance, rather than force the issue.

If trespassing charges are to be filed, the

Restoring the past, preserving the future

Purple Coneflower to thrive throughout the state. These, however, were too soon replaced with row crops as food demands increased.

The first farmers used moldboard plows and real "horsepower" to turn Iowa's prairies into some of the most productive farmland in the world. But there was a price to be paid for this; the lack of long-term planning and soil-saving techniques led to massive amounts of soil loss throughout the years. This was brought to the country's attention in the early 1930's when the "Dust Bowl" developed. One particular dust storm in 1934 blocked out the sun in Washington D.C. and ships 200 miles offshore in the Atlantic out the sun in Washington D.C. and ships 200 miles offshore in the Atlantic Ocean were covered with dust.

The Soil Conservation Service was born out of those regrettable days. The Soil Conservation Service's name was changed to Natural Resources Conservation Service in 1995. The agency's new name reflects its commitment to working with and conserving all natural resources, not just

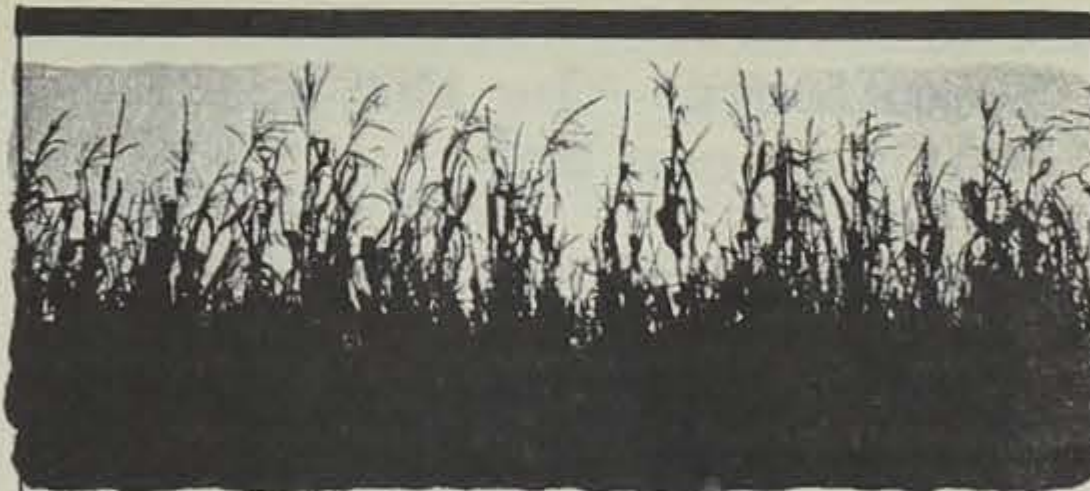
the land.

The soil and water conservation districts were formed to direct activities in the respective counties. East Pottawattamie's SWCD was formed in 1942. It promoted the establishment of the first terraces, waterways and sediment control structures with a cost-share incentive program.

Many changes have occurred in the farming spectrum since the East Pottawattamie SWCD was established to help protect the land for future generations. For example, plowing from fence row to fence row is no longer done, and today's farmers are experimenting with no-till, minimum tillage, streambank and streambed stabilization projects, windbreaks, wetland restoration, etc.

The rolling hills of prairie grasses and wildflowers which existed 150 years ago in western Iowa may never be seen again, due to the ever-increasing population's demand for food.

Today's farmers are to be commended, however, for their efforts toward preserving the natural resources which yet remain.



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Brandes says best "take a look"

by Russ Brandes
East Pottawattamie
Commissioner

On August 1, I traveled southeast for an hour to attend the CRP Field Day north of Corning. This was a joint effort by NRCS, FSC, ISU Extension and several other groups, with the main goal being research and demonstration work relating to what happens at the end of CRP.

The land being used for all of the work was typical for that region: 90 bushel average corn yields and 30 bushel soybean yields. Granted, these are not

average for our areas, but the problems, concerns, hazards and even some of the economics will fit our area.

With five years worth of data comparing grazing systems (4, 13 and 18 paddocks) to various cropping rotations (as recommended by NRCD), net returns were highest for the 13-paddock system at \$19.86 per acre. Coming in second was continuing in the CRP (\$13.09 per acre), while a corn-soybean rotation with grass headlands came in sixth at \$8.16 per acre.

Now I realize 1996 has been different. The above comparisons were made with \$2.40 per bushel corn, \$5.50 per bushel soybeans, \$40.00 per ton alfalfa and \$90.00 feeder cattle. We don't have those numbers now, but how soon might they be back?

We heard about the economics but we saw the practicalities with

converting CRP to viable grazing systems. Various fencing systems and materials were used along with different watering systems. This was and is an excellent opportunity to see working grazing systems in their everyday clothes.

Give your local NRCS office a call for directions to this unique demonstration farm. If enough are interested, a bus trip might be arranged.

Like all management decisions, this is only one tool which could be used, but like all tools, it needs to be studied. Try to fit the numbers to your farm. This tool can extend your grazing season, increase your carrying capacity, and reduce your input costs.

The bottom line, though, is every farm is different, and every operator is different.

So go down south and take a look. Couldn't hurt! Might help!

people to spend unpaid hours helping in an NRCS office. Some high school or college students want to volunteer in return for school credit. Other college students need ammunition to put on their resume. They are usually highly motivated and work best with a short term project which is specific in nature.

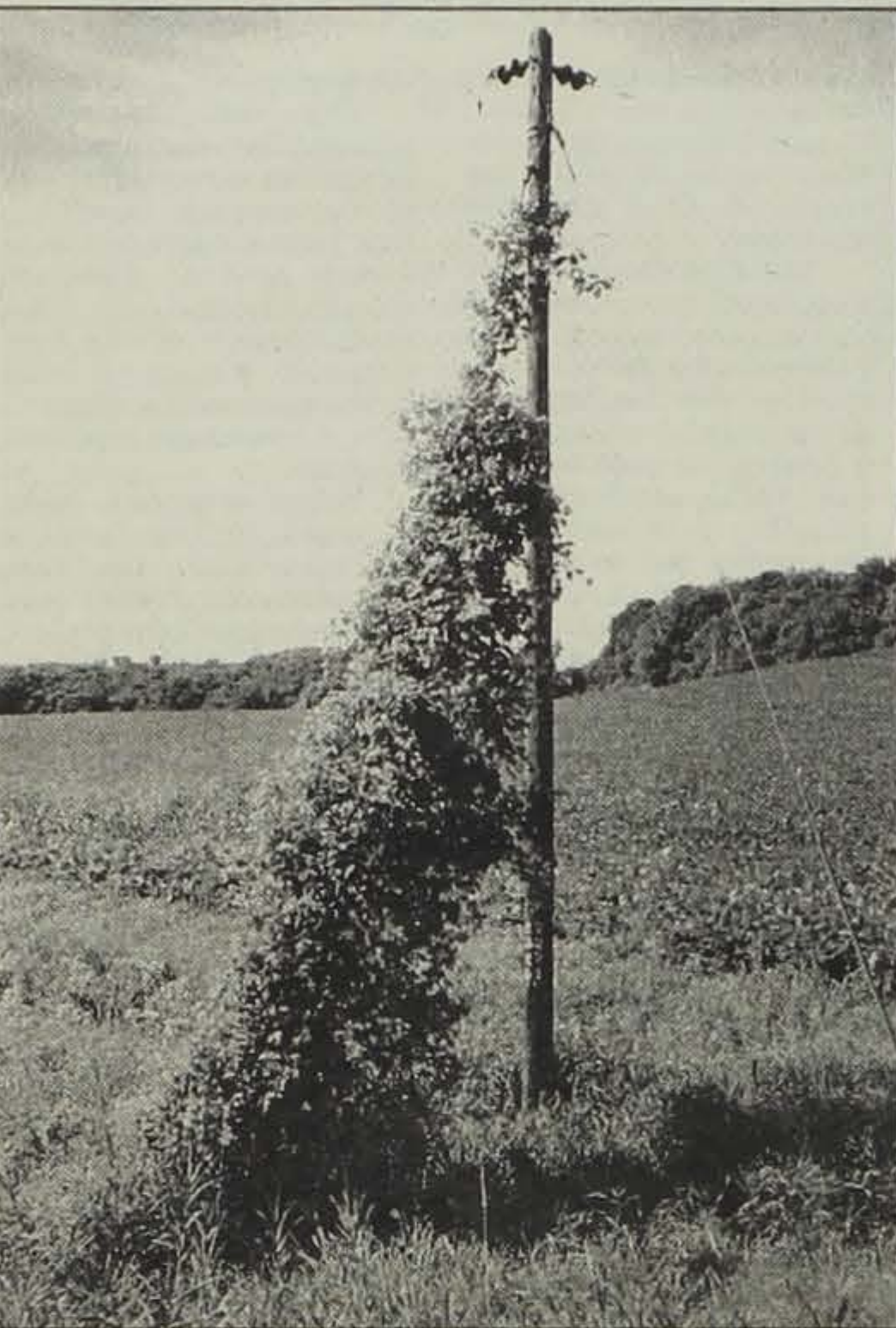
Others simply want to feel useful. Some of these may have a skill and are confident that they can contribute. Their schedules are usually full and that's the way they like it. And some who want to feel useful may not have the best self confidence. It can be very rewarding helping those people increase their self-esteem.

In the last category are people who are sympathetic to the conservation movement and simply want to do their part to make sure that our land is healthy for the next generation.

We at the Natural Resources Conservation Service are anxious to see that people interested in volunteering have a good and rewarding experience. Each office has a designated volunteer coordinator who will help find a project to fit any need.

If you think we could help you meet your needs, please call or stop by your local NRCS office. Or, if you know someone whom we could help, please tell them about us.

Wanted: Landowners in Pott. County who intend to plug a well. Would like to conduct a demonstration on proper plugging procedures. Need a site, with easy access and area to accommodate group, equipment and parking. Contact Julia at 328-2489, or Michelle at 482-6408 for further information.



This wild cucumber vine, as most volunteers do, is striving to be the best that it can be, and also lend the best support it can to the guywire.

Volunteers -- be the best that you can be!

by Greg Mathis
Soil Conservationist

All I did was ask Jeff Zimprich, the Area Conservationist, "What does the Area 4 Volunteer Coordinator do?" I should have known better than to ask the question. I quickly realized that I had just volunteered for the job!

The Area 4 Volunteer Coordinator organizes and promotes volunteer activities within the NRCS thirty field offices, RC&D offices and engineering offices. These offices are located in twenty-one counties in southwest Iowa.

counties in southwest Iowa. It is not a paid position; it simply adds more onto current duties. Shirley Fredericksen had been the coordinator prior to becoming the District Conservationist at Harlan. She had done a good job and I wanted to at least meet her standards.

I began talking to field offices which have had volunteers and observing volunteers in my own office. I became intrigued by what motivates a person to become a volunteer. Why would a person want to spend their own time working in an office without pay, I wondered.

Basically, I found there are three sources of motivation which cause

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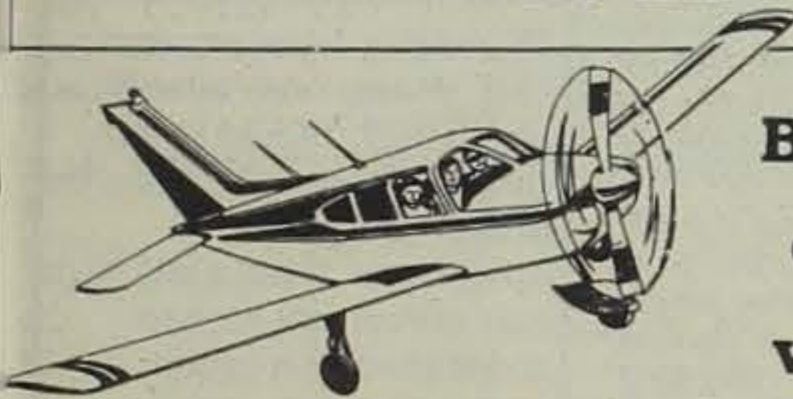
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Tom Scheffler, Volunteer
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State Personnel

Becky Lockwood, Secretary,
SWCD Treas.
Clair Acker, Soil Cons.
Technician

County Personnel

Michelle Zimmerman,
Resource Planner



Bird's eye view

by Michelle D. Zimmerman
County Resource Planner

Have you seen Pottawattamie County from the air? On Tuesday, July 30, Connie Lehan, County Supervisor, and Jack Drake, State Representative, were guests of the East Pottawattamie Board of Commissioners for a flight to observe conservation practices from the air.

The Armstrong Research Farm was visited, as well as those of Jack Drake, Darrell Stamp, Kenneth Martin and Mary Stilson (new terraces), Aaron Vorthman (lagoon

system), Gary Mueller (lagoon system), Clifford Stille, LaVerne Wilson (new terraces) and the site of the tornado touchdown west of Avoca.

Kenneth Martin, pilot and owner of the plane, was accompanied by Commissioners Darrell Stamp, Terry Gleaves and Russ Brandes and Assistant Commissioner Karen Hotze.

A special thanks to Mr. Martin for providing those on the flight with a "bird's-eye view" of the county.

by Chris Williams
County Naturalist

Little Red Riding Hood, Peter and the Wolf, The Three Little Pigs and other children's stories have all painted grueling pictures of wolves and many other large predators. Wolves, bears, cougars, fox, bobcats and other large predators have been destroyed by humans who still believe myths and misconceptions about many of these species. Many have been driven almost to the point of extinction, but one species has managed to survive and one might even say, thrive with humankind.

Wily and cunning, it can run at speeds of 25 to 30 miles per hour, and even 40 mph for a short distance. It can travel great distances... up to 400 miles across harsh, frozen or desert landscapes.

Its scientific name is *Canis (dog) latrans* (a barker) and is appropriate for this howler of the night. Its common name is derived from the Aztec Indian word "coyoti", which was Hispanicized to Coyote. Early pioneer settlers called them "prairie wolves".

Skillful hunters by day and night, they search for the rabbits and mice which make up 2/3 of their diet. This cunning animal often hunts side by side with badgers for small mammals. Ground squirrels, pocket gophers, birds, frogs, snakes and even fruits and seeds are eaten in less quantities.

A coyote will even take down deer, and further

Howl in the night



west, Pronghorn Antelope, the fastest land animal in North America. Deer and antelope are captured by forming small hunting packs and taking turns chasing and eventually wearing down the animal to the point of exhaustion.

Some references point out that coyotes do take some livestock and poultry, but are often unjustly blamed for many losses due to "free-roaming" or stray dogs. For over a hundred years we have considered this animal a nuisance, but we should really respect this amazing natural predator.

The coyote is one of the last symbols of the Great

Plains and Great American West. No one can better sum up the true meaning of the coyote and its symbolism than a 1909 quote from Chief Plenty Coups of the Crow Nation:

"A few more passing suns will see us here no more, and our dust and bones will mingle with these same prairies. I see as in a vision the dying spark of our council fires, the ashes cold and white. I see no longer the curling smoke rising from our lodge poles. I hear no longer the songs of the women as they prepare the meal. The antelope have gone; the buffalo wallows are empty. Only the wall of the coyote will be heard."



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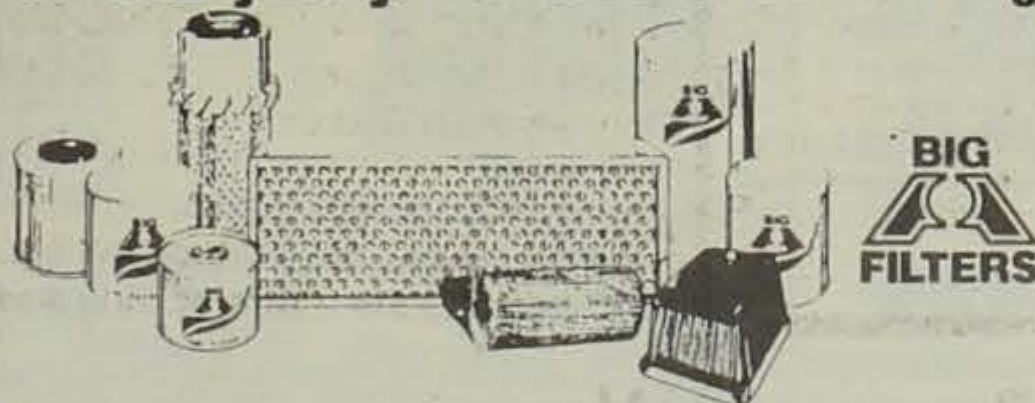
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To till, or not to till ??

by Kevin Gee
Tech Aide

To till or not to till? That is often the question. Well, each year NRCS performs a road survey of a 100-mile route in East Pottawattamie to gather information after planting.

Each county which also does this sends its numbers in to the state office, and it forwards the information to the Conservation Technology Information Center in Indiana. That entity uses the surveys to track trends and direct research efforts in cooperation with state agricultural colleges, government agencies, etc.

One noticeable trend in East Pottawattamie county was an increase in no-till corn, from 29% in 1992, to 46% in 1995. The conservation tillage ground above 30% residue after planting, however, is up 4% over the 1995 total.

I attribute this increase to additional corn-corn acres in 1996, with no setaside. The soybeans planted under no-till culture ballooned from 13% in 1992, 41% in 1995 and 34% in 1996.

Another trend we have found interesting to note over the last several years is the continual shift to narrow-row soybeans. This year, our county had over 30% of the soybean fields planted in a narrow-row system.

We would like to congratulate all farmers in the county for all their conservation efforts. The spring of 1996 has been very discouraging to many farmers, with the erosion scares caused by continual heavy rainstorms.

It takes many conservation practices, however, to fully achieve a conservation farm, and the progress over the past 10 years has greatly reduced the detrimental effects.



Fall a good time to test soil

by Kevin Gee
Soil Cons. Aide

An important part in planning next year's cropping sequence involves soil testing. An excellent time of the year to test soil is in the fall before frost is present. A well-taken soil sample can be a valuable tool for assessing the fertility of the soil.

The method used in taking the soil cores is just as important as the lab analysis of the sample itself. A proper soil sample should not exceed a 10-15 acre area. Also, any given sample sent in to the lab should be a mixture of 20-40 cores taken in the chosen area. Along with this, a county soil survey should be used to avoid taking cores from different soil types for the same sample.

Each soil type contains a very unique composite of clay, silt, and sand. Each aggregate has different amounts of organic matter and productivity levels. Typically, in Pottawattamie county, 2-4 different soil types can be found in a 40-acre field. The hilltops or ridges typically have Marshall 9B or 9C soil

which can be found in the land above the top of one or two terraces.

The second soil area found would be in the steeper side slopes where Marshall 9D, Extra 99D2 or Monona 10D2 is located. These soil types are usually between the first and fourth terraces on the hillside.

The third soils area, which can appear on a portion of the county's fields, involves the lower side slopes of a hill, which can be a thinner area often "seepy" under wet conditions. This soil area, if present, has a heavier soil called Malvern 60D2, 93D2, Shelby-Adair, or 192D2 Adair. These soils are more commonly located in the eastern half of East Pottawattamie county.

The fourth and final soil area which can occur in the county is the creek bottom soils. Colo-Judson 11B, Judson 8B, Colo 133, or Kennebec 212 are the common soil types located in the area. People often find that if the areas are sampled separately, they will be much higher in phosphorus and organic matter than the other hill-ground area. Thus, these areas may not require additional P & K fertilizer

to grow the following year's crops.

When extracting the sample cores within a field, several techniques should be used. First, a zig-zag pattern should be walked within the soil type area to keep the sample areas which have separate crop histories, such as an old feedlot, farmstead, etc. Most laboratories are calibrated to test samples taken from a 6-8" depth, so cores should be pulled from this depth. Cores should be taken within the row, between the individual stalks. If there is no soil probe available, one may be borrowed or purchased prior to taking the samples, because results are more accurate than using a shovel. Once the cores are taken, the chunks should be "diced" and mixed before an appropriate amount is bagged.

When completing the lab information sheet, the past crop grown should be listed, the crop to be grown should be listed, and the yield goal for each soil type. It should be made certain that a realistic yield level is listed for each area.

If terraces have been

built in a field, testing for zinc in that area might be considered. Typically, soils will test low following earth moving, and may need a 5-10 pound to the acre rate of actual zinc applied after construction. If testing for this possible deficiency, a sample should be taken from just the area where the dozers ran. Obtaining an organic matter test will give a better idea of the proper herbicide rate to apply for that soil type.

Once the results are returned, they should be closely examined. This information may then be utilized to assist the planning of lime and fertility application.

Wanted: Landowners in Pott. county who intend to plug a well. Would like to conduct a demonstration on proper plugging procedures. Need a site with easy access and area to accommodate a group, equipment and parking. Contact Julia at 328-2489, or Michelle at 482-6408 for further information.



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Envirothon team wins "Rookie of the Year" award

Iowa's Envirothon Team was given the "Rookie of the Year" award at the 1996 National Envirothon Competition, held July 28 through August 2 at Mahoney State Park in Nebraska.

The five-member team from Waverly Shell-Rock High School competed with 32 other teams from across the United States and several Canadian provinces. Competition was described as "tough", as 11 of the teams competing were returning for at least a second year.

Teams were tested in outdoor stations on their knowledge of aquatics, forestry, soils and wildlife.

East Pottawattamie
SWCD/NRCS

Revolving loan program

A portion of the funds allocated by Pottawattamie County through rural area Local Option Sales Tax revenue will be set aside for establishing a "district" conservation practices revolving loan fund. This fund is to be used to provide loans at no interest to eligible landowners for constructing permanent soil conservation practices. The fund will be administered by the East Pottawattamie Soil and Water Conservation District (SWCD) in cooperation with the Iowa Department of Agriculture and Land Stewardship - Division of Soil Conservation and Pottawattamie County Board of Supervisors.

In this program, eligible landowners can borrow up to \$10,000 at no interest for

After a fact-finding boat tour of the Missouri River on Tuesday, teams were sequestered for nearly nine hours on Wednesday to put together their 20-minute oral presentation. Their charge was to develop a plan for a greenbelt along the Missouri River between Council Bluffs and Omaha.

Michelle Zimmerman, County Resource Planner and Iowa Envirothon steering committee member, assisted with the program in Nebraska and said she gained valuable insight for improving the Iowa competition.

Congratulations are due to the team and its coach for a job well done!

West Pottawattamie
SWCD/NRCS



Some of the participants in the no-till tour observe the residue benefit in this soybean field.

No-till tour, barbecue held

by Julia Gubbels
County Resource Planner

The West Pottawattamie Soil and Water Conservation District held a no-till tour on July 2, which started south of McClelland. The tour featured soybean fields which were planted to corn last year.

Weed control of the grasses was adequate in the majority of the fields. Cornstalk residue levels varied from field to field.

The tour started at 5:30 p.m. at the Brokman Farms, which are located in section 9 of Hardin Township. The second stop was at

a farm owned by Fred Henry and operated by Gary and Darin Goodman. The tour continued with stops at the farms of Doug and Mark Schnepel, and concluded with a tour of the Darrell Danker farm, operated by Darrin Eitmann.

At the end of the tour, a barbecue was held at the Treynor Park. The Pork Producers prepared sandwiches, potato chips and tea for the group. Area chemical representatives sponsored the meal.

Those attending, other than the participants, were farmers, NRCS staff, local ag chemical dealers, and chemical company representatives.

institution may become a participant at any time by signing an agreement with the East Pottawattamie SWCD.

The agreement between the East Pottawattamie SWCD and the participating financial institution requires the financial institution to render an opinion regarding the applicant's ability to repay

the loan.

In addition, the participating institution or escrow agent will:

1. Secure approved loans with a lien on real estate for which conservation practices are applied by filing a promissory note and security agreement in accordance with approved

Page 15 West Pottawattamie Farmers' efforts gain recognition

The Iowa Association of Soil and Water Conservation District Commissioners sponsors an awards program to encourage better land use programs and environmental control on farms in Iowa.

There are three farmer divisions, which include: 1) owner-operator, 2) landowner-tenant, 3) new cooperator.

West Pottawattamie had entries in the first two divisions.

Owner-operator

The winner for the owner-operator division is Leo Stortenbecker, who lives south of Treynor, in section 25 of Keg Creek Township. Leo owns approximately 330 acres in Pottawattamie County. His farming practices include contouring, terraces, no-till and field borders. Also, crop rotations, including meadow and pasture land, are utilized by livestock. The overall appearance of the farmstead is aesthetically pleasing. Buildings are well-maintained, and fences around the farmstead and fields are well-kept. Leo and his wife are active members of the Silver City United Methodist Church.

Landowner-tenant

The winners for the landowner-tenant division are Tom Whitson and Merlin Dau, respectively. The farm is located in section 22 of Hardin Township. It consists of approximately 320 acres. Tom and Merlin utilize contouring, terraces, field borders and no-till. The Whitson farmstead is planted with trees and various flowers.

Congratulations to the above award winners and their families. We commend you on a job well done!

practices.

2. Collect fees for administering the loan.
3. Collect and forward the loan payments to the East Pottawattamie SWCD.
4. Pursue delinquent loans along normal collection procedures for a period of 90 days.

The participating financial institution shall retain the loan fees as its payment for administering the loan. The maximum fee assessed to the borrower will be two percent (2%) of the loan, plus filing costs. The minimum fee will be \$150 plus filing costs.

The East Pottawattamie SWCD will provide all forms required for the loan program and will assume responsibility for foreclosure resulting from loan default of greater than 90 days. In addition, the participating financial institutions shall be held harmless in perfection of securing interest loans.

The forms and detailed procedures for processing a loan are on file at the East Pottawattamie SWCD office. Those interested are asked to please stop in.

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Chainsaw artist appreciates aid from forestry program



Jim Clark, with only a few of the many and varied examples of his creative talents, sculpted by chainsaw.

It's a coincidence that James (Jim) Clark lives on Timber Road near Manilla, although passers-by might think otherwise. At the intersection of 2200th Street and Timber Road sits Jim's workshop. Prominently displayed are cleverly crafted animals, birds and other figures made of timber logs, tree stumps, etc. by the young "chain-saw sculptor". One wonders how he can create such attractive dimension and expression from an inanimate hunk of wood, but his artistry is evident when one views the results.

Jim admitted to always having been interested in "whittling" or working with wood, although he has never had any formal training in the art. Knowing he had talent, his wife asked him to carve some Santa Claus figures one holiday season, using one she had ordered in the mail as a pattern. Jim complied, and the figures were so successful that he carved some small "cigar store Indians" and other likenesses.

"My sister had a craft store, so she talked me into putting

some of them for sale," he said, with a grin and a shrug. "I guess it sort of took off from there. But for a long time I had wanted to do something bigger. So one day, I found a dead cottonwood, got the chain saw and carved my first large Indian."

It too was soon in demand, so he made a big bear, and when Dunham Hardwoods in Dunlap began selling them, he couldn't keep up with the orders. In time, he included flying eagles and other birds and animals, as well as tables, benches, stools and other pieces. These rustic replicas of pioneer furniture are also very popular with the public. Pheasant hunters passing by his farm would stop to see his work, and usually order one or more of the wooden figures.

"Pretty soon, my wife was rebelling at having this stuff in the living room," Jim confided with a chuckle, "so I decided I needed a separate shop. Ralph Wingert told me that money might be available through RC&D, so I went to them and applied. Marty Braster wrote a grant application for me, which was approved, so I got \$6500

from the *Rural Development Through Forestry Program*.

Most of the money was spent for cement, Jim said, used not only for the floors but also for the walls, formed to resemble brick. An old machine shed on the site was dismantled, and the lumber used in the new building. Some of the interior is faced with rough-cut siding, and combined with the brick facade, provides a setting which is pleasantly in keeping with the mode of display. He, his father Howard, and son Matt spent all last summer constructing the shop, and Jim commented there are a "few finishing touches" yet to be applied.

Many of his ideas come from pictures in magazines, or pictures people provide when requesting special orders. He gets "lots of requests" for pieces he has not before done, but Jim admitted that some do not adapt to chain saw art.

Jim also farms 160 acres, using minimum and no-till systems with a corn-bean rotation. The farm is terraced, has buffer strips, and is in "complete compliance" with FSA, he

affirmed. He also has a "few" stock cows, and will sell the calves this fall.

His wife, who he said "got him started at this whole thing" (the carving) is employed as a bookkeeper at the Farm Service Cooperative in Irwin. Their son Matt, 18, is a student at Iowa State University, Ames, and 17-year-old daughter Jami is a senior at I-K-M (Irwin, Kirkman, Manilla) High School. The family attends the Irwin Methodist Church, where Jim serves as a trustee.

With "no time" for other hobbies, Jim said he finds his chain saw art very fulfilling and enjoyable. "I would do it even if it did not bring in any money", he said with conviction. He is always looking for wood to use in his projects. The neighbors help, telling him where to find dead trees, etc., and the sawmills give him scrap lumber which would otherwise be thrown away

or burned. He uses six different chain saws of various sizes to detail his creations.

He expressed his gratitude to Marty Braster of Golden Hills RC&D, whose assistance came "just at the right time" and for the grant, without which he could not have progressed "to this point" as quickly.

He is encouraged to attend more shows after having had a display in Eldora this summer, where he "sold everything" and got orders for more. The family plans to attend a steam show -- featuring old steam-engine driven machinery, including a sawmill -- where he will have some of his art for sale.

He admitted he would like to become acquainted with other chain saw artists, and wondered if there was an organization of them. Anyone with that information may contact him at 2203 Timber Road, Manilla, Iowa 51454.

Review conservation plan

Anyone with a conservation plan on highly erodible land should review that plan regularly. The conservation compliance provisions of the 1996 farm bill requires anyone who has signed up for the seven-year program to be in compliance with their farm plan.

After fall harvest or early

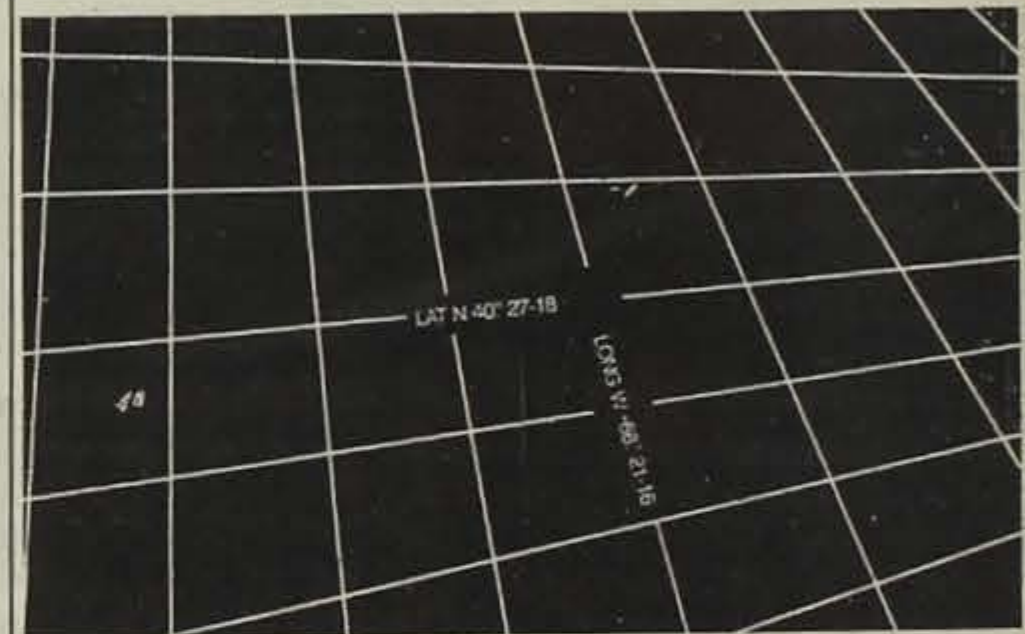
winter is a good time to do this and plan ahead. Our staff can review your plan with you if you have any questions or concerns.

Remember, practices need to be maintained which have been initially applied. Stop in or call the office at 712-755-2417 to set up an appointment to review your plan.

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Study shows off-site costs of erosion are high



The damage caused by runoff water is very evident in this field, and shows why off-site costs are a factor.

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 damages in Iowa at more than \$32 million a year.

Those damages include

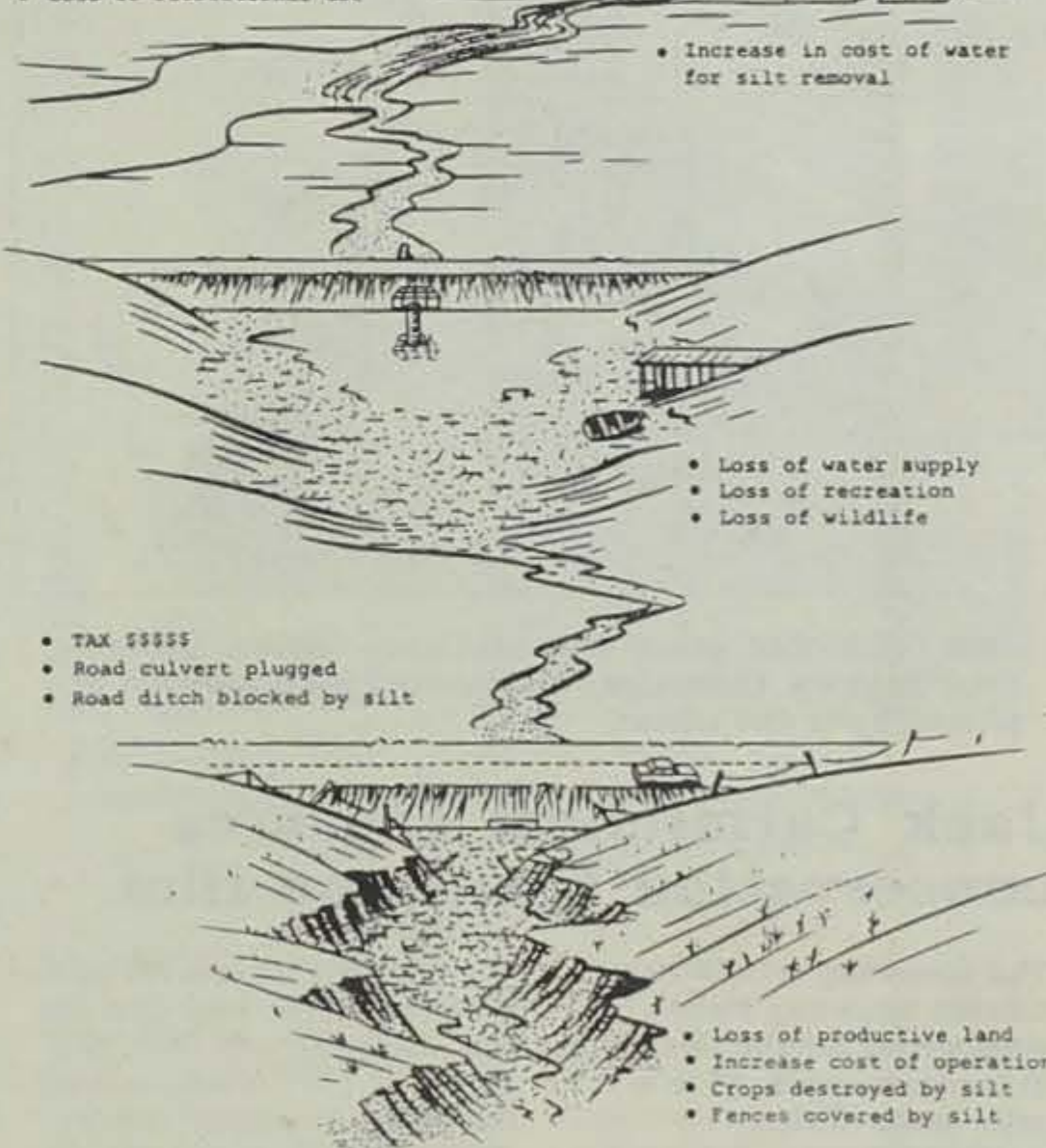
the costs of cleaning sediment out of drainageways and road ditches, loss of recreation value in streams and lakes, extra costs for treating drinking water, and sediment damage to other areas of a farm or other farms.

The study, conducted in 1985 and 1986, marked the first time a concentrated effort has been made in Iowa to get specific damage estimates on downstream costs associated with soil erosion.

The Center of Agriculture and Rural Development (CARD) at Iowa State University gathered cost data from county engineers, state agencies, city water treatment officials and others. Cooperating in the study were the Southern Iowa Ag Boosters, the Soil Conservation Service, the Iowa Department of Natural Resources and the Iowa Department of Agriculture and Land Stewardship. Annual damages are estimated at more than \$8 million to transportation; \$10 million to recreation, fish and wildlife; \$1 million to municipal water supplies; and more than \$13 million in damages because of sediment buildup and blocked drainage on agriculture land.

But the estimates tell only part of the story. They represent what is currently being spent each year to ease the problems, not eliminate them.

- Reduced stream capacity
- More frequent flooding
- Loss of navigation
- Loss of recreational use



The above graph illustrates some of the off-site problems which can effect conservation efforts.



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Jack Carmichael poses with his Canon camera. For more than 35 years, Carmichael has pursued his enjoyment of photography and nature.

Jack Carmichael captures conservation beauty on film

The following article was written by Jenny Hykes, staff writer for the Harlan Tribune. It appeared in a prior issue of that publication.

For Jack Carmichael, retiring hasn't meant the end of working. And it certainly hasn't meant the end of enjoying nature's beauty and his artistic hobbies.

Although Carmichael, who is 74, retired from the Soil Conservation Board in 1988 "on December 30, 1988, at 5:00 p.m." to be exact, he has still kept up his hobby of photography, something he's enjoyed for the last 35 to 40 years.

He uses a Canon FB with a 210 telephoto lens that his son Jeff bought in Okinawa, Japan in 1972 when he was in the Marines there. Carmichael later bought the camera.

His favorite photography subject is "pictures of old buildings in disrepair", he says. And he has many pictures of weather-beaten houses and leaning barns, with weeds and wildflowers swaying up to the doorstep.

Fall is his favorite season to photograph.

"In my spare time, I like to take my camera and go over to the lake and look for some wildlife or wildflowers," he says.

In recent years,

Did you realize your fields can lose one bushel of soil for every bushel of corn harvested? A cubic foot of cropland soil weighs about 90 pounds. This means that a ton of soil is equal to 22.2 cubic feet. There are 1.24 cubic feet in a bushel, which leaves 17.9 bushels of soil per ton.

In Iowa, the average cropland erosion rate by water is 6.5 tons per acre, per year. Multiply 6.5 by 17.9 and you get 116 bushels

of soil lost per acre in a year's time.

If your fields are close to that figure, you'd essentially be trading a bushel of topsoil for a bushel of corn.

Which is more valuable in the long run?

Think about it!

And while you are thinking about that, did you know . . .

. . . that a spoonful of soil contains more micro-

organisms than there are people on earth? And that many of these micro-organisms are key indicators of soil quality?

. . . that virtually all fresh water falls on soils and travels over them, percolates through them, evaporates from them, or interacts with them to drive several chemical, physical, and biological processes?

. . . that soil quality is a moving target, depending on soil quality is an assessment of the fitness of a soil to perform certain functions, such as supporting plant growth, partitioning and holding water, and acting as an environmental buffer?

. . . that soil quality directly affects water quality, biodiversity, wildlife habitat, plant growth, and crop production?

And . . . that the key determinant in whether soil quality is improved, restored, sustained or degraded is management.

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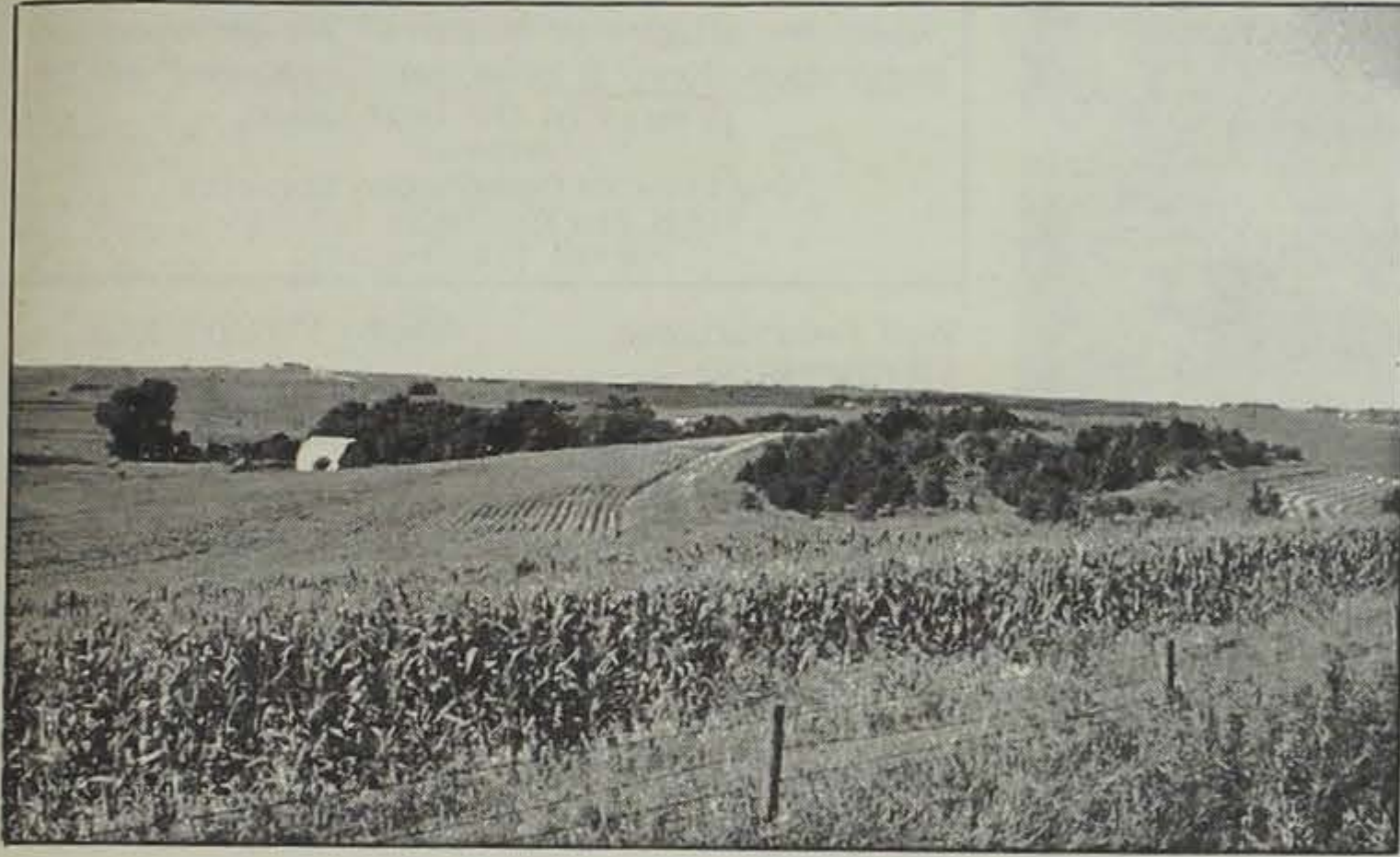
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Personal Profile: Richard Wooster, Shelby SWCD Commissioner



The many trees in the plot at the right, and surrounding the farmstead in the distance are evidence of one of Richard's favorite conservation projects.

First in a series of articles introducing personnel of the Natural Resources Conservation Service and Soil & Water Conservation Districts of Harrison, Shelby and East and West Pottawattamie counties.

Richard Wooster became a Shelby County Soil and Water Conservation District Assistant Commissioner in the early 60's, later was elected as a full commissioner, has served as chairman, and is vice-chairman at the present time.

He said that he has always enjoyed being a commissioner and the interaction with his peers and the landowners at the local level. "But I don't really have time for more extensive participation," he confided, with a smile.

One soon understands his reasoning, for Richard is a man of many interests and many pursuits. He is an avid conservationist, carrying on the traditions established by his father and grandfather before him. He lives on the land his grandfather acquired in 1888 when he purchased two 40-acre tracts from the railroad. Other land was gradually added through the years, and Richard now operates the 285-acre family farm. While conceding to having some custom work done in these later years, he still remains active and involved.

He maintains a herd of stock cows and calves. His farm is in complete compliance, with all crops no-tilled, and terraces and grassed waterways in place. "It bothers me, though," he admitted, "when the people who have established headlands are allowed to farm them one year out of every four. It's greedy to do this just to add a little more cropland."

Richard is a member of the Longbranch Watershed Association, which is still active, and attends the watershed meetings whenever possible. He is concerned because the work in the watershed is not completed,

and more funding difficult to obtain.

He said that a goal of the Shelby SWCD commissioners is to get the county to "T" by 2001, but reflected that it might be difficult, requiring "a lot of cooperation". (T is the maximum soil loss which can be allowed over a long period of time and still maintain productivity of the soil).

Richard's passion for trees is very evident, although he pointed out that he is only continuing what his grandfather began. The long lane which leads to the homestead is lined with walnut trees, and trees of every other variety are planted all about, many of them in a nearby grove. Most of these have been growing since his grandfather planted them many years ago.

Above the farmstead is another 6-acre tract, and Richard admits to having interred "hundreds of trees" during the past ten years or so. He likes to plant the same variety of trees

which existed "when the Indians roamed these hills". Included are native black cherry, three varieties of oak, shag-bark hickory, walnut, Jack pine, Ponderosa pine, red cedar, wild plum, hazel nut, ash, and many others. Also included are varieties of shrubs, such as nine-bark, honeysuckle, lilac, etc. Most of these are obtained from the state forest nursery in Ames, and Richard has his own tree-planter. He uses a "survival of the fittest" system, but does replace the trees which "don't make it".

Richard and Vivian also love and protect the wildlife which is sheltered among the trees and shrubs. Vivian chuckled when she said they "buy feed by the wagonload" to sustain the animals and birds. Even the many squirrels are welcome to help themselves to the grain and walnuts.

Unfortunately, coyotes are also attracted to the site, and Vivian still mourns the loss of one of the horses which became a



Richard and Vivian Wooster actively support conservation, as well as many other areas of interest.

victim to these predators. "They ran him through a barbed wire fence last year," she said, "and he was so badly cut and bled so badly that we could not save him." But two other quarter horses, Bar Maid Millie and Prince, still give their owners pleasure, as well as a Shetland pony named Stormy. "We bought the pony sight-unseen," Vivian said, with a smile, "just as a companion for Bar Maid Millie. But he is gentle, and such a sweetie! I seldom have time to ride any more, but just enjoy

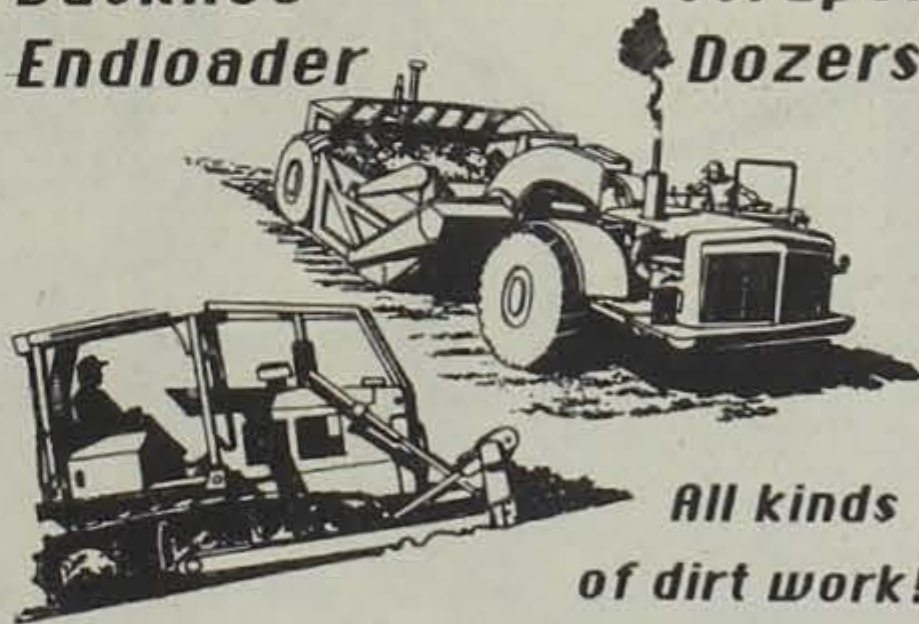
having the horses around."

The Woosters also have a large Weimeramer, Kristmas, named for the season she became "part of the family." While Kristmas's size and initial ferocious greeting is intimidating, once her owners reassure that the caller is a friend, she becomes tongue-lollingly welcoming.

The gracious old victorian dwelling his grandfather built in 1896 is still located on the site.

Continued on page 20

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Shelby SWCD/NRCS

Personal Profile

Continued from page 19

not far from the house built by Richard's father in 1922. This is now occupied by Richard and Vivian, and although some remodeling has been done, it still retains its early design. The interior is filled with beautiful antique furniture, artifacts and fixtures, many of them with a family history. Vivien's decorating talents are evident throughout, as well as her acumen as a collector, something Richard shares.

While her interests lie more toward art, antique furniture and china, he acquires and restores old tractors. Included in his collection thus far: 1926 Hart-Parr; 1936 2844 Oliver Hart-Parr on steel wheels; 1935 CC Case; 1937 Farmall F12; 1938 R2 Caterpillar; 1948 Oliver 60; 1948 Oliver Standard 77; 1958 Oliver 550; 1955 Oliver Super 99 Diesel. Richard also collects old guns, watches and knives. He has an old grist flour mill, an early Fairbanks-Morse 7.5 hp engine and an eclectic selection of other antique tools, implements and primitives.

The Woosters are lifetime members of the Shelby County Historical Society and also serve on the Shelby County Sesquicentennial Committee. He belongs to the County Conservation Board, the Hart-Parr-Oliver Collector's Assn., and is an endowment member of the National Rifle Association. They are of the Baptist denomination.



Photo by Mike Eisele, NRCS

In your hands

Whether it's butterflies in your backyard, or water and wildlife on the farmland, the care of natural resources is in the hands of private landowners -- your hands.

Shelby SWCD/NRCS

What's meant by "T" value of soil mapping unit?

The soil-loss tolerance factor "T" is an estimate of the maximum annual rate of soil erosion which can occur over a sustained period without affecting crop productivity. The rate is expressed in tons of soil loss per acre, per year. Rates of 1 through 5 are used, depending upon soil properties and prior erosion. The values for most Shelby County soils are 4 or 5 tons. Five tons per acre is about the thickness of a dime. Nature needs 250 to 1,000 years to build an inch of topsoil.

Topsoil is being lost much faster than it is being replaced. Most of our conservation plans have estimated soil losses of between 8 and 20 tons per acre. While this is a significant reduction, much work needs to be done if we are going to protect this resource.

The cost-price squeeze in agriculture has caused more intensive farming. Rotations, soil-conserving crops, and livestock enterprises are being replaced by cash grain farming and row crops. The result is increased soil erosion. While the overall ability to produce continues to increase due to increasing technology, the potential to

produce has decreased significantly due to soil depletion. This concept is displayed in the figure below.

As you lose soil each year, you lose potential yields from that year's soil loss, in addition to all the losses of the previous years. If you lose \$1 an acre with each new year's erosion, the total builds fast. You lose \$1 the first year; the second year you lose \$2; the third year's loss is \$3, but the total loss for the three years is \$6. In the 30th year, you will lose \$30 for that year, but you will have lost a total of \$465 on one acre! The important thing to remember is that the cost of depletion is an accumulating value.

Comment Corner

See something you liked in this issue of the Conservation Newsletter? Tell us about it! Something you didn't like? We want to hear your views.

Ideas for articles or features? We are open to suggestion! Keep it brief, and responses will be printed in the next issue.

Write to:

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715 N. 2nd Ave., Logan, IA 51546
Or call: 712-644-2210

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The wonder of trees

Of all the plants, trees are the most useful in reversing the atmospheric buildup of carbon dioxide from fossil fuel burning -- the heart of concerns about global climate changes.

One tree has the cooling effect of five air conditioners. Trees consume 1.47 tons of carbon dioxide and release 900 lbs. of oxygen per ton of their weight. One acre of trees provides oxygen for seven people and will clean the air polluted by eight cars operated for 12 hours.

Plant a tree and breathe a little easier.

Wanted: Landowners in Pott. County who intend to plug a well. Would like to conduct a demonstration on proper plugging procedures. Need a site, with easy access and area to accommodate a group, equipment and parking. Contact Julia at 328-2489 or Michelle at 482-6408 for further information.

Shelby SWCD/NRCS

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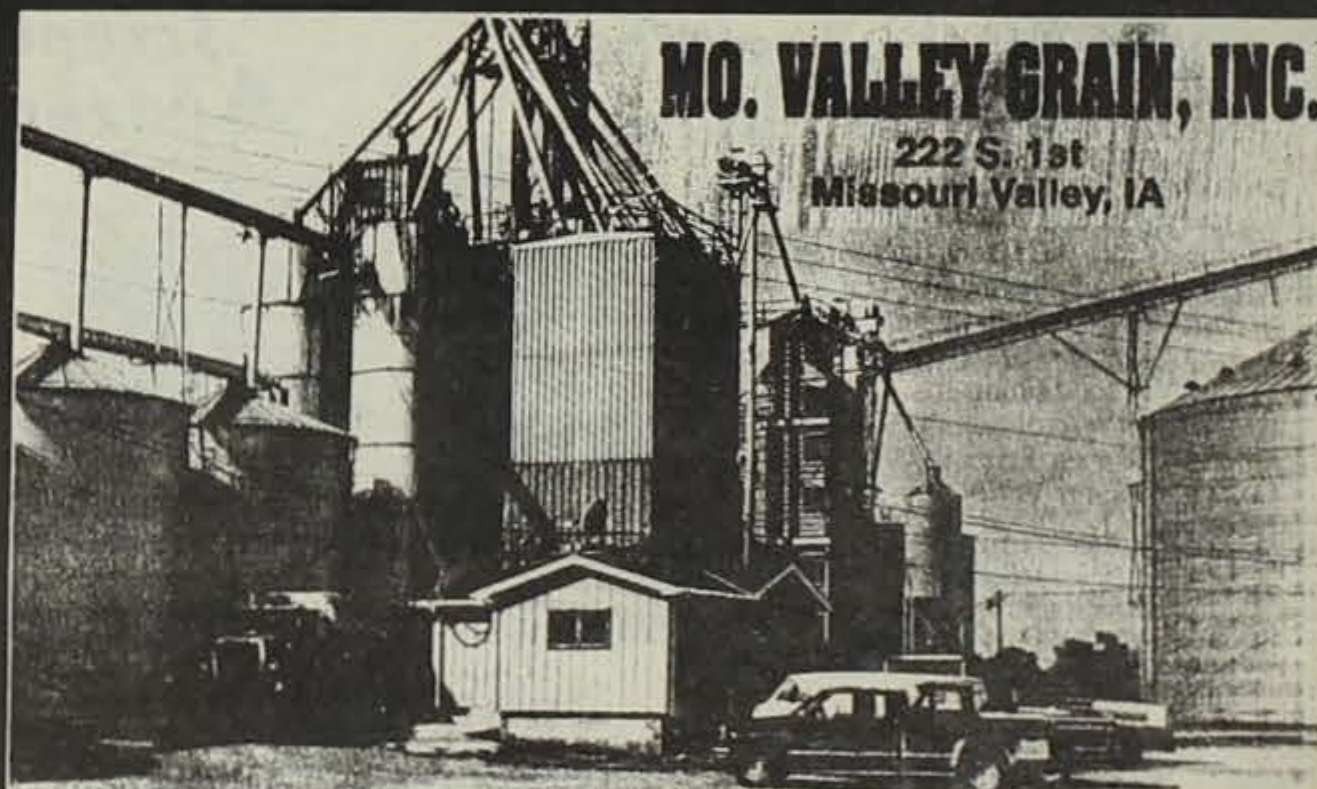
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