

1998

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Fayette SWCD Annual Report

The 1998 Annual Report dedicated to retiring SWCD commissioner Paul Nuss

This fall, after 18 years as a Fayette SWCD Commissioner, Paul Nuss, Hawkeye, decided he should give someone else the opportunity to serve the people of Fayette County.

Paul will be missed for his humor and dedication. He has set an example in his farming operation for others to follow. Paul has found that the way for him to earn a good living for himself and his family was to take care of his natural resources, so they could take care of him. He has also served on other boards over the years and always did his share.

Our thanks go out to Paul's wife, Jean, for she too has helped out with projects of the district. Enjoy your rest, but expect to get calls for "help" from the folks at the Fayette SWCD.

Thank you, Paul & Jean, for 18 years of donating your time and effort, jokes, and smiles. P.S. We don't know if we told Jean about your "deer hunting."



Paul Nuss



The future of the Earth is in our hands . . .

Inside this issue, you'll find page after page of information about how the Fayette Soil and Water Conservation District helps its patrons conserve the area's natural resources for those who will follow behind us.

Published by Newspapers of Fayette Co., Inc.

Wednesday, Feb. 10, 1999

SWCD questionnaire to help us better serve our customers

To better serve you, our customers, the Fayette SWCD is asking for your help. By filling out the following questionnaire and returning it to our office, the district will have a better understanding of your needs and desires.

The district commissioners will use this information to give items priority and hopefully better serve you. The district tries to feel free to serve all of the people in it.

If you have comments you wish to make feel free to include them. We thought this would be a way to address your concerns without asking you to come to a meeting. However all district meetings are open to the public and the public is encouraged to attend. If you have concerns that you feel need to be addressed, get them to the district office, located in the USDA service center, or contact a commissioner, so they can be added to the agenda for the month and discussed.

The commissioners were elected by you the voters to serve the soil and water needs of the district. We would be happy to discuss any concerns you have.

The Fayette County SWCD is in the process of updating our long range plan. We want to know how you feel about the direction we are taking in Soil & Water Conservation. We would like you to first become familiar with some district's general philosophies and priorities, then give us your input as to whether or not this is the way we should continue, or change. The following are a few general District priorities or philosophies.

1) Conserving soil is synonymous to improving water quality. Controlling sheet and rill erosion on the uplands is the best initial approach in applying conservation systems (RMS) as opposed to trying to solve major problems downstream, ie gully erosion, siltation, etc.

2) Agricultural cropland is the predominant land use in need of conservation systems. Priority for soil conservation practices on cropland are based on erosion rates of the field, location to priority streams, rivers or public lakes.

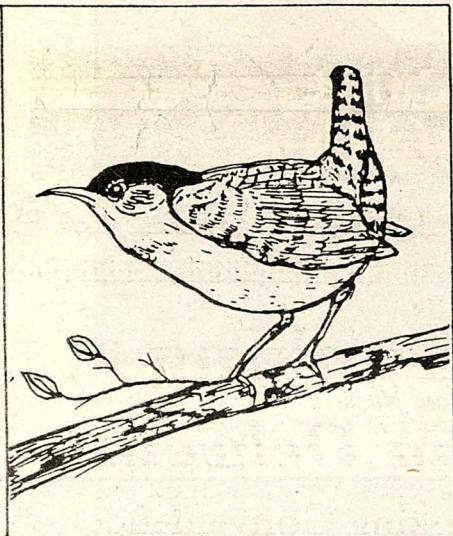
3) Fayette County woodlands are one of our most precious resources. We feel we must assist landowners to improve and protect their existing woodlands and to plant additional trees.

4) Water quality can be improved with the construction of agricultural waste storage structures and also proper waste utilization.

5) Fayette County highest priority water resources: -coldwater streams, Frog Hollow Lake, -sinkholes, wetlands.

Survey, cont. to pg. 12

Tips on providing proper wildlife habitat



House Wren

The house wren is one of our most common and enjoyable backyard birds. Its beautiful bubbling calls are a joy to hear during the summer.

House wren boxes are likely to be used if they are 5 to 10 feet above the ground and located under the eave of a building or in a tree. This is the only kind of bird house which can be free-hanging from an eye-screw. All other bird houses need to be firmly anchored. House wren holes are too small for house sparrows or European starlings to use. Don't put a perch on the nest box. Perches invite sparrows to try using the nest. If you have a perch on a wren house, take it off.

The entrance hole for a wren house should be 1-inch in diameter. The 1 1/4-inch hole size shown on page 4 also allows use by chickadees and nuthatches, but not house sparrows.

House wrens generally nest in wooded, shrubby habitats. Their nests are characterized by twigs and the six to eight eggs are finely speckled with reddish spots. Sometimes wrens will take over the nest of a tree swallow or eastern bluebird after puncturing the eggs of the other birds with their bills.

As soon as one family of wrens leaves a house, clean it out so another brood of young ones can be raised.

Black-capped Chickadee and Carolina Chickadee

Illinois has two species of chickadees: the black-capped, occupying the northern two-thirds of the state and the carolina, occupying the southern one-third. Many people enjoy these delightful birds at their feeders every winter but don't realize they will also nest in yards and woodlots with mature hardwood trees.

The house shown will be used by chickadees if placed in the proper habitat: either mature hardwood shelterbelts and woodlots in agricultural areas or mature hardwood forests in other parts of the state. The house should be mounted 5 to 15 feet high with 40 to 60 percent sunlight. About an inch of sawdust should be placed in the bottom of the nest box. The chickadee needs an entrance hole 1 1/8 inches in diameter. The 1 1/4-inch diameter hole shown on page 4 also allows use by wrens and nuthatches, but not house sparrows.

Prairie Deer Mouse and White-footed Mouse

The prairie deer mouse and white-footed mouse are frequent occupants of nest boxes placed for house wrens, chickadees and bluebirds. They are distinctively marked by brown or grayish backs, white bellies, long tails and very prominent eyes. While they may occasionally be a nuisance if they take up residence in a house, they are both rather appealing and interesting native mammal species found throughout Illinois.

They can be a fascinating occupant of nest boxes in their own right. Some people intentionally place nest boxes for these two native mouse species on fenceposts along fencelines near their cabins or at nature centers. A wren house as shown on page 4 is appropriate for use by these two mice. Nest boxes should be on posts about 3 or 4 feet above the ground.

As the mice raise their families they can provide a constant source of enjoyment and fascination for children who may occasionally open the side of the box and peek at the bug-eyed occupants within. Mice will winter in these boxes, so the entry hole should face the east or southeast to avoid prevailing northwest winds.

Recycling materials

By Jodi Jeanes

Fayette County Recycling Coordinator

The Fayette County Recycling Center is able to accept a variety of materials.

The most commonly asked about material is magazines. The recycling center does accept magazines, but they need to be bundled separately with twine string, boxed or in a grocery sack with the handles tied tightly. They may be placed into the newspaper section of the recycling bin.

White office paper is another product that needs to be bundled separately into the newspaper section of the recycling bin. This includes white office paper, typing paper, computer paper, fax paper, notebook paper and any white paper that is dye free.

The public may place newspapers, Reader's Digests, telephone books, colored paper, Christmas wrapping paper that is flattened and free of bows or ribbon and miscellaneous junk mail loosely into the newspaper section of the recycling bin.

The public may recycle all plastic materials that are numbered one through seven. These are all the plastic materials that have a triangle located on the bottom of the product with a number inside the triangle. These products need to be placed into the plastic section of the recycling bin.

All ferrous and non-ferrous metals may be placed into the tin section of the recycling bin. Please make sure that any plastic or tin products are

rinsed out completely and free of food particles. This is very important to reduce contamination.

There are three acceptable colors of glass materials. They are clear, brown and green glass. There is a section in each bin for each separate color.

Please make sure that all glass products are clean and placed in the proper color section of the recycling bin to reduce contamination. There are some glass materials that are not recyclable and they are window glass, light bulbs, oven ware, dishes and ceramic.

When one of the above materials are placed into a recycling bin, they usually get broken on top of the recyclable glass and will contaminate the whole container of glass. The glass must then be placed into the landfill. It is extremely important that only recyclable glass be placed into the recycling bin.

The cardboard section of the recycling bin is for cardboard only. All boxes must be flattened and free from Styrofoam and plastic bags.

There are 29 recycling bins located throughout Fayette County. If you have any questions concerning recycling materials or where the nearest recycling bin is located, please contact the recycling center at (319) 422-3712 or write to Fayette County Recycling Center, 18525 Lane Rd., Fayette, IA 52142.

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July 1997

- Fayette SWCD received \$2,500.00 for the IM Fund.
- Fayette SWCD received \$37,616.00 for the 3M Fund.
- IM Budget & Spending Plan was approved.

August 1997

- Fayette SWCD received \$1,808.50 for REAP Forestry Program.
- Fayette SWCD received \$8,015.00 for REAP Practices Program.
- Fayette SWCD received \$7,500 for the Organic Nutrient Management Program.

September 1997

- Annual Conference was held in Des Moines.
- 6th Annual Conservation Education Field Day for 475 third grade students from 12 schools was held at the Richard Jensen farm.

November 1997

- Fayette SWCD received \$1,623.80 in supplemental Forestry funds.

December 1997

- Fall Regional meeting was held at Decorah.
- Scholarship Award information was sent to schools.
- Poster Contest information was sent to schools.

January 1998

- Organizational commissioner meeting was held.
- Fayette SWCD held their Annual Tree Sales Program.
- Fayette SWCD requested \$43,142.50 in supplemental cost-share funds.
- 1998 REAP Assembly was held at Northeast Iowa Community College in Calmar.
- Paula Radke/Don Buhr were nominated for the landlord/tenant award.

February 1998

- William Bennett attended the NACD (National Association of Conservation Districts) meeting in Nashville, TN.
- Commissioner Development Workshop was held at Helen & Norma's in West Union.
- The SWCD Annual Report was published.
- Multi-county Contractor meeting was held.
- Supporter Club Letter was mailed out.

March 1998

- Fayette SWCD received \$21,092.00 in supplemental cost-share funds.
- Annual Awards Banquet was held.

April 1998

- SWCD was given an update on projects completed in the five county area by Teresa Steffens, Secretary, RC&D in Postville.
- Pamela Fedeler was chosen as the 1998 Scholarship Award Winner for Fayette County.
- Conservation Awards were selected.

May 1998

- SWCD signed a DNR/Pheasants Forever Habitat Agreement for the purpose of hiring a person to promote and enroll eligible landowners into the continuous CRP program.

June 1998

- Conservation Award Winners were selected.

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Report on CRP filterstrip and riparian buffers

By Joe Wingert

The conservation reserve program is a voluntary program that offers annual rental payments with 20% bonus payments included, and cost share assistance to establish long term resource-conserving covers on eligible land. Filterstrips and riparian buffers are narrow strips of permanent vegetation designed to protect streams, river and wetlands. The duration of the contracts are from 10 to 15 years.

Continuous sign up began in September of 1996. The program was having such a good effect on the environment and wildlife, that a job was created and paid for as a joint venture of Pheasants Forever, Fayette Soil and Water Conservation District and NRCS. Others involved in the project are FSA, County Board of Supervisors and Division of Soil Conservation. The job entails contacting land owners and informing them of the benefits of enrolling their land into the program.

We have studied aerial photos to locate streams and rivers. From this we sent out 500 letters to the owners along these tributaries encouraging their participation in this program. To date there are 940 acres enrolled in filter strips and 307 acres of riparian in Fayette County.

The benefits of the filter strip and riparian are to substantially reduce pollutants of herbicide and fertilizer in the near by stream or other body of water. You may enter into the program 20 ft. to 100 ft. on filter strips and 50 ft. to 150 ft. on riparian buffers on either side of the stream, pond or wet area.

Buffer strips trap sediment and enhance infiltration. Buffers also trap fertilizers, pesticides, bacterial and viral pathogens, and heavy metals. They also help trap snow and cut down on blowing soil with strong winds. They can protect wildlife from harsh weather and can protect

buildings from wind damage.

Buffers can reduce noise and odor. They may be the primary source of food, nesting cover, and shelter for many wildlife species or, they may be the connecting corridor for wildlife to move safely from one habitat area to another. Buffers can help stabilize a stream and reduce water temperature. They can serve as a turn row. The vegetation whether its forage or trees, can be planned for harvest at the end of the CRP contract. Buffers offer a set back distance of ag chemical use from water sources.

Well planned buffers improve the appearance of a farm or ranch, and will make good use of areas that shouldn't be cropped. Considering the improvement being made to the environment with better water quality, and more wildlife habitat, this program is of benefit to all.

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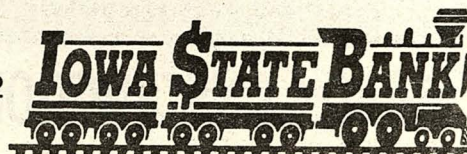
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Smiths are Woodland Owner honorees for '98

Jim and Karen Smith of Arlington were the winners of the Woodland Owner of the year for 1998. They have 23 acres of woodland which they have improved over the years.

Jim and Karen purchased the property in 1996 from Jim's father. Jim's father believed in protecting the forest and would not allow harvesting. In 1997, Jim and Karen attended the Master Woodland Manager's course. By attending this course and forestry field days, both Jim and his father understood they must actively manage their woods to regenerate the oak.

In 1997 they started killing the boxelder in the area and planting red

oak and walnut on 4.5 acres. Also in 1997, 3 acres were clear cut to provide browse and regenerate oak. Finally in 1997 scattered mature walnut were harvested and the trees from the clear cut were also sold which included some very high quality red oak.

In 1998, 8 acres of understory was released with the removal of taller undesirable trees.

Both Jim and Karen are avid bow hunters so managing this woods also encourages increase in habitat for deer and turkeys. Jim and Karen also enjoy walking in the woods and will continue to improve the woods for years more of enjoyment.

We wish to congratulate Jim and Karen on this award.



Jim and Karen Smith stand near their forestry project they have planted on their land north of Arlington. They are the winners of the forestry award from the SWCD.

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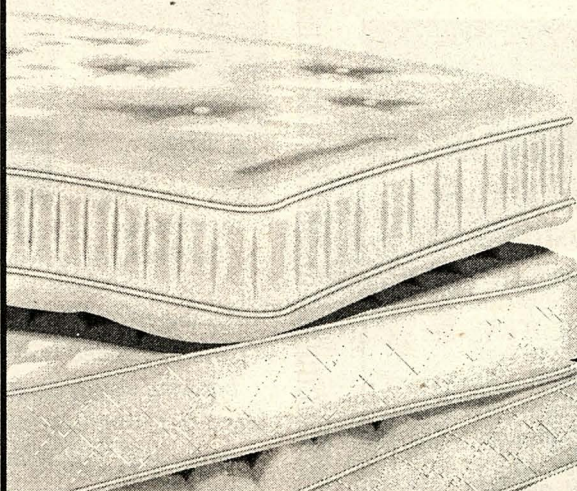
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Report from CDI for 1998

by William E. Bennett, Vice President

The Conservation Districts of Iowa spent the year trying to help all the conservation districts in the state to be of better service to their customers. In January the President and

Vice President went to Chicago for a two day meeting with state leaders from the other seven states in the north central region. This included the top leadership in these states of both federal and state conservation agencies and the elected officers of

the state conservation associations.

In February the CDI in cooperation with NRCS (Natural Resource Conservation Service), Iowa DSC (Division of Soil Conservation) and NACD (National Association of Conservation Districts), district com-

missioners were given a training course designed to help them do a better job of meeting their customers needs. This training gave commissioners a better understanding of their duties and responsibilities under the laws and rules of the state of Iowa. These meetings were held in conjunction with the spring regionals. Also, in February your President and Vice President went to Nashville to represent the state of Iowa at the annual meeting of NACD. The President serves as a member of the board of directors, with the Vice President serving as alternate director. Both also serve on committees setting policy for NACD.

In March, we were in Washington, DC, visiting with all five of Iowa's Congressmen and both Senators to try to give them a better understanding of what the needs are for the districts to put conservation practices on the ground in Iowa. In some cases, we met with staff instead of the elected official because of conflicts in schedules.

In April the third state Envirothon was held at the state 4-H camp at Madrid. The winners went on to the national competition, which is North America's largest high school environmental competition. CDI has and needs cooperation from many groups and individuals to hold this event and the regionals across the state. Among these groups are FFA, 4-H, DNR, DSC, IA. Dept. of Education, some corporations and of course SWCDs.

June was the month that we toured conservation buffer strips in central Iowa where Iowa State University is conducting research to find out how effective buffers can be. Buffers being researched include trees and grass and wetlands as filters. Combinations of these are also being tried. Results so far have been very positive. They have been im-

proving water quality and controlling erosion.

In July, the North Central Regional meeting was held in Columbus, Ohio. We were able to learn more about what other districts were doing to serve their customers and how we might be able to do better back in Iowa. July was also the month that the CDI board of directors joined the State Soil Conservation Committee in a tour of various projects in the Iowa River Corridor.

In August, Rapid City, South Dakota, was the site of the NACD Leadership Conference, where additional training was given on how to provide leadership by finding out what the customers wants and needs are, so that districts can deliver the assistance needed.

September the annual meeting of CDI was held in Des Moines. This meeting provided an opportunity for commissioners across the state to learn new ways to serve all the people of the state. This was also the business meeting for CDI.

December found your officers again traveling the state for regional meetings. This time we gave training to both commissioners and FSA county committee persons, so that each board could better understand what the other is doing and we can work together to provide better service to customers.

During the year CDI also moved into their new offices in Urbandale. This office is shared with Trees Forever. An Envirothon coordinator was hired to handle the Envirothon. The "Office Chair" (CDI newsletter) was sent out to districts to keep them current on what was happening. Officers met with district commissioners and others to help solve problems within districts and attended the five other CDI board meetings and three NACD board meetings.

Habiger: conservation tillage still a major player

By Mark Habiger, Area Conservationist NRCS

The advent of the 1985 Farm Bill improved the quantity and quality of conservation application throughout Iowa. The cooperation of federal, state, and local partners as well as the commitment of soil and water conservation districts were key in completing the objectives of that bill. While the 1985 Farm Bill's requirements for USDA program participation are still in effect today, we are noting a decrease in residue management across the state.

There may be several reasons for the decreased residue management across the state. The Agricultural Marketing Transition Act which offers farmers decreasing payments through 2003, CRP contract expirations, or personal preferences may be cited as reasons for the decrease. Whatever the reason, it is important to note that the cost of fall tillage and lack of residue management is exacting a heavy toll on our natural resources.

Crop residue management offers

The commitment of the land stewards, soil and water conservation districts and conservation partners was, and still is, second to none.

several tangible and intangible benefits. The protection of residue through the winter reduces water and wind erosion. The residue builds soil tilth and increases organic matter. Reduced tillage operations decreases the amount of soil compaction, fuel costs, and equipment wear and tear. The wildlife benefits are enormous with residue offering shelter and nesting opportunities for animals and birds.

Iowa has been an agricultural AND a conservation leader for the

nation. During the late 1980's when we were striving to meet the conservation compliance planning needs across the country, Iowa was leading the way largely due to the cooperation of its farmers. Residue management was the key component of those plans. The commitment of the land stewards, soil and water conservation districts, and conservation partners was, and still is, second to none. For this reason, I find it difficult to believe we are experiencing less and less conservation tillage across the state, but it is occurring.

For those of you actively practicing residue management, let me say thank you for your commitment to conserving our precious natural resources. Your conservation commitment, dedication and stewardship will be your legacy. You are the reason Iowa is a conservation leader and a model for the rest of the country.

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Ervin Sadler stands in his field near Oelwein where he uses contouring to control erosion. He is the winner of the landowner's award from the SWCD.

Sadler no longer skeptical about how well contours work

By Julie McCready, NRCS

Ervin and JoAnn Sadler are the winners of the land owner/tenant award for 1998. The farm north of Oelwein is where Ervin was raised. They have also raised two daughters on this farm. Pam Hilabolt and her husband Randy, live in Wheatland, with their three children, Richard, Amy, and Roger. Their other daughter, Penny Jo, works for the Oelwein School system and still lives close to the family farm with her children, Katie and Johnny.

Conservation contouring started

on the farm 17-18 years ago when Ervin was having a problem with a waterway. Jerry Muff, NRCS West Union, came out and told him the problem wasn't in the waterway it was up the hill. Jerry convinced him to try contouring.

Ervin says at first he was skeptical, but later God dumped 2 1/2" of rain on that field. The next day he went out to see how the field held up. He says water was held in those contours and of course, so was the top soil. Ervin said you'd have to be an idiot not to see how well they

worked.

This rain had actually flooded the town of Oelwein but Ervin kept his top soil. He said contouring really works for him. He says lots of misconceptions are out there concerning contours including short row problems... "Down here contours can run for miles and they are just beautiful."

Says Ervin, "If you just try contours you would see how great they work."

"Many people worry about the 'bottom line' if you take care of the

soil the bottom line will come. You buy a fancy car and take care of it yet you let the land that feeds you run down to the ditch. A dog doesn't bite the hand that feeds it. The land has taken care of me for all these years it's only right I take care of it. Top soil is unreplaceable. We have to take care of it for the future generations." That is why Ervin insists his renter, Ron Rechkemmer use contour farming. Ervin notes Ron also uses no-till farming to further save the soil.

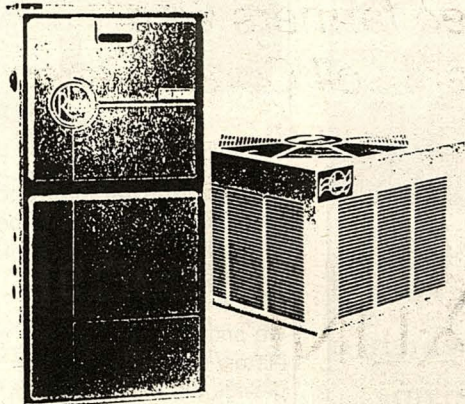
Ervin raised beef cattle "birth to

beefsteak" when he first farmed so he had more hay in his rotation. Now he uses a corn/soybean rotation with some hay on the hillier areas. He also uses minimum tillage.

Ervin enjoys working on the farm and spending time with his family. Ervin and JoAnn like to take day trips up to the 'Riverboat' to try their luck.

As for luck in farming, Ervin has learned luck comes with common sense and contour farming.

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Fayette SWCD is pilot district for carbon storage study

In September, NACD and NRCS announced that NACD (National Association Conservation Districts) had received a grant from the DOE (Department of Energy) to study how conservation practices help store carbon, the main greenhouse gas, and help prevent global warming. Iowa was chosen as a pilot state with five conservation districts to be pilot districts in developing the process that will be used in gathering the information needed for the computer model. The Fayette SWCD was chosen as one of the five pilot districts. During 1999 all districts in the state will go through the process of providing this information. The computer model being used is the only one that is recognized by world scientists as being accurate.

At the November commissioners meeting, Dr. Jill S. Knapp, executive director, of CDI gave a presentation to commissioners to help them understand the process. She explained how carbon is stored and how it is released. She reported what scientists believe carbon does in the atmosphere. Dr. Knapp went on to let commissioner and staff know that information would be needed on acres under cultivation, types of tillage done, crop rotations and other things going back to when the district was first settled. When the pre-

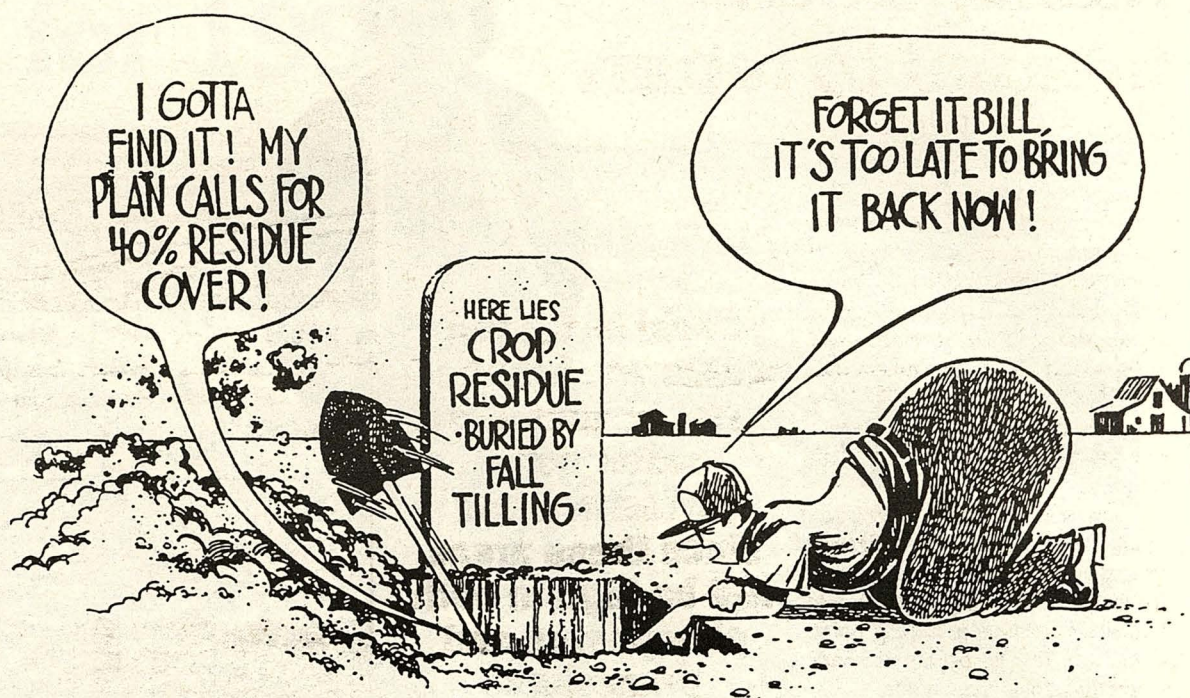
sentation was given it was not known for sure what types of forms would be used, but she showed a draft form.

In the December commissioners meeting, it was decided that on January 4th after the regular commissioners meeting, commissioners and Jerry Muff, district conservationist, would meet with the people collecting the information and provide them with the information requested.

It is believed that this information will show that conservation farmers are helping to offset pollution caused by burning fossil fuels and doing other things, such as clearing and burning the rain forests, that create more greenhouse gases. It is possible that conservation practices may be shown to not only save soil and protect our water supply, but also improve the quality of the very air we breathe. Carbon storage credits may become a valuable commodity and be bought and sold, like grain or gold and silver.

After the information gathered is entered into the computer model, the findings will come back to the district as well as being passed on to the DOE for use in global warming negotiations. The district will probably only receive information that pertains to Fayette county, but what is found out is sure to be interesting and possibly profitable to conservation farmers.

Save Crop Residues this fall!



Leaving crop residues alone after harvest will help you:

- **Leave options open for next spring**

If you have residues to work with, you can decide how much tillage to do in the spring, but you can't put back residue you have buried.

- **Stay in compliance**

Conservation compliance is still in effect. Your plan likely shows a level of residue you will maintain.

- **Avoid erosion like many farms had this year**

In many parts of the state, erosion occurred, even on no-till fields. But the most severe erosion was found on fields with little or no residue cover. Heavy residues can cut soil erosion by as much as 90%.

- **Save time, energy and money**

No-till can take a third of the time to plant a field that conventional preparation and planting takes; no-till can save more than 3 gallons of fuel an acre, and MAX data show no-till and other conservation tillage systems are more economical than low-residue farming systems.

- **Produce cleaner water and healthier soil**

Crop residues hold soil particles in place as well as herbicides. Herbicide runoff can be cut by as much as half from low residue systems.

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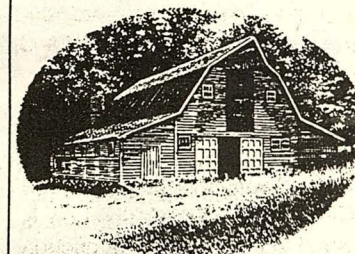
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Good pasture management integral to return

Submitted by James Ranum, Grazing Specialist

If grain yields could be increased 15% by changing management most producers would consider change. If inputs were less than the value of the increased yields changes would be implemented. Many pastures could be increased 25 or more percent with limited increases in inputs. There are four management practices which will increase returns from your pastures.

The first thing to consider is adequate fertilization. A fertilization program starts with a good soil-testing program. Each pasture should be tested to obtain a starting point. Good soil testing points or shade where livestock concentrate.

Studies done at Forage Systems Research Center in Linneus, Mo, have shown that animals concentrate nutrients within 150 feet of shade or water. Soil samples should be taken away from these concentration areas. If your soil pH is medium then fer-

need to be matched to soil resources for the best results. When selecting the species to be used improved cultivars should be used. Pay par-

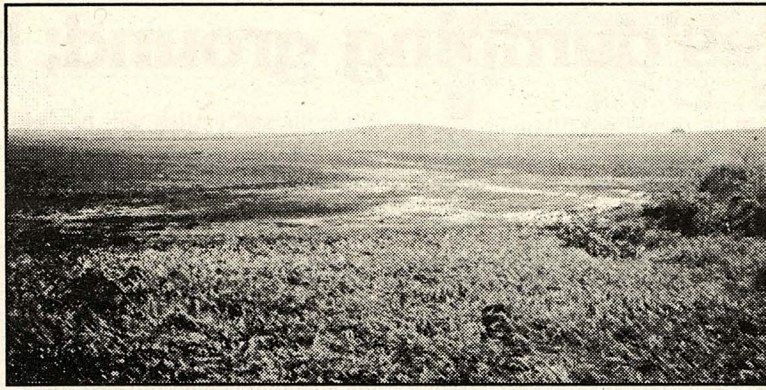
Avoid fertilizing within one hundred feet of shade or water concentration areas since these areas will be high in both phosphorus and potassium.

ticular attention to improved palatability and maturity.

Water availability and location affect how effectively livestock utilize a pasture. A goal of all pastures should be water within 100 feet from the farthest portion of the pasture. Livestock, especially during hot weather, concentrate near water then graze away from the water. They repeat this pattern day after day resulting in over grazing close to the water and under grazing the farthest portions of the pasture. As the under grazed portion matures and loses palatability the livestock select the regrowth near the water compounding the over grazing, reducing the pasture vigor.

Providing water access within 800 feet peak may seem difficult, however, on northeast Iowa quite often it isn't difficult or too expensive. The first option is running water from the buildings using your well. If this is possible it is the cheapest and highest quality water available. Four thousand feet of 1 inch density polyethylene water line can be laid over the surface for fewer than eight hundred dollars and offers a lot of flexibility in watering options. Other possibilities are nose pumps, sling pumps, gas pumps, or ponds.

Pasture management is the final factor affecting pasture productivity. Season utilization of dry matter produced in a pasture is directly related to the length of the grazing period. Pastures grazed 30 days or longer have a utilization rate of 30 to 35 percent while pastures rotated daily can exceed 75 percent. Ideal rest periods vary from 14 to 20 days in the spring when plants are rapidly growing to 40 or more days in hot dry summers. Given the opportunity livestock will select the newest growth available. Depending upon the quality of forage needed pastures should be subdivided so they will be evenly grazed before the pasture starts to regrow.



In 1996, this field north of Hawkeye was inflicted with soil erosion from spring rains. Tillage has increased this fall for whatever reason. If 1999 spring rains are intense, get ready for soil erosion such as this again.



Contour grass strips such as these are being enrolled into the continuous CRP in addition to the grassed headlands associated with the strips. The Strips are a maximum 30 ft. wide, and headlands 60-70 ft. wide. CRP payments are based on the maximum rental rates for the soils. For example:

Fayette 163 D=\$121/Acre
Downs 162 D=\$132/Acre
Kenyon 83 B=\$155/Acre



tilization will improve production. The higher the amount of the legumes in the pasture the more benefits received from improving soil fertility.

Avoid fertilizing within one hundred feet of shade or water concentration areas since these areas will be high in both phosphorus and potassium. Nitrogen fertilization is essential to high pasture production especially on grass pastures. A tall grass pasture such as brome, fescue, or reeds canary grass can use in excess of 200 pounds of nitrogen per acre. Even a pasture with 50 percent legumes in the sward can benefit from nitrogen applications as the legume only applies 100-150 pounds of nitrogen for the grass.

Plant composition affects both the production and persistence of the pasture. Short grass legume pastures such as bluegrass and white clover are very persistent but low yielding. Tall grass species such as brome, orchard, or reed canary grass with legumes such as red clover, alfalfa or birdsfoot trefoil yield more and respond to improved management but less persistent. Forage species

ATTENTION:

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Farmers Practicing
Conservation Tillage

The original.

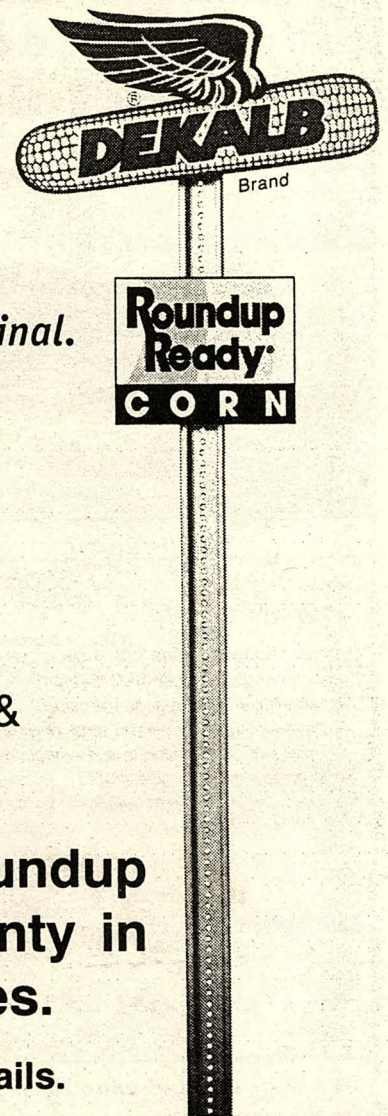
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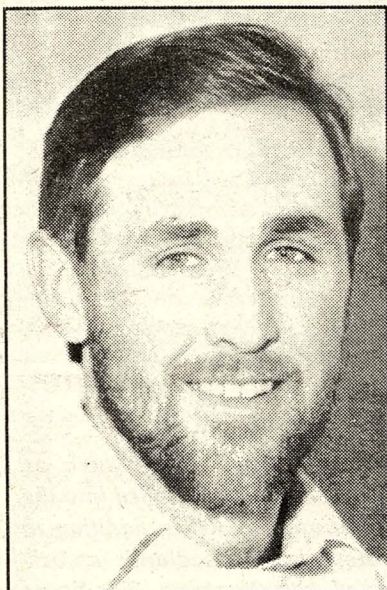
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Pond replaces dumping ground; haven for wildlife, fish



Mark Vagts

Submitted by Mark S. Vagts

Our proposed pond site was a waterway with undesirable trees and, as was the case on many farms with similar sites, had been used by previous owners as a dumping area. The land surrounding the waterway was very steep—it had been nicknamed "Old Smokey." Since purchasing the land, I had considered removing the trees. I spoke with a contractor about this, when the idea of a pond was first suggested. I was not completely sold on the idea of a pond, but went ahead with the removal of the trees last winter.

After removing the trees and cleaning up wagonloads of metal and other items in the waterway, the contractor again brought up the possibility of a pond. Our neighbor had built one on his farm adjoining ours, and by putting a pond on our farm, it would help slow siltation and pre-

vent his pond from filling in.

The Natural Resource Conservation Service came up with a proposal, and after a little convincing from my family, I agreed to the plan.

Bob Vobora, a soil scientist, probed the soil. He determined the original area we planned to use was not suitable since the soil was too close to bedrock, and the pond could leak, and the water would back up into another neighbor's land. The site was moved farther up the waterway, which required yet another plan and would encompass some tillable farm ground. I eventually decided to go ahead with this proposal.

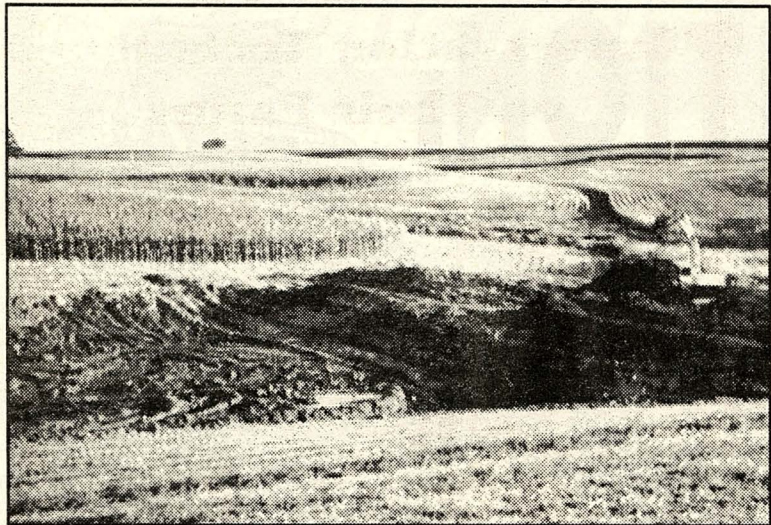
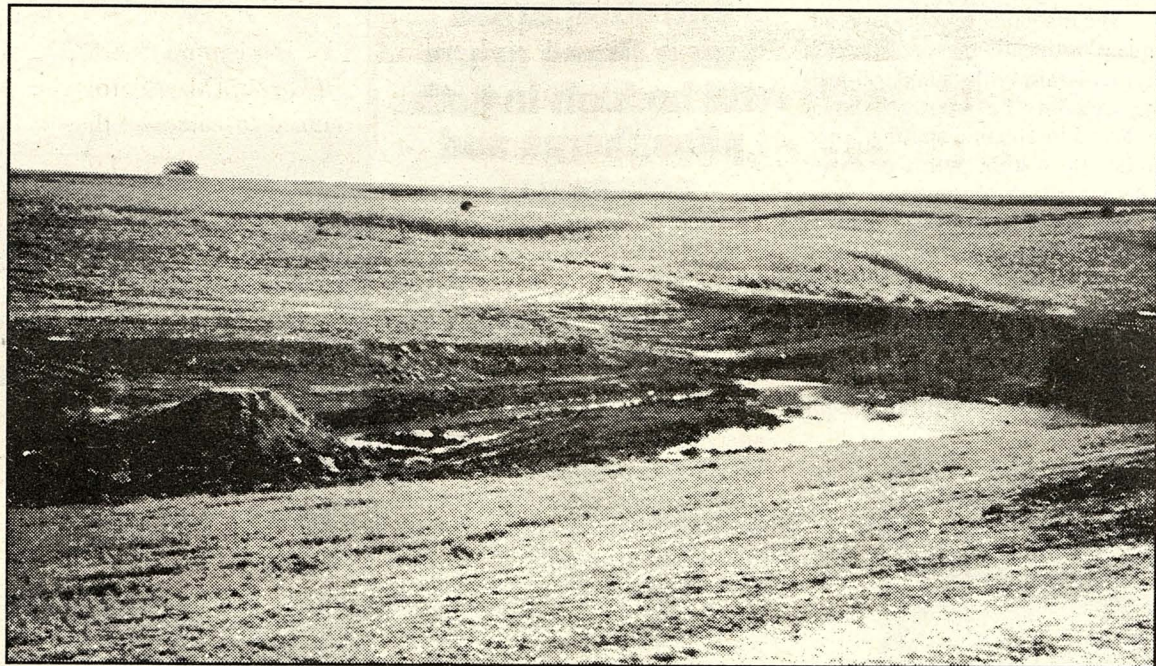
The site was surveyed, and excavation began in early fall. The dam was constructed and a small island built in the pond so waterfowl could nest without the risk of being invaded by predators. A natural spring and 56 acres of watershed feed the pond. Before winter set in, it was approximately half full.

I worked primarily with Lavonne Koch, soil technician, who designed the pond and took the necessary steps to have the site surveyed and readied for the contractor. She was extremely helpful, taking extra time to explain the entire building process to me and my children. The contractor was also very informative and checked in with me before proceeding to each new step. He did an excellent job of constructing the pond. Both made the entire pond building project a rewarding and educational experience for my whole family.

Next fall, fish will be introduced to the pond for future harvesting.

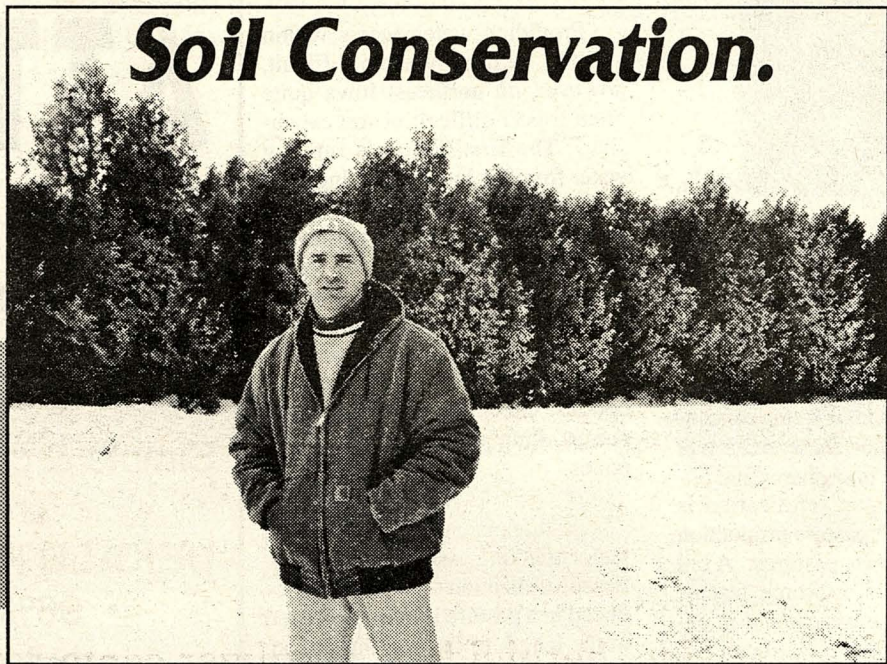
Bluegills and catfish will be first, with bass the following fall. I intend to seed brome grass on the area surrounding the pond, as well as some trees, to hold down erosion and beautify the area.

Building the pond has put to use formerly unmanageable land while controlling soil erosion and providing a natural habitat for fish, waterfowl, and wildlife. The undesirable trees and junk that had filled the area and made it unsightly are now gone, and one day the area will be a haven for wildlife—and humans.



Jerry Muff and LaVonne Koch from the NRCS discuss the work with the contractors.

CSB is Proud of the Efforts of Local Farmers Who Practice Soil Conservation.



Like Melvin Schlatter of Sumner, whose evergreen windbreak has helped control winter winds & snow deposits around his farm. Pictured above is Melvin's son Ron in front of a five rowed section of the windbreak.



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SUMMARY

IOWA MAX 1992-1997

Com	Fields	Seed	Fertilizer	Pesticide	Operations	Land	Yield	Profit
No-till	497	26.04	47.00	26.02	47.01	106.14	148.2	\$43.19
Ridge-till	223	26.47	46.82	18.06	55.44	109.91	151.3	\$52.53
Mulch-till	336	28.63	48.44	29.27	58.27	99.99	145.6	\$42.02
Reduced-till	493	27.79	48.28	25.36	56.51	104.12	151.1	\$49.19
Conventional	74	27.81	50.67	30.43	67.28	104.60	149.9	\$38.96
Soybeans								
No-till	472	21.60	17.31	28.86	44.95	106.67	49.66	\$61.18
Ridge-till	164	17.18	16.90	18.36	52.40	109.81	49.37	\$65.05
Mulch-till	392	20.34	18.22	25.37	55.99	103.72	51.61	\$72.74
Reduced-till	126	18.24	17.64	22.38	58.99	106.98	49.41	\$54.06
Conventional	35	17.96	16.56	20.96	63.82	111.66	48.50	\$35.84

Congratulations

**to Ervin Sadler for receiving the
Land Owner Conservationist of
the Year award & to his
tenant Ron Rechkemmer.**

Maynard Coop salutes all local
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efforts in '98 and look to
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MAX is even more valuable when a group of growers in a given area or watershed use it during the growing season to compare results following harvest. We invite you to work with your local ag retailer, crop consultant and/or natural resources specialist to make these "end of season" comparisons possible. The more growers involved, the better chance to consider ways to fine tune your operation, increase profits and maybe even find solutions to water quality problems along the way.

Fields in MAX aren't managed in any particular way, so you have the chance to use "real world" examples to compare various management aspects for "real world" results.

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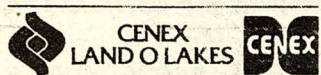
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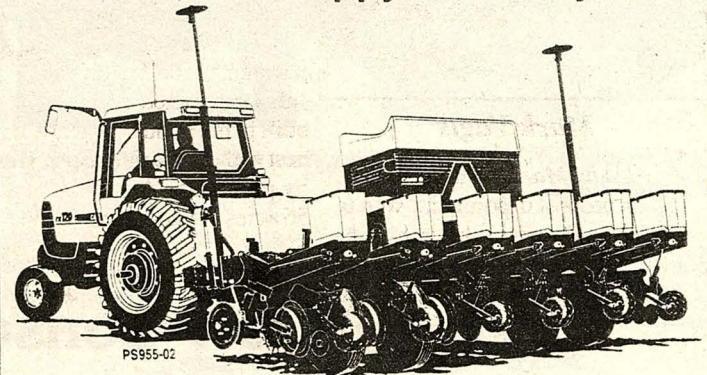
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Fayette County SWCD Commissioners, from left- Jon Grafenberg, West Union; Bill Bennett, Elgin; and Richard Jensen, Elgin.

How Conservation Districts work . . .

Conservation districts in Iowa are managed by five commissioners elected on the general ballot in each county. With assistance from the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service and Iowa Department of Agriculture and Land Stewardship-Division of Soil Conservation, commissioners address the natural resource issues that are most critical in their districts.

If you are interested in becoming a commissioner, contact your

local soil and water conservation district. Elections are held in even numbered years.

Many volunteer opportunities exist with both the local districts and the NRCS. Most districts appoint assistant commissioners who help with all aspects of district work. The Earth Team is the volunteer organization for the NRCS. For more information contact your local NRCS office.

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- 5.6 acres m/l- very nice acreage, 2 story, 3 BR home within 3 miles of West Union. Gardeners delight: herb garden, grapes, raspberries & other perennials.

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Financial Statement

Financial Statement
July 1, 1997 to June 30, 1998

IM BUDGET

Allocation	\$ 2,500.00
Supplemental	1,700.00
Total Allocation	4,200.00
Commissioner Expenses	1,620.98
Office Supplies and Expenses	2,254.02
Returned to State	\$ 325.00

IIM BUDGET COST-SHARE PROGRAM

1997-1998 Allocation	\$ 37,616.00
Spent	3,464.74
Obligated	2,697.75
Unobligated	\$ 31,453.51
1996-1997 Allocation	\$ 37,616.00
Supplemental	21,092.00
Total Allocation	58,708.00
Spent	31,428.80
Obligated	28,923.40
Returned to State	2,505.40
1995-1996 Allocation	\$ 37,363.00
Supplemental	24,270.00
Total Allocation	61,633.00
Spent	47,459.14
Obligated	12,438.19
Returned to State	\$ 1,735.67

REAP PRACTICES

1998 Allocation	\$ 8,015.00
Spent	2,755.81
Returned to State	5,259.19

REAP FORESTRY/NATIVE GRASSES

1998 Allocation	\$ 1,808.50
Supplemental	1,623.80
Total Allocation	3,432.30
Spent	2,925.00
Returned to State	\$ 507.30

ORGANIC NUTRIENT MANAGEMENT PROGRAM

1998 Allocation	\$ 7,500.00
Obligated	\$ 7,500.00

Conservation Accomplishments

PRACTICE	NUMBER	ACRES (ac) FEET (ft)
Waste Management System	2	328 ac.
Conservation Crop Rotation		12,000 ac.
Conservation Planned Systems		504 ac.
Conservation Tillage		1,118 ac.
Contour Farming		7 ac.
Critical Area Planting	6	1051 ac.
Shallow Water Pond	1	11.8 ac.
Field Border		1949 ac.
Grassed Waterway		13,725 ft
Contour Stripcropping		106 ac.
Terraces		59.5 ac.
Timber Stand Improvement		1,266 ac.
Tree Planting	11	1,117 ac.
Waste Utilization	142	2,660 ac.
Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) Continuous Practices CRP 17	72	11,541 ac.
Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) General Sign-up		
Total CRP acres		



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Sixth annual third grade field day is great success



Fayette County SWCD is pleased to host the annual 3rd grade field day, each year at the Richard Jensen farm near West Union. Alan Crowe, at Right, with folder, discusses, "Lines on the Land."

History of Conservation Districts

In 1937, as the Dust Bowl focused attention on soil erosion, President Roosevelt sent a model law to governors recommending legislation that would allow landowners to form voluntary soil conservation districts. It was recognized then, as now, that local, voluntary efforts are most effective in getting conservation practices established on the land. The legislation was adopted by Iowa's legislature in 1939 and the first conservation district was formed in three Marion County townships in April 1940. By 1952, all of the land in Iowa was served by Conservation Districts.



Julie McCready explains the benefits and importance of bees to the environment at the NRCS Bee Station.



Third graders, whether familiar with farm life or not, enjoy their wagon ride at the annual field day event sponsored by the Fayette County SWCD.

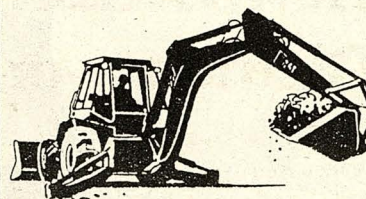
The 6th annual 3rd grade Conservation Education Field Day was another great success! Over 475 children from 12 schools in Fayette County participated this year. The entire event coordinated by the Fayette SWCD is made possible by all the volunteers who operate stations, provide food, equipment and give so generously of their time for the three day event.

The Fayette County Pork Producers donated and cooked sandwiches for the field day and Doug Easton-Culligan Water donated water for the event.

The Fayette SWCD would like to thank everyone who makes this event possible!

The eight stations featured at the

third grade field day were; 1) Will Ogle-Earth Team Volunteer, Bob Vobora-NRCS Area Office Soil Scientist-"Soil Station", 2) Tom Baker-Earth Team Volunteer-"Pond Station", 3) Alan Crowe-NRCS State Tech. - "Lines on the Land", 4) Julie McCready-WAE NRCS-"Bee Station", 5) Dick Jensen-SWCD Commissioner-"Erosion Station", 6) Jodi Jeanes-Fayette County Commissioner/Fayette County Recycling Coordinator, Sue Lueder-Fayette County Naturalist-"Recycling Station", 7) Lisa Navarro-Plotz-Gilbertson Conservation Education Area Park Ranger-"Wildlife Station", 8) John Olds & Tom Brown-One Stop Forestry, Mike Finnegan-Earth Team Volunteer-"Forestry Station".

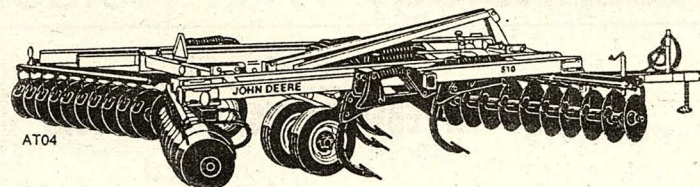


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GOOD DEALS...AND A GOOD DEAL MORE

Embedded systems could be biggest problem for farmers

By Dan Burkhart, Fayette County Extension Education Director

One second after midnight December 31, 1999, most milking systems and livestock ventilation controls quit working. Automated grain handling and drying systems don't work. Heating and air conditioning units fail because the thermostats no longer function. The electricity is out and phones don't work. Airliners get lost flying across the country. Could

this really happen?

Not really, unless everybody sticks their head in the sand and pretends nothing could go wrong. The problems above are caused by embedded chips in devices and systems in noncomputer applications.

Almost everything has a chip in it. Chips were programmed at the factory to customer specifications, and nobody knows if they will work past the year 2000 or not. We could

have some real problems here, especially with machines and systems that sustain life, such as machines in hospitals or in situations in which lives are depending on the information from a chip, such as in airplane instruments. Chips that automatically monitor a process like a production line or the decay of nuclear materials in a storage facility are also very important, for obvious reasons.

Fortunately most of the systems that use embedded chips don't use

dates, and most aren't in places that will cause life-or-wallet-threatening problems if they fail. But, some companies have production lines that are controlled by embedded processes, and these firms need to get right on the problem to make sure that they can continue to produce. We need to find all the applications that use chips and make sure that they will continue to work. This is the heart of the problem with embedded systems and also the solution. Most companies don't have to test their embedded systems or even fix them. You don't need to hire expensive help to solve your embedded chip problem. You need to look at your business and decide what aspects of it are mission critical and make sure those are protected first.

All farm businesses should have a plan that backs up and protects the business' data, ensures continued production with minimal delay, makes sure the money keeps flowing in and the product flowing out.

For embedded systems, this is what you do

Start with everything that just has to keep working that either plugs in or has wires or needs batteries. This means all the systems in your buildings, your transportation, and everything that keeps the product flowing out of your farm business and raw materials and money flowing in. While you're at it, define every machine that is also necessary for life or health and any system that knows the date or days of the week. These obviously have date-related software and could fail at the century change.

After you have begun identifying machines and systems that probably have embedded systems, initiate a dialogue with the manufacturers to find out if their systems or devices are year 2000 compliant. If you have a system that simply cannot be allowed to fail and you need extra assurance, then you need to have some

kind of backup system ready. If you can feel comfortable only by having your devices with embedded systems tested, then go ahead and have them tested.

You need official confirmation that the makers of the chip-bearing products and devices will either stand behind what they have made or will tell you how to replace them. This will take care of the issue of fixing most of these systems. Other than finding all the embedded chips in the first place, getting this assurance will probably be the hardest part of the fix. If you don't get assurance of compliance in a reasonable amount of time before the year 2000, make plans to either replace the machine, system, or device, or make sure you can do without it or can work around it.

If you have done what is suggested here, your critical systems will be protected. You, your farm business should be fairly safe, at least from the embedded systems problem. The year 2000 problem big picture, though, shows the dependencies we have created. It is not enough to solve our own problem in isolation. We need to address the year 2000 compliance problems of our customers, our suppliers, and our state and local governments and communities. If they haven't done the same thing we have, the situation could still be a disaster for us.

Everyone is in the same boat on the year 2000 problem. If we fix everything in our businesses, we are still at risk from other systems and anyone else with whom we share data. Again, the overriding message seems clear. We are all in this together. The more we help each other, the more we help ourselves.

Call me for more information at 319-425-3331 or call 1-800-728-2245, extension 399 and ask for Ken VandeBerg, ICN Coordinator for information on when the next statewide Iowa Communications Network Year 2000 inservice is.



Working to preserve water and soil quality in Fayette County are NRCS and SWCD staff. In front, from left- Joe Wingert, Julie McCready, Lori Kohlmeier; in back- Jerry Muff, LaVonne Koch and Alan Crowe.

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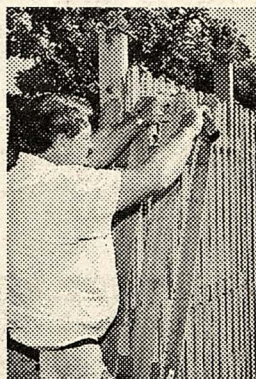
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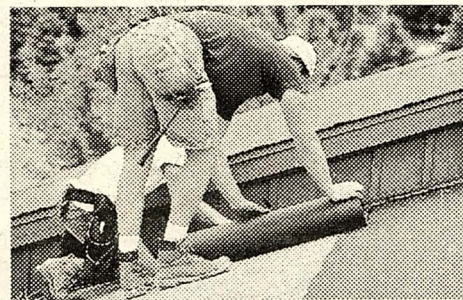
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14 Benefits for U.S. Farmers and the Environment through Conservation Tillage

For most soils, the higher the level of crop residue (stems, stalks, and leaves from the previous harvest) left on the surface of a field, the greater the benefits. Tillage systems that leave 30 percent or more crop residue, after planting, are called conservation tillage systems.

Conservation tillage systems (no-till, strip-till, ridge-till and mulch-till) offer the following economic and environmental benefits.

1. **Reduced labor requirements** - Conservation tillage systems are geared toward fewer trips through the field. For instance, no-till requires as little as one trip for planting compared to 2 or 3 tillage operations plus planting for conventional or intensive tillage operations. Fewer trips mean less labor and fewer related expenses per acre.
2. **Time savings** - Conservation tillage systems, like no-till, can take a third of the time conventional systems require to prepare and plant a field. On a 1,000 acre farm, the time savings can be as great as 450 hours or more than seven 60 hour work weeks.
3. **Reduced machinery wear** - Making fewer trips across the field with a tractor and planter or drill reduces machinery wear and maintenance costs. No-till saves an estimated \$5 per acre on such costs. That's a \$5,000 savings on a 1,000 acre farm.
4. **Fuel savings** - Fewer tillage trips through the field on a tractor, and decreased horsepower requirements, provided by no-till, save an average 3.5 gallons an acre compared to conventional tillage systems.
5. **Higher soil moisture** - Leaving crop residues on the soil surface reduces water evaporation in the top few inches of the soil. No-till can make as much as two additional inches of water available for growing plants in late summer.
6. **Reduced soil erosion** - Crop residues on the soil surface reduce soil erosion from water and wind. Depending on the amount of crop residues left on the soil surface, soil erosion can be reduced by up to 90% compared to an unprotected, intensively tilled field.
7. **Improved surface water quality** - Crop residues help hold soil particles and associated nutrients and pesticides on the field. For instance, herbicide runoff can be cut in half by conservation tillage on some sites.
8. **Improved water infiltration** - Crop residues act as tiny dams to slow water runoff from the field, allowing the water more time to soak into the soil. This soaking effect, known as infiltration, is also increased by channels (macropores) created by earthworms and old plant roots that are left intact. All help to significantly reduce or eliminate water runoff from a field.
9. **Increased organic matter** - Crop residues on the surface of a field slowly decompose, building up organic matter in the top two or three inches of soil. Organic matter is important to long-term fertility. Intensive tillage speeds the breakdown of crop residues and the loss of organic matter.
10. **Decreased soil compaction** - While most compaction occurs during the first trip through the field, reduced weight and horsepower requirements with no-till, can help minimize compaction. Additional field traffic, required by intensive tillage, compounds the problem by breaking down the soil structure and promoting compaction.
11. **Improved soil tilth** - No-till increases the soil particle aggregation (small soil clumps). The small aggregates make it easier for water to move through the soil and allow plants to use less energy to establish roots. Intensive tillage makes this process a chore.
12. **More wildlife** - Crop residues provide shelter and food for wildlife, such as game birds and small animals.
13. **Reduces release of carbon gases** - Crop residues keep naturally occurring carbon in the soil for use as organic matter. Intensive tillage releases soil carbon into the atmosphere, as carbon dioxide, where it can combine with other gases to contribute to earth warming or the so-called "green house effect."
14. **Reduced air pollution** - Less horsepower requirements and fewer trips mean reduced tractor motor emissions. Crop residues also reduce wind erosion and the amount of dust in the air.

Compiled by
Conservation Technology Information Center
West Lafayette, IN tel. 765-494-9555

IN THE SIMPLEST TERMS, conservation buffers are transition zones between land uses and bodies of water. They are usually land in permanent vegetation designed to intercept pollutants and manage other environmental concerns.

They're popular because they work. If properly installed and maintained, they remove up to 50 percent or more of nutrients and pesticides, up to 60 percent or more of certain pathogens and up to 75 percent or more of sediment.

When coupled with other good farm management practices (such as crop residue management, integrated pest management and winter cover crops), conservation buffers go a long way toward helping farmers achieve environmental sustainability.

The National Conservation Buffer Initiative would like to see two million miles of conservation buffers in place by 2002. Many federal and state agencies, as well as private groups, provide financial

or technical assistance.

In a nutshell, these are the three most significant USDA programs:

■ The continuous Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) encourages farmers to convert highly erodible land to vegetative cover, such as native grasses, wildlife plantings, trees, filter strips and riparian buffers. Participating landowners receive an annual rental payment for the life of the contract, usually 10 years and renewable.

■ The Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) provides technical, educational and financial assistance to eligible farmers to alleviate soil, water and natural resources concerns. Funded through the Commodity Credit Corp., EQIP is also involved in implementing nutrient, pest- and grazing-management projects.

■ The Wildlife Habitat Incentives Program (WHIP) provides cost-share dollars for the restoration, protection and management of habitats that benefit game birds, songbirds and associated wildlife.

A statewide organization

Conservation Districts of Iowa- CDI is a non-profit 501(c)3 organization devoted to providing educational programs on the conservation of soil, water and other natural resources.

CDI was founded in 1947 to provide a unified voice for the individual county-based soil and water conservation districts. Since that time, CDI has been working with the 100 soil and water conservation districts in Iowa to promote sustainable agricultural practices for the protection of soil and water resources. Today, work is also being done in urban settings, promoting conservation practices for homeowners, developers and communities.

While each soil and water conservation district maintains its own programs, CDI helps districts combine efforts to address regional, state, and national issues.



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Dan Egan creates shallow water wetland

By Alan Crowe, State Tech. NRCS

For years Dan Egan had farmed a "wet" area on the family farm. The area wasn't large, only about 7 or 8 acres, but still it was cropland and he wanted to make the most of it. In the early 70's Dan tiled the area running lateral lines every 70 ft., hoping this would eliminate the wetness problem and improve his yields. For 5 or 6 years things did improve, but shortly afterwards his yields dropped to 25 bu. per acre, 50 bu. per acre in a real good year.

What was causing this problem? One might blame Mother Nature, but a better explanation would be the soil type. The predominate soil in this area is a classic wetland type soil called Palms Muck---more commonly known as peat. The water table is close to the surface for most of the year. The soil has a very high organic matter content which is quite effective in plugging tile lines. Also this soil type is very prone to settling after tile drainage has been done. In other words a producer is fighting an uphill battle when trying to convert this type of soil to productive cropland.

Dan put the area into the set-aside program whenever possible, but that is no longer an option. then he tried to bid the field into the general CRP but his bid was rejected.

Then one day Dan came into the NRCS office to inquire about the continuous CRP program. He and Jerry Muff (district conservationist) discussed the situation and Dan decided he would try to create a shallow water wetland for enrollment into CRP. Due to the nature of the



Dan Egan stands near the shallow water wetlands he created this past year with the advisement of the Fayette County SWCD.

soils and the lay of the land, no earth moving was needed. Dan contacted the person who had initially installed the tile and had him dig up the tile lines at 100 ft. intervals, bring the severed lines up to within a foot of the surface, and crimp or cap the ends. As it turned out about 70 excavations were made.

Mr. Egan says he was surprised at how easy it was to restore the area to a shallow water wetland. Within two days of the excavations, surface water was visible. Dan figures the water reached a depth of 10" before freeze-up. He has also established a vegetative filter strip 66' wide around the perimeter of his wetland which has been seeded to switch grass and enrolled in the continuous CRP program.

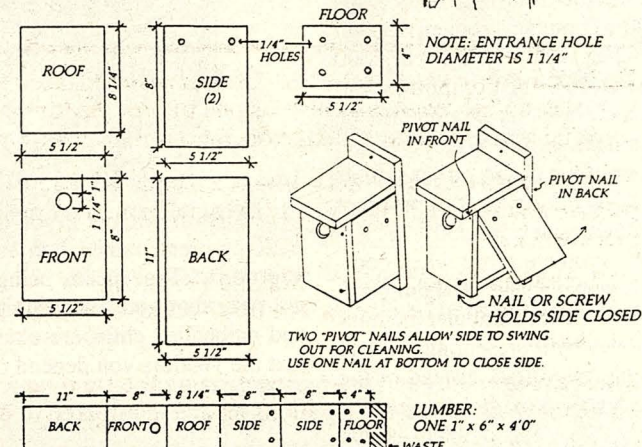
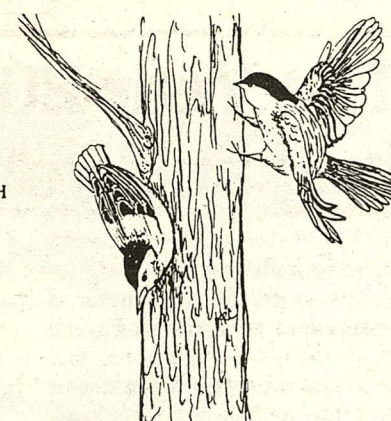
When I asked Dan what the pri-

mary reason was for creating the wetland he said "the area just wasn't very productive, and since I didn't get it into the general CRP I thought this would be the best alternative." He also mentioned that when he was farming the area he was probably losing money due to the poor yields, but now he is pleased to be earning in the neighborhood of \$125 per acre. Quite a turnaround.

One thing Mr. Egan hadn't expected, at least not this soon, was the arrival of wildlife. Although he would occasionally see deer in this field, this fall he saw quite a number of deer using the area as a watering hole. But his biggest surprise was to find 60-70 geese utilizing the wetland. Although the flock eventually headed south, Dan enjoyed their stay and is looking forward to seeing what wildlife will visit this site next year.

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Conservation Districts of Iowa initiatives

Backyard Conservation Bringing Conservation From the Countryside to Your Backyard.

This program provides information on how many farm conservation practices can be adapted to urban lots to achieve similar conservation benefits. Districts across the state are promoting this program with workshops, displays and written information.

Iowa Envirothon

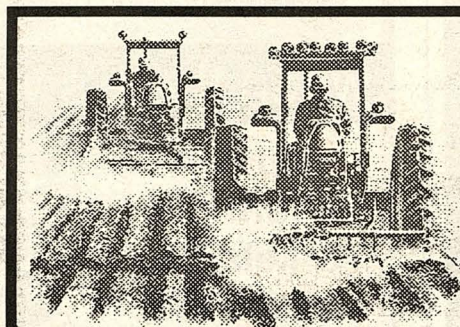
The Iowa Envirothon is an environmental education competition for high school students. Student teams compete on their knowledge of aquatics, forestry, soils, and wildlife. The winning team represents Iowa at the National Envirothon held each summer.

Scholarships

CDI and the CDI Auxiliary award scholarships to Iowa students pursuing studies in agriculture or natural resources.

Commissioner Development

Programs are offered to help locally-elected soil and water conservation district commissioners better fulfill their responsibilities.



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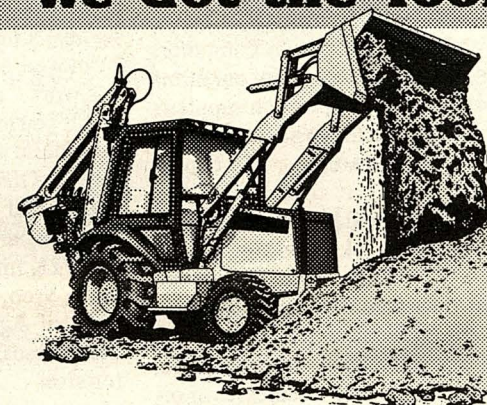
farmers that take the extra effort to practice soil conservation on their farms!

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The Year 2000 bug and your farm

By Dan Burkhart, Fayette County Extension Education Director

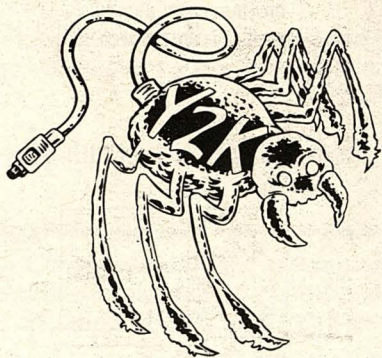
The year 2000 could usher in some serious problems for Fayette County farms, communities, and businesses if they don't get serious about the year 2000 bug. This "bug" is really a computer problem that will arise when we reach the year 2000 and some of our computers and embedded computer chips won't be able to deal with it. Computer and telecommunications professionals who are working on the problem have affectionately labeled it "Y2K."

The problem arose when computer system managers and programmers tried to save computer memory and money by representing the date with only two digits instead of the usual four. So 1981 became just 81, 1998 just 98. The problem is that when January 1, 2000 arrives and computers record it as "00," some of them will recognize it as 1900 instead of a century later. This glitch could cause them to generate false data, or possibly stop running.

The Y2K bug can affect us all. Even if a farmer's own computers and chips are okay, a lot of our farms and businesses depend on suppliers or services that might have problems. That can be disruptive and expensive.

Farmers and businesses need to take a good look to be sure they're Y2K okay. They should be sure that their own computer systems won't have a problem with the Y2K bug. They should also examine their data changes with other businesses or organizations and consider where those important providers might have a Y2K problem. They should develop a Y2K action plan to protect themselves and use it.

Here are three suggestions for local farmers, businesses, and communities:



- First, figure out if you have a Y2K problem, rather than assume you don't. That means being sure not only that your own computers and embedded chips are okay, but that the vendors you depend on are okay as well.

- Second, be informed. Rather than being pushed into paying for remedies you don't need, make realistic assessments based on what's important to your operations.

- Third, act now. Fixing most Y2K problems isn't particularly complicated, but it can take time against a deadline that truly cannot be moved, and last-minute fixes may not work.

If you have more questions, contact me at the Fayette County Extension Office. We have some fact sheets and can point they way to other resources. There are also several Y2K Internet sites on the World Wide Web, including the Department of Agriculture's Cooperative State Research Education, and Extension Service (<http://www.reeusda.gov/y2k>) and the Small Business Administration <http://www.sba.gov/y2k/>. There are several Iowa Communications Network Y2K conferences scheduled for Northeast Iowa Community College in Calmar this winter. If you want more information, call Ken VandeBerg, ICN Coordinator, at 1-800-728-2256, extension 399.

Are wetlands really important?

By Alan Crowe, NRCS-State Tech

I often hear the questions--are wetlands really important? Do they really provide a useful function to us? Are wetlands really worth saving?

I suppose the answer depends upon your own personal values and what's important to you. But personally, wetlands are very important to me!

Why?? Well for one, I love water. Clean, clear, pretty, good tasting water. Wetlands are very efficient in maintaining & improving water quality. Wetlands provide natural pollution control by removing agricultural chemicals such as pesticides and excess fertilizers from surface waters. How? Wetlands filter and collect sediment from runoff water which reduces the amount of pathogens and sediment attached substances, such as phosphorus and potassium, which would otherwise be carried into downstream surface waters.

Another reason wetlands are important to me is because I enjoy watching wildlife! Wetlands provide ideal habitat for a wide variety of plants and animals. Studies have shown that throughout the United States, wetlands support about 190 species of amphibians, 5000 plant species, and 1/3 of all native bird species. Considering how few wetlands actually remain, that's a lot of wildlife.

Wetlands help our environment in other ways too. Wetlands reduce soil erosion along water courses by slowing down the overland flow of water. Also they help prevent floods or at least reduce the damage of flooding by reducing peak water flow after storms.

Are wetlands REALLY important? I sure think so!!



WETLANDS

Slough bill tax exemption reminder

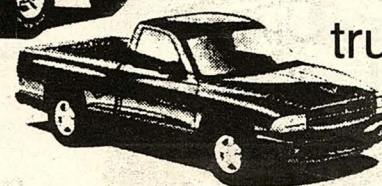
Landowners have until April 1 to submit their annual applications for the slough bill, a property tax exempt program for land designated as wildlife habitat. This is primarily for open prairies and wetlands which provide no economic return. Therefore cropping, haying or grazing is not allowed on land in the slough bill program. Make applications at the

local NRCS Service Center, NRCS field office, located south of West Union on Hwy 150.

Fayette SWCD commissioners will act on these requests and submit them to the Fayette County Assessor's office.

Woodland, if not being grazed, is eligible and can be signed up at the County assessor's office.

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Water control structures and ponds

by LaVonne Koch, NRCS-FO

The demands for water and wildlife use has increased tremendously in recent years and ponds or water control structures are one of the most reliable and economical sources of water. Ponds serve in a variety of ways, including water for livestock, fire protection, fish production, erosion control, and landscaping improvements. The main purpose is to control soil erosion and prevent gullies from forming.

These are two types of ponds or water control structures: an excavated or dug-out, and earthen dam. Excavated ponds are the simplest to build in relatively flat terrain. Because their capacity is obtained almost solely by excavation, their practical size is limited. They are best suited to locations where the demand for water is small.

Because excavated ponds can be built to expose a minimum water surface area in proportion to their volume, they are advantageous in places where evaporation losses are high and water is scarce. The most desirable site for an excavated pond are where fine-textured clay and silty clay extend well below the proposed pond depth. If an excavated pond is to be fed by surface runoff, enough impervious soil at the site is essential to avoid excess seepage losses. An embankment pond is made by building an embankment or dam across a stream or watercourse where the stream valley is depressed criteria and recommendations are for dams that are less than thirty five feet high and located where failure of the

structure will not result in loss of life, damage to homes, commercial buildings, highways or roads.

For economy, locate the pond where the largest storage volume can be obtained with the least amount of earth fill. A good site generally is one where a dam can be built across a narrow section of the valley, the side slopes are steep and the slope of the valley permits a large area to be flooded. Earthen ponds are designed for the watershed involved, the storage of rainfall, thirty five years of sediment and for the depth of water desired.

Selecting a suitable site for your pond is important, and preliminary studies are needed before final design and construction. Analysis and selection of pond sites should be based on landscape structure and associated ecological functions and values. Relationship of the site to other ecological features within the landscape is critical to achieving planned objectives. Avoid sites under powerlines or near underground pipelines.

By landscaping during construction, ponds can be one of the most attractive places for wildlife. Constructing islands have several advantages over other nest structures. They can be used by several pairs of nesting geese as well as nesting ducks. They made good loafing and feeding sites, provide habitat for other wildlife, require little maintenance and are long-lived if properly constructed.

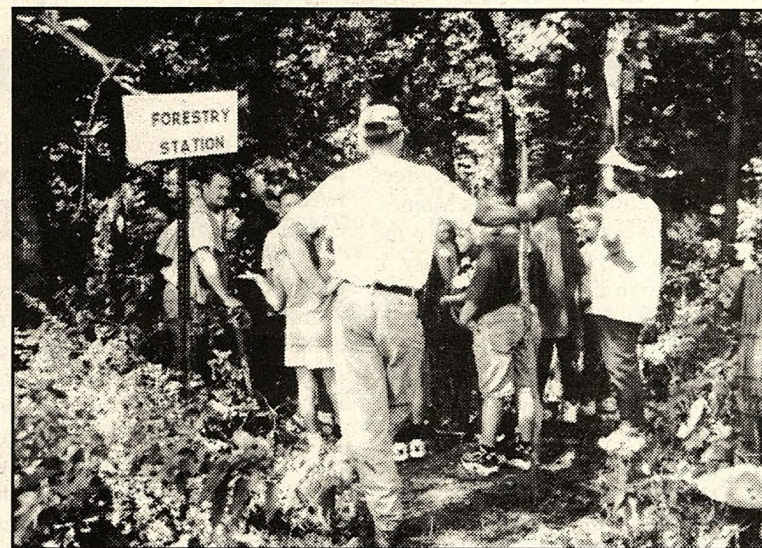
Larger islands are not recommended because they can harbor nest

predators year-round. Islands should be placed at least 50 feet from shore and be surrounded by water that is a minimum of two feet deep to make predator access difficult. The top of the island should be three feet higher than the anticipated high-water level or one to two feet above the emergency spillway level. Islands should be seeded with a temporary cover crop of rye or oats until dense permanent vegetation such as canary grass, or switchgrass can be established. Other ways to enhance wildlife and protect the ponds from soil erosion and chemical runoff is to plant trees, shrubs, grasses and forbs.

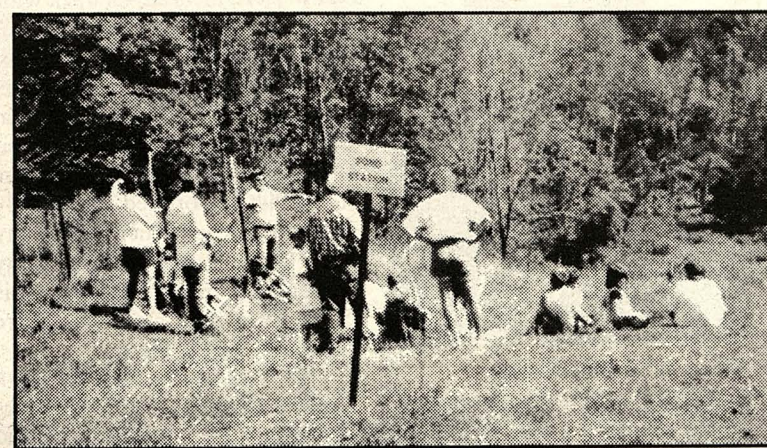
A pond, no matter how well planned and built, must be adequately maintained if its intended purposes are to be realized throughout its expected life. Lack of operation and maintenance has caused severe damage to many dams and spillways. Inspect your pond periodically. Be sure to examine the pond after heavy rains. And maintain the protective plant cover on the dam and on the emergency spillway.

Several producers in Fayette County have considered this practice on their farm and have seen good benefits of controlling soil erosion.

There are no guarantees that a pond will hold water or at a specific level, but taking careful measures in the initial process can help to minimize the risk involved. In order to assure you and help you with these measures, or possible assist you in cost-share, contact the Natural Resource Conservation Service for assistance.

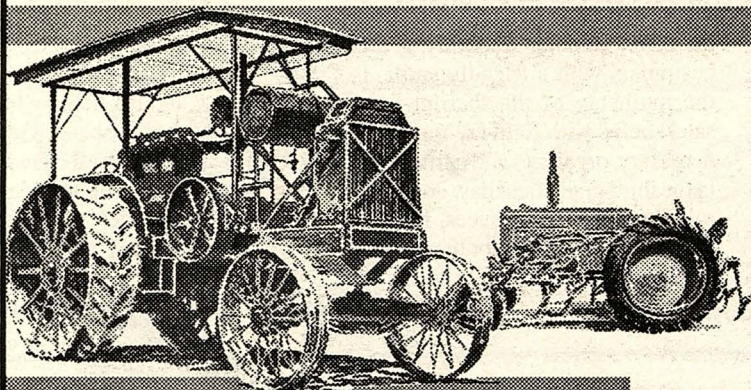


John Olds (of One Stop Forestry) is pictured under the forestry sign, at part of the third grade field day at the Richard & Dorothy Jensen farm, rural Elgin.



As part of the third grade field day, Tom Baker, at left (with hat & glasses), explains the pond station.

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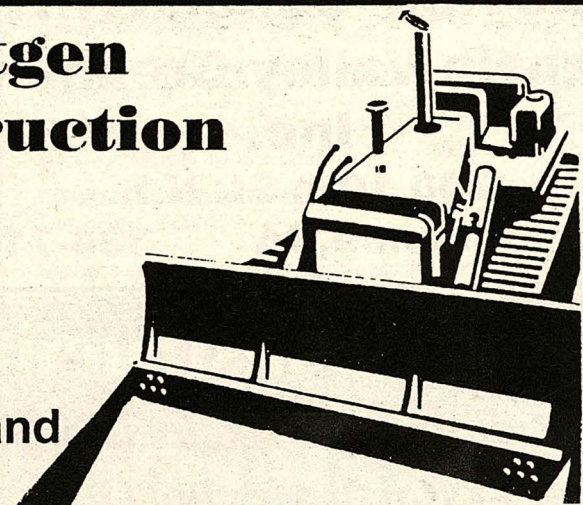
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Your natural resources glass - half full, or half empty?

By Leroy Brown, State Conservationist-USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service, Des Moines

As we approach not only the next decade, but a new century, it might serve all of us well to ask ourselves how well prepared we think we are to take care of ourselves and those who will follow us on this earth. In answering that question, we have to ask whether we are taking care of the soil that feeds us, the water we drink, bathe, swim and fish in, the air we breathe, the plants that



Leroy Brown

sustain and beautify our countryside, and the animals that also call our part of the world home.

From my vantage point, as a public servant working to help private landowners take care of natural resources, I see both a great deal of progress as well as significant challenges in resource conservation in Iowa. How do you see your part of the world--your county, or the state of Iowa? Do you see enough progress that you're optimistic about the job that's being done in resource conservation--that the glass is half full and rising? Or do you think there is so much to be done to care for our soil, water, air and wildlife that you think we're moving too slowly on resource conservation?

I'll point to some examples in Iowa that make me optimistic about our future, and proud of the progress

that's been made through the excellent partnership that now exists between Iowa's private landowners and conservation groups and agencies.

I believe our soil conservation glass is half full and rising because we have cut soil erosion by a third in the past 10 years. Our soil erosion rates on sloping Iowa cropland averaged more than 10 tons an acre a year as recently as 15 years ago. Now, our average soil loss is about 5 tons per acre. Much of the credit goes to Iowa farmers who have undertaken conservation tillage methods, terracing, planting of grasses and trees on the most sloping lands, contour farming and other measures. And most farmers are on track with the conservation plans they made as part of the 1990 and 1996 farm bills.

On the other hand, there was severe soil erosion in Iowa this year with heavy rains. And in many counties, the state and federal cost-share funds that are offered are quickly depleted because there are many more landowners wanting to apply conservation measures through this partnership than have cost-share funds available to them.

I'm also encouraged by Iowa farmers' willingness to install conservation buffers along streams and in crop fields. These buffers are strips of grass or trees that hold soil in place, filter runoff waters, and give new habitat to wildlife. About 10 percent of Iowa's farmers have installed a total of more than 100,000 acres of buffers as part of the Conservation Reserve Program's continuous sign-up in the past two years. That makes Iowa a national leader, as it is in many conservation categories. But there's much room for more buffers in the state. And there will be more. Farm organizations as well as conservation groups including Pheasants Forever and Trees Forever are promoting buffers in Iowa.

Just a few short years ago, I would have been very pessimistic about our wetlands resources in Iowa. When you think of wetlands,

you think of states like Louisiana, Florida, and Minnesota. But Iowa, known for its corn, soybeans and hogs, is also a national leader in restoration of wetlands. Through the USDA Wetlands Reserve Program (WRP) and other programs, NRCS has helped Iowa landowners restore about 50,000 acres of wetlands, and more are scheduled. Together, we've actually reversed the trend of draining or otherwise losing wetlands to one of bringing them back. Once again, though, there is a backlog of requests from Iowa landowners who would like to restore wetlands under USDA programs, but federal funding is limited so they are awaiting more funding. There's also been a considerable amount of progress in improving water quality, with landowners reducing the amount of nitrogen and other fertilizers they apply, and application of pesticides only in amounts and where they are needed. Livestock owners have worked at installing safe manure storage systems and nutrient management plans, too, but there's much more to be done in that area.

You know when you hear farmers concerned about wildlife ruining their crops that collectively, their efforts are providing the habitat wildlife needs to survive. But habitat and wildlife numbers can be strongly affected by weather, so that's something that always needs some attention.

Yet another area of conservation is what homeowners can do in their backyards for a better environment. Many homeowners are using the same techniques that farmers use, but on a smaller scale. The fertilizer and pesticide management, plants that provide habitat, water conservation methods, ground covers such as mulching, and other measures all make a difference in our overall well being. Many homeowners practice such conservation methods, but there are also many who could improve.

We're looked at in Iowa as national leaders in conservation. We

are fortunate to have so many landowners, organizations, and citizens interested in caring for our natural resources. It starts at the local level, where enthusiasm for conservation can make great things happen.

If you're interested in doing more conservation on your land, or in promoting local projects, contact your conservation district or local

USDA Service Center. Your federal, state, and local conservation agencies, starting with your conservation district, appreciate your interest and cooperation.

Whether you think the natural resources glass is half full or half empty in your area, you can help boost its level up a bit by doing your part.



Pictured with Employee of the Month Lori Kohlmeier, are: Jon Grafenberg, Representative Roger Thomas, Paul Nuss, Bill Bennett, Representative Steve Falck & Dick Jensen.

Employee of the month

Lori Kohlmeier, Fayette SWCD secretary, was named Iowa Department of Agriculture and Land Stewardship-Division of Soil Conservation Employee of the month for December. This honor is presented only to those employees who have performed far above what is required of them. Lori has met and exceeded this qualification. Lori is a highly motivated employee and has served the district for 13 years. She keeps the office running smoothly, greets customers with a friendly smile, is the mainstay of the district trees sales, helps with field lay-out when necessary, organizes and participates in the third grade field day, does payroll for district employees, handles the cost share money for the county/state projects and generally keeps the office in line.

Lori was recognized for this service at the December commissioner meeting, where David Strom of the Division of Soil Conservation presented her with a plaque. Attending the presentation were State Reps. Roger Thomas and Steve Falck. State Senators Kitty Rehberg and Lyle Zieman were unable to attend. The district commissioners want to publicly give their thanks to Lori and congratulate her for being such a pleasure to work with. We don't know what we would do without her smiling face and her helping hands.

Lori and her husband, George, live on a farm south of Hawkeye. They have two children: Heather who is in kindergarten at Durant Elementary in Sumner and Derek, 2 years old. Lori and George enjoy snowmobiling in their spare time.

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Fayette County Conservation partnerships prove dedication

By Jerry Muff
NRCS

I've been greatly impressed this past year with all of the groups and individuals who've contributed in one way or another in assisting us with our conservation efforts. 1998 has been the best year I've seen where the conservation partners have come together for a common cause.

The primary project I'm thinking of is one in which several organizations went together to fund the employment of an individual to work out of our SWCD/NRCS office to promote the conservation buffer strip initiative.

This is better known as the continuous CRP, administered by the USDA's FSA. The most recent listing shows Fayette County ranking seventh in the state of total acres enrolled in the continuous CRP with over 2,500.

The CRP contracts time frames

running from 10 to 15 years. Joe Wingert from Arlington has been working part-time since last June with our SWCD/NRCS staff, promoting this CRP program.

The continuous CRP includes such practices as vegetative filter strips along streams, rivers and wetlands; Riparian areas; contour filter strips; shelterbelts; and field windbreaks.

I believe this is one of the best soil conservation, wildlife habitat and water quality programs ever offered to landowners.

Within a few months, Joe will be working on his third allocation of funds, thanks to all the organizations who have made his employment possible.

Pheasants Forever, Department of Natural Resources, Iowa Department of Agriculture and Land Stewardship-Division of Soil Conservation and the Natural Resources Con-

servation Service played major roles by developing the program in which funds are offered on a local matching fund arrangement.

Local organizations also contributing were the Fayette County Supervisors, Fayette Soil and Water Conservation District and the Fayette County and Roadside Vegetative Manager have been helpful to CRP participants in the establishment of CRP cover.

Local organizations contributing as they did displays that they are not self-oriented, but rather team-oriented and therefore realize that much more can be accomplished in working towards a common goal.

I, as an employee of the NRCS, and Bill Bennett, chairman of the Fayette Soil and Water Conservation District, wish to express our gratitude to the members of the above named organizations and those representing them.

NRCS, SWCD, IDALS-DSC; Conservation agencies working together

You may see those acronyms and understandably be confused as to who they are or what they mean.

To clarify I would like to review the following agencies who are all located at the USDA service center under the title of the NRCS field office.

The NRCS (Natural Resources Conservation Service) is a federal agency that rents the office space and works with the public providing technical assistance.

The IDALS-DSC (Iowa Department of Agriculture and Land Stewardship-Division of Soil Conservation) through a memo of understand-

ing has staff working in and out of the office.

The third organization working out of the office with a memo of understanding is the SWCD (Soil and Water Conservation District). The leverage funding given was to help support employees of this agency.

While the NRCS and IDALS-DSC are federal and state employees, the district is locally elected commissioners who under Iowa law are to direct the services provided.

Commissioners are one of the few, if not the only elected officials that do not have taxing powers. They are not compensated for their time,

but are reimbursed for their out-of-pocket expenses. Commissioners decide, within the rules as set down by state and federal government, on how and where cost share money will be invested, what the annual plan of work will be and what direction conservation work will take in the county.

The DC (District Conservationist), an NRCS employee, is the manager of the office, making daily decisions on how the work load is handled.

Hopefully this can help clarify who we are and what we do.

State legislators meet with Fayette SWCD commissioners

State Representative Steve Falck and Roger Thomas met with Fayette SWCD commissioners at the December commissioners' meeting. While State Senators Kitty Rehberg and Lyle Zieman were invited to attend, their schedules did not permit this to happen. Commissioners gave Representatives Falck and Thomas an overview of the districts operations and what was felt were the needs of the conservation program in Fayette County and also the total needs in Iowa. Representatives Thomas and Falck asked many questions about how operations of the district were handled, so they would have a better understanding of how tax money is invested to protect the vital resources of the state.

They already understood that conservation practices helped slow water run off and prevent soil from filling streams, rivers and lakes and helped prevent flooding. They also knew that conservation practices help prevent soil from blowing and therefore, filling ditches and cause driving hazards.

The commissioners explained how they tried to invest every resource (staff and money) so that it would do the most good. It was brought out that without our natural resources of soil, water and air, we would not have need for anything else, because there would be no life on the planet. Fayette SWCD works

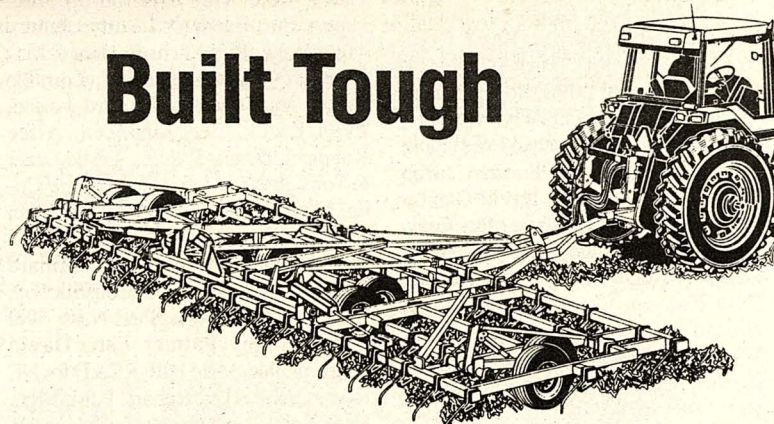
hard to get as much protection as possible on the ground. Every dollar invested in prevention saves several times as many dollars because it costs much more to cleanup what is not protected, this means savings for everyone.

Representatives Thomas and Falck asked if the commissioners knew why everyone did not practice soil and water conservation. The only reasons commissioners could think of were, that some land users did not know any better and some others were not concerned, because they do not think about what was being lost forever. These answers pointed out the great need for better education for everyone. No one ever tries to solve a problem that they do not know about.

Fayette SWCD commissioners invited both representative Thomas and Falck to meet again with them at the legislative luncheon Jan. 20 in Des Moines, cosponsored by CDI and the State Soil Conservation Committee and gives all state legislators an update on the conservation needs of Iowa.

Because of their busy schedules after something over two hours of discussions, representatives Falck and Thomas had to leave. However, they did stay and participate in the presentation to Lori Kohlmeyer of her plaque for being IDALS-DSC Employee of the Month.

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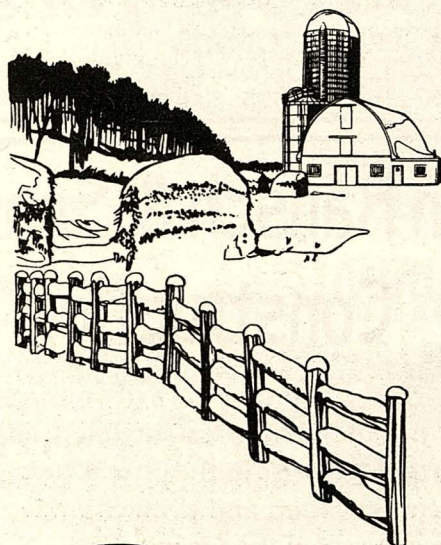
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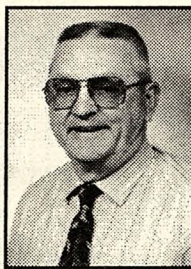
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Jim Arnold

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Donations given to SWCD supporter club

We would like to take this opportunity to thank the following, who so generously donated to the 1998 Soil & Water Conservation District supporter club. Thanks for all you do, we appreciate your support.

1998 Soil & Water Supporters - Ralph W. Adams, Lavern Alcorn, Major & Mrs. Richard Barnes, Mary Batterson, A.W. Bird, Clarence Bishop, Edna Blockhus, Ruth Brooks, Inez Brown, Ken Butters, Art Chapman, Curt Chensvold, Robert Cowles, Harold Dennler, Lawrence Downs, Patrick Duffy, Vincent Gaskill, Ralph Gilmer, B. Granneman, Galen Griffin, Willis Grundmeyer, Theodore Hageman, T.L. Hansen, Ray Hoeger, James Ingels, Lawrence Ishman, Norman Jones, Alfred Kamoss, Wm. Kauten, Diane & Edie Langerman, Louis Langreck, Herman Lenz, Bernice Lincoln, Kim Livingston, Dorothy Medberry, Kenneth Meyer, MHRM Inc., Marilyn Mihall, Miller Family Farm, Jason Moellers, Mark Moser, Robert & Gerry Musser, W. Harry Naffziger, Robert Numedahl, Don Oelrich, Joyce Oldfather, Herman Peterman, Donald Pliester, Harold Popenhagen, James Rasmussen, Rausch Family Inc., LaVerne & JoAnn Ries, Helen Roberts, Jon Saboe, Marvin Saboe, Iola Stannard, Russel Pagel, Richard Stubenrauch, Don & Mary Treloar, Varykino Inc., Roberta Warner, Vera Winter, and Bernice Walsh.

Soil & Water Saver - W.R. Adams, Donald Alcorn, Marjorie Allenstein, Jon Andersen, Arlington Co-Op, Dennis Athey, David Baier, Charles Baumler, Edna Beermann, Cleve Bennett, Clayton Bonjoir, Brad Brownell, Gary Brownell, Gary Burger, Veryl Burghardt, Rodney Burnett, Mabel Burrack, Busse Farm, Ronald Copp, Mrs. Park Cowles, J. Sidney Crowe, Al Davis, Roger Decker, Mildred Dietzenbach, Arlys Doscher, Merlin Dunt, Don Durscher, Bruce Fink, Eugene Franzen, Mike Franzen, Jacob & Beverly Friederich, David Gamm, Brad Geerdes, Larry Glass, Mary Gray, Ken Grimes, Gerald Guenther, Helen Halstead, Roger & Connie Halverson, Ruth Hansen, Carrie & Jon Hauer, Harold Heins, Richard Henn, Paul Hoeger, Bill Hogan, Warren Iliff, Marvin Ingels, Glenn Janssen, Melvin Janssen, Balz & Shirley Kamm Jr., Elsie Kittleson, Samuel Koehler, Minnie Kuehner, Raymond Kueker, Daryl Kuhens, Monty Kuhn, L&H Ranch, Keith Lansing, Jean Leech, Edith Mann, Dwight & Kathy Mauer, W.D. McCully, John McEnaney, Berniece Metcalf, Rodney Morse, Donald Mueller PhD, Gerald Muff, Gordon & Sandra Murray-John, Merrill Nerem, Stanley Ney, Cecil

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Ralph Houg gives his land to the Fayette SWCD

Several years ago Ralph Houg came to the Fayette Soil and Water Conservation District commissioners and asked if they would be willing to accept a bequeath of his land when he passed away. After checking with the State Attorney General, the commissioners agreed to accept this generous gift.

Ralph asked the district to use his land to help teach people to respect our natural resources and to use them wisely, so that future generations will be able to continue to enjoy the bounties of the land.

Ralph knew, that without the wise use and respect for the land, water and air, people will not be able to survive. He gave the commission-

ers a tour of the property and told them how he had worked with nature to grow things and how it bothered him the way some people abused the resources. He also told them how much he enjoyed walking in the evenings and communing with nature.

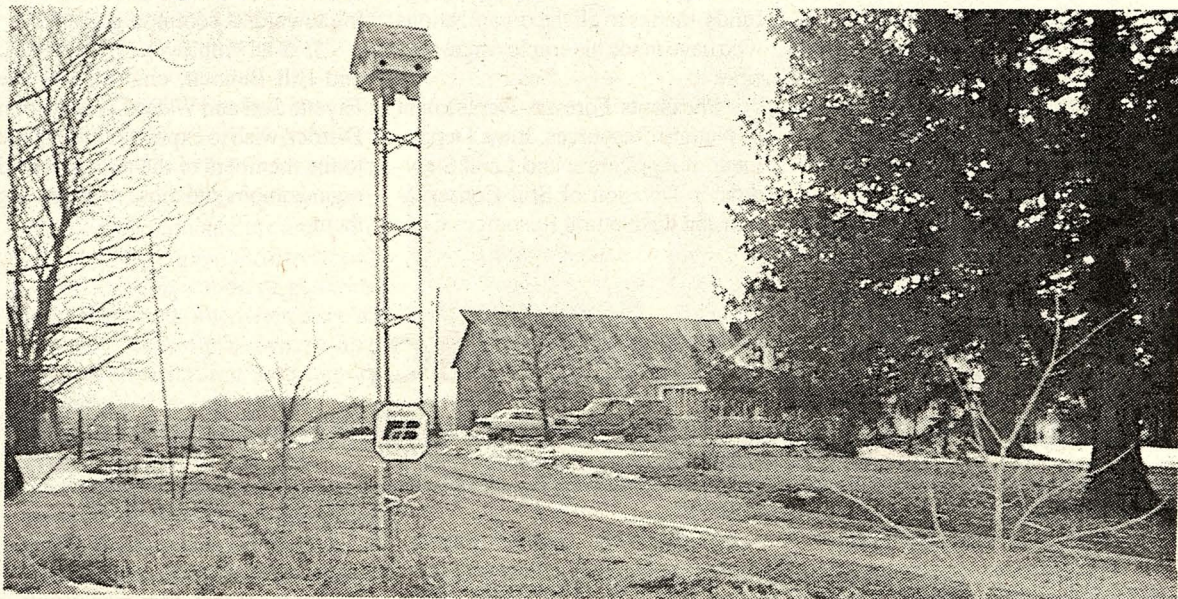
Of the five commissioners who were on the board at that time, Bill Bennett and Dick Jensen are still serving as this gift is passed to the district. The present commissioners are working together to develop a plan that will follow Ralph's wishes. They plan to move the field day for third graders to the Houg property, when they get everything in order.

Plans are in the works to have

similar events of middle school and high school students. It is the commissioners' hope, that is the not too distant future, adult programs will also be presented there. Commissioners are at the present time attempting to restore and enhance the wetlands on the property.

Ralph told the district he did not wish to see a park on the site. He wanted it to be a place where people could learn about good forestry, water quality and respect for nature.

The commissioners would welcome constructive advice on what might be done to fulfill Ralph's wishes. It would be best if you contacted one of the commissioners with your ideas and suggestions.



Part of the late Ralph Houg farmstead as it appears from Hazel Road.

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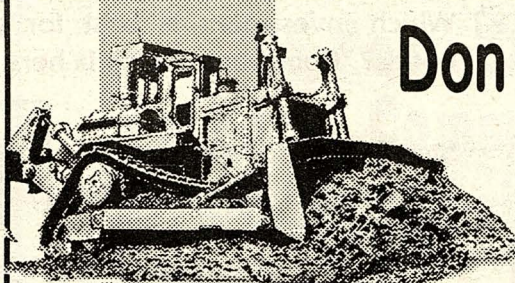
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Banner year for wildlife habitat

By Rod Marlatt, Director

Fayette County Conservation Board

The Fayette County Conservation Board along with the support of Fayette County Pheasants Forever had a record year for wildlife habitat.

This year's program was huge as most work was done to assist landowners in implementing their CRP plantings. These plantings were done in conjunction with NCRS designs as varied from Riparian strips, filter strips, nesting cover, switch grass and mixed natives.

When the total numbers were calculated, even we were astonished at what was done, especially given the wet conditions that had to be contended with during the planting season.

Wildlife habitat and reforestation plantings were completed on 31 sites encompassing 52 acres in Fayette County. These plantings utilized 11,650 trees, 7,600 shrubs and 203 transplants.

Four wetland developments or restorations were done encompassing four sites and 10 acres. The main accomplishment here was the establishment of two wetlands on the Thelman Wildlife Area.

This has been a long term project and was finally completed with the financial support of the United States Fish and Wildlife Service.

Thirteen wildlife food plots were established and encompassed 29.5

acres around the country. Thirty-three native grass plantings, mostly CRP on private land, were completed on 40.9 acres. Fourteen management burns were conducted on 49 acres to improve those existing habitat acres.

In the end 103 projects were completed, covering 577.6 acres across Fayette County.

As a result, the Fayette County Conservation Board was awarded first place in the state of Iowa for Wildlife Habitat Improvement by the Izaak Walton League of America. This award has been won by the Fayette County Conservation Board six years in a row.

None of this would ever have happened without the financial support of the Fayette County Pheasants Forever. Our Wildlife Habitat Program is merged with Pheasants Forever for this purpose and has worked extremely well.

The Pheasants Forever Chapter raises and provided the financial support for the program while the Conservation Board provides the labor and machinery to implement the project. Our hats go off to this group, as none of this would happen without them. If habitat is important to you, please lend your support to Fayette County Pheasants Forever.

The habitat calendar for 1999 is already full for projects and should again be a banner year for wildlife

habitat. For more information on how we can help you with your CRP, windbreak, food plot or any other wildlife project, contact us at (319) 422-5146 or (319) 425-3613.



Fedeler receives SWCD scholarship

The 1998 scholarship contest, sponsored by the district and the Iowa Association of Soil and Water Conservation District Commissioners, had approximately 20 entrants.

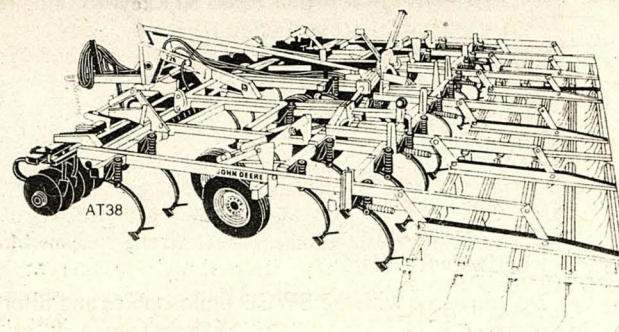
Pamela Fedeler of Arlington was the recipient of the \$100 scholarship. She is the daughter of Mark and Sheryl Fedeler. Pamela is attending Winona State University to pursue a career as a Veterinary Technician.



Pamela Fedeler

Applicants were evaluated on the basis of scholastic performance, service, character, leadership, and financial need. The commissioners appreciate the interest shown by all the applicants.

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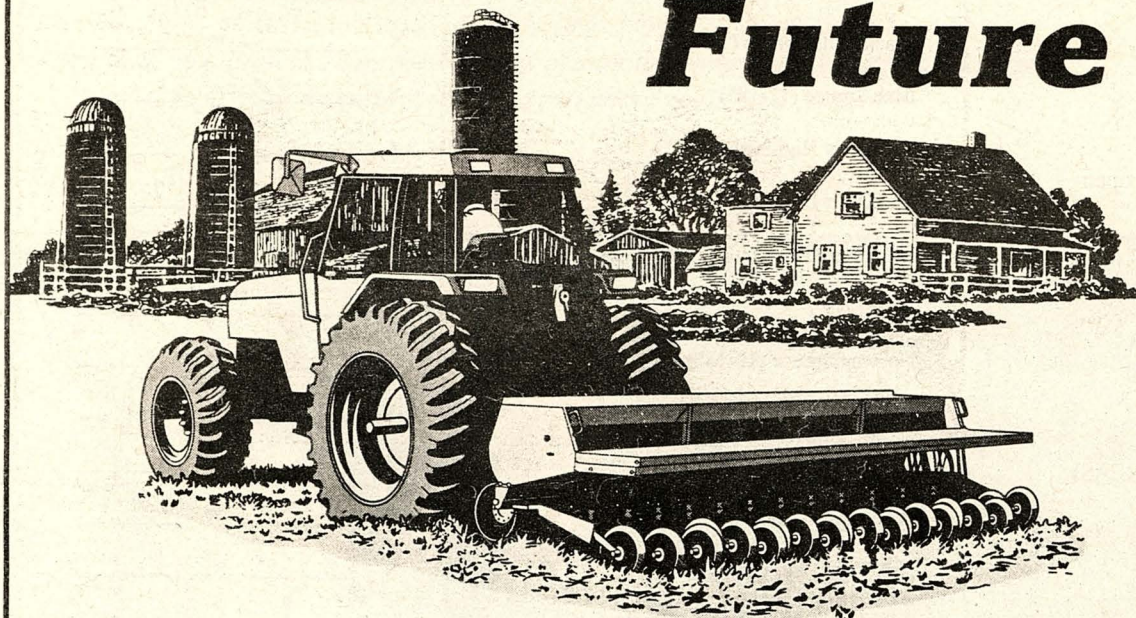
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Iowa wildflowers invite bees, songbirds, and butterflies to our gardens and make excellent garden and landscaping plants. By planting native plants, you can help preserve unique species, create wildlife habitat, and enjoy a self-sufficient garden.

A habitat can be as small or as large as your area and imagination allows. Start by using native plants in existing beds, borders, ditches, or create a small "prairie plot" of Iowa wildflowers and grasses in your yard.

Each garden package contains 15 - 2-1/2" potted plants. Orders will be accepted until April 1, 1999 and plants will be available for pickup at our office in early-June. We will notify you later of the exact pickup date.

The garden packages have been put together for sunny sites with average soil moisture. *Heights listed are for mature plants.

Butterfly/Hummingbird Garden \$30 each

3 Columbine	2' tall*	Scarlet/yellow color in spring
3 Butterfly Milkweed	2' tall*	Orange color in early summer
2 Wild Bergamot	4' tall*	Lavendar color in summer
2 Stiff Goldenrod	4' tall*	Golden color in fall
3 Black-eyed Susan	3' tall*	Yellow color in summer
2 Smooth Blue Aster	2' tall*	Blue color in fall

Iowa Prairie Garden \$30 each

3 Yellow Coneflower	4' tall*	Yellow color in summer
2 Pale Purple Coneflower	3' tall*	Lavendar color in summer
3 Purple Prairie Clover	2' tall*	Purple color in early summer
3 Ohio Spiderwort	2' tall*	Purple color in late spring
2 Wild White Indigo	2' tall*	White color in early summer
2 Sky Blue Aster	3' tall*	Blue color in fall

Please rank the following items on order of importance; with 1 being the MOST important and 10 being the LEAST important.

What is our most critical soil and water related problem?

Survey, cont.

- ☐ ANIMAL WASTE RUNOFF
- ☐ SOIL EROSION IN PRAIRIE AREAS
- ☐ SOIL EROSION IN HILL AREAS
- ☐ AG RUNOFF OF NUTRIENTS AND PESTICIDES
- ☐ SILTATION OF RIVERS AND STREAMS
- ☐ SILTATION OF ROAD DITCHES
- ☐ LOSS OF WETLANDS
- ☐ ROTATIONAL GRAZING
- ☐ URBAN RUNOFF
- ☐ SINK HOLES
- ☐ STREAM BANK PROTECTION
- ☐ FORESTRY
- ☐ WATER QUALITY
- ☐ URBAN RUNOFF

Do you agree with the SWCD philosophies and priorities in the opening statement?

- ☐ 1) Do not agree
- ☐ 2) Somewhat agree
- ☐ 3) Agree with most of statement
- ☐ 4) District is right on track

Please rank practices according to importance and effectiveness, 1-10.

- ☐ TERRACES
- ☐ WATERWAYS
- ☐ RESIDUE MANAGEMENT
- ☐ CONTOUR STRIPS INCLUDING BUFFERS
- ☐ FILTER STRIPS (ALONG STREAMS, RIVERS, WETLAND AREAS)
- ☐ CONTOUR FARMING
- ☐ PONDS DEEP AND SHALLOW
- ☐ GRADE STABILIZATION STRUCTURES
- ☐ AGRICULTURAL WASTE STORAGE STRUCTURES
- ☐ INTEGRATED CROP MANAGEMENT
- ☐ INTENSIVE ROTATIONAL GRAZING
- ☐ FORESTRY

Please rank the following on order 1 being the best approach 10 being the worst approach.

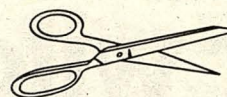
- ☐ TARGET SPECIFIC WATERSHEDS TO CONCENTRATE INCENTIVE DOLLARS AND PERSONNEL
- ☐ MANDATE A LEVEL OF CONSERVATION TO BE APPLIED ON ALL AG LAND

- ☐ OFFER ENOUGH FINANCIAL INCENTIVES TO GET ADEQUATE PARTICIPATION

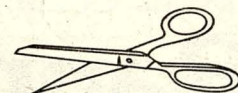
- ☐ DO A BETTER JOB OF EDUCATION AND INFORMATION

- ☐ CONTINUE AS USUAL, UTILIZING ALL AVAILABLE PROGRAMS AS EFFICIENTLY AS POSSIBLE

If you would like to express additional comments on any of the above information we would welcome your input. Thank-you!



Clip & Return



Item	Number to Order	Total
Butterfly/Hummingbird Garden	@ \$30 each x _____	= \$ _____
Iowa Prairie Garden	@ \$30 each x _____	= \$ _____
Total of Above Columns		\$ _____
Add 6% Tax		\$ _____
Total Amount Due		\$ _____

Please make checks payable to Fayette SWCD and return with your order to Fayette SWCD, 120 N Industrial Pkwy #2, West Union, IA 52175-1612. Should you have any questions, please feel free to contact us at (319) 422-3868 Ext. 3.

Name: _____
 Address: _____
 City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____
 Phone: _____

FAYETTE SWCD TREE ORDER FORM

NAME: _____
 ADDRESS: _____
 CITY: _____ STATE _____ ZIP _____
 PHONE: _____

Trees are hardy, bare root seedlings with healthy root systems from Cascade Forestry Service, Inc. Trees are sold only by the bundle (25 trees), except for the nut, shade, evergreen packages, and individual trees. These three packages and individual trees are sold as specified as below. There is no guarantee on stock sold at these prices.

The sale is open to anyone. There are no guidelines as to who can purchase the trees and where the trees are to be planted. All orders must be received in our office by March 4, 1999. We will notify you in mid-April when your order can be picked up. Supplies are limited so order early.

PLEASE NOTE: Check must accompany your order, payable to Fayette SWCD.

Species	Price Per Bundle	Number of Bundles	Total Cost
American Arborvitae (12-18")	\$35.00	x _____	= _____
American Arborvitae (18-24")	\$45.00	x _____	= _____
Black Hills Spruce (12-18")	\$35.00	x _____	= _____
Blue Spruce (12-18")	\$35.00	x _____	= _____
Cranberry Highbush (5-12")	\$35.00	x _____	= _____
Red Osier Dogwood (18-24")	\$35.00	x _____	= _____
Honeysuckle (Arnold's Red 18-24")	\$35.00	x _____	= _____
Lilac (2-3')	\$35.00	x _____	= _____
Norway Spruce (12-18")	\$35.00	x _____	= _____
Red Oak (2-3')	\$35.00	x _____	= _____
Scotch Pine (12-18")	\$35.00	x _____	= _____
White Pine (12-18")	\$35.00	x _____	= _____
Nut Tree Pkg. Includes: 3 Butternut 18-24"; 3 Hazelnut 12-18" 3 Walnut 2-3'; 3 Northern Pecan 6-12" 3 American Chestnut 18-24"	\$40.00	x _____	= _____
Evergreen Pkg. Includes: 4 White Pine 18-24"; 4 Blue Spruce 18-24"; 4 Norway Spruce 18-24"	\$40.00	x _____	= _____
Shade Tree Pkg. Includes: 3 Green Ash 2-3'; 3 Sugar Maple 2-3'; 3 Red Oak 2-3'; 3 Bur Oak 2-3'; 3 Swamp White Oak 2-3'	\$40.00	x _____	= _____

Individual Trees	Price Per Tree	Number of Trees	Total Cost
American Arborvitae (18-36")	\$ 6.00	x _____	= _____
Blue Spruce (18-36")	\$ 6.00	x _____	= _____
Norway Spruce (18-36")	\$ 6.00	x _____	= _____
White Pine (18-36")	\$ 6.00	x _____	= _____

Total of Above _____
 Add 6% Sales Tax _____
 Total Payment Due _____