



Box 190

1965 REPORT OF THE MILLS COUNTY

Soil & Water Conservation District

MALVERN, IOWA

Phone 624-8364

foreword.....

Once again it is a pleasure to present our report of accomplishments for the Mills County Soil Conservation District. We are especially proud of the fact that 1965 will mark the 25th anniversary of your District. Even though this report is intended to reflect the progress for 1965, we thought it best to point out the 25th year of service before it passes.

Many interesting events have happened during the past twenty-five years to influence the soil conservation program in the District and we thought it would be interesting to include some of them as a part of this report.

We have also mentioned the "Progressive Farmers of Mills County" and as a good example, you will notice in the list of accomplishments that 632,885 feet of terraces were built in 1965. Records show that a little over 40% of these terraces were of the new cut-and-fill or bench type terraces. This

is an excellent example of progress considering the short period of time they have been in use.

You will also notice that tree planting was added to our list of accomplishments. The eighteen acres planted in 1965, more than doubled the amounts planted in the District during previous years. Much of the credit is given to Ben Howles, the new District Forester with the State Conservation Commission.

Pony Creek Watershed progress is still being made at a satisfactory rate. To date, fourteen structures have been completed and two from the 1965 contract remain to be completed in the spring of 1966. It is planned that all of the remaining open structures, including three road structures, be completed in 1966. This will leave the large 85 acre lake, a small road structure and drainage ditch to complete the project. The tentative date for completion was originally set for 1970 but it looks at the present time like it will be either 1967 or 1968.

Galen Bales winner of the First Plow Terrace contest is shown in the process of building the winning terrace. Hastings, Iowa, 1942

AGRICULTURAL STEPS taken by MILLS COUNTY

Twenty-five years ago, the farmers of Mills County took a giant step forward in agriculture by forming the Mills County Soil Conservation District. During this time, numerous men and women have given many hours of their time in formulating and carrying out one of the most successful agricultural programs in the nation. Some are gone now but others carry on with their strong belief that the progress of any community or nation is based upon wise use of our soil and water. To these people we dedicate this report.

In looking back over the twenty-five years since the District was organized, it is amazing the foresight these people had in formulating a sound conservation program. Amazing because most of the basic ideas of erosion and gully control, education, wildlife conservation and economics remain the same today. Only the methods for doing it have changed.

Who were the people that drafted the first District program? The minutes of the second official Commissioners meeting, held on July 17, 1941, lists the following people: (We are sure that many more, not listed, were instrumental in building the foundation for the District program.)

D. N. McGrew, J. F. Wearin, Jr., and J. M. Steele, the first elected District commissioners; Miss Amy Hammers, County Superintendent of Schools; Mrs. S. C. Lincoln, Home Project Chairman; Ira L. Turner, Farm Bureau President; J. F. Wearin, Sr., AAA County Chairman; Mr. Veragie, Vice President, Omaha Production Credit Association; E. A. Zack, Area Conservation; SCS, Wm. Speer, Area Soil Conservationist; SCS, Carl Zimmerman, SCS Conservationist; Walter Harrison, Verna Wyant, Allen Workman, Henry Buck, F. F. Bullington, R. F. Varner, S. C. Lincoln, Sr. and John Longstreet, County Agricultural Agent.

Out of this program came many interesting events during the past 25 years. The following are just a few that we thought most interesting:

1941—Records show that 192 farmers voted on the proposed Soil Conservation District; 172 in favor and 20 opposed.

D. N. McGrew, J. F. Wearin, Jr., Jack Steele were elected as the first commissioners.

1942—First cooperative agreements approved by (1) A. Burgen, (2) Joe Wriedt, (3) and J. F. Wearin, Sr., (4) Myron Jones, (5) George Phelps and Lucille Phelps Jones.

The first annual plow terrace building contest was held.

Emphasis was placed on contouring and terracing to help farmers increase production for war time. Results of efforts were 2032 acres of contouring and 30,000 ft. of terraces.

1943—More and more farmers are coming to us with

their problems asking us for advice and assistance, realizing apparently that we have a program which is for their benefit.

Emphasis was placed on training farmers in laying out contour lines. Eighty-two were sufficiently trained and presented diplomas. Test plots were established for crested wheat grass, bromegrass, Canadian wild rye and orchard grass.

Interest in waterways increased greatly due to the "Mills County Method of Waterway Construction" which was developed by R. W. Jones, SCS Technician.

1944—1950 attended the third SW Iowa Plow Terrace Building Contest on the C. W. Kuylen farm. Millboard plows and disc tillers are the accepted method of terrace construction.

1945—John Deere published and distributed, throughout the nation, a leaflet showing the "Mills County Method of Terrace Construction." Mills County was one of the five winners in the Omaha World-Herald Contest.

One thousand fifteen of the 1500 Mills County farms completed some type of conservation practice during the year.

1946—Mills County was host to the National Plow Terrace Building Contest.

The Malvern Leader, Farm Bureau and Soil Conservation District cooperated in sponsoring the Mills County Farm Institute.

1947—A year of disastrous floods during the month of June, followed by prolonged drought.

An estimated 52,472 ac. of crops were destroyed by erosion and flooding in Mills County.

The Malvern Trust and Savings Bank published the booklet, "It's Time to Open a Soil Savings Account."

During the year we have enjoyed wonderful cooperation with Amy Hammers, the County Superintendent of Schools, and again wish to thank her for her very excellent program of conservation being taught in the rural schools.

1948—The 1,000th mile of terrace here built in Mills County. D. N. McGrew accompanied the rural school teachers to the Soil Conservation Experimental Farm near Clarinda and was much impressed with their intelligent interest in what was shown them.

1949—On Sept. 16, 1949, Operation Conservation took place at the Euel Anderson farm. When the job was finished, there were six and one half miles of terraces, 4,000 ft. of contouring and 100 acres seeded to bromegrass, alfalfa, and 478 rods of contour fences. An air tour of the county was sponsored by the Mills County Area Club and the District with 61 passengers taking the tour. The Male Creek Watershed Association was formed on Oct. 13, 1949. The 33rd General Assembly of the State of Iowa made state funds available to Mills County for the first time.

1950—Emphasis was placed on good land use. Warren Gregory, one of the first cooperators to adopt and apply a complete conservation program, reported an average corn yield of 117.3 bu. per acre for his entire acreage of good land use.

Everett T. Winter, Vice President, Mississippi Valley Association was quoted: "It would take an enormous factory located in Mills County to create in one year, purchasing power of the people living within Mills County equal to that which the program of the Mills County Soil Conservation District has already created."

1951—The Emerson State Bank cosponsored a field day "Farm for Profit" on the Fredrick Larson farm. 60% of the farms in the county continue to have soil erosion less than 20 to 25 tons per acre or more.

1952—April of this year brought one of the most disastrous floods in 74 years to the Missouri River bottom.

Pony Creek Watershed Directors attending the ground breaking ceremony. 1963. Left: Carl Green, Albert Spelman, Carl Lincoln, Dennis Downing and Donald Delamatt.

tons. The crest of flood occurred on April 19th, at which time the flood stage was 3 to 4 feet higher than it had been in the past 50 years of records. One hundred farms made application through the P.M.A. Land Restoration Program for assistance in repairing flood damage. Total cost of restoration was \$242,618.

The District adopted a new policy of progressive planning whereby the farmer became a cooperator immediately upon application for District assistance.

1953—U. S. Congress approved the Male Creek Watershed as one of the 30 pilot watersheds in the nation.

Work on the Male Creek Pilot Watershed was started April 7th. The 3,000th mile of terraces in Mills County was constructed on the Marjorie Ryan farm, managed by Ber Ruggan.

Mills County District was selected as a repeat winner in the World/Soil Soil Conservation Recognition contest.

1955—Severe drought conditions cut corn yields for the county to about 20 bu. per acre.

Mills County saw its first irrigation of crops. The Soil Conservation District was recognized by the State Soil Conservation Office as being one of the leading Districts in Iowa for terrace construction and first in acres of grassed waterways.

A full length movie, "With Our Own Hands," was made in the Male Creek Watershed by the Allis-Chalmers Company.

1956—Dale Harper, Implement Dealer at Glenwood was awarded a certificate for the year in Soil and Water Conservation.

The district control structures in Male Creek were completed in September.

1957—Barney Myers and Carolyn Dasher represented the Mills District in the "Queen of the Furrow" contest. Miss Dasher also won the regional contest.

Dallas McGrew was elected as the "Outstanding Soil Conservationist" in the state of Iowa for 1957.

Pony Creek Watershed began to organize.

1958—Three hundred nineteen miles of terraces were completed during the year.

1959—Several farmers from Pony Creek, along with Dale Lincoln went to Des Moines to present their case for a watershed unit.

1960—In September, the District cosponsored a cut and

fill terrace demonstration on the Euel Anderson farm.

1961—Pony Creek Watershed was approved for construction.

Senator Bourke Hickenlooper and Congressman Ben Jensen spoke at the commissioners banquet.

1962—Waubesa Creek Watershed application was approved by the State Soil Conservation Committee.

1963—Construction began in the Pony Creek Watershed.

District Commissioner J. F. Wearin, Jr. presented the District Program and Work Plan to reflect up-to-date policies and ideals.

1964—Duster Self was named the Outstanding Soil Conservation District Cooperator representing the District at the National Soil Conservation Conference.

A seed increase plot of Emerald Cornbelt was established in the Myron Jones farm.

The District cosponsored the regional Queen of Conservation Contest.

This brings us up to the past year 1965. During the year the District continued to have successful conservation programs on every farm through field application and Conservation of Farm Plans. Heavy rains through a major problem in Mills County. It is estimated that many untreated fields lost from 30 to 40 tons of soil per acre.

The District also distributed Soil Conservation Water materials to many of the county churches.

The commissioners paid their dues to the State and National Association of Soil and Water Conservation Districts.

Sponsored a soil survey exhibit at the County Fair.

Harvey Bode was named as the outstanding Soil Conservation Operator in the Des Moines Regional and Tribune Contest.

Dale Lincoln was selected to a 1 year term as commissioner representing Pony Creek Watershed. The award was awarded to the Chase and Palmer Co. of Cambridge.

Carolyn Hilton and Sherry Hunter represented the District in the regional Queen of Conservation contest.

Preliminary investigation for cost benefits were made in the Waubesa Creek watershed.

Mrs. Dale King was elected as the representative by the District to attend the Fall Conservation Workshop Conference for Teachers held at the 441 camp at the Iowa State Fair.

A change in office personnel was made when Lawrence Jones retired from his position as Farm Planner.

Aid and was replaced by Jerry Stevens.

The District Commissioners wish to take this opportunity to thank the many people and organizations that have helped us in carrying out another year of successful conservation. Sincere thanks go to the U. S. Soil Conservation Service, Mills County Agricultural Station and Conservation Service, the Mills County Extension Service, Farm Home Administration, Pony Creek watershed board and drainage district, Waubesa Creek watershed board, Mills County Nursery and Garden, State Conservation Supervisors, Glenwood Official Tribune, Malvern Leader, Male Creek board of trustees, the Vocational Agricultural Department, State Conservation Commission, and many others too numerous to mention.

FINANCIAL REPORT

1944-1945 STATE BUDGET

1-M Fund	Commissioners' expenses	\$ 137.77
Office Supplies		18.47
Travel		84.50
Materials for demonstration		38.32
Office Expense		64.90
2-M Fund	Technical Assistance	\$2347.72
	Time Certificate (Missela Harkness)	2852.00
	State Retirement	12.00
	Federal Retirement	188.49
Total Disbursed	REVOLVING FUND	\$5995.75
Balance on hand Jan. 1, 1965 (Malvern Bank)		\$ 787.35
Time Certificate (Missela Harkness)		2852.00
Time Certificate (Malvern Bank)		400.00
Pony Creek Watershed		71.00
Reimbursements 1-M fund		69.85
Interest on Time Certificates		32.00

Total Cash on hand and receipts

DISBURSEMENTS

Office supplies, postage, equipment

Dues, subscriptions, donations

Field supplies and equipment

Printing, bulletins, booklets

Pony Creek Watershed permits & easements

Tuition for Teacher to Conservation Camp

Total disbursements

Total (Missela Harkness)

Time Certificates (Missela Harkness)

Balance cash on hands Jan. 1, 1966

Total

Beginning of construction of the Conaway Structure in the Male Creek Watershed 1955-56.

ACCOMPLISHMENTS

During the past several years, most of our soil conservation practices have been applied to the land with the assistance of government cost sharing. Due to this fact, many farmers have been led to believe that help from the Mills County Soil and Water Conservation District or the U. S. Soil Conservation Service is not available unless there is cost sharing on the project.

We the Mills County District Commissioners wish to make it clear that the services of the District and the Soil Conservation Service are available to any and all who request them.

To also wish to take this opportunity to commend the farmers of Mills County on their fine record of soil conservation application since the District was organized. Twenty-five years ago. The following is a list of the most important accomplishments applied during 1965 and total to date. However, we are quick to point out that there are other practices, such as contouring, crop residue use, con-

servation cropping systems, rotation meadows, pasture planting and restoration, wildlife habitat development, plus many others have also played an important part in good conservation land use.

ACCOMPLISHMENTS

	Unit	1965	To Date
New Cooperators	No.	58	1002
Revised Farm Plans	No.	7	489
Planned Cooperators	No.	1	1
Grassed Waterways	Ac.	128	2740.1
Drainage Ditch	Ac.	207.25	8015.43
Tile	Ac.	1325.50	6353.50
Structure	Pt.	4043	23622.0
Terraces	Pt.	6528.95	17030.39
Tree Planting	Ac.	18	33
Tall Timber, Rabbits, Control	Ac.	10	10
Services Provided on Conservation	No.	102	102
Planned Cooperators	No.	1	1
Land Owners & Operators apply-	No.	108	108
ing one or more practices.....	No.	102	102

PERSONNEL

District Commissioners for the last twenty-five years
