

DAVIS COUNTY SOIL CONSERVATION DISTRICT

1945 REPORT

In the first year of operation the Davis County Soils District can look back and see that some definite progress has been made through the last twelve months.

Although great strides have been made in Soil Conservation field the last ten years farm leaders realized the need for accepting technical assistance available through Soil Conservation Service. Through the combined effort of AAA, Farm Security and Farm Bureau, petitions were circulated among farm owners in the interest of establishing a district. Upon the completion of this, the State Soil Conservation committee saw fit to grant us permission for holding referendum and election for commissioners which was held September 9, 1944. A great deal of interest was shown when 398 farm owners cast their ballots in 8 voting establishments over the County.

With the referendum completed and interest at a high level, educational meetings were carried on through the leadership of Extension Service. Commissioners made application to State Office for technical help and the County was on its way in an organized way to combat soil depletion. With the help of the District Office, a working plan for the year's operation was worked out. On February 15th, a County-wide meeting was held with representatives from the various townships to review the proposed plan. The plan was discussed and agreed upon by the group in outlining a policy to follow.

Leland A. McCord, Farm Planner, reported for duty April 1, 1945. Although groups were not established at this time there were many applications made for assistance in laying out terraces, contouring, drainage and other related work.

An extremely backward Spring with excessive rainfall made it impossible to carry out all Soil Conservation practices, however, interest was present that afforded a foothold in establishing our program. Several demonstrations were held in between the rains. During the summer and fall, 13 farm groups representing 120 farms made application to the Commissioners for assistance. To date, 3 of these groups have been zaped and a part of their meetings completed.

During the year, farm operators from Soap Creek area petitioned the County Board Supervisors in organizing a drainage district. In turn, a request with the approval of the Board was made to the District Commissioners for help in working out a preliminary survey. After meeting with a group of representatives from the Soap Creek area, the commissioners approved the request and made application to the Regional Office for Engineering assistance. A favorable reply was received and it is hoped that project will get under way by Spring, 1946.

In furthering the Soil Conservation program, an attempt was made to find a new and ample source of Agricultural Limestone. After a thorough survey of the county, a sight was located and leased by the District Commissioners. The County Engineer cooperated in getting a preliminary test and various operators were contacted relative to producing limestone for County use. The Kaser Construction Company of Adel, Iowa was selected and a preliminary agreement was intered into. The Company is now in process of completing a core drilling and early reports are most favorable.

Brone grass was secured through Soil Conservation Nursery and put out to a cooperator on the basis of a percent of the seed coming back to the district for further production.

Application has been made through the Surplus Commodity for heavy machinery. Various methods have been considered for dirt moving and pond making program. Operators are now being contacted and it is hoped that a suitable agreement can be completed at an early date.

The State Conservation Committee has applied to the District for assistance in working out a plan to prevent silting into Lake Wapello. The erosion problem has become a genuine menace and unless some preventive steps can be taken the usefulness of the Lake will be greatly impaired. Although we have not been able to make a survey of the existing conditions we plan to offer all available assistance that it is possible for us to give.

All in all, the first year of the Davis County Soil Conservation District has been a busy one since our inception we have had 15 committee meetings which have been attended faithfully by the Commissioners, representatives of Extension, AAA and FSA. We want to commend the work of our Soil Planner, Leland McCord and his associate, Vance McCracken. We are also gratefully to Parks Forrester for his assistance and cooperation in establishing our program.

During the year which has just passed we have assisted in contouring 656 acres of farm land, building terraces on 57 acres and the construction of 9250 feet of diversion ditches. Ten farm plans have been completed this winter. Twenty news articles have appeared in our local papers. For the coming year, a full program has been planned. We have a goal of completing 50 farm plans, getting our quarry into production, completion of the survey on Soap Creek drainage district, assistance on Lake Wapello project and working out a suitable contract on dirt moving and pond making.

P. W. Spilman
P. W. Spilman, Chairman

Dale Blackwell
Dale Blackwell, Secretary
Fred Melvin
Fred Melvin, Commissioner