

MILLS COUNTY SOIL AND WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT

FISCAL YEAR '77

ANNUAL REPORT

I GIVE MY
PLEDGE AS AN AMERICAN
TO SAVE AND FAITHFULLY TO
DEFEND FROM WASTE THE
NATURAL RESOURCES OF
MY COUNTRY - ITS SOIL
AND MINERALS, ITS
FORESTS, WATERS,
AND WILDLIFE

July 1, 1976 thru June 30, 1977

We, the Commissioners of the Mills County Soil and Water Conservation District, respectfully submit this annual report for Fiscal Year '77 to you, for your review and consideration.

Each year we try to involve more individuals in our program. Special efforts will be directed toward controlling erosion and pollution resulting from new construction on highways, in cities and town, from feedlot and chemical wastes and from industry and urban areas.

KEEP IN MIND -- Pollution is a convenience -- not a necessity. Only through the help and support of everyone can we carry out a successful program.

We would like to say "THANK YOU" to the Soil Conservation Service, Agricultural Stabilization Conservation Service, State Soil Conservation Committee, Department of Soil Conservation, Mills County Extension, Iowa Conservation Commission and all the many schools, banks, churches, newspapers, radio stations, plus all of the other groups and individuals who have helped us carry out our program. A very special "THANK YOU" goes to the more than 100 individuals in Mills County who sent donations to help further the cause of soil and water conservation. Their generosity is certainly appreciated.

If you have a soil or water problem please stop in our office at 313 Main Street, Malvern, Iowa or give us a call at 624-8364. If it is within our jurisdiction we will be more than happy to provide the necessary assistance.

COMMISSIONERS

Albert Washburn, Chairman
Harold Tackett, Vice Chairman
Glen Sell
Bill Stacy
Roger Jackson

ASSISTANT COMMISSIONERS

Henry Pein
Richard Bierman
Paul Hathaway
Viola Hathaway
David Snow

WATERSHEDS:

Waubonsie Creek: Two sites in Waubonsie Creek Watershed are completed. Sites 9-1 and 11-1. The work on Site 11-1 should be completed by late this summer. The district has been busy trying to obtain easements for Part III or Sites 23-1 and 23-2. Contract will hopefully be let by early fall.

Pony Creek Watershed: Landrights for the 4.3 miles of channel work is moving right along. We anticipate a contract being let sometime in late summer or early fall.

MILLS COUNTY SOIL SURVEY: The soil survey of Mills County is right on schedule. The mapping should be completed by late fall. Approximately 255,000 of the 285,000 acres in the county have been mapped.

TREASURER'S REPORT

I-M BUDGET

Total Allocation		\$ 1,612.84
Commissioners Mileage	\$ 368.16	
Office Supplies	903.82	
Prizes for Contests	200.00	
Rental for typewriter and Meeting place	67.50	
Materials for demonstrations	1.00	
Office Expense	71.17	
Meeting Expense	1.19	
Total Expended	\$ 1,612.84	

II-M BUDGET

Total Allocation		\$20,349.97
Salaries - Clerk & St. Aide	\$17,354.00	
State share of IPERS	827.69	
State share of FICA	1,015.21	
Health Insurance	602.00	
Life Insurance	72.00	
Disability Insurance	112.80	
Travel	73.09	
Equipment	293.18	
Total Expended	\$20,349.97	

III-M BUDGETS State Cost-Share

73/74	Total Allocation		\$29,238.77
	45 Landowners used	\$29,087.52	
	Released to State 6-30-77	\$151.25	
74/75	Total Allocation		\$22,600.00
	2YRS. - 2 Landowners L.T.A.	\$7,645.50	
	20 Landowners used	14,769.54	
	Released to state 7-1-76	184.96	
75/76	Total Allocation		\$25,000.00
	19 Landowners used	\$24,737.23	
	Released to state 6-30-77	\$262.77	
76/77	Total Allocation		\$64,565.50
	35 Landowners used	\$63,314.13	
	Unobligated Balance	\$ 1,251.37	

Mills County shared a CETA contract with Page, Fremont and Montgomery Counties. Mills County employed 1 clerk typist and 1 Conservation Aide for July & August of 1976 and May & June of 1977.

SAVING OUR SOIL - YOU CAN HELP

No one will argue the fact that we need to do more to save our high-producing Iowa soil. Being against soil conservation is being against clean water, plentiful food supplies, a beautiful countryside, and other benefits of keeping soil in place.

But there's a difference between agreeing that we need to save our soil and taking steps to make sure that we actually do. The record in Iowa (Soil Conservation Service figures) shows that we have a corps of conservation landowners who have made significant gains in protecting their land, but it also shows we've a long way to go.

On the average, Iowa farmers are losing 2 bushels of topsoil on unprotected sloping land for every bushel of corn they produce. That's 230 bushels of soil per acre each year, or about 1/12 inch of topsoil. We have about 6-8 inches left from an original 12-14 inches of topsoil on these sloping lands. At present rates, then, in 100 years the topsoil could be gone.

With increases in row crop acreages, progress has been slow in protecting our land against erosion. Only a little more than a third of Iowa's land has been protected in the 40 years since the soil conservation movement began after dust storms in the mid - 1930's.

The point is, we need to get conservation practices on the land at a much faster pace than we have in the past. We need that extra nudge to turn the "talkers" into "doers".

The "doers" should be each of us, for we all have a stake in keeping our land productive and in keeping sediment out of our streams and lakes. Conservation practices help the landowners, but they also benefit every one of us that depend on the land. We should all expect to pay our fair share. (from the Lucas Co. Newsletter)

D. C.'s COMMENTS

Again this year I am pleased to say that the amount of conservation applied to the landscape in Mills County is very gratifying.

Terraces was the number one conservation practice applied. More than 68 miles or 363,470 feet were built. Of these 97% were parallel. These terraces applied also mean that 1862 acres are being protected from severe erosion problems.

Other practices applied were, contouring 5515 acres; 74 acres of critical area seeding, and 61 acres of pasture and hayland seeding and management.

I think the need for additional emphasis on conservation tillage should be the challenge for all of us in the new year, as this practice can do more to protect and save our precious topsoil than any other single practice. There are 187,130 crop acres in Mills County. Erosion can be reduced on these acres 50%, compared to conventional methods, by simply leaving 3000 pounds of residue on the soil surface at planting time. Much time, fuel and money can be saved by leaving the residue on the soil surface at planting time. Moisture is conserved as well, this alone is a very valuable asset, especially in periods of dry weather as we have been experiencing. We will be glad to work with you on planning conservation tillage into your farming program.

I am also pleased to report that the Golden Hills RHD Project application has been sent to Washington, D.C. for approval. This project includes the following S.C.D.'s - Harrison, Shelby, West Pottawattamie, East Pottawattamie, Cass, Mills, Montgomery, Fremont and Page.