

Kossuth County Soil Conservation District

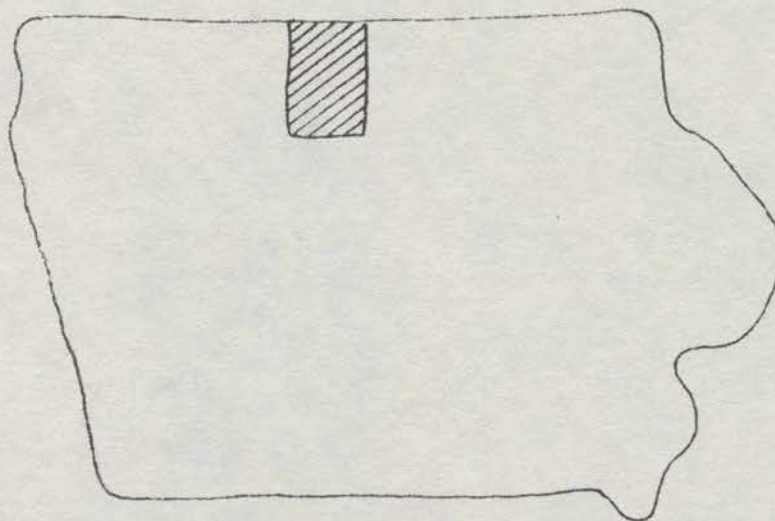
1980 ANNUAL REPORT



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KOSSUTH COUNTY SOIL CONSERVATION DISTRICT



1306 North Main Street

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Algona, Iowa 50511

IN TRIBUTE

This 1980 annual report is dedicated to the memory of Commissioner Claude A. Seely who passed away June 13, 1980. Claude was elected as a district commissioner in 1963 and served on the district governing board until the time of his death. He was chairman for seven years.

Seely was an avid promoter of planting trees. During his 18 years of service to the Kossuth County Soil Conservation District, he devoted much time and energy to the district's annual tree program, distributing thousands of trees and shrubs to be planted in farmstead and field windbreaks.

One of Claude's often-heard comments was: "What I would like to see in Kossuth County, in order to stop our soil from blowing and to protect our wildlife, is a row of honeysuckle or trees planted on every fence line we have."

In appreciation of Claude's dedicated service, the District planted 30 evergreens in his honor at Smith Lake on "Plant Iowa Day" in April, 1980. These now stand as a living memorial to one of Kossuth's outstanding conservationists.

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An annual review of the Kossuth County Soil Conservation District's program reflects that conservation tillage continues to be a highly promoted practice in the county as an effective and economical method of reducing wind and water erosion.

A bulletin board displaying photos of conservation tillage equipment has been set up in the office to keep cooperators informed of all the different kinds of equipment on the market. The display includes pamphlets and brochures from all the implement dealers and is updated as new material becomes available.

The SCS slide set "Growing Corn and Beans No-Till in Crop Residues" was shown to several voc-ag classes, adult farmer evening classes, garden clubs, and various civic organizations throughout the year, and was available for viewing for a day at the Kossuth County Fair. One presentation, co-sponsored by the Kossuth Extension Service, was made to area farmers having an interest in conservation tillage. A time of discussion followed each presentation to answer questions.

The District paid bus fare for Kossuth County farmers to attend a tour of Ernie Behn's farm near Boone sponsored by the Hancock SCD. Attending from this area were George Lickteig, Gerald Haas, John Simpson, Harold Bjustrom, Jeff Haas, Kevin Benson, Gene Wagner, and Steve Cink. The group toured Behn's corn and soybean fields planted in a ridge-tilled farming operation, saw the equipment he uses, and participated

in a question-and-answer session with Behn. Behn has written a book about his farming operation entitled "More Profit with Less Tillage", copies of which are available at the district office and are loaned out to anyone wanting to read about his successful conservation tillage operation.

NARROW BASE TERRACES INTRODUCED IN COUNTY

The first narrow-base terraces built in Kossuth County were installed on the Charles and Merwyn Thompson farm in Eagle Township. Narrow-base terraces have steep front and back slopes and are seeded on both sides. Their average width is 16-18 feet which takes 6 to 8 feet more cropland out of production than the conventional seeded backslope terrace.

The economical benefit is one of the advantages of the narrow-base terrace. The cost of installation is approximately half that of grassed backslope terraces.

Other district cooperators building these new type terraces are George Lickteig, Wesley Twp.; Wayne Keith, Plum Creek Twp.; and, Mike Schmit, Plum Creek Twp.

Total terrace construction throughout the county during 1980 reached nearly 40,000 feet.

IOWA SOIL CONSERVATION AWARD WINNER

Whittemore-area farmer, John Simpson, was named county winner of the 1980 Iowa Soil Conservation Awards Program. Simpson, who owns and operates a 520-acre grain farming operation in Whittemore Township, received the recognition for his efforts in conserving his soil and water resources.

Simpson, a cooperator with the Kossuth SCD since 1971, uses conservation tillage on all his cropland to keep soil loss to a minimum. He is one of the initiators of conservation tillage in this area and has worked with the Kossuth SCD in production of a slide set on local farmers using minimum tillage operations.

Other noteworthy conservation accomplishments include renovating an existing farmstead windbreak, establishing a secondary windbreak on the south edge of the farm, and maintaining a natural wetland area where waterfowl and upland birds nest and deer and various fur-bearing animals have been sighted.

Simpson advanced to regional competition (a 15-county area) and received second-place honors.

WALTMAN WINS WINDBREAK AWARD

Clinton Waltman, rural Burt, was named county winner of the 1980 Izaak Walton League Windbreak Contest. The award-winning windbreak consisting of two rows of honeysuckle, one row of green ash, and three rows of concolor fir was planted in 1968.

Waltman and his wife, Marion, began working on their project several years before 1968 when they planted 12-inch concolor fir seedlings in a cultivated plot along the roadside. The firs were transplanted to the present windbreak site when they reached a height of four feet. Prior to planting the trees, the windbreak area was cleared of an old existing grove that had died out.

SPEECH CONTEST WINNERS

Lori Habegar, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Duane Habegar of rural Burt, took first place honors and \$25 cash prize in the district's speech contest held in October at Burt.

Second place and \$15 were awarded to Ron Eastman, son of Mr. and Mrs. Robert Eastman of Burt. DeAnn Harms, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Johnnie Harms, Burt, placed third and received \$10. All three winners are students at Burt Community High School.

The topic of this year's contest was "Water, Air, Soil -- Means of Survival". Contest judges were Lura Sewick, Burt, and Wendell C. Christensen, Wesley.

CONSERVATION WORKBOOKS

In an effort to expand its conservation education program, the Kossuth SCD initiated a conservation workbook program in the county. Three hundred sixth grade science students from seven school systems participated in the project. Each student received two workbooks: "Our Resources and Their Care" which deals with soil, plant, wildlife and water conservation; and, "Quality Environment is our Concern", a study about air pollution, solid and liquid waste pollution, animal extinction and water pollution.

THIRD GRADERS PLANT TREES

In observance of Arbor Day, the District offered a free Colorado Spruce seedling to each third grade student wanting to plant one. All schools in the county responded and 355 seedlings were given out. The seedlings were distributed at Smith Lake in conjunction with Governor Ray's "Plant Iowa Program".

District commissioners and office staff participated in the Plant Iowa Program by providing a demonstration on tree planting and an exhibit on native trees of Iowa.

TWILIGHT TOUR

The commissioners sponsored a tour of some of the outstanding conservation practices in the county. Stops on the tour included: Bob Deal's pond; L. I. Gisch, pond; John Simpson, conservation tillage and windbreak; Earl Schmitt, windbreak; and Chuck Behr, animal waste lagoon.

VOC-AG CLASS TOURS CONSERVATION PRACTICES

In September, District Conservationist Ohland conducted a tour for the Algona Vocational Agriculture class and their instructor, Brad Greiman. The group looked at the terraces and pond site at Wayne and Edgar Keith's farm which were in the finishing stages of construction.

SOIL STEWARDSHIP WEEK

Soil Stewardship Week was observed in May, 1980. The District provided bulletin covers and inserts to all churches in the county requesting the material. Twenty-four churches participated.

TREES AND SHRUBS SOLD

More than 8500 trees and shrubs were sold for windbreak planting during the spring of '80. The income from this project supports various local activities, pays state and national association dues, and is used to purchase office equipment.

The District will be selling trees and shrubs for windbreaks again this coming spring. List of varieties and prices can be obtained from the District office.

STATE COST SHARE

Fourteen state cost share applications to build terraces were approved during the 1980 calendar year. Of these, eight were completed; two, construction underway; and, four, cancelled.

There is an unobligated balance of \$14,106.11 in the state cost share account. Applications are being accepted for those projects with spring construction planned.

MEETINGS

The Kossuth District Commissioners conducted twelve regular and one special meeting during 1980. These are open meetings, and the public is notified through radio and news releases.

At their organizational meeting in January, Wendell Christensen was elected chairman and Kenneth Brones, vice-chairman. John Ley, County Extension Director, was appointed secretary and Carolyn Marshall, treasurer. John Reding was appointed to another term as assistant commissioner.

In January Commissioners Brones, Antoine, and Christensen attended the annual Commissioners' Short Course, a two-day session at Ames.

The commissioners met with the Kossuth Co. Board of Supervisors in February to discuss the conservation needs in the county.

Commissioners Brones and Antoine served on the county board for Governor Ray's Plant Iowa Program. Their responsibilities included promotion of tree planting in Iowa.

Christensen and Antoine attended the Spring Regional Commissioners' meeting at Fort Dodge in March.

In July the commissioners met at Union Slough Wildlife Refuge to look at an area being damaged by erosion from neighboring farmland. A representative of the ASCS county committee and SCS personnel were also in attendance.

District Conservationist Ohland met with the ASCS county committeemen in August at their development meeting for the 1981 ACP year.

Brones and Ohland worked at the soil conservation information booth and the conservation tillage plots at the Farm Progress Show near Nevada, Iowa, in October.

Brones, Antoine, Christensen, and Ohland attended the Fall Regional Commissioners' meeting held in Fort Dodge in November.

A meeting for the distribution of the Kossuth County Soil Survey Advance Report was held in November; this was co-sponsored by the Extension Service. Copies of the completed survey were distributed to various public and citizen organizations. Copies of the field sheets are on file at the district office and are available to persons interested in soils information on designated acreages.

DOAN WATERSHED EFFORT DROPPED

A meeting of the landowners in the Doan Watershed was held in April. The group voted against proceeding with the development of a work plan for the watershed, so the effort was officially dropped.

Doan Watershed was organized in June of 1966 and in October, 1967, made application through the Iowa Department of Soil Conservation for assistance under the Watershed Protection and Flood Prevention Act,

P. L. 566. Under this Act, engineering assistance would have been provided for the development of a plan to provide flood control and improve drainage within and below the watershed; cost share assistance would have been available to the group for construction costs of the project.

COMMISSIONER ELECTIONS HELD IN NOVEMBER

At the polls in November, Kossuth County voters determined the successors to three soil conservation district commissioners' terms which ended this year.

Kenneth Brones, Swea City, was re-elected to a second six-year term. He resides in Eagle Township and has served on the district governing body since 1973.

Robert Deal of rural Algona will fill a six-year position vacated by Luther Kinne of LuVerne who did not run for re-election.

Kent Seely, Plum Creek Township, was elected to serve the remaining two years of the unexpired term of the late Claude Seely. Kent has been appointed by the State Committee, Department of Soil Conservation, in August to fill this position until the general election.

Also serving on the five-member board are Wendell Christensen, Wesley, and James F. Antoine, Bancroft. District commissioners serve without salary and guide the overall soil and water conservation program in the county.

OFFICE PERSONNEL CHANGES

Paul J. Ohland joined the Kossuth staff as district conservationist in July. He succeeded Lyle Riedinger who retired in February after

having worked in this county for 25 years. Ohland was district conservationist for the past 10 years in Worth County prior to transferring to Algona.

In December Meleia Shelman began working in Kossuth County as a soil conservation technician. Meleia transferred to Algona from Washington, Iowa, where she had been employed for 15 months.

BISHOP RECEIVES HONORS

Loren Bishop, conservation technician, completed thirty years of service with the SCS in 1980, of which 20 years have been spent in Kossuth County.

In October Bishop received a certificate of merit and a cash award in recognition of his accomplishments over and above his regular duties during the past year.

CONSERVATION ACCOMPLISHMENTS

January 1, 1980 - December 31, 1980

<u>Code</u>		
100	District Cooperators.....	32
102	Individuals and groups assisted.....	201
104	Total services rendered to individuals and groups.....	701
106	Those applying conservation practices.....	103
108	Conservation plans prepared.....	2,028 acres
110	Conservation plans revised.....	601 acres
	Conservation alternatives provided.....	3,261 acres
312	Waste Management System.....	1
329	Conservation Tillage.....	1,252 acres
330	Contour Farming.....	385 acres
378	Ponds.....	2
380	Farmstead Windbreaks (new).....	26 acres
412	Grassed Waterway.....	1 acre
600	Terraces.....	37,455 feet
638	Water and Sediment Control Basin.....	2,400 feet
645	Wildlife Upland Habitat Management.....	31 acres
750	Cropland Benefited by Application of Conservation Practices.....	2,288 acres
760	Cropland Adequately Protected.....	809 acres
770	Cropland Adequately Treated.....	243 acres

FINANCIAL STATEMENT

July 1, 1979 - June 30, 1980

1-M ACCOUNT:

Allocation received.....		\$ 2,117.64
Disbursements:		
Commissioners' Expense	\$ 734.55	
Office Supplies	551.08	
Printing	120.10	
Office Expense	711.91	
Total disbursements.....		\$ 2,117.64

2-M ACCOUNT:

Allocation received.....		\$19,715.00
Disbursements:		
Salaries	\$ 15,842.09	
Travel	24.60	
State Retirement	884.50	
Social Security	971.12	
Health Insurance	772.34	
Life Insurance	93.50	
Long-term Disability Insurance	87.98	
State-owned Equipment Expense	419.70	
Released to D.S.C.	619.17	
Total disbursements.....		\$19,715.00

3-M ACCOUNT:

1979-80 allocation received		\$29,993.06
Funds paid out - terrace construction	-	22,993.06
Funds obligated, practice not completed	-	7,000.00
Balance of unobligated funds.....		\$ 0.00
1980-81 allocation received		\$33,000.00
Funds paid out - terrace construction	-	12,393.89
Funds obligated, practice not completed	-	6,500.00
Balance of unobligated funds.....		\$14,106.11

1980 PERSONNEL DIRECTORY

DISTRICT GOVERNING BODY

Wendell Christensen, Wesley..... Chairman
Kenneth Brones, Swea City..... Vice-Chairman
Luther Kinne, Lu Verne..... Commissioner
James F. Antoine, Bancroft..... Commissioner
Claude Seely, Algona (Jan-June)..... Commissioner
Kent Seely, Algona (July -)..... Commissioner
John Reding, Bode.....Assistant Commissioner
John Ley, Co. Extension Director..... Secretary to Commissioners

OFFICE STAFF

Lyle Riedinger (Jan-Feb)..... District Conservationist
Paul J. Ohland (July -)..... District Conservationist
Loren Bishop..... Conservation Technician
Carolyn Marshall..... District Clerk
Stephen Cink..... State Aid/WAE Aid
Meleia Shelman (Dec -)..... Conservation Technician

