

**WORK PLAN
DES MOINES COUNTY
SOIL CONSERVATION DISTRICT**

State of Iowa

WORK PLAN OF THE DES MOINES COUNTY
SOIL CONSERVATION DISTRICT

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A. INTRODUCTION AND PURPOSE

The purpose of this work plan is to set forth methods to be used in meeting the purposes and objectives of the district. A wide variety of problems are recognized within the area and it is hoped that through the cooperative efforts of farmers and others that ways will be found to meet them.

The proper adjustment in crop rotations is needed to maintain a high level of fertility and the proper physical structure of the soil. Addition of limestone and fertilizers are needed to supply adequate plant food. Erosion control practices such as contouring, terracing and strip cropping are needed to reduce and slow down runoff from fields. Adequate water disposal systems are needed, including waterways, dams, drainage ditches, diversions, tile drains, ponds, etc. Pastures need renovation to increase their production. Woodland should be protected, improved and made a part of the farm enterprise. Wildlife needs to be protected and in some parts stimulated by plantings for feed and protection. Erosion on highways creates many problems both to the roads and the land adjacent.

B. EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM

The Des Moines County Soil Conservation District will look to the County Extension Director and the Iowa Extension Service for guidance and assistance in planning and carrying out the educational program.

It is proposed to use every practical method to adequately inform the people in the District of their land use, erosion, drainage and other soil conservation problems and of the best methods to be used in meeting them. Among subjects to be emphasized are the following:

1. The purpose of the district, its objectives, when and how organized, facilities available and how the district operates.
2. The extent of the drainage, erosion and land use problems in the district.
3. The principles of good land use, suggested methods of meeting the conservation problems and the practices best suited.
4. Results of research information and additional research when needed.
5. The methods of leasing that will bring about better farming practices on rented land.

C. METHODS

1. Publicity

The local press will be asked to keep the public informed of activities of the district, experiences of farmers with conservation, damage due to heavy rains, the effectiveness and other results of conservation practices as well as items of interest and news value.

2. Meetings

- a. General information meetings will be held to create interest in soil conservation and proper land use and to explain the work of the district.
- b. Group meetings will be held in centers of interest to explain the district plan of operation, to develop further community interest, to organize the group for farm planning or for the application of starting practices of soil conservation.
- c. Meetings will be held with special groups such as the Farm Bureau, AAA, schools, bankers, service clubs and other groups interested in the protection of our natural resources.

3. Demonstrations and Tours

The effectiveness of sound conservation is best shown out on the land and to this end it is proposed to hold numerous demonstrations and tours.

4. Training Schools

Most conservation practices can be installed by the farmers themselves with a little instruction. Training schools for simple practices should be held as needed to assist farmers in laying contour lines, strip cropping, grassed waterways, small dams, diversions, etc.

5. Exhibits

Exhibits will be used to call attention to the results of erosion and the need for conservation measures.

6. Contests

The district will sponsor and seek the assistance of other groups in sponsoring contests that will stimulate interest in the program of the district.

D. COOPERATING AGENCIES

1. District Commissioners

The district commissioners will direct and coordinate with the assistance of the Extension Service the educational activities of the district. They will help conduct educational meetings and present the philosophy of the district.

They will also assist to organize farm planning groups and establish priorities for farm planning. Review and approve farm plans.

2. Soil Conservation Service

Subject to availability of funds and personnel, the Soil Conservation Service will provide conservation surveys, will assist farmers in developing conservation farm plans and will assist in the establishment of recommended practices on approved farm plans. Upon request they will assist in carrying on the educational program.

3. Farm Bureau

In the 1946-47 Extension Program now being written one of the major problems set out by the program planning committee is a need for soil saving and proper land use to build up our land. Educational assistance to farm people to meet this problem will be one of the major efforts. The County Farm Bureau Board has already authorized expenditure up to \$50 for office expenses of the Soil Conservation District. Township and other meetings have been in the past and will be used in the future to spread information about soil conservation. Board members and others have circulated petitions for the establishment of the district and have circulated blanks for those desiring help from the soil technicians. We will use these means and other timely methods in the promotion of soil conservation and proper land use.

4. Production and Marketing Association (AAA)

The present program of the Production and Marketing Association stresses soil conservation practices. The county committee will cooperate with the district and arrange to bring additional information to the township committeemen. The township committeemen in their contacts with farmers will stress the program by giving more emphasis to soil and water conserving practices.

5. The Board of Supervisors

The Board of Supervisors of Des Moines County have expressed much interest in the conservation program and are pleased to cooperate in this very essential work. They have stated that it is their belief that by cooperation in the conservation program much valuable work can be accomplished for the people of the county.

6. Extension Service

Soil conservation has been set out in the 1946-47 program as one of the main problems about which something should be done. All available means such as meetings, press, radio, farm calls and interviews with office callers will be used to awaken the minds of farm groups to soil conservation and to give information on how the objectives of the soil conservation program may be attained.

7. Vocational Agriculture

Vocational and agricultural instructors will include soil conservation in adult and high school classes. They will conduct and assist with soil conservation demonstrations in the communities which they serve.

8. Public Schools

Rural schools are revising their science courses to include a more thorough study of soil, its importance and methods of conserving it. The County Superintendent has suggested that this subject be reviewed at teachers' meetings to better qualify the teachers for use of subject material. Town schools which draw pupils from rural areas should be contacted to arrange for emphasis on conservation of soil and the maintenance of soil fertility.

9. State Conservation Commission

The propagation of wildlife is beneficial to agriculture. Soil conservation measures tend to provide necessary environment for wildlife. It is the policy of the State Conservation Commission to cooperate fully in the development of proper land use and the conservation officers will assist whenever possible in the district program. On farms carrying proper wildlife programs, arrangements will be made for posting.

10. Newspaper and Radio

The local papers and radio station have shown interest in soil conservation and a willingness to boost the program by the use of their respective facilities.

11. Other Agencies

Many people and agencies are in position to assist in the development and establishment of a sound conservation program. Their assistance is solicited.

E. FARM PLANNING

Assistance will be given to farmers in planning proper land use, drainage and erosion control programs. Any farmer wishing assistance shall make written application to the district governing body which will review and pass on all such requests. Preference will be given to groups of farmers within a neighborhood who are accustomed to working together or who have similar conservation problems. Groups may consist of from 6 to 16 or more farmers. Planning groups will organize and select a leader who will call all group meetings and act as representative for the group.

The written application of the group will be the basis for establishing priority. Priority for work will be based upon willingness and interest of the group, date application is received and the general distribution of work over the district.

Farm planning will be conducted through group meetings supplemented by conferences with individual farmers out on their own land. A soil conservation survey and land use map will be used as a guide in preparing conservation plans on the farm. Consideration will be given to the adjustments needed in livestock and other farm enterprises. The farm plan will include the proper land use for each area, application and use of lime and fertilizer, effective erosion control and drainage measures and a schedule to show the sequence and time for applying the various measures.

After the conservation plan has been developed by the farmer with the assistance of the technician it will be submitted to the district commissioners for review and approval. Insofar as possible, establishment and maintenance of the plan will be carried on through the groups.

F. Reports

Reports requested by the State Soil Conservation Committee, the United States Department of Agriculture and other cooperating agencies will be prepared and submitted in accordance with the agreements and understandings. Local representatives of the cooperating agencies will assist the commissioners in making these reports.

G. Revisions

The adequacy of the work plan for carrying out operations of the district will be determined from time to time and necessary revisions will be made at least every six months.

DES MOINES COUNTY SOIL CONSERVATION DISTRICT

By

Noah Schrock

Chairman, District Governing Body

Date August 2, 1946

The signing of this districts work plan was authorized by a resolution of the district commissioners adopted at a meeting held on August 2, 1946.

Walter B. Eyre

Secretary, District Governing Body

DISTRICT CALENDAR OF WORK

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District educational activities will be carried on under the general supervision of the County Extension Director. The District Commissioners will initiate various activities and will seek assistance from any agencies or persons who can help with the work plan.

Activity	Purpose and/or group	Number Annually	When
Educational meetings of general interest	Township Farm Bureau	12	When convenient
	4-H Clubs	8	When convenient
	Civic Clubs	4	Jan, Feb, Mar,
	Schools, teachers, classroom	2	Co. institute
	Isaac Walton League	4	When convenient
	AAA Township Committee	1	Winter
	Other -	2	Winter
Conservation schools	Training in conservation practices:		Winter
	1. soil institute	1	December
	2. leaders' training school	1	February
Demonstrations and training schools	Contouring	10	Early Spring
	Terracing	6	Spring and fall
	Pasture improvement	4	Spring and fall
Irrigation and result demonstrations	Forage plots	1	June
	All conservation practices that have been applied	2	June
		1	October
Neighborhood or community meetings	To organize planning groups	8-15	Continuously
Farm planning meetings	To plan farms	10 20-24	Continuously as needed by Farm Planner

Activity	Purpose and/or group	Number Annually	When
Publicity, news and radio	Reports of district activity, field day, heavy rains, contests, tours, meetings, demonstrations, experiences of farmers		Regularly, continuously, or opportune time
Individual planning	Scattered farms for demonstrations in areas lacking interest	(Rarely to be used)	As needed
Layout work	On farms with conservation plans	Current layout on farm plans	Mar, Apr, May, June, Aug, Sept, Oct, Nov.
Starting practices (to stimulate interest)	On farms with working agreements when approved by commissioners	Current layout season	Mar, Apr, May, June, Aug, Sept, Oct, Nov.