

2011-2012 CHEROKEE COUNTY SOIL & WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT ANNUAL REPORT

314 Lake Street
Cherokee, Iowa 51012
Phone 712-225-3769

The Commissioners of the Cherokee County Soil and Water Conservation District are pleased to present this Annual Report of conservation accomplishments. It reflects the efforts of many individuals and groups working together to improve our environment through conservation programs. We hope our cooperative working relations continue as we work to protect our natural resources. The District is always ready to assist you with any conservation problem you may have.

Along with the landowners and operators in the county, we would like to thank the government agencies, news media, schools, businesses, and individuals that have assisted in the promotion and application of soil and water conservation.

Cherokee County District Commissioners

New District Conservationist

Mike Henderson joined the Staff as District Conservationist for Cherokee and O'Brien Counties in January. He grew up on an irrigated crop farm in the Oklahoma Panhandle near Texhoma, OK. He earned Bachelors and Masters Degrees in Agronomy from Oklahoma State University. In 1993 he married Eva and moved to Postville, IA where he began working for the Postville Coop as an agronomist. In 2001 he stepped into the conservation field working with the Grannis Creek Watershed in Fayette County. Since then he has served as a Soil Conservationist in Allamakee, Harrison, and Dubuque Counties and District Conservationist in Grant County, KS. He also served as the ISU Extension Education Director for Delaware County, IA for a time. Mike and Eva live on an acreage south of Marcus with their 3 daughters, Sarah, Dawn and Leah. The girls attend MMC Schools.



From left to right: Jason Titcomb, Cherokee; Nathan Anderson, Aurelia; Tom Oswald, Cleghorn; Russell Winterhof, Aurelia; and Tom Bindner, Marcus. Assistant commissioners Ginger Walker, Linda Bindner, Scott Osborn, and Pam Pierce not pictured.



Left to Right: Resource Conservationist Ruth Ehley, State/District Secretary Tracy Rasmussen, WAE/District Employee Michelle Harman, District Conservationist Mike Henderson, Federal Technician Julia Gubbels, and District Summer Intern Rachel Husman. In front: Retired State Technician Randy Jipp.

PERSONNEL

Commissioners

Jason Titcomb, Chairman	Cherokee
Nathan Anderson, Vice-Chair	Aurelia
Tom Bindner, Co-Treasurer	Marcus
Tom Oswald	Cleghorn
Russell Winterhof	Aurelia

Assistant Commissioners

Linda Bindner	Marcus
Scott Osborn	Cherokee
Pam Pierce, Co-Treasurer	Cherokee
Ginger Walker	Cherokee

Field Office Staff

Michael Henderson	District Conservationist
Ruth Ehley	Resource Conservationist
Julia Gubbels	Soil Conservation Tech.
Randy Jipp	State Technician
Michelle Harman	WAE/District Technician
Tracy Rasmussen	State/District Secretary
Rachel Husman	Summer Intern

CONTRIBUTIONS

Contributions are the primary source for financing educational and promotional activities. We would like to thank the following contributors who donated money from October 2011 through September 2012. Your generosity is greatly appreciated.

Cherokee State Bank - Cherokee
 Mike & Pam Cronin - Cleghorn
 Farmers State Bank - Marcus
 Jenness Farms - Omaha, NE
 Lundell Construction Co. Inc. - Cherokee
 McGuire Auction Co. Inc. - Holstein
 Gary & Alura Otto - Cherokee
 Sand Seed Service, Inc. - Marcus
 Schmiller Construction, Inc. - Marcus
 Stalcup Agricultural Service - Storm Lake
 Western Cherokee Mutual Insurance - Marcus
 WHJ LLC - West Des Moines

In Kind Contributions \$1368.36
 Financial support for program delivery
 at the District level \$5634.99

Cherokee County Soil and Water Conservation District

Cherokee SWCD
 314 Lake Street
 Cherokee, IA 51012
 Phone: 712-225-4151 or 225-3769
 Fax: 712-225-6090

Contact us about any of your conservation concerns.



Cherokee County Soil & Water Conservation District And Natural Resources Conservation Service Accomplishments

(October 1, 2011 – September 30, 2012)

Brush Management	250 ac
Conservation Cover	48 ac
Conservation Crop Rotation	7,546 ac
Contour Farming	2,975 ac
Cover Crop	101 ac
Filter Strip	7 ac
Grade Stabilization Structure	1 no
Grassed Waterway	34 ac
Integrated Pest Management	340 ac
Nutrient Management	293 ac
Prescribed Burning	121 ac
Residue & Tillage Mngt, Mulch Till	2,573 ac
Residue & Tillage Mngt, No-Till/Strip Till/ Direct Seed	127 ac
Restor/Mngt of Rare & Declining Habitats	31 ac
Solid/Liquid Waste Separation Facility	2 no
Subsurface Drain	18,929 ft
Terrace	3,275 ft
Underground Outlet	146 ft
Upland Wildlife Habitat Mngt	194 ac
Waste Storage Facility	1 no
Waste Transfer	1 no
Water & Sediment Control Basin	13 no
Wetland Restoration	12 ac
Wetland Wildlife Habitat Mngt	12 ac
Windbreak/Shelterbelt Establishment	7,240 ft

2012 DISTRICT ACTIVITIES

- 16 Regular Meetings
- Conservation Partnership Legislative Day
- Paid CDI Dues
- Organizational Meeting to Approve District Policies, elect officers, and establish committees
- Booth at the Cherokee County Ag Show
- Hosted regional Little Sioux meeting
- Poster Contest Presentations
- Northwest Iowa Regional Envirothon (environmental competition for high schools)
- CDI Spring Regional meeting
- Reviewed scholarship applications
- District Tree Sales
- 4th Grade Poster judging
- Stewardship Week - gave Activity Sheet/Placemats to restaurants/groups
- Watershed inspections
- Scholarships presented at MMC and South O'Brien High School Awards Programs
- 4th grade posters displayed at the Sanford Museum
- Public hearing on revised soil loss limitations
- Conservation Tour
- District Audit
- CDI Annual Conference

Conservation Tour

This year's conservation tour was held the evening of July 10th and included five stops. The first stop was in Pitcher 35 at Mark Radke's farm. Mark has previously been recognized by Pheasants Forever and other organizations for his conservation efforts. He shared with the group many of the things he has learned through his years of no-tilling and strip-tilling. The next stop was at the Aurelia Wetland Walking Path where Denny Allen and Cherokee County naturalist Laura Kohn were the presenters. Denny explained the work that went in to building the path and its structures, while Laura talked about the wetland function and some of the unique species that are present. From there, participants headed to Duane and Lucille Kent's award winning shelterbelt in Afton 25. In 2011 the Kent's received the Field Shelterbelt Award in the Izaak Walton League Windbreak Awards program for Iowa. Duane explained the importance of researching soil requirements and characteristics of the different species as well as diversifying as much as you can in case one of the species develops a disease. The next stop was at the Anderson Family's pasture in Afton 30 where Nathan Anderson talked about how rotational grazing has helped increase animal performance in his cattle. He also showed us the pasture he has been able to reclaim through

cedar tree removal. The last stop was at Duane Mummert's The Grainery in Afton 7. Duane shared some of the history of The Grainery as well as the conservation work he has done on the surrounding land. It turned out to be a beautiful evening. At The Grainery everyone enjoyed grilled turkey fillets and side dishes courtesy of the Cherokee SWCD.



Mark Radke's No Till/Strip Till



Aurelia Wetland Walking Path



Duane & Lucille Kent's Windbreak



Nathan Anderson's Pasture Reclamation



Supper at Duane Mummert's The Grainery

STATE FUNDING

(July 1, 2011 – June 30, 2012)

Bonding 2 Cost Share Fund

Carryover + extra	\$ 36,958.74
Total cost-share paid	36,958.74
Total approved & pending	<u>0.00</u>
Balance 6/30/12	\$ 0.00

Cost Share Fund

Allocation + Carryover	\$ 28,606.92
Total cost-share paid	4,108.52
Total approved & pending	<u>24,498.40</u>
Balance 6/30/12	\$ 0.00

REAP Practices Fund

Allocation + carryover	\$ 32,002.78
Total cost-share paid	19,390.74
Total approved & pending	<u>12,612.04</u>
Balance 6/30/12	\$ 0.00

REAP Forestry/Native Grasses Fund

Allocation	\$ 3,125.31
Total cost-share paid	2,374.38
Total approved & pending	<u>603.75</u>
Recalled 6/30/12	\$ 147.18

I-M Budget

(July 1, 2011 – June 30, 2012)

(Funds appropriated by the legislature to reimburse commissioners for traveling expenses as well as pay for district office supplies)

Allocation + Supplemental	\$ 2,400.00
Expenses	\$ 2,507.25
Balance 6/30/12	- \$ 107.25

Extra commissioner expenses of \$107.25
incurred, but not reimbursed.

Low Interest Loans

\$391,342 in low interest loans were made.

Little Sioux Flood Prevention Watershed Maintenance Funds

(July 1, 2011 – June 30, 2012)

(Funds collected in prior years to be used for maintaining existing structures in the county)

Balance carried forward	\$198,326.70
Income (Interest)	\$4,431.47
Expenses	<u>\$16,748.00</u>
Balance 6/30/11	\$186,010.17

General Fund (Revolving)

(July 1, 2011 – June 30, 2012)
(For District Functions)

Balance carried forward	\$20,029.77
Income	\$17,695.92
Expenses	<u>\$20,614.68</u>
Balance 6/30/12	\$17,111.01

Ross Pinkerton Memorial Fund

(July 1, 2011 – June 30, 2012)

Balance carried forward	\$455.00
Income	\$0.00
Expenses	\$0.00
Transferred to General Fund	<u>\$455.00</u>
Balance 6/30/11	\$0.00

FEDERAL FUNDING

EQIP Funds

(Environmental Quality Incentives Program)
(October 1, 2010 - September 30, 2011)

Funded EQIP contracts in the amount of \$68,242.03

CAFO/AFO Resource Concerns: \$15,872.00

Cropland Resource Concerns: \$31,693.43

Wildlife Resource Concerns: \$4034.00

Pasture: \$16,642.60

The Cherokee SWCD is an Equal Opportunity Provider and Employer.

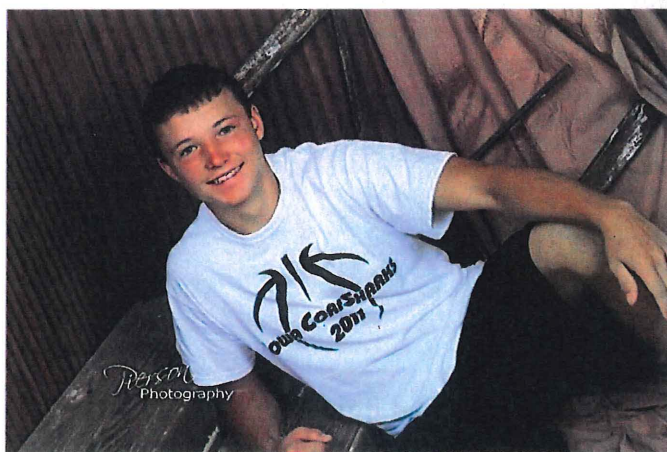
District Awards Scholarships

Each year the Cherokee SWCD gives scholarships to high school seniors who will be pursuing programs of study in any field of agriculture or natural resources. Scholarship applications are judged according to leadership (service, character, and self motivation) and scholastic achievement. The District forwards the top scholarship application to the Conservation Districts of Iowa regional director for a chance to compete for regional and state scholarships. Recipients of this year's District Scholarships were Eric Magnussen and Zachary Specht.



Eric Magnussen

Eric Magnussen from Larrabee was the recipient of a \$300.00 scholarship from the Cherokee SWCD. Eric graduated from South O'Brien High School in May. His parents are Mark and Diane Magnussen. In high school Eric participated in football, basketball, track, instrumental music, Jazz Band, Dinner Theater, and FFA. Eric's interests include farming, hunting, fishing, and FFA competitions. Eric is currently attending South Dakota State University in Brookings, SD where he is majoring in Agronomy and minoring in Soil Science.



Zachary Specht

Zachary Specht from Marcus also received a \$300.00 scholarship from the District. Zachary is a 2012 graduate of Marcus-Meriden-Cleghorn High School. He is the son of Brian Specht and Geri Lynn Specht. In high school Zach participated in National Honor Society, MMC Leadership Team, Football, Basketball, and Student Council. Zach's interests include fishing, hunting, four-wheeling, hanging out with friends, swimming, and working. Zach is currently attending Southwest Minnesota State University in Marshall, Minnesota where he is studying Agricultural Business.

If you know of any high school seniors residing in Cherokee County who are planning to pursue programs of study in agriculture or natural resources please encourage them to apply for the District's 2013 scholarships. For more information they should talk to their guidance counselor or call our office at 225-4151.

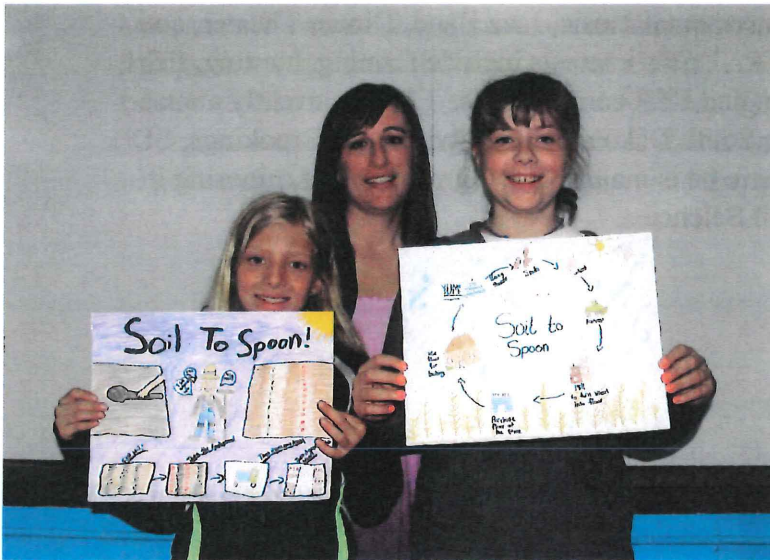
Conservation Education 2012: Students Learn about Soil

In 2012, the National Association of Conservation Districts (NACD) again offered elementary students the opportunity to learn about conservation through a nationwide poster contest. Each year, NACD proposes a new theme. Their choice for 2012 was "Soil To Spoon". The Cherokee County Soil and Water Conservation District Commissioners offer the contest to all of the county's fourth grade classes. In 2012, Aurelia, Cherokee, and Marcus-Meriden-Cleghorn elected to participate.

To introduce the contest, Assistant Commissioner Scott Osborn traveled to each school bearing educational handouts, poster board, contest rules, and a presentation for the kids. Scott talked about the food chain and how everything that we consume interacts with or is a product of our soils. He used an apple to show how much of the earth's useable soils (which is only a very tiny portion of the earth) are available to feed the world's population and how important it is to protect this valuable resource.

Students produced colorful posters with the content theme illustrated by whatever inspired them most. The judges reviewed the posters and judged them on the following criteria: conservation message 50%, visual effectiveness 30%, universal appeal 10%, and originality 10%. The top 3 winners from each school were presented with cash awards, ribbons, and certificates. The winning poster for the county was sent on to a regional competition for a chance at the state and national levels. The 2012 winner for Cherokee County was Chloe Kruger, a 4th grader at Aurelia. Congratulations Chloe!

Aurelia 4th Grade Poster Winners



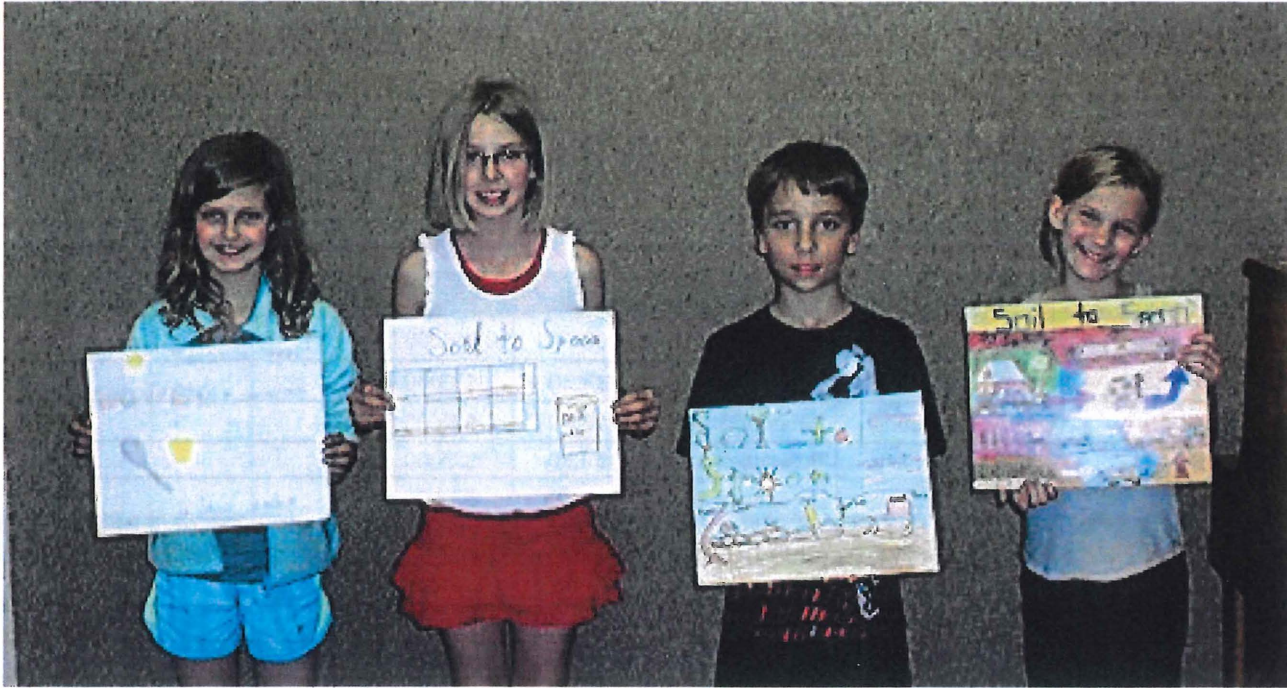
Pictured from left to right: Aurelia's 3rd place winner Kirah Kolpin, teacher Mrs. Kate Westphal, and 1st place winner Chloe Kruger.

Marcus-Meriden-Cleghorn 4th Grade Poster Winners



Pictured from left to right: MMC's 1st place winner Kaitlyn Goth, 2nd place winner Gretchen Ruba, and 3rd place winner Trista Johnston.

Cherokee 4th Grade Poster Winners



Pictured from left to right: Cherokee's 3rd place winner Kaysie Johnson, 2nd place winner Lauren Shea, 1st place winner Mikey Burkhart, and Aurelia's 2nd place winner Elizabeth Reilly.

Soil Loss Limit Revision Public Hearings On-going State-wide

The Iowa Department of Agriculture – Division of Soil Conservation (IDALS-DSC) along with all 100 Iowa Soil and Water Conservation Districts (SWCDs) are required to hold public hearings to discuss changes in District-wide soil loss limits. This requirement driven by Iowa code is supposed to occur every 5 years. At the public hearings folks who wish to address the District Commissioners with their input or have questions about revised limits are welcome to do so.

IDALS-DSC has contracted with the Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS) to develop the soil loss limit revisions and NRCS will be represented at each meeting by a member of the State Soil Scientist's staff. The soil scientist will provide a synopsis of why some soil loss limits have been revised since the last time the approved limits were established. Any questions the public or Commissioners/staff in attendance may have will be addressed by the attending soil scientist.

NRCS will use the revised soil loss limits in each District for conservation planning purposes whether the District Commissioners approve the revisions or not. All customers who have an existing conservation plan will be grandfathered allowing them to keep the previously approved soil loss limits for RUSLE 2 calculations used to derive their plans. Customers who request new conservation plans will have their plans created using the revised soil loss limits.

District Commissioners will use the revised soil loss limits when investigating soil loss complaints. Roughly one-third of the Districts in the State held public meetings this year, to be followed by an equal number of Districts in years 2 and 3 until all 100 SWCDs are up to date with this requirement. If anyone has any questions about soil loss limit revisions I encourage you to talk with a District that has completed or is currently involved with this process or give me a call at 515-281-5853.

Thanks for all your hard work facilitating soil and water conservation at the local level. We ALL appreciate your efforts.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Brandon Dittman'.

Brandon Dittman, IDALS DSC - Western Iowa Field Representative

Note: The Cherokee SWCD held a public hearing June 19, 2012 to discuss changes in soil loss limits in Cherokee County.

2012-2013 Tree Price List

Cherokee Soil & Water Conservation District

314 Lake Street, Cherokee, IA 51012 PH: (712) 225-4151 or
FAX: (712) 225-6090 EMAIL: Tracy.Rasmussen@ia.nacdnet.net

Species	Size	Type	Trees Per Bundle	Price Per Tree	Price Per Bundle or Pot	No. of Bundles	No. of Trees	Total Price
If you are looking for a species not listed below, give us a call. Other varieties may be available.								
Deciduous Trees								
Male Cottonwood (seedless)	4-5'	Seedling	Bundles of 25	\$2.44	\$61.00			
Silver Maple	5-6'	Seedling	Bundles of 10	\$3.30	\$33.00			
Bur Oak	3-4'	Seedling	Bundles of 10	\$2.60	\$26.00			
Red Oak	3-4'	Seedling	Bundles of 10	\$2.50	\$25.00			
Hybrid Willow	4-5'	Seedling	Bundles of 25	\$2.88	\$72.00			
Shrubs								
Nanking Cherry	2-3'	Seedling	Bundles of 25	\$1.68	\$42.00			
Common Chokecherry	2-3'	Seedling	Bundles of 25	\$1.60	\$40.00			
American Cranberrybush	2-3'	Transplant	Bundles of 10	\$3.10	\$31.00			
Redosier Dogwood	2-3'	Transplant	Bundles of 10	\$2.10	\$21.00			
Common Purple Lilac	2-3'	Transplant	Bundles of 10	\$2.10	\$21.00			
Amur Maple	2-3'	Transplant	Bundles of 10	\$2.90	\$29.00			
Common Ninebark	2-3'	Transplant	Bundles of 10	\$2.40	\$24.00			
American Plum	3-4'	Seedling	Bundles of 10	\$2.00	\$20.00			
Evergreens								
White Pine	18-24"	Potted	Any Quantity	\$15.50		NA		
Black Hills Spruce	24-30"	Potted	Any Quantity	\$18.00		NA		
White Spruce	18-24"	Potted	Any Quantity	\$15.50		NA		
Colorado Blue Spruce	24-30"	Potted	Any Quantity	\$18.00		NA		
Special Order	Size	Type	Trees Per Bundle	Price Per Tree	Price Per Bundle or Pot	No. of Bundles	No. of Trees	Total Price

All Orders Subject to Availability!

50% Deposit Required on all orders.

Please make checks payable to Cherokee SWCD

No survival guarantee on stock sold at these prices.

Trees will be available the first or second week in April for pickup.

Date _____

Name _____

Address _____

City, State, Zip _____

Phone _____ Email _____

Profit from tree sales is used for conservation education projects (4th grade poster contest, scholarships for high school seniors, and yearly conservation tour)

SUB TOTAL	
LESS 10% DISCOUNT BY 11/29/12	
TOTAL BEFORE TAXES	
7% STATE & LOCAL OPTION TAX	
GRAND TOTAL	
CASH/CHECK#	
AMOUNT PAID	
BALANCE DUE	

Orders received by 11/29/12
will receive a 10% Discount.

Dear Soil & Water Conservationist:

For over 68 years the Cherokee Soil & Water Conservation District has been helping producers conserve two of our most valuable resources, our soil and water. We believe that soil and water conservation is an easy task that everyone can do and we need your help. We invite you to join our local conservation efforts by becoming a Conservation Club Member for 2013. All Conservation Club funds collected are used specifically for projects like: scholarship awards for high school seniors, conservation education materials, 4th grade poster contest prizes and materials, and our yearly Conservation Tour in which the public views newly implemented conservation practices. We also provide technical assistance in the local office by paying for part-time employees.

As Iowans, we all share similar concerns for soil and water quality as well as protecting these resources for future generations. Iowa is faced with challenges that will impact conservation programs. By donating to the Cherokee SWCD, we can continue to promote, educate, and implement these important conservation practices. Any support you can give to the SWCD is greatly appreciated. And remember, your contribution **IS tax deductible**. If you would like to make a contribution, please complete the membership form below and mail it with your donation, made payable to the Cherokee SWCD.

With Sincere Thanks,
Cherokee SWCD Commissioners

Please make your donation payable to:
Cherokee SWCD

Name: _____

Address: _____

**Cherokee SWCD
314 Lake Street
Cherokee, IA 51012
712-225-3769**

Levels of Support

Soil & Water Supporter	\$20 - \$49.00	Soil & Water Saver	\$50 - \$99.00
Soil & Water Steward	\$100 - \$149.00	Soil & Water Sustainer	\$150.00 and above

Donation enclosed: _____ **Any Amount Welcome**



All Soil & Water Sustainers have the option to receive a free rain barrel from the Cherokee SWCD - while supplies last.

Conservation Reminders

The local NRCS staff and SWCD commissioners have compiled a “top sixteen” list of land treatments that can potentially contribute in an unfavorable manner to soil stewardship. The list is presented to aid in wetland compliance, highly erodible land compliance, maintenance agreements of installed structures, contract fulfillment such as CRP, and general soil conservation. Land prices are high, rents are high, commodity prices are high, and crop inputs are high. Each of these items put additional pressure on implementing effective conservation. Land owners, operators, and commercial applicators are encouraged to visit with each other and with the local NRCS staff to determine how profitability and conservation can be maximized on the land.

- 1.) Toes of narrowbase terraces destroyed by heavy tillage/moldboard plowing.
- 2.) Terrace and waterway seeding destroyed by herbicide application.
- 3.) Structural integrity of terraces diminished by saplings/volunteer trees or animal burrowing.
- 4.) Ephemeral erosion in endrows due to removal of field borders.
- 5.) Top width and capacity of waterways decreased by heavy tillage/moldboard plowing.
- 6.) Water ponding behind terraces due to collapsed intakes.
- 7.) Amount of contracted acres (i.e.-CRP waterways, CRP filter strips, general CRP, etc.) violated due to tillage encroachment.
- 8.) Residue removal in excess of Conservation Plan requirements (i.e.-baling bean straw, baling corn stalks, excessive tillage, etc.).
- 9.) Farming operations such as tillage, manure application, and anhydrous application not conducted on the contour.
- 10.) Farming operations conducted over the top of broadbase terraces.
- 11.) Conservation cover not applied according to Conservation Plan requirements (i.e.-seeding a cover crop after silage harvest).
- 12.) Land leveling, filling, dredging, clearing, excavation, stump removal, abandoned farmstead removal, or drainage (to include tiling) conducted in an area not evaluated by NRCS. AD-1026 not completed by the landowner/operator in a *timely manner* before intended land manipulation.
- 13.) Seeding damage by livestock and/or human traffic on terraces, waterways, and grade stabilization structures; and livestock overgrazing and/or grazing when soil conditions are wet.
- 14.) Structures removed partially or totally without adequate consideration of the Conservation Plan, Maintenance Agreement, or downstream/downhill landowner.
- 15.) Inadequate ridge height on terrace blocks with associated loss of channel storage capacity due to tillage operations.
- 16.) Pesticide drift into ponds, streams, and other water bodies due to removal of buffers/filter strips.

This list of common observations is to serve as helpful reminders *prior to conducting* an operation that could potentially lead to a violation of Farm Bill compliance, maintenance agreement, or contract. Please visit the local USDA Center for specific considerations that apply to your farm and for requesting technical assistance.