

New Decade will bring

1989 Annual Financial Report

IM Budget - District Allocation July 1, 1988 1,800.00

Expenses

Commissioners mileage, meals, lodging 1,176.11
Office Supplies & expense 623.89
Balance on hand June 30, 1989 0.00

IIIM Budget (voluntary cost-share program)

ALLOCATION

1973-74 15,317.83
1974-75 11,521.44
1975-76 23,668.47
1976-77 31,283.84
1977-78 46,250.00
1978-79 43,633.00
1979-80 46,320.00
1980-81 45,000.00
1981-82 77,662.12
1982-83 54,833.72
1983-84 96,753.61
1984-85 144,251.75
1985-86 147,916.82
1986-87 122,828.44
1987-88 92,429.64
1988-89 83,564.58
1989-90 initial allotment 32,006.00
TOTAL 1,115,241.26

No interest loan [6] 48,248.05

Conservation Club Account

June 30, 1988 balance 1,616.77
Receipts 347.15

Disbursements 166.88
June 30, 1989 balance 1797.04

Revolving Account

June 30, 1988 balance 412.73
Receipts 483.98
St. Comptroller

Disbursements 444.92
Office expense 451.79
June 30, 1989 balance

ACCOMPLISHMENTS

New Cooperators 29 No./2,950 Ac
Farms contacted 625 No
Individuals & groups applying practices 116 No
Food Security Act Plans 101,033 Ac
Contouring 495 Ac
Terraces 84,252 Ft
Sediment & water control basins 83 No
Reduced erosion on cropland 2,692 Ac
Field border 13,800 Ft



Hardin Soil Conservation Staff

Lawrence Green (center) serves as District Conservationist for Hardin county. Other staff members are, left to right: Chester Worden, part-time technician; Christine Birks, part-time technician; Green; Susie Reece, district clerk; Kent Holmgard, soil conservation technician. Not present: Earnest Hoffa, soil conservation technician.



Goodyear Award to Hardin SWCD

The Hardin Soil and Water Conservation District was one of the four Iowa districts named grand award winners in the 1989 Goodyear Conservation Awards Program. Hardin Commissioners pictured with the plaque are left to right: Carroll Hobson of Eldora, vice chairman; Gene Roberts of Hubbard, treasurer; Martin Broer of Iowa Falls; Caleb Knutson of Radcliffe; and Gary Walters of Eldora, chairman. Not pictured is Nancy Galloway of Union, assistant commissioner.

Summary of District Activities

Twelve regular, two special meetings, one workshop and two joint Grundy/Hardin county meetings were held by the Hardin County Soil and Water Conservation District Commissioners. The special meetings were to review applications and request supplemental funding. The workshop was devoted to development of the 1990 annual work plan.

JANUARY - Commissioners elected the following officers: chair, Gary Walters; vice-chair, Carroll Hobson; treasurer, G.E. Roberts. Commissioners Annual Short Course in Ames was attended by Walters, Hobson and Knutson. Requested and received supplemental state cost share funds.

FEBRUARY - Eighth sign up period for the Conservation Reserve Program had 21 bids submitted for 401 acres. Annual workshop and annual report of the Hardin County Soil and Water Conservation District was submitted for the Goodyear Award.

MARCH - Spring Regional meeting was attended by Walters.

APRIL - No-till and ridge-till tour signs were completed by boys from the State Training School. Nanci Galloway appointed as an assistant commissioner for the Hardin County Soil and Water Conservation District.

MAY - Jane Primus gave a classroom presentation and Thaine Hogue conducted an outdoor classroom for the Iowa Falls School District.

JUNE - Signs for self-guided no-till/ridge-till tour district were installed. District winners for the Iowa Conservation Awards Program were selected.

JULY - Received initial allocation of 89-90 cost share funds. Gary Walters nominated for the Iowa Outstanding District Commissioner Award.

AUGUST - Carroll Hobson selected to represent the District on the County

REAP Committee. Supplemental State Cost Share funds were requested and received. The ninth sign up for Conservation Reserve Program had 37 bids submitted for 1035 acres. To date 6,425 acres have been placed in CRP in Hardin county, including 123 acres with tree planting.

SEPTEMBER - Joint meeting of Grundy and Hardin County Soil and Water Conservation Districts to discuss water quality application for the Pine Lake Watershed. A public information meeting for landowners and operators in the Watershed was held to determine level of interest for participation in the Water Quality Program. Friends of Conservation dinner and awards presentation was held September 24 at the Boat Club. Fall Regional meeting was attended by Walters and Knutson. James Bergeson was selected as Hardin County winner of Izaak Walton Wind-break Award.

OCTOBER - Joint meeting of Grundy and Hardin County Soil and Water Conservation Districts to develop final draft of Water Quality application for Pine Lake Watershed.

NOVEMBER - Fall Conservation tour held with two busloads of participants. Annual conference was attended by Walters, Hobson and Roberts. The Hardin County Soil and Water Conservation District was recognized as one of four districts in the State of Iowa to win the Goodyear Distinguished Service Award. Walters was recognized as Outstanding District Commissioner in the State of Iowa for 1989.

DECEMBER - Hobson represented the District, winner of the Goodyear Award, by attending the Grand Awards Tour held at the Wigwam Resort in Litchfield Park, Arizona. Workshop held to complete the Annual Work Plan for 1990.



Terraces reduce soil loss

Terraces installed on an approximate contour can reduce soil loss by 55% to 65%. Conservation plans involving terraces in some situations will allow more flexibility in choosing crop rotation and tillage practices while achieving acceptable soil loss levels.



Identify no-till, ridge-till practices

Last spring, boys from the State Training School in Eldora painted signs to help the Soil and Water Conservation District mark land on which no-till and ridge-till farming practices are used.

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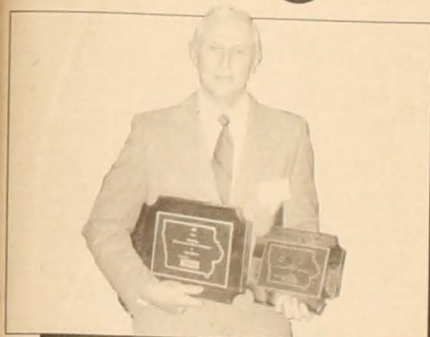
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changes in soil conservation



Top Conservation Award to Walters

Gary Walters, rural Eldora, was honored in 1989 as Iowa's Outstanding Soil and Water Conservation District Commissioner. Walters was selected for the award from nine nominees, one from each region in the state.

Less tillage; cleaner environment

by Gary D. Walters, Commissioner

Once again this last year we've experienced less than normal rainfall and water erosion has not been as evident as in past years. Also, less soybean stubble was tilled in the fall of 1989 than in 1988 because of less concern of herbicide carryover. But did you notice on some of those cold, windy days the tremendous clouds of dust rolling off those disked and chisel-plowed soybean fields?

What has prompted these farm operators to neglect the research of many universities, seed company agronomists, and S.C.S. that there are no yield or profit advantages in fall tillage of soybean stubble? Such "recreational tillage" can, in fact, be a double edged sword for both wind and water erosion.

The previous year's soybean row is a mellow and moist seedbed for corn that a farm operator cannot duplicate!

For those of us that ridge-tilt or no-tilt corn into the old soybean row, we know that it works. We need to convince others that this is practical and profitable.

Most any planter that has disk-openers will do a good job in the old soybean row if adjusted properly and still leave plenty of trash to protect against erosion. Another big advantage is the conservation of top soil moisture in a dry spring.

Early pre-plant herbicide application works well in such a plan prior to no-tilt. Some can be applied up to 30 days prior to planting and will be incorporated by the rain by the time the corn is planted.

If the farm operator is prone to till, a field cultivator or soil finisher will leave more residue on the surface and waste less soil moisture than a disk in all pre-plant tillage operations.

Changes as we go

by Carroll J. Hobson

Soil and water conservation like many other aspects of our society has made many changes since it started in the 1930's. In the beginning broad based terraces were made by horses or mules pulling a small grader. Today they are made by huge crawler tractors and self propelled dirt machines. Most people have decided over time that the old broad based terrace, laid out on contour lines, was effective but unusable in today's large tractor dominated agriculture.

A farmer that has to waste a lot of time doing his work for whatever reason is a bankrupt farmer eventually. Farming is a capital intensive business. Interest, depreciation and taxes must be paid whether these costs are incurred by machines, land or conservation. I am grateful every day for the good work done in our county in past years.

The costs of those early terraces and tiling projects were only a fraction of today's cost and we have been stopping soil erosion and water pollution all this time as a bonus.

Today society is changing emphasis again. Environmental people (most do not understand farms) have demanded changes in farm bills and we are now working with the effects.

Swampbuster and sodbuster rules left very little latitude for repair or revision on farm land, even small pot holes are regarded as wetlands. There was and is a blizzard of papers to sign, understand and store. Tiling contractors were driven out of business over night. There is a lot of confusion as to what constitutes tiling repair and what is new drainage.

The environmentalists are encouraged by their wildlife and swamp saving victories from the last farm bill so now they are trying hard to eliminate several commonly used chemicals. If you are unhappy and frustrated with any of this call or write your United States representative and your senators. One of them is running for re-election. Don't blame the soil and water conservation district commissioners or the staff at the office, if it had been our option, changes would have already been made.

In spite of the problems we will go forward doing the best we can to conserve the soil and clean up the water in Hardin county. The latest population prediction shows we will have a billion new people to feed by the year 2000 with the same soil and water, consider that.

Farm Plans Completed

by Martin L. Broer

The conservation office has just completed the farm plans for the highly erodible land in Hardin county. The 1985 Food Security Act has put a different perspective on land conservation. While some land has required a farm plan, other highly erodible land has escaped the necessity of a plan because of USDA definition. Much still needs to be done on a voluntary basis and we always need to rely on the conservation ethics of our Hardin county farmers.

Because of the farm plan requirement, many of us have a better understanding of what needs to be done on all of our land. With or without government requirements, we all need to be better stewards of the soil.

It is our hope that more and more non-farmers would become aware of the need for conservation and better understanding of the problems farmers face in balancing land preservation with economic need.

Fall Conservation Bus Tour

The Hardin County Soil and Water Conservation District sponsored a bus tour on November 1, 1989 to give area residents, especially senior citizens, a chance to see conservation practices in the field. The attendance was much greater than in 1988, fully loading two school buses. With District Conservationist, Lawrence Green, on one bus and Soil Conservation Technician, Earnest Hoffa, on the other, the group toured conservation practices southeast of Eldora for approximately one and one half hours.

The first tour stop was the Donald F. Balvanz farm where participants were able to see terrace construction in progress. They received an explanation of how terraces and water and sediment control basins differ in erosion control benefits and the cost share assistance for construction which is presently available.

A brief stop was made to view highly erodible and wetland areas in a pasture and to discuss the restrictions sodbuster and swampbuster laws would have if the landowner wished to convert the land to commodity crop production.

Wetland Determination Mailing Nearly Complete

The Soil Conservation Service has been busy preparing and mailing wetland determinations during January and February as part of the wetland provisions of the 1985 Food Security Act. There have also been a series of four wetland information meetings held in Radcliffe, Iowa Falls, Hubbard and Eldora to answer questions of those landowners who had potential wetlands identified on their farms. A wetland inventory process utilizing aerial slides for 1982, 1984, 1985, 1986 and 1987 was the basis for identifying potential wetland areas.

Over 1,600 letters were mailed out to landowners. If you did not receive a letter on land you own, don't worry. This simply means potential wetland areas were not identified on your farm. You may call or stop by the Soil Conservation Office to check for sure if you wish.

A beautiful, functional farmstead windbreak on the Irwin Seward farm was our third stop. All SCS designated windbreaks have a minimum of three rows; either three rows of evergreen or one row of shrubs and two rows of evergreens.

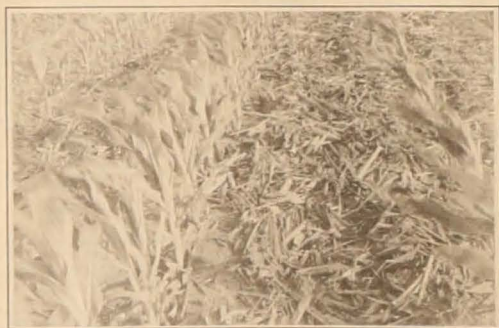
Conservation practices including grass headlands on the Irwin Seward farm and contouring on the Bill Vigners farm were seen at our fourth stop. A brief discussion of the universal soil loss equation (USLE) and the requirements of conservation compliance plans for highly erodible land was also done at this site.

Other conservation practices seen on the tour were an extensive terrace system on the Felton farm, a concrete drop structure and waterway on the John Graham farm and a conservation reserve program (CRP) seeding on the Cecil Rooks farm.

The grand finale of the tour was a drive to Upper Pine Lake where the planned lake renovation, water quality problems, and needed land treatment in the Pine Lake Watershed was discussed.

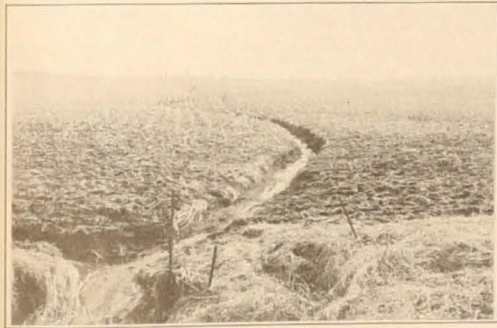
In the wetland letters for landowners with potential wetland identified in cropland fields, they were given a 45 day period to provide the SCS with information about drainage which was done on the slides prior to the signing of the laws - December 23, 1985. With the information provided by landowners, a final determination will then be made. On non-cropland areas the determinations may be appealed in writing, then an on-site field visit will be made.

Due to the large number of requests for final determinations based on drainage information provided and field visits for appeals, the landowners involved may not receive a response until this summer. Priority will be placed on completion of determinations for those wishing to do drainage work or clearing this spring.



Seek 30% to 50% residue cover

Conservation tillage leaving between 30% and 50% residue cover after planting is the backbone of most conservation compliance plans in Hardin county. A large number of farmers will face changes in their tillage and herbicide management to achieve these residue levels.



Encourage shaping and seeding

Shaping and seeding of a grass waterway is a long term solution compared to "covering up" your erosion problems only to have them reappear in a few short months. Even the best conservation tillage will not control the concentrated flow of water from runoff when there are a number of acres draining to one spot.

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