



New Commissioners . . . are Derald Blois, Robert K. Petersen and Floyd Fischer.

Conservation District Holds 25th Anniversary Dinner

UNDERWOOD — About 250 persons attended the 25th anniversary banquet of the West Pottawattamie County Soil Conservation District Wednesday night.

Emcee C. W. McManamy, long active in district work, described the fete as "a tribute to a revolution in agriculture—one whose purpose has been to build up rather than tear down."

The soil conservation program is one utilizing federal state and local resources to promote conservation practices and help farmers carry out projects such as drainage and terracing land. The federal Soil Conservation Service furnishes the technicians to oversee projects, while state and local organizations provide administration and funds.

Since its origin 2,561 miles of field terraces have been constructed, 1,672 acres of land have been graded, 1,291 cooperatives have been formed, and 146 grade stabilization struc-

tures have been built in the district.

Difficult Beginning

Clifford Johnson, district secretary for all its 25 year history, described how difficult it was in the first years to promote the idea of conservation districts.

He said poor roads and bad weather hampered many efforts to reach farmers to explain the program and convince them to join.

After a brief history of the district, awards were presented by chairman Eldon Ravlin. Kenneth Christensen of Rte. 3, Council Bluffs, was presented the Goodyear Tire and Rubber Company award for outstanding district cooperator.

Winners of the Iowa Soil Conservation Achievement Awards were Timothy McEvoy, Missouri Valley, owner-operator category; Ervin Eilts, Crescent, new cooperator; and Paul Brandt and Helen Alston, both from Rte. 1, Council Bluffs, landlord-tenant operation.

Ravlin, serving his 11th year as commissioner, has been named Iowa's Outstanding District Commissioner for 1969.

Election First

Prior to the banquet a special ballot was held to elect new district commissioners. Derald Blois, Robert K. Petersen, and Floyd Fischer were elected.

The number of commissioners was expanded from three to five this year because of the variety of projects added to the soil conservation program.

Ervin Koos, president of the State Association of Soil Conservation Commissioners, said future success relies on the understanding of the program by the people in it. He said although the federal government's agenda is long, there is no program more important than that of conservation and control of pollution.

Grass Roots

Koos lauded the soil conservation district program as one of the few examples of real grass-roots government. However, he said, the time has come to include both cities and rural areas in the same districts.

"Pollution doesn't stop at the city limits," he said. "And it is unrealistic to make conservation programs do so."

He said as a stream enters a city one program now ends and another begins. As the stream leaves the city, the second program ends and a third begins. Programs lose their effectiveness in situations like this, he said.

Criticize Cash Fines To Officers

HARRISON WEBER
FINES — (IDPA) —
the court re-



SCS Job: Keep Rind On Orange

1971

(Editor's Note: The following story is the first of a series of four that will appear in coming Sundays in The Nonpareil dealing with the work of the Soil Conservation Service.)

By A Staff Writer

"If you would compare the earth to an orange, the soil that all growing things depend on is like the rind of that orange," said Cal Cox, West Pottawattamie County Soil District conservationist.

Cox heads the local office of the Soil Conservation Service (SCS), an agency that works with area farmers and city dwellers to initiate good conservation practices.

"It's a joke among soil conservation men that when earth is in the right place, it's soil, but when it's in the wrong place due to erosion, it's dirt," Cox said.

Erosion is attributed to wind and water transporting soil where it doesn't belong. Soil conservationists like to point out the damage one drop of rain does when it hits bare earth:

The drop of water sends particles of earth flying in the air, and washes them down hill, where they eventually clog up rivers and streams as sediment. The clogged-up waterways can eventually mean flooding and more erosion.

Gullies created by water erosion create ugly scars on the land and depreciate its value, often separating a good section of land from the rest of the farm.

"Ecology is a very topical concern right now, but we've been involved with it since the Soil Conservation Service was started in 1935. The biggest pollutant there is is silt," Cox said.

The SCS office in the Federal Building in Council Bluffs is both state and federally funded and it's general guidelines are set by five district commissioners, elected by farmers in the area. Cox is assisted by a clerk and two soil conservation specialists.

In 1971, a total of 211 area farmers participated in SCS programs.

West Pottawattamie County's commissioners, who serve on staggered six-year terms are Eldon Ravlin, Floyd Fischer, Stanley Grote and Clint Goos, all of Council Bluffs, Harvey Moss of Macedonia, Derald Blois of Honey Creek, Robert K. Petersen of Minden, Louie Fahrenkrog of Carson, and Lloyd Brokman of McClelland, Secretary.

According to Cox, the service goes through four principal steps in assisting farmers with their conservation problems:

1. At the farmer's request, a detailed acre-by-acre survey of the farm is completed, mapping soil types, erosion and slope.

2. Together, the farmer and the soil conservation technician draw up a conservation farm plan, providing for various alternatives in the treatment and use of the land according to its capabilities.

3. The soil conservation plan is implemented, with the soil conservationist giving the necessary technical guidance. The owner may do most of the work himself, or he may hire contractors.

4. The conservation improvements are maintained by the farmer with guidance from the service.

Improvements on the land to prevent erosion include structures (dams) and terraces to slow down the flow of water. Practices that can be initiated to prevent erosion include minimum tillage of the soil, mulch tillage, and contour plowing, perhaps the oldest method of erosion control.

Mulch tillage is a planting and harvesting system which leaves crop residues (stalks, stems, leaves and other plant parts) under or on the soil surface in the field.

Financing for soil conservation practices is handled through the county Agricultural Stabilization and Conservation Service, which will be discussed in a later article.

1971

Seven In W. Pottawattamie Watersheds Protect The Soil

(Editor's Note: This is the third in a series of four articles dealing with the work of the Soil Conservation Districts and the Soil Conservation Service.)

—O—
Watersheds are locally-organized units, sponsored by the Soil Conservation District and the County Board of Supervisors.

"Every farm drains into some watershed, and that's how we establish the boundaries of a watershed," said Eldon Ravlin of Council Bluffs, county chairman of the Soil Conservation District.

Main Purpose

The main purpose of watersheds in keeping soil in the uplands. Other benefits of soil conservation watersheds are reduced land depreciation from erosion, less sedimentation in lowland areas and recreational facilities for hunting, swimming and fishing, with permission of the landowner.

Currently, there are seven watersheds organized in West Pottawattamie County:

Indian Creek: 9,792 acres with four erosion control structures completed and 11 planned; Ryan-Henschall: 9,410 acres with 15 structures completed and two planned; North Pigeon: 4,510 acres with six structures slated for construction this spring and a total of 18 planned; Simon Run: 4,175 acres,

with 12 structures planned; Twin Ponies: 21,640, and Mamie Creek: 4,440, both with erosion control plans still being prepared; and the Pottawattamie County portion of Pony Creek: 1,536, with upland treatment in practice but no structures.

Procedure Involved

In order to organize a watershed project, individuals with erosion or water management problems contact the Soil Conservation District. The SCD commissioners and personnel explain the watershed approach and SCS watershed technicians examine the specific problems in the watershed.

If the technicians agree a watershed project would be the best solution to the problem and there is favorable interest, the watershed residents elect directors, establishing a watershed organization.

The watershed directors and SCD commissioners then make an official application for watershed aid, which is

reviewed by the state Watershed Advisory Board.

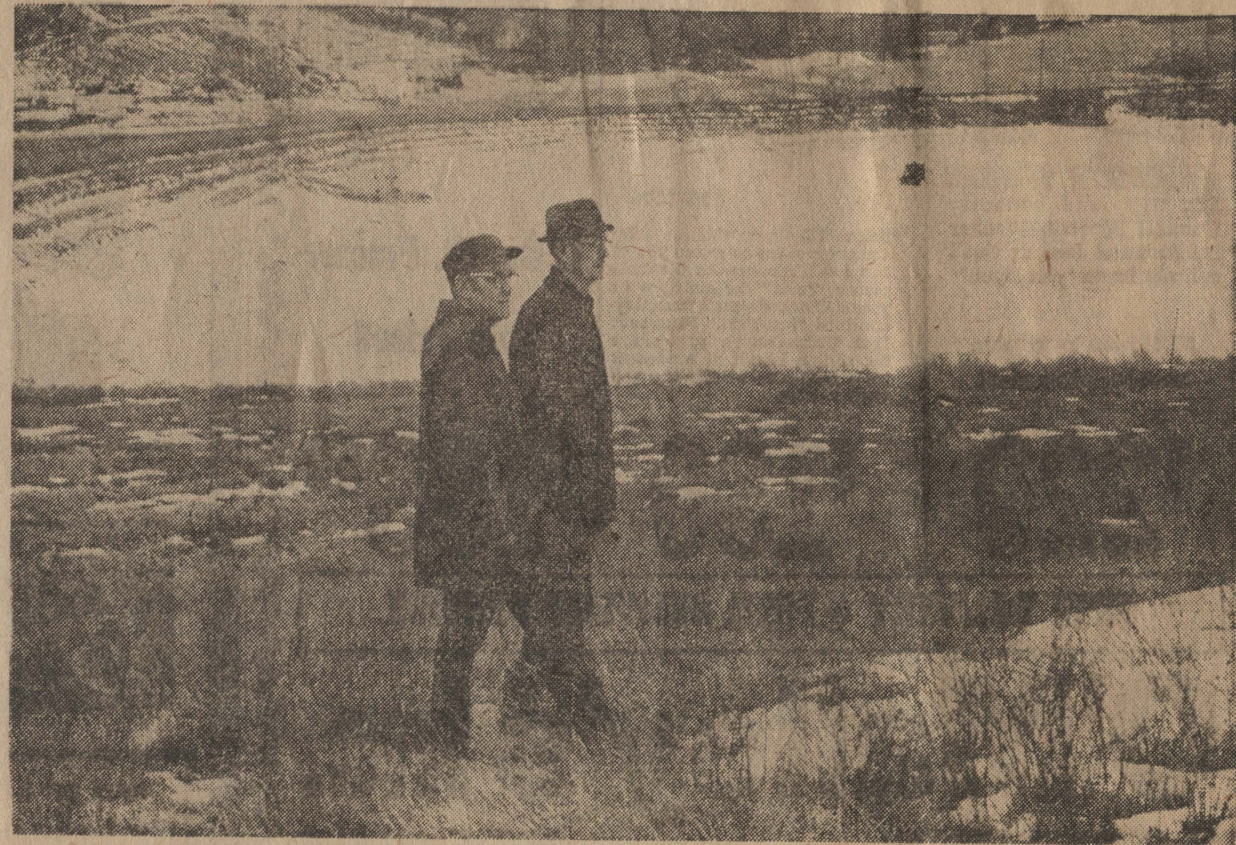
Field Studies

The recommendations of the Advisory Board are then given to the State Soil Conservation Committee. If it is approved, the watershed technician makes detailed field studies and prepares work plans with the assistance of the residents.

When the project receives final approval, the directors obtain easements and right-of-way and water rights and make arrangements for long-term maintenance. Maintenance of structures on roads is done by the county.

Work on smaller structures and uplands work is done on a 50-50 cost sharing basis, while the government pays the total bill for the cost of large gully stabilization structures.

The larger structures are earth dams with a lake or pond created behind it. Other smaller structures involve a concrete chute which takes some of the steep grade from the gully.



Surveying An Erosion Control Structure . . . in the Indian Creek Watershed are soil conservationist Calvin Cox and County Soil Conservation District Chairman

Eldon Ravlin. The structure is located on farms owned by LeRoy Coffelt and Adolph Fell north of Council Bluffs.—Nonpareil Photo.



—Staff Photo

'First Acre Ceremony'—

The Carroll County Standard Soil Survey officially got underway Friday afternoon at Swan Lake Park with a "First Acre Ceremony." The soil survey will take three to four years to complete. Some of the approximately 35 persons attending the event were (back row, left to right) Arlyn Gesell, district conservationist; John Pesek, Iowa State University agronomist;

Leon Foderberg, state department of soil conservation; Leonard Sporrer, Carroll County soil commission; Leonard Rupiper, chairman of the Carroll County Board of Supervisors, and Wilson Moon, state soil conservationist. The three soil scientists conducting the survey are (front row) Max Sherwood, Frank Haynes and Kirk Johnson.

Twenty-one Iowa counties have published soil surveys and 26 more have surveys completed but not published, according to Lacy Harmon, soil conservation service soil scientist, as reported in the July 13 Wallace's Farmer magazine.

Seventeen counties are in the process of surveying soils and 16 to 20 others will begin within six years, Harmon said. The magazine said that if four counties finish surveys each year, the entire state should be surveyed by 1986.

Talking about those who would use the surveys, Gesell said land appraisers have "any number of reasons for wanting soils data," including "credit purposes, investment, home or business sites or for taxation purposes. Numerous Iowa counties are using it in tax assessments and equalization."

Engineers could use the soil survey to locate proper sites for the construction of highways, railroads, gas or oil pipelines, dams or buildings, Gesell said.

Planning and zoning commissions will be able to use the survey for a guide in the "urbanization of our land," he added.

When published, the survey will be available without charge through the extension service.

Your views

Cal Cox helped the educators

Council Bluffs

In the May 5 issue of *The Nonpareil*, C. W. McManamy wrote an excellent article about Cal Cox. I agree with everything he wrote, but there is more.

Several years ago, Jan Kamp, 6th grade teacher at Gunn School, and I wrote a curriculum guide for "Outdoor Education", that has been used by the 6th grade classes in Council Bluffs Public Schools these past years.

Each fall we have new teachers that help staff the two and one-half day program at Camp Pokomoke. When it came time for in-service for new teachers in forests, soils, and streams, who could we depend on to help us with his vast knowledge of the flowers, weeds, soils at Camp Pokomoke? Yes, Cal Cox.

Cal wrote a complete 10 page bulletin on grasses, flowers, weeds, and soils familiar to Camp Pokomoke alone.

We will never know how many teachers, boys and girls, and principals that Cal has helped in outdoor education. Whenever I think of Camp Pokomoke, 6th graders, fun and learning about God's great outdoors, I shall think of my dear friend, Cal. Thanks Cal.

Lloyd J. Gere, Principal
Gunn & Lake Schools



Explaining The Composition . . . and how bluffs near Crescent were formed is Fred Dorheim, state economic geologist. Dorheim's program on

geology and soils was one of many taught at the Western Iowa Teachers Fall Workshop at Camp Hitchcock Friday. — Nonpareil Photo.

At Camp Hitchcock

10-10-75

Teachers explore outdoors

Southwest Iowa teachers are getting a first-hand taste of nature this Friday and Saturday in order to better be able to teach others about it.

About 35 educators were expected to participate in the Western Iowa Teachers Fall Workshop at Camp Hitchcock near Crescent.

The event is sponsored by the West Pottawattamie Environmental Education Council of the Soil Conservation Service (SCS).

Ed Flannery, science coordinator of the Council Bluffs School District and one of the

program staff, said this is the third annual workshop to be held.

"It's purpose is to provide teachers with some new methods of teaching in and about the outdoors and recreation," Flannery said.

The teachers participated in several activities led by the following staff members: horsemanship, Linda Dolinski, Glendale School; archery, Stan Anderson, YMCA camping services director; gun safety, Mike Batten, Hoover School; geology and soils, Fred

Dorheim, state economic geologist, and John Nixon, SCS soil scientist.

Acclimatization, Flannery; and other educational activities Cal Cox, SCS district conservationist, and Jane Hallstrom, outdoor education coordinator for the Omaha School District.

The teachers were slated to stay overnight at the camp, taking part in a trust hike and a study in astronomy.

On Saturday, the group planned to visit a nearby cemetery to learn how to apply what they find there to environmental education.

Outdoor classes

set for teachers

10-9-75

CRESCENT—About 50 high school teachers from Southwest Iowa and eastern Nebraska will converge on Camp Hitchcock north of here Friday for the annual Western Iowa Teachers Fall Workshop.

Cal Cox, area conservationist for the Soil Conservation Service, said the two-day workshop is sponsored by the West Pottawattamie Environmental Education Council.

Cox said the workshop will begin at 9:30 a.m. Friday and will include sessions on outdoor recreation, biology, geology and acclimatization. The evening will include a speech, singing and night hikes.

The teachers will spend most of Saturday morning going to a nearby cemetery for site activities.



Ralph Spomer . . . research engineer.

Carter Lake youth tops

10-22-76

CARTER LAKE — Dale Williams of Carter Lake was named top winner in the West Pottawattamie Environmental Education Council's soil conservation speech contest.

Theme of the speeches was "Soil Conservation — Lifeline to Mankind." The education council is under the auspices of the West Pottawattamie Soil Conservation District.

Williams will represent West Pottawattamie County in the regional speech contest Nov. 10 at Harlan.

Second place honors went to Pam Kline of Council Bluffs while third place was taken by Jim White of Carter Lake. All three winners are ninth grade students at Woodrow Wilson Junior High School.

11-7-76

Conservation winners

Robert F. Young and Eldon Ravlin, Council Bluffs, will represent the West Pottawattamie County Soil Conservation District in the Goodyear Conservation awards program at Litchfield Park, Ariz.

The program for grand award winners will be held Friday. More than 100 award-winning conservationists from across the nation will attend the 29th annual event.

The group includes two representatives from each first place conservation district in the state competitions sponsored by Goodyear Tire and Rubber Company in cooperation with the National Association of Conservation Districts. (NACD).

Only four from Iowa will be attending.

Culver believes soil top issue

12-1-76

DES MOINES, Iowa (AP) — Soil conservation is one of the most underrated of the nation's agricultural issues and should be advanced to high priority, Sen. John Culver, D-Iowa, said Tuesday.

"Everybody believes in soil conservation," Culver told the annual conference of Iowa's Soil Conservation District Commissioners. "We simply haven't been aroused enough to take the necessary and feasible measures to give adequate

protection to one of the greatest heritages any people ever had."

Across Southwest Iowa

Dedication June 25 of watershed project

Dedication of the Indian Creek Watershed project will be at 1:30 p.m. June 25 at the Structure Two site northeast of Council Bluffs.

Eldon Ravlin, chairman of the sponsoring West Pottawattamie County Soil Conservation District, said Sen. Dick Clark and U.S. Rep. Tom Harkin have been invited to attend, along with several state and local officials.

A series of 15 structures designed to stabilize grades and eliminate siltation have been constructed in the watershed under the supervision of the Soil Conservation Service engineers. These structures will supplement the soil and water conservation achieved by a number of miles of terraces and contouring applied by local farmers.

RAVLIN SAID the net result is an anticipated 71 per cent reduction in the silt load that formerly was carried from the upper reaches into the concrete channel of Indian Creek in Council Bluffs. This, in turn, is expected to materially reduce any threat of city flooding by the creek.

Ravlin said visitors will be invited to take a self-guided tour of the watershed following the dedication. The watershed will be marked for convenience. All the structure sites will be within viewing distance of the tour site.

The watershed project was a joint venture between the federal government, the Soil Conservation District and the county board of supervisors. Landowners in the watershed donated the needed land for all of the structures and their access.

Council Bluffs Nonpareil

OPINION PAGE

*"Speak your truth quietly and clearly. . . Listen to others
... They too have their story." — Max Ehrmann.*

Defeating the creek

Public Enemy Number One of Council Bluffs has been brought to bay in the rolling hills and valleys northeast of the city.

The culprit will be detained there indefinitely to the infinite advantage of both the city and those hills and valleys where he once roamed freely. He is now held prisoner there.

The Indian Creek Watershed project is virtually complete. The 100 year old struggle between Council Bluffs and Indian Creek has been settled.

LITERALLY EVER since the first Indian pitched his wigwam along the lower reaches of this little stream, the creek has menaced those living along it with floods and aggravated them with mud and silt.

Among some of the earliest records of Council Bluffs are accounts of the struggles to stabilize the banks of this stream where it flows through the heart of the city. Attempts were made to straighten its meanderings and permit quicker runoff to prevent the floods.

Those records also tell the story of devastation left in the wake of the creek's angry uprisings. They document the thousands of tax dollars spent to clean up after the floods.

In the late 1930's the present concrete channel was built for Indian Creek where it runs through the city. This accomplished much but the problem of siltation still remained. That siltation, which reduced channel capacity, resulted in more flood.

MEANWHILE, the agricultural portion of the watershed, which lies above the city, suffered immeasurable damage through erosion, expanding gullies and decreased production.

The glimmering of a plan to bring an end to the depredations of Indian Creek appeared in the late 1950's. A watershed soil and water conservation program for the upper reaches of the creek was proposed.

Slowly, and often painfully, that plan took form and substance. It is now a completed reality.

Today, throughout the 5,000 acres of hills and valleys that constitute the upper reaches of Indian Creek some 70 miles of terraces have been built around the slopes and side hills. In addition 15 structures calculated to stabilize the banks and, in some instances, to impound runoff water and silt, have been completed.

The terraces mean that most of the rain which falls on the slopes of the Indian Creek watershed will be held on those slopes. The structures mean that bank erosion will be sharply

reduced and, more importantly, the anticipated silt load that would be carried into the city, even in the event of a heavy rain, will be reduced by as much as 71 per cent. In addition the runoff from the watershed into the city will be substantially slowed.

The watershed program means that a great measure of the flood threat to Council Bluffs has been eliminated.

It would not be realistic to suggest that all possibility of an Indian Creek flood has been erased.

Some 5000 acres of the watershed are within the city itself. Many of these acres are roof tops, parking lots, street surfaces and the like. Rain falling on these will make its hurried way into Indian Creek.

In such an event though, the watershed program still helps stop the chance of flooding.

First, because the runoff from the upper reaches has been slowed the runoff from the city proper will have had time to move out ahead. Secondly, because the siltation problem has been largely eliminated the creek channel in the city can function at full capacity.

The Indian Creek project has been a model of cooperation. Landowners in the upper reaches not only constructed the terraces on their acres but a number of them in turn gave the land needed for locating structures and impounding areas.

The federal government cooperated with Soil Conservation Service personnel who designed both the upland treatment and the structures. The federal government also provided substantial funding for the structures.

And the state of Iowa cooperated, again in supplying funds for both land treatment and for personnel. Pottawattamie County and the West Pottawattamie Soil Conservation District cooperated as joint sponsors.

The Indian Creek watershed project will be dedicated at a short ceremony at the site of structure number two on June 25. The 1:30 p.m. program will feature representatives from the several organizations and agencies involved. At the conclusion of the program maps will be provided those who would like to drive the marked tour and observe the achievements accomplished in the watershed.

In the old days the freeing of a community from the threat of a particularly troublesome desperado was occasion for public celebration. This dedication may be somewhat more restrained but the occasion is no less momentous.

Across Southwest Iowa

W. Pottawattamie soil district cited

The West Pottawattamie County Soil Conservation District and Black Hawk County district are sharing honors as Iowa's top winners in the 29th annual Goodyear Conservation Awards program.

The West Pottawattamie district was the southern area winner, selected by an independent judging committee on the basis of 1975 accomplishments in resource management and development.

The contest is sponsored by Goodyear Tire and Rubber Company in cooperation with the National Association of Conservation Districts.

Robert Fred Young, outstanding cooperator, and SCS board chairman, Eldon Ravlin, both of Council Bluffs, will represent the district on an expense-paid, vacation-study, grand awards tour to Goodyear Farms and Wigwam resort at Litchfield Park, Ariz., in December.

They will be joined by representatives of 51 other first place districts throughout the United States.

In soil conservation contest

7-29-76

Neola couple named winners



Overall Winners ... of the Region Five Soil Conservation Awards Contest are Mr. and Mrs. Robert S. Jensen of rural Neola. The Jensens will go on to statewide competition sponsored by the Iowa Soil Conservation Service.

NEOLA — The Robert S. Jensen farm north of Neola has been selected as overall winner of Region Five in the Iowa Soil Conservation Awards Contest.

Ken Olin, area conservationist, said Region Five consists of nine soil conservation districts in Southwest Iowa. There are nine regions in the state.

Regional winners will compete in state competition with the overall winner to be recognized and honored at a state meeting Nov. 29.

Jensen and his wife, Loretta, have a substantial portion of the needed terraces for their farm already constructed and cropping is all on the contour. The couple has constructed a farm pond and some diversion terraces and installed tile drainage in the poorly-drained areas of the farm.

The Jensens were also judged on several other factors including farm husbandry and community service.

Recognition for Neola man

11-6-76

NEOLA — The Robert Jensen farm operation at Neola has been honored for excellence in adequately treating agricultural land against soil erosion.

Jensen received the award during the 30th Annual Conference for Soil Conservation District Commissioners of Iowa in Des Moines.

Jensen farms 360 acres in the West Pottawattamie Soil Conservation District. He has 172 acres protected by terraces and contours on 205 acres of cropland. Jensen has also built a farm pond and a diversion as well as installing 36,000 feet of tile drain.

OTHER SOUTHWEST Iowans fared well during the awards presentations.

George W. Hosfelt of Massena and Marvin Hillman of Essex were named outstanding soil conservation district commissioners for Regions 5 and 8, respectively.

West Pottawattamie County took first place honors in the Goodyear Soil Conservation Awards program for the southern district. Honored were Eldon Ravlin of Council Bluffs as its chairman and Robert Young of Council Bluffs as outstanding cooperator.

Lois Clark of the Harrison County Soil Conservation District and Nita Larson of the Shelby County Soil Conservation District each received 10-year awards as state clerks and conservation aides. Gayle Johnson of the Cass County Soil Conservation District received a 25-year award.

To protect agriculture

Overall plan is needed

By KAREN WEBER
Nonpareil Staff Writer

Douglas Primmer, county auditor, has long been a critic of the Pottawattamie County subdivision ordinance.

"Frankly, it's not the best and it's never been properly enforced. We can't just have little pieces of land cropping up out of nowhere," said Primmer.

"We need a comprehensive plan which embraces zoning and subdivision ordinances combined with a building code and permit system."

He also called for a county zoning administrator to "conscientiously enforce" the ordinance.

One of Primmer's major concerns is spot zoning or sporadic subdivision of land in

the middle of an agriculture section.

Primmer listed several problems which occur from spot zoning:

- Increased highway and road maintenance costs.

- New road construction for county residents who build homes in the middle of a section.

- Lack of dust control from gravel roads.

- Increased county snow removal.

Primmer said a comprehensive zoning plan would "protect and preserve prime agricultural land and reduce conflict between farmers and non-farming rural residents."

Primmer said the plan would also help homeowners in subdivision areas by making sure a new house is properly built and wired, according to standard code.

"The homeowner should not become a victim to a system that has no ground rules or

regulations," he said.

HE ALSO SAID a sound zoning system would be an asset to the county by generating more tax revenue to provide services in properly designated housing developments.

Primmer said many people are unaware of the spot zoning problem until they decide to build a house in a rural part of the county.

"The zoning ordinance is a device to implement the comprehensive plan — and of course it won't work without an enforcement officer."

"I'm convinced people will accept zoning much better if we adopt this plan," he said.

Primmer said the "anything goes" approach in county land use is unrealistic. "For most people a home is a major investment — what happens if a cattle feeding operation is put in right next to a new house — it's bound to create problems."

Proper and effective zoning has been a concern of county officials for several years. According to Primmer, a study has been conducted and a new ordinance drawn up under authorization of the County Board of Supervisors.

Primmer said the plan is currently under review by the county attorney's office.

In the meantime, Primmer said he will continue to work towards a new zoning plan that would "greatly benefit" all residents in the county.

Funds for old school may go to projects

The Dodge School Preservation Association may decide Dec. 11 on distribution of about \$1,400 left in its fund.

A meeting is scheduled for that day at 11 a.m. at the Howard Johnson's Motor Lodge.

The association's board has tentatively agreed to apply the remaining funds toward sculpture and wall art for a proposed downtown art project; establishment of a childrens' art workshop, and the preservation of Rock Island Depot.

BOARD SECRETARY C. Adam Schulte said contributors who object to the planned spending should write to Velma Knowles, 2604 Avenue B, on or before Dec. 10. Contributions will be returned upon request.

The association was formed to save Dodge School and convert it into some type of museum or cultural arts center.

The association abandoned the plan last June because of excessive vandalism to the school.

"We just couldn't put the school back together again after the tremendous loss," said Randy Rasmussen, a board member.



Doug Primmer

Chilly Sixth Grade Campout Draws 200 Youth

5-6-76



More than 200 sixth graders from area schools, including Tri-Center and Underwood schools, camped at Arrowhead Park Friday night, as a part of a West Pottawattamie Soil Conservation District and Junior Academy of Science sponsored study opportunity. Above are Tri-Center's Beebeetown delegation [chaperoned by Charles Killion of the Gazette-Reporter and News, among others] and in the lower photo are Underwood sixth grade campers.—Charles Killion Photo.



By Chuck Killion

The West Pott. Soil Conservation District and Junior Academy of Science sponsored a campout for West Pott. Sixth Graders at Arrowhead Park April 29. Activities for the youngsters included Soil Study, Archery, Scavenger Hunt, Aquatic Study, Terrarium Building, and Dancing. The program and sponsored by the West Pott. Environmental Educational Council.

The Iowa Conservation Commission presented a study of the fish found in Arrowhead Lake, with a demonstration of a "shock" boat used to temporarily stun the fish for netting and study.

The campout was attended by

over 200 Sixth Graders from Tri-Center, Underwood, Roosevelt, Gunn, and Carter Lake Schools.

Cal Cox, District Conservationist, explained that this campout and study program is also presented to all sixth grade youth in Council Bluffs on a two and one half day per year basis. Its goal is to educate the young people to preserve and care for what God gave us to enjoy. Mr. Cox was assisted in presenting the environmental study by Steve Hardiman, a Carter Lake Science Teacher and President of the West Pott. Environmental Educational Council.

The Aquatic Study led by Ed Flannery, Science Co-ordinator for Council Bluffs schools and Evelyn Hopper, instructed on

the plant and animal life in the lake.

Everyone had the opportunity to try his luck with a bow and arrow during the archery portion of the program, under the direction of Betty Kohn, a Physical Education Teacher at Lewis and Clark Elementary.

Eric Myer of Iowa Western Community College led groups on hikes collecting soil, moss rocks, and plants to use in building terrariums.

Even though temperatures dropped to the high 30's Friday night, everyone enjoyed themselves and speaking for the counselors, I'm sure looking forward to next year and a new crop of sixth graders for a great campout.

Council Bluffs
Nonpareil

OPINION PAGE

*"Speak your truth quietly and clearly... Listen to others
... They too have their story." — Max Ehrmann.*

Soil conservation — everyone's job

By ELDON RAVLIN
Chairman, West Poottawattamie
County Soil Conservation District

We have talked for years about the fact that soil erosion hurts everyone from the landowner right on down to the child in the supermarket who depends on the farmer for food. And on that same basis, soil conservation helps everyone, not only now but in the future as well.

It follows, then, that everyone should do his or her share to save our land. Conservationists have repeatedly said everyone benefits and everyone should pay his or her share for keeping our soil productive.

In Iowa, we have "put our money where our mouth is" as far as soil conservation is concerned. We are unique in being the only state to provide state tax money for cost sharing on soil conservation.

The State Legislature appropriated \$4 million to be spent this year on a 50 per cent cost-share basis with landowners. On a \$3,000 terrace job, for instance, the farmer would pay \$1,500 and the state would pay \$1,500.

Since the state cost-share program was initiated in 1973, \$10.5 million have been appropriated by the Iowa General Assembly for use in conjunction with the program. Funds are allocated to individual soil conservation districts on a conservation needs basis.

The West Pottawattamie County Soil Conservation District has received \$137,409 in

conjunction with the program. These funds are in addition to federal moneys already coming into Iowa through the Agricultural Conservation Program (ACP) administered by county committees, the Agriculture Stabilization and Conservation Service (ASCS).

These "incentives" for soil conservation are actually a way of having society pay for its share of the cost of saving our soil. It is a "pay now or pay later" situation — and if our "pay later" situation occurs, the cost will be tremendous. Can you imagine what it would be like with no topsoil? That would also mean no good lakes (all filled with sediment); poor water quality (sediment is our No. 1 pollutant); scarcity of food; poverty (farmers depend on good soil for a living); and an economic slump (agriculture is our leading export business). The list could go on and on. We so often take our soil for granted.

But we shouldn't. We have lost half our topsoil in Iowa on unprotected sloping lands. We have only 6 to 8 inches of topsoil left on those lands, and we are losing another inch every 12 years. In another generation of farming, our topsoil could be gone from unprotected sloping lands.

We have had serious erosion in West Pottawattamie County the last 3 years. We encourage landowners to take advantage of the state's foresight in saving our soil and encourage and program to continue at a faster pace than in the past.



Loading Up . . . on Iowa Air National Guard helicopters during a tour of Southwest Iowa watersheds are members of the State Soil Conservation Committee and other conservation officials. The

helicopters are in a straw field at the Paul Jacobsen farm near Dow City. — Nonpareil Photo.

Worst farm now one of best

Soil conservationists take to air

By GLEN FAHRENKRUG
Nonpareil Staff Writer

A tour of Southwest Iowa watersheds got off to a slow start Thursday for members of the State Soil Conservation Committee.

The group left Eppley Airfield via Iowa Air National Guard helicopters but had to turn around when they hit a fog bank near Neola.

After an hour's delay, the group flew over the recently-completed Indian Creek Watershed north of Council Bluffs and the nearly-completed Ryan-Henschel Watershed near Underwood before piloting to the Paul Jacobsen farm near Dow City.

Tour members, including Bill Greiner, director of the State Soil Conservation Department, went from the helicopters to an entirely different mode of transportation — hayracks.

Jacobsen, a retired Soil Conservation Service engineer, bought what he called "the worst farm in Crawford County" in 1961 and has been using his agricultural engineering background to make the farm a viable operation.

Jacobsen said 218 of the 307 acres of the farm are now controlled by terracing. He plans another 56,560 feet of terracing on the farm which drapes over what were once steep bluffs.

"We've filled in gullies that was once wasteland. In some of those places, we have the best beans on the farm," Jacobsen said.

He learned "the hard way" what was best for the farm. His original terraces which followed the contour of the land have been replaced by straight terraces. Eventually, he said, these new terraces which catch most water runoff, fill in and change the slope of the land.

"In this field (north of the Jacobsen home) we've knocked down the slope from 16 to 12 per cent," he said.

The tour of Jacobsen's farm covered four topographical areas, ranging from a nearly flat corn field to ground sloping by more than 16 per cent.

His most controversial land-conversion method is "plowing down" the steep hills which, in effect, moves dirt downhill.

"I'm not recommending erosion. Other people let their fill run into the river. But I've put 14 feet of fill above my terraces. I want it where it will do me some good."

By his terracing work, Jacobsen said he has turned his farm "into one of the highest yielding farms in Crawford County."

Jacobsen believes his terracing work is responsible for making his 1976 corn crop a decent one. Despite a lack of rain since June 8, he felt his corn would yield 80 bushels an acre while he estimated an unterraced field across the road would make only 20 bushels.

Jacobsen, who has spent more than \$55,000 putting terraces on his farm, said there can be only one result.

"If the present terrace layout is maintained . . . topography will improve each year and will enhance farm operations.

"In my opinion," he said, "for terracing to be accepted on a universal basis, planning for the most convenient field operation

is a must. To obtain such a layout, terrace systems should be planned by a central unit."

"In a central unit a group of specialists could be trained to plan the most efficient farm terrace systems from topographical maps. No prudent businessman would spend \$55,000 to construct a building without a prior plan. No prudent farmer should be willing to spend a like sum on his farm without a plan being prepared in advance," he said.

The group also took aerial tours of the Mill-Pacayne and Dane Ridge watersheds in Harrison and Crawford counties, respectively.

The final stop was in Atlantic at Schildberg Quarry which is under the jurisdiction of the Iowa Department of Natural Resources.

Owner-operator Dennis Schildberg said his workers are now reclaiming the land which was unearthed during the quarrying of limestone.

He said the original quarry site is in the process of being converted into a recreational site, complete with a 10-acre lake reaching a depth of 50 feet. The lake has been stocked with fish.

Banks around the lake have been seeded and are beginning to turn green with grass.

At the other side of the quarry, workmen are doing final dike work to separate the quarry from the East Nishnabotna River. Schildberg said it would take a worse storm than the one which

tried in 1972 to flood the quarry site. "The farm, like Olin, area conservationist for the e, said watershed work in Southwest Iowa was ess, but we've a long way to go."

Soil is key to foreign trade

7-6-76

America's foreign trade policy is linked to the national soil conservation, Sen. Dick Clark, D-Iowa, said Tuesday at the opening of a Senate Agriculture Committee field hearing at the Leo Ryan Jr. farm, north of Weston.

Clark said the foreign trade policy is based on full farm production. "The nation cannot maintain full production if it means we must mine our soil to achieve it," he said.

Clark headed the hearing which was called to examine soil conservation. A similar hearing was scheduled for Tuesday afternoon near Sioux City.

Sen. Clark said he is convinced that "we are still not using our soil and water as wisely as we must if we are to preserve for our children and grandchildren our fields and forests."

"OUR SOIL continues to wash away faster than nature can rebuild it. Too many of our streams are clogged with silt. And too many farmers find that they cannot afford the cost of facilities and practices needed to stop these critical losses."

Clark said he is concerned that "programs responsible for protecting these resources are being taxed beyond their limit." He said experts tell him that "we have had critical losses in the past two years and that conservation needs are greatly exceeding program capacity."

The senator said he is particularly concerned because the Ford Administration seems to be trying to significantly reduce funding of conservation programs.

Clark said the hearings are, in a sense, an early step in a process to "better come to grips with the growing need for investment in conservation in this country."

He said the Senate recently passed the Land and Water Conservation Act of 1976, which requires an appraisal of land and water resources every five years.

One of the persons testifying at the Weston hearing was Dale Nelson, executive director of the Iowa Farm Bureau.

Nelson said soil and water conservation programs need a high priority and continued expansion if agriculture is to avoid excessive water and wind erosion while producing to meet growing domestic and world food needs.

HE SAID the present volun-

tary cost-sharing soil conservation system will continue to be effective if greater efforts are expended to promote the importance of conservation and the incentive to participate is available on a continuing basis.

"Establishment of permanent conservation structures is a long-term investment which should be beneficial to the individual farmer and the general public," Nelson said. "Watershed planning and development is essential for effective soil conservation in many areas of Iowa."

One of the largest completed watershed projects in Southwest Iowa — the Indian Creek Watershed north of Council Bluffs — was toured by Clark and his staff prior to the Weston hearing.



On The Spot Inspection. . . of the Indian Creek Watershed project north of Council Bluffs was conducted Tuesday by Ken Olin and Cal Cox, both of the U.S. Soil Conservation Service, and Sen.

Dick Clark, D-Iowa. Clark later conducted a Senate Agriculture Committee field day hearing at the Leo Ryan Jr. farm near Weston. — Nonpareil Photo.

Soil officials to attend 30th annual meeting

Southwest Iowa officials will be among those from Iowa's 100 soil conservation districts who will gather in Des Moines Nov. 29, 30 and Dec. 1 for the 30th annual conference for Soil Conservation District Commissioners.

The three-day meeting is sponsored jointly by the Iowa Association of Soil Conservation District Commissioners and the Iowa Department of Soil Conservation.

Featured speakers at the Tuesday morning general session will be Harry Lusk of Allis Chalmers Corporation of Milwaukee, Wis., assisted by Terry Meeuwsen, Miss America of 1973, and Albert J. Erickson of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Office of Water Planning and Standards.

The business session will include a report on activities of the National Association of Conservation Districts (NACD) by Upper Mississippi Region director Ervin J.J. Koos of Shelby.

More than 600 are expected to attend the three-day affair.

SWI farmers 12-1-76 are winners .

Two Southwest Iowa farmers are district winners in a statewide soil conservation contest.

Robert Jensen of Neola and Farris Gray of Bedford were named district winners in the contest conducted by the Iowa Department of Soil Conservation and the Iowa Association of Soil Conservation Districts with the assistance of the U.S. Soil Conservation Service.

Plaques were presented to Jensen and Gray by the Iowa Farm Bureau Federation.

The state conservation winner was Harry Horak of Vinton.

50 persons attend Watershed ceremony

6-36-76

More than 25 years ago a group of people began formulating plans for control of the unpredictable Indian Creek which periodically flooded parts of Council Bluffs.

Those plans reached virtual completion Friday afternoon with the dedication of the Indian Creek Watershed.

About 50 people were on hand for the ceremonies, including some of the original commissioners of the project sponsor, the West Potawattamie County Soil Conservation District.

Bill Brune, state conservationist, told the group about 80 per cent of the land above the Site Two structure where the dedication was held is adequately treated against soil erosion. He said the 15 structures in the Indian Creek watershed now join with some 1,100 structures across Iowa to help

prevent the loss of rich Iowa soil "and provide future storage for sediment."

Norm Koester, civil engineer for the U.S. Soil Conservation Service, (SCS), said people celebrating the nation's Tricentennial won't remember who did the work nor how much time and money was spent on the project, only that the lakes formed by the watershed "have been here as long as we can remember."

The lakes and ponds formed by some of the larger structures will be used to trap sediment. Koester said by SCS computations, they have a life span of at least 100 years.

The watershed stretches over 9,500 acres from Council Bluffs to about four miles north. It is designed to prevent erosion and the resulting sediment which would clog the creek in Council Bluffs.



A Pooch . . . roams through a crowd of about 50 people at Friday afternoon's dedication of the Indian Creek watershed. The project has drawn to a virtual close after more than 25 years of dreams,

drawings and digging. The watershed will help prevent siltation of Indian Creek in Council Bluffs. — Nonpareil Photo.

Bluffs still under flood threat gun

The new Indian Creek Watershed dams will not stop the threat of flood for Council Bluffs, two soil conservationists told Rotary Club Thursday at Ramada Inn.

Speaking were Cal Cox, district conservationist, and Norman Koester, district engineer, for the Soil Conservation Service of the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

The small dams northeast of Council Bluffs are primarily sediment retention dams placed to catch soil which has eroded from fields in the watershed.

COX SAID the dams will stop about 70 per cent of the eroded soil that would normally be carried by Indian Creek.

"The watershed will stop sediment coming from agricultural areas, but there will still be sediment from within the city — from streets and housing developments," Cox said.

The sediment tends to clog the Indian Creek channel through the city, posing a threat of flood.

"There still could be flooding in a real heavy rain storm," Koester said.

Sheet and gully erosion in the first part of this century clogged the Indian Creek channel causing some flooding in the 1940s.

Because of the sediment problem, the channel was dredged twice in the 1950s, the second time at a cost of \$100,000.

Koester said the 15 watershed dams are in areas where severe gully erosion had taken place.

"These were built to heal the

sores in the land," Koester said, "but they in no way replace what was planned originally by the Corps of Engineers."

The Corps proposed a \$2,250,000 dam on Indian Creek northeast of the city that would have taken Council Bluffs off



Cox

Koester

the danger list for severe flooding.

The project seemed assured in 1965 when the City Council adopted a resolution approving the project.

A \$1.2 million bond issue in November of 1965 to finance local costs for the dam and spillway failed. The issue needed 60 per cent approval but received 57.5 per cent, about 175 votes short of passage.

The dam has officially been on the Corps' "inactive" list of projects since 1967.

Koester said if terracing had been used in the early part of this century the gullies used in the watershed dam project probably never would have developed.

Koester said the program also helps to save farm land and top soil which might have been washed away.



2-24-77

Conservation awards given

Soil conservation winners for the West Pottawattamie County Soil Conservation District were given awards Wednesday. They are (rear) Bob Jensen of Neola (family operated), Bob Young of Route 1, (outstanding cooperator), John Hartwell of McClelland (outstanding cooperator). Mr. and Mrs. Howard Nelson Jr., accept the landlord-tenant award for Howard Nelson Sr. and Ted Johnson, respectively. —Nonpareil Photo.

Across Southwest Iowa

Conservation meet set for tonight

A public meeting will be held tonight to get county residents opinions on what kind of a conservation program they want said Eldon Ravlin, chairman of the West Pottawattamie County Soil Conservation District.

The meeting will be a 8 p.m. in the Community Hall of the Central Fire Station.

Ravlin said letters have been sent to the heads of organizations and people are being invited to drop by district office to give their opinions on what is needed.

"We're asking people to fill out a worksheet to find out what they think are the most serious problems and to identify which problems concern them more than others," Ravlin said.

The district will use answers in formulating local conservation programs. Summary of the plan will be sent to state and national offices of the U.S. Soil Conservation Service. The information will be used with other county summaries to develop state and national programs.

The Resource Conservation Act of 1977 requires the Soil Conservation Service to get public input into all policy and planning decisions.

Opinions on conservation requested

Residents of Pottawattamie County are being asked for their opinions on what kinds of conservation programs should be offered in the future.

Eldon Ravlin, chairman of the West Pottawattamie County Soil Conservation District, said a public meeting will be held at 8 p.m. Wednesday, July 19, at the Council Bluffs Community Hall to discuss the situation.

"And we are asking for public input in any form we can get it."

Ravlin also said, "We are also sending letters to heads or organizations, inviting people to stop by the district office and doing whatever else we can to get opinions.

"WE'RE ASKING people to fill out a worksheet to find out what they think are the most serious problems, and to identify which problems concern them more than others."

The West Pottawattamie County Soil Conservation District will use the answers in formulating local conservation programs for the future. Summaries of the plan will be sent to state and national offices of the U.S. Soil Conservation District will use the answers in formulating local conservation programs for the future. Summaries of the plan will be sent to state and national office of the U.S. Soil Conservation Service for use with other county summaries, to develop state and national programs.

Ravlin said the study is part of the Resource Conservation Act of 1977, termed "unprecedented legislation" by conservation officials.

More information is available at the SCS office, Room 221, Federal Building, Council Bluffs. Cal Cox is district conservationist and Ron Williams is soil conservationist.

Farmers beat deadly erosion

8-77

By DAVE PYLE
Nonpareil Staff Writer

Farmers battling soil erosion are not making trenches in their fight, they're stopping them.

Farmers are using their own fields to demonstrate the minimum tillage system sponsored by the Agricultural Research Service, the West Pottawattamie County Extension Service, the Soil Conservation Service and the West Pottawattamie Soil Conservation District.

Monday officials and participating farmers met at the Village Inn to discuss the project.

Minimum tillage is designed to take the "punch" out of soil erosion forces and save the farmer both time and money in his farm operation.

PARTICIPANTS in the project had their test plots staked out with a sign which was to call attention to the field, and had Nonpareil-supplied mail boxes with informational brochures near each of them. The idea was to have the information available for those interested as well as offering examples of just what the minimum tillage method looked like and its results over a year's time.

Four participating farmers attended the meeting. They were: Jack Hester of Neola, Roger Sealock of Underwood, Don Casson of Underwood and Dave Christensen, Underwood.

None were too sure about how well the project had reached farmers not already involved with minimum tillage.

Reports said that a total of 40-45 brochures had been taken from nine sites. Several of the farmers said they had also seen people looking at their fields. Many noted, however, that the fields were not visible from their homes and couldn't be sure about how many had stopped to look the fields over.

Hester said he felt the project had done at least one thing.

"This project has given this method of farming a name and a little respectability," Hester said. "Before, when someone would look at my fields, he would just think I was a sloppy farmer."

Minimum tillage involves leaving a mulch on the field after harvest to slow erosion. Primary tillage is usually done with a disc, followed, in some cases, with a cultivator or chisel plow for secondary tillage. Many of the farmers use a side winder in front of their buffalo till planters.

But extensions agents and soil conservation officers emphasized that the method often varies in degrees. One farmer may use minimum tillage one way, another might use it another. Some may use a heavy discing process while others refuse to disc at all, saying that discing is as bad for

erosion as plowing. Plowing is not used in minimum tillage.

HESTER'S COMMENT on sloppiness stems from comparison of a minimum tillage field to a plowed field. The minimum till field has a plant residue covering it to protect the soil while the plowed field appears "clean."

Soil loss when using minimum tillage is only 10 per cent of what the loss would be with conventional plowing methods.

In the Southwest Iowa area, where soil is generally of the Ida and Monona wind-blown loess type, farmers annually lose up to 20 tons of soil to erosion. The minimum till method can cut this loss to 1½ to two tons, officials said.

"But economics is what's going to sell this — dollars in the pockets," Hester said. Hester said he first became a minimum till convert when he found he didn't have the necessary equipment for conventional plowing methods. He said minimum till saved him large amounts of money in equipment investment.

The farmers attending the meeting also agreed that they were saving substantially in fuel costs and time spent in the field.

Minimum till farming also increases the organic content of the soil. Conventional methods yield under five per cent organic content while minimum till field raise the content above and beyond the five per cent level "and gets the organic material much closer to the surface where it belongs," said Jay West, Iowa State extension officer.



Studying Soil Conservation . . . progress in West Pottawattamie County are winners of 1977 soil conservation awards. They are Marvin Larson, Robert Hough, Irvin Larson, and Elton Young.

Standing is Eldon Ravlin, chairman of the West Pottawattamie County Soil Conservation District — Nonpareil Photo.

Four honored for soil work

Four Pottawattamie County men received plaques and a word of thanks from the West Pottawattamie County Soil Conservation District Commissioners on Thursday.

The honorees were 1977 winners of district soil conservation contests. "These four men are setting good examples of conservation work on their farms," said Eldon Ravlin, chairman of the district commissioners.

Receiving the award in the landlord-tenant division were Marvin Larson, Underwood, and his landlord, Robert Hough, Council Bluffs.

Family operator division

winner was Elton Young of Route 2. New operator division winner was Irvin Larson of Route 3.

Irvin Larson was also named as overall winner. He represented West Pottawattamie County in regional competition last fall.

The winners were chosen after being nominated with about 20 other county farmers. The district commissioners looked over each farm and selected a winner for each division.

Nominees for 1978 will be named sometime in late summer, said Cal Cox, district conservationist.

The
SUNDAY Nonpareil
State News

Priorities in soil plan

7-31-77

Can unused acres become profitable through conservation practices?

The West Pottawattamie County Soil Conservation District says yes.

Turning poor land into profitable land is among the priorities established by the district in its new long-range plan.

"First, it summarizes the situation as to climate, population, farm size and the physical characteristics of the natural resources. Second, it inventories the existing conservation practices and recognizes the total needs of the district," Eldon Ravlin district chairman said of the plan.

It also establishes priorities for work to serve as guides to cooperating agencies; recognizes who will carry out various aspects of the total conservation job; and provides the district a basis from which to request funds and assistance.

TOP ON THE priorities list is terracing for water control. The district has been involved in the installation of more than 2,500 miles of both cropland and basin terraces in West Pottawattamie County. Another 2,200 acres still need to be terraced.

Next on the list, Ravlin said, is conservation and resource planning for erosion control. The control would be accomplished by use of terraces, conservation tillage, contouring, grassed waterways, tree and wildlife plants, pasture management practices and wind erosion control on flat lands.

The latter is critical in the wide open Missouri River bottomland, much of which is susceptible to erosion by high winds.

ALSO ON THE priorities list is the maintenance of watershed work already completed and development of new

watersheds, important for the lands drained by the bluffs and valleys throughout the county.

Finished now are the Indian Creek Watershed north of Council Bluffs, the Ryan-Henschel Watershed west and south of Underwood and the West Pottawattamie portion of the Pony Creek Watershed which extends into Mills County.

Work has begun on the North Pigeon Watershed in Northwestern Pottawattamie County and the Simon Run Watershed northeast of Crescent. The Maie Creek Watershed southwest of McClelland is in the application stage, and construction on the Twin Ponies Watershed in the Southwestern portion of the district will begin in about five years.

RAVLIN SAID another priority is "an information and education program that will inform all people of the importance of conservation of natural resources."

That portion of the program has also been initiated. It has included wildlife studies at DeSoto National Wildlife Refuge, Smith Wildlife Refuge (an area of natural habitat northeast of Council Bluffs), as well as observation of conservation work in the watersheds and on private farms.

The list also calls for feedlot and farmstead windbreaks to conserve energy and feed, to beautify, and to provide wildlife food and cover.

A properly established windbreak can cut home heating bills considerably by stopping the cold, northerly winds of winter.

Also on the priorities list is the development of previously unusable acres.

Ravlin said the priority entails "tree planting for economic gain on lands marginal to pasture and cropland use."

Conservation

4-3-77

application

signed by Ray

The publication for official establishment of the Golden Hills Resource Conservation and Development (RC&D) has passed the state level.

Gov. Robert Ray signed the application for the RC&D which comprises nine soil conservation districts in eight Southwest Iowa counties.

The application now goes to the U.S. Soil Conservation Service (SCS) for final approval.

Establishment of the Golden Hills RC&D would free federal funds for use in Southwest Iowa water and soil conservation projects.

Some of the money could conceivably be used for recreational development in conjunction with water and soil conservation.

Soil surveys are planned

3-11-77

The Pottawattamie County Resource Coordinating Committee is preparing to mail a survey seeking farmer advice on soil conservation and water quality.

Currently the committee is aiding in the preparation of a plan mandated by the 1972 Federal Water Pollution Control Act amendments. The plan is being accomplished to improve water quality in the nation's rivers, said Robert Summy, committee chairman.

In Iowa and Pottawattamie County, Summy said, this means the control of soil erosion and agricultural runoff, non-point pollution. The committee hopes to aid in the development of a plan accomplishing this while creating minimum hardships for individuals.

Summy said 70 surveys will be mailed in Pottawattamie County. The surveyed individuals are randomly selected from a list of landowners and operators within the county. No personal identification of participating individuals will be made.

Twin Ponies to be assisted

2-23-77

The Twin Ponies Watershed Project, in Mills and Pottawattamie counties, is one of 16 watershed projects to receive planning assistance.

The announcement was made Tuesday by R. M. Davis, administrator of the U.S. Soil Conservation Service, in Washington, D.C., an agency of the Agriculture Department.

The projects are the first to be authorized for such aid this fiscal year.

Davis said he has instructed the agency's state offices to "provide help to local sponsors of the 16 projects, including investigations and surveys necessary to develop watershed plans under Public Law 566, the watershed protection and flood prevention act.

Although the idea for the Twin Ponies Watershed was conceived in 1958, citizen input and concrete plans were not developed until early 1976.

The 21,640 acre watershed stretches from near the Council Bluffs Airport south into Mills County, adjoining the Pony Creek Watershed there.

The area includes 1,600 acres of bluffs and 5,400 acres of bottomland.

**Council Bluffs
Nonpareil****OPINION PAGE**

*"Speak your truth quietly and clearly. . . Listen to others
. . . They too have their story." — Max Ehrmann.*

Don't halt watershed programs; expand them

President Carter and his administration have taken many paradoxical positions.

One of the more glaring of these has been the revelation some 1,200 rural watershed programs have been ordered reviewed with an eye toward calling a possible halt to this program.

At almost the same instant, the President is calling for immediate congressional action on an \$844 million drought aid bill.

At first glance, these two may not seem to be related. A second look, however, would reveal they have a common denominator, namely water.

For the uninitiated, perhaps a quick review of the watershed activity is in order. A watershed project is the cooperative effort between the residents of a common waterway, the state and federal governments.

This effort has two major goals, conservation of water which falls in that watershed and the resulting conservation of the soil on which it falls. Side benefits of most watershed projects are wildlife and fish propagation and conservation, along with a measure of recreation.

WATERSHED PROJECTS are usually small. A stream or waterway may be only several miles in length. It may encompass only four, five or six land owners. By the same token, the waterway may be many miles in length and involve several dozen landowners. Geography is a determining factor in either event.

In addition to whatever work might be done on the waterway itself, such as structures or tubes, there is another very important requirement for watersheds.

This is the upland treatment that must be applied by the land owners — such as terraces, grassed waterways, strip cropping in some

areas — all of the practices that are designed to keep the raindrop where it falls and permit it to soak into the ground rather than to go downstream.

Such practices, along with water-impoundment behind some of the structures, help to replenish the subsurface water supplies of the land.

These subsurface supplies provide the best drought aid available from any source.

SO MUCH FOR the basic merit of watershed programs. It must also be noted watershed programs are not born overnight. From their very inception, they must be studied and justified time and time again with statements of need, reviews and inspections.

Moreover, there is tremendous competition among watershed program proposals. Only those that emerge with the highest possible scores in need ratings have even a chance of ever becoming reality.

To call for further review of these watershed programs is to reveal an almost total lack of knowledge about how they work.

To do anything to curtail or slow down the watershed effort is to visit a vast disservice on this nation and its attempts to conserve water.

No government program, however massive, can make other than miniscule amounts of water at best.

The water this nation must have must first fall on it in the form of rain. It is this water which must be conserved in every possible manner.

One of the major steps in the initial stages of such conservation efforts is embodied in the watershed programs. The concept should not only be retained, but should be substantially increased and expanded.

Input sought on conservation

County residents are being asked for their opinions on what kind of conservation programs should be offered in the future.

The West Pottawattamie County Soil Conservation District will use the answers in formulating local conservation programs. It will also forward a summary to state and national offices of the U.S. Soil Conservation Service. The information will be used with other county summaries to develop state and national programs.

Elden Ravlin, chairman of

the conservation district, said opinions may be given at the public meeting scheduled for 8 p.m. Monday at the Farm Bureau Building in Council Bluffs. Letters are also being sent to heads of organizations and people are being invited to stop by the district office.

For more information contact Cal Cox, District Conservationist or Ronald Williams, Soil Conservationist at the Soil Conservation Service Office, at Council Bluffs.

Survey: Crop Production, Water Top Concerns

By Fred Thomas

World-Herald Staff Writer

Food and fiber production problems and water-related concerns are uppermost in the minds of Nebraskans who commented in a survey on the status of natural resources.

More than 3,000 persons commented last July at 30 public meetings around the state or through a television show.

They were asked to list "major" and "minor" concerns in their area.

Drawing the most major responses — 2,533 — was "food and fiber production." Persons expressed considerable concern about loss of cropland and pastureland, and cost of land and energy in farming.

Three irrigation-water topics ranked 2, 3 and 4 in major concerns, the U.S. Soil Conservation Service said Wednesday in announcing results. Irrigation costs ranked second, irrigation problems in general were third

and increased demand on water supply finished fourth.

'Major Concern'

Drawing the most total votes was depletion of ground water, with 2,049 calling it a major concern and 985 a minor concern.

The survey was sponsored by the SCS and Nebraska's 24 natural resources districts, as part of a nationwide attempt to get citizen comments on natural resources.

The information will go to the U.S. Department of Agriculture to help its staff develop programs to meet concerns of citizens, said Benny Martin, SCS state conservationist.

Public meetings on the programs will be held next spring, he added.

Leon Halstead, president of the Nebraska Association of Resources Districts, said he expected NRD soil and water leaders to use the information to design activities.

In the metropolitan Omaha area, three different concerns

drew the most attention, said Dave Nash, district conservationist. No. 1 was the loss of cropland to urban sprawl. Farmers lamented the loss of productive acres and decline of family farms, and city residents lamented the loss of open spaces, Nash said.

Habitat Second

Ranked second in the metro area was the loss of wildlife habitat because of development, and third was the overall issue of land use, he said.

A summary of the survey is available by writing the SCS at room 345, Federal Building — U.S. Courthouse, Lincoln, Neb., 68508.

Here are the top 25 issues statewide and the number of "major" concern responses:

- 1, food and fiber production;
- 2, irrigation costs; 3, irrigation;
- 4, increased demand on water supply; 5, energy consumption in food and fiber production;
- 6, land use; 7, efficiency of irrigation systems; 8, water avail-

ability for irrigation; 9, depletion of ground water for irrigation; 10, efficiency of irrigation water application; 11, depletion of ground water on total water supply; 12, viability of family farm-ranch; 13, overall concern for water supply; 14, loss of windbreaks effect on environment; 15, governmental effects on resources; 16, adequate local capital; 17, loss of windbreak effect on soil erosion; 18, water erosion; 19, surface storage of water; 20, loss of cropland from production; 21, degradation of water quality by irrigation; 22, costs of controlling water erosion; 23, land held for development and by absentee owners; 24, local government capability to meet

resource needs; 25, loss of pastureland from production.

In the metropolitan Omaha area, the top concerns were:

- 1, loss of cropland to urban sprawl, other uses; 2, loss of wildlife habitat because of land-use conversions; 3, land use; 4, land disposal of organic wastes; 5, loss of food and fiber production; 6, water quality; 7, effective political leadership on natural resources and soil erosion issues.

Protection of farms is concern

1-20-78

The problems of urban sprawl, the splitting of agricultural land and random housing developments in the country were among the major concerns noted during a Thursday hearing on developing a land preservation policy.

The meeting at Community Hall, was sponsored by the Temporary Land Preservation Policy Commission of Pottawattamie County. About 30 persons attended.

Don Untiedt, West Pottawattamie County extension director, said several people at the meeting testified they would like to see some kind of zoning protection for agricultural land.

Others spoke of revitalizing inner-cities for development instead of using agricultural lands for shopping centers,

industrial tracts, schools and houses.

"One woman recommended that the Pottawattamie Land Preservation Commission look into the possibility of using existing right-of-ways such as along railroads and highways for laying out power lines," Untiedt said. "She said this could be done instead of going right across prime agricultural land."

Several people told the commission that steps need to be taken to keep the loess bluffs from eroding.

Untiedt said the commission is taking all of these recommendations — and those made at a similar meeting last week in Oakland — studying them and putting them together at a meeting Feb. 23.

Landowners, farmers stand to benefit

SCS team in C.B. to map soil throughout county

A survey team of the U.S. Soil Conservation Service, which recently completed a detailed soil map of Mills County, has moved its headquarters to Council Bluffs to begin finishing a soil survey of Pottawattamie County.

John Nixon, team leader, said the SCS will be doing soil mappings in the county for the next five years, hoping to complete the survey by the winter of 1982-83.

Nixon, who was the leader of the survey team headquartered in Malvern for the Mills County survey, said parts of Pottawattamie County were mapped in 1975 and 1976 when the SCS wanted a complete map of the land along the

Missouri River.

DURING THAT SURVEY, most of the Missouri River bottomlands and part of the uplands near Council Bluffs were mapped.

"There are approximately 616,000 acres of land in Pottawattamie County," Nixon said. "We mapped 107,000 acres during those earlier surveys, leaving us with 508,000 acres to do."

Nixon said the 1,000 acres not accounted for represent land not surveyable such as downtown Council Bluffs.

Nixon said the team can map between 300 and 400 acres a day — barring inclement weather or other obstacles.

"The survey party determines what kind of soil, what kind of slope and how much good, dark topsoil is remaining on the land," Nixon explained.

THE SURVEY begins with aerial photographs which the team uses in the field. With those photographs, exact locations can be pinpointed for soil types, drainage areas, houses or any other features on the land, Nixon said.

"We take soil samplings and identify them on the spot. We have a truck with a hydraulic probe for soil sampling at special places — otherwise we use a hand probe."

Nixon, an agronomy graduate of Iowa State

University, will be assisted by Mary Ann Barger, a soil scientist for the past 2½ years who also worked with Nixon on the Mills County survey.

Another soil scientist, Charles Branham, will transfer from Grundy Center to Council Bluffs to help work on the Pottawattamie survey.

"**WE'LL BE MAPPING** out mainly in the western part of the county," Nixon said, "and a few selected areas in the eastern part for the first few years."

Right now, Nixon and Ms. Barger are unpacking at their new headquarters in Room 245 of the Federal Building. Maps, map-making tools, equipment

and other soil paraphernalia are scattered around the large room.

During the winter months, Nixon said, most of the soil scientists' duties deal with tasks put off during the summer months of field work — they are now writing reports, attending meetings and finishing map work.

WHY A SOIL map of the county?

"We're here for anyone who has to use the soil as a base — engineers, house builders, farmers — they can all get information from us," Nixon said.

"We can give general advice on soil preparation but not

specific details like how much fertilizer a farmer should use," he noted.

"They built a school on bad soil at Creston," Ms. Barger added. "It's flooded all the time. You can get this kind of information from us before you make the expensive mistakes."

Once the soil survey is published, the book will contain information that can be applied to the management of farms, ranches and woodlands; the selection of sites for roads, ponds, buildings and other structures; and in judging the suitability of tracts of land for farming, industry and recreation.

FOR EXAMPLE, if the

survey shows an area with a type of soil known to have a high shrink-swell percentage, builders should avoid putting streets, paved roads and house foundations on it.

If the soil survey is ignored, those structures could end up cracking with the expansion of the soil.

All of the soils in Pottawattamie County will be shown on detailed maps at the back of the survey book. The numerous maps made from the aerial photographs will be used to outline and identify the soil types.

A map guide will list all the soils in alphabetical order by symbol and give the capability classification of each. An in-

dividual, colored map will show the relative suitability of the soil and degree of limitation for many specific purposes.

Each soil series is named for a town or other geographic feature where a soil of that series was first observed and mapped. For example, in the Fremont County Soil Survey, among the 47 soil types included are "Hamburg silt loam" and "Waubonsie fine sandy loam."

Nixon has worked on soil surveys in Adair, Cass, Fremont, Page, Union and Mills counties; he was party leader in Union and Mills.

He lives in Glenwood while Ms. Barger lives in rural Silver City.



Taking A Soil Sample ... and noting its exact location, is Mary Ann Barger, soil scientist, and John Nixon, soil party leader. During actual sampling to be started this spring in Pottawattamie County, the hand probe, being

demonstrated by Ms. Barger, is used to collect soil samples from the ground. Nixon and Ms. Barger are Soil Conservation Service employees. — Nonpareil Photo.

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Protection of farms is concern

1-20-78

The problems of urban sprawl, the splitting of agricultural land and random housing developments in the country were among the major concerns noted during a Thursday hearing on developing a land preservation policy.

The meeting at Community Hall, was sponsored by the Temporary Land Preservation Policy Commission of Pottawattamie County. About 30 persons attended.

Don Untiedt, West Pottawattamie County extension director, said several people at the meeting testified they would like to see some kind of zoning protection for agricultural land.

Others spoke of revitalizing inner-cities for development instead of using agricultural lands for shopping centers,

industrial tracts, schools and houses.

"One woman recommended that the Pottawattamie Land Preservation Commission look into the possibility of using existing right-of-ways such as along railroads and highways for laying out power lines," Untiedt said. "She said this could be done instead of going right across prime agricultural land."

Several people told the commission that steps need to be taken to keep the loess bluffs from eroding.

Untiedt said the commission is taking all of these recommendations — and those made at a similar meeting last week in Oakland — studying them and putting them together at a meeting Feb. 23.

Soil contractors workshop

1-5-78

A 5-day workshop for soil contractors will be held beginning Feb. 6 at Iowa Western Community College.

The workshop will be co-sponsored by eight community colleges, the State Soil Conservation Service and the Iowa Land Improvement Contractors Association.

Workshop sessions will begin at 8:30 each morning and last for about six hours. They will cover beginning and advanced surveying, soils, insurance and bonding, record management, underground utilities, drainage laws and septic tank installation.

A registration fee of \$30 will cover books and other materials required for the workshop. IWCC will award continuing education units for completion of the training.

People interested in the workshop should contact Clair Baker at IWCC.



Studying Soil Conservation . . . progress in West Pottawattamie County are winners of 1977 soil conservation awards. They are Marvin Larson, Robert Hough, Irvin Larson, and Elton Young. Standing is Eldon Ravlin, chairman of the West Pottawattamie County Soil Conservation District — Nonpareil Photo. 2-24-78

Four honored for soil work

Four Pottawattamie County men received plaques and a word of thanks from the West Pottawattamie County Soil Conservation District Commissioners on Thursday.

The honorees were 1977 winners of district soil conservation contests. "These four men are setting good examples of conservation work on their farms," said Eldon Ravlin, chairman of the district commissioners.

Receiving the award in the landlord-tenant division were Marvin Larson, Underwood, and his landlord, Robert Hough, Council Bluffs.

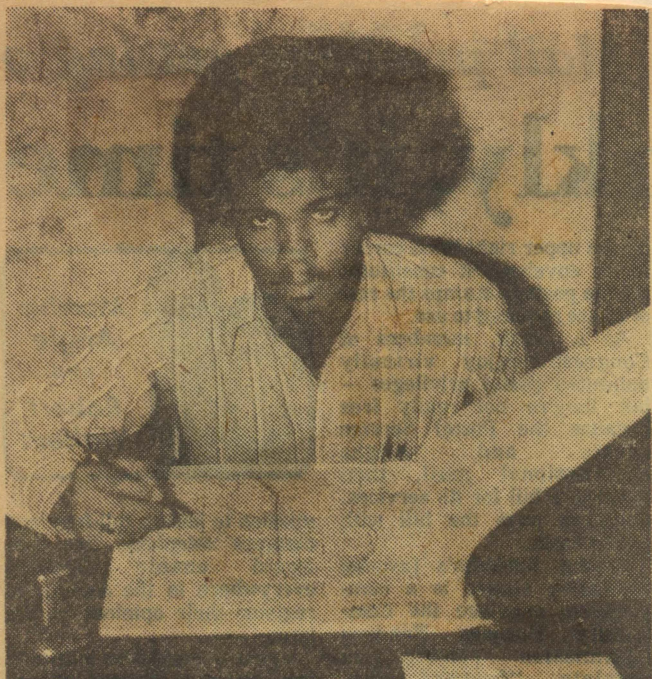
Family operator division

winner was Elton Young of Route 2. New operator division winner was Irvin Larson of Route 3.

Irvin Larson was also named as overall winner. He represented West Pottawattamie County in regional competition last fall.

The winners were chosen after being nominated with about 20 other county farmers. The district commissioners looked over each farm and selected a winner for each division.

Nominees for 1978 will be named sometime in late summer, said Cal Cox, district conservationist.



Poring Over Soil Conservation Maps . . . in his new position as conservationist in the field office of the Soil Conservation Service is Ron Williams. Williams is a graduate of the University of Arkansas at Pine Bluff. — Nonpareil Photo. 2-28-78

Conservationist on SCS staff

The field office of the Soil Conservation Service here has added another soil conservationist to its staff.

Ron Williams, 24, 716 Willow Ave., is working with the district conservationist, Cal Cox, in a training process.

Williams graduated last spring from the University of Arkansas at Pine Bluff and spent last summer working in the Burlington SCS office.

The Humphrey, Ark. native will provide technical assistance to district landowners and will also work with other agencies in conservation planning.

Williams said he will also be providing technical assistance to people seeking compliance to the Clean Water Act and the Culver Amendment to that act whenever it is passed.

Williams' starting salary is \$10,000 a year.

The
SUNDAY

Nonpareil

State News

West Pottawattamie gets soil conservation award

West Pottawattamie County Soil Conservation District has received a merit award from the Goodyear Tire and Rubber Co., for its program of soil and water conservation this year.

The award is the highest honor that the district could have received because of

eligibility requirements, according to Cal Cox, a Pottawattamie County conservation officer.

Districts that have won first and second place honors during a five-year period are not eligible. Pottawattamie County won first place in 1975 and is

excluded until 1980, Cox said.

Winning top prize for Iowa's southern district was Decatur County. Audubon County took second place. Also receiving a merit award was Page County.

According to Cox, recognition of Pottawattamie County meant that the district would have been a top contender for first place had no limitations be in effect.

Taking top prize in the Northern division was Palo Alto County. Second place went to Clayton County.

First place districts are eligible to send one representative on an all-expense paid vacation-study trip to the Goodyear Farm in Litchfield Park, Ariz.

Cal Cox left mark on hillsides, in valleys

By C.W. McMANAMY
Nonpareil Staff Writer

The recent, sudden death of Cal Cox, soil conservationist in the West Potawatamie district, was a deep shock to many of us who knew him so well.

To me, Cal was typical of a lot of guys in jobs like his. The nature of their work dictates that a few people come to know them quite well. Quite a few people know them fairly well, a good many have a speaking acquaintance as it were, and ever so many folks in their communities do not know them at all.

In spite of this, the work Cal did was of major importance to the public and its well being.

It is only now becoming rather distantly recognized that proper conservation and use of the two major resources of this nation, soil and water, are of vast importance not only to those who till the land, but to every citizen who lives on and from the production of that tillage.

CAL WAS A HIGHLY knowledgeable technician. He knew the how, the what and the why of conservation. With him, as with most of the Soil Conservation Service people, it was, and is, more than just technical knowhow.

He believed totally in the job he was doing. He inspired those he worked with and trained to embrace that same belief. It is a measure of this dedication to suggest there are perhaps more school students, than adults, in the district who knew Cal first-hand.

The reason for this was the many appearances and talks he made before school classes. In addition, he was one of the moving spirits in the conservation

camp sponsored by the district each summer at the county park near Neola.

Cal worked with the land, its topography and character and the steps that should be taken to protect that land and the water that fell on it. This meant he had to work with people: land owners, tenants, contractors and others. I am sure most of these folks found him, as I found, to be an affable gent intent on accomplishing the greatest possible measure of conservation.

He always maintained a busy schedule but found time to pay his civic rent with a multitude of volunteer assignments. With these, as with his work, he gave a full measure of himself.

CAL WOULD BE the first to insist he was just an ordinary Joe and by almost any measure that is true. Because it was my privilege to know him quite well, I felt it was timely to comment on him.

Cal was one among the many like him. People who perform a most valuable service for their organizations, their communities and this nation. Yet people who take pride in their work, not because they hold themselves to be important but because they hold their contributions to be important.

The basic strength of our society is the ordinary Joes like Cal Cox who are really not just ordinary at all, but unless you come to know them pretty well you do not find that out.

Cal left his mark in the memories of those of us who knew and worked with him. More importantly, he left his mark on the hillsides and in the valleys of this community. We and the land are the better for his having been here.



ELECTED TO THE FAR-MAR-CO board during its annual meeting were Paul Ruch (left) of Haxtun, Colo., and Floyd J. Fischer of Council Bluffs, Ia. Delegates to Far-Mar-Co's annual meeting also approved a plan to reduce the number of directors from 25 to 15 at next year's annual meeting.

12-24-79

The **DAILY Nonpareil**

Opinion Page

"Speak your truth quietly and clearly . . . Listen to others . . . They too have their story." — Max Ehrmann.

Soil conservation proposal threatening

President Carter's Council on Environmental Quality has proposed federal farm programs be available only to those who practice soil conservation.

Implementation of such a policy would open a can of worms that raises the hackles of ever dedicated soul and water conservation disciple in the country.

The specter that an approach such as this one immediately brings into focus is all-out government control of the soil and water conservation program in America.

The present program was initiated at the local level by grass roots farmers deeply concerned about practices that were contributing to the loss of topsoil and water.

That initial program was made viable by the cooperation of state and federal government agencies with local farm interests. It should be noted, however, that the control of the program, including major decisions, remained with the local districts and their governing bodies.

Soil and water conservation always has been a voluntary program, one entered into in whatever form by farmers and farm owners who understand the values involved.

As the costs of applying the needed mechanical practices have grown, the government has extended financial aid. Such expenditures were more than warranted by the public good which resulted from the on-farm conservation.

SOIL AND WATER conservation in this county, in Southwest Iowa, the state as a whole, and in this nation has made remarkable progress in a relatively short period of time. In less than four decades Iowa has been blanketed with 100 soil conservation districts.

Considering the revolutionary philosophy involved in conservation farming when that idea was first broached, the progress in terms of actual on-the-land conservation has been

truly amazing.

That this program has advanced so spectacularly and worn so extremely well is due almost entirely to the grass roots nature of its organization.

If the federal government steps into the conservation picture with a mandatory program, regardless of its nature, soil and water conservation thenceforth becomes a government program.

TWO CONTRADICTORY FACTS emerge upon the contemplation of such a development, the landowner will, with justification, suggest the government should pay the cost of applying the practices deemed necessary.

The other side of that coin is simply this: If the government does indeed pay the costs of installing soil and water conservation practices on a farm, that same government is virtually certain to demand a strong voice in how those practices are used and maintained. In other words, the government will have a voice in the operation of every farm in the country or at least every farm where conservation practices have been mandated.

Much remains to be done in needed conservation. With the growing pressure on soil conservation and clean water supplies, a time element is associated with those needs.

Nevertheless, the conservation program can and will be expedited much more effectively and practically under the mantle of local control and voluntary compliance rather than government mandate.

Hopefully, conservation interests as well as all other farm organizations will join hands to resist this recent suggestion and all others like it.

Aside from anything else, such an approach provides a very tangible threat to one of the few remaining freedoms enjoyed by farmers and other citizens in this nation.