

DES MOINES COUNTY SOIL CONSERVATION DISTRICT

DISTRICT PROGRAM

DISTRICT WORK PLAN

Revised - 1965

1972



DES MOINES COUNTY SOIL CONSERVATION DISTRICT

DISTRICT PROGRAM

DISTRICT PROGRAM

The district program lists in brief the erosion problems and causes, the related economic and social factors, and the long time objectives and recommendations for the district.

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DES MOINES COUNTY SOIL CONSERVATION DISTRICT

DISTRICT PROGRAM

REVISED - 1965

INTRODUCTION

This program attempts to set forth soil conservation and land use problems of Des Moines County and to state what the district plans to achieve. The program will serve as a basis of cooperation between the land owners as well as other cooperating organizations and agencies.

PURPOSE

The Des Moines County Soil Conservation District was organized early in 1946 to give land owners and operators an opportunity to work together to meet their erosion control, drainage and land use problems. It should also awaken an interest in the stewardship of the soil and other natural resources.

HISTORICAL

In August, 1945 the Des Moines County Farm Bureau Board considered the matter of a soil conservation district after the provision of the state soil conservation law had been presented by Walter B. Eyre, County Extension Director.

Des Moines County was one of the first in the State of Iowa to be organized. Self government was set up in Burlington in 1833. This part of the present state of Iowa was made part of the Michigan territory in 1834. At that time Des Moines County extended from a line west from Rock Island, south to the Missouri line - a strip fifty miles wide. On April 20, 1836 it was made part of the Wisconsin territory. Temporary capital for the entire Wisconsin territory was set up in Burlington. Formal organization of the county was made in 1837, the year that the city of Burlington was incorporated.

The early agricultural history of Des Moines County is rather meager. Not until 1914 did the farmers of this territory really concern themselves about soil problems. The virgin soil was rich and the plow had not made too deep an imprint. The Des Moines County Agricultural Association was formed and was soon changed to the Des Moines County Farm Bureau which was incorporated in April, 1914. The county agent's reports from 1914 to 1918 recognized the growing soil problems, particularly that of soil acidity. In 1919 several farmers signed petitions for soil surveys of the county. During the period from 1914 to 1936 a few farmers were sufficiently interested to cooperate with the county agent in holding a few demonstrations on erosion control, terracing and tree planting. Also the C C C Camp located in Oakville from 1933 to 1942 made a number of soil surveys and aided a few farmers in erosion control.

LEGAL DESCRIPTION

Des Moines County is located on the Mississippi River which forms its east boundary. It is bordered by the Skunk River on the south, by Henry County on the west and by Louisa County on the north. Des Moines County comprises an area of 409 square miles or 261,760 acres. Land use information compiled for the 1959 Conservation Needs Report shows nearly 95% of Des Moines County is used for agricultural purposes. The Iowa Ordnance Plant covers 33 square miles and about one half of this is used and managed for agricultural purposes. The Des Moines County Soil Conservation District includes all the land in Des Moines County exclusive of land within incorporated cities and towns.

CLIMATE

The climate of Des Moines County is characterized by rapid changes in temperatures. There is only a mild amount of winter precipitation but sufficient rainfall during the growing season.

The frost-free period averages 186 days in length. The first fall frost can be expected the third week in October and the last killing frost normally comes about the 15th of April.

The normal annual temperature is 50.6 degrees with summer averaging about 73.7 and the winter 26.1 degrees. High humidity is common for this area during the summer months making conditions near ideal for corn growing.

Precipitation of 32 - 36 inches per year is sufficiently abundant for crop production.

The prevailing winds in Des Moines County are from a southerly direction from April through October and from the northwest during the five months of November through March. The average velocity is 8.57 miles per hour throughout the year.

Winters are rather mild with infrequent heavy snows and blizzards. Ice storms are rather common with one or more destructive ones each year. Snowfall for the year averages 24.9 inches, coming in nine or ten snow falls each year.

POPULATION

The population of Des Moines County as reported in the 1960 Federal Census was 44,605 of which 4,647 or 10 percent lived on farms. Average age of all farm operators is 49.4.

INCOME

Total value of all farm products sold 1964 Federal Census was \$15,705,000.

This amounted to an average of \$3,260 per farm.

Source of cash income was: crops sold \$4,185,000 and \$11,520,000 from live-stock and products sold.

LAND

There are 1280 farms in Des Moines County and the average size is 174 acres.

The total land area is 239,303 acres with 222,919 acres or 93 percent in farms.

FARM TENURE

56.6 percent of Des Moines County farms are operated by owners and 43.4 percent are rented according to the 1964 farm census.

AGRICULTURE

The agriculture of Des Moines County consists of a predominance of corn and soybeans being raised on most of the cropland in the county. Small amounts of wheat and oats plus substantial acreages of hay and pasture are grown along the bluff areas where the prairie uplands break to the river bottoms.

Some cattle are raised on the rough land along the bluff areas. Most of the feeder cattle are shipped in from western ranges.

Substantial amounts of grain are shipped out of Des Moines County via river barge.

CROPS

The general farm crops grown in the order of their importance are as follows: Corn, Soybeans, Alfalfa, Wheat, Oats, Red Clover and Bromegrass and Birdsfoot trefoil.

Corn is by far the most important crop grown in Des Moines County regarding both value and acreage.

In 1964 corn was planted on 70,596 acres or 31.4 percent of the total farm land. (1964 farm census) The average yield for the county was 89.3 bushels per acre.

Soybeans, Wheat, Oats and Hay is grown only where erosion, soil conditions etc prohibit the raising of continuous corn.

LIVESTOCK

Cattle production is restricted to the bluff areas of the county. Hogs are raised on most farms in Des Moines County. The trend is toward specialization even in livestock production. The principal cattle breeds are Hereford, Angus and Shorthorns. A scattering of Charolais and Charolais crosses are evident. The predominance of the hogs raised are cross breeds.

Dairying is of some importance in the county. Most of the Dairy farms are located in the more rolling areas of the county.

Sheep and poultry production are of minor importance in the county.

TOPOGRAPHY AND SOILS

The topography of Des Moines County is a gentle, undulating upland plain having a gentle slope to the south, southeast and southwest becoming quite rough and broken as the several streams reach the bottomlands of the Mississippi and Skunk Rivers.

The uplands soils of the county are the Mahaska Taintor silty loam and clay loam soils. These soils are level to gently rolling and extremely productive soils. The agricultural trend toward continuous row crop is causing heavy erosion on these soils. The steeper Otley and Ladoga soils have had serious erosion problems ever since the land was brought into production. The heavy soil loss, the particular topography and the trend to more row crops makes these soils a serious and complicated soil conservation problem. Most of the light colored upland soils were originally wooded. They are located on the bluffs of the Mississippi and Skunk Rivers and along Flint and other small creeks. These soils for the most part are Clinton and Lindley Silt loams. These timber soils are extremely erosive.

Most of the bottomland are found in the Alluvial belt along the Mississippi, Skunk and Flint Rivers. They are composed primarily of Wabash and Nodaway Silt loams and similar soils. The Mississippi bottoms are protected from overflow by levees and are drained by an extensive system of drainage ditches and pumping stations. These bottoms are organized into legal drainage districts and special assessments are levied against the land to maintain the drainage system.

The two dominant land use problems of the county are: Soil erosion control on the uplands and drainage on the bottomlands. The erosion of upland causes ditching and increased production costs and at the same time this same soil when deposited in the bottomland drainage ditches causes overtopping of levees and diversions plus very high maintenance costs for the drainage districts and for the Corps of Engineers who are responsible for keeping a nine foot channel in the Mississippi River.

THE DES MOINES COUNTY CONSERVATION NEEDS INVENTORY PUBLISHED IN 1963 INDICATE THE FOLLOWING:

CROPLAND: 169,115 acres

46,743 acres adequately treated or not requiring any treatment.

56,938 acres of cropland needing erosion control practices.

410 acres needing both erosion control and drainage practices.

15,409 acres needing drainage practices.

3,061 acres needing treatment for unfavorable soil conditions.

GRASSLAND: 38,570 acres

15,983 acres of grassland adequately treated but still requiring proper management.

20,710 acres needing improvement.

WOODLAND: 17,806 acres

2,295 of woodland are adequately treated or do not require treatment.

12,123 need establishment or improvement.

FARMSTEAD & WILDLIFE: 6,431 acres

595 acres with no problems.

4,644 acres adequately treated.

906 acres needing erosion control practices.

326 acres needing drainage practices.

OUT OF AGRICULTURAL USE: 5,716 acres

SPECIAL PROBLEMS

The trend toward larger farms and larger machinery seemingly divert many land owners awareness from the problem of soil erosion.

Developing an awareness of the public to the seriousness of soil and water loss is of utmost importance. The need to enlist the support of the general

public is of utmost importance.

Approximately 60,000 acres along the Mississippi are protected by levees. River flooding causes not only seepage problems but the human risk factor is always present with the possibility of levee failure. The extreme variation of soil types in the bottom land causes great difficulty in correcting drainage problems.

Lack of adequate conservation in the uplands of the Flint River Watershed causes extreme flooding and crop damage to the farmer involved in its flood plane.

The great number of "factory worker" farms in the bluff areas above the Rivers, restricts the application of needed conservation practices in these areas.

A limited area of sandy soil on the Mississippi River terraces in the Southern part of Union Township and to a limited extent in the bottomland area in Jackson and Huron Township offer special problems, with high water tables and poor drainage.

LAND USE PROBLEMS

The economic necessity and the generally good quality of the land has set the trend for continuous row cropping in Des Moines County.

The following shows the change in land use between 1950 and 1960:

SITUATION	1950	1960
Farms w/livestock	1268=84%	1112=77%
Corn raised	60,925 acres	70,596 acres

Oats raised	25,364 acres	9,522 acres
Soybeans raised	15,063 acres	27,057 acres
Hay raised	23,436 acres	14,764 acres

As indicated the trend is away from Oats and Hay production and toward more row crop production. This indicates that erosion is apt to be increasing. The need for more mechanical practices is indicated such as contouring, strip cropping and especially the parallel, cut & fill, tile inlet type terrace.

WOODLAND

Timberland as a whole has been and still is poorly managed. Some inroads have been made in establishing timber management but a greater effort is needed.

The lack of knowledge concerning the value or potential value of timber is the greatest hinderance toward good timber management. The paper mill at Fort Madison has helped develop interest and knowledge in the economic value of timberland.

PASTURE IMPROVEMENT

Pasture improvement has not been used to the extent it should in the county. That land that lends its self to permanent pasture often is of such rough topography that farmers are reluctant to spend the money necessary to renovate. Most of this land is covered with poor quality second growth timber which is neither good for lumber or pasture.

DRAINAGE

Drainage, both tile and open drainage is needed and used through out the

county. Many of the original tile systems were poorly engineered and installed with tile failures showing up regularly. Re-tiling is being done in many cases. The decision of where existing, old mains are still adequate, is a problem where the old and new tile systems involve each other.

The mild winters with much freezing and thawing are extremely hard on grassed waterways. Waterways in Des Moines County are necessary yet very difficult to maintain. Tile inlet terraces seem to be the most logical answer.

HIGHWAYS AND COUNTY ROADS

The roads of this county are a constant source of erosion. The timber influence of the soils in the rougher areas of the county make it extremely difficult to stabilize road cuts and ditches.

WATERSHEDS

The land of Des Moines County chains into the Flint River, Mississippi River or into the Skunk River on the south. The watersheds vary from a few hundred acres to many thousand acres. The upper reaches of the watersheds are made up of level to nearly level prairie land that changes abruptly to very rough, rolling land above the river bottom lands. The introduction of the tiled inlet terrace on the very productive, gently rolling uplands is the first effective conservation tool acceptable to the farmers. Serious bottomland flooding has caused nearly all the Mississippi River bottomland farms to organize drainage districts to protect themselves.

RECREATION

The city of Burlington and the county as a whole has more parks and recreation areas than most counties. Still the need for further recreation development

exists. A large county lake is planned now bringing another 350 acres of land under recreational development.

CONSERVATION PRACTICES

A Des Moines County Conservation Needs Report was published in 1963. The Needs Committee was composed of members of USDA Agencies and local conservation oriented groups.

This report itemized the existing agricultural resources and the conservation efforts made in the past. Then a break down of the future needs and expected trends was made giving a projected outlook to 1975 of Des Moines Counties Conservation Needs and agricultural outlook.

DES MOINES COUNTY CONSERVATION PRACTICE NEEDS

Practice		Total Needs	Amount On	Remaining
Name	Unit	Practical	Land 12/31/62	Needs
Contouring	Acres	52650	28758	23892
Diversion	Miles	106	9	97
Surface Field Ditches	Miles	25	14	11
Mains and Laterals	Miles	138	125	13
Farm Ponds	No.	699	408	291
Flood Water Structures	No.	10		10
Erosion Control Structures	No.	948	278	670
Grassed Watercourses	Acres	3747	355	3392
Land Clearing	Acres	4992	1461	3531
Pasture Renovation	Acres	17635	4831	12804
Strip Cropping Contour	Acres	648	454	194
Terraces Graded	Miles	513	101	412
Terraces Parallel	Miles	343	3	340
Tile Drains	Miles	1884	409	1475
Tree Planting	Acres	1638	231	1407
Wildlife Area Development	Acres	1208	227	981
Wildlife Area Preservation	Acres	1555	227	1782
Woodland Improvement	Acres	9201	456	8745
Cooperators	No.	1311	637	674
Cooperators	Acres	231922	105216	126706
Basic Plans	No.	1311	465	846
Basic Plans	Acres	231922	75450	156472

DES MOINES COUNTY LOOKS AHEAD TO 1975

By 1975 the Des Moines County Soil Conservation District will have been in operation for 29 years.

The Conservation Needs study points out the facts that at the present rate of application of erosion control practices, and the demands being made on the land for grain crop production, the soils of Des Moines County will not be adequately protected from erosion for at least two or three generations. This will be too late for a portion of our land now in grain crops.

The need for education through the schools and rural youth groups will become more apparent and the realization that it is easier to grow conservation farmers, than to convert erosion farmers to conservation farmers.

The majority of land owners and operators will have accepted various conservation practices as a necessary requirement in maintaining productive capacity, appearance and continuing value of their farm.

Farm numbers will have decreased and size increased until they will be somewhat stabilized as more economical units. There will probably be even more small size units near Burlington, operated by individuals who obtain a majority of their income from other sources but desire rural dwelling.

Pastures will be cleared, renovation reseeded with grasses and legumes, rotation grazed and managed to improve their contribution to the net income of the farm.

Timber areas will be reduced, leaving fewer poor stands and improving the remaining areas by interplanting, weeding out poor trees and protecting from livestock.

The lack of adequate water for maximum crop production and industrial consumption by 1975 will command the attention and planning of the thinking public.

Recreation on the farm for city dwellers will be a source of income for the more rugged and scenic farms of the county.

ACREAGE BY SLOPE CLASSES

	0-1	2-4	5-8	9-13	14-24	25+	Total
Upland ---	50372	51100	41786	19119	14215	9750	186342
Bottomland	26713	18868					45581

ASSISTANCE FROM VARIOUS SOURCES

Assistance in furthering the program of the Soil Conservation District is supplied by the following: State Soil Conservation Committee, Soil Conservation Service, Extension Service, Agricultural Stabilization and Conservation Service, State Conservation Commission, Farm Bureau and other farm organizations, County Conservation Board, County newspapers and Radio Stations, Chamber of Commerce, Banks, County Mutual Insurance Companies, County Board of Supervisors and County Engineer.

PROPOSED LONG TIME CONSERVATION OBJECTIVES

The Des Moines County Soil Conservation District, through its commissioners, propose the following long range conservation program for the Des Moines County Conservation District. This program is based on the conservation needs of the district, and the cooperation and assistance from the various local, government and state agencies. The principal objective being to bring about the needed land use adjustments and to carry on an aggressive soil and water conservation program.

Most farmers are aware of the erosion taking place on their farms. The heavy use of fertilizer and heavy farm machinery capable of erasing the marks of erosion tend to under emphasize the seriousness of soil erosion. The use of larger and faster equipment and the economic necessity to cover large acreages fast tend to lessen the farmers willingness to accept those conservation practices that involve frequent turning, stoping or handling short or point rows. Since soil erosion must be stopped where it starts, on the upland cropland, we plan to take advantage of new developments in the field of erosion control that are more acceptable to the conservation farmer.

It will be the objective of the District to make available to every land owner and operator the facts and information which will enable him to plan the best possible use and management of his land. The district plans to provide the necessary technical assistance for putting conservation practices on the land.

The district will promote the completion of a Standard Soil Survey and promote the use of it as a basis for all land use.

In summing up the foregoing objectives the commissioners feel that in order to maintain the productive ability of our soils, to help control pollution and flooding of our water courses, to help stabilize production costs, maintain a better standard of living and to fulfill our moral obligation for soil stewardship, we must and should practice sound soil and water conservation. Land that is seriously eroded and damaged affects more than just the present land owner. The entire community is affected. It tends to affect the living standard of the present family. It lessens the chance of the children getting adequate education and in turn their economic future. The local tax base is lowered, affecting schools, roads and public improvements. The predicted population explosion demands a maintenance program for our land if we are to help provide a safe and happy future for our today's youth.

REVISIONS

The preceding program may be revised and amended at any time the Soil District Commissioners may deem necessary.

The program will be reviewed annually.

Des Moines County Soil Conservation District

Date 2-28-66by: Arthur Corman
Chairman

A resolution authorizing the adoption of this revised program was passed by
the district governing body on 2-28-66 at Burlington, Iowa.

by: Harold Linder
Secretary

SOIL CONSERVATION SERVICE
Fairfield, Iowa
12/21/67

TO : Work Unit Conservationists, Patterson, Thorburn, Hall, Barker,
Espy, Pettit, Turley, Baker, Doran, Stark, Arnold, Bollinger,
& Mullen.

FROM : Lyall H. Mitchell, Area Conservationist

SUBJECT: Districts - District Program & Work Plan Revisions

We are going to ask that you treat this letter somewhat "For Official Use Only" due to the particular message we are relaying to you. It concerns information contained in the District Programs and Work Plans. These, of course, are documents of the soil conservation districts, but we know that we have supplied considerable assistance in the recent revisions that have been or are being completed.

While visiting recently with Don Johnson, Chairman, State Soil Conservation Committee, he commented that he had just reviewed a recently revised District Program and Work Plan in this area and found it quite well prepared, but he did observe that little or no mention ^{was made} of the State Committee or State Funds and the assistance these provide to the district. We were just a little embarrassed for the reason we had helped to review these particular revisions before they were sent on. We think Don was entirely justified in raising this question.

After the above we made a check of the eleven District Programs and Work Plans that have been revised to date, ^{and} we found that seven of these made little or no mention of the State Committee and State Funds while the other four ranged from short paragraphs to good descriptions.

In view of the above, we recommend that perhaps some notation be placed on the Districts' copies of these ~~and~~ that these two items be definitely included in any future revisions. This might help to insure that the above mentioned items will not be missed again. We will note on each of your letters our findings for your location.

cc: Frank Mendell

Found Good Description

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
SOIL CONSERVATION SERVICE

405 Iowa Building
Des Moines, Iowa 50309
November 16, 1967

Mr. Arthur Corman
Chairman
Des Moines County Soil
Conservation District
Federal Building
Burlington, Iowa 52601

Dear Mr. Corman:

Attached is the District's signed copy of the revised Supplemental Memorandum of Understanding.

This revised Supplemental Memorandum of Understanding reflects the fundamental changes that have taken place over the past years in the relationship of Soil Conservation Districts and the Soil Conservation Service. It should provide the District and the Service more flexibility in fitting their operations to each other and to cover the many new areas of responsibility that the Districts and the Service have undertaken.

Congratulations to the Des Moines County Soil Conservation District in modernizing the working basis of our long partnership and may the years ahead be even more fruitful in the cause of soil and water conservation.

Sincerely yours,



Frank H. Mendell
State Conservationist

Attachment

SUPPLEMENTAL MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING

between the

Des Moines County Soil

CONSERVATION DISTRICT, State of Iowa

and the

SOIL CONSERVATION SERVICE

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

The Des Moines County Soil Conservation
District of Iowa and the Secretary,
United States Department of Agriculture, have entered into a basic Memorandum
of Understanding, which was signed by the district on/the June 21, 1946 and revised on
28 day of February
19 66. That Memorandum establishes a basis for the cooperation of agencies
of the department with the district.

Under the terms of the Soil Conservation Act of 1935 and other Acts, the
Soil Conservation Service is authorized to cooperate with and to furnish assist-
ance to the district for conservation and resource development work.

The district and the Service have the common objective of helping to bring
about the conservation, development, and wise use of land, water, and related
resources. They, therefore, enter into this Memorandum of Understanding as the
foundation for an enduring cooperative working arrangement. This memorandum
supplements the Memorandum of Understanding between the district and the depart-
ment referred to above, and is subject to all the provisions of that Memorandum
of Understanding.

A. What the Service Will Do

1. The Service will make available to the district the services of personnel qualified in carrying out resource planning, conservation and development, and will provide such facilities as its employees may require. Through its state conservationist, the Service will designate a conservationist as its primary staff member for assisting the district.

2. Service assistance will be allocated in accordance with an annual plan of operations prepared by the Service in consultation with the district and based upon the district's annual work plan. The Service will consult with the district whenever substantial changes in assistance to be made available are contemplated and will notify the district in advance whenever changes are to be made.

B. What the District Will Do

1. The district will (a) adopt a procedure for the orderly and progressive development and application of conservation and resource development plans for farms, communities, watersheds, and other land units, (b) be responsible for determining the recipients of services provided by the district and for setting priorities for the kind and amounts of work to be performed in the district, and (c) develop a systematic method for group and individual follow-up work essential to the carrying out of conservation and resource development plans.

2. The district's annual work plan, which will be prepared as a guide for its work and activities for the year ahead, will include such information as is needed for the preparation by the Service of its annual plan of operations.

3. The district will keep records of all materials and equipment furnished it by the Service in accordance with agreements regarding such materials and

equipment. Such records will be available for examination at any reasonable time by accredited Service representatives.

C. It is Further Understood

1. Either party, as mutually agreed upon, will provide or arrange for such additional services, facilities, equipment, materials, and arrangements as may be required to achieve common objectives.

2. Service personnel and facilities, all of which will be under the jurisdiction of the Service, will be located insofar as feasible at headquarters mutually satisfactory to the district and the Service. The Service retains the right to establish headquarters for its personnel at such places as it deems most appropriate.

3. This Supplemental Memorandum of Understanding will be effective when signed by both parties and will continue in effect for the duration of the basic Memorandum of Understanding referred to above, except that it may be modified or terminated at any time by mutual consent of the parties hereto, or may be terminated by either party by giving sixty (60) days' notice in writing to the other party.

Des Moines County Soil

CONSERVATION DISTRICT

By: Arthur Corman
Chairman, District Governing Body

Date: October 23, 1967

The signing of this Supplemental Memorandum of Understanding on behalf of the district was authorized by a resolution of the District Governing Body adopted at a meeting held on the 23 day of October, 1967.

Acting N.L. Sutton
Secretary, District Governing Body

Date: October 23, 1967.

SOIL CONSERVATION SERVICE

United States Department of Agriculture

By: Frank H. Sweeney
State Conservationist, Soil Conser-
vation Service

Date: 11/11, 1967.

DES MOINES COUNTY SOIL CONSERVATION DISTRICT

DISTRICT WORK PLAN

Revised - 1965

WORK PLAN:

The work plan carries on further by offering in more detail the best known ways and means at hand today for the long time objectives listed in the district program. The work plan will serve as a guide in the methods of accomplishing various conservation procedures and other activities.

1. INTRODUCTION & PURPOSE
2. ADMINISTRATIVE
 - a. Position and duties of district commissioners
3. ASSISTANCE PROVIDED BY DISTRICT TO DISTRICT COOPERATORS
 - a. ACP cooperators, other farmers and landowners
 - b. Public organizations and others
4. ASSISTANCE ENLISTED AND RECEIVED BY DISTRICT
 - a. Various Federal and State Agencies
 - b. News media
 - c. Schools, etc
5. EDUCATION PROGRAM
 - a. Methods to be used
6. PLANS OF ACTION FOR PLACING CONSERVATION ON THE LAND
 - a. Conservation Surveys
 - b. Land Use Recommendations
 - c. Cooperative Agreement
 - d. Farm Conservation Plan
 - e. Application
7. OTHER ACTIVITIES * NOT INCLUDED ELSEWHERE
8. SMALL WATERSHEDS
 - a. Policy and assistance
9. RECREATION
 - a. Assistance and Promotion
10. PLANT MATERIALS
11. CONSERVATION BEAUTIFICATION
12. CALENDAR OF WORK - ANNUAL BASIS - DISTRICT REPORTS
13. REVISION OF WORK PLANS
14. RURAL AREA DEVELOPMENT
15. RESOURCE CONSERVATION AND DEVELOPMENT

DES MOINES COUNTY SOIL CONSERVATION DISTRICT

DISTRICT WORK PLAN Revised - 1965

INTRODUCTION AND PURPOSE

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

The proper adjustment in the use of the different soils and the installation of the needed conservation practices is needed to maintain the productive ability of the land. Erosion control practices such as contouring, terracing, and strip cropping are needed to reduce and slow down runoff from fields. Proper and adequate use of additional limestone and fertilizers are needed to supply adequate plant food. Adequate and stabilized water disposal systems are needed, including waterways, dams, drainage ditches, diversions, tile drains, ponds, etc. Pastures need renovation to increase the protective cover and to increase their economic value. Woodlands need to be protected from livestock and managed as part of the farm enterprise. Wildlife cover and habitat needs to be protected and increased by plantings for feed and protection.

ADMINISTRATIVE

The Commissioners of the District will meet on the fourth Monday of each month at the Soil Conservation District Office in Burlington, Iowa. The meetings will normally be held at 8 P. M.

During each odd year there will be an election for one District Commissioner to serve a six year term of office. The Senior Commissioner serves as Chairman. Assistant Commissioners are selected as needed by the Commissioners.

The District Commissioners will prepare an Annual Report indicating activities performed and progress made, etc.

The District will keep minutes of all meetings held and records will be maintained of all funds received and expended. The Commissioners will review and approve all farm plans and will set up priorities for planning and application when needed. The Commissioners determine policies and priorities of the districts activities.

The Office is located in the Federal Building - Main and Jefferson Streets, Burlington, Iowa. The phone number is 754-8983.

The Commissioners of the District will prepare an Annual Plan of Operation at the beginning of each year. A sample is included in the appendix.

ASSISTANCE AVAILABLE

The District has signed a memorandum of understanding with the U. S. Department of Agriculture and the Soil Conservation Service which has resulted in technical assistance being made available to the District in the principal phases of soil surveys, farm conservation planning, application of practices and information and education.

The District has signed a memorandum of understanding with the Iowa Extension Service. The Extension Service will provide leadership and will assist the District with the education and information program.

The Soil Conservation Service has been assigned the technical responsibilities for certain ACP practices. The District and the ASC Committee will cooperate

in administering the Federal ACP Funds made available to the county for the purpose of cost sharing of the initial application of conservation practices. The ASC Committee may make available to the SCS, up to 5% of the County ACP funds to assist with the technical assistance necessary to put those conservation practices on the ground. The ASC and the District will cooperate in providing encouragement and assistance to farmers taking soil tests.

The District will seek cooperation with the Farmers Home Administration. Those farmers seeking and needing the services of the FHA will be informed of that organization and its function.

Vocational Agriculture Instructors carrying on any class of activity associated with Soil and Water Conservation will be provided with such material, visual aids and demonstration assistance as the District can make available. Special emphasis will be made to encourage field demonstrations, soil judging and speech contests.

The State Conservation Commission and the District will cooperate in trying to control the erosion problems involved above the State Lakes of the county. Both State and Federal funds will be used to encourage and help defray the costs of such conservation work.

The organization of the County Conservation Board introduces another organization interested in conservation of wildlife, primitive areas and the development of new outdoor recreation facilities. The District will hold joint tours with the Board and cooperate when ever possible with the Conservation Board. The District will work with the churches of the county to encourage the churches to emphasis soil stewardship in their work.

A constant effort will be made by the District to help the Radio Stations and Newspapers prepare news items of agricultural and conservation interest.

The Ordnance Plant and adjoining land covers 19,000 acres of land. The District will encourage and assist the plant Agronomist to develop conservation plans for those parcels of land leased for farming. The District will assist the plant agronomist with all land use problems that may occur on the plant ground.

ASSISTANCE TO DISTRICT

This part summarizes the assistance available to the District. The agencies and organizations are:

State Soil Conservation Committee

The State Soil Conservation Committee has established general policies for election and operating procedures of the District.

Administers and distributes state funds established by law for use of soil conservation districts in Iowa.

Two separate and distinct funds have been set up and are maintained in each soil district.

1. 1M Budget

A fund of \$500 for each district allocated each year for District Commissioners expenses and mileage. Certain office expenses, meetings, exhibits, and educational material are paid from this fund.

2. 2M Budget

This fund is used for employment of part-time and/or full-time technicians helpers and clerks.

These funds are allocated by a budget prepared by the District on needs each year.

This source of funds for clerical and technical assistance has made Iowa one of the leaders in soil and water conservation.

Soil Conservation Service

The Soil Conservation Service will provide technical personnel to assist farmers in developing and putting into effect conservation plans. They will work closely with the District commissioners in carrying out Soil Conservation Service and District policies. The SCS will assist the commissioners in revising and improving the district program and work plan.

Extension Service

This assistance is made directly through the County Extension Director and Extension Specialists. The District will call on the Extension Director and Specialists for help in program planning, educational, and any special problems.

Agricultural Stabilization and Conservation Service

This agency, through its Agricultural Conservation Program (ACP), cost-shares with the farmer on certain permanent type practices.

This is to encourage those conservation practices which the farmer would not carry out to the needed extent without program assistance.

The ASCS County Committee may make available to the Soil Conservation Service up to 5% of the county ACP funds. This is to partially reimburse the SCS for time spent on servicing farmers under the cost-share program.

Certain designated practices are the responsibility of the SCS personnel for determining need, practicability, layout, and certification for ACP payment.

Farmers Home Administration

This agency encourages clients to develop and follow conservation farm plans. Loans are available for needed soil and water conservation practices.

Schools

The schools of the county are encouraged to teach conservation subjects in grade and high school science classes.

The County Superintendent of Schools works with the District on sponsoring an essay contest.

The agricultural instructor at the Central Community High School cooperates on soil and water conservation subjects.

Iowa Conservation Commission

Two types of service are available to the District through this agency.

1. County Conservation Officer

Technical information and planning for fish and wildlife management.

2. Farm Forester and District Forester

A farm forester is provided to assist farmers in woodland management and tree planting in connection with farm plans. Also, a district forester assigned only to Shimek State Forest assists in group tours and other educational forestry work.

EDUCATION

The objective of the program will be to furnish information on the following items:

1. The extent and seriousness of erosion as it pertains to this county.
2. The probable causes of erosion and corrective measures.
3. Principles of good soil management.
4. Use of erosion control practices.
5. Pasture improvement and woodland management.
6. Land management as affected by changes in land use.

District Commissioners and others qualified may give talks on soil conservation before other town and country groups such as Chamber of Commerce, Jaycees, Rotary and etc.

An effort will be made by the District Commissioners and other qualified individuals to acquaint public school teachers with extent and seriousness of erosion in Des Moines County and the measures essential to its control.

Visual aids such as motion pictures, colored slides, picture displays, charts, etc., will be made available to supplement other educational methods.

The District will try to sponsor at least two Contests per year to help create interest. These contests might be, Safety Speech Contest, Soil Conservation Speech Contest, Register & Tribune Contest.

News releases, annual reports, radio programs and feature articles will be used as a means of keeping the public informed of the progress of soil conservation cooperators and the activities of the District.

PLANS FOR ACTION FOR PLACING CONSERVATION ON THE LAND

COOPERATIVE AGREEMENT

A cooperative working agreement between the district and those farmers desiring assistance shall be signed before extensive assistance is given the farmer. This agreement spells out the intended action of both parties.

GROUP APPROACH

When applying conservation practices on the land, a group approach will be used when ever possible. By getting neighbors and even whole neighborhoods to cooperate in handling a common conservation problem, a more complete and lasting conservation program can be placed on the land. Group jobs will be given priority. The written application of the group will be the basis for establishing priority. Priority for work will be based upon the willingness and interest of the group.

FARM PLANS

One of the most important tools that will be used to help place conservation on the land, will be the use and development of a "Conservation Farm Plan."

The planning of conservation practices will be based on a soil survey and the intended use of that land. After the farm plan has been developed by the farmer with the assistance of the work unit conservationist it will be submitted to the District Commissioners for review and approval.

The farm plan will include the proper land use of each area, application and use of lime and fertilizer, effective erosion control and drainage measures and application schedule.

Practices that were used in planning a farm:

Contour farming, strip cropping, terraces, forestry management practices; including new tree planting, pasture improvement, land conversion, soil treatment, and drainage practices.

APPLICATION

A cooperator of the district or an ACP participant who wishes to apply a conservation practice will be provided technical services by the district. Proper application of the needed conservation practices on each acre of land is the ultimate goal of the district. This assistance is provided without cost to the cooperator. Extension application or assistance will not be performed on a farm which is neither a district or ACP cooperator.

OTHER ACTIVITIES

Consultative services will be provided by the district for erosion problems on non-agricultural land to organizations, groups or individuals.

Soil Conservation Service personnel assigned to the Soil Conservation District will perform such Radiological duties as outlined in the Radiological Monitoring Directives.

PLANT MATERIALS

The District will assist the Soil Conservation Service plant materials specialist with his efforts to find and introduce new and better adapted plants for conservation use. Experimental plots and seed increase plantings will be encouraged in the county when ever the need arises.

CONSERVATION BEAUTIFICATION

The Districts main concern in the past had been to develop a sound conservation program for the eroding cropland. The District now recognizes the need for more emphasis to be placed on making the farm a better place to live as well as produce crops. The District program now includes the recognition of the need to not only to take care of eroding cropland but to also give special attention to building sites, home sites, road cuts, orchards, wind break and etc.

SMALL WATERSHEDS

Small watersheds will receive special attention. The small watersheds or group approach will be encouraged at every opportunity when ever the problem involves the drainage from more than one farm.

RECREATION

In recognizing the need for more recreation in the District each cooperator will be encouraged to make multi use of all practices where recreation and wildlife can be included.

RURAL AREA DEVELOPMENT

The District will promote and assist Rural Area Development enterprises when this program is formed.

The SCS Work Unit Conservationist will serve as Chairman of the T.A.P. Committee and will represent the Soil Conservation Service on this committee.

SAMPLE

OF

DISTRICT ANNUAL PLAN OF OPERATION

ACTIVITY	PERSONS RESPONSIBLE	Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May	June	July	Aug.	Sept.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.
Annual Report-----	Comm's & SCS-----	x	x	x									
Comm's Short Course-----	Comm's & Asst. Comm's-----	x											
Contractors Meeting-----	SCD, SCS & ASC-----		x										
Reg. Tribune Contest-----	Comm's, SCS & Banks-----						x						
Speech Contest-----	Comm's, SCS & FFA-----				x						x		
Soil Stewardship-----	Comm's, SCS & Ministers-----				x								
Comm's Annual Conference-----	Comm's-----							x			x		
Publicity-----	W.U.C. & Tech.-----	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Administration-----	Comm's-----	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Springbrook Camp-----	Comm's & W.U.C.-----						x						
Teachers Workshop-----	Comm's & W.U.C.-----										x		
Watershed-----	Comm's & W.U.C. Staff-----						x	x	x				

REVISIONS

This program and work plan may be revised or amended at anytime the Commissioners deem it inadequate. It will be the policy to review the program and work plan during January of each year and make necessary revisions at that time. Suggestions from farmers and other interested parties will be welcome at all times.

Des Moines County Soil Conservation District

by Arthur Corman
Chairman, District Governing Body

Date 2 - 28 - 66

The signing of this revised district program and work plan was authorized by a resolution of the District Governing Body adopted at a meeting held on _____

Harold Linder
Secretary, District Governing Body

