

INSIDE IOWA TOILET

News of
Interest

For the DYSART REPORTER, NORTHERN SUN-PRINT, REINBECK

30 years of ...

IOWA soil conservation cost share protects the soil and water resources of the state from erosion and sediment damage

FINANCIAL assistance encourages the adoption of practices that are consistent with the capability of the land

INCENTIVES are available through funds appropriated by the Iowa General Assembly

PROGRAM funds are matched by landowners, spent locally to hire private construction contractors, and reinvested into the economies of local communities



Iowa Department of Agriculture and Land Stewardship
Division of Soil Conservation
www.agriculture.state.ia.us

Thirty years of cost share and Iowa's water quality

There has been a lot of attention leveled at water quality in recent years. A lot can be learned by studying our lakes, rivers and streams, but in order to truly understand what is happening with water quality in a state like Iowa, it is necessary to turn around and look upstream. What happens on the landscape has a huge impact on the water downhill from that landscape.

Of the 157 impaired waters in Iowa on the 1998 list, well over half were included because of sedimentation problems. Keeping the soil where it belongs is not new to Soil and Water Conservation Districts (SWCDs). In fact, it has been the focus of Districts for well over 60 years.

This year during Soil and Water Conservation Week, November 16-22, we are celebrating 30 years of the "first in the nation" soil conservation Financial Incentives Program. Over its

lifetime, the State of Iowa has invested over \$150 million in financial incentives to assist landowners to protect their farms from the damaging effects of soil erosion. Those same landowners have invested an equal amount from their own pocketbooks, stimulating tremendous economic activity in local communities throughout Iowa.

The Division of Soil Conservation estimates that we have stopped over 18 million tons of fertile topsoil from escaping our fields in that 30 year timeframe. That is enough precious black soil to provide a six-inch layer for over 20,000 football fields. Put another way, the soil saved in the lifetime of the Financial Incentives Program would cover all four lanes of an interstate highway stretching from California to New York. Of course a good share of the lost soil may have found its way to our state's water-

ways, so in effect, SWCDs have been a partner in improving water quality for years.

Improving water quality isn't difficult to understand. Placing waterways, terraces, grade stabilization structures, and diversions in the right locations, save soil and preserve water quality. Reducing tillage and leaving crop residue on the soil surface improve soil quality and reduce the movement of soil as well. In the end, soil conservation work means that less sediment makes its way to the water.

We can't go wrong. By investing in soil conservation, we get the best of both worlds - we improve the productivity of our farms and keep sediment out of our water. That's a win-win scenario where everyone benefits.

*Article intended for District Annual Reports
November 4, 2003
Bill Elton*

State cost share - 30 years strong

by Bernie Bolton, President
Conservation Districts of Iowa

Cost share is a fantastic program to help cooperators control erosion on their farms. There is hardly a cooperator who has not benefited from this great cost share program. Not only do farmers take part by providing at least 50% of their own dollars, but many times it is an incentive to do several additional projects.

Cost share dollars change hands several times within each of our communities. Once the contractors pull into the field to do the work, fuel is needed for the equipment, insurance coverage is required, repair persons are necessary and, in turn, each of these businesses pay their bills with the dollars collected from the cooperators and state cost

share. This provides a major economic stimulus in our local communities.

There are so many cost share programs for our customers to avail themselves. To name a few: terracing, contour strip-cropping, windbreaks, water and sediment basins, pasture and hay land planting, waterways and buffers.

As Soil and Water Conservationists, we have the opportunity to combine state cost share projects with both the federal and the county programs to protect soil and improve water quality. These practices are all protected by the cooperator with 20-year maintenance agreements under the watchful eye of soil and water conservationists, NRCS staff and State technicians. The last 30 years have had a significant influence on agriculture in the

state of Iowa by helping to keep our rich topsoil out of the streams and retained on our farms. We must continue to work together to promote an increase of monies and uses for our cost share program. We will build a better tomorrow working together to keep these valuable commodities for future generations.

I personally want to thank former Governor Robert Ray and the state legislators for their positive and proactive approach to setting Iowa as the first state in the nation to have a cost share program. We continue to have governors and legislators who are leaders for conservation. The time is NOW. Let's be ready for an even bigger and better celebration in the year 2023 when we have 50 years of cost share under our belt.

•FY 1985 funding was \$8,644,000 (High)

•Total dollars appropriated to program \$182,309,933.22

•\$3 to \$4 million unawarded demand every year

•Cooperators may receive financial incentives for approved management practices.

•5% of each year's appropriation is allocated to the Publicly-owned lakes program.

•5% of each year's appropriation is set aside to abate soil loss complaints under the mandatory program.

•30% of the district's allocation may be used for the establishment of management practices.

•Approximately 2500 landowners installed practices each year to protect more than 27,000 acres with terraces, waterways, structures and basins.

•Acres benefited per year: 40,740

•5 year average of practices installed per year:

•940 acres of Contour Strip Cropping

•170 acres of Contouring

•1,975 feet of Diversions

•17,242 feet of Field Windbreaks

•1,068 acres of No-till

•352 acres of Pasture & Hayland Planting

•74,328 feet of Under-ground Outlets

•2,519 Water & Sediment

•Funds are allocated directly to 100 soil & water conservation districts on the basis of each district's share of the state's most erosive cropland soils.

•Five elected soil & water conservation district commissioners in each soil & water conservation district work with field office staff to prioritize conservation needs in a particular district.

•Any landowner in the state of Iowa, who is a cooperator with the soil & water conservation district, who meets the requirements, and who enters into a voluntary agreement with the district to install and maintain an approved conservation practice, is eligible to receive 50 percent of the estimated or actual cost of the project, whichever is the lesser amount.

•Permanent practices installed are subject to a 20-year maintenance agreement to assure their long-term, successful performance.

•All practices must meet USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service specifications.

•Funds utilized through this program are matched 50 : 50 by landowners, spent locally to hire private construction contractors, and reinvested by those contractors in local communities. Local jobs and businesses are

public investment in conservation practice installation.

•Once farmers get started in the conservation program with some public cost-share assistance, they quite often will continue with installation of conservation practices - especially terraces even though the full 50 percent cost-share is not available.

•There is a definite public interest in the stewardship of private lands. The installation of permanent soil conservation practices will, in most instances, have considerable off-site benefit. Sediment is kept from reaching road ditches, waterways remain clean and unclogged, lakes have a longer life, adjacent lands are not subjected to sediment deposition, and potential non-point pollutants stay on the farm.

•Soil & water conservation district commissioners throughout the state have done an outstanding job of obligating these funds in each district. Without the assistance of commissioners, Natural Resources Conservation Service staff, and Division of Soil Conservation personnel assigned to districts, the IFIP would not have operated so smoothly. Commissioners and staff are to be congratulated for the time and effort they have taken to make the Iowa Financial Incentives Program successful and effective.

Conserving Soil & Water in Tama County 2003 Annual Report

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30 years of soil conservation = 30 years of water quality improvements or "6,818 miles of dump trucks"

Most people view "soil conservation" as reducing erosion and maintaining our soil resource, which is absolutely right. But, few recognize the relationship between "soil conservation" and "water quality". Sediment is the number one nonpoint-source pollutant of the nation's waters. In addition, nutrients attached to soil particles represent a major pollution source as well.

The Iowa Financial Incentives Program has addressed erosion control and water quality improvement for 30 years. As a voluntary approach, this program has not often received the recognition it is due, as compared to more widely known regulatory compliance actions.

Since 1973, more than 75,000 cooperators have matched dollar-for-dollar the State of Iowa's contribution to install measures to reduce erosion and improve water quality.

That's a total investment of public and private funds of approximately \$364,620,000.

It is estimated that the Financial Incentives Program has conserved over 18 million tons of our precious topsoil. A good deal of that would have reached our rivers, streams and lakes. To put that into another perspective, picture in your mind a 10-ton dump truck, 20 feet long. Now, try to imagine 6,818 miles of dump trucks lined up bumper to bumper to empty soil into our rivers, lakes and streams.

It is important that we build on our strengths as a state and as a nation. In Iowa, our strength is our fertile topsoil. The Financial Incentives Program will continue to conserve our soil, allowing us to sustain viable agriculture, to provide for economic stability and to promote national security.

John Sellers, Chair
State Soil Conservation
Committee of Iowa

2003 Annual Report

of the Tama County Soil
and Water Conservation
District - Assisted by the
Natural Resources
Conservation Service.

We the commissioners of the Tama County SWCD present our report. This report is prepared to provide information concerning local conservation efforts in Tama County.

We wish to thank all cooperators who work with us to bring conservation directly to the land. We extend our appreciation to all partnering agencies, units of government, media groups and individuals who share our concern for protecting our natural resources here in Tama County. We urge your continued effort. Your suggestions and comments are welcomed.

Tama County Soil and Water
Conservation District
Commissioners:
David Beane, Chairman
Jeff Bruene
Stanley Dostal
Rollie Haynes
Jody Kasal
Assistant Commissioners:
Cathy Wick
Dean McKenna

Office Staff Federal
Employees:
Larry Jones, District
Conservationist
Chestor Worden, Soil
Conservation Technician
District Employee
Mark Pokorny
State Employee
Nancy Havran, State
Secretary

Meet your SWCD Commissioners

David Beane

David Beane and his wife Judy have farmed in Carlton Township for 39 years. They have been no-tilling corn, soybeans, and alfalfa since 1993. They have a beef cow herd and feed the calves out to market. They like to travel to all parts of the United States and have been to Europe and South America where they have done volunteer work for the church.

Daughter Kristin, husband Andy and granddaughter Isabel live in Des Moines where she is managing editor for Garden Gate Magazine. Daughter Laura, husband Bryce Freeman and grandson Bennett live in Columbia Md., where she is a post doctor fellow with the National Cancer Institute. Son Wesley is a deputy sheriff in Marshall County.

Since becoming a soil commissioner I have become more observant of soil and water protection practices. Some farmers do a good job of soil conservation and others seem to have little interest in the future of our soil and water. This means that commissioners still need to provide more education on the advantages of conservation.

Jeff Bruene

I farm in northern Tama county near Gladbrook.

The farming operation consists of corn, soybeans, alfalfa hay, stock cows, feeder cattle and hogs. My wife, Cheryl, and I are 4-H leaders for the Wolfcreek Whirlwinds, as well as the youth leaders for the United Methodist Church. I also belong to the Tama County Pork Producers, Farm Bureau, and Gladbrook Lions' Club. Cheryl is an interior designer for Frederick Furniture in Grundy Center.

We have two sons, Douglas (18) and David (13). Douglas is a freshman at Iowa State University. David is in seventh grade at G-R Middle School where he participates in football, band, and chorus.

As I begin my second year as a commissioner, I find it to be a continual learning process. I am happy to be a part of providing conservation and helping to educate people on the importance and benefits of conservation, not only in Tama County, but in the entire state of Iowa. It is very rewarding to see the beautiful and creative ways the landowners of Tama County use conservation methods to improve and preserve their farms and homes. We have just completed putting six new terraces on our land, 3 broad base and 3 push-up terraces at position located on native grasses. I challenge all citizens of Tama County to incorporate a conservation method into their property in the coming year.

Stanley Dostal

Soil conservation has been a learning experience for me all of my life. When my father farmed, it seemed that everything had to be plowed, even if it was hilly. Later we got involved in doing some contouring on hilly farmland we rented. Then, no-till was something new. I started to

change my way of farming when I heard about no-till. I experimented with ten acres of corn stalk ground that I planted to corn. I did not have a no-till planter, so I used what I had, a planter with disc openers. My neighbor said it would never work, and that he would still use his plow. The results impressed my landlord. We never turned a furrow again, and the neighbor also changed his way of planting. The way we farm today continues to be a step in the right direction. With improved farm equipment for no-till and conservation tillage, it takes less effort to plant the crops. It is also more rewarding to see that we are keeping the soil on the land for future generations.

My interest in soil conservation started when I was out of high school and starting to farm with my father. Through the years, I have added more conservation practices to my farming operation, such as terraces, windbreaks, waterway structures, and buffer strips. About ten years ago, I was asked to be an assistant soil commissioner. I learned more about conservation and enjoyed working with the commissioners, so I decided to put my name on the ballot for district soil commissioner. Being a commissioner, I believe I am helping to keep Iowa a leader in soil and water conservation.

Larry Jones

I am the new District Conservationist for the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) in Tama County. I am married to Julie, and we have a daughter Amanda, who is in 6th grade, and a son Steven, who is in 5th grade. We have lived in Newton for the past 10 years and Julie works at Maytag.

I grew up on a farm near Brooklyn, Iowa, and graduated from BCM High School in 1983 and Iowa State University in 1987 with a degree in Agricultural Business. I began work with the NRCS as a soil conservationist in July of 1987 at DeWitt, Iowa. We got married in 1988, and Julie worked in Iowa City. I relocated to Bloomfield, Iowa, in 1990, in 1990, I signed up in Keokuk County in 1991, and was promoted to District Conservationist in West Burlington in Des Moines County in 1992, all while Julie worked in Iowa City.

Julie changed jobs in 1994, and we moved to Newton. I was transferred to a vacant soil conservationist position in Jasper County where I worked for seven years. I accepted a two-year detail to a soil conservationist position located on native grasses. I challenge all citizens of Tama County to incorporate a conservation method into their property in the coming year.

I enjoy the outdoors hunting and fishing with my family and friends. Steven and I collect toy tractors (way too many if you ask my wife and daughter), and Julie and I like to do woodwork projects - I build and she finishes them. It works great. Our two cats like to play with me and Amanda.

We are very active with Community Reformed Church in Newton where Julie teaches Sunday school. I serve as Elder, and we participate in the Voices of Praise music group. I also sing with Eternal Light, a men's quartet, which was started in February of 2003 to provide musical entertainment for churches or other organizations.

I look forward to working with the producers of Tama County. Please stop in the office

if you have any questions.

Jody Kasal

I have lived my entire life on a farm near Elberon. I have farmed for the last 26 years raising corn, soybeans and cattle.

I enjoy spending time with my two children, Eve age 11 1/2 and Joseph, age 7 1/2 and my best friend Lynne.

My interests are mostly farm related. In the summer I enjoy outdoor activities and in the winter I enjoy remodeling my home. I also enjoy coin collecting.

I have been a commissioner for the past 3 1/2 years. There are a lot of things to learn when becoming a commissioner and I can honestly say it has been enjoyable.

Deann McKenna

Assistant Commissioner
I live northwest of Dysart on a farm and raise corn and soybeans and finish feeder pigs.

My wife, Monica, and I have two children, Phillip, age 16, a 10th grader at Union High School in LaPorte City and Marcie, an 8th grader at Union Middle School in Dysart.

I have always been interested in soil conservation. We have terraces, and do no-till farming.

I have been an assistant commissioner for one year and find it a very interesting learning experience.

Catharine Wicak

Assistant Commissioner

In 1994, after I retired from my work as a Dysart middle school science teacher, the Tama County Soil and Water Conservation District Commissioners appointed me as one of their assistant commissioners. My area of responsibility has been to assist in the educational activities for the students in the county.

The Tama County Soil and Water Conservation District has an ambitious educational program for the students in the county. Excellent environmental education materials are provided annually for all the third and fourth grade students. A conservation grocery sack decorating contest is conducted for students in grades three through five with the county winner receiving an airplane ride over the county in the summer. An Outdoor Conservation Day is held every year at Otter Creek Park for fifth grade students. Guest instructors provide information on a variety of topics such as soil and water conservation, proper use of chemicals, forestry, and wildlife. The Commissioners also provide a tree for each sixth grade student to plant in the spring. A college scholarship is awarded each year to a Tama County graduating high school senior who is planning to study in a field related to the environment.

Tama County has also been very active in the Iowa Envirothon. This is an environmental competition in which teams of five high school students compete for the privilege of representing Iowa at the National Envirothon. I have been the coordinator for the Northeast Iowa Envirothon for seven years, assisted by the Tama County Commissioners and office staff and have also served on the Iowa Environmental Committee during that time.

Teaching science for many years, and having grown up on an Iowa farm, have resulted in environmental education becoming extremely important in my life. It has been very interesting and worthwhile to have an active role assisting with Tama County's SWCD educational program.

"Cost-sharing for conservation"

by Chester Worden,
Tama County Soil
Conservation Technician

There are several different cost-sharing programs that can help owners establish conservation on the land. Each program has specific rules, but most programs have several things in common. The basic rule is that the money be mainly used to help conserve soil and help with water quality. Recreation and wildlife cannot be the main use of the money. An example that cannot be cost-shared is a pond in a draw that

doesn't have much erosion. This pond would be mainly for recreation. Another example would be where there is soil erosion, but the water-retention dam for the pond only needs to be 8 ft. tall to control the erosion. The farmer wants a 15 ft. high dam for fishing. Only the 8 ft. needed for erosion is eligible for cost-share. The farmer would need to pay for the extra 7 ft. portion used for recreation.

The agencies giving the cost-share money also expect it to be spent wisely and stop the erosion as close to its source as possible. They would much rather help establish contour terraces or grassed waterways on the side-hills, instead of building a water & sediment control basin or pond dam at the bottom of the hill. The soil saved on the hills will still be there for the next generation of farmers to use.

Other items that most cost-share programs have in common are there is usually a dollar limit that can be used. A farmer cannot start the practice until the money is allocated and a proper design developed by NRCS is given to the farmer and contractor.

The most common cost-assistance programs are:

1. IFIP (Iowa Financial Incentive Program). This is state money administered by the local Tama County Soil & Water Conservation District. Each county can spend the money differently as long as it is for soil conservation within the boundaries of that coun-

ty. This program is limited to several thousand dollars per farmer per year, but can be used on both crop and pasture land.

2. REAP (Rural Enhancement Assistance Program). This is state money that has mainly been used for farmstead windbreaks and a few grassland or forestry projects in Tama County.

3. EQIP (Environmental Quality Incentive Program). This is a federal program administered by NRCS that can be used for soil erosion, livestock manure handling facilities, pasture improvement or other water quality problems. A county EQIP Committee helps prioritize county problems and decide on a ranking system as to how the money will be spent each year. A farmer must use or install proper conservation practices on the entire tract over a 5-year period and larger projects can be funded if that is what the local EQIP Committee decides is important.

4. CCRP (Continuous Conservation Reserve Program). The FSA administers this federal program. Commonly called the "Buffer Program", it helps establish grass or wetland buffers that help stop pollutants like silt, chemicals and fertilizer getting into our waters. It has the least limits and pays well, but only certain land is eligible. Some grass waterway areas for eligible, others are not.

5. GRP (Grassland Reserve Program). A new program started in 2003 helps keep land in grass. You can still pasture it, but also get a small incentive to keep the land in grass for a period of time, and keep it growing well to properly protect the soil and enhance livestock profits.

Come to the NRCS or FSA offices to see if you qualify for any of these programs that can help you put "Conservation on the Land". Also watch news articles for program rules and sign-up times. Proper soil conservation and water quality practices are very important for our environment, both now and for future generations.

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Annual Conservation Awards Banquet



Urban Conservation Award
Dwayne and Pam Wood

Dwayne and Pam's main interest is family. They have two children and five grandsons.

Dwayne enjoys fishing, gardening, hunting, home projects and travel. Pam enjoys travel, theatre, bridge, gardening and being with friends.

Pam is a dance teacher and aerobics instructor.

Dwayne is a member of the following organizations: Lions Club, Presbyterian Church, Masonic Lodge, Eagles and Legion. Pam belongs to the Toledo EMS and is an EMT I, a member of the Presbyterian Church, Chamber of Commerce and the Red Hat Society.



The Woods believe in composting and have a clever willow weaving done by Dwayne that camouflages the compost heap.



Conservation Tillage Award
Ken and Jean Sievers

The Sievers have been married for 36 years. Jean works at the Tama Medical Center as a Clinic Nurse. They have two daughters and two granddaughters.

The Sievers enjoy golf, woodworking, flowers and spending time with granddaughters and repairing and refurbishing their daughters' homes.

Ken has many interests and talents. His wife, Jean, has given him the title of "Material Specialist". "He has talents to literally build their home using walnut from the farm, keeps everything running as he has recently retired from building grain bins and dryer systems."

The Sievers are members of Farm Bureau and Peace United Church of Christ.

Ken farms 600+ acres. The farming methods used are crop rotation, no-till - contour farming, buffer strips, terraces and waterways.



It is evident from this photo that the Sievers are avid gardeners. They have a delightful variety of plants that create a palette of color to their yard.



Rural Backyard Conservation Award
Mark Wilson family

Mark and Sandy have two sons.

Mark is a farmer and Sandy is owner of the Whispering Pine Gifts and Decor in Traer.

The entire family enjoys boating and golfing.

Sandy is a member of the Traer Chamber of Commerce and Chris, Brock and Mark are members of Pheasants Forever and the Tama County Snowmobile Club.



The Wilson family has built a shelter house to enable them to enjoy the pond site in all types of weather. Notice the areas that are perfect for wildlife habitat, soil has been conserved by building the pond.

More Conservation Awards on page 4C



Established Windbreak Award
Tom and Sheila Ratliff

Tom and Sheila have been married for 30 years and have three sons. The Ratliffs enjoy fishing, hunting, camping, hiking and basically anything that is outside.

Tom works for Tama County as an Excavator Operator. He also is a gun smith and has his own shop entitled "Deer Creek Trading Post". Tom is a member of Boy Scouts, NRA and Marlin Collectors Association.

Sheila works for Luthje Auto Sales as office manager.



The Ratliff's windbreak affords them not only beauty and a place for wildlife, but also a great windbreak to block the wind and snow.



Owner/Operator Award
Randy and Susan Beichley

The Beichleys have four children. Susan is a registered nurse at the Intensive Care Unit in Marshalltown. She is also very involved with the farming operation.

The Beichleys enjoy supporting their children in their sport activities.

They are members of the county Farm Bureau, directors on the County Board, Ag in the Classroom chairman, Farm Safety in Tama County, active in Chapel Church and Sunday School.

The Beichleys have farmed for 24 years and are very interested in conservation. Randy's dad built terraces and waterways. They practice no-till and some minimum tillage on the 360 acres that they are farming. They also feed 11,000 to 12,000 feeder pigs a year. Every other week they ship out 400 to 500 feeders.

Randy is quoted as saying that, "This is a 365 day a year job, pigs are farrowed all year long, no matter what time of year it is."

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Pictured from left to right, Barry and Cheryl Ewoldt, Fred and Lois Schuchman, Mr. and Mrs. Gary McCool, Hertz Farm Management.

Buffer Initiative Award Fred Schuchman and Barry Ewoldt

Fred and Lois live in Cedar Rapids. After 41 years in the insurance industry, Mr. Schuchman is the retired Senior Vice President and Treasurer of the Millhiser Smith Insurance Agency in Cedar Rapids. Mr. Schuchman stated that he will occasionally work for the office when requested.

Lois retired two years ago after 41 years of employment as the office manager for the Bon and Sussey Department of United Fire and Casualty Company in Cedar Rapids.

Hertz Farm Management is a very active part of the land ownership and generally the Schuchmans use whatever conservation methods are available to maintain and improve their farmland which is slightly in excess of 1,000 acres in Benton and Tama Counties. Mr. Schuchman grew up on a farm in Clayton County in Strawberry Point and Lois grew up on a farm in Benton County near Watkins.

Lois and Fred both grew up on farms and enjoy the outdoors very much and spend a substantial amount of time walking and enjoying nature at its best now that they are both retired. They both like to travel and have visited 86 different countries. They also like sporting events and are active in their churches and local community.

BARRY AND CHERYL EWOLDT are operators of the Schuchman farm. They have two sons.

Barry and Cheryl are active members of Zion Lutheran Church. Barry is vice president of the church council and Cheryl is a Lutheran Youth Fellowship leader. They are also members of Farm Bureau, County Club and enjoy golf and college football.



Wildlife Award Jim Chizek

Jim currently manages approximately 800 acres of CRP land, which is owned by him and four other owners. All acres lie in Tama County and consist of seven different farming units.

Practices implemented consist of the following:

There are 25.5 acres of CP-25, which Jim refers to as a 5/10 mix, being five different prairie grasses and ten different forbes.

There are 41.7 acres of 3/3 mix. This consists of Big Blue Stem, Indian Grass and Little Blue Stem. Also, there are three forbes, being Partridge Pea, Purple Prairie Clover and Illinois Bundleflower.

There are approximately 107 acres of Switchgrass planted.

There are approximately 60 acres of legume.

There are 17 wildlife food plots, consisting of approximately 18 acres. The food plots are planted in sorghum or corn.

On two farm units, Jim is in the process of cutting down the wooded creek lines. By cutting them, wildlife cover is enhanced - primarily for birds, and will deter the activity of birds of prey. At this time, approximately 200 trees have been planted and a handful of shrubs.

In the summer of 2003, Jim purchased a 300 acre W.R.P. farm located about four miles east of Toledo. Jim has planted three food plots of either corn or soybeans. There are four wetland ponds on the farm. The plan is to further enhance this property next year for wildlife.

Jim started implementing the above practices approximately 15 years ago.



There are two plots of broadcast planted silver maples. Each plot was planted in the spring of 2002 at a rate of approximately 125,000 seeds per acre. The trees are now about knee to thigh high. There are also nine log bridges used to cross creeks. A 1.1 acres shallow water duck pond was added in 2002.



Randy Beichley by his pickup and hog confinement and lagoon in the background. Beichleys won the Owner/Operator Award.

Landlord/Tenant Award Ethel Pippert, Eleanor Smith, Steve Osborn

Eleanor Smith resides in Indianola and now is enjoying winter in the south.

Eleanor's interests and hobbies include the following: gardening, landscaping, volunteering at the Methodist Church and at residence in The Village, a retirement community in Indianola. She is retired from farming and being a consulting dietitian. She belongs to the following organizations: Warren County Conservation, Historical Society, Habitat for Humanity and the National Arbor Day Foundation.

Ethel Pippert is also enjoying winter away from Iowa and was unable to attend. She resides in Gladbrook.

Ethel's interests and hobbies include sewing, crocheting, other handwork, reading, some gardening, and volunteering in Gladbrook community affairs, church, etc. She is retired from teaching, substitute teaching and working in a local retail store.

Organizations that she belongs to are Gladbrook United Methodist Church, American Legion Auxiliary, Eastern Star, Alpha Study Club, Gladbrook Women's Club and a member of the Board of Gladbrook Investment Co.

No information available for Steve Osborn.

District Accomplishments 2002-03

July 2002

Completed the Otter Creek 319AIIFF Project. The District sponsored a Free Watermelon Feed at the Tama County Fair and Ag in the Park during this month.

A Locally Led Work group was selected to help in determining EQIP rankings and priorities.

Conservation award recipients were selected.

August 2002

Water Quality Project Coordinator, Judie Krebsbach, reported that Mason will be taking aerial pictures of the Wolf Creek Watershed.

Paul Valtin, Field Representative of the Division of Soil Conservation attended the meeting to share information regarding the state 2003 budget situation. The Division of Soil Conservation received a 40% cut in the budget. Commissioners were encouraged to contact their legislative members to share their concerns due to the budget shortfall. Dan Bruene has decided not to run for re-election as a District Commissioner. He has served 22 years.

September 2002

The District approved the motion to purchase a building to house the 4-wheeler that is owned by NRCS.

Flood Plain assessed values were discussed. Property taxes have more than doubled for land that is in the flood plain. It was decided to invite Lance Horbach and the county assessor to come to the next regular meeting of the District to discuss the increase in taxes and to share concerns regarding the lack of sufficient funding for state cost share conservation projects.

32 EQIP applications were submitted as an assistant commissioner.

Jeff Bruene applications have been received in Tama County. None of the applications in Tama County received funding for the first approval for FY 2002. The majority of the funding will be for the years 2003/2004.

October 2002

The District voted to match funding with CDI for a District Employee to provide technical assistance. The funding matched is \$5,000.00.

Jeff Lutz, Area Office Engineer, is assisting the Sac & Fox in the construction of their pond site resulting in a soil loss complaint of at least nine years ago. EQIP applications are still being received.

November 2002

Conservation Awards Banquet was held with approximately 90 in attendance. The following was decided: Purchase NACD booklets for 3rd and 4th grade students this spring, sponsor the conservation grocery sack project for grades 3, 4 and 5; help with the Environment which will be held in March; purchase trees or shrubs for all 6th grade students in Tama County.

11 4-H members were awarded \$50 savings bonds for their conservation projects.

Jeff Bruene was elected to serve as a District Commissioner by write in votes.

December 2002

FFA of Union High was given a \$100.00 donation for providing the program for the Awards Banquet. Discussion was held regarding the purchase of signs depicting "entering and leaving Tama County."

January 2003

Election of officers was held. Chairman, David Beane; Vice Chairman, Jody Kasol; Secretary/Treasurer, Nancy Hyman; Assistant Treasurer, Stan Dostal; Dennis Wilson, Cathy Wieck and Dean McKenna will be contacted by the District Secretary to see if they would serve as Assistant Commissioners. Committee members were selected as follows: Legislation Committee- All SWCD members- Communication Committee: Cathy Wieck and Nancy Hyman; Education Committee- Cathy Wieck and Stan Dostal; Audit Committee- Rollie Haynes and Jeff Bruene.

Tama County has reached the 10,023.6 buffer CRP acres. A recognition will be held on March 13 at the Otter Creek Lake Park Nature Center to showcase the buffers.

Contractor's meeting date was set for February 26.

Tama County has received 44 EQIP applications.

February 2003

Dean McKenna and Cathy Wieck were appointed as assistant commissioners.

The District shared with the Area Conservationist their concern regarding inadequate staff in Tama County.

A tree planning information day with Bob Hibbs, District Forester, will be held in Tama County.

The Cooperative Working Agreement between the Natural Resources Conservation Service, the Division of Soil Conservation and the Tama County Soil and Water Conservation District was reviewed along with the Mutual Working Agreement.

The District's Annual Work Plan was presented and reviewed. Jeff Bruene attended the commissioner orientation meeting.

March 2003

The District's scholarship award recipient is Michael Plett.

A Locally Led meeting will be held April 8 to revise the ranking sheet. Robert Mier, District Conservationist for Grundy will be assisting.

April 2003

The District held a tree sale campaign again this year. The District approved the hiring of Tina Hayek as an intern beginning in May.

350 grocery sacks were judged for the Grocery Sack Recycling contest held by the District for students in 3rd through 5th grades attending school in Tama County.

May 2003

The District approved the application for the 4 Mile Creek development grant. Scholarship for Michael Plett was presented at Awards night at Gladbrook.

The District's work plan was reviewed. Dues of \$50.00 for the Iowa Watersheds membership was approved. \$95,000 has been allocated to Tama county for EQIP funding. Jason Gritsch, DNR is working on 5 possible WHIP applications.

June 2003

The Buffer Recognition Day will be held July 9th. 6 road signs depicting the entering and leaving Tama Soil and Water Conservation District were purchased.

The District's Annual Work Plan has been revised and will be reviewed next meeting.

A Free Watermelon feed was held in July at the Tama County Fair.

Conservation Award recipients were selected and will be recognized at the

Annual Awards Banquet which will be held November 18.

The District will be receiving another \$3,000 for the District Employee from CDI without any District matching funds.

This is a shot of the filter strips that were installed approximately two years ago with switch grass. The seeding was very successful and provides a great filter.

Fracture Compacted Layers, while preserving surface residue.



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The PathFindTM Shank features an exclusive pivoting design that allows the shank to deflect up to 6 degrees on each side for a total of 12 degrees of movement. The PathFindTM shank is a Spring Reset design and accepts all Krause In-Line Ripper Points and attachments.

Unique Advantages

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Tama County Accomplishments

RMS Planned on Cropland	4,537 acres
RMS Applied on Cropland	4,346 acres
RMS Planned on Grazed Land	514 acres
RMS Applied on Grazed Land	285 acres
Erosion Reduction Applied on Cropland	6,008 acres
Nutrient Management Applied	423 acres
Pest Management Applied	54 acres
Wetlands Creation, Restoration or Enhancement	816 acres
Wildlife Habitat Management Applied	3,065 acres
Buffers Applied	879 acres
Conservation Systems Applied to Address Flooding Concerns	2,717 acres
Conservation Systems Applied to Address Water Supply Concerns	3,883 acres
Progressive Planning on Cropland	2,899 acres
Progressive Planning on Grazed Land	359 acres
Land Benefitted on Cropland	1,783 acres
Land Benefitted on Grazed Land	51 acres

State Cost Share Projects - 7-1-02 - 6-30-03

34.5 Acres - Waterways
10 Grade Stabilization Structures
1 Water & Sediment Basin

Tree questions

By Robert Hibbs
District Forester

On Wednesday, January 28, the DNR Forester for this area will be at the NRCS office in Toledo from 1 p.m. until 3 p.m. He will assist landowners with ordering low-cost State Nursery tree seedlings, visit about tree planting possibilities under CRP, and answer other questions you may have about timber marketing, insect & disease, the Forest Reserve law, or other concerns.

State Nursery tree seedlings cost only 45¢ apiece for hardwood trees and shrubs, or 30¢ apiece for evergreens. Some offerings are even less costly. Special, pre-selected assortments of 200 seedlings are available for people who do not need the regular minimum order of 500 plants. For regular orders, the seedlings are ordered in units of 100 seedlings. For shrubs planted three feet apart, 100 shrubs will plant a single row no more than the length of a football field. Five hundred evergreen seedlings planted at a 6-foot

spacing for Christmas trees will occupy only one-half acre. Five hundred hardwoods planted ten feet apart for lumber and veneer will cover only one acre. An average person with a shovel can plant 300 to 500 seedlings in a day. Tractor-mounted tree planting machines can plant 500 seedlings per hour!

There is no current bid period for entering land into the CRP, but certain tree planting options are available on a continuous basis. One option is the CP-22 Riparian Buffer Strip practice. Trees planted on land adjacent to streams can qualify for a 15-year payment for either cropland or for marginal pastureland. Tree strips can be up to 180 feet in width, which represents one acre every 242 feet of stream that will be protected.

A stream running one-half mile through your farm can qualify for about 22 acres of CRP. Payment for marginal pasture, of course, is less than the rate for cropland. Another CRP practice to improve water quality is CP-31, Bottomland Timber on Wetlands. This is only for floodplain cropland that will be converted to forest, and it has normal crop rental rates for 15-year contracts. CRP cost-share is available for both tree planting practices.

Selling timber has always been a problem for landowners because they don't know market value, and they've always felt that timber is "worthless". Some trees are worthless, but a recent Benton County sale of red oaks returned about \$6,000 per acre, just for the trees. With a potential value from zero to \$6,000 you'd better make sure you know what you're selling before you accept \$500!

Current, major tree insect and disease problems are found primarily on Scotch pine and Colorado blue spruce. Scotch pine is being killed by both Ips (bark) beetles and pine wilt nematodes. Colorado blue spruce should not be planted any longer due to its susceptibility to both cytospora stem canker and rhizosphaera needle cast fungus.

If you have questions about any forestry concern, stop at the NRCS office to visit with the DNR Forester.

New continuous CRP practices

Mark Pokorny
Resource Conservation
Technician
Tama Co. NRCS Office

There are four new continuous CRP practices available to farmers with the advent of the new farm bill. They each have a unique application that was not available in the past, and may not fit on every farm.

Wetland Restoration (CP-23) has been available in the past as a General CRP practice but now is a part of the continuous program which means it can be applied for at any time, rather than just during the general sign-up period. This has been well received in Tama County since its inception. It allows a producer to enroll whole fields for restoration back into wetland habitat areas. Rental rates are determined by the soil type. Cropping history requirements must be met to be eligible. USDA pays 50% cost share for all

restoration expenses. An additional 25% cost share is also available.

Marginal pastureland wildlife habitat buffer and Marginal pastureland wetland habitat buffer (CP-29, 30) are 2 new practices that apply to pastureland 120 feet wide along a stream. This is very similar to the many filter strips around the county. The only difference between the cropping history requirements do not apply to this practice. The rental rate is fixed at \$84 per acre. The only difference between the 2 practices is that the wildlife habitat buffer is to be seeded to native grasses and the wetland buffer is the wetland area of the buffer. In the past the only practice we had available on marginal pasture was a riparian or tree planting. We've had some problems with flooding and canary grass pressure with tree plantings on these areas so these new practices have been a welcome alternative

for us.

The last new practice is Bottomland Timber Establishment on Wetlands (CP-31). This practice has just come to us in the last couple of weeks. Its focus is to establish a minimum of three different varieties of mast producing hardwood trees and shrubs on flood plain areas. Its purpose is to reduce erosion and sediment delivery to river systems, enhance wildlife, sequester green house gases, and restore wetlands. This practice does have to meet cropping history requirements. Rental rates are determined by soil type. Cost share rates are 50% for establishment of permanent cover. This practice should fit well in many areas of the county.

If any of these new practices have an interest to you or if you have any questions on them please contact our office. We are always interested in helping you apply conservation on your farm

Riparian Buffers: Improved water quality for Iowa and increased profits for landowners

By Gary Beyer,
District Forester

Conservation Reserve Programs (CRP) are targeting one of our most valuable resources - water. Riparian buffers are a fancy name for trees and grasses along a stream. In most areas of Iowa, the natural buffers of grasses and trees that would filter the water have been removed to create more cropland. Farming next to the stream results in a direct route for soil and herbicides to reach the stream. Water in our streams is continually leaching into the underground aquifers, which is where our drinking water comes from.

Water sources in the ground can be destroyed in a very short time, but may take hundreds or thousands of years to restore. Riparian buffers put the natural vegetation back in place to filter out the soil, nutrients, and

herbicides. Planting trees also improves wildlife cover and the natural beauty of Iowa.

Coyote

By Rick Trene
Wildlife Biologist

This time of year many sportsmen are pursuing the wily coyote especially if there is snow on the ground. Snow makes hunting the elusive coyote somewhat easier although hunting coyotes is never easy. What do you know about the cunning coyote?

The common name of this animal comes from the Aztec word coyotl. The preferable pronunciation is the Mexican Spanish version "ki-o-tee". The coyote is 39-54 inches long and weighs 18-30 lbs. Some heavy males have weighed up to 50 lbs. Generally, the animal is light gray to dull yellow on the upper parts and white below. There are considerable variations in coloration with extremes from nearly white to nearly black observed. Coyotes live up to 10 years in the wild and some as long as 18 years in captivity.

The animals generally give a series of sharp barks or yips-yaps that end in a long wailing cry. They are heard more during the mating period in February and March. They are most vocal between sunset and sunrise. Biologists sometimes count these individuals by using a siren. When the siren is turned on coyotes in the area will bark.

Coyotes live in brushy country and open farmlands. A den is used only for raising the young. The rest of the year they sleep where they happen to be. Dens are usually located in unused fields and are generally close to timber. The coyote may dig its own den, but generally remodels a fox, skunk, badger or woodchuck den. Openings are well concealed by brush and are approximately 10" wide by 20" high. Tunnels may be from 5' to 30' long and 1" to 2" in diameter.

Home range varies from 3 to 30 miles in diameter. Coyotes are nocturnal but are seen occasionally during the day. The coyote is a swift animal with a top speed of 45 m.p.h.

A food habit study on 770 coyotes showed their diet to consist of 54% rabbits, 9% mice and rats, 8% livestock and 6% carrion. The balance was birds, insects and plants.

The breeding season is in February and March and usually 5-7 young are produced. The pups, born in April and May come out of the den when they are about 3 weeks old. The young are taught to hunt when they are 8-12 weeks old.

Aside from its conflicts with man, the coyote contributes much to the wildlife community. It helps control rodent populations and is a scavenger on dead animals. As a source of hunting, the coyote provides many hours of excellent entertainment. If watched for coyotes will be seen in this area.

Wildlife specialist available for help with wildlife habitat improvement

By Jason Gritsch
Wildlife Specialist
Dept. of Natural Resources

Jason Gritsch, a Wildlife Specialist for the Dept. of Natural Resources, will again be available for help with improving your farm or acreage for wildlife habitat. Jason was working with private landowners for the past two years but due to budget cuts was assigned other duties. Jason will be working part-time with private landowners two days a week starting after January 1, 2004. Jason is very knowledgeable about current cost sharing opportunities through the existing farm programs and tree and shrub planting opportunities through DNR programs.

Speaking of tree and shrubs, now is the time to order tree and shrub seedlings for spring planting. If you're thinking about developing that wildlife area around your pond or in some other area on the farm, order the trees and shrubs now before they become in short supply.

Evergreen trees available from the State Nursery include several species of pines, which are suitable for this area. Also, many hardwood species plus a variety of wildlife shrubs are available. The popular wildlife packet is also available again this year. This packet features 200 seedlings, including 50 evergreens and 150 shrubs that are particularly beneficial to Iowa wildlife.

If you are interested in ordering any of these tree and shrub species, the wildlife packet, or improving wildlife habitat on your farm, contact Jason at the USDA Building, 203 W. High Street, Toledo, Iowa 52342. Phone number is 641-484-8153.

Plett receives 2003 scholarship



Michael Plett

Michael John Plett, Gladbrook, is the 2003 Conservation Districts of Iowa Scholarship winner.

Michael is the son of John A. and Marcia J. Plett. His future plans are to attend Iowa State University, Ames.

Iowa Financial Incentive Programs

As of 6-30-03

2000/2001	
Allocated Received	\$81,534.93
Obligated	81,073.58
Balance	461.35

2001/2002	
Received	74,104.00
Obligated	73,699.50
Balance	404.50

2002/2003	
Received	\$44,029.00
Obligated	41,421.11
Balance	2,607.89

1M Fund	
Beginning Balance	\$1,905.00
Commissioner Mileage	773.00
Postage	686.56
Office Supplies	382.49
Tama News (advertising)	122.60
NACD Dues	387.50
CI Dues	325.00
	772.15

Tama County Soil and Water Conservation District

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Concolor Fir Norway Spruce White Spruce White Pine
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All are bare root and come in bundles of 25

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