

PROTECT & PRESERVE OUR LAND THROUGH CONSERVATION

1992 SWCD Booster Club

Fifty years ago, Tama County residents organized and voted the Tama County Soil & Water Conservation District (SWCD) into existence. According to state laws, the District is responsible for carrying out a county-wide soil and water conservation program.

Planning for the long term preservation of these and other vital resources is not a simple task, but is necessary for the orderly management, develop-

ment and utilization of our natural resources.

But soil and water conservation districts have no taxing or bonding authority to raise funds for certain education, promotional activities such as outdoor classes, computer programs, and Arbor Day tree planting activities for school children nor postage, awards or Food Security Act education programs.

The Tama SWCD joins state and national soil conservation district associations, which are your voices to lawmakers about conservation issues.

To help raise funds for these and other programs, the district commissioners organize a fund raising drive each year. Members of the Tama SWCD 1992 Booster Club include: Skip Harrah, Harold and Patricia Wright, Larry's Feed and Supply, Southard Implement, Ernest and Virginia Lau, Frank Zmolek, Milo and Florence Paustian, Eldo and Maxine Hagedorn, Joy Ann Farms, Wilbert and Virginia Lamprecht, Melvin Dostal, Mark Nechanicky, Merle McMillan, Mr. and Mrs. Raymond Berner, Steve Podhajsky, Wilmer Meek, Raynard and Arlene Delfs.

Vivian Dixon, George Kos, Elizabeth and A. O. Chantland, Harold and Martha Judge, Robert and Janet Malin, Emil and Louisa Hansen, Leo and Jean Benda, Ray and Ella Staker, William Podhajsky, Robert Gunn, Helen Posusta, Tama County Mutual Insurance Association, Ruppenkamp Family, Inc., Roy G. Tweed, Edward Holevoet Conservatorship.

Spahn and Rose Lumber Company, Lyman and Frances Barker, Mr. and Mrs. Charles Dehbon, Dorothy Sawyer, Darrell Hunnicutt, Ervin Heller, Thunderbird Farms, Inc., Agnes Kucera, B.E.S.T. Farm, Kober Farms, Checkerboard Farms, Sawyer-Gulden Farms, Harold Pritchard, Lloyd Chyma, Sr., Robert and Cecilia Podhajsky, Carol Nelsen.

Mr. and Mrs. Edward Dolezal, Iowa River E.S. Raymond and Elva Delfs, Belle Plaine Nursery, Grattan Backhoe Service, Frank Meggers, John Babinat, Traer Manufacturing,

Twin Cities Insurance, Allen

Farm; William and Elaine Lenhart, Mr. and Mrs. Kenneth Kenner, Roland and Bessie Gary, Kenneth Bruene, Dr. H. D. Osborne, Trust, Lloyd and Genevieve Sotka, Morris Bruene, Robert and Joyce Konicek, Mrs. John Ehlers, Arlo and Elizabeth Dahms, Randall M. Brunson, Betty Benda.

Sandra and Mark Dengler, Villageside Farms, Jay Herman, Mr. and Mrs. Loren Luethje, Roger and Patricia Sievers, John and Nelle Erickson, Ken and Carolyn Adolphs, Phyllis Henry, Wilbert and Lois Stueck, Char-

lotte E. Stokes, Leona A. Vest;

Bohemian Mutual Insurance, Alice Hoppe, R. Farms, Inc., Pioneer Hi-Bred, Inc., Poweshiek Water Association, Velma Koubas, Blanche Zmolek, Beyer Farms, Roland and Mary Seda, Deka Corporation, Raum Farms, Inc., Mr. and Mrs. Wayne Steveson, Edward Halblom, Roger Blocker, Tama County Farm Bureau, Richard and Rose Bruene, Dorothy Steveson, Kuchyanka II, Gerald and Marlene Eernisse, Gary and Geri Hoskey, Don Schmitz and Sons, Inc., Ferd and Rose Kvindra, Byron Witt Enterprises and David and Linda Dostal.



Photo by Nancy Dostal

New Practices Applied In Union Grove Watershed

Many new conservation practices have been applied to the land in the Union Grove Lake watershed in the last year and several conservation programs and educational sessions have been added or changed since last year.

Farmers are continuing to apply conservation practices in the Union Grove Lake watershed. In June of 1991, 79% of the required soil conservation practices were applied to the land and 17 landowners had required practices left to apply on their farm.

As of June 1992, 95% of all required soil conservation practices were applied to the land and only 11 landowners had practices left to apply on their farm.

The practices that remain to be applied are grassed waterways, grassed field borders, water and sediment control basins, conservation tillage, and critical area seedings. All of



Curt Donohue
Soil Conservationist

these practices are required to be applied by December of 1992. The Soil Conservation Service mailed letters to all the people with practices left to complete, requesting them to schedule and complete the practices. 100% of the required soil conservation practices should be applied to the land by December of 1992.

The Department of Natural Resources notified the Soil Conservation Service that the

SCS Staff

Soil Conservation Service staff members for 1992 include, left to right, from bottom up: Cheryl Pansegrau, Roger Platt, Craig Stange, Deb Wedmeyer, Mark Koubas, Audrey Wheeler, Melody Bro, Linda Sells and Curt Donohue.

Environmental Protection Agency is pulling their funding for costsharing out of the Union Grove Lake project. This could mean that future costshare projects cannot be funded at the 75% rate. The standard costsharing through the Agricultural Stabilization and Conservation Service and the Soil Conservation Service will be available at the 50% rate. Projects that are currently approved are still eligible for the 75% rate. People who are considering new costshare practices should contact the Soil Conservation Service.

A new water quality program is being offered to farm operators in the lake watershed. The Agricultural Stabilization and Conservation Service is offering a three year program called the Water Quality Incentive Program. This program provides incentive payments for three years to farm operators who install new conservation practices that can

improve water quality. Currently nine cooperators have enrolled in the program. Practices that are being utilized include waste utilization (467.4 acres), integrated crop management (1560.2 acres), conservation tillage (841.5 acres) and pasture and hayland management (86.0 acres).

Several educational sessions have been scheduled for this year in the watershed. They include grassed waterway and terrace maintenance, manure spreader calibration, animal waste nutrient sampling, soil testing and fertilizer recommendations, abandoned well closing and weed control options.

People with questions concerning their farm plans, costshare or other programs available to cooperators in the Union Grove Lake Watershed are encouraged to contact the Soil Conservation Service at 203 W. High St., Toledo, Iowa.

Soil Maps Available On ISU Computer

More than one-half of Iowa's 99 counties now have soil maps available on computer diskettes.

A user can access any tract of land by identifying the section number and township description. The map that thus appears on the computer screen is identical to the soil map shown in the county soil survey report.

The computer program contains more than 60 interpretations for each kind of soil map included are yield estimates as well as properties for each soil. Digitized soil maps are scheduled to be completed for remaining Iowa counties by the end of 1993.

Contact: Gerald Miller, Iowa State University Extension (515) 294-1923.

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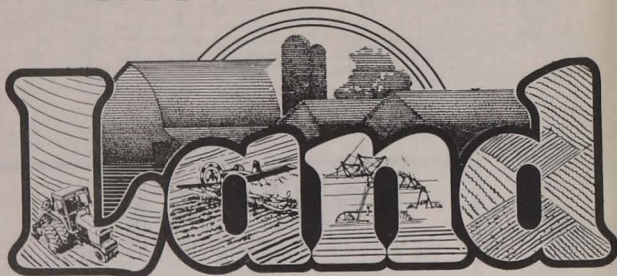
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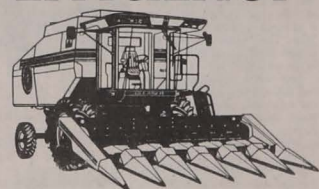
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R-52 COMBINES

Combined Conservation Practices Preserve Precious Topsoil

We have learned that the most effective way of controlling soil erosion is a combination of conservation practices. As an example, no-till is a help, but no-till in combination with contouring a whole lot better. Likewise terraces, contouring, and no-till can be a combination hard to beat in keeping your valuable topsoil, fertilizer and chemicals from leaving the farm.

A six inch to seven inch rainfall is not the rare event it is often made out to be. It can't happen on your farm, as we experienced the first week of July this year. Not only was topsoil lost from unprotected farmland, the uncontrolled runoff water severely damaged roads, moved rock into the ditches and even destroyed a bridge crossing over Salt Creek.

It has been proven again that terraces control the velocity of runoff rainfall, thereby giving the landowner the double benefits of not only



Ferd Kvidera
Assistant Commissioner

keeping valuable crop producing soil in place for use next year, but also better of property tax if it's not needed to repair flood damage.

Bro Accepts New Role As Assistant Commissioner

Melody Bro, Commissioners Comments. The name may sound familiar, but with the new title of Assistant Commissioner. After nearly nine years of serving the Tama SWCD as state technician, I am now officially retired. I hope to serve the district and its board well in my new role.

For those of you who may not know me, my husband, Mark, and I farm southwest of Montour and are busy raising a hay breeding crew — Sam, Chris and Laura. I met Mark years ago by working with him through the district office, of all places I'm a graduate of Iowa State in agronomy and pest management.

The past nine years have seen many changes in the roles the district and the Soil Conservation Service play concerning soil conservation. In earlier years, the only time the office entered the field of all other get information or to arrange soil conservation practices, such as waterways or terraces, to be installed. My, how times have changed!

Granted, the Tama SWCD/SCS office has become more regulatory due to the Food

Security Act, and for a long time I had a problem working on the staff and handling the idea. Until one day, a Farmer explained to me that the office's role change was due to the farmers themselves. Finally, it all made sense.

The only way to change any negative feelings toward the Tama SWCD and SCS is through education. I'm not just referring to group meetings put on by the office, but to many other things.

Outdoor education through our schools can not only teach the next generation, but maybe we can learn something from our own children and change our own attitudes toward conservation. Often times, the eyes of our little ones can see an angle or a concept that we'd never before imagined.

Hundreds of soil conserving farmers are spread throughout Tama County. We can't be so closed-minded that we can't look on our neighbor's door and try to learn something from him. The best way to tackle something new is to learn from each other.

Keep your eyes and your mind open, and pray for a safe and bountiful harvest.

Waterway Field Day Is Educational Experience

The waterway field day was very educational in both the use of waterways and use of fabric in waterways. The structure drew a lot of interest from farmers. Marshall Musing's Vegi Terraces were very interesting and I believe they would work very well. I was glad to see so many farmers and landowners attending, but was somewhat disappointed that some farmers who should have been there, were not. It was a lot of work to put a project like this together and I was proud to be a part of it.

While traveling across the county observing the crops, wildlife roadside flowers and conservation practices, one can see that each depends on the other.

Conservation practices benefit both crops, and the land.

More birds and animals are around fields with field borders and waterways. These practices provide habitat for many species. Have you ever watched a Kestrel hover and dive for a field mouse or watched a



Dennis Emke
Commissioner

killdeer stomp to protect a nest or seen a pheasant hen and her dozen chicks come out of newly mown hay?

I read where a 20 day old Kestrel weighs as much as an adult. That is a lot of field mice and shrews and bugs. A Robin may eat the equivalent of 14 field mice in one day.

DISTRICT ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Fiscal Year 1992

October 1, 1991 - September 30, 1992

District Cooperators, 10 No.	1,388 Acres
Contour Farming	4,861 Acres
Farmland Windbreaks	6 Acres
Grassed Waterways	130 Acres
Grade Stabilization Structures, 3 No.	
Contour Strip Farming	287 Acres
Terraces	18,200 Feet
Water & Sediment Control Structures, 9 No.	
Individuals & Groups Assisted, 597 No.	
Individuals & Groups Applying Practices, 217 No.	
Tracts with an Approved Conservation Plan, 2,456 No.	231,228 Acres
Cropland Acres Treated	28,309 Acres

BUDGETS

July 1, 1991 - June 30, 1992

1M Commissioners Mileage, Meals, Hotel	\$1,372.24
Office Supplies and Expenses	\$597.12
Printing	\$1.95
2M Secretary and Engineering aide Aide Salary	\$31,690.00
3M	
91-92	\$56,206.00
22 Agreements Approved	
6 Agreements Completed	\$4,646.43
1992 REAP	
7 Agreements Approved	
6 Agreements Completed	\$1,634.00
1992 REAP Forestry/Native Grasses	
1 Agreement Approved & Completed	

Economy Affects Conservation

It seems that all of the articles in the newspapers feel that conservation in Iowa has failed. I, myself, feel that conservation has made greater improvements in the last four years than at any time in history. Granted, everyone is not in compliance but most farmers are trying to improve.

Mother Nature plays a big part in the success of projects like waterways, etc. So many waterways need tiling and are very wet, so end rows are planted along them to turn on. These end rows are a bad place for water to run and erosion takes place here.

Very little money is available for these practices. Farmers struggling to stay in business don't have money to do this on their own.

I really feel the terrible farm economy is hurting conservation as much as anything. It's too bad now, when we are really geared up to get our



Franklin Bro
Chairman

waterways as well as other practices underway, little money is available.

Most farmers are struggling to pay feed, seed, repair and fertilizer bills and do not have money for tiling and bulldozing.

Education Plays Important Role In Environmental Conservation

Yvette Berner
Assistant Commissioner

My job as Assistant Commissioner for Education is to assist the Tama County Soil and Water Conservation Commissioners in promoting their ideals among the young people of the county.

Each year the District sponsors a poster competition for all age levels on topics of environmental concern. A year ago Tama County even had a national winner at the 6th grade level, and posters from there have often won state awards, too. Teachers are notified about the deadline dates and rules for this competition.

Another educational area is the promotion of tree planting each year for students at the 6th grade level in Tama County. Each year I distribute trees for Arbor Day planting in April to all sixth grades which have requested trees. This year several hundred high bush cranberry shrubs were delivered.

And the 5th Grade Outdoor Education Day at Otter Creek

Park is a long established success story. On this May occasion, experts in all kinds of outdoor nature areas assemble to meet with all the 5th grade students in area schools, for an outdoor classroom in eight sessions at the Park. Teachers and students both look forward to this occasion.

There are also scholarships for teachers to attend Conservation Education summer workshops and nominations for Conservation Teacher of the Year can be made.

In addition, educational aids can be borrowed from the SWCD Office at 203 West High in Toledo or can be delivered by me. These include videos on conservation practices and the visually stimulating model to demonstrate how pollution can attack our water supply.

Concern and caring for the environment starts at an early age. We at the Tama County Soil and Water District Commission are ready and willing to assist where we can in teaching our young people to respect the land and our planet.

Wet Weather This Year Encouraged Conservation

Russell Lyon
District Commissioner

This has been an interesting year to serve as a district soil commissioner. The wet fall of 1991 and spring of 1992 encouraged reduced tillage, grassed field borders and seeded waterways. Then the heavy rains in July proved the value of these conservation practices.

We were gratified with the success of the waterway field day held on the Marion and Denny Berger farm on August 4. The staff, with Mark Kuba in charge, did an exceptional job of planning the field day and carrying it to completion. Attendance was good. I talked to people from Hampton, Fort Dodge and Newton. We thank

the Bergers for lending us their farm and the business people and farmers who donated money, machinery, material and labor to help make the field day successful.

The chairman of our commissioners, Frank Bro, was chosen outstanding commissioner in our region from 1991. A well deserved honor. Frank is in his 12th year as a commissioner but will not be a candidate for re-election. We appreciate Frank's many contributions to soil conservation.

We also are losing our District Conservator, Craig Stange. I have enjoyed working with Craig and help him the best in his new job as State Forester in North Dakota.

Conservation Legislation

Landowner Liability

Eased

A new state law exempts landowners from liability for damages caused when properly constructed and maintained erosion-control structures fail during excessive rainfall.

"This legislation provides an important security measure that may encourage more Iowa landowners to install soil conservation practices," says Dale M. Cochran, Iowa Secretary of Agriculture.

This protection is important to many landowners who have installed terraces, grade stabilization structures, ponds, and other permanent erosion control structures.

The new law means that landowners won't be held liable for their soil conservation efforts as long as they construct the structures correctly and take the necessary steps to maintain them.

"The legislation makes the task of Iowa's volunteer soil and water conservation commissioners easier," says J. Kelly Tobin, president of the Iowa Association of Soil and Water Conservation District Commissioners. "Landowners know that if they install necessary conservation practices, they won't be incurring additional liabilities." The law took effect July 1.

Soil conservation practices are designed to withstand average conditions with proper maintenance. Mark Jensen, state engineer for the Soil Conservation Service, says it is not cost effective to build terraces to withstand extreme weather conditions. Most structures will withstand conditions more extreme than for which they were designed.

For example, terraces in Iowa are constructed to control the runoff of a 10-year, 24-hour rainfall. Such a rainfall averages 4 to 5 inches of precipitation across the state at one time, and may produce up to 3 inches of runoff under certain conditions.

Most terraces in Iowa will withstand a more severe rain if they have been properly designed, constructed, and maintained.

Contact: Geraldine Fridlington, Iowa Department of Agriculture, Land Stewardship, (515) 242-6343.

Urban Soil Erosion Can Be Reduced

Some of the worst soil erosion in Iowa each year does not occur in farm fields or feedlots. It takes place in thousands of urban construc-

THE TOLEDO CHRONICLE, TUES., SEPT. 15, 1992

Soil Conservation Service.

Soil erosion at construction sites usually occurs over a short period of time. It often, however, exceeds 30 tons per acre during development.

Land developed for urban uses must be protected from the effects of soil erosion, Cochran says. He advises contractors to incorporate effective erosion control and site management into construction plans and on-site construction management.

"Erosion control at construction sites can be achieved at little cost to the developer. A sound erosion control or prevention program actually may be less expensive than correcting problems caused by erosion after the development has been completed," Cochran says.

There are fairly common and inexpensive erosion control management practices available to contractors. Practices include grading to control water flow, pegging soil in place where water flows rapidly, mulching exposed soil and installing fabric barriers to catch and hold sediment during construction.

Designs for new building sites should include erosion control plans such as placing roof down spouts and gutters to direct runoff into grassy areas instead of pavement. This slows the rate of water flow.

Landscape plans should include special ground cover plants designed to hold water and to reduce its rate of flow.

"A program of responsible erosion control and site management during construction may result in a more positive image for site developers. Sites with properly designed erosion control and storm water management systems are often more aesthetically pleasing, and may

have higher property values," Cochran says.

Contact: Geraldine Fridlington, Iowa Department of Agriculture and Land Stewardship, (515) 242-6343.

Wetlands Reserve

Program

The Wetlands Reserve Program is a voluntary program offering landowners a chance to receive payments for restoring and protecting wetlands on their property. Authorized by the 1990 Farm Bill, the program provides a unique opportunity for farmers to retire marginal cropland and reap the benefits of having wetlands on their property.

Participating landowners receive cost share payments for wetland restoration. Contact: Jim Ayen, Soil Conservation Service, (515) 284-4370.

Preserving Wetlands For Wildlife

Wetland basins in the Dakotas, Iowa, Minnesota, and Montana provide important waterfowl nesting habitat. But more than half the wetlands that once existed have been lost to agricultural drainage.

The Iowa Department of Natural Resources' main goal for wetland preservation is to protect and enhance 2,000 acres per year of wetlands and adjacent uplands during the next 15 years. Another goal is to raise \$2 million annually from federal, state, and county agencies, conservation organizations, private business and concerned citizens to acquire wetlands.

Contact: Lee Gladfield, Iowa Department of Natural Resources, (515) 281-5629.



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1992 CHRONICLE, INC. DESMOINES

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