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Fayette SWCD Annual Report

Yearous is Woodland Owner of the Year

Stan Yearous believes conserving and managing woodlands goes hand-in-hand with preventing farm erosion.

Filtering decaying species of timber on his 520 acre farm east of Wadena, all while planting a new crop of ash, oak and walnut has provided a balanced breed of woodlands. The benefits are endless, he says.

"The value of timber itself makes it so worth getting a management plan," Yearous says. "Marking (and harvesting) undesirable trees helps the desirable trees grow better."

Little has changed at the wooded homestead Yearous has called home for nearly 50 years. That's because he harvests some trees almost annually.

"I harvest trees almost every year. Harvesting goes right along with planting. I've planted a lot of trees, and I'm going to continue."

In all, Yearous tends to over 90 total acres of woodlands on his farm.

In 1986, Stan began following the terms of his first written management plan. He did a

selective harvest on 36 acres, including four acres of clear-cutting. The harvest measured 65 million board feet (MBF).

Later in 2002, he worked with District Forester Gary Beyer to revise his existing plan. That year, he clear-cut 36 acres of predominantly red oak, approximately 115 MBF.

In 2003, he removed five acres of undesirable species. Two years later he removed 16 acres of undesirable species in preparation for tree planting. The same year he released 21 acres of new crop.

The process, called Timber Stand Improvement (TSI), allows healthy, more desirable trees to fully grow.

"At a certain point, the undesirable trees prevent the others from growing," says Yearous.

His new crop includes seven acres of direct seeded ash, oak and walnut in 2000. Two years later, Yearous planted 16 acres of oak and walnut in a harvest area. In 2005, he created a riparian buffer over seven acres in a pasture area.

Yearous' plan also consisted of fencing off seven acres around his

riparian buffer, and an additional six acres of woods in 1995.

He enrolled 145 acres into the wetland reserve program in 2000.

Holding a deep respect for his woodland, Yearous has done the majority of the work himself. He's attended many forestry field days and seminars to gain further knowledge of forest management. He says he considers the woodlands an integral part of his farm, providing erosion control, wildlife habitat and personal recreation.

"It's a long-term investment for me and my family," he says.

Yearous suggests keeping cattle out of farm woodlands, and urges other farmers to create management plans. He gives a lot of credit to Beyer for helping him create the best plan for his woodlands.

"Gary has been great with leadership and advice, and he has helped a lot of people just like me. I urge people to work with a forester. It can save a lot of money to take care of trees."

Stan lives at his rural Wadena farm with his wife, Cynthia.



Stan Yearous, pictured with his wife, Cynthia, has been named the 2006 Woodland Owner of the Year by the Fayette County Soil and Water Conservation District. Since 1986, Yearous has kept 92 acres of woodlands on his rural Wadena farm under a written management plan.

Sammy Jo Massman awarded Soil and Water Scholarship

Sammy Jo Massman of rural Ossian knows it's important to protect the land farmers use every day.

"The reason I think that, is, I look at all the farms in my area and see how much work they need. Area farms are getting to the point where they either have trouble with not enough fertilization, or tremendous erosion problems in their fields."

This realization has led her to pursue career goals in agriculture business and soil conservation, and her hard work and broad knowledge of farmland has



Sammy Jo Massman received this year's Soil and Water Scholarship. She's currently studying Ag Business at Northeast Iowa Community College, and in a year will transfer to Iowa State University. She's the daughter of Jerome and Brenda Massman, rural Ossian.

earned her the 2007 Fayette Soil and Water Conservation Scholarship.

A 2006 North Fayette graduate, Massman is the daughter of Jerome and Brenda Massman.

Sammy Jo left her high school the FFA president and chairman of three standing committees. When she wasn't involved in track, basketball, softball and

FCCLA at school, she remained an avid outdoors-woman and farmer.

She currently attends Northeast Iowa Community College,

studying Ag Business. In a year, Massman will transfer to Iowa State University to earn a four-year degree in Ag Business, with an emphasis on soil conservation. Her goal: to help farmers attain their goals.

"What draws me to these areas are the needs for improvements in fields, water ways, and terraces," she says. "I've made my career goal kind of broad to a point. An ag business can relate to a thousand jobs."

Massman says she's considering starting a career in the Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS) or the Farm Service Agency (FSA).

Growing up in northern Fayette County and southern Winneshiek, Massman developed a job resume milking and doing chores on the Knutson Bros. farm south of Ossian, caring to a 180 dairy cow set up. She's also worked on the Dave Lyons farm. She's involved in church and community

MASSMAN, continued on page 24

Nearing 50 years and holding

By William Bennett

In 1962, my father Cleve Bennett and I were having a problem with a great deal of erosion on a farm we had purchased in 1959. When, we were cultivating or harvesting, we would come to ditches we could not cross with our equipment or we would damage the equipment. We talked to Howard Boyle a Soil Conservation Service technician and he recommended we construct terraces. We weren't sure that was a good idea. Our neighbor Harold Strong (one of the Fayette Soil Conservation Districts first three commissioners) had built terraces with a plow. They were very difficult to farm because they varied so much in width between the terraces. At some places you could only plant two rows of corn and at other places it was about fifty rows or more.

Howard told they had a new style of terraces called parallel grass back slope terraces with tile outlets for the run off water and that you cut off hills and filled valleys when you constructed them. These terraces leveled the land and were

easier to farm because they cut out most of the point rows. We decided to construct this type of terrace on about twenty acres. Our first problem was that no one in Fayette County knew how to lay them out. Clayton County had a person that knew how, so that problem was solved. Granger Construction constructed them with scrapers and dozers push soil up hill and hauling soil off knolls to build the structures. Dad and I installed the tile intakes, using ten gallon milk cans with cut outs to connect the corrugated steel pipe with holes punched in them to the clay drainage tile. The cans were filled with concrete to hold everything together. The front slopes of the terraces were fifteen feet wide and the intakes were placed about sixteen feet from the edge of the terrace. We were pleased with the results of our efforts.

The first year we found we had made a mistake in the way we constructed the terraces. We had a very poor yield on the crops that were planted were had taken soil off to construct the terraces.

NEARING, continued on page 16

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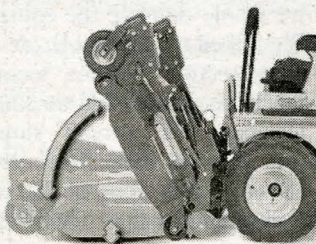
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West Union Field Office Employees

Employees pictured, left to right, front row- Lori Kohlmeyer, Lisa Bahe, Ray Drewelow, Jim Wolf; Back row- Eric Boehm, Jerry Muff, Joe Wingert, Lavonne Koch; Absent- Carrie Davis

Crowe retires as DSC Technician

Alan Crowe retired in 2006 as a Division of Soil Conservation (DSC) Technician. Alan will be missed by the local staff, commissioners and many landowners he assisted with



Alan Crowe

the application of soil and water conservation practices. He laid out many terrace systems contour strips and grassed waterways over the years. His later years he was our primary grassed waterway technician. Good luck to Alan in retirement.

Identification Statement

The Fayette Soil & Water Conservation District's Annual Report

Published by the Fayette SWCD,
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West Union, IA 52175 Issue No. 9

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Fayette County Soil and Water District commissioners are pictured above. From left- Joyce Trotter, Bill Bennett, Will Ogle, Richard Jensen, Rod Marlatt, Deb Dessel, Paul Nuss and John Grafenberg.

Hoeger farm named to IA Century list

In 1976, over 5,000 families in Iowa were recognized with certificates honoring them as the first inductees into the Iowa Century Farms Program. Today, the Paul and Phyllis Hoeger's rural Maynard farm has been added to the list of farms in Iowa of over 15,000 Iowa Century Farms. Paul's great-grandfather was the first to plow the land in the late 1800s.



Paul and Phyllis Hoeger's rural Maynard farm has been added to the list of farms in Iowa of over 15,000 Iowa Century Farms. Paul's great-grandfather was the first to plow the land in the late 1800s.

Paul and Phyllis Hoeger's farm, two miles west of Maynard, has been added to that list.

"That's important to us," says Paul, whose great-grandfather immigrated to the United States from Germany in 1888. "Our family has been here for over 100 years, and not many people can say that."

The two previous landowners did not farm or live on the land. Paul's great-grandfather and his sons were the first ones to plow up the sod. There were no buildings on the farm at that time.

"It was a virgin prairie then," Paul says. "I know they picked up a ton of rock."

The current buildings are the original, except the machine shed, which was built later. Paul's parents purchased the farm in 1968. They milked cows and raised dairy cattle, which Paul worked with until his parents sold the cattle in 1991. That's when they planted a windbreak on the north and west sides of the buildings, to protect the farm from wind and snow.

Paul and Phyllis were married in 1995. They have an assortment of poultry, which includes laying hens, turkeys, guineas, ducks and peafowl. The row crops are corn and bean rotation.

For residue management, Paul does minimum tillage, leaving

residue cover after each crop. The farm totals 240 acres, 140 of which are tillable. Paul rents another 160 acres from a neighbor and farms it like his own.

The Hoegers' yard and fences are neat and kept free of weeds. He makes it his goal to conserve the soil.

Paul watched a neighbor farm on a contour for several years, and decided it would be good for the long, steep slopes on his land. Convincing his father that it was the way to go, he started to contour and stopped using the moldboard plow.

"We started contouring in 1986. I wish my great-grandfather could have seen it."

After a spring of heavy rains, seeing that the contours were not enough to control all the erosion, Paul decided to place contour buffer strips on the land. The next year he constructed waterways. He also did contour buffer strips and waterways on the rented farm.

Paul says, "It is reassuring to look out over the farm in the spring after working the fields and see the green strips protecting the soil."

Paul and Phyllis are also concerned about water quality and wildlife. The riparian buffer and filter strip along their creek are effective tools to improve the environment. The total conservation system applied on their farm makes it stand out among others. Their farm is enrolled in the Conservation Security Program. It is one of few in the county that made the tier 3.

Four generations of Paul's family have farmed the land for 110 years. There will not be another generation to carry on the tradition. It is Paul's belief that he needs to manage the land in a manner of being a responsible steward, so the land will continue to be a productive resource for future generations.

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Section 34 of Illyria Twp., Fayette Co. 24 acres

Great building/rec site located 1 mile S of Wadena
Sections 33 & 34 of Illyria Twp., Fayette Co. 68 acres

Nearly all timber with great hunting potential
Section 29 of Eden Twp., Fayette Co. 40.5 acres

Great building/rec site with small pond; highway exposure
Sec. 5 & 6 of Pleasant Valley Twp., Fayette Co. 40.22 acres

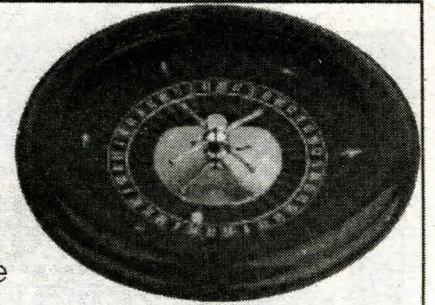
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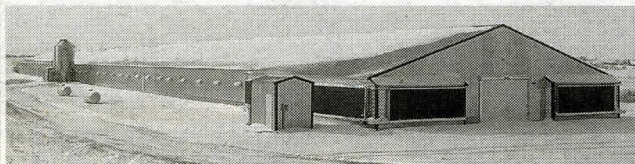
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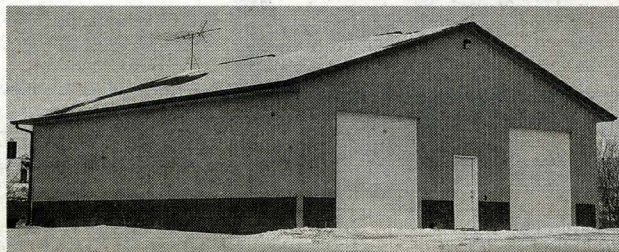
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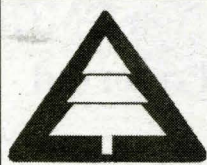
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Future bleak for ash in Iowa

Gary Beyer
District Forester

The Emerald Ash Borer may add ash to the tree species in Iowa that are fading from the landscape. The Chestnut Blight virtually eliminated American Chestnut in the 1940s, the Dutch Elm disease hit the Midwest in the 1960s, Butternut Decline became prevalent in the 1980s, and now the Emerald Ash Borer is 200 miles from the Iowa border.

The Emerald Ash Borer is from northeast China, Korea, and Japan. It entered the United States in solid wood packing material. It is estimated that the insect has killed over 27 million ash trees in Michigan, Ohio, Indiana, Illinois, and Maryland. There is no known cure for this insect.

The adult is an emerald green beetle. The larvae is the phase that does the damage. The larvae is a flat headed borer that feeds under the bark severing the tissue that conducts food and water in the tree. The Emerald Ash Borer attacks all ash species and kills trees from 1 inch in diameter to large trees. The first symptoms are crown dieback and shoots on

the trunk of the tree. The borer leaves a "D" shaped exit hole.

Impact In Iowa:

As of now, the Emerald Ash Borer has not been detected in Iowa. If it gets here, it will most likely arrive on firewood transported from an infected area. There are an estimated 30 million ash trees in the towns and cities, and 50 million ash trees in Iowa's woodlands. The cost to remove the dead ash trees in urban communities alone would cost over \$6 billion. The bottomland forests would lose the most common species. This could affect the water purifying benefits of forests along our streams.

Ways To Combat Emerald Ash Borer:

The Forestry Bureau will continue to monitor the spread of Emerald Ash Borer. The borer is attracted to stressed ash trees. Ash trees have been purposely planted too shallow in Iowa parks so that they are attractive to the borer. These "sentinel" trees are checked throughout the summer to determine whether the borer is present. Newspaper articles and pamphlets have been written

stressing not to move firewood or ash nursery stock into Iowa from the infected areas. Infected states currently have a quarantine on movement of ash nursery stock, firewood, lumber, and logs. Beginning next year, the State Forest Nursery will no longer grow ash species. After this year, ash will not be approved for planting in any cost sharing program.

What Can You Do:

In towns, begin replacing ash trees that are stressed or in poor condition. Plant a diversity of species on your property. The elm and ash have certainly taught us not to put all of our eggs in one basket. In woodlands, when it is time to thin your woods, remove the ash in favor of other species. If you are selling trees in your woodland, sell the ash that are large enough. And, do not bring ash firewood or ash nursery stock into the state.

Researchers are working on methods to control the Emerald Ash Borer. If we can delay the infestation of Emerald Ash Borer in Iowa, ash trees may continue to be an important tree in Iowa's cities and landscape.

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Fayette SWCD Revolving Fund

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District Revolving Fund	
Beginning Balance	\$1,490.94
Receipts	
Certificate of Deposits	\$40,000.00
Certificate of Deposit Interest	\$478.45
Fabric Income	\$2,215.58
Gifts Given Reimbursement	\$25.00
Grannis Reimbursement	\$148.00
Houng Money Market Transfers	\$879.92
IM Commissioner Funds	\$2,000.00
Map Scales	\$4.28
Meeting Expense Reimbursement	\$20.00
Mink Creek Reimbursement	\$187.50
Money Market Transfers	\$16,905.97
Supporter Club	\$1,132.80
Tree Sales	\$1,941.69
Total Receipts	\$65,939.19
TOTAL	\$67,430.13
Expenses	
ATV	\$201.95
Certificate of Deposits Purchased	\$40,000.00
Checks Printed	\$50.25
Computer	\$109.19
Developmental Grant	\$117.00
Donations	\$1,150.00
Education	\$1,354.59
Fabric	\$1,593.24
GPS	\$1,350.00
Grain Drill	\$148.48
Grannis Creek	\$148.00
Houng Property	\$1,376.71
IM Commissioner	\$1,665.80
IM Office	\$2,448.34
Liability Insurance	\$186.00
Meeting Expenses	\$948.97
Mink Creek	\$3,195.00
Office Supplies	\$287.06
Postage	\$363.77
Sales Tax	\$590.61
Trees	\$7,771.72
Upper Maquoketa River	\$509.00
Total Expenses	\$65,565.68
Ending Balance 6/30/06	\$1,864.45

The checking account at First National Bank was closed out and the remaining funds of \$1,864.45 were deposited in the money market account at Kerndt Brothers Savings Bank.

See who came to visit one of Fayette County's wetlands

By Ray Drewelow

Yes, our county was visited by Whooping Cranes. They were tracked by DNR from Florida to our county and on their way to Canada.

Status: U.S. Wildlife officials counted 149 whooping cranes in November 1995, the most since the American government began taking censuses in the 1930s.

In the late 1800s, there were about 1,500 birds in the aspen parkland and prairie regions of Western Canada and the U.S. As human settlement spread westward, the world population dropped to a low of 14-16 in the 1940s.

Conservation efforts since 1938 have resulted in a slow increase. Including those in captivity, and 25 cranes in two other wild populations, there are now 320 whooping cranes in the world.

Size: Cranes are the tallest of all birds in North America. An adult male stands 5 feet tall, weighs as much as 16 1/2 pounds, and has a wingspan up to 2.5 m wide. Despite their size, cranes average a flight speed of about 45 km-h. By gliding on wind currents, they can stay aloft for 10 hours and cover up

to 750 km.

Food: Cranes eat snails, larval insects, leeches, frogs, minnows, small rodents, and berries. They may scavenge dead ducks, marsh birds or muskrats. During migration, they stop to eat aquatic animals, roots of plants and waste grain in stubble fields. In Texas, they eat shellfish, snakes, acorns, small fish and wild fruit.

Breeding: Whooping cranes mate for life. In early spring, adults

display elaborate courtship rituals, bobbing, weaving, jumping and calling with their mates. The female lays two large eggs and both adults incubate them for the next month. The eggs hatch at different times and the second chick is often pushed out of the nest or starved. Chicks can swim as soon as they hatch. They can fly within 80-90 days.

Lifespan: Up to 24 years in the wild.



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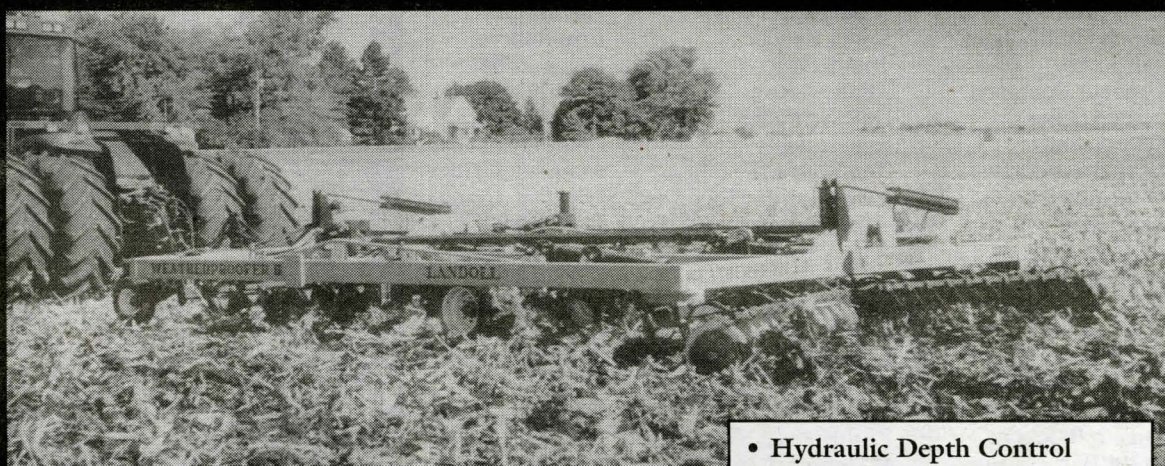
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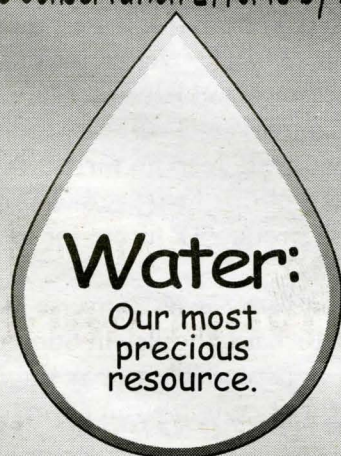
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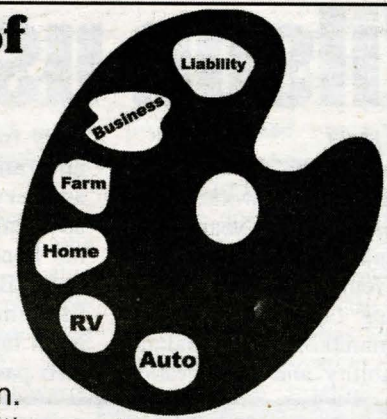
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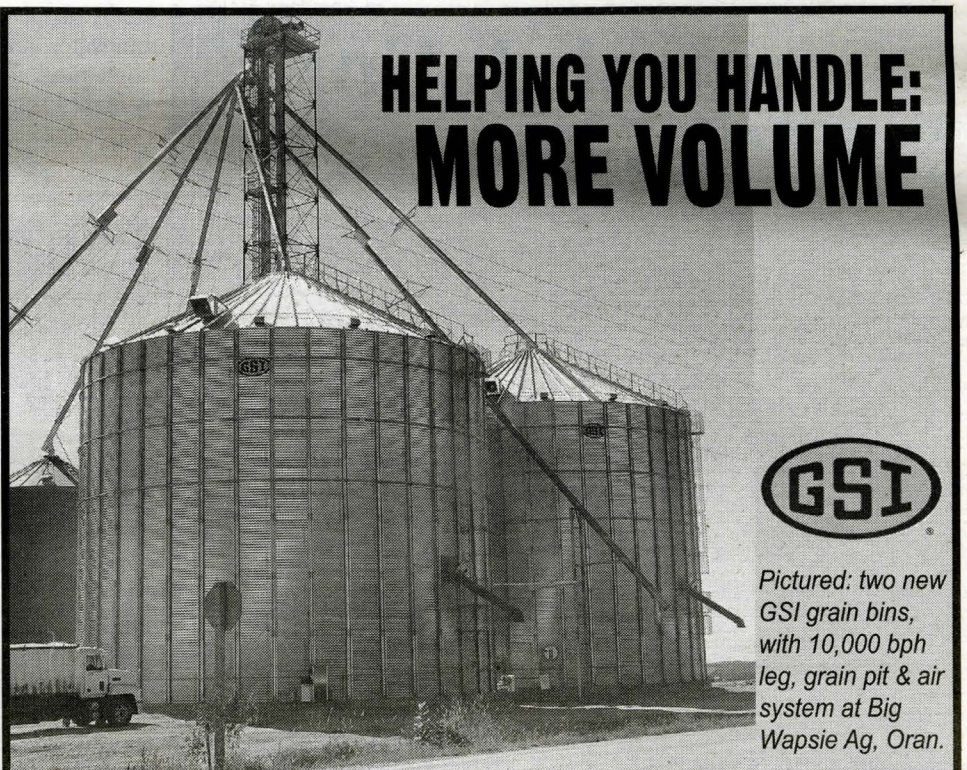
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Wilson uses land preserving practices

By Jerry Muff,
Dist. Consyst. NRCS

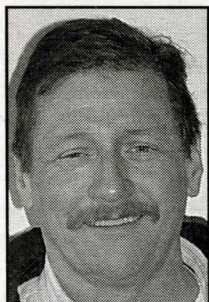
Our office has worked with Gary Wilson over the years which I have enjoyed and appreciated. I have found him to be an outstanding farmer with a keen eye on maintaining the balance of profitability and conservation.

Gary frequently utilizes the local government agencies, programs and services to his and the land's advantage. He is good at expressing his honest opinion in a positive light. Because of Gary and others like him, we as public servants can learn how to do a better job and also pass their experiences on to

others.

The Wilson family is located in the southwest corner of Fayette County and includes Gary, wife Theresa, eldest son Jared, daughter Rebekah and the youngest, Jedidiah. The two older children are currently in college; Jared at ISU in Agronomy, Rebekah at Northwestern. Jedidiah is in the West Central Schools with an interest in farming.

Gary began farming with his father, Gene in the late 70s and early 80s. They were using the chisel plow with flat sweeps as the primary tillage system. Row patterns were pretty much up and down the hill, whichever made for the longest rows. In 1980 or '81 a severe spring storm caused major erosion to the area and one field in particular. Gary described it as removing several inches of our best topsoil and depositing most of it down slope within the field. He doesn't feel they can get the soil back, but he developed a serious determination to not allow for it happen again. Gary is an innovator and not afraid to try something new and different if it makes sense. He and his dad,



Gary Wilson

Gene, proceeded to work into no-till farming with some trepidation and determination.

They began the no-till experience by going on a small scale on their better land and monitoring it closely. Having fair success they gradually expanded the no-till to include all of their soybeans and 70% of their corn acres.

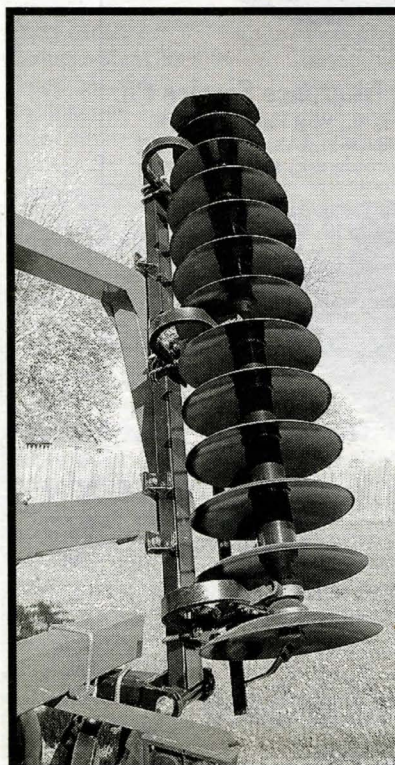
They began to learn that there were challenges with their new planting system. The Wilsons really liked the conservation and fuel conserving aspects that were realized with no-till planting; however, some of their land, mostly the rented land, was not perfectly tile drained. It did not take long to find out that no-till was not responding well in these areas. The cool and wet soils became more of a problem when tilling the soil was eliminated and all of the crops' residue was left on the surface. The texture of the soil was sticky, resulting in poor crop emergence. After a period of time he noticed that even on the better soils that yields were beginning to suffer where no-till was being used compared to tilled areas. Nutrient stratification was the culprit when Gary took some soils samples at the 2 in depth rather than the normal 6-8 in depth.

While Gary's efforts have been a learning experience, he feels that it has cost him money in reduced

profitability with the problems encountered. That doesn't mean he's giving up; he is simply modifying the operation to resolve the issues encountered. Gary has purchased an implement called Salford RTS. It has multiple bars with several 1.25" wavy coulters designed to size or cut the residue. Behind the unit is a rolling basket used to simply knock the stalks down or do a little leveling. The coulters can be set at whatever widths you'd like. He has used it with the coulters set close together to do full width work in areas where soils are cooler and wet and when stalks are particularly tough. The new GMO corn varieties seem to have tougher stalks than in the past. The goal for now is to set the implement to do strip tillage prior to planting. Gary plans to run the strips between the previous corn rows to avoid tearing up the root balls. In 30" rows, there will be a 10" band that is lightly tilled. This unit will also be run over the fields after spreading P and K (better known as plow down fertilizer). This will address a few of the problems mentioned earlier: by helping to decompose corn stalks, provide for some incorporation of fertilizer and with the light tillage in bands, will help to warm and dry up the soil where the seed is planted.

The Wilsons realize that tillage isn't the total answer to addressing

WILSON, continued on next page



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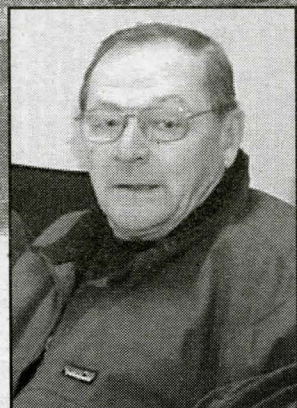
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How Pheasants Forever meant Pheasants Again

By Dick Jensen

When I was a younger man (years ago) pheasants were plentiful – so was their habitat. Out back in the grove behind our house was a thicket of brush mixed with raspberries, weeds, tall grass and apple trees. My own, nearest wild retreat area I loved to explore. Even on the coldest winter day I could look out the kitchen window and view the value of habitat. Food and cover was plentiful for all of nature's feathered and furred critters that flourished there.

Farther from the house was the big slough that was too wet to grow decent crops. I would walk down the wide grassy fence-row, through a wild plum thicket that led me to the tall grasses of the bogs. I could immediately understand the habitat connection with wild life. The tossed salad of vegetation was a paradise for every kind of animal. Tracks and trails, grassy little pockets burrowed out, bits of rabbit for our blood stained feathers, signs of feeding on the seed loaded plants, and swimming critters like mink and muskrat were holed up along the creek. All seemed well for these

wild inhabitants but my cold wet feet soon were carrying me back home.

I was only a visitor to nature's theatre where the pheasants chose to stay. I had no way of knowing how soon this paradise would be lost. Corn and beans were destined to rule the land. That natural theatre with all of the vast array of players was now only a boyhood memory.

Years passed by and agriculture seemed to get all the attention. Pheasants and habitat were in a life or death struggle for survival. Only a small group of conservationists were organizing to save our heritage that appeared doomed. This dedicated group was simply called "Pheasants Forever." Evidence of what they stood for and what they have accomplished is obvious to any outdoor-minded person. No other wildlife organization has done so much for the conservation effort and connecting our children to the wonders of nature.

The next time you see any pheasants, you need to thank Pheasants Forever for pheasants again.

Wilson, cont. from previous page

all the entire conservation needs for the land they farm. CRP grassed waterways have systematically been installed on most of the farms they own and operate. They construct their own waterways and have become quite proficient at it. They in turn receive the cost share for installing the practice plus receive annual rental payments through the CRP. Vegetative filter strips are also common along all streams. They realize that farming cannot be profitable where flood waters have taken the soil down to the cobble layer. So again, the

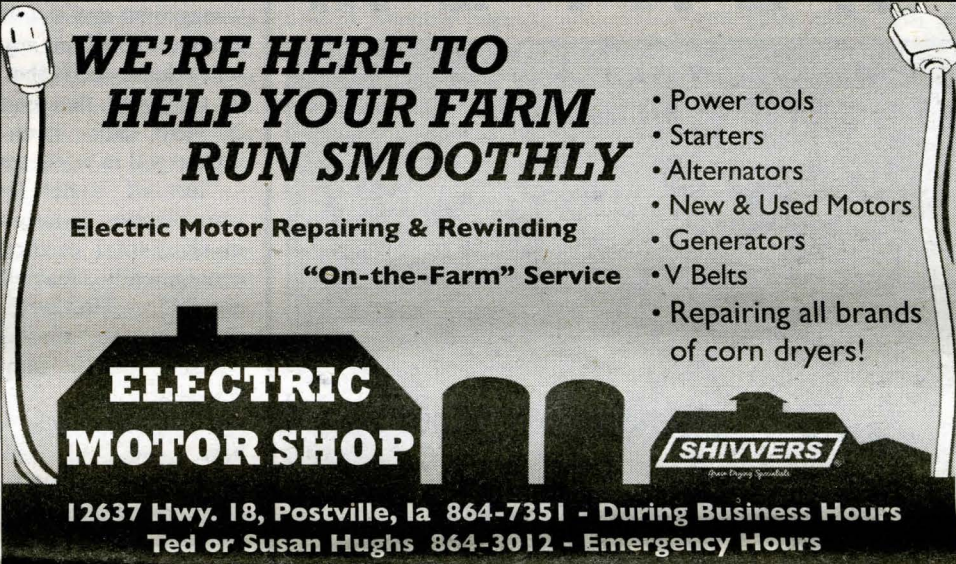
continuous CRP provides a great option. They have even restored a wetland on one of their farms which was done through the continuous CRP.

Much of the conservation efforts have paid off to the Wilsons in the way of another program which became available in 2005 called the Conservation Security Program (CSP). This program rewards total stewards of the land with soil conservation, water quality and wildlife habitat practices in place. The Wilson farming operation has ranked

quite well in the CSP.

While the conservation programs and incentives are worthwhile and helpful, Gary doesn't forget why he is doing it all: he doesn't ever want to see his land damaged again like it was from the storm of 25 years ago.

"I also appreciate the time that the NRCS staff has invested in my farming operation. This staff spends time teaching me and encouraging me to be a better steward of the soil."



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Canada Thistle Control in Native Plantings

By Greg Schmit
NRCS Area Office

Canada thistle is one tough customer. Unfortunately, there is no silver bullet to use in completely freeing your prairie reconstruction or natural area from Canada Thistle. No magic herbicide, cultural, biological or mechanical practice alone exists totally rid your prairie from this Hydra of the noxious weed world.

Mow it down or till it up and it spreads through root buds. Spray it with the latest and greatest herbicide and you're likely to kill something beneficial. Burn it at the wrong time and it will come back stronger. Don't do anything and it will release seeds that will spread in the wind that can germinate 20 years later. Even after being submerged in water for 4 years!

But all is not lost. Unless your planting is only a few acres in size, total eradication is not economically feasible or even possible. However, control is certainly an obtainable goal. It's kind of like playing against Michael Jordan. You can't stop him; you can only hope to contain him.

To kill it, we have to understand it. Extensive research has provided us with a few facts about our nemesis of the natural area.

1. Canada thistle is a perennial that spreads by seed and rhizomes. Root fragments only 5 inches long can produce shoots.

2. It has a relatively high light requirement. Death occurs when light is reduced to 20% of full sun.

3. Shoots emerge when the soil temperature reaches 41 degrees F. Warm season grasses don't get going until about 50 degrees F.

4. Root reserves are lowest just before flowering (bud stage) and greatest in the early fall.

5. Average seed production is 1,500 seeds per plant.

Control Methods

The absolute best way to fight thistles in a prairie seeding is to

do as much control and eradication before even planting any native grasses or forbs. Minimize tillage to prevent raising more weed seed and then applying glyphosate 2 or 3 times to emerging weeds is an excellent way to start a prairie planting. Planting an area to glyphosate resistant corn or beans for several years before seeding natives is another method to prepare the seed bed.

An integrated approach using a combination and/or repetition of control practices is the best method to contain already established Canada Thistle populations in natural areas. In most cases, a herbicide application is part of all of the management techniques.

Tillage

Not an option. See Number 1 above.

Hand Pulling

This is probably only an option in very small areas or early infestations.

Mowing

Canada thistles can be managed by diligent mowing. IF you're willing to mow in June, July, August and September at 7 to 28 day intervals for 4 years!

Keep in mind that root reserves are lowest at bud to bloom. A mowing in mid-to late June, followed by a herbicide application in the fall before a killing frost, is your best way to utilize mowing to reduce thistle patches.

Do not mow thistle plants lower than 8 inches. Surprisingly, removing ALL of the thistle leaves stimulates root growth.

Burning

Burning by itself doesn't work unless you burn every year in late April or early May. Unfortunately, you will also suppress many native forbs.

A burn followed by a herbicide application at the bud to bloom stage works better than just spraying. The burn will enhance native species and also even the age of the thistle stand, making your herbicide more effective.

Spraying

Spraying alone can control Canada Thistle infestations. However, herbicide applications need to be done multiple times in the same growing season and it is very difficult not to harm desirable forb species. Some of the better herbicides utilized to control thistles are aminopyralid (Milestone), clopyralid (Stinger), triclopyr (Grazon) and 2,4-Damine. Products that use a combination of these active ingredients are also available and more effective. A precise spot application at bud to bloom (late June) and then again at fall regrowth (late September) for 2 successive years will greatly reduce a thistle population.

Some things to keep in mind when using herbicides: Follow label directions. Use the recommended rates; more is NOT better. Use a non-ionic surfactant. Apply the herbicide as precisely as humanly possible. Apply the herbicide when the label recommends; most times this is bud to bloom or early regrowth/rosette stage.

Competition

Any management practice that increases the health of the native prairie seeding will help in the fight against Canada Thistles. One study has shown that Switchgrass can crowd out thistles by shading and root zone competition. Unfortunately, it took about 8 years to finally accomplish this intended task. It would seem then, that the best way to keep thistles at bay in natural areas would be to give in and just plant a thick stand of prairie grasses that can be sprayed with a broadleaf herbicide. But giving in is not an option.

The best option is to meticulously deplete the seedbed of weeds like Canada Thistle and then plant MORE forbs. Planting the most diverse mix possible allows for all of the growing zones above and below the ground to be occupied, leaving very little room for Canada Thistle to prosper.

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Considerations of bioenergy in Iowa's future

By Richard VanKlavern
NRCS State Conservationist

As we all know, the quality and quantity of Iowa's water greatly impacts the vitality of the state's economy. It directly affects our livestock industry, our tourism industry and the ability to attract new economic development opportunities.

One of the fastest growing industries in Iowa, bioenergy, will have huge implications on Iowa's water supply issues. The ability for Iowa water utilities to supply adequate water will have a direct role on where the bioenergy industry expands in the state—and how large the industry will eventually become.

According to a Minnesota research group, ethanol plants use 10 gallons of water per minute for each 1 million gallons of ethanol produced. So a typical plant producing 50 million gallons of ethanol per year would need 500 gallons of water per minute.

Much of this water is recycled within the plant; however, there is some consumptive water use through evaporation during cooling and wastewater discharge.

So just how much water will Iowa ethanol plants need? Exact water usage figures are not publicly available. But we can make some estimates.

The Iowa ethanol industry currently has the capacity to produce an estimated 2.1 billion gallons per year of ethanol. Using the multiplier of 4 gallons of water consumed per gallon of ethanol—that equals nearly 8.4 billion gallons of water per year needed

for Iowa ethanol production. This is about 7 percent of the state's total projected water use of 108 billion gallons per year. Ethanol's share of Iowa's estimated water use could double to 14 percent in the next five years.

The booming bioenergy industry also raises some interesting challenges and opportunities from a water quality perspective. Let's first look at the demand for corn and its potential impacts.

At their current production capacity, Iowa's ethanol plants could consume an estimated 750 million bushels of corn. Researchers estimate each average sized plant would need 128,500 acres of corn to supply it.

There's been lots of buzz about how high corn prices will go because of this demand. Some folks have thrown around the \$5 mark.

Although the top end isn't known, I think it is safe to say corn prices will continue to increase—probably significantly—encouraging producers to grow more corn.

The concern is some of this crop will be grown on former CRP acres or pasture ground, which isn't well-suited for row crop production. Breaking up this ground cover, will greatly reduce soil quality resulting in excessive erosion rates, poorer water quality and reduced wildlife habitat.

It is also important to consider the impact higher corn prices will have on LDP payments. If LDP payments are not as important, what impact will that have on the strength of USDA's conservation

compliance program? Will compliance still be a tool to help ensure a base level of conservation in Iowa?

An expanded corn-based ethanol industry could also fuel a boom in the cattle feeding industry because of the abundance of the distiller's grain by-product. More cattle mean more animal waste to manage, which raises its own set of natural resource concerns. And more cattle will need more water—where will the water come from?

These are all good questions conservationists should be asking themselves, and others.

But some developments, like the potential shift to cellulosic ethanol, hold great promise for the quality of our state's water supplies. Cellulosic-based ethanol could mean a shift to plants using more perennial crops like switch grass, which would hold positive water and soil quality impacts.

Because of this the conservation community needs to support continual improvements in the efficiency of cellulosic ethanol and help the industry plan for the future. The most immediate concern surrounding cellulosic ethanol is the industry's plan to use corn stalks or stover as a feedstock source. For many parts of Iowa, this would cause conservation concerns from the resulting reduced soil quality and increased soil erosion.

Overall, the growth of ethanol and renewable fuels appears to be a good thing for Iowa and our producers. It could also serve as a platform for us—as

conservationists—to help build awareness about Iowa's water quality and quantity issues, the value of proper land use planning, and the importance of publicly supported conservation.

In the end, if we come to the table with the renewable energy industry and producers and work out our concerns, the growth of this industry can be a win-win for producers and conservation.



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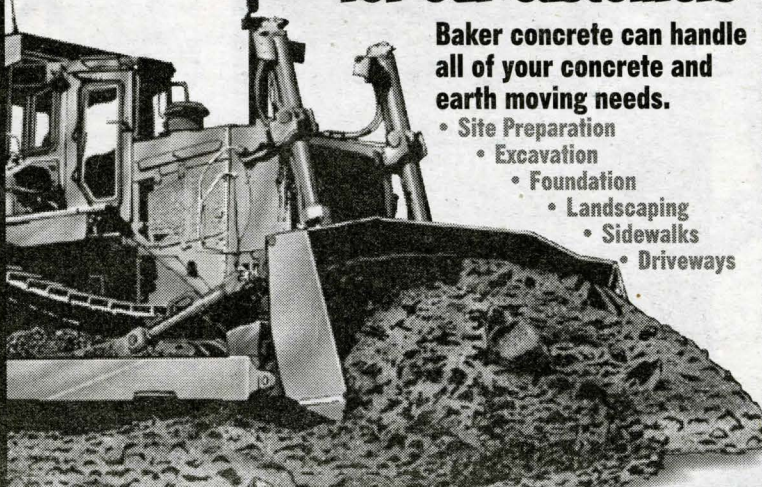
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Fayette SWCD Revolving Fund June 1, 2006 through June 30, 2006

District Revolving Fund – Kerndt Brothers

Beginning Balance \$1,000.00
(transferred from MM Savings to open account on 6-2-06)

Receipts

Money Market Transfers	\$1,109.70
Supporter Club	\$100.00
Tree Sales	\$155.10
Total Receipts	\$ 1,364.80
TOTAL	\$ 2,364.80

Expenses

Checks Printed	\$12.25
Developmental Grant	\$1,000.00
Houg Property	\$109.70
IM Office	\$171.34
Meeting Expenses	\$40.78
Office Supplies	\$27.18
Total Expenses	\$1,361.25

Ending Balance 6/30/06

\$1,003.55

Monthly water monitoring begins

Tom Sperflage
Environmental Specialist, IDALS-DSC

Water quality monitoring has begun at four sites along the South Fork Maquoketa River.

The Soil and Water Conservation District Commissioners and the watershed's citizen council have decided that samples should be taken once per month and measure total phosphorus, total kjeldahl nitrogen and total coliform/E.coli bacteria at each site.

This sampling effort is part of the work items in the original grant for the project. It is meant to help all of us understand if we are making measurable progress in our goals of nutrient and bacteria reduction to the river.

Total phosphorus and total kjeldahl nitrogen measure the

grand total of phosphorus and nitrogen in the water. High levels of phosphorus and nitrogen in the water are what turns the water green in the spring, summer and fall...there is an explosion of algae that use the nutrients as a food source. We are promoting and encouraging watershed citizens to pay careful attention to their nutrient (including manure) applications on crop fields and lawns.

Total coliform is a measure of the presence of all bacteria in the water. Detection of total coliform in the water suggests that disease – causing pathogen bacteria may also be present. E.coli bacteria are a subset of total coliform bacteria.

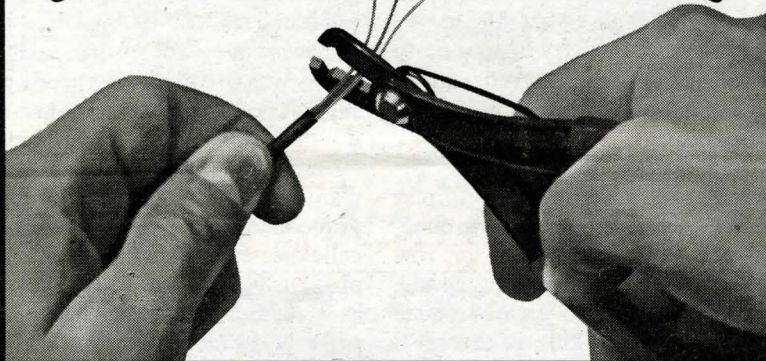
E.coli bacteria are specific to warm blooded mammals – humans, livestock, wildlife,

etc. E.coli in the water generally indicates there has been recent fecal contamination. Not all E.coli bacteria are considered pathogenic. As an indicative measure, presence of E.coli bacteria in the water signifies that we should have concern for human health. Pathogenic E.coli cause infection, diarrhea, stomach cramps and other sometimes more serious maladies.

Failing septic systems hooked up to field tile, improperly stored/applied livestock manure and wildlife deposits are all sources of bacteria to the water.

Developing a nutrient management plan, following it, and limiting our sediment delivery should provide a benefit to the amount of bacteria that is delivered to the river.

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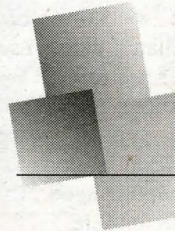


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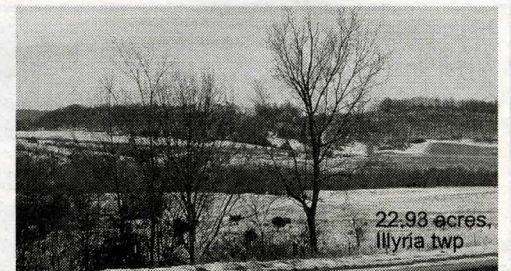
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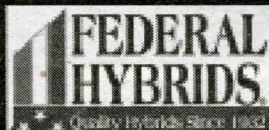
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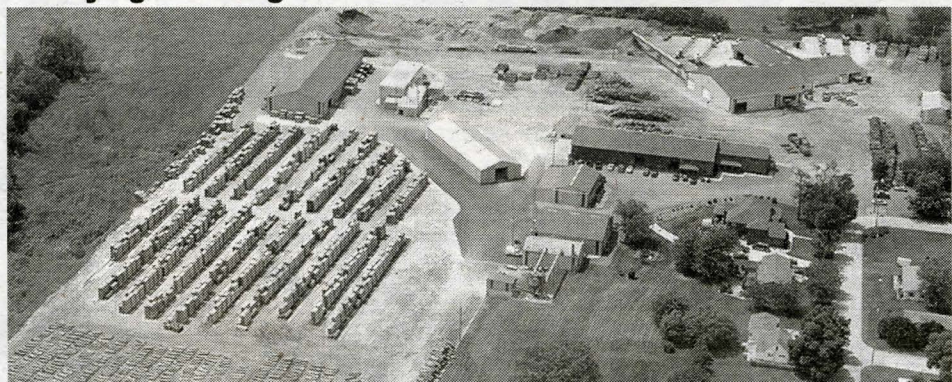
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TAKO: Take A Kid Outdoors

By Richard Jensen

"To instill in young minds an appreciation and understanding that they are but one member of the whole 'land community' with their shared fate of all its other members."

My instincts suggest that separation from nature is detriment to wholesome development of our kids.

TAKO is a low-technical, high-ethical experience that will instill in young minds an appreciation and understanding of their natural environment.

The first fact we need to be aware of is that with each generation, our kids grow further separated from nature. For thousands of years, our ancestors shared a kinship with their fellow voyagers of the natural world. Out of gratitude for their food and shelter, they displayed great love, respect, admiration and reverence to the earth. The abundance of the land meant survival of these hunters and gathers, and the wealth of this culture depended on the health (bounty) of the land. This is true yet today, I call this the Common Rootage Era.

The point is, that long ago man understood his dependency on the total food chain order- soil, plant, animal and himself. Nature

was the textbook that translated vital truths about his existence. It may not have been Utopia, but man flourished for many years in harmony with nature.

Next came the Gizmos and Gadgets Era.

Glitter and gleam take priority to peaches and potatoes. Attitudes and actions about land ethics are scarce and trivial. Education-labeled geography, botany, agronomy, history, and certainly economics- ignores these ethics. Synthetic and artificial substitutes for wood, leather, wool, flowers, rocks, grass, food, etc. further alienate us from the real earth. Modern civilization has cluttered and confused our senses that we have nearly lost the mar-earth. Education and science keep the pump well greased, but very little attention is paid to the condition of the well. It is this disconnect from nature that I ask you to think about.

Nature-deficit disorder

Television, computers, video games, schools, sports, hanging out, etc. all compete against kids' outdoor time. Parents fear of strangers, gangs, traffic, drugs, bugs, mosquitoes, etc. curtail kids' outdoor exposure. Climate-controlled game rooms, simulation games, automobiles, sleeping-

in, and lack of mentors are more distracters for these wild kids. Is it any wonder we see an epidemic of obesity, depression, and attention deficit disorder?

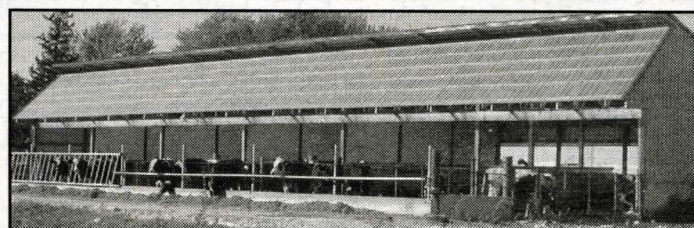
Those of us who grew up connected to nature still cherish those days of playing in the woods, creeks and ponds, catching tadpoles, building a tree house, fishing, looking for rocks, etc. The list of adventures was long and gave witness to the order of nature. Those wilderness hikes were unstructured, non-competitive, stressless, undiluted, and non-commercial. Only when we have a relationship to something we can see, feel, understand, love or have faith in can we be ethical.

We need to support community and youth organizations and now TAKO so all of your kids can discover the awesome world of nature. Take A Kid Outdoors needs mentors and friends.

I extend an invitation of support to all community members. Anyone who finds favor with supporting this nurturing program for kids may contact me at 563-380-9158

Accomplishments for 2006

Practices	Amount
Contour Farming	103.5 ac
Contour Buffer Strips	964.9 ac
Contour Stripcropping	130.4 ac
Grade Stabilization Structure	1 structure
Grassed Waterways (290,000 lineal ft)	270.2 ac
Manure Storage Structures	2 structures
No-till	9,945 ac
Terraces	22,528 ft
Water & Sediment Control Basin	6 basins
Wetland Restoration	13 ac
Conservation Reserve Program (CRP)	
2006 CRP continuous	748 ac
2006 General CRP	653 ac
Total Contracts = 2,601	Total Acres = 29,918 ac



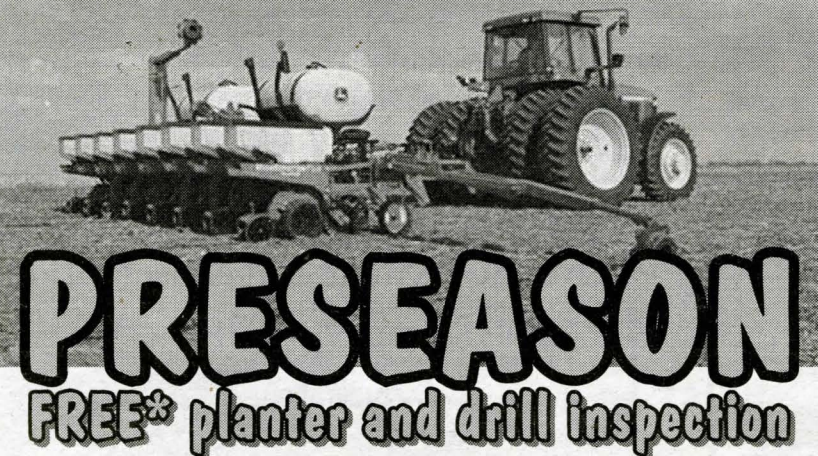
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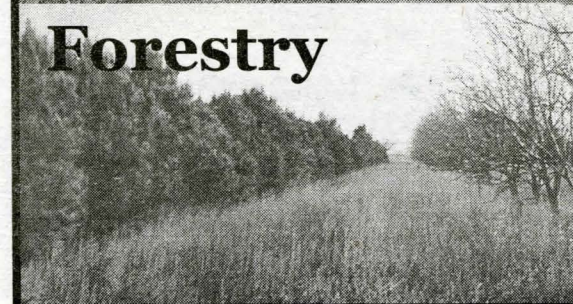
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South Fork Maquoketa River Water Quality Project continues making progress

By Tom Sperflage
Environmental Specialist, IDALS-DSC

The South Fork Maquoketa River Water Quality Project officially began operations on July 1, 2004, and is locally sponsored by the Fayette, Buchanan and Delaware County Soil and Water Conservation District Commissioners.

The South Fork Maquoketa River is a warm water stream that runs through the corner southeast Fayette County, on through the Lamont area and then northwest of Dundee in Delaware County. The South Fork Maquoketa joins with the Upper Maquoketa River in Backbone State Park. At that point, the joined rivers essentially form the upper reaches of Backbone Lake.

Water quality concerns in the watershed are excess sediment, nutrients and bacteria reaching the river. Identified priority areas within the watershed are: areas with livestock in close proximity to streams, areas with the highest sediment delivery rates, sources of high fecal coliform bacteria, stream segments with no filterstrips, and intensively cropped areas close to streams.

Since the start of the project, many water quality improving and

soil conserving projects have been built. The following chart will document projects installed by county by fiscal year. The project may be in operation for two more years, depending on continued success in reducing the levels of sediment, nutrients and bacteria that reach the river.

Participating producers have started installing practices like no-

till and contour farming, grassed waterways, filterstrips, wetlands and cover crops on corn silage acres.

The Commissioners of the participating Soil and Water Conservation Districts thank all participating watershed residents for the work they have done and ask those yet to participate, to do so soon.



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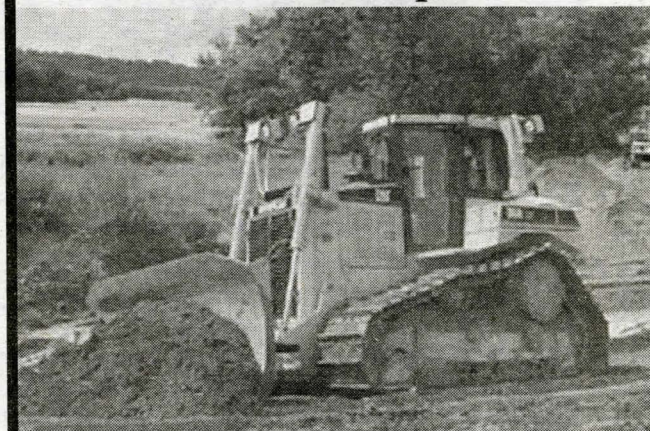
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Terry Szabo, President

Conservation Progress in Fayette County

By Jerry Muff
NRCS

Most folks have a basic understanding of the numerous and most popular conservation programs out there, but are not aware of all the programs we work with at the West Union Field Office. So I tried to list the programs we utilize most commonly in Fayette County in the following article. They are a combination of federal and state programs.

Federal Programs

The most influential conservation in Fayette County is undoubtedly the continuous CRP. We maintain the number two position in the state of Iowa for total number of CRP contracts. The state average is approximately 1,000 contracts per county, while Fayette County has 2,380. Yet we rank 26th in the state for total CRP acres, general CRP and continuous CRP, which is at 27,700 acres. The average CRP acreage for the state is 19,380. This points out a pretty obvious fact that we have the lion's share of small CRP acreages which is the smaller acreage practices such as vegetative filter strips, contour buffers, wetlands, and many other practices we get with

the continuous CRP. We have a few streams which are almost completely buffered, such as the Otter Creek east of West Union. Another example of excellent usage of this program are the arials shown in another article of this publication which shows conservation progress on about seven sections in the Maynard area. The majority of farmers in that large area have adopted contour buffer strips to their land to reduce soil erosion and provide wildlife area at the same time, not to mention the water filtering effects of the grass strips. The farmers there have made fairly substantial changes to their farming to change from straight row farming to the contour buffers that is shown on the arials. They have done a great job of changing to a much better and sustainable operation with their contour buffers.

Conservation Security Program, CSP -

The sign-up was in spring of 2005 in which Fayette County maintains 125 contracts. This program takes a wide ranging resource approach to farming. Payments are made to farmers on working lands to implement soil,

water, and wildlife conservation systems. Five to ten year contracts have been developed for farmers in the Turkey and Wapsipinicon River watershed. The maximum amount of annual payments made to the highest level is \$45,000/year. If you see unharvested crops left in fields, it is probably a wild life food plot on CSP contracted land. These food plots may be a great help to many wildlife species for winter survival if these cold winter temps continue on.

Environmental Quality Incentive Program, EQIP -

This cost share incentive program has emphasis on conservation and water quality for Fayette County. A national priority has been placed on assisting with livestock related issues. Therefore we have assisted several farmers with manure storage structures and proper waste utilization plans for those producers. No-till farming, intensive rotational grazing and contour strip cropping have flat rate payments which have been used most commonly in the county. Recently we have added tree planting, forest stand improvement, plus grassed waterways and erosion control

structures to the list of eligible practices at the 50% cost share level. Fayette County received \$191,000 for 2007. We're highly encouraging especially livestock producers to look into this program for our technical assistance and cost share assistance to improve the manure management on your farm.

WHIP- Wildlife Habitat Incentive Program -

Funding has been limited for this program, so it hasn't been used much in the past. However, recent interest in streambank stabilization along out cold water streams have a good chance of receiving 60% cost share. This work is generally rip rapping the erosive streambank and installing bank hides for fish habitat. We've received two applications for 2007.

State Programs

Iowa Financial Incentive Program IFIP -

This program provides \$40,000 - \$60,000 to Fayette for primarily the construction of permanent conservation practices. The SWCD administers this program locally and has high priority on terraces, gully control practices and grassed waterways at the 50%

cost share level. We usually have no problem utilizing these dollars. **Resource Enhancement and Protection REAP -**

The commissioners of the SWCD has decided to use this allocation for Forestry, such as tree planting and forest stand improvement at the 75% cost share level. The district receives approximately \$10,000 per year.

Watershed Programs -

Currently Fayette SWCD has an approved water quality project for Mink Creek. Carrie Davis is the watershed coordinator for the project. Carrie promotes the special higher cost share program to the landusers in the watershed. These funds are from a combination of state and federal sources. The Mink Creek project is scheduled to end in October 2007, but we hope to extend it through 2008. If you own land in this watershed and are considering projects, I'd suggest for you to contact our office soon.

If any of these programs sound interesting to you, please contact our office at 563-422-3868 in West Union for more information and assistance.

From *Planting*

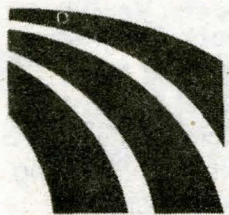
to *Harvest*

*To forget how to dig the earth
and to tend the soil
is to forget ourselves.*

- Mohandas K. Gandhi

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Financial Statement

July 1, 2005 through June 30, 2006

IM BUDGET

Allocation	\$ 2,000.00
Commissioner Expenses	\$1,559.80
Office Expenses	\$440.20
STATE COST-SHARE FUNDS	

2005-2006 Allocation	\$28,459.00
Spent	\$25,958.10
Balance	\$ 2,500.90

2004-2005 Allocation	\$28,459.00
Allocated	\$10,766.50
Spent	\$14,855.07
Balance	\$ 2,837.43

2003-2004 Allocation	\$28,459.00
Supplemental Allocation	\$17,991.50
Total Allocation	\$46,450.50
Spent	\$40,428.08
Balance	\$6,022.42

REAP Forestry Reallocation	\$2,632.50
Allocation	\$2,010.00
Supplemental Allocation	\$4,425.00
Spent	\$5,092.50

Reallocated under 2007 Funds	\$3,975.00
REAP Practices Reallocation	\$3,450.00
Allocation	\$8,041.00
Supplemental Allocation	\$17,460.00
Spent	48,449.13

Reallocated under 2007 Funds	\$20,501.87
Mink Creek Water Protection Fund	\$750.00
Spent	\$106.40
Recalled	\$643.60

Trotter ends seven years as SWCD commissioner



Joyce Trotter

Joyce Trotter of Fairbank is stepping down after seven years as a Fayette County Soil and Water District commissioner. She said her commitment to her grandchildren and her job at Oran Mutual Telephone Company made it difficult to devote more time to the board.

During her years as a commissioner, Trotter points to helping area children and conservationists become more educated about their practices.

"Each year all Fayette County third graders were invited to attend a conservation field day, which included sessions on soil, erosion, wildlife, forestry and farm safety," Trotter said. "Education offered to adults included no till field day and a program specifically for lady landowners."

Trotter became involved as a commissioner because she was concerned about land and water conservation. She and her husband, Rick, own 160 acres, and 60 of those acres are part of the Conservation Reserve Program to reduce soil erosion. The Trotters grow switchgrass, wild flowers and other plants on those 60 acres, and the remaining land is timber. Trotter said they've participated in CRP for about 14 years.

As a commissioner, Trotter said she was proud of approving payment for cost share for different practices for area farmers and for acting as a good example of conservation.

"The most rewarding part of being a commissioner was seeing new conservation practices take place on the land and seeing the third graders get excited about conservation," she said.

Nearing, cont. from front

We applied manure and fertilizer; we planted alfalfa, soybeans and anything else we could think to try to improve the yield, all with no improvement. Finally after about twenty years we started to get the land to produce again. We had made the mistake of not pushing back the top soil and stock piling so that it could be put back over the areas where had removed soil

from. This process is now called topsoiling, but at that time we didn't know that was needed.

The good news is that from the very start until the present time and into the future these structures are keeping the soil in place.

In the nineteen nineties, I moved the intakes closer to the terraces and converted the area near the intakes to narrow base

terraces. This time, I topsoiled and didn't lose any yield from the construction and now there is not a problem operating large equipment in this field. With proper maintenance, I expect that my grandchildren will see these terraces still working when they turn one hundred years old.

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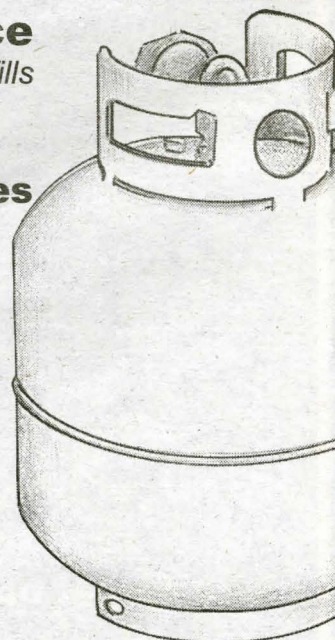


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Conservation progress on the land

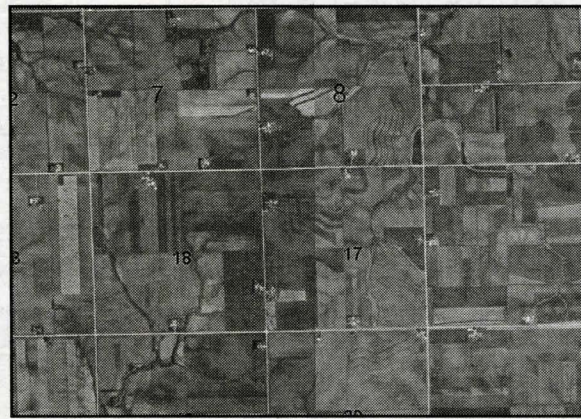
By LaVonne Koch

There is an area in Fayette County between Maynard and Westgate where the increasing amount of soil conservation practices on the land is very visible and is showing a great impact to conservation. The last 16 years, this area has had a ripple effect on contour buffer strips, terraces, and grassed waterways. These 15 landowners took a step towards conservation, and this area shows a significant amount of progress.

During the 90s, this area had seen heavy rains and experienced sheet and rill erosion and ephemeral gully erosion. After watching the county clean soil out of the road ditches, the landowners knew that something needed to be done as this was their soil off their land.

Even though some of these areas may not be classified as highly erodible but with longer slope lengths, the velocity of the water can cause tremendous amount of rilling. Grassed contour buffer strips reduce the slope lengths which also reduce the amount of soil erosion. Another conservation practice reducing

slope length is terraces. Terraces are permanent structures that divert the water underground through



This shows a 1990 view of Harlan and Fremont townships, 16 years before conservation practices were applied to the land.

intakes and tile and replace some grass waterway.

Sheet and rill erosion is common on agricultural land lacking permanent vegetation. With a corn and bean rotation and fence row to fence row cropping, this has been a major factor in soil erosion. Following rainfall in cropped fields after tillage, rill erosion occurs. Muddy runoff also indicates high sediment loss. The

two main agents of soil erosion are water and wind. The amount of soil carried away is related to two factors: speed of water and plant cover. With the speed of water, the higher the velocity the higher the loss of soil and with plant cover, where plants protect the soil and in their absence wind and water can do much damage.

Ephemeral gully erosion is caused when concentrated flow of water runs off a field. Fast moving water tends to cut into the soil causing gullies. The most common areas are in draws and other low lying areas on a slope where water concentrates as it runs off a field. A grassed waterway is an important practice reducing gully erosion. A grassed waterway has good upland treatment. Two

practices, contour buffer strips and grassed waterways, work well as upland is treated and the rows of the cropped ground between the grassed contour strips empty water into grassed waterways, reducing sheet and rill and ephemeral gully erosion.

As you drive the county, one can see the many conservation practices which make a great impact on the land.

Some of the conservation practices are enrolled in the Conservation Reserve Program while others may have received State Cost

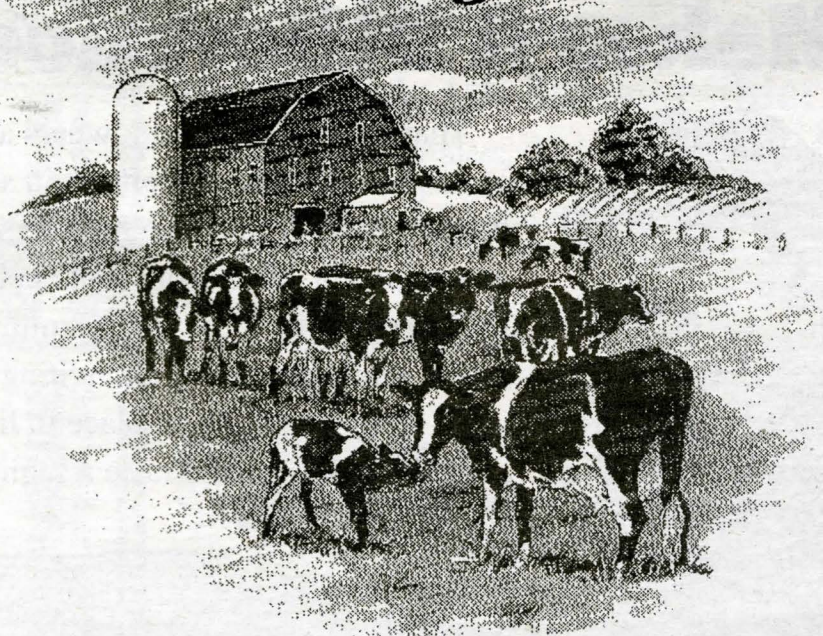
Share or EQIP funds. No matter which program the conservation



This 2006 photo shows significant progress of conservation practices in the same area in Harlan and Fremont townships. There are contour buffer strips-10.56 quarter sections, terraces-.38 quarter sections, grassed waterways-13.5 miles.

practices fall under, these practices have really made a great difference in reduction of soil erosion.

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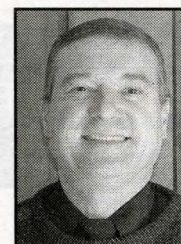
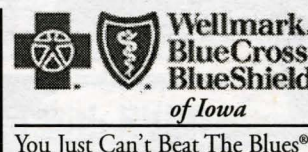
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Mink Creek Watershed Project

By Carrie Davis

The Mink Creek Watershed, located in eastern Fayette and western Clayton counties, has been the subject of a water quality project the past year. Encompassing over 12,000 acres, Mink Creek is a cold water trout stream classified as class B (HQ) by the Iowa DNR water resource classification system. This means that the stream has "exceptional recreational and ecological importance. Special protection is warranted to maintain the unusual, unique, or outstanding physical, chemical, or biological characteristics which these waters possess."

The water quality of Mink Creek is being negatively impacted by massive amounts of sediment and excessive nutrient

contributions from the watershed. Turbidity measurements after significant rain events are noted as "spectacularly high" by Upper Iowa University Professor of Biology, Rick Klann.

The primary focus of the project has been on reducing sediment delivery into the stream. Practices installed through the project will be provided up to 75% cost share and will be prioritized based on reduction of sediment delivered to the stream. Structural practices installed through the project include terraces, grade stabilization structures, and grassed waterways. In addition to funding provided through the watershed project, additional funding sources such as CRP, REAP, and EQIP have been promoted and utilized. The Fayette County SWCD

believes that a voluntary effort in improving conservation is the best way to protect our unique natural areas. The SWCD is currently in the process of writing a proposal to obtain additional funding to continue the Mink Creek Watershed Project.

The Mink Creek Watershed Project is supported in part or in total by the Iowa Department of Agriculture and Land Stewardship, Division of Soil Conservation, through funds of the Watershed Protection Fund and by the Iowa Department of Natural Resources through a grant from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency under the Federal Non-point Source Management Program (Section 319 of the Clean Water Act). Technical assistance is provided by the U.S. Department of Agriculture,

Natural Resource Conservation Service. All programs and services are offered on a non-discriminatory basis, without regard to race, color, national origin, religion, sex, age, marital status, or handicap.

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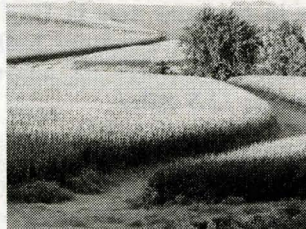


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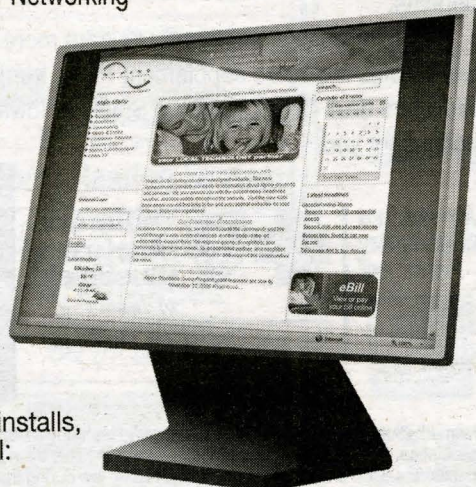
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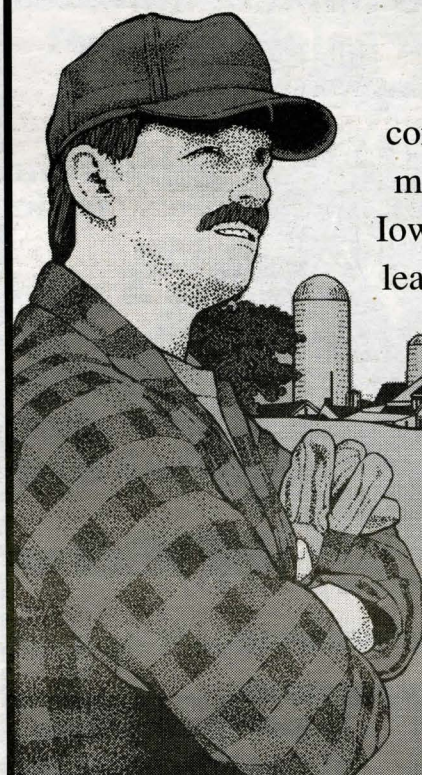


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Sadlers' host 2006 No-Till Advantage Field Day

By Dan Burkhart
Fayette CEED

planter. In addition to reducing machinery cost because of less

trips over the field, no-till systems reduce fuel used per acre and cut labor cost to approximately .6 hour per acre. Temeyer's system leaves nearly all crop residues attached to the soil, and as a result, residue does not float off the field and fill county road ditches after heavy rainfall.

Valuable soil also stays where it belongs—in the field.

Brian Lang, ISU Crop Specialist summarized long term research that shows that even though corn yields are on an average 5% less than a chisel plow system, reduced costs gives the no-till the advantage in higher profit per acre. Research shows that soybean yields show very

little yield difference between tillage methods. As a result, no-

till system net profit is also higher. Lang also commented on no-till long term advantages related to soil savings and soil tilth.

Robert Tigner, ISU Farm Management Specialist, reviewed the no-till advantages that improve the bottom line, including lowering energy and labor cost per acre, less machinery expense and fewer trips over the field. Tigner also reviewed

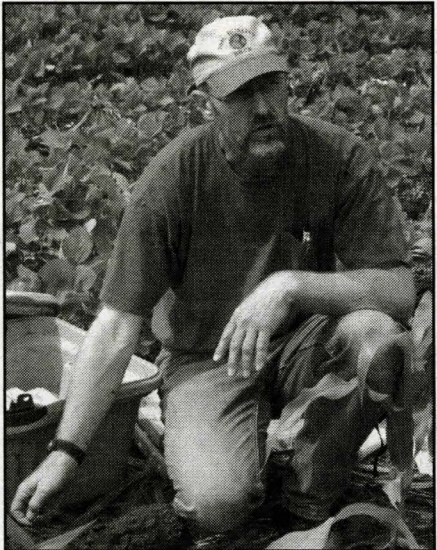
the long term advantages for land-owners who require tenants to use no-till systems.

Bob Vobora Area Resource Soil Scientist, NRCS, demonstrated the changes in soil tilth, water infiltration and compaction in long term no-till operations. Studies show that fields need to be in no-till 3-5 years before the long term benefits begin to occur. These

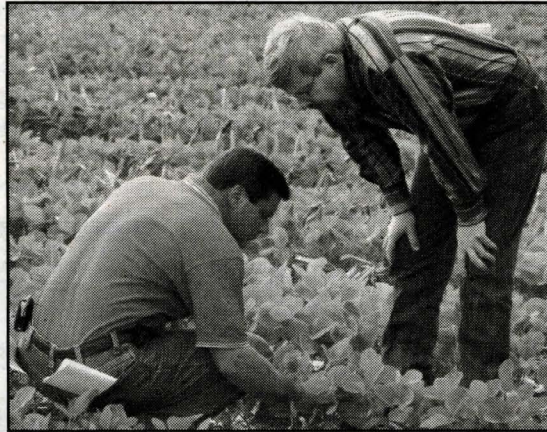
benefits include, increased water infiltration, raising soil carbon levels and lowering carbon loss.

NRCS representative, Paul Vondra shared information on no-till cost-share payments and related government programs.

The field day was sponsored by ISU Extension in Fayette County and the Fayette County Soil and Water Conservation District.



Bob Vobora, Area Resource Soil Scientist, NRCS, demonstrated how changes in soil tilth occur over time in no-till farming systems.

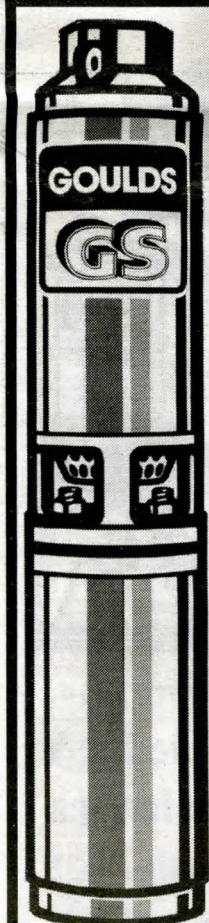


Brian Lang, ISU Extension Crop Specialist, and Robert Tigner, ISU Extension Farm management Specialist for NE Iowa, inspect no-till soybeans on the Sadler farm.



The opportunity to share ideas related to no-till farming systems is a valuable part of the No-Till Advantage Field Day.

The second annual Fayette County No-Till Advantage Field Day was June 30, 2006 on the Ervin and JoAnn Sadler farm near Oelwein. Justin Temeyer, tenant, shared information on his no-till system and displayed his no-till



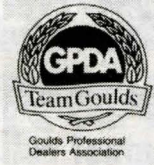
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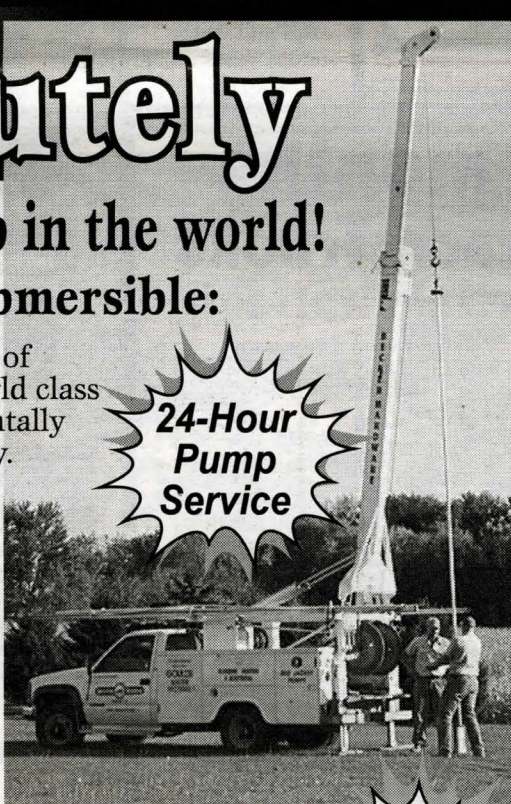
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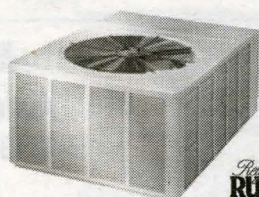


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Nuss retires as Fayette SWCD commissioner

After nearly 30 years on the Fayette County Soil and Water Conservation Board, Paul Nuss, of Hawkeye, is stepping down as commissioner.



Paul Nuss

Nuss said he wants to retire so that a younger generation of conservationists can continue to improve water and soil quality in Fayette County.

"I've been fortunate to work with a great board through the

years," said Nuss. "We have a good staff here in Fayette County, and I'm pretty sure they'll continue doing a good job."

The commissioner says his biggest hope for the future is that land owners and neighbors continue to show stewardship in the county.

"There have been some good things done, and there's much more we can do."

Nuss said he hopes future Fayette SWCD commissioners maintain a steady focus on eliminating chemical runoff

pollution in streams and rivers that run through farmlands. He's also concerned about general soil erosion into bodies of water.

"My biggest concern has been quality of water. Too many people use the land as only a tool, and try to get as much as they can out of it."

The commissioner compares the practice of preventing water erosion to roller skating up a steep hill. He says there's little or no time to break away from the common conservation practices that have been installed by the board in past decades. To do so, he says, would mean the big gains achieved in water quality in Fayette County would be for nothing.

"The best thing for the next commissioners to do is keep doing what we've done, and let the next group continue to improve the quality of our land and water."

Nuss says he's ready to put his trust into the new generation of conservation leaders in Fayette County. He says it will take a new voice to get the attention of a new body of government, which is crucial in finding help to conserve the land.

"You need to have a love for

the land, and realize you have a younger generation behind you. I hope the next commissioner can utilize the young farmers and landowners we have here. They're the ones who can tell the lawmakers what we need to do next."

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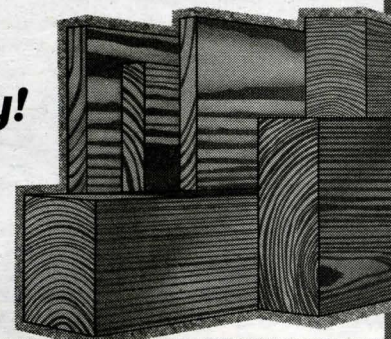


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Iowa CRP program "CP33- Quail Buffer" very popular

By Tom Sperflage
Environmental Specialist, IDALS-DSC

Iowa producers have found the CRP CP33 - Quail Buffer practice very popular. Iowa was allocated 20,000 acres for this practice, starting Oct. 1, 2004.

Across the state, we have obligated more than 19,000 acres of that original allocation in a little more than 2 years. In the last 6 months alone, we have obligated about 6,000 acres state-wide.

South Fork Maquoketa River watershed residents have also found interest in the CRP Quail Buffer. Participating producers have determined that this practice will reduce sediment delivery to the river, protect their fenceline/endrow areas, and produce quality quail and pheasant habitat.

In our watershed, we have 32 contracts developed for a total of 341 acres enrolled. Of this

total, 121.9 acres will be seeded in the spring of 2007. We have nearly 2% of the state's acreage allocation for this practice, while our watershed is about .001% of the state's farmland. That's a very positive statement from our participating watershed producers.

Wildlife studies <http://www.fsa.usda.gov/FSA/newsReleases?area=newsroom&subject=landing>

&topic=ner&newstype=newsrel&type=detail&item=nr_20061114_rel_1580.html) in the United States are documenting that bird numbers are increasing in areas with CRP Quail buffers. There is one watershed resident who reports that quail have already been seen on his Quail Buffer.

Locally, we can document that sediment delivery to the river is reduced when watershed residents install conservation practices like the Quail Buffer.

We encourage you to continue identifying the most critical areas of your property and adopt a higher level of conservation on them.

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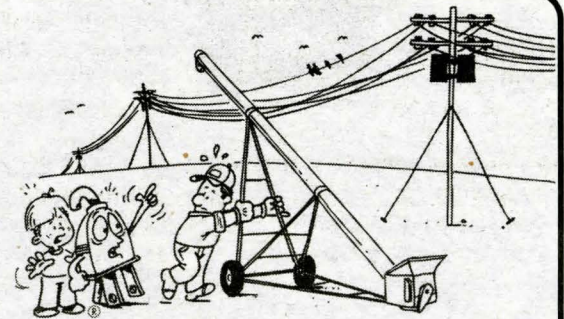


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Ken Pape - Making the Most of Manure

By James Wolfe

In 2005, Ken Pape installed a concrete manure storage structure as part of his hog operation. "I wanted a system that would help my operation be environmentally sound and make the most of the nutrients in the manure," Ken states.



Ken Pape

Storing manure allows it to be applied to the land, when it is most beneficial, as opposed to frozen fields or growing crop fields. The structure has the capacity to hold the manure from 18,000 nursery pigs for one year.

Storing manure also allows it to be managed for its nutrients. The cropland receiving the manure from Kens' operation has no additional commercial fertilizer applied to corn-bean rotation fields. The liquid manure is injected into the soil. This reduces loss to the environment (volatilization to the air runoff) and increases nutrients (nitrogen, phosphorus, and potassium) available to the crops. No-till injection coulters disturb the soil only minimally.

Ken also feeds distillers grain and feed reducing phytase to his hogs. Both these reduce the amount of phosphorus in the manure. This makes it easier to not over apply phosphorus on fields that test high in phosphorous.

Cost-share assistance is available from the NRCS through the EQIP (Environmental Quality Incentives Program) for manure storage and other manure management practices and other soil conservation practices. You can contact the office at 563-422-3868 for more information.

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Leaving a Legacy

Rod Marlatt, Conservation Director Fayette County Conservation Board

What is my legacy? It's a question that all of us ponder as the years roll by and age sets in. Landowners in our state are becoming older and decisions have to be made in regards to passing the land down, selling it, or a multitude of other options. Much of this land has been well cared for by the landowner or has unique virtues such as conservation farming practices, timber, wetlands, and prairie. Many of these stewards of the land want to ensure that, regardless of the transfer of this land, the virtues that they have so carefully protected remain forever.

One of the best tools available to provide this protection is a Conservation Easement.

A Conservation Easement is the most popular, permanent way you can protect natural land while continuing to own it. The land is still yours to sell or pass onto your heirs, but you set aside certain rights. You determine that no future owner will do specific things on the property that would harm its conservation or natural features.

For example, you can set aside the development rights to ensure your land is always used for wildlife or farming. Conservation Easements can be used to restrict quarrying, building, timber harvest, or any combination of

land rights.

The limitations set forth in Conservation Easements are tailored to suit your unique property as well as your personal preferences as a landowner.

When you write a Conservation Easement, you choose a conservation organization or agency that will ensure the easement terms are respected in the future. That the conservation partner shares your goals for the land and accepts the responsibility to monitor the land use regularly and enforce your restrictions if necessary.

The protection afforded by Conservation Easements is permanent; it legally binds all present and future owners of the land. Easements are recorded with the county recorder and are permanently attached to the title of the land thereafter.

Some people choose to place a Conservation Easement on land before it is transferred by sale, gift, inheritance or bequest. Even if the new owner is a good land steward, the easement adds a layer of protection for the land.

Iowa law (Chapter 457A) allows the Iowa Department of Natural Resources, any County Conservation Board, and any city in Iowa to hold a Conservation Easement. Many federal agencies, soil conservation districts, and private, nonprofit organizations can also hold Conservation Easements.

When a Conservation Easement reduces the property value, the landowner that donates the easement may claim the difference in value as a charitable deduction for income tax purposes. An easement may lower estate taxes and inheritance taxes, too.

If you've ever considered donating a Conservation Easement, new legislation provides a huge incentive to act sooner rather than later. The Pension Protection Act of 2006 significantly expands tax incentives for easements donated by Dec. 31, 2007.

Specifically the new legislation:

Raises the charitable deduction landowners can take for donating Conservation Easements from 30% to 50% of their adjusted gross income in any year;

Increases the deduction limit to 100% of income if the donor is a farmer or rancher; and

Allows the donor to carry forward the charitable deduction for up to 15 years.

Again, if you're looking to preserve the land you have worked so hard to protect, and leave a legacy, you may want to consider a Conservation Easement.

For more information you may contact the Fayette County Conservation Board or other legal easement recipients. Potential donors should also consult with their attorneys, financial advisors, family members and heirs.

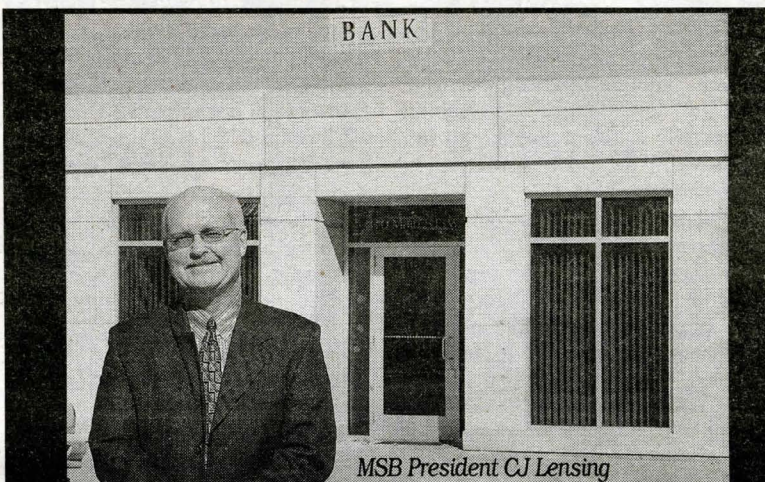


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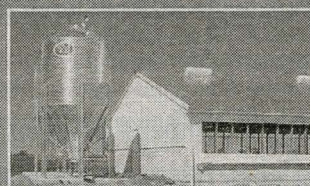
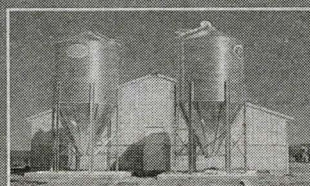
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Massman, cont. from front

activities, and helps out at the Good Samaritan center in West Union, and Ossian Senior Hospice.

Any spare opportunity she has, Sammy is helping her dad with chores or working with her own cattle. She goes fishing during the summer, and hunts with both bow and shotgun for deer and turkey during the fall.

"Being an avid outdoorsman has been the most help in choosing my career field," Massman says.

Sammy Jo held a job at the Coop 1-Stop convenience store in Ossian, where she absorbed more farming knowledge. Listening to farmers at the store helped her prepare for an eventual career in farm services.

"With the gas station being farmer owned, I got to see and hear the problems that arose on their farms. I realized that going into an agriculture field would be a perfect suit for me in helping farmers."

Massman realizes that even the smaller jobs, such as rock picking, baling hay and picking corn have given her a boost in conservation knowledge. To her, it was just another stone turned over along the path to her career goals.

"Through these part time jobs, I have gained more knowledge on the nutrient uptake and requirements of the soil. Working in the fields, I noticed all of the erosion and improper tillage that happens in local fields. I would like to help farmers out (now that I know) the need for assistance with farmers and their crops."

Continuing her education is one step Massman knows is important in today's business ag field. Her plan is to use her passion for farming as motivation in college, the same way she did in FFA in high school and on the farm.

"The goals I have for education exceed my spending limits by a lot, but I know it will help me in the future. With the help of scholarships and loans, I hope to succeed in both my educational and career goals. I've put a lot of time into (gaining) agriculture knowledge and learning advances in new technology."

The creation of 1,000 forests is in one acorn

- Ralph Waldo Emerson

We are proud to support the Fayette County Soil and Water Conservation District. The work you do preventing soil loss due to wind & erosion; preserving wetlands; managing forests; and keeping our ground water free of pollution is value to us all. THANK YOU!



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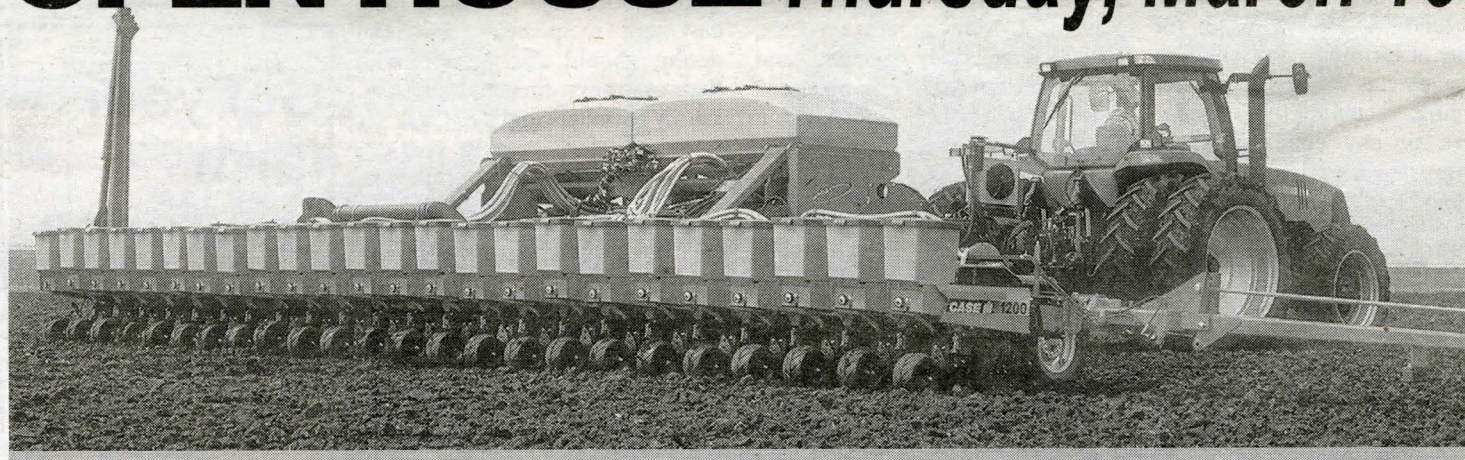
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4th Annual

OPEN HOUSE Thursday, March 15



The parts department will be offering the lowest prices of the year on oil, filters, sweeps, planter parts, plus twine and net wrap, so it's a good time to stock up!

The service department special is a complete 57-point planter inspection for \$16.50 per row. Any parts or labor booked through the service department on Open House day will be eligible for an extra 10% savings.

If your Open House purchases are \$750 or more, and you use your commercial revolving account, CASE/IH will give you NO INTEREST, NO PAYMENT until May 1, 2007.

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