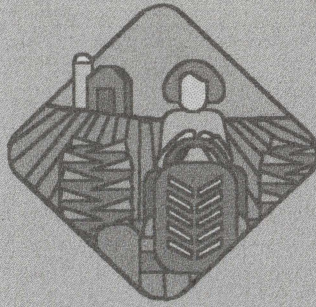




Soil & Water Conservation Update

Dickinson SWCD ~ Spirit Lake, IA

712-336-3782 Ext. 4

January 2000

Management by Fire Burning

by Willard Punt
Conservation Technician

Often times for site preparation for seeding or interseeding, burning down existing growth with chemicals is an excellent management tool. To enhance and accelerate the establishment of planted native warm season grasses, fire can be used as a major management tool. Fire can control many woody plants, herbaceous weeds and competing cool season vegetation, stimulate desirable plants and improve wildlife habitat. To realize these benefits, fire must be used under specified conditions and with proper timing. This is termed "prescribed burning".

Most of the native grasses are planted on CRP acres, or range land where a producer is managing grazing land. **When planning to do any fire burning on CRP acres a prescribed burning plan is a must.** To develop a burning plan, come to the Dickinson County Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) office in Spirit Lake. After the plan is developed it must be approved by the Farm Service Agency (FSA) County Committee before doing any burning on CRP ground.

A general rule of thumb: Burn warm season grasses as needed. Never burn cool season pasture forages.

Burning should take place just as the desired species (native grasses) start to break dormancy in the spring. A good rule of thumb is to burn when the desired species has one inch or less of new growth. Burning of cool season forages is not recommended. In fact, it is a control measure to get them out of warm season stands.

Highly Erodible Land (HEL) Plans

by Carroll Oskvig
District Conservationist

A Highly Erodible Land (HEL) Plan records the crop rotation used in each field and the amount of residue that will be left on the soil surface.

Each HEL soil map unit has its own wind and water erosion potential, and tolerable soil loss level measured in tons/acre/year. These and other factors are used to calculate the estimated soil loss for each HEL field.

Farmers who have expired CRP fields that are HEL should contact the Dickinson Soil and Water Conservation District office to schedule a HEL planning appointment this winter.

Farmers who have a HEL plan, but intend to include a less conserving crop in the rotation or

District Commissioners

Mark Ingwersen — Chairperson
Bill Northey — Vice Chair
Keith VanKleek — Secretary
Orville Berg — Treasurer
Chris Hoffman — Commissioner
Tom Koster — Assistant Commissioner

District Mission Statement

The Dickinson SWCD will serve it's customers and the needs of the District's natural resources through education, promotion, and demonstration.

plan to leave less crop residue on the soil surface, should call the SWCD office for an appointment to have these changes verified prior to spring planting.

For questions concerning HEL plans, feel free to contact the staff at the Dickinson Soil and Water Conservation District office.

Native Grass Drilling Service Available for CRP Seedings

by Jeff Kestel
Iowa Lakes Resource
Conservation & Development

If you have native grasses or forbs that need to be planted on CRP acres you will be pleased to know that a service will be available to do just that. Also, if preferred by the landowner and/or operator the planting service will work directly with the NRCS office to get seeding requirements, order needed seed and certify completion with NRCS when seeding is completed.

The service is being provided jointly by the Iowa Lakes Resource Conservation & Development (RC&D) and Ann & Dick Nelson from Emmetsburg. For each acre seeded by the service \$2.50 will be contributed back to the local Soil and Water Conservation District (SWCD) to be used on local conservation efforts.

For more information about this native grass planting service contact the Iowa Lakes RC&D by phone at 712-262-2083 or by e-mail at jeff.kestel@ia.nrcs.usda.gov. You can also contact your local Dickinson County SWCD/(NRCS) office at 712-336-3782, ext. 3.

Volunteers:

Madge Voss, Clarence Call, Keith Van Kleek, Greg Villegas, Jim Bell, Maurice Dougal, Robert Warrick, Tom Koster, Robert Herbert, Leon Goodell, Don Goodell and Tim Wilson.
We thank you for your help.

Tim Terrill begins as Environmental Specialist

by Tim Terrill
Environmental Specialist

As the new Environmental Specialist to Dickinson County, I would like to say thank you to all the people who encouraged me through life.

My name is Tim Terrill and I would like to introduce myself to the community. I was born in Mason City, Iowa, where I spent a small portion of my life growing up. Through two major relocations in my life I resided in Minnesota to receive my Bachelor's Degree in Biology from Winona State University. Maturing in the land of ten thousand lakes strengthened my background in water ecology. Recently I moved to Storm Lake, Iowa, where I gained experience in bio-control of Purple Loosestrife and environmental public relations. I currently am employed by the State of Iowa to serve your community.

As we advance into the new millennium, challenges will be encountered. As a servant of this community it is my goal to learn more about the programs provided for us. I wish to help others by learning about opportunities that can empower this county to obtain goals that push us forward. Another objective is for me to promote and increase volunteerism. Volunteerism placed me where I am today. It also increased my social responsibility to my community. When we offer our time to the environmental aspects of our area, we receive an enrichment in our lives. Being a volunteer helps everyone.

I am very positive about the new millennium. One person can make a difference. Take my hand as we get to know each other and progress into new adventures.

The United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) prohibits discrimination in its programs on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, religion, age, disability, political beliefs, and marital or family status. (Not all prohibited bases apply to all programs) Persons with disabilities who require alternative means for communication of program information (Braille, large print, audiotapes, etc.) should contact the USDA Office of Communications at (202) 720-5881 (voice) or (202) 720-7808 (TDD). To file a complaint, write Secretary of Agriculture, US Department of Agriculture, Washington, D.C. 20250, or call