

News of Interest

**Thursday,
March 12,
2009**

For the DYSART REPORTER, GLADBROOK NORTHERN SUN-PRINT, REINBECK COURIER, TAMA NEWS-HERALD, TRAER STAR-CLIPPER

CONSERVING SOIL AND WATER IN TAMA COUNTY



Conservation ... Our Purpose, Our Passion.

The purpose and passion for conservation is shared among many. It is shared between NRCS employees and partners who help people help the land. And it is shared by the landowners with whom we work. Our passion is manifested through the benefits derived from stewardship of private lands—benefits we all enjoy, such as cleaner water and air, improved soils and abundant wildlife habitat.

Learn about our stories, the stories of conservation made possible through a shared purpose, a shared passion and a shared commitment to conservation.

USDA

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- REPAIRING FIELD FLOOD DAMAGE
- SCHOLARSHIP AWARDS
- MESSAGE FROM COMMISSIONER

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Grain Markets
Page 2

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04 LEATHER SUNROOF CONTROL WHEELS 2BK			04 LEATHER LEATHER PEARL WHITE 50K			VE AUTO LTR FULL POWER TRK		
04 CHEVY GRAND MARQUIS LS	\$16800	M0277	04 CHEVY CRUZE 3000	\$9800	M05190			
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HEATED LEATHER SUNROOF 2BK	\$15800	M0261	04 MERCEDES CLK 500 CONVERTIBLE	\$22800	M05399	04 GLADBOARD ESCALADE SVS AWD	\$42800	M0506
LEATHER SUNROOF WHEELS 2BK	\$15800	M0261	LEATHER AWD AND AIR COND			05 LEXUS K300 AWD	\$27800	M0549
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FLUX 57K	\$28600	M0480	04 CHEVY CLASSIC	\$18400	M05155	04 JEEP WRANGLER SPORT 4X4	\$19800	M05192
LEATHER LEATHER COMRADE WHEELS 22K	\$16800	M0299	04 AUTO FLUX POWER 00K 44K			00 JEEP EXPEDITION SPORT 4X4	\$10800	M05229
TOYOTA CAMRY	\$16800	M0299	04 CADILLAC DEVILLE DTS	\$12800	M05247	6 CYSI AUTO CAB SOUND BAK 6BK		
04 CHEVY GRAND MARQUIS LS	\$16800	M0327	04 MERCURY GRAND MARQUIS LS	\$16800	M05156			
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05 BUICK LUCERNE CX	\$16800	M0218	20K PWR ROOF CHROME WHEELS 6BK			HEATED LEATHER DTS DVD QUADZ 81K		
04 AUTO FULL LEATHER TRADE 71K	\$10800	M0218	04 BUICK CENTURY COUNTRY	\$14000	M05155			
05 PONTIAC GRAND AM SE	\$9800	M05190	20K PWR ROOF TRADE HIGH MILES	\$4400	M05155	GLADBOARD VENTURE VEHICLES		
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04 NISSAN MAXIMA SL 3.5	\$14800	M05287	04 CHEVY K1500 CREW 4X4	\$23800	M0397	00 LEXUS RX300 AWD (WEAK TRANNY BUT DRIVES)	\$995	
04 NISSAN MAXIMA SL 3.5	\$14800	M05287	97K STYLE LTR FULL POWER 6BK	\$17800	M05294	00 JEEP CRUISER 4X4	\$4400	
04 DODGE STRATUS SE	\$7400	M0401	05 DODGE RAM CREW 4X4			05 LEXUS RX300 AWD	\$4400	
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Tama County Soil and Water 2009

Challenges bring opportunities

By James Gillespie
Bureau Chief

Well, what can we say about what happened this past year? Who would have guessed we would have had the weather we all experienced, the damage it caused and how it impacted both rural and urban areas?

We saw record snowfall in parts of northeast Iowa and heavy rainfalls across most of the state all summer. This was the fourth wettest year on record in 135 years of record-keeping. All but one county was declared a disaster area by either the Governor of Iowa or the President of the United States.

Damages to conservation practices totaled over \$40 million dollars. 2,284,000 acres suffered erosion of 20 tons per acre or more, and there were 636,000 acres of bottomland scouring. Numerous sites suffered infrastructure damage and homes and businesses were flooded. A lot of these damages are still out there and are in need of financial and technical resources to help repair and restore.

As a community, rural and urban, we need to think about our actions and their consequences. The Iowa Department of Agriculture

and Land Stewardship, and our conservation partners are committed to building a "Culture of Conservation" across the state. We all need to consider our "footprint" on the Iowa landscape. Evaluate the land use for current and future needs and wants. There is a reason a floodplain is called a floodplain; it is prone to flooding. We must all manage the land as consistently as possible to its natural capabilities. We cannot expect the land to produce more than it is reasonably able to nor should it be used in ways that do not maintain soil quality and provide conservation benefits. Consider your "hydrologic footprint"; what happens to the rainfall that lands on your property? We should try to absorb as much as possible to slow runoff to minimize flooding and improve water quality.

Contact your local soil and water conservation district to discuss these challenges and take advantage of opportunities to reduce these types of resource concerns in the future. Lowans have taken great pride in protecting the resources of this state. Let us continue to build a "Culture of Conservation" that will sustain us in the future. Thank you for what you do and what you can do!

Union Grove Lake Watershed Project

Many of us in and around Union Grove Lake Watershed sat up and took notice when the lake was placed on the state's "impaired waters list." From that concern, the Union Grove Lake Watershed Project was born.

Water bodies within the state are placed on the "impaired" list when they no longer meet their designated purposes due to water quality. Union Grove's impairments include algae, pH, bacteria, and turbidity (clarity).

Union Grove isn't just a state-owned lake. It is a resource of Tama and Marshall counties and has economic impact on the surrounding communities of

Garwin, Gladbrook, and Green Mountain. Lake use in 2006 alone was estimated at 111,000.

The lake is also an indicator of the health of the natural community we live in and a reflection of our residential and agricultural land use. That's why it's important for us to come together and help.

The Union Grove Lake Watershed Project will be conducted over the next three years. A water monitoring plan is developed to better determine where pollutants are coming from in the area.

The project also includes using soil and water conservation practices on the watershed's agricultural land to help improve runoff entering

the lake. An education program for Union Grove's landowners, farm operators, and rural and lakeside residents is also ongoing.

What can you do? Get involved by learning more, volunteering and making changes on your land. Work together, we can heal Union Grove Lake.

The project is a cooperative effort of the Tama Soil & Water Conservation District, the local office of USDA's Natural Resources Conservation Service, the Iowa Department of Agriculture and Land Stewardship, the Iowa Department of Natural Resources, and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency.



Crop fields: Repairing flood damage

By Chester Worden
Tama County Soil Conservation Technician

If you live in the northern one-third of the county, you probably sustained a lot of rills (small gullies down hillsides) and waterway washing last summer. I saw the worst damage I remember in several fields last fall. It reminded me of pictures I saw in college about damage in southern Iowa in the 20's & 30's. The heavy rains in 1993 came while the crops were tall, but last year they came when crops were either not emerged, or not yet planted. Because of the wet spring, many farmers tilled soybean ground, when normally a lot of it was notilled in previous years.

Grassed Waterways are the easiest practice to repair. There are only two things you can do with a waterway that has gullies down each side. A one-year temporary fix might be to till the side gullies, make them a little more

rounded, and seed them down to make the total width of the waterway wider. The only permanent fix is to completely reshape the waterway and reseed; this will need to be done eventually, even if you try a temporary fix.

A tougher decision is what to do about the one gully that washed where you have not had a grassed waterway before. Use my suggestions as a second opinion and maybe it will help you decide which option to use. For those draws that have washed in past years and were about ready for a grassed waterway anyway, I think a new grassed waterway would be your best solution. These may be drawn uphill from the present grassed waterway. A lot of grassed waterways have to be extended over time. Last year it just happened in a short time period. You might ruin the waterway below if you don't control washing near the top.

Those draws that formed gul-

lies for the very first time last year have a couple options to consider. Completely fill it in the waterway and then take it out again. An option that I do not think should be used is to just leave it alone and let it become a "v" shaped gully and plant around it. It will only get worse and then you will definitely need a grassed waterway sooner rather than later.

Hopefully 2009 will be a better year. Try to no-till crops into soybean stubble if at all possible. You cannot control the weather, but you can control the amount of tillage you do. Remember that soil is a very valuable natural resource and saving it by using good conservation methods is important.

Time to plan for a new windbreak

By Cliff Foster

When the winter weather comes to a close it may be time to plan for a new windbreak or simply renovate an existing windbreak. A well planned windbreak will not only help slow the wind, they also protect soil, conserve energy, control snow deposition, provide shelter from wind for livestock, improve aesthetics, and will provide wildlife habitat. With the increasing energy costs, creating more efficient windbreaks become more valuable in helping to decrease energy consumption. The investment each individual makes in a windbreak will normally be returned many times over in 30 years in savings in fuel costs, wear on structures, health of livestock, and increased values to the environment as a whole.

The minimum requirements for windbreaks for REAP (Resource Enhancement and Protection) funding is for three rows of coniferous trees on the north and/or west sides of acres to be protected. One row of dense deciduous shrubs may be substituted

for one row of coniferous trees, usually installed on the windward side. The varieties of coniferous trees and deciduous trees/shrubs are determined by an evaluation of the soil types in the area to be planted. The south/east sides are considered field windbreak areas, treatment could consist of single row plantings.

Cost-share is available for windbreaks. If interested contact the local NRCS (Natural Resource Conservation Service) office at (641) 484-2701 ext. 3 to inquire about funds.

There are additional possibilities for funding for shelterbelts. These plantings sometimes require greater than the three row minimum to be planted or may have other requirements to be met.

Additional funding sources could be from the DNR's (Iowa Department of Natural Resources) Rick Trine Wildlife Biologist at (641) 752-5231. The FSA (Farm Service Agency) office has an option through CRP (Conservation Reserve Program) for shelterbelts, contact at (641) 484-2701 ext. 2.

New Wetlands Brochure

By Clint Miller
Soil Conservationist

A recent new addition to the office brochure rack is the publication Wetlands and Conservation Compliance - What Every Iowa Farmer Needs to Know.

This brochure is a quick reference to familiarize you with USDA wetland compliance provisions.

Although the term "wetland" brings to mind areas of shallow water, cattails, and landing ducks, most of our wetlands are forested wetlands, cropland wetlands or wet meadows and prairies that only hold surface water temporarily.

So why be concerned about Wetlands and Conservation Compliance? If you have removed woody vegetation,

drained, dredged, filled or leveled land in order to farm it without a wetland determination, you could be in violation of the Conservation Compliance provisions of the Farm Bill and may be ineligible for USDA benefits.

This means you could lose or even have to pay back previous farm payments including DCP, Price Support Loans and LDPs, CRP rental payments, and disaster payments.

Questions

Some of the questions that this brochure answers include:

- Can I clear trees from a wetland area?
- Can I install subsurface drain tile or surface drainage ditches on an existing crop field?
- Are old creek channels wetlands?

• What types of wetlands could be present on my property?

And remember, wetland determinations completed prior to July 3, 1996, are not considered "certified," and therefore may no longer be valid due to changes in the Farm Bill.

If you have or are planning to conduct one or more of these common farming activities, you should stop into our office and pick up a copy of *Wetlands and Conservation Compliance - What Every Iowa Farmer Needs to Know*.

The Iowa Department of Agriculture & Land Stewardship (IDALS) offers a variety of programs designed to maintain and improve water quality in Iowa. Two IDALS low-interest loans are offered through participating lenders

to Iowa landowners.

The Local Water Protection Program (LWPP) may be used for projects to control the runoff of sediment, nutrients, pesticides and other nonpoint source pollutants from entering Iowa

waters. These projects may include composting facilities, contour buffer strips, field borders, field windbreaks, filter strips, riparian forest buffers, terraces, grade stabilization structures, grassed waterways or other practices that are shown to improve or protect water quality.

The Livestock Water Quality Program (LWQ) is available for projects to prevent, minimize or eliminate nonpoint source pollution of Iowa's rivers and streams from animal feeding operations including lagoons,

manure management structures, equipment, vegetative filters and the development of manure management plans. Assistance is limited to existing facilities for animal feeding operations with less than 1,000 total animal unit capacity (AUC).

Prior to receiving a loan, the landowner must receive project approval from the local Soil & Water Conservation District. For more information about either loan program, contact the Tama Soil & Water Conservation District at Conservation District at 641/484-2702, ext. 3.

Opening grain prices on Friday, March 6, 2009:
Heartland Co-op, Traer, corn \$3.40, beans \$8.29;
Tama Benton Co-op, Dyars, corn \$3.36, beans \$8.21;
Werner's Grain and Feed, Tama, corn \$3.36, beans \$8.29.

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Scharnweber Water Conditioning Toledo-641-484-3923	Dolezal Farm Supply Toledo-641-484-4606	Iowa Step and Tank Toledo - 641-484-8265	Sand Hill Auto Salvage Tama 641-484-2057

Tama County Soil and Water 2009

Union Grove Lake Project: Assessment of Deer Creek

Melody Bro
Union Grove Lake
Watershed Project
Coordinator

A main purpose of the Union Grove Lake Watershed Project is to target priority areas in which to focus conservation efforts, both on the land and along the watershed's stream corridors. One tool used to survey stream health is a GIS/GPS-based assessment called RASCAL (Rapid Assessment of Stream Conditions Along Length).

Began in November 2007, the RASCAL for 4.3 miles of Deer Creek and two of its major tributaries was completed in April 2008. The assessment collected data on 24 different parameters such as streambed substrate, streambank stability, channel pattern, riffle and pool frequency, and adjacent land cover and use.

Individually, each parameter reveals a great deal about the water quality of a stream. Collectively, the results can make it possible to see patterns in the data and identify not only problems, but also likely causes.

Deer Creek's RASCAL revealed that nearly all of the 4.3 corridor miles studies would benefit from the installation of riparian grassed filters.

It also showed segments along Deer Creek's main

channel with numerous knickpoints, significant channel degradation, and severe streambank erosion. Upon looking at historical aerial photographs, these degraded stream segments also corresponded with sections of Deer Creek which have undergone significant artificial channelization, both recent and decades ago.

Straightening a stream may make the adjacent farmland more farmable, but it also shortens the overall length of the stream. This increases both the streambed slope and the flow velocity within the channel. As the overalls continue to cut down into the streambed, adjoining streambanks erode, become unstable, and eventually slough into the stream.

Could creek straightening be a contributing factor to corridor and lake deterioration? No one will ever know for sure, but the correlation is very likely.

With the Project's limited resources, utilizing the RASCAL is important so that conservation efforts can be focused in key areas and have greater water quality impact along Deer Creek and on Union Grove Lake.

To the land owners and operators who allowed me access to their properties in order to complete the RASCAL. Thank you for your cooperation!



Iowa Financial Incentives Program

Iowa Financial Incentives Programs (Cost Share)

Expenses (cost share payments and/or funds obligated)

REAP practices 0

REAP forestry 1,607.61

Voluntary 20,941.12

Income (unobligated funds)

REAP practices 6,978.11

REAP forestry 232.14

Voluntary 32,139.50

District Operations Fund

(Reimbursements from State for commissioner and office expenses)

Income:

Allocations received 2,124.81

Expenses

Commissioner mileage 882.25

Postage 794.81

Office supplies 771.40

Printing and printed material 94.00

Meeting Expenses & dues 2,023.80

Total expenses 4,566.26

Excess spent from revolving fund (2,441.45)

Scholarship awards

The Tama Soil and Water Conservation District (SWCD) and the Conservation Districts of Iowa (CDI) are conducting a Scholarship Contest. The scholarships will be presented to Iowa high school seniors to be used for their first year of education at the college level while pursuing programs of study in any field of agriculture or natural resources.

The District will be awarding two scholarships for graduating seniors. The first place scholarship will be for \$300 and the second place scholarship award will be in the amount of \$200. The first place scholarship winner will then have their application forwarded on to CDI for state level consideration.

Three scholarships will be awarded at the state level in the amounts of \$1,800, \$1,200, and \$1,000. Regional winners from the other six regions who do not receive a state award will each receive \$300. The first, second and third place awards will be paid directly to the school of choice in two installments, beginning with the first term of attendance and at mid-term or semester. The \$300 awards will be paid directly to the students.

All applications must be typed or completed with a word processor. Applications are to be submitted to your local soil and water conservation district office in the county in which you live. The county/district will select an application and forward it to the CDI Regional Director, who will in turn select an application and forward it to CDI, where a judging team will make the final selections. The application is due to

the Tama SWCD by February 28, 2009. The application is available online at: <http://www.cdioa.org/award.html>. If you have questions, or would like a paper copy of the application, please call or stop by the office at 102 W HWY 30 in Toledo, 641-484-2702 ext 3.

Last Year's Scholarship Winners

Jesse Kladivo, son of Tom and Carol Kladivo of Traer, was selected as the first place winner for last year's scholarship award. Jesse is a graduate of North Tama County Community High School, and is currently attending Hawkeye Community College. He plans on transferring to Iowa State University, and his goal is to become a wildlife biologist. Jesse was the recipient of a \$300 scholarship from the District.

Joel Paustian, son of Don and Marlene Paustian of Toledo, was selected as a scholarship winner for last year's contest. Joel is a graduate of South Tama County High School, and is currently attending Kirkwood Community College. Joel hopes to become an Agricultural Technician. He was the recipient of a \$200 scholarship from the District.

Daniel Poduska, son of James and Rebecca Poduska of Chelsea, was also selected as a scholarship winner for last year's contest. Daniel is a graduate of South Tama County High School, and currently attends Hawkeye Community College. He hopes to one day enter the field of either agriculture management, or parks and natural resources. Daniel was the recipient of a \$200 scholarship from the District.

Cost-share funds available for conservation practices

Cost-share money is available for agricultural landowners and farm operators in Tama County looking to add certain conservation practices to their farm management systems. Rates are up to 50% for the entire county, and up to 75% if the land is located in the Union Grove watershed.

Currently, the Union Grove Lake Watershed Project has funding approved for terraces, grassed waterways, fencing (livestock exclusion), stream corridor protection, streambank restoration, and water/sediment control basins. However, cost-share may also be obtained for numerous other conservation

practices such as contour stripcropping, grade stabilization structures, and ponds. For more information, contact Project Coordinator Melody Bro at 641-484-2702, ext. 120.

Certain other practices may qualify for Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) practices like contour buffer strips, filter strips, wetland restoration, and quail habitat. The Conservation Reserve Program offers means for rural landowners to not only reduce soil erosion, but to also reduce sediment in lakes and streams, improve water quality, and enhance wildlife habitat.

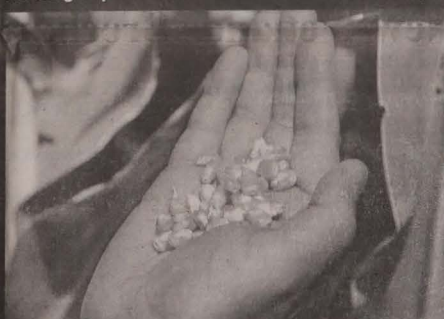
Practices available through

the CRP continuous signup include: grassed waterways, contour buffer strips, filter strips between water bodies and wetlands, marginal pastureland, wildlife-wetland habitat buffers, quail buffers, field windbreaks, shelterbelts, living snow fences, riparian buffers, shallow water areas, wetland restoration, farmable wetlands, and bottomland timber establishment.

There is 50% cost-share for the installation of most CRP practices, with an additional 40% Practice Incentive Payment if available. Rental rates vary according to the soil types involved, with annual rental payments made for the life of each contract,

generally 10 to 15 years. For more information on CRP, contact the Farm Service Agency at 641-484-2701.

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Detailed Iowa soils information now online

Des Moines - Finding soils information for more than half of Iowa's counties is just a click away. Soil survey manuscripts with soils data, maps, diagrams, tables and other details are available online for 52 of Iowa's 99 counties, as of Nov. 1.

The Soil Survey Division of the USDA's Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) recently placed the manuscripts online at http://soils.usda.gov/survey/online_surveys/iowa/. Before, this information was only available in hard copy or on compact disc from your local USDA Service Center.

Soil survey manuscripts contain detailed information about every soil in the county - including soil formation, properties, classification, total acres, and interpretations and suitability for each soil.

The interpretations and suitability section - "Use and Management of the Soils" - identifies the limitations that affect specific uses and indicate the severity of those limitations. For example, a recreational planner in Humboldt County designing a hiking trail could look up the soils in a proposed location to see if they were suitable for hiking. Ratings are both written and numerical, based on soil features, such as wetness, slope, texture of the surface layer, and susceptibility to flooding. Soil suitability ratings are available for other recreational activities, too, including playgrounds, camping areas, off-road motorcycle trails and golf fairways.

Suitability ratings for cropland, pastureland, wildlife habitat, tree planting, building

site development, sanitary facilities, and other purposes are also available.

Mike Suck, Iowa NRCS state soil scientist, says customer convenience is the primary goal of having the soil

survey manuscripts online. He also hopes soil survey manuscripts will reach a broader audience.

"Homebuilders, community planners, highway departments, engineers, sani-

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Tama County Soil and Water 2009

Soil and Water Conservation District Commissioners

By Jan Wobeter

The Tama Soil and Water Conservation District Commissioners are elected officials that meet once a month and work with the Farm Service Agency and Natural Resources Conservation Service to be a voice for both the farmers and the land.

The commissioners are all committed to helping preserve our soils, farms and natural resources for future generations. They review contracts with farmers and landowners for practices to protect the lands such as CRP, waterways, terraces, ponds and many other conservation practices.

tices.

The commissioners encourage conservation awareness by holding outdoor classrooms at Otter Creek Park every May for area 5th grade students.

This workshop includes sessions on wildlife, water quality, erosion, fish and many other topics.

The SWCD also gives scholarships to county seniors heading into related areas of study.

The SWCD Commissioners are honest and hardworking with a passion for keeping our lands healthy for years to come. I am proud to be a member of this team.



CRP News

There has been a welcome change in the Conservation Reserve Program this fall. Due to the increase in land values and rental rates, the CRP rental rates have been revised upward again. The soil types with a corn suitability rating (CSR) between 0 - 60 went up an average of \$22.16 per acre. Soil types with a CSR rating from 60 - 100 went up an average of \$32.00 per acre. I have worked up several filter strip applications lately that are paying in the \$250 / acre range. The only exception is the marginal pasture rental rate, it was not changed. This will only pertain to all new applications only. This change should help the CRP program stay competitive in the future for Tama County.

Another recent development in the continuous CRP program is the addition of another new practice which started in May. The new practice, State Acres for Wildlife Enhancement (SAFE) was a huge success this year. It is also known as Gaining Ground for Wildlife. The purpose of this practice is to increase populations of ring-necked pheasants, quail, bobolink, and eastern meadowlark. It allows landowners to seed down large areas of cropland to native grasses. Enrollment is limited to 10 acre minimum habitat blocks. It has been limited to certain targeted areas in the county, and throughout the state. This year was limited to only 19,700 acres on a "first come - first serve" basis. Unfortunately the total acre allocation was used up this year. We are hoping to have this practice available again in the future.

Please feel free to give us a call, or stop in if you have any questions regarding these topics or any other concerns you may have on your farm. Thank you.

Water quality in Union Grove Lake watershed

Melody A.C. Bro
Union Grove Lake
Watershed Coordinator

Nothing serves as a better barometer of our local environment's health than its water quality. That's why the quality of the water in and above Union Grove Lake will be monitored throughout the three-year life of the Union Grove Lake Watershed Project.

Water quality testing during the early months of the project will provide a baseline showing Union Grove's current conditions. In this way, as conservation practices are applied during the life of the watershed project, progress can be shown toward the project's ultimate goals of meeting the intended use of the lake (recreation) and the lake's removal from Iowa's Impaired Waters List.

In early June 2008, Project Coordinator Melody Bro and several volunteers began sampling water at three sites along the center line of the lake (shallow, mid-depth, and maximum-depth)

and at two stream sites north of the lake. The samples were tested on-site for dissolved oxygen and water clarity. They were then shipped to the University of Iowa Hygienic Lab (UHL) in Ankeny to be tested for nitrogen and phosphorus content. In addition, the lake samples were also tested at UHL for chlorophyll, and the tributary sites were also tested for E. coli and solids.

The results from the 2008 season's water quality testing are in, revealing several very definite trends.

The five sampling sites were each tested ten times from June through October. All of the following comparisons are made to similar waterbodies in the same ecoregion of Iowa.

The stream sites consistently showed high levels of inorganic nitrogen (nitrate-nitrite). Nitrate and nitrite are naturally occurring, but concentrations can be elevated due to contamination by fertilizers and human and animal waste.

These same locations also exceeded Iowa's water quality stan-

dards for E. coli, a bacteria indicative of fecal contamination. The sample site in the northeast quadrant of the watershed surpassed standards in one sampling, while the northwest quadrant's site exceeded standards four of the ten times.

Overall, both tributary sites were relatively low in ammonia, phosphate, organic nitrogen, and suspended solids.

Union Grove Lake's sampling sites were high in ammonia, as well as nitrate-nitrite, throughout the season. Ammonia can be toxic to both fish and aquatic macroinvertebrates, dependent upon pH and water temperature.

Chlorophyll a was tested at the lake's sites to approximate the lake's total algal biomass. These levels in Union Grove Lake peaked in late September and early October, with levels throughout the sampling season significantly high.

For information on water quality, contact Melody Bro at 641/484-2702, ext. 120 or at melody.bro@ia.usda.gov

Celebrate St. Patrick's Day and St. Joseph's Day with good food!

HEL (HIGHLY ERODIBLE LAND) VIOLATIONS WILL COST YOU \$\$\$\$

New provisions implemented with the passing of the Farm Bill Act of 2008 made significant changes to the level of penalties that are assessed against producers found with HEL violations!!

Prior to the implementation of these new farm bill changes, producers were allowed to receive a good faith determination from the FSA Committee, complete a revised conservation plan and no penalty was assessed unless it was a subdivider violation.

The FSA Committee will no longer be able to determine Good Faith Relief for HEL violations without a \$555 penalty being assessed. The new regulations mandate a minimum penalty of \$1000 be assessed; the maximum is \$10,000. These penalties will be offset against any and all USDA payments (DCLP, CRP, etc.) earned by the producer for the program year.

All USDA benefits are lost by the producer if the FSA Committee cannot determine good faith.

With the excess rainfall and flooding that occurred in the 2008 crop year, there are many fields with sheet and rill erosion, and/or ephemeral gullies present. Before applying ANY TILLAGE on these fields, review and discuss your options with the NRCS office. Once a HEL violation has been recorded by NRCS, it is too late to correct it for that program year!!!!

Questions regarding this notice shall be submitted to:

Tama County FSA Office	
Tama County NRCS Office	102 Hwy 30 West
102 Hwy 30 West	Toledo, Ia. 52342
Toledo, Ia. 52342	Phone #641-484-2701
Phone #641-484-2702	Fax #641-484-5289
Phone #641-484-2702	Fax #641-484-5289

Soils, from page 3

tarians and golf course superintendents will find the information valuable," says Suckik. "Soil surveys provide great information for students and teachers, too."

Suckik says the ability to print individual pages right at home or work is another major benefit.

"If you're only concerned about one or two sections of land, you only need to print

that map," he said.

According to Suckik, more county information will be continually added and updated. If you live in a county without an online soil survey manuscript, contact your local NRCS office for a copy.

http://offices.sc.gov.usda.gov/locator/app?state=ia to locate the NRCS office nearest you.

STAR COOKING. .

MARILYN CHIZEK



March 17 is St. Patrick's Day and March 19 is St. Joseph's Day.

On March 17 the Irish are joined by many "honorary Irish" people to celebrate the wearing of the green. They drink green beer, celebrate with parades and dance the Irish jig.

The green shamrock is a traditional icon of St. Patrick's Day and many adopt the custom of wearing them on this special day.

On March 19 the Czechs are joined by many "honorary Czechs" to celebrate the wearing of the red. They drink red beer, celebrate with parades and dance the polka.

A Czech proverb - If it is nice on St. Joseph's Day, it will usually be a good year. Another St. Joseph's Day proverb - St. Joseph shakes his beard and see: Winter's disappeared!

Both these days offer people of Irish and Czech descent a chance to share their cultures.

Wishing everyone a Happy St. Patrick's Day and a Happy St. Joseph's Day!

Crockpot Corn Beef & Cabbage

3 carrots, cut into 3" pieces

3 potatoes, cut into 3" pieces

3-4 lbs. corn beef brisket

2-3 medium onions, quartered

1 head cabbage, cut into small wedges

2 C. water

Combine ingredients in crockpot. Cover tightly.

Cook on high 7-8 hours or on low for 12 hours.

Mint Chocolate Chip Pie

2 C. whipping cream
2 T. confectioners' sugar
2 C. cold milk
1 1/2 tsp. peppermint extract

5-6 drops green food coloring, optional

2 (3.4-oz.) pkg. instant vanilla pudding mix

1 C. miniature semisweet chocolate chips

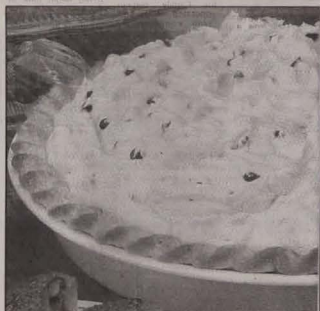
1 (9-in.) pastry shell, baked

In a small mixing bowl, beat cream and sugar until soft peaks form. In a large mixing bowl, combine the milk, extract and food coloring if desired. Add pudding mixes; beat on low speed for 2 minutes or until thickened.

Fold in cream mixture and chocolate chips. Pour into pastry shell. Refrigerate for 3 hours or until set. Yield: 6-8 servings.

Potato Dumplings

Boil and mash 6 large potatoes. When cool, add a scant 1/2 C. of fatina or cream of wheat and mix well. Allow to stand a little while. Add 3 eggs, well beaten, 1 tsp. salt and enough flour to form a stiff dough. Turn out onto floured board, knead and form into a long roll. Cut into pieces and shape into dumplings. Drop into boiling salted water and boil for 20 minutes.



Mint chocolate chip pie

Almond Poppy Seed Bars

3 eggs
2 1/4 C. sugar
1 1/2 C. milk
1 C. vegetable oil

1 1/2 tsp. almond extract
1 1/2 tsp. vanilla extract
1 1/2 tsp. butter flavoring

or additional vanilla extract
3 C. all-purpose flour
4 1/2 tsp. poppy seeds
1 1/2 tsp. baking powder
1 1/2 tsp. salt

Eroting:
1/3 C. butter or margarine, melted

3 C. confectioners' sugar
3 T. milk

In a mixing bowl, beat the eggs, sugar, milk, oil, extracts and butter flavoring. Combine the flour,

poppy seeds, baking powder and salt; add to the egg mixture and mix just until combined. Spread into a greased 15"x10"x1" baking pan. Bake at 350 degrees for 20 minutes or until a toothpick inserted near the center comes out clean. Cool on a wire rack. In a mixing bowl, combine the frosting ingredients; beat until smooth. Frost bars. Yield: approximately 5 1/2 dozen.

We hope you have fun Star-Cooking and eating!

If you have a recipe you would like to share with our readers, please submit it to Marilyn Chizek, in care of the *Dysart Reporter*, *Northern Star-Clipper*, *Reinbeck Courier*, *Tama News-Herald*, or *Traer Star-Clipper*. We look forward to hearing from you.

Answers To Last Week's Puzzle

