LEE COUNTY SOIL CONSERVATION DISTRICT

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Revised - 1965

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LEE COUNTY SOIL CONSERVATION DISTRICT

DISTRICT WORK PLAN
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1. INTRODUCTION

The Lee County Soil Conservation District Commissioners have presented the conditions and the conservation problems in the District program. The work plan sets forth how these problems may be corrected.

The use of all available resources will be marshalled by the District Commissioners in attaining the objectives of the program. All local, state, and federal agencies and organizations will be called upon to accomplish this goal. Therefore, it is imperative that smooth working relations be maintained with other organizations and agencies.

2. ADMINISTRATION

Every two years there will be an election held by the District. At this election, one commissioner will be elected for a term of six years. Vacancies occurring in the District governing body will be filled as prescribed by law.

At the reorganization meeting held after an election, a chairman will be designated. Usually this will be a commissioner with at least 4 years service. A secretary and treasurer will be named at this meeting.

The commissioners will hold regular monthly meetings and other special meetings as needed.

The secretary will maintain minutes of each meeting. The treasurer will maintain a record of all funds and money received or expended. The treasurer will be bonded up to $1,000.

An annual budget will be prepared by the District each spring and submitted to the State Soil Conservation Committee.

An annual report of the progress and activities within the district will be prepared. Report will be distributed to federal, state, and local organizations assisting the district.

It will be the policy of the District to hold an annual meeting in the late fall each year. This meeting will be for cooperators and interested friends of the District.

An activity planning meeting will be held each January with other agencies and groups. The activity schedule will outline meetings, tours, contests, and other activities to be stressed that year.

The commissioners will help the technical staff on setting goals for farm planning and application. They will determine priorities in scheduling assistance and will approve cooperative agreements, conservation farm plans, and other assistance.

3. EDUCATION

The District commissioners will conduct and coordinate an educational program. This program is to inform landowners, operators, and the general public of soil and water conservation objectives.

A memorandum of understanding has been signed between the District and the Iowa Cooperative Extension Service. The District will therefore look to the County Extension Director for leadership in education.

The objective of the District is to supply information to landowners, operators, and urban people regarding:

1. Proper land use
2. Sound land management principles
3. Control and conservation of water
4. The use of erosion control practices
5. Pasture improvement and management
6. Woodland, wildlife planting and management
7. Recreation--added income for farm enterprise

The District will employ the following educational methods:

1. News releases to local papers and radio stations on weekly activities in the District. Feature articles on individuals and particular practices will be used from time to time.

2. Meetings will be of two general types: Meetings sponsored by other organizations will afford opportunity to present soil conservation and district information. Such organizations would be Farm Bureau, ASCS, Civic Clubs, and the schools.

Meetings sponsored by the District itself would include group enterprise, watershed meetings, and informational meetings.

3. Tours--these will be held at opportune times to observe conservation projects. Observation to be made of conservation methods used in individual fields, in complete farm plans, and on group job and watershed tours.

4. Schools--general information such as bulletins, exhibits, pictures, and films will be furnished to the schools of the county. Example--the booklet, "The Story of Land," sent to libraries of all the county schools.

The District co-sponsors an essay contest with the County Superintendent of Schools. Contest is for all high school and 7th and 8th grade students in the public and parochial schools.

A speech contest has been conducted which is open to school children in the 7th grade through high school.

The District provides a scholarship for one or more teachers to attend a session at Springbrook Teachers Conservation Camp. The teacher must teach in Lee county the ensuing year and may be expected to give a report to the District.

5. Training schools-contractors' meetings. Meetings held annually in February withlocal contractors. New developments in conservation practices specifications (SCS-ACP).

6. Exhibits-County Fair. A booth displaying conservation practices, or such theme, is set up at the Lee County Fair.

7. Individual. The staff assisting the District will make available consultive assistance to individuals and groups who are not district cooperators. Included with non-cooperating farmers will be urban landowners, schools, golf courses, camps, building developments, etc. Assistance will also be given to county governments, rural area development groups, highway departments, appraisers, and zoning boards. On-site inspections and on-site visits will be limited to minimum needed for sound recommendations.

4. PROCEDURE FOR PLACING CONSERVATION ON THE LAND

There are two general procedures which will be followed in the district for placing conservation on the land.

a. Use of Individual Practice

The technical staff is quite often called upon to help install an individual practice. While doing so, the farmer can become acquainted with the district program and the interdependence of conservation practices.

b. The Development and Application of Farm Plans

These will be developed on an individual basis upon request by the landowner or farm operator.

The commissioners have set a goal of 30 to 35 plans per year. The farm plan sets forth the conservation needs of the farm and how these needs may be met. These conservation needs are based on the desires of

the farmer and the capabilities of the soil. Because of changes of farming operation or needs, the farmer may request a revision of the plan.

The important final step in developing the plan is to apply it to the land. Technical assistance is furnished by the District in planning, staking, and checking the application of practices. The maintenance of the practices is the responsibility of the farmer.

Farmers within an organized watershed will be given planning and application assistance consistent with overall needs of the District.

5. LAND USE RECOMMENDATIONS

a. Conservation Surveys and Land Use Classes

Soil conservation surveys are prepared for individual farms as needed. There is no up-to-date county soil survey. The maps of the individual farm soil survey indicate the soil type, slope, and degree of erosion. The three items determine the capability of the soil for cropland, pasture, woodland, or wildlife land. This information is used by the farmer and the technician in determining the proper conservation practices to apply.

b. Erosion Control Practices

The following is a brief summary of the most commonly used practices:

1. Contour farming. This practice consists of plowing, disking, and planting across the slope on an established grade. Contour rows to be laid out with sufficient grade to allow adequate drainage. This practice is easily installed and simple to follow and usually the basic start in conservation farming.

2. Strip Cropping. This practice is more effective than contouring. Consists of alternate strips of row crops, grain, or meadow.

3. Terracing. This practice will provide the most protection from erosion of the three practices. Terraces placed at required intervals will break up the slope into a series of shorter slopes. The use of parallel terraces and cut and fill terraces will permit use of four-row equipment.

4. Grassed Waterways and Terrace Outlets. A good, grassed waterway is a must for an efficient effective terrace system. Suitable outlets should be constructed and well sodded before building terraces.

Grass is an effective measure for control of ditches or gullies. Most waterways may be restored by sloping to proper width and grade. Width should be sufficient to carry the runoff and then seeded with a grass mixture.

5. Gully Control. Used where control cannot be obtained by vegetation or grading. Structure of concrete or earth fill and corrugated pipe may be used to stabilize the outlet or end of ditch. In some cases, several individuals, county, or state highway departments may share in solving such a problem. Until gully or waterway area is well seeded, livestock should be excluded from area.

6. Farm Ponds. Ponds serve several purposes--gully control, livestock water, fire protection and environment for wildlife. Drainage area above pond should be maintained in grass. Fills on ponds with drainage areas above 10 acres should have trickle tubes or drop inlet structures installed. Pond area to be fenced to exclude livestock. All these contribute to a successful and efficient source of water.

7. Highway Erosion. The district urges all farmers to cooperate with county and state highway departments in controlling roadside erosion. Erosion of roadside bank and ditches, undermining of culverts and gully erosion in fields below culverts are some of the major problems.

6. PRACTICES RECOMMENDED FOR EACH TYPE OF LAND

a. Cropland

The following practices are recommended for cropland in the District:

1. Proper drainage (tile, open ditch, or land grading) and cultivation are needed if maximum crop yields are to be obtained.

2. Limestone and fertilizer should be applied according to complete soil test reports.

Fertilizer requirements are based on soil tests, management, and expected yield.

3. Intensive row cropping should be limited to non-erosive land and high management practices. Crop rotations should be followed on all sloping land that include at least one or more years of legume-grass crops.

4. Return all crop residue possible to the soil. The timely spreading and proper handling of barnyard manure will result in little loss of nitrogen.

5. Supplementary soil and moisture conservation practices to be combined with the above practices to effectively reduce erosion. This would include minimum tillage and cultivation where practical.

b. Hayland

Mixture of alfalfa and grasses are recommended for land not suited to frequent row cropping. Usually it is advisable to grow a row crop or small grain crop every six to eight years in preparation for reseeding. The use of conservation practices and soil treatments apply to hayland as well as cropland.

c. Pasture

Most all permanent pastures need management and soil and water conservation treatment. For example, lime fertilizer, brush removal,

controlled grazing and reseeding to high producing legume-grass mixtures.

A pasture improvement program, whereby a certain acreage is treated each year, is highly desirable. In this way, disruption of the livestock pasture program or an unusually high acreage of seeding, is avoided.

All pastures should be clipped at least twice a season. The practice of supplementing bluegrass pasture with rotation meadows gives excellent returns.

In recent years, excellent results have resulted from mixtures of alfalfa-bromegrass or orchard grass. Birdsfoot trefoil on the poorer, steeper pasture land has given excellent pasture.

Specific recommendations have been developed for the work unit technical guide. These were developed with assistance of Iowa Agricultural Experiment Station and Extension Service.

d. Woodland

Land to be devoted or maintained in woodland will include:

1. Steep, erosive land already covered with timber.
2. Existing woodland of high value on potentially capable cropland.
3. Eroded cropland or pasture land.
4. Isolated or inaccessible areas.

Practices recommended by the State Farm Foresters will be followed. These include protection from fire and grazing, improvement and selective cutting and planting. Conifers, such as white and red pine, are the most widely planted species.

e. Wildlife Area

In areas I and III, most farms have wasteland areas in addition to hedgerows, brushy fence rows, and woodland borders. In addition, areas

around farm ponds may be planted to material beneficial to wildlife. In area II, where there is a scarcity of cover, odd areas may be planted to provide more cover.

Recommendations for the work unit technical guide have been developed with assistance of Iowa Conservation Commission and Extension Biologist.

7. OTHER ACTIVITIES

a. Watershed and Group Problems

In solving an erosion problem it is oft times necessary for two or more farmers to cooperate. The District will encourage the formation of drainage and erosion control groups.

Whenever practical, farmers will be encouraged to organize into watersheds in order to solve their mutual soil and water conservation problems.

b. Recreation

The District will encourage projects that increase the present family-size farm income. Such projects are vacation farms, hunting and fishing preserves, camp sites, etc. The District will provide technical aid such as consultation, on-site visits, and general plans for different enterprises.

Also, soil and water conservation problems in the development of Shimek State Forest will be helped by technical assistance.

c. Rural Area Development

The District will promote and assist Rural Area Development enterprises when this program is formed.

d. Resource Conservation and Development

The District will cooperate with adjoining Districts in studying the benefits of developing an RC&D project in this area.

e. Natural Beauty of the Countryside

By encouraging applicable land use changes and effective soil and water conservation treatment. This can be accomplished by helping soil conservation district cooperators and others to incorporate into their conservation plans provisions for roadside improvements, elimination of "eye-sore" areas, and farm road beautification.

f. Plant Materials

The District will cooperate with the Soil Conservation Service in developing the use of new varieties of crops and shrubs. Cooperators will be selected who are well qualified to handle seed increase plots. In this way, the adaptability and uses can be proven in the local district.

g. Credit

Banks, insurance and loan companies, and Federal Land Banks through the National Farm Loan Association adequately handle credit facilities. However, the Farmers Home Administration handles financing for farmers who are unable to obtain the services of the above organizations. The FHA has several types of loans for soil and water projects, operating loans, and loans for recreational projects to augment farm income.

The District will cooperate with all lending agencies in getting needed soil and water conservation plans on the land.

h. Records and Reports

The District, with the assistance of State Clerks and Soil Conservation Service technical staff, will keep necessary records and render required reports.

8. ASSISTANCE TO DISTRICT

This part summarizes the assistance available to the District. The agencies and organizations are:

a. State Soil Conservation Committee

The State Soil Conservation Committee has established general policies for election and operating procedures of the District.

Administers and distributes state funds established by law for use of soil conservation districts in Iowa.

Two separate and distinct funds have been set up and are maintained in each soil district.

1. 1M Budget

A fund of $500 for each district allocated each year for District Commissioners' expenses and mileage. Certain office expenses, meetings, exhibits, and educational material are paid from this fund.

2. 2M Budget

This fund is used for employment of part-time and/or full-time technicians' helpers and clerks.

These funds are allocated by a budget prepared by the District on needs each year.

This source of funds for clerical and technical assistance has made Iowa one of the leaders in soil and water conservation.

b. Soil Conservation Service

The Soil Conservation Service will provide technical personnel to assist farmers in developing and putting into effect conservation plans. They will work closely with the District commissioners in carrying out Soil Conservation Service and District policies. The SCS will assist the commissioners in revising and improving the district program and work plan.

c. Extension Service

This assistance is made directly through the County Extension Director and Extension Specialists. The District will call on the Extension Director and Specialists for help in program planning, educational, and any special problems.

d. Agricultural Stabilization and Conservation Service

This agency, through its Agricultural Conservation Program (ACP), cost-shares with the farmer on certain permanent type practices.

This is to encourage those conservation practices which the farmer would not carry out to the needed extent without program assistance.

The ASCS County Committee may make available to the Soil Conservation Service up to 5% of the county ACP funds. This is to partially reimburse the SCS for time spent on servicing farmers under the cost-share program.

Certain designated practices are the responsibility of the SCS personnel for determining need, practicability, layout, and certification for ACP payment.

e. Farmers Home Administration

This agency encourages clients to develop and follow conservation farm plans. Loans are available for needed soil and water conservation practices.

f. Schools

The schools of the county are encouraged to teach conservation subjects in grade and high school science classes.

The County Superintendent of Schools works with the District on sponsoring an essay contest.

The agricultural instructor at the Central Community High School cooperates on soil and water conservation subjects.

g. Iowa Conservation Commission

Two types of service are available to the District through this agency.

1. County Conservation Officer

Technical information and planning for fish and wildlife management.

2. Farm Forester and District Forester

A farm forester is provided to assist farmers in woodland management and tree planting in connection with farm plans. Also, a district forester assigned only to Shimek State Forest assists in group tours and other educational forestry work.

REVISIONS

This work plan may be revised at any time the District Commissioners judge it to be inadequate. The work plan will be reviewed annually to make any necessary revision. Suggestions from cooperators within the District or other interested parties are welcome.

Lee County Soil Conservation District

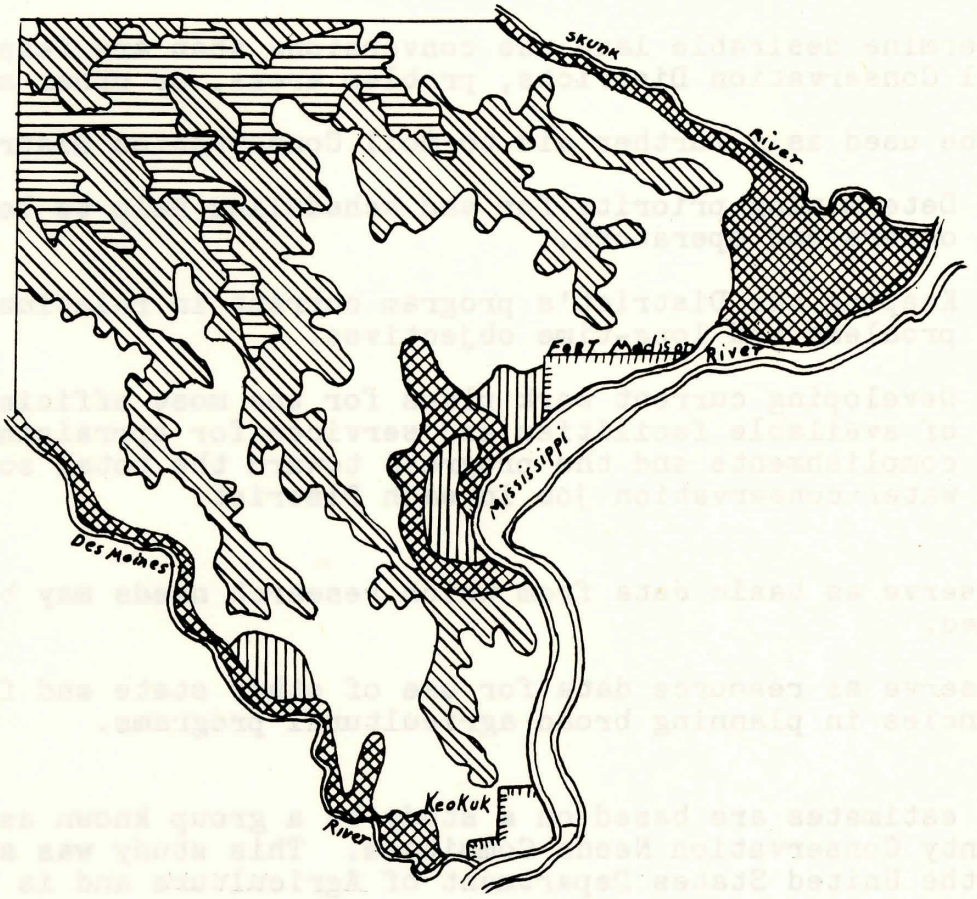
Date 12-15-65 by: Raymond Hohl
Chairman

The signing of this revised work plan was authorized by a resolution of the District Commissioners, voted upon, and adopted at a meeting held at the Lee County Soil Conservation District Office at Donnellson, Iowa, December 15, 1965.

by: Marjorie M. Stamps
Secretary

Lee County, Iowa

SOILS



IV - Alluvial Soils

Level to gently rolling
(0-9% slope)
1st and 2nd bottomland soils

Nearly level to undulating
(0-5% slope)
1st and 2nd bottomland soils
(Mississippi River)

II - Grundy-Haig

Nearly level to undulating
(0-5% slope)
Haig-Grundy

I - Weller-Lindley

Rolling to steep (9-30% slope)
Weller-Lindley

III - Transitional

Gently rolling to rolling
(5-14% slope)
Grundy-Pershing-Weller-Shelby-
Lindley

PURPOSE OF THE CONSERVATION NEEDS REPORT

A. To determine essential conservation practices and soil treatments needed to achieve a practical soil and water conservation program for the Soil Conservation Districts for watersheds or other land units.

B. Determine desirable land use conversions that are feasible by Soil Conservation Districts, problem areas, or other areas.

C. To be used as a further aid to Soil Conservation Districts in:

1. Determining priority for and scheduling help to land owners and operators.

2. Keeping the District's program current in relation to problems and long-time objectives.

3. Developing current work plans for the most efficient use of available facilities and services for appraising accomplishments and the progress toward the total soil and water conservation job in each District.

D. To serve as basic data from which research needs may be determined.

E. To serve as resource data for use of other state and federal agencies in planning broad agricultural programs.

The estimates are based on a study by a group known as Lee County Conservation Needs Committee. This study was authorized by the United States Department of Agriculture and is a part of a nation-wide study. The needs committee was made up of the following agencies, groups, and individuals:

Soil District Commissioners, Agriculture Stabilization and Conservation Service, Farm Bureau, Board of Supervisors, County Engineer, Extension Service, Farm Foresters, Crandon Forest Farms, Inc. Forester, Soil Conservation Service, Doane Agricultural Service, Citizens State Bank, Donnellson, Fort Madison Chamber of Commerce, Green Bay Drainage District, County Assessor, and Conservation Officer.