

Allamakee Soil & Water Conservation District Annual Report 2012-2013



The Year in Review by Lynn Stock, Chairman

We have completed another successful year of conservation in the Allamakee Soil and Water Conservation District. With the current economic climate we were fortunate to have received more than our 2012 allocation of state cost share dollars for both terraces and forestry practices. These programs still play a vital part in the overall conservation efforts in our county. We always have a long list of applicants that we are unable to fund. These funds are typically allocated based on the date of sign-up. We encourage producers to sign up as soon as possible since we cannot guarantee funding. Our 2013 state funding was allocated by August and we have received a substantial amount of additional supplemental funding which is also almost entirely obligated.

In addition to the state cost share program Allamakee County received federal dollars of \$1,078,610 in the EQIP program, \$233,754 in the WHIP program and have approved 8 new operations for the CSP program. These dollars are used for terraces, grade stabilization structures, cover crops, livestock buildings to replace open lots, manure storage, streambank stabilization, energy improvements and many more practices.

We continue to pursue special funding for watershed projects. In response to a request from the landowners in Minnesota and Iowa to look at the flooding issues on Waterloo Creek we applied for and were granted cost share funds from the State Watershed Improvement Review Board, WIRB. These funds are only available to Iowa producers. We are working closely with the Bee/Duck Creek Watershed group in Minnesota (the stream is not called Waterloo Creek until it enters Iowa) to have a successful overall effort that treats the stream in both states. We have allocated a portion of our EQIP funding to Waterloo Creek and Houston County, MN, has done the same. The NRCS was able to contract Bob Joachim through the Ultima program to assist with implementing practices in both Iowa and Minnesota. We are installing terraces, ponds and waterways and hope to see an eventual decrease in the flooding on Waterloo Creek.

We are having great success with our new grant to assist landowners with writing "conservation addendums" to their lease agreements. This grant is from the McKnight Foundation and allowed us to hire Sara Berges. She works with landowners and renters to write conservation provisions to the land lease. She has presented to various groups, including Annie's Project through the ISU Extension Service which assists female landowners. An article about her project was published in the September issue of *Wallaces Farmer*.

The District worked with an aerial seeding company and assisted producers to fly on cover crops for the second year. In Allamakee County 2,722 total acres were flown and planted to one of 6 different seed options.

IDALS Buffers up the Ante

Once again the Iowa Department of Agriculture and Land Stewardship (IDALS) is offering an incentive payment for landowners/producers to install contour buffers including contingent field borders and filter strips on land that is not currently in the CRP or the Continuous CRP programs. Land that has these practices already in place is also not eligible for these funds. This time however, the one-time payment rate will be for \$300 an acre. The applicant will sign a five year maintenance agreement, which includes the seeding year, and develop a plan for the strips to be moved up or down the hill in the future should they wish to continue with the buffers.

Contour buffers may range from 15' to 30' with the bottom buffer being up to 60' wide. In conjunction with the contour buffers a field border up to 60' wide can be included in the plan. Filter strips can be from 30' to 120' wide may also be installed for payment. These buffers may be hayed or grazed.

Buffers may be flagged out but not established (seeded) prior to proper approval from the state (IDALS). Applicants sign a form which goes to the District Commissioners meeting then on to the state for final approval of funding. Waterways are not eligible for this program. Anyone interested in buffers or filters should stop in at the NRCS office to indicate where they may like to in NRCS personnel may estimate probable buffer acres from a map or actually layout and GPS in the buffers for acres to be entered on the application.

Federal Programs available for Conservation Practices

There are currently several Federal programs available for installing conservation practices. They include the Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) and the Wildlife Habitat Incentives Program (WHIP) and the Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP).

The EQIP program is offered on a competitive basis with each application receiving a ranking score based on environmental factors. These include physical location of the practice, the potential of that practice to impact the environment and national, state, and local priorities. There are currently several EQIP initiatives including an Energy Initiative, the Driftless Initiative and an Organic Initiative. With the initiatives there is not a county pool of funds so each application is being ranked compared to other applications across the entire state or the Driftless area (8 counties in Northeast Iowa). Practices included for Allamakee County included terraces, forestry practices, livestock manure management systems, streambank stabilization and pasture practices.

The energy initiative involves a producer having an audit completed on their farmstead livestock operation and then incentives are offered to upgrade their current equipment to more energy efficient ones. The audit must be completed prior to signing up for the practices. The energy initiative does include grain drying.

The livestock manure systems may include total containment, such as a manure storage tank or a new building that replaces open feedlots. In order to be eligible for the highest cost share rates for a new building, the producer must be eliminating all of their open lots at this site. The building has to be entirely roofed with no outside access for the animals. The entire floor of the building must be concrete. Also, all of the animals have to currently be at this location (not expansions or new enterprises) to be eligible. Producers need to obtain their own engineer for design, construction inspection, and certification of the building. If the building is located near shallow bedrock and/or sinkholes, the building must also have secondary containment constructed around it to prevent any possible runoff in the event of an emergency.

The pasture practices include rotational grazing which may include fencing, planting, watering systems and lane improvements. The watering systems may include installing a fountain, a pumping plant, a well (for livestock use only) a pond or fortifying access to a limited area on a stream or a pond.

Streambank stabilization involves stabilizing the streambank at its current location utilizing rock and grading the bank back to a flatter grade. We can also do J-Weirs and other instream practices to stabilize banks and improve wildlife habitat. The NRCS will assist landowners with survey, design and installation of the practice and with obtaining all necessary permits from the Iowa DNR and from the US Army Corps of Engineers.

The CSP program involves completing an extensive tool to determine the amount of past conservation activity completed and then requires completing new activities. The payment is on either cropland, pastureland or forest. All applications are ranked on a statewide basis.

There is a continuous sign-up for both the EQIP and CSP programs. At a specified date, the applications are all gathered and ranked and funding is allocated. If a producer is interested in signing up for either of these programs they need to be contacting the NRCS office as soon as possible so cost estimates can be prepared. The funding for the EQIP program is on a flat rate basis which typically comes out to approximately 50% of the total cost. The CSP program dates will be announced before the next deadline.

SODBUST PLANS

Producers bringing land into production that has not been previously cropped need to complete a sodbust plan **before** doing any ground-breaking activity. Failure to complete a sodbust plan could jeopardize farm program payments.

A sodbust plan, to tolerable soil loss levels, needs to be completed on the area being brought into production. Rotations will be determined based on the predominant soil type of the sodbust area. The sodbust plan will include any tillage, grassed headlands, critical area seedings, and contour or strip cropping practices that would be needed to bring the area to a compliance level.

The Allamakee County District Commissioners have decided that they will **not approve** sodbust plans where the ground has been brought into production prior to completing the plan. They will **not approve** any plans if the area being sodbusted has a predominant soil with an E slope or greater.

The Allamakee NRCS office is encouraging any producers considering sodbusting acres for the 2014 crop year to contact the office as soon as possible to complete their plans. This will give the staff an opportunity to make any field visits to check slopes and gather any

STRUCTURE DAMAGES FROM HEAVY RAINS

As fall harvest approaches, producers may encounter structural damages to terraces, ponds, and sediment basins because of the excessive rains we experienced this spring.

These structures were not designed to handle the torrential down pours experienced in the short amount of time that the rainfalls occurred, resulting in blowouts and/or overtopping of structures.

If you discover that your structures have sustained these types of damages, please notify the Allamakee County Natural Resources Conservation Service office. Staff can make on-site assessments of damages, and will then be able to give you the proper information/design for repairs. These repairs may include adding needed fill to ridges/berms and intake replacement or cleanout.

If terraces were cost shared through the local NRCS and have exceeded their maintenance agreement, cost shares may be available to reconstruct to required specifications.

Including Conservation In Farm Leases

How can farm landowners enforce conservation compliance on their land? One way to accomplish this is to include conservation provisions in their farm lease. The Allamakee County Soil and Water Conservation District (SWCD) has started a project to encourage landowners to do this in the form of a conservation addendum to attach to a farm lease. This addendum, at a minimum, can include the NRCS conservation plan and plan map. This project provides a free service to landowners and participation is voluntary. There is a need for this project because the requirement to maintain the conservation practices present on the land often is not discussed when considering new farm tenants. Also, uncertainty in future Farm Bills may affect the ability of FSA and NRCS to enforce conservation compliance. The record high commodity prices are encouraging operators to bring as much of the land into production as possible, resulting in the removal of grassed waterways, headlands, and buffers. In addition, competition for cropland is at an all-time high. Many landowners are unaware of their rights regarding conservation on their land.

The Allamakee SWCD's Lease Project Coordinator, Sara Berges, is meeting with local landowners and tenants to create lease addendums that specify conservation practices to be implemented on specific fields. This is done by updating the conservation plan and plan map and discussing additional options to include such as crop residue management, the application of maintenance rates of phosphorus and potassium, shared costs for conservation practice installation, and non-compliance. This project does not involve writing the farm lease or negotiating rent and will not be a substitute for an attorney. However, it does involve working with landowners and tenants to explain lease options regarding conservation. This project is a joint effort with the Drake University Agricultural Law Center (The Center). Ed Cox, from The Center, is assisting the SWCD to ensure that the lease provisions meet legal requirements.

New leases need to be signed prior to March 1. If you may be interested in participating in this project, please contact Sara Berges at the Allamakee SWCD at (563) 568-2246 extension 3, stop by the office at 635 9th St NW, Waukon, Iowa, or email at sara.berges@ia.nacdn.net.

Allamakee SWCD Awards Scholarships to Three Students

The Allamakee SWCD awarded three \$500 scholarships in conjunction with Allamakee Dollars for Scholars. The recipients were Shelby Bodley and Mercedes Burroughs from Waukon High School and Amanda Lage from Postville High School. To be eligible for the scholarships, the applicants must be enrolling in an agricultural or natural resource based major. The SWCD was able to present these scholarships due to the generous donations that we receive from members of the conservation club.

Shelby Bodley



Mercedes Burroughs



Amanda Lage



Allamakee SWCD Holds Awards Banquet



The Allamakee Soil and Water Conservation District held their awards banquet on August 27, 2013 at the Farmers and Merchants Savings Bank. Award winners were presented a clock and plaque made by Elliott Jewelers. The clocks were donated by Waukon State Bank, Fidelity Bank, Farmers and Merchants Savings Bank and New Albin Savings Bank. The meal was catered by Schulte's BBQ and Catering of Waukon.



The commissioners would like to thank all of the sponsors of the awards for helping to make this years awards banquet a success, and also to the award recipients for being leaders in conservation for others to follow.

Waterloo Creek Watershed Project

The 2013-2015 project, funded by the Watershed Improvement Review Board, covers the following conservation practices in the Iowa portion of the watershed: terraces, water and sediment control basins, and grade stabilization structures (ponds), streambank stabilization, ag waste and pasture management. One water and sediment control basin and one pond have been constructed. Two water and sediment control basins, one pond, and about 6600 feet of terraces have been approved for construction.

Waterloo Creek is designated as a primary contact recreational, high-quality, cold water stream in Iowa. People have direct contact with the water, and the temperature is cold enough to support trout and other cold water organisms. Waterloo and Duck Creeks were also named "Outstanding Iowa Waters" by the Iowa Environmental Council. The water quality of Waterloo Creek is also important due to tourism from trout fishing and other outdoor activities. According to Iowa Department of Natural Resources (IDNR) Fisheries Biologist Bill Kalishek, Waterloo Creek is the 4th most popular trout stream in Iowa with more than 24,000 fishing trips annually. Steve Klotz, Minnesota DNR Fisheries, says Bee Creek is also a popular trout fishery due to its steady (un-stocked) trout population and extensive public access.

In July 2013, Bob Joachim began working as a Project Technician for the Waterloo/Bee/Duck Creek Watershed in northwestern Allamakee County and southwestern Houston County. He works out of the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) offices in Waukon and Caledonia. Bob's background includes more than 30 years of experience working for the NRCS in both Iowa and Minnesota.

Bob's extensive professional experience allows him to provide a consistent approach to the survey and design of conservation practices in both states. He has already made several contacts throughout the watershed, and would be happy to meet with you on your farm to discuss existing and/or potential practices. Bob is familiar with the watershed and practices needed to address resource concerns in the watershed.

Bob is ready to help producers assess their property and can complete a survey, design, and cost estimate for appropriate practices. He may be contacted at 563-568-2246 ext. 3 in Iowa or 507-724-5261 in Minnesota, or Robert.Joachim@ia.nacdnet.net.

The Allamakee Soil and Water Conservation District (SWCD) was recently notified that they have been awarded a grant through the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation for technical support in the watershed. This will allow for continued planning and design efforts in both states. Also, funds from the current WIRB grant will now be available for additional practices (in Iowa) such as streambank stabilization, ag waste, and pasture management.

Aerial Seeding Cover Crops

Adding cover crops to a farming operation can be a great way to reduce soil erosion, improve soil and water quality, scavenge residual nitrogen, and provide forage for livestock. Several different species, such as oats, cereal rye, rye grass, and tillage radishes, may be used as a cover crop and are typically planted in the fall after the corn and soybean harvest. Depending on the species used, they will grow until they are winter killed or terminated by herbicide or tillage in the spring. To achieve the full benefits of cover crops they must be planted early enough in the fall to ensure they have sufficient time to grow prior to a hard freeze. Unfortunately, in this part of Iowa, if a producer waits until after corn or soybean harvest there may only be 2-3 weeks available for the cover crop to grow before a hard freeze kills the cover crop or stops growth until spring. Interest in cover crops has rapidly grown over the last few years as area producers began looking for alternative cover crops after harvest. The Allamakee SWCD (SWCD) recognized this need and initiated a program to aerial seed cover crops in August 2013.

The SWCD partnered with Klinkenborg Aerial Spraying of Parkersburg, IA to seed cover crops into standing corn and soybeans with a plane in late August. Because growing cover crops need sufficient light to grow, the seeding was timed to coincide with soybean leaf drop and corn plants maturation. Six different mixes were offered to meet the producers' different goals and objectives. The mixes used and the costs per acre were as follows:

1.5 bu.. Cereal Rye @ \$31.00/ac for seed

1.5 bu. Oats, 4 lbs. Tillage Radishes \$33.00/ ac for seed

15 lbs. Annual Ryegrass, 4 lbs. Tillage Radishes \$31.00/ ac.

10 lbs. Annual Ryegrass, 2.5 lbs. Tillage Radishes, 6 lbs. Hairy Vetch \$35.00/ ac.

1.25 bu. Cereal Rye, 2 lbs. Clover, 1.5 lbs. Turnips \$35.00/ ac.

10 lbs. Rye Grass, 10 lbs. Crimson Clover \$30.00/ ac.

The cost for the aerial application was \$15/ac with a 20 acre minimum.

The service was offered in Allamakee, Clayton, Fayette and Winneshiek Counties with over 8,000 acres seeded into standing corn and soybeans from August 23 to September 7. Gusty winds and a late boom in the aphid populations pushed the seeding later than anticipated. Maturing crops and absence in rain from early August to mid-September delayed the germination of the seed and reduced the growth of the cover crops this fall. Turnips and radishes appear to be affected the most by the lack of sunlight available due to late maturing crops. Considering the conditions this year the cover crops did well, and the winter hardy species such as cereal rye, hairy vetch, and annual ryegrass should continue to grow until they are terminated next spring.

The Allamakee SWCD would like to thank the Waukon, Decorah, Fayette, and Monona airports, Klinkenborg Aerial Spraying for their cooperation in this effort.

Cover Crop FY 13

Beginning Balance	\$0.00
Income	
Cover Crop Seed & Application	\$88,346.27
Total Income	\$88,346.27
Expense	
Waukon Feed Ranch	\$13,044.56
Innovative Ag. Services	\$14,592.30
Hall Roberts - Forklift	\$450.00
Klinkenborg	\$22,255.80
Klinkenborg	\$37,737.90
Total Expense	\$88,080.56
Ending Balance	\$265.71



Allamakee County Commissioners & Staff



District Commissioners

Lynn Stock, Chairman;
Jack Knight, Vice-Chairman
Clinton Welsh-Treasurer
Dan Byrnes
Mike McCormick

Allamakee County SWCD Mission Statement

The Mission of the Allamakee County Soil and Water Conservation District is to provide local leadership in the advancement of the protection and enhancement of the natural resources of Allamakee County by providing technical, educational, and financial assistance to the public by using all available resources.

IDALS-DSC Mission Statement

The Division of Soil Conservation is responsible for state leadership in the protection and management of soil, water, and mineral resources assisting soil and water conservation districts and private landowners to meet their agricultural and environmental protection needs.

www.allamakeeswcd.org

The Allamakee County Soil & Water Conservation District is now online! Check us out at allamakeeswcd.org. Learn more about cost share assistance, conservation practices, and the watershed projects that we have available. You can read the annual report and newsletter, learn about local conservation efforts, and see when our next meeting will be. Check back often because we will be changing articles, adding more pictures, and giving information on program sign-up dates and deadlines.



NRCS Staff

LuAnn Rolling, District Conservationist;
Jacob Groth, Soil Conservationist;
Steve Scholtes, Soil Technician;
Barb Hanson, Soil Technician;
Tom Duvel, Conservation Aid;
Bob Joachim-Watershed Technician

IDALS-DSC Staff

Brianne Wild, Secretary

District Staff

Sara Berges-Lease Project Coordinator
Jim Ranum– District Technician (not pictured)
Michelle Elliott-Watershed Coordinator
Brady Kruger-CSP Technician (not pictured)

District Payroll Account

Beginning Balance \$6,484.61

Income

Cover Crop Seed & Application	88,542.10
Farm Bill	10,890.90
IDALS Intern	2,400.00
Transfer from WSB	58,000.50
Transfer from NASB	23,625.34
Board of Supervisors	2,000.00
Lease Project	39,258.38
Waterloo Creek DNR	64,504.83
Internet	69.05
Mis	395.00
Transfer from IM Fund	2,850.00
Total	\$292,536.10

Expenses

Cover Crop Seed & Application (88,080.56)	
Fair Booth	(702.77)
Postage	(1,424.07)
Hacker, Nelson	(550.00)
Hagen & Kallevang	(460.00)
IPERS	(10,988.71)
State Taxes	(2,962.00)
Federal Taxes	(15,637.31)
Unemployment	(505.24)
Wages Paid	(58,423.52)
Transfer to WSB MM (64,473.33)	
Kubota	(587.80)
Lease Project	(7,212.53)
Transfer to IM Fund	(2,400.00)
Ludlow WIRB	(15,565.92)
Yellow River DD WIRB	(8,059.42)
Waterloo Creek DNR (9,654.82)	
Indian Springs Project	(4,886.22)
Petty Cash	(20.00)
Misc.	(3,506.51)
Farm Bill	(751.50)
Total	\$(296,852.23)

Money Market WSB

Beginning Balance \$66,861.92

Interest	\$445.59
Deposits (From Payroll)	\$64,473.33
Payment (To Payroll)	\$58,000.50

Ending Balance \$73,780.34

Money Market NSAB

Beginning Balance \$63,669.88

Interest	\$350.52
Payments (To Payroll)	\$23,625.34

Ending Balance \$40,395.06

Ending Balance \$0.00

1M Funds

Beginning Balance \$136.50

Income

Supplemental Allocation	\$400.00
Allocation	\$2,000.00
Total Income	\$2,400.00
Expense	
NACD Dues	\$100.00
USPS	\$734.31
Commissioner Mileage	\$171.60
Transfer to Payroll	\$850.00
Commissioner Expense	\$40.00
Northeast IA Printers	\$640.59
Total Expenses	\$2,536.50
Ending Balance	\$0.00

Revolving Funds

Beginning Balance \$6,439.65

Income

Interest	\$17.40
Donations	\$3,086.00
Total Income	\$3,103.40
Expenses	
Comm. Mileage	\$91.26
Cons. Ed. Day	\$198.00
Misc.	\$83.79
Scholarships	\$1,500.00
Total Expenses	\$1,873.05
Ending Balance	\$7,670.00

DSC Funding Report

Allocation	\$43,013.00
Supplemental Allocation	\$27,892.61
Expended	\$48,126.62
Obligated	\$20,538.99
Unobligated	\$2,240.00
REAP-F	
Allocation	\$2,217.71
Supplemental Allocation	\$6,653.13
Expended	\$1,976.25
Obligated	\$6,894.00
Unobligated	\$0.59
REAP-P	
Allocation	\$6,653.13
Supplemental Allocation	\$1,094.89
Slippage	\$3,000.00
Expended	\$7,830.00
Obligated	\$2,070.00
Unobligated	\$848.02

Scholarship

Betty Decker	Dan & Traci Byrnes
Herb & Ann Dehli	Leo Byrnes Family
Velma Huebner	Tony & Liz Willie
Richard & Debbie Moose	Warner Enterprises
Leo & Kathy Conway	Eugene & Barb Sanderman
Brad & Linda Winkie	Gary & Connie Tilleros
Ron & Therese Snitker	Robert & Diane Schulte
Greg & Marlene Palmer	Gary & Anne White
Jim & Sue Dyer	Julie Wood
Joe & Judy Sweeney	
Dennis Koenig	

Conservation Club Donors

Supporters \$5-\$25

Doug Mullen
Dennis & Chris Soride
Charles Cota
Steve & Donna Story
Mark & Deb Palmer
Lloyd & Delores Dehning
Walter & Lorraine Teslow
Wayne Bruch
Brad & Linda Winkie
Eric & Stephanie Palmer
Earl Goodman
Beverly Platten
John & Jane Gadow
Gerald Cline
Curtis Lundy
Tim & Sherri Dohrmann
Kevin & Vicki Bontien
Richard Dage
Oswald Goettler
Dave & Brenda Dougherty
Earl Iverson
Delbert & Eloise Bulman
Don & Sharyn McCormick

Soil Saver \$26-\$50

Henry Hemesath
Earl & Bev Haas
Marilyn Clark
Kenny & Becky Meyer
Gary White
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Dennis & Barb Nebendahl
John Dresser
Lanny & Daisy Johnson
Ruth Franzen
Charles & Doris Berns
Miles & Susan Schulte
Clayton & Adele Monserud
Dennis Eder
Dave & Connie Bulman
Curtis & Diane Kraus
Joseph & Inez Gallagher
Ann & Kermit Klees

Stewards \$51-UP

Dennis & Sherri Lyons
Leigh Ann Leyman &
David Hahn
Dave & Gail Prestemon
Stan & Mary Straate
Dennis & Judy Byrnes
Jeff & Marge Lange
Kurthridge Farms
John & Jenny Opfer
Roger & Susan Schlitter
James & Karen Hitchins
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Dean Teslow
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Vernalene Oelberg