

Allamakee Soil & Water Conservation District Annual Report 2013-2014



Boulder weir installation on Patterson Creek.

The Year in Review by Lynn Stock, Chairman

We have completed another successful year of conservation in the Allamakee Soil and Water Conservation District. The state cost share programs continue to 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 2015 state funding was allocated by August and we have received additional supplemental funding which is also entirely obligated.

In 2014 we funded terraces, ponds, contour buffer strips, cover crops and a variety of forestry practices. We would like to encourage producers to develop a plan with the District office well ahead of when they would like the practice installed as “walk-in” requests for cost share without prior planning will receive the lowest priority.

In addition to the state cost share program Allamakee County received close to \$1 million federal dollars in the Environmental Quality Incentives Program, EQIP. These dollars are used for terraces, grade stabilization structures, cover crops, livestock buildings to replace open lots, manure storage, stream bank stabilization, energy improvements and pasture improvement practices. This year the Yellow River Watershed received additional EQIP funding through the Driftless Area Land Conservation Initiative, DALCI. Hopefully this additional funding will continue in 2015.

We continue to work with landowners in Minnesota and Iowa to try to improve 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 *Wallaces Farmer*.

The Allamakee County Soil and Water Conservation District Commissioners are elected on the general ballot, on a non-partisan basis to administer and direct the conservation programs in our County. We serve 4 year terms and are not compensated for our time. We are proud of the conservation effort that producers in our County expend and enjoy working with them to accelerate and enhance the activities they are doing. We understand that progress is only made through the voluntary efforts of the people that are utilizing the land and water resources. We would encourage people to let us know where we can improve our efforts. Please share your ideas with myself or the other Commissioners; Dan Byrnes, Jack Knight, Clinton Welch, and Mike McCormick.

Allamakee SWCD to Host Photo Contest for Youth

Allamakee County youth in kindergarten through high school can participate in a photo contest through the Allamakee SWCD. Find your favorite stream, river, spring, pond, or lake [in Allamakee County](#) and take a photo. The photo can include people doing water related activities such as fishing, boating, or swimming. The contest deadline will be May 15, 2015, but we wanted to let you know about it now so you can start getting out and taking photos. There will be prizes for contest winners. To submit a photo, either drop it off at the SWCD/NRCS office at 635 9th St NW between 8 a.m. and 4:30 p.m. Monday-Friday or email it to sara.berges@ia.nacdnet.net. Each picture should include your name and age, information about when the photo was taken, where it was taken, and should have the name of the water body if it has a name. If the photo is of a stream and you do not know the name, please try to look it up. This is a great opportunity to learn more about the different water bodies in Allamakee County.

Apply for State Cost-share today!

Have you been thinking of doing a project on your farm such as terraces, a sediment basin, or pond? How about a forestry project that you have been wanting to do like forest stand improvement, tree planting, or a windbreak? If you have thought about doing any of these projects on your farm, even if it may be a few years before you would like to complete them, stop in the office today to start the process by updating the conservation plan for your farm.

The conservation plan is developed by having a technician from our office meet with you at your farm to discuss your rotation, tillage, and conservation options. Once we have established a conservation plan, we can start generating estimates for your project(s) that would be eligible for state cost-share.

If you are interested in doing terraces, sediment basins, or ponds, state cost-share can help fund up to 50% of the project. A technician from the office will work with you to determine where the structure should go and have a map and estimate for you to review before signing up for the project. Once you sign up for the project, you must wait for funding to become available before starting the project. You will receive a letter stating the approval of your cost-share funds. If the project is started before you have been approved for cost-share, we will not be able to fund it. The cost-share on these practices may increase if they are associated with a watershed project such as Waterloo Creek.

If you would like to do any forestry work you will need to contact a District Forester and have them write a plan to turn into the office. The plan will state what work needs to be done and how many acres are associated with it. There is a minimum number of acres in order to qualify for some of these practices. For example, forest stand improvement has a minimum of 5 acres, tree planting a minimum of 3 acres, and site prep for natural regeneration has a minimum of 3 acres. All of these forestry practices and more are eligible for up to 75% cost-share through our office.

There are required maintenance agreements for all of these practices. The landowner is responsible for maintaining the practice for the length of the maintenance agreement. If any repair is required, it will be done at the expense of the landowner. If any of these projects are removed before the maintenance agreements expire, the landowner will be required to pay back all of the cost-share money received from the state. The different practices have different maintenance agreement lengths. Most of the forestry maintenance agreements are for at least 10 years while structures like terraces and ponds have maintenance lengths of 20 years.

Waterloo Creek Watershed Project

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.

This project is funded by the State of Iowa's Watershed Improvement Review Board (WIRB) and the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation (NFWF). WIRB funding provides cost-share assistance for conservation practices including terraces, pasture management, sediment control basins, grade stabilization structures/ponds, and stream bank stabilization. The NFWF grant provides funding for technical support throughout the watershed. To date, there have been 6,600 feet of terraces constructed. These have included grass back and narrow base terraces. Additional completed projects include two stream bank stabilization sites, a sediment control basin, and a pond. We also have many projects approved that will start construction either this fall or next spring.

In May 2014, Justin Nie began working as the new Waterloo Creek Watershed Coordinator. Nie's background includes 14 years of farming and a Bachelor of Science degree from Upper Iowa University in Conservation Management. He is available to talk with Waterloo Creek Watershed landowners about any their conservation concerns. Nie will meet landowners on their property or in the office. He is still trying to make it around to meet everyone in the watershed and making sure everyone that needs or wants conservation assistance is getting it.

In addition to Nie, Bob Joachim has assisted as a Project Technician for the Waterloo/Bee/Duck Creek Watershed. For the past year he has been meeting with landowners in both Iowa and Minnesota and has been designing practices in both states. His knowledge and experience in the field has been very beneficial.

The Waterloo Creek Project will be wrapping up in October 2015. If anyone would like assistance getting any practices done they need to talk with Nie as soon as possible. There is limited watershed funding left and a short amount of time to get the projects completed. If anyone has questions Nie can be contacted at 563-568-2246 ext. 3 or Justin.nie@ia.nacdn.net.

This year, we are also encouraging Waterloo/Bee/Duck Creek landowners to include conservation in their farm leases. An easy way to do this is to update your conservation plan and attach it to your farm lease. If you are interested in discussing this option, please talk to Sara Berges at the Allamakee SWCD office by calling 563-568-2246 ext. 113, stopping by the office, or emailing sara.berges@ia.nacdn.net.

Low Interest Loans for Soil Erosion and Manure Management Practices

The Allamakee office offers a Low Interest Loan program through the Iowa Department of Agriculture and Land Stewardship (IDALS). This program is a 3% loan that is to be paid over a period of 10 years. You can apply for the loan on: Terraces, grade stabilization structures, water and sediment control basins, pasture and hay land planting or prescribed grazing, grassed waterways and filter strips, field borders, windbreaks, and buffers, waste storage facilities, and deep bedded buildings or other roofed manure control structures that provide 100% confinement.

Eligible applicants include farmers, landowners, and livestock producers. Loans to implement practices for animal feeding operations can only be made to operations that are under 1,000 animal units and are not required to have an NPDES permit. Loans can only be made to existing operations or for replacement facilities when a water quality problem is being resolved. The primary purpose of the project cannot be expansion.

The loan terms are: loan amounts can be from \$5,000 - \$500,000, Terms up to ten years, can fund up to 100% of eligible project costs, 3% fixed interest for life of the loan, Applications accepted anytime, available through the lender of your choice, and can be used in conjunction with grants/cost-share.

If you are interested please stop in the office or call (563)568-2246 ext. 3 for more information we would be happy to assist you.

Dan Byrnes Retires after 12 years as Commissioner

Dan Byrnes has been a dedicated commissioner for the Allamakee County Soil and Water Conservation District for a total of 12 years. He served on the board as Vice-Chair and Treasurer and had participated in Conservation Education Day, helped in the fair booth, and other various activities on the Board. The district is grateful for his help on the board and his contributions to conservation. Thank you for all of your hard work and dedication to our office.



Including Conservation in Your Farm Lease: Why and How

Many landowners are unaware of their rights regarding conservation on their land. For example, did you know that Iowa law states that all of the crop residue belongs to the tenant unless otherwise stated in the lease agreement? Residue removal can have many negative effects including loss of nutrients, reduced water infiltration, increased bulk density, and loss of soil structure. If your renter removes crop residue, you may want to discuss maintenance rates of phosphorus and potassium to add nutrients back to the soil and/or the addition of a cover crop to protect the soil over winter. Landowners have the power to determine how they want their land to be farmed. Discussing lease terms regarding conservation and writing them into the lease allows decisions to be made before potential problems arise and also helps the landowner enforce conservation compliance on their ground. It is important to protect our soil because it is a limited resource and conservation can help to ensure the long-term productivity of the land. If you do not currently have a written lease, talk to a lawyer or you can use a fillable form template such as those available from ISU extension at www.extension.iastate.edu/adgdm. Additional information about farm leasing can be found at sustainablefarmlease.org.

An easy way to include conservation in your farm lease is to attach your NRCS conservation plan and plan map(s) as an addendum to the lease. The Allamakee SWCD currently has a project that provides a free service to help landowners/tenants update conservation plans for this purpose. Participation is voluntary. There is a need for this project because the requirement to maintain the conservation practices present on the land is often left out of lease discussions. In recent years, many operators have removed waterways, headlands, and buffers to create more crop ground. The past few years have had substantial spring rainfall, resulting in severe gullies and significant soil erosion in many locations. Ensure that the soil stays on the upland by maintaining/installing conservation practices and discussing conservation when you discuss your lease.

The conservation addendum can specify conservation practices to be implemented on specific fields as well as additional options 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. 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.nacdnet.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 Michelle Winkie, Sam Schwartz from Waukon High School and Matt Manning from Kee 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.



Michelle Winkie, Dan Byrnes (Allamakee SWCD Commissioner), and Sam Schwartz



Matt Manning

Visit us online at www.allamakeeswcd.org

The Allamakee County Soil & Water Conservation District is now online! Check us out at [allamakeeswcd.org](http://www.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.

Allamakee County Commissioners & Staff



District Commissioners (left to right)

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

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.



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 (through Feb. 2013)
Brady Kruger-CSP Technician (pictured on right below)
Justin Nie—Watershed Coordinator (Started May, pictured below)



Conservation Education Day

The Allamakee SWCD sponsored the 37th annual Conservation Education Day on May 8, 2014 for the county sixth-grade students. The event was held at the Waukon City Park. The weather was great and the students seemed to have a wonderful time. We hope they learned many concepts about conservation and enjoyed participating at the different stations.

The students learned about why conservation is important and different ways to conserve our natural resources. The instructors and the stations were as follows: Watersheds and Water Quality, Sara Berges and Bob Joachim, Allamakee SWCD; Native Animals, Ross, County Conservation; Fur Bearers, DNR officer, Bill Collins; Tree Planting, LeRoy Barnhart, Teacher; Archeology, Michael Douglas, Effigy Mounds; Extension Office, Sue Pederson, Oil Spills and Fish Identification, Bill Kalishek, IDNR Fisheries.

The Allamakee SWCD furnished trees from the State Forest Nursery for the students to plant during his session and supplied each student with a spruce tree to take home and plant on their own. The district also furnished the lunches for the staff and instructors. Brianne Wild, State Secretary, organized the event and served the lunches.



Annual use of District Funds

July 1, 2013- June 30, 2014

Payroll Account

Beginning Balance \$2,168.48

Income

Waterloo Creek WIRB	\$18,000.00
Waterloo NFWF	\$12,746.46
McKnight Lease	\$36,000.00
WFAN	\$225.33
Leopold Lease	\$28.80
Farm Bill	\$12,593.70
Cover Crop	\$89,966.50
IDALS-Intern	\$6,105.00
Indian Springs	\$6,224.98
Transfers In	\$36,055.11
Buffer Repayment	\$192.00
Award Sponsorships	\$825.00
Interest	\$94.50
Total	\$219,057.38

Expenditures

Payroll	\$54,431.21
Payroll Taxes	\$17,411.58
IPERS	\$10,470.66
Postage	\$846.33
Accounting fees	\$1,773.00
Equipment	\$1,462.28
Dues & Publications	\$1,278.90
Education & Awards	\$642.00
Meeting & Travel	\$453.10
Cover Crop	\$85,009.92
Transfer from IM	\$2,775.00
Waterloo Creek WIRB	\$24,339.81
Drake University	\$5,000.00
Advertisements	\$976.00
Iowa Workforce	\$146.46
IDALS Intern	\$99.00
Cons. Ed. Day	\$25.99
Trout Unlimited	\$75.00
Supplies	\$13.31
Total	\$207,229.55
Ending Balance	\$13,996.31

IM Account

Beginning Balance \$0.00

Income

Allotment	\$2,775.00
Mileage	\$416.13
Newsletter	\$1,284.70
Total	\$1,700.83
Ending Balance	\$1,074.17

Revolving Account

Beginning Balance	\$7,670.00
Income	
Donations	\$2,864.00
Interest	\$20.11
Total	\$2,885.11

Expenses

Award Banquet	\$275.17
Cons. Ed. Day	\$107.75
Scholarships	\$1,500.00
Total	\$1,882.92
Ending Balance	\$8,671.19

WSB Money Market

Beginning Balance	\$73,780.34
Income	
Interest	\$375.68
Expense	
Transfer to Payroll	\$30,370.41
Ending Balance	\$43,785.61

NASB Money Market

Beginning Balance	\$40,395.06
Interest	\$283.69
Ending Balance	\$40,678.75

DSC Funding Report FY14

IFIP Cost-Share

Allocation-	\$83,707.00
Supplemental Allocation -	\$41,662.50
Expended-	\$76,819.12
Obligated-	\$45,729.37
Unobligated-	\$2821.01

REAP-F

Allocation-	\$3,283.22
Supplemental Allocation-	\$9,849.66
Expended-	\$6,381.75
Obligated-	\$4,812.00
Unobligated-	\$1,939.13

REAP-P

Allocation-	\$10,461.14
Supplemental Allocation-	\$1,174.67
Expended-	\$4,378.68
Obligated-	\$4,416.00
Unobligated-	\$2,841.13

State Cost-Share Projects

Completed in FY13

Terraces	46,970 ft.
REAP/P	54.4 ac.
REAP/F	86.5 ac.
IDALS Buffers	197.9 ac.

Conservation Club Donors 2013-2014

Supporters \$5-25

Gary & Karen Galema	Dennis & Chris Soride
John Larkin	Jane & John Gadow
Virginia Holder	Jeff & Judy Huinker
Cyril & Shirley Larkin	Beverly Platten
Greg Palmer	Miles & Sue Schulte
Richard & Debbie Moose	

Savers \$26-\$50

Charles & Shirley Cota	Kenny & Becky Meyer
Miles & Sue Schulte	Clay & Adele Monserud
Jim & Mary Ann Boardman	Rollie Henkes
Jason Howe	Steve & Donna Story
Joseph & Inez Gallagher	Charles Berns
Roger & Connie Halverson	Robert & Diane Schulte
Dan & Joan Lyons	Bob Heffern
Dennis & Barb Nubendahl	Randy & Lois Dickson

Stewards \$51-Up

Brad & Linda Winkie	Dave & Rhonda Bahr
Vernalene Oelberg	David & Connie Bulman
Allan Bacon Family Trust	Dennis & Judy Byrnes
David Hahn & Leigh Ann Layman	
Gary White	Jerry & Machele Bulman
Ronald Berns	Dave Stilwell
Bob Stilwell	Mary Nagel
Steve & Chris Weymiller	

Scholarship

Eleanor O'Neil
Phil & Barb Salstrom
Julie Wood
Betty Decker
Ronald & Therese Snitker
Liz & Tony Willie
Leo & Kathy Conway
Kerndt Farms
John & Jenny Opfer
Gene & Barb Sanderman
Velma Huebner
Todd & Jan Soukup
Dan & Traci Byrnes
Byrnes Family
Brad & Linda Winkie
Elmo Hagen
Brian & Michelle Herman
Warner Enterprises
Gary & Diane Koschmeder
Herb & Ann Dehli