

Allamakee County SWCD Annual Report

2011-2012



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 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 and cover crop is killed or stops growing 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 2012.

The SWCD, partnered with Hall Robert's Son Inc., a seed company in Postville, IA, and 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. Producers that participated in this project had different goals and objectives for their cover crops and 4 different mixes were offered to meet their needs. The mixes used and the costs per acre are as follows:

- 2 bu winter rye/ac @ \$27.90/ac for seed
- 2 bu oats and 5# tillage radish/ac @ \$33.25/ac for seed
- 15 lbs ryegrass and 2# tillage radish/ac @ \$21.00/ac for seed
- 45 lbs winter rye and 6 lbs red clover and 3 lbs tillage radish/ac @ \$31.50/ac for seed

The cost for the aerial application was \$15/ac with a 10 acre minimum.

The service was offered in Allamakee, Clayton and Winneshiek Counties with a total of 1514 acres seeded into standing corn and soybeans from August 22th to August 27th. Hall Robert's Son Inc. mixed the seed and delivered it to the Waukon, Decorah, and Monona airports where the seed was loaded on to the plane. Depending on the mix used, 35-100 acres could be seeded with each load and about 60 acres could be seeded per hour. The plane was equipped with a GPS navigation system, flew 40-50 feet off the ground, and only flew when wind speeds were less than 10 miles per hour to ensure an accurate delivery of the seed.

Seed counts were completed in standing corn to alleviate concerns of the seed being caught in the corn canopy. Counts were completed on the 2 bu of winter rye mix and the oats and tillage radish mix. There were an average of 22.3 winter rye seeds per square foot and 20 oat seeds and 2.9 radish seeds per square foot. Some seed was observed on the corn leaves, but most of it had fallen to the ground within a few days. The distribution of seed appeared to be very uniform across the fields that were checked.

Approximately 10 days after the seeding was completed a rainfall of 1 to 4 inches over 2 days occurred over the entire area. Germination was observed within 2 days of the rain fall event. Ten days after the rainfall, the oats and winter rye were 4-6 inches tall and the radishes were at the second leaf stage. Seedling counts were completed on September 15th in standing corn on the winter rye and oat

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radish mixes. The winter rye mix averaged 11 seedlings per square foot. The oats and tillage radish mix averaged 15.9 oat seedlings and 1.7 radish seedlings per square foot. The number of seedlings is less than the seed counts because not all of the seeds had germinated or had been moved or consumed by seed predators. Stand counts will be completed on all the mixes after harvest to evaluate the seeding rates and advise changes for next year.

The initial results from this program are encouraging and, if there is sufficient interest, we will offer the program next year. If you are interested in adding cover crops to your operation, whether through aerial seeding or conventional methods, please contact us to discuss what cover crop options will meet your objectives and update your conservation plan. Cost share assistance may be available through several State and Federal programs.

The Allamakee SWCD would like to thank the Waukon, Decorah and Monona airports, Hall Robert's Son Inc., and Klinkenborg Aerial Spraying for their cooperation in this effort..

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 close to our 2011 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 2012 state funding was allocated by August and we hope to receive additional supplemental funding, although there are no guarantees that the state will allocate any more funds.

In addition to the state cost share program Allamakee County received federal dollars of \$798,877 in the EQIP program and \$93,393 in the CSP program. These dollars are used for terraces, livestock buildings to replace open lots, manure storage, stream-bank stabilization and many more practices.

We continue to pursue special funding for watershed projects. We are wrapping up a very successful project on Indian Springs. This project allowed us to increase the cost share amount, often by combining watershed funds with federal funds, to 75 percent of the total cost. The Indian Springs project is funded by the WIRB, Watershed Improvement Review Board, and it is the first time we have worked with a watershed that was partially urban, encompassing part of Waukon that includes the industrial park and the city park. The goals of this project are to minimize the amount of stormwater runoff from the city of Waukon into the Indian Springs Pond, reduce the amount of sediment and nutrient loading in the stream through pasture management and cropland conservation practices, and to educate the public on how urban and rural residents can impact water quality.

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 WIRB board. We have continued to conduct water sampling and now have three years of data. 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 are looking forward to launching a new grant to assist landowners with writing "conservation addendums" to their lease agreements. This grant is from the McKnight Foundation and will begin later this fall.

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, Arlyn (Butch) Fossum, and Randy Kruger.

District Commissioners

Lynn Stock, Chairman
Dan Byrnes, Vice Chair
Randy Kruger, Treasurer
Arlyn Fossum
Jack Knight

District Staff

Sara Berges
Michelle Elliott
Jim Ranum

IDALS-DSC Staff

Brianne Bjerke

NRCS Staff

LuAnn Rolling, DC Tom Duvel, CA
Jacob Groth, SC
Steve Scholtes, SCT
Barb Hanson, SCT

Allamakee SWCD Awards Scholarships to Four Students

The Allamakee SWCD awarded four \$500 scholarships in conjunction with Allamakee Dollars for Scholars. The recipients were Rachel Bjerke, Lars Sivesind, Nick Stortz, and Matthew Schulte all graduates of Waukon Senior 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.



Nick Stortz



Lars Sivesind



Rachel Bjerke



Matt Schulte

Federal Programs Available for Conservation Practices

By LuAnn Rolling

There are currently two Federal programs available for installing conservation practices. They include the Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) 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 not include grain drying or handling.

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 in karst terrain, characterized by 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. 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 and involves 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.

**Allamakee County Soil
& Water
Conservation District
FY-12 – July 2011—June 2012
Report on Annual Use of District
Funds**

District Employee Funds**Beginning Balance \$5,036.59****Income**

WIRB	\$34,000.00
Interest	\$27.61
Transfer from WSB	
Money Market	\$69,376.00
Transfer from NASB	
Money Market	\$72,000.00
Farm Bill Clerical and Technical	\$22,619.70
Miscellaneous	\$4,859.00
Total Receipts	\$202,882.30

Expenses

Federal Taxes	\$10,520.58
Hagen & Kallevang	\$940.00
IA Taxes	\$1,882.00
Indian Springs	\$10,151.41
IPERS	\$6,955.96
Ludlow Creek	\$89,252.88
Transfer to WSB	
Money Market	\$26,750.00
Transfer to 1M	\$2,000.00
Wages Paid	\$43,957.36
Waterloo Creek	\$1,720.94
Postage	\$1,308.38
Unemployment	\$158.25
Miscellaneous	\$7,836.53
Total Expenses	\$201,434.29

Ending Balance \$6,484.61**1M Funds**

Beginning Balance	\$750.00
Deposit	\$2,000.000
CDI Dues	-\$850.00
Comm. Mileage	-\$366.21
NACD Dues	-\$100.00
Newsletter Printing	-\$760.00
Postage	-\$347.29
USPS Bulk Mail Permit	-\$190.00
Ending Balance	\$136.50

Revolving Account

Beginning Balance \$4,948.23

Income

Donations	\$3,484.00
Interest	\$14.71
Total Income	\$3,498.71

Expenses

Miscellaneous	\$3.98
Scholarships	\$1684.00
Conservation Ed Day	\$224.31
Fairbooth	\$95.00
Total Expenses	\$2,007.29

Ending Balance \$6,439.65**Money Market WSB**

Beginning Balance	\$108,673.32
Interest	\$815.60
Deposits (from payroll)	\$26,750.00
Payments (to payroll)	-\$69,377.00
Ending Balance	\$66,861.92

Money Market NASB

Beginning Balance	\$134,643.17
Interest	\$1,026.71
Transfer to WSB MM	-\$72,000.00
Ending Balance	\$63,669.88

Ludlow Creek Watershed (WIRB)

Beginning Balance	\$94,222.03
Allocated	\$34,000.000
Obligated	\$0.00
Expended	\$112,656.11
Balance	\$15,565.92

Indian Springs Watershed (WIRB)

Beginning Balance	\$55,429.58
Allocated	\$0.00
Obligated	\$3,888.00
Expended	\$33,670.33
Balance	\$21,759.25

Waterloo Creek

Beginning Balance	\$0.00
Allocation	\$0.00
Obligated	\$0.00
Expended	\$5,400.56
Balance	-\$5,400.56

Yellow River Direct Drain (WIRB)

Beginning Balance	\$8,059.42
Allocation	\$0.00
Obligated	\$0.00
Expended	\$0.00
Balance	\$8,059.42

SWCD Website

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.

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.

Allamakee 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, education, and financial assistance to the public by using all available resources.

Waterloo Creek Watershed

Waterloo Creek Watershed is unique because it is designated as a high quality, cold-water stream in Iowa, but is also impaired for bacteria. The water quality of Waterloo Creek is important ecologically, but also its popularity as a trout-fishing destination means that it is economically important to the region due to tourism.

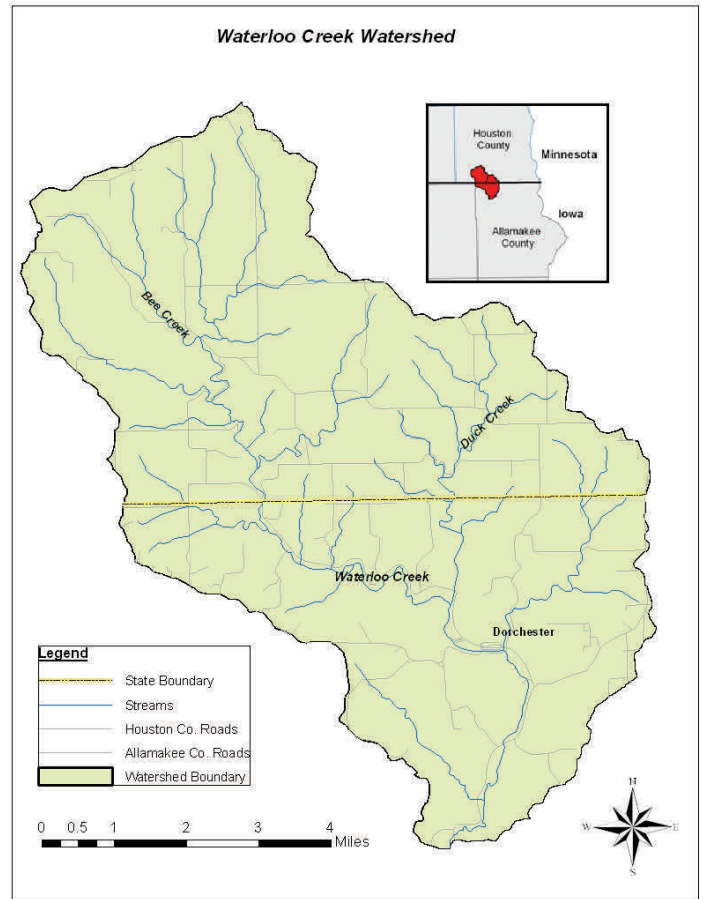
2012 is the third and final year of water sampling in the Waterloo Creek Watershed, which is funded by a grant from the Iowa DNR/EPA. The end result of this grant will be the completion of a watershed protection plan, which is currently being developed and will be used for future grant applications.

Bi-weekly water sampling has been conducted since April at seven locations in the watershed and will conclude in October. Temperature monitors were installed in the spring to monitor water temperature continuously at five locations in the watershed.

Macroinvertebrate sampling was conducted in August by the State Hygienic Laboratory. Samples were collected at three sites that were representative of stream environments throughout the watershed. Macroinvertebrates are indicators of water quality because some species are more pollution tolerant than others. The number and type of organisms found will give a good indication of water quality.

In addition to water sampling, other assessments are being done this year within the watershed. Door-to-door landowner surveys are taking place to discuss watershed issues and to determine interest in conservation practices. Livestock and land cover/use assessments are also being updated.

The Waterloo Creek Watershed Project was recently approved for funding through the Watershed Improvement Review Board (WIRB). The project will start in January 2013. While the funds provided through this grant are only available to implement conservation practices in Iowa, other funding sources are being sought to apply practices in Minnesota. Landowners will be expected to sign up for federal EQIP funds to combine with grant funds in order to provide up to 75% cost-share for grade stabilization structures and terraces. If you own land in the Iowa portion of the watershed and are interested in applying for a practice, please contact the Allamakee County SWCD at 563-568-2246 ext. 3 or stop by our office at 635 9th St NW in Waukon.



Introducing Michelle Elliott, District Technician

My name is Michelle Elliott and I am the District Technician working on the Waterloo Creek Watershed Project.

I grew up on a farm north of Boone in central Iowa. I graduated from Iowa State University in 2002 with a BS in Environmental Science. I received a Graduate Certificate in Geographic Information Systems (GIS) from ISU in 2006. From 2002-2011, I worked in the Iowa DNR's Field Services and Compliance Bureau in Des Moines, Spencer, and Mason City.

I moved to northeast Iowa last fall. My husband is from Decorah and works in Food Service for the Decorah Community School District. We live on an acreage near Ridgeway and enjoy biking, camping, fishing, gardening, and kayaking.

I am pleased to be working in the environmental field in this beautiful part of the state and enjoying working with the residents of Allamakee County.

Conservation Education Day

The Allamakee SWCD sponsored the 36th annual Conservation Education Day on May 3, 2012 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 Michelle Elliott, Allamakee SWCD; Native Animals, Larry Stott, retired Waukon teacher; Fur Bearers, DNR officer, Bill Collins; Tree Planting, DNR Forester, David Asche; Conservation Station, Iowa Learning Farms; and Fish Identification, Theresa Shay, IDNR Fisheries.

David Asche furnished trees from the State Forest Nursery for the students to plant during his session. The district 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 Bjerke, State Secretary, organized the event and served the lunches.



**Theresa Shay,
DNR, Fish ID**



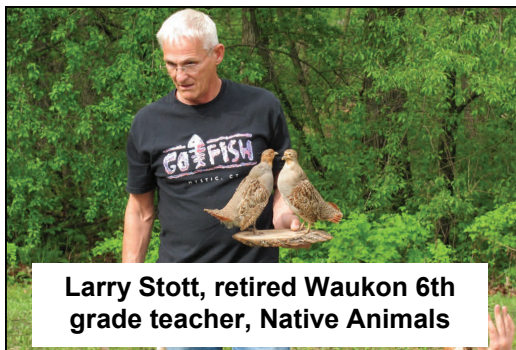
**Dave Asche, DNR Forester,
Tree Planting Station**



**Bill Collins, DNR,
Fur Bearers
Station**



**Michelle Elliott, District
Technician,
Watershed Station**



**Larry Stott, retired Waukon 6th
grade teacher, Native Animals**



**Iowa Learning Farms,
Conservation Station**

Conservation Club Donors FY 2011-2012

Supporters \$5-\$25

Earl Goodman
Mary Flatin
Gerald Cline
Fidelity Bank Waukon &
Postville Branch
Earl & Vivian Iverson
Chuck & Shirley Cota
Curtis Lundy
Steve & Donna Story
Dennis & Christine Soride
Lloyd & Dleores Dehning
Oswald Goettler
Owen & Mildred myhre
Mark & Debra Palmer
Cyril & Shirley Larkin
Kurthridge Farm
Brad & Linda Winkie
Edgar & Shirley Brainard
Marilyn Clark
Earl & Vivian Iverson
Dave & Anne Blocker
Walter & Lorraine Teslow
Clayton & Adele Monserud

Soil Savers \$26-\$50

Earl Goodman
Clayton & Adele Monserud
Daniel & Joan Lyons
Dennis & Judy Byrnes

Dennis Nebendahl
Jeff & Judy Huinker
Randy & Lois Dickson
Neal & Florence Cohen
Rollie Henkes
Donald & Rhonda Bahr
John Leschensky
Curtis & Diane Kraus
James & Mary Ann Boardman
Robert & Diane Schulte
John Dresser
Randy Petersburg & Linda Carstens

Stewards \$51

Dean & Mary Teslow
David Stilwell
David Hahn & Leigh Ann Layman
Walter Hagen Family Trust
Dennis & Sherri Lyon
Allan L. Bacon Family Trust
Dan P. & Nooch White
Dave & Gail Prestemon
Bruening Rock Products Inc.
Steve & Christine Weymiller
Tom & Mary Mellick
Gary & Diane Koschmeder
Deanna Schultz
Larry & Jane Lamborn
Michael Osterholm
Kent & Joan McCormick
Jeff & Martha Byrnes

Scholarship

Betty Decker
Phil & Barb Salstrom
Greg & Marlene Palmer
Velma Huebner
Eugene & Barbara Sanderman
Roger & Dianna Dickson
Neal & Florence Cohen
Dan & Traci Byrnes
Leo Byrnes Family
Gary & Connie Tilleros
Riverland Conservancy Inc.
Runde Land Company
Dr. & Mrs. Louis Bray
Jim & Sue Dyer
Roger & Susan Schlitter
Vernalene Oelberg
Brad & Linda Winkie
Glenn Griffin
Ron & Angie Cooper
Warner Enterprises LLC
Elmo & Sheryl Hagen
Leo & Kathy Conway
Tony & Liz Wille
Don Piche
Meryl Honn

DSC Funding Report

Financial account of funds provided to the Allamakee County SWCD from the Iowa Legislature through programs administered by the Iowa Department of Agriculture and Land Stewardship Division of Soil Conservation (IDALS-DSC).

FARMS Regular Account

Allocations	\$50,931.53
Obligated/Expended	\$50,144.43
Unobligated	\$ 787.10

FARMS REAP-P

Allocations	\$ 7,429.14
Supplemental	\$ 1,272.00
Slippage	\$ 6,450.58
Obligated	\$13,002.00
Unobligated	\$ 2,149.72

FARMS REAP-F

Allocations	\$ 2,476.38
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Supplemental	\$ 7,429.14
Slippage	\$ 5,710.27
Obligated	\$11,832.00
Unobligated	\$ 3,783.79

Ludlow Creek Watershed (WIRB Grant)

Beginning Balance	\$ 94,222.03
Allocated	\$ 34,000.00
Expended	\$112,656.11
Balance	\$ 15,565.92

Indian Springs Watershed (WIRB Grant)

Beginning Balance	\$55,429.58
Allocated	\$ 0.00
Obligated	\$ 1,638.00
Expended	\$33,670.33
Balance	\$20,121.25

PRACTICES/PROJECTS COMPLETED FY11 July 2011—June 2012

State Cost-Share Terraces

Cedar Crest Properties	1425 feet
John Gavin	6550 feet
Gregory Kerndt	6250 feet
Theodore McNally	2250 feet
Darrell Troendle	1175 feet
Elmo Hagen	5775 feet
John Ruff	1925 feet
TOTAL	25,350 Feet

REAP-P

Nancy Grangaard Rev. Trust-TSI	24.5 acres
Mary Jane Hatfield- TSI	15.1 acres
Steven Kiley-Tree/Shrub Est.	5.8 acres
Ronald Palmer-Windbreak	1.0 acre
Gerald Conway-Site prep.	8.7 acres
Gerald Conway-Tree/Shrub Est.	3.1 acres
Alex Galema-TSI	5.0 acres
Ralph Reppe-Windbreak	1.0 acre
David J. Morris-Windbreak	1.0 acre
Jeff Mackeben-TSI	38.0 acres
Matthew Brainard-Windbreak	1.0 acre
Thomas Skarlis-TSI	17.0 acres
Dave Weymiller-TSI	45.0 acres
TOTAL	166.2 acres

REAP-F

Peggy Khan-Windbreak	1 acres
Reginald Freilinger- TSI	13.4 acres
Duane Vorseth- Tree/Shrub Est.	3.5 acres
Jimmie Stewart-Tree/Shrub Est.	6.6 acres
Jimmie Stewart-Conservation Cover	17.4 ac
Nancy Grangaard Rev. Trust - Site Prep.	3.4 acres
Angela Freilinger-Mohs-TSI	14.5 acres
Angela Freilinger-Mohs-TSI	6.0 acres
Thomas Skarlis-TSI	3.0 acres
Aandi Deering-Windbreak	1.0 acres
Miller Lansing Trust-Tree/ Shrub Est.	3.4 acres
Cory Fritzler- TSI	12.8 acres
Arnold Crum-TSI	24.5 acres
Nelson Converse-Windbreak	1.0 acres
TOTAL	111.5 acres

Ludlow Creek Project

Maury Regan-Terraces	1700 feet
Meryl Honn- Pond	1
Steve Enyart-Ag. Waste	1
John Opfer – Ag. Waste	1
Byron Schultz-Terraces	6650 feet

Ken Kiesau-Terraces	950 feet
Darrel Crawford-Terraces	2500 feet

Indian Springs Project

City of Waukon-Rain Garden	1
City of Waukon-Rain Barrels	2
City of Waukon – Sediment Basin	1
Tony Baxter-Sediment Basin	1
Jean Schon-Rain Barrels	3
Megan Enyart-Rain Barrel	1

Buffer Initiative- \$200/acre

Dan Lyons	1.8 acres
Wayne Schulte	10.3 acres
Dan Lyons	15.1 acres
Jon Hagen	3.9 acres
Adam Anderson	2.0 acres
Trevor Herman	2.0 acres
Gerald Conway	3.8 acres
Burton Wild	2.7 acres
Wayne Kelly	4.1 acres
Jeff Kelly	4.1 acres
Mike Burrichter	3.4 acres
Jeff Byrnes	12.8 acres
Tom Gavin	7.2 acres
Ryan Christianson	8.0 acres
Maynard Johnson	11.2 acres
Paul Sorum	13.6 acres
Mike Burrichter	6.0 acres
TOTAL	112 acres

Dan and Traci Byrnes Win Iowa Farm Environmental Leader Award

Dan and Traci Byrnes, rural Waukon, were recipients of the "Iowa Farm Environmental Leader Award" at the Iowa State Fair on August 17th. The award was presented Iowa Governor Terry Branstad, Iowa Secretary of Agriculture Bill Northey and Iowa Department of Natural Resources Director Chuck Gipp. Karl Brooks, Regional Administrator for the Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) Region 7 Office in Kansas City, KS was also present at the ceremony to recognize the winners.

"The agricultural industry is a vital part of the state's economy, and a vital part in feeding a growing world population. I know farmers take great pride for the work they do and the commodities they produce. Farmers also take pride in their environmental stewardship, by protecting topsoil from erosion and keeping our waterways clean. This award is thanks for their efforts," Branstad said at the award ceremony.

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Dan and Traci produce corn, oats, alfalfa hay, pasture and purebred angus cattle on their farm in Jefferson Township. They are the third generation of the Byrnes family who has now owned and operated this farm for 107 years. They have incorporated minimum tillage, contour grass buffer strips, rotational grazing, soil and manure sampling, manure management, contour farming, waterways, wildlife areas, grassed headlands, farmstead windbreaks and field windbreaks on this farm. They have also installed two manure management facilities, cover crops, filter strips along their stream and tree plantings around their sinkholes.

Dan feels it is very important to preserve the quality of soil and water resources for future generations. "I feel there are ways to implement practices and still make the farming operation profitable," Byrnes said. "I want this farm to be in as good or better condition than it was when I started for the sake of the next generation"

Dan has been an elected member of the Allamakee Soil and Water Conservation District for 10 years. He was on the Allamakee County Extension Council for 12 years and the St. Patrick's parish council for 8 years. He is currently the secretary/treasurer of the Equity Livestock Marketing Cooperative in Waukon.

The award is a joint effort between the Governor, Lt. Governor, Iowa Department of Agriculture and Land Stewardship, and Iowa Department of Natural Resources to recognize the efforts of Iowa's farmers as environmental leaders committed to healthy soils and improved water quality. It seeks to recognize the exemplary voluntary actions of farmers that improve or protect the environment and natural resources of this state while also encouraging other farmers to follow in their footsteps by building success upon success.

"Iowa has tremendous farmers who are not only the most productive in the world, but who also understand that we must care for the soil and water and preserve it for the next generation," Northey said. "By highlighting farmers that have taken steps on their farm to better protect the environment, we also want the award to bring attention to local leaders in environmental stewardship and serve as an encouragement to others to incorporate additional conservation practices."

Winners were presented a certificate as well as a yard sign donated by Monsanto. All winners were chosen by a selection group representing both conservation and agriculture. The selection group that approved the 2012 winners included Jim Gillespie from the Iowa Department of Agriculture & Land Stewardship, Bruce Trautman from the Iowa Department of Natural Resources, Jim Frederick from the Conservation Districts of Iowa, John Lawrence from Iowa State University Extension and Outreach, Sean McMahon from The Nature Conservancy, Jeff Pape from the Iowa Farm Bureau, Jay Lynch from the Iowa Corn Growers Association, Jim Andrew from the Iowa Soybean Association, Pat Daufeldt from the Iowa Turkey Federation, and Dave Moody from the Iowa Pork Producers Association.



Final Year of Indian Springs Pond Watershed Project

The Indian Springs Pond Watershed Project, funded by the Watershed Improvement Review Board (WIRB), is nearing the end of the final year of the three-year project. The main goal of the project was to reduce the amount of sediment and nutrients entering upper Big Paint Creek and the Indian Springs Pond, located in the Waukon City Park. The watershed is approximately 1,300 acres in size and includes some agricultural land as well as the western and southern boundaries of the City of Waukon. This project brought together agricultural and urban landowners as well as many city boards, including the Park and Recreation Board and the City Council with the common goal of protecting the water quality of the Indian Springs Pond. The pond was constructed over 20 years ago at a depth of 16 feet, but has since silted in to an average depth of around 3 feet.

(continued on page 10)

(Continued from pg 9) Several rural landowners participated in the project by installing terraces and sediment basins to capture runoff or by setting up a rotational grazing plan to reduce erosion and nutrient enriched runoff. Many urban landowners installed rain barrels to capture rain for watering plants.

Several conservation practices were installed and conducted throughout the Waukon City Park. A sediment basin was installed north of the campground to capture runoff from the adjacent road and crop field. Two rain gardens have been installed; one by the Thompson Shelter (installed in 2011) and the second south of the campground (installed in 2012). The older one is blooming beautifully while the newer one has had a slow start with the drought this year. Two rain barrels were installed on the Thompson Shelter to demonstrate how rain barrels work and to provide water for watering nearby flowers and washing off feet after playing on the new playground.

Educational signs were installed throughout the park. They highlight topics such as karst topography (near the sinkholes west of the campground), watersheds (by the pond), conservation practices (north of the new sediment basin), rain gardens (by the 2011 rain garden), and oak savannas (by the western parking lot for the new trail). There are also a few small signs with topics such as bur oaks, open grown trees, and keeping nature clean.

In addition to the WIRB Grant, a Resource Enhancement and Protection (REAP) Grant was obtained by the City of Waukon and the Allamakee SWCD to improve the quality of the woodland in the park and the grassland in the south unit of the park and to install a recreational trail. Over the past 2 years, volunteers and Luster Heights inmates have worked to cut much of the invasive vegetation out of the park woodland and under the bur oaks in the south unit. This has decreased competition for the existing oaks and has allowed ground cover vegetation to grow and reduce erosion. A volunteer and Luster Heights inmates built five bridges and Skyline Construction installed the majority of the trail last fall. A gravel trail currently follows the valley along Big Paint Creek, south of the pond. It will be completed this fall and will wrap back around to 11th Ave SW following the ridgeline.

Once this watershed project is completed, the city will take bids to get the pond dredged to return it to its original depth of 16 feet. This intention of this watershed project has been to protect the pond so that it is not as prone to siltation as in has been in the past. The City hopes that by dredging the pond, the water quality and fish diversity will be improved. Currently, sources of funding are being explored with hopes that the pond can be dredged soon.

Thank you to everyone who participated in this project, either by installing conservation practices or by volunteering to help with one of the activities. The only way to have a successful project is to have active participation.

New Conservation Lease Project

The Allamakee County Soil and Water Conservation District is pleased to announce that the McKnight Foundation has approved our grant application for the Conservation Lease Project. The District's Conservation Lease Specialist, Sara Berges, will work with interested landowners, and hopefully operators as well, to create lease addendums that specify conservation practices to be implemented on specific fields. The addendums will look similar to a conservation plan but will be more detailed and will include such topics as specific crop rotations, required conservation practices, and nutrient management. They can also include stipulations for non-compliance, shared costs for conservation practice installation, and residue management, as well as many other topics. The goal would be to have the landlord and renter work with the conservation lease specialist to determine their priorities for the farm and work together to come to an agreement about how to address those priorities. Sara will also conduct annual compliance oversight on each farm to ensure that the plan is being followed.

This project is a joint effort with the Drake Agricultural Law Center. The Drake Agricultural Law Center Fellow, Ed Cox, will be coming to Waukon later this fall to hold public informational meetings along with Sara. Having Ed work with us on the project will ensure that the lease addendums meet legal requirements and to build on the past work that they have done, as can be viewed on their website sustainablefarmlease.org.

Please keep an eye on the Waukon Standard and the Allamakee SWCD website (allamakeeswcd.org) for announcements regarding the public informational meetings about the project and resulting lease addendums. If you would like more information on this project or may be interested, please stop by the office, call us at 563-568-2246 ext. 3, or email Sara at Sara.Berges@ia.nacdnet.net.

