

Holt SWCD Annual Report Lists Past Year's Activities

This is the report of the Holt Soil and Water Conservation District's activities and accomplishments during the year 1960.

The following table gives an outline of the accomplishments for the past year on some of the major conservation practices carried out by District cooperators.

Practice	Unit	1960	Date
Strip cropping	Ac.	311	109,302
Cover cropping	Ac.	283	27,886
Proper use	Ac.	36,706	253,780
Permanent seeding	Ac.	1,839	30,621
Dune Stabilization	Ac.	31	5,081
Terraces & Divisions	Ac.	159	8,227
Waterway Development	Mi.	1.2	69.5
Pond construction	No.	4	322
Land leveling	Ac.	20	278

Tree planting increased primarily because several of the large irrigators, using self propelled systems planted the non-irrigated corners to trees. We believe this is a good practice and that in a few years it will afford livestock protection as well as excellent wildlife cover and increase the beauty of the country side.

Dam construction was somewhat lower because contractors were not available to build all that were requested and staked.

Sixteen Great Plains contracts written this year brings the total to 34 for that program to date. Accomplishments for the year on these 34 contracts are in brief as follows: 1,027 acres of permanent seeding. Of this the range inter-seeder was used on 90 acres. There were 10 dams constructed, four were livestock water, fed by intermittent spring flows, five erosion control dams and one large irrigation dam. Seven livestock wells and one spring development were cost shared. Five

acres of waterways were developed and 1.7 miles of terraces and diversions built. Tree planting totaled 19 acres. Cost share payments were made on nearly 10 miles of fence for cross fencing and protection of new seedlings and tree plantings. All of this seems a sizeable amount of conservation work to be completed by 34 cooperators in one year.

Informing Public Is No Small Task

There were 34 news releases made during the year. These were printed in from one to four of the newspapers in the county.

Each Thursday the 1000 watt radio station KBRX in O'Neill carries a 15 minute program covering some phase of conservation. Responsibility for these programs is shared by the County Extension Agent, Weston Whitmer and Bob Hill of the Soil Conservation Service. Occasionally a District Supervisor assists with the program.

Supervisors Help In Numerous Areas

District Supervisors attended the area meeting in Ainsworth in December. Three Supervisors attended the State Convention of SWCD's in Fremont in October. They took with them as their guest, Weston Whitmer, Soil Conservationist, who has been a very valuable person to our District for the past ten years.

Elmer Juracek, our secretary-treasurer has served the past year as state vice president of the state association and at the convention in Fremont, was re-elected to another term in that office.

Mr. Juracek also attended the National Watershed Congress in Washington, D. C., and the area meeting in Sheridan, Wyo.

Three Supervisors also attended the National Convention of SWCD's in Louisville, Ky. Such participation surely indicates the life and enthusiasm

asm our District has in working for soil and water conservation.

Four-H teams from the Holt District again enjoyed a successful year. For the third year out of the last four, Holt county has had the top 4-H Individual at the State Range Judging contest. This year's winner was Keith Krugman. Our top team, which tied for sixth place at the National contest in Oklahoma City last spring, participated though they were ineligible to compete in the State contest. They topped the winning team by 100 points. They are again eligible to participate in the National contest. O'Neill high school also had an FFA team competing in the State contest.

Holt SWCD helped sponsor the county and area contests this year. There were 23 contestants in the county contest and 63 in the area competition.

One of the Supervisors is a 4-H Leader in Range conservation and placed third in the adult class in the National contest. Two of the boys on our champion range judging team are sons of Bob Hill, our Unit Conservationist. Such interest and cooperation has had a part to play in the success of Range Judging in the Holt SWCD.

The Holt SWCD, Fehr's Tractor and Equipment Co. and Vic Uphoff of the L & S Steel Company sponsored the contractors meeting. There were about 25 people attending. Specifications and cost share rates were explained by personnel from both the ACP and SCS.

The Holt SWCD entered the Goodyear contest with Milton McKathie of Atkinson being the co-operator chosen to represent the District.

Clarence Focken of Atkinson and Henry Miksch of Stuart were the cooperators to represent the District in the Sioux City contest. The Holt District won the area competition.

One thousand copies of the 22 year Progress Report booklets were distributed in the District. The supervisors decided to finance the cost of the booklets themselves and not ask for a sponsor. This left the back page

available to add local information.

The annual meeting, called Holt SWCD Awards Night, was held at the Legion club in O'Neill March 11.

Supervisor Elmer Juracek presided over the program. All supervisors took part in some way or other. The new Soil Stewardship film, "The Earth is the Lord's," was shown and set the stage for the program that followed.

Sloux City Awards went to three good cooperators of the District: Darrel Bright of O'Neill, Carol Summerer of Ewing and Edward Sterns of Atkinson.

The farm of David Keidel of Stuart was chosen for the Conservation Picture award. The award had been sponsored by the O'Neill National Bank and Mr. Keidel was presented a photo of his farm at the Annual Meeting.

Mr. Ivan Minshall had won the Goodyear Award. All award winners were presented SWCD co-operator signs by the District.

Mr. Richard Gavitt, Extension Forester was present and presented Tree Farmer Awards to two of our District's outstanding tree planters. These went to Mr. E. J. Revell of O'Neill and Mr. Ernest Billstein of Chambers.

Watershed Program Sensible Approach To Water Program

The Watershed program is the sensible approach to our Soil and Water Conservation program. That is the opinion of Bill Richards, Holdrege farmer and president of the National Association of Soil and Water Conservation Districts.

The backbone is its federal, state and local partnership. However there is an increasing tendency to shift the entire responsibility to the Federal Government.

"But the answer, in my opinion is not to shift the authority to a Federal Agency, but to strengthen agencies of state government."

"We have barely scratched the surface in development of Nebraska resources," Mr. Richards said.

"The time will come when as a nation we will be called upon to produce at the maximum of our capacity if we are to meet the problems of an exploding population and expanding industrial economy."

Mr. Richards said the eastern end of the nation is already a deficit food producing area and that the line will continue to move westward.

The Elkhorn and its tributaries drain a huge area extending from the Elkhorn source near Bassett to its confluence with the Platte near Ashland.

Warren Fairchild, committee executive secretary, said the committee agreed to cooperate with the association in asking the USDA to make a basin-wide survey of irrigation, flood control and conservation needs.

He said the request is the first made in the state under Public Law 566, which authorizes the USDA to do basic planning in co-operation with state agencies.

He described the Elkhorn association's suggestion as the "most energetic" plan ever proposed in the state.

Robert Bridge of Norfolk, Elkhorn president, had asked the state committee to approach the secretary of agriculture for planning aid.

The Elkhorn Valley Water Resources Association has asked the Nebraska Soil and Water Conservation Committee for assistance in developing a comprehensive resource development plan for the Elkhorn basin. The plan includes soil and water conservation, flood control, irrigation, recreation, fish and wild life program and all phases of resource development.

The Nebraska Soil and Water Conservation Committee has agreed to cooperate with the Elkhorn Water Resources Association in seeking federal help for planning a watershed program for the entire Elkhorn River Basin.

State Senator Ross Rasmussen of Hooper said he's "highly pleased" that the Nebraska Soil and Water Conservation Committee has agreed to work with the Elkhorn Valley Water Resources Association in the project.

The rivers channel has been straightened in several locations under local supervision, first from Wisner to Beemer, then from Beemer to West Point and finally from West Point to the Dodge county line.

Each of these projects has caused flood problems downstream, according to the senator, a former Dodge County Supervisor. "Now Dodge county is catching it. We're on the nozzle end," he said.

Dodge county recently completed correction of a loop to save a bridge north of Hooper and currently is correcting another loop to save Scribner bridge and protect the town of Scribner.

"This work was made necessary by the straightening projects above Scribner, which caused water to flow faster than the stream could carry it," he said.

"It proves that projects such as these can't be done piecemeal but must be part of a total watershed project."

New Names Appear As Supervisors

The regular election was held in conjunction with the annual meeting. Harvey Krugman declined to be a candidate for reelection. Other nominees were Elmer Juracek, incumbent; Russell Bareman, Thilo Poessnecker, Robert Witherwax and Elmer Vogel.

Elmer Juracek and Elmer Vogel were elected to serve on the board. Later in the year Clarence Ernst resigned because of an attorney General's ruling stating that it was not possible to serve on a Soil and Water Conservation District board and the County Board of Supervisors concurrently. Robert Witherwax was appointed by the board to fill the vacancy.

Schools Urged to Teach Conservation

No boy or girl should leave high school without a basic understanding of resource conservation according to Educationally Yours, a monthly publication of the Nebraska Department of Education.

The publication said about 37 per cent of the total area of Nebraska has been severely affected by erosion in about 85 years of use.

"What will it be in another 85 years?" it asks. It urged schools to step up their efforts in teaching conservation.

Grass Seed Growers Plan Year's Program

A meeting was also held with the grass seed growers to determine policy, commission charge, to set prices and to work out other problems.

The Vocational Agriculture classes of the Atkinson and O'Neill high schools met with the Supervisors at the September meeting. A discussion and explanation of the World Herald contest was held. The boys were shown the part the local SWCD plays in conserving our most valuable resources, soil and water.

Opinions were aired during the July meeting with Elmer Mahline and Lloyd Snyder of the Board of Educational Lands and Funds. They expressed their desire to get a conservation plan developed for all school land. Since then the cooperative agreement of the new lease now signed, stipulates that they will conserve and improve the Nebraska Educational Lands. This they will accomplish by applying and maintaining conservation practices on these lands.

At the request of the Holt SWCD, Duane Chamberlain, Assistant Executive Secretary of the Nebraska Soil & Water Conservation Committee, came to O'Neill and reviewed our bookkeeping system. At a following meeting with the Supervisors, he gave his recommendations. He thought the system in general was excellent and that the financial procedures were more than adequate.

A question contest was also held this year. School children were asked to send in questions on conservation.

New Equipment Added; Nisbet Drills Busy

The Holt District has no planned Watershed program at this time. Most Watershed work in Holt county will not qualify for Federal assistance under Public Law 566. The recently organized Elkhorn Valley Watershed Association does include part of Holt county. Any work involved will be in the Eastern part of the county.

During 1960 the District purchased a new International 340 tractor. This was financed mostly through a private loan. The new tractor was a great help in accomplishing as much conservation work as we did. We also secured a new mounted Range inter-seeder. More than 300 acres were planted this way and the results so far are proving very popular.

With a range inter-seeder it is possible to re-establish native grasses in pastures that are poor in condition, without completely

working the soil. The seeder works very much like a lister, making shallow furrows just deep enough to clear away the weeds and existing vegetation. The seed is planted in the center of this shallow furrow in clean ground. This method has attracted a lot of attention and is proving very successful especially in lighter soil.

Both Nisbet grass seed drills were busy last spring. Something new in grass seeding was tried this year. More than 300 acres of grass seed were drilled in cover crops after all chance of germination was past. Many cooperators were asked to try this method and it was the first time this type of seeding was tried in our District.

Two tree planters were working last spring. The mounted planter on the new tractor helped greatly to shorten the planting season.

With the grass drills operating too, the District has had as many as nine employees at one time.

Sholes resigned in order to give full time to his own work. Robert Gallagher has now taken over as manager and after the fall grass seeding was done, has worked on repairing the District equipment and helped to bring the grass seed inventory up to date.

The District this year also purchased an air conditioner. With better service in mind for our cooperators, the air conditioner is used to keep Clarke McNary and other seedling trees dormant until planting. The trees are stored in an insulated building and the air conditioner keeps them moist and cool. This will help raise the survival rate on all the trees planted by the District. In the summer the conditioner is moved to the office and does much to keep it more pleasant during hot weather.

AWARDS PROGRAM
By winning the Sioux City Award for Permanent Agriculture the District received a \$100 cash prize. This was used to secure a new tape recorder.

DON'T let your land slip through your fingers!

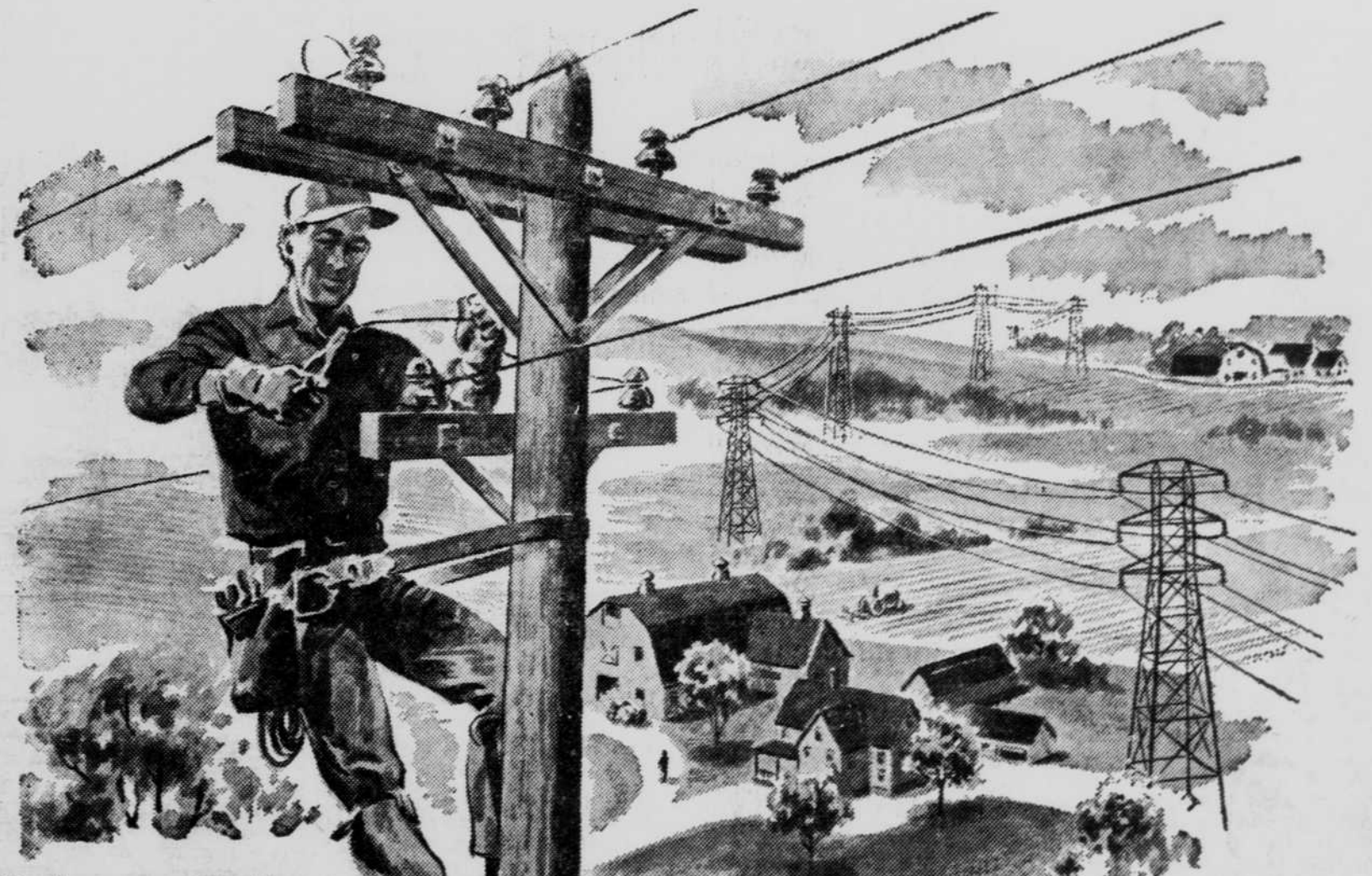


As the Steward of the soil serves God, he serves himself and countless others in many ways. To those who conserve our most precious resource, the soil, we say "CONGRATULATIONS."

FEDERAL LAND BANK ASSOCIATION OF O'NEILL

CONGRATULATIONS

To Those Who Help Make Farming A Better Way of Life



Niobrara Valley Rural Electric Association

RURAL ELECTRIFICATION has brought light and power to more than 16,000,000 rural Americans through over 1,000 locally owned systems. It has made dramatic changes in farming and in life in rural areas... it is destined to continue to expand until the most remote farm enjoys all the conveniences of city life.



What view do you take of THE FUTURE?

As science and industry take giant steps forward in 1961, you and your family will be an integral part of this accelerated progress. Never have the over-all prospects been brighter or the opportunities for self-development and self-fulfillment greater. The facilities and counsel of this full-service bank can help you make the MOST of your auspicious future!

We congratulate those who conserve the soil, one of nature's most valuable resources. We honor those who plan ahead for the wiser land use and continued harvests across the long tomorrow.

O'Neill National Bank
O'Neill

