

# HISTORY AND PROGRESS OF THE JAMES RIVER SOIL CONSERVATION

## DISTRICT OF DICKEY COUNTY

The Soil Conservation Districts law was enacted by the United States Congress in 1935. The North Dakota Legislature passed the law in 1937 making the formation of soil conservation districts possible. Upon vote of the farmers a district could be organized. Then a board of supervisors is elected. Upon the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding with the U S. Department of Agriculture and the development of a Work Program for the local district it is authorized to operate and conduct business. The USDA provides the technical help needed to carry out a soil and water conservation program. The district when organized becomes a legal-sub-division, but has no taxing powers. At this time I would like to go back to some of the minutes of those first meetings.

In the fall of 1946 the James River Soil Conservation District was organized. A group of interested farmers and the county Agent were instrumental in getting the petitions signed and a favorable vote was the result. County Agent at that time was E. L. Baldwin. The first board of supervisors was composed of the following ; Earl Stearns, (deceased), C. E. Olson, Oakes, and Alfred Ulmer, Ellendale. The district at first included the east 16 townships. In the fall of 1948 farmers in the west half petitioned to become a part of the Soil Conservation District and were annexed.

After the district was organized the supervisors secured tree planters and equipment for carrying out conservation practices for farmers. In this way farmers who signed an agreement with the district for proper use of their land became cooperators and received the benefits the district could offer. One of the main projects was the organizing of the Oakes Nursery. This was a result of interested local individuals who could see the great possibilities that the tree planting program plays in the control of wind erosion. The Oakes Nursery was then organized by the effort of all Soil Conservation Districts in the state of North Dakota. It is a separate organization and is serving all of the state in <sup>growing</sup> the needed trees for the conservation program of the cooperators of districts.

Names of supervisors that have served are as follows; Paul Kellogg, Menango replaced Earl Stearns in 1950., George Hankel replaced C. E. Olson in 1958. He is

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serving as chairman at the present time. In 1959 Chris Bellinger was elected replacing Alfred Ulmer. In 1960 Erwin (Pat) Sand of Ellendale was elected replacing Paul Kellogg. There are two appointed supervisors namely; A. L. Gramlow, Fullerton and George Gayman of Ellendale. The supervisors conduct all the business affairs of the district. They plan the conservation work and determine how it is to be done, They serve without pay.

The following is a summary of some of the most important accomplishments of the District since it was organized; As of June 30, 1963

Number of Farmers who cooperating with the District	605	— Total Acres 365,005
Number of Farmers who have a complete conservation plan on their farm	538	— Total Acres 321,278
Conservation Cropping System	210,000 Acres	
Cover & Green Manure Crops	41,680 Acres	
Crop Residue Use	405,800 Acres	
Drains, Cropland	675,316 Feet	
Farm & Ranch Ponds	425 Ponds	
Field and Farmstead Windbreaks	4,601 Acres	
Grasses & Legumes in Rotation	93,571 Acres	
Grassed Waterway or Outlet	121 Acres	
Irrigation, Field Ditch	12,514 Ft.	
Irrigation, Land Levelling	142 Acres	
Irrigation, Pipeline	3,350 Ft.	
Irrigation System, Sprinklers	7 Systems	
Irrigation Systems, Surface	4 Systems	
Irrigation Water Management	668 Acres	
Pasture & Hayland Planting	20,036 Acres	
Proper Pasture Use	125,040 Acres	
Range Proper Use	140,670 Acres	
Range, Deferred Grazing	78,150 Acres	
Wind Stripcropping	10,478 Acres	
Contour Farming	150 Acres	

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Stubble Mulch Farming	67,730 Acres
Wildlife Wetland Development	15 Acres
Wildlife Habitat Development	1,574 Acres

Every conservation plan that a farmer cooperator develops is based on the soil survey which is made by the soil conservation service. It tells the farmer what treatment is needed and the use the land is best suited for. The SCS has completed soil surveys on 343,950 acres in Dickey County.

We, as supervisors feel that the soil conservation district has had a big part in the conservation accomplishments that have been made. Farmers who have become cooperators with the District have received technical help so that they could use each acre according to its capability and treat each acre according to its needs. The assistance of the other agencies and the cost-sharing of the ACP has made the application of much needed conservation possible. It has speeded up the conservation of our soil and water resources. It has given all a chance to take a part in the job that is everybodys' responsibility. We also feel that the soil conservation program in the last 15 years has made our soil more stable and less subject to erosion than it was before. I believe it has made our citizens more aware of ~~their responsibility in~~ the hazards of erosion and the ever-constant guard we must keep to preserve our soil and water resources for future generations. It has made better stewards of the people who live on the land. These stewards of the soil know, as they conserve the soil, that other men and other families depend now and forever on the produce of an ever-fruitful land. He recognizes that the Earth is the Lord's and that it was placed here for the benefit of all His children. And so the steward serves God as he serves men everywhere. May our district continue to serve ~~it~~ in the future as it has in the past, and with that, I Thank You.