Allamakee Soil & Water Conservation District

USDA **2015**

Commissioners

Lynn Stock-Chairman

Jack Knight-Vice-chairman

Clint Welsh-Treasurer

Mike McCormick

Donald Elsbernd-Co-Treasururer

Office Staff

LuAnn Rolling-DC

Jacob Groth-SC

Steve Scholtes-SCT

Barb Hanson-SCT

Tom Duvel-SCA

Sara Berges-LC

Justin Nie-WC

Brianne Wild-Secretary

Brady Kruger-DE

Jim Ranum-DE

Allamakee SWCD offers Assistance for Cover Crops

The Allamakee SWCD is offering a potential opportunity to receive state cost-share funds for management practices, such as cover crops. In order to be eligible for these funds, you can never have received cost-share funds for cover crops through state or federal programs before. Acres of cover crop may be limited due to funding available for the year. If you choose to seed a non-winter hardy species such as oats, barley, spring wheat, brassicas, and legumes, they must be seeded by no later than September 15th. If you choose to seed a winter hardy cover crop, it must be seeded by October 20th. Any cover crops that are seeded after October 1st must be drilled or incorporated; any aerial or broadcast applications will not be eligible after the October 1st deadline. Producers will need to select one of the following options to establish the cover crop and plant the following cash crop:

A. Cover crop will be no-tilled or broadcast seeded. The following cash crop will be no-tilled into the cover crop residue.

B. Cover Crop will be no-tilled or broadcast seeded. Spring tillage may be done prior to planting the following cash crop.

C. Tillage or manure injection may be done prior to seeding the cover crop. The cash crop will be no-tilled into the cover crop residue.

A seeding plan will be provided to the producer at the time of application approval. If the producer chooses to use their own seed, a germination test must be provided proving greater than 80% germination prior to distribution of cost-share funds. In order to apply for these funds, please stop in the office and talk to one of our technicians and get signed up today!

What's in this issue?

Scholarship Program & Lease Project	2
IDALS– Intern FY14 Donations	3
Waterloo Creek Project & Updating Conservation Plans	4
Using Manure to Reduce Risks & Lower Input Costs	5
Donations	6

Donald Elsbernd Joins SWCD Board

Donald Elsbernd was elected as a new commissioner on the Allamakee SWCD Board in the November 2014 elections. His duties started on January 2, 2015.

Don Elsbernd grows corn, soybeans and a little alfalfa hay with his son, Eric, on 1,300 acres in Allamakee and Winneshiek Counties, near Postville. He began no-tilling corn into soybean stubble about 25 years ago. Now, he no-tills all of his cropland except for corn-on-corn, which he strip-tills. The NRCS office and SWCD Board would like to welcome Don.

SCHOLARSHIPS ARE AVAILABLE!

The Allamakee SWCD plans to award scholarships to 2015 high school graduates. Applicants must reside in Allamakee County and plan to study in the field of agriculture or natural resources in college. **Applications are due on February 27, 2015** for consideration. Winners will be awarded in the spring at their awards banquet.

The Scholarship program is funded by donations to the district conservation club. Last year, the district awarded three scholarships in the amount of $500 each. We have presented scholarships totaling $13,500 over the last eight years!

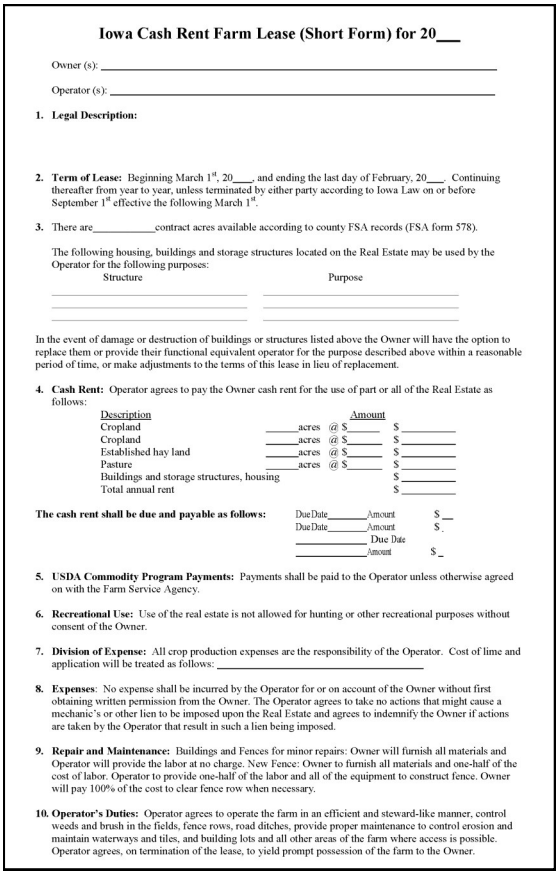
Conservation Lease Project

The Allamakee SWCD is working on a conservation lease project that works with Allamakee landowners and tenants to include conservation requirements in their farm leases. This lease project is funded through August 2015 through a grant from the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation and provides a free service to landowners with land in Allamakee County (and the Houston County portion of the Waterloo/Bee/Duck Creek Watershed) to help write conservation into farm leases as a conservation addendum (or attachment) to the farm lease. We will not be writing the farm lease and will not be a substitute for an attorney, but we will work with landowners and tenants to explain lease options regarding conservation. There is a need for this project because conservation is often left out of lease discussions and many landowners do not understand their legal rights regarding conservation. Also, fluctuating commodity prices have prompted the removal of many waterways, headlands, and buffer strips and previously non-cropped ground has been sodbusted to maximize the amount of crop ground.

The basis for these conservation addendums is a revised conservation plan and plan map. Including the conservation plan in the lease allows both the landowner and tenant the opportunity to review the plan when the lease is renewed and make changes if needed. If you do not currently have a written lease, several different lease templates are available or an attorney can draft a lease document for you. Written leases are encouraged because they reduce the likelihood of a disagreement or misunderstanding regarding the lease terms. Consider how detailed leases often are for rental housing. Why should leases for farmland be any less detailed, especially considering the long-term productivity expected from the land?

When leasing farmland, there is often confusion about who is responsible for the conservation plan and ensuring good land management. Many landowners don't realize that they have a say in how their land is farmed once it's rented. In many cases, only the tenant provides input on what goes into the conservation plan. However, the landowner has the right to provide their input as well. We think it is very important for the landowner to understand what is in the conservation plan and how it affects their land. Current conservation compliance requirements often represent the bare minimum conservation standards, but additional requirements can be added to the conservation plan to improve conservation on the land. For example, state law allows the tenant to remove crop residue, but because a large amount of nutrients leaves the cropland when residue is removed, the landowner can negate that in their lease document or require a mitigation practice.

If you would like more information about this project, please contact Sara Berges as the Allamakee SWCD by calling 563-568-2246 extension 3, emailing sara.berges@ia.nacdnet.net , or stopping by the office.



Iowa Cash Rent Farm Lease (Short Form) for 20___

Owner (s): _____

Operator (s): _____

1. **Legal Description:**

2. **Term of Lease:** Beginning March 1st, 20___, and ending the last day of February, 20___. Continuing thereafter from year to year, unless terminated by either party according to Iowa Law on or before September 1st effective the following March 1st.

3. There are_____contract acres available according to county FSA records (FSA form 578).

The following housing, buildings and storage structures located on the Real Estate may be used by the Operator for the following purposes:

Structure	Purpose

In the event of damage or destruction of buildings or structures listed above the Owner will have the option to replace them or provide their functional equivalent operator for the purpose described above within a reasonable period of time, or make adjustments to the terms of this lease in lieu of replacement.

4. **Cash Rent:** Operator agrees to pay the Owner cash rent for the use of part or all of the Real Estate as follows:

Description	Amount
Cropland	_____acres @ $_____ $_____
Cropland	_____acres @ $_____ $_____
Established hay land	_____acres @ $_____ $_____
Pasture	_____acres @ $_____ $_____
Buildings and storage structures, housing	$_____
Total annual rent	$_____

The cash rent shall be due and payable as follows: Due Date_____Amount $__
Due Date_____Amount $_
_____Due Date
_____Amount $_

5. **USDA Commodity Program Payments:** Payments shall be paid to the Operator unless otherwise agreed on with the Farm Service Agency.

6. **Recreational Use:** Use of the real estate is not allowed for hunting or other recreational purposes without consent of the Owner.

7. **Division of Expense:** All crop production expenses are the responsibility of the Operator. Cost of lime and application will be treated as follows: _____

8. **Expenses**: No expense shall be incurred by the Operator for or on account of the Owner without first obtaining written permission from the Owner. The Operator agrees to take no actions that might cause a mechanic's or other lien to be imposed upon the Real Estate and agrees to indemnify the Owner if actions are taken by the Operator that result in such a lien being imposed.

9. **Repair and Maintenance:** Buildings and Fences for minor repairs: Owner will furnish all materials and Operator will provide the labor at no charge. New Fence: Owner to furnish all materials and one-half of the cost of labor. Operator to provide one-half of the labor and all of the equipment to construct fence. Owner will pay 100% of the cost to clear fence row when necessary.

10. **Operator's Duties:** Operator agrees to operate the farm in an efficient and steward-like manner, control weeds and brush in the fields, fence rows, road ditches, provide proper maintenance to control erosion and maintain waterways and tiles, and building lots and all other areas of the farm where access is possible. Operator agrees, on termination of the lease, to yield prompt possession of the farm to the Owner.

Jared Winkie IDALS Summer Intern

The Iowa Department of Agriculture and Land Stewardship (IDALS) has a summer intern program every year for selected counties in Iowa. Allamakee has been fortunate enough to have been selected the last two years to host an intern. In order to qualify for this position, you must be majoring in some type of agriculture in college.

The announcement for interns was sent out to all the colleges in Northeast Iowa and the commissioners selected their top three to interview for the position.

Our 2014 summer intern was Jared Winkie. Jared is the son of Brad and Linda Winkie of Waukon and is currently a student at Iowa State University majoring in Animal Science. He plans on graduating in May of this year.

Jared has been helping in the office on CRP checks, grazing plans, EQIP checks and several other various jobs. We would like to thank Jared for all of his hard work during his summer and winter breaks. Good luck in your future!

Thank You for Your Generous Donations!

Supporters $5-$25

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

Savors $26-$50

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

Stewards $51– UP

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

Scholarship

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

Last Year for Waterloo Creek Watershed Project

Throughout 2014, project coordinator Justin Nie and project technician Bob Joachim have been out in the field meeting with landowners to discuss conservation practices and available funding sources. With the wet spring and the short fall construction window, fewer practices were installed than we had planned. However, several projects were completed this year. A few projects were cancelled during the year, mainly due to landowner changes.

In the Iowa portion of the watershed, one grade stabilization structure was constructed, 421 feet of stream bank were stabilized, and new fencing was installed as part of a pasture management system.

In the Minnesota portion of the watershed, two grade stabilization structures were installed. One of those structures was a vegetated chute drop structure.
With harvest wrapping up, you may have noticed areas in the field that could use some improvement. **2015 is the last year for the Waterloo Creek Watershed Project and there are funds available** for people to sign up to do projects. 75% cost-share funds are available for terraces, grade stabilization structures (ponds), stream bank stabilization, and pasture management in the Iowa portion of the watershed. The cost-share funds must be spent by December 2015. If any of these projects interest you, please contact our office as soon as possible and we can discuss your conservation options. If you have any questions, do not hesitate to contact Justin Nie by phone at 563-568-2246 ext. 3 or by email Justin.nie@ia.nacdnet.net.

Don't forget to Update your Conservation Plans!

Remember to make sure your conservation plan is up to date. This is especially important if you have recently purchased ground, switched renters, changed your crop rotation, or if your land is coming out of the CRP. Your conservation plan consists of your crop rotation, the type of tillage you will be using and other conservation practices such as waterways, buffer strips, or terraces that you would like to incorporate into your operation.

Developing and implementing a conservation plan allows you to meet the conservation goals on your operation and also remain eligible for USDA program benefits including Federally subsidized crop insurance and financial assistance programs such as EQIP and CSP. Every year, five percent of our producers will be picked for an annual spot check. If you are one of these producers and are not following a valid conservation plan or an approved conservation system, you may be found out of compliance. If this happens, you will be at risk of losing your farm program benefits for all of the farms that you are associated with including your Federal subsidy on crop insurance.

Producers with updated conservation plans will also receive priority for projects funded through EQIP and other financial assistance programs. Producers that have a conservation plan and designs for practices that are part of that plan such as manure storage, terraces, and ponds will receive funding prior to an applicant without those in hand at time of application.

Please contact the office to make sure that your plan is valid and up to date. If you have any questions or would like to check and make sure that your plan is current please call the office at (563)568-2246 ext. 3.

Using Manure to Reduce Risk and Lower Input Costs

Dr. Daniel Andersen, Assistant Professor, Agricultural and Biosystems Engineering

Although we never know what the future will bring, as we look ahead to 2015 most are predicting a year of lower corn and soybean prices (a number I've heard is about $4.15 a bushel for corn and $9.50 a bushel for soybean). Although we have little control over the price, one thing we do have some control over is our input costs, especially the amount and types of fertilizers we apply.

While world demand for phosphorus fertilizers continues to climb, some economists have speculated that U.S. farmers may decide to reduce phosphorus applications in 2015 as a means of input cost control. Another option may be to make better use of our animal manure as a source of phosphorus. We all realize that manure has a high value in our crop production systems, but you may not realize just how far you can afford to move it if you are getting value from all the nutrients, especially the P and K. To get this value, the manure has to be applied to fields that need this phosphorus and a crop response will be expected. Generally, this means fields that have Melich-3 soil test phosphorus levels of below 30 ppm.

Let's look at an example; we are going to work with a corn-soybean rotation, set current nitrogen, phosphorus, and potassium prices at $0.44 per lb N, $0.49 per lb P_2O_5, and $0.40 per lb K_2O, and focus on swine manure first. Current nutrients concentrations (average ± standard deviation) in deep-pit slurry from a swine finishing operation are around 58 ± 25 lbs N/1000 gallons, 41 ± 18 lbs P_2O_5/1000 gallons, and 24 ± 8 lbs K_2O/1000 gallons (average ± standard deviation).

Our commercial manure haulers on average are charging around $0.02 per gallon, plus a mileage fee of $0.0035 per gallon per mile transported. These prices are only rough guidelines that may vary throughout the state depending on your manure, soil, crop production, and site-specific characteristics. If a farmer is getting value from the N, P, K than they can afford to haul their swine slurry manure about 12 miles and have it be as cost effective as commercial fertilizer. Transport distances of 5 to 20 miles are possible depending on the manure's nutrient content. However, if only the nitrogen is of value then the hauling distance equivalent to the fertilizer value is only about 1 mile. Similar analysis can be conducted for dairy slurry, beef manure solids, layer manure, and turkey litter. Results of all manure types are summarized in Table 1.

Table 1. Break-even hauling distances for manures from different types of operations and different cases of how manure are valued. The first number represents the average manure, values within parenthesis represent how far manure within 1 standard deviation of the average could be transported.

	Manure Type				
	Swine Slurry	Dairy Slurry	Beef Solids	Layer Manure	Turkey Litter
Break-even Hauling Distance (mi)					
All Nutrients Value	12 (5 - 20)	8 (2 - 13)	14 (9 -20)	25 (16 - 34)	16 (13 - 19)
Break-even Hauling Distance (mi)					
Only Nitrogen Valued	1 (0 - 4)	0 (0 - 1)	0 (0 - 1)	1 (0 - 3)	2 (1 - 2)
Break-even Hauling Distance (mi)					
P & K only (P-limited)	5 (0 - 10)	6 (2 - 11)	13 (8-13)	21 (13 - 28)	11 (9 - 13)

So what does this mean to you? Current market conditions seem to indicate that crop prices over the next year or two might be lower than what we experienced in the past couple years. Finding ways to reduce expenditures as we try to get the crop in the field and to harvest might help in reducing our risk. Manure can play a role in this. If you have fields in need of phosphorus and others that don't, strive to get your manure resources to the fields where you can take advantage of the fertility the manure has to offer. Hauling swine manure an extra mile will only increase your application cost about $13 per acre, but if it allows you to better use the phosphorus nutrients it can offer more than $45 in additional phosphorus value.

Allamakee Soil & Water Conservation District
635 9th St. NW
Waukon, IA 52172
(563)568-2246 ext. 3

Non Profit Org.
U.S. Postage
PAID
Permit No. 115
Waukon, Iowa

Or Current Resident

JOIN THE CONSERVATION CLUB—-YOUR SUPPORT IS NEEDED

Landowners/operators and area businesses:

We hope that the Allamakee County Soil and Water Conservation District can count on your support again in fiscal year 2014-2015. We thank you for your generosity in the past. For 72 years, the District has been helping you and your neighbors conserve our most valuable resources, our soil and water.

We invite you to join in the local conservation effort by becoming a Conservation Club member.

The District has no taxing authority and the commissioners volunteer their services, which become more demanding every year. Funds for promoting soil and water conservation in our county must be raised locally through donations.

Donated dollars are used for a variety of projects including the district newsletter, scholarships, materials for the local conservation education day, CDI and NACD dues, and awards for conservation leaders.

We believe promoting soil and water conservation is everyone's job and we invite you to help. Please consider a donation.

Categories are as follows:

SUPPORTEERS $5-25

SAVORS $26-50

STEWARDS $51-UP

SCHOLARSHIP– ANY AMOUNT

PLEASE ATTACH THIS SLIP TO YOUR DONATION.

THANK YOU!

NAME_____

ADDRESS_____

_____

_____

RETURN TO:
Allamakee SWCD
635 9th Street NW
Waukon, IA 52172

CHECK HERE____ IF YOU WANT YOUR DONATION TO GO TO THE SCHOLARSHIP FUND