Iowa Current Developments

December 2011

USDA NRCS

United States Department of Agriculture
Natural Resources Conservation Service

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A Message from the: State Conservationist

Richard Sims, State Conservationist

Happy Holidays

As 2011 comes to a close, we anticipate many changes coming in the new year. Congress is still working on a new Farm Bill, which will include changes to our financial and technical assistance and mandatory programs.

In my career, I have been through six new Farm Bills and worked with several new Chiefs. But underneath the changes in the way we do business, the heart of our "business" has remained the same my entire career.

We are here to help landowners put conservation on private lands. We are the federal employees who help people help the land. How we help them might change from Farm Bill to Farm Bill. The tools we use may change as technology advances. But our purpose remains the same.

Please remember what you do matters. And we will face the pending changes together.

Wishing you a very wonderful Holiday Season. And if you are traveling, may you and your family return safely.

Richard Sims

Iowa Current Developments

***Current Developments* is a product of the USDA's Natural Resources Conservation Service in Des Moines, Iowa, published bimonthly by the Iowa NRCS Public Affairs Staff in cooperation with NRCS and partner agency employees from across the state.**

Current Developments Stories and Photos

Please submit your Current Developments story ideas and photos to State Public Affairs Specialist Laura Greiner at laura.greiner@ia.usda.gov.

Past issues can be found at www.ia.nrcs.usda.gov/intranet/currentdevelopments.html.

@IowaNRCS

USDA NRCS

United States Department of Agriculture
Natural Resources Conservation Service

Helping People Help the Land
www.ia.nrcs.usda.gov

USDA-Natural Resources Conservation Service
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Congratulations: Director Gillespie

Jim Gillespie was recently named the new Director of the Division of Soil Conservation within the Iowa Department of Agriculture and Land Stewardship.

"I look forward to working with farmers, landowners, partners, and soil and water conservation districts to continue to build on the 'culture of conservation' that is so strong in our state," Gillespie said.

He served as Field Services Bureau Chief for the Department since 1989. Previously Gillespie served as a Field Representative in the Division of Soil Conservation and worked with county soil and water conservation districts on local resource management issues.

He graduated from Northwest Missouri University with a Bachelor of Science in Secondary Education with an emphasis on agriculture. After graduation he taught agriculture at Earlham Community School and served as the FFA advisor before joining DSC.

Fond Farewell: Dave Beck's Open House

Friends and coworkers gathered Dec. 2 at the West Union Area Office to celebrate the retirement of Dave Beck, former Assistant State Conservationist for Field Operations. The agency first hired the Kansas native when Dave was 19. He begins his new position as Executive Director of the Southern Iowa RC&D Area on Jan. 9. His primary work will be as project manager to get the Clarke County Water Supply project installed. Dave also served as Planning Leader in state office and Area Conservationist in Sioux City. [Go Wildcats. :)]

Special Thanks: For Supporting the Troops

District Conservation Greg Townley presents certificates of appreciation to State Conservationist Richard Sims and Assistant State Conservationist for Field Operations Bruce Trautman for NRCS' support of his military service. Townley was on mobilization duty from August 2009 until August 2011. While on military duty Townley provided personnel recovery skills training to 2,500 soldiers.

Special Visit: From Ann Mills

In early December Deputy Under Secretary for Natural Resources and Environment Ann Mills and Regional Conservationist Tom Christensen made a special visit to the state office. Formerly a senior executive at American Rivers, Mills led the implementation of programs to develop sustainable solutions for flood and drought mitigation and water quality improvement across the country. She holds a Masters Degree from the Lyndon B. Johnson School of Public Affairs at The University of Texas at Austin, and a BA in Political Science from Tufts University. Michelle Williams, center, is pictured with Mills and Christensen. Williams, an intern in the Business Management Leaders Program, is currently completing her human resources rotation at the state office. A native of Kansas City, Williams graduated from Drake University.

CDI Leadership: Goodbye and Hello (again)

Tim Palmer

Jim Frederick

January marks a change in leadership for the Conservation Districts of Iowa. Tim Palmer leaves the post after two years. Incoming president Jim Frederick formerly worked for NRCS and was the Area Conservationist in Area 2 before he retired. Thank you, Tim! Hello again, Jim!

House Fire: NRCS Family in Need

Steve Scholtes', (SCT in Waukon) mother passed away on Dec. 15. When he came home from her wake on Monday, Dec. 19, he found his house on fire. The fire, which began in the basement, left the house uninhabitable.

The fire department had to break most of the windows and there is water and smoke damage throughout. The family lost most of their furniture, clothes and both of their house dogs.

Of the fire Steve said, "our family is safe so it could have been a lot worse."

They have found a house to move into while they are cleaning/repairing their house. However, they are in need of basically everything. If anyone would like to donate, a fund has been set up for them.

Steve and Patty Scholtes Benefit
Farmers and Merchants Savings Bank
P.O. Box 9
Waukon, IA 52172
563-568-3417

You may direct questions to:
LuAnn Rolling,
Allamakee County
District Conservationist
563-568-2246

Happy New Year: 'US' 100 Years Ago

A lot has changed since this car (1911 Model T) was first driven. Here are some statistics for the Year 1911:

- The average life expectancy for men was 47 years.
- Fuel for this car was sold in drug stores only.
- Only 14 percent of the homes had a bathtub.
- Only 8 percent of the homes had a telephone.
- There were only 8,000 cars and only 144 miles of paved roads.
- The maximum speed limit in most cities was 10 mph.
- The tallest structure in the world was the Eiffel Tower !
- The average US wage in 1910 was 22 cents per hour.
- The average US worker made between $200 and $400 per year .
- A competent accountant could expect to earn $2000 per year, A dentist $2,500 per year, a veterinarian between $1,500 and $4,000 per year, and a mechanical engineer about $5,000 per year.
- More than 95 percent of all births took place at home .
- Sugar cost four cents a pound.
- Eggs were fourteen cents a dozen.
- Coffee was fifteen cents a pound.
- The American flag had 45 stars.
- The population of Las Vegas , Nevada , was only 30!!!
- Two out of every 10 adults couldn't read or write and only 6 percent of all Americans had graduated from high school.
- There were about 230 reported murders in the ENTIRE U.S.A. !

Kudos: Way to go!

Employee of the Month

Congratulations to Connie Cummings, State Secretary, Jefferson SWCD, who is the December DSC Employee of the Month. She was nominated by the Jefferson and Wapello Soil and Water Conservation Districts and Vince Sitzmann, DSC Field Representative. She received her certificate from Sitzmann and Jim Gillespie, Director of the Division of Soil Conservation, during the Jefferson commissioner meeting on Dec. 15. Congratulations Connie!

PF Honors

Bruce Trautman, assistant state conservationist for field operations, and Dave Beck, retired, were selected by Pheasants Forever staff as the group's 2011 Professional Excellence Award winners. PF is honoring Beck and Trautman for their support of the Farm Bill Biologist program and their career efforts in protecting Iowa's natural resources. PF will present the awards at their state convention on Jan. 7 at the downtown Marriott in Des Moines. Congratulations Dave and Bruce!

Acting STC

Jeff Zimprich, assistant state conservationist for field operations, begins his role as acting Illinois State Conservationist on Jan. 17. Larry Beeler, assistant state conservationist for programs, will serve as the acting AST-FO in Area 4.

590 Standard: Iowa Begins Revising the National Standard

Iowa NRCS technical staff will be working with partners for the next several months to update Iowa's nutrient management standard (or 590 standard) after the national release in December. USDA updates this conservation practice standard at least every five years to reflect the latest technologies and agency objectives.

Iowa NRCS has until Jan. 1, 2013, to adapt the Iowa nutrient management standard to meet the new criteria and standards. The public will be invited to comment on any proposed changes.

Key changes in the national standard include:

- recognizing the widespread adoption of variable rate technologies to plan and apply fertilizers and providing specifications on how to plan and report their use.
- introducing a Nitrogen Leaching Index to help determine where to implement management practices for the most positive environmental impacts.
- providing guidance on using on-farm knowledge to adaptively manage nutrients.
- addressing the risk of applied nutrients entering water through tile inlets.
- directing the analysis of manure samples using certified labs.

The nutrient management standard helps producers apply available nutrient sources in the right amount, from the right source, in the right place, and at the right time for maximum agricultural and environmental benefits.

Deadlines and Special Dates: Coming Up in January

1	**Jan. 2 New Years Observed**	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	**Jan. 13 CSP**	14
15	**Jan. 16 MLK Day**	17	18	19	**Jan. 20 EQIP**	21
22	23	23	25	26	27	28
29	30	**Jan. 31 Security Training**				

February Dates

Feb. 3
EQIP Initiative Deadline

Feb. 20
President's Day

Changes In: NRCS Personnel

In order of Effective Date

Name	Title	Nature of Action	Effective Date	Location
BUCKLIN, JOHN M	Soil Conservationist	PROMOTION	10/23/11	Elkader FO Area 3
HAGER, JULIA JEANNE	Soil Conservationist	Name Change from Milliren	10/23/11	Charles City FO Area 3
OVERTON, RUSSELL D	Engineering Tech (Civil)	PROMOTION	10/23/11	Anamosa FO Area 3
THILGES, JEREMY D	Resource Conservationist	PROMOTION	10/23/11	Emmetsburg FO Area 1
BECKER, JULIO AUGUSTO	Office Assistant	CAREER COND APPT	11/6/11	Corydon FO Area 4
BEDNAREK, RICHARD J	State Soil Scientist	PROMOTION	11/6/11	State Office Des Moines
EBERHART, JANA LYNN	Soil Con Tech	Name Change from Matthiesen	11/6/11	Maquoketa FO Area 3
HOGGE, CHRISTOPHER D	Soil Conservationist	REASSIGNMENT	11/20/11	Sac City FO Area 1
MACK, DAVID THOMAS	Soil Conservationist	PROMOTION	11/20/11	Maquoketa FO Area 3
MENSING, TONY JOE	Ag Engineer	PROMOTION	11/20/11	Sioux City AO Area 1
MORTENSON, DAMARYS M	Asst. State Conservationist-FO	PROMOTION	11/20/11	Sioux City AO Area 1
SCHWALBE, LORI K	Soil Con Tech	REASSIGNMENT	11/20/11	Leon FO Area 4
STEELE, AMBER M	Resource Conservationist	REASSIGNMENT	11/20/11	Northwood FO Area 2
WILEY, PHOEBE M	Soil Con Tech	PROMOTION	11/20/11	Fairfield FO Area 5
BECK, DAVID W	Asst. State Conservationist-FO	RETIREMENT	12/3/11	West Union AO Area 3
LONG, SUSAN M	Civil Engineer	RETIREMENT	12/3/11	Ottumwa FO Area 5
MEYER DIDERIKSEN, TANYA A	Natural Resource Speclst	REASSIGNMENT	12/4/11	Washington FO Area 5
MILLER, THOMAS O	Natural Resource Manager	REASSIGNMENT	12/4/11	Maquoketa FO Area 3
RIDGEWAY, SHAFFER C	Acting Asst. State Conservationist-FO	PROMOTION TEMPORARY	12/4/11	West Union AO Area 3
WICKMAN, STACY LYNN	Resource Conservationist	Name Change from Schlader	12/4/11	Albia FO Area 5
HOEFLER, JULIE R	Soil Con Tech	REASSIGNMENT	12/18/11	Manchester FO Area 3
OFFERMAN, QUENTEN ALAN	Engineering Tech (Civil)	PROMOTION	12/18/11	Williamsburg FO Area 5
WOLTER,J ACOB MICHAEL	Soil Con Tec	REASSIGNMENT	12/18/11	Epworth FO Area 3
ROBB, RANDY J	Wetland Rest Speclst	RETIREMENT	12/26/11	Fairfield AO Area 5
EDWARDS, W KEITH	District Conservationist	RETIREMENT	12/31/11	Rock Rapids FO Area 1
FORD, JAY E	District Conservationist	RETIREMENT	12/31/11	Denison FO Area 1

Changes In: DSC Personnel

In order of Effective Date

Name	Title	Nature of Action	Effective Date	Location
Ben Gleason	Environmental Specialist	Left Employment	12/8/11	Clarke SWCD
James Gillespie	Division of Soil Conservation Division Director	Appointment	12/2/11	Des Moines
Mike Franklin	Acting Field Services Bureau Chief	Acting Appointment	12/27/11	Des Moines

District Office Address Change:
Woodbury SWCD
204 First St, Ste. C1
Sergeant Bluff, IA 51054