

Narrative Report
Madison County Soil Conservation District
1944

The Madison County Soil Conservation District feels that it has made considerable progress this year in spite of the many problems it has encountered. The first thing to interfere with our program was the shortage of farm labor. Since the war has made it necessary for every farmer to produce more food, with ever fewer workers, we haven't been in a position to carry out a conservation program as we otherwise would like to do. However, we believe that the practices which have been carried out by the District have enabled the farmers to produce more food as called for because of better land use. The second drawback the past year was the difficulty in securing enough machinery with which to do all the terracing and drainage requested over the county.

We, the supervisors of the district, feel that we have a large responsibility in directing the work for the great conservation problems facing us. There are approximately 124,140 acres of land in the district which can be cultivated provided crop rotation will be done. It is up to us to offer assistance in getting this practice carried out. In addition to this there are 43,449 acres of pasture land to be improved, 12,414 acres of permanent hay crop to establish and 90,001 acres of woodland on which the district will need to give assistance in cutting, selling and re-setting trees. About 80,000 acres of land in this county need drainage. All of these problems are to be remedied by this district in the future.

During the past year 120 farms were planned totaling 19,555 acres. This makes a total of 302 farms planned or a total of 47,691 acres planned to date. Following is a list of some of the work accomplished this year: 5,888 acres of crop rotation; 829 acres of strip cropping; 13 acres of Kudzu; 112 acres of serices; 49 acres of alfalfa; 32 acres of perennial grasses; 3,630 acres of terracing; 203 acres of water disposal areas; 1,687 acres of pasture improvement; 18 stock ponds; 149 acres of wildlife areas; 3 fish ponds; 2,032 acres of farm drainage; 456 acres of woodland improvement; a 4 acres of tree planting.

To date 7,032 acres of cultivated land has been planned to be rotated either on a three, four, or five year rotation as the land necessitates, 2,954 acres of strip cropping, 34 acres of kudzu, 256 acres of sericea, 6,706 acres of terracing, 2,997 acres of pasture improvement, and 472 acres of woodland improvement, 18 stock ponds, 2,132 acres of farm drainage, 3 fish ponds, 149 acres of wildlife area, 4 acres of tree planting, 203 acres of water disposal areas, 32 acres of perennial grasses and 49 acres of alfalfa have been established in this county by the district. A large amount of the crop land has been planted to a winter cover crop each fall just after a row crop. These figures show what has been done even with the handicap under which we have operated. We feel that this is more than a start and we will be able to expand these practices in the future. At the present time there are fifteen farms on which the district has kudzu demonstrations, twelve sericea demonstrations, and some other plots of Bermuda grass pastures, fish ponds, etc., which have been very beneficial in getting other farmers interested in a conservation plan and in carrying out similar conservation practices.

We especially appreciate the cooperation of all other agencies, both Federal, State, and local, in aiding us with the Soil Conservation Program. The Agricultural Extension Service has backed everything we have undertaken to do. The AAA office has made our program progress since they made payments on various practices we recommended to the farmers in their agreements. The Farm Security Administration has been very cooperative in that a large percentage of their clients have agreements with us. The State Forest Service, in cooperation with the Soil Conservation Service, has given us a technician which has been very beneficial to farmers who have timber to cut, sell, or new setting to make.

The local Farm Bureau, Civic Club, Chamber of Commerce, banks and schools have also aided us in many respects. We appreciate very much their consideration and support.

We are looking forward to this year as being the best year this districts has had. Just recently we have made a contract with a construction company to place two terracing units and a bulldozer in this county. We believe that with this equipment we can tour any part of Madison County at the end of 1945 and find more farm plans with the conservation practices established than we have been able to see in the past.

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "Tom Lewis", written over a solid horizontal line.

**Tom Lewis, Chairman
District Governing Body**