



*Supervisors*

ANNUAL REPORT - 1977

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This is a brief report about the program of the Madison County Soil Conservation District. Our District was organized in 1941 to help bring about the wise usage of our soil and water resources. As a legal subdivision of state government with local farmer leaders serving as District supervisors we have a program of work based upon local needs. We think you need to know what we are doing; we need your continued support.

THE DISTRICT STAFF

Our District office is staffed with technicians employed by the Soil Conservation Service of the U. S. Department of Agriculture. Our secretary is provided by the Madison County Court. The staff consists of Paul Aydelott, District Conservationist, Bobby Clifford, Soil Conservationist, and Maxine Blankenship, Secretary. Engineers, Soil Scientists and other specialists are available from the Soil Conservation Service upon request.

OUR MAJOR ACCOMPLISHMENTS LAST YEAR

We assisted over 200 people with conservation problems last year. Conservation plans were prepared for 24 farms. We assisted in the treatment of 9 acres of critically eroding land, 411 acres of pasture planting, and 635 acres of minimum tillage. We helped in the construction of 14 ponds, 3 acres of grass waterways, 58,021 feet of terraces, 44,000 feet of drainage, about 3 miles of diversion ditches, and about 15 silt basins or grade stabilization structures.

A special erosion control project was started last year for farms lying within the drainage area of Clover Creek. The Districts in Madison, Hardeman and Chester Counties cooperated with the Chickasaw-Shiloh Resource, Conservation and Development Council in the project development. Trees and grass will be planted on gullied areas and steep cropland to stop erosion and the sedimentation of Clover Creek and its bottom lands. Debris basins and brush dams will trap the eroding soil. The long term effect will be a reduction in flooding and drainage problems in the bottoms and improvement in area land values and incomes. We entered into contracts on 7 farms and will pay 75 per cent of the total treatment costs with funds provided by the Soil Conservation Service.

We joined other counties in a special task force effort to assemble a plan for land treatment and erosion control in the Obion-Forked Deer River Basins. After several public meetings, local opinions and objectives were written into the plan. It calls for a large scale movement toward erosion control with enough cost-sharing to allow landowners to participate without undue hardship.

OUR MAJOR GOALS FOR 1978

We plan to assist at least 280 cooperators obtaining conservation practices on 140 farms. Conservation plans will be prepared on 45 farms. Erosion control contracts will be signed on 15 farms in Clover Creek. We plan to help with the installation of structural practices such as terraces, diversions and silt basins on 500 acres of cropland. This will include 60,000 feet of terraces. We hope to assist in the use of 300 acres of minimum tillage. Trees and grass will be used to stop erosion on 50 acres of gullies or other critically eroding areas.

For the first time, the State of Tennessee has appropriated \$1000 per county for hiring of additional employees. We plan to hire a part-time technician to help survey terraces this spring. We hope to obtain the assignment of an additional Soil Conservation Service technician. We will be asking landowners to assist us as much as possible in making engineering surveys on their land.

In cooperation with the Agriculture Stabilization and Conservation Service (ASCS) we plan to prepare multi-year contracts on three Madison County farms for accelerated land treatment and erosion control. The farms will serve as model conservation farms in their communities.

#### THE LONG RANGE OUTLOOK FOR CONSERVATION

This year we will update our long range program. The heavy emphasis on row crop production in Madison County has brought about some of the most severe soil erosion in the country. Preliminary estimates show that we need to at least quadruple our accomplishments if we are to meet the conservation needs.

As you may have heard, Section 208 of the Federal Water Pollution Control Act requires our creeks, rivers and lakes to be fit for swimming and fishing by 1985. In other words, farmers may find it illegal to allow an excessive amount of sediment, fertilizer, pesticides or animal waste enter a creek or river. That could have far reaching effects in Madison County. Through our Tennessee and National Associations of Conservation Districts we are working with Congress, the EPA and state governments to protect the farmer's interests. We prefer voluntary programs for farmers that will protect his economic well being. Section 208 was amended in December establishing an agricultural cost sharing program to assist landowners apply "best management practices" for nonpoint source pollution. We hope that the Obion-Forked Deer Land Treatment Plan will be eligible for this program.


#### PROGRAM COSTS

Because taxes are a troublesome burden to most, we thought you, the county taxpayers, would like to know how much we cost. Our services are made without charge. Our budget from the County Court is almost \$13,000. From this allocation about 60% will be spent on the salary of the secretary and part-time employee we intend to hire. About 30% will be used for the renting of office space. The remaining 10% will be used for the purchase of supplies, postage and reports publication.

#### A WORD OF THANKS

We greatly appreciate the financial support from the County Court. In spite of a small budget, we feel that we have had a large impact on agricultural and non-agricultural land uses in Madison County.

The mutual support and cooperation with the churches, schools, industries, county and city governments, and private individuals has been a great asset in the success of our program. We look forward to an even better year in 1978.

  
Franklin James, Chairman