

## REAL PROGRESS IN SEDIMENT REDUCTION

I am delighted and refreshed to participate in today's tour of Black Creek. Here we are viewing how effective land treatment, embracing all the collective forces of soil and water conservation, shows measurable effects in sediment reduction. But at the same time, we are witnessing in this Allen County Soil and Water Conservation District, something new, a spark of creativity from the very people who own, farm and love the land. Good people who are concerned about their natural resources and who are improving them. Here, you are monitoring the sediment-reducing effects of varied combinations of soil and water saving practices. As this tour has progressed the good influences of this work in helping clean up Black Creek have become more and more apparent, more and more impressive.

I spoke a moment ago about the spark of creativity. I know James E. Lake joins me in describing this as a local undertaking, backed by the Purdue University, the Soil Conservation Service, and the cooperating Environmental Protection Agency. At the root of all of this are the supervisors of the district.

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Remarks by Norman A. Berg, Associate Administrator, USDA, Soil Conservation Service, at the Tour of Black Creek Watershed Study Project, August 7, 1974, Harlan, Indiana.

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The moldboard plow wasn't invented in Washington, D.C. It was born on the prairie where it was needed. Neither was soil and water conservation born in our nation's capitol. It is both a science and an art that has evolved through the combined experiences, observations and wisdom of those who love and work the land—helped and perfected with the assistance of those from our land grant colleges, from our growing state soil and water conservation agencies, and from USDA and other federal agencies.

Our Soil Conservation Service is nearly 40 years old. That is, its predecessor, the Soil Erosion Service, was established on August 26, 1933, and actually got under way less than a month later.

Today there are some 3,000 conservation districts that are seriously attacking one of the nation's most serious environmental problems—reduction of siltation. They have their own programs. They are finding out many new things, just as you will here, that benefit landowners and the general public everywhere.

Four years ago I participated in the first National Conference on Sediment Control in Washington. One of the outgrowths of that conference was a guide to county governments that has turned into a major contribution to removing sediment as a major problem in growing America.

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One of the things that prompted this was the concern of conservation district supervisors throughout the nation, with urban sources of sediment as well as that originating in farmed fields.

Our skills have been sharpened and our progress has been measurable. Your work here in Allen county is significant. It is a valuable tool in helping improve the quality of the environment as America's communities grow. Your work is important--important to your county and to the nation.

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I commend them--Ellis McFadden, Roger Ehle, Raymond Arnold, Michael Lomont, Gilbert Whitsel, as well as their associates Robert Roy and Arnold Romenke. And I'd like to express my appreciation for the quality of the work on the land to Joseph R. Graber and the other farmers who display their love of their soils and who are making great efforts to improve their part of our environment. I know that District Conservationist Daniel McCain, County Conservationist James Lake and Conservation Technician Dennis Bennett, enjoy a salutary working relationship with the landowners and those of the cooperating agencies as well.

Intensive conservation practices are being applied, and the cooperation of landowners is the hallmark. Extensive cost-sharing is being provided for a wide range of practices.

One of my interests is land use policy that stems from the grass roots. One of my great delights is to get back to the countryside and see this interest and concern, and conservation action. I joined the Soil Conservation Service more years ago than I like to contemplate as a soil conservationist in an Idaho soil conservation district. My first experiences--and they were great--were working with irrigated farmers and ranchers in the same way Dan McCain and Dennis Bennett are working here.

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