

The State of the Service

Coworkers & guests for Ohio
It's a pleasure to join in your conference.
Professional employees
The Soil Conservation Service and each of you are in a challenging and

exciting time in the conservation movement. You are here to get a better

understanding of our SCS plans for the next decade and beyond, and I hope

you'll return to your offices with some new ideas and new resolve for getting

your part of the conservation job done.

OK *- 7 topics to discuss* *- See, Arant's message*
Back to continue to
You are here to talk about and to go home and implement the Framework
See
Plan of the SCS. I'd like to discuss with the help of *56* slides the setting in

which SCS felt the need to critically examine the way it is geared up to do

its intended work. Then I'll *open for* discuss some of the ways we are moving ahead

to implement the Plan, and *importantly* relate a few of the more recent developments at the

national level affecting SCS.

Material for speech by Norman A. Berg, Associate Administrator, Soil Conservation Service, at a meeting of SCS professional employees, Columbus, Ohio, October 11, 1972.

LIGHTS OUT

BEGIN SLIDE RUN

1. The setting in which the Soil Conservation Service and conservation

districts must work...

2. Is one of change...accelerating change...

Never before has the
future become the
past - so fast.

The setting in many places,

3. Is one in which yesterday's farmland

4. Is getting new neighbors today

5. And more neighbors tomorrow

6. Until the city is right next door and still growing.

7. Our setting is one in which many farm and ranch families

8. Have moved to the city where wide open spaces means room to park a station wagon.

9. Look what's happened to our farm population since 1910.

10. While urban population keeps pace with the total growth...up and up.

- 11: We have a setting in which people have changed their values and priorities

- 3 -

as well as their addresses. They ^{seek} ~~want~~ to bring quality of life more in balance with quantity of material goods.

12. Younger Americans are especially aware and eager to become involved in improving the quality of life, but the search for quality goes on in all age groups.

13. They are concerned about pollution that is becoming a monument of its own;

People do
they want a cleaner and healthier environment.

14. They are ^{more} becoming aware that sediment is a severe pollutant...

15. And that sediment and many other problems arise from ^{land use} ~~the~~ haphazard and often careless growth of suburbs all over this Nation.

16. They want a quality environment...whether it's a vista one might see a few times in his life...

17. Or right in town...

18. Or right at home.

- 4 -

19. They want a high-quality food supply *at reasonable prices*
20. And that means *first* there must *always* be a high-quality agriculture in America.
21. They want space and facilities for recreation...
22. They want space and habitat for wildlife...
23. And they want *some special* the red carpet treatment for fish.
24. It is in this setting that SCS ~~has~~ developed a Framework Plan to make its actions responsive to the needs that we foresee.
25. As our plan states in the *very* beginning, SCS has three mutually supporting mission objectives, *1* *2* *3* The plan sets forth a framework in which our *related to quality* actions can best relate to these mission objectives. *Bill Tinsley is our expert on this.*
26. In program activities, the framework plan helped us decide what present activities and relationships continue to be meaningful in the 1970's, *will* and helped us chart some new courses for SCS. The plan lists 19 separate

activities with a goal for each and a set of actions SCS ^{Refers to} will take to reach the goals.

27. For example: ^{SCS} Resource technology must be ^{continually} further developed to meet today's conservation needs. We'll work to ^{insure that} make our own technology ^{remains} second to none, and ^{will} strengthen our liaison with research and educational institutions and with industry.

28. We're ^{ing} going to work to develop a comprehensive system for surveying and monitoring to provide facts for planning and for keeping the public informed about their resources and the changes taking place in extent and condition of those resources. ^{Special assignment} In addition to the standard field work for soil surveys, snow surveys, and other studies...

29. ^{we are} We ^{ing} will make use of newer methods ^{again} such as remote sensing to gather more basic resource data and interpretations.

- 6 -

30. We ~~will~~ ^{Red} step up our resource conservation planning assistance to help

people make use of the facts we've gathered. SCS recognizes its

responsibility for bridging a wide gap between national concerns and

those of groups and individuals in the use of natural resources.

31. We ~~will~~ ^{are} work ^{ing} to improve our ^{role} helpfulness in getting conservation measures

planned, installed, and maintained properly, whether it's on the farm...

32. Or in the suburbs or anywhere else.

--SCD's of Harder (Kelley Thurns A.M.)
33. SCS will work ~~to~~ inform all citizens about resource conditions and

conservation needs, so they can participate more knowledgeably in resource

decisions. Information work ~~will~~ ^{is} be the responsibility of every SCS

employee, aided by information specialists and educators.

continues to
34. SCS ~~will~~ work to make itself function as a highly motivated, innovative,

and effective organization through the best in management support. Every

SCS employee has the responsibility to manage his time, skill, and

- 7 -

and materials in a way that gets the best conservation job done at lowest

cost. We want professionalism to continue to be our image.

*I'll say**more on this later this A.M.*

35. Other nations have the same challenge as America to fit natural resources

to the long-term needs and objectives of the people. SCS will continue

its efforts to help improve foreign conservation programs to make more

countries self sufficient in food production while protecting the *IR*

resource base.

36. The SCS Framework Plan gives us a *tool* way to fit these program activities into

a package and make decisions on how best to move through the process from

dollars to results.

37. The Plan focuses on the relationships between SCS and conservation districts

and others to achieve the objectives of the plan. It recognizes that

conservation districts are the primary local organization through which

SCS works. And although each of us will be working with an increasing number of other groups, how well districts and SCS work together in future years will strongly influence the effectiveness of resource conservation action in the years ahead. We've got to keep that relationship finely tuned.

38. We've got to keep all our ducks in a row and do the best job we can in a business that is more and more complex.

39. America has a rich land resource--^{mostly 2/3} ~~more than half of~~ it owned by farmers and ranchers, businessmen, and industry. Their decisions--good and bad--determine its future.

40. The second biggest landowner is the Federal Government, with most of its property west of the Mississippi. The rest is state and local government property or Indian land.

41. Here's how our land is used. Note that land in urban and transportation uses comprises only 3 percent--yet 70 percent of Americans live on that land.

42. The patterns and practices in land use need careful attention by all of us. The signs are there that the America we live in can be...

43. Scarred...

44. Turned upside down...

45. Flooded out...

46. Polluted...

47. Littered with trash...

48. Or with helter-skelter subdivisions.

But

49. The America we live in can be productive...

50. Pleasant...

51. Enjoyable...

52. And satisfying to live in...

53. And ^{to} do business in.

54. We can help to make a higher quality environment for all Americans...

55. Which will mean ^{will lead the world} happier Americans for a long time to come.

56. That is the business that the Soil Conservation Service ^{can help on} must be about in

the years ahead.

NOW IF I MAY HAVE THE LIGHTS PLEASE.

In Brief

That's our long-range planning effort. We have dramatic new things to do,

old standby things to do, and in between; and our program will have to touch

all the bases.

Two areas of the plan foresee a significant change in emphasis for the Soil Conservation Service, so I would like to say more about them. (This

is not to de-emphasize the Plan's other facets.)

First, we are going to expand our knowledge of natural renewable resources through more complete and accurate surveying and monitoring. We need much better data on the extent, condition, and rate of change of soil, water, and related resources.

We are convinced that you and district leaders and their cooperators have training and experience second to none in appraising the state of our soil and water resources. You also have the ability to look at the supply and condition of our soil and water to determine the impact on those resources when a new force or change is interjected into the environment.

Our framework plan sets forth a number of specific goals in surveying and monitoring.

First, it calls for a soil survey of the Nation that is complete and current.

Second, it calls for systematic studies to produce basic resource data and interpretations for units of government, planners, and other people concerned with resource management.

Third, it calls for an expansion of our present Conservation Needs Inventory into a comprehensive system for monitoring the condition of our soil, water, and related resources.

Fourth, it proposes a sediment monitoring system that includes information on sediment sources, deposition, characteristics, and effects.

X Fifth, it calls for even more timely and accurate snow-survey data.

I cannot over-emphasize the importance of expanded survey and interpretative activities. The need for more reliable data about our natural resources has never been more apparent than during the past few years, as a public debate has raged over the condition of our environment and what to do about it.

> Detail this later
in R. Dev. bill
see Cons. Needs Memo 28

- 12 -

A number of the conflicts have not yet been resolved to the satisfaction of the general public simply because no one has the needed information on which to base an informed judgment.

A second area forecast for our program relates to planning assistance.

The districts and SCS are already up to ^{our} their ears in planning work. Last year, nearly 23,000 units of State and local government asked for and received district and SCS assistance. We provided nearly 11,000 resource inventories and evaluations to government units. We counseled on land use and treatment of proposed sites for more than 2,000 schools, hospitals, sanitary landfills, and other public facilities.

The SCS Framework Plan anticipates a far greater demand for this sort of planning assistance in the Seventies and it sets forth several principles to guide our employees.

- 13 -

An important principle calls for maximum citizen involvement. We have known for a long time that a successful conservation plan can be developed only when the farmer or rancher participates fully and makes the necessary decisions. Experience also confirms that plans for communities, townships, or counties-- if they are going to be supported--must have local people participating from the very beginning. It is not our job as SCS employees to make decisions for local people, but rather to help local planners themselves to recognize the alternatives which confront their communities when they make resource decisions.

We also ask you to pay attention to the principle of interaction. This means simply that everything you do about resources interacts in some way with something else; it sets off a whole series of effects.

*Florida
Disneyworld*
In one city, for example, there has been a deliberate emphasis on building high rise apartments to beat the high cost of providing utility services

- 14 -

to detached single-family homes. But one unforeseen result of the confinement of apartment living has been a mass exodus to the country on weekends.

This Friday-night migration, in turn, has led to problems of waste disposal and pollution at nearby lakes and campgrounds and to increased congestion on the highways, with accompanying increases in the weekend accident rate.

intend We hope that you can and will *do* share your training and experience with local

people to help minimize such unforeseen effects of planning decisions.

One of the most challenging tasks for both Conservation Districts and SCS is in communicating the facts about our program to a changing public in a changing American society. For years soil and water conservation was of interest chiefly to those people who were directly involved--the farmers and ranchers who were both the prime movers and the principal beneficiaries of the program. Support for SCS came from the people who worked with us on a day-to day basis, and it is no exaggeration to say that our work was accepted with

enthusiasm.

Today this acceptance is no longer universal. The unprecedented national concern over the environment has brought every resource agency and institution under searching public scrutiny. Every action with an impact on the environment is being carefully studied to determine whether or not it is truly in the public interest. This represents a basic change in the social environment in which we work, and we must learn to understand that and deal with it.

This is one reason for some of the controversies which have touched our program. Clearly, America's resource decisions are going to have to be based on solid information, instead of unfounded fears, guesswork, or wishful thinking. And I believe that Districts and the SCS should have a more significant role in obtaining that information and making it readily available.

In my opinion, all of the elements of this Framework Plan give ~~our~~ ^{SCS} agency

an outstanding opportunity to contribute importantly in the years ahead to meeting the environmental improvement needs of this Nation.

And to a large extent, that opportunity rests with you. It is you in the field who will determine the shape and success of the Soil Conservation Service tomorrow. Only two percent of SCS people and money are back there in

Washington. Our work and our image are shaped right here *in Ohio & the other 49 States & the Caribbean Area.*

- 17 -

I'd like to stress that our Service Plan will work--will help us to a strong role--but only if every SCS employee reads and understands it and helps implement it in every one of the 3,027 districts in the Nation.

You will need to help explain it to other employees, to other agencies and organizations, and to district leaders and cooperators.

How you help implement the Plan is most important. We can't make a plan that fits the situation in every work unit or area. You still have a responsibility to assess the total needs within your sphere of work and the resources you have to work with--and design the best conservation program you can that touches all the bases.

are moving
We must ~~move~~ ^{are moving} ahead quickly in SCS to implement the Plan. I'm involved strongly in this aspect as chairman of the Advisory Group for Implementing the Framework Plan. A big step forward was the recent State Conservationists meeting in Brainerd, Minnesota, at which we fully discussed the Plan and made some decisions for moving ahead. This step was one of 12 recommendations made to the Administrator by the advisory group. We also recommended and have now issued several study papers to discuss, explain, or define subjects brought up in the Plan.

*See
H. M. H. S.*

They came in handy at the State Conservationists meeting. Other similar papers are on the way. Other recommendations of the group have included encouraging states to develop multi-year SCS program plans; revising Management Memorandum 3; encouraging SCS personnel and their district supervisors, whenever possible, to attend meetings together to discuss the Framework Plan and the Future of Districts report; and developing and testing quality standards for several resource management systems.

We will continue to review how well our resources are oriented toward meeting the plan's objectives; ^{to} develop effective institutional arrangements; ^{to} work toward developing and implementing an effective surveying and monitoring system; and ^{to} involve ourselves more aggressively in land-use planning activities at all levels of government.

The Plan states some present needs and gives some forecasts about what we think will be the future. Predicting the future is difficult business. ^{But} You will need to use your own crystal ball based on trends and opportunities where you are, and above all, face the realities or developments that unfold as you move along.

→ J K Q says - Very specific & personal misfortune awaits those who presume to believe that the future is revealed to them.

- 19 -

Nationally, here are a few of the things that ^{are} ~~have~~ unfolded ^{g. realities}
recently:

I → Backup material

Rural Development.--This has been around as a discussion topic since the mid-1950's and as a part of SCS activities since long before that. On August 20, President Nixon signed the Rural Development Act of 1972 after the conference report had been approved by the House 339 to 6 and by the Senate 73 to 0. It is finally an idea whose time has come.

The Act takes full recognition of the role that SCS can play by giving it several new authorities to strengthen SCS programs that already are having a major effect in improving the liveability of rural America.

SCS now is authorized to provide technical and financial aid to watershed and RC&D project sponsors in water quality management, control of agriculture-related pollution, disposal of solid wastes and municipal and industrial water supply. In watersheds we'll be able to aid in ground water recharge. The act also permits the use of Federal funds other than PL-566 money for land-rights acquisition, and authorizes long-term contracting for watershed land treatment work. In RC&D projects, SCS is authorized to help communities store water in reservoirs for rural fire protection.

The Act also authorizes an inventorying and monitoring program including studies and surveys of erosion, sediment damage, flood-plain identification, and land-use changes and trends. USDA is to issue a land inventory report on the nation's soils, water, and related resources every five years. This fits directly within our SCS goal of broadening our knowledge of America's natural resources.

The Act also broadens the credit assistance of the Farmers Home Administration, and calls for SCS to provide technical assistance associated with FHA's water and sewer program. It provides for an additional Assistant Secretary of Agriculture to broaden and strengthen rural development efforts, and casts the Department in the principal coordinating role in rural development.

These provisions will directly or indirectly influence the progress and the flexibility of SCS programs. We're now working on guidelines and procedures for carrying out the new authorities.

2) Budget.--Our Financial picture has been a tough act to follow.

You remember that things looked dim for a while last year, then we got a \$40 million boost, and then like everyone else we had to apply the screws to hold down inflation. We still are operating under budget and personnel restrictions that call for tight schedules, top priorities, and top production for every man-year. These will affect the expenditure of our 1973 appropriation, enacted on August 22, which calls for a \$5 million increase in CO; \$500,000 more for watershed planning and nearly \$8½ million more for operations; \$62,500 more for the Great Plains program; and \$6 million more for RC&D.

But we are being asked to hold our outlays in FY 73 to the 1972 Budget level.
Our new style for a while will probably continue to be the "lean

and hungry" look. Many companies and organizations have recently said, "We've found when we have to, a smaller number of us can still get out the wash.

It may not be as pretty as it was before, but it still gets out on the line".

This ties in to another concern called "reduction of average grade level."

All agencies are being scrutinized for any evidence of bureaucratic empire building. The signals are clear--we simply can't afford to be as generous in staffing as we would like to be to meet the workload that districts ask us to consider.

2/ Reorganization.--This is still an active issue in the Administration and in Congress, although ~~it appears that~~ no bill will reach the floor the remainder of this session. A bill now before the House Rules Committee would take FHA, REA, the Rural Development Service, and some functions of ERS along with many other programs now housed in several departments and create a new Department of Community Development. This would be one of the four Departments that President Nixon has recommended to replace several existing departments and independent agencies.

The original proposals on reorganization would have split SCS, with our water resource activities going to one department and the rest of us to another. This was changed to transfer SCS intact to the Water Resources Administration of the Department of Natural Resources. A later change ^{Proposed} ~~was~~ ^{to make} to retain a USDA, restructured to serve the farmers and remove "peripheral activities." (SCS is one of those "peripheral activities.")

Off the record
You can judge your age by the amount of pain you feel when you come in contact w/ a new idea.

But wherever your agency hangs its hat, your activities are
not peripheral in any sense of the word. While the organizational
charts ^{could event rally} are being turned inside out, the work you ^{are} ~~are~~ doing in the
^{in Columbus & in Washington} field, had better continue to be done:

--Conservation practices on the land

^{& RCD}
--Watershed structures built and operating

^{other}
--Soil surveys made and used

--Rural development needs given a major thrust

4/ National Land Use Policy.--The Administration has re-emphasized
and broadened its proposal this year, and this issue is an active one
too. The subject is a broad one that will take many proposals, in
some of which USDA and SCS will be directly involved.

- Butz letter
- Issue paper

5 Environmental Issues.--In some ways, the tempo of criticism on our channel modification work and on public access and some other issues seems to be slower now, and I hope that this means a gradual improvement in public understanding. Yet, last month's Audubon Magazine contains a major article that in an effective and highly emotional way condemns the practice of channel modification.

All of ^{us}~~you~~ have the responsibility of working closely with conservation districts and the other agencies and organizations that are part of the conservation team to give our work the maximum favorable effect on the environment and to bring about mutual understanding of its contribution.

You also must work more closely with many groups and individuals who do not share our viewpoint or our experience. Even in situations where calm and open discussion seems difficult or impossible. We cannot afford to give up in our efforts to communicate. If we pull back from our critics, if we fail to talk with them and work with them and argue constructively with them, we are going to increase their suspicions and animosity.

On the other hand, I am confident that positive information efforts and the best use of your well demonstrated talents for working with people will pay dividends in the long run. Those who have a sincere interest in environmental improvement and who understand your programs and your missions can become valuable allies.

In the years ahead, then, the job of the Service will be a challenging one--in the jobs we've always been called on to handle, and a lot of newer assignments. But I am confident that the Service's employees are equal to the challenge. My three decades of experience in USDA have convinced me that the SCS contains ~~one of~~ the finest groups of people in the country. Our dedication is widely acknowledged. We can take pride in the excellence of our work. We are proud of the degree of expertise we have and that we have developed.

Having said this, I should like to remind each of us that:

1. Whatever you and I do, know more about it than anyone else. Read, study, make notes, think. Develop your own personal library.
1. Whatever you and I do, spend more time doing it than anything else.

--Work longer hours.

--Take work home.

--Tell others.

--Write about it.

3. Put work first.

--Ahead of everything but your wife and family.

--Make a hobby of it.

4. Broaden knowledge.

--Extend your study into related areas.

--Listen to (and question) people who are doing
work different from, or who probably know
more than, you.

5. Evaluate experience.

--Ask "why?" about every experience you have.

--Keep an eye on results.

--Discard the worthless, the poor, the uncertain.

--Avoid things that don't work.

--Try for better experience.

6. Beat promotion opportunities to the punch. Look ahead,
plan ahead, and study and work to get there.

7. Be ready:

--To convince others that you do indeed know what

you are talking about, on the basis of fact.

--To be convinced of new ways of doing things, and

of new ideas.

--To change your methods, your approach, your

conclusions, on the basis of fact.

--To move, to another town, another State, another

country, wherever there's opportunity. Better

keep your wife informed and aware on this point.

8. Set goals.

--Think what you want to be doing next year, three

years from now, ten years.

--Change your goals as you are convinced of the

need to do so. Times are changing fast--watch

your objectives, but look before you leap.

Worth citing here, I think, is a profound
remark made by L. F. Urwick, foremost management
authority in Great Britain. He said, "The
history of other animal species shows that the
most successful in the struggle for survival have
been those which were most adaptable to change in
their world."

Throughout our organization our people should
feel an obligation and be encouraged to study
and suggest improvements that may make the SCS
better--in terms of efficiency, quality of work,
improved service, lower costs, elimination of
waste, red tape, unnecessary operations, and the
like.

When an organization is characterized by such attitudes as these,
there are some results that can be measured. Productivity, for example,
is high. Turnover is low. Costs are low. Morale is high. Acceptance
by the public is high.

We think this describes the SCS. For example:

Our productivity per man is 10 to 20 times what it was twenty years ago. With due regard for inflation, our costs have gone down steadily the last 20 years--depending on what activity you're measuring. Acceptance by the public is at an all-time high despite the magazine articles. Turnover is low, lower than that of any other government agency. It stands at about 0.4% per month. Only one other organization of comparable size in the United States has a lower turnover than ours. And with so few people leaving SCS, you can't say morale is low, or that dissatisfaction is more than minimal.

In terms of new ideas, new concepts, better methods, improved techniques, we can safely say, I think, that SCS stands high. I could cite numerous sources in the Washington complex as a basis for the statement that SCS is a leader in its field and is moving strongly and progressively with these times of change. With present reductions in funds resulting both from imposed constraints and inflation, I have noted no tendency anywhere to relax on the matter of improving our program operation, our expertise, or our management. In the meantime, our training is increasing.

In the matter of career development, the SCS career system unquestionably stands among the best in the Nation. The Administrator, his Associate, his Deputies, every State Conservationist, and every AC came up, as we say, "the hard way," that is they began their careers in a field office. They moved from one position to another with increasing responsibilities. Promotion from within, on merit, has been the policy we have followed for the life of the Service. To the best of my knowledge, SCS has done possibly more in this field of career development than any other Federal agency.

You have a career in a great agency--an agency that has the courage and conviction to look at itself in depth and decide how and where to strengthen in order to make a more meaningful contribution to America.

You are here until Friday to give and take ideas on making our Framework Plan more than a document. Let's have at it.

"There is nothing wrong with change, if it is in the right direction"

SOME VITAL STATISTICS:

Population (1970), 10,652,017; area, 41,222 square miles; 17th state to enter the Union, March 1, 1803; capital, Columbus; flower, scarlet carnation; bird, cardinal; nickname, "Buckeye State," from tree native to it.

Ohioans were responsible for two of the world's greatest inventions, the airplane by the Wright brothers, the electric light by Thomas Edison. Ohio is a leading producer of tires, matches, machine tools, stoves, soaps, coffins, playing cards, Liederkranz cheese, sour balls, police whistles, dancing shoes and false teeth. One of the world's largest printing plants

is in Dayton. (Redbook is printed in it.) The world's first professional baseball team, the Cincinnati Red Stockings, was established in Ohio in 1866. America's first billionaire was an Ohioan, John D. Rockefeller.

Artifacts from the 11th and 12th centuries have been found in Ohio. The first white men there found Erie Indians; La Salle, the French explorer, arrived in 1669; France claimed the territory in 1673. The Indians gave up their claims to central and southern Ohio in 1795 and Tecumseh's confederacy of Indian tribes was destroyed by the War of 1812.