



Elbert Blankenship



L.E. DeMoulin



H.E. Ferguson



Henry J. Potthast



Arthur Unterbrink

1944—2019



Celebrating 75 years of Service



Mike Bingham



Wes Pourchot



Denny Kirkham



Carl Albert



Kyle Johnson

Bond County Soil and Water Conservation District

A 75-Year History

In the early 40's, Bond County Farm Adviser W. H. Tammeus saw a need for a Soil Conservation District. He gathered supporters and began campaigning. An election in 1942 failed to get the majority needed to pass the referendum. Finally, in 1944, Tammeus and others were successful in getting the Conservation District formed in parts of the county, totaling 53,600 acres. The charter for formation of the Bond County Conservation District was granted on July 19, 1944.

Tammeus suggested H. E. Ferguson and L. E. DeMoulin be appointed as acting directors until a formal election could be held. On August 26, 1944, the first election of directors was held. Members of the first Board of Directors included Ferguson, DeMoulin, Henry Potthast, Arthur Unterbrink, and Elbert Blankenship. The Board's first order of business was to establish goals for the Conservation District. These goals were to achieve erosion control, better drainage, and good land use through information and education.



First Board of Directors: Top, L to R: HE Ferguson, Henry J Potthast, and LE DeMoulin; Bottom: Arthur Unterbrink, and Elbert Blankenship.

Once a Soil Conservation District was formed, the Soil Conservation Service assigned a Work Unit Leader to the County. Ralph Canfield began working in Bond County on January 1, 1945. In April of that same year, C.R. "Shad" Coleman was hired as a Soil Conservation Aid. Canfield remained in Bond County until his retirement in 1955; Coleman retired in 1967. Coleman went on to serve as a Director from 1968 to 1983. Both gentlemen were largely responsible for the progressive conservation efforts made in Bond County at that time.

Directors and staff held 24 evening meetings in the county to promote soil conservation and the Soil Conservation District. County producers were very interested in expanding the district to include the whole county. The first cooperator to make application for services was Raymond Adams on 238 acres in Pleasant Mound Township. Within the first year, 25 signed farm plans had been developed on 3,778 acres, with an additional 42 active applications for farm plans in the office as well.

Expansion of the District

Work began in 1946 to expand the district to include the entire county. Those appointed to work on expansion were Henry Potthast, H. E. Ferguson, J. T. Willeford, Elbert Blankenship, Fred Baumberger, Verse Sanders, George Bauer, Fred Potthast, and Arthur Unterbrink. Harold Kuhnen, Farm Adviser, also played an important role in expansion of the district. On May 5, 1947, the district was re-chartered to include 240,726 acres. In 1962, the words "and Water" were added to the district's name, in compliance with a newly passed state law. This was in keeping with the expanding role of Soil and Water Conservation Districts state-wide.

Funding

Funding of the district's activities began with the rental of a whirlwind terracer and a rotary scraper, both which had been donated. Directors sought donations from county banks, implement dealers, and district cooperators. Records show directors often "passed the hat" among themselves to raise needed funds. Today, most of the funding is provided through a grant from the Illinois Department of Agriculture. The SWCD also raises funds through its equipment rental program, soil sampling program, fish sales, grant applications, sponsorships and cooperative agreements with the NRCS.

Soil Survey

In 1971, work was initiated for preparation of a general soils map of the county. This was a joint project by the district and the County Board of Supervisors. The general soils map was published in 1972. In 1973, the County Board discussed with the District Board the

possibility of conducting a detailed soil survey. In 1975, the County Board and Soil Conservation Service entered into an agreement to conduct a modern soil survey.

The Soil Survey office opened on July 25 with Don Phillips as the Soil Survey Party chief. Tyronne Goddard was the staff leader when the survey was completed in December 1979. A Last Acre Mapping Ceremony to mark the completion of the survey was held on the Don Dalenberg farm on April 19, 1980. The Soil Survey of Bond County was published in 1983. Currently soils maps and the soil survey information for Bond County can be found online.

District Directors

The district could not have accomplished so much in the past 75 years without the dedication and hard work of the Directors of Bond County Soil and Water Conservation District. A total of 40 landowners and producers have served as a director, many serving several terms. Eight board members have served 10 years or more, bearing witness to the tremendous transformations in technology and society. Past and present directors are as follows:

Director	Years Served	Yrs.	Director	Years Served	Yrs.
Elbert Blankenship	1944-46	2	Vincent Gnaedinger	1983-87	1
L.E. DeMoulin	1944-55	11	Forrest Marcoot	1984-94	10
H.E. Ferguson	1944-49	5	Glenn Kreider	1986-90	4
Henry Potthast	1944-52	8	George Luber	1987-2001	14
A. J. Unterbrink	1944-52	8	Kurt Baumberger	1990-96	6
J. T. Willeford	1946-49	3	Boyd Schaufelberger	1991-93	2
Fred Baumberger	1949-59	10	Ron Lawler	1993-97	4
Fremont Buchmiller	1952-56	4	Mike Vonder Haar	1993-99	6
Timper Rachow	1952-58	6	Jeff Tischhauser	1994-96	2
Melvin Cripe	1953-57	4	Artie Myers	1996-2011	14
J.W. Anthony	1956-68	12	Richard Sharp	1996-2007	11
Eugene Dalenberg	1956-72	16	Roger Blankenship	1997-2001	4
Hollis McCasland	1957-61	4	Mike Bingham	1999-Present	20
Duane Apple	1958-64	6	Harold Gehrig	2001-2011	11
Robert Collmann	1959-79	20	Wes Pourchot	2001-Present	18
Lester Kleiner	1961-65	4	Lester Harnetiaux	2007-2015	8
Darrell Lurkins	1965-92	28	Karen File	2011-2018	8
J. W. H. Loddick	1967-76	9	Kyle Johnson	2011-Present	7
C. R. Coleman	1968-83	15	Denny Kirkham	2014-Present	5
Edward Gruner	1972-73	1	Carl Albert	2018-Present	1
Thomas Paine	1973-80	7			
John W. Elam	1976-82	6			
Donald Dalenberg	1979-91	12			
Hal Langham	1982-84	2			
Ronald Stoecklin	1982-86	4			

District Staff

The District employed its first secretary in 1961, when the State Legislature granted funds to Districts for hiring administrative and non-technical personnel. Prior to this time, clerical work was done by Directors, their wives, NRCS (SCS) personnel, or hired out when funds were available.

In 1980, the State Legislature granted funds to Districts to employ administrative aides to carry out erosion and sediment control programs. When these aides were first hired, they covered a three-county area (Bond shared an aide with Macoupin and Montgomery Counties). Since 1984, Bond County has had its own full-time Resource Conservationist. This position gives the District much needed assistance in carrying out its programs and activities.

Since 2015 the Bond County SWCD has modified its roles and responsibilities for the staff. The positions of Executive Director and Conservation Associate were created. The Executive Director merged the roles of Administrative Coordinator, Resource Conservation and Education Coordinator. The Executive Director provides overall management of the SWCD. Those duties include but are not limited to financial management, grant writing, office management, IL Dept of Agriculture program management, and education program management including the Bond County Ag. in the Classroom. The Executive Director also provides technical services for landowners and serves as the cooperative agreement services provider for the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service.

The Conservation Associate serves as the program manager for the equipment rental program, the soil sampling program, assists with educational programs and other duties as needed.

Resource Conservationist	Years Served		Administrative Coordinator	Years Served
Mike Littleton	1980-81		Wanda Barkman	1961-67
David Hobson	1981-84		Karen Suess	1967-76
Dan Feldmann	1984-89		Carol Eveland	1977-79
Brad Daniels	1989-92		Donna Bristow	1979-93
Dan Feldmann	1993-2015		Joy Dierkes Emily Hartmann	1993-2007 2007-2015
Executive Director Emily Hartmann	Years Served 2015-Present		Conservation Associate Roger Marcoot	Years Served 2015-Present

NRCS Personnel

The Natural Resources Conservation Service (formerly Soil Conservation Service) and the SWCD have worked together to provide technical and financial assistance for producers. Soil Conservation Service staff played an important role in the District's growth in the 1940's.

A cooperative services agreement has been in place for several years. This agreement allows the NRCS and SWCD to work together within the USDA offices to provide services for local landowners.

District Conservationist	Years Served		Soil Conservation Technician	Years Served
Ralph Canfield	1944-55		C. R. Coleman	1945-67
Albert Seyer	1955-60		Jesse Hill	1957-61
Delbert Jackson	1960-66		Chester Potter	1962-64
John Paden	1966-77		Gerald Rush	1967-70
John Hughes	1978-79		David Lashbrook	1971-74
James B. Johnson	1979-84		Wes Gaffner	1975
Tony Antonacci, Jr.	1984-88		Roger Blankenship	1980-85
Jon Hubbert	1988-90		Glen Franke	1987-89
Roger Staff	1990-96		Rob Rinehart	2006-2014
Dan Mueller	1999 - 2007		Beth Stanley	2014-2016
Justin King	2007-2015		Annett Ambuehl	2016-Present
Gary Gabautz	2015-Present			



1968:
Back row: Eugene Dalenberg, Joe Loddick
Front row: Darrell Lurkins, JW Anthony, Robert Collmann

1981:
Ron Stoecklin, Darrell Lurkins,
Hal Langham, Don Dalenberg,
CR "Shad" Coleman



1965: JW Anthony, Robert Collman,
Lester Kleiner, Gene Dalenberg,
Wanda Barkman (office secretary), H
Duane Apple, Ralph Broom, Farm
Advisor

Directors from the Past



Past Directors (1984): Seated, l to r: Hollis McCasland, CR Coleman, Fred Baumberger, Melvin Cripe. Second row: Darrell Lurkins, Ron Stoecklin, John Elam, Tom Paine, Forrest Marcot. Third row: JWH Loddick, Robert Collmann, Hal Langham, Lester Kleiner, Duane Apple, Don Dalenberg, and Vince Gnaedinger.



Past Directors (1994): Seated, l to r: Fred Baumberger, Melvin Cripe, Tom Paine, Robert Collmann, Darrell Lurkins, Forrest Marcot. Standing: Boyd Schaufelberger, George Lubber, Jeff Tischhauser, Kurt Baumberger, Mike Vonder Haar, Ron Lawler, Lester Kleiner.

Conservation Teacher of Year

1984—Charles Baum, Greenville Jr. High Science Teacher *
1991—Kay Reymond, 4th Grade—Greenville
2013—Matt Elam, Mulberry Grove Agriculture & FFA*
2018—Steve Zimmerman, Greenville Agriculture & FFA*

Conservation Farm Family

1968—Don Doll
1969—Marshall Mollett
1987—Mr. & Mrs. Ronald Stoecklin—State Finalist
2011—Jim and Jeff Tischhauser—State Finalist
2014—Doll Dairy, Inc.—State Winner*

Outstanding Forestry Contribution

2009—Mark Carr, State Winner*
2019—William Calvert, State Winner*

State Scholarship Winners

2015—Lorraine Albert—McKibben Scholarship *
2016—Lauren Robison—IL SWCD Employee Assoc. Schol.*
2018—Lauren Robison—IL SWCD Employee Assoc. Schol.*

Gehrig Scholarship Winners

2013—Kelcie Woker, Greenville & Newton Albert, Mulberry Grove
2014—Katie Cayo, Mulberry Grove & Dr. Bryan Davidson, Greenville
2015—Lorraine Albert, Mulberry Grove
2016—Jeff Leidner, Mulberry Grove
2017—Kaeden Mollett, Greenville
2018—No winner
2019—Katelynn Dugan, Mulberry Grove & J.T. Thiems, Greenville
2020—Shelbi McCray, Greenville

* Illinois Statewide Winner

Conservation Teacher of the Year Winners



2013 State Winner—Matt Elam, Mulberry Grove H.S. Agriculture, Industrial Arts and FFA Advisor



2018 State Winner—Steve Zimmerman, Greenville H.S. Agriculture & FFA Advisor

Conservation Farm Family Finalists & Winner



2014 Illinois Conservation Farm Family of the Year—
Doll Dairy, Inc.—Homer & Frank Doll and families



2011 Illinois Conservation Farm Family of the Year—
State Finalist
James and Jeff Tischhauser Families



Gehrig Scholarship Winners



Newt Albert, 2013



Kelcie Woker, 2013



Katie Cayo, 2014



Bryan Davidson, 2014



Lorraine Albert, 2015



Jeff Leidner, 2016



Kaeden Mollett, 2017



J.T. Thiems and Katie Dugan—2019



Shelbi McCray—2020