

ANNUAL REPORT

1965

BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

FL-SCD-43

SEMINOLE COUNTY

FLORIDA

BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

Bonner L. Carter, Chairman

Ralph Hammond, Vice Chairman

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FARM PLANNING:

Conservation farm planning continued to progress at a rather rapid rate during 1955. The goals in basic plans were met and the numbers of new District Cooperators exceeded the planned goals. A total of 58 basic conservation plans and 44 new cooperator's plans were worked out with District cooperators during the past year. As of December 31, a total of 285 basic conservation plans have been worked out with cooperators since the local District was organized in 1949. These basic plans cover over 41 thousand acres of agricultural land.

The fact remains that our local financing agencies are more considerate of the farmers who practice and carry out recommended conservation practices and consider their loans as good financial investments.

FARM DRAINAGE & IRRIGATION:

This District experienced a rather dry year during 1955. Many of our small lakes, ponds, and marshlands are either dry or lower than ever before. There were also many of our artesian wells that ceased to flow during our Spring truck crop season. The total rainfall in this area was not too much below normal; however, the intensity of rainfall was lower and most of the rain was actually absorbed by the land thus allowing only a small amount of run-off to the low areas.

The demands for water in this District are greater now than ever before. These increased demands were brought about mainly by our rapidly increasing population, new homes, professional buildings & factories, and improved methods of farming. In order to meet these demands and expected future demands for an ample supply of fresh water we feel that a county-wide water conservation district is necessary. We feel that an adequate water table could be re-established and maintained better through a county-wide program.

To-date 48 miles of small open drainage ditches have been established on cooperators farms for the purpose of removing surplus surface water from approximately 7500 acres.

Last year four seepage irrigation systems were established on local cooperators' farms. These irrigation systems are proving more popular and are enabling the ranchers to develop better improved pastures and greater beef and milk production.

There are several thousands of acres of prairie land in this District capable of producing very good pastures; however, the salt content in most of this land is so high that our improved grasses and clovers will not grow productively. It is our belief that with a good drainage system

together with our normal rain-fall of fifty to sixty inches each year that most of these salts will be leached out and this acreage will become productive within a few years. One of our co-operators, Mr. Elbert Cammack, installed a good drainage system on similar prairie land about four years ago and is now getting excellent results.

As an indication of the productivity of this heretofore worthless land, Mr. Cammack now has about 200 acres of excellent pangola and white Dutch clover pasture which is being used to produce silage and grazing for his dairy herd. He has two metal silos of approximately 250 tons each and practices feeding silage both Summer and Winter. ~~again~~ Mr. Cammack harvested silage three times last Summer and obtained approximately 8 tons per acre per cutting.

An increased amount of local interest and concern in water conservation has recently been observed by many of our land owners. Our Board of supervisors will continue to stress the need of and work for a county-wide water control program.

FORESTRY & WILDLIFE:

Through the efforts of our Seminole Conservation District Board, the County Commissioners provided ~~some~~ funds for a part-time farm forester. The Board feels that this appropriation is justified and will prove beneficial to local land owners. There are over 70,000 acres in our district that are classified as woodland and are best used by leaving them permanently in this crop.

We have observed the fine work of the local Fire Control Unit of the Florida Forest Service. These Rangers are assisting local woodland and pasture owners in plowing fire lanes and helping to control forest fires.

As a result of large scale land clearing and development in this District, the bird life activity has been retarded to a noticeable extent. Our district realizes the need for preservation of our bird life and is engaging in a program with some of our cooperators to plant partridge peas and a new strain of bicolor lespedeza.

Our Board has recently received and signed a memorandum of understanding with the Florida Game and Fresh Water Fish Commission. We feel that their assistance will be of great benefit in helping us to develop a sound wild life program. The District has already received some planting materials from the Commission which have been distributed to local cooperators.

PASTURE & RANGE:

Pasture establishment slowed down somewhat during the past year; however, there were approximately 1633 acres of improved grasses planted last year. Permanent pastures established since the District was organized in 1949 will average approximately 2000 acres per year. As of this date approximately 11,366 acres have been cleared and planted to improved pastures. Good conservation practices have been carried out on most of this pasture acreage and as a result more tonnage of beef at less expense has been realized by the farmer enabling him to expand his operation.

Included in this acreage is the interesting reclamation project carried on by one of our co-operators. With the guidance of our technical staff, Mr. Elbert Cammack has transformed approximately 200 acres of worthless prairie land into excellent pasture.

Several check plots are being checked periodically on this farm to determine the reduction of salt content which was extra high before a good drainage system was installed. Soil samples are obtained periodically from the test plots and sent to the Central Florida Experiment Station where the total soluble plant food and the salt content is determined. Since an approved drainage system was installed about four years ago the chloride content has gradually lowered from approximately 1800 parts per million to around 300 parts per million. Some of these plots were originally too salty to produce native grasses; however, there is now an excellent stand of white Dutch clover and Pangola grass on all of these plots. There are several thousand acres of similar prairie land in this District which may be reclaimed by installation of approved drainage systems.

CITRUS & COVER CROP:

Only a small acreage of good citrus land remains undeveloped in this District; therefore, many citrus growers are beginning to use marginal and sub-marginal land in an effort to grow citrus. It is doubtful that these marginal lands are capable of producing citrus economically under our present economic conditions. Much of this land may be more profitable to the owners by establishing it to pastures and timber.

The District advocates the planting of a good leguminous cover crop such as hairy indigo on all young groves. Most of our citrus soils are very infertile and lack sufficient organic matter. We feel that in addition to adding nitrogen & organic matter to the soil the cover crop gives the soil a healthier condition by allowing better air and water movement through the soil.

Since there is only a limited amount of remaining good citrus land undeveloped in this isolated areas of this District we feel that a detailed soil survey on all land before planting to citrus is of vital importance. This survey could result in better land use and also be more profitable to all growers.

SEMINOLE COUNTY SOIL CONSERVATION DISTRICT
Sanford, Florida

STATEMENT OF CASH RECEIPTS AND EXPENDITURES
June 1, 1955 to December 31, 1955

| | | |
|-------------------------------|-----------|-----------|
| Balance at Beginning of Audit | | \$ 110.93 |
| Add receipts | | |
| From rent of equipment | \$599.00 | |
| Total Receipts | | \$ 599.00 |
| Less Expenditures | | |
| Maintenance and repair | \$ 156.45 | |
| Telephone Service | 63.12 | |
| Supervisors' Banquet | 29.18 | |
| Christmas Banquet | 25.86 | |
| Office supplies | 16.07 | |
| Postage | 9.66 | |
| State Dues | 35.00 | |
| Insurance | 13.50 | |
| TOTAL EXPENDITURES | | \$ 346.84 |
| BALANCE DECEMBER 31, 1955 | | \$ 363.09 |
| Accounts receivable | \$ 64.00 | |
| <u>Accounts payable</u> | | |
| Office supplies | 5.75 | |
| Telephone service | 7.50 | |
| Maintenance and repair | 15.75 | |
| Total | 29.00 | |

This certifies that the above statement is correct and in accordance
with records submitted for audit.

Signed _____
Roger Harris

SUMMARY:

The Seminole District held its re-organizational meeting in August 1955. Mr. W.W. Linz was elected to the local board replacing Mr. George Harden and Mr. Ralph Hammond was re-elected on the Board. A greater interest in our soil & water conservation program was evidenced by the participation of local land owners and farmers in our recent election for district supervisors. We understand that this district led the State in numbers of votes cast during the past election.

The Board did not receive any financial assistance from other sources for use on district work during the year. Our only source of income was derived from a rental fee charged for the use of our retortype mower. This mower is rented to co-operators for mowing their crop residue, cover crops, and pastures on a nominal per day basis. The cost of repairs & maintenance about equals the amount received for its use.

The mower has proved to be a very useful piece of equipment and is in constant demand during certain seasons. The initial
a it
cost of machining like this makes impracticable for a small land owner to own one.

Bonner L. Carter
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Chairman, Seminole SCD