

Watershed Operations

May 2009

Reinvesting in the Mill Creek Watershed, Iowa and Missouri

Introduction

The purpose of the Mill creek watershed project is to protect cropland in the watershed from excessive erosion and resource depletion.



Mill Creek Watershed covers 51,900 acres in Page County, Iowa, and northern Nodaway County, Missouri.

Project Description

- **Location:** Page County (Iowa), 5th Congressional District; Nodaway County (Missouri), 6th Congressional District
- **Federal Funding:** \$57,500

The purpose of this project is to create a system of land treatment measures applied in combination with existing cropland to protect the watershed from excessive erosion and resource depletion. The plan calls for controlling excessive soil erosion on critically eroding cropland by implementing or installing soil conserving practices.

Partners

- USDA, Natural Resources Conservation Service
- Page County Soil and Water Conservation District
- Nodaway County Soil and Water Conservation District
- Page County Board of Supervisors
- Nodaway County Commission

Benefits

The major benefit of the Mill Creek Watershed Plan is reduced soil erosion on more than 13,000 acres of cropland. The plan improves water quality due to 40 percent less sediment in streams and reservoirs.

Funded through the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) of 2009, this project is part of the Obama Administration's plans to modernize the nation's infrastructure, jump-start the economy, and create jobs. NRCS is using Recovery Act dollars to update aging flood control structures, protect and maintain water supplies, improve water quality, reduce soil erosion, enhance fish and wildlife habitat, and restore wetlands. NRCS acquires easements and restores floodplains to safeguard lives and property in areas along streams and rivers that have experienced flooding.



Terraces built on Mill Creek Watershed cropland, like the one pictured here, will reduce erosion.

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Economic Opportunities

When fully implemented, this watershed project will contribute to the economic growth of the area by providing more than \$438,000 of annual benefits. This will be accomplished with specific land treatment practices that will help maintain crop yields, reduce production costs, and improve efficiency of operations.



Contour farming is already proving effective in reducing erosion in the Mill Creek Watershed.

Statewide Perspective

The watershed has rolling topography and lies within the Nodaway River drainage area. Reduced erosion from the Mill Creek Watershed Plan will help improve water quality through reduced deposits and lower levels of nitrates. Improved water quality will have a State and regional impact to streams and rivers in southern Iowa and northern Missouri.

For More Information

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No-till is a common conservation practice on Mill Creek Watershed cropland. Soil and residue is left undisturbed to protect from erosion.

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