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Cover
A color infrared aerial image (scale 1:58,000) of northwestern Kansas, taken August 1980, as part of the National High-Altitude Photography program. Photo courtesy of EROS Data Center, Sioux Falls, South Dakota.

The Soil Conservation Society of America is dedicated to promoting the science and art of good land use, with emphasis on conservation of soil, water, air, and related natural resources, including all forms of beneficial plant and animal life. To this end, SCSA seeks through the *Journal of Soil and Water Conservation* and other programs to educate people so that mankind can use and enjoy these natural resources forever.

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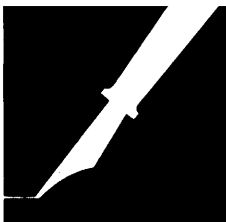
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PEN POINTS

Unique or not unique?

Regarding the *JSWC* feature on the Iowa Natural Heritage Foundation (November-December 1981 issue), I wish to comment on the INHF concept.

I favor private sector involvement in land conservation. My support of and membership in the Nature Conservancy is due to my belief that the private sector can be very effective in protecting our natural heritage. However, I am straddling the fence with regard to the INHF. I cannot agree with Mr. Buckmaster that the INHF is significantly different from the Nature Conservancy or similar organizations. Competition is generally thought of as being healthy for private sector operations. I don't believe this is necessarily true in the natural re-

source conservation field. Yet, perhaps we do not have sufficient precedent to judge whether competition will further or hinder the goals of the private sector in land conservation.

I applaud your decision to include the subject article in the *JSWC*. The general trend in natural resources management is toward greater private sector involvement. But I object somewhat to the article's presentation of the INHF as unique. The article should have more clearly spelled out the differences between the INHF and similar organizations, such as The Nature Conservancy.

I would appreciate the *JSWC* including a future article on the private sector's involvement in land conservation, an article which would give "equal time" to all the principal private natural resource organizations.

Bruce P. Van Haveren
Lakewood, Colorado

stand the procedures for estimating coarse fragments by volume, the figure is necessary.

William F. Graham
Bureau of Solid Waste Management
Pennsylvania Department of
Environmental Resources
Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania

Our error again. We inadvertently omitted figure 1 in page make-up. The entire article, including figure 1, appears on pages 62-63 of this issue. Our apologies to the author and readers.

Editor

Cost-sharing based on soil saved

JSWC readers will want to know that at least 25 states have had from 1 to 9 county ASC committees volunteer for a pilot, variable cost-share level (VC/SL) evaluation under the existing Agricultural Conservation Program (ACP).

These 75 or so counties will test the effectiveness and feasibility of establishing cost-share levels for farmers based on the estimated soil saved by applying approved conservation practices. The universal soil loss equation, wind erosion equation, and land use capability classes will be used to determine soil saved.

Primary objectives of the VC/SL are (1) to improve the effectiveness of soil-conserving ACP practices, (2) to improve ACP cost effectiveness, and (3) to better identify high priority conservation needs in states and counties.

The Agricultural Extension Service and Soil Conservation Service are assisting ASCS in this pilot project through information, education, technical assistance and evaluation.

The County ASC committees in the pilot counties are responsible for selecting the method for establishing VC/SL to be used for determining the minimum and maximum variable cost-share levels for each applicable practice.

Approved counties will soon be announcing ACP sign-up and informing their producers of this new opportunity.

Clarence L. Tardy
Agricultural Stabilization
and Conservation Service
U.S. Department of Agriculture
Washington, D.C.



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Some bloopers

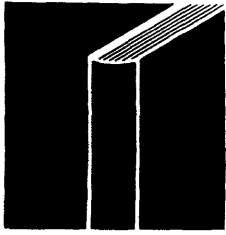
In the article "New Roots for American Agriculture" (November-December 1981 issue), the grass pictured on pages 320 and 321 appears to be eastern gamma grass (*Tripsacum dactyloides*), not eastern grama grass as listed. Also, in reference 21 on page 324, the SCS Plant Materials Center mentioned is located in Knox City, Texas, not in Tennessee.

John H. Reynolds
Department of Plant
and Soil Science
University of Tennessee
Knoxville, Tennessee

Right you are! The grass is eastern gama grass. Our error. The plant materials center location was incorrect in the original manuscript and we failed to catch the error. Our apologies to the authors and readers.

Editor

The article "Volume Estimates of Coarse Fragments in Soils: A Combination of Visual and Weighing Procedures" (November-December 1981, pages 360-361) refers to a figure 1, but no figure 1 appears in the article. To under-



BOOKS, ETC.

Farmland or Wasteland: A Time to Choose. By R. Neil Sampson. 422 pp., illus., refs., apps., index, 1981. Rodale Press, Emmaus, Pennsylvania 18049. \$16.95; in Canada, \$18.95.

R. Neil Sampson's new book *Farmland or Wasteland: A Time to Choose* bears a subtitle, "Overcoming the threat to America's farm and food future." The two threats encompassed are (1) the loss of soil quality through such forces as soil erosion, soil compaction, desertification, and acid rain, and (2) the loss of the use of farmland for food production through such forces as farmland conversion, irrigation water shortages, and the production of gasohol. While not a doomsday forecaster, Sampson believes that unless these threats are overcome America's future will be characterized by either "unacceptably" high-priced food or food shortages.

Those who have heard or read Neil Sampson's numerous speeches and papers as executive vice-president of the National Association of Conservation Districts will not be surprised either by his careful tone or reasoned use of data to bolster arguments on the severity of these threats. Also, his close ties to the farmers about whom he writes allows Sampson to enrich the book with anecdotes that reflect the complex nature of any solutions to these threats.

Sampson acknowledges disagreement concerning interpretation of data on the validity of the threats. However, he leaves no doubt about his opinion: The losses of farmland quality and quantity are significant. Furthermore, while not myopic to the possible ameliorating effects on predicted future food shortages of improved yields and/or declining food demands due to higher prices, he argues that reliance on these effects is an inappropriate and unrealistic response to the problems affecting America's farmlands. Because of this, he devotes little of the book to an examination of these ameliorating effects, focusing instead on the threats. And while one can quarrel with Sampson's occasional uncritical acceptance of some data sources or research conclusions, the book is at its best when providing the reader with a compendium of the nature and extent of the farmland problems that have accompanied an expanding agriculture.

The book is less satisfying if one is searching for an agenda for improvement. Sampson calls for the wider acceptance of a new land ethic and briefly explores some

possible new approaches. While providing some insights, his discussion of new approaches gives the reader little guidance on what improvements are possible and what will be their probable costs in terms of higher food prices, higher housing prices, increased administrative and enforcement costs, or lost individual choice. One strategy offered as an improvement over the status quo, for example, is to shift food production nearer to areas where the food will be consumed. If one accepts that food is now transported into metropolitan regions because it is cheaper than growing food locally, then such a strategy will result in higher priced food. It may even mean incurring costs associated with some type of regional protectionist policy to stop the importation of cheaper food. Sampson does not discuss these possibilities.

The disappointment of the last chapter on new approaches is understandable, however, considering the complexities of managing America's diverse farm sector for the nation's many competing goals. What Sampson's book does is counter the contentions of those who think that an expanding agriculture, with all its benefits of low cost food and the provision of foreign exchange, can come without costs and without limits. This "all-good" view of agriculture is a fantasy, as the book clearly documents.—SANDRA S. BATIE, *Department of Agricultural Economics, Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University, Blacksburg, 24061.*

General

1982 Publications Catalog. American Society of Agricultural Engineers, St. Joseph, Mich. 49085.

A Statistical Profile of Substate Regional Organizations. By J. Norman Reid. 16 pp., illus., refs., 1981. ESS-8. Economics and Statistics Service, U.S. Department of Agriculture, Washington, D.C. 20250.

Public Relations and Communications for Natural Resource Managers. By James R. Fazio and Douglas L. Gilbert. 375 pp., illus., refs., bibliog., index, 1981. Kendall/Hunt Publishing Co., Dubuque, Iowa 52001. \$19.95.

The Living Chesapeake. By J. R. Schubel. 113 pp., illus., 1981. The Johns Hopkins University Press, Baltimore, Md. 21218. \$19.95.

The Southwest Under Stress: National Resource Development Issues in a Regional

Setting. By Allen V. Kneese and F. Lee Brown. 268 pp., illus., index, 1981. \$30.00, hardcover, \$9.50, paperback.

Forests

Age and Growth Rate of Tropical Trees: New Directions for Research. Edited by F. Herbert Bormann and Graeme Berlyn. 137 pp., illus., 1981. Bull. No. 94. Publications, Yale Forestry Library, New Haven, Conn. 06511. \$6.95.

Man and the Mediterranean Forest: A History of Resource Depletion. By J. V. Thirgood. 194 pp., refs., index, 1981. Academic Press Inc., New York, N.Y. 10003. \$29.00.

Soils

Desertification of the United States. By David Sheridan. 142 pp., illus., refs., bibliog., 1981. U.S. Government Printing Office, Washington, D.C. 20402.

National Conference on Urban Erosion and Sediment Control: Institutions and Technology. 378 pp., illus., apps., 1980. U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Chicago, Ill. 60605.

Soil Erosion and Reservoir Sedimentation in Lesotho. By Qalabane K. Chakela. 150 pp., illus., 1981. Africana Publishing Co., New York, N.Y. 10003. \$29.50.

Soil Survey and Land Evaluation. By David Dent and Anthony Young. 278 pp., illus., refs., tbs., apps., index, 1981. Allen & Unwin, Inc., Winchester, Mass. 01890. Cloth, \$35.00; paperback, \$16.95.

Soil Conservation (second edition). By Norman Hudson. 324 pp., illus., apps., indexes, 1981. Cornell University Press, Ithaca, N.Y. 14850.

Soils and Landforms: An Integration of Geomorphology and Pedology. By A. J. Gerrard. 219 pp., illus., gloss., bibliog., indexes, 1981. Allen & Unwin, Inc., Winchester, Mass. 01890. Cloth, \$35.00; \$16.95, paperback.

Soils and the Environment: A Guide to Soil Surveys and their Applications. By Gerald W. Olson. 178 pp., illus., refs., apps., index, 1981. Chapman & Hall, Methuen, Inc., New York, N.Y. 10017. Cloth, \$29.50; paper, \$16.95.

Water

The Oceans: Our Last Resource. By Wesley Marx. 332 pp., apps., bibliog., index, 1981. Sierra Club Books, San Francisco, Calif. 94108. \$13.95.

A Guide to Hydrologic Analysis Using SCS Methods. By Richard H. McCuen. 145 pp., illus., tpls., app., 1981. Prentice-Hall, Inc., Englewood Cliffs, N.J. 07632. \$22.95.

Tropical Agricultural Hydrology: Watershed Management and Land Use. Edited by R. Lal and E. W. Russell. 482 pp., illus., indexes, 1981. John Wiley & Sons, Inc., Somerset, N.J. 08873. \$62.95.

Water Shortage: Lessons in Conservation from the Great California Drought, 1976-1977. By Richard A. Berk, C. J. LaCivita, Katherine Sredl, and Thomas F. Cooley. 209 pp., illus., refs., apps., index, 1981. Abt Books, Cambridge, Mass. 02138. \$20.00.

Education

Educators Guide to Free Science Materials. Edited by Mary H. Saterstrom. 372 pp., indexes, 1980. Educators Progress Service, Inc., Randolph, Wis. 53956. \$15.50.

The Soil Teaching Aid. By Andy Aandahl. 140 pp., illus., gloss., 1979. University of Nebraska Press, Lincoln, 68488. \$100.00.

Understanding the Game of the Environment. An Illustrated Guide to Understanding Ecological Principles. By David R. Houston. 174 pp., illus., gloss., 1979. Agr. Inf. Bul. No. 426.

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Agricultural Mathematics (second edition). By Roger Higgs, Charles Heidenreich, Richard Loberger, Robert Cropp, and Milton Mitchell. 297 pp., app., 1981. Interstate Printers and Publishers, Inc., Danville, Ill. 61832. \$10.50.

Pick a Field...Any Old Field; Trees and Their Friends; Wild Animals, Large and Small. First binder in a four-binder set of 13 Conservation Education Source Books. 120 pp., 1981. Rideau Valley Conservation Authority, Box 599, Manotick, Ontario K0A 2N0. \$12.50.

Ecology

Terrestrial Nitrogen Cycles: Processes, Ecosystem Strategies and Management Impacts. Edited by F. E. Clark and T. Rosswall. 714 pp., illus., index, 1981. NFR, Wenner Gren Center, Stockholm, Sweden. \$56.00.

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