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### Cover:
Landsat infrared image of Cook Inlet and the Anchorage, Alaska, area. See page 368. Image courtesy of EROS Data Center.
The Soil and Water Conservation Society is a multidisciplinary organization dedicated to promoting the science and art of good land and water use worldwide, with emphasis on the conservation of soil, water, and related natural resources, including all forms of beneficial plant and animal life. To this end, SWCS seeks through the Journal of Soil and Water Conservation and other programs to emphasize the interdependence of natural resources and thereby to educate people so that they can use and enjoy these resources forever.

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Hitting home

Duane Sand's "Viewpoint" in the July-August 1988 JSWC [p. 278] really hit home to conservationists in the field. Many of us have felt extremely frustrated in the last 18 months watching the Food Security Act of 1985 (FSA) erode into an almost meaningless piece of legislation. What is not insignificant is the mountain of paper wasted by this act. FSA has ensured we will be pushing these mountains around until 1995. The irony is that we will have less time to get good conservation on the land.

Where are the conservationists? They are out there but cannot be heard due to the demands of the monster known as FSA.

Timothy Dunne
Belvidere, New Jersey

Where's the bull?

In regard to the story by Dale Marsh "A Wetland...is a Wetland...is a Wetland" [JSWC, July-August 1988, pp. 282-285], I read this lengthy story three times and found no reference to his getting the Department of Natural Resource's approval, permits, and all the gory bull that we have to go through here in Michigan to do these projects.

My curiosity just got the better of me. Is Wisconsin more lenient than Michigan? Or was his job position a contributing factor? We have counties in which it takes an act of congress to excavate ponds like he did. As a matter of fact, a contractor friend of mine was fined for not getting a permit from the DNR to excavate a pond in a swamp for the same purpose as in Marsh's story.

This wetland and swampbuster deal is a living nightmare. Every state and county interprets the guidelines differently. We have counties that won't even let you remove a shovel full of dirt from a swamp. In Kalamazoo County, the DNR won't even allow ditch cleanout. I think a lot of these people are going overboard with these controls. I can't see anything wrong with excavating ponds in swampy areas, and I don't condone draining the proverbial swamps, but these people are getting carried away. You wouldn't believe some of the hassles we have had regarding running tile into sidehill seeps, etc. It has all but put us out of business.

It is too bad the farmer cannot afford to tell the government what they can do with these programs.

Gale Carpenter
Farm Drainage Services
Union City, Michigan

Justifying the means

Two pieces in the September-October 1987 issue of the JSWC had a common theme. The first, "Soil Conservationists and the Uses of Law" [pp. 304-311] has the statements, "For law in this context is not law. Law here is soil and science and morality." The second, "Reclamation Act Celebrates Rocky Tenth Birthday" [pp. 342-343] states, "The Office of Surface Mining also has failed to stop abuse of gaping loop holes in the original law..." The piece contains numerous defamatory statements of doubtful validity.

These are startling and unusually frank statements of the "environmental" movement's creed that if a law does not suit you, you can justify your actions by invocation of a higher duty. More bluntly, the end justifies the means.

Where does one draw the line between allegiance to a "higher" law and lawlessness? My personal experience has been that the actions of "environmental" extremists are often more damaging than the activities they block.

W. Clark Ashby
Southern Illinois University
Carbondale, Illinois

Not our intent

We have received some comments concerning a news article, "Planting Alfalfa Curbs Saline Seep," featured in the JSWC [May-June 1988, p. 247]. We would like to clarify our position on the last paragraph in that article.

It was not our intent to advocate removal of or indict windbreaks as a major cause of saline seep. Windbreaks have been shown to aggravated saline seep conditions only in isolated cases. In fact, we prefer to augment the positive effects tree plantings can have on moisture storage, moisture use, erosion control, and wildlife habitat improvement.

We would greatly appreciate a retraction or modification of the paragraph which indicates removing windbreaks will help prevent saline seeps. This will help to clear up this misunderstanding. Improperly managed windbreaks can be a concern, but in very isolated cases.

Glenn Hockett
Montana Salinity Control Association
Conrad, Montana

What purpose revegetation?

The emphasis on the physical appearance of the denuded and eroding landscape in "Tennessee's Copper Basin: A Case for Preserving an Abused Landscape," [JSWC, March-April 1988, pp. 140-144] may obscure for some readers the true purpose of the cooperative revegetation program being conducted by the Tennessee Valley Authority (TVA), Tennessee Chemical Company (TCC), and the Soil Conservation Service (SCS). Dr. M.-L. Quinn advocates historical preservation of "as much of the Copper Basin landscape as possible, particularly within the bare and
sparser areas.” She contends that the TVA-TCC-SCS revegetation plan is “too narrow” and should be “supplemented or replaced with one that is more broadly based and that has historical preservation as one of its central themes.” She concludes that the landscape should be preserved as an example of an abused environment “productive, not of trees, but of history.”

The main purpose of the revegetation effort is not to improve the physical appearance of the Copper Basin, but rather to control continuing damage to downstream water resources. Although there is no longer any active mining in the Copper Basin, erosion of the denuded area continues to impact the Ocoee River with metals, acid, and sediment. The only practical way to protect the Ocoee for present and future public use is to control the source of the pollutants.

Quinn suggests that if the area were preserved in its present state as she proposes, “the organization in charge of the preserved area would probably need to negotiate an agreement with environmental regulatory agencies on management of sediment.” There are no feasible engineering means of “managing” sediment from such an extensive area. Even if sediment management were feasible, the costs would likely be enormous. However, failure to control sediment has also proved costly in terms of increased power production costs at the three TVA hydropower facilities on the Ocoee River and in terms of impaired aesthetics and recreational uses of the river.

Contrary to Quinn’s implication that water resources from Copper Basin erosion has not ended or reached a plateau. The rate of sediment accumulation in Ocoee No. 3 Reservoir is indeed declining. However, this is largely because the reservoir has already trapped essentially all the sediment it can hold. Most new accumulations are flushed out of the reservoir during heavy stormflows, and TVA annually flushes other accumulations from the area in front of the dam’s power intakes. Ocoee No. 2 is only a diversion dam and does not create a reservoir basin where a significant amount of sediment can be deposited. Therefore, the sediment leaving Ocoee No. 3 Reservoir is accumulating in Ocoee No. 1—the largest and furthest downstream of the reservoirs and the only one receiving significant recreational use. Expanding sediment deposits in Ocoee No. 1 are impacting recreation and blocking boat access to some embayments when water levels are low. Revegetation of the Copper Basin would not remove the sediments already present, but it would reduce further impairment of the beneficial uses of Ocoee No. 1 Reservoir.

Quinn refers to the impact of poor water quality on aquatic life in the Ocoee River as an “advantage” in that it prevents conflicts between whitewater rafters and fishermen. In our opinion, no resource management agency can responsibly advocate purposefully maintaining conditions of present land use or past land abuse that degrade water quality to an extent that precludes water uses designated by state water quality control acts or water uses embodied in the national goal of making all waters fishable and swimmable. The loss of potential uses of the water resource is at least as real and significant to the local economy as the loss of the present physical appearance of the Copper Basin.

As Quinn notes, both TVA and TCC have recognized and supported the concept of preserving a representative denuded area near the Ducktown Basin Museum for educational purposes and as a visitor attraction. Consequently, no revegetation has been conducted below the immediate area of the museum overlook since it was established.

It should be noted that TCC has not been subject to any regulatory requirements to cooperate in this revegetation project. Its voluntary efforts are unique within the mineral mining industry of the Tennessee Valley region. We believe TCC's efforts both to support the museum and to revegetate the Copper Basin—especially during a period when economic conditions have forced TCC to realign its operations and significantly reduce its work force—are highly commendable.

Janice P. Cox
TVA Water Resources

Jack A. Muncy
TVA Land Resources
Chattanooga, Tennessee
STATEMENT OF OWNERSHIP, MANAGEMENT, AND CIRCULATION

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11. I certify that the statements made by me above are correct and complete.

—Alan Epps, Executive Vice-president, Soil and Water Conservation Society.
General


Stopping the Sands in Morocco and Beyond. 4 pp., illus., 1987. Forestry Project Profiles No. 5. Forestry Department, Food and Agriculture Organization, United Nations, Rome, Italy.


Forests


Soils


Human Populations


Water


Agriculture


Reshaping the Bottom Line: On-Farm Strategies for a Sustainable Agriculture. By David Granatstein. 63 pp., illus., refs., 1988. Land Stewardship Project, Stillwater, Minnesota 55082. $9.00.


Land Use


Remote Sensing


Fish and Wildlife


Reclamation

Correction

Two illustrations accompanying the research report "Soil taxonomy and surveys: Classification of areal sensitivity to pesticide contamination of groundwater" (JSWC, July-August 1988, pp. 348-352) were printed without the required shading. The illustrations are reprinted below correctly. They are reprinted at the same size as the originals, so that they can be copied, cut out, and pasted over the original, incorrect versions on page 351.—The editors.

Figure 1. Areas in Merced County predicted (p > .50) by Fresno soil series function to contain DBCP-contaminated sections are shaded. Actual section contamination status: + = positive, Δ = negative.

Figure 2. Areas in Merced County predicted (p > .50) by Fresno soil family function to contain DBCP-contaminated sections are shaded. Actual section contamination status: + = positive, Δ negative.