

IOWA

PLANNING NEWS

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September 1936

CONTRIBUTIONS OF IOWA STATE PLANNING BOARD TO CONSERVATION

Iowa's second summer of extreme heat and drouth in three years is drawing to a close. On all sides the question arises as to what, if anything, can be done, if not to prevent future drouths, at least to ameliorate their effects and minimize their damage.

The Iowa State Planning Board came into existence during the first of these drouth years. Appointed in February 1934, it will have soon rounded out its third year of operation.

During that time it has made numerous contributions to the advancement of sound conservation and restoration.

Largest single contribution is a more complete understanding of the nature of problems facing the state, and of the facilities available for meeting the problems. In its corps of technical advisers the Iowa State Planning Board has brought together for the first time many of the authorities in various fields to consider these problems and advise as to their solution. Recommendations of these experts have been included in the reports which have been issued from time to time.

The two major reports of the Board have had wide circulation throughout the state, especially The Second Report, April 1935, which has been placed in all college and junior college libraries, in the county seat library of each county, in all high schools with vocational agriculture

courses, and in the hands of various county, city and state officials.

Minor reports, treating of problems concerning land resources and their use, water resources, population and social trends, and business and industrial trends have been issued and made available at nominal charge to persons interested.

Two projects, Biological Survey and Lake and Stream Improvement, have contributed directly to conservation by putting into practice sound conservation measures for the protection and restoration of fish and game, protection of lake and stream shorelines, etc.

Another service that has been performed by the staff of the Iowa State Planning Board has been the preparation of park and improvement plans through which many communities have been able to secure WPA projects employing local workers. These projects have meant definite contributions to their communities.

One of the most recent of planning board projects is the water resources survey of all river drainage basins of the state.

Part of a larger National survey which has been designed to furnish data for a National Water Plan requested by the President by December 1, this survey will be the most complete study of all Iowa river basins ever to be made. Work on this project has been going forward throughout the summer and a report, in

six parts, is now nearing completion.

Each of the six parts in this report will be devoted to a particular river basin or group of basins and their tributaries, and will include information on existing and potential development with regard to water power, pollution control, flood control, water supplies, recreation and wildlife.

Charts and maps have been prepared of the principal river basins to show existing physical conditions as to erosion, soil condition, forest cover, and also to portray conditions of land use, population trends, and economic conditions.

Such information as this, gathered on a nationwide basis, will serve a dual purpose. It will be used in making a sound nationwide outline of feasible plans for securing the greatest beneficial use of the water resources of each major drainage basin in the United States. It will further provide the state and local agencies with a clear statement of dominant physical and economic considerations that affect the development of water resources in each basin.

The survey will also endeavor to establish, insofar as possible at this time, the major ultimate aims and limits of development and the work consistent with these aims that can now be undertaken.

The present report is preliminary only. Subsequent reconsideration and further analysis will lead to a more complete plan for the conservation and development of Iowa's water resources. Even this plan will not be final, for planning is organic, not static, and requires adjustment to changing conditions.

Iowa's rivers have been divided into the following groupings for the purpose of this study: (1) Upper Iowa, Yellow, Turkey, Maquoketa, and Wapsipinicon; (2) Iowa and Cedar; (3) Des Moines, Skunk, Fox, Wyaconda, and Fabius; (4) Chariton, Thompson, Platte, and Nodaway; (5) Nishnabotna, Mosquito Creek, Soldier Creek and Boyer Creek; (6) Little

Sioux, Floyd River and Rock River.

Of these, only the Des Moines, Cedar, and Iowa have been previously surveyed. In 1910 the Des Moines was surveyed and reported upon, and in 1928 the Iowa and Cedar were studied by the late Professor Nagler of the University of Iowa. The Little Sioux River was also covered somewhat in the 308 report of 1910.

In the preparation of this report the Iowa State Planning Board is carrying out its functions in still another field - that of cooperating with federal agencies, and with representatives of other states.

Thus it may be seen that the services of the Iowa State Planning Board have fallen into a number of classifications. First and foremost of these services is the bringing together of specialists along the various lines, persons connected with the state institutions and state agencies, in the interest of better coordination and better understanding.

It has cooperated with local planning bodies in the solution of their local problems.

And finally, through its cooperation with other states and with federal agencies it has acted as a liaison body for Iowa in attacking problems that extend beyond state boundary lines.

Elsewhere in this issue of the Planning News there is reprinted the list of recommendations for a long time drouth relief and conservation program adopted by the Iowa State Planning Board and presented to the President's drouth conference at Rapid City, South Dakota.

The Iowa State Planning Board will hold its regular monthly meeting at the Hotel Ft. Des Moines, Des Moines, Saturday, September 19. Meeting of the executive committee will be called to order at 10 a.m.

LONG TIME PROGRAM RECOMMENDED FOR DROUTH RELIEF

The Iowa State Planning Board, at its meeting on August 15, approved the following statement and outline of recommendations for presentation at the meeting of the Central Northwest Regional Planning Commission at Rapid City, South Dakota, August 21-22.

Those recommendations that have been starred are for immediate operation through emergency drouth relief agencies or other established agencies.

The need in many counties in Iowa for relief due directly to the unprecedented heat and prolonged drouth constitutes a serious emergency. All state and federal agencies concerned should coordinate their efforts to relieve distress, curtail losses, and help in a long-time program to mitigate the effects of future disasters of a similar nature.

The Iowa State Planning Board believes that one of its chief functions is the coordination of all agencies toward the achievement of the long-time objectives of conserving and restoring the natural and human resources of the state.

It also believes that in the present emergency the state and nation may find an incentive toward action in that direction, and speedily accomplish what might otherwise have taken years to achieve.

It should be borne in mind that the Iowa State Planning Board is laboring under no misgivings in regard to the effects of this program and the inevitability of future drouths; however, these suggestions should make possible a much better use of the seasonal rainfall so as to curtail the evils of both floods and drouths, as well as to re-establish and maintain a sound biological and ecological balance.

LAND USE

1. Soil conservation and erosion measures -- planting of special crops, contour farming, strip cropping, terracing, etc.--should be encouraged through education, demonstration and such benefits as are economically desirable.

2. Drouth resisting crops should be developed and their use encouraged.

*3. Limestone crushing projects should be instituted under the emergency works program, and the product distributed for agricultural use. This is especially desirable because liming the soil will facilitate the growing of certain drouth resistant crops.

*4. Drouth conditions being especially favorable to the control and eradication of noxious weeds, projects for weed eradication should be included in the emergency works program.

*5. The emergency employment program, under the technical direction of the proper agencies, should be expanded to include: (a) Construction of small dams to provide storage reservoirs at or near the heads of streams and on farm land. (b) Drilling and rehabilitating farm wells.

6. Private and public forestation should be encouraged because of its value in soil and water conservation.

7. Submarginal land and certain slough areas should be retired from production, by government purchase if necessary, and used for purposes conducive to soil and water conservation and as preserves for migratory birds and other forms of wild life. Special attention should be given to land along the banks of streams and at or near the heads of tributaries where control of comparatively small areas will reduce greatly the run-off and siltation which follow precipitation.

8. The program of county agricultural planning committees should be expanded to include other phases of county planning. Mapping of existing land uses should be continued, and should be followed by an expanded program of land use planning. Individual farm operators should be provided with farm planning service as a part of a permanent program of soil and water conservation.

WATER CONSERVATION AND DEVELOPMENT

*1. The development of artificial lakes and storage reservoirs and dredging of existing lakes now heavily silted should be furthered, under the Iowa 25-Year Conservation Plan.

*2. Further improvement and restoration of marshes, ponds, dry and live lakes by clearing, planting and posting, working toward a better ecological balance, is recommended.

3. We recommend the development of new water supply systems for small towns not provided with such systems.

4. Open ditch drainage and stream straightening should be discouraged.

*5. Research in the field of water resources should be furthered, including: (a) Observation wells for determining water levels, etc. (b) Stream gaging and evaporation stations. (c) Saturation studies at dams. (d) Silting observations on new reservoirs.

6. The construction is suggested of sediment traps, or drop inlets, but not water traps, above culverts under railroads and highways.

7. There are probably certain areas in the state where relatively small irrigation projects might be established economically, especially for use in years of drouth.

8. The building of storage reservoirs in streams is recommended for the purpose of maintaining low-flow discharges and reducing future flood damage.

9. We strongly urge the proper disposal of municipal and industrial sewage wastes to prevent pollution of streams and lakes.

REHABILITATION AND RESETTLEMENT

1. In general, rehabilitation in place should be given preference over resettlement, provided the land and other factors are satisfactory.

2. Resettlement should be based on long-time views of the needs of those resettled and the possibilities offered in the areas to which movement is contemplated. Relief should not be withheld pending resettlement.

3. Constant effort should be made to discover and develop new occupations and industries adaptable to both physical and human resources.

EDUCATION

1. An equalization system should be instituted in order to make educational opportunities less dependent on local property tax returns. In areas greatly affected by the drouth, immediate loans or grants may be necessary in order to prevent lowering of educational standards. Federal funds should be provided in special areas of fluctuating populations, such as temporary construction sites.

*2. In determining the quotas of various sections for educational relief (Student Relief, National Youth Administration programs, etc.), consideration should be given to enlarging the quotas for drouth sections.

3. Conservation of natural resources should be given increased attention in school studies.

LEGISLATION

1. Consideration should be given to tax reduction or exemption for the following: (a) Forest and permanent pasture land. (b) Land use for water reservoirs. (c) Land utilized in compliance with soil conservation practices established by the state.

2. Legislative provision should be made for interstate cooperation with respect to the use and control of water resources.

3. Legislative provision should be made for state control of the development of ground water supplies for industrial and private uses.

4. In order to facilitate land and water conservation, legislative provision should be made for rural zoning, permitting the designating of areas for agriculture, recreation and forestry.

5. Legal provisions should be made for state and local financial participation in lake improvement projects in drouth areas.

TRANSPORTATION

*1. A program for the construction of a system of farm to market roads is recommended.

*2. The present roadside improvement projects should be extended, particularly in the drouth areas. This is very constructive erosion control as well as water conservation.

ELISABETH HERLIHY TO GIVE FULL TIME TO MASSACHUSETTS PLANNING

After completing more than twenty-two years as secretary and executive head of the Boston City Planning Board, during which time she has made an invaluable contribution to wise and economical spending of money for public improvements with resulting betterment to the welfare of the people of the city, Elisabeth M. Herlihy, on August 31, left her place in City Hall, to begin her new duties in the broader field of the state service as executive secretary, as well as chairman, of the State Planning Board of Massachusetts.

Letters and telegrams from officials of the State and also from leaders in the field of city and town planning all attest the high regard in which the new secretary of the State Planning Board is held. Governor Curley in a statement said:

"In securing Elisabeth M. Herlihy as its executive secretary as well as chairman, the State Planning Board has obtained the services of one of the foremost authorities in its field. Through her outstanding work in planning for the City of Boston, Miss Herlihy has demonstrated the invaluable place which practical, scientific planning should hold in the affairs of every municipality. It must be a source of genuine satisfaction to all in our state, as it is to me, that the benefit of her services will now be extended, through the State Planning Board, to the entire Commonwealth. This Board, as I have often stated, is in my opinion one of the best safeguards that can be established for the future development of the facilities and resources of our Commonwealth along lines that will be of most practical benefit to all our people."

Thomas Adams, famous English authority on city planning, cabled from London:

"The State Planning Board is indeed fortunate in obtaining the services of Elisabeth Herlihy as its executive officer. All who know of her work will be pleased at this recognition of personal quality and professional integrity. Her loss to the City Planning Board of Boston will be more than compensated for by the contribution she will make to the larger and more important field of state planning."

The following resolution adopted by the Boston City Planning Board, which is quoted in part, reviews in detail the service which Miss Herlihy has rendered:

"From the day of her appointment by this Board, March 3, 1914, Miss Herlihy has dedicated her life and devoted her full energy to the field of planning, the importance of which as a guide to the orderly and efficient development of our municipalities was, at the time, just coming to be recognized by the American public.

"Through study and research, by contacts and exchange of ideas with others, by regular attendance at state and national planning conventions, by correspondence with foreign planners, and by personal investigation of planning work elsewhere both in this country and in Europe, coupled with her own experience in planning for Boston, she has become a master in the planning field. She was the first woman to be honored by election to membership in the national professional planning organization, the American City Planning Institute. Deservedly has she come to be recognized as the foremost woman in the field of planning in this country and likewise she is well known abroad.

"To the work of this Board Miss Herlihy has contributed, in an unusual degree, ability, tact, wisdom and initiative. Her service to the City has been of distinct value, and to her, in large measure, is due credit for the successful work of the Board since the beginning.

"For many years, Miss Herlihy, perhaps more than any other individual, has aided the cause of planning in this State through helpful counsel with public officials and members of other municipal planning agencies and through her work as an officer of the Massachusetts Federation of Planning Boards. It is logical, therefore, in view of her talent and experience, that her full time service should now be demanded by the Commonwealth.

"The Boston City Planning Board, sincerely appreciating the exceptional service which Miss Herlihy has rendered as its secretary, regrets most deeply that the time has come when this happy and intimate relationship of twenty-two years' standing must be broken. The Board recognizes, however, the larger field of public service to which she is now called. No one is better qualified to direct the newly undertaken work of planning for the development of the State at large. While thus recording its appreciation of the service which she has rendered to the city of Boston,

the Board extends to her its cordial good wishes for a long and successful administration of the affairs of the State Planning Board of Massachusetts."

LUNCHEON GROUPS LEARN OF PLANNING BOARD'S PROGRAM

Speakers representing the Iowa State Planning Board appear to be in much demand for appearances before luncheon clubs and other gatherings.

So popular was the subject of planning before members of the Rotary Club at Marshalltown recently, that they asked and received a second presentation. This followed the delivery of a detailed report on traffic and street use of that city by the Urban Planning Division of the Iowa State Planning Board. Prof. P. H. Elwood, Jr., National Resources Committee Consultant to the Planning Board; Laurence W. Murray, engineer in charge of the Marshalltown studies, and Ross H. Matson, Director of the Planning Board, appeared first before the Marshalltown Rotarians by special invitation on August 18. Two weeks later, Mr. Murray was invited to come back for a further discussion of the traffic and street use problems which the Rotarians found so interesting.

A recently completed traffic study for Burlington was described and the general program of the State Planning Board was outlined before the Burlington Rotary Club, August 24, by Prof. C. Woody Thompson, University of Iowa Economist, and Jack Elliott, Supervisor of the Burlington traffic survey. Prof. Thompson is director of the business survey now being completed by the Planning Board for the state, under auspices of the Committee on Business and Industry, of which Dean C.A. Phillips, College of Commerce, University of Iowa, is chairman.

Prof. J. R. Fitzsimmons, a landscape technical adviser to the State

Planning Board and Director of the Urban Land Use Studies being made by the Board, addressed the Old Settlers' picnic at Storm Lake, Sept. 3, on the work of the Planning Board. Prof. Fitzsimmons is to appear before the Webster City Business Men's Association the latter part of this month to discuss with them the newly completed land use study of that city.

Prof. Elwood and Engineer Murray were to be in Centerville, Sept. 14, to address a Chamber of Commerce luncheon on the subject of the Appanoose County Survey and Report completed last spring by the State Planning Board. Appanoose County is seriously considering the formation of a County Planning Council, and the luncheon is expected to mark a step further in that direction.

Dean H. H. Kildee, Chairman of the State Planning Board, and Prof. Elwood are planning to go to Sheldon Sept. 28, where they will present the objectives and program of state planning before the Monday Noon Luncheon Club, a business and professional men's group.

FAIRGOERS VISIT I. S. P. B. BOOTH

Many people representing agriculture, business, education and other fields of activity over the state visited the exhibit of the Iowa State Planning Board at the recent State Fair.

The chief objects of interest at the booth were two plaques depicting two extremes in farm practices. The first, "Land and Water Exploited," depicted the extreme in a run down condition of an Iowa farm, whose land is badly eroded, whose soil is seriously depleted both through erosion and intensively detrimental farming practices, resulting in a farm plant nearing the stage of total deterioration.

Opposite this was pictured the other extreme, the ideal of "Land and Water Conserved," in which were shown beauty, utility and efficiency in farm practices, -- land protected against ero-

sion, water conserved and used both for recreation and for reserve, homestead and other farm buildings well kept, a delightful place in which to live.

Also at the exhibit were maps showing various types of studies and projects undertaken by the State Planning Board. Those on duty at the booth were able to meet many persons, discuss planning with them, distribute literature and in this manner reach a large number who had not as yet understood much about the functions and activity of the Planning Board.

TRAFFIC SURVEY REPORTS ISSUED

Reports of Planning Board land use and traffic surveys in three cities were published during the past month and two more are slated for publication by October 1.

For Marshalltown, a report was published early in August on an analysis of traffic and accidents on city streets.

A land study for Webster City containing basic information on land use areas, comparison of this land use with other cities of Iowa and with the U.S. average and norms, and general information maps was published on August 15.

In Ottumwa an analysis of Traffic flow in the central business district was published on September 1.

Two additional reports will be ready by October 1, a Traffic Flow and Accident Analysis for Cedar Rapids and a Land Use Report for Muscatine.

These reports are distributed among public and semi-public agencies in the cities, to libraries, schools and to interested citizens. Copies are also sent to zoning and planning commissions in those cities having such bodies.

As a nation we not only enjoy a wonderful measure of present prosperity but if this prosperity is used aright it is an earnest of future success such as no other nation will have.

-Theodore Roosevelt.

 FITZSIMMONS HEADS PROJECT

 TO STUDY IOWA RECREATION

Newest project of the Iowa State Planning Board is a study to determine recreation habits of the people in the state and to discover the extent to which existing facilities are being used.

This study will include an analysis of counts made in the various State Parks of persons making use of these areas.

Also contemplated is a survey or inventory of all recreational areas in the state and a study of recreation habits, the latter project to be conducted through the schools.

At the head of this survey is John R. Fitzsimmons of the Iowa State College Extension Service, also Landscape Consultant for the Iowa Conservation Commission. Mr. Fitzsimmons has had wide experience in the field of recreation planning and has an extensive knowledge of the recreational potentialities of the state. His article on "Vacationing in Iowa," published in the June issue of the Planning News attracted wide attention.

 EDITORIAL COMMENT

Most planning agencies are concerned with "so-called" physical planning, that is, planning land use, highways, parks, civic centers, etc. This apparent emphasis is due partly to public acceptance of roads and recreation centers as proper public facilities, whereas social and economic planning are sometimes considered undesirable governmental functions, encroachments upon private life and business.

In a large sense, however, there can be no complete segregation of physical, social and economic planning. A park is a special use of land for the people, and therefore cannot be completely dis-

sociated from social welfare and social planning. The right of eminent domain, permitting the community to condemn land for park use, the question of taxation of surrounding properties benefited by public park development, the method of financing recreation programs in the park -- all these are definitely related to economic planning.

The preparation of a fiscal program may be considered economic planning, yet its importance is due to society, its form a matter of concern to the members of society. A plan for public works construction for the next decade must certainly have sound financial preparation, yet it cannot succeed without proper construction design -- and the final products, bridges, streets, sewer systems, etc., must be socially necessary or the entire plan is subject to question.

Anything worthwhile must be socially desirable, well constructed and well financed. A skyscraper in a prairie town may be well built, but when the inevitable bankruptcy proceedings are instituted, there must arise doubts as to its social necessity.

Mr. R. H. Matson, Director
Iowa State Planning Board
Elm Lodge,
Ames, Iowa

Dear Mr. Matson:

Thank you very much for a copy of "Housing among the low income groups, Ottumwa, Iowa."

We have already had occasion to use the report a number of times. I can see that it is going to be a valuable source of information for welfare and others interested in community welfare.

Sincerely,

May B. Ditch,
Librarian
Ottumwa, Iowa

IOWA STATE PLANNING BOARD W. P. A. PROJECTS
Progress Report as of September 1, 1936

Tax Survey

State-wide tax survey to determine effects of proposed homestead exemptions on tax revenue of the state.

Field work 90 per cent complete. Final analysis in progress.

W.P.A. Project No. 65-72-2928

Urban Land Use Traffic Studies

City traffic and land use surveys in 9 cities.

Field work now 85 per cent complete. Tabulations 50 per cent complete. Urban land use report for Webster City, and traffic survey report for Cedar Rapids ready September 15.

W.P.A. Project No. 65-72-5033-66.

Base Map Survey

A state-wide survey to revise and check township base maps showing roads, farmstead locations, electric lines, farms having electric and telephone service, etc.

About four per cent of the work as a whole was completed during August. Tabulation has been started in WPA districts 4 and 5.

W.P.A. Project No. 65-72-5048

Analysis of Farm Statistics

Studies based on available farm statistics, involving distribution of farm land in various uses, trends in acreage and yields of major crops and effects of various leasing systems on farm practices and on distribution of income and expense.

Project approximately 47 per cent complete.

W.P.A. Project 65-72-5321

Population and Social Trends

Analysis of field data gathered under I.E.R.A. to determine composition and characteristics of Iowa's population over 65; also to determine employment and unemployment in state.

Old age study completed. Coding has begun on transcriptions of employment study. Approximately 37 per cent of cards have been punched and verified.

W.P.A. Project 65-72-2929

Survey of Public Health Resources

Purpose of project is to discover amount and character of expenditure for protection of public health in Iowa.

Field work has progressed rapidly. Survey being set up in all districts save the first. Field work in fourth district about 40 per cent complete.

W.P.A. Project No. 65-72-2933

Biological Survey

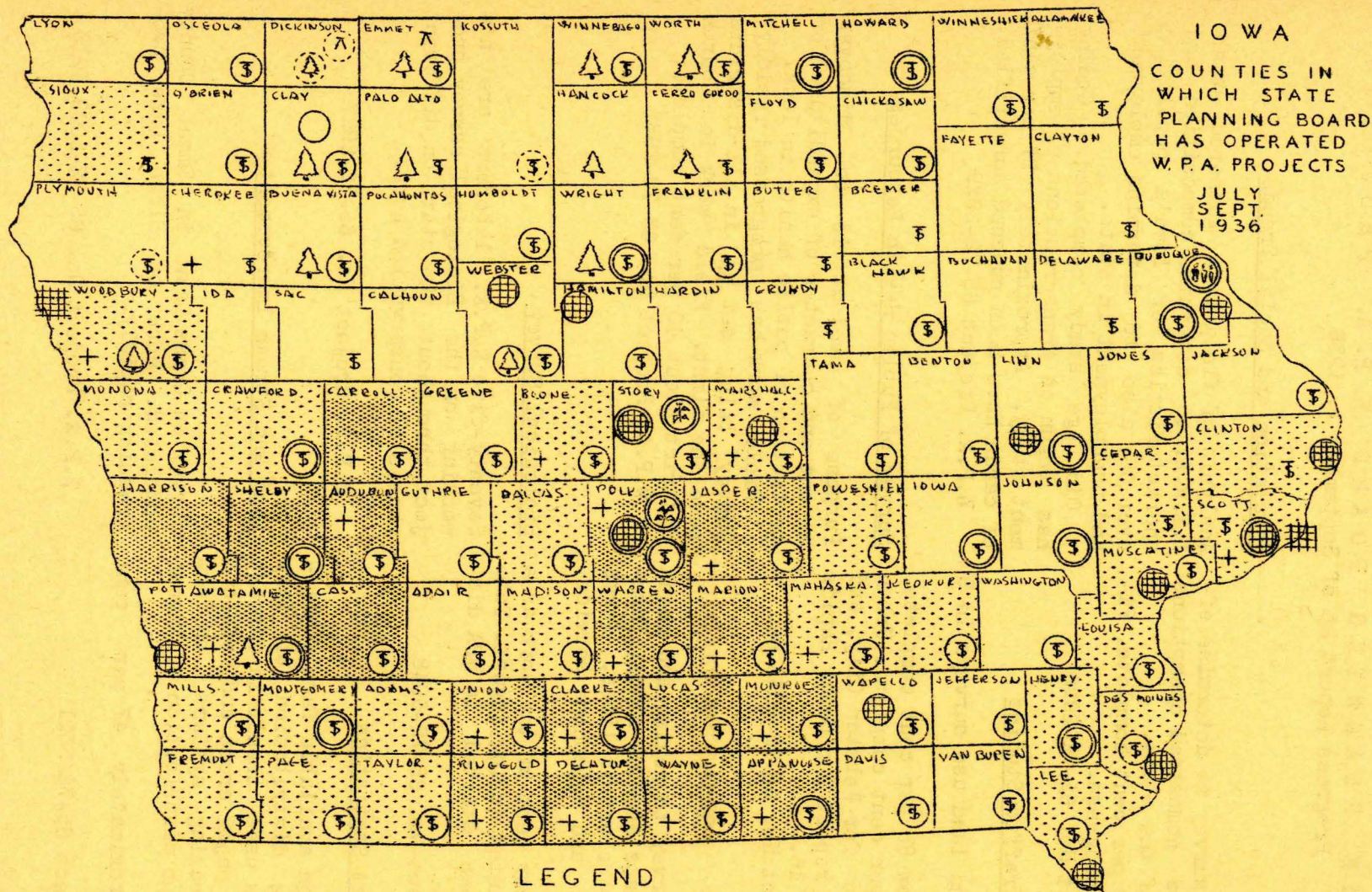
Seventy-five W.P.A. laborers are now working on the Biological survey project throughout the state on different phases of conservation work.

W.P.A. Project No. 65-72-2927

Land and Stream Improvement

Survey on Grass Lake in Emmet County completed. Work on Birge Lake progressing rapidly.

W.P.A. Project No. 65-72-5009-5013



LEGEND

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|----|------------------------------|---|--------------------------------|---|--|
| \$ | TAX SURVEY | λ | LAKE AND STREAM IMPROVEMENT | ○ | FIELD WORK COMPLETED |
| ⊙ | POPULATION AND SOCIAL TRENDS | ⊠ | URBAN LAND USE TRAFFIC STUDIES | ○ | FIELD WORK INTERRUPTED TO BE CONTINUED |
| 🌳 | ANALYSIS OF FARM STATISTICS | ⋯ | BASE MAP SURVEY | ⊙ | TABULATING OFFICE |
| △ | BIOLOGICAL SURVEY | ⊠ | BASE MAP COMPLETED | + | PUBLIC HEALTH |

I O W A S T A T E P L A N N I N G B O A R D

H. H. Kildee, Chairman Dean of Agriculture, Iowa State College
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Mrs. Henry Frankel Iowa State Conservation Commission
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Chester A. Phillips Dean of Commerce, State University of Iowa
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A. C. Trowbridge State Geologist
Fred White Chief Engineer, Iowa Highway Commission

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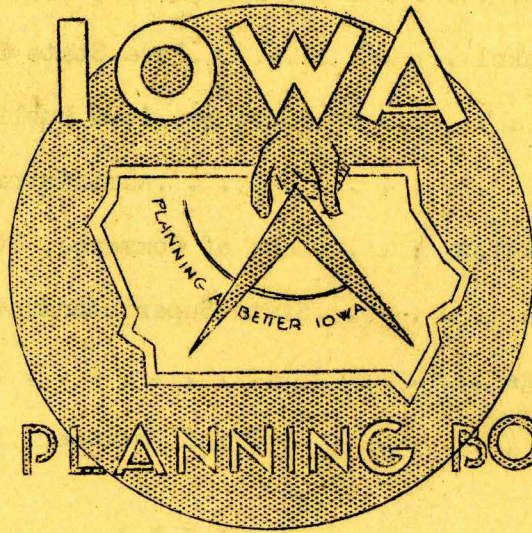
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* * * * *

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STATE PLANNING BOARD