Clay County

REAP

Five Year Program Plan

1990-95

Prepared in June 1990 By:

The Northwest Iowa Planning and Development Commission

REAP Program Plan
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Clay County

Five Year Program Plan, 1990-1995

"The purpose of the REAP Program shall be a long term integrated effort to wisely use and protect Iowa's natural resources through the acquisition and management of public lands; the upgrading of public park and preserve facilities; environmental education, monitoring and research; and other environmentally sound means. The resource enhancement program shall strongly encourage Iowans to develop a conservation ethic, and to make necessary changes in our activities to develop and preserve a rich and diverse natural environment". This quotation comes directly from the REAP Program Guidelines. No other words can more explicitly, nor more precisely, state the purpose and policies of the entire program itself. It is with these ideas in mind that the Clay County Resource Enhancement Committee, in conjunction with all other county conservation groups, hopes to guide its actions, programs, and policies to improve and enhance the county's diverse environmental resources.

The Clay County Resource Enhancement Committee is composed of one member from each of the following groups or organizations: Clay County Board of Supervisors, Cities, and School districts, County Conservation Board, Soil Conservation Service, Nature Conservancy, Audubon Society, Clay County Farm Bureau, Iowa Great Lakes Fishing Club, Clay County Sno Broncs, Clay County Cyclists Inc., Muskies Inc., Hawkeye Fly Fishing Association, Everly Red Riders, Clay County Soil and Water Conservation District, Clay County Chapter of Ducks Unlimited, and Clay County Chapter of Pheasants Forever. When totaled, the entire membership of the Clay County REC is 33.

The framework and officer structure of the Clay County REC is simple. The framework is comprised of specific sub-committees, assigned by the overall committee, to perform such tasks as designated. The sub-committees submit all work back before the entire committee for final approval. The officer Structure is comprised of only 2 positions, a Chairman and Vice Chairman, at this time. The REC will expand the officer structure if it is deemed necessary.

History of Resource Enhancement in Clay County

With the inception of the REAP Program being quite recent, there has not been any specific enhancement or protection of resources within Clay County through the use of REAP monies or programs, but resource enhancement and protection activities on the state, county, and city level have taken place.

Through the Department of Natural Resources, the State of Iowa has acquired over 5,700 acres of land within Clay County. This land has been developed into public hunting and fishing areas, wildlife production areas, and refuges.

Clay County has acquired and developed over 700 acres of land into county areas and recreation areas and wildlife refuges. These areas not only offer a multitude of recreational and nature activities for county residents and visitors, but also provide habitat for the production and survival of area fish and wildlife as well.

Cities within Clay County have also been involved with the acquisition of land for resource enhancement. Over 100 acres of land has been acquired by county cities and developed into public city areas and greenspaces. Like the county areas, these areas provide recreational activities to people and also to a certain extent, habitat for wildlife.

When totalled, over 6,500 acres of land has been acquired by the state, county, and cities within Clay County, and developed to enhance not only the environmental quality of life for the public, but for the production and benefit of wildlife as well. With programs such as REAP, the Prairie Pothole Joint Venture, Conservation Reserve Program, and other specific environmental programs, this total figure of land set aside for enhancement and protection within Clay County is sure to rise, as it will in most other counties.

REC Planning Process

The main functions of the Clay County Resource Enhancement Committee form around two activities. These activities are the reviews of city, county, and private REAP grant applications, and the composition, adoption, and subsequent revisions of the county REAP five year plan. The actual planning process incorporates the cooperation of the various interest groups which comprise the REC, with the officers. A simple majority of members present is all that is necessary for passage of any motion.

Funds Break Down

For FY 89 & 90 a total of $16,128,500 will be appropriated into the REAP Program. For FY 91 a total of $20,450,000 will be appropriated, and for FY 92-2000 a total of $30,450,000 per year will be appropriated. The allocations of these totals to the various programs of REAP shall be as follows:

The first $350,000 shall be allocated to the Conservation Education Board for the development and revision of conservation education materials, and for the initiation of conservation education workshops for Iowa educators. This fund will also reimburse those educators that participate in the workshops.

One (1) percent shall go to the Iowa Department of Natural Resources for administration of the program.

Twenty-eight (28) percent will be placed into the open spaces account. This account shall be divided into three major sections. These sections will receive funds based on the percentage allotments to each. They are as follows:

Eight-five (85) percent for statewide open space acquisition and development and also for supplemental development of state owned property.
Ten (10) percent to be used to implement a cost share grant program for the acquisition of open spaces using not less than twenty-five (25) percent private matching funds.

Five (5) percent to be used to fund the protected waters program.

Twenty (20) percent shall be allocated to the county conservation account. This account shall also be divided into three sections that will receive funds based on percentage allotments to each. They are as follows:

Thirty (30) percent of the allocation to the county conservation account annually shall be allocated to each county equally.

Thirty (30) percent of the allocation to the county conservation account annually shall be allocated to each county on a per capita basis.

Forty (40) percent shall be held in an account to be awarded to county conservation boards on a competitive grant basis. This competitive grant shall have two cycles per year and require no matching funds.

Twenty (20) percent shall be allocated to the soil and water enhancement account to be governed by soil conservation division. These funds shall be used to implement soil and water enhancement programs which include but are not limited to, reforestation, woodland protection and enhancement, wildlife habitat preservation and enhancement, protection of highly erodible soils, and clean water programs.

Fifteen (15) percent shall be allocated to the cities parks and open spaces account. These moneys will be used to develop a competitive grant program whereas a city can apply for funds to acquire, establish, and maintain natural parks, preserves, and open spaces. These grants may include expenditures for multipurpose trails, restroom facilities, shelter houses, and picnic facilities, but not for single or multipurpose athletic fields, baseball or softball diamonds, tennis courts, golf courses, and any group or organized sports facilities.

Nine (9) percent shall be allocated to the state land management account. These funds shall be use to expand currently owned state lands and facilities.

Five (5) percent shall be allocated to the historical resource grant and loan fund established under control of the department of cultural affairs. These funds will be available to cities, counties, and private citizens.

Three (3) percent shall be allocated to the living roadway trust fund. These funds will be made available to counties and cities through a competitive grant cycle for development and implementation of integrated roadside vegetation plans, consisting of living windbreaks, wildlife habitat, roadside erosion control and aesthetic purposes.

Resource needs and opportunities in Clay County

Natural Resource Inventories

Soil

In Clay County approximately 73% of the soils are 0-2% slope and 27% are between 2% of slope and greater. Of this 27%, about 18% are 2-5% slope and 9% are over the 5% slope range. Soil erosion from both water and wind could be controlled by the use of conservation tillage on the soils of the 0-2% slope range.

The major soils found in Clay County include: Clarion loam, Everly clay loam, Marcus silty clay loam, Nicollet loam, Nicollet clay loam, Primghar silty clay loam, Sac silty clay loam, Wadena loam, and Webster silty clay loam.

The Clarion, Nicollet, and Webster soils were developed from glacial till. The remaining major soils were developed under loess deposits except Wadena, which is an outwash soil.

Water Resources

Water has had a great deal of influence on the development of Clay County. Poorly drained soils, which are located over the entire county, restricted farming until they were artificially drained. Subsurface drainage has made Clay a top producing row-crop county.

The Little Sioux River, which flows south through the county and is a part of the Missouri River Watershed, is the major drainage way through the county. The water courses are mainly used for wildlife habitat, recreation activities and for watering livestock.

The two major lakes within the county are Trumbull and Lost Island, although part of Lost Island Lake does fall within Palo Alto County. There are several other lakes, but they are mainly wildlife/public hunting areas and are not primary areas for fishing and boating.

The quality and quantity of well water in many parts of the county is quite questionable. A regional rural water system, which offers a viable alternative to property owners, and supplies a potable source of water for domestic and livestock purposes, is currently being extended and installed. But in conjunction with this effort, water quality improvement policies still need to be determined and established to improve the county ground water supply as a whole.

Vegetation

Being located on the fringe of the prime prairie pothole region of Iowa, Clay County receives the benefit of having a mixture of both prairie wetlands and wooded river corridors. This diversity of areas gives rise to many different types of growing areas, and therefore allows for the development of many different species of plant life. As each individual plant

species grows and flourishes in areas that meet its basic survival needs, each becomes characteristic or native to that area. Below is a list of some of the most common plant species categorized by area in which they are found.

*Woodland

Some of the most common tree species found along the Little Sioux River and around the lakes of the county.

Burr Oak	American Basswood	Green Ash	Red Oak

*Wet Prairies (Fens)

These specific areas are rare but contain several unique plant species such as, Aero Grass, Cotton Sedge, Small White Lady Slipper Orchids, Yellow Monkey Flower, Northern Green Orchid, and Lady Tress Orchids.

*Prairie

Clay county has some native prairie grass areas. These prairies are unique in that they are comprised of a combination of eastern and western prairie grass species such as Blue Grama and Side Oats Grama.

*Marshes

Clay County contains many marshes or wetlands that are inhabited by a multitude of various plant species. Some of them are: Cattails, many species of bulrushes, Yellow bullhead Lilly, Coon Tail, Water Milfoil, Silver Maple, Willow, and Arrowhead.

Wildlife and Fisheries

With the presence of prairie, wetland, and woodland habitat areas, Clay County contains a diverse assortment of fish and wildlife species. A few of the most common species found throughout the county are listed below.

Wildlife

Clay County's various woodlands, wetlands, lakes, rivers, and prairie areas provide habitat for many different wildlife species. Some of the most common, which are listed by class, are:

*Bird

Gray Partridge	Red-tailed Hawk	American Kestrel
Great Blue Heron	American Bittern	Yellow Warbler
Spotted Sandpiper	Marsh Wren	Ring-necked Pheasant
Mourning Dove	Red eyed Vireo	Red winged Black Bird
Yellow-throat	Song Sparrow	Yellow-headed Black Bird

Plus many species of North American Ducks, Geese, Swans, and Wading birds which either nest and/or migrate through the area.

*Mammal

White-tailed Deer	Red Fox	Opossum
Fox Squirrel	Coyote	Eastern cottontail Rabbit
Mink	Pocket Gopher	Striped Skunk
Raccoon	White-footed Mouse	Short-Tailed Shrew

*Reptile and Amphibians

Snapping Turtle	Smooth Softshell Turtle	Western Painted Turtle
Plains Garter Snake	American Toad	Northern Leopard Frog
Bullfrog	Eastern Garter Snake	Northern Water Snake

Fish

With presence of two lakes, many wetlands, and a river system, Clay County contains many fish species. Below are some of the more common species found in the county's waters.

*Game Species

Northern Pike	Largemouth Bass	Yellow Bullhead
Smallmouth Bass	Flathead Catfish	Pumpkin Seed
Bluegill	Yellow Perch	Black Crappie
White Bass	Channel Catfish	Sunfish

*Non-Game Species

Common Carp	Fathead Minnow	Black Buffalo
Iowa Darter	Blunt nose Minnow	White Sucker
Spottail Shiner	Creek Chub	Golden Shiner
Common Shiner	Sand Shiner	Short Nose Gar
Long Nose Gar		

* The listings above are not intended to be overall inventories of the wildlife and plant species found in the county, but just a listing of common species seen quite often. For a more comprehensive list, please refer to the Iowa Department of Natural Resources, or a comprehensive field identification guide.

Parks, Recreation Facilities, and Open Space

State

The State of Iowa currently owns and operates 11 public hunting areas within Clay County. The name and a brief description of size, location, and type follow.

Barringer Slough

The area is 1,178 acres in size and is located 2 miles West, 1 mile North of the City of Ruthven. The area is comprised of marshy prairie and waterfowl, pheasant, and deer make up the principal game found there.

Dan Green Slough

This slough is 285 acres in size and is located 4 1/2 miles East of the City of Langdon. The area is entirely marsh and the principal game is waterfowl and pheasant.

Deweys Pasture

The area is 443 acres in size and located 1/2 mile West and 4 miles North of the City of Ruthven. The pasture is comprised of marshy prairie with rabbit, waterfowl, and pheasant inhabiting the area.

Elk Lake

The lake area is 306 acres in total size and located 2 miles West and 3 miles South of Ruthven. The area is comprised of 4/5 shallow lake and 1/5 grassland. Waterfowl and pheasant make up the principal game.

Little Sioux Wildlife Area

The area is 194 acres in size and located 2 miles Northwest of the City of Gillette Grove. The area borders the Little Sioux River and offers good hunting for squirrels and deer.

Mud Lake

The Mud Lake area is 252 acres in size and located 1 mile South and 4 miles East of the City of Webb. Mud Lake area consists of a drained lakebed. Pheasant and rabbit make up the principal game found there.

Ocheydan Game Area

This area is 100 acres in size and located 5 miles West of Spencer, bordering along the Ocheydan River. Open timber and prairie comprise the vegetation of the area, and waterfowl and pheasant are the principal game.

Round Lake

The lake area is 430 acres in size and located 4 miles Northwest of the City of Ruthven. Marshland comprises the area, and pheasant comprises the principal game.

Wetland Complex

This area is 1,280 acres and is located 5 miles Northwest of the City of Ruthven. Marsh and prairie make up the area, with waterfowl, pheasant, and deer being found there as well.

Trumbull Lake

This lake area is 1,224 acres and located 1 mile West and 5 miles North of the City of Ruthven. The area consists of a lake surrounded by timber with waterfowl and pheasant being the principal game.

Wapiti Marsh

This area is 80 acres in size and is located adjacent to Elk Lake. The area is comprised entirely of marsh with waterfowl and pheasant hunting being predominant.

County

There are nine county recreation areas totalling over 700 acres, which are operated and maintained by the Clay County Conservation Board. These areas and their facilities are as follows:

Bertram Reservation

This area is located 2 miles East of Peterson and is managed, as provided in the deed from the Prairie Gold area Boy Scout Council, for "The Maximum Wilderness Experience". The area is 240 acres in size and open to primitive hunting with only muzzeloading weapons and bow and arrow during scheduled seasons. The existing facilities include one "A" frame shelter house and several campsites with fire rings. The area also contains a Savanna Prairie located on the south central portion of the site, which has been identified as the finest example of Savanna Prairie left in the United States.

Bob Howe/Thunder Bridge Wildlife Refuge

The refuge is located on the West edge of the City of Spencer, and is managed as a river access point and wildlife production area. As for existing facilities, the area contains one small parking lot.

Grandview Park

This 1 acre park is located on the West side of Lost Island Lake. Current management practices maintain this park as a picnicking, boat launching, and fishing area. The existing facilities include a restroom facility, boat ramp, and picnic sites.

Kindlespire Little Sioux Access

This 222 acre area, which is open to hunting during regular seasons, is located 5 miles West of the City of Webb. The area is managed for primitive camping, fishing, hiking, and cross country skiing. The existing facilities include a restroom facility, picnic tables, and fire grills.

Oneota Little Sioux Access

The area is 154 acres in size and located on the Southside of the City of Spencer. The park is managed as a wildlife area, and is used for environmental education coursework by all of the schools in the county. Existing facilities include a horse arena, open shelter, large parking lot, and a restroom facility. A log cabin, which was restored and re-opened to the public for the first time in 15 years, is also found within the confines of the park. The area also contains the Clay County Conservation Board's office and shop.

Riverside-Little Sioux Access

This 3 acre river access point is located 1 mile West of Peterson, and is managed as a highway rest stop and access point to the Little Sioux River. The area contains an open shelter house and restroom facility.

Scharnberg Park

Located 1 1/2 miles East, and 1/2 mile South of the City of Everly, Scharnberg Park is 36 acres in size. It is managed as a swimming and picnicking area, and contains an enclosed shelter, changing area, water system, and restroom.

Schmerse Wildlife Area

This 42 acre area, open to fishing and hunting during season, is located 3 miles East of the City of Fostoria. It is managed as a wildlife area and contains one small parking lot.

Stouffer Memorial Wildlife Preserve

This preserve is 27 acres in size and located 2 miles East of the City of Spencer. The current management practices maintain this area as a wildlife refuge, and currently, the preserve park has no facilities.

City

Cities within Clay county also own and operate many over 100 acres of city parks and open space areas. These facilities offer a full range of opportunities to conduct a full assortment of recreational activities from camping to fishing, to playing golf and tennis.

Human Population, Trends, and Distribution

Population	
1970	18,464
1980	19,576
est. 1990	17,853
est. 2000	16,851

As can be seen from the table above, Clay County demonstrated an increase in population of 1,112 people between 1970 and 1980. Although current census figures are not yet available for 1990, estimates by the Iowa Department of Transportation indicate that in 1990, Clay County will have 1,723 fewer people then in 1980. This loss in population is estimated to continue through the year 2000, with Clay County showing an estimated loss of 1,002 persons between 1990 and 2000. It must be stated that this downward trend in population is only estimated and will be reevaluated when 1990 census material becomes available.

The distribution of the largest portion of the population within Clay County is centered specifically around the City of Spencer area. The populations of the seven townships which are immediately adjacent to the City of Spencer, plus the population of the city itself, comprise nearly 80% of the total population of the county. When future growth develops, it is anticipated that this area will most likely see the majority. Some rural townships may also see some future population increases and developments, but major developments within these areas, though welcome, are not anticipated.

Trends in Natural Resources

Up until the mid 1980's, the trend in Clay County has been much like every other county in Northwest Iowa, to convert native prairie, wetland, and woodland from their native state to one of agricultural production. This trend peaked during the mid 1980's with an estimated conversion rate these areas to agriculture at 5% per year. But with the passage of the 1985 farm bill, things began to change. Now, with current programs such as the Conservation Reserve Program, Wetlands for Iowa, Swampbuster, REAP, and the continued activities and efforts of both public and private conservation organizations, this original trend has or is being reversed. Some regions within the state are currently seeing a no net loss of these forementioned native areas, and are projecting to move one step further and actually increase their numbers of wetlands, woodlands, and prairies. Clay County is forecasted as one of these particular areas. With the aid of the programs listed above, in conjunction with others such as the Prairie Pothole Joint Venture, Clay County can help lead the state in reversing the old trend, and over the next ten years, restore and redevelopment those areas previously lost.

Existing and Projected Needs

*The existing and projected needs within Clay County for the term of this plan, or until amended, reviewed, or updated, in order of highest to lowest priority need, shall be as follows:

Environmental Education

Enhancement of environmental education programs are seen as the most crucial need for the county. The development of a high quality comprehensive environmental education program is one of the keys to success to future environmental projects and awareness. Through education, every age group of society can learn to appreciate the natural world around them, the basic

* Programs based on need and not necessarily eligible for REAP funding.

* reasoning of fish and wildlife management practices, and the actual fragility of our immediate environment and world.

The county in conjunction with the educational system, needs to make every effort, including the possibility of employing a county naturalist, to continue, enhance, and develop future environmental education programs.

Land acquisition/set aside

The need for acquisition, development ,and/or set aside of wetland, timber corridors, prairie areas, wet prairies (fens), and other unique land forms is seen as another high ranking need. The county along with state and local conservation entities, private clubs and organizations, and concerned individuals need to work together to ensure that the loss or conversion of these and other wildlife and habitat areas is minimalized, and that these areas, once acquired or set aside, are put into sound wildlife and outdoor enhancement practices and programs.

Soil and Water Conservation

Further need to increase the application, methods, and practices of soil and water conservation, such as but not limited to the following:

A. Minimum or no-till farming.
B. The increase of soil and water conservation applications such as
   1. Windbreaks
      a. Farmstead
      b. Field
   2. Terraces
   3. Grassed waterways
   4. Filter strips
   5. Sediment control basins
   6. Native grass plantings
   7. Structures such as ponds
C. The development of an integrated roadside vegetative management program.

Water Quality

Ground water efforts need to be addressed. Monitoring strategies need to be developed and conducted to reassess the overall quality of the surface and groundwater inventories of the county. From these assessments, actual quality practices need to be established and practiced. Educational programs are also needed to instruct local area people and visitors of the impacts of certain actions on overall water quality. Some possible applications designed to help increase water quality that the county may use are, but are not limited to the following.

A. Establish native grasses and trees on filter strips adjacent to perennial streams and rivers.

* Programs based on need and not necessarily eligible for REAP funding.

B. The construction of feedlot and waste management systems to assist in preventing nitrates from entering water supplies, and aid in the proper utilization of manure in crop production.

Outdoor Recreation Facilities and Amenities

There is a county need for the further development and enhancement of outdoor recreation areas, such as but not limited to:

A. Construction and extension of trail systems throughout the county
B. Increase and enhancement of county areas and their related amenities such as but not limited to picnicking areas, shelter houses, trail systems, plantings and habitat development for fish and wildlife, restroom facilities, and camping facilities.
C. Increase and enhancement of city parks and their related amenities such as such as but not limited to picnicking areas, tree and shrub plantings, shelter houses, restroom facilities, camping facilities, and trail systems.
D. Increase in access points along the river for canoeing.
E. To make all areas, either city or county, accessible to handicap and aging population as well.

Issues in Clay County

Resource Based

Current resource based issues within the Clay County stem around water quality and the loss of fish and wildlife habitat.

Nitrate infiltration into water supplies is currently a major problem within Clay County. Figure 1, shows the overall rise in concentrations of nitrates from 1930-1985 in three river systems within Iowa, which includes a river, the Little Sioux, that runs through Clay County. As can be seen from figure 1, nitrate concentrations in 1985 are approaching 155 mg/1 for NO3, and 40 mg/1 for NO3-N. These amounts exceed the maximum recommended levels of 45 mg/1 for NO3 and 10 mg/1 of NO3-N by 110 mg/1 and 30 mg/1 respectively.

Figure 1.

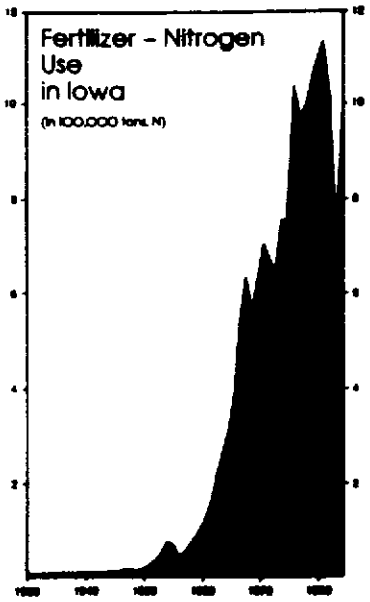
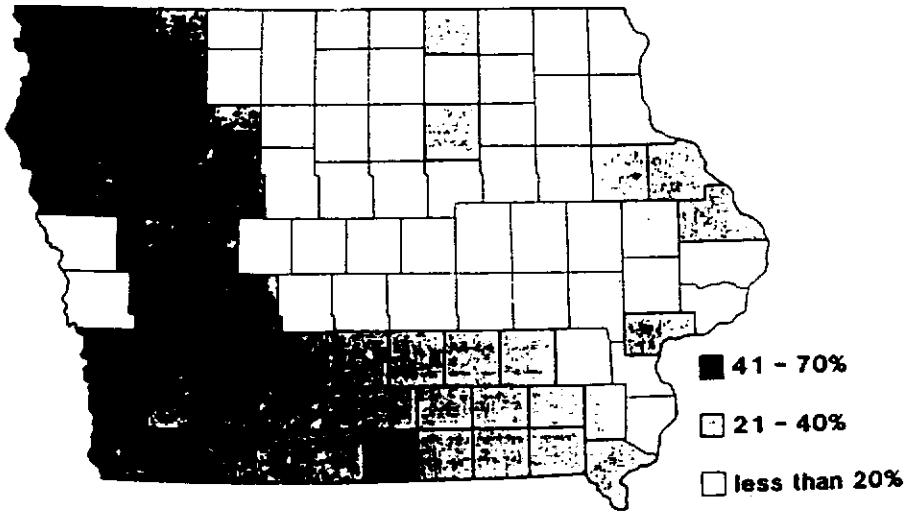


Figure 2 shows the distribution of counties within Iowa from 1980-1985 that have certain percentages of drinking water samples which exceed the drinking water standards for nitrate. Clay County, during that period, had between 21-40% of the water samples taken, actually exceed the standard. Counties immediately west of Clay had even worse percentages with 41-70% of their samples exceeding the standard.

Figure 2. **Percent of Private Well Water Samples Exceeding the Drinking Water Standard for Nitrate**



Based on analysis of over 43,000 samples submitted during period from 1980 - 1985.

Data Supplied by University Hygienic Laboratory

In this day and age, water quality is always an issue. With more and more people using water not only for human consumption, but also for recreation, the quality of the entire watershed system becomes a major concern. Clay County is no exception as can be seen from reviewing the data from figures 1 and 2. To address this problem the county, in conjunction with other federal, state, and local agencies, needs to take steps in the development sound practices to identify the major sources of nitrate infiltration. Once identification has taken place, the next step would be to develop and implement measures to reduce the nitrate infiltration. Clay County is very unique in that it contains not only rivers and lakes, but also marshes, prairies fens, and a large groundwater system. Care should be taken now to insure the quality of the water in these areas to ensure and enable the safe use of each for years to come.

Another key resource based issue is the continued conversion of wetlands, prairies, and woodlands to agricultural land thus reducing vital wildlife habitat. The effect of a loss of habitat has been proven to be a key aspect responsible for the decrease of fish and wildlife species, be they waterfowl, upland game, or big game. Recently though, this trend has slowed and in certain places, has changed for the positive. Wildlife habitat needs to be developed and expanded within Clay County to provide for the continuance of a healthy population of fish and wildlife species for future generations to enjoy.

Population Based

In the development of recreational facilities and outdoor areas, the capacity in terms of daily usership is always an issue. With rising populations and increased demands upon the current system, the development of future areas and facilities needs to be carefully planned. These new facilities need to keep in mind the carrying capacities of the old facilities, thus insuring these new areas once developed, will be completely necessary, and will be able to grow and expand as more demands are placed on them.

Financial

Financial issues are another area of concern. Funding for specific acquisitions and developments is very limited. With today's cost of land and development, whatever funding is available for such programs, does not go far. Therefore, care should be taken and all options and facets, including other supplemental funding sources looked into, before committing county funds into projects. REAP, through the direct allocations and competitive grant cycles, will allow for the development and subsequent action on more projects than was possible before, but care still needs to be taken to ensure funding sources are wisely used, and that the projects meet with long term goals.

Another financial issue, which stems from the development of wildlife habitat, is removing land from agricultural production and the county tax rolls. Even though land, acquired through the REAP Open Spaces Account, will be eligible for tax value reimbursement, not all land acquisitions will be eligible for such reimbursements of funds to the county. Care needs to be taken to see that wildlife habitat is developed, but not to the point that the livelihood of county farmers and the financial resources of the county are negatively effected.

Roles and Responsibilities in Clay County

For the term of this REAP Plan, the roles and responsibilities of each of the following, in terms of their association with the REAP Program, are, but are in no way limited by the following:

City

To ensure attendance of their respective representatives to the REC meetings. To explore, and if applicable to apply, to all feasible funding programs, including but not limited to REAP, for the enhancement and protection of city parks and greenspaces. To assess and update the city's environmental goals.

County

To assess, determine, and expand current county recreational facilities to meet future demands by seeking assistance from all possible funding sources. To promote the development of fish and wildlife habitat. To assist with the development and expansion of environmental education throughout the county. To update and review current county conservation goals. To help improve the quality of life, within the county, through the promotion of recreation and outdoor activity. It is a proven fact that outdoor recreation and activity is a very beneficial factor in terms of the health of today's working people, in that it helps reduce stress and anxiety.

School Districts

To ensure attendance of their representatives to the REC meetings. To work alone and in conjunction with each other, plus with state and county agencies on the development of environmental education programs.

State/Federal

To provide financial and technical assistance with environmental programs such as REAP, to assess current environmental programs with the state's ever changing needs, and develop new and innovative programs or change existing ones to meet those needs, and to ensure that funding will remain available throughout the terms of the programs.

Regional Planning Agencies

To provide technical assistance with the administration, grant and plan preparations, and any other administrative functions to local counties, cities, and interested individuals. Plus, act as a clearinghouse of information concerning state and federal programs.

Private

To ensure attendance of their respective organizations to the REC meetings. To help develop support, awareness, and to assist in education of the public on environmental programs.

Cooperative Efforts

Cooperative efforts of any and all of the above mentioned groups, and those not mentioned is highly encouraged. Such cooperation can only benefit resource enhancement and protection activities within the county.

Actions in Clay County

Acquisition

With federal and state fish and wildlife programs, such as the Prairie Pothole Joint Venture, targeting many areas within Clay County, acquisitions of land will definitely increase above their current rate. The State of Iowa, in keeping with the objectives and goals of the forementioned plan, has proposed this list of general areas targeted for acquisition over the next 1-5 years.

A. The acquisition of wetland and restorable wetland areas in and around the Trumbull and lost Island Lake Area.

B. The purchase of associated upland and prairie areas adjacent to the above mentioned wetlands.

C. Land along the Little Sioux River, particularly in the area from Spencer to Linn Grove, has been targeted for either acquisition or easement to ensure the continuance of the Little Sioux River in the protected waters program.

The Clay County Conservation Board has also comprised a list of potential areas and land forms that it would like to acquire over the next five years. The county, as does the state, would like to purchase some land along the Little Sioux River. The Conservation Board is also interested in acquiring certain unique land forms such as prairie fens, wetlands, and woodlands. Although the county has not targeted any specific areas for acquisition, this by no means should be taken that the County Conservation Board is not open to the development of acquisition projects. The Board is keeping every option open and will work either alone or in conjunction with any state, local, or private entity using REAP monies or whatever other funding is available, including donation, whenever an acquisition project that fits the goals of this or any other county conservation plan develops.

Although there are no specific projects outlined yet, the cities within Clay County are also planning to acquire land with the aid of the REAP city grant program. These acquisitions would be to purchase land for the expansion of city parks and other such outdoor and eligible projects.

Private acquisition projects meeting the eligibility requirements of the REAP private cost share grant program are also anticipated. These projects are expected to consist of mostly acquisition for the development of fish and wildlife habitat.

Development

Although no specific development projects have been outlined, the County Conservation Board does anticipate applying for REAP funding through the competitive grant program for further development of camping, boat launching, hiking, and other such eligible facilities within the county. The County Conservation Board will make every attempt to carry these projects through to completion, but the county is also keeping an open eye to the development of new projects as well.

Cities within the county will also be applying for REAP funding to further develop their city park and greenspace systems.

Operations and Maintenance

With the exception of the state acquisitions and developments on state owned land, all operations and maintenance of lands developed and acquired will be undertaken by either county or local administrative entities. Furthermore, all efforts will be made to secure all necessary equipment and personnel, dependant of course upon funding, needed to meet the maintenance and operational demands of the county and city owned areas.

Education

Education and particularly environmental education, is viewed throughout the county as the key to the success of continued environmental awareness and concerns. The county currently has several state funded outdoor recreational safety classes and seminars, and many school districts within the county currently have and maintain environmental education and science courses. With education being the number one priority of existing and projected needs, the Clay County Conservation Board is currently planning an enhancement of the environmental education system within the county. Within the next year, the Conservation Board anticipates employing an interpretive naturalist with the use of REAP funding. With the naturalist program available, the county will have the tool to originate new and innovative education techniques and programs. These new education programs will hopefully be incorporated, through the cooperation of the school districts, into the classrooms, and will also spill over into adult education as well. Since education really never stops, the naturalist program will constantly be upgraded and new materials will be added as the need arises.

The need of a quality environmental educational system is paramount if children, teenagers, and adults alike are to be made aware of the importance for the conserving of our natural resources for the total well being. The employment of a naturalist is a big step towards reaching that goal, but it is only one step. Further programs and ideas will need to be developed if the county is to keep a quality environmental educational system.

Legislation

Legislation is an effective tool to use in the enhancement and protection of resources. By making state and federal governmental law making bodies aware of environmental concerns and problems, new laws and policies are passed which aid our ecosystem. Pushing for new environmental legislation will remain as an effective tool to be used, and the county, cities, and concerned conservation groups and citizens will need to keep abreast of current federal and state legislative actions concerning the environment to ensure that Clay County interests are being addressed.

Table I. Proposed expenditure plan of REAP funds for period FY 89-91

	1989-90	1990-91
Total Allocation	$14,251	$23,883
Land Acquisiton		
Facility Development and Renovation		
Road Resurfacing	$3,000	
Boat Ramp	$4,000	
P. Tables and Grills	$2,300	
Fertilizer	$851	
Equipment Purchase		
Trail Maint. Equip.		
Stump Cutter	$2,600	
Supplies and Materials Purchased		
Prairie Grass Seed	$1,500	$5,970.75
Staff Hired		$17,912.25
Total	$14,251	$23,883.00

The above table includes Clay County's proposed REAP expenditures for a period of two fiscal years. Although it was not necessary, the county wanted to show the proposed expenditures of REAP funds for the period just previous to the coverage of this plan, which begins July 1, 1990. In future plans and updates, the expenditure plan will keep to one year only.

Methods of Plan and Budget Update

This plan and budget may be amended at any time by a majority vote by the committee members of the REC. Further, this plan and budget shall be reviewed annually for additions, deletions, corrections, and further updates. This review and subsequent update, will be passed by a majority of the committee members of the REC present at the time.