



MINNESOTA HISTORICAL SOCIETY
Minnesota State Archives

CONSERVATION DEPARTMENT

An Inventory of Photographs Relating to Soil and Water Conservation

OVERVIEW OF THE RECORDS

- Agency:** Minnesota. Dept. of Conservation.
- Series Title:** Photographs relating to soil and water conservation,
- Dates:** 1926-1957 (bulk 1936-1940).
- Abstract:** Assorted sized black and white photographs assembled by the Conservation Department mainly documenting the role in Minnesota of the United States Department of Agriculture's Soil Conservation Service (SCS), particularly its efforts in the 1930s in the areas of land, farm, water, and woodland management practices. Many of the photographs were taken in the southeastern section of the state.
- Quantity:** 3.4 cu. ft. (4 boxes).
- Location:** See Detailed Description section for box locations.

SCOPE AND CONTENTS OF THE FILES

Efforts particularly highlighted include wind and water erosion management, particularly terrace and strip contour planting, fencing, windbreaks, gully and stream bank vegetation planting, and the effect of improper erosion management on land and buildings; woodland management, particularly winter logging and brush control; highway and roadway improvement; land utilization, particularly subsistence farming; Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) projects and work; and wildlife management, especially views of winter feeding stations and habitat growth. Many of the photographs include identified farmers and SCS and CCC personnel.

The majority of the photographs contain detailed descriptions of the photograph's content, location, farm/land owner, and date. Some also identify the photographer and affiliated CCC camp and/or SCS project. The major photographers identified are George V. Gideon, H. W. Lathrop, W. H. Lauer, C. H. Christopherson, and E. L. Henrikson.

Of particular interest are photographs of the Von Arx, Houston County, and Andrist, Goodhue County, family farms, which practiced early contour strip farming and fertilization, respectively; the USDA conservation demonstration project in the Gilmore Valley Watershed near Winona; early aerial views; the Winona CCC camp, particularly its nursery and work with the Winona Wood Products Cooperative Association plant; the Waterville CCC camp and its work on dam construction and lake erosion prevention; Adine Wiger, Ulen, working on the family farm; the Minnesota Valley Canning Company farm; a 1937 New Richland High School conservation class tour; a September 1938 Winona area flood; caribou farms; bird banding; wind and water erosion projects and demonstrations at Beltrami Island (Baudette) and Pine Island, Twin Valley, and Bayport; erosion documentation comparisons, using copies of early 1900s photographs and 1930s views of the same landscapes; "Mr. Soil Saver" and "Mr. Gully Jumper" erosion prevention cartoons; and victory gardens.

ORGANIZATION OF THE RECORDS

These records are organized into the following sections:

- Land use photographs and indexes, 1926-1955 (bulk 1936-1940).
- Farm forestry index and photographs, 1942-1943.
- Camp Waterville, special miscellaneous, and general interest photographs, undated and 1936-1937, 1941.
- General farm and women farming photographs, 1934, 1942, 1945, 1947.
- Cartoon series, 1940.
- Drainage ditches, ponds, and gullies, 1945-1957.
- Farming techniques, erosion, and efforts to combat soil loss, 1942-1951.
- Miscellaneous and unnumbered photographs, undated.

RELATED MATERIALS

Minnesota Division of Game and Fish Beltrami Island Wildlife Management Area project file and Minnesota Division of Forestry Pine Island settler relocation and development project records, both housed in the Minnesota Historical Society State Archives collections (each cataloged separately).

INDEX TERMS

This collection is indexed under the following headings in the catalog of the Minnesota Historical Society. Researchers desiring materials about related topics, persons or places should search the catalog using these headings.

Topics:

Aerial photography in land use—Minnesota.
Bird banding—Minnesota—Photographs.
Caribou farming—Minnesota—Photographs.
Conservation of natural resources—Study and teaching—Minnesota—New Richland—
Photographs.
Contour farming—Minnesota—Photographs.
Dams—Minnesota—Design and construction—Photographs.
Erosion--Minnesota--Photographs.
Farm management—Minnesota—Photographs.
Farms—Minnesota—Photographs.
Flood damage--Minnesota--Photographs.
Floods—Minnesota—Winona—Photographs, 1938.
Lake conservation—Minnesota—Photographs.
Land use—Minnesota—Photographs.
Logging—Minnesota—Photographs.
Roadside improvement—Minnesota—Photographs.
Soil conservation—Minnesota—Photographs.
Soil conservation—Caricatures and cartoons.
Soil erosion—Minnesota—Photographs.
Shore protection—Minnesota—Photographs.
Stream conservation—Minnesota—Photographs.
Terracing—Minnesota—Photographs.
Victory gardens—Minnesota—Photographs.
Wildlife management—Minnesota—Photographs.
Wind erosion—Minnesota—Photographs.
Windbreaks, shelterbelts, etc.—Minnesota—Photographs.
Woodlots—Minnesota—Photographs.

Places:

Baudette (Minn.)—Photographs.
Bayport (Minn.)—Photographs.
Beltrami Island (Minn.)—Photographs.
Gilmore Creek Valley (Minn.)—Photographs.
Twin Valley (Minn.)—Photographs.

Persons:

Andrist family—Photographs.
Christopherson, C. H.
Gideon, George V.
Henrikson, Einar L.
Lathrop, Harold William, 1901-1962.
Lauer, W. H.
Von Arx family—Photographs.

Organizations:

Civilian Conservation Corps (U. S.). Company 714 (Winona, Minn.)—Photographs.
Civilian Conservation Corps (U. S.). Company 3710 (Waterville, Minn.)—Photographs.
Civilian Conservation Corps (U. S.). Minnesota District—Photographs.
Minnesota Valley Canning Company (LeSueur, Minn.)—Photographs.
United States. Dept. of Agriculture.
United States. Soil Conservation Service—Photographs.
Winona Wood Products Cooperative Association—Photographs.

Types of Documents:

Photographs--Minnesota.

ADMINISTRATIVE INFORMATION

Preferred Citation:

[Indicate the cited item and folder title here]. Minnesota. Dept. of Conservation.
Photographs relating to soil and water conservation. Minnesota Historical Society. State
Archives.

See the Chicago Manual of Style for additional examples.

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Processing Information:

Processed by: Marie Perry and Carrie M. Tannehill, December 1999; Cheri Thies, August
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DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE COLLECTION

Note to Researchers: To request materials, please note both the location and box numbers shown below. Each file consists of one folder unless specified otherwise.

Location	Box	
113.A.1.4F	1	<p>Land use photographs and indexes, 1926-1955 (bulk 1936-1940):</p> <p>Organized numerically, using Minn as a prefix (i.e., Minn-1), this incomplete series of photographs mainly document conservation efforts, such as, water erosion control, particularly stream bank protection; wind erosion control, including terracing, contour strip cropping, and buffer strip areas, inactive areas, fencing, and improper farming practices; subsistence farming; orchards and nurseries; and forests and other non-agricultural land use, such as, woodland planting and management. There is also documentation of wildlife habitat, including caribou farms; highway and roadside improvements projects; safety equipment and practices; aerial views; the Andrist and the Von Arx families and their farms; farm equipment, fields, and structures; the USDA Gilmore Valley Watershed conservation demonstration project; the camps and crews of the SCS Pine Island and Beltrami resettlement and development projects, Twin Valley wind erosion project, and CCC Bayport erosion demonstration project; several erosion comparisons using early 1900s photographs and views of the same land in the 1930s; and numerous photographs of area farmers, their families, and SCS/CCC personnel.</p> <p>The majority of these photographs are mounted on 5 inch by 8 inch press board cards, which contain a detailed description of each photograph's content, the location, the farm/land owner, and date. Some also identify the photographer and affiliated CCC camp and/or SCS project. The major photographers identified are George V. Gideon, H. W. Lathrop, and W. H. Lauer. Some of the photographs which had loosened from the cards have been placed in photographic envelopes.</p> <p>Indexes, undated. 2 folders.</p> <p>Topical index, divided by image category; listing the photograph's number, location, and category. Also several cross indexes which note if a photograph is filed under two or more different image categories, and a handwritten listing specifying which photographs depict the Gilmore Creek Project.</p> <p>Photographs: Minn-2 through Minn-554. 22 folders.</p>
113.A.1.5B	2	Photographs: Minn-556 through Minn-1178. 21 folders.
113.A.1.6F	3	Photographs: Minn-1179 through Minn-1642. 18 folders.

Location	Box	
113.A.1.6F	3	<p>Farm forestry index and photographs, 1942-1943. 1 folder. Photographs, numbered using an FF prefix (i.e., FF-1) and organized sequentially. Mainly taken by W. H. Lauer and C. H. Christopherson, they include views of barn construction, a lumber harvester, portable sawmill, corn crib, hog barn, tree planting, maple sugaring, Winona Wood Products Cooperative Association plant, and stands of red oak, Norway pine, jack pine, and scotch pine. The photographs are identified with only the FF number; content details are found on the accompanying card index and an annotated description sheet (i.e. a "Legend Sheet").</p> <p>Camp Waterville, special miscellaneous, and general interest photographs, undated and 1936-1937, 1941. 1 folder. Some, but not all, of these photos include handwritten descriptions on the non-image side. The Camp Waterville (CCC) photographs includes images from Cynthia Lake Dam and Cedar Lake Dam in Scott County, Shield Lake in Rice County, Goose Lake Dam at Waseca, Pleasant Lake in Sand Creek and various scenes of Waterville. The remainder of the photographs include views of a Soil Conservation Service cooperators' picnic (1936) and a New Richland High School conservation class tour (June 1, 1937).</p> <p>General farm and women farming photographs, 1934, 1942, 1945, 1947. 1 folder. Farming scenes, including Adine Wiger hoeing in a potato field and harvesting blue grass seed with a tractor and combine in Ulen, taken by E. L. Henrikson (July 6, 1942); scenes of the Minnesota Valley Canning Company operated farm (August 9, 1945); the George Henry farm, [Whitewater?], (July 1947); and grazed and ungrazed woodland, Lindahl Coulee (June 23, 1934). The photographs are dated and described on the non-image side.</p> <p>Cartoon series, January 27, 1940. 1 folder. Labeled R5-293 – R5-304, these two series of six photographed cartoons entitled "Mr. Soil Saver" and "Mr. Gully Jumper" were made by the Milwaukee WPA art project for use in exhibits to encourage proper erosion-fighting farming techniques by contrasting the relative success of farmers "Soil Saver" and "Gully Jumper."</p> <p>Drainage ditches, ponds, and gullies, 1945-1957. 1 folder. Labeled MN-5-1 – MN-101-12, eighteen photos predominantly depicting drainage ditches, ponds and gullies. Various photographers are noted, most commonly D. Broberg.</p>

Location	Box	
113.A.1.6F	3	Farming techniques, erosion, and efforts to combat soil loss, 1942-1951. Labeled 6001-1 – 6110-12; these approximately 600 photos depicting various farming techniques, the effects of erosion, and efforts to combat soil loss. There are also a few photos of victory gardens. They appear to be grouped in sets of twelve related photos (i.e. 6001-1 – 6001-12), although many photos are missing from the series. Most photographs are labeled with location, farm owner, photographer and a content description. They are attributed to a number of photographers, including Einar L. Henrikson. 6001-1 – 6046.11. 12 folders.
113.A.1.7B	4	6047.1 – 6110.12. 16 folders. Miscellaneous and unnumbered photos, undated. 1 folder. Five photos, either unnumbered or apparently numbered in the same mode as the main series, but from the 4000 and 9000 series. Photos are unattributed and may lack content or location information.