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FIVE EROSION CONTROL MEASURES
AID WILDLIFE ON MANY FARMS

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Five inexpensive and widely applicable measures which conserve the soil and at the same time preserve wildlife, have been tested recently near Harwood, Md., by the Soil Conservation Service. Ernest G. Holt, in charge of wildlife work, says the methods are generally adaptable to all agricultural sections of the country and are particularly successful in preserving such wildlife as rabbits and quail.

The five measures, in general, make use of resources readily available on the average farm, and one or more of the methods will help preserve wild life on farms in every part of the country, Holt says.

The tested measures include:

1. The planting of mixed grains in protected areas where winter food for game and birds is lacking. These plantings, while helping to control soil erosion, can be easily accessible to wildlife, yet can be placed where they will not interfere with the cropping system.

2. Soil-binding trees, shrubs, or cover crops are used by farmers to reclaim gullied land and check gully spread. It is an easy matter to include in the erosion-control plantings some shrubs or plants which furnish food for wildlife. There are many such plants, but some of the more widely used are: lespedeza, coralberry, toyon (an evergreen shrub sometimes known as the California holly), blackberry, dogwoods, and viburnums.

3. Fencing of farm woodlands for protection from grazing also help to conserve wildlife. Protecting woodland areas from farm livestock permits the growth of forest trees and shrubs which provide food for wildlife. The combination planting of trees and food-producing shrubs not only supplies food for small game and birds, but also may add to the quality of a forest stand and contributes materially to erosion control. Many farm woodlands are not grazed, but are still in need of stand improvement. In these cases, the Service recommends planting the kinds of trees and shrubs which improve the quality of the stand and which, at the same time, add to the effectiveness of the soil-saving program. Wildlife should not be forgotten when such plantings are made. Open spaces may be purposely left in the woods and allowed to grow to briars and shrubs, in order to supply food for small game and birds.

4. Whenever it is necessary to clean brush or hedgerows for fencing or woodland improvements, the brush piles may be left as cover for birds, rabbits, and other wildlife. Tree tops and brush neatly piled and left on the ground through the winter furnish welcome cover and shelter for birds and small game. In woodland cuttings, a few snags may be left to provide nesting places for nuthatches, chickadees, flickers, woodpeckers and other birds valuable to the farmer.

5. In farm woodlands of hardwoods, strips and borders of pine and spruce have been planted on many acres this fall. This is particularly true in locust plantations where it is considered that these strips, by shading the trunks of the trees, materially aid in reducing locust borer injury. These strips and borders serve well as wildlife cover areas.

Wherever practical erosion control workers interested in wildlife also discourage fence-row cleaning, so that vegetative growth along fence rows will be saved for wildlife shelter and food. This practice may find application in many parts of the country, since the activities of birds are likely to more than compensate for any weed or insect pests that may be harbored in fence rows.