

Soil And Water Report Review Period Going

The 60-day public review period for a new USDA report is nearing the half-way point, a conservation leader said this week.

Duane Pysher, District Conservationist for the Soil Conservation Service at the Leesport Field Office in Berks County, said the comment period ends September 11.

"Despite erosion that could threaten farmland productivity", Pysher said, "the report says the United States will be able to meet food production needs into the next century".

A draft version of the report was released last month for public review. It is the second appraisal of the nation's soil and water resources conducted in response to the Soil and Water Resources Conservation Act of 1977. The Act requires USDA to monitor the status of the soil and water resources on nonfederal lands, and to develop programs mitigating conditions that significantly deplete or damage those resources.

"The value of the report is that it identifies the status and condition of soil and water resources and gives the Department an opportu-

ity to develop ways to conserve and protect them", Pysher said. "Despite the fact that the report identifies some resource conservation problems, its findings show that the United States can meet food-production demands for the foreseeable future".

The report includes the effects of erosion on productivity, offsite effects of erosion, salinization of land, condition of rangeland, condition and quality of water supplies, upstream flooding, and projections of future conditions.


"The draft report should be considered a tool for developing workable conservation programs", said Pysher. "People concerned about agricultural resource management should take a hard look at this appraisal, and submit their comments to us".

Pysher said the first appraisal led to the development of the National Conservation Program implemented in 1982, and was a major source of information used in legislating the conservation provisions of the 1985 farm bill.

Copies of the draft report, "The Second Resources Conservation Act Appraisal", are available for

review through local Agricultural Stabilization and Conservation offices. Comments can be mailed or


given to local USDA offices by September 11, 1987.



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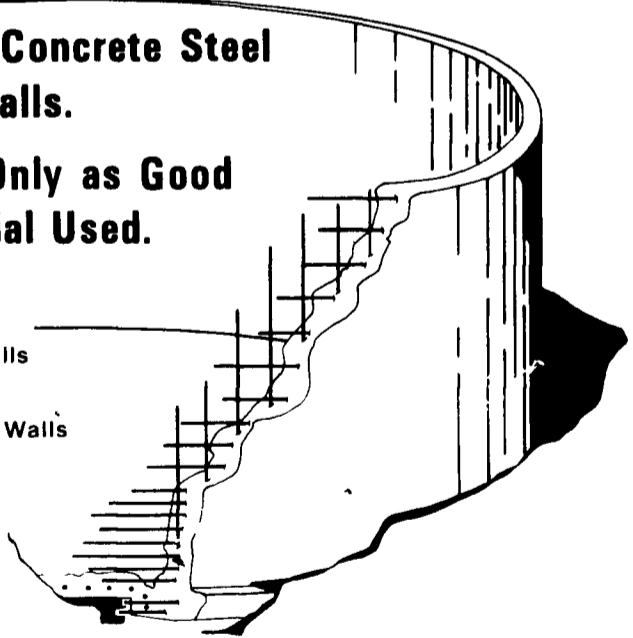
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