

New Supervisor Training

Jan 15, 2014

Miles City, MT

- CD History
- CD Operations
- What CD's Do
- District Authority
- Supervisor Roles

History of Conservation Districts

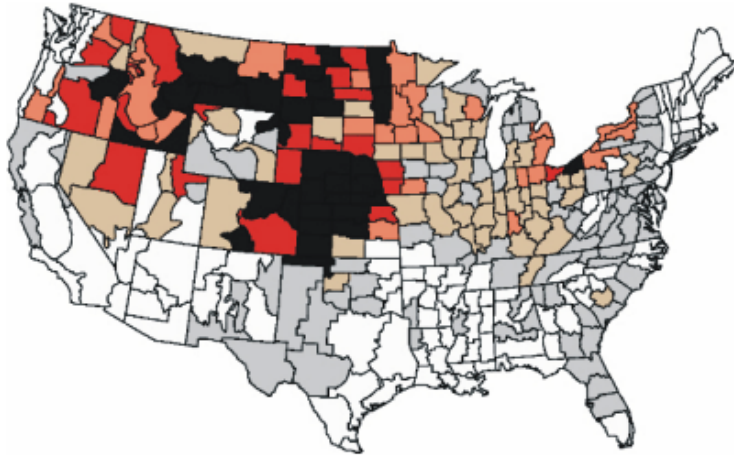
- Early 1930s, the Dust Bowl.
- Severe and sustained drought, soil began to erode and blow away
- Huge black dust storms blotted out the sun and swallowed the countryside.
- Thousands of “dust refugees” left the black fog to seek better lives.



Palmer Drought Severity Index

1930-1939

Percent of time in severe and extreme drought



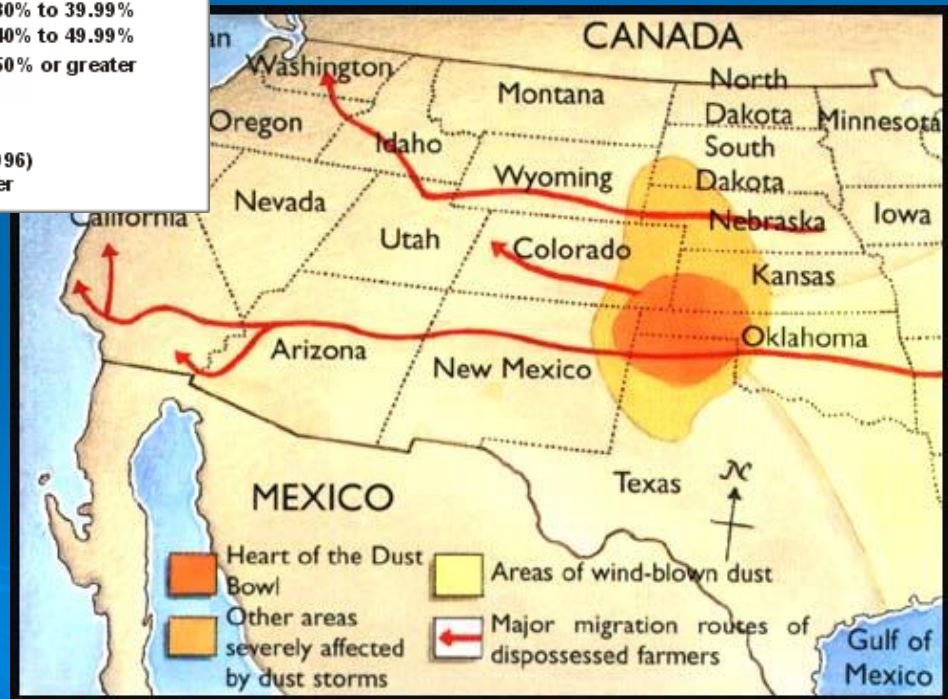
% of time PDSI \leq -3

- Less than 10%
- 10% to 19.99%
- 20% to 29.99%
- 30% to 39.99%
- 40% to 49.99%
- 50% or greater

SOURCE: McKee et al. (1993); NOAA (1990); High Plains Regional Climate Center (1996)
Albers Equal Area Projection; Map prepared at the National Drought Mitigation Center

Montana was also in a severe drought during the dust bowl days (1930's).

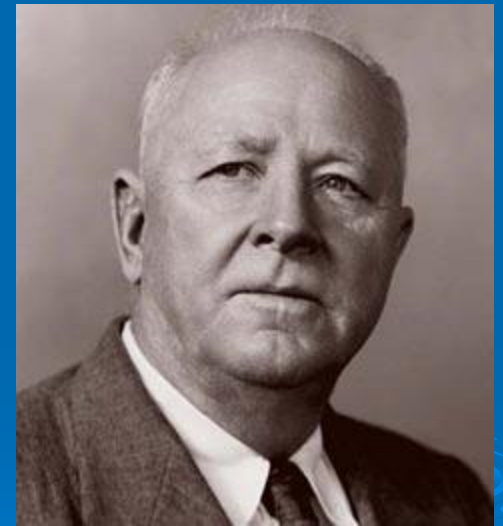
Many farmers moved west during this time frame we know as the great depression.



History of CD's

- Storms stretched across the nation .. south to Texas and east to New York.
- Dust sifted into the White House and on the desk of President Roosevelt.
- Dust traveled as far as 200 miles out to sea
- In 1934, the term “dust bowl” was born.

Hugh Hammond Bennett,
the “Father of Soil Conservation”.



On May 12, 1934, a major storm hit the plains, later to be described by Bennett as a turning point in the battle to get public attention to the erosion problem:



- Congress unanimously passed
- **Soil Conservation Act of April 27, 1935.**

The Key to Success:

- Three-fourths of the continental United States is privately owned, and 59% in Montana.
- Congress realized that only active, voluntary support from landowners would guarantee the success of conservation work on private land.
- 1937, President Roosevelt wrote the governors of all the states recommending legislation that would allow local landowners to form soil conservation districts.

CD's become reality in Montana



Caught on across the country with district-enabling legislation passed in every state.

- Montana passed the Montana Conservation District Law (Section 76-15-101, MCA) in 1939.
- Wibaux CD & Sheridan CD were the first CD's formed in Montana on Jan 15, 1940.
- Today, there are 58 conservation districts in MT.

History of CD's in review:

1. What major event lead to the creation of CD's?
2. What act did Congress pass in 1935 addressing soil and water conservation?
3. What percentage is private land in your county? ?%
4. What year was the Montana Conservation District Law passed?
5. Today there are how many CD's in Montana?