

TEACHER'S GUIDE
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MISSION 5: "Up from the Dust"

The CCC and Soil Conservation

Prior to the Great Depression, most farmers overplanted the same crops and failed to protect the land's delicate topsoil. Such farming practices left the soil less productive for growing and made the impact of the drought much worse. To combat this problem, the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) worked with the Soil Conservation Service (a federal program responsible for reducing water and wind erosion in rural agricultural areas) to improve farming practices and revitalize damaged crop fields. In this photograph, CCC workers use tractors to dig diversion lines between crop fields. These tracks guided runoff water away from farmlands in order to prevent the formation of gullies (deep ditches caused by sudden water erosion).



Source: John Vachon, "CCC (Civilian Conservation Corps) working with Soil Conservation Service making diversion terrace to prevent gullying, Vernon County, Wisconsin," September, 1939. Library of Congress, Prints and Photographs Division, Washington, D.C. LC-USF33-T01-001569. <http://www.loc.gov/pictures/item/fsa1997004942/PP/>

