

DISTRICT 5 ADVANCE MEETING HELD JOINTLY WITH THE FIFTH ROADSIDE
AND SHADE TREE CONFERENCE AT IOWA STATE COLLEGE, AMES, IOWA.

FEBRUARY 20-22

Comments by State representatives on roadside improvement problems included:

"Kansas has been using pulverized peat moss mixture for backfilling plant pits on projects the last two planting seasons. * * * Most of the peat furnished is mined and milled in Iowa and shipped to Kansas in carload lots. The peat is pulverized so that it will pass through a one-quarter-inch mesh screen and is thoroughly mixed with the soil at the ratio of one part peat to eight or nine parts soil before placing in the backfill.

"We are using peat as a soil conditioner and not for any fertilizing value that it might have. The planting costs for trees and shrubs are somewhat increased by using peat moss, but better plant survival justifies the increase. From what little we know about the use of peat moss, we believe it advisable to use it rather sparingly and to have it thoroughly mixed with the backfill.

"It is often very difficult to get a satisfactory vegetative cover on our shoulder slopes and on our backslopes. It appears justifiable in some instances to stock-pile the topsoil when grading operations are started and to spread a thin layer over the backslopes and shoulder slopes."

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"In Missouri we have made a very definite departure from the 'beautification' idea of extensive plantings of exotic trees, shrubs, and vines. In its place we are using a more naturalistic design in an attempt to blend the roadside into the adjoining landscape. Erosion control by vegetative means is receiving special consideration.

"We are restricting our plant lists to native varieties and such exotic plants as have proven their ability to readily naturalize under roadside conditions.

"The use of agricultural lime, fertilizer, and topsoil is proving very beneficial in the establishment of grasses along our roadsides.

"We are making much of our roadside work a part of our new construction, both being covered by the same contract. In this manner we feel that by reducing maintenance costs, we will receive more benefits from our investment."

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