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## BUDGET UNIT BRIEF – FY 2018

Fiscal Services Division

December 20, 2017



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Ground Floor, State Capitol Building

Des Moines, Iowa 50319

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## Soil and Water Conservation – Administration

### Purpose and History

During the 2011 Legislative Session, the General Assembly enacted HF 2525 (Agriculture and Natural Resources Appropriations Act), which appropriated funds to the Department of Agriculture and Land Stewardship (DALSS) to pay for administrative expenditures in the Division of Soil Conservation and Water Quality. This included payment for administration of soil and water conservation programs and for reimbursement of expenditures incurred by the Soil and Water Conservation Districts. There are several conservation programs in the Division of Soil Conservation and Water Quality. The following is a summary of programs funded from the Environment First Fund:

- Soil Conservation and Water Quality Cost Share: Provides financial incentives to landowners who implement approved soil and water conservation practices. State funds are divided among the Soil and Water Conservation Districts. The landowner pays for at least 50.0% of the cost of the practice.
- Watershed Protection Program: Awards funds for development grants to Soil and Water Conservation Districts to implement watershed strategies.
- Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP): Implements wetlands that are strategically located to remove nitrates from cropped areas that have tile drainage.
- Conservation Reserve Program: Establishes long-term revegetation for landowners. The landowner enters into a 15-year contract with the federal Department of Agriculture. State funding supports the hiring of Soil and Water Conservation District technicians who assist landowners with planning and implementation, and provides one-time payments to landowners who establish continuous conservation practices such as contour buffer strips.
- State Watershed Protection Practices: Provides cost-share incentives to landowners to establish practices that improve water quality protection efforts. State funding is a 20.0% allocation from the Resource Enhancement and Protection (REAP) Fund.

### Funding History

Funding has varied over the years, but the average appropriation for the past five years is \$2.9 million from the Environment First Fund.

### Related Statutes and Administrative Rules

Iowa Code chapter [161A](#)

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### More Information

Division of Soil Conservation and Water Quality: [iowaagriculture.gov/soilConservation.asp](http://iowaagriculture.gov/soilConservation.asp)

Conservation Districts of Iowa: [cdiowa.org](http://cdiowa.org)

House File 2525: [www.legis.iowa.gov/docs/publications/LGE/83/HF2525.pdf](http://www.legis.iowa.gov/docs/publications/LGE/83/HF2525.pdf)

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Iowa Administrative Code [27—1](#), [27—10](#)