

## SOIL CONSERVATION AND WATER QUALITY DIVISION[27]

### Regulatory Analysis

Notice of Intended Action to be published: 27—Chapter 22  
“Soil and Water Resource Conservation Plans”

Iowa Code section(s) or chapter(s) authorizing rulemaking: 161A  
State or federal law(s) implemented by the rulemaking: Iowa Code chapter 161A

### *Public Hearing*

A public hearing at which persons may present their views orally or in writing will be held as follows:

July 14, 2026  
9 to 10 a.m.

Borlaug Conference Room  
Hoover State Office Building  
Des Moines, Iowa

### *Public Comment*

Any interested person may submit written comments concerning this Regulatory Analysis, which must be received by the Soil Conservation and Water Quality Division no later than 4:30 p.m. on the date of the public hearing. Comments should be directed to:

Colin Tadlock  
1305 East Walnut Street  
Des Moines, Iowa 50319  
Email: [colin.tadlock@iowaagriculture.gov](mailto:colin.tadlock@iowaagriculture.gov)

### *Purpose and Summary*

This proposed rulemaking updates Chapter 22 by removing references to the State Soil and Water Quality Committee, which is now an advisory committee, to reflect the delegation of authority to the Division.

### *Analysis of Impact*

1. **Persons affected by the proposed rulemaking:**
  - **Classes of persons that will bear the costs of the proposed rulemaking:**  
No costs are incurred by the public to comply with this proposed rulemaking.
  - **Classes of persons that will benefit from the proposed rulemaking:**  
No persons will benefit from or be impacted by this proposed rulemaking.
2. **Impact of the proposed rulemaking, economic or otherwise, including the nature and amount of all the different kinds of costs that would be incurred:**
  - **Quantitative description of impact:**  
There will be no significant impact associated with this proposed rulemaking.
  - **Qualitative description of impact:**  
There will be no significant impact associated with this proposed rulemaking.
3. **Costs to the State:**
  - **Implementation and enforcement costs borne by the agency or any other agency:**  
Not applicable.

- **Anticipated effect on State revenues:**  
Not applicable.
- 4. **Comparison of the costs and benefits of the proposed rulemaking to the costs and benefits of inaction:**  
Not applicable.
- 5. **Determination whether less costly methods or less intrusive methods exist for achieving the purpose of the proposed rulemaking:**  
Not applicable.
- 6. **Alternative methods considered by the agency:**
  - **Description of any alternative methods that were seriously considered by the agency:**  
Not applicable.
  - **Reasons why alternative methods were rejected in favor of the proposed rulemaking:**  
Not applicable.

*Small Business Impact*

**If the rulemaking will have a substantial impact on small business, include a discussion of whether it would be feasible and practicable to do any of the following to reduce the impact of the rulemaking on small business:**

- Establish less stringent compliance or reporting requirements in the rulemaking for small business.
- Establish less stringent schedules or deadlines in the rulemaking for compliance or reporting requirements for small business.
- Consolidate or simplify the rulemaking’s compliance or reporting requirements for small business.
- Establish performance standards to replace design or operational standards in the rulemaking for small business.
- Exempt small business from any or all requirements of the rulemaking.

**If legal and feasible, how does the rulemaking use a method discussed above to reduce the substantial impact on small business?**

This proposed rulemaking will have no significant impact on small business.

*Text of Proposed Rulemaking*

ITEM 1. Rescind 27—Chapter 22 and adopt the following **new** chapter in lieu thereof:

CHAPTER 22  
SOIL AND WATER RESOURCE CONSERVATION PLANS

**27—22.1(161A) Authority and scope.** This chapter establishes procedures and standards to be followed by the division of soil conservation and water quality, Iowa department of agriculture and land stewardship, in implementing the development of soil and water resource conservation plans in all soil and water conservation districts in Iowa and developing a comprehensive soil and water resource conservation plan for the state of Iowa. It establishes standards and guidelines that the soil and water conservation districts will use in fulfilling their responsibilities under this program.

**27—22.2(161A) Rules are severable.** If any provision of a rule or the application thereof to any person or circumstance is held invalid, the invalidity does not affect other provisions or application of the rule that can be given effect without invalid provision or application, and to this end, the provisions of these rules are severable.

**27—22.3(161A) Definition.** In addition to the definitions in rule 27—10.3(161A), the following term is defined:

“*Soil and water resource conservation plan*” is a comprehensive long-range assessment of soil and surface water resources in the district consistent with rules approved by the district under Iowa Code section 161A.4. The plan will assess the condition of soil and water in the district; evaluate the type, amount, and quality of soil and water, the threat of soil erosion, floodwater, and sediment damages, and necessary preventative and control measures; develop methods to maintain or improve soil and water condition; and cooperate with other state and federal agencies to carry out this plan.

**27—22.4(161A) Soil and water resource conservation plan development.** This rule establishes criteria for districts to develop a plan to preserve and protect the public interest in the soil and water resources of this state and for future generations.

**22.4(1) Plan development criteria.** The soil and water conservation district commissioners will develop a soil and water resource conservation plan as required by Iowa Code section 161A.4 that will include the content items required by rule 27—22.5(161A).

The district commissioners will use the following planning process criteria:

- a. Examine and inventory the current resource situation.
- b. Identify current problems.
- c. List available resources—human and financial.
- d. Determine objectives and goals.
- e. Determine the best course of action to obtain those objectives and goals.
- f. Review the action periodically for progress and effectiveness.

**22.4(2) Plan timeline.** The duration of the plan is five years. After five years, the plan should be revised and updated. It will go through the adoption and approval process again.

**22.4(3) Participation in the planning process.** Each soil and water conservation district should enlist the support and input of public and private sector agencies and organizations, including the county board of supervisors, the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) Natural Resources Conservation Service, the cooperative extension service, and the division.

**27—22.5(161A) Soil and water resource conservation plan content.** The plan will preserve and protect the public interest in the soil and water resources of this state for future generations. It will include the proper control and use of the soil and water resources by measures, including but not limited to the control of floods; the control of erosion by water or by wind; and the preservation of the quality of water for its optimum use for agricultural, irrigation, recreational, industrial, and domestic purposes, all of which shall be presumed to be conducive to public health, convenience, and welfare, both present and future.

**22.5(1) Plan content.**

- a. Preface.
  - (1) Purpose of the soil and water resource conservation planning process.
  - (2) Credits to sources and those assisting in the planning.
  - (3) Credits to groups providing input for district objectives and goals.
- b. Organization and authorities.
- c. General description of soil and water conservation district.
- d. Inventory of soil, water, and related natural resources.
  - (1) Existing land use—general description.
  - (2) Soil resources.
  - (3) Water resources.
  - (4) Recreation and wildlife resources.
  - (5) Mining and mineral resources.
  - (6) Land management.
  - (7) Factors limiting practice application.
  - (8) Actions needed to overcome limiting factors.

- e. District objectives, goals, and priorities.
- f. District policies.
- g. Statement of adoption.
- h. Statement of approval.
- i. Maps.

**22.5(2)** *Annual review.* There shall be an annual review of the plan by the district that will assist in developing the annual work plan. The plan may be amended as a part of the annual review.

**27—22.6(161A) Soil and water resource conservation plan adoption, approval, filing, and distribution.** The plan shall meet all of the requirements of Iowa Code chapter 161A and this chapter before final plan completion.

**22.6(1)** *Adoption.* The district commissioners by a motion at their regularly scheduled meeting shall approve their completed plan or amendment.

**22.6(2)** *Approval.* The district shall submit its completed plan or amendment to the division for approval. If found to meet the content requirements of rule 27—22.5(161A), the division shall approve the plan or amendment by motion at its regularly scheduled meeting. The approved plan will be signed by the administrator of the division.

**22.6(3)** *Filing.* The approved district plan or amendment shall be filed with the recorder in the county in which the district is located and shall be filed with the division as part of the state soil and water resource conservation plan.

**22.6(4)** *Distribution.* The commissioners shall provide notice of the filing and may provide a copy of the approved district plan to the county board of supervisors in the county where the district is located. The district may provide copies to all interested parties that have been a part of the planning process.

**27—22.7(161A) State soil and water resource conservation plan.** The division is responsible for developing a state plan according to Iowa Code section 161A.4(2)“h.” The state plan shall contain on a statewide basis the information required for a district plan.

These rules are intended to implement Iowa Code chapter 161A.