

**161C.7 Watershed protection.**

1. The department of agriculture and land stewardship shall implement and administer a watershed protection program. The department of agriculture and land stewardship, in consultation with the department of natural resources, shall annually establish a prioritized list of watersheds that are of the highest importance to the state's water quality. The watershed protection program shall, to the extent practical, target for assistance those watersheds on the prioritized list. A soil and water conservation district, in cooperation with state agencies, local units of government, and private organizations, may submit an application for assistance to the department which provides a strategy for protecting soil, water quality, and other natural resources, and improving flood control in the watershed. Upon approval of an application, the department may provide a grant to the soil and water conservation district for purposes of carrying out the strategy provided in the application.

2. A watershed protection account is created within the water protection fund created in section 161C.4. Moneys credited to the account shall be distributed under the watershed protection program.

3. Administrative rules used for water quality protection projects under the water protection fund shall be used to administer the watershed protection program.

99 Acts, ch 204, §27; 2003 Acts, ch 179, §157; 2004 Acts, ch 1101, §26