
FISCAL UPDATE Article

Fiscal Services Division

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WATER RESOURCES COORDINATING COUNCIL MEETING — MAY 2019

May Meeting. The [Water Resources Coordinating Council](#) (WRCC) met on May 30, 2019, at the Polk County Extension Office in Altoona. Secretary of Agriculture Mike Naig called the meeting to order.

Flood Information. Kurt Simon, federal Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS), provided information on the [Emergency Watershed Protection Program](#). The Program provides options to landowners and local communities to reduce the hazards from floods, droughts, windstorms, and other natural disasters. Examples of how funds are used include: removing debris, protecting eroded stream banks, repairing levees, and reseeding damaged areas. Currently, all 99 counties are eligible to apply for assistance.

Wetlands Reserve Program. Mr. Simon also reported there is \$40.0 million available for technical and financial assistance nationwide to restore and enhance [critical wetlands](#) on agricultural lands. Critical wetlands improve water quality, prevent flooding, and provide recreational benefits. Proposals can be submitted to the NRCS until June 14, 2019.

Conservation Innovation Grants. The NRCS is also accepting proposals for the [Conservation Innovation Grants](#) program, through which there is up to \$12.5 million available to adopt innovative conservation practices on agricultural land. The program encourages creative solutions and new technology for conservation practices. Proposals are being accepted until July 30, 2019.

Iowa Nutrient Research Center. Laurie Nowatzke, Iowa Nutrient Reduction Strategy at Iowa State University (ISU), reported that the 2019 research grants for the [Iowa Nutrient Research Center](#) will be announced in June. Proposals are for projects that assist landowners in reducing nitrate and phosphorus. The Iowa Nutrient Center also has a new website that provides information on previous grants awarded and other resources for improving water quality.

Storm water Runoff Research. Dr. Michael Perez, ISU, presented information on [storm water runoff](#). Areas that have LiDAR information are tested before and after storm events to measure the loss of sediment. Dr. Perez also discussed other storm water projects being evaluated that slow down the water velocity. These include the construction of silt fences and the use of wattles. A wattle is a fiber roll used as a sediment control device that is made of straw, coconut fiber, or similar materials.

Nutrient Research and Education Council. Shawn Richmond from the [Nutrient Research and Education Council](#) (NREC) provided an update on the NREC's current research project, providing information from 900 surveys completed at 150 locations around Iowa. The information is being reviewed by ISU, and subjects covered include nitrogen, phosphorous, tillage, cover crops, and other related subjects.

Next Meeting. The date has not been determined for the next meeting but will be scheduled for late August or early September. For additional information, refer to the [WRCC](#) website.

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