

# **Infrastructure Status reports**

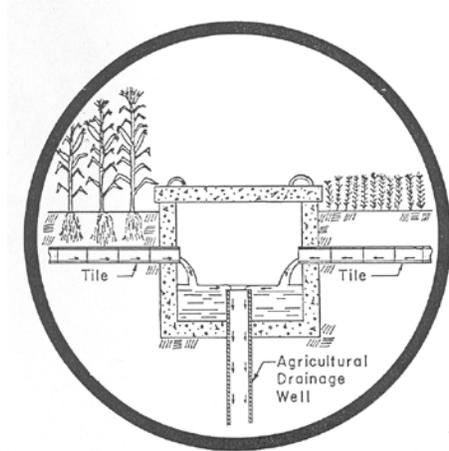
**12/31/18**



**Division of Soil Conservation  
& Water Quality**

# Agricultural Drainage Well Closure Assistance Fund

Agricultural drainage wells (ADWs) were developed in the early to mid-1900's and discharge cropland tile drainage water to underground aquifers. The fund was established in 1997 to protect drinking water aquifers by cost-sharing with landowners to close agricultural drainage wells and develop alternative drainage outlets to surface streams or install alternative management practices. Projects are typically constructed through drainage districts, although some projects are undertaken by individual landowners. Some of the remaining wells to be closed are located in karst areas with shallow limestone.



- 300 registered agricultural drainage wells (ADWs) in Iowa
- 100 ADWs closed by landowners, Watershed Improvement Review Board funding, or determined by the Department of Natural Resources (DNR) to not be ADWs or to be non-functioning
- 175 ADWs closed to date using \$16.54 million of assistance funds
- 6ADW closures in project construction phase
- 7 ADW closures in design phase with 2019 construction
- 13 ADWs remain in continued use with DNR permits.
- 7 ADW closures anticipated for FY20
- FY20 appropriation request = \$1,875,000

## Fund Status

FY18 Appropriation	\$1,875,000
Balance 6/30/18 Brought Forward	\$5,699,714
Interest to Date	\$36,628
Expenditures to Date	\$ 56,552
Obligated/Encumbered	\$7,554,790
Unobligated	\$0

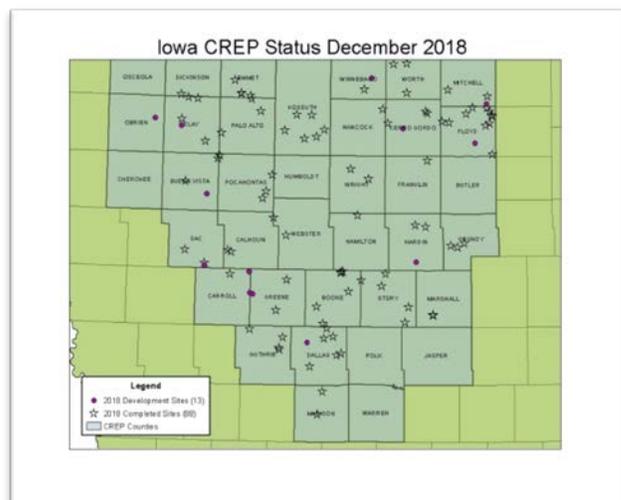
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## Iowa Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP)

The Iowa Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP) was initiated in 2001 and is a joint effort of the Iowa Department of Agriculture and Land Stewardship and the USDA Farm Service Agency to protect Iowa drinking water and reduce hypoxia in the Gulf of Mexico. It is a highly targeted water quality program focusing on the reduction of nitrate loads to surface waters through the restoration of strategically located and designed wetlands that intercept tile-drainage water from upper-lying cropland.



- Research and monitoring by Iowa State University has shown that CREP wetlands remove 40-90% of the nitrate in tile-drainage water
- Wetlands restored to date (88) and those currently being designed (13) are estimated to remove over 1,468,000 lbs of nitrogen **annually**. Roughly 110,121 tons of nitrogen will be removed over their design life. These wetlands will provide water quality protection for 124,109 acres of land
- Hundreds of potential wetland locations exist for landowner consideration
- Average lifetime nitrogen removal costs: \$0.26/lb.
- Currently there is over a 3-year waiting list of applicants that have requested state funding
- State funds are matched with Federal funds
- FY20 appropriation request = \$1,000,000



### Fund Status

FY19 appropriation	\$1,000,000
Balance 6/30/18 Brought Forward	\$2,686,385
Expenditures to Date	\$ 365,219
Reimbursements	\$ 0
Obligated/Encumbered	\$3,321,166
Unobligated	\$ 0

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## District Initiatives/Buffer Initiative

The District Initiatives/Buffer Initiative (Conservation Reserve Program-CRP) was established in 2000 as a part of the Iowa Water Quality Initiative. Program initiatives are delivered through local Soil and Water Conservation Districts (SWCDs) in cooperation with the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) to leverage dollars for federal conservation programs, increasing Iowa's overall participation in both state and federal programs. Locally-led initiatives prioritize and target sensitive areas, by providing funds and resources to protect our soil and water resources.



- SWCDs receive funds to provide technical assistance to enroll CRP and install Federal Environmental Quality Incentive Program (EQIP) practices.
- Iowa traditionally leads the nation in the USDA Continuous CRP with acres enrolled.
- Under the EQIP program, landowners have invested an estimated \$15 million along with over \$34.6 million from federal funds.
- SWCDs partner with Pheasants Forever, NRCS and IDNR to support habitat improvement projects on private land.
- Incentives support grazing systems on expiring CRP contracts that support permanent cover; and filters and buffers that protect Iowa's lakes, rivers and streams.
- SWCDs and staff work one-on-one with landowners and operators to implement conservation practices.
- FY20 appropriate request - \$900,000

### Fund Status

FY19 Appropriation	\$ 900,000
Balance 6/30/18 Brought Forward	\$ 688,153
Refunds/Reimbursements	\$ 12,011
Expenditures to Date	\$ 275,886
Obligated/Encumbered	\$ 1,324,278
Unobligated	\$0

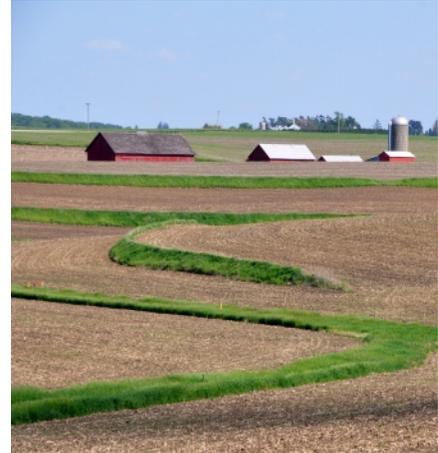
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## Iowa Conservation Cost Share Program

Iowa's Conservation Cost Share program was established in 1973 to protect the soil and water resources of the state from erosion and sediment damage. The program encourages the adoption of farm management and agricultural practices that are consistent with the capability of the land to sustain agriculture while preserving the state's natural resources. Technical assistance is provided by IDALS-DSCWQ and the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS), and practices are designed to NRCS technical standards. Applicants are required to enter into maintenance agreements to ensure long-term success and performance. Practices are approved locally by Iowa's 100 Soil and Water Conservation Districts (SWCDs).



- Soil and water conservation practices:
  - enhance soil quality and improve water infiltration
  - reduce erosion, soil loss and runoff
  - reduce water impairments from sediment and nutrients
  - reduce storm water impact on private property and infrastructure
- From July 1 to December 31, 2018, IDALS processed landowner payments for 508 soil and water conservation practices.
- 15,894 acres were benefited with a soil loss reduction of 56,000 tons/year
  - Includes 369,000' of terraces, 103 acres of waterways, 12,340 acres of cover crops, 48 grade stabilization structures.
- Landowners invest a minimum of 50% of their own money on these practices
- The investment of cost-share funds and those of private landowners are reinvested in Iowa's local economies benefiting the communities
- In September 2018, 43 SWCDs requested \$11.6 million in supplemental funds with only \$2.5 million available, leaving \$9.1 million of unmet demand and lost opportunities to improve our soil and water resources
- FY20 appropriation request = \$8,325,000

<b>Fund Status</b>	FY19 Appropriation	\$7,835,000
	Balance 6/30/18 Brought Forward	\$3,947,784
	Refunds & Reimbursements	\$520
	Expended	\$2,901,770
	Obligated/Encumbered	\$8,881,534
	Unobligated	\$0

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## Soil and Water Conservation Administration

There is a need to improve soil quality, maintain productivity, enhance water quality, manage nutrients properly, and provide flood protection. To do so and ensure program dollars are spent effectively, we need to provide the best administrative and technical assistance possible for the Iowa Financial Incentives Program, Resource Enhancement and Protection Program, Watershed Protection Fund, Water Protection Fund Projects and State Revolving Fund Program. Staff also assist with implementing projects and practices funded by the federal government; including the Environmental Quality Incentive Program, Conservation Reserve Program, Wetland Reserve Program, and other programs in all 99 counties and 100 SWCDs.



Currently there are 19 (9 conservation assistant and 10 technician) vacant positions that need to be filled so that all 100 offices will be fully functional and able to communicate and provide assistance to implement conservation practices.

- Staff will assist landowners in applying over \$42 million in state funded programs
- Staff will help USDA/NRCS apply approximately \$30 million federally funded conservation practices
- FY20 appropriation request = \$3,800,000

### Fund Status

FY19 Appropriation	\$3,800,000
Balance 6/30/18 Brought Forward	\$3,800,000
Expenditures to Date	\$3,800,000
Obligated/Encumbered	\$3,800,000
Unobligated	\$0

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## Watershed Protection Fund

The Watershed Protection Fund was initiated in 2000 as part of the broader Iowa Water Quality Initiative. Watershed development funds are available to Soil and Water Conservation Districts (SWCDs) for that first important step of identifying problems in the watershed and creating a sound plan for improvement. Implementation of watershed protection projects brings together the community, both rural and urban, to target resources to reduce soil erosion, protect water quality, provide flood reduction, and protect natural resources. IDALS-DSCWQ, the Iowa Department of Natural Resources (DNR) and the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) work together in the support of these projects in order to achieve the maximum watershed improvements and water quality benefits with the state and federal program funds available to each agency.



- 15 watershed projects are underway in 28 SWCDs
- State funds are cost-shared at rates up to 75% with applicants assuming at least 25% of the cost
- 55 watershed project practice claims were reimbursed totaling \$380,218 and leveraging \$911,943 from other sources including applicant contributions
- 2,915 acres were protected with a soil loss reduction of 6,039 tons/year
- Sediment delivery to the state’s water bodies was reduced by 3,332 tons/year along with 4,519 lbs/year of Phosphorus and 6,939 lbs/year of Nitrogen
- Projects have leveraged state funds with approximately \$2,000,000 of DNR Section 319 federal program funds
- FY20 appropriation request = \$900,000

### Fund Status

FY19 Appropriation	\$ 900,000
Balance 6/30/18 Brought Forward	\$ 802,416
Expenditures to Date	\$ 425,218
Obligated/Encumbered	\$ 1,277,198
Unobligated	\$ 0

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## Iowa Water Quality Initiative (WQI)

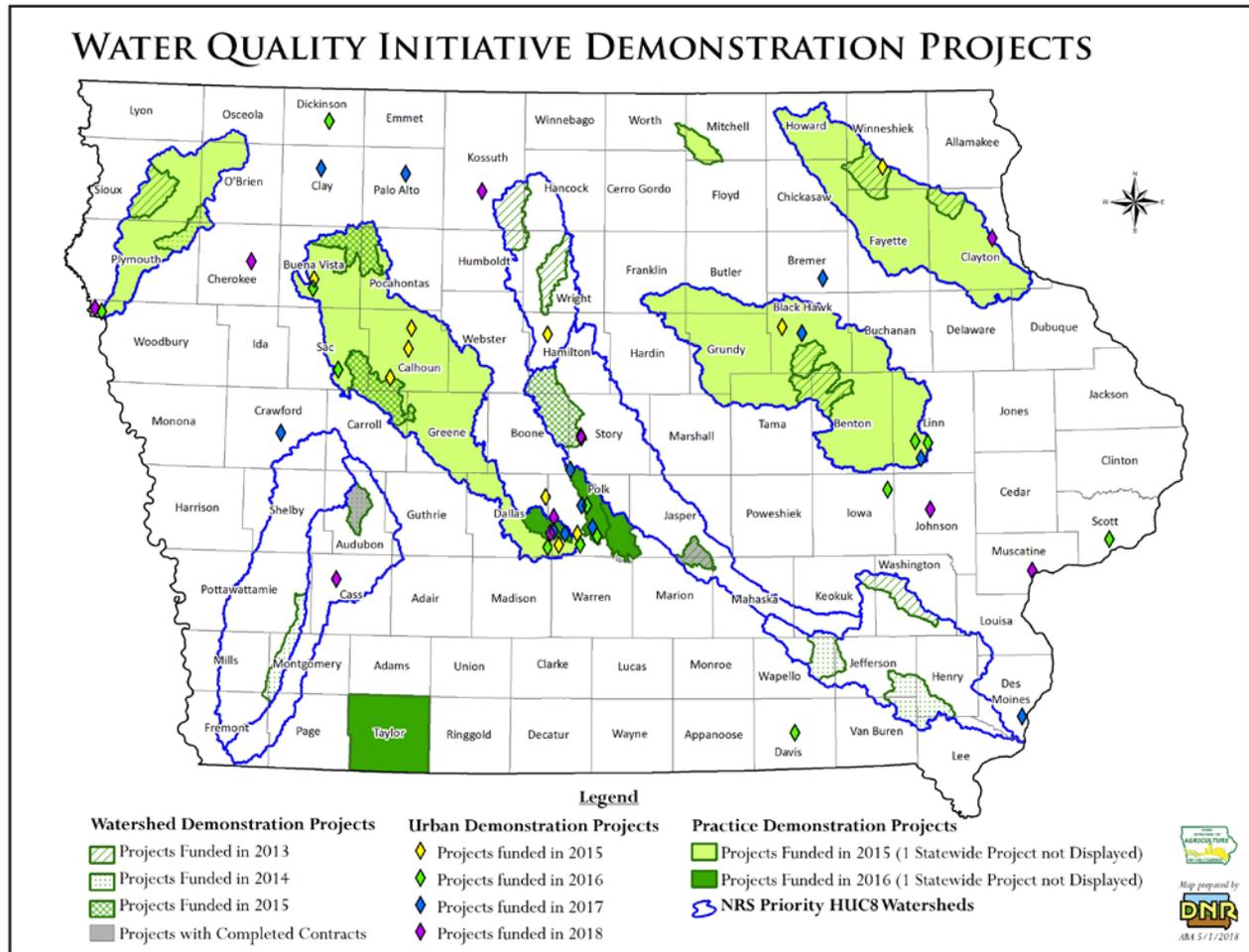
The Iowa Water Quality Initiative was established in 2013 to help implement the Nutrient Reduction Strategy (NRS), which is a science and technology based approach to achieving a 45 percent reduction in nitrogen and phosphorus losses to our waters. The strategy brings together both point sources, such as municipal wastewater treatment plants and industrial facilities, and nonpoint sources, including farm fields and urban stormwater runoff, to address these issues.

The WQI seeks to harness the collective ability of both private and public resources and organizations to rally around the NRS and implementing proven conservation practices to reduce nutrient loss and improve water quality.

A total of 65 demonstration projects are located across the state to help implement and demonstrate water quality practices. This includes 14 targeted watershed projects, 7 projects focused on expanding the use and innovative delivery of water quality practices and 44 urban water quality demonstration projects. More than 250 organizations are participating in these projects.

More information about the initiative can be found at [www.CleanWaterIowa.org](http://www.CleanWaterIowa.org).

- 2,800 farmers committed \$5.0 million in cost share funds in the fall of 2018 to install nutrient reduction practices. The practices that were eligible for this funding are cover crops, no-till or strip till, or using a nitrification inhibitor when applying fall fertilizer. Farmers using cost share funding contribute an estimated \$9.1M of their own funding for these practices.
- 14 watershed demonstration projects within the designated priority watersheds.
  - Demonstrate NRS practices on a watershed scale
  - Conduct edge of field monitoring in project locations to collect data, target practices, and confirm results
  - Provided extensions to 3 projects to expand and build upon their current efforts of advancing demonstration the NRS on a watershed basis.
- 44 active or recently completed urban conservation demonstration projects.
  - In the process of adding more urban projects. Anticipate new projects starting April 2019
- 7 active practice demonstration projects focused on targeted and innovative delivery of NRS practices.
  - Practices include: denitrifying bioreactors, saturated buffers, wetlands, cover crops and perennial land use
- Over 250 partners are collaborating and leveraging funds in the 65 projects under WQI.
- IDALS has successfully leveraged state funds to bring in 3 federal grants through the USDA-Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS) Regional Conservation Partnership Program (RCPP) and EPA-Gulf of Mexico Program
  - \$3.5M to provide additional dedicated federal resources to 8 of the 16 WQI Demonstration Watershed Projects was awarded in 2015.
  - \$9.5M to provide additional dedicated federal resources to 4 of the 16 WQI Demonstration Watershed Projects and within 3 of the 9 designated priority watersheds of the NRS was awarded in 2016
  - \$1M cooperative agreement to establish the Transforming Drainage Demonstration Project in the Des Moines River Basin awarded in 2018.
- FY20 appropriation request = \$10,575,000 (\$8.2 million requested from General Fund & \$2.375 million requested from EFF)



**Fund Status**

FY19 RIIF Appropriation	\$5,200,000
FY19 General Fund Appropriation	\$3,000,000
FY19 Env. First Fund Appropriation	\$2,375,000
Balance 6/30/18 Brought Forward	\$16,531,205
Interest to Date	\$108,323
Refunds & Reimbursements	\$73,234
Expenditures to Date	\$5,330,999
Obligated/Encumbered	\$21,956,763
Unobligated	\$0

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