

Infrastructure Status reports

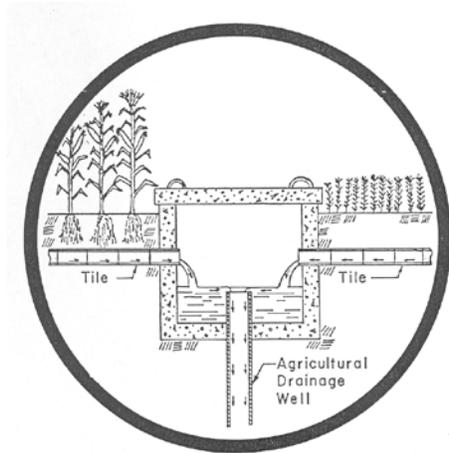
12/31/15



**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
- 99 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
- 153 ADWs closed to date using \$14.20 million of assistance funds
- 12 ADW closures in project construction phase
- 8 ADW closures in bid phase with 2015 construction
- 28 ADWs remain in continued use with DNR permits.
- 9 ADW closures anticipated for FY17
- FY17 appropriation request = \$1,920,000

Fund Status

FY16 Appropriation	\$1,920,000
One-time General Fund funding	\$0
Balance 6/30/14 Brought Forward	\$3,548,115
Interest to Date	\$5,839
Expenditures to Date	\$1,561,790
Obligated/Encumbered	\$3,912,164
Unobligated	\$0

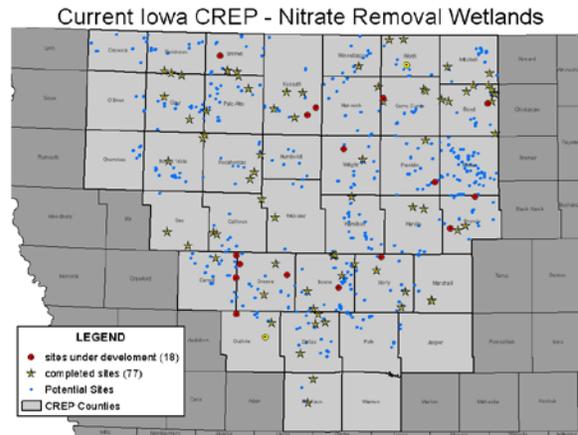
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Iowa Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP)

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 (77) and those currently being designed (18) are estimated to remove over 1,300,000 lbs of nitrogen **annually**. Nearly 100,300 tons of nitrogen will be removed over design life. These wetlands will provide water quality protection for 122,300 acres of land
- Hundreds of potential wetland locations exist for landowner consideration
- Average lifetime nitrogen removal costs: \$0.25/lb.
- Currently there is over a 5-year waiting list of applicants that have requested state funding
- State funds are matched with Federal funds
- FY17 appropriation request = \$1,000,000



Fund Status

FY16 appropriation	\$1,000,000
Balance 6/30/15 Brought Forward	\$3,155,428
Expenditures to Date	\$1,385,476
Reimbursements	\$ 243,996
Obligated/Encumbered	\$3,013,948
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 leads the nation in the USDA Continuous CRP with 884,139 acres enrolled.
- Under the EQIP program, landowners have invested over \$8.81 million along with over \$14.69 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.
- FY17 appropriate request - \$1,000,000

Fund Status

FY16 Appropriation	\$ 1,000,000
Balance 6/30/15 Brought Forward	\$ 595,198
Refunds/Reimbursements	\$6,188
Expenditures to Date	\$ 548,720
Obligated/Encumbered	\$1,052,666
Unobligated	\$0

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Integrated Farm & Livestock Management Demonstration Program

The Integrated Farm and Livestock Management demonstration program was initiated in 2000 as part of the Iowa Water Quality Initiative to demonstrate the adaptability and effectiveness of conservation systems with farming operations. New and emerging technologies are demonstrated on private farmland to refine management input to reduce erosion and soil loss, enhance soil quality, increase infiltration, reduce runoff and lessen nutrient and sediment loading to Iowa's water bodies. Resources and infrastructure are leveraged to provide extensive information delivery and exchange for other important issues such as row crop residue harvest for biofuels, cover crops and perennial living mulch, and nutrient transport from cropped landscapes.

- Iowa Learning Farms, coordinated by Iowa State University, is building a "Culture of Conservation" through a partnership of farmers, agencies, conservation groups, agribusiness, the research community, and the public that supports continuing change for improved water and soil quality in improved tillage, cover crop, and residue management field demonstrations. Approximately 100 cooperators and conservationists in Iowa's five major soil associations allowed farmers to evaluate agronomic information and share local wisdom.



- A strong statewide awareness campaign utilizing a farmer-to-farmer, Iowan-to-Iowan grassroots approach included more than 200 public events across Iowa in 2015.
- Education and outreach to thousands of individuals strengthened society's commitment to the conservation of natural resources to sustain our quality of life.
- Iowa Soybean Association's agriculture and environment performance program has been allocated \$400,000 by legislative earmark.
- Funds leveraged with federal grants and other sources bring millions of additional dollars to Iowa.
- FY17 appropriation request = \$625,000

Fund Status

FY16 Appropriation	\$625,000
Balance 6/30/14 Brought Forward	\$ 113,047
Expenditures to Date	\$ 596,441
Obligated/Encumbered	\$ 141,606
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. Funds are administered 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, 2015, IDALS processed landowner payments for 765 soil and water conservation practices.
- 21,359 acres were benefited with a soil loss reduction of 94,273 tons/year
 - Includes 732,091' of terraces, 150 acres of waterways, 14,721 acres of cover crops, 46 grade stabilization structures, 56 water and sediment control basins
- 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 2015, 63 SWCDs requested \$19.1 million in supplemental funds with only \$2.27 million available, leaving \$16.83 million of unmet demand and lost opportunities to improve our soil and water resources
- FY17 appropriation request = \$7,500,000

Fund Status	FY16 Appropriation	\$6,750,000.00
	Balance 6/30/15 Brought Forward	\$1,927,545.47
	**One-time General Fund Appr Balance 6/30/15 Brought Forward	\$3,739,756.29
	Refunds & Reimbursements	\$4,922.20
	Expended	\$3,726,406.40
	Obligated/Encumbered	\$8,695,817.56
	Unobligated	\$0

**House File 648 appropriated \$7,000,000 in Fiscal Year 2014 for soil and water conservation administration and the conservation of soil and water resources. These practice funds were spent down on beginning March 2015 and the balance was carried forward to Fiscal Year 2016 where the remaining practice funds will be expended.

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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, Wildlife Habitat Incentive Program, and other programs in all 99 counties and 100 SWCDs.



Currently there are 28 (16 conservation assistant and 12 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 \$24,370,000 in state funded programs which will leverage an additional \$15,000,000
- Staff will help USDA/NRCS apply approximately \$51,579,476 federally funded conservation practices that will leverage approximately \$9,567,011.
- Conservation projects have brought over \$100,000,000 to communities across Iowa that support local contractors and local businesses that create jobs and spur economic development in Iowa's communities
- Positions will assist landowners and operators with conservation practice implementation on approximately 2,000,000 acres in Iowa this year
- FY17 appropriation request = \$2,700,000



Fund Status

FY16 Appropriation	\$2,700,000
Balance 6/30/14 Brought Forward	\$2,496,000
Expenditures to Date	\$2,496,000
Obligated/Encumbered	\$2,700,000
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.



- 17 watershed projects are underway in 27 SWCDs
- State funds are cost-shared at rates up to 75% with applicants assuming at least 25% of the cost
- 40 watershed project claims were reimbursed totaling \$263,578 and leveraging \$259,481 from other sources including applicant contributions
- 1,798 acres were protected with a soil loss reduction of 4,909 tons/year
- Sediment delivery to the state’s water bodies was reduced by 2,898 tons/year along with 3,771 lbs/year of Phosphorus and 5,044 lbs/year of Nitrogen
- Projects have leveraged state funds with approximately \$2,900,000 of DNR Section 319 federal program funds
- FY17 appropriation request = \$900,000

Fund Status

FY16 Appropriation	\$ 900,000
Balance 6/30/15 Brought Forward	\$ 617,232
Expenditures to Date	\$ 329,272
Obligated/Encumbered	\$ 1,187,960
Unobligated	\$ 0

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Iowa Watershed Improvement Review Board (WIRB) Administration

The Iowa Watershed Improvement Review Board (WIRB) was initiated in 2005. This Board is responsible for awarding grants to water quality improvement projects. The WIRB is comprised of representatives from agriculture, drinking water and wastewater utilities, environmental organizations, agribusiness, the conservation community along with two state senators and two state representatives.



Administrative support to the Board is provided by the Iowa Department of Agriculture and Land Stewardship—Division of Soil Conservation and Water Quality.

- The Board oversees 40 active projects lasting up to three years.
- These 40 projects have been awarded \$7,032,309 from the WIRB and have spent \$2,849,457.
- The funded projects are accountable to the WIRB through progress reports submitted biannually that summarize activities completed and provide details of expenditures. Annual project reports are also included with the WIRB annual report to the Legislature and the Governor.
- The WIRB maintains a website at: <http://www.iowaagriculture.gov/IWIRB.asp>

For FY2016, \$50,000 for WIRB Administration was funded from the Iowa Conservation Cost Share Program.

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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 initiative seeks to harness the collective ability of both private and public resources and organizations to deliver a clear and consistent message to stakeholders to reduce nutrient loss and improve water quality.

A total of 32 demonstration projects are currently located across the state to help implement and demonstrate water quality practices. This includes 16 targeted watershed projects, 7 projects focused on expanding the use and innovative delivery of water quality practices and 9 urban water quality demonstration projects. More than 100 organizations are participating in these projects. These partners will provide \$16.72 million dollars to go with the \$11.11 million in state funding going to these projects.

More information about the initiative can be found at www.CleanWaterIowa.org.

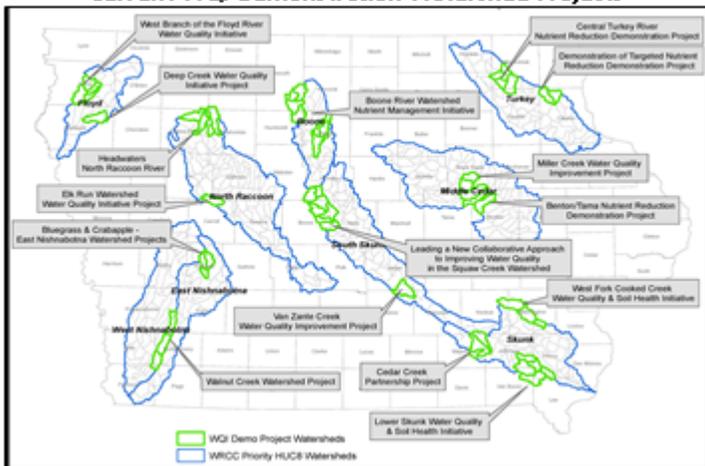
- 1,800 farmers committed \$3.5 million in cost share funds to install nutrient reduction practices in each of Iowa's 99 counties. The practices that were eligible for this funding are cover crops, no-till or strip till, or using a nitrification inhibitor when applying fall fertilizer. Farmers using cost share funding contribute 50% or more to the total cost of the practice.
- 16 active 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
- 9 active urban conservation demonstration projects.
 - In the process of adding more urban projects. Anticipate new projects starting April 2016
- 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 120 partners are collaborating and leveraging funds in the 32 active projects under WQI.
- IDALS has successfully leveraged state funds to bring in an additional \$3.5M in federal funding to 8 of the WQI Demonstration Watershed Projects.
- IDALS partnered with the Iowa Agricultural Water Alliance and 45 other partners for \$10M additional funding in targeted watersheds in the state. IDALS expects to be notified if successful in January 2016.
- FY17 appropriation request = \$10,000,000 (requested from General Fund)

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Current WQI Demonstration Watershed Projects



Fund Status

FY16 RIIF Appropriation	\$5,200,000
FY16 General Fund Appropriation	\$4,400,000
Balance 6/30/15 Brought Forward	\$11,757,361
Interest to Date	\$16,799
Expenditures to Date	\$4,180,154
Obligated/Encumbered	\$17,194,006
Unobligated	\$ 0

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