



Division of Soil Conservation

www.agriculture.state.ia.us
515-281-5851

	FY02 Budget	FY03 Budget	FY04 Proposed
General Fund:			
• Operations (\$214,700 Commissioner Expense included in Operations for 03)	6,674,110	6,949,830	6,686,624
• Commissioner Expense	268,376		468,376
Total General Funds	6,942,486	6,949,830	7,155,000
Infrastructure Account:			
• Conservation Cost Share (inc. authorization to use 15% for TA in 03 & 04)	7,500,000	3,500,000	5,500,000
• Watershed Protection Program	2,700,000	2,700,000	3,200,000
• Integrated Farm and Livestock Demonstration Program (IFLM)	850,000	500,000	850,000
• Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP)	1,500,000	1,500,000	2,000,000
• District Initiatives	1,500,000	0	2,000,000
• Ag Drainage Well Closure	1,000,000	0	1,500,000
• REAP (20% of \$10 million appropriation to DNR)	2,000,000	0	2,000,000
• Soil Survey Reauthorization	0	0	200,000
Total Infrastructure Funds	17,050,000	8,200,000	17,250,000
Total Funds	\$23,992,486	\$15,149,830	\$24,405,000

State Soil Conservation Cost Share, FY-04 Proposed: \$5,500,000

The “cornerstone” of soil and water conservation practice application in Iowa.

The Division of Soil Conservation implements the Cost Share program in cooperation with Iowa’s 100 soil and water conservation districts (SWCDs). SWCD commissioners set local priorities for the use of these funds, and field office staff are available for conservation planning and practice design. Practices installed are subject to maintenance agreements to assure their long-term, successful performance.

Funds are matched by landowners, spent locally to hire private construction contractors, and reinvested into the economies of local communities. In addition to soil conservation and water quality protection, local jobs and businesses benefit from these financial incentives.

In 2002, nearly 2,500 landowners installed practices protecting more than 27,000 acres with terraces, waterways, structures, basins and other measures. Yet, demand for cost-share assistance continues to exceed appropriated funds. FY-03 funding has been allocated to SWCDs, leaving more than \$3,000,000 in requests that could not be met.

The installation of soil and water conservation practices through the Cost Share Program provides:

- permanent protection of the soil resources to sustain agriculture and the state’s economic base
- improved water quality for public use



Dennis, Collin and Cathy Bubke are tenants on this Ida County farm.



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Since 1973, the Iowa Soil Conservation Cost Share Program has provided financial resources to assist landowners with the application of structural and management practices to control soil erosion, maintain land productivity, and protect water quality.

Iowa Watershed Protection Program, FY-04 Proposed: \$3,200,000

The watershed approach to comprehensive, efficient and effective resource management.

Watershed Protection projects are set up to reduce soil erosion, protect water quality, provide flood control and protect natural resources. Since 1999, the Iowa Watersheds Protection Program has provided financial assistance for the development of local watershed initiatives.

In FY 2002, watershed projects saved 1,750,000 tons of soil, which would fill 102,941 dump trucks. Bumper to bumper, these trucks would stretch 488 miles, from Des Moines to Indianapolis.

In FY 2003, 44 new projects are underway and nine watersheds are being assessed for projects in the future. These projects are accelerating protection efforts with cooperation from local, state, and federal partners. State funds are leveraged against over \$2,000,000 of federal money and over \$600,000 of local money.

- 64 watershed projects have been developed and are in various stages of completion
- soil erosion has been reduced, flood control has been provided, and water and other natural resources have been protected



Roger McCaffrey, Soil & Water Conservation District, Robert Lohman and Dean Hargens, County Board of Supervisors, Russ Schwartz, landowner, and others are cooperating on this Crawford County project.



The East Boyer River Watershed Protection Project encourages a multi-objective approach to water quality, flood and erosion control, infrastructure protection, enhanced recreational opportunities, wildlife habitat improvement, and other natural resource issues.



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Integrated Farm and Livestock Management (IFLM) Demonstration Program, FY-04 Proposed: \$850,000

“Input management” is key in balancing agricultural production and environmental protection.

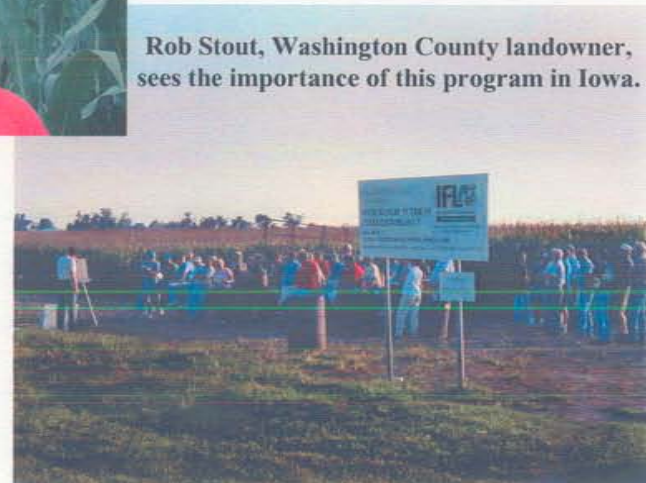
Through organized IFLM projects, farm operators participate in and demonstrate on their farms new and emerging technologies that refine management input, resulting in decreased environmental risk and an improved bottomline.

In 2002, 230 producers, actively engaged in nine projects, demonstrated to themselves and their communities how to efficiently and effectively utilize animal manure as a commodity rather than a waste, maximize their yield with reduced application of commercial fertilizers, reduce soil erosion and sustain the resource base, and reduce nutrient and sediment loading into Iowa’s water bodies.

- improves utilization of manure as a resource
- improves water quality through reduced nutrient and sediment loading
- increases the state’s economic base through sustainable ag management



Rob Stout, Washington County landowner, sees the importance of this program in Iowa.



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Through the IFLM Program, farmers demonstrate to farmers that best management practices are effective and adaptable to their farming operations, resulting in environmental and economic benefits.

Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program, FY-04 Proposed: \$2,000,000

Wetlands strategically designed and located remove nitrate from cropland tile-drainage water.

The Iowa Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP) is a major state/USDA initiative to develop wetlands to remove nitrate from cropland tile-drainage water. The program is being implemented to construct and restore up to 9000 acres of wetlands and buffers over the next three years.

Research at Iowa State University has shown that wetlands meeting the program requirements have the potential to remove 40-90% of the nitrate and 90+% of the herbicide in tile drainage water from upper-lying croplands. The wetlands will also provide wildlife habitat and increased recreational opportunities.

Financial incentives are provided to develop and restore the wetlands. Landowners receive annual land payments over 15 years and reimbursements for costs of wetland and buffer establishment. Additional incentives are provided to maintain the wetlands and buffers under either 30-year or perpetual easements.

- the state's investment is leveraged at a 4:1 USDA/state ratio
- wetlands developed over the next decade will remove 5,000 tons/year of nitrate from water entering Iowa's lakes and streams
- landowners improve the quality of downstream drinking water supplies
- assists environmental goals for hypoxia (dead zone) in the Gulf



Ralph Christiansen, Pocahontas County Supervisor and President of the Iowa Drainage District Association, recognizes the importance of nitrate-removal wetlands to both agriculture and the environment.



Wetlands constructed with financial assistance from the Iowa Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program are designed to remove up to 90% of the nitrate in tile drainage water from cropland.



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District Initiatives, FY-04 Proposed: \$2,000,000

Focuses personal contact and financial incentives to enhance landowner involvement.

The conservation of natural resources and the protection of soil and water on private lands is advanced by the District Initiatives program. Locally-led initiatives prioritize and target sensitive areas by providing funds and resources where they do the most good. Districts work one-on-one with landowners and operators to deliver conservation programs, increasing Iowa's participation in both state and federal programs. Identifying critical practices and ways to enhance program alternatives will do more to solve resource problems.

As the result of past work, Iowa leads the nation in buffers protecting our rivers and streams. These buffers reduce erosion; remove nutrients and other ag chemicals from shallow, subsurface water; provide wildlife habitat; and increase landscape biodiversity.

- removes sensitive land from production
- state's two-year investment of \$2,750,000 brought \$67,807,740 of federal dollars to Iowa
- \$22.88:\$1 return
- buffer sign-up increased by nearly 40%
- Iowa leads the nation in buffers
- sediment and pesticide delivery is reduced
- streambanks are stabilized
- water quality is improved



LaVonne Koch, Soil Conservation Technician, and Jon Steege, County Roadside Vegetative Manager, work with landowner Brad Daniels on his Fayette County farm.



The Iowa Buffer Initiative has enhanced soil and water conservation district programs through incentives for the establishment of practices such as this shallow water structure.



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Agricultural Drainage Well Closure Assistance Program, FY-04 Proposed: \$1,500,000

Eliminates the environmental risk to drinking water supplies associated with these wells.

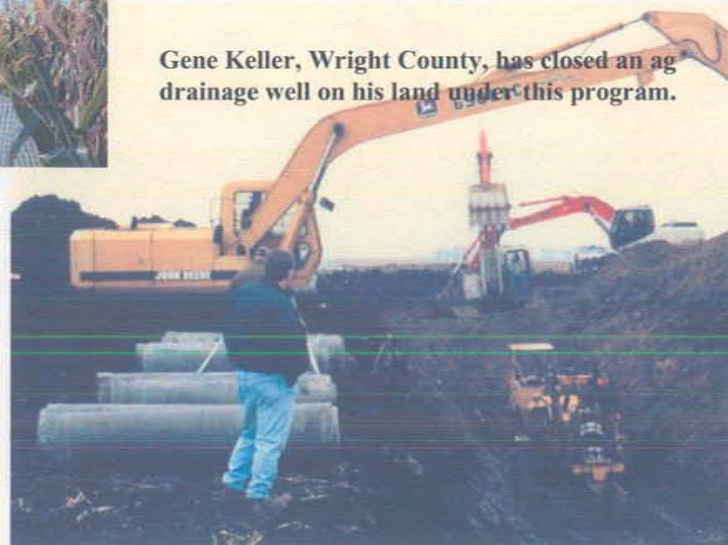
The Agricultural Drainage Well Closure Assistance Program protects drinking water aquifers by cost-sharing, with landowners, the closure of high-priority agricultural drainage wells and development of alternative drainage outlets to surface streams.

The alternative drainage outlets are typically constructed through formation of drainage districts, although some outlets can be developed by individual landowners. Projects are selected under established priority criteria from applications received statewide from landowners having agricultural drainage wells.

- 292 ag drainage wells registered in Iowa
- 66 wells have been closed and alternative outlets provided
- an additional 10 high-priority wells are in the process of being closed
- alternative drainage costs up to \$100,000 per well



Gene Keller, Wright County, has closed an ag drainage well on his land under this program.



The Agricultural Drainage Well Closure Program provides financial assistance to landowners for closing drainage wells to protect drinking water supplies.



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Resource Enhancement and Protection (REAP) Soil and Water Enhancement Account, FY-04 Proposed: \$2,000,000 (est)

REAP funds improve water quality through soil conservation measures.

Since 1990, the Division of Soil Conservation has received funding for the Soil and Water Enhancement Account through the Iowa's REAP Program. Each year 20 percent of the REAP funds are deposited in the Division's account and divided equally between Water Quality Protection Practices and Projects.

"Practice" funds are provided directly to soil and water conservation districts for water quality protection. Twenty-five percent of these funds support establishment of trees and native vegetation. The remaining seventy-five percent are used for permanent vegetative cover, livestock waste management, and traditional erosion control to protect high priority public water resources.

Locally-led "Projects" commonly use the watershed approach to address water quality problems. The projects enjoy a high level of community support and include strong public information and education programs.

- Practices target off-site sediment, nutrient loading, and livestock waste management
- Projects protect surface and ground water resources from point and nonpoint sources of contamination



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Cooperative Soil Survey Program, FY-04 Proposed: \$200,000

Soils information is a vital element in addressing accurate property tax land valuation.

The Cooperative Soil Survey is a nationwide partnership of federal, regional, state, and local agencies and institutions. Its principal goal is the development, maintenance and application of reliable soil resource information. Historically, the Division of Soil Conservation has matched county contributions for the development and modernization of the survey.

The State of Iowa has partnered in the Iowa Cooperative Soil Survey for 34 years. State funding assists our partners with the technical and financial responsibilities of soil survey work. Eight counties in Iowa are utilizing soil surveys that are over 50 years old, and these surveys do not provide adequate information to meet today's complex needs.

Soil survey information is essential in dealing with:

- land valuation and property tax
- crop production efficiency and farm profitability
- surface and ground water quality
- soil and water conservation
- urban and suburban development
- land use planning



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The cost of not having accurate soils information is difficult to measure;
but the consequences are evident.