



# ANNUAL USE OF DISTRICT FUNDS

## (JULY 1, 2022– JUNE 30, 2023)

<b>BEGINNING BALANCE (7/1/22)</b>	<b>\$51,984.67</b>
 <b>RECEIPTS</b>	
EQUIPMENT RENTAL.....	\$5,761.00
RECORDING FEES.....	\$34.00
STATE OF IOWA (1M).....	\$2,678.63
INTEREST.....	\$137.03
SALES TAX.....	\$25.62
DONATIONS.....	\$250.00
CONTRACTOR MEETING.....	\$478.26
STREAM SIGNS.....	\$1,594.65
MISC.....	\$25,927.90
<b>TOTAL RECEIPTS.....</b>	<b>\$36,887.09</b>
 <b>EXPENDITURES</b>	
1M EXPENDITURES.....	\$2,722.50
RECORDING FEES.....	\$255.00
SALES TAX.....	\$25.62
STREAM SIGNS.....	\$1,794.65
CONTRACTOR MEETING.....	\$471.86
DRILL REPAIRS.....	\$594.64
DONATIONS.....	\$1,600.00
FARM BILL BIOLOGIST.....	\$1,500.00
MISC.....	\$25,935.68
<b>TOTAL EXPENDITURES.....</b>	<b>\$34,899.95</b>
 <b>ENDING BAL (6/30/23).....</b>	 <b>\$53,971.81</b>

**STATE COST SHARE EXPENDED (FY 23)**

IOWA FINANCIAL INCENTIVES PROGRAM (IFIP) .....	\$43,116.71
REAP PRACTICES (REAP P) .....	\$9,764.14
REAP PRACTICES (REAP F/NG) .....	\$1,166.25
WATER QUALITY INITIATIVE (WQI) .....	\$23,611.85

**COUNTY FUNDING EXPENDED (FY 23)**

LOCAL OPTION SALES TAX (LOST) .....	\$88,715.15
OPERATION & MAINTENANCE (PL-566) .....	\$7,297.90

**2023 CONSTRUCTION ACCOMPLISHMENTS**

COVER CROPS.....	2,273.06 ACRES
TERRACES/ WASCB.....	68,010.00 FEET
WINDBREAKS.....	.5 ACRES

**COMMISSIONERS & STAFF**

**Commissioners**

Don Dilts (Chair)  
 Dolores Bristol (Vice- chair)  
 Dave Dittmer (Treasurer)  
 Russ Goeser (Co- Treasurer)  
 Gary Larson

**Assistant Commissioners**

John Hurd  
 Linda Durick  
 Mary Nixon  
 John Thomas

**Staff**

Brooke Bauer (Cons. Assistant)	Brett Bengard (State Technician)
Kelsey Solheim (Farm Bill Spc)	Laura Monson (Edu. Coordinator)
Tabitha Panas (Pheasants Forever)	
Brad Richardson (Resource Conservationist)	
Laura Ferguson (District Conservationist)	

# POSTER CONTEST

This past spring Treynor 2nd graders participated in the CDI poster contest. The theme was "One Water". Congratulations to our district winners!



1st- Makenna Johnson



2nd- Toby Campbell



3rd- Sloane Chambers

## Honorable Mention

- Von Chambers
- Sawyer Frain
- Ila Anderson
- Ben Saar

## 2023 Contractor's Meeting

On February 8th, the East and West Pottawattamie Soil & Water Conservation Districts hosted a contractor's meeting at the Treynor Community Center. Sgt. Kirkpatrick with the Commercial Motor Vehicle Enforcement gave a short presentation on current and new DOT policy for oversized loads.



## Hello from the new District Conservationist



Hello! My name is Laura Ferguson, and I am the new District Conservationist for the West Pottawattamie County Field Office. I wanted to take a moment to introduce myself, and share my excitement for my new role in the District. I started my career with the NRCS in July 2020, as a Soil Conservationist in Oakland, IA. I joined the Council Bluffs office in June 2023, and I am already so impressed with all the conservation that I see being implemented here! From wildlife projects, organic farming, cover crops, and small-scale to larger operations, this district sure has a variety of everything. Which makes my job exciting – there is something new every day and I have learned so much from the producers and landowners I have worked with so far.

A little bit more about me – I am originally from Columbus, NE, and attended college at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln, where I received my degree in Environmental Restoration Science. I am very passionate about conservation and soil health, and I'm an active member of the Southwest Iowa Soil Health (SWISH) team. I currently reside in Carson, IA with my husband Shawn and our two cats. I look forward to working with you all in the future. Don't hesitate to stop by the Council Bluffs office to say hi and discuss your farm goals and any questions you might have about conservation. I am more than happy to help!

## Iowa Farmers Lead the Way in Soil Conservation Efforts for a Sustainable Future

By Susan Kozak, IDALS Director of Soil Conservation and Water Quality

As I write this article, I am in the middle of a project looking at soil health and water quality benefits when multiple conservation practices are utilized together. I find myself pondering different ways to implement conservation on the ground. With its expansive fields of corn and soybeans, Iowa has long been a cornerstone of American agriculture. Now, the state is at the forefront of a movement to prioritize soil health and water quality. Farmers across Iowa are adopting conservation practices such as cover crops, no-till farming, and edge of field practices to enhance soil health, improve water quality, and boost overall productivity.



One of the standout practices gaining popularity in Iowa is cover cropping. By planting cover crops like rye or oats during the off-season, farmers protect the soil from erosion, improve water retention, and contribute to water quality improvement efforts in the state. This not only safeguards the environment but also enhances the long-term viability of the land for future generations. This year, Iowa is approaching 4 million acres of cover crops planted across the state – about 13% of the farmed acres. This is a huge increase in cover crop adoption from 10 years ago, but we still have a long way to go. As cover crops gain popularity, we should also look at integrating them with other conservation practices to offer a multitude of benefits, creating a synergistic approach that enhances overall agricultural sustainability. The success of Iowa's soil conservation efforts is bolstered by strong partner support and collaborative initiatives. State and

federal programs provide financial incentives for farmers adopting conservation practices, making it economically viable to invest in sustainable agriculture. Partnerships with key organizations in the state also play a crucial role in disseminating knowledge and best practices. Here at the Iowa Department of Agriculture and Land Stewardship we are proud of the commitment Iowa's farmers have made to soil conservation and water quality, as we work towards a more sustainable and resilient future for agriculture. If you are interested in trying some of these practices on your farm or layering new practices with what you are already doing, please reach out to your local USDA service center for more information.

## Growth in Water Quality Programs Increases Access to Conservation Funding

*By Jake Hansen, Water Resources Bureau Chief – IDALS Division of Soil Conservation and Water Quality*

Since the Iowa Water Quality Initiative was first funded in 2013, the program landscape for conservation funding and options for producers has grown significantly. Farmers have been presented with a charge to voluntarily incorporate cover crops, nutrient management practices, and structural projects aimed at holding nutrients in place and reducing nitrogen and phosphorus losses. This call to action has been well-received—cover crop adoption in the past decade has grown to more than 4 million acres statewide, and landowners are installing nutrient reduction wetlands and edge of field practices at record levels year over year. All of this work is happening in addition to continued commitment to “traditional” soil conservation practice adoption at historic levels.

The success of the Water Quality Initiative has been noticed on a regional and national scale. Some of the programs piloted in Iowa are taking hold in other states in the Mississippi River basin, and the science team led by the Iowa Nutrient Research Center has added several water quality practices to the Iowa Nutrient Reduction Strategy in the last few years, including bioreactors, saturated buffers, and prairie strips, to name a few. Cost-share programs are becoming increasingly flexible, with more ways to support practices than ever before.

Growth in program offerings is not without its challenges. New programs and new funding bring new partners to the table; and local staff, commissioners, and partners find themselves working to understand subtle differences in the wider variety of cost-share opportunities in order to help meet ambitious conservation goals. I am happy to report that local staff and elected commissioners are rising to the challenge and effectively working to help more producers than ever. The Water Quality Initiative has engaged over 250 partner organizations throughout Iowa and beyond over the ten years of its existence, but cooperation and leadership from our Soil and Water Conservation Districts, Natural Resources Conservation Service, and Iowa Department of Natural Resources partners has been essential to the successful growth we are all experiencing. Thank you so much to all of the staff and local leaders who have helped to make this growth a reality, and to the thousands of farmers who have been willing to embrace new conservation ideas and implement new practices! As interest in water quality programs continues to grow, we look forward to continuing to work with all of you to maintain local conservation priorities and to embrace new opportunities.



## Conservation Milestones and Water Quality Momentum

By Iowa Secretary of Agriculture Mike Naig

2023 was a milestone year for conservation and water quality in Iowa. Not only did we recognize 10 years of the state’s Nutrient Reduction Strategy, 40 years of the state’s Abandoned Mine Land reclamation program, and 50 years of the state’s conservation cost-share program, but we also set yet another record for conservation implementation in the state.

Department wide, our cost-share programs continue to see record utilization – in dollars spent, dollars leveraged, and in total practices implemented. We’ve gone from approximately 10,000 acres of cover crops statewide a decade ago to nearly 4 million today. We’ve completed 132 wetlands and have dozens of additional sites in the design process as we head toward our goal of building 30 per year. We’ve built hundreds of saturated buffers and bioreactors through our innovative “batch and build” model which modernizes and streamlines the process to install practices on multiple farms at once. With eight active “batch and build” agreements in place and more in development, there’s ample room for growth. We have also launched new or expanded Water Quality Initiative projects in targeted watersheds across the state, and this work is making a difference.



I want to thank Iowans for saying “yes” to conservation. I also want to thank the hardworking and devoted conservation professionals at the local, state, and federal levels as well as the many supporting public and private partner businesses and organizations. From outreach, design, and layout, to developing watershed and community-based projects, these men and women go to work every day to help us deliver more water quality improvement.

Even though Iowa State University’s dashboard measurements show that we are making Nutrient Reduction Strategy progress, we are far from satisfied. Records exist to be broken, and that’s what we intend to keep doing. We want to push further every year, continually recruiting more farmers, landowners and partners. Positive changes to the land equals positive impacts to our water.

We need everyone pulling in the same direction – the Iowa Department of Agriculture and Land Stewardship, USDA NRCS, Iowa’s 100 Soil and Water Conservation Districts, farmers, landowners and all of our private and public partners. Water quality matters to everyone, and everyone has a role to play in conserving our natural resources and improving our soil and water.

Despite challenges ranging from drought to inflation, I remain optimistic and excited about what we can do together in the years and decades ahead. Without question, the investments we are making, the partnerships we are forming, the practices we are implementing, and the water quality momentum we are accelerating will benefit not just the Iowans of today but the generations of Iowans yet to come.