



# SOIL CONSERVATION COST SHARE

SFY 2015 ANNUAL REPORT

## THE IMPACT OF COST SHARE

**1** Cost Share allows **more conservation practices** to be installed.

**Benefits**

- ▶ reduce erosion, soil loss and nutrient runoff
- ▶ improve soil health and water quality
- ▶ reduce storm water impact on private property and infrastructure

**WATER QUALITY**

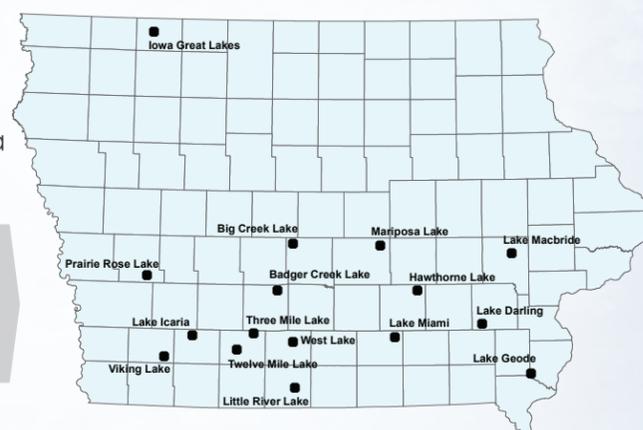
The cost share program was established to protect the production of Iowa's agriculture land. It originally concentrated on soil erosion, but every conservation practice installation also protects Iowa's water quality by reducing sedimentation and keeping phosphorus out of the water.



**2** 5% of each year's cost share appropriation goes towards **protecting the water quality of public-owned lakes** in Iowa.

Local SWCDs submit applications to the Iowa Department of Natural Resources to become a designated lake.

This map shows which lakes have been chosen for SFY2016. Farmers living within the selected lakes' watersheds can apply for up to 75% cost share, to establish practices to protect water quality.



**3** **It's good for Iowa's economy.** Money gets reinvested in Iowa's local economies benefiting local communities.



Eagle Grove Farmer Tim Smith was awarded the 2015 Conservation Farmer of the Year. Tim implements many practices that prevent soil erosion, improve water quality and provide wildlife habitat. He has installed a bioreactor, prairie strips, completed nutrient management plans, no-till and strip-till and many other practices.



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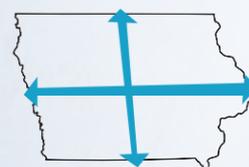
## COST SHARE IN 2015

**1** **State** contribution ..... **\$9.8 million**  
(includes cost share and administrative support)  
**Iowa farmer** contribution ... **+\$12.8 million**  
**Total** investment ..... **\$22.6 million**

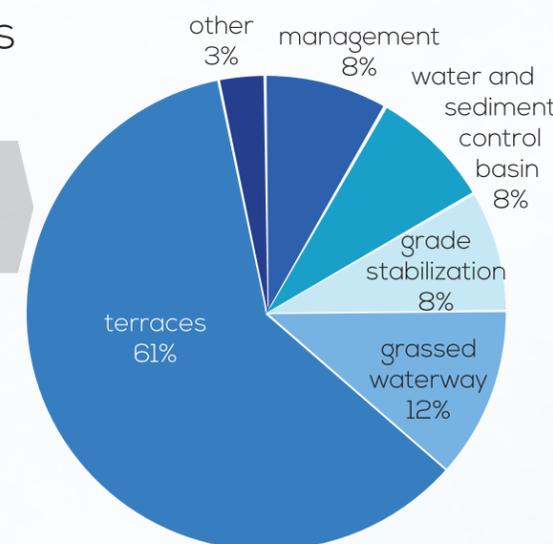
**2** **1,904 Iowa farmers** used cost share to install conservation practices.

**3** Conservation practices included...

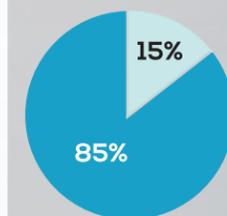
Why so many terraces? Terraces are an effective, long term conservation practice. They trap up to 95% of the sediment and phosphorus from a field.



There were 515 miles of terraces installed using cost share in SFY 2015, which is the distance stretching across Iowa twice!



**TODAY** we have **34 Technicians** and **84 Secretaries** covering **100 offices**. Staff work in multiple districts to ensure work gets done across Iowa.



**FUNDING**

**85%** of the funds directly benefit the land

**15%** used for administration



"The cost share program is a partnership between the local landowners and state to help get conservation practices on the land that prevent erosion and improve water quality. These funds are a great investment by the state, with farmers historically contributing \$1.50 or more for each dollar invested by the state."

- Bill Northey, Iowa Secretary of Agriculture





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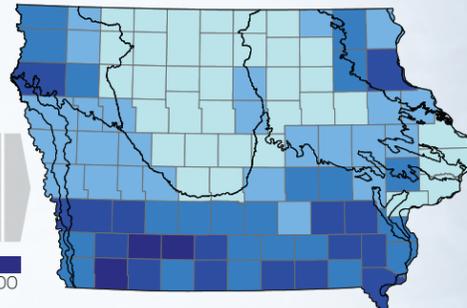
For over four decades, Iowa's conservation cost share program has encouraged the adoption of land stewardship and conservation practices that sustain agriculture and preserve our state's natural resources.

### HOW COST SHARE WORKS

**1 Iowa Department of Agriculture & Land Stewardship (IDALS) receives appropriation** from legislature.

Diverse landforms across Iowa directly affect the cost and type of conservation practice best for each field. Therefore, location affects the amount of funding a county needs and receives.

0-\$30,000    \$30,000 - \$90,000    \$90,000 - \$170,000    \$170,000 - \$310,000    \$310,000 - \$555,000



**2 Funds are distributed** to Iowa's 100 SWCDs based on land use, soil erodibility and landowner demand.

#### WHAT'S A SWCD?

A SWCD is a Soil & Water Conservation District, made up of State, District, and Federal staff, plus 5 Elected Commissioners.

State staff in some field offices include:

##### TECHNICIANS:

Work with landowners/contractors. Provide technical support, develop surveys, create layout, and design conservation practices.

##### CONSERVATION ASSISTANTS:

Work with commissioners and landowners. Provide administrative support for district activities and outreach, and process cost share applications and claims.



Districts and local groups partner to host educational events in their community throughout the year.

**3 Then, farmers and landowners apply for cost share** by visiting their local SWCDs.

Applications are accepted year round.

Cost share can be used for both management and permanent conservation practices.



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**4** The five Soil & Water Conservation District **Commissioners approve applications** in their own SWCD.

#### WHAT'S A Commissioner?

someone elected to promote conservation in their county, helps administer state and federal programs, directs activities such as field days, water quality projects, educational meetings, contests, and award programs.



Bob Lynch, Humboldt County commissioner and Conservation Districts of Iowa President Elect



term begins January 1, 2016

**5** Next, **farmers hire a local contractor** and get to work! Conservation practice plans are developed by staff working with landowners and local contractors.

Modern survey and design tools help in the design, customizing practices for each field.

**6 Practices are installed** and the soil conservation and water quality benefits begin!

Investing in soil conservation not only improves productivity on the farm by keeping soil in our fields, it also helps keep soil and nutrients out of the water.

PRACTICE EXAMPLES:



TERRACES



MANAGEMENT (COVER CROPS)



GRASSED WATERWAY



WATER AND SEDIMENT CONTROL BASIN



GRADE STABILIZATION

### THE IMPORTANCE OF PARTNERSHIPS

Our technicians and conservation assistants are a part of the 100 Soil & Water Conservation Districts (SWCD), which are housed within federal USDA-Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) buildings. They use federal equipment and other resources. Therefore, the **partnership** between IDALS, SWCD and NRCS is critical.

Other partners working together include the Conservation Districts of Iowa, USDA Farm Services Agency, USDA Rural Development, State Soil Conservation Committee, county conservation boards, county board of supervisors, drainage districts, levee districts and other local groups.