## Iowa law grants authority to Soil and Water Conservation Districts to carry out activities that will help get conservation on the ground.

There are 100 SWCDs across the state; one in each county, two in Pottawattamie County. SWCDs have the authority to:

- **Conduct surveys**, **investigations** and **research** about soil erosion, sediment damages, floodwater, and develop or implement preventative control measures
- **Conduct demonstration projects**
- **Cooperate or enter into agreements** with, and furnish financial or other aid to government or other agencies, or any owner or occupant of land within the district **to carry out erosion control and watershed protection**
- **Obtain options and acquire property**, rights, or interests by purchase, exchange, lease, gift, grant, or otherwise. May maintain, administer, and improve properties acquired. May receive income from such properties and expend income to carry out conservation activities
- **Accept donations, gifts and contributions** in money, services, materials, or otherwise from the United States or any of its agencies, and from the State or any of its agencies to carry on district operations
- **Encourage local school districts to provide instruction about soil conservation** as part of course work relating to natural resources conservation and environmental awareness
- **Develop comprehensive plans to conserve natural resources** including controlling and preventing soil erosion
- Help **administer cost share for conservation practices** in the county

**FOR MORE INFORMATION**
Contact your local Soil and Water Conservation District!
Find contact information at:
https://idals.iowa.gov/FARMS/Index.php/districtMap

## LEARN ABOUT BMPs!

Whether you're in an urban or rural environment, this is an opportunity to learn about how best management practices (BMPs) can be implemented to conserve soil and protect our water. See some example BMPs below:

Bioretention Cell

Cover Crops

Permeable Paving

Waterway

## EQUAL OPPORTUNITY FOR ALL

Districts offer services without regard to race, color, national origin, gender, religion, age, disability, political beliefs, sexual orientation, and marital or family status.

Studies have shown that where minorities and/or women are represented on boards in proportion to their presence in the area, program participation by these groups is increased.

To help broaden interest in district programs, and to bring different perspectives to district boards, districts encourage members from those groups to consider serving as a soil and water conservation district commissioner.

The major criteria for being a successful commissioner is an interest in the natural resources and the people of Iowa.

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www.iowaagriculture.gov/soilconservation.asp

# BECOME A

# SOIL & WATER Conservation District

# COMMISSIONER

Have a positive impact on Iowa's land and people.

Help set local priorites for natural resource protection.

Make decisions that will make your county a better place to live.

Improve local awareness of natural resources.

Give back to your community.

# BECOME A COMMISSIONER!

Are you eligible to vote in a general election?

If so, you're an eligible candidate for election to the county Soil and Water Conservation District (SWCD) Board of Commissioners!

Each district is governed by five commissioners who are elected at the general elections on a non-partisan basis for four-year terms. Only one commissioner may reside in any single township.

You'll need a nominating petition from the county Auditor. At least 25 eligible voters must sign the petition, and you must file it with the Auditor no later than the 68th day before the general election. You must also file an affidavit stating your name, residence and an assurance that you are an eligible candidate. No political party is designated.

## HELP DIRECT LOCAL PROGRAMS

As a commissioner, you'll help guide soil and water conservation programs in the county, and will have the opportunity to influence state and national conservation programs.

You'll be expected to take part in monthly meetings, become knowledgeable of soil and water conservation laws and programs, develop and carry out soil and water resource conservation plans, and help direct financial incentive programs. You will be reimbursed for expenses, and be protected from personal liability.

You will be involved in publishing an annual report, and assist in the management of district funds and personnel.

## HELP ADMINISTER STATE & FEDERAL PROGRAMS

Soil and Water Conservation Districts are legal subdivisions of state government. Commissioners are responsible for carrying out state laws and programs within district boundaries.

These include:

- Sediment Control Law
- Conservation Cost Share
- Conservation Revolving Loan Funds
- Water Quality Protection Projects
- Resource Enhancement And Protection

Districts also play a key role in carrying out federal programs:

- Conservation Reserve Program
- Environmental Quality Incentive Program
- Conservation Compliance
- Wetland Reserve Program
- Conservation Planning

Districts serve as local sponsors for watershed projects, resource conservation and development areas, and soil surveys as well.

**A commissioner is an elected conservation promoter in the community,** who helps direct activities such as field days, educational meetings and materials, contests, award programs, and other publicity.

**This could be you!** As a Commissioner, you'll be an advocate for conservation funding in Iowa. You'll be asked to join in the annual Conservation Partnership Day at the State Capitol, where Commissioners from across Iowa have the opportunity to come together and speak with legislators.

## THE CONSERVATION PARTNERSHIP

Soil and Water Conservation Districts work closely with a number of local, sate, and federal agencies, as well as with local groups and organizations.

Key to this partnership are the Iowa Department of Agriculture and Land Stewardship - Division of Soil Conservation (IDALS-DSC) and the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service (USDA-NRCS).

IDALS-DSC provides state technical and secretarial staff to districts, and helps administer state and local programs. The NRCS works through districts, providing technical soil conservationists and other natural resource specialists as well as office space for local districts.

Other partners include the Conservation District of Iowa, USDA Farm Services Agency, USDA Rural Development, State Soil Conservation Committee, Iowa Department of Natural Resources, county conservation boards, county board of supervisors, drainage districts and levee districts.

For more information about Iowa's Conservation Partnership, visit: http://www.ia.nrcs.usda.gov/partnerships/.

Terraces and residue management saving soil in the rural western Iowa landscape.