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 agricultural land, but 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.

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 SFY-2016. Farmers living within the selected lakes’ watersheds can apply for up to 50% cost share to install practices to protect water quality.

It’s good for Iowa’s economy. Money gets reinvested in Iowa’s local economies benefitting 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.

State contribution ............... $9.8 million
(includes cost share and administrative support)

Iowa farmer contribution ........... $12.8 million

Total investment ................. $22.6 million

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

Conservation practices included...

Funding
85% of the funds directly benefit the land
15% used for administration

There were 956 miles of terraces installed using cost share in SFY 2015, which is the distance stretching across Iowa twice.

15%

85%

terraces 61%
grazed waterway 12%
groundwater management 8%
water and sediment control 8%
groundwater stabilization 8%
SOIL CONSERVATION COST SHARE
SFY 2015 ANNUAL REPORT

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-$40,000 $40,000-$100,000 $100,000-$200,000 $200,000-$250,000 $250,000-$500,000

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 communities 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.

   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
   - TANK MANAGEMENT (COVER CROPS)
   - GRADED WATERSHED
   - WATER & Sediment CONTROL BASIN
   - GRADE STABILIZATION

   THE IMPORTANCE OF PARTNERSHIPS
   Our technicians and conservation assistants are all 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 Committees, county conservation boards, county board of supervisors, drainage districts, levee districts and other local groups.