

# IDALS-DSC Programs

Over 94% of Iowa's land is held in private ownership, and the programs of the Iowa Department of Agriculture and Land Stewardship - Division of Soil Conservation (IDALS-DSC) have been established to work with these landowners.

Over 90% of the landscape is used for agricultural production so much of our focus is in rural communities, but we haven't overlooked the importance of land management in urban areas.

It is critical to our understanding of both conservation and hydrology issues, that what happens on the landscape has immense consequences to the environmental health of our state and the quality of life we enjoy.

IDALS-DSC is striving to integrate our programs with other agencies and local concerns to improve water and soil quality throughout the state and nation.



- Abandoned Mined Land Reclamation
- Ag Drainage & Nutrient Studies
- Ag Drainage Well Closure
- Coal Mining
- Conservation Practices No-Interest Loans
- Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program
- Constructed Wetlands
- Integrated Farm & Livestock Management
- Iowa Learning Farms
- Iowa Financial Incentives Cost Share
- Iowa Wetland Landscape Systems Initiative
- Local Water Protection Loans
- Minerals Mining
- State Revolving Loans
- Urban Conservation
- Water Quality Protection Practices & Projects
- Water Quality Initiative
- Watershed Improvement Review Board
- Watershed Protection Program

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Wallace State Office Building  
502 E. 9th Street  
Des Moines, IA 50319  
Phone: 515-281-5851  
Fax: 515-281-6170



Iowa Department of Agriculture  
and Land Stewardship



**Division of Soil Conservation**

## PROGRAM SUMMARY



*working with lowans building  
a culture of conservation*

# DSC Program Briefs

## **Abandoned Mined Land Reclamation**

Federal funding is received annually to reclaim priority features of pre-law surface coal mines, selected from an inventory of over 300 Iowa sites.

## **Ag Drainage & Nutrient Studies**

Research and demonstration project addresses concerns of groundwater contamination from agricultural drainage wells, with improved in-field management of fertilizers and herbicides.

## **Ag Drainage Well Closure**

Financial assistance provided to protect groundwater aquifers by closing agricultural drainage wells and developing alternative drainage to surface outlets.

## **Coal Mining**

Iowa's coal regulatory mining and reclamation activities are administered and enforced.

## **Conservation Practices No-Interest Loans**

No-interest loans are made available to eligible landowners for construction of permanent soil conservation practices, as an alternative to financial incentive.

## **Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP) Constructed Wetlands**

Iowa CREP is a major state/federal initiative to restore wetlands, located and designed to remove nitrates from tile-drainage water while providing valuable habitat.

## **District Initiatives**

Locally led initiatives in Iowa's soil and water conservation districts (SWCDs) prioritize and target sensitive areas by providing funds and resources where they do the most good. The statewide Buffer Initiative is a very successful example.

## **Integrated Farm and Livestock Management - Iowa Learning Farm (ILF)**

Farmer to farmer information exchanged in public demonstration field days, showing effectiveness and adaptability of best management practices. These practices optimize production while minimizing the potential impacts of sediment, nutrients, and pesticides on soil and water resources.

## **Iowa Financial Incentives Cost Share**

The program's effectiveness is seen across the state's landscape as terraces, waterways, erosion control structures and others.

## **Iowa Wetland Landscape Systems Initiative**

A pilot program seeking to demonstrate the potential for a market-based method of incorporating wetlands into drainage infrastructure upgrades in order to achieve multiple economic, agronomic, and environmental benefits.

## **Local Water Protection Loans/ State Revolving Loan (SRF)**

Low-interest loans are available to producers in an effort to reduce sediment, nutrients and livestock waste negatively impacting our streams and lakes.

## **Minerals Mining**

Limestone, sand, gravel, gypsum and clay mine operators are licensed, as well as registering more than 1,000 mineral sites in Iowa.

## **Water Quality Protection Practices & Projects (REAP)**

Working one-on-one with landowners, practices target and prevent sediment and nutrient losses. Landowners and partners work together to protect the state's water resources from point and non-point contamination.

## **Iowa Water Quality Initiative (WQI)**

The Water Quality Initiative was established to assist with implementation activities of the Nutrient Reduction Strategy (NRS). Activities include targeted demonstration watershed projects, statewide financial assistance, and outreach & education efforts. All activities through the WQI are conducted through collaboration between both public and private organizations; to reduce nutrient loss and improve water quality.

## **Urban Conservation**

Roads, parking lots, roofs and compacted lawns send polluted runoff to streams in cities all across Iowa. IDALS's urban conservation program offers technical assistance and limited financial assistance to help property owners in urban settings install infiltration-based practices that reduce the volume of runoff and filter out pollutants that get transported to receiving streams via storm sewers.

## **Watershed Improvement Review Board (WIRB)**

Grants awarded to Iowa SWCDs, local watershed improvement committees, county conservation boards, public water supply utilities, and cities. Projects include agricultural runoff, streambank erosion, municipal discharge, livestock and storm water runoff and more.

## **Watershed Protection Program**

SWCDs and local leaders receive grants to inventory and assess and develop implementation strategies for watershed management. Grants provide assistance for implementation of local watershed initiatives to reduce soil erosion, protect municipal drinking water supplies, provide flood control and more.

