



2016-2017 Soil and Water Conservation District Local Government Biennial Budget Request Data Summary

March 2015

Soil and Water Conservation Districts (SWCDs) receive state General Fund appropriations for three programs: Conservation Delivery, the Non-Point Engineering Assistance Program (NPEAP) and the Erosion Control and Water Management Program (State Cost-Share). The SWCD Biennial Budget Request provides budget and activity information for these SWCD programs and serves as their annual plan for Erosion Control and Water Management Program funds.

These three programs are complementary, providing a statewide delivery mechanism that includes technical assistance, point-of-contact for landowners and renters, implementation funds, and environmental engineering. This is also a crucial component for the effective use of Federal programs such as EQIP (Environmental Quality Incentive Program) and CRP (Conservation Reserve Program), and state programs such as Clean Water Fund activities.

Funding provided by these state programs is only a fraction of the statewide SWCD budget total. Significant portions of SWCD budgets are provided through county budget allocations or revenue generated by providing conservation products and services. Required matching funds for the construction and installation of conservation practices are provided by benefitting landowners or land occupiers, and frequently leverage Federal EQIP funds to cover a substantial portion of overall project costs.

SWCD Program	FY2014-15 Base Funding Amount	FY2016-17 Total Leveraged Funds	FY2016-17 Additional State Funds Needed	FY2016-17 Estimated Total Program Need
Conservation Delivery	\$ 3,530,000	\$10,266,000	\$8,686,000	\$22,482,000
Erosion and Water Management (State Cost Share)	\$ 2,400,000	\$ 5,890,000	\$ 8,780,000	\$17,070,000
NPEAP	\$ 2,120,000	\$ 512,000	\$ 833,000	\$3,465,000
Total	\$ 8,050,000	\$16,668,000	\$ 18,299,000	\$43,017,000

Figures rounded to nearest thousand

Program Summaries

Conservation Delivery

Conservation Delivery Grants are allocated to individual SWCDs based on a BWSR formula. Conservation Delivery Grants provide SWCDs with some degree of funding stability to deliver conservation in Minnesota. The 89 SWCDs in the state (and Hennepin County) receive an average of \$39,222 annually to support general operations including rent and utilities, equipment, expenses for elected supervisors, and administration.

There is no match requirement for these funds, but the actual operational costs are reflected in the \$10.3M in leveraged funds anticipated to be provided during the FY2016-17 biennium as part of the local-state partnership to deliver conservation assistance throughout Minnesota.

Optional information for additional funds needed to improve conservation delivery across the state was estimated to be \$8.68M although some districts opted not to provide this information. Of the requests for additional funding, the majority were to increase staffing and staff technical capacity for additional assistance to landowners and the community.

FY2016-17 Conservation Delivery Program Funding	
Baseline Appropriation (FY2014-15)	\$ 3,530,000
Total Leveraged Funds	\$10,266,000
Additional State Funds Needed	\$ 8,686,000
Estimated Total Program Need	\$22,482,000

Examples of activity requests include:

- McLeod SWCD: Increase efficiency by hiring either contract staff or additional staff to provide more support for easement programs, state cost share, wetland conservation act, AgBMP program, feedlot assistance, general conservation assistance, and education.
- Anoka Conservation District: Increase efficiency of general operational functions that are the cornerstone of a successful and efficient organization, enabling us to secure and manage grants to implement conservation.
- Dakota SWCD: Support administration and operations of the elected Board and conservation activities of the district at current personnel level.
- Hubbard SWCD: Replace equipment used for monitoring and data collection for lakes, streams, impaired waters and local drinking water wells; ensure one fulltime staff person available to provide basic conservation assistance to meet local need.

Erosion and Water Management (State Cost Share)

The Erosion and Water Management Program, or State Cost Share, provides funds for SWCDs to provide financial and technical assistance to assist landowners with the implementation of conservation practices. This public-private partnership investment results in the installation of best management practices addressing excess erosion, nutrient and livestock management, shoreline protection and stabilization, and other practices needed to protect water quality and maintain soil productivity.

Optional information for additional funds needed to implement conservation best management practices totaled \$8.78M for the biennium, or just over 3.5 times the anticipated baseline funding available. Of the requests for additional funding, the majority were to

FY2016-17 State Cost Share Program Funding	
Baseline Appropriation (FY2014-15)	\$ 2,400,000
Total Leveraged Funds	\$ 5,890,000
Additional State Funds Needed	\$ 8,780,000
Estimated Total Program Need	\$17,070,000

increase funds available for best management practice installation.

Examples of activity requests include:

- Anoka Conservation District: Provide staffing to inspect previously installed practices, provide maintenance guidance and refine designs based on lessons learned.
- Pennington SWCD: Provide technical assistance to landowners on a voluntary basis to complete BMPs.
- Winona SWCD: Provide technical and financial assistance to landowners to control erosion and reduce surface water runoff through clean water diversions, waterways, terraces and sediment basins.
- Carlton SWCD: Provide incentives for priority conservation practice implementation across all land uses.
- Chippewa SWCD: Design and install terraces to solve erosion problems in existing erosion prone areas.
- Lake of the Woods SWCD: Provide technical assistance, training, landowner contact, initial site evaluations, coordinating and participating in survey and design as well as construction oversight and reporting.

Non-Point Engineering Assistance Program (NPEAP)

The Non-Point Engineering Assistance Program was established in 1994 to provide engineering assistance using Technical Services Areas (TSA) for non-point water quality management practices to landowners seeking assistance from SWCDs.

The FY2014-15 General Fund baseline appropriation for TSAs was \$2.12M. This funding is granted to the TSAs to pay for staff, travel, equipment, maintenance and supplies, and administrative support and reporting services provided by the host SWCD. The average annual grant to each of the 8 Technical Service Areas to provide statewide engineering assistance for conservation practices is \$135,143. There is a required 10% local match provided by member SWCDs. The remainder of the funds needed to support this program and the technical assistance it provides come from a variety of other sources including fees, private and public grants and member support. In addition, each TSA is granted \$20,000 once every four years to update, modernize, and replace equipment.

FY2016-17 Non-Point Engineering Assistance Program Funding	
Baseline Appropriation (FY14-15)	\$2,120,000
Total Leveraged Funds	\$ 512,000
Additional State Funds Needed	\$ 833,000
Estimated Total Program Need	\$3,465,000

Host SWCDs filled out the FY2016-17 BBR on behalf of, and in consultation with, their member SWCDs. This included identifying \$833K in additional funding needed during FY2016-17 to implement member and partner conservation activities.

Examples of activity requests include:

- Southeast Minnesota SWCD Tech Support Joint Powers Board: Provide increased Nutrient Management Planning services to the 11 SE MN Counties thru 2 FTE staff positions located in Fillmore & Rice SWCDs.
- Red River Valley Conservation Service Area: Provide further Non-Point Engineering Assistance to the 16 counties of the Red River Valley Conservation Service Area for the planning, placement and implementation of structural practices to reduce sediment and nutrient loading to surface waters.
- Technical Service Area 5: Complete terrain analysis so that all of the watersheds within the TSA are covered and have information required to target the highest priority areas for installation of BMPs.
- Technical Service Area 6: Install an additional estimated 12 Erosion Control Projects, 3 Feedlots and 1 wetland per year with the hiring of an additional technician.