

## Preface

As a Soil and Water Conservation District Commissioner, you have an important role as a locally-elected conservation leader. To effectively nurture conservation in your community, you should understand your roles and responsibilities as a Commissioner. This Iowa Soil and Water Conservation District Commissioner Handbook has been developed to help you do that.

Every effort has been made to make this handbook as useful as possible. Please note that this reference is a very basic resource of information on being a Commissioner. Specific details on how to carry out District programs are contained in the Policy and Procedures Manual located in each District office. The other references listed in the appendix may also help you develop effective District programs.

If you have any questions, do not hesitate to call upon the experience of your fellow Commissioners or District Staff. You may also contact your Field Representative at the Division of Soil Conservation and Water Quality, the Natural Resources Conservation Service or Conservation Districts of Iowa.

*I consider the soil conservation  
Districts movement one of the  
most important developments in  
the whole history of agriculture.*

- Hugh Hammond Bennett,  
pioneer in the field of soil  
conservation; founded and  
headed what is now the  
Natural Resources  
Conservation Service (NRCS)

Written in Joint Cooperation by  
Conservation Districts of Iowa,  
Iowa Department of Agriculture and Land Stewardship - Division of Soil Conservation and  
Water Quality,  
Natural Resources Conservation Service

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## *Table of Contents*

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<b><i>Organization of Soil and Water Conservation</i></b>	<b><i>1-1</i></b>
<b><i>Districts Under State Law</i></b>	
Position of District Commissioners	<i>1-1</i>
Statutory Powers	<i>1-2</i>
Responsibilities of District Commissioners	<i>1-4</i>

---

<b><i>The District Board</i></b>	<b><i>2-1</i></b>
Duties of the Chairperson	<i>2-1</i>
Duties of the Vice Chairperson	<i>2-2</i>
Duties of the Secretary	<i>2-2</i>
Duties of the Treasurer and Co-Treasurer	<i>2-3</i>
Duties of all Board Members	<i>2-4</i>
Assistant Commissioners	<i>2-4</i>
Committees	<i>2-5</i>
District Employees	<i>2-5</i>

---

<b><i>Administration Within the District</i></b>	<b><i>3-1</i></b>
District Meetings	<i>3-1</i>
Annual Reports	<i>3-2</i>
Contests and Awards	<i>3-2</i>
District Finances	<i>3-4</i>
Commissioner Expense Funds	<i>3-4</i>
Revolving Fund	<i>3-5</i>
State Cost Share	<i>3-6</i>
Iowa Financial Incentives Program	<i>3-6</i>
IDALS-DSCWQ Program Briefs	<i>3-7</i>
Parliamentary Motions Guide	<i>3-8</i>

---

<b><i>District Plans and Planning Activities</i></b>	<b><i>4-1</i></b>
Soil and Water Resource Conservation Plan	<i>4-1</i>
District Annual Work Plan	<i>4-1</i>
Locally Led Conservation	<i>4-2</i>
Total Quality Management	<i>4-2</i>
Marketing District Programs	<i>4-3</i>
The Planning Process	<i>4-3</i>

---

<b><i>Commissioner Development and Training</i></b>	<b><i>5-1</i></b>
Annual Conference for Soil and Water Conservation District Commissioners	<i>5-1</i>
Regional Meetings	<i>5-1</i>
Other Programs	<i>5-2</i>

---

<b><i>Partner Agencies and Organizations Working with Districts</i></b>	<b><i>6-1</i></b>
<u>Federal</u>	<i>6-1</i>
USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) Personnel	<i>6-1</i>

---

Other Federal Partners	6-2
Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)	6-2
US Army Corps of Engineers (CORPS)	6-2
USDA Farm Services Agency (FSA)	6-2
US Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS)	6-2
USDA Rural Development (RD)	6-2
State Technical Committee	6-2
Resource Conservation and Development (RC & D)	6-2
<u>State Agencies</u>	6-3
Iowa Department of Agriculture and Land	6-3
Stewardship, Division of Soil Conservation and Water Quality (IDALS-DSCWQ)	
State Soil Conservation Committee (SSCC)	6-3
IDALS-DSCWQ Personnel	6-3
Other State Partners	6-5
Iowa Department of Natural Resources (IDNR)	6-5
Iowa State University Extension (ISUE)	6-5
<u>Local Boards and Committees</u>	6-5
County Conservation Board	6-5
County Board of Supervisors	6-5
Drainage Districts and Levee Districts	6-6
<u>Non-Profit Organizations</u>	6-6
Conservation Districts of Iowa (CDI)	6-6
National Association of Conservation Districts (NACD)	6-8
<b><i>Legal and Ethical Issues</i></b>	7-1
<u>Civil Rights</u>	7-1
Discrimination	7-1
Sexual Harassment	7-2
Diversity	7-2
<u>Ethics</u>	7-3
<u>Personal Liability</u>	7-3
<b><i>History and Development of the Soil and Water Conservation District</i></b>	8-1
National	8-1
Iowa	8-2
Local	8-2
<b><i>Appendices</i></b>	
Acronyms	A
References and Resources in the District Office/Online	B
Sediment Control Law	C
Map of CDI Regions	D
Map Of DSCWQ Field Representative Regions	E
Map of NRCS Areas	F
Financial Checklist–Monthly review of financials checklist	G
Financial Checklist–Financial policy checklist	H
Iowa Code Chapter 161A	I
Suggested District Information	J

# Organization of Soil and Water Conservation Districts Under State Law

## The District Commissioner

Soil and Water Conservation District Commissioners are the governing body of the local District in Iowa, as delineated in Iowa Code Chapter 161A.

**Number of Commissioners:** Each board is composed of five Commissioners.

**Qualifications:** Any candidate for Commissioner must be an eligible elector residing in the District. Not more than one Commissioner can be a resident from any one township at the same time.

**Election:** Candidates for the position of Commissioner are elected locally on a nonpartisan ballot during the general election. Elections are held in even-numbered years.

**Term of office:** Each Commissioner is elected for a four-year term beginning on the first day of January that is not a Sunday or a holiday following the election.

**Oath of office:** Elected Commissioners will take the oath of office prescribed by Iowa Code Section 63.10 prior to or on the first day of January that is not a Sunday or a holiday in odd-numbered years.

**Compensation:** A Commissioner receives no compensation for services but may be reimbursed for actual expenses necessary to discharge the duties of Commissioner.

**Civil liability:** Commissioners are protected from personal liability in the discharge of their duties by tort liability provisions of Iowa Code Section 25A.2.

**Vacancies:** A vacancy in the office of Commissioner can be created through death, resignation, or a move into the township where another Commissioner resides. Any Commissioner that misses 60% of the meetings in a calendar year may be removed from office by the unanimous vote of the other Commissioners in the District. A vacancy is filled by appointment by the State Soil Conservation Committee until the next general election. Districts are encouraged to recommend the name of a suitable replacement candidate to the State Soil Conservation Committee.

*Soil and Water Conservation Districts are the local legal subdivisions of state government responsible under state law for soil and water conservation work within their boundaries. Iowa Code Chapter 161A, defines a "District" or "Soil and Water Conservation District" as a "governmental subdivision of this state, and a public body corporate and politic, organized for the purposes, with the powers, and subject to the restrictions in this chapter set forth."*

*Districts promote protection, maintenance, improvement, and wise use of the soil and water within the District.*

## Statutory Powers

The following is a summary of Commissioner powers as given in Iowa Code Chapter 161A.7. A Soil and Water Conservation District has the power to:

1. Conduct surveys, investigations, and research related to soil erosion and sediment damages, and prevention measures needed. This is to be done in cooperation with the Iowa Agricultural Experiment Station.
2. Conduct demonstrations on state-owned lands with consent of agency owning the land. Extends to private lands with landowner consent. This is to be done in cooperation with the Extension Service through cooperative agreements.
3. Establish conservation practices to protect resources on state land with consent of administering agency, including both structural and vegetative practices. Extends to private owners as well.
4. Furnish financial and other aid to landowners within limits of appropriations to carry out erosion control, watershed protection practices and flood prevention operations.
5. Acquire property from gift, purchase, lease, grant, etc. and receive income from that property. Income to be used in furtherance of the provisions of this chapter.
6. Make soil conserving equipment available to landowners, as well as fertilizer, lime and other materials necessary to conserve resources.
7. Build and maintain conservation structures and improve structures as necessary.
8. Develop and publish comprehensive resource conservation plans for the control and prevention of soil erosion, floodwater and sediment damages.
9. Sue and be sued. Enter into contracts. Make rules to carry out District programs.
10. Accept donations of money and services from U.S. and State agencies and expend such monies in carrying out District operations.
11. Require contributions by landowners as a condition of extending SWCD benefits.

*The general statement of powers, duties, and specific provisions of the Districts are contained in Iowa Code Chapter 161A.*

12. No provisions with respect to acquisition, operation or disposition of property by other public bodies shall be applicable.

13. After formation of any District, all participation shall be voluntary, except as specifically stated.

14. Change the District name with State Soil Conservation Committee approval.

15. Require filing with the District of lands on which permanent cost-share practices have been established using state cost-share funds. Require landowners to maintain cost-share practices throughout maintenance agreement period. No projects shall be removed, altered or modified without consent of Commissioners.

16. Encourage schools to provide natural resource conservation instruction.

17. Develop soil and water resource conservation plans for the District.

18. Enter into agreements for carrying out water protection practices to protect the state's groundwater and surface water from point and non-point sources of contamination.

**Other Commissioner Powers in the Iowa Code:**

Chapter 161A.13

Approve formation of and govern sub-Districts for watershed protection programs.

Chapter 161A.20

Approve special annual tax to acquire land rights, maintain practices, etc.

Chapter 161A.21

A subDistrict may condemn land.

Chapter 161A.44

Establish soil loss limits.

Chapter 161A.51

Enter private lands to determine if soil loss limits are being exceeded.

Chapter 161A.72.

Require land owners receiving state funds for conservation practices to enter into maintenance agreements.



*The nation that  
destroys its soil  
destroys itself.*

- Franklin D.  
Roosevelt,  
President

## Responsibilities of District Commissioners

As elected officials responsible for managing the activities of your District, District board members are expected to perform the following duties:

1. Hold regular monthly business meetings that conform to the state's Open Meeting Law, Iowa Code Chapter 21.
2. Develop an understanding of Iowa Soil Conservation Laws as listed in Chapter 161A.
3. Be aware of soil and water conservation conditions in District.
4. Keep in contact with IDALS-DSCWQ through correspondence, phone calls, and meeting attendance.
5. Cooperate with USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) and other federal, state, and local organizations.
6. Establish acceptable soil loss limits for soil types in the District.
7. Administer state and federal cost-share programs. This includes the Iowa Financial Incentive Program (IFIP), Resource Enhancement And Protection (REAP), and Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP) programs as well as various federal programs that may be available such as Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) and Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP)
8. Adjudicate soil loss complaints.
9. Develop and implement annual work plans.
10. Assist IDALS-DSCWQ with the selection of the Conservation Assistant and any other state employees that may be located in the District office, such as the state soil conservation technician and the state environmental specialist.
11. Publish an annual report of the District accomplishments.
12. Manage all funds, both state and District, facilities, and equipment consistent with the best interests of the District.
13. Enter into maintenance agreements for permanent conservation practices.
14. Employ and manage District personnel.

*Activities of Districts vary from District to District depending on the priorities set by the local Commissioners. Demonstrations of conservation practices, education meetings, youth and adult field days, newspaper articles, awards programs, contests, tree sales, etc., can all be a part of a District Commissioner's activities. The District Commissioners can best determine what activities will be most effective in promoting soil and water conservation in their area.*



# The District Board

*All meetings and notification of meetings must be done in accordance to the state's Open Meetings Law. The state's Open Meetings Law requires a commitment by each board to conduct business and establish policy openly in a manner accessible to the public. The law defines advance notices, emergency meetings and exceptions.*

Each conservation District is governed by five Commissioners as specified in Iowa Code Chapter 161A. During the January meeting, each board will elect a chairperson and a vice-chairperson and appoint a secretary and a treasurer. These elections and appointments are official acts of the District and must be noted in the official minutes of the District. Many District boards appoint the Conservation Assistant to serve as secretary of the District board. Many Districts rotate their officers every year. This affords each member the opportunity to use their leadership talents effectively.

## Duties of the Chairperson

1. It is the responsibility of the District chairperson to develop the agenda for the monthly board meeting. The chairperson may consult with the District Conservationist and the Conservation Assistant to make sure that all necessary items are included in the agenda. The chairperson should prepare the agenda in a timely manner and request assistance of the Conservation Assistant in seeing that the agenda is typed and mailed to interested parties, and posted in advance of each meeting.
2. Preside at all meetings or arrange for vice-chairperson to preside.
3. Call meetings to order on time and end meeting on time. Announce order of business, provide all of those in attendance with a typed agenda, and recognize visitors and others present at the meeting.
4. Handle the discussion in an orderly manner:
  - a. Give everyone who wishes a chance to speak.
  - b. Keep all speakers to rules of order and to the question.
  - c. Allow equal discussion on both sides of the issue.
  - d. Encourage all Commissioners to take part in the discussion.
  - e. Enter into the discussion to give additional information or to clarify information.
5. State each motion before it is discussed and before it is voted upon. Put a motion to vote and announce the outcome.
6. Suggest or ask for motions--do not make them.
7. Appoint committees, assign responsibilities, and ask for reports when due.

8. At close of term of office, turn over to successor the chairperson's material and explain responsibilities.
9. Make sure that all new Commissioners and Assistant Commissioners are properly informed and understand their duties.
10. Don't hesitate to give credit where credit is due!
11. Observe proper parliamentary procedures during the meeting.

### **Duties of the Vice-Chairperson**

1. Act in place of the chairperson whenever needed and assume other duties at request of chairperson. This may include arranging for special programs or providing advice.
2. In case of resignation or death of chairperson, the vice-chairperson succeeds the chairperson until the board is reorganized.
3. Consults with and advises chair on matters of program and policy.

### **Duties of the Secretary**

1. Provide public notification of each meeting and notification to board members.
2. Provide chairperson with list of items that should be placed on the agenda.
3. Keep minutes of each meeting. Make a complete record of all proceedings and supply IDALS-DSCWQ with a copy. Sign all minutes and official records. The following information should be included:
  - a. Type of meeting (regular, annual, special)
  - b. Date, location, and time of meeting.
  - c. Name of presiding officer and list of Commissioners in attendance. List others in attendance, such as agency representatives and guests. If a large group attends, name the organization and list the spokesperson.
  - d. Summary of reports made at the meeting. Ask agency representatives and committees to submit written reports if needed.
  - e. All motions including who made the motion, who seconded it, and action taken.
  - f. All important statements even though action was not taken.

*The secretary of the organization is the individual who is responsible for seeing that official minutes are kept, correspondence is completed, and all other paper work is kept in a professional manner. The actual tasks of minute taking and sending out correspondence can be delegated. In many Districts, the Conservation Assistant serves as the secretary for the board. However, that does not relieve the board of responsibility for seeing that it is done.*

*The board is responsible for all District funds, both state and local. The treasurer should use due diligence to see that all funds and records of funds are handled properly.*

*The board treasurer should work closely with the Conservation Assistant in reconciling the bank statements with the treasurer's report to provide accurate financial statements to the rest of the board (See SWCD-District Operations (DO) District Funds Management for recommended guidelines for handling District funds)*

**Appendix G** has a checklist for the treasurer and co-treasurer to use when reviewing the monthly financials

**Appendix H** has financial policies to be adopted annually by the board during the first meeting of the

4. Keep a record of all committees, both standing and special. Notify committee members of their appointment if they are not present when appointment was made.

5. Initiate correspondence on behalf of the board as needed. Assistance may be obtained from the District Conservationist, other agencies, Commissioners or the Conservation Assistant.

### **Duties of the Treasurer and Co-Treasurer**

1. Maintain complete and accurate records of receipts and expenditures for the District.

2. Issue receipts for all monies received and pay bills when authorized and approved by the board. Make sure that all authorized payments are recorded in the minutes.

3. Make a monthly financial report to the board.

4. Make an annual financial report in the Annual Report to the public and to IDALS-DSCWQ of all District funds, both state and local.

5. Deposit and issues checks in and from the District account.

6. Reconcile the treasurer's report with the bank statement monthly using the checklist found in Appendix G.

Chapter 161A of the Iowa Code specifies that Commissioners shall be bonded:

*"The Commissioners shall provide for the execution of surety bonds for all employees and officers who shall be entrusted with funds or property..."*

## Duties of all Board Members

1. Adopt sound financial policies - see Appendix H for the financial policy checklist.
2. Arrange for an annual audit of District funds by two Commissioners other than the treasurer and co-treasurer within 90 days after fiscal or calendar year end, and send a copy to IDALS-DSCWQ.
3. Assume duties and carry out tasks assigned by the chairperson.
4. Assist other board officers as requested.
5. Be familiar with all District programs to be able to work closely with all officers and committees.
6. Be prepared to serve in one or more of the board offices.

## Assistant Commissioners

Assistant Commissioners may be appointed by the District governing board to assist with the activities of the District. Assistant Commissioners aid the District governing body by assisting with a number of activities including, but not limited to, field days, annual meetings, contests, educational activities, and special observances, such as Soil and Water Conservation Week. Appointment of Assistant Commissioners is important to creating a network of volunteers, as well as a source of potential new Commissioners.

The use of Assistant Commissioners to help with District activities is encouraged. Assigning specific duties and responsibilities at the time of appointment will help maintain their interest and support.

Assistant Commissioners are eligible for reimbursement for actual expenses incurred while performing their duties. This reimbursement is made from the District Commissioners' expense account. All travel and expense claims must be approved by the elected District Commissioners and certified as a just claim by the chairperson or a member of the governing body. Claims for Assistant Commissioners should be clearly marked as such.

Generally, Assistant Commissioners should be appointed for a period of one calendar year, January through December. Appointments, however, may be made at any time depending on the need. There is no limit on the number of appointments, and the number will vary depending on the activities and needs of the local District.

*The Iowa Code prohibits Commissioners from delegating their responsibilities and authorities regarding official District business to others. Therefore, they cannot appoint Assistant Commissioners to act for them on official District business. This includes making motions or voting on official District business at District meetings. Assistant Commissioners may act in an advisory capacity and offer suggestions or comments, but may not assume the full authority*



*A committee is organic rather than mechanical in its nature: it is not a structure but a plant. It takes root and grows, it flowers, wilts, and dies, scattering the seed from which other committees will bloom in their turn.*

- C. Northcote Parkinson,  
British Historian

*Any committee that is the slightest use is composed of people who are too busy to want to sit on it for a second longer than they have to.*

- Katharine Whitehorn  
British Journalist

## Committees

Committees offer Districts an excellent means to manage their affairs more efficiently and make greater use of available volunteer time and expertise. Soil and Water Conservation Districts typically maintain committees on subjects such as education, District operations, personnel, conservation programs, budget, legislation, contests, awards, etc.

There is no rule as to how many or what kind of committees are right for any particular District. Most Districts will maintain certain standing committees that have assigned duties and responsibilities for various events and undertakings each year. Districts may also appoint special committees with a one-time objective to consider a new proposal or idea.

Committees with well-defined goals and objectives are most effective. The elected Commissioners remain responsible for the actions and decisions of the various committees to which they delegate responsibility. It may be advisable to have at least one elected Commissioner or an Assistant Commissioner serve on each committee.

In the case of the specially appointed committee or task force, it is important that the committee be disbanded once its established objective has been accomplished. Likewise, a District's committee structure should not be so complex as to become an administrative burden and render itself ineffective.

## District Employees

District employees may hold positions as technicians, information specialists, education specialists or others as needed. Positions may be funded by the County Board of Supervisors, Experience Works or income from District projects or grants. These employees are responsible to the District Commissioners. The SWCD Commissioners are responsible for all aspects of employment, including setting wages, benefits, and all terms of employment. Each District employee should receive a handbook. A sample employer and employee handbook can be found on the Conservation Districts of Iowa website, [www.cdiowa.org](http://www.cdiowa.org).



# District Administration

## District Meetings

A major responsibility of the District Commissioner is to participate in the conservation District meetings. Because Commissioners are elected officials, implement legislated authorities and manage tax dollars, the meetings must be held in accordance with the Iowa Open Meetings Law.

Planning by the chairperson and the staff is essential. The chairperson must have and retain control of the meeting so that orderly and constructive discussion occurs. **At least three Commissioners must be present to constitute a quorum. Official business cannot be transacted without a quorum.**

The plan for the meeting is the agenda. This should be set by the chairperson and the staff in advance so that Commissioners and other interested parties can receive the agenda 24 hours before the meeting. The agenda of the meeting must be followed in accordance with the Iowa Open Meeting Law.

All Districts should maintain complete and accurate minutes. It is possible that there could be a legal need for them in a soil loss case where they might be used as evidence in court. Minutes of the previous meeting should be mailed to the Commissioners in advance. This can eliminate the need for reading them aloud at the meetings. Minutes are required to be made available in a timely manner upon request.

Committee reports should be well-organized and to the point. If action is needed, recommendations for consideration by the board should be provided.

New and old business can be handled much the same way. When needed, as in the setting of policy or spending of funds, always use the procedure of "motion" and "second" and "recorded vote". Adequate time should be given for discussion, but the chairperson should keep discussion on the subject and limit it to a reasonable time.

All meetings should be conducted under standard parliamentary procedures. On file in the District office is a copy of an Iowa State University Extension publication as a reference for conducting a good meeting. A parliamentary procedure introduction is also included at the end of this chapter.



*Whoever invented  
the meeting must  
have had  
Hollywood in mind.  
I think they should  
consider giving  
Oscars for  
meetings: Best  
Meeting of the Year,  
Best Supporting  
Meeting, Best  
Meeting Based on  
Material from  
Another Meeting.*

- William Goldman,  
Screenwriter

## **Annual Reports**

An Annual Report is an important part of the District administration. The report should contain a statement of the District's accomplishments and activities throughout the year. The form of the this report varies from District to District. Many Districts use it as an educational as well as informational publication. When articles on conservation topics are included, it can be used as an important tool to advance conservation in the District.

The report gives the general public the opportunity to know what is being done with the public funds the District spends. A public that is well-informed is more apt to support the District's needs in the future.

## **Contests and Awards**



Districts have many opportunities each year to honor persons who are doing outstanding work in the field of soil and water conservation. Honoring those who have done a good job is an excellent way to promote conservation. Entering the different contests provides a means through which Districts compare their programs to other Districts and improve their programs by gaining ideas from other Districts.

The contests and awards programs can be an important part of the District's yearly activities. A contests and awards committee should be set up to handle the awards nominations and the awards program. Many Districts hold an annual awards banquet to recognize persons in the District who do outstanding conservation work.

NACD presents awards to individuals, organizations, businesses, agencies, etc. for outstanding work and leadership in soil and water conservation. There is a Friend of Conservation Award and an award for distinguished service. For more information on NACD sponsored awards please visit their website at [www.nacdnet.org](http://www.nacdnet.org).

The following are awards given annually in Iowa. See the Policies and Procedures Manual for specific rules and requirements. Many of these award applications can be found at [www.cdiowa.org](http://www.cdiowa.org).



**CDI Poster Contest**—for grades K-12. State winners forwarded to NACD for national contest. *Sponsored by Grinnell Mutual Reinsurance Company.*

**CDI Scholarship Awards**—recognizes outstanding high school graduates furthering education in conservation or agriculture.

**Iowa Soil Conservation Awards Program**—recognizes outstanding conservation farmers and teachers in several categories.

**Outstanding Soil Conservation District Commissioner**—a state-wide award given to one Commissioner for exemplary service.

**Outstanding Watershed Award**—recognizes a watershed project which showcases conservation at its best.

**Ken Wagner Award**—recognizes outstanding Commissioners.

**Ruth Wagner Award**—recognizes outstanding Assistant Commissioners.

**Woodland Owner of the Year**—recognizes individuals who are doing an outstanding job of woodland management.

**Izaak Walton Windbreak Award**—recognizes individuals for implementing windbreaks.

**CDI Honorary Member**—recognizes individuals who exerted a significant influence on the Iowa soil and water conservation program.

**CDI Champion Commissioner**—recognizes Commissioners and Assistants who attend Iowa Conservation Partnership Day, Spring Regional Meeting & the Annual Conference.

**Division of Soil Conservation and Water Quality Award**—recognizes individuals for outstanding service to soil and water conservation efforts in Iowa.

**Conservation Woman of the Year Award**— recognizes women who have made significant contributions to conservation and the improvement of Iowa's natural resources conservation through achievements on her own land, her career or voluntary efforts.

**Iowa Farm Environmental Leader Awards Program**— recognizes the efforts of Iowa's farmers as environmental leaders committed to healthy soils and improved Water Quality.



The general fact is that the most effective way of utilizing human energy is through an organized rivalry, which by specialization and social control is, at the same time, organized cooperation.

- Charles Horton Cooley, U.S. Sociologist

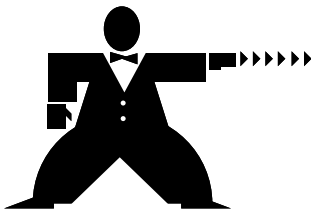
## District Finances

Funding to the Districts is provided by appropriation of the Iowa Legislature through IDALS-DSCWQ, county government, agency and private grants, and through local District fund raising activities.

### Commissioner Expense Funds

The Commissioner Expense Funds are appropriated to provide reimbursement to Soil and Water Conservation District Commissioners and Assistant Commissioners actual mileage, meals, lodging, and registration fees incurred in the discharge of their duties. The funds also provides for payment of certain Soil and Water Conservation District office supplies and expenses.

At the beginning of each fiscal year, the state budget appropriation for Commissioner expenses is allocated to Soil and Water Conservation Districts by IDALS-DSCWQ. Any unused funds remaining in this appropriation at the close of the fiscal year (July 1 to June 30) are reverted to the General Fund of Iowa and consequently cannot be carried into the next fiscal year.



#### Submission of Commissioner Expenses:

1. All requests for travel and expense reimbursement must be **submitted to the Conservation Assistant within 90 days** of the time that the expense is incurred.
2. Mileage is reimbursed at the rate of **\$0.39 per mile** for official business. Commissioners should record their travel expenses and must submit them to the treasurer for payment.
3. When Commissioners attend meetings that have a registration fee, the following must be submitted with the request for reimbursement.
  - a. Original receipts that show the expense.
  - b. Copy of the registration form.
  - c. Copy of the program agenda.
4. When Commissioners attend meetings in which only a charge is made for the cost of the meal, they can simply submit a claim for reimbursement for the cost of the meal.
5. Commissioner expense funds can only be used for travel and expenses within the State of Iowa.

## Revolving Fund

There are several methods employed by Districts for the purpose of raising funds for District activities. Examples include:

1. Cooperator clubs, booster clubs, terrace clubs, no-till clubs, etc.
2. Sales of trees and shrubs for forestation, wildlife refuge, and windbreak projects when the District is not in direct competition with local nursery dealers.
3. Sales of ads in District newsletters or annual reports.
4. Contributions from local businesses, contractors and industries.
5. Sales of tickets to District annual and biennial dinner meetings.
6. Sale or rental of District-owned materials, such as seeders, no-till planters, flags, fabric check machines, etc.
7. Income from property received as a gift, endowment, estates, or portions thereof.

Districts are encouraged to raise money for revolving funds within policy guidelines established by the State Soil Conservation Committee. This policy concerns the participation of state employees in assisting the District with the raising of money for District revolving funds. Districts must adhere closely to the following policy:

"All employees on the state payroll shall not be paid commissions or salaries for services rendered in annual report or newsletter ad sales, tree sales or other fund-raising campaigns. The State Soil Conservation Committee believes that the sale of these items is a part of the District's regular program and, therefore, shall be considered a part of the state employee's duties."

*Each District may establish a revolving fund. Some Districts carry on various fund-raising activities to obtain money for District programs. Revolving funds can be used where state and federal appropriated funds cannot be used.*

*Districts cannot charge for services rendered by federal or state employed personnel and the revolving fund should be audited each year by the District.*

## State Cost Share

Iowa soil and water conservation programs are appropriated by the Iowa legislature to provide financial incentives for soil conservation practices and water quality protection. These funds are administered through the SWCD, supporting the locally led process. Commissioners are responsible for approving all state cost share, no matter the program.

### Iowa Financial Incentives Program

Iowa Financial Incentives Program (IFIP) funds were the first state cost share program for conservation on agricultural lands. IDALS-DSCWQ has received appropriations for conservation cost sharing since 1973. Eighty-Five percent of the cost share funds appropriated are allocated to Districts to provide state funding of not more than 50% of the approved cost of permanent structural soil conservation practices. Districts may use up to 30% of their allocation for the establishment of management practices such as cover crops, no-tillage and strip-tillage.

Five percent of the amount appropriated is set aside by IDALS-DSCWQ for cost sharing not to exceed 75% of the approved cost of permanent and management soil conservation practices on watersheds above publicly-owned lakes. The lakes have to be on an approved list of the Natural Resources Commission.

Five percent of the appropriation is set aside for cost sharing with landowners or farm operators who are required to install soil erosion control practices as a result of an administrative order from the District, implementing the state's Erosion Control Law.

It is the responsibility of the Commissioners to allocate financial incentives funds to landowners within their District. It is important that each Commissioner be familiar with Chapter 10 of the Iowa Administrative Code "Iowa Financial Incentive Program for Soil Erosion Control" These are the rules that cover the financial incentives program and are on file in the District office in the Policies and Procedures Manual.

There are several other state funded programs offered through your District. On the following page you'll find a brief summary of all those programs.



*A lake is the landscape's most beautiful and expressive feature. It is earth's eye; looking into which the beholder measures the depth of his own nature.*

- Henry David Thoreau, U.S. philosopher, author, naturalist.  
*Walden*, "The Ponds" (1854)

## Iowa Department of Agriculture and Land Stewardship - Division of Soil Conservation and Water Quality (IDALS-DSCWQ)

### DSCWQ 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 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 Farms (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.

#### **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 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.



[www.iowaagriculture.gov](http://www.iowaagriculture.gov)  
[www.facebook.com/iowadepotofag](https://www.facebook.com/iowadepotofag)  
[www.twitter.com/iadepotag](https://www.twitter.com/iadepotag)



## *Parliamentary Motions Guide*

*Based on Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised (11<sup>th</sup> Edition)*

The motions below are listed in order of precedence. Any motion can be introduced if it is higher on the chart than the pending motion.

<b>YOU WANT TO:</b>	<b>YOU SAY:</b>	<b>INTERRUPT?</b>	<b>2<sup>ND</sup>?</b>	<b>DEBATE?</b>	<b>AMEND?</b>	<b>VOTE?</b>
\$21 Close meeting	I move to <b>adjourn</b>	No	Yes	No	No	Majority
\$20 Take break	I move to <b>recess</b> for	No	Yes	No	Yes	Majority
\$19 Register complaint	I rise to a <b>question of privilege</b>	Yes	No	No	No	None
\$18 Make follow agenda	I call for the <b>orders of the day</b>	Yes	No	No	No	None
\$17 Lay aside temporarily	I move to <b>lay</b> the question <b>on the table</b>	No	Yes	No	No	Majority
\$16 Close debate	I move the <b>previous question</b>	No	Yes	No	No	2/3
\$15 <b>Limit or extend debate</b>	I move that debate be limited to ...	No	Yes	No	Yes	2/3
\$14 <b>Postpone to a certain time</b>	I move to postpone the motion to ...	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Majority
\$13 <b>Refer</b> to committee	I move to refer the motion to ...	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Majority
\$12 Modify wording of motion	I move to <b>amend</b> the motion by ...	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Majority
\$11 Kill main motion	I move that the motion be <b>postponed indefinitely</b>	No	Yes	Yes	No	Majority
\$10 Bring business before assembly (a <b>main motion</b> )	I move that [or "to"] ...	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Majority



## *Parliamentary Motions Guide*

Based on *Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised (11<sup>th</sup> Edition)*

**Incidental Motions** - No order of precedence. Arise incidentally and decided immediately.

<b>YOU WANT TO:</b>	<b>YOU SAY:</b>	<b>INTERRUPT?</b>	<b>2<sup>ND</sup>?</b>	<b>DEBATE?</b>	<b>AMEND?</b>	<b>VOTE?</b>
§23 Enforce rules	Point of order	Yes	No	No	No	None
§24 Submit matter to assembly	I <b>appeal</b> from the decision of the chair	Yes	Yes	Varies	No	Majority
§25 Suspend rules	I move to <b>suspend the rules</b> which ...	No	Yes	No	No	2/3
§26 Avoid main motion altogether	I <b>object to the consideration</b> of the question	Yes	No	No	No	2/3
§27 Divide motion	I move to <b>divide the question</b>	No	Yes	No	Yes	Majority
§29 Demand rising vote	I call for a <b>division</b>	Yes	No	No	No	None
§33 Parliamentary law question	<b>Parliamentary inquiry</b>	Yes (if urgent)	No	No	No	None
§33 Request information	<b>Request for information</b>	Yes (if urgent)	No	No	No	None

**Motions That Bring a Question Again Before the Assembly** - no order of precedence. Introduce only when nothing else pending.

§34 Take matter from table	I move to <b>take from the table</b> ...	No	Yes	No	No	Majority
§35 Cancel or change previous action	I move to <b>rescind/ amend something previously adopted</b> ...	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	2/3 or maj. w/ notice
§37 Reconsider motion	I move to <b>reconsider</b> the vote ...	No	Yes	Varies	No	Majority

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9/2011

Side 2



# *District Plans and Planning Activities*

## **Soil and Water Resource Conservation Plan**

*The soil and water resource conservation plan should be a comprehensive document which will set out strategies, goals, and priorities for the wise use, protection, and improvement of land, water, and all related natural resources.*

Each Conservation District should have a soil and water resource conservation plan on file in the District office. This document recognizes the District's current needs in resource development and the authorities with which Districts are empowered. Plans should be reviewed each year when preparing the annual plan of work and updated every five years. Amendments should be added to the plan as needed.

As a District becomes more involved in various resource conservation programs, a soil and water resource conservation plan becomes more important. A properly completed plan can be of benefit in budgeting and providing overall direction for the District.

District Commissioners are urged to take an active part in the development of the District soil and water resource conservation plan. The goals, objectives, and policies should be set by the Commissioners. When completed, a statement page should be recorded with the county recorder.

A manual to assist the District in developing their soil and water resource conservation plan was provided by the DSCWQ to each District for reference.

## **District Annual Work Plan**

Districts should prepare an annual work plan. This document should list the major goals the District has set for the year and the activities that will be used to achieve those goals. The soil and water resource conservation plan is the basis on which the District prepares its annual work plan.

A Memorandum of Understanding between Districts and the NRCS is located in each office. The Operational Agreement is the document developed locally to detail working arrangements between the District and the local field office. This Operational Agreement can be used to replace the annual plan of work. The Operational Agreement should be developed jointly between the Commissioners and the District Conservationist and should state what the District expects to achieve and how it will be accomplished.

Consider state and national plans and priorities as you create local plans and priorities:

-Iowa's Nutrient Reduction Strategy  
[www.nutrientstrategy.iastate.edu](http://www.nutrientstrategy.iastate.edu)

-NRCS Strategic Plan  
[www.nrcs.usda.gov/wps/portal/nrcs/main/ia/about/](http://www.nrcs.usda.gov/wps/portal/nrcs/main/ia/about/)

Commissioners should prepare the plan in January of each year. Copies should be mailed to IDALS-DSCWQ and the Area NRCS Office.

Development of the annual work plan is an organized way of thinking about the coming year as it relates to the District's long-range objectives, goals, and actions. It provides a framework in which to work. It should remain flexible, however, and changes should be made when necessary.

### **Locally Led Conservation**

District work plans should not be prepared in a vacuum. Commissioners must actively seek input from others in their District. While the Locally Led process was formally organized under the 1996 Farm Bill for determining EQIP priority areas, the process has been used by many Districts since their founding. The following is how former NRCS Chief, Paul Johnson describes locally led conservation.

“What do I mean by locally led conservation? Basically, locally led conservation means local people, usually with the leadership of conservation Districts, assess their natural resource conditions and needs; set goals; identify programs and other resources to solve those needs; develop proposals and recommendations to do so; implement solutions; and measure their success....

Locally led conservation is based on an assessment of conservation needs and all the assistance available to the community from government and non-governmental sources.

Locally led conservation uses all federal, state and local conservation programs—and private sector programs—singly and in combination, as tools to solve natural resource concerns....”

For guidance  
on  
putting  
locally led  
conservation  
into action  
visit,

[http://  
directives.sc.ego  
v.usda.gov/  
RollupViewer.as  
px?hid=27712](http://directives.sc.egov.usda.gov/RollupViewer.aspx?hid=27712)

### **Total Quality Management (TQM)**

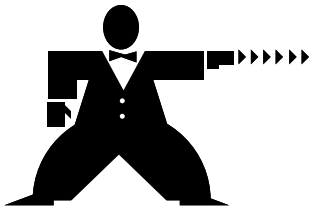
Total Quality Management (TQM) is a business practice that strives for continual small improvements in all processes. The focus of improvement is on meeting and exceeding customer needs and expectations.

District programs should focus on the local needs of their customers. Depending on your District, your customers may be farmers, teachers, suburban homeowners, local government officials or many other specific groups with needs that can be met by your programs. Asking these individuals what help they need from your District is an excellent way to start your planning process.

## Marketing District Programs

While marketing often is viewed as advertising, good marketing is very similar to TQM in that it focuses on meeting the needs of the customer.

A component of marketing is promotion, or making your customers aware of the services you have to offer. Districts are encouraged to promote their activities and programs through newsletters, public service announcements, workshops, news media, or other means that effectively reach the intended audience. Too often Districts have taken a low profile and many potential customers are unaware of the help that may be available to them through their local District.



### Promotional or public relations activities may:

- \* Inform the public of what the District is, what it does, and why it is important
- \* Promote favorable recognition for the District
- \* Ensure that potential cooperators are aware of the availability of District assistance
- \* Build partnerships with other organizations
- \* Increase the amount of funds that your District receives
- \* Increase the quality and amount of assistance the District obtains from cooperating agencies
- \* Improve the quality and quantity of people interested in working on District programs

## The Planning Process

Preparing the annual work plan need not be a difficult process. However, it should be well thought out. The following brief outline of the planning process may help you develop and use your District plan.

## Phase I — Inventory, Problems and Objectives

**Step 1. Identify the Major Issues and Concerns in Your District**— It can be beneficial to enlist other organizations, legislators and individuals to help you identify the major areas of concern. You may get new insight into some concerns, as well as help to build support for District programs.

**Step 2. Determine the Objectives**—Once you have identified the issues, you can develop goals and objectives to address these concerns. Objectives should be realistic, they should include a time frame and who will be responsible for accomplishing them.

**Step 3. Inventory Resources**— Determine what natural resources, financial, technical and human resources you have available to help you meet your objectives.

**Step 4. Analyze Resource Data**—Once you know what resources are available to help you meet your objectives, you need to determine what you can realistically accomplish or what additional resources may be necessary.

**Phase II — Decision Support**—You now have the information you need to decide how to proceed. This includes information about the “tools” that are available.

**Step 5. List Potential Activities**— You now should have a list of potential activities for your District. You probably will have more than you can realistically accomplish.

**Step 6. Evaluate List of Activities**— Given limited resources and often seemingly unlimited needs, which of those items identified can you reasonably expect to impact? Recognize that you cannot be all things to all people. Considerations:

1. What are the most critical needs of your local clients/customers? These will probably be the ones you want to approach first.
2. What are your strengths? You will probably be most effective in those areas where you have the greatest strengths and resources.
3. If you identify a critical need, but you as a District lack needed resources, what partnerships can you form to address the need and gather the needed resources?

**Step 7. Make decisions**— Make decisions and document them. You now have a plan. Write the plan.

## Phase III — Implementation and Evaluation

**Step 8. Implement the plan**—Without implementation, the conservation benefits are not realized and without evaluation, it's hard to improve the plan and the whole process.

**Step 9. Evaluation**—Continue to monitor your plan to determine if it meets your objectives. Don't be afraid to modify the plan if it appears that circumstances have changed or the original plan is not meeting your objectives.



*I have always thought that one man of tolerable abilities may work great changes, and accomplish great affairs among mankind, if he first forms a good plan, and, cutting off all amusements or other employments that would divert his attention, make the execution of that same plan his sole study and business.*

- Benjamin Franklin, U.S. Statesman

# Commissioner Development and Training

## Meetings

### Annual Conference for Soil and Water Conservation District Commissioners

The Annual Conference is a statewide meeting for all Commissioners and Assistant Commissioners. This annual event provides an excellent opportunity for Commissioners to get together and discuss their programs with other Commissioners.

Educational programs are a major component of the conference. While the agenda varies from year to year, tours, workshops, key note speakers, and small break-out sessions are generally offered to provide Commissioners with a diversity of educational opportunities. The intent is to provide a broad range of topics pertinent to Commissioners whether they are newly elected or have served for several terms.

The conference also includes the annual business meeting of CDI in which resolutions are discussed and officers elected, and the awards ceremony in which numerous individuals are recognized for their efforts in soil and water conservation.

The meeting is co-sponsored by CDI and the SSCC in cooperation with the DSCWQ and NRCS.

### Regional Meetings

CDI and the SSCC hold spring regional meetings. These meetings are often half day meetings where Commissioners get together to discuss issues of mutual interest and hear updates on a variety of topics from CDI and its partners, IDALS-DSCWQ and NRCS. Resolutions that have been submitted in advance of the meeting can be discussed. Regional and Alternate Directors are elected on a rotating basis at the spring regional meetings.

Commissioners are encouraged to discuss their development needs with their CDI Regional Director or with their DSCWQ Field Representatives.



*Every act of conscious learning requires the willingness to suffer an injury to one's self-esteem. That is why young children, before they are aware of their own self-importance, learn so easily; and why older persons, especially if vain or important, cannot learn at all.*

**-Thomas Szasz,**  
U.S. psychiatrist.  
*The Second Sin,*  
"Education"

## Other Programs

Numerous opportunities exist for Commissioners to learn more about District leadership.

CDI, NACD, SSCC, IDALS-DSCWQ & NRCS provide additional opportunities for Commissioner development. In addition, opportunities for Commissioner development are offered by other government agencies, academic institutions, non profit organizations and wildlife, hunting and commodity group.



*Education makes people easy to lead, but difficult to drive; easy to govern but impossible to enslave.*

**- Lord Brougham**  
(1778–1868),  
Scottish Whig  
politician.  
Speech, 29 Jan.  
1828, to the  
House of  
Commons.



## *Partner Agencies and Organizations Working with Districts*

Districts work in close partnership with many federal, state, and local agencies and organizations. Formal working agreements exist with USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) and the Iowa Department of Agriculture and Land Stewardship-Division of Soil Conservation and Water Quality.

### **Federal**

#### **USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS)**

The NRCS is the technical agency of the US Department of Agriculture that helps land owners and operators on a voluntary basis to write conservation plans and apply conservation practices to the land. The NRCS also provides financial assistance, develops soil surveys, monitors soil and water resources, and assists with conservation compliance. NRCS personnel work through the Soil and Water Conservation Districts. The NRCS in Iowa provides office space, computers, vehicles and other supplies for the Soil and Water Conservation District offices as well as state conservation employees.

### **NRCS Personnel**

#### **State Conservationist (STC)**

The State Conservationist is responsible for overall operations of the NRCS in Iowa. The STC and the State Office staff are housed in the Neal Smith Federal Building in Des Moines.

#### **Assistant State Conservationist, Field Operations (ASTC-FO)**

The state is divided into five NRCS areas, each served by an Assistant State Conservationist-Field Operations. The ASTC-FO works closely with the Districts in each of their regions and is the immediate supervisor of the District Conservationist serving each District. See the appendix for the Districts served by each ASTC-FO.

#### **District Conservationist (DC)**

The USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service person assigns a District Conservationist to each SWCD. Some DCs are assigned to more than one District through a management unit. The DC supplies technical assistance, administrative services, conservation planning assistance, professional advice, and public information through the District.

#### **Resource Conservationist (RC)**

The Resource Conservationist position provides assistance to the District Conservationists within an assigned area consisting of more than one county, by providing technical guidance in the development of conservation plans as well as providing ongoing technical training to the Field Office staff. In addition, the Resource Conservationist will be responsible for completing all annual Food Security Act Compliance reviews for their service area. This position is on the Area Office staff and is located in a Field Office. The Resource Conservationist is under the Area Resource Conservationist's supervision.



*Society is indeed a contract. . . . It is a partnership in all science; a partnership in all art; a partnership in every virtue, and in all perfection. As the ends of such a partnership cannot be obtained in many generations, it becomes a partnership not only between those who are living, but between those who are living, those who are dead, and those who are to be born.*

- Edmund Burke  
(1729–97), Irish  
philosopher,  
statesman.  
Reflections on the  
Revolution in France  
(1790).

### **Soil Conservationist (SC)**

A Soil Conservationist may also be assigned to work in the District with the DC, depending on the work load. Soil Conservationists provide landowner assistance with conservation planning work.

### **Soil Conservation Technician (SCT)**

Some Districts, depending on work load may be assigned a Soil Conservation Technician. Technician are primarily involved with field layout and design of conservation practices.

### **Other Federal Partners**

#### **Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)**

EPA is the federal agency with oversight for many environmental quality programs. Districts most often work with EPA on water quality projects such as non-point source (319) projects.

#### **US Army Corps of Engineers (CORPS)**

The CORPS has responsibility for many activities on streams and rivers, and administers the 404 permit process.

#### **USDA Farm Services Agency (FSA)**

The FSA administers USDA price support, crop insurance and other USDA benefit programs, as well as CRP. It also provides GIS Images for conservation work and natural disaster relief. FSA is guided at the county level by locally-elected, 3-member county committees. FSA and NRCS work closely at the field level.

#### **US Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS)**

US Fish and Wildlife Service work with Districts on many wetland issues and provides assistance with habitat improvement.

#### **USDA Rural Development (RD)**

Rural development provides government loans for housing, business and industry, and community facilities.

#### **The State Technical Committee**

The State Technical Committee is made up from a broad range of agencies and organizations. NRCS, FSA, Districts, conservation and farm organizations, as well as farmers, are represented on the committee. The committee helps NRCS and FSA address program and planning issues and concerns by giving those affected by the programs and policies an opportunity to voice suggestions, recommendations, and concerns. State Technical Committee meetings are open to the public.



## **State**

### **Iowa Department of Agriculture and Land Stewardship, Division of Soil Conservation and Water Quality (IDALS- DSCWQ)**



[www.iowaagriculture.gov](http://www.iowaagriculture.gov)

IDALS-DSCWQ is responsible for the administrative functions of the soil and water conservation laws of Iowa. The State Soil Conservation Committee (SSCC) is the policy-making body for the DSCWQ. The DSCWQ's staff plan, administer, and execute the Division's responsibilities. Division staff advise and assist Districts with local resource management programs, allocate state financial incentive program funds, and assign state technical and secretarial positions to Districts. The staff provide assistance to landowners in the reduction of non-point source pollution and the protection of groundwater quality. The DSCWQ staff also administer the state's mine reclamation laws.

#### **State Soil Conservation Committee (SSCC)**

The SSCC is the policy-making body for IDALS-DSCWQ. The SSCC is made up of nine appointed voting members, two ex officio non-voting members and two advisor non-voting members.

Nine voting members are appointed for six-year terms by the governor, subject to confirmation by the Senate. Six members must be actively engaged in farming; and three are appointed from the state at large, one to represent cities, one to represent tree farmers; and the other to represent the mining industry.

The two ex officio non-voting members are representatives from the Iowa Cooperative Extension Service and the Iowa Department of Natural Resources. The two advisory non-voting members are representatives of the Secretary of Agriculture of the United States and the Iowa County Engineers Association. The committee meets normally on the first Thursday of the month in the Wallace Building in Des Moines. These meetings are open to the public.

#### **IDALS-DSCWQ Personnel**

##### **Director**

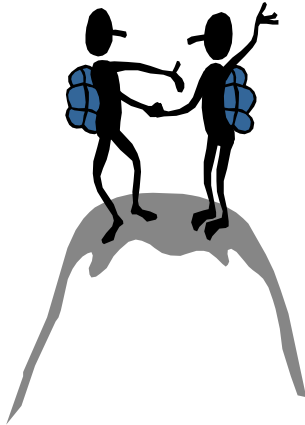
The Director of IDALS-DSCWQ has over-all administrative responsibility for the division and is appointed by the Iowa Secretary of Agriculture. The Director and the state office staff are located in the Wallace State Office Building in Des Moines.

### **Field Representative**

Each District is served by a Field Representative who is responsible for assisting the District with questions and concerns regarding all statutory authorities, legal issues, cost-share and other state funds. The Field Representative is also the supervisor of the Conservation Assistant and any other state employees that may be assigned to the District office. See Appendix E for which counties each field rep is responsible.

### **Conservation Assistant**

Each District is assigned a Conservation Assistant as funding allows. The Conservation Assistant is a state employee and supervised by the Field Representative. Daily coordination is provided by the NRCS District Conservationist (DC). The Commissioners and DC will assist the DSCWQ with interviewing candidates for state positions. The position will be filled by the DSCWQ in accordance with state hiring procedures. Please see the pamphlet "Getting on Board Working for the State of Iowa" which explains the state hiring process.



The Conservation Assistant's duties include receiving office visitors, phone calls, typing, filing, record keeping, reading and distributing mail, preparing correspondence, sending out meeting agendas, handling state cost-share, assisting the DC, keeping the District's financial records current and other duties assigned by IDALS-DSCWQ. Many other responsibilities are handled by the Conservation Assistant depending on the employee's experience and abilities.

### **Soil Conservation Technician (SCT)**

IDALS-DSCWQ has technician positions that are assigned to Soil and Water Conservation Districts. These positions are placed in Districts that have the greatest need for added technical assistance. These individuals are state employees paid by the state. They are hired and supervised similarly to the Conservation Assistant.

### **Environmental and Urban Specialist**

IDALS-DSCWQ has project coordinator positions that are assigned to Soil and Water Conservation Districts to assist with special projects. These individuals are state employees. They are hired and supervised the same as state secretaries.

For additional information on the relationship of state employees to the District and to the NRCS, see the District's Cooperative Working Agreement. This is the formal agreement between the NRCS, IDALS-DSCWQ, and the District on responsibilities and use of resources.

## Other State Partners

### Iowa Department of Natural Resources (IDNR)

The IDNR is the state agency that administers parks, lakes, recreation areas, wildlife areas, forests, natural and cultural preserves and associated user facilities and services. Programs of the agency include the research and management of fish, wildlife, forest resources, lakes and streams, and other unique natural features. They also regulate hunting and fishing, boating, and other outdoor recreational activities and help coordinate activities of the county conservation board. The IDNR is responsible for coordinating statewide water pollution abatement and water quality management programs funded by the EPA.



[www.iowadnr.gov](http://www.iowadnr.gov)



[www.extension.iastate.edu](http://www.extension.iastate.edu)



### Iowa State University Extension (ISUE)

Iowa State University Extension has the responsibility for providing leadership for educational programs of the USDA. The administrative, support staff, faculty specialists, and program specialists are located on campus at Iowa State University. Field specialists with responsibility for agriculture and natural resources, communities, families, and youth are located in county offices across the state. In addition, a county extension education director that serves as the local contact for Soil and Water Conservation Districts is located in all 99 counties.

## Local Boards and Committees

### County Conservation Boards

County Conservation Boards are established at the discretion of each county. The five members of the county conservation board are appointed by the county board of supervisors to oversee the operation of the county conservation board program and its staff. County conservation boards are authorized to levy property tax for the acquisition, development, and management of county parks, museums, wildlife areas, and other natural areas.

### County Board of Supervisors

The responsibility for operation of county government is vested in three or five elected members to the county board of supervisors. The supervisors cooperate with Soil and Water Conservation Districts in the planning and installation of works of improvement along highways, roads, and farmlands. Some boards of supervisors allocate money to Districts for educational purposes, installation of conservation practices, staff, and other specified purposes.

*In order that people may be happy in their work, these three things are needed: They must be fit for it: they must not do too much of it: and they must have a sense of success in it—not a doubtful sense, such as needs some testimony of others for its confirmation, but a sure sense, or rather knowledge, that so much work has been done well, and fruitfully done, whatever the world may say or think about it.*

- W. H. Auden  
Anglo, American poet.



[www.iowadrainage.org](http://www.iowadrainage.org)

### **Drainage Districts and Levee Districts**

Drainage Districts and/or levee Districts may be formed by petition of landowners requesting the board of supervisors to establish and manage such a District to solve local water problems. Drainage and levee Districts aid Soil and Water Conservation Districts by integrating soil conservation, flood control and drainage projects.

### **Non-Profit Organizations**

#### **Conservation Districts of Iowa (CDI)**



[www.cdiowa.org](http://www.cdiowa.org)

Conservation Districts of Iowa (CDI) is a non-profit 501(c)(3) organization. It is a voluntary, entirely independent organization which represents the interests of the Soil and Water Conservation Districts and Commissioners in Iowa. It is governed by a board of directors who are elected by the Soil and Water Conservation District Commissioners of Iowa. One director is elected from each of the nine regions in the state. The president and vice president are elected at-large at the annual meeting of the Commissioners. The secretary and treasurer are elected by the board from members of the board. Districts are encouraged to keep in touch with their regional director and let him/her know of their concerns.

The primary purpose of CDI is to augment the work of the 100 local conservation Districts by providing programs and services that help make each individual District more effective. CDI helps to promote communication between Districts with its annual newsletter/report and quarterly bulletins, email updates, a website, as well as regional and annual meetings. Programs for Commissioners often focus on helping them better fulfill their responsibilities as Commissioners.



*Conservation must become before recreation.*

- Charles, Prince of Wales (b. 1948).  
*Times* (London, 5 July 1989)

Public programs are aimed at improving knowledge of natural resource issues and the work of conservation Districts in Iowa. Some programs of CDI include the Iowa Envirothon, District Poster Contest, and the CDI Scholarship Program. The Iowa Envirothon is an environmental education competition for high school students. The winning team of the Iowa Envirothon goes on to compete at the National Envirothon which is held in a different state or Canadian Province each year. The CDI Scholarship program is offered to graduating high school seniors for those students continuing their education in conservation or agriculture. The poster contest is offered to all students from elementary to high school. Winning entries go on to compete at the national level through NACD.

CDI through its resolution process provides a forum for Commissioners to address state and national issues. Resolutions requesting changes in Iowa policy are passed on to the SSCC or the State Legislature for required action. Resolutions regarding national issues are addressed by the National Association of Conservation Districts (NACD) at their annual meeting. If these pass the NACD resolution process, they become part of the NACD National Policy and gain support from Districts across the country. CDI employs a lobbyist as well and hosts the annual Iowa Conservation Partnership Day at the Capitol with their partners in conservation.

Because many state and federal policies affect District activities, Commissioners are encouraged to build good working relationships with their state and federal legislators. Commissioners often can provide legislators with important information on the status of natural resources in their District and may have opportunities to give testimony in formal meetings or hearings on conservation issues. Each District is encouraged to appoint an individual to serve as the primary legislative contact for the District who will provide the other Commissioners and Assistant Commissioners with timely information on state and federal legislation.

CDI administers Farm Bill funding to Districts to get conservation on the ground and so Districts can employ conservation aides.

CDI is funded by dues from the Districts, projects, grants, and contributions.



The National Association of Conservation Districts (NACD) is the nonprofit organization that represents America's 3,000 conservation Districts and the 17,000 men and women who serve on their governing boards. Conservation Districts are local units of government established under state law to carry out natural resource management programs at the local level. Districts work with millions of cooperating landowners and operators to help them manage and protect land and water resources on all private lands and many public lands in the United States.

NACD's mission is to serve conservation Districts by providing national leadership and a unified voice for natural resource conservation.

Among the goals of the organization are to:

- Represent Districts as their national voice on conservation issues;
- Provide useful information to conservation Districts and their state associations;
- Build partnerships with federal and state agencies and other organizations in order to carry out District priorities and programs;
- Analyze programs and policy issues that have an impact on local Districts; and
- Offer needed and cost-effective services to Districts.

The association was founded on the philosophy that conservation decisions should be made at the local level with technical and funding assistance from federal, state and local governments and the private sector. As the national voice for all conservation Districts, NACD supports voluntary, incentive-driven natural resource conservation programs that benefit all citizens.

NACD maintains relationships with organizations and government agencies; publishes information about Districts; works with leaders in agriculture, conservation, environment, education, industry and other fields; and provides services to its Districts.

The association's philosophy is that conservation decisions should be made by local people with technical and funding assistance from federal, state and local governments and the private sector. The association's programs and activities aim to advance the resource conservation cause of local Districts and the millions of cooperating landowners and land managers they serve.

Through the NACD resolution process, state resolutions are discussed for inclusion in the NACD policy statements. This is used to help NACD guide its legislative and educational programs.

Each state has representation on the NACD Board of Directors. NACD is partially supported by the dues paid by conservation Districts and state associations throughout the US.



[www.nacdnet.org](http://www.nacdnet.org)

# *Legal and Ethical Issues*

## **Civil Rights**

The Mutual Agreement between the USDA and each Soil and Water Conservation District and the Cooperative Working Agreement between USDA-NRCS, the State of Iowa, and each Soil and Water Conservation District specify that each District will be in compliance with the nondiscrimination provisions contained in the Titles VI and VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, as amended; the Civil Rights Restoration Act of 1987 (Public Law 100-259); and other nondiscrimination statutes: namely, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, the Age Discrimination Act of 1975, and American's with Disabilities Act of 1990.

## **Discrimination**

Discrimination is the intentional process of creating division, distinction, partiality, and/or hurt on the basis of perceived feature or characteristic.

Following are brief descriptions of each of the referred to requirements that conservation Districts have agreed to adhere to. Consult the USDA-Natural Resources Conservation Service General Manual for more details about each requirement.

**Titles VI and VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964**, as amended, prohibits discrimination on the basis of race, color, religion, national origin, and sex in employment practices and prohibits reprisal or retaliation for civil rights activities.

**Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973** ensures that disabled individuals have access to District program services and benefits.

**Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972** ensures that no individual is denied participation in District education programs because of gender.

**Age Discrimination Act of 1975** ensures that no person is denied participation in District programs because of age. The requirement does not apply where age distinctions are established under the authority of any law that provides benefits or established criteria for participation on the basis of age.



No person in the United States shall on the grounds of race, color, national origin, gender, religion, age, disability, political beliefs, sexual orientation, marital or family status, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be otherwise subjected to discrimination under any program or activity receiving federal assistance from the U.S. Department of Agriculture or any agency thereof.

**Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990** ensures reasonable accommodations are made to protect the rights of individuals with disabilities in all aspects of employment; services to people with disabilities; participation in programs or activities which are available to people without disabilities; that all new construction and modifications are accessible to individuals with disabilities and that barriers to service are removed in existing facilities.

### **Sexual Harassment**

Sexual harassment is defined as unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature.

There are two types of sexual harassment

*Quid pro quo* - "I can do this for you, if you do this for me."

*Hostile environment* - Creating an atmosphere that interferes with the employee's work performance.

**Civil Rights Act of 1991** states that sexual harassment is seriously recognized as a form of prohibited discrimination. It provides additional remedies under federal law to deter unlawful harassment. The act facilitates bringing actions against employers and encourages litigation by providing for compensatory and punitive damages and trial by jury.

### **Diversity**

Diversity, within the Conservation Partnership, refers to the concept of inclusiveness concerning both the clientele being served and those who are coordinating and providing the services. It goes beyond notions of race and gender and embraces all cultures and all people who use, manage and receive the benefits of our natural resources.

The make-up of the Soil and Water Conservation District board should reflect the diversity of the clients that the Commissioners serve in their District. Commissioners should actively encourage women and minorities to run for the office of District Commissioner. Recruiting individuals to serve as Assistant Commissioner is an excellent way to introduce people to the District.



## Ethics

As an elected official, you are expected to conduct your job in a professional manner and to ensure fair and equitable program delivery to all of your customers. Anything that violates the public trust can be considered unethical behavior. In brief, any activity that prevents you from making impartial decisions or results in some form of favoritism in the delivery of service should be considered unethical.

Iowa Code Section 68B.2A discusses conflicts of interests. These may occasionally occur at the District level. Commissioners should recognize when their personal interests in a project may influence the impartiality of a vote. A common example would be when Commissioners are requesting cost-share dollars for practices on their own property. In such a situation, the Commissioner should abstain from voting on the issue. Other situations may occasionally develop in which a Commissioner with a certain business interest could personally benefit from a District project. Similar to “insider trading”, officials should not utilize knowledge gained from their position in a manner that would benefit them personally. Commissioners employed by the District is a conflict of interest.

Commissioners should also exercise good judgement in the handling of all District funds, including their revolving account. While these funds may have been raised by the Commissioners at local events, they are public moneys and must be accounted for in all District financial statements used for furthering the work of the District.

*Iowa Code  
Section 68B  
provides a set of  
regulations to  
govern officials  
ethical behavior  
regarding the  
acceptance of  
gifts, conflicts of  
interest, and  
hiring relatives.*

## Personal Liability

Commissioners are covered under the states tort liability law as long as they are carrying out their official duties with due care and in good faith. Tort claims are civil actions that are brought on allegations of wrongful death or injury to a person or damage to property. The lawsuits are typically based on negligence, breach of duty or nuisance. Providing Commissioners are acting within the limits of their duties, the State Attorney General’s Office will defend them against suits.

Contact IDALS-DSCWQ whenever you are unsure about possible liability resulting from a District action that you are considering. They will contact the Attorney General’s Office for advice on the matter.



## *History and Development of the SWCDs*

It is often said that "necessity is the mother of invention." In the case of the soil conservation movement, necessity appeared as a national emergency in the 1930s. Improper use of farmland and overuse of rangeland teamed up with recurring drought to produce the Dust Bowl era. During that time, dust storms originated in the Great Plains and swept across the nation, resulting in ruined land, dead livestock, untold human suffering and forced abandonment of farms by many families. Storms sometimes carried the precious topsoil thousands of miles, dumping it into the ocean. However, it was the "dust" created in the nation's Capital that brought government action.

### **National**

*President  
Roosevelt,  
recognized that  
"soil erosion is a  
menace to the  
national welfare  
and that it is  
hereby declared to  
be a policy of  
Congress to  
provide  
permanently for  
the control and  
prevention of soil  
erosion..."*

August 25, 1933, saw the creation of the Soil Erosion Service within the US Department of the Interior. This was the first soil conservation action taken by the US Government and in fact was the first program of its kind anywhere. The Service began gathering data on the condition of the nation's soil resources and set up the first demonstration projects.

On March 25, 1935, the Soil Erosion Service was transferred to the US Department of Agriculture and became the Soil Conservation Service.

The same year Public Law 46 of the 74th Congress, known as the Soil Conservation Act of 1935 went into effect. The act, passed unanimously by the House and Senate and signed by President Roosevelt, recognized that "soil erosion is a menace to the national welfare and that it is hereby declared to be a policy of Congress to provide permanently for the control and prevention of soil erosion..."

The Soil Conservation Service addressed the challenge by setting up a number of large-scale demonstration projects around the country. Although the projects themselves were successful, it soon became clear that this method was not far-reaching enough. It was much too slow to accomplish the desired results, it was far too costly, it did not provide long-lasting conservation treatment, and it lacked grass roots support and participation.

What was needed was a local organization through which conservation would be accomplished.

But no such organization existed. A totally new, locally-administered unit of government was needed--the Soil Conservation District. Finally a model state Soil Conservation Districts law was sent to each of the state governors in February 1937 along with a letter from President Roosevelt.

The states did act, but with varying degrees of speed. Twenty-two states passed enabling legislation within the same year. Eventually all fifty states, Puerto Rico, and the Virgin Islands adopted enabling laws.

This is how the Soil and Water Conservation Districts came to be what they are today.

### **Iowa**

The Iowa soil conservation program was initiated in 1939 when the Iowa General Assembly passed enabling legislation to allow soil conservation Districts to organize and to provide for their administration. Legislation of the 48th General Assembly was responsible for the Conservation Districts Law and establishment of the State Soil Conservation Committee.

Iowa has 100 Soil and Water Conservation Districts. The first District organized in 1940 was the Marion District. However, the Montgomery District, also organized in 1940 was the first District organized on a countywide basis. Today all Districts are organized on county boundaries with the exception of Pottawattamie which is divided into two Districts. The last District organized was the Howard District in Northeast Iowa in 1952.

In 1987 legislation was adopted to add "water" to the District title, creating Soil and Water Conservation Districts.

### **Local**

The history of the development of the local Soil and Water Conservation District is contained in the District's soil and water resource conservation plan. This document is on file in the District office and at the county recorder's office, and Commissioners should review the soil and water resource conservation plan for this information. You might also consider looking up your history and inserting that document in this section of the book.

*Districts are unique units of government relying upon voluntary cooperation from private individuals. They are formed and administered locally by the people they serve, can receive funds from the county, are sanctioned by state law, receive funds and administrative assistance from the state, and accept technical assistance from the federal government in order to advance the wise use and protection of our most valuable and vital resources--soil and water.*

# Appendices

- A. Acronyms
- B. References and Resources in the District Office/Online
- C. Sediment Control Law
- D. Map of CDI Regions
- E. Map of Field Representative Districts
- F. Map of NRCS Areas
- G. Financial Checklist—Monthly review of financials checklist
- H. Financial Checklist—Financial policy checklist
- I. Iowa Code Chapter 161A—View at the following link, <https://www.legis.iowa.gov/DOCS/ACO/IC/LINC/Chapter.161a.pdf>

**The following is a suggested list of information to add that will enhance this document:**

- J. Commissioner Development Plan
- K. Directory of Commissioners, Assistant Commissioners and Staff
- L. Directory of Important Local Contacts
  - 1. County Level Officials
    - a. Board of Supervisors
    - b. County Conservation Board
    - c. Cooperative Extension Service
    - d. FSA County Committee Members
  - 2. State and Federal Legislators
    - [www.legis.iowa.gov/legislators](http://www.legis.iowa.gov/legislators)
  - 3. Other contacts (Foresters, RC&D, etc.)
- M. District Committees
- N. Plans: Soil & Water Resource, Annual Work, Annual Report
- O. District Programs
- P. Cost-Share and Incentive Payment Policies
- Q. Soil Loss Limits for Soils Types in the District
- R. History of County District
- S. Other information

## *Appendix A: Acronyms*

The language used to discuss District activities is often incomprehensible and confusing to those unfamiliar with it. Here is a brief guide to the acronyms often used in SWCD offices.

AA - Affirmative Action  
ACEP - Agricultural Conservation Easement Program  
ADW - Agricultural Drainage Wells  
AFO - Animal Feeding Operations  
AFSCME - American Federation of State, County, and Municipal Employees  
AGI - Adjusted Gross Income  
AL - Annual Leave (for federal employees)  
AO - Area Office  
AMA - Administrative Management Assistant  
ASTC-FO - Assistant State Conservationist-Field Operations  
B & F - Budget and Finance  
BI - Buffer Initiatives  
BEST - Bringing Excellence and System Together  
BMP - Best Management Practices  
CA - Conservation Assistant  
CAFO - Concentrated Animal Feeding Operations  
CCC - Commodity Credit Corporation  
CCRP - Continuous Conservation Reserve Program  
CDI - Conservation Districts of Iowa  
CED - County Executive Director  
CEED - County Extension Education Director  
CES - Cooperative Extension Service  
CET - Civil Engineering Technician  
CNMP - Comprehensive Nutrient Management Plan  
CO - Central Office  
CR - Civil Rights  
CREP - Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program  
CRP - Conservation Reserve Program  
CSA - Conservation Security Act  
CSDI - Conservation Delivery Streamlining Initiative  
CSP - Conservation Security Program  
CStP - Conservation Stewardship Program  
CTIC - Conservation Technology Information Center  
CTP - Conservation Technical Plan  
CWA - Clean Water Act  
DAS - Department of Administrative Services  
DC - District Conservationist  
DMS - Document Management System  
DNR - Department of Natural Resources  
DO - District Operations  
DOT - Department of Transportation  
DSCWQ - Division of Soil Conservation and Water Quality

DSCWQ-QST - Division of Soil Conservation and Water Quality-Quality Steering Team  
EAP - Employee Assistance Program  
EBI - Environmental Benefits Index  
ECP - Emergency Conservation Program  
EEO - Equal Employment Opportunity  
eFOTG - Electronic Field Office Technical Guide  
EI - Erosion Index  
EPA - Environmental Protection Agency  
EQIP - Environmental Quality Incentives Program  
ES - Environmental Specialist  
EWP - Emergency Watershed Program  
FA - Financial Assistance  
FAC - Food and Agriculture Council  
FAIRAct - Federal Agriculture Improvement and Reform Act  
FARMS - Financial and Reports Management System  
FBS - Farm Bill Specialist  
FC - Family Care  
FCA - Farm Credit Agency  
FEMA - Federal Emergency Management Agency  
FIP - Forestry Incentives Program  
FO - Field Office  
FOIA - Freedom of Information Act  
FPP - Farmland Protection Program  
FSA - Farm Service Agency  
FSAA - Field Services Administrative Assistant  
FTE - Full Time Equivalent  
GIP - Grassland Incentive Program  
GIS - Geographic Information System  
GLCI - Grazing Land Conservation Initiative  
GPS - Global Positioning System  
GRP - Grassland Reserve Program  
HEL - Highly Erodible Land  
HR - Human Resources  
HUA/HUC - Hydrologic Unit Areas/Codes  
IA - Inter Agency  
ICM - Integrated Crop Management  
IDALS - Iowa Department of Agriculture and Land Stewardship  
IFA - Iowa Finance Authority  
IFIP - Iowa Financial Incentive Program  
IFLM - Integrated Farm/Livestock Management  
INFO - Information  
IPERS - Iowa Public Employees Retirement System  
IPM - Integrated Pest Management  
IRS - Internal Revenue Service  
ISCAP - Iowa Soil Conservation Awards Program  
ISUE - Iowa State University Extension

IUP - Iowa United Professionals  
ITS-TSD - International Technical Service – Technical Support Division  
LEG - Legislation  
LESA - Land Evaluation Site Assessment  
LICA - Land Improvement Contractors of America  
LTA - Long Term Agreement  
LWOP - Leave Without Pay  
LWPP - Local Water Protection Program  
M & M - Mines and Minerals  
MCM - Mid-contract Management  
MLRA - Major Land Resource Area  
MMP - Manure Management Plan  
MOU - Memorandum of Understanding  
MRBI - Mississippi River Basin Initiative  
NACD - National Association of Conservation Districts  
NASCA - National Association of State Conservation Agencies  
NCDEA - National Conservation District Employees Association  
NEPA - National Environmental Policy Act  
NGO - Non-government Organizations  
NHEL - Non-highly Erodible Land  
NPDES - National Pollutant Discharge & Elimination System  
NPPH - National Planning Procedures Handbook  
NPS - Non-point Source  
NRCS - Natural Resources Conservation Service  
NRI - National Resource Inventory  
NRWA - National Rural Water Association  
O&M - Operation and Maintenance  
OMB - Office of Management and Budget  
OSHA - Occupational Safety and Health Administration  
P & P - Policies and Procedures  
PDQ - Position Description Questionnaire  
PERS - Personnel  
PF - Pheasants Forever  
PL - Public Law  
PL - 566 Public Law 566  
PLU - Planned Land Unit  
POL - Public Owned Lakes  
Protracts - “Pro”gram Con”tracts” System  
PRS - Performance Results System  
PTO - Paid Time Off  
QA - Quality Assurance  
QC - Quality Criteria  
QIP - Quality Improvement Process  
QSAT - Quality Solutions Action Team  
QST - Quality Steering Team  
RC - Resource Conservationist  
RCA - Resources Conservation Act



RC&D - Resource Conservation and Development  
RCPP - Regional Conservation Partnership Program  
RD - Rural Development  
REAP - Resource Enhancement and Protection  
REAP F/NG - Resource Enhancement and Protection-Forestry/Native Grasses  
REAP P - Resource Enhancement and Protection-Practices  
RFA - Request for Application  
RFS - Receipt for Service  
RUSLE2 - Revised Universal Soil Loss Equation, Version 2  
SARE - Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education  
SC - Soil Conservationist  
SCIMS - Service Center Information Management System  
SCT - Soil Conservation Technician  
SIP - Stewardship Incentives Program  
SLR - Soil Loss Regulations  
SO - State Office  
SRF - State Revolving Fund  
SS - Soil Scientist  
SSCC - State Soil Conservation Committee  
ST - State Technician  
SWCD - Soil and Water Conservation District  
SWCS - Soil and Water Conservation Society  
SWRCP - Soil & Water Resource Conservation Plan  
319 - Section 319 Funds  
TA - Technical Assistance  
TMDL - Total Maximum Daily Loads  
TOM - Task Order Management  
TQM - Total Quality Management  
TSP - Technical Service Provider  
USACE - United States Army Corps of Engineers  
USDA - United States Department of Agriculture  
USFWS - United States Fish and Wildlife Service  
USGS - United States Geological Service  
USLE - Universal Soil Loss Equation  
VOL - Voluntary  
WAE - While Actually Employed  
WC - Workman's Compensation  
WEPS - Wind Erosion Prediction System  
WHIP - Wildlife Habitat Incentives Program  
WIRB - Watershed Improvement Review Board  
WPF - Water Protection Fund  
WQI - Water Quality Initiative  
WQP - Water Quality Project  
WRE - Wetlands Reserve Easement  
WRP - Wetlands Reserve Program  
WS - Watersheds  
WSPF - Watershed Protection Fund

## *Appendix B: References and Resources in the District Office/Online*

The following materials are available for Commissioners in the District office or online:

### **SWCD Office:**

**Soil and Water Resource Conservation Plan** - Reviewed every 5 years, the plan recognizes District's current needs in resource development and the authorizes with which Districts are empowered.

**District Annual Work Plan** - Reviewed annually, the plan lists goals set by the District and the specific activities that will be used to achieve those goals.

### **IDALS-DSCWQ:** [www.iowaagriculture.gov](http://www.iowaagriculture.gov)

**Policies and Procedures Manual** - This provides full text of District code and other codes and procedures with which Districts need to be familiar. IDALS-DSCWQ website has many other resources for Districts and Commissioners.

### **NRCS:** <https://www.nrcs.usda.gov/wps/portal/nrcs/site/ia/home/>

**Field Office Technical Guide** - Provides standards and specifications for conservation practices used by NRCS and Districts. NRCS website has many other resources for Districts and Commissioners.

### **CDI:** [www.cdiowa.org](http://www.cdiowa.org)

**Conservation Districts of Iowa's website** - Provides information on CDI's education, acknowledgement, Commissioner development, policy and on the ground conservation programs. In addition, the website provides information on upcoming events of importance to Districts and Commissioners, District and partner job announcements and ways for Districts, Commissioners and the public to get involved in soil and water conservation.

### **NACD:** [www.nacdnet.org](http://www.nacdnet.org)

**National Association of Conservation Districts website** - Provides news, information and resources on soil and water conservation events, education and policy.

### **DNR:** [www.iowadnr.gov/environment/waterquality](http://www.iowadnr.gov/environment/waterquality)

**Iowa Department of Natural Resources website** - Provides information on water quality in Iowa, resources for making improvements and case studies of successes in the state.

### **Iowater:** [www.iowadnr.gov/Environment/WaterQuality/WaterMonitoring/IOWATER.aspx](http://www.iowadnr.gov/Environment/WaterQuality/WaterMonitoring/IOWATER.aspx)

Iowa Volunteer Water Monitoring Database

## *Appendix C: Sediment Control Law*

The state's Sediment Control Law (House File 73) was passed by the 64th Iowa General Assembly in 1971. This bill provided that soil erosion could be declared a nuisance and abated as such after due process. The burden of proof is the responsibility of the Soil and Water Conservation District.

Each Soil and Water Conservation District has adopted regulations to establish soil loss limits for the District that have been approved by the State Soil Conservation Committee following a public hearing. The soil loss limits are expressed in terms of rates of soil erosion that will be permitted annually in the different soil types and land uses of the District.

Individual landowners, government agencies, and others having an interest in property being damaged by sediment from soil erosion on lands other than their own may file a complaint against owners of land on which excessive erosion is alleged to be occurring.

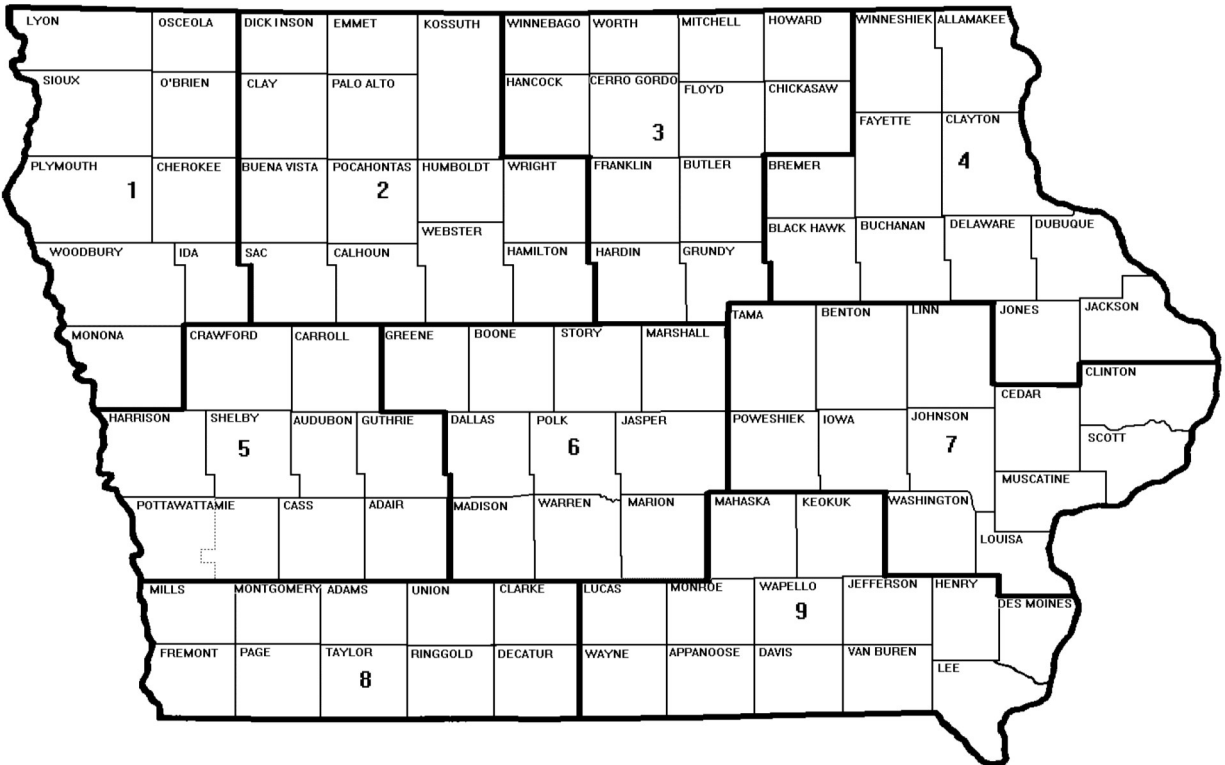
The Commissioners of the Soil and Water Conservation District will inspect or cause to be inspected any land within the District upon receipt of a written and signed complaint that soil erosion is occurring in excess of the limits established by the District. If the soil erosion exceeds soil loss limits, the Commissioners should make every effort to obtain voluntary compliance with application of needed conservation or erosion control practices. An effort should be made to bring the parties involved in the complaint together and to offer assistance, including financial incentives, to help correct the erosion problem without further formal action. In the event that voluntary compliance is not possible, the law provides that Districts shall issue an administrative order to the parties in violation and that corrective action must be started within six months and completed within twelve months.

In the case of erosion occurring on the site of any construction project, the party has five days to start and thirty days to complete. Cost-share funds are not available for erosion control on construction projects.

It should be noted that District Commissioners should act on all soil loss complaint letters in a timely manner. The Iowa Department of Agriculture and Land Stewardship-Division of Soil Conservation and Water Quality will assist District Commissioners with soil loss complaints. Contact your DSCWQ Field Representative for assistance.

*For additional  
information on  
processing  
complaints and  
enforcing the  
Iowa Sediment  
Control Law,  
see SWCD  
Policies and  
Procedures  
Manual  
SWCD-SLR-1  
(12/93)*

## Appendix D: Map of CDI Regions



### **Conservation Districts of Iowa Staff:**

Clare Lindahl, Executive Director [clare.lindahl@cdiowa.org](mailto:clare.lindahl@cdiowa.org)

Courtney Slagle, Office and Projects Manager, [admin@cdiowa.org](mailto:admin@cdiowa.org)

Catherine DeLong, Water Quality Specialist, [catherine.delong@cdiowa.org](mailto:catherine.delong@cdiowa.org)

### **Address:**

945 SW Ankeny Road, Suite A  
Ankeny, Iowa 50023

### **Phone:**

515.289.8300

### **Website, Facebook and Twitter**

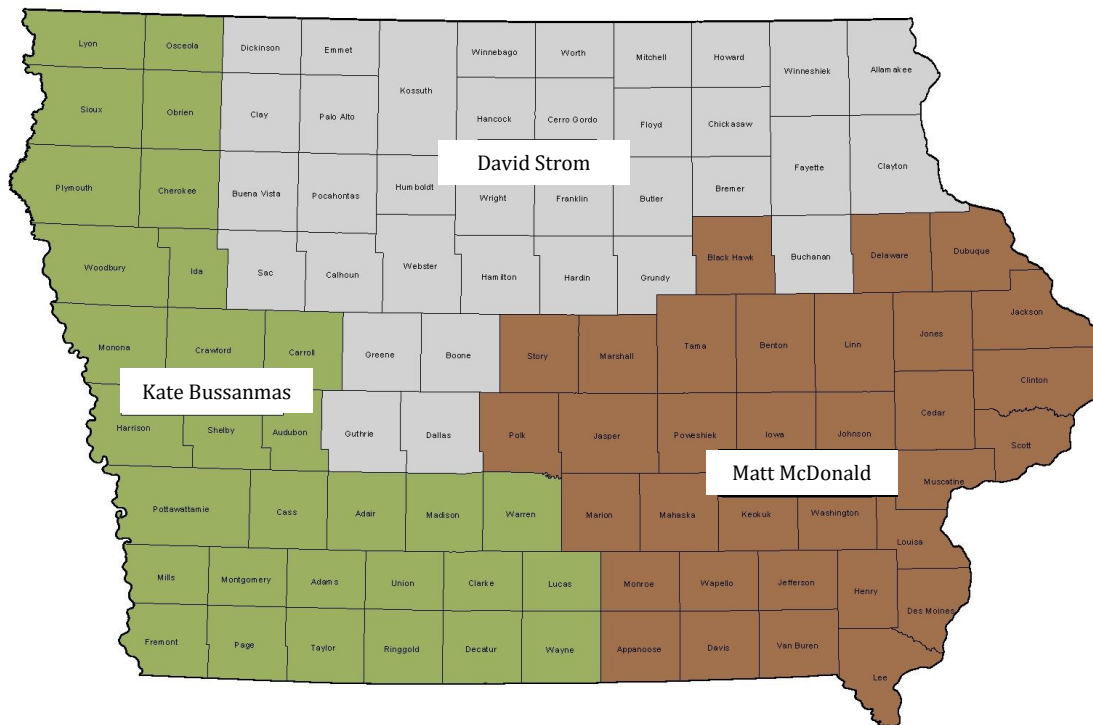
[www.cdiowa.org](http://www.cdiowa.org)

[www.facebook.com/ConservationDistrictsofIowa](https://www.facebook.com/ConservationDistrictsofIowa)

[www.twitter.com/ConsDistIowa](https://www.twitter.com/ConsDistIowa)

***For a complete listing of Regional Directors with contact information,  
please contact CDI***

## *Appendix E: Map of DSCWQ Field Representative Districts*



Division of Soil Conservation  
Field Representatives

**IDALS-DSCWQ**  
**Wallace State Office Building**  
**Des Moines, IA 50319**

James Gillespie, Director (515) 281-7043

Vince Sitzmann, Chief, Field Services Bureau (515) 281-7818, cell (515) 205-9014

Kate Bussanmas, Field Representative (515) 281-5853, cell (515) 306-7014

Matt McDonald, Field Representative (515) 281-6153, cell (515) 306-7013

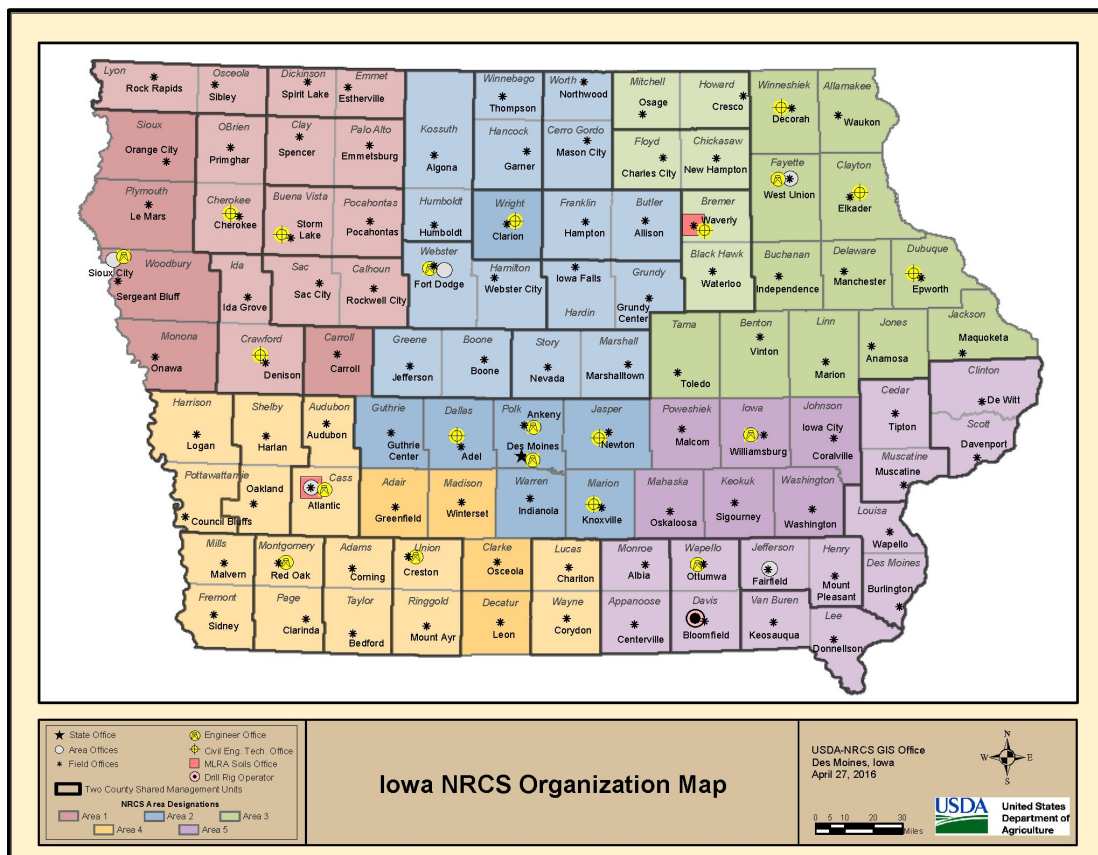
David Strom, Field Representative (515) 281-5142, cell (515) 306-7015

Jake Hansen, Chief, Water Resources Bureau (515) 725-2962

Susan Kozak, Chief, Mines And Minerals Bureau (515) 281-6147

Matt Lechtenberg, Water Quality Initiative Coordinator (515) 281-3857

# Appendix F: Map of NRCS Areas



## NRCS

210 Walnut Street, Room 693  
Des Moines, IA 50309

Kurt Simon, State Conservationist (515) 284-6655

Marty Adkins, Asst. State Conservationist - Partnerships (515) 323-2211

Jon Hubbert, Asst. State Conservationist - Programs (515) 284-6655

Jaia Fischer, Asst. State Conservationist - Management and Strategy (515) 284-4525

Assistant State Conservationist for Field Operations (ASTC-FO)

Luis Cruz-Arroyo, Area 1, (712) 276-4648

NRCS Area Office 3539 Southern Hills Drive, Ste 3, Sioux City, IA 51106

Kevin McCall, Area 2, (515) 573-4351

NRCS Area Office 521 South 29th St., Fort Dodge, IA 50501

Shawn Dettman, Area 3, (563) 422-6201

NRCS Area Office 120 N Industrial Pkwy #4, West Union, IA 52175

Vacant, Area 4, (712) 243-2913

NRCS Area Office 507 W 7th St. Box 475, Atlantic, IA 50022

Lane Collins, Area 5, (641) 472-8411

NRCS Area Office 1805 W Jefferson Ave, Ste 2, Fairfield, IA 52556

# Appendix G: Financial Checklists

## [YEAR] [COUNTY] Soil and Water Conservation District Financial Policies

### Monthly Review Checklist

#### **Disbursements**

- ☐ All disbursements have been categorized correctly
- ☐ All disbursements have been preauthorized
- ☐ All disbursements being withdrawn from 1M or grant specific sources are allowable expenses
- ☐ All disbursements have appropriate documentation, a valid invoice with the vendor name, vendor address, date of service, itemized list of goods or services provided and amount due
- ☐ Travel vouchers for reimbursement of employees have proper documentation including mileage documentation (google maps, etc.) and itemized receipts of meals, lodging, other misc. travel expenses
- ☐ Any voided checks are recorded, retained and filed

#### **Receipts**

- ☐ All funds received have been categorized correctly
- ☐ All money received by the SWCD, cash and checks, has a receipt

#### **Petty Cash**

- ☐ All petty cash fund expenses are reasonable and in compliance with the petty cash fund policy
- ☐ Withdrawals from the petty cash fund are recorded in a log with the name of employee requesting disbursement from petty cash fund, date of transaction and general description of transaction
- ☐ Employee requesting disbursement from petty cash fund will provide receipt for actual cost for which the withdrawal from fund was made
- ☐ Receipts have been provided for all disbursements from the petty cash fund
- ☐ The amount needed to replenish the petty cash fund has been calculated, recommended to the Board and the fund has been replenished

#### **Reconciliation**

- ☐ The Treasurers Report and original Bank Statement agree for all disbursements in checking and savings accounts
- ☐ The Treasurers Report and original Banks Statement agree for all funds received in checking and savings accounts
- ☐ The Treasurers Report and original Banks Statement agree for all Certificates of Deposit
- ☐ The Petty Cash Report agrees with the funds in the Petty Cash Box or Safe

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Treasurer

Date

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Co-Treasurer

Date

# Appendix H: Financial Checklists

## [YEAR] [COUNTY] Soil and Water Conservation District Financial Policies Annual Checklist

### **Financial Policies Adoption/ Segregation of Duties**

- ☐ These financial policies listed below are adopted by the [COUNTY] SWCD Board on [DATE ADOPTED]
- \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

- ☐ The adoption of these financial policies is noted in the [COUNTY] SWCD Meeting Minutes for [DATE OF MEETING]
- ☐ The [YEAR] Treasurer of the [COUNTY] SWCD Board is [NAME OF COMMISSIONER APPOINTED]
- ☐ The [YEAR] Co-Treasurer of the [COUNTY] SWCD Board is [NAME OF COMMISSIONER APPOINTED]
- ☐ The following individuals will be authorized to sign checks: [NAMES OF COMMISSIONERS WITH SIGNATURE AUTHORITY]
- ☐ Original bank statements will be received, reviewed and initialed by the Treasurer and Co-Treasurer each month
- ☐ Two signatories will be required on checks over \$500 with the exception of payroll checks

### **Disbursements**

- ☐ Authorization of all disbursements will be approved by the SWCD Board at a regular monthly or special meeting
- ☐ Pre numbered checks will be used for all disbursements
- ☐ All disbursements will have appropriate documentation, a valid invoice with:
  - Vendor name
  - Vendor address
  - Date of service
  - Itemized list of goods or services provided
  - Amount due
- ☐ Travel vouchers will be required for reimbursement of employees with proper documentation:
  - Mileage documentation (google maps, etc.)
  - Itemized receipts of meals, lodging, other misc. travel expenses
- ☐ All financial documentation will be retained for 7 years on file at the SWCD Office or longer if required by the funding agent
- ☐ The check book will be kept a locked cabinet
- ☐ Pre-signed checks will not be used
- ☐ No checks will be written for cash other than to replenish the petty cash fund
- ☐ Records of voided checks will be retained and filed
- ☐ Details of expenditures will be noted in the meeting minutes
- ☐ All supporting financial documents will be initialed and dated by the Treasurer and Co-Treasurer



# Appendix H: Financial Checklists

## [YEAR] [COUNTY] Soil and Water Conservation District Financial Policies Annual Checklist Continued

### **Receipts**

- ☐ All funds received by the SWCD will be deposited promptly
- ☐ All money received by the SWCD, cash and checks, will have a receipt
- ☐ A pre-numbered receipt book will be used to issue all receipts
- ☐ A duplicate copy of the receipt will be retained and filed
- ☐ The receipt book will be retained and filed
- ☐ The receipt book will be reconciled with the original bank statement and treasurers report monthly by the Treasurer and Co-Treasurer
- ☐ All checks will be endorsed "For Deposit Only" upon being received
- ☐ All funds will be maintained in a secure locked location until deposited
- ☐ All funds will be paid to the SWCD in this order of preference, Electronic Funds Transfer (EFT), check, cash
- ☐ If possible, the SWCD will ask people not to pay in cash

### **Petty Cash**

- ☐ The SWCD petty cash fund is for small unexpected expenses
- ☐ Eligible SWCD petty cash fund expenses include meeting or office supplies
- ☐ Ineligible SWCD petty cash expenses include check cashing and travel expenses
- ☐ The SWCD will limit the petty cash to \$50
- ☐ Petty cash will be kept in locked location
- ☐ Withdrawals from the petty cash fund will be recorded in a log with information:
  - Name of employee requesting disbursement from petty cash fund
  - Date of transaction
  - General description of transaction
- ☐ Employee requesting disbursement from petty cash fund will provide receipt for actual cost for which the withdrawal from fund was made
- ☐ The Treasurer and Co-Treasurer will reconcile the petty cash fund monthly
- ☐ The Treasurer and Co-Treasurer will verify receipts have been provided for all disbursements from the petty cash fund during the monthly reconciliation of the petty cash funds
- ☐ The Treasurer and Co-Treasurer will verify expenses are reasonable and in compliance with the petty cash fund policy during the monthly reconciliation of the petty cash funds
- ☐ The Treasurer and Co-Treasurer will recommend an amount needed to replenish the petty cash fund to the whole SWCD Board at the monthly meeting
- ☐ A check will be written and approved at the monthly SWCD Board meeting to replenish the fund

### **Monthly Financial Review / Audits**

- ☐ The SWCD will perform a monthly review of financials
- ☐ The SWCD will conduct an annual self-audit of District funds and submit an annual financial statement of all accounts including a listing of assets, to the Iowa Department of Agriculture and Land Stewardship – Division of Soil Conservation and Water Quality
- ☐ The District will work with Field Representatives from the Iowa Department of Agriculture and Land Stewardship – Division of Soil Conservation and Water Quality to conduct on site visits and complete audit and project specific checklists.