

Agency 029 - DEPT OF NATURAL RESOURCES

STATUTORY AUTHORITY:

Authority for the Department of Natural Resources (DNR) is contained in: Nebraska Constitution (Article XV, Sections 4, 5, 6 and 7); Nebraska Statutes (Chapter 2, Articles 15,32 and 46; Chapter 11, Article 1; Chapter 16, Article 6; Chapter 31, Articles 5 and 10; Chapter 33, Article 1; Chapter 37, Article 7; all of Chapter 46 with the exception of Article 11; Chapter 54, Article 24; Chapter 56, Article 1; Chapter 61, Article 2; Chapter 66, Article 11; Chapter 81, Article 1; and Chapter 84, Articles 7 and 9) and Reissue Revised Statutes of Nebraska 2011 Supplement.

VISION:

The DNR is dedicated to working with Nebraska's citizens and leaders to plan, establish, and administer policies and programs for the effective management and conservation of the State's water and land resources. We are committed to acquiring applicable data, conducting necessary technical and scientific analyses, and making this information available to all stakeholders for use in making informed, cooperative resources management decisions for the benefit of all Nebraskans, both now and in the future. This is accomplished through providing high quality services with a professional workforce devoted to the management and conservation of the water and land resources of the State of Nebraska.

MISSION AND PRINCIPLES:

The DNR is committed to performing its statutory responsibility to manage and conserve the State's water and land resources in an effective and efficient manner. Obligations include: administering and regulating surface water to ensure compliance with interstate agreements; directing floodplain management and dam safety programs; operating the streamgaging program; assembling and sharing natural resources data; participating in integrated water management planning in collaboration with local natural resources interests; performing state-wide water planning; registering groundwater wells and issuing surface water permits; and managing state cost-share programs to aid in proper use and protection of Nebraska's water, land, and related natural resources.

GOALS:

The goals of the DNR are to establish and maintain fair and equitable standards for the use and preservation of Nebraska's water and land resources and, where authorized, to enforce rules and regulations governing their use. To accomplish these goals, the DNR proactively researches, develops, and updates information utilizing the best science which will assist the State's efforts in effectively managing and developing Nebraska's water and land resources. This involves striving to work in a cooperative manner with stakeholders representing various interests to address complex natural resources issues with the aim of finding satisfactory solutions - solutions that achieve an acceptable balance among all stakeholders while minimizing negative impacts on Nebraska's resources for the future.

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Financial Data

	FY12 Actual	FY13 Approp	FY14 Request	FY14 Recomm	FY15 Request	FY15 Recomm
Operations Funding						
General Fund	8,652,164	10,397,171	10,397,171	10,524,446	10,397,171	10,654,585
Cash Fund	341,087	776,125	776,125	777,861	776,125	779,636
Federal Fund	609,872	439,596	662,579	671,378	662,579	680,375
Revolving Fund	0	0	0	0	0	0
Other Fund	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total Operations	9,603,122	11,612,892	11,835,875	11,973,685	11,835,875	12,114,596
Aid Funding						
General Fund	6,885,669	5,958,361	5,958,361	5,958,361	5,958,361	5,958,361
Cash Fund	1,486,831	9,710,000	8,310,000	8,310,000	8,310,000	8,310,000
Federal Fund	0	72,327	72,327	72,327	72,327	72,327
Revolving Fund	0	0	0	0	0	0
Other Fund	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total Aid Funding	8,372,499	15,740,688	14,340,688	14,340,688	14,340,688	14,340,688
Total Funding						
General Fund	15,537,832	16,355,532	16,355,532	16,482,807	16,355,532	16,612,946
Cash Fund	1,827,917	10,486,125	9,086,125	9,087,861	9,086,125	9,089,636
Federal Fund	609,872	511,923	734,906	743,705	734,906	752,702
Revolving Fund	0	0	0	0	0	0
Other Fund	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total Agency	17,975,622	27,353,580	26,176,563	26,314,373	26,176,563	26,455,284

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Program 303 - STATE AID - SMALL WATERSHEDS

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION:

The Small Watersheds Flood Control Fund was established in 1963 to provide state financial assistance for the acquisition of the necessary land rights for flood control structures. Land rights can be in the form of easements, rights-of-way or purchases. The fund can financially participate in only 25 percent of the number of land rights involved. When land is purchased for a project it must be sold within ten years with proceeds of the sale being returned to the fund for reuse. A special provision of the law allows any political subdivision to acquire any fee title property at appraised value, provided that the property is utilized for public purposes such as recreation or fish and wildlife enhancement. To date a total of 38 tracts have been retained for public use.

PROGRAM OBJECTIVES:

The objective of the program is to provide financial assistance to local units of government in the procurement of lands, easements, and rights-of-way that are needed for construction of flood control projects upon approval from the Natural Resources Commission (Commission). Secondary objectives are to assist in accelerating the watershed planning process and to assist sponsors in all aspects of land rights acquisition and land management. The financial assistance provided to local sponsors for land rights acquisition under this program is an integral part of the total flood control program.

PERFORMANCE MEASURES:

Money from sales of fee title property following completion of projects for which the property was acquired is the primary source of funding for this program. While the law provides for sales within ten years, an attempt is made to sell the property as soon as it is considered to be in optimum condition for resale - usually within six years. This practice enables the Commission to more quickly commit funding to new projects. Another goal is to resell property at a premium over the purchase price which helps offset the loss of funds committed for acquiring easements and rights-of-way. Performance measures are depicted on the attached worksheet.

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Program 303 - STATE AID - SMALL WATERSHEDS

Financial Data

	FY12 Actual	FY13 Approp	FY14 Request	FY14 Recomm	FY15 Request	FY15 Recomm
Operations Funding						
General Fund	0	0	0	0	0	0
Cash Fund	0	0	0	0	0	0
Federal Fund	0	0	0	0	0	0
Revolving Fund	0	0	0	0	0	0
Other Fund	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total Operations	0	0	0	0	0	0
Aid Funding						
General Fund	0	0	0	0	0	0
Cash Fund	191,136	475,000	475,000	475,000	475,000	475,000
Federal Fund	0	0	0	0	0	0
Revolving Fund	0	0	0	0	0	0
Other Fund	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total Aid Funding	191,136	475,000	475,000	475,000	475,000	475,000
Total Funding						
General Fund	0	0	0	0	0	0
Cash Fund	191,136	475,000	475,000	475,000	475,000	475,000
Federal Fund	0	0	0	0	0	0
Revolving Fund	0	0	0	0	0	0
Other Fund	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total Program	191,136	475,000	475,000	475,000	475,000	475,000

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Program 304 - NE SOIL & WATER CONSERVATION

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION:

The Soil and Water Conservation Fund was created in 1977 to provide financial assistance to private landowners for installation of soil and water conservation practices. Various conservation practices are eligible for cost-share assistance of up to 75 percent. The Natural Resources Commission (Commission) determines the list of eligible practices, establishes operating procedures, and annually allocates the funds among the 23 natural resources districts (NRDs). The United States Department of Agriculture - Natural Resources Conservation Service provides technical assistance needed in planning and verifying proper installation of conservation measures. NRDs are responsible for the administration of the program at the local level.

PROGRAM OBJECTIVES:

The objective of the Soil & Water Conservation Fund is to promote landowners' efforts to better manage and conserve the State's natural resources. Funds are allocated by NRD and used to reimburse a portion of landowners' costs to implement conservation practices deemed appropriate by each NRD for conditions in their jurisdictions. Funds can only be requested if federal programs do not address the specified practice, or if federal funds are insufficient to satisfy landowner requests. Landowners are required to maintain practices for 10 years, and must repay at least a prorated portion of the state contribution if the practice is removed sooner. Repaid funds are reallocated back to the NRDs.

PERFORMANCE MEASURES:

The primary measure of performance for the Nebraska Soil and Water Conservation Program is the degree to which available funds are used to implement eligible soil and water conservation practices. Except for two percent of funds received that must be retained by the DNR for grants to landowners ordered by natural resources districts pursuant to the Erosion and Sediment Control Act to install permanent soil and water conservation measures, all appropriated funding is allocated to natural resources districts. The number and extent of soil and water conservation implementation activity by eligible practice for fiscal years 2010–12 and estimates for fiscal years 2013-15 are listed on the attached Performance Measures Worksheet.

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Program 304 - NE SOIL & WATER CONSERVATION

Financial Data

	FY12 Actual	FY13 Approp	FY14 Request	FY14 Recomm	FY15 Request	FY15 Recomm
Operations Funding						
General Fund	0	0	0	0	0	0
Cash Fund	0	0	0	0	0	0
Federal Fund	0	0	0	0	0	0
Revolving Fund	0	0	0	0	0	0
Other Fund	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total Operations	0	0	0	0	0	0
Aid Funding						
General Fund	2,449,850	2,318,036	2,318,036	2,318,036	2,318,036	2,318,036
Cash Fund	0	50,000	50,000	50,000	50,000	50,000
Federal Fund	0	0	0	0	0	0
Revolving Fund	0	0	0	0	0	0
Other Fund	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total Aid Funding	2,449,850	2,368,036	2,368,036	2,368,036	2,368,036	2,368,036
Total Funding						
General Fund	2,449,850	2,318,036	2,318,036	2,318,036	2,318,036	2,318,036
Cash Fund	0	50,000	50,000	50,000	50,000	50,000
Federal Fund	0	0	0	0	0	0
Revolving Fund	0	0	0	0	0	0
Other Fund	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total Program	2,449,850	2,368,036	2,368,036	2,368,036	2,368,036	2,368,036

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Program 306 - WATER WELL DECOMMISSIONING

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION:

The Water Well Decommissioning Fund was established in 1994 to provide cost-share assistance to encourage the decommissioning or plugging of illegal water wells. Assistance per well decommissioned varies from a few hundred dollars up to the maximum of \$700, depending on the well type and size. The source of funding is presently \$21.50 from each well registration fee received by the DNR. To participate in the program, natural resources districts (NRDs) must agree to establish a program with availability for at least 30 wells per year.

PROGRAM OBJECTIVES:

The objective of the Water Well Decommissioning Fund is to encourage proper decommissioning of illegal water wells in the State. This is accomplished through providing financial incentives in the form of cost-share assistance. Due in part to their local relationships and staff, funds are channeled through participating natural resources districts which administer the application, inspection and reimbursement processes.

PERFORMANCE MEASURES:

The number of abandoned wells that have been decommissioned in a manner that eliminates the potential for ground water contamination and other hazards is the only performance measure for this program. The number of wells decommissioned with assistance from this program for the past several years is dependent upon funds available, but total wells decommissioned per year has ranged from 715 to 2,276. Actual numbers of wells decommissioned with and without assistance from this program for fiscal years 2010-12 and estimates for fiscal years 2013-15 are listed on the attached Performance Measures Worksheet.

Agency 029 - DEPT OF NATURAL RESOURCES
Program 306 - WATER WELL DECOMMISSIONING

Financial Data

	FY12 Actual	FY13 Approp	FY14 Request	FY14 Recomm	FY15 Request	FY15 Recomm
Operations Funding						
General Fund	0	0	0	0	0	0
Cash Fund	0	0	0	0	0	0
Federal Fund	0	0	0	0	0	0
Revolving Fund	0	0	0	0	0	0
Other Fund	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total Operations	0	0	0	0	0	0
Aid Funding						
General Fund	0	0	0	0	0	0
Cash Fund	52,895	100,000	100,000	100,000	100,000	100,000
Federal Fund	0	0	0	0	0	0
Revolving Fund	0	0	0	0	0	0
Other Fund	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total Aid Funding	52,895	100,000	100,000	100,000	100,000	100,000
Total Funding						
General Fund	0	0	0	0	0	0
Cash Fund	52,895	100,000	100,000	100,000	100,000	100,000
Federal Fund	0	0	0	0	0	0
Revolving Fund	0	0	0	0	0	0
Other Fund	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total Program	52,895	100,000	100,000	100,000	100,000	100,000

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Program 307 - NE RESOURCES DEVELOPMENT

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION:

The Nebraska Resources Development Fund (NRDF) provides grants and/or loans to political subdivisions for natural resources projects. Natural resources districts are typically the project sponsors, but cities, counties and irrigation districts have also been sponsors. Projects are often multipurpose in nature, including flood damage reduction, sediment and erosion control, recreational development, groundwater recharge, improved irrigation management, and/or fish and wildlife enhancement. To be considered for funding, projects must be economically, financially and technically feasible, and development plans must be satisfactory and minimize impact to the natural environment.

PROGRAM OBJECTIVES:

The Nebraska Resources Development Fund is intended to help fund efforts to conserve the State's natural resources and enable other uses beneficial to Nebraskans. State agencies or political subdivisions propose projects with purposes such as pollution abatement, reduction of flood damages, improvement of public irrigation facilities, preservation and development of fish and wildlife resources, providing of public outdoor recreation lands and facilities, and preservation of the waters of Nebraska for all beneficial uses. The Fund was established with the intent that it be used only after possible funding through other sources has been explored.

PERFORMANCE MEASURES:

The primary measures of the success of this program are:

- Effective use of State dollars to leverage other funding sources available to each project
- Successful completion of approved projects
- Realization of expected benefits to the State and its citizens which exceed costs over the life of the project.

Information on projects currently in progress, and a summary of results since inception of the program are provided on the attached Performance Measures Worksheet.

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Program 307 - NE RESOURCES DEVELOPMENT

Financial Data

	FY12 Actual	FY13 Approp	FY14 Request	FY14 Recomm	FY15 Request	FY15 Recomm
Operations Funding						
General Fund	0	0	0	0	0	0
Cash Fund	0	0	0	0	0	0
Federal Fund	0	0	0	0	0	0
Revolving Fund	0	0	0	0	0	0
Other Fund	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total Operations	0	0	0	0	0	0
Aid Funding						
General Fund	2,678,684	3,140,325	3,140,325	3,140,325	3,140,325	3,140,325
Cash Fund	0	47,500	47,500	47,500	47,500	47,500
Federal Fund	0	0	0	0	0	0
Revolving Fund	0	0	0	0	0	0
Other Fund	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total Aid Funding	2,678,684	3,187,825	3,187,825	3,187,825	3,187,825	3,187,825
Total Funding						
General Fund	2,678,684	3,140,325	3,140,325	3,140,325	3,140,325	3,140,325
Cash Fund	0	47,500	47,500	47,500	47,500	47,500
Federal Fund	0	0	0	0	0	0
Revolving Fund	0	0	0	0	0	0
Other Fund	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total Program	2,678,684	3,187,825	3,187,825	3,187,825	3,187,825	3,187,825

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Program 309 - NAT RESOURCES WATER QUALITY

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION:

The Natural Resources Water Quality Fund was established by the Legislature in 2001 to provide funds to natural resource districts (NRDs) for support of their water quality programs. The sources of funds are pesticide registration fees and pesticide applicators license fees collected by the Nebraska Department of Agriculture. The DNR serves as the administrative body for passing funds through to NRDs. Funds are allocated among the NRDs and administered based on rules and regulations established by the Natural Resources Commission. Although annual receipts vary from year to year, these allocations are expected to average about \$1,000,000. Districts must provide three dollars of local matching money for every two dollars allocated from the fund.

PROGRAM OBJECTIVES:

By statute, Water Quality Fund monies can only be used by natural resources districts (NRDs) and only for water quality programs. The fund helps enable NRDs to implement and manage a wide variety of water quality-related measures, both for surface water and ground water. NRDs must provide three dollars match for each two dollars of state funds received.

PERFORMANCE MEASURES:

The performance measure for this fund is the distribution of all available funding to natural resources districts for their use in district water quality programs. Distributions of funds for fiscal years 2010–12 and estimates for fiscal years 2013-15 are listed on the attached Performance Measures Worksheet.

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Program 309 - NAT RESOURCES WATER QUALITY

Financial Data

	FY12 Actual	FY13 Approp	FY14 Request	FY14 Recomm	FY15 Request	FY15 Recomm
Operations Funding						
General Fund	0	0	0	0	0	0
Cash Fund	0	0	0	0	0	0
Federal Fund	0	0	0	0	0	0
Revolving Fund	0	0	0	0	0	0
Other Fund	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total Operations	0	0	0	0	0	0
Aid Funding						
General Fund	0	0	0	0	0	0
Cash Fund	950,000	1,187,500	1,187,500	1,187,500	1,187,500	1,187,500
Federal Fund	0	0	0	0	0	0
Revolving Fund	0	0	0	0	0	0
Other Fund	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total Aid Funding	950,000	1,187,500	1,187,500	1,187,500	1,187,500	1,187,500
Total Funding						
General Fund	0	0	0	0	0	0
Cash Fund	950,000	1,187,500	1,187,500	1,187,500	1,187,500	1,187,500
Federal Fund	0	0	0	0	0	0
Revolving Fund	0	0	0	0	0	0
Other Fund	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total Program	950,000	1,187,500	1,187,500	1,187,500	1,187,500	1,187,500

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Program 311 - INTERRELATED WATER MGMT

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION:

The Interrelated Water Management Plan Program was established in FY2006 to facilitate and fund the duties of natural resource districts arising under the Nebraska Ground Water Management and Protection Act. It functions as a grant program administered by the Natural Resources Commission (Commission) and the DNR. A review committee comprised of reviewers from DNR and other agencies, the NRDs, and the University of Nebraska evaluates requests submitted annually by natural resources districts. Requests are evaluated against guidelines established by the Commission. Review findings are presented to the Commission for consideration and final decisions on funding obligations. A local revenue match totaling twenty percent of total project costs is required.

PROGRAM OBJECTIVES:

This grant program is intended to facilitate the duties of natural resource districts arising under the Nebraska Ground Water Management and Protection Act, and to help offset costs incurred in performing those duties. The DNR tracks the status of each funded project, and reports this as well as overall program status at each Commission meeting.

PERFORMANCE MEASURES:

The primary measure of success for the Interrelated Water Management Planning Program relates directly to the adoption of integrated management plans and the timeliness of subsequent actions in better managing the State's water resources. By helping to fund research and study, sponsors can apply additional science to their basins' environment, hydrology, and hydraulics to determine appropriate actions and ensure that planned improvements are sound. A summary of grant activities since the inception of the program is summarized in the attached Performance Measures Worksheet.

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Program 311 - INTERRELATED WATER MGMT

Financial Data

	FY12 Actual	FY13 Approp	FY14 Request	FY14 Recomm	FY15 Request	FY15 Recomm
Operations Funding						
General Fund	0	0	0	0	0	0
Cash Fund	0	0	0	0	0	0
Federal Fund	0	0	0	0	0	0
Revolving Fund	0	0	0	0	0	0
Other Fund	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total Operations	0	0	0	0	0	0
Aid Funding						
General Fund	1,683,471	500,000	500,000	500,000	500,000	500,000
Cash Fund	0	0	0	0	0	0
Federal Fund	0	0	0	0	0	0
Revolving Fund	0	0	0	0	0	0
Other Fund	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total Aid Funding	1,683,471	500,000	500,000	500,000	500,000	500,000
Total Funding						
General Fund	1,683,471	500,000	500,000	500,000	500,000	500,000
Cash Fund	0	0	0	0	0	0
Federal Fund	0	0	0	0	0	0
Revolving Fund	0	0	0	0	0	0
Other Fund	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total Program	1,683,471	500,000	500,000	500,000	500,000	500,000

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Program 334 - SOIL AND WATER CONSERVATION

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION:

The Soil and Water Conservation Program comprises the majority of the DNR's functions and all personnel. The twenty-three subprograms within this program area make up the core of the DNR's business and administrative functions and encompass all state-funded personnel within the agency. Only the six aid programs that the Natural Resources Commission is responsible to oversee are separately budgeted. The work of the DNR is divided among nineteen of the twenty-three subprograms described in the supporting information.

PROGRAM OBJECTIVES:

The objective of the Water and Soil Conservation Program is to effectively and efficiently administer and enforce regulations and policies affecting the use of Nebraska's water and soil resources. This entails providing the scientific, technical, and administrative resources and information needed to reach defensible policy decisions, while working cooperatively with other committed stakeholders to find a sustainable balance among competing demands. The DNR's goal is to provide Nebraska's leaders and citizens with the information and analyses they need to make wise resource decisions for the benefit of all Nebraskans, both current and future.

PERFORMANCE MEASURES:

A limited number of empirical performance measures are identified for this program as many employees perform work which is difficult to quantify. This is the case in several of the DNR's highest priority areas, such as: hydrology studies; modeling for water accounting and conjunctive management; cooperative work with NRDs, irrigation districts, and other interests; and floodplain administration. Metrics for other activities such as GIS tools development, database integration, and program administration are also difficult to define in meaningful terms. As a result, empirical measures presented on the attached Performance Measures Worksheet represent only a portion of the work accomplished in this program.

Agency 029 - DEPT OF NATURAL RESOURCES
Program 334 - SOIL AND WATER CONSERVATION

Financial Data

	FY12 Actual	FY13 Approp	FY14 Request	FY14 Recomm	FY15 Request	FY15 Recomm
Operations Funding						
General Fund	8,652,164	10,397,171	10,397,171	10,524,446	10,397,171	10,654,585
Cash Fund	341,087	776,125	776,125	777,861	776,125	779,636
Federal Fund	609,872	439,596	662,579	671,378	662,579	680,375
Revolving Fund	0	0	0	0	0	0
Other Fund	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total Operations	9,603,122	11,612,892	11,835,875	11,973,685	11,835,875	12,114,596
Aid Funding						
General Fund	73,664	0	0	0	0	0
Cash Fund	292,800	7,850,000	6,450,000	6,450,000	6,450,000	6,450,000
Federal Fund	0	72,327	72,327	72,327	72,327	72,327
Revolving Fund	0	0	0	0	0	0
Other Fund	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total Aid Funding	366,464	7,922,327	6,522,327	6,522,327	6,522,327	6,522,327
Total Funding						
General Fund	8,725,828	10,397,171	10,397,171	10,524,446	10,397,171	10,654,585
Cash Fund	633,887	8,626,125	7,226,125	7,227,861	7,226,125	7,229,636
Federal Fund	609,872	511,923	734,906	743,705	734,906	752,702
Revolving Fund	0	0	0	0	0	0
Other Fund	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total Program	9,969,586	19,535,219	18,358,202	18,496,012	18,358,202	18,636,923