

Subject Soil Health Cost-Share Program

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Overview

This bill establishes a soil health cost-share program at the Board of Water and Soil Resources (BWSR) to provide financial assistance to local units of government for soil health and related water quality practices and appropriates money for the program.

Summary

| Section | Description |
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| 1 | Soil health cost-share program. |
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Establishes the soil health cost-share program.

Subd. 1. Definitions. Defines “board,” “local units of government,” and “soil health” for purposes of the program.

Subd. 2. Establishment. Requires BWSR to establish a cost-share program, consistent with provisions of an existing cost-share program, for the purposes of mitigating climate change impacts and improving water quality and related public benefits.

Subd. 3. Financial assistance. Allows BWSR to provide financial assistance to local units of government for the costs of soil health and related water quality practices consistent with certain approved water management plans. Requires BWSR to establish costs eligible for financial assistance under the program. Requires BWSR to enter into agreements with local units of government receiving financial assistance.

Subd. 4. Technical assistance. Allows BWSR to employ or contract with agronomists, biologists, or hydrologists to work on program implementation. Requires BWSR to provide assistance to local units of government, review and assess practice standards, and evaluate the effectiveness of completed practices funded under the program. Requires BWSR to cooperate with the Minnesota Office for Soil Health at the University of Minnesota, the federal Natural

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Resources Conservation Service (NRCS), and other agencies and private sector organizations as needed to enhance the program's effectiveness.

Subd. 5. Federal aid availability. Requires BWSR to regularly complete an analysis of federal funds and programs available to supplement or complement local and state efforts under the program.

Subd. 6. Report. Requires BWSR to submit a report to the legislature by January 15, 2024, with results of the program and recommendations.

2 **Appropriation.**

Appropriates \$2,750,000 from the general fund in fiscal years 2022 and 2023 to BWSR for purposes of the soil health cost-share program.



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