



Kentucky Association of Conservation Districts

2025 General Assembly Session

1996 to 2017:
\$1,150,000 - \$975,000
General Fund Dollars

2018 to 2023:
\$907,300 - \$900,000
Tobacco Settlement Dollars

2024-2026:
\$1,000,000
Tobacco Settlement Dollars

For more information please visit
our website:
WWW.KYConservation.com

Direct Aid for Conservation Districts

1. Direct Aid monies are appropriated to conservation districts to assist each county in carrying out their statutory requirements and is distributed based upon the district's compliance with the oversight requirements of the Soil and Water Conservation Commission (audit requirements, reports, scheduling, etc.).
2. Direct Aid funds match local and federal funds in hiring needed technical and administrative staff to assist the citizens in each county to address conservation and environmental issues. Districts currently have an 80% federal grant available for technical assistance if they can provide the matching 20%. We have the federal funds to hire up to 50 technicians statewide but at this time only have hired 26 due to lack of district funding.
3. With the assistance of these funds, districts maintain office space in each county, especially those who no longer have an NRCS office in their county.
4. Due to the support of these funds, some districts are better able to provide additional financial assistance to landowners to address conservation concerns as well as other environmental concerns in their communities, such as: Fallen Animal Pickup, Metal Recycling, Household Hazardous Waste Collections, etc.
5. Funds brought into conservation districts are proven to facilitate reinvestment in the local communities.
6. 67 Conservation Districts administer CAIP programs in 70 counties across the Commonwealth of Kentucky in cooperation with the Kentucky Agricultural Development Board and the Kentucky Office of Agricultural Policy.
7. Direct Aid funds assist with the cost of the statutorily required audits of conservation districts.

State Funding of PL-566 Watershed Structure Rehabilitation

The Watershed Protection and Flood Prevention Act (PL-566) authorizes the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service to help organizations and units of government plan and implement watershed projects.

Requesting special funds to establish a Matching Watershed Dam Infrastructure Revolving Fund to match federal and local funds for the purpose of the rehabilitation of high hazard watershed dams across the Commonwealth.



Kentucky Soil Erosion & Water Quality State

Cost Share Program



1. These funds enable producers and landowners to implement best management practices and maintain compliance with their Ag Water Quality Plan. This program helps reduce soil erosion, decrease nutrient runoff, and to make our streams cleaner, which affects everyone in the state.
2. The program also provides financial assistance to landowners under the “Bad Actor Clause” of the Ag Water Quality Act to carry-out corrective measures to keep them in compliance with the Act.
3. Clean water is essential for today's farmers to supply food resources for future increasing populations.
4. Cost Share Funds are invested back into the local community, at a minimum rate of 125%, benefitting local contractors, farm supply stores, seed/fertilizer suppliers, etc.
5. **FY 2024: Allocated Cost Share Funds: \$3,870,784.14**
Requested Cost Share Funds: \$11,364,981.60



Pipeline & Tank



Heavy Use Area

1995: (Start of Program)
\$650,000
Restricted Fund Dollars From KDA
1996:
\$ 1,150,000
Restricted & General Fund Dollars
1997 to 2002:
\$11,150,000
Restricted, General & Tobacco Settlement Dollars
2003 to 2008:
\$9,550,000
Federal, Restricted & Tobacco Settlement Dollars
2009 to 2023:
\$2,500,000
Tobacco Settlement Dollars
2024-2026:
\$2,000,000
Tobacco Settlement Dollars

Increase Audit Limits for Conservation and Water Conservancy Districts

Conservation District Quick Facts

- 121 Conservation Districts in Kentucky.
- 847 public elected officials dedicated to the natural resources of the Commonwealth.
- Every citizen in Kentucky lives within a Conservation District.
- Working at the "grassroots" level to establish conservation programs using federal, state, and local funding.

Currently there is a Special Audit Limit of \$500,000 for all Special Purpose Government Entities. Conservation Districts administer many state and federal grants, which may then cause them to exceed this limit. Many of these funds from the state and federal government are pass-through funds benefiting our local landowners, not the operational budgets of the conservation districts.

REQUEST: To raise the Special Audit Limit to \$1,000,000 for all Conservation and Watershed Conservancy Districts.

Opposed to Conservation District Supervisors Being A Partisan Elected Position

Conservation Districts work at the grassroots level to protect and conserve natural resources across the Commonwealth. Partisanship would provide no clear benefit to the communities we serve; but instead bring undue partisan polarization into local issues. As non-partisan bodies we are better able to represent and serve the communities within the Commonwealth of Kentucky, making sound conservation decisions regardless of political affiliation.

REQUEST: To exempt Conservation District Supervisors from any legislation that would make them partisan.