



Legislative Proposals for 2013

1. **Crep/Wetlands Funding** – The IDDA supports an increased state appropriation from the “Environment First” fund for the Crep/Wetlands program. Every dollar appropriated by the state is able to leverage four federal dollars. The current state appropriation level is \$1 million. With increasing land prices across the state, CREP appropriated dollars do not go as far. The program currently has a waiting list of interested landowners. An increased state appropriation would allow increased construction of nitrate removal wetlands providing increased protection for Iowa’s water. IDDA supports restoring the funding to at least \$1.5 million annually – the funding level before the program was cut.
2. **Regulation of Wetlands** - The IDDA opposes any legislative proposal to empower the state of Iowa to regulate the dredging or filling of isolated wetlands. The dredging or filling of the majority of these isolated wetlands is already subject to review and regulation under provisions of the farm bill or local subdivision approval and building permit authorities. The state of Iowa cannot afford and ought not to divert precious resources toward creation of a needless regulatory bureaucracy.
3. **Ag Drainage Well Closure** – There are currently about 46 ag drainage wells in active use – acting as direct chemical pipelines into drinking water supplies. Previously, state funds were provided to help close these drainage wells. The 2011 legislature eliminated program funding entirely but the 2012 legislature did restore the program. The 2012 appropriation was \$1,550,000 - \$1 million from the Rebuild Iowa Infrastructure Fund and \$550,000 from the environment first fund. IDDA supports funding at the 2012 levels or higher.
4. **Expansion of Definition of Trustee Eligibility** - In some rural drainage districts that still elect trustees, the Code definitions of who is eligible to be a trustee have become problematic. More and more landowners own land in a form other than with their names. For example, they may have trusts that own the land, a partnership or a family farm corporation. The definition of who is eligible to be elected trustee should be expanded to include other types of individuals with ownership interests. This could include a trustee of a trust, a partner that is part of partnership owning land or a stockholder of a farm corporation owning land in the district.
5. **Railroad Responsibility for drainage structures** - The Iowa Supreme Court recently held in *Chicago Central & Pacific Railroad Company vs. the Calhoun County Board of Supervisors* that "when a drainage improvement crossing the railroad's right of way needs to be rebuilt or repaired, the board is responsible for drawing up plans for the rebuilding or reconstruction of the improvement and serving those plans on the railroad. The railroad then has the duty to "build or rebuild the necessary culvert or bridge." IDDA opposes any amendments to the statute that would shift the cost of rebuilding or reconstruction to landowners.