

2013 Legislative Report

Following is a list of bills that passed the 2013 legislature that pertain directly or indirectly to drainage.

HF 152 – The first part of this bill allows levee and drainage districts to enter into agreements with the owners of land lying inside or outside of the district. Previously, the law only allowed such agreements with owners outside of the districts. The rest of the bill deals with election of drainage district trustees that was very specifically written for some districts in southeast Iowa. IDDA supported the legislation. The Governor signed the bill on May 1st.

HF 648 – This is an appropriations bill, which contains a number of provisions important to drainage interests. It was the last bill to pass the legislative session. It contains \$1.62 million in funding for the ag drainage well closure program. Elsewhere in the bill, funding is contained to begin implementation of the state nutrient reduction strategy overseen by the Iowa Department of Agriculture and Land Stewardship. \$7 million is appropriated for soil conservation cost share, \$10 million for the water quality initiative and \$3 million for the Watershed Improvement Fund. Also, \$1.5 million is appropriated to Iowa State University to support an Iowa Nutrient Research Center. The purpose of the research center will be to “pursue a science based approach to nutrient management research.” An advisory council is also created to study and recommendations of solutions for consideration by the center. Finally, this bill also contains \$1 million for the Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP). IDDA supported the legislation. It was signed by the Governor (with some item vetoes) on June 20th.

SF 435 – This is an appropriations bill, which includes \$2.4 million in funding for water quality initiative fund. The purpose of this fund is to reduce nutrients in sub-watersheds. This fund is administered by IDALS. IDDA supported the legislation. It was signed by the Governor on June 17.

HF 460 – This bill made some significant changes in drainage law but was introduced too late in the session to receive consideration. It is expected that it will receive consideration in the next legislative session. Due to the late introduction of the bill, IDDA did not take a position on it. We currently are having the bill reviewed by legal counsel.