



## Legislative Proposals for 2014

- 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. Ag Drainage Well Closure** – There are currently about 45 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 2013 appropriation was \$1.62 million. IDDA supports funding at the 2013 level.
- 3. 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. IDDA supports changing the definition of who is eligible to be elected as a trustee 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.
- 4. Drainage Warrants** - Currently, when drainage warrants are issued, state law requires that warrants be issued in denominations not exceeding \$1,000 (Iowa Code 468.100) For large drainage projects, this creates an unnecessary administrative burden. IDDA supports raising the maximum amount of a drainage warrant to \$5,000.
- 5. Rebuilding Drainage Infrastructure** - The Missouri River Floods of 2011 did extensive damage to the drainage infrastructure in districts that lie along the river. Those districts have found that existing state law – particularly with regards to combining districts, annexation of land and bidding requirements do not contemplate the activity that will have to occur to rebuild that infrastructure. Representative Matt Windsschitl from Missouri Valley introduced HF 460 in 2013 to address these issues. However, the bill was introduced too late in the session to receive active consideration. IDDA is currently working with trustees and county supervisors from that area to make the changes necessary in HF 460 so that it can be actively considered in the 2014 legislature. Assuming that these discussions are successful, IDDA supports a modified version of HF 460 that would address the above issues.