

The Natural Resources & Outdoor Recreation Trust Fund benefits

Water Quality

Iowa relies on its water as a source for drinking, fishing and recreating. Each year, 30 million visits are made to Iowa's lakes and rivers, bringing nearly \$2 billion of spending to our state. Yet, the Iowa DNR has identified over 600 impaired waterbodies.

In the last 30 years, there have also been 951 flood-related disaster declarations have been made in Iowa, costing the state \$13.5 billion. Wetlands act as natural sponges by holding water to prevent downstream flooding. However, more than 90% of Iowa's wetlands have been drained for agriculture and development. Wetland restoration provides a cost-effective solution for mitigating flood damage and improving water quality.

In 2018, the Iowa legislature passed Senate File 512, officially making the Iowa Nutrient Reduction Strategy (NRS) the key legal mechanism for reducing pollution in Iowa's waters. The NRS will cost an average of \$1 billion annually, while SF512 allocates \$282 million total to water quality projects over the next 11 years (concluding in June 2029). The Natural Resources and Outdoor Recreation Trust Fund has an estimated yearly revenue of more than \$180 million, nearly two-thirds of which could go toward water quality projects.

The Iowa's Water and Land Legacy coalition encourages the 2019 Iowa Legislature to pass a sales tax increase to fund the Natural Resources and Outdoor Recreation Trust Fund and improve Iowa's water quality and flood protection.



The majority of Natural Resources and Outdoor Recreation Trust Fund dollars are designated for water quality improvement projects, including lake restoration, wildlife habitat projects, water protection and enhancing flood protection efforts.

- Up to two-thirds of the total revenue of the Trust Fund is available for voluntary, non-regulatory, private land conservation projects outlined in the Nutrient Reduction Strategy.
- More than \$782 million in unmet, shovel-ready project needs have been identified by Iowa's county conservation boards and are ready to go once funding is available.
- The Trust will fund voluntary, non-regulatory conservation partnerships and is accountable to taxpayers through public oversight, mandatory annual audits and regular reports submitted to the Iowa legislature.
- Less than 10 percent of Iowa's wetlands — natural spaces that help prevent flooding and provide habitat for wildlife — remain, amounting to a loss of 5 million acres of wetlands.
- Iowa loses an average of 5 tons per acre of topsoil, our major economic engine, each year to erosion.