

Fiscal Estimate Narratives

DATCP 1/3/2022

LRB Number	21-5172/1	Introduction Number	AB-0728	Estimate Type	Original
Description nitrates under the well compensation program; eligibility for producer-led watershed, lake, and river protection grants; and the annual allocation plan for county conservation grants					

Assumptions Used in Arriving at Fiscal Estimate

This bill impacts two programs at DATCP. The bill makes changes to the statutes to allow producer-led grants to be awarded to producer-led groups that include farmers located in adjacent watersheds, thereby expanding the area a producer-led group may form and states that DATCP may consider demonstrated commitment to implementing a county's land and water resource management plan when allocating soil and water resource management grants (SWRM).

Producer-Led Watershed Protection

The change in producer-led group eligibility may increase the number of applicants for this annual grant program. For 2022, 36 applications were received for approximately \$1.2 million. This increase and any further increase in applicants and award recipients will increase the staff resources needed to administer the grant program.

Soil and Water Resources Management

The bill states that DATCP may consider demonstrated commitment to implementing the county's approved land and water resource management plan and if so, must take into account externalities in the SWRM grant process. These considerations will have no impact on staffing at DATCP. Local governments could be allocated SWRM funds differently, but there is no overall fiscal impact.

Long-Range Fiscal Implications

Long-range implications for changes in eligibility and the continued growth of the Producer-Led program will continue to stress staffing resources available for this program. Additional funding for positions would support added staff resources to continue working closely with applicants, grant recipients, collaborators, regional coordinators, and continue to pursue external grants to further support the work of the farmers in these Producer-Led groups.