



State of Wisconsin  
2023 - 2024 LEGISLATURE

LRB-1584/P2  
JAM&MCP:klm

DOA:.....Hutter, BB0412 - County conservation staffing

**FOR 2023-2025 BUDGET -- NOT READY FOR INTRODUCTION**

**AN ACT** ...; **relating to:** the budget.

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*Analysis by the Legislative Reference Bureau*

**AGRICULTURE**

***County land conservation staff***

Under current law, as part of the Soil and Water Resource Management program, DATCP provides grants to counties for county conservation staffing. Current law specifies the activities that county conservation staff may engage in with grants provided under this program. The bill provides that these grants may also be used to fund county conservation staff who administer or implement long-range planning and erosion control mitigation.

Under current law, grants for county conservation staffing provide full funding for a county's first conservation staff position; 70 percent of the cost of a county's second position; and 50 percent of the cost of a county's third or subsequent position. The county must provide the remaining funds for these conservation staff positions. DATCP and DNR jointly prepare an allocation plan each year, setting out the amounts to be paid to each county under the program. Current law also requires DATCP and DNR to attempt to provide an average of \$100,000 to each county for staffing grants.

Under the bill, if any money remains after meeting these goals, DATCP and DNR may provide, in their annual grant allocation plan, grants to counties for fourth and subsequent conservation staff positions, with a requirement for the county to pay an amount towards those positions as determined by DATCP and DNR; and

grants to counties to assist them in meeting their funding requirements for a second or third conservation staff position.

For further information see the state and local fiscal estimate, which will be printed as an appendix to this bill.

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***The people of the state of Wisconsin, represented in senate and assembly, do enact as follows:***

**SECTION 1.** 92.14 (3) (intro.) of the statutes is amended to read:

92.14 (3) BASIC ALLOCATIONS TO COUNTIES. (intro.) To help counties fund their land and water conservation activities, the department shall award an annual grant from the appropriation under s. 20.115 (7) (c), (qe), or (qf) or s. 20.866 (2) (we) to any county land conservation committee that has a land and water resource management plan approved by the department under s. 92.10 (4) (d), and that, by county board action, has resolved to provide any matching funds required under sub. (5g) unless the county is seeking a grant under sub. (3) (h). The county may use the grant for land and water resource management planning and for any of the following purposes, consistent with the approved land and water resource management plan:

**SECTION 2.** 92.14 (3) (a) 6. of the statutes is created to read:

92.14 (3) (a) 6. Long-range planning and erosion control mitigation.

**SECTION 3.** 92.14 (3) (h) of the statutes is created to read:

92.14 (3) (h) A grant to a county that assists the county in meeting a matching funds requirement under sub. (5g) for a 2nd or 3rd staff person, as provided under sub. (6) (b).

**SECTION 4.** 92.14 (5g) (a) of the statutes is amended to read:

92.14 (5g) (a) Except as provided in par. (b), if a grant under sub. (3) (a) to (g) provides funding for salary and fringe benefits for more than one county staff person, a county shall provide matching funds, as determined by the department by rule,

equal to 30 percent of the cost of salary and fringe benefits for the 2nd staff person and 50 percent of the cost of salary and fringe benefits for ~~any additional staff persons~~ the 3rd staff person for whom the grant provides funding.

**SECTION 5.** 92.14 (6) (b) of the statutes is amended to read:

92.14 (6) (b) The department and the department of natural resources shall prepare an annual grant allocation plan identifying the amounts to be provided to counties under this section and ss. 281.65 and 281.66. In the allocation plan, the departments shall attempt to provide funding under this section for an average of 3 staff persons per county with full funding for the first staff person, 70 percent funding for the 2nd staff person and 50 percent funding for ~~any additional staff persons~~ the 3rd staff person and to provide an average of \$100,000 per county for cost-sharing grants under sub. (3) (a) to (g). If after meeting these goals there are additional funds available, the departments may provide funding in the allocation plan to counties for a 4th or subsequent staff person with a matching requirement to be determined by the departments and for assistance under sub (3) (h). The department shall submit that plan to the board.

\*\*\*NOTE: Does the \$100,000 average per county provision need to be changed/deleted?

(END)