

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

The English River Watershed is participating in the statewide, National Disaster Resiliency – Iowa Watershed Approach project. This 5-year program aims to reduce flooding and improve water quality in select areas of project watersheds. The English River Watershed has \$4.3 million in funding for a cost share program for landowners/tenants in select areas of Iowa and Poweshiek Counties.

1. How long does the program run?

Applications can be submitted starting in December of 2017 and the program will continue until either cost share funds run out or the program ends (in 2021).

2. What practices are eligible?

Contour buffer strips, riparian herbaceous cover, filter strips, conservation cover, oxbow restoration, floodplain restoration, ponds and grade stabilization structures, sediment basins, water and sediment control basins, PRAIRIE strips, terraces, bioreactors, wetlands, saturated buffers, and grassed waterways.

3. What is the cost of participation?

The English River WMA will pay for 100% of engineering & design costs, 75% of construction costs, and legal fees (if applicable). Landowner/tenants are responsible for 25% of construction costs (see Question #4).

4. How is match determined?

The landowner/tenant match will be 25% of the after-survey estimate, based on your county's SWCD average costs. If actual construction costs exceed estimated costs, the IWA project will pay the difference.

5. How do I apply?

Applications and information about the cost share program are available on our website at www.EnglishRiverWMA.org, or by calling (319) 656-2310 and requesting materials be mailed to you. Watershed staff are housed at Kalona City Hall. Just ask to speak to watershed staff when you call.

6. Can conventional cost share funds (through USDA programs) be used to offset 25% match through IWA?

No. Landowners may use low or no-interest loan options (typically 3% interest for 10-year loan) available through your local SWCD office to offset their match, if desired.

7. What channels will be used to notify the public of bid opportunities?

Engineers working with the watersheds in this project have lists of local contractors that are routinely notified of bid opportunities. Anyone can request to be added to this list, if they are not already on it. Contractors are invited to call watershed staff and request to be added to this list. Public notice will also be provided to local publications in the counties in which the work will be performed (this is a program requirement).

8. How do we know we are getting good quality contractors?

We only work with contractors who are licensed, bonded, and insured. This includes a performance bond guaranteeing quality of work 1 year after completion. Contractors must provide examples of previous work as requested. Projects will be bundled to allow opportunities for smaller, local contractors to compete for bids. Contractors will be expected to adhere to strict timelines and all projects will be monitored by technical/engineering staff and will be certified by project engineers after construction is complete.

9. Will my crops be damaged during construction?

Construction will be coordinated with landowner/tenant to avoid adverse impact to crops.

10. Are there limits on cost share amounts?

There will be no limit on number of projects a landowner/tenant is willing to participate in, however, applications are subject to ranking, and the English River WMA reserves the right to prioritize applications based on flood reduction capacity of proposed practices and location, to limit total program expenditures on lower priority practices, such as grassed waterways.

11. Will there be maintenance agreements for the projects? Who is responsible for them?

All projects will have maintenance agreements, which are the responsibility of the landowner/tenant. Contract terms will vary by practice, with buffers requiring 5 – 10-year terms (depending on type); conservation cover 5 years, bioreactors and grassed waterways 10 years; and structural practices such as terraces, ponds, wetland restoration, basins, etc. 20-year terms.