

# SOIL AND WATER Resources

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## Gov. Nixon Appoints Thomas Bradley to the Soil and Water Districts Commission

Gov. Jay Nixon recently appointed Thomas Bradley to the Soil and Water Districts Commission. His term began on Oct. 28. Bradley, from Sikeston, owns approximately 1,000 acres of row crop farmland in New Madrid County.

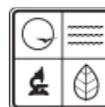
When Bradley was 13 years old, his family moved to a small farm in New Madrid County. He grew up on his father's row crop operation and developed the desire to become a farmer through that experience. Today, almost 50 years later, he still has that desire and dedication that was instilled in him during those early years. At present, he grows cotton, corn, wheat and soybeans and actively participates in several cost-share agricultural programs.

Formerly, Bradley was involved in several agriculture-related businesses. He was part owner and a licensed commodity broker for Ag Data, Inc., and editor of the Ag Data Index, a weekly publication that recommended hedging strategies for cotton, grain and livestock producers. He was also a licensed securities dealer.

He is currently a Missouri real estate broker and an active farm manager for absentee landowners. He was a professional member of the Missouri and American Society of Farm Managers and Rural Appraisers. He is in his fifth term as the New Madrid County treasurer and is the chairman of the New Madrid County Enhanced Enterprise Zone. He served 12 years on the local New Madrid County Soil and Water Conservation District Board and has been active in several other agricultural-related local, state and national organizations. He has a bachelor's degree in agriculture with a minor in geology from Southeast Missouri State University located in Cape Girardeau.

As a recipient of several cost share programs, he is fully aware of the benefits these programs have to the environment and how they help protect soil and water resources. "I feel a sacred responsibility to ensure that these assets are taken care of for the generations to come and it is my goal to ensure these safeguards are in place to accomplish that goal," said Bradley.

Bradley and his wife, Mary Beth, who is a program technician for the United States Department of Agriculture's Farm Services Agency, have two daughters and two grandchildren, with another due in May. He is a life member of the National Rifle Association, a life member of the Safari Club International, a 30-year sponsor of Ducks Unlimited, a founding member of the Big Prairie Jaycees and an Honorary Kentucky Colonel. He loves to hunt and fish and enjoys spending time on the lake pulling his family and friends on tubes, skies and wake boards during the summer months.



**Missouri Department  
of Natural Resources**  
Soil and Water Conservation Program

## FY 2011 Needs Assessment Update and Resource Category Changes

The FY 2011 Needs Assessment report was presented by program staff at the Nov. 30 Soil and Water Districts Commission meeting. The commission was briefed on the proposed fiscal year 2011 department budget, which included \$24 million for the cost-share program. This is \$2 million less than was requested for the current fiscal year. As shown on the graph on page 3, the districts requested \$56.3 million through the needs assessment process. With a reduction in cost-share to \$24 million in fiscal year 2011, the commission directed staff to bring a proposal back in January to allocate 69 percent for sheet/rill and gully erosion practices, which is the same percentage allocated in FY 2010. The remaining budgeted amount of \$7.5 million will be available for the other resource concerns, for which there was \$21.8 million requested. In addition, the commission directed staff to utilize similar maximums utilized in FY 2010 to allow the cost-share funds available to be spread more evenly across the districts. These maximums would include the number of acres requested and the dollar amount requested.

At the meeting, some of the written concerns expressed by the districts about the needs assessment process were addressed by program director Bryan Hopkins and two changes were approved by the commission. To address the issue of flexibility, Hopkins proposed and the commission approved the consolidation of the resource concerns into fewer categories. Next fiscal year, there will be seven resource categories. Changes included combining the sheet and rill erosion and the gully erosion categories; combining the nutrient and pest management categories; moving sinkhole treatment, spring development, well decommissioning, sinkhole improvement, buffer sinkhole improvement and streambank stabilization practices into the sensitive areas category; and moving compost facility and incinerator practices to the animal waste category. See the new categories below.

The other change proposed by Hopkins involved advanced allocations, which is money that will be made available to start practices prior to July 1, 2010, however, the payment will be made after July 1. The advanced allocation will be funded at \$4 million this year. The amounts allocated to each district will be funded as a percentage of the district's FY 2011 cost-share allocation.

### FY 2011 Resource Categories

#### Sheet, Rill and Gully Erosion

- DSL-1: Permanent Vegetative Establishment
- DSL-2: Permanent Vegetative Cover Improvement
- DSL-4: Terrace Systems
- DSL-44: Terrace Systems w/ Tile
- N380: Windbreak Shelterbelt Establishment
- DSL-15: No-Till Systems
- DSL-11: Permanent Vegetative Cover Critical Areas
- DWC-1: Water Impoundment Reservoir
- DWP-1: Sediment Retention, Erosion or Water Control Structure
- DWP-3: Sod Waterways
- DSL-5: Diversions

#### Woodland Erosion

- DFR-4: Forest Plantation
- DFR-5: Woodland Protection through Livestock Exclusion
- N472: Use Exclusion
- C100: Timber Harvest Plans
- N655: Restoration of Skid Trails, Logging Roads, Stream Crossings and Log Landings

#### Irrigation Management

- N442: Irrigation System, Sprinkler
- N443: Irrigation System, Surface and Subsurface
- N447: Irrigation System, Tail Water Recovery
- N430: Irrigation Water Conveyance
- N587: Structure for Water Control
- N554: Drainage Water Management

#### Animal Waste Management

- N312: Waste Management System Beef, Dairy, Poultry, Swine
- N317: Composting Facility
- N316: Incinerator

#### Sensitive Areas

- N386: Field Border
- N393: Filter Strip
- N391: Riparian Forest Buffer
- N380: Windbreak/Shelterbelt Establishment
- WQ10: Stream Protection
- N725: Sinkhole Treatment
- N574: Spring Development
- N351: Well Decommissioning
- DSP-31: Sinkhole Improvement (Only Perry, St. Genevieve and Cape Girardeau Counties)
- C650: Streambank Stabilization

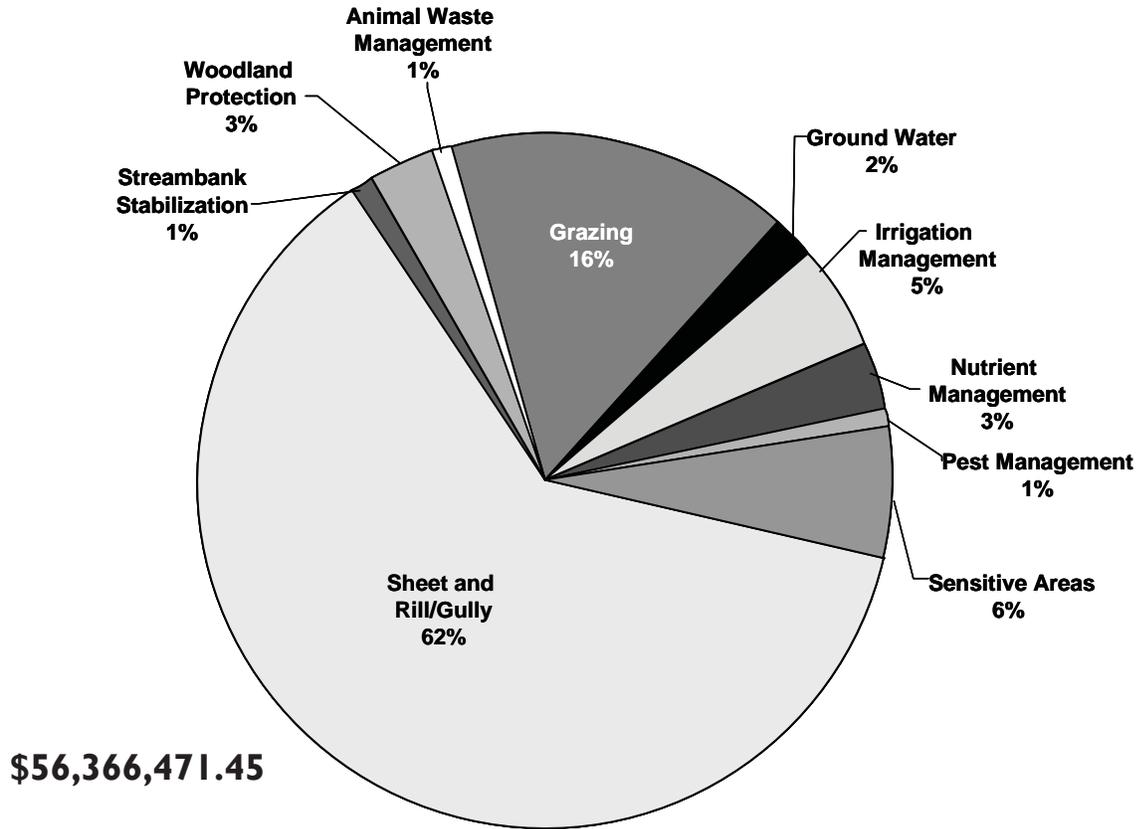
#### Nutrient and Pest Management

- N590: Nutrient Management
- N633: Waste Utilization
- N634: Manure Transfer
- N595: Pest Management

#### Grazing Management

- DSP-2: Permanent Vegetative Cover Enhancement
- DSP 3.1: Planned Grazing System Water Development
- DSP 3.2: Planned Grazing System Water Distribution
- DSP 3.3: Planned Grazing System Fence
- DSP 3.4: Planned Grazing System Lime
- DSP 3.5: Planned Grazing System Seed

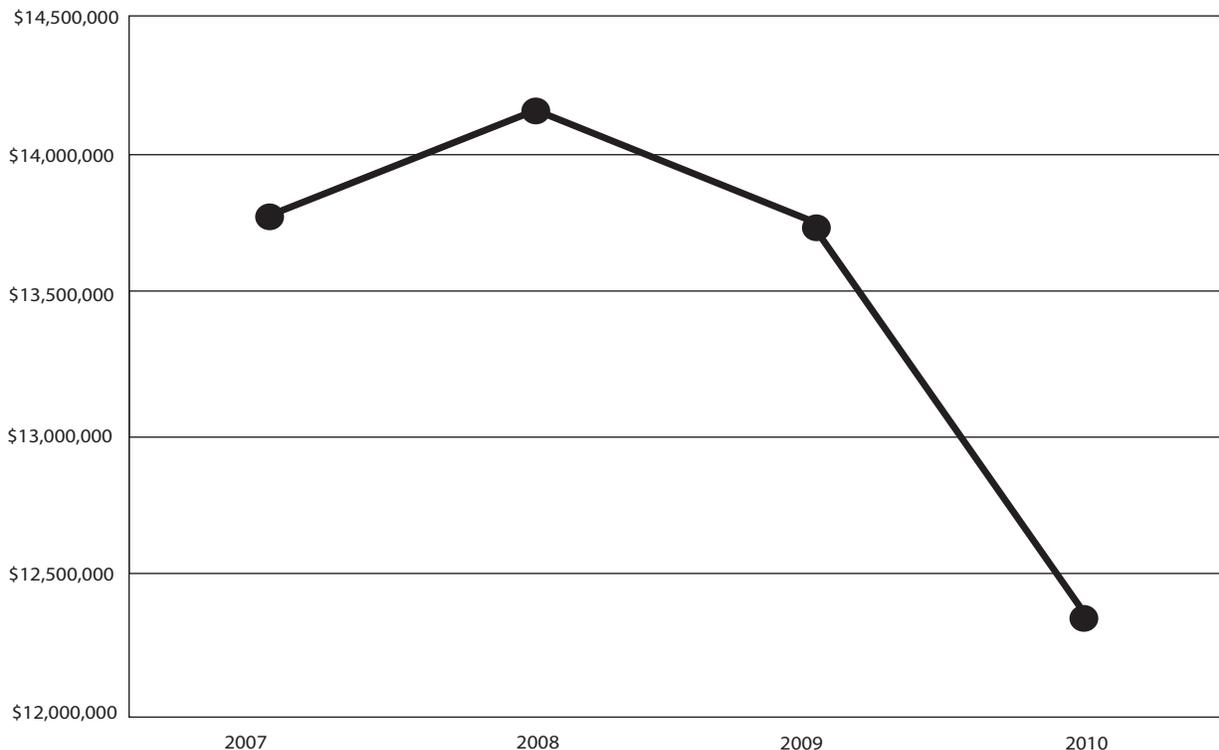
## FY II Requested Cost-Share Funds



## FY 2010 Soil and Water Sales Tax Revenues Drop

As a result of the continually struggling economy, the tax revenues for the first four months (July to October) of FY 2010 reflect a 10.1 percent decrease from the same time frame in FY 2009. If this negative rate does not improve for this year, it will affect the amounts of funds allocated for commission programs.

**Soil Sales Tax Revenue Comparison July to October Totals by Fiscal Year (FY)**



## Practice Policy Review Cycle

During the Nov. 30 commission meeting, program director Bryan Hopkins proposed and the commission endorsed the concept of having a practice policy review cycle much like NRCS does with the Practice Standard and Specifications. During a Practice Policy Review Cycle, staff will be collecting information from the districts on suggestions for policy clarifications and policy enhancements for a particular practice. Hopkins would like to make a comprehensive review of all the policy concerns surrounding a practice, adopt all the necessary policy modifications at once and then keep the policy consistent for a considerable length of time. Once the policy is adopted by the commission, districts will have the opportunity to make further written suggestions on any particular policy clarifications or enhancements at anytime, but these written comments will then be collected until the next Practice Policy Review Cycle is determined necessary for the practice. If there are significant changes to practice policy, training will be provided by program staff in the regions.

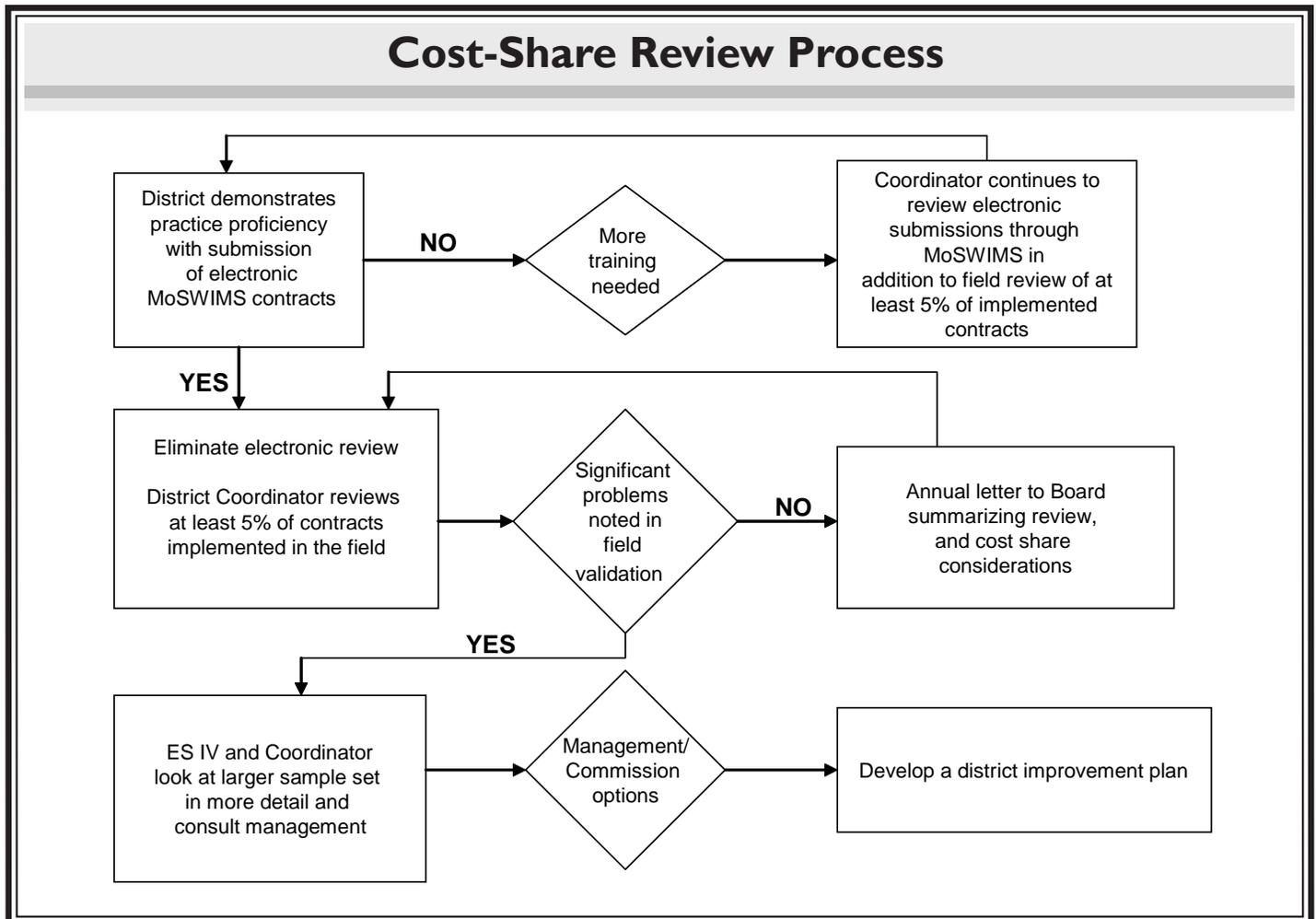
At the Nov. 30 commission meeting, the commission directed a Practice Policy Review be performed on the N386 Field Border practice.

## New Cost-Share

### Contract Review Process

Districts have been entering contracts in the new MoSWIMS program for the past 18 months, and at this time, districts have shown proficiency in providing accurate contracts to landowners. With using reports generated from MoSWIMS, a determination will be made on individual practice proficiency within each district. Initially, the program will be looking at mostly the traditional practices to reduce the level of oversight on each contract.

Basically, if a district has been very proficient in entering contracts in the system, program staff would only review a sample set of submissions and then practice implementation in the field. If a district is not functioning proficiently, more training will be made available and program staff will continue to review all contract submissions until the district proves to be proficient. The flow chart below shows the new review process that program staff will be implementing in the very near future.



### FY2010 Cost-Share as of Dec. 29

Resource Concern	Allocated	Obligated	Obligated %	Claimed	Claimed %
Animal Waste Management	\$416,496.58	\$249,865.95	60 %	\$89,552.50	22 %
Grazing Management	\$4,246,039.11	\$2,204,746.05	52 %	\$546,195.64	13 %
Groundwater Management	\$561,169.37	\$235,016.13	42 %	\$53,523.79	10 %
Irrigation Management	\$747,665.84	\$319,775.55	43 %	\$17,487.70	2 %
Sensitive Areas	\$1,277,402.47	\$427,243.61	33 %	\$82,896.37	6 %
Sheet and Rill/Gully	\$18,300,991.59	\$12,655,731.65	69 %	\$5,189,172.21	28 %
Streambank Erosion	\$170,693.60	\$0.00	0 %	\$0.00	0 %
Woodland Erosion	\$754,289.36	\$371,861.93	49 %	\$92,497.69	12 %
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$26,474,747.92</b>	<b>\$16,464,240.87</b>	<b>62 %</b>	<b>\$6,071,325.90</b>	<b>23 %</b>

### FY2010 Cost-Share SALT as of Dec. 29

	Allocated	Obligated	Obligated %	Claimed	Claimed %
TOTAL	\$7,350,240.79	\$4,441,081.90	60 %	\$2,088,601.28	28%

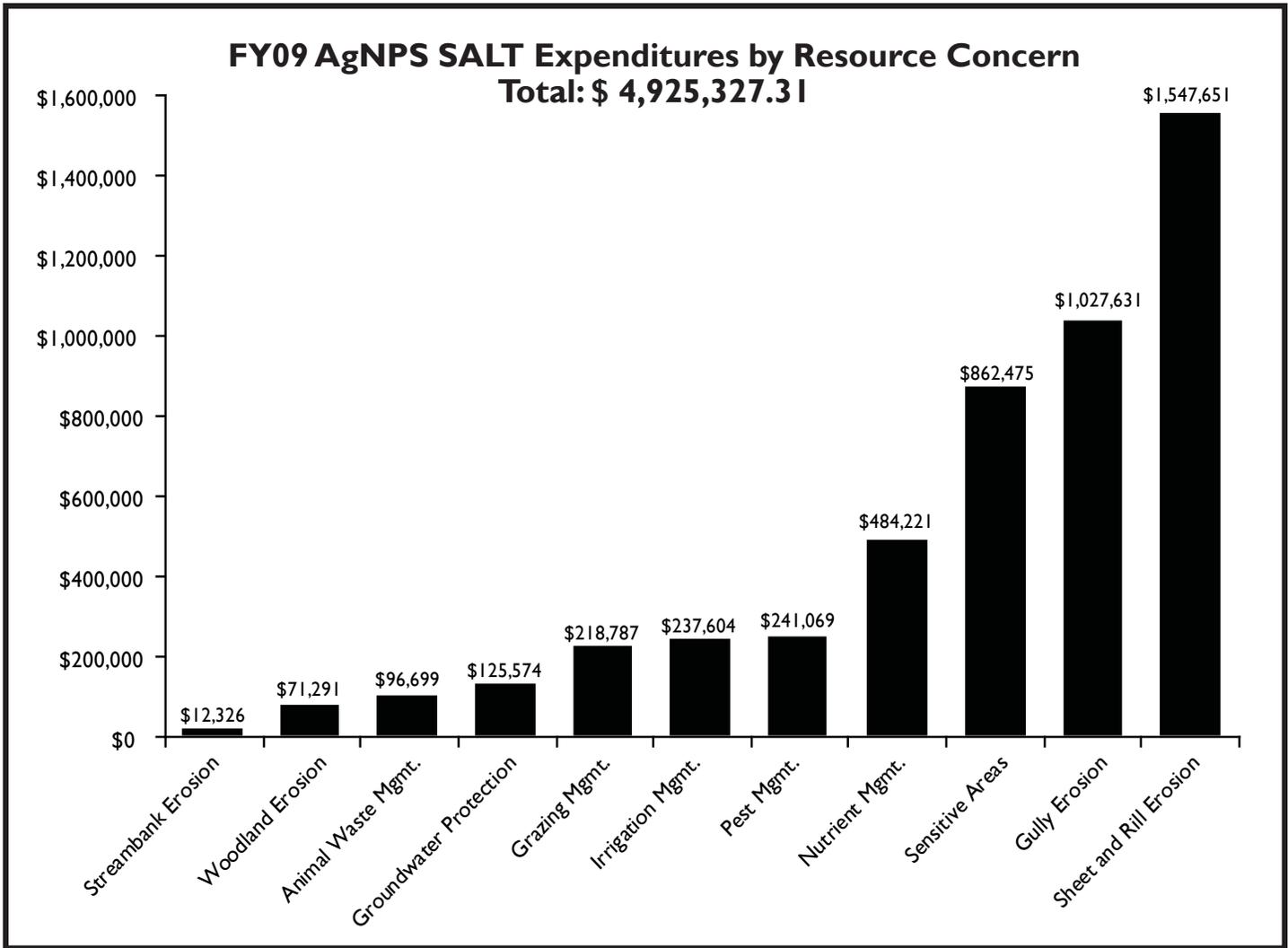
### Summary and Timeline for New Cost-Share Rules

New cost-share rules have been developed as a result of House Bill 250, which changed the definition of the Cost-Share Program to “saving the soil and protecting the water resources of the state to preserve the productive power of Missouri agricultural land.” The Soil and Water Districts Commission has taken steps towards providing additional conservation practices (SALT practices) designed for protecting water resources. An emergency rule to allow implementation of House Bill 250 was put into place until the regular rulemaking process could be completed.

Significant changes to the rules include the availability of incentive payments to landowners or operators for adopting practices that change management techniques and protect water resources. Statewide cost-share rates will continue to be up to 75 percent of the estimated approved costs; however, the commission will have authority to offer up to 100

percent cost-share or special incentive rates for new or priority conservation practices in defined critical areas. Commission policy was also incorporated into the rules to allow landowners or operators a reasonable and fair period of time to correct contract violations (e.g., violations of the maintenance agreement) at their own expense before repayment of cost-share or incentive payments is required.

The proposed amendment is expected to be filed with the Joint Committee on Administrative Rules, or JCAR, and the Office of the Secretary of State, or SOS, Office on Jan. 4, 2010, and published in the Missouri Register by Feb. 1. Following that, there will be a 30-day public notice comment period, which is expected to be open from Feb. 1 through March 3. Any written comments would be appreciated. A response to the comments should be completed by March 8. The expected date to file the Order of Rulemaking with JCAR is March 15 and then with SOS on April 15. The Order of Rulemaking is expected to be published in the Missouri Register on May 17 and in the Code of State Regulations on May 31. The expected amendment effective date is June 30.



### FY 2009 AgNPS SALT Cost-Share Evaluation

Approximately \$4.9 million was spent on 1,226 cost-share and incentive payments during the 2009 fiscal year on AgNPS SALT practices. The highest amount, \$1.5 million, was spent on sheet and rill erosion practices, while \$1 million was expended on gully erosion practices. Refer to the graph above to see how expenditures were distributed between resource concerns.

### Time Accounting System will be Implemented in Early 2010

The commission directed that a standardized time reporting tool be developed at their October meeting. The new system is designed to help the Soil and Water Conservation District boards and the Soil and Water Districts Commission evaluate the staffing time associated with programs administered by the local districts. The new system will be useful in future decisions for the district boards and program.

Current plans are to provide training for the time accounting system in February. Butler, Ray, Bollinger and Saline counties have agreed to pilot the new system in December and January. Staff will be working with the pilots to make sure the system has the necessary codes for tracking time and activities of the district employees.

### Update on New Financial Accounting System

The new financial accounting system is currently in the testing stage. A few counties will be selected to pilot the system with the goal to have them entering transactions in late February.

One of the key advantages with the new system is that all of the data entry and the submission of the district's financial data and documentation will be streamlined. This will assist in providing more accurate data on the use of the soils tax. In addition, the new system will have a more consistent chart of accounts to allow for better reporting and ease of auditing. Since the new system is Web based, it will also be more efficient by eliminating data entry by staff in the district and the program and the need for districts to send hard copies of paperwork to the program office quarterly. Data will also be easier and quicker to view when a district may be experiencing data entry problems.

## Update on Health Insurance for 2010

In October, the Soil and Water Districts Commission approved two health care plans for calendar year 2010, the PPO 300 and the PPO 2000. The number of employees that enrolled in the PPO 300 plan is 166. A total of 101 employees are enrolled in the PPO 2000 plan, of which 83 signed up for the plan and 18 were automatically enrolled in the plan after failing to sign up for insurance by the deadline. If an employee does not want to be in that plan, there is an appeal process. Please refer to memo 2010-017.

At this time, the districts need to notify the program office if any of their employees have secondary insurance. The Missouri Consolidated Health Care Plan requires that this information be submitted. If you have any questions, please contact Jim Boschert at the Soil and Water Conservation Program office at 573-522-3320.

## Upcoming Events

Jan. 13

Soil and Water Districts  
Commission Meeting,  
Elm Conference Center,  
Jefferson City

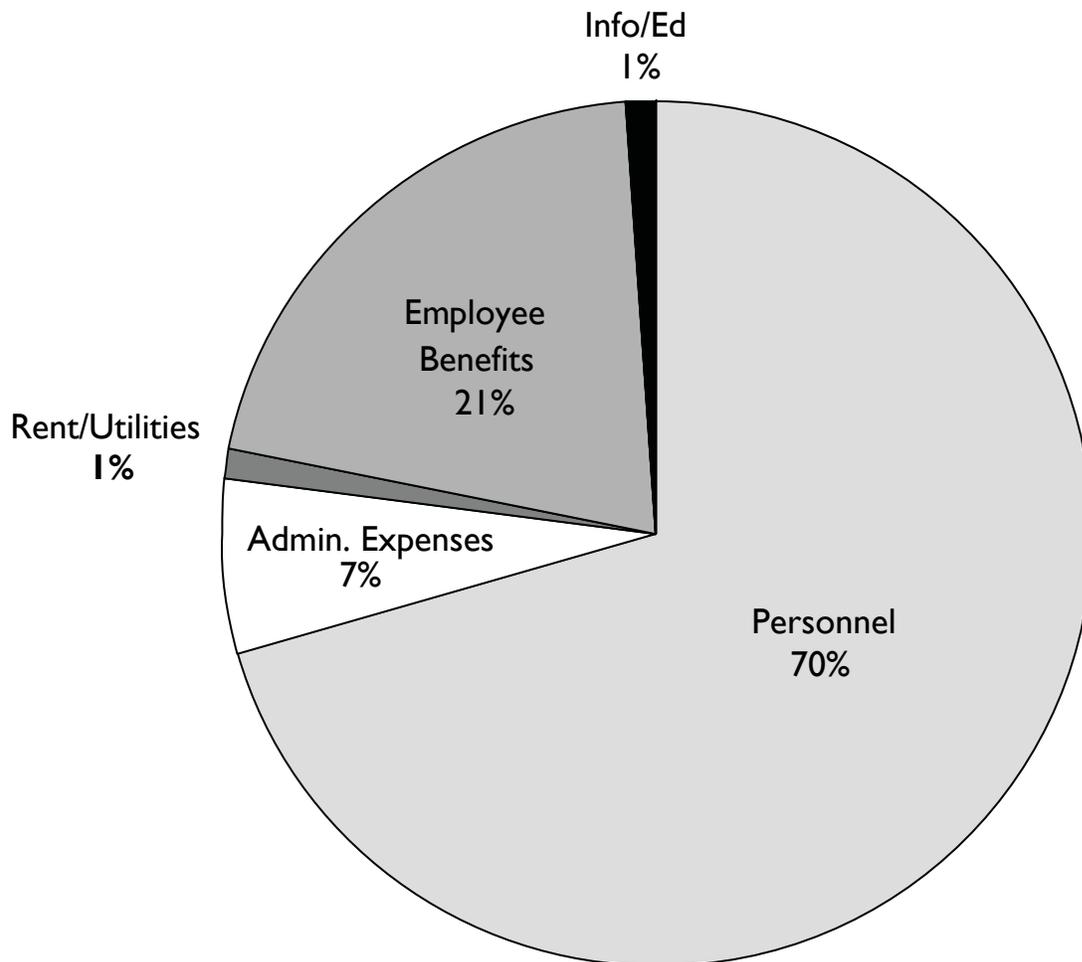
Jan. 19

Well Decommissioning Training,  
Elm Street Conference Center,  
Jefferson City

Feb. 16

Well Decommissioning Training,  
Elm Street Conference Center,  
Jefferson City

## FY 2009 Usage of District Assistance Grants Total Amount Spent: \$9,108,320



The graph above shows how much of the \$9.1 million in district assistance grant money for fiscal year 2009 was used and what it was spent on statewide.



# SOIL AND WATER *Resources*

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