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State of Minnesota

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

NINETY-SECOND SESSION

H. F. No. **3302**

02/10/2022 Authored by Lippert; Hansen, R.; Acomb; Long; Lillie and others
The bill was read for the first time and referred to the Committee on Environment and Natural Resources Finance and Policy
03/23/2022 Adoption of Report: Amended and re-referred to the Committee on Higher Education Finance and Policy

1.1 A bill for an act
1.2 relating to natural resources; providing for soil health; appropriating money;
1.3 proposing coding for new law in Minnesota Statutes, chapters 103C; 103F.

1.4 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF MINNESOTA:

1.5 Section 1. **[103C.701] SOIL-HEALTH GOALS.**

1.6 The state of Minnesota's soil-health goals are that:

1.7 (1) at least 5,750,000 acres employ cover crops, perennial crops, no-till, or managed
1.8 rotational grazing by 2030;

1.9 (2) at least 11,500,000 acres employ cover crops, perennial crops, no-till, or managed
1.10 rotational grazing by 2035; and

1.11 (3) at least 23,000,000 acres employ cover crops, perennial crops, no-till, or managed
1.12 rotational grazing by 2040.

1.13 Sec. 2. **[103F.49] SOIL HEALTH COST-SHARE PROGRAM.**

1.14 Subdivision 1. **Definitions.** (a) For purposes of this section, the terms in this subdivision
1.15 have the meanings given.

1.16 (b) "Board" means the Board of Water and Soil Resources.

1.17 (c) "Local units of government" has the meaning given under section 103B.305,
1.18 subdivision 5.

1.19 (d) "Soil health" has the meaning given under section 103C.101, subdivision 10a.

2.1 Subd. 2. **Establishment.** The board must administer a cost-share program consistent
2.2 with section 103C.501 to establish soil health practices that mitigate climate change impacts,
2.3 improve water quality, and provide related public benefits.

2.4 Subd. 3. **Financial assistance.** (a) The board may provide financial assistance to local
2.5 units of government, private sector providers, and farmers for the costs of soil health and
2.6 related water-quality practices consistent with a plan approved according to chapter 103B,
2.7 103C, or 103D. The board must establish costs eligible for financial and technical assistance
2.8 under this section.

2.9 (b) The board may enter into agreements with local units of government receiving
2.10 financial assistance under this subdivision.

2.11 (c) Financial assistance under this subdivision must give priority to multiyear contracts
2.12 and to leveraging contributions from nonstate sources.

2.13 (d) Financial assistance under this subdivision must give priority to multiyear contracts
2.14 that prioritize long-term soil health practices, including but not limited to no-till, field
2.15 borders, prairie strips, and other practices sanctioned by the board or the United States
2.16 Department of Agriculture's Natural Resources Conservation Service, that, separately or
2.17 together with other conservation practices, provide durable soil health and related benefits.

2.18 Subd. 4. **Technical assistance; review.** (a) The board may employ or contract with
2.19 experts to implement the soil health program under this section.

2.20 (b) When implementing the soil health program, the board must:

2.21 (1) assist local units of government in achieving the objectives of the program;

2.22 (2) review and assess practice standards; and

2.23 (3) evaluate the effectiveness of completed practices.

2.24 Subd. 5. **Federal aid availability.** The board must regularly complete an analysis of the
2.25 availability of federal funds and programs to supplement or complement state and local
2.26 efforts consistent with the purposes of this section.

2.27 Subd. 6. **Carbon market applicability.** The board and the commissioner of agriculture
2.28 may cooperate with the United States Department of Agriculture, other federal and state
2.29 agencies, and private sector organizations to align or incorporate soil health practices with
2.30 carbon trading, mitigation, or offset markets and related tracking or recognition efforts.

3.1 Sec. 3. **SOIL HEALTH; APPROPRIATION.**

3.2 \$17,000,000 in fiscal year 2023 is appropriated from the general fund to the Board of
3.3 Water and Soil Resources to accelerate the adoption of soil health practices consistent with
3.4 Minnesota Statutes, sections 103C.101, subdivision 10a, and 103F.49. The base appropriation
3.5 under this section in fiscal year 2024 and thereafter is \$4,500,000.

3.6 Sec. 4. **STATEWIDE SOIL HEALTH ACTION PLAN; APPROPRIATION.**

3.7 \$180,000 in fiscal year 2023 is appropriated from the general fund to the Board of
3.8 Regents of the University of Minnesota to develop a soil health action plan, in consultation
3.9 with the Minnesota Office for Soil Health, the United States Department of Agriculture's
3.10 Natural Resources Conservation Service, and other state and federal agencies, academic
3.11 institutions, local governments, and practitioners, that will provide recommendations for
3.12 standardized specifications for soil health and related conservation and climate protection
3.13 practices and projects to achieve soil health goals, including recommendations for research,
3.14 implementation, outreach, and prioritization of the use of future funding. By January 15,
3.15 2023, the plan must be submitted to the chairs and ranking minority members of the house
3.16 of representatives and senate committees and divisions with jurisdiction over agriculture
3.17 and environment and natural resources policy. This is a onetime appropriation.