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State of Minnesota

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

NINETY-FIRST SESSION

H. F. No. 1569

02/21/2019 Authored by Lippert, Brand, Hansen, Persell and Christensen
The bill was read for the first time and referred to the Committee on Environment and Natural Resources Policy
02/28/2019 Adoption of Report: Re-referred to the Committee on Ways and Means

1.1 A bill for an act
1.2 relating to natural resources; establishing pilot program for drinking water
1.3 protection; appropriating money.

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

1.5 Section 1. WORKING LANDS; PILOT PROGRAM FOR DRINKING WATER
1.6 PROTECTION.

1.7 Subdivision 1. Goal. It is the goal of the state to develop a market-driven strategy for
1.8 enhancing clean water and conservation outcomes by using perennial crops and cover crops
1.9 that can yield multiple benefits for water quality, soil health, carbon storage, habitat, and
1.10 Minnesota's rural economy.

1.11 Subd. 2. Program. (a) In selected areas, to protect sources of drinking water, the Board
1.12 of Water and Soil Resources must develop and implement a working lands pilot program
1.13 that includes:

1.14 (1) criteria and a process for selecting drinking water supply management areas that are
1.15 expected to result in the greatest water quality improvements and that exhibit readiness to
1.16 participate in the program;

1.17 (2) criteria for screening landowners and operators interested in participating in the
1.18 program;

1.19 (3) outreach to local governments, interest groups, and individual farmers on the economic
1.20 and environmental benefits of perennial and cover crops;

2.1 (4) coordination with soil and water conservation districts, watershed districts, public
2.2 water suppliers, cities, counties, and other local government entities to develop and participate
2.3 in the program;

2.4 (5) agronomic assistance to growers in establishing and maintaining the selected crops,
2.5 in coordination with the Forever Green Initiative and the University of Minnesota extension
2.6 programs;

2.7 (6) contract terms that provide flexibility for participating growers to establish a variety
2.8 of crops, crop rotations, and livestock enterprises that provide a high level of living cover
2.9 throughout the year and that can provide economic return;

2.10 (7) coordination with end users to establish off take agreements and delivery supply
2.11 chains for harvested crops;

2.12 (8) coordination with One Watershed, One Plan and other watershed-scale planning
2.13 efforts;

2.14 (9) coordination with initiatives related to protecting groundwater and drinking water,
2.15 soil health, and habitat;

2.16 (10) evaluation of current conditions and measurable water quality improvements under
2.17 the program; and

2.18 (11) efforts to use federal funds for assistance to establish perennial and cover crops to
2.19 the greatest extent possible.

2.20 (b) The board must coordinate developing the working lands pilot program with
2.21 stakeholders and the commissioners of health, natural resources, agriculture, and the Pollution
2.22 Control Agency and the University of Minnesota. The board must submit annual progress
2.23 reports by January 1 and a final report assessing program results by June 30, 2024. All
2.24 reports must be submitted to the chairs and ranking minority members of the legislative
2.25 committees and divisions with jurisdiction over agriculture, natural resources, and
2.26 environment policy and finance and to the Clean Water Council.

2.27 Subd. 3. **Appropriation.** \$8,500,000 in fiscal year 2020 is appropriated from the general
2.28 fund to the Board of Water and Soil Resources to establish the pilot program under this
2.29 section. This is a onetime appropriation and is available until June 30, 2024.