



SBARE Update State Soil Conservation Committee

The State Soil Conservation Committee (SSCC) is the state agency responsible for soil conservation in North Dakota. This seven-member board includes five elected members representing Soil Conservation Districts (SCDs) across the state. The remaining two members are appointed by the governor to represent industries and interests not already represented on the board. This structure means that the SSCC brings decades of conservation, agriculture and management experience to districts.

The SSCC, as prescribed by state law and in collaboration with our partners, works toward soil conservation by facilitating communication among districts, managing the District Activity Reporting Tool (DART), administering required SCD supervisor training, distributing state funds to districts and more.

For the 2021-2023 biennium, the SSCC received \$1.21 million to distribute among the state's 54 SCDs. **100% of funds allocated to the SSCC by the legislature are distributed directly to SCDs**, where they are used for employee salaries or benefits only. Districts use these funds to provide technical assistance and conservation planning support to residents, creating a direct, voluntary, locally-led conservation impact in every corner of the state.

The SSCC distributes state funds to SCDs to **maximize conservation impact**. Factors considered include staffing levels, supervisor training participation, reporting compliance, local funding availability and more.

Additional support for SCDs will:

- Increase implementation of conservation practices
- Reduce staff turnover
- Improve employee job satisfaction
- Free up funds for employee professional development

These funds are a lifeline in many districts. About 42% of SCDs generate less than \$50,000 in mill levy revenue per year, and 70% of districts generate less than \$100,000. Once other district expenses like building and equipment maintenance are completed, few districts generate enough funds to support even one full-time employee. In today's job market, it has become even more difficult for districts to attract and maintain staff. A lack of locally generated funds also puts districts in a difficult position when applying for grants that require matching funds.

Despite these challenges, SCDs accomplish incredible things every year. Thanks to the District Activity Reporting Tool (DART), built to support district planning and share accomplishments, we are able to report that in 2020, North Dakota's SCDs:

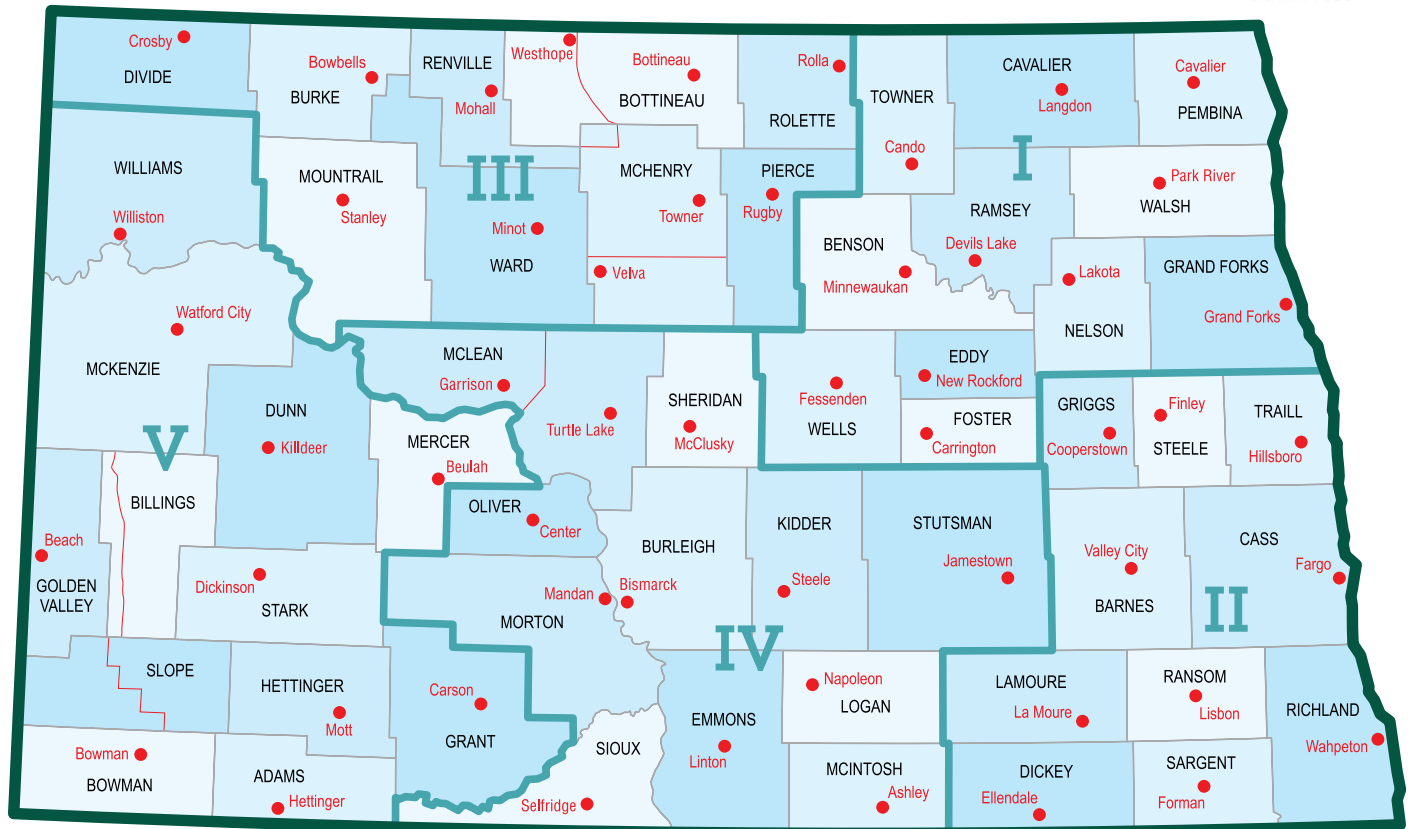
- Presented conservation and ag literacy educational programs to more than 9,600 K-12 students and 900 college students
- Seeded more than 7,300 acres of cover crops and nearly 4,000 acres of grasslands for soil health, livestock forage and wildlife habitat
- Planted more than 700 miles of erosion-reducing windbreaks, including more than 32,000 hand-planted trees
- Provided conservation-based workshops, programs and field days to more than 4,000 attendees
- Tested more than 1,400 water samples to ensure the safety of people and livestock
- Planned and installed more than 25 miles of water pipeline to improve livestock distribution and increase ranch profitability
- Conducted more than 900 hours of soil testing and nearly 800 hours of soil mapping for ag producers

Increased state support for soil conservation is needed to build on the accomplishments above. In order to move toward that, the SSCC requests that the State Board of Agricultural Research and Education (SBARE) prioritize an additional \$300,000 of district assistance funding to be distributed by the SSCC. This increase would help offset inflationary forces and directly impact soil conservation in North Dakota. As with the current allocation, this increase would be strategically distributed by the SSCC to maximize its impact.

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| Current State Biennial Allocation | \$1,211,520 |
| Average Annual Allocation per SCD | \$11,218 |
| Current Maximum Annual Allocation per SCD | \$18,215 |
| Requested Biennial Allocation | \$1,511,520 |
| Requested Average Annual Allocation per SCD | \$13,995 |



Soil Conservation Districts in North Dakota



NDSU

EXTENSION

— Shared SCD/County Boundary
— SCD Boundary
— SCD Area Boundary
● SCD Office

North Dakota Soil Conservation Districts

AREA I

North Central SCD
(Benson County)
Cavalier County SCD
Eddy County SCD
Foster County SCD
Grand Forks County SCD
Nelson County SCD
Pembina County SCD
Ramsey County SCD
Towner County SCD
Walsh County SCD
Wells County SCD

SSCC Member:
Donna Grann, Sheyenne

Governor's Appointee: Barton Schott, Kulm
Governor's Appointee: Kelly Klosterman, Mooreton

AREA II

Barnes County SCD
Cass County SCD
James River SCD
(Dickey County)
Griggs County SCD
LaMoure County SCD
Ransom County SCD
Richland County SCD
Wild Rice SCD
(Sargent County)
Steele County SCD
Traill County SCD

SSCC Member:
Warren Solberg, Horace

AREA III

Mouse River SCD
(Bottineau County)
Turtle Mountain SCD
(Bottineau County)
Burke County SCD
Divide County SCD
North McHenry County SCD
South McHenry County SCD
Mountrail County SCD
Pierce County SCD
Renville County SCD
Roulette County SCD
Ward County SCD

SSCC Member:
David Hill, Willow City

AREA IV

Burleigh County SCD
Emmons County SCD
Kidder County SCD
Logan County SCD
McIntosh County SCD
South McLean County SCD
West McLean County SCD
Morton County SCD
Oliver County SCD
Sheridan County SCD
Cedar SCD
Stutsman County

SSCC Member:
Jack Spah, Tuttle

AREA V

Adams County SCD
Bowman-Slope SCD
Dunn County SCD
Golden Valley SCD
Grant County SCD
Slope-Hettinger SCD
McKenzie County SCD
Mercer County SCD
Stark and Billings SCD
Williams County SCD

SSCC Member:
Wes Frederick, Flasher

<https://www.ag.ndsu.edu/ndssc>