

Subject Southeast regional groundwater protection and soil health

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Summary

This bill would appropriate an unspecified amount of money from the general fund to the Minnesota Department of Agriculture (MDA). MDA would then award this money as grants to soil and water conservation districts (SWCDs) in the following counties: Dodge, Fillmore, Freeborn, Goodhue, Houston, Mower, Olmsted, Rice, Steele, Wabasha, and Winona. The purpose of these grants is to (1) reduce leaching of excess crop nutrients into groundwater, (2) immobilize unused nitrogen from the rooting zone, and (3) reduce erosion.

These grants are in conjunction with Olmsted County's groundwater protection and soil health initiative. This initiative has several programs that share costs or provide funding assistance to implement management practices that protect groundwater and soil health. SWCDs may use the grants awarded in this bill to make subgrants for projects with Olmsted County's groundwater protection and soil health initiative.