

Conservation Kick

CONNECTING COMMUNITIES

What if drinking water utilities could work with upstream producers to install conservation practices that reduce nutrient loss and protect source water?

Conservation Kick will facilitate the purchase of water quality credits by drinking water utilities. The credits, generated by agricultural producers interested in reducing nutrient loss from their operations, will support local source water protection strategies. By connecting drinking water utilities with agricultural producers, transactions in the Conservation Kick marketplace will result in improvements to community health, local economies, and the environment.



DRINKING WATER UTILITIES

Fund conservation practices that reduce nutrient and sediment loss

Improve source water quality

Reduce costs associated with drinking water treatment



AGRICULTURAL PRODUCERS

Install targeted conservation practices with funding from drinking water providers

Improve soil health for a more sustainable and economical farm



ECOSYSTEMS

Improve water quality

Provide habitat for wildlife, including pollinators

Capture and store carbon

Contact Great Lakes Commission Program Manager Nicole Zacharda at nzacharda@glc.org for more information.

How Conservation Kick Works

- 1 Great Lakes Commission (GLC) partners with interested water quality credit buyers to identify nutrient reduction objectives (list of eligible buyers below). The GLC's grant **provides 1:1 matching funds of up to \$10,000 to double local investment**
- 2 GLC works with local colleagues to recruit agricultural producers to install conservation practices that **make progress toward a buyer's nutrient reduction objectives**
- 3 Nutrient reductions are quantified into "**credits**" and water quality investor and agricultural producer **enter a contract for purchase of the credits**. Initial payments will be drawn from the grant's matching funds with remaining payments structured over the life of a 10-year contract
- 4 Agricultural producer **installs conservation practice to improve water quality**
- 5 Practice implementation is verified and then **confirmed annually**
- 6 **Water quality improves and agricultural producer is compensated for practice implementation**

WHO CAN BUY WATER QUALITY CREDITS?

Municipal governments
Drinking water utilities
Local watershed organizations
Private sector companies*
Philanthropic foundations*

WHICH AGRICULTURAL PRODUCERS CAN SELL WATER QUALITY CREDITS?

Row-crop producers
Livestock and
poultry operations

* Private sector purchases are not eligible for matching funds from GLC

What conservation practices does Conservation Kick fund?

Conservation Kick funds a variety of conservation practices meeting NRCS standards, including cover crops, filter strips, drainage water management, and riparian buffers.

Project Timing

Funds are available for approximately 5 community-based buyers to participate by committing to work with the GLC team by **May 1, 2021**

While the grant supporting Conservation Kick will end on February 28, 2022, GLC staff will remain available to assist buyers with annual verification and payment reminders

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