Cost-Share Program: This program provides incentives for landowners to install practices that prevent or control excessive erosion, such as terraces and water impoundment reservoirs. Landowners can request up to 75 percent of the cost of the practice to be reimbursed, after the practice has gone through a certification process.

Agricultural Nonpoint Source Special Area Land Treatment Program (AgNPS SALT): These five to seven year projects focus on decreasing agricultural nonpoint source pollution in watersheds. AgNPS SALT uses total resource management to decrease sediments, pesticides and nutrients entering waterways. More than 70 watershed projects have received funding and assistance since the program's creation, and seven projects have been completed.

Soil Science: The soil science section provides a scientific foundation for conservation by continually updating the Soil Survey, which is available to the public at no charge (http://soils.missouri.edu), and providing technical soils assistance to landowners.

The department's Soil and Water Conservation Program also provides money for university research, district benefits and administrative costs. The program receives no general revenue funding for soil and water conservation efforts.

The Parks-and-Soils Sales Tax

Article IV, Sections 47 (a), (b) and (c) of the Missouri Constitution

- ► Designates a one-tenth-of-one percent sales tax
- ► Revenue is divided equally between soil and water conservation and state parks
- ► Originally passed in 1984
- ► Missouri voters renewed the sales tax in 1988 and 1996
- ► Unless renewed, the tax is currently set to expire November 2008

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Conserving Soil and Water for Future Generations

The Parks-and-Soils Sales Tax

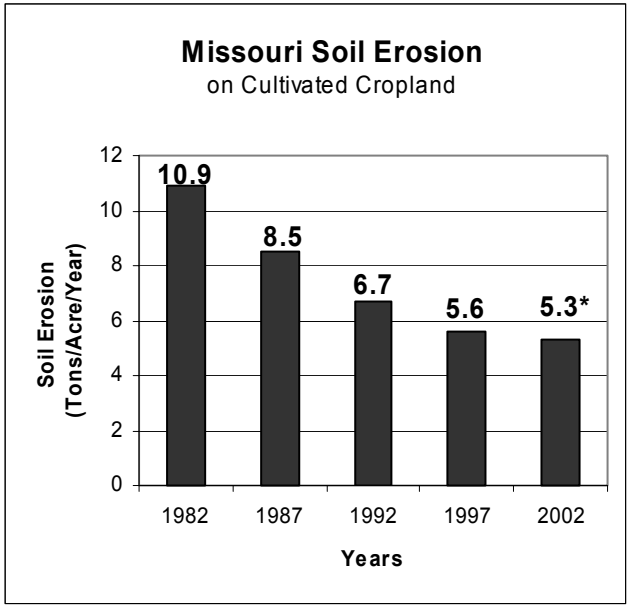
In the 1930s, Americans realized how devastating soil erosion could be, as the Dust Bowl swept across the nation relocating an estimated 300 million tons of soil. Legislation began to take shape to better manage and conserve our nation's soil. Despite these actions, Missouri was still plagued with high erosion rates.

In 1982, Missouri was losing soil at a rate of 10.9 tons per acre each year on cultivated cropland. A one-tenth-of-one-percent parks-and-soils sales tax was passed by Missouri voters in 1984 to fund state parks and soil conservation efforts. Prior to the passage of the parks-and-soils sales tax, Missouri had the second highest rate of erosion in the nation.

Missouri's erosion rate dropped more than any other state from 1982 to 1997. Missouri ranks seventh in the nation, with the most recent data showing an erosion rate of 5.3 tons per acre* (2002). It is estimated that more than 148 million tons of soil have been saved since the start of the sales tax, but at least 40 million tons of soil still wash away every year on cultivated cropland in Missouri.

Figure 1: Rates of soil erosion on cultivated cropland in Missouri from 1982 to 2002. Missouri's soil erosion rate has dropped by 5.6 tons/acre.*

A ton of soil spread across an acre would be as thick as a dime and cover a football field.



Soil Erosion in Missouri

Missouri has made tremendous progress in soil conservation through the use of programs supported by the sales tax. Although soil erosion is a natural process caused by wind and water, erosion can be accelerated when humans alter the landscape.

There are 3.7 million acres* still eroding above tolerable rates in Missouri. It is imperative for water quality and productive agricultural land that erosion is kept to a minimum.

Missouri's $4.97 billion agricultural industry depends on soil. Soil is the basis of production agriculture. Even with advancements in agricultural technologies, the productivity of the soil must be protected.

Of Missouri's 44.6 million acres of land, 26.3 million acres are considered agricultural (10.5 million acres cultivated cropland, 14.2 million acres pasture and hay land, and 1.6 million acres Conservation Reserve Program land). Missouri's productive soils can be difficult to farm due to the hilly topography. Erosion can cause additional problems by washing away the productive topsoil, leading to decreased productivity of our land. Decreased productivity affects Missouri's food supply and its economy.

When soil erodes it can wash into streams, rivers and lakes. Sediment is the leading cause of water pollution in Missouri. Soil not only decreases water clarity, it carries chemicals and nutrients into Missouri's waterways.

**Signifies pre-release estimates based upon the 2003 National Resources Inventory. These estimates are subject to change.*

Sediment increases chances of flooding, and it can also lead to the destruction of valuable aquatic habitat, such as fish spawning areas. Chemicals entering water can add millions of dollars each year to water treatment cost. By focusing efforts on controlling erosion on agricultural land, we can have a greater impact and better conserve Missouri's water resources.

Soil conservation is vital to the quality of life in Missouri. By sharing the costs, all Missourians are able to share the benefits of soil and water conservation.

Voluntary Programs Help Landowners Decrease Erosion

The Missouri Department of Natural Resources' Soil and Water Conservation Program has been entrusted to conserve Missouri's soil and water for future generations. With funding from the parks-and-soils sales tax, the department has been able to create several voluntary programs that provide agricultural landowners incentives for using soil and water conservation practices.

District Grants: Each of the 114 soil and water conservation districts in Missouri receives a district grant. These grants can be used to hire personnel, fund technical assistance, and provide information and education programs.

Loan Interest-Share Program: This program reimburses a portion of interest on landowners' loans when they purchase equipment or administer management practices that reduce erosion or the potential for erosion.

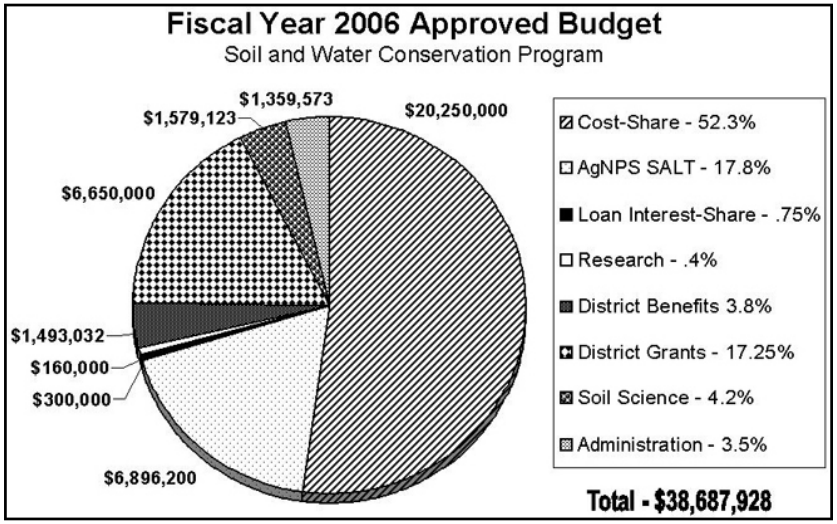


Figure 2: The 2006 approved budget for the Soil and Water Conservation Program. Fiscal Year 2006 began July 1, 2005.