

Transition from practice-based to performance-based compensation for federal agriculture conservation programs

Many agricultural entities are enabled to collect money for “Conservation Practices” that may not accomplish what they are intended to do. The U.S. General Accounting Office has issued recommendations to focus agriculture conservation programs on performance rather than practices as performed per program directives.

The intent of this resolution is to encourage the transition, over time, from primarily providing federal conservation funding to farmers for installation of practices (such creating buffer strips along streams or planting cover crops) without tying any of that taxpayer support to measurable conservation outcomes, to ensuring a portion of compensation is tied to achieving conservation outcomes, especially related to improving soil health and reducing polluted runoff.

Therefore, be it resolved that the Izaak Walton League of America, assembled in convention in Lincoln, Nebraska July 29, 2023 amends its Conservation Policies, Chapter III Stewardship of the Land, by adding the following new provision to B) Agricultural Conservation 5):

5) Federal conservation programs should:

f) facilitate a transition from a practice-based compensation to a performance-based compensation system by incentivizing more widespread implementation of conservation practices that improve soil health, reduce soil erosion and improve water quality.