


MEMORANDUM
FY2026-013

DATE: June 4, 2026

TO: All Soil and Water Conservation Districts

FROM: Jim Plassmeyer, Director 
Soil and Water Conservation Program

SUBJECT: Funding for Technical Equipment

During FY26 the Soil and Water Conservation Program (SWCP) has continued to implement the long-term goals of better pay and benefits for district staff, increased staff capacity to support the cost-share program, and incentives for district performance. While all these items come with a significant price tag, the program was able to realize some significant savings due to staff turnover, long term vacancies and funding that districts rolled over from previous fiscal years.

The program has decided to distribute this available funding to districts as a one-time allocation in the 48 Technical Fund. Each district will receive an allocation of \$15,000 to their 48 fund in fiscal year 2026. This funding will not expire and can be rolled into future fiscal years.

As in the past, all items purchased or training taken must be in support of technical assistance in Soil and Water Conservation Districts (SWCD). SWCD boards should review the attached list and determine which item(s) will be the most beneficial to the SWCD for technical work. The SWCP encourages SWCD boards and staff to thoroughly research each item for purchase, especially the electronic items (iPad/tablets, GPS units, Trimble units), to make sure they are compatible with current SWCD and/or NRCS computer equipment. Some of these items include annual costs such as maintenance, upgrades, insurance, and data plans. Please be sure sufficient funds will be available through state and/or local sources for the total costs of items purchased. If multiple districts want to jointly use their funding to buy shared technical equipment such as a GPS unit, each district needs to pay the vendor directly in order for the purchase to be eligible from state funding. If SWCDs previously paid expenses from their local funds for an eligible item, the SWCD cannot reimburse their local funds for the expense. If you have any questions, please contact your district coordinator. Thank you.

Attachment



Eligible Items for Technical Grant

Camera	To assist SWCD staff to document state cost-share practices during construction, at completion, and throughout maintenance of practices. Eligible items are camera, case, and SD cards.
Computer Monitor	To allow SWCD staff a second monitor to utilize Citrix, which will expedite planning and mapping of state cost-share practices. Eligible item is computer monitor.
GPS Unit	To assist SWCD staff with designing state cost-share practice in the field. Eligible items are GPS unit, case, battery charger, external antenna, and a battery.
iPad	To assist SWCD staff with designing state cost-share practices in the field. Eligible items are iPad, case, external antenna, data plan, software updates, stylus pen, and iPad holder for truck or UTV.
Laser Level	To assist SWCD staff with surveying structural practices built with state cost-share funds. Eligible items are laser level and case.
Smart Phone	To enhance contact with SWCD staff while they are in the field and to document cost-share practices. Eligible items are phone, case, data plan, and monthly fees.
Surveying Rod	To assist SWCD staff with surveying structural practices built with state cost-share funds. Eligible item is surveying rod.
Technical Training	To provide SWCD staff with training for technical aspects of their work. Eligible items (registration, hotel, meals, and mileage) are costs associated with SWCD staff attending technical training provided by Natural Resources Conservation Service, Soil and Water Conservation Program, or other approved entities.
Trimble Unit	To assist SWCD staff with surveying structural practice built with state cost-share funds. Eligible expenses are Trimble unit, data collector, range pole and brackets, dome, service contract, data card, monthly service, case, charger, batteries, and software.
Water Flow Meter	To allow SWCD staff to assist landowners with determining current water supplies for planned cost-share practices such as grazing and irrigation systems. Eligible item is the water flow meter.

Well Camera To allow SWCD staff to determine well condition/depth for the N351 Well Decommissioning cost-share practice. Eligible items are well camera and case.

State Funded Truck To transport staff to field work locations, trainings, and other relevant work locations. Eligible items are routine truck maintenance and truck repairs. May use for truck replacement with prior approval from the SWCP.

Other Items 48 funding may be used for other purchases with prior written approval from the SWCP. If the district believes any item not listed above would be beneficial for the staff to efficiently and effectively complete technical work, the board may submit a signed letter to the program office requesting approval to use state funding for the purchase. Include a detailed justification in the letter. Requests will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis.