South Dakota legislators agreed this year to provide new tax incentives for private landowners who help protect the state’s water resources from agricultural runoff. The goal of SB 66 is to encourage the use of buffer strips that filter out nutrients and keep these pollutants from reaching a water body.

The law applies to agricultural land within 120 feet of certain lakes, rivers or streams (a total of 575 lakes and 11,000 miles of streams, according to South Dakota Gov. Dennis Daugaard). Eligible riparian buffer strips will be assessed at 60 percent of the land’s agricultural income value; also under the law, grazing is prohibited from May 1 through Sept. 30.

Under a 2015 law in Minnesota, new perennial vegetation buffers of up to 50 feet must be placed along rivers, streams and public ditches to prevent nutrient runoff. The law provides flexibility for landowners to install and maintain the buffers. Financial support to meet this new requirement comes from a mix of federal, state and local conservation programs. Nearly three-quarters of Minnesota’s counties are already between 60 percent and 100 percent compliant with the buffer requirement, Gov. Mark Dayton announced in March.

By:
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Attachment
Stateline Midwest: April 2017 1.75 MB

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