

OHF FINAL REPORT – EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Project Number: 013-144

Recipient: Pheasants Forever, Inc.

Award Amount: \$52,500.00

Total Project Costs: \$14,458.14

Total OHF Funds Received: \$3,610.74



Goal of Project:

The North Central Soil Health and Habitat project was originally developed by Pheasants Forever and Unilever to address Directive B. Unilever, a consumer goods manufacturing company, was working with several farmers in North Dakota who supply wheat into their supply chain on sustainable agriculture practices. Sustainable agriculture means growing crops in ways which sustain the soil, minimize water and fertilizer use, protect biodiversity and enhance farmers' livelihoods. Unilever has worked with cooperating farmers in north central North Dakota to identify issues of local concern. Through conversations with area farmers, soil health, specifically salt impacted soils, was one of their top issues of concern. Healthy soils are important in many ways, from being able to provide more nutritious crops to better managing water (droughts or heavy rain). Practices such as perennial cover and cover crops slow the growth of salt impacted soils and provide long-term economic benefits to farmers. The goal of this project was to work with 10-20 area farmers that were within the Unilever supply chain to deliver 3,250 acres into the program to address salt impacted cropland.

Work Accomplished:

Participation in this project was well below expectations. Pheasants Forever shared program information throughout the project through a multitude of avenues, including local USDA Service Centers, an area grower meeting hosted by Unilever, and through targeted social media promotion. During the mid-point of the project Pheasants Forever added staff capacity that was focused within the project area. Interest in the program remained limited. Project partners were only able to deliver 81.5 acres of perennial cover and 308 acres of cover crops within the project area.

Project Results:

81.5 acres of perennial cover under 5-year agreements and 308 acres of annual cover crop.

Value to North Dakota:

Salt impacted soils remain a concern across North Dakota that has both long-term environmental and economic impacts. Through outreach events, we have increased the understanding of how both perennial cover and cover crops can help address this resource concern. We know that during the course of this grant other program opportunities became available to area producers that provided increased financial assistance.