

# Outdoor Heritage Fund Grant Application



## Instructions

After completing the form, applications and supporting documentation may be submitted by mail to North Dakota Industrial Commission, ATTN: Outdoor Heritage Fund Program, State Capitol – Fourteenth Floor, 600 East Boulevard Ave. Dept. 405, Bismarck, ND 58505 or by e-mail to [outdoorheritage@nd.gov](mailto:outdoorheritage@nd.gov). It is preferred that both a hard copy and electronic copy are submitted.

You are not limited to the spacing provided, except in those instances where there is a limit on the number of words. If you need additional space, please indicate that on the application form, answer the question on a separate page, and include with your submission.

The application and all attachments must be received or postmarked by the application deadline. You will be sent a confirmation by e-mail of receipt of your application. You may submit your application at any time prior to the application deadline. **Applicants are strongly encouraged to submit applications prior to the deadline for staff review in order ensure that proposals will be complete when submitted on deadline date.** Incomplete applications may not be considered for funding.

**Please review the back of this form to determine project eligibility, definitions, budget criteria, and statutory requirements.**

Project Name	<b><u>Working Grassland Partnership IV</u></b>
Name of Organization	North Dakota Natural Resources Trust
Federal Tax ID#	36-3512179
Contact Person/Title	Terry Allbee, Business Manager/Biologist
Address	1605 E. Capitol Ave., Ste. #101
City	Bismarck
State	North Dakota
Zip Code	58501-2102
E-mail Address	terry@naturalresourcestrust.com
Web Site Address	www.ndnrt.com
Phone	701-223-8501
Fax # (if available)	701-223-6937

List names of co-applicants if this is a joint proposal

**MAJOR Directive:**

Choose only one response

**Directive A.** Providing access to private and public lands for sportsmen, including projects that create fish and wildlife habitat and provide access for sportsmen;

**Directive B.** Improving, maintaining and restoring water quality, soil conditions, plant diversity, animal systems and by supporting other practices of stewardship to enhance farming and ranching;

**Directive C.** Developing, enhancing, conserving and restoring wildlife and fish habitat on private and public lands; and

**Directive D.** Conserving natural areas and creating other areas for recreation through the establishment and development of parks and other recreation areas.

**Additional Directive:**

Choose all that apply

**Directive A.**

**Directive B.**

**Directive C.**

**Directive D.**

**Type of organization:**

State Agency

Political Subdivision

Tribal Entity

Tax-exempt, nonprofit corporation.

**Abstract/Executive Summary.**

Summarize the project, including its objectives, expected results, duration, total project costs and participants. (no more than 500 words)

The ND Natural Resources Trust (Trust) and partners have worked throughout North Dakota helping landowners with options to develop expired Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) acres into working grazing lands through previous phases of Working Grassland Partnership grant funds. The support by the Outdoor Heritage Fund (OHF) Advisory Board and the ND Industrial Commission has been integral to each phase's success and the interest by landowners for development assistance on expiring CRP remains very strong.

The Trust, through this OHF grant application, is requesting support for Working Grassland Partnership IV (WGP4) which will provide the opportunity for landowners statewide to participate in this program. North Dakota has a very high number of CRP acres set to expire

in the next several years. There will be over 238,667 acres (51,357.38 acres in 2019 and 187,310.39 acres in 2020) of CRP expiring. The counties with the highest amount of expiring acres in these two years include Hettinger, Adams, Bowman, Grant, Grand Forks, Golden Valley, Sargent, and LaMoure. The highest total of expiring CRP acres is Hettinger County with 26,037.74 acres and each of the other seven counties mentioned have 8,000 or more acres expiring. Beyond that, every county in North Dakota will have some expiring CRP acres over the next two years. The 2018 Farm Bill will provide sign-ups for some of these acres to be re-enrolled into the CRP program, but it is certain many acres will transition from CRP to other agricultural uses. The goal of WGP4 is that when landowners identify the acres they want to incorporate into their grazing operation, we can assist them with the financial and technical resources for a successful transition.



WGP4 will provide a “one stop shop” for landowners through a local in-the-field partnership approach. This partnership approach provides the technical background to work with landowners to plan the best location and design for grazing developments. The partners who deliver this technical support include (but not limited to): Ducks Unlimited (DU), Pheasants Forever (PF), ND Association of Soil Conservation Districts (NDASCD), North Dakota Conservation District Employees Association Employees (NCDEA), ND Game and Fish Department (NDGFD), US Fish and Wildlife Service’s Partners for Fish and Wildlife (PFW), and USDA Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS). This grant funding presents the opportunity to incorporate enhanced soil/water management and wildlife species conservation while also increasing the livestock profitability for the landowner. In addition, all WGP4 agreement participants will be fully aware of public access opportunities through the NDGFD’s Private Land Open To Sportsman (PLOTS) Program. This proposal fulfills the directives of OHF and is of high interest by landowners in North Dakota.

**Project Duration: 4 years**

**Indicate the intended schedule for drawing down OHF funds.**

Year 1 – Program promotion, partner coordination, landowner agreements, reimbursement of cost-shares, and habitat lease payments (approx. 20%-40%)

Year 2 – Finalize landowner agreements obligations, reimbursement of cost-shares, and remaining habitat lease payments (approx. 20%-40%)

Year 3 - Reimbursement of cost-shares (approx. 10%-20%)

Year 4 – Final reimbursement of cost-shares (approx. 10%-20%)

**Amount of Grant request: \$1,225,000.00**

**Total Project Costs: \$2,235,000.00**

Note: in-kind and indirect costs can be used for matching funds.

**Amount of Matching Funds: \$1,010,000 (45% of total project costs)**

**A minimum of 25% Match Funding is required.** Indicate if the matching funds will be in-kind, indirect or cash. Please provide verification that these matching funds are available for your project. Note that effective as of July 1, 2015 no State General Fund dollars can be used for a match unless funding was legislatively appropriated for that purpose.

Amount of Match	Funding Source	Type of Match
\$140,000.00	ND Natural Resources Trust	X Cash <input type="checkbox"/> In-Kind <input type="checkbox"/> Indirect
\$800,000.00	Landowner Cost-Share	X Cash X In-Kind <input type="checkbox"/> Indirect
\$50,000.00	ND Natural Resources Trust	<input type="checkbox"/> Cash X In-Kind <input type="checkbox"/> Indirect
\$10,000.00	ND Natural Resources Trust	X Cash <input type="checkbox"/> In-Kind <input type="checkbox"/> Indirect
\$10,000.00	Ducks Unlimited	<input type="checkbox"/> Cash X In-Kind <input type="checkbox"/> Indirect

**Certifications**

X I certify that this application has been made with the support of the governing body and chief executive of my organization.

X I certify that if awarded grant funding none of the funding will be used for any of the exemptions noted in the back of this application.

**Narrative**

**Organization Information – Briefly summarize your organization’s history, mission, current programs and activities.**

Include an overview of your organizational structure, including board, staff and volunteer involvement. (no more than 300 words)

The Trust was created in 1986 and was originally called the North Dakota Wetlands Trust until 2000. The Trust’s mission is to preserve, restore, manage, and enhance wetlands and associated wildlife habitat, grasslands, and riparian areas in the state of North Dakota. The Trust achieves this mission by partnering with agricultural and conservation organizations to promote productive use of private agricultural lands and private property rights that result in enhancement and protection of private lands, to effectively use North Dakota's public lands both for agriculture and recreation, to promote good land use along urban river corridors, and to enhance the state's significant water resources. The Trust helps shape the landscape through its programs and does its best to help shape both public attitude and public policy to support natural resources protection.

The Trust is managed by a six-member Board of Directors. Three of the Directors are appointed by the Governor of North Dakota, one by the National Audubon Society, one by the National Wildlife Federation, and one by the North Dakota Chapter of The Wildlife Society. The NDGFD Director is an ex-officio member. The Trust has an Executive Director and four staff members.

From its inception, the Trust has played a role as facilitator between agricultural and conservation interests. In addition to facilitating and funding sound, on-the-ground conservation of natural resources, its goal is to identify common issues, create dialogue, and resolve conflicts.

**Purpose of Grant – Describe the proposed project identifying how the project will meet the specific directive(s) of the Outdoor Heritage Fund Program**

Identify project goals, strategies and benefits and your timetable for implementation. Include information about the need for the project and whether there is urgency for funding. Indicate if this is a new project or if it is replacing funding that is no longer available to your organization. Identify any innovative features or processes of your project. Note: if your proposal provides funding to an individual, the names of the recipients must be reported to the Industrial Commission/Outdoor Heritage Fund. These names will be disclosed upon request.

For tree/shrub/grass plantings: provide a planting plan describing the site design, planting methods, number of trees/shrubs by species and stock size, grass species and future maintenance. A statement certifying that the applicant will adhere to USDA-NRCS tree/shrub/grass planting specifications along with the name of the governmental entity designing the planting may be substituted for a planting plan.

For projects including Section 319 funding: provide in detail the specific best management practices that will be implemented and the specific projects for which you are seeking funding.

For projects including fencing: A minimum cost share of 40% by the recipient is preferred. Include detailed information on the type of fencing to be installed, whether funding is requested for boundary fencing, new or replacement of existing fencing, and/or cross fencing.

CRP has historically been very popular in North Dakota with millions of acres enrolled into the program from 1985 to present. Many of these acres are set to expire from CRP contracts, leaving landowners with a decision to make on what is next for these acres. As we all know, many of the acres have been enrolled in CRP for 10 to 30 years with limited management options. As these contracts expire many landowners are looking for options to incorporate these acres into rotational grazing systems. WGP4 will be a much-needed option for these landowners to keep the expired/expiring CRP acres in grassland and improve the livestock production value on those acres.

The need to maintain grassland habitat in North Dakota is vitally important for the wildlife species that depend on healthy grasslands for their existence. Unfortunately, some of these grassland-dependent species are showing significant declines in population levels in our state. The North Dakota State Wildlife Action Plan (SWAP) published by NDGFD updated wildlife species of conservation priority through extensive, science-based evaluation and monitoring. The SWAP documented a list of grassland dependent species in decline, such as the Western Meadowlark, which is the state bird. Having the state bird on a conservation priority list highlights awareness of the habitat concerns of declining species and the impact to producers when populations reach critical lows.

The North Dakota Game and Fish Department published “Life After CRP – Maintaining Ring-Neck Pheasants in a Changing Landscape” as a guide for landowners and pheasant enthusiasts. The publication highlights the importance of grassland habitat for pheasant use. Research from North Dakota State University’s Hettinger Research Extension Center by Ben Geaumont, Wildlife and Range Scientist, also concludes that expired CRP acres that have transitioned to rotational grazing systems have a significant use by ring-neck pheasants in the southwestern portion of North Dakota.

Background:

**WGP Phases:** The original Working Grassland Partnership grant was submitted and approved by OHF in 2016. The intent was to work with USDA Declining Grassland Bird CRP State Acres for Enhancement (SAFE) program and expiring CRP acres. The direction of the program became clearer when USDA stopped taking any new CRP applications, including the Declining Grassland Bird SAFE, due to concerns that the program may exceed the national CRP acreage cap. WGP has been focused solely on expiring CRP lands since then. This has proactively addressed



habitat for upland game birds and declining bird species of concerns, while at the same time increasing the viability and productivity of the ranching operations. It steadily became a definitive win-win situation and was well-received as implementation progressed. The OHF Advisory Board then approved WGP II in 2017 and WGP III in spring 2018. These phases of the program expanded financial support and geographic availability. The goal of WGP4 is to provide a statewide program for all the CRP landowners in every county in North Dakota. Through the past WGP programs the Trust has entered into 100 plus agreements for a total of 35,000+ acres. WGP II and WGP III have obligated the majority of the OHF funding. There is a very small remaining balance (less than \$100,000). The Trust and supporting partners are currently in communications and/or writing agreements with landowners to obligate this remaining balance.

**Funding Urgency:** Over the last several years, we’ve learned that livestock producers across the state continue to seek additional grazing lands to improve the viability of their operations. The combination of reduced grassland acres available for grazing, unfavorable crop production prices and variable weather patterns that have affected the availability of forage has fueled this demand. As the next several years of CRP acres are set to expire, landowners will have to make a decision on whether to keep the land in CRP, transitioning into grazing land or converting back to cropland.

Using expiring CRP for grazing has proven to be a beneficial option for grazing operators, landowners (including absentee landowners) and wildlife. Some of the absentee landowners have a strong interest in having their land remain in grass cover. This proposal works to provide the linkage of those absentee landowners with livestock producers who are seeking to graze these properties. Developing a grazing plan for expiring CRP builds a strong

relationship with the landowner and land manager. Without understanding there is a grazing alternative and cost-share availability, CRP landowners may gravitate back to CRP or crops out of expediency or feeling like there are no other options.

Currently, several agencies and organizations are willing to work with landowners to convert expiring CRP acres into working grasslands. Local County SCDs, DU, PF, NDASCD Farm Bill Specialists, USFWS Partners for Fish and Wildlife, NRCS, and NDGFD all offer excellent assistance options through this private lands program.

Goals, Strategies and Benefits: WGP4 will focus on grasslands from past expired CRP contracts, and expiring CRP contracts in 2019 and 2020. The goal of this grant is to provide options to landowners looking to retain these acres in grassland. This will be completed by providing an incentive-based upfront lease payment and 60% cost-share for livestock and bird-friendly developments, the grant has a goal of signing 50 agreements on over 14,000 acres.

The habitat lease will be funded by the Trust and will only be available on the acres expiring from current CRP contracts. The lease payment will be a one-time, upfront payment that would be issued when a WGP4 agreement is signed. The habitat lease will serve as an additional incentive to keep these acres in grassland. This proposal is asking for OHF to provide funding for grazing system developments that include livestock water and fencing. The developments will be cost-shared at a rate of 60% from the grant and 40% from landowners. Technical advice, such as grazing plans, will be provided by applicant and supporting partners. Landowners will select the fence type that will best meet their operation need. This will range from single-strand high tensile electric to five-strand barbed wire fence. Cost-share rates will be adjusted to accommodate the different fence types that are based on USDA Tech Guide Allowable costs. The WGP4 will provide landowners with boundary fence cost-share only for acres that are part of expiring CRP contracts and/or acres that currently do not have any existing boundary fence. The NDGFD may offer PLOTS payments on land in and around the WGP4 program acres.

The WGP4 aims to build on the initial success of Phase I, II and III, benefiting grassland productivity and condition, improving water quality and soil health, and enhancing wildlife habitat for grassland birds. Equally valuable, this project will improve the sustainability and profitability of many existing livestock operations. By supporting grazing infrastructure we believe these former CRP acres will transition into working, bird-friendly, grazing lands for livestock operations, potentially generating a long-term investment.

Directives and Timeline: The OHF major directive states (B) improving, maintaining and restoring water quality, soil conditions, plant diversity, animal systems, and by supporting other practices of stewardship to enhance farming and ranching. This is the major directive of this OHF grant request and will provide landowners the cost assistance and technical guidance to accomplish this directive on their property.

In addition, directive (A) of providing access to private and public lands for sportsmen, including projects that create fish and wildlife habitat and provide access for sportsmen will be achieved by NDGFD offering landowners PLOTS through this project.

Directive (C) of developing, enhancing, conserving and restoring wildlife and fish habitat on private and public lands will be achieved by NDNRT habitat conservation leases in combination with the OHF development assistance.

The proposed project will be 10 years in length, with the majority of the lease payments and livestock/bird-friendly development practices being completed in the first two years. WGP4 will create sustainable agriculture and conservation benefits to an expected 14,000 acres.

Is this project part of a Comprehensive Conservation Plan?  Yes  No  
If yes, provide a copy with the application.

*Note: Projects involving buildings and infrastructure will only be considered if part of a Comprehensive Conservation Plan. Please refer to the "Definitions" section at the back of the form for more details.*

Although a comprehensive Conservation Plan does not exist specifically for Working Grassland Partnership, the need for maintaining grassland and grassland management is address in the ND State Wildlife Action Plan.

**Management of Project – Provide a description of how you will manage and oversee the project to ensure it is carried out on schedule and in a manner that best ensures its objectives will be met.**

Include a brief background and work experience for those managing the project.

The Trust will provide management, coordination, and administration of the WGP4 funding. The Trust and partners will work collectively to provide landowners with program options. The Trust will complete all program coordination from our office located in Bismarck. Kathy Kirschman, Administrative Assistant/Biological Technician, Terry Allbee, Biologist/Business Manager, and Jesse Beckers, Conservation Program Coordinator have a combined 25 years of experience in delivering conservation projects for the Trust. The Trust will provide tracking and reporting of all landowner agreements following grant guidelines.

The partnership provides a "one stop shop" through a team of in-the-field partners for landowners to work with from beginning to end. Private lands delivery partners help promote and work directly with landowners. In addition to the Trust staff, other landowner contacts will be done by NDGFD Private Lands Biologists, NDASCD's Farm Bill Specialists, PF's field staff, local SCD's, DU Conservation Biologists, and USFWS Partners for Fish and Wildlife Biologists,. As these field staff work with landowners interested in USDA conservation programs or on expiring CRP, they can present grazing infrastructure development options, conservation habitat leases, and NDGFD PLOTS as opportunities for successful transition to working lands. All grant funds will be paid as agreements and development activities are completed and proper documentation is supplied to the Trust.

**Evaluation – Describe your plan to document progress and results.**

Please be specific on the methods you will utilize to measure success. Note that regular reporting, final evaluation and expenditure reports will be required for every grant awarded.



We worked diligently to create this diverse partnership for implementation and evaluation reasons, plus to do the optimal outreach to producers. Our partners enable “boots on the ground” contact with landowners, and that more local relationship development sets the tone for positive results in how the program can benefit their operation and wildlife habitat. Our field agent partners help with contract facilitation and the implementation aspects, verifying that fence and water resources are completed as prescribed and following up on grazing plans. Our administration ensures timely payments and support lines for both participating landowners and partners. More specifically, success will be measured on the level of agreements completed with landowners and the amount of acres benefited by the lease and development activities by increased conservation habitat for grassland birds, satisfied landowners, and increased access for public enjoyment.

## Financial Information

**Project Budget – Use the table below to provide an itemized list of project expenses and describe the matching funds being utilized for this project.**

Indicate if the matching funds are in the form of cash, indirect costs or in-kind services. The budget should identify all other committed funding sources and the amount of funding from each source. **A minimum of 25% match funding is required.** An application will be scored higher the greater the amount of match funding provided. (See Scoring Form.)

Certain values have been identified for in-kind services as detailed under “Budget Information” at the back of this form. Refer to that section and utilize these values in identifying your matching funds.

**NOTE: No indirect costs will be funded. Supporting documentation for project expenses, including bids, must be included or application will be considered incomplete.**

Project Expense	OHF Request	Applicant's Match Share (Cash)	Applicant's and Other Project Sponsor's Match Share (In-Kind)	Total Each Project Expense
OHF - Livestock and Grassland Bird Friendly Development Practices 60%	\$1,200,000			\$1,200,000
OHF - Livestock and Grassland Bird Friendly Development Practices 40%			\$800,000	\$800,000
Habitat Lease		\$140,000		\$140,000
Contracted Services	\$15,000		\$10,000	\$25,000
Project Staffing	\$10,000		\$60,000	\$70,000
<b>Total Costs</b>	<b>\$1,225,000</b>	<b>\$140,000</b>	<b>\$860,000</b>	<b>\$2,235,000</b>

**Budget Narrative – Use the space below to provide additional detail regarding project expenses.**

- Agreements – All WGP4 agreements with landowners will be 10 years.
- Livestock and Grassland Bird Friendly Development Practices:
  - Fencing will follow the NRCS Office Tech Guide Allowable Cost recommendations by OHF. The grant will provide landowners a 60% cost-share payment based on these cost-share payment rates. Landowners will provide the remaining 40% cost-share.
  - Water Development will follow the NRCS Office Tech Guide Allowable Cost recommendations by OHF. The OHF grant will use these rates for agreement development, but will pay 60% cost-share based on actual costs. The landowners will provide the remaining 40% cost-share.
- Trust Habitat Lease - The Trust will offer landowners a lease payment for all CRP acres expiring in 2019 and 2020 that are included in the agreement. The lease rate will be \$5.00 per acre per year, so landowners will receive a \$50/acre one-time payment for the 10 year agreement. Lease payments will be on expired/expiring CRP acres only.
- Contracted Services – All projects will be reviewed by State Historical Society of North Dakota for cultural resources and North Dakota State Historical and Preservation Office approval. If the project requires a cultural resources professional, we outsource that to conduct a field review. Contracted services for a pedestrian review cost \$1,250 and costs would advance depending on findings. Based on the Trust experience in requesting cultural reviews and the potential for the majority of the new WGP4 agreements in the southwest portion of ND, an estimate of 10 agreements will need pedestrian cultural review that can only be done by certified reviewer. The cost of 10 reviews at \$1,250 per review is \$12,500. In addition the Trust does record all agreements at the county courthouse to ensure notice to any future landowners at a recording cost of \$20 per agreement. There will be approximately 50 agreements at \$20 per agreement for a total of \$1,000. Other contracted services include water pipeline engineering, soil testing, partner coordination meeting costs and to provide contracted services for any additional delivery and/or program monitoring. The Trust will provide a cash match of \$10,000 toward these contracted services.
- Project Staffing – The partners will provide the majority of staffing through in-kind contribution of existing Trust staff at \$50,000. This Trust staffing cost include staff time, benefits, and travel. DU is providing \$10,000 in-kind staffing. The grant proposal does request \$10,000 in OHF funds for staffing costs in completing the cultural resource requests, grant administration, and most importantly to provide landowners with a full awareness of all OHF grants that have been approved. As the Trust and Partners work with landowners and producers in delivering the WGP4 it is important for all involved to be aware of all approved OHF grants available and inform

landowners of the opportunity and direct them to appropriate entities depending on their resource concern.

Note: Costs for seeding, fencing, pipelines, wells, and cover crops cannot exceed NRCS Field Office Tech Guide without justification. Projects involving perimeter fencing must follow NRCS eligibility standards.

**Sustainability – Indicate how the project will be funded or sustained in future years.**

Include information on the sustainability of this project after OHF funds have been expended and whether the sustainability will be in the form of ongoing management or additional funding from a different source.

The WGP4, if funded, will be implemented and delivered in 2019-2020. The Trust will work with partners to promote the program and landowner agreements will start as soon as possible and be completed when all funding is obligated. Operation and maintenance of land development activities will be completed throughout the agreement period by landowners. The partnership will perform periodic field checks. Creating working relationships with landowners provides potential for furthering other OHF funded grants.

**Partial Funding – Indicate how the project will be affected if less funding is available than that requested.**

If the grant proposal is partially funded, the Trust would reduce the number of development activities, focusing the highest priority activities and the number of acres that can be improved would be reduced.

**Partnership Recognition - If you are a successful recipient of Outdoor Heritage Fund dollars, how would you recognize the Outdoor Heritage Fund partnership? \* *There must be signage at the location of the project acknowledging OHF funding when appropriate.***

The Outdoor Heritage Fund will be recognized as the major partner in WGP4. All promotional material will have the OHF logo and describe the OHF recognition. All WGP4 agreements will have OHF logo on the agreement header. All landowner interaction with WGP4 will be aware the importance of OHF funding to this beneficial project.

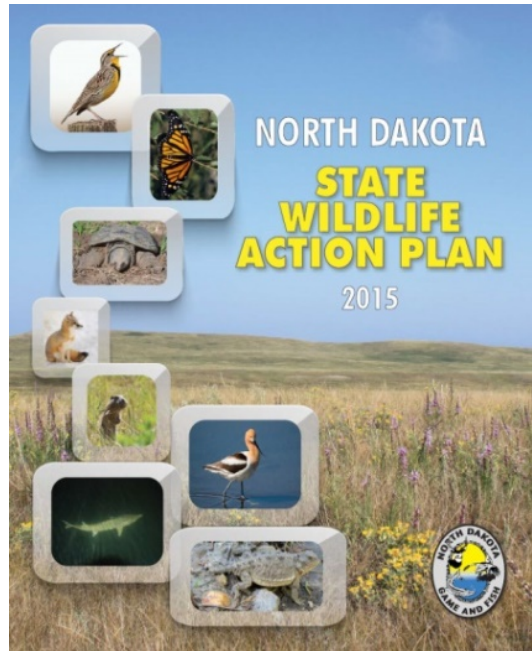
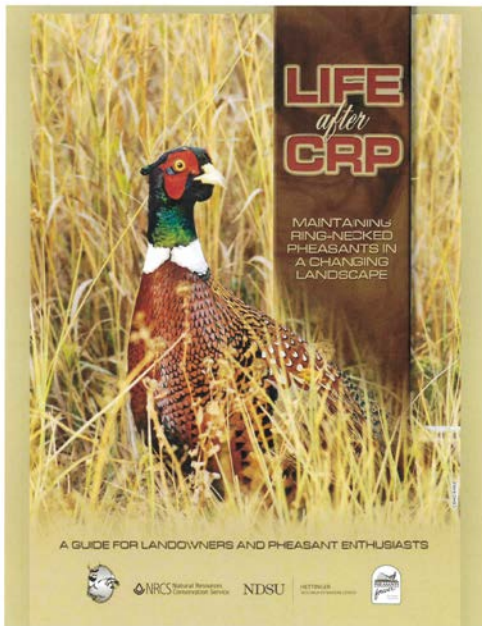
References:

[https://gf.nd.gov/sites/default/files/publications/life\\_after\\_crp.pdf](https://gf.nd.gov/sites/default/files/publications/life_after_crp.pdf)

<https://ndnrt.com>

2015 State Wildlife Action Plan

<https://gf.nd.gov/wildlife/swap>



**Awarding of Grants - Review the appropriate sample contract for your organization on the website at <http://www.nd.gov/ndic/outdoor-infopage.htm>.**

Can you meet all the provisions of the sample contract?  Yes  No

If there are provisions in that contract that your organization is unable to meet, please indicate below what those provisions would be:

**ABOUT OHF:**

The purpose of the North Dakota Outdoor Heritage Fund is to provide funding to state agencies, tribal governments, political subdivisions, and nonprofit organizations, with higher priority given to projects that enhance **conservation** practices in this state by:

**Directive A.** Providing access to private and public lands for sportsmen, including projects that create fish and wildlife habitat and provide access for sportsmen;

**Directive B.** Improving, maintaining and restoring water quality, soil conditions, plant diversity, animal systems and by supporting other practices of stewardship to enhance farming and ranching;

**Directive C.** Developing, enhancing, conserving and restoring wildlife and fish habitat on private and public lands; and

**Directive D.** Conserving natural areas and creating other areas for recreation through the establishment and development of parks and other recreation areas.

## EXEMPTIONS

Outdoor Heritage Fund grants may not be used to finance the following:

- Litigation;
- Lobbying activities;
- Any activity that would interfere, disrupt, or prevent activities associated with surface coal mining operations; sand, gravel, or scoria extraction activities; oil and gas operations; or other energy facility or infrastructure development;
- The acquisition of land or to encumber any land for a term longer than twenty years; or
- Projects outside this state or projects that are beyond the scope of defined activities that fulfill the purposes of Chapter 54-17.8 of the North Dakota Century Code.

OHF funds may not be used, except after a finding of exceptional circumstances by the Industrial Commission, to finance:

- A completed project or project commenced before the grant application is submitted;
- A feasibility or research study;
- Maintenance costs;
- A paving project for a road or parking lot;
- A swimming pool or aquatic park;
- Personal property that is not affixed to the land;
- Playground equipment, except that grant funds may be provided for up to 25% of the cost of the equipment not exceeding \$10,000 per project and all playground equipment grants may not exceed 5% of the total grants per year (see Definitions/Clarifications for how this will be calculated);
- Staffing or outside consultants except for costs for staffing or an outside consultant to design and implement an approved project based on the documented need of the applicant and the expenditures may not exceed 5% of the grant to a grantee if the grant exceeds \$250,000 and expenditures may not exceed 10% of the grant to a grantee if the grant is \$250,000 or less (see Definitions/Clarifications for how this will be calculated);
- A building except for a building that is included as part of a comprehensive conservation plan for a new or expanded recreational project (see Definitions/Clarifications for definition of comprehensive conservation plan and new or expanded recreational project); or
- A project in which the applicant is not directly involved in the execution and completion of the project.

The goal of the Industrial Commission is that at a minimum 15% of the funding received for a biennium will be given priority for recreation projects that meet Directive D.

The following projects are not eligible for funding, unless there is a finding of exceptional circumstances by the Industrial Commission include:

- Construction or refurbishment of indoor/outdoor ice rinks,
- Construction or refurbishment of indoor/outdoor athletic courts and sports fields,
- Other substantially similar facilities.
- Infrastructure that is not part of a comprehensive conservation plan.

- Projects not meeting a minimum funding request of \$2,500.

## Budget Information

In-kind services used to match the request for Outdoor Heritage Fund dollars shall be valued as follows:

- Labor costs \$15.00 an hour
- Land costs Average rent costs for the county as shown in the most recent publication of the USDA, National Agricultural Statistics Services, North Dakota Field Office
- Permanent Equipment Any equipment purchased must be listed separately with documentation showing actual cost. (For example: playground equipment)
- Equipment usage Actual documentation
- Seed & Seedlings Actual documentation
- Transportation Mileage at federal rate
- Supplies & materials Actual documentation

More categories will be added as we better understand the types of applications that will be submitted. We will use as our basis for these standards other State and Federal programs that have established rates. For example, the North Dakota Nonpoint Source Pollution Management Program has established rates. If your project includes work that has an established rate under another State Program, please use those rates and note your source.

## Definitions/Clarifications:

Building - Defined as "A structure with a roof either with walls or without walls and is attached to the ground in a permanent nature."

Comprehensive Conservation Plan - Defined as "A detailed plan that has been formally adopted by the governing board which includes goals and objectives--both short and long term, must show how this building will enhance the overall conservation goals of the project and the protection or preservation of wildlife and fish habitat or natural areas." This does not need to be a complex multi-page document. It could be included as a part of the application or be an attachment.

New and Expanded Recreational Project means that the proposed building cannot be a replacement of a current building. The proposed building must also be related to either a new or expanded recreational project--either an expansion in land or an expansion of an existing building or in the opportunities for recreation at the project site.

Playground equipment calculation - Only the actual costs of the playground equipment (a bid or invoice showing the amount of the equipment costs must be provided) - cannot include freight or installation or surface materials or removal of old equipment, etc.

Staffing/Outside Consultants Costs - If you are requesting OHF funding for staffing or for an outside consultant, you must provide information in your application on the need for OHF funding to cover these costs. For example, if you are an entity that has engineering staff you must explain why you don't have sufficient staff to do the work or if specific expertise is needed or whatever the reason is for your entity to retain an outside consultant. If it is a request for reimbursement for staff time then a written explanation is required in the application of why OHF funding is needed to pay for the costs of that staff member(s)' time. **The budget form must reflect on a separate line item the specific amount that is being requested for staffing and/or the hiring of an outside consultant.** This separate line item will then be used to make the calculation of 5% or 10% as outlined in the law. Note that the calculation will be made on the grant less the costs for the consultant or staff.

## Scoring of Grants

**Oral Presentation.** Please note that you will be given an opportunity to make a ten-minute Oral Presentation at a meeting of the Outdoor Heritage Fund Advisory Board. These presentations are strongly encouraged.

**Open Record.** Please note that your application and any attachments will be open records as defined by law and will be posted on the Industrial Commission/Outdoor Heritage Fund website.

All applications will be scored by the Outdoor Heritage Fund Advisory Board after your ten-minute oral presentation. The ranking form that will be used by the Board is available on the website at <http://www.nd.gov/ndic/outdoor-infopage.htm> .

## **Awarding of Grants**

All decisions on requests will be reported to applicants no later than 30 days after Industrial Commission consideration. The Commission can set a limit on duration of an offer on each application or if there isn't a specific date indicated in the application for implementation of the project, then the applicant has until the next Outdoor Heritage Fund Advisory Board regular meeting to sign the contract and get the project underway or the commitment for funding will be terminated and the applicant may resubmit for funding. Applicants whose proposals have been approved will receive a contract outlining the terms and conditions of the grant.

## **Responsibility of Recipient**

The recipient of any grant from the Industrial Commission must use the funds awarded for the specific purpose described in the grant application and in accordance with the contract. The recipient cannot use any of the funds for the purposes stated under Exemptions on the first page of this application.

If you have any questions about the application or have trouble submitting the application, please contact Andrea Pfennig at 701-328-3786 or [apfennig@nd.gov](mailto:apfennig@nd.gov).

Revised: September 14, 2018