

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. 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: Grasslands Enhancement Project Phase II

Name of Organization: Ducks Unlimited

Federal Tax ID#: 13-5643799

Contact Person/Title: Dane Buysse, Conservation Programs Biologist

Address: 2525 River Road

City: Bismarck

State: North Dakota

Zip Code: 58503

E-mail Address: dbuysse@ducks.org

Web Site Address: www.ducks.org

Phone: (O) 701-355-3584, (C) 701-425-4852

Fax # (if available)

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)

North Dakota has millions of acres of Bakken Shale Formation important to energy development, agriculture, and wildlife habitat. Lessees and landowners of State School Trust, Tribal, Public and adjacent private land have a mutual interest to enhance grasslands, which are enjoyed by the public through hunting, wildlife watching, hiking and agricultural leases. Land managers utilize cattle, owned by agricultural producers, to enhance soil health; for the benefit of rangeland diversity; for the enhancement of wildlife habitat; for the improvement of water quality, to ultimately satisfy the public who have a collective interest in North Dakota's grasslands. Though most of North Dakota is under private ownership, it is increasingly more difficult to maintain or increase grazing numbers on private pasture due to certain grazing practices and inadequate infrastructure. The objective of GEPP II continues to be a collaboration with interested producers to, "Improve grazing systems

on school trust, tribal, public and adjacent private land through grazing infrastructure enhancements and planned grazing.”.

The Grasslands Enhancement Project Phase II (GEPP II) is a state-wide expansion of the Grasslands Enhancement Pilot Project (GEPP). Additional support from the North Dakota Forest Service and Turtle Mountain Band of Chippewa Indians (Tribe) brings new opportunities to the project. The addition of Tribal Lands will extend this incredible opportunity to lessees of tribal lands. The North Dakota Forest Service has an interest to establish infrastructure so that grazing can be utilized as a tool to enhance ecosystems in the Turtle Mountains.

Project success will be measured by water infiltration testing, rest recovery time on pastures, and producer satisfaction with infrastructure enhancements. This will be accomplished by addressing resource concerns through planned rotational grazing practices and by providing technical and financial assistance to interested producers.

The GEPP II will consist of 5-year agreements or will align with landowner or agency grazing lease terms. Grant funds will be utilized within 5 years (2020-2025) and is requesting \$619,000 from the Outdoor Heritage Fund for a \$1,057,500.00 project. An estimated 8,000 acres of state school trust, tribal, public and adjacent private land will be enhanced through the project. In addition, all GEPP II agreement participants will be fully aware of public access opportunities through the NDGFD's Private Land Open To Sportsmen (PLOTS) Program.

Project Duration: 5 Years

Indicate the intended schedule for drawing down OHF funds.

Year 1 – Program promotion, partner coordination, landowner/lessee agreements, projects begin construction, water infiltration testing and provide cost-share reimbursement. (Approx. 10%)

Year 2 – Program promotion, landowner/lessee agreements, water infiltration testing, cost-share reimbursement for projects. (Approx. 30%)

Year 3 – Program promotion, landowner/lessee agreements, water infiltration testing, cost-share reimbursement for projects. (Approx. 30%)

Year 4 – Landowner/lessee agreements, water infiltration testing, cost-share reimbursement for projects. (Approx. 30%)

Year 5 – Final cost-share reimbursement for projects and water infiltration testing. (Approx. 10%)

Amount of Grant request: \$619,000.00

Total Project Costs: \$1,057,500.00

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

Amount of Matching Funds: \$438,500.00 (41% 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
\$400,000.00	Lessees/Landowners	Cash/In-Kind
\$6,000.00	Ducks Unlimited	Cash
\$10,000.00	Ducks Unlimited	In-Kind
\$20,000.00	ND Natural Resources Trust	Cash
\$2,500.00	ND Natural Resources Trust	In-Kind

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)

Ducks Unlimited (DU) conserves, restores and manages wetlands and associated habitats for North America's waterfowl. These habitats also benefit other wildlife and people. Established in 1937, DU and its partners have conserved more than 14 million acres of habitat across North America thanks to the generous contributions from more than a million supporters. Guided by science and dedicated to program efficiency, DU works toward the vision of wetlands sufficient to fill the skies with waterfowl today, tomorrow and forever. Thanks to over 80 years of success, DU is recognized as the world's largest and most effective private waterfowl and wetlands conservation organization. DU is known for our ability to partner with private individuals, landowners, government agencies, scientific communities, industry leaders and other entities to successfully deliver collaborative conservation projects. DU is a grassroots and volunteer-based organization. Our 675,000 members are conservationists and outdoor enthusiasts who reside across the United States, Canada and Mexico, including over 6,300 members in North Dakota. DU's Great Plains Regional Office, located in Bismarck, ND, employs a multidisciplinary team of engineers, biologists, scientists, agronomists, real estate and administrative support personnel. Since 1984, DU and our partners have completed over 1,300 projects impacting more than 480,000 acres in North Dakota. DU is a tax exempt, non-profit corporation under section 501 (c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code and our Board of Directors is comprised of volunteers from across the country. For a full listing of DU's Board members, please visit: <http://www.ducks.org/about-du/board-of-directors/>

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.

Project Background and Funding Urgency

If you have spent any time in the fall on school trust, tribal, public or adjacent private land you may have noticed undesirable habitat conditions for species you are seeking to hunt or watch. Underutilization of grasslands, open to the public, have resulted in monocultures of invasive cool season grasses and woody vegetation. Over utilization of grasslands, due to a variety of factors, has resulted in reduced winter cover for wildlife, lower forage production, decreased drought tolerance and stunted vegetative communities. Commonly these results are due to the unavailability of quality water resources and/or grazing infrastructure. Because of historic social perceptions and misinformation some parcels of land simply don't have adequate grazing infrastructure to support cattle, let alone structure to support a rotational grazing system. Land managers and lessees have therefore been restricted to continual haying or large pasture grazing systems, settling to do the best management possible with their currently available resources. Lessees of these lands may resort to hauling water daily, building inadequate temporary fence, continue the same management year after year or simply turn down the opportunity to graze pasture due to lack of resources. Water is the number one limiting factor in grazing system rotations. Assisting landowners and lessees with grazing infrastructure on these lands, when agricultural cashflow is limited, will allow for the continuation of enhancing grazing systems and increased opportunities for local producers. This will not only improve habitat conditions, but also reduce risk for lessees on the front end.

In November 2016, Ducks Unlimited (DU), North Dakota Natural Resources Trust (Trust) and other partners and landowners collaboratively submitted the "Grasslands Enhancement Pilot Project" (GEPP) Outdoor Heritage Fund grant. The project initiated on May 1, 2017, after discussions on fence ownership were agreed upon by all parties to move forward. This collaboration provided lessees of school trust, public and adjacent private land with the opportunity to improve grazing infrastructure and management practices at an economically feasible price point. The primary objective of (GEPP) was to improve rangeland health and wildlife habitat on school trust, public, and private lands throughout the Bakken Shale Formation, northeast of the Missouri River. To date GEPP has enhanced 4,219 acres of pasture through 8 projects with additional projects in the planning process. The success of this project is being monitored with water infiltration testing and planned grazing. *See Table 1 Below.*

Table 1.



2018 Water Infiltration Test



2019 Rotating Cattle

State	5:33	5:33	10.8 in/hr	13 min	4.4 in/hr
1	4:58	4:58	12 in/hr	26 sec	11 min
2	13:20	13:20	4.5 in/hr	31 sec	5.2 in/hr
3	4:77 sec	7 min 57 sec	7.5 in/hr	28:04	21 in/hr
				10:35 sec	3.4 in/hr

Please write additional comments below regarding predominant grass species and plant height

- Sprague Pepp @ N Creek site
- Cope @ site

2018 Infiltration Results

Location	Soil Texture	Start Time	End Time	First Infiltration Time (minutes)	Infiltration Rate (in/hr)	Start Time	End Time	Second Infiltration Time (minutes)	Steady State (in/hr)
7-27-2019 State Land 1		0	7:58 pm	4 min 52 sec	12.3 in/hr	8:28 pm	3:14	14 min 53	4 in/hr
7-29-2019 State Land 2		0	9:23 pm	6 min 34 sec	9.14 in/hr	9:33	9:59	22 min 29 sec	2.67 in/hr
7-30-2019 State Land 3		0	3:45 pm	8 min 29 sec	7.07 in/hr	3:55 pm	4:30	35 min 23 sec	1.7 in/hr
					9.5 in/hr				2.7 in/hr

2019 Infiltration Results

The 640 acre state school trust land above was rested in 2018 due to poor water quality and lack of growth. Water pipeline, power source, water tanks, cross fencing installed in 2018. 2019 included a 7-cell rotation with 185 pairs & 54 yearlings.

GEPP II builds upon the proven success of GEPP to assist school trust, tribal, public and adjacent private lands with the establishment of grazing infrastructure to benefit lessees and the public user throughout the entire state. Originally developed to address landowner and lessee resource concerns, GEPP's success in establishing quality water and improving grazing rotations on 4,219 acres has proven there is an interest to improving grazing infrastructure on these lands. Several school trust, tribal, public and adjacent private land tracts lack the necessary infrastructure for a rotational grazing system. North Dakota has experienced a wet cycle for nearly 30 years and some lessees continue to struggle to supply quality water. Recognizing and addressing this water resource concern as soon as possible will provide a greater benefit in the long run to the land, agricultural lessees and the public. Land managers agree that infrastructure improvements will provide better utilization, increased grazing opportunities, improved grassland diversity and an enhanced outdoor user experience in the long run. According to a January 2019 publication by NDSU, *"Total direct expenditures (\$974.4 million) from hunting and fishing in North Dakota generated \$1,139.1 million in secondary economic effects. Gross business volume (direct and secondary effects) of hunting and fishing in North Dakota was estimated at \$2.1 billion."* The continued enhancement of lands open to public, with a direct benefit to local producers, further emphasizes the benefits to North Dakota as a whole.

By establishing rotational grazing infrastructure, we can support the enhancement of school trust, tribal, public, and adjacent private lands. The increased opportunity to rotationally graze will result in improved cover for wildlife, advance soil health, diversify grasslands, improve water retention during heavy rainfall events and provide the public with an enhanced outdoor experience. Equally important are the grazing and haying lease payments made on school trust lands, which provide funding for North Dakota public schools.

Goals, Strategies and Benefits

GEPP II will focus on projects throughout the state of North Dakota, with priority to lessees in the Bakken formation. See *Figure 2*. Establishing rotational grazing infrastructure on school trust, tribal, public, and adjacent private lands is the goal of this grant and to support the implementation of rotational grazing systems on these lands. Grant funds are estimated to improve grassland diversity on 8,000 acres of grassland. This will be achieved by reducing up-front costs through 60% cost-share for grassland enhancements. Providing this cost-share will make enhancements to school trust, tribal, public, and adjacent private land, an economical option at a time when agronomic cashflow is limited. Project partners will work with lessees and landowners to advance grazing systems on school trust, tribal, public and adjacent private lands. Reducing grazing duration per paddock on pastures will improve plant diversity and promote rest recovery time. Providing lessees with technical assistance and cost share for grazing infrastructure is the most proven, cost-effective way to improve wildlife habitat and promote working landscapes.

Through a broad-based partnership with a variety of backgrounds and expertise, we will deliver additional options to producers who graze school trust, tribal, public, and adjacent private lands. Promotion and outreach to lessees will provide a unique opportunity to develop grazing infrastructure on a voluntary basis.

GEPP is requesting OHF to provide funding for grassland enhancement practices that include livestock fencing, water developments and grass plantings. Infrastructure developments will consist of cost-share at a rate of 60% OHF and 40% from project partners according to the 2019 or most up to

date NRCS Field Office Tech Guide Allowable Cost recommendations by OHF. Boundary fence cost-share will be provided only on projects, which DO NOT contain any existing fence and increase grazing land available to agricultural lessees; Example (hay land and currently unmanaged idle grasslands).

Technical assistance will be provided by applicant and supporting partners. Grazing systems will consist of a grazing plan which will be focused on duration and recovery time to determine success. A grazing plan based on the principles of duration and recovery time provides producers with opportunity to be flexible based on each year's conditions and associated monitoring. Soil health of the systems will be monitored by water infiltration and success of the systems will ultimately be determined by the satisfaction of cooperating producers.

At a difficult economic time for agricultural producers we feel it is more important than ever to provide cost-share assistance on school trust, tribal, public and adjacent grassland acres and crucial that we encourage the implementation of rotational grazing systems. GEPP II expands GEPP to a statewide effort and provides a unique opportunity to work collaboratively towards a common goal in enhancing grassland habitat available to the public and tribal members. According to North Dakota Tourism's 2018 Annual report "*North Dakota's outdoors welcomed more than 63,000 nonresident anglers and 23,000 nonresident waterfowl hunters in 2018.*" Continued enhancement of these lands will help ensure North Dakota's outdoor users continue to have positive outdoor experiences.

Figure 2. GEPP II Project Area covers **All of North Dakota** with a **Bakken formation priority**, Northeast of the Missouri River. Northeast of the Missouri River includes the prairie pothole region, which is considered one of the most unique landscapes in the country.



Green: Priority Project Area, Grey: Expanded Project Area

Directives and Timeline

OHF Major 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. This is the major directive for GEPP and will be achieved by providing lessees with cost share and technical guidance to address resource concerns (water quality, soil conditions, plant diversity, animal health). Resource concerns will be addressed by improving rotational grazing systems through a grazing plan and establishing livestock grazing infrastructure. Water quality will improve by installing water sources away from wetlands and waterways. Soil conditions will improve through even manure distribution, rest recovery, and plant utilization. Rotational grazing promotes plant diversity through whole plant community utilization and increased stocking density for shorter grazing periods.

OHF Additional Directives

(A)– Providing access to private and public lands for sportsmen, including projects that create fish and wildlife habitat and provide access for sportsmen; School trust lands have been open to public hunting since 1983. Waterfowl Production Areas are open to public hunting, fishing, trapping, wildlife education, and wildlife observation. Wildlife Refuges are open to the public for wildlife observation, photography, limited hunting and ice fishing. Tribal lands are open to all tribal members and open to the public with a permit and lessee permission. North Dakota Forest Service lands are open to the public for outdoor recreation. Providing lessees with financial and technical assistance to establish grazing infrastructure will enhance these lands for sportsmen and provide valuable habitat for wildlife.

(C)– Developing, enhancing, conserving and restoring wildlife and fish habitat on private and public lands; this will be achieved by installing infrastructure to support rotational grazing on school trust, tribal, public and adjacent private land. Grass seeding, where needed, and implementing grazing plans to promote rest recovery time will develop new habitat and enhance existing cover.

If GEPP II is funded, agreements will be 5 years in length and/or will align with landowner grazing lease terms. Grazing infrastructure and improvements will be completed during the 5-year grant term (2020 - 2025). GEPP partners will continue to monitor the success of grazing systems throughout each agreement. Lessees of Trust land, Tribal land and U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service land are typically 5-year agreements, whereas Forest Service agreements are typically 3 years in length.

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.

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.

DU will provide management, coordination, and administration for GEPP II. DU conservation program biologists will coordinate with grant partners to identify lessees with an interest in expanding their grazing infrastructure on state school trust, tribal, public, and adjacent private land. DU will work collaboratively with partners and lessees to provide program guidance and cost-share for implementing rotational grazing infrastructure. The Trust will provide program promotion and technical

guidance. The North Dakota Grazing Lands Coalition (NDGLC) will provide technical assistance through their network of mentors across North Dakota by assisting in the development of rotational grazing plans. North Dakota State school trust, North Dakota Forest Service and Fish and Wildlife Service will provide assistance in agreement terms and permitting process needed to install grazing infrastructure. The Tribe will coordinate with lessees to increase awareness of GEPP and assist in development of grazing plans and permitting on Tribal lands. North Dakota's Natural Resources Conservation Service will provide technical assistance as needed for engineering pipelines, etc. Grant funds will be distributed to cooperators, contractors and consultants as agreement items are completed and proper documentation is provided to DU. Projects shall be funded on a first come first serve basis until funds expire. Dane Buysse, Conservation Programs Biologist and Jonas Davis, Manager of Conservation Programs have a combined 21 years of experience in delivering conservation projects for DU. DU will provide tracking and reporting of all landowner agreements to follow grant guidelines.

Lessees of state school trust, tribal, public and adjacent private land will work with landowners to develop grazing infrastructure, which enhances functionality of the ecosystem and promotes grassland rest recovery. DU biologists and partners will provide technical assistance to landowners.

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.

Success of the GEPP will be determined by the number of acres affected and rest recovery time for pastures. The number of rest recovery days for pastures will be a tool to determine the success of the rotational grazing systems to promote plant vigor and diversity. Soil health will be determined by water infiltration tests. Progress of projects will be documented through monitoring photos. Success of the program will ultimately be determined by the satisfaction of lessees and the amount of interest in the project.

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 and Other Project Sponsor's Match Share (Cash)	Applicant and Other Project Sponsor's Match Share (Cash/In-Kind)	Total Each Project Expense
OHF – Grassland Enhancement Practices 60%	\$600,000			\$600,000
OHF – Grassland Enhancement Practices 40%			\$400,000	\$400,000
Portable Infrastructure		\$20,000		\$20,000
Contracted Services	\$9,000	\$6,000		\$15,000
Project Staffing	\$10,000		\$12,500	\$22,500
Total Costs	\$619,000	\$26,000	\$412,500	\$1,057,500

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

- Agreements – All GEPP II agreements with landowners and/or lessees will mirror landowner agreement terms up to 5 years in length.
- Grassland Enhancement Practices
 - Fencing will follow the 2019 or most up to date NRCS Office Field 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 and lessees will provide the remaining 40% cost-share.
 - Water Developments will follow the 2019 or most up to date NRCS Office Field 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 and lessees will provide the remaining 40% cost-share.
 - Grass Plantings will follow the 2019 or most up to date NRCS Office Field 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 and lessees will provide the remaining 40% cost-share.
- Portable Infrastructure
 - The Trust will provide \$20,000 cash to cover 60% of the costs for grassland enhancement practices, which do not meet NRCS standards on rangeland such as trailer for hauling water or propane powered generator pump systems. If funds are not used for portable infrastructure, it will be available for cost-sharing grassland enhancement practices.
- 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 resource professional, we contract out that expertise to conduct a field review. Contracted services for a pedestrian review cost \$1,500 and costs would advance depending on findings. Based on DU's experience in requesting cultural reviews and the high potential for projects to involve native rangeland and pastureland, an estimate of 10 agreements will need pedestrian cultural review that can only be done by a certified reviewer. The cost of 10 reviews at \$1,500 per review

is \$15,000. Other contracted services may include water testing at \$60/sample or soil testing at \$25/sample. Ducks Unlimited will provide a cash match of \$6,000 toward these contracted services. Grant request \$9,000 for contracted services.

- **Project Staffing**

- DU and the Trust will provide most of the staffing through in-kind contributions at \$12,500, which includes time, travel, benefits. Contributions include Ducks Unlimited biologists at \$10,000 and Trust staff at \$2,500. The proposal does request \$10,000 in OHF funds for staffing costs to cover expenses related to GEPP II projects, which includes meeting with landowners and lessees to develop projects, completion of cultural resource requests to SHPO and grant administration. As Ducks Unlimited and partners work with landowners and lessees to deliver GEPP II it is important for all partners to be made aware of OHF funding availability and opportunities.

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 Grasslands Enhancement Project Phase II (GEPP II) impact is sustainable in many ways.

Providing up to 60% cost share for grazing infrastructure offers lessees quality water sources and fencing infrastructure, which is the foundation for a sustainable livestock grazing system. Quality water sources located strategically away from waterways will improve water quality downstream and reduce activity near fragile habitats. Another primary reason is proper infrastructure enables lessees the ability to graze through drought conditions where land managers can better control Kentucky bluegrass and smooth brome. GEPP II also promotes planned rotational grazing practices, which has proven to lengthen the grazing seasons available forage for ranchers, improve habitat for wildlife, enhance grassland health, improve drought tolerance and improve grassland diversity. Establishing reliable water sources, cross fencing and boundary fencing, when needed, allows landowners and lessees to collaborate on a sustainable system, which benefits school trust, tribal, public, and adjacent private land.

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

Partial funding would result in a reduced capacity to improve grazing systems on school trust, tribal, public, and adjacent private land. Fewer acres would be enhanced, but partial funding would still allow for an increase in the quality of public land resources available for grassland management by utilizing livestock as a tool.

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.*

1. Outdoor Heritage Fund will be recognized in project outreach efforts, on the Ducks Unlimited Website, and on local/national press releases.
2. Outdoor Heritage Fund will be recognized when working with all landowners and lessees interested in GEPP II.

3. Outdoor Heritage Fund will be recognized as a major contributing partner during landowner workshops/field tours that promote the project.

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:

References:

<https://www.ndtourism.com/sites/default/master/files/pdf/2018annualreport.pdf>

<https://gf.nd.gov/sites/default/files/publications/hunter-angler-spending-2017-2018-final.pdf>



North Dakota Natural Resources Trust
1605 E. Capitol Avenue, Suite 101
Bismarck, ND 58501-2102
Phone: (701) 223-8501

October 31, 2019

Karlene Fine, Executive Director
North Dakota Industrial Commission
ATTN: Outdoor Heritage Fund Program
State Capitol – Fourteenth Floor
600 East Boulevard Ave., Dept. 405
Bismarck, ND 58505

Dear Ms. Fine:

The North Dakota Natural Resources Trust's (Trust) mission is to preserve, enhance, restore, and manage wetlands and associated wildlife habitat, grasslands, and riparian areas in the state of North Dakota. We are writing in support of the Ducks Unlimited Outdoor Heritage Funds grant proposal titled "Grasslands Enhancement Project Phase II." The Trust will provide \$20,000 in cash match and \$2,500 of in-kind match.

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, our goal is to identify common issues, create dialogue, and resolve conflicts. Along with our agricultural and conservation partners, the Trust advocates for recognition, appropriate development, and protection of North Dakota's unique natural resource values.

Consistent with the Trust's mission, this grant proposal will be a critical component for providing technical and financial assistance to link private landowners and publicly owned property. This partnership of private land management on selected public lands will deliver increased livestock production as well as increased wildlife conservation habitat creating a true "win-win situation."

We are happy to provide our endorsement of Ducks Unlimited's grant proposal and look forward the accomplishments.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Keith Trego". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Keith" being more prominent than the last name "Trego".

Keith Trego
Executive Director



North Dakota Grazing Lands Coalition
PO Box 1091, Bismarck, ND 58502

www.ndglc.com
contact@ndglc.com

October 21, 2019

Karlene Fine, Executive Director
North Dakota Industrial Commission
State Capitol - 14th Floor
600 East Boulevard Ave., Dept. 405
Bismarck, ND 58505

ATTN: Outdoor Heritage Fund

Dear Ms. Fine:

Please accept this letter of support by the North Dakota Grazing Lands Coalition (NDGLC) for Ducks Unlimited's Outdoor Heritage Fund proposal "Grasslands Enhancement Project Phase II" (GEPP II).

NDGLC is a grassroots group organized in 1996 to promote the health and sustainability of North Dakota's 13.5 million acres of grazing lands. Coalition members have a strong focus on managing for soil health and biodiversity to promote sustainable farming and ranching. NDGLC supports "GEPP II" as it seeks to improve grazing infrastructure and grazing systems on public and private lands. It is a core belief of ours that through voluntary actions, respect for private property rights, and education on the benefits of well managed grazing resources, their goals are achievable. Advice our mentors provide is based upon the knowledge and experience gained on their operations and through interactions with other ranchers across the state.

It is important to the NDGLC that the ag producer perspective be accounted for in a program like this. Therefore, NDGLC is prepared to provide support for GEPP II to enhance school trust, tribal, public and adjacent private land in North Dakota. The proposed rotational grazing systems will be implemented to optimize grazing duration and recovery time that will benefit the rancher and North Dakota's grassland species. The NDGLC mentor network is pleased to provide support, upon request, to cooperators interested in the program through rotational grazing systems management.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Chad Njos". The signature is fluid and cursive.

Chad Njos, NDGLC Chairman



North Dakota Forest Service

*re for, protect and improve forest and natural resources to enhance
the quality of life for present and future generations."*

10/28/2019

Karlene Fine
Executive Director, North Dakota Industrial Commission
ATTN: Outdoor Heritage Fund
600 East Boulevard Ave Dept 405
Bismarck ND 58505

Dear Ms. Fine

The North Dakota Forest Service manages five state forests encompassing 13,761 acres. The primary goal of the State Forest Program is to practice sound land stewardship to enhance the forest, grassland and wetland ecosystems found on the state forests.

Keeping areas as close to their natural condition as possible is a goal of the state forest program. The state forest system contains significant acreages of land that was historically grassland. Controlling noxious weeds, haying and grazing are the primary approaches to maintaining these areas as grassland.

The proposed Outdoor Heritage Fund, Grassland Enhancement Project Phase II would offer a unique opportunity to improve our agricultural lease program by enhancing wildlife habitat while simultaneously benefitting our farmers and ranchers that lease those lands. With that sentiment the North Dakota Forest Service is pleased to offer our support for the Grassland Enhancement Project Phase II.

Sincerely,

Michael Kangas
Nursery and State Forest Team Leader

Nursery and State Forest Team Leader NDSU Dept 7650 PO Box 6050 Fargo ND 58108-6050
Tel: (701) 231-5936 E-mail: michael.kangas@ndsu.edu www.ndsu.edu/ndfs

1707 North 9th Street
PO Box 5523
Bismarck, ND 58506-5523
Phone: (701) 328-2800
Fax: (701) 328-3650

<https://land.nd.gov>



Jodi A. Smith, Commissioner

October 24, 2019

KARLENE FINE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
NORTH DAKOTA INDUSTRIAL COMMISSION
ATTN: OUTDOOR HERITAGE FUND PROGRAM
600 EAST BOULEVARD AVE DEPT 405
BISMARCK ND 58505

Dear Ms. Fine:

By and through the Department of Trust Lands, the North Dakota Board of University and School Lands manages thousands of acres of trust lands that were granted by the federal government to North Dakota at statehood. These permanent trust lands were provided solely for the purpose of providing financial support to public schools in North Dakota. In order to provide this support, these lands are managed to generate income and are leased to farmers and ranchers at public auction at lease once every five years.

While working with Ducks Unlimited during the Grasslands Enhancement Pilot Project Phase I, land improvements were implemented on school trust land that allowed lessees to improve grazing management. The proposed Phase II of the project has the potential to continue to enhance trust lands through the application of grazing management, wildlife habitat, and water quality practices.

Non-vehicular public access is authorized on school trust land by the Board of University and School Lands. However, a lessee can request closed signs from the Department if livestock management practices conflict with hunting seasons.

The Department of Trust Lands supports Ducks Unlimited proposal for a Phase II to the Outdoor Heritage Fund project to enhance public and school trust lands; and it will work within the confines of its fiduciary responsibility to the trusts and beneficiaries to cooperate with the project. The application of land and water development practices will enhance the use of school trust lands, while maintaining our principal responsibility to generate revenue to the school trusts.

We look forward on continuing the collaboration on the proposed project in areas where it offers mutual benefit.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads 'Jodi Smith'.

Jodi Smith
Commissioner, Board of University and School Lands



United States Department of Agriculture

Natural Resources
Conservation Service

Bismarck State Office
PO Box 1458
Bismarck, ND
58502-1458

Voice 701.530.2000
Fax 855-813-7556

October 28, 2019

Ducks Unlimited
Attn: Dane Buysse
2525 River Road
Bismarck, ND 58503

ATTN: Outdoor Heritage Fund

Dear Dane,

The Outdoor Heritage Fund proposal by Ducks Unlimited for the Grasslands Enhancement Project Phase II is an excellent project that fits local conservation needs.

U.S. Department of Agriculture, Natural Resources Conservation Service, will provide technical assistance for the Engineering projects and will work closely to assist North Dakota agricultural producers and all grant partners.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jennifer C. Heglund".

JENNIFER C. HEGLUND
Acting State Conservationist

Helping People Help the Land

An Equal Opportunity Provider, Employer, and Lender

United States Department of the Interior



FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE

J. CLARK SALYER NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE
681 SALYER ROAD
UPHAM, ND 58789-0066
PHONE (701) 768-2548
FAX (701) 768-2834



October 28, 2019

Karlene Fine, Executive Director
North Dakota Industrial Commission
ATTN: Outdoor Heritage Fund Program
600 East Boulevard Ave., Dept. 405
Bismarck, ND 58505

Dear Ms. Fine:

We are pleased to support Ducks Unlimited and partners "Grasslands Enhancement Project Phase II" (GEPP II) grant proposal. The United States Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) has a history of working closely with private landowners to manage Waterfowl Production Areas and Refuges through grazing management. Ranchers in need of grazing have the opportunity to graze these areas when management is necessary to meet habitat objectives. Therefore, USFWS is proud to support the GEPP II efforts to provide lessees of public lands and adjacent private lands with grazing system enhancements for the benefit of grassland health and wildlife habitat.

Waterfowl Production Areas and Refuges provide the public with access to hunt, wildlife watch, photograph wildlife and enjoy the outdoors with family and friends. They also provide a variety of additional benefits to the public such as erosion and flood reduction, ground water recharge and wildlife habitat. Rotational grazing is a great management tool to promote native vegetation and control tame cool season grasses, which tend to invade native grasslands. The addition of proper infrastructure to these public lands will provide land managers and lessees with greater opportunity to enhance these public lands.

We are proud to support the efforts of Ducks Unlimited and partners to enhance public lands and adjacent private lands by utilizing grazing as a tool. The USFWS and lessees will work with GEPP II partners to develop grazing infrastructure enhancements and rotational grazing infrastructure on Waterfowl Production Areas and Refuges. Rotational grazing systems will be designed around rest recovery time and allow for rest recovery time on adjacent private pastures. We look forward to the positive enhancements this will provide public lands.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, reading "John Takala".

John Takala
Wetland District Manager



TURTLE MOUNTAIN BAND OF CHIPPEWA INDIANS

HIGHWAY #5 WEST
P.O. BOX 900
BELCOURT, ND 58316

(701) 477-2600
Fax: (701) 477-0916
Website: www.tmbci.org

October 28, 2019

Karlene Fine, Executive Director
North Dakota Industrial Commission
ATTN: Outdoor Heritage Fund Program
600 East Boulevard Ave., Dept. 405
Bismarck, ND 58505

Dear Ms. Fine:

Please accept this letter of support by the Turtle Mountain Band of Chippewa Indians (the Tribe) for Ducks Unlimited's "Grasslands Enhancement Project Phase II" (GEPP II) grant proposal.

The Mission of the Tribe is "Empowering our people to become better and do better." The GEPP II grant proposal is a great opportunity for lessees to enhance Tribal grazing lands. Grazing management and agriculture are a primary tool to ensure Tribal lands continue to be working lands for local people. The Tribe is pleased to support GEPP II efforts to provide lessees of state school trust, tribal, public and adjacent private land with grazing system enhancements for the benefit of grassland health and wildlife habitat.

Tribal lands are open access to all tribal members and open to public hunting if a tribal permit and permission from the lessee are granted. The Turtle Mountain Band of Chippewa Indians has around 30,100 members, 8,500 of whom live on or adjacent to the Tribes land base of 86,989 acres of tribal and individual allotted trust lands in Rolette county, North Dakota. Grazing and agricultural leases on tribal lands are commonly 5 years in length. The Tribal leases are commonly members and all infrastructure improvements become ownership of the Tribe once installed. Preferential leasing provides current lessees with the option to continue leasing once their lease expires, provided that payments are up to date.

The opportunity for lessees to make improvements with cost share provided is encouraging to both lessees and the Tribe as a landowner. Enhancements, which promote rotational grazing and rest-recovery, are beneficial to Tribal lands because of the similarities to how bison historically grazed the North Dakota landscape.

We are proud to support the efforts of Ducks Unlimited and partners to enhance state school trust, tribal land, public land and adjacent private land by utilizing grazing as a tool. The Tribe and lessees will work with GEPP II partners to develop grazing infrastructure enhancements and rotational grazing infrastructure on Tribal lands. We look forward to the positive enhancements this will provide tribal lands.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jamie S. Azure".

Jamie S. Azure, Chairman
Turtle Mountain Band of Chippewa Indians

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.

Revised: September 14, 2018