

# 11128 - ND Conservation District Employees Association Statewide Tree Planting Initiative

## Application Details

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<b>Funding Opportunity:</b>	7583-Outdoor Heritage Fund May 2021 - Round 18	<b>Initial Submit Date:</b>	May 3, 2021 4:20 PM
<b>Funding Opportunity Due Date:</b>	May 3, 2021 11:59 PM	<b>Initially Submitted By:</b>	Sarah Tunge
<b>Program Area:</b>	Outdoor Heritage Fund	<b>Last Submit Date:</b>	May 5, 2021 3:51 PM
<b>Status:</b>	Under Review	<b>Last Submitted By:</b>	Sarah Tunge
<b>Stage:</b>	Final Application		

## Contact Information

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### Primary Contact Information

**Active User\*:** Yes

**Type:** External User

**Name:** Salutation Sarah Middle Name  
First Name  
Tunge  
Last Name

**Title:**

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ste 102  
  
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City State/Province  
58523  
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**Phone\*:** (701) 873-2101 3  
Phone Ext.  
###-###-####

**Fax:** ###-###-####

### Organization Information

**Status\*:** Approved

**Name\*:** North Dakota Conservation District Employees Association (NDCDEA)

**Organization Type\*:** In-State Non-Profit

**Tax Id:**

**Organization Website:**

**Address\*:** 123 Main Street, PO Box 346  
  
McClusky North Dakota  
City State/Province  
58463  
Postal Code/Zip

**Phone\*:** 701-873-2101 Ext.  
###-###-####

**Fax:** ###-###-####

**Comments:**

<b>Restricted Indirect Cost Rate:</b>	0.0%
<b>Unrestricted Indirect Cost Rate:</b>	0.0%

## Budget

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### ***Objective of Grant***

**Objective of Grant:**

The purpose of the grant is to continue funding for the 2022-2024 tree planting season for conservation tree installation to include trees and fabric. This program is being utilized to help fill the increasing need for financial assistance; not replace any existing state or federal programs.

### ***Summary***

<b>Grant Request:</b>	\$2,550,000.00
<b>Matching Funds:</b>	\$1,633,333.00

**Total Project Costs:** \$4,183,333.00

**You must have at least 25% match**

**Percentage of Match:** 39.04%

***Project Expenses***

<b>Project Expense Description</b>	<b>OHF Request</b>	<b>Match Share (Cash)</b>	<b>Match Share (In-Kind)</b>	<b>Match Share (Indirect)</b>	<b>Other Project Sponsor's Share</b>	<b>Total Each Project Expense</b>
Tree Planting/Weed Barrier Installation	\$2,500,000.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$2,500,000.00
Landowner Obligation	\$0.00	\$833,333.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$833,333.00
Applicant In-Kind SCDs	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$800,000.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$800,000.00
Administration	\$40,000.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$40,000.00
Cultural Resource Reviews	\$10,000.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$10,000.00
	<b>\$2,550,000.00</b>	<b>\$833,333.00</b>	<b>\$800,000.00</b>	<b>\$0.00</b>	<b>\$0.00</b>	<b>\$4,183,333.00</b>

***Budget Narrative***

**Budget Narrative:**

\$833,333.00 Landowner responsibility at the 25% for the remaining cost share on a reimbursable basis of 75/25 In-kind Cost: \$800,000.00 will be contributed by the ND Soil Conservation Districts participating. These services will include field visits, application submission, field staking and order placement, tree installation and follow up certified verification.

Outdoor Heritage Funds will be submitted to the Industrial Commission during the month of July/August based on completion of the Soil Conservation Districts tree planting service for the year indicated. Allocated funds are distributed to the local SCD's on behalf of the landowners for services rendered. Field Office Tech Guide requires tree plantings be installed no later than the first week of June.

***Bid Attachments***

<b>Description</b>	<b>File Name</b>	<b>Type</b>	<b>Size</b>	<b>Upload Date</b>
	No files attached.			

**Match Funding**

<b>Match Amount</b>	<b>Funding Source</b>	<b>Match Type</b>
\$833,333.00	Landowner cash match at a 75/25 cost-share	Cash
\$800,000.00	ND Soil Conservation Districts - planning, application management, site prep, planting and check-out.	In-Kind
<b>\$1,633,333.00</b>		

**Description**

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**Directives**

**Major Directive\*:** Directive B  
Choose One

**Additional Directive:** Directive A, Directive C  
Choose All That Apply

**Type of Agency\*:** Tax-exempt, nonprofit corporation  
Choose One

**Abstract/Executive Summary**

**Abstract/Executive Summary\*:**

Conservation tree planting is an important component of agricultural systems, improves rural life and enhances wildlife. Field windbreaks help reduce soil erosion and have been proven to reduce water evaporation from adjacent cropland and increase crop yields. Conservation plantings are designed for streambank stabilization, filter water runoff from adjacent agricultural lands, provide wildlife habitat, increase safety on roads with snow accumulation, provide winter protection for wildlife or livestock, and to protect rural homes from snow and wind. The NDSTPI will engage stewards to embrace conservation practices that promote the ecological benefits trees provide. This initiative will provide financial assistance to implement agroforestry practices in North Dakota including farmstead, feedlot and field windbreaks, wildlife and riparian plantings, buffers and living snow fences.

The success of the ND Statewide Tree Planting Initiative has grown due to the outreach the 54 Soil Conservation Districts have provided through newspapers, quarterly newsletters, and boots on the ground conservation planning. The biggest indicator of success has been increasing numbers of trees installed and increasing numbers of applications submitted each grant round.

The SCD's promotion of the Outdoor Heritage Fund allows district staff to conduct on site field visits with interested stewards. Staff requirements of the program for landowners to qualify include proper site preparation prior to field installation, completion on the CONS 4 plan to meet soil suitability and Field Office Tech Guide requirements. Following all local, state, and federal setbacks required for adequate field placement. All approved OHF applications are required to be screened by the State Historical Preservation Office (SHPO) and the Tribal Historical Preservation Office (THPO) applicable for the county submitting prior to any installation that will take place. If an additional screening is warranted due to a sensitive area the landowner is required to obtain an archeological survey followed up by SHPO in concurrence of approval. All plantings are paid based on actual footage installed in accordance to their OHF/SCD contract. Eligible landowners enter a ten-year contract and must maintain the tree site for the duration of the lifespan. Replacement trees to ensure establishment in subsequent years is the responsibility of the landowner.

The NDCDEA has implemented a random site spot inspection policy in the year of installation. This will ensure accountability and that the quality of work meets all specifications.

The grant request is \$2,550,000.00 for a three-year program with total project costs not to exceed \$4,183,333.00. The landowner's obligation will be 25% of the practice installation cost and maintenance outlined in the ten-year contract.

### ***Project Duration***

#### **Project Duration\*:**

Project planning will begin upon awarding of grant funds. OFH funding requests will be submitted to the Industrial Commission during the month of July/August based on completion of the SCD tree planting. Allocated funds are distributed to the local SCD's on behalf of the landowners for services rendered. Field Office Tech Guide requires tree plantings be installed no later than the first week of June. Timeline will repeat yearly until completion of grant in 2024 or when funding is exhausted.

## **Narrative**

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### ***Narrative***

Briefly summarize your organization's history, mission, current programs and activities. Include an overview of your organizational structure, including board, staff and volunteer involvement.

**Organization Information\*:**

The ND Conservation District Employees Association was formed on February 11th, 1991. Our purpose is to promote professionalism, provide training, and networking opportunities for district employees throughout the state. In addition to supporting district employees, NDCDEA advocates for diverse partnerships and collaboration opportunities to increase effectiveness and efficiency in the delivery of conservation programs.

NDCDEA is a strong partner in the conservation delivery system that includes District Supervisors, the North Dakota Association of Soil Conservation Districts (NDASCD), North Dakota State Soil Conservation Committee (NDSSCC), State and USDA conservation agencies.

The NDCDEA Board consists of 12 district employees elected for two-year terms from the NDASCD areas; the Executive Committee includes a president, vice-president, secretary, and treasurer elected by the area directors. Throughout the year, NDCDEA sponsors training and leadership opportunities for district employees including technical training, youth and adult outreach, office administration, and leadership. NDCDEA utilizes partnerships in coordination of sound technical training delivery. NDCDEA has a strong history of bringing partners to the table to collaborate and encourage conservation.

NDCDEA has a history of successfully managing grants including: three OHF Grants (\$6,207,000) for state-wide tree planting initiatives; one NACD Conservation Partnership Collaboration grant (\$35,600) for leadership training, USDA conservation practice deliverables, and to build an online district accomplishment tracking tool; three NRCS Conservation Delivery Planning Partnership grants to provide technical and financial assistance for USDA Farm Bill directives; and a Conservation Collaboration Grant for \$543,000 to continue support for districts working on USDA Farm Bill deliverables.

**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.

If your project involves an extenuating circumstance to exempted activities please explain.

**Purpose of Grant\*:**

The purpose of the grant is to continue with funding for the 2022-2024 tree planting season for conservation tree installation to include trees and fabric. This program is being utilized to help fill the increasing need for financial assistance and to not replace the current USDA NRCS Environmental Quality Incentive Program or the USDA FSA CRP Continuous Sign up for trees. The federal programs have limited or capped application practices including tree planting installation along with a decrease in funding to meet the demand of the participants wanting to install conservation tree plantings. This shift in priorities leaves a growing portion of the population ineligible for cost-share programs.

The program is orientated to a growing number of landowners with resource concerns who do not qualify for other cost share programs. Installing trees on private land increases wildlife habitat and creates natural travel corridors for wildlife, while decreasing soil erosion, decreasing energy costs, protecting roads from snow impacts and improving crop production and water quality.

This program also strengthens working relationship with partners by connecting landowners with additional opportunities for conservation through programs like the Private Land Open to Sportsmen.

If approved for additional funding, conservation tree planting cost-share will be available to landowners beyond the 2022 tree planting season.

Applications are submitted a year prior to planting, allowing for a review process for FOTG specifications, adequate site prep, cultural screenings, and tree availability from nursery suppliers.

**Tree Plantings Completed:**

2015	447 Applicants	1,976,875 linear feet installed
2016	142 Applicants	994,079 linear feet installed
2017	128 Applicants	839,487 linear feet installed
2018	152 Applicants	767,026 linear feet installed
2019	209 Applicants	1,484,292 linear feet installed
2020	381 Applicants	1,927,891 linear feet installed
2021	412 Applicants	2,370,307 linear feet estimated *Estimated as being installed

Totals for the project to date are:

1,871 Applicants

10,359,957 linear feet equivalent to 1,962 miles of trees

The current grant is planned for the 2020 through 2022 tree planting seasons with \$3,000,000.00 requested for conservation tree planting installation. There has been a significant increase in requests and current funding will be exhausted prior to 2022. This application request will allow for the continued installation of conservation trees and landowner outreach.

**Please list the counties that would be impacted by this project:**

**Counties\*:** Statewide

**Is This Project Part of a Comprehensive Conservation Plan?\*** No

**If Yes, Please Provide Copy of Plan:**

**Does Your Project Involve an Extenuating Circumstance?\*** No

**Please Explain:**

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.

**Management of Project\*:**

The NDSTPI program is open to landowners across the entire state of North Dakota and all conservation districts are eligible to participate. Public and private entities/landowners are encouraged to participate. The NDCDEA will coordinate the project at the state level with program partners utilizing leadership and expertise for guidance. The NCDEA provides an effective tracking and reporting mechanism for project resource information, location, and accounting. Conservation Districts are required to submit applications, producer contracts, payment submissions and status reviews per the grant requirements. NDCDEA will provide oversight and coordination of the program. Prior to contract acceptance, a peer review for CONS 4 suitability, set back requirements and FOTG specifications will be conducted along with location and maps submitted to the SHPO or THPO for review to ensure planting areas are free of any cultural resource impacts. Landowners will agree to maintain the planting projects for a 10-year period of time with the cost for replacement trees and shrubs being the responsibility of the landowner.

All contracts will be held with grant administrator should a request be made for a state review with receipt of services. Payment requests will contain all legal descriptions, names, and funds dispensed on their behalf.

NDCDEA has also implemented random field spot checks for planting installations ensuring another layer of review to ensure plantings are meeting compliance.

Requests will be made through the planting season of 2022, 2023, and 2024. Status reviews and actual footage installation cost will be completed and certified for payment in August/September. Prior submission the landowner is required to sign off on the payment application assuring practices were installed and they agree with the amount being requested on their behalf.

NDCDEA will measure the success of the grant by the number of applications submitted and approved along with the footage of trees and fabric installed. Project reports will be submitted with cumulative totals and payment reimbursement requests. NDCDEA has a strong working relationship with both state and federal conservation programs partners and they will ensure grant funds are spent appropriately and with a high level of accountability. NDCEA is required to follow audit guidelines ensuring funds are being dispersed accordingly along with federal filing to maintain their 501 C3 status. SCDs will continue with a framework that is easy to understand and navigate public and private landowners seeking cost share assistance.

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.

**Sustainability\*:**



Conservation tree planting is an important long-term management tool. Trees provide opportunities integrate productivity and profitability with environmental stewardship.

Individual conservation tree plantings will be managed to ensure effectiveness by the landowner. Overall survival requirements will be outlined within the landowner agreements as well as prohibited land management practices such as burning, grazing, or destructive tree removal. Landowners will be financially vested in the project as an additional incentive to ensure the practice is successful.

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

**Partial Funding\*:**

If partial funding is awarded, NDCDEA will limit the number of applications each year based on fund available. These adjustments can be made to accommodate financial allocations if awarded partial funding. A reduced level of funding would result in fewer landowner participations.

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

**Partnership Recognition\*:**

The ND Outdoor Heritage Fund is listed as primary sponsor on all media releases SCD's provide in their county. The OHF logo is visible on all advertisement, pamphlets, county newsletters and statewide press releases. The OHF has also been recognized on a national level with presentations on partner success stories. SCD's will highlight not only the NDCDEA Statewide Tree Planting Initiative, but also other OHF projects they are partners on at county and statewide events.

Do you have any supporting documents, such as maps or letters of support that you would like to provide? If so, please provide them in a single file.

**Supporting Documents\*:** No

**If Yes, Please Provide Copies in a Single File:**

Awarding of Grants - Review the appropriate sample contract for your organization. Sample Contract

**Can You Meet All the Provisions of the Sample Contract?\*** Yes

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

**Provisions Unable to Meet:**

## Tasks

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## Tasks

Task	Start Date	Completion Date
Application review	10/01/2021	10/01/2023
Planning	08/01/2021	06/30/2024
Random site checks	08/01/2022	08/01/2024
Tree planting & weed barrier installation	05/01/2022	06/15/2024

## Description of Tasks

### Please Describe Tasks:

Conservation planning will begin upon award of the grant for the 2022 planting season. Applications will be reviewed by a peer group and SHPO or THPO prior to awarding contracts in the fall of 2021. Contracts for 2022 will be issued after being cleared. Planting will begin in the spring of 2022. Random site visits will take place in the late summer of each grant year 2022-2024. Reimbursement requests will be submitted in July/August of each grant year based on actual footage installed.

## Deliverables

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### Deliverables

Deliverable	Quantity	Unit of Measurement, if applicable
Tree & Weed Barrier Installation	500.000	Miles

## Certification

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### Certification

**Certification:** Yes

**Name:** Sarah Tunge  
First Name Last Name

**Title:** NDCDEA Director  
Title

**Date:** 05/03/2021

### Internal Application Number

**#/ID:** 18-20

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