

Outdoor Heritage Fund Grant Application



Instructions

After completing the form, applications and supporting documentation may be submitted by e-mail to ndicgrants@nd.gov. It is preferred that only electronic copies 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 by the application deadline. 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	Working Grassland Partnership 7
Name of Organization	North Dakota Natural Resources Trust
Federal Tax ID	36-3512179
Contact Person/Title	Terry Allbee Business Manager/Biologist
Address	1605 East Capitol Avenue, Suite 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 701-527-1625 (cell)

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)

Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) has been part of North Dakota's landscape since the 1980's. Landowner interest in enrolling into CRP has varied since inception. Our state of North Dakota currently has just over 1.1 million acres enrolled. Most CRP contracts are 10 years in length. As many past CRP contracts reach their expiration, landowners are making decisions on what they will do with these former cropland acres. The decision typically falls into the following options: 1) reenrollment back into CRP: 2) conversion of those acres back to cropland and 3) keeping those acres in grasslands for hay or livestock production. The landowners who choose the option for grazing require additional expense for fence and water developments necessary to graze them properly. As long as there are CRP acres in North Dakota, there will be expiring CRP acres and landowners will need to make a decision. The Working Grassland Partnership concept is to assist those who want improved soil health, increased water infiltration, additional acres for livestock grazing, and to benefit grassland dependent wildlife species.



This grant proposal titled "Working Grasslands Partnership 7" is designed to assist landowners who want to transition their expiring CRP acres into grazing acres for livestock production. Working Grassland Partnership 7 (WGP7) is requesting grant funding for cost-share of fencing and water developments on CRP acres that will expire in 2024, 2025 and/or 2026. The Trust will provide habitat lease only on expiring CRP acres. WGP7 will be offered statewide.



The North Dakota Natural Resources Trust (Trust) is very appreciative of the past support of previous grant proposals that assisted landowners with transitioning expiring CRP acres. The Trust has a strong track record of delivering those previous grants. Cumulatively the Working Grassland Partnership grants from Outdoor Heritage Fund (OHF) have signed 196 landowner agreements and have enrolled 84,650 acres. All previous grant funds have been obligated and there is only a small percent of funds remaining to be paid before all previous grants will be finalized. The WGP7 will be offered on new acres and to new landowners.

Over the next three years there are 155,306 acres that will expire in North Dakota, that is 14% of all CRP acres in the state. Counties with the greatest total of expiring CRP acres include Sargent, Barnes, Grand Forks, Nelson, Ransom, Bowman and Richland Counties. Because of the OHF Advisory Board support in funding previous OHF grants, the familiarity and awareness of the Working Grassland Partnership approach is very high among landowners. The Trust has a current backlog of landowners, with many being from eastern North Dakota.

CRP Contract Expirations by Year 1/ Acres as of April 2024

STATE	2024	2025	2026	2027	2028	2029	2030	2031 +
ALABAMA	3,702	3,968	4,721	2,669	2,518	1,946	20,235	55,170
ALASKA	0	0	0	0	0	0	7,823	4,659
ARIZONA	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	61,561
ARKANSAS	10,088	14,294	13,273	11,890	7,039	9,372	14,096	107,147
CALIFORNIA	0	0	718	1,000	0	0	8,196	70,475
COLORADO	7,968	2,999	62,090	17,736	5,608	3,553	346,335	2,339,674
DELAWARE	105	100	204	99	76	168	161	1,964
FLORIDA	61	223	274	311	122	615	224	4,663
GEORGIA	11,690	17,849	8,171	4,441	3,176	13,247	20,258	70,040
HAWAII	147	2	329	0	273	225	0	5,435
IDAHO	21,424	12,318	20,178	29,994	128	95	16,917	262,994
ILLINOIS	34,206	70,919	121,796	99,019	34,411	40,301	128,081	263,553
INDIANA	9,149	18,071	27,058	19,441	9,457	5,715	20,629	74,263
IOWA	74,312	153,744	273,427	301,897	33,889	51,747	280,222	507,341
KANSAS	15,191	175,880	116,775	91,327	26,975	13,289	249,788	1,271,922
KENTUCKY	7,863	12,514	19,660	17,087	3,325	2,232	18,655	54,329
LOUISIANA	19,729	20,069	7,784	17,523	11,487	36,163	23,927	113,722
MAINE	1	10	25	2	15	0	255	1,892
MARYLAND	3,353	3,429	3,060	4,757	3,025	2,633	4,131	16,504
MASSACHUSETTS	0	0	0	0	0	9	0	0
MICHIGAN	4,023	4,118	12,203	6,673	7,058	3,304	22,540	48,942
MINNESOTA	42,433	55,225	82,224	94,005	60,581	58,926	139,928	433,115
MISSISSIPPI	14,191	25,127	33,719	27,830	14,847	20,065	76,682	242,319
MISSOURI	23,354	30,511	70,229	38,003	9,079	4,474	94,414	400,566
MONTANA	3,859	10,161	26,679	88,244	12,295	2,369	71,782	673,628
NEBRASKA	17,764	58,240	72,180	70,923	19,358	5,445	138,925	1,835,517
NEVADA	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2,968
NEW JERSEY	54	182	138	150	70	45	245	1,260
NEW MEXICO	3,565	5,955	14,160	18,267	0	0	8,199	1,037,500
NEW YORK	541	732	1,141	1,288	600	350	1,480	8,449
NORTH CAROLINA	1,227	2,028	2,226	726	539	471	3,538	8,029
NORTH DAKOTA	37,613	60,364	57,329	108,791	35,298	33,378	163,869	651,767
OHIO	8,379	13,919	15,568	18,457	8,567	5,948	25,165	131,483
OKLAHOMA	1,520	1,962	15,577	1,913	739	66	96,240	545,870
OREGON	1,628	3,127	40,139	26,604	5,199	1,175	123,954	709,789
PENNSYLVANIA	6,118	5,689	5,129	8,138	7,484	5,948	4,888	35,989
PUERTO RICO	435	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
RHODE ISLAND	28	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
SOUTH CAROLINA	1,839	3,582	1,411	2,368	2,146	1,207	2,989	8,549
SOUTH DAKOTA	55,504	71,206	80,726	108,593	38,965	47,119	150,811	1,838,910
TENNESSEE	1,942	4,456	13,629	6,994	1,082	733	14,582	48,903
TEXAS	23,013	54,993	88,122	31,399	2,449	7,222	465,731	1,491,190
UTAH	195	0	1,060	0	6	0	40,490	121,456
VERMONT	254	154	86	67	74	64	138	1,092
VIRGINIA	906	2,389	2,889	1,020	845	457	4,495	15,317
WASHINGTON	4,984	29,115	163,597	29,600	3,507	5,746	154,445	533,246
WEST VIRGINIA	452	336	555	186	298	171	84	11,685
WISCONSIN	6,697	11,972	19,813	17,724	6,353	2,569	27,509	96,671
WYOMING	132	179	10,116	436	253	0	13,317	442,018
TOTALS:	481,639	962,107	1,510,290	1,327,593	379,217	388,558	3,006,371	16,663,541

USDA FSA Website

North Dakota has the 4th largest total of expiring acres in the country in 2024.

Project Duration: 5 Years

Indicate the intended schedule for drawing down OHF funds.

2024 \$ 62,500.00
2025 \$500,000.00
2026 \$100,000.00
2027 \$100,000.00

Amount of Grant request: \$ 762,500.00

Total Project Costs: \$1,267,500.00

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

Amount of Matching Funds: \$ 505,000.00 (40%)

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 (Cash, In-kind or Indirect)
\$357,500.00	Private Landowners	Cash
\$100,000.00	NDNRT	Cash
\$17,500.00	NDNRT	In-Kind
\$15,000.00	Ducks Unlimited	In-Kind
\$15,000.00	ND Partners for Fish and Wildlife	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)

The North Dakota Natural Resources Trust was created in 1986 and was originally called the North Dakota Wetlands Trust until 2000. The Trust's mission is to promote the retention, restoration, creation and wildlife friendly management of wetlands, grasslands, and riparian areas by presenting practical conservation opportunities throughout North Dakota. The Trust achieves this mission by partnering with agricultural and conservation organizations to 1) promote the productive use of private agricultural lands private property rights that result in the enhancement and protection of private lands; 2) effectively use North Dakota's public lands both for agriculture and recreation; 3) promote good land use planning along urban river corridors, and 4) 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 resource protection.

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.

Statewide, there will be just under 155,306 acres expiring from CRP in 2024, 2025 and 2026. During the next three years, decisions by landowners on the future of their property will be addressed. In many cases, landowners want to reenroll these acres back into a CRP contract. Due to national CRP scoring many of these landowners do not score high enough to be accepted. Many of these acres are highly erodible soils, so the choice for cropping is not desired. This is where the WGP7 can assist with cost-share for fencing and water developments. The transitioning of these acres to working grasslands acres will require installation of grazing infrastructure as well as providing collaborate technical assistance. WGP7 will be focused on expiring CRP acres but will also be available to landowners with past CRP acres or existing CRP acres that are part of grasslands CRP.

Using expired CRP for grazing has been proven to be a beneficial option for landowners and wildlife. As a result of past successful WGP grants, there is a collective partnership of agencies and organizations familiar with how WGP works and are willing to guide landowners, exploring their options on how to transition expired CRP acres into working grasslands. These federal, state and non-profit organizations will be a critical part of creating new landowner partnerships under WGP7. WGP7 will focus on retaining grasslands from expiring 2024, 2025, and 2026 CRP contracts. By providing cost-share on livestock and bird-friendly developments, the grant has a goal of signing agreements on over 10,000 acres. This proposal is asking for OHF to provide funding for grazing system developments that include livestock water and fencing. The Trust will also provide a habitat lease only on acres expired from CRP. This would be a one-time, upfront payment that would be issued when a WGP7 agreement is signed. The habitat lease will serve as an additional incentive to keep these acres in grassland. Technical advice, such as grazing plans, will be provided by the supporting partners. Landowners are also informed about possible NDGFD PLOTS payments on land in and around the WGP7 program acres. The WGP7 aims to build on the success of previous WGP grants by continuing to enhance grassland productivity and condition, water quality, soil health, and wildlife habitat for grassland birds. Equally valuable, this 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 long-term livestock operations.

In addition to the WGP7, landowners will be informed of additional opportunities through the Meadowlark Initiative. The Meadowlark Initiative Coordinator will be an additional resource for landowners looking for other potential grassland based programs that could further enhance their ranches. The Meadowlark Initiative's focus is to help producers remain profitable and productive while supporting grassland dependent wildlife.

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.

The Trust will oversee and coordinate all activities associated with the WGP7 proposal. WGP7 will be offered throughout the entire state of North Dakota with priority given to projects with the most recent expired CRP acres. The Trust will develop site specific agreements with landowners which will include a map defining boundaries, planned developments, the payments amount, landowner contributions, and the Trust matching funds. All agreements will be signed and dated by the landowner and the Trust. A signed agreement by the Trust will be used to determine the level of obligated funds for the grant. The Trust will honor all signed agreements, as our organization recognizes them as legally binding documents.

The Trust will complete all program coordination from our office in Bismarck, ND. Terry Allbee, Business Manager/Biologist and Eric Rosenquist, Conservation Program Coordinator, will serve as the program coordinators. Additional Trust staff will be instrumental in the delivery of WGP7. Trust has been the grateful recipient of OHF grants in the past and is committed to the opportunity to complete the proposed activities. The Trust staff has been successful in delivering other OHF grants and has a strong track record of delivery.

The Trust will partner with the North Dakota Partners for Fish and Wildlife Program (ND PFW) and Ducks Unlimited (DU). The partners will utilize a network of conservation biologists that have strong technical skills in assisting landowners. Providing additional cultural review submissions, recommendations on technical assistance to landowners for grazing systems, assist with cost effective project designs, and on-site reviews. The ND PFW and DU have provided in-kind match to this grant proposal.

All grant funds will be paid as agreements and development activities are completed and proper documentation is supplied to the Trust. WGP7 will obligate funds through continuous enrollment, meaning there will be no batching period and funding stops when the funds are committed. The Trust will provide tracking and reporting of all participant agreements following grant guidelines.

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 in addition to doing optimal outreach to producers. Our partners enable “boots on the ground” contact with landowners, and the focus on developing strong local relationships sets the tone for positive results in how the program can benefit their operation and wildlife habitat. Our 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 by the number of

landowners participating and the number of acres enrolled. Furthermore WGP7 will increase conservation habitat for grassland dependent species, provide productive agricultural returns and result in satisfied landowners.

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 Match Share (In-Kind)	Other Project Sponsor's Share	Total Each Project Expense
Grazing Systems	\$742,500.00	\$10,000.00	\$0.00	\$357,500.00	\$1,110,000.00
Habitat Leases	\$0.00	\$80,000.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$80,000.00
Contractual Services	\$10,000.00	\$10,000.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$20,000.00
Project Staffing	\$10,000.00	\$0.00	\$17,500.00	\$30,000.00	\$57,500.00
Total Costs	\$762,500.00	\$100,000.00	\$17,500.00	\$387,500.00	\$1,267,500.00

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.

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

Grazing Systems -This OHF grant proposal requests \$742,500 in grazing developments and landowners will provide \$357,500 in match. The grant proposal estimates that the cost-share will be split equally between fencing and water developments. The Trust will provide \$10,000 for additional developments that may not be eligible for cost-share by OHF guidelines. These may include portable equipment, portable power supply and/or other cost-share on any unique practices. Grazing Systems will consist of installing fencing and water developments on private property to be managed by livestock grazing. Fencing will follow the NRCS Office Tech Guide Allowable Cost; the full funding rate will be determined by NRCS's practice scenario amount. Funding rate will be determined by federal fiscal year when the landowner agreement is signed. The grant will provide landowners with a 60% cost-share payment on fencing. All fencing cost-share will be paid based on a rate per foot of fence and type of fence installed. Landowners will provide the remaining 40% cost-share. If a unique fencing development does not have a NRCS practice scenario rate it will be cost-shared at 60% of actual costs. Water Developments will follow the NRCS Office Tech Guide Allowable Cost;

the full funding rate will be determined by NRCS's practice scenario amount for planning purposes. The OHF grant will use 75% cost-share of these rates for agreement developments but will pay based on actual costs. The landowners will provide the remaining 25% cost-share. If the split between fence and water developments are not equal, available landowner matching funds may adjust.

Habitat Leases - The Trust will provide \$80,000 in habitat lease payments. These habitat lease payments will be available to the landowner for any CRP acres expiring in 2024, 2025 and 2026. The lease rate will be \$7.00 per acre per year, so landowners will receive a \$70/acre one-time payment for the 10 year agreement. Lease payments will be on expired/expiring CRP acres only. If the full \$100,000 is not used for habitat leases, the Trust will provide these funds for additional grazing system developments.

Contractual Services - This grant proposal is requesting \$10,000 for any additionally required contracted services for items such as cultural resources, specialized services, equipment rentals, habitat assessments, promotional services, partnership coordination meetings, and for any additional delivery and/or program monitoring. If contracted services request is not utilized during the grant period for these services, these funds would be used for additional grazing systems identified in the proposal. The Trust will provide a cash match of \$10,000 toward contracted services and/or outreach, education, support, and workshops that help landowners receive information about technical assistance. If these funds are not utilized for contracted services, the funds would be used for additional grazing system developments.

Project Staffing - This grant proposal requests \$10,000 of project staffing for the Trust from OHF. Additional staffing costs will be provided by the Trust, ND PFW and DU will be considered in-kind match based on actual costs of salary, benefits, and travel. The Trust will provide a minimum of \$17,500 of in-kind match, ND PFW will provide \$15,000 of in-kind match and DU will provide \$15,000 of in-kind match. Staffing activities includes all activities to complete program promotion and outreach, meeting with landowners, providing technical assistance, completing landowner agreements, partnering with state, federal, local, and nongovernmental organizations, processing payments, providing agreement monitoring, and completing all grant administration.

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.

WGP7 will only be available to private landowners. The WGP7 is a completely voluntary project that will focus on increasing wildlife habitat, increasing agricultural productivity and improving soil health. It is our vision in this proposal that landowners will select options to fit their farming/ranching operational goals by providing a modest cost-share and that these activities will be retained long after the WGP7 agreement has ended. When the partnership of OHF, conservation organizations, and private landowners can be completed with working grasslands, it is a win for every citizen in our state.

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

The Trust is very grateful for past Working Grassland Partnership grant funding. We feel these funds have made a difference in agricultural operations of private landowners in North Dakota. The Trust thanks the OHF Advisory Board for considering our WGP7 proposal. This request for \$762,500 of OHF funds with an additional \$505,000 in match is very important for participating landowners. If the OHF Advisory Board recommends a reduction in funding from the original proposal, this will result in a lower number of agreements with landowners, a smaller number of acres achieved, and a reduction in the amount of cash and in-kind match provided by the Trust, ND PFW, DU, and landowners.

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 WGP7 funds will be placed on private lands. All landowners will be informed of the OHF funding sources. OHF logo will be on all landowner agreements on the first page at the very top. If any signs are placed at project locations, it will include the OHF logo. All WGP7 distributed information for outreach and/or media will identify OHF as a funding source. Additionally, all presentations or discussions to partners and/or other organizations will acknowledge OHF as a funding source.



Dakota Prairie Legacy Initiative website showing Working Grassland Partnership

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.

Maintenance – Activities that preserve or keep infrastructure in a given existing condition, including repairs. Repair means to restore to sound condition after damage, to renew or refresh; except repairs due to damage caused by Acts of God.

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, the Commission can be reached at 701-328-3722 or outdoorheritage@nd.gov.

Revised: November 4, 2019, April 12, 2023