

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: Cover Crop & Livestock Integration Project 4

Name of Organization: Ducks Unlimited, Inc.

Federal Tax ID#: 13-5643799

Contact Person/Title: Tanner Gue, Manager of Conservation Programs

Address: 2525 River Road

City: Bismarck

State: North Dakota

Zip Code: 58503

E-mail Address: tgue@ducks.org

Web Site Address (If applicable): www.ducks.org

Phone: 701-355-3592 (o), 701-595-6945 (c)

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)

Innovative farmers and ranchers in North Dakota are adopting regenerative agriculture principles and investing in novel conservation practices to build soil health, enhance operational productivity, and improve sustainability. These practices include cover crops and integrating livestock grazing on cropland. Producers have observed outstanding results, noting increased soil carbon and nutrient availability, reduced soil compaction, increased water infiltration, enhanced water quality, and increased profitability. Local benefits of cover crops and livestock integration also include enhancing existing wildlife habitat and increasing the total acreage of habitat available. At larger watershed scales, benefits include reduced flooding and sedimentation in neighboring creeks and rivers. These success stories generate much interest from neighbors and these successes can be replicated. However, there is financial risk associated with implementing new practices. Many producers can't afford that risk and they haven't been able to mitigate it because there's a lack of available conservation programs assisting with grazing infrastructure on cropland. To help, Ducks Unlimited (DU), other partners, and landowners collaboratively submitted an Outdoor Heritage Fund (OHF) proposal in 2017 called the "Cover Crop & Livestock Integration Project" (CCLIP). The OHF Advisory board overwhelmingly approved of CCLIP's goal to offer voluntary project options that provide landowners with incentive needed to kick-start cover crops and livestock integration on cropland. CCLIP was a short 5-year program that provides landowners with cost share for fence and water infrastructure on cropland, cost share for 2 years of cover crop seed, and technical assistance for implementation. OHF's CCLIP was so successful, DU and landowners submitted a second phase (CCLIP 2) in 2019 that expanded availability. The success continued! DU and landowners submitted a third phase (CCLIP 3) in 2022 to address continued need. All available funds dedicated to previous phases of CCLIP are spoken for. More than 145 projects have either been completed or are in the process of enhancing soil health and wildlife habitat on more than 35,000 cropland, 48,000 grassland and 5,500 wetland acres. The CCLIP concept is a proven strategy in getting folks started using regenerative practices. Demand remains very strong. This grant proposal is called CCLIP 4. This fourth phase of previously successful grants will keep momentum going to help producers initiate cover crop and grazing practices on more than 4,000 additional cropland acres, enhancing 5,000 additional grassland acres. Through CCLIP 4, we're requesting \$936,000 from OHF to aid implementation of cover crop seed (75% cost-share), livestock fencing (60% cost-share), livestock water (75% cost-share), and staffing over the next 5 years. CCLIP 4 will build on strong partnerships established in previous phases. DU and other conservation partner biologists will provide outreach and technical assistance. DU agronomists, Pulse USA, and Millborn Seed staff will help landowners design cover crop seed mixes. Private landowners that also enroll in North Dakota Game and Fish Department (NDGFD) Private Land Open To Sportsmen (PLOTS) program will receive an additional 15% non-match cost-share incentive, up to \$150,000, from NDGFD for permanent wildlife friendly livestock fencing and livestock water systems.

Project Duration: 5 years

Indicate the intended schedule for drawing down OHF funds.

2026: Approximately 15% of funding (\$140,000.00) spent as implementation of CCLIP 4 begins. Project funds begin to be spent as landowner partners begin to implement regenerative practices. DU's team of biologists and agronomists will be leading landowner outreach, coordination with partners, and project planning.

2027: An additional 25% of funding (\$234,000.00) to be spent as new landowner partners continue to implement regenerative practices. DU's team of biologists and agronomists will continue leading landowner outreach, coordination with partners, and project planning.

2028: An additional 30% of funding (approximately \$280,000.00) to be spent as new landowner partners continue to implement regenerative practices. DU's team of biologists and agronomists will continue leading landowner outreach, coordination with partners, and project planning. We anticipate all funding to be committed to more than 25 different projects with farmers and ranchers by the close of 2028.

2029: An additional 20% of funding (approximately \$188,000.00) to be spent as landowner partners continue to implement regenerative practices. DU's team of biologists and agronomists will continue coordination with partners and project planning.

2030: The remaining 10% of funding (approximately \$94,000.00) to be spent as landowner partners complete their projects. DU's team of biologists and agronomists will continue coordination with partners and landowners to assist with regenerative practices and evaluate project effectiveness.

Amount of Grant request: \$ 936,000.00

Total Project Costs: \$ 1,440,000.00

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

Amount of Matching Funds: \$ 504,000.00 (35%)

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)
\$419,000.00	Private Landowners	Cash
\$45,000.00	Ducks Unlimited	In-Kind
\$20,000.00	Millborn Seeds	Cash
\$10,000.00	Pulse USA	In-Kind
\$10,000.00	North Dakota Natural Resources Trust	Cash

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 19 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 88 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 750,000 members are conservationists and outdoor enthusiasts who reside across the United States, Canada and Mexico, including over 4,600 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 1,900 projects impacting more than 575,000 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: <https://www.ducks.org/about-ducks-unlimited/du-leadership>.

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.

Agricultural production in North Dakota has experienced reduced diversity over the past few decades. Historically, this landscape was marked with small mixed-operator farms incorporating diverse cropping rotations and small herds of livestock. North Dakota continues to transition to a landscape with less diverse crop rotations and annual conventional tillage practices. Livestock use and associated grassland acreage continue to decline. The primary result of decreased biodiversity at the scale of individual farms and ranches is degraded soil health. Soils in poor health have less carbon, reduced nutrient availability, increased compaction, reduced water infiltration, increased surface runoff, and reduced water quality. Ultimately, dysfunctional soils lead to reduced ecosystem function and reduced profitability for farmers and ranchers. Reduced soil health at the local farm and ranch scale can have implications at much larger watershed scales. For example, surface runoff and flooding increases the amount of sediment and fertilizers in creeks and rivers, resulting in eutrophication of downstream environments. To help, DU, other partners, and landowners collaboratively submitted an OHF proposal in 2017 called the "Cover Crop & Livestock Integration Project" (CCLIP). CCLIP was a new opportunity developed to promote cover crops and livestock grazing on cropland as a management tool for improving soil health, water quality, grassland health, and wildlife habitat. Diversification of cropland systems using cover crops can improve overall soil health and functionality by restoring organic matter, increasing aggregate development, and reducing soil compaction. Very importantly, integration of livestock on cropland takes soil health to the next level. Grazing stimulates plant root growth, distributes urine and manure, and strengthens the nutrient cycle process. CCLIP does not treat symptoms of dysfunctional soils. Rather, practices adopted through CCLIP restore soil functionality and provide long term benefits to producers' operations, local watersheds, and wildlife. The Advisory Board's support for previous CCLIP phases is an unquestionable success. In 7 short years, more than 145 different projects are enhancing soil health and wildlife habitat on more than 35,000 cropland, 48,000 grassland, and 5,500 wetland acres (Fig.1). All available funds dedicated to previous phases of CCLIP are spoken for. The CCLIP concept is so effective in getting folks started using important soil health practices that DU biologists and partners are working on new project agreement details with more than 10 additional landowners right now (Fig. 1). Several more are waiting for technical assistance and funding. This CCLIP Phase 4 proposal will address the need and build on the initial success of previous phases to help regenerate soil functionality, improve water quality, and enhance wildlife habitat.

The primary goal of CCLIP 4 is to offer voluntary working lands options that provide interested landowners with the means necessary to introduce cover crops and livestock grazing. Project partners will work directly with landowners to select cover crop mixes and grazing plans that address specific resource concerns and achieve operational goals. Producers enrolled in CCLIP 4 will plant cover crops and develop grazing systems. CCLIP 4 will provide up to 60% cost share for approved fencing infrastructure on cropland, 75% cost share for approved water system infrastructure on cropland, and 75% cost share for two years of diverse cover crop

seed mixes. Cost share assistance from OHF will be matched by the landowner and partners at a minimum of 40% for fencing and a minimum of 25% for water system infrastructure and cover crop seed. CCLIP 4 partners will help producers develop grazing plans based on duration, rest recovery time, available crop residue, and cover crops. Grazing plans will require that producers integrate livestock on enrolled cropland acres at least twice within the 5-year agreement period. By providing technical guidance and cost share for cover crop seeding costs and grazing infrastructure, CCLIP 4 will increase long-term operational resiliency and profitability while enhancing wildlife habitat and recreational opportunities.

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 of CCLIP 4. DU conservation program biologists and agronomists as well as Pulse USA and Millborn Seeds experts will work collaboratively to provide producers with program guidance and technical assistance in developing cover crop mixes and grazing systems. The North Dakota Grazing Lands Coalition (NDGLC) will also provide technical assistance through their mentoring network in the development of cover crop mixes and rotational grazing plans. DU biologists and agronomists will develop site specific agreements with landowners, which include a map defining boundaries, the payment amount, and landowner match contributions. All agreements will be signed and dated by the landowner and DU. Cover crops and grazing systems on cropland and grassland will be reviewed to monitor implementation and effectiveness in achieving soil and grassland health goals. Projects will be funded on a first come first serve basis until funds expire and agreements will be 5 years in length. Grant funds will be distributed to participating producers as agreement items are completed and proper documentation is provided to DU. DU biologists will coordinate the program from our office located in Bismarck, ND. Tanner Gue, Manager of Conservation Programs in North Dakota, will serve as the program coordinator. Tanner has more than 13 years of experience in delivering conservation projects for DU. DU will provide tracking and progress reporting of all landowner agreements according to grant deadlines. Maintaining good communication with agreement participants and partners is important to DU. Pulse USA and Millborn Seeds collaboration with DU biologists and agronomists to provide technical assistance concentrating on cover crop seed mixes and livestock integration will continue to be critical to the success of CCLIP 4. Pulse USA is a farmer owned seed and agricultural product company that has been developing and promoting cover crop concepts for more than 10 years across the Midwest and North Dakota. Millborn Seeds has a team of specialists in the areas of cover crop and forage who have been collaborating with farmers and ranchers across the Midwest and North Dakota for 30 years. Both Pulse USA and Millborn Seeds team of representatives are experts in cover crops and are well known in the farm and agronomic research community. Pulse USA and Millborn Seeds may provide a discount on seed purchases if the landowner so chooses to purchase seed from

them. On-the-ground DU biologists, agronomists, and other conservation partners will direct all producers in this project who are interested in additional cost share or public access incentives to the PLOTS program through the NDGFD. NDGFD will provide producers who enroll in CCLIP 4 and PLOTS with an additional 15% non-match cost-share incentive, up to a total of \$150,000, for permanent wildlife friendly livestock fencing and livestock water systems.

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 CCLIP will be determined by quantifying total acreage of enhanced cropland and grassland. Increased water retention and infiltration is a sign of good soil health and is an observed benefit of cover crops and rotational grazing practices in the Northern Great Plains. Therefore, we may also use water infiltration tests to monitor progress. Grazing cover crops and cash crop aftermath increases rest recovery periods on grazing pastures. Therefore, the number of rest recovery days on associated pastures may be a supplementary metric for determining progress and success of CCLIP. Project progress will also be documented through monitoring photos.

An increase in production and a decrease in costly inputs (e.g., synthetic fertilizer, herbicide, pesticide) are also observed benefits of cover crops and livestock integration. This equates to an improved bottom line for producers. The most important measure of CCLIP success will be the level of satisfaction from participating producers.

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)	NDGFD (Non-Match)	Other Project Sponsor's Share	Total Each Project Expense
1) Cover Crop Seed	\$270,000	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$90,000	\$360,000
2) Permanent Grazing Systems	\$651,000	\$0	\$0	(\$150,000)	\$309,000	\$960,000
3) Portable Grazing Systems	\$0	\$30,000	\$0	\$0	\$20,000	\$50,000
4) Project Delivery	\$15,000	\$0	\$45,000	\$0	\$10,000	\$70,000
Total Costs	\$936,000	\$30,000	\$45,000	(\$150,000)	\$429,000	\$1,440,000

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.

1) Cover Crop Seed will consist of a diverse, multi-species mix (at least 3 species) planted on privately owned cropland acres to be managed by livestock grazing. Cover Crop Seed will follow the NRCS Field Office Tech Guide Allowable Cost; the full funding rate will be determined by NRCS's practice scenario amount. This OHF grant will use up to 75% cost-share of these rates for agreement development, but will pay on actual cover crop seed costs. Landowners will provide the remaining 25% cost-share. This OHF grant proposal is requesting \$270,000 in cover crop seed and landowners will provide at least \$90,000 in match.

2) Permanent Grazing Systems will consist of installing permanent fence and water developments on privately owned acres to be managed by livestock grazing. Cross fencing and perimeter fencing will follow the NRCS Field Office Tech Guide Allowable Cost; the full funding rate will be determined by NRCS's practice scenario amount. This OHF grant will provide landowners a 60% cost-share payment on fencing and a 75% cost-share payment on

water developments. All fencing cost-share will be paid based on a rate per foot of fence and type of fence installed. Landowners or NDGFD will provide the remaining 40% cost-share. Water Developments will follow the NRCS Field Office Tech Guide Allowable Cost; the full funding rate will be determined by NRCS's practice scenario amount. This grant will use 75% cost-share of these rates for agreement development, but will pay on actual costs. Landowners or NDGFD will provide the remaining 25% cost-share. The OHF grant proposal is requesting \$651,000 in permanent grazing system infrastructure and landowners will provide \$309,000 in match.

Private landowners that enroll in NDGFD PLOTS program will receive an additional 15% non-match cost-share incentive, up to \$150,000, from NDGFD for permanent wildlife friendly livestock fencing and livestock water systems.

3) Portable Grazing Systems will consist of installing portable windbreak panels, portable fence and portable water developments on privately owned acres to be managed by livestock grazing. The partners will provide up to 60% cost-share of actual costs for Portable Grazing Systems. North Dakota Natural Resources Trust will provide \$10,000 in cash match. Millborn Seeds will provide \$20,000 in cash match. Landowners will provide the remaining 40% cost-share (\$20,000). This proposal does not request funding from OHF for portable grazing system infrastructure.

4) Project Delivery will consist of actual time spent by DU biologists and agronomists who will meet with landowners to provide technical assistance, complete landowner agreements, partner with state, federal, local, and nongovernmental organizations, process payments, provide agreement monitoring, and complete all grant administration. Ducks Unlimited staffing costs include staff time, benefits and travel. This OHF grant proposal is requesting only \$15,000 in OHF funds and Ducks Unlimited is providing at least \$45,000 of in-kind match. Pulse USA will also provide \$10,000 of in-kind match.

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.

Collaborative working lands conservation programs like CCLIP 4 are a win-win-win for 1) our farmers and ranchers, 2) our natural resources and wildlife, and 3) the public of North Dakota. For most landowners, CCLIP 4 is the only opportunity available that assists with cover crops and livestock integration on cropland. By providing long-lived grazing infrastructure on cropland, the likelihood is very high that farmers and ranchers will continue managing for soil health and functionality using regenerative conservation practices like cover crops and livestock grazing long after the life of the 5 year agreement. Proven interest in the project area is overwhelmingly positive indicated by landowner-based Soil Conservation District boards' support and producers ready to enroll in the concept (Fig.1). Many of these landowners who are educating themselves on cover crops and the concept of soil health want to complete the cycle by integrating livestock. Further, Ducks Unlimited biologists and agronomist are actively monitoring important soil health parameters on several projects with landowners. Face to face with our hands in the soil, producers and conservation professionals are learning about soil health together. Ducks Unlimited staff is fostering community learning and accelerating

adoption of these practices for the long term. CCLIP 4 is the catalyst to continue elevating regenerative principles and conservation practices to a broad geography in North Dakota.

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

Ducks Unlimited thanks the OHF Advisory Board and North Dakota Industrial Commission for their past full support of CCLIP grant phases. Partial funding would result in fewer producers having the opportunity to enhance their farming and ranching operations by improving soil health on cropland and grassland health on pasture. Partial funding would also reduce this project's capacity to minimize soil erosion and improve water quality in wetlands, streams and rivers in North Dakota. Further, less habitat acres would be enhanced for wildlife. If the proposal receives partial funding, this will also reduce the amount of cash and in-kind match available by Ducks Unlimited, partners, and landowners. However, CCLIP 4 is still possible with partial funding.

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.*

CCLIP 4 will provide OHF partnership and funding recognition in the following ways. 1) CCLIP 4 will include the OHF logo on all landowner agreements. 2) OHF will also be mentioned as a partner and funding source in all discussions with landowners in the delivery of this project. 3) DU has placed signs with OHF logos on projects from previous CCLIP phases when agreed upon by the landowner (Fig. 2). DU staff will continue to do that. 4) All CCLIP 4 distributed information for outreach and/or media will identify OHF as a partner and funding source. Examples of such outreach and media include but are not limited to landowner workshops, landowner field days, national DU press releases, and the DU website. 5) Presentations or discussion with partners and/or other organizations will also acknowledge OHF as a partner and funding source.

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:

Figure 1

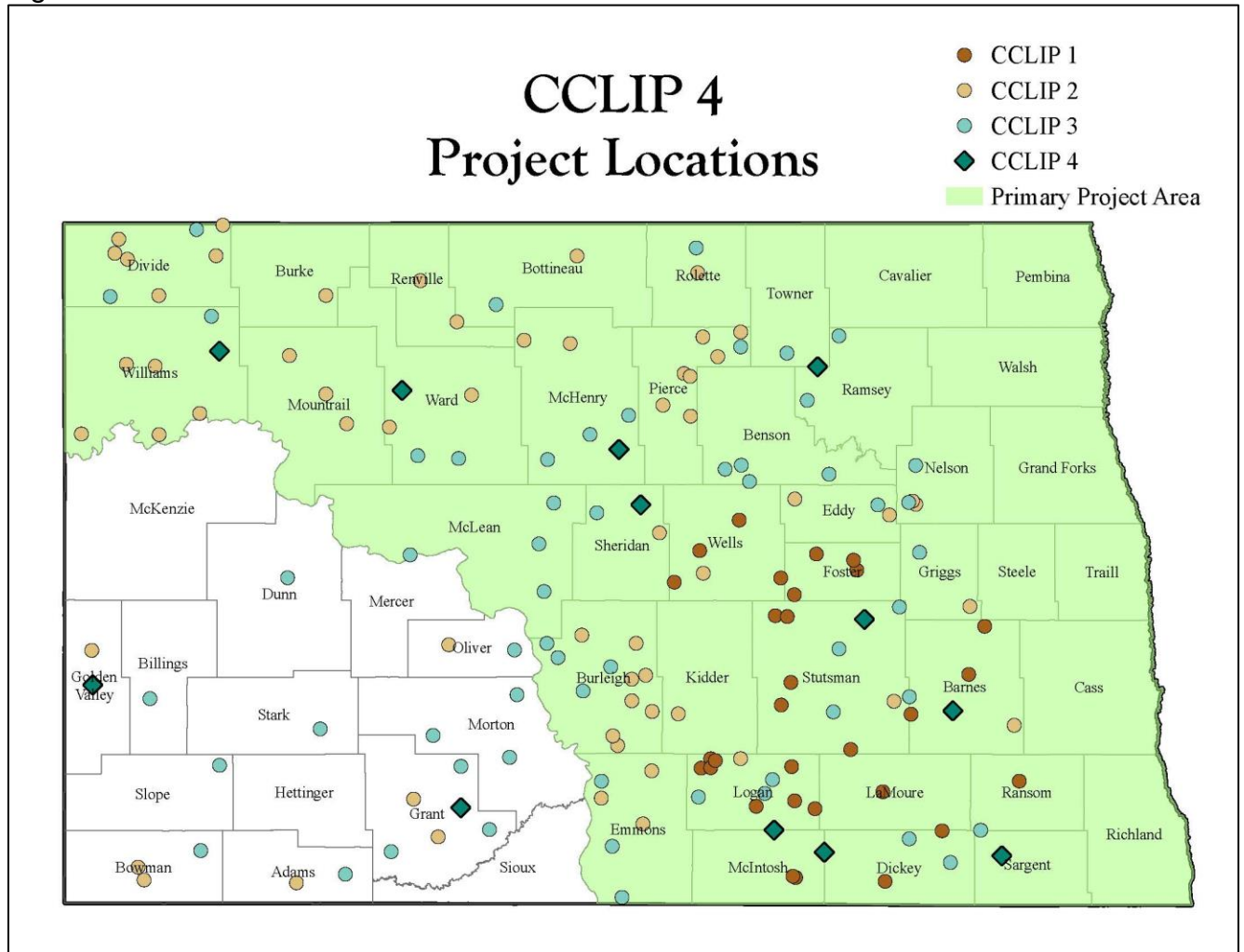


Figure 1: Cover Crop & Livestock Integration Project Area with existing project locations from previous phases and new proposed project locations. Approximately 10% of CCLIP 4 funding to be allocated to projects outside of the primary project area.

Figure 2



Figure 2: Ducks Unlimited biologists and agronomists have placed signs with the OHF logo on projects from previous CCLIP phases when agreed upon by the cooperating landowner. Ducks Unlimited staff will continue this practice to recognize OHF as a partner for CCLIP 4.



Great Plains Regional Office
2525 River Road
Bismarck, ND 58503-9011
(701) 355-3500 • Fax (701) 355-3575
www.ducks.org

April 29, 2025

North Dakota Industrial Commission
Attn: Outdoor Heritage Fund Program
600 East Boulevard Ave., Dept. 405
Bismarck, ND 58505

Outdoor Heritage Fund Advisory Board Members,

Ducks Unlimited, Inc. is excited to be the lead partner in the “*Cover Crop and Livestock Integration Project IV*” proposal being submitted to the Outdoor Heritage Fund. This effort combines technical and financial assistance for innovative strategies that improve soil function on croplands and enhance grassland health for our farmers and ranchers, wildlife, and people of North Dakota. As outlined in the proposal, our organization will contribute at least \$45,000.00 of in-kind contributions from our experienced conservation program team to deliver this program and provide technical assistance to partnering landowners.

Our organization is excited about this opportunity, and we are glad to be part of a broad coalition of partners in this proposal that will use proven models of success for voluntary conservation practices. This effort will use innovative strategies to enhance grazing systems on private and publicly accessible lands and continue to build capacity and support for regenerative agricultural practices across North Dakota.

Sincerely,

DocuSigned by:

386EEE42028C41D...

Johann Walker
Director of Operations
Great Plains Region



April 30, 2025

Ducks Unlimited Inc.
Mr. Tanner Gue – Manager of Conservation Programs
2525 River Road
Bismarck, ND 58503

RE: Ducks Unlimited Cover Crops & Livestock Integration Project (CCLIP4)

Dear Mr. Gue:

The North Dakota Game and Fish Department's (Department) mission is to protect, conserve and enhance fish and wildlife populations and their habitats for sustained public consumptive and nonconsumptive use. The Department's Private Land Initiative (PLI) is the mechanism for delivering the mission onto the private landscape. A main component of PLI includes the Private Land Open To Sportsmen (PLOTS) program, which creates or enhances habitat on private lands and provides public access for walk-in hunting.

Previous phases of the CCLIP have proven to be effective and well received by producers. Interest in cover crops continues to grow, but the CCLIP's unique feature of integrating livestock and installing grazing infrastructure on cropland is an important component to help diversify and maintain our states ranching communities.

As you work with producers on CCLIP, we encourage you to make private landowners aware of opportunities for additional incentives for walk-in hunting access through the PLOTS program. The Department will provide a 15% non-match cost-share incentive, up to \$150,000, for permanent grazing infrastructure, including wildlife friendly fencing, and water development. This incentive is available to producers who commit to enrolling in the PLOTS program for a minimum of five years.

We are pleased to provide our endorsement of the Ducks Unlimited Cover Crops & Livestock Integration Project grant proposal and look forward to the findings of ongoing research evaluating its impact on wetland water quality, soil health, carbon accumulation, and benefits to wildlife.

Sincerely,

Jeb Williams
Director

Governor
Kelly Armstrong

Director
Jeb Williams

Deputy Director
Scott A. Peterson



April 24, 2025

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

Outdoor Heritage Fund Chairman and Advisory Board:

I am writing to document Millborn Seeds support of Duck's Unlimited proposal to Outdoor Heritage Fund for the Cover Crop and Livestock Integration Project 4 Proposal. Millborn Seeds is familiar with the proposal, understands general expectations, and supports the efforts to address the natural resource concerns identified therein.

Millborn Seeds is prepared to allocate a \$20,000 contribution to the project if it is successfully selected for funding. This program is a great win for North Dakota landowners and stakeholders who enjoy the rural recreation provided by positive land use activities undertaken on private lands.

At Millborn Seeds, our employees are committed to Leading a Land Use Movement, which encourages and supports landowners willing to invest in practices which support the conservation and restoration of our nation's natural resources. This project represents a chance to facilitate a positive change on the landscape of North Dakota, establishing critical habitat for multiple species of wildlife. We hope that our contributions and support benefit both the organizers and participants in this program.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads 'Matt Fenske'.

Matt Fenske
CEO



2002 Northern Plains Drive Bismarck, ND 58504 | Phone: (701) 530-0734 | www.pulseusa.com

April 25, 2025

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

North Dakota Outdoor Heritage Fund Advisory Board:

Please accept this letter of support by Pulse USA for the Ducks Unlimited "Cover Crop & Livestock Integration Project IV" (CCLIP4) Outdoor Heritage Fund proposal. This project simultaneously serves farm producer interests and benefits a diverse group of North Dakota stakeholders. The first, second and third phase of CCLIP were resoundingly successful and we know that CCLIP4 will aim to build on that success.

Pulse USA is an employee-owned agricultural seed and livestock feed company. We have been on the forefront of cover crop development and implementation since 2007. We worked closely with Burleigh County Soil Conservation Service after the drought of 2006 to implement cover crop practices and education in our region. Our interest in cover crops has always been as a tool for the farmer to restore soil health, minimize long term input costs and create additional revenue streams for already working lands to benefit the farmer. Our team of representatives are well recognized by the farm community and research stations for their practical knowledge of cover crop objectives, mixes, benefits and agronomics. Advice that our team of highly qualified employees provide is based on knowledge and experience gained with our customers, continuing education, and interactions with scientists, extension agents and others across the state and nation.

We are very pleased to provide in-kind staff support and technical assistance for this project dedicated to providing simple and flexible options that work for both the producer and wildlife. Pulse USA representatives will work closely with on-the-ground Ducks Unlimited biologists to help producers design specific cover crop seed mixes based on the producer's operational goals and needs. In addition, North Dakota producers enrolled in the Cover Crop & Livestock Integration Project may also receive a discount on Pulse USA cover crop seed mixes if they chose to procure them through Pulse USA.

As with the initial phases of the project, CCLIP4 has tremendous potential to deliver, through a broad-based partnership, additional working lands options for landowners that achieve "win-win" solutions for both North Dakota producers and natural resources.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "James Kostecky", with a long, sweeping flourish at the end.

James Kostecky, Seed & Operations Manager, Pulse USA



North Dakota Grazing Lands Coalition

April 22, 2025

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

Outdoor Heritage Fund Advisory Board Members:

Please accept this letter of support by the North Dakota Grazing Lands Coalition (NDGLC) for Ducks Unlimited's "Cover Crop & Livestock Integration Project IV" Outdoor Heritage Fund proposal.

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 the "Cover Crop & Livestock Integration Project IV" as it seeks to provide financial assistance for North Dakota farmers and ranchers to introduce cover crop practices and develop grazing infrastructure necessary for livestock integration on cropland. This continued effort will help producers improve soil health, grassland health, grazing infrastructure, and grazing systems. 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.

Again, we are happy to support this important effort that promotes sustainable farming and ranching in North Dakota.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jay Reiser".

Jay Reiser
NDGLC Chairman



PO Box 1091 • Bismarck, ND 58502 • contact@ndglc.com • 701-355-4458



Keith Trego
Executive Director
1605 E Capitol Avenue, Ste. 101
Bismarck, ND 58501-2102
(701) 223-8501
Fax: (701) 223-6937

April 25, 2025

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

ND Outdoor Heritage Fund Advisory Board:

The North Dakota Natural Resources Trust mission is to preserve, enhance, restore, and manage wetlands and associated wildlife habitat, grasslands, and riparian areas in the state of North Dakota. Please accept this letter of support for Ducks Unlimited's fourth phase of the "Cover Crop & Livestock Integration Project" Outdoor Heritage Fund proposal. The Trust will provide \$10,000 in cash match towards the grant.

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 and create dialogue. Along with its agricultural and conservation partners, the Trusts advocates for recognition, appropriate development, and protection of North Dakota's unique natural resource values.

The Cover Crop & Livestock Integration Project has provided North Dakota farmers and ranchers with the financial assistance needed to kick-start sustainable agricultural practices that meet their operational goals and diversify their operations while improving soil health, water quality, grassland health, and wildlife habitat. This goal is consistent with the Trust's mission and 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".

Keith Trego
Executive Director

To preserve, enhance, restore, and manage wetlands and associated wildlife habitat,
grasslands, and riparian areas in the state of North Dakota.

Foster County Soil Conservation District

April 25, 2025

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

Dear Outdoor Heritage Fund-Advisory Board Members:

Please accept this letter of support by the Foster County Soil Conservation District Board for Ducks Unlimited's "Cover Crop & Livestock Integration Project IV" (CCLIPIV) Outdoor Heritage Fund proposal. This project's primary objectives are to help producers enhance soil health, reduce input costs for cash crop production, reduce feeding costs for cattle, and enhance grassland health. These goals align well with our natural resource concerns and conservation goals in Foster County.

There are necessary costs associated with cover crop and livestock integration practices not limited to cover crop seed, boundary and cross fence, and water developments (wells, rural water connection, tanks, pipeline, etc).

Having financial assistance to introduce cover crop practices and develop adequate infrastructure to integrate livestock on cropland will be beneficial for producers in our area and for our natural resources.

Sincerely,



Robert House, Chairman
Foster County SCD Board

*Working together to Conserve for our
Future TODAY!!!!*



Bob T House
Grace City, ND

Curtiss Klein
Carrington, ND

Sam Partlow
Carrington, ND

Cody Montgomery
Carrington, ND

Karl Hoppe
Carrington, ND

April 23, 2025

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

Dear Outdoor Heritage Fund Advisory Board Members:

As a Soil Conservation District, it is our mission to further the widespread application of sound soil and water conservation practices. The North Central Soil Conservation District Board supports the Smart Livestock Advancing Terrestrial Ecosystems (SLATE) Outdoor Heritage Fund proposal by Ducks Unlimited as it seeks to partner with producers in utilizing virtual livestock fence technology. Virtual fence technology is of interest to ranchers in our county for a variety of reasons, but new technology and the upfront costs are a barrier to entry at this point in time.

The implementation of traditional rotational grazing infrastructure has provided benefits for both wildlife and agricultural producers in our county and continues to see high demand. A recent topic of discussion and growing interest is around the potential for virtual fence technology to manage livestock movements, enhance winter grazing opportunities, provide peace of mind knowing livestock whereabouts and potential for youth to find their niche in the ranching operation. This once dreamed of technology is now available to producers for a variety of livestock ranging from sheep and goats to cattle.

Providing producers with financial assistance to integrate this new technology into their operations will be an incredible opportunity for OHF to make an impactful contribution to ensure future generations will enjoy healthy grasslands and abundant wildlife resources.

Sincerely,



Donna Grann

North Central SCD Board (Chairperson)

April 25th, 2025

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

Dear Outdoor Heritage Fund-Advisory Board Members:

Please accept this letter of support by the Pierce County Soil Conservation District Board for Ducks Unlimited's "Cover Crop & Livestock Integration Project IV" (CCLPIV) Outdoor Heritage Fund proposal. This project's primary objectives are to help producers enhance soil health, reduce input costs for cash crop production, reduce feeding costs for cattle, and enhance grassland health. These goals align well with our natural resource concerns and conservation goals in Pierce County.

There are necessary costs associated with cover crop and livestock integration practices not limited to cover crop seed, boundary and cross fence, and water developments (wells, rural water connection, tanks, pipeline, etc).

Having financial assistance to introduce cover crop practices and develop adequate infrastructure to integrate livestock on cropland will be beneficial for producers in our area and for our natural resources.

Sincerely,
Dallas Hager 4/25/2025
Dale Huger
Pierce County SCD Board *Chairman*



**916 E Interstate Ave, #6
Bismarck ND 58503
701-250-4518, Ext. 3**



April 25, 2025

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

Dear Outdoor Heritage Fund-Advisory Board Members:

Please accept this letter of support by the Burleigh County Soil Conservation District Board for Ducks Unlimited's "Cover Crop & Livestock Integration Project IV" (CCLIP IV) Outdoor Heritage Fund proposal. This project's primary objectives are to help producers enhance soil health, reduce input costs for cash crop production, reduce feeding costs for cattle, and enhance grassland health. These goals align well with our natural resource concerns and conservation goals in Burleigh County.

There are necessary costs associated with cover crop and livestock integration practices not limited to cover crop seed, boundary and cross fence, and water developments (wells, rural water connection, tanks, pipeline, etc).

Having financial assistance to introduce cover crop practices and develop adequate infrastructure to integrate livestock on cropland will be beneficial for producers in our area and for our natural resources.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Daniel Oswald". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial "D".

Burleigh County SCD

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 ndicgrants@nd.gov.

Revised: November 4, 2019, April 12, 2023