

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 **Educational Prairie Trails**

Name of Organization **United Prairie Foundation**

Federal Tax ID# **77-0639875**

Contact Person/Title **John DeVries, Founder/President**

Address **260 Front Street**

City **Sheldon**

State **ND**

Zip Code **58068**

E-mail Address **unitedprairie@mlgc.com**

Web Site Address (If applicable) **unitedprairie.org**

Phone **701-793-0668**

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)

This project expands United Prairie Foundation’s Educational Prairie Trail program in the Red River Valley of eastern North Dakota, which utilizes locally sourced native plants and seeds to support public education about the tallgrass prairie ecosystem. United Prairie Foundation and the Fargo Park District have successfully partnered on previous urban conservation projects that offer new opportunities for recreation and education. The success of those projects allows us to expand to West Fargo and Wahpeton, North Dakota. The Educational

Prairie Trail features high-diversity native plantings, new trail connections, and a series of eight interpretive signs highlighting different aspects of prairie ecology. Together, these additions will enhance and create several new sites for recreation and education about North Dakota's unique prairie-wetland ecosystems.

Many communities struggle to establish successful pollinator and native plant areas due to limited access to local ecotype plants/seed and lack of long-term management experience. United Prairie Foundation (UPF) ensures this project's success through proper site preparation, providing locally sourced plant material, and informed maintenance planning and implementation. The project will expand the footprint of prairie and provide locations for outreach events and promotion of diverse prairie habitat. If funded, this project will stand as a model for successful community-based prairie restoration, demonstrating how native plantings can transform public spaces into educational destinations.

Project Duration: 4 years

Indicate the intended schedule for drawing down OHF funds.

Most of the requested funds would be used in year 1. In the case of any delay, continued installations will take place in year 2.

2026: Site preparation, seeding, plug installation, sign installation, trail installation

2027: Vegetation management, sign installation

2028: Vegetation management

2029: Vegetation management

Amount of Grant request: \$ 113,700

Total Project Costs: \$ 232,450

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

Amount of Matching Funds: \$ 118,750

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)
\$35,000	United Prairie Foundation	In-kind
\$40,000	Fargo Park District	Cash
\$15,000	Fargo Park District	In-kind
\$8,200	City of Fargo	Cash
\$3,600	West Fargo Park District	In-kind
\$6,450	Wahpeton Parks and Recreation	Cash
\$3,000	Wahpeton Parks and Recreation	In-kind

Certifications

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

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.

United Prairie Foundation (UPF) is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit based in Sheldon, North Dakota. UPF employs up to 10 staff members seasonally, is guided by a board of community members, and leads a steering committee that operates the Sheldon Community Center. Since 2004, UPF has worked to reconnect people with the prairie landscape. Our mission is to *“Make Prairie Common Again.”* We accomplish this by planting and maintaining prairie and wetland habitats in both rural and urban settings, with a strong emphasis on public engagement and community education. UPF operates North Dakota’s only native plant nursery, growing plants from wild seed collected in local prairies. We collaborate with cities, park districts, schools, and community groups to establish prairie habitats and other public demonstration sites that inspire appreciation for North Dakota’s native ecosystems.

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

This project will create new recreation and education opportunities in the Red River Valley by establishing a network of Educational Prairie Trails. Eight locations across Fargo, West Fargo, and Wahpeton will be established as Educational Prairie Trail sites, each with a series of interpretive signs along trails or sidewalks featuring native plantings. These locations will be planted with UPF’s greenhouse-grown plugs and local ecotype seed mixes, with the exception of the North Softball Complex which will only have signs added to an existing planting by UPF. Feedback gathered by the Fargo Park District showed that residents would like to see more native plantings with interpretive signage.

The project directly fulfills Directive D by conserving natural areas and creating new areas for recreation and education through park development. Each Educational Prairie Trail site will serve as a living classroom for park visitors, schools, and community groups, with interpretive signs explaining prairie ecology, wildlife, and restoration. The project will increase existing park use in three North Dakota cities by offering a new way for residents and visitors to experience and learn about nature within city limits. It also meets Directive C by developing, enhancing, conserving, and restoring wildlife and pollinator habitat on public lands.

This project is unique because it will provide multiple convenient locations for ND residents and visitors to observe and learn about North Dakota’s rare prairie ecosystem. United Prairie Foundation specializes in the use of locally sourced native plants to create resilient, high-quality pollinator and wildlife habitat in both large and small-scale projects. These diverse, ecologically appropriate plantings provide valuable floral resources in grass-dominated urban landscapes and support a wide range of wildlife and pollinators. For this project, each prairie garden will be 300 square feet and each garden will have an interpretive sign. UPF’s prairie gardens are not like traditional gardens, but are planted densely with high species diversity to replicate true prairie habitats. The following locations

have been chosen because they are high-profile, busy locations and have the highest potential to reach the most people.

Fargo Park District

Urban Plains Park

16 gardens, trails, and sign installations

Orchard Glen Park

Garden expansion, sign installations

Forest River Park

8 gardens, sign installations

Bison Meadows Park

6 gardens, sign installations

North Softball Complex

Sign installations

City of Fargo

40th Ave/38th St, locations for additional 6 acres to be determined

Seeding 2 acres, sign installations

West Fargo Park District

Rivers Bend Trail

8 gardens, sign installations

Wahpeton Parks and Recreation

Chahinkapa Park Sculpture Garden

8 gardens, sign installations

Is this project part of a Comprehensive Conservation Plan? Yes No

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.

John DeVries – UPF Founder and President

John has implemented prairie restoration and management projects across eastern North Dakota since 2004, with a strong focus on native seed harvest and diverse prairie establishment since 2010. His long-term partnerships with the Outdoor Heritage Fund, private landowners, and government agencies have contributed to many successful restoration efforts across the region. John identifies high-quality native seed harvest locations, oversees planting operations, and determines long-term management needs for successful restorations. Since 2019, his work has expanded to include partnerships with city park departments, schools, and various community groups to bring native prairie into public spaces. John and his team work to create and maintain Educational Prairie Trails and other public spaces that help people experience and learn about North Dakota’s native ecosystems.

Patrice Delaney – Senior Biologist

Patrice has worked with native prairie since 2018. In her research at Minnesota State University Moorhead, she studied grassland restorations, native plant community interactions, herbarium record keeping, seed collection, and conducted wildlife surveys. With UPF since 2023, Patrice identifies plant species, evaluates seed quality, and assists with planning, planting, and maintaining prairies in both rural and urban settings. She leads the development of the Educational Prairie Trail program and related outreach materials designed to help schools, park districts, and community groups learn about prairie ecology and restoration.

Evaluation – Describe your plan to document progress and results.

Success will be measured by the number of native species established, percent native vegetation cover after year one, and the number of visitors or volunteers participating in education events. Education and outreach events hosted at Educational Prairie Trail locations will be promoted and reported. Project locations will be photographed before, during, and after work is completed. Receipts and invoices for the project will be included in reports. Methods used for planting, seeding, and weed maintenance will be reported. Native plant species established will be reported.

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.

Project Expense	OHF Request	Applicant's Match Share (Cash)	Applicant's Match Share (In-Kind)	Applicant's Match Share (Indirect)	Other Project Sponsor's Share	Total Each Project Expense
Prairie Plugs (ND origin)	\$32,550				\$ 46,450	\$79,000
Plug Installation	\$19,750					\$19,750
Watering					\$21,000	\$21,000
Seed and Seeding (up to 8 acres)	\$10,800				\$3,600	\$14,400
Site Preparation and Herbicide	\$8,000				\$2,200	\$10,200
Interpretive Signs (up to 72)	\$12,600					\$12,600
Trail (up to 1300 ft crushed gravel)	\$30,000					\$30,000
Volunteer Assistance					\$7,500	\$7,500
3 Years Management			\$35,000		\$3,000	\$38,000
Total Costs	\$113,700		\$35,000		\$83,750	\$232,450

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

Prairie Plugs - The Educational Prairie Trail will feature local ecotype prairie wildflowers and grasses that will provide authentic opportunities for learning about the prairie ecosystem. Plant plugs are established plants, started in UPF’s greenhouse, with developed roots. This allows individual species to be placed in strategic locations and established quickly. Plugs are highly preferred over seed alone in this project because they will provide vibrant blooms in the year they are planted. Up to 100 species of native prairie plants are grown by United Prairie Foundation from wild, hand-picked seed collected from remnant prairies in eastern North Dakota. \$32,550 is requested from OHF for 8,140 plugs with \$46,450 in cash from project partners for the remaining 11,610 plugs. The cost reflects a 20% volume discount off UPF’s retail price. UPF commits to replacing plugs at no cost if needed.

Installation - \$1/plug installation.

Watering - Watering will be completed by the Fargo Park District, West Fargo Park District, and Wahpeton Parks and Recreation as in-kind match. Watering after planting and throughout the first growing season is essential for successful plant establishment.

Seed and Seeding - Seed for 2 acres on 40th Avenue South will be paid for by the City of Fargo as a portion of their cash match. OHF funds are requested for seeding up to 6 additional acres on City of Fargo property, locations to be determined following municipal decision-making. Seed mixes by UPF are highly diverse (60+ species), assembled with

combine-harvested and hand-picked prairie seed, and are professionally tested for purity, viability, and weeds. Typical cost of local ecotype prairie seed ranges from \$1,000 to \$2,000 per acre depending on the species mix and seeding rate.

Site Preparation - \$8,000 requested for site prep includes up to 3 applications of herbicide (glyphosate) at all project locations. \$1,600 for site prep is cash match from the City of Fargo. \$650 for site prep will be provided in-kind by the West Fargo Park District.

Interpretive Signs - The Educational Prairie Trail's interpretive signs are being designed and developed by UPF under a separate project funded from the Minnesota Board of Water and Soil Resources. The signs correspond with a school curriculum developed by UPF for grades 5-12 and cover a wide range of topics suitable for all ages. The series of eight interpretive signs will be permanently placed at all project sites. UPF staff will install signs. OHF funds are requested for the cost of printing signs, supplies, and installation. \$175 per sign, 72 signs.

Trail - Up to 1300 feet of trails will be added to Urban Plains Park using crushed gravel at a maximum cost of \$30,000. The Fargo Park District's previously used contractor will be hired to complete the trail construction.

Volunteer Assistance - Up to 500 hours of volunteer assistance with planting and project activities at \$15/hour in-kind.

3 Years Management - In-kind monitoring and weed maintenance at all project sites will be completed by UPF for 3 years following installation to ensure long-term success and sustainability. Seeded acres will be mowed as needed to limit weed growth and promote native seed establishment.

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

UPF is committed to maintaining the Educational Prairie Trails throughout the project period and advising partners on management practices after OHF funds have been expended. This is demonstrated by UPF's \$35,000 in-kind match commitment for management. Seeds can be harvested from the plugs planted in this project, contributing to further community prairie restoration and ensuring locally adapted plant genetics remain in use. Our goal is to make urban conservation work possible and sustainable by educating municipal and park staff to ensure proper management long-term. All project partners have committed to ongoing maintenance after the OHF project period.

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

If less funding is awarded, UPF will prioritize the highest-traffic park sites to maximize educational visibility and ecological impact. With less funding, the scale of the project would

be reduced, community education opportunities would be missed, and long-term urban conservation goals would be delayed.

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

The Outdoor Heritage Fund will be recognized on all signs and in media releases announcing the project.

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

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

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

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