

# Outdoor Heritage Fund Grant Application



## Instructions

After completing the form, applications and supporting documentation may be submitted by e-mail to [ndicgrants@nd.gov](mailto: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: **Private Forest Improvement and Protection Program**

Name of Organization: ND Game and Fish Department

Federal Tax ID# 45-6002467

Contact Person/Title: Nate Harling, Habitat Program Manager – Private Lands

Address: 100 N. Bismarck Expy

City: Bismarck

State: ND

Zip Code: 58501

E-mail Address: [nharling@nd.gov](mailto:nharling@nd.gov)

Web Site Address (If applicable): [gf.nd.gov](http://gf.nd.gov)

Phone: 701-516-3079

List names of co-applicants if this is a joint proposal: Matt Olson, Forest Stewardship Manager, ND Forest Service

**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)

*The forests of the Turtle Mountain region are ecologically unique and historically significant, offering critical fish and wildlife habitat, recreational opportunities, scenic landscapes, and vital contributions to the local economies. Though they represent the state's single largest area of native forest, they are increasingly threatened by land-use changes. This pilot program presents a timely and meaningful opportunity to address those challenges by providing landowner incentives to actively manage and protect their forest from conversion. Conserving these areas is a high priority for both the North Dakota Game and Fish Department (NDGF) and the North Dakota Forest Service (NDFS).*

*In 2022, the North Dakota Forestry Advisory Council created a working group to develop and implement a landscape forest stewardship plan for the Turtle Mountains. The working group*

*engaged state, federal, and tribal agencies plus other individual and organizational stakeholders to assess needs and interest in improving the forest and published the Turtle Mountain Landscape Forest Stewardship Plan (Plan) in 2024.*

*Eight categories of landowner objectives were developed through this process:*

- 1. Forest Conservation*
- 2. Forest Aesthetics*
- 3. Forest Health Management*
- 4. Wildlife Management*
- 5. Recreation*
- 6. Forest Products*
- 7. Conservation-Based Estate/Legacy Planning*
- 8. Fire (Wild and Prescribed)*

*This OHF proposal aims to support a program that addresses objectives # 1, 2, 3, 4, and 5 from the Plan by offering financial assistance to private landowners willing to implement forest management practices and participate in a 20-year forest protection agreement.*

*Jointly, the North Dakota Game and Fish Department (NDGF) and North Dakota Forest Service (NDFS) are requesting \$600,000 in funding from the Outdoor Heritage Fund to supplement \$270,000 in match to create the Private Forest Improvement and Protection Program. Benchmarks for this pilot program include:*

- Development of site-specific forest stewardship plans*
- Implementation of recommended forestry management practices (aspen mastication and/or oak thinning)*
- Enrollment in 20-year non-conversion agreements to protect these areas from development to other land uses*
- Incentivize enrollment in NDGF's PLOTS program for the 20-year non-conversion agreement term.*

*Native forests are often an afterthought in North Dakota – a prairie state known for its grasslands and wetlands. Covering only approx. 1% of the state, we take these areas for granted, underestimate their value, and unfairly assume they will endure eternally. Unfortunately, many threats exist that challenge that notion and impacts have and will continue to be seen.*

*Threats to this landscape include converting forested acres to other types of land uses, tree diseases and pests, over-age forest composition that lacks natural disturbances, absence of a timber products industry (to aid in forest disturbance and rejuvenation), and residential/cabin development. Losing forested acres degrades air and water quality, reduces fish and wildlife habitat quality and quantity, reduces recreational opportunities and erodes historical significance.*

*Funding this pilot program is an opportunity to begin to address these challenges and provide a foundation to build sustainable success in one of North Dakota's beloved natural treasures.*

**Project Duration:** *Four years*

**Indicate the intended schedule for drawing down OHF funds.**

The draw down schedule is difficult to project due to the unknown timing of the grant being authorized and total funds available. Best estimates for expenditures and OHF drawdown are as follows:

2026 - 30%  
 2027 - 50%  
 2028 - 20%  
 2029 - 0%

**Amount of Grant request: \$600,000**

**Total Project Costs: \$870,000**

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

**Amount of Matching Funds: \$270,000**

**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)
\$15,000	Landowner	Cash
\$40,000	ND Game and Fish Dept.	Cash
\$50,000	ND Game and Fish Dept.	In-kind
\$50,000	ND Forest Service	In-kind
\$115,000	Rocky Mtn. Elk Foundation	Cash**

\*\* RMEF grant funding pending; submitted on 9/12/25. RMEF did not provide an application status update prior to the OHF grant application submission.

**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)

*NDGF was established in 1930, guided by a mission to protect, conserve and enhance fish and wildlife populations and their habitats for sustained public consumptive and nonconsumptive use. The Department has 170 FTE employees, led by a Director and Deputy Director, as well as an eight-member advisory board that organizes public engagement. The Private Land Initiative is the primary mechanism for applying this mission on private lands across North Dakota.*

*The Private Lands Initiative has three main goals:*

- Conservation of habitats for fish and wildlife populations*
- Provide landowners interested in wildlife conservation with cost share assistance for developing and protecting habitat*
- Provide the public with opportunities to access fish and wildlife resources on private land.*

*The Private Land Open To Sportsmen program (PLOTS) provides financial and technical assistance to private landowners for habitat protection, enhancement and development. Landowners accepting assistance through PLOTS agree to allow public access for walk-in hunting.*

*In 2024, NDGF expanded its private land programs to incorporate conservation programs that do not require public access, including 10-year agreements for new grass plantings and 30-year native grassland protection agreements in southwestern ND, protecting native prairie grasslands from conversion to other land uses.*

*NDFS is organized under the North Dakota Board of Higher Education. The agency is administered by the State Forester who reports to the president of North Dakota State University at Fargo and supports the land grant mission in public service. The mission of the NDFS is to "care for, protect and improve forest resources to enhance the quality of life for future generations." A wide variety of customers depend on NDFS for technical, financial and educational forestry assistance. The State Forester administers forestry programs serving communities, rural landowners, soil conservation districts, rural fire districts, schools and citizens of North Dakota. All the programs utilize a voluntary, educational and incentive-based approach to address natural resource needs and customer demands.*

### **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.

*This new and unique approach directly addresses Directive C; developing, enhancing, conserving and restoring wildlife and fish habitat on private and public lands. This pilot program will conserve and protect 1,000 acres of privately owned forested lands for 20 years by offering an up-front incentive to ensure these lands are not converted to other land uses. Additionally, 10% (100 acres) of the forest stand is required to undergo forest management activities.*

*Some parcels in the project area have incorporated these same forest management practices in recent years. In order to not disqualify them for protection agreements, NDGF and NDFS agreed that if the minimum 10% stewardship component has been completed in the past five years, those parcels will be considered qualified for protection agreements. Of note, payments will not be issued for stewardship activities completed during the five years prior to the authorization of this grant – only future stewardship activities on enrolled parcels.*

*This program will also address Directive A; in that it will provide a portion of funding to enroll 600 acres in the PLOTS program, providing unrestricted walk-in hunting access. Hunters rely on access to public and private lands in the Turtle Mountains to pursue species like elk, white-tailed deer, moose, ruffed grouse and other small game species.*

*Other voluntary access options will also be encouraged, such as the Department's HuntLink app, which connects hunters and landowners seeking permission for specific hunting opportunities (e.g., coyotes, antlerless deer, or youth hunts). Landowners can designate their preferences and contact information through their NDGF account, and hunters can view these listings via the Department's online mapping application.*

*The Department is also developing new access opportunities, including customized electronic posting, which will begin in 2026 and allows landowners to specify posting dates rather than closing access for an entire season. Additional access models such as controlled or reservation-based systems are also being evaluated. As these tools become available, they will be offered as flexible options to participating landowners.*

*The North Dakota Forest Service has a long history of working with landowners in the Turtle Mountains to develop recommendations through Forest Stewardship Plans to meet their goals for their property. Unfortunately, forestry management practices require specialized equipment and operator skills. This work is expensive, physically demanding, and very time-consuming, leaving many landowners unable to complete the work on their own.*

*Similar to native grass stands, native forests need periodic disturbance to maintain their quality. Without natural disturbance (primarily wind and fire events), this program becomes necessary to address the issues that threaten the long-term health and viability of the oak-aspen forests of the Turtle Mountains.*

Is this project part of a Comprehensive Conservation Plan?  Yes  
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.

*Though private land habitat programs and initiatives have existed within NDGF for decades, the PLOTS program as we know it today was established in 1997. Through decades of effort and experience, the PLOTS program has grown into a large-scale, highly successful private land habitat and access program, patronized by tens of thousands of hunters annually.*

*The Private Lands Section includes 15 staff – one Section Leader, one Habitat Program Manager, one GIS specialist, and two Region Supervisors who oversee 10 field biologists who manage over 2,950 active PLOTS program agreements containing over 880,000 acres.*

*Two Private Lands Section staff will closely coordinate and execute the enrollment process and assist with long-term monitoring throughout the 20-year agreement term and PLOTS agreements.*

*Nate Harling, Habitat Program Manager – Private Lands will oversee grant management responsibilities by coordinating with NDFS, issuing payments, completing reports, and managing RMEF contributions. Nate has 25 years of professional experience enrolling and managing short- and long-term voluntary conservation program agreements, multi-million-dollar grants, planning and budgeting with NDGF.*

*Brandon Ramsey, Private Land Biologist will generate interest, evaluate offers, enroll landowners in PLOTS, and conduct compliance assessments. Brandon has eight years of experience in various roles with NDGF.*

*Additionally, NDFS brings a wealth of knowledge and experience in working with local, state, federal, and other non-governmental organizations and private landowners. The Forest Stewardship Program provides technical assistance to private, non-industrial forest owners. The Forest Stewardship Tax Law program and the Windbreak Renovation Initiative are two of the programs managed by the Forest Stewardship Team that provides incentives for landowners in the state. Two Forest Stewardship Program staff will develop forest stewardship plans, oversee contractors implementing forest management activities, and ensuring completion of work.*

*Matt Olson is the NDFS Forest Stewardship Manager and has extensive experience in delivering conservation programs to private landowners in North Dakota. Matt is responsible for supervising Forest Stewardship staff, coordinating technical and financial assistance to private landowners and administering rural-based forestry grant and financial assistance programs. Matt is assisted by a staff of Forest Stewardship Specialists who are responsible for providing field services and support to landowners*

*statewide and as liaisons to cooperating agencies providing technical and financial assistance for implementing forestry best management practices.*

*Cody Clemenson is the NDFS Forest Stewardship Specialist in Bottineau, North Dakota. Over the last six years, Cody has delivered technical assistance to various landowners in the state, advising them on best management for their forested resources. Activities include writing comprehensive Forest Stewardship Plans to help landowners achieve their forest management goals, such as improving wildlife habitat, forest health, forest protection, and forest utilization. Cody has written 21 forest stewardship plans across the Turtle Mountains that encompass 4,741 acres, with 2,172 of those acres being forested.*

*Step-by-step program enrollment:*

- 1. Generate landowner interest*
- 2. Rank interest; proceed with highest-ranking offers*
- 3. Calculate forested acres and estimate payments*
- 4. Make formal offer to landowner*
- 5. Upon conditional approval of landowner, development of a Forest Stewardship Plan will be initiated, due diligence will be completed (land ownership research, etc.), preparation of 20-year agreement and payment documents and other associated documents, and development of PLOTS agreements*
- 6. Obtain landowner signatures for Forest Stewardship Plan, 20-year agreement and PLOTS agreements.*
- 7. Coordinate and ensure completion of forest management practices\**
- 8. Upon completion, payments will be issued to landowner and contractor, if applicable*

*\*Landowners who have completed forest management practices within the past 5 years will also qualify for the 20-year protection agreement as long as the 10% minimum is met. No payments will be issued for management practices completed in the past 5 years.*

*Shared agency roles:*

*NDGF and NDFS will collaborate to develop promotional materials to generate landowner interest and ranking criteria. Agencies will communicate often with regard to project status and approvals, landowner interest, funding status, job completion status, grant coordination, and compliance monitoring..*

*Agency roles:*

*NDGF*

- Conduct ownership review, complete 20-year protection agreement enrollment, and record notice with the Bottineau or Rolette County Recorder's Office.*
- Complete PLOTS enrollment (when applicable)*
- Issue payments (after*

*NDFS:*

- Develop site-specific Forest Stewardship Plans*
- Coordinate aspen mastication and/or oak thinning activities*

- Communicate completion of stewardship activities to NDGF

**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.

Four components will define success for this pilot program.

1. Landowner demand – number of acres/landowners interested in enrollment
2. Acres enrolled in 20-year non-conversion agreements
3. Acres of forest managed
4. Acres enrolled in PLOTS

**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)	Applicant's Match Share (Indirect)	Other Project Sponsor's Share	Total Each Project Expense
20-year forest protection payments (no PLOTS requirement)	\$200,000	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$200,000
Forest stewardship (no PLOTS requirement)	\$45,000	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$15,000	\$60,000
20-year forest protection payments (PLOTS required)	\$225,000	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$75,000	\$300,000
PLOTS program access payments	\$40,000	\$40,000	\$0	\$0	\$40,000	\$120,000
Forest stewardship (PLOTS required)	\$90,000	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$90,000
NDFS staff	\$0	\$0	\$50,000	\$0	\$0	\$50,000
NDGF staff	\$0	\$0	\$50,000	\$0	\$0	\$50,000
<b>Total Costs</b>	<b>\$600,000</b>	<b>\$40,000</b>	<b>\$100,000</b>	<b>\$0</b>	<b>\$130,000</b>	<b>\$870,000</b>

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.**

*There are two approaches to this budget, with the main difference being whether the landowner enrolls in PLOTS or not.*

*Protection agreement payments:*

*All 20-year protection agreements (PLOTS and non-PLOTS), include a \$25 per acre, per year, upfront payment ( $\$25 \times 20 \text{ years} = \$500/\text{acre}$ ). Acres enrolled in this agreement are not eligible for grazing due to the negative impacts to the forest understory and the regrowth after implementation of forest management practices. Payments will be disbursed upon verified completion of management activities as outlined in the forest stewardship plan.*

*Total cost = \$500,000*

*Forest stewardship payments:*

*Contractor estimates to complete aspen mastication and/or oak thinning average about \$1,500 per acre. Unlike the protection agreement payments, there is a notable difference between PLOTS and non-PLOTS parcels when it comes to stewardship payments.*

*If enrolled in PLOTS, the landowner would receive 100% cost-share on management activities. If the land is not enrolled in PLOTS, the landowner would receive 75% cost-share on management activities and would have to fund the remaining 25% out-of-pocket.*

*Payments will be disbursed upon verified completion of management activities outlined in their forest stewardship plan.*

*Total cost = \$150,000*

*PLOTS program payments:*

*Landowners participating in the PLOTS program will receive additional \$10 per acre, per year, upfront payment ( $\$10 \times 20 \text{ years} = \$200/\text{acre}$ ).*

*Payments will be disbursed upon completion of enrollment in the PLOTS program.*

*Total cost = \$120,000*

*In-kind match:*

*NDGF and NDFS have each pledged \$50,000 of in-kind match, based on staff time spent promoting the program, working with landowners, conducting site visits, developing agreements and stewardship plans, completing due diligence (ownership review, attorney fees, recording fees, etc.) and staff travel expenses.*

*Total In-kind match = \$100,000*

*Cash Match:*

*NDGF has pledged \$40,000 toward PLOTS program access payments.*

*Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation offers a robust national grant program, providing applicants the opportunity to seek funding for projects twice annually. NDGF submitted a Land Conservation & Access 2025 grant application on 9/12/25 to provide \$115,000 cash match to supplement this OHF proposal.*

- \$40,000 will be applied toward PLOTS program access payments
- \$75,000 will be applied toward protection program payments that include PLOTS

*Total cash match = \$155,000*

Overall, the match ratio per entity for this project is:

OHF = 68.97%  
NDGF = 10.34%  
NDFS = 5.75%  
RMEF = 13.22%  
Landowner = 1.72%

**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.

*Based on positive stakeholder feedback gathered in the Plan and agency institutional knowledge of the Turtle Mountains, NDGF and NDFS anticipate robust landowner interest in this pilot program. Once interest is generated and the program is fully implemented, various options exist to expand and sustain this program. Options include seeking additional state and local funding, exploring opportunities to partner with private carbon storage entities, or seeking federal funding through Agriculture Conservation Easement Program (ACEP) or a newly proposed federal program called Forest Conservation Easement Program (FCEP) that may be available through the next Farm Bill.*

*North Dakota is home to other areas of native forest that face the same threats. Together we can strive to protect, enhance, and sustain these forest communities and ensure their place in this “prairie state” landscape.*

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

*If partial funding is awarded, the pilot program can be scaled back to match the available funding but would diminish the opportunity to prove the concept and upscale the program in the future.*

**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.**

*NDGF agrees to place signage on OHF-funded tracts and provide recognition by using one or more of the following methods (social media, website, ND Outdoors magazine, telecast, and/or podcast).*

**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](mailto:ndicgrants@nd.gov).

Revised: November 4, 2019, April 12, 2023