ENHANCED GRAZING LANDS & WILDLIFE HABITAT (PHASE I)

Name of Organization: Ducks Unlimited, Inc.

Federal Tax ID#: 13-5643799

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List names of co-applicants if this is a joint proposal:

Ducks Unlimited will serve as the primary grantee. Other supporting partners include: USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service, Farm Service Agency, North Dakota Game & Fish Department and ND private landowners.

MAJOR Directive:
Choose only one response

O **Directive A**. Provide access to private and public lands for sportsmen, including projects that create fish and wildlife habitat and provide access for sportsmen;

X Directive B. Improve, maintain, and restore water quality, soil conditions, plant diversity, animal systems and to support other practices of stewardship to enhance farming and ranching;

O **Directive C**. Develop, enhance, conserve, and restore wildlife and fish habitat on private and public lands; and

O **Directive D**. Conserve natural areas for recreation through the establishment and development of parks and other recreation areas.

Additional Directive:
Choose all that apply

X **Directive A**. Provide access to private and public lands for sportsmen, including projects that create fish and wildlife habitat and provide access for sportsmen;

X **Directive B**. Improve, maintain, and restore water quality, soil conditions, plant diversity, animal systems and to support other practices of stewardship to enhance farming and ranching;

X **Directive C**. Develop, enhance, conserve, and restore wildlife and fish habitat on private and public lands; and

X **Directive D**. Conserve natural areas for recreation through the establishment and development of parks and other recreation areas.

Type of organization:
O State Agency

O Political Subdivision

O Tribal Entity

X Tax-exempt, nonprofit corporation, as described in United States Internal Revenue Code (26 U.S.C. § 501 (c)

Project Name: Enhanced Grazing Lands & Wildlife Habitat (Phase I)

Abstract/Executive Summary
Over 1.25 million acres of Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) lands have expired across North Dakota since reaching peak enrollment (~3.4 million acres) in 2007. Another 848,000 acres will expire over the next 5 years. Once these 10-15 year contracts expire, landowners have very few conservation options to keep restored grasslands intact or receive additional incentives if they're not able to reenroll in CRP. Conventional theory suggests that most of these tracts are going back into crop production. However, an innovative partnership launched by the USDA-Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) and Ducks Unlimited (DU) in 2013 proved that many landowners are interested in keeping expired CRP and other grasslands intact if offered the right incentives and increased land use flexibility.

Though a special $3M allocation of Environmental Quality Incentive Program ("EQIP") funds aimed at enhancing grazing lands and retaining expired CRP, NRCS and DU enrolled nearly 25,000 acres into this program during a brief 30-day sign-up. Over 200 eligible applications were received across eastern ND requesting $9.5M in cost-share assistance, but only 46 (23%) contracts were executed due to funding limitations. Cost-share assistance will help transition these "set-aside" lands to more "working lands" via enhanced grazing and wildlife habitat incentives. Landowners utilized a variety of cost-share practices including grazing incentives (brush and forage management, prescribed grazing, weed control), wildlife habitat management and infrastructure developments (fence, water wells, wetland restoration). These standard NRCS cost-share agreements range from 2-5 years (prescribed grazing), up to 20 years (water well installation), depending on site-specific management plans and life expectancy of the project developments.

Due to the overwhelming success of this initial pilot and large backlog of unfunded projects, DU and NRCS would like to expand this program in ND with the help of OHF support. By adding an additional highly-valued partner (ND Game & Fish Dept.), we also plan to incorporate a new public access component to the program. With $1.5M in support from OHF, the project partners plan to enroll 20,000 additional grassland acres in this special EQIP program over the next year, while offering increased public access on approximately 3,750 acres. This project specifically addresses all four OHF directives through *"stewardship that enhances ranching (B), wildlife habitat conservation (C) conservation of natural areas for recreation (D) and increased public access for sportsmen (A)"*. Cost-share payments will be based on standard EQIP practices and agreements will generally range from 2-5 years (up to 20 years) depending on site-specific management plans and infrastructure improvements. Optional two-year public access agreements through NDGFD's "Working Lands Program" will also be offered to interested landowners. This project represents Phase I of several future anticipated proposals aimed at creating a sustained program that serves as a successful model for bringing federal, state, non-governmental and private partners together.

The total cost of this project is:	$3,665,820
OHF Grant Request	$1,500,000 (41%)
Partner Matching Support	$2,165,820 (59%)

Project Participants

- Ducks Unlimited (grantee)
- USDA – Natural Resources Conservation Service
- USDA – Farm Service Agency
- North Dakota Game & Fish Department
- Private Landowners

Amount of Grant request: The project partners respectfully request $1,500,000 (payable over 1 year) in funding support from the Outdoor Heritage Fund.

Total Project Costs: $3,665,820

Amount of Matching Funds: $2,165,820 ($2,030,000 cash; $135,820 in-kind)

Source(s) of Matching Funds

USDA – Natural Resources Conservation Service	$2,000,000 (cash)
North Dakota Game & Fish Dept.	$30,000 (cash)
Ducks Unlimited, Inc.	$135,820 (in-kind)

Certifications

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

X I certify that if awarded grant funding none of the funding will be used for any of the exemptions noted on Page 1 of this application.

Narrative

Organization Information

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 13 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 over 75 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, volunteer-based organization. Our 590,000+ members are conservationists and outdoor enthusiasts who reside across the United States, Canada and Mexico, including over 6,700 members in North Dakota.

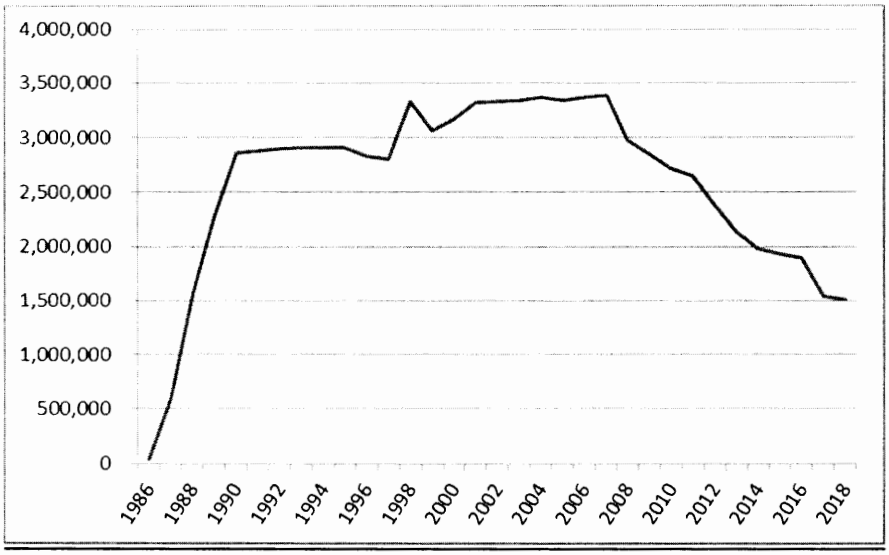
DU's Great Plains Regional Office, located in Bismarck, ND, employs a multidisciplinary team of engineers, biologists, scientists, agronomists, real estate and administrative support personnel. Since 1984, DU and our partners have completed 1,280 projects impacting 441,508 acres in North Dakota. DU is 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: http://www.ducks.org/about-du/board-of-directors/

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

Background

Over 1.25 million acres of CRP have expired across North Dakota since peak enrollment of ~3.4 million acres in 2007. Another 848,000 acres are slated to expire over the next 5 years and this downward trend is expected to continue (Figure 1). Recent research has documented some of the highest conversion rates (1-5% annual loss rate) of perennial grasslands and wetlands to cropland throughout the region during 2007-2011—a rate and scale not seen since the 1920-30s. Nationally, CRP acres have also dropped from 31.2 million to 27 million. Despite current factors driving conversion and conventional theory that suggests all expired CRP is going back into crop production, landowner interest remains high to maintain many of these areas in grass for livestock production and wildlife habitat.

Figure 1. CRP acre enrollment history and projected expirations in North Dakota, 1986-2018 (Source: Farm Service Agency)



Project Goals

The goal of this project is to conserve and enhance 20,000 acres of expiring CRP and other grasslands through a new and innovative program that provides incentives for enhanced grazing lands and critical wildlife habitat. Using a core set of NRCS-approved Environmental Quality Incentive Program (EQIP) practices, NRCS and DU will partner together to enroll landowners in this program over the next year. A complete list of eligible habitat management practices (prescribed grazing, forage and biomass planting, forage harvest management, wetland restoration, etc.), infrastructure developments (fence, wells, pipelines, water facilities, etc.) and cost-share rates is provided in Appendix A.

Working in partnership with the ND Game & Fish Department's (NDGFD) "Working Lands Program" (WLP), we will also provide increased public access on approx. 3,750 acres (19%) enrolled in the program. WLP is a short-term program based on the wildlife value of lands actively farmed or ranched, while providing public access. The current farming or ranching management practices of the lands are evaluated by NDGFD biologists, who place values on components such as conservation practices, good stewardship and quality of hunting habitat and public access. These will be optional 2-year public access agreements for interested landowners based on a cost-share rate of approximately $3-4/acre per year for a total of $30,000.

OHF Directives

This project specifically addresses all four OHF directives by:

1) Conserving 20,000 acres of expiring CRP and other grasslands by transitioning "set aside" lands that are at high risk of conversion to more "working lands" via enhanced grazing and habitat management incentives. Unlike traditional CRP that has restrictive haying and grazing provisions, this project provides increased flexibility, management and economic incentives that are attractive to ND livestock producers; *(Directive B. Improve, maintain, and restore water quality, soil conditions, plant diversity, animal systems and to support other practices of stewardship to enhance farming and ranching)*

2) Providing increased public access on approximately 3,750 acres enrolled in the program in partnership with ND Game and Fish Department's "Working Lands Program"; *(Directive A. Provide access to private and public lands for sportsmen, including projects that create fish and wildlife habitat and provide access for sportsmen)*

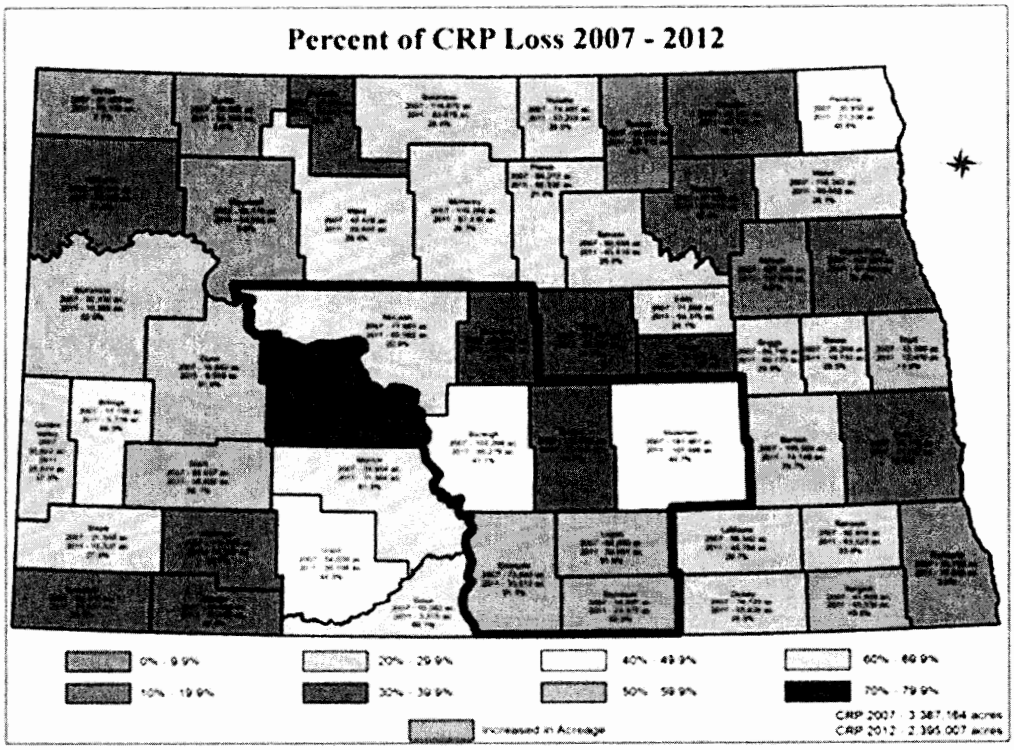
3) Enhancing critical migratory bird, upland and big game habitat on private lands via wildlife habitat incentives on 20,000 acres of expiring CRP and other grasslands; and
(Directive C. Develop, enhance, conserve, and restore wildlife and fish habitat on private and public lands)

4) Conserving critical natural areas and enhancing public recreational opportunities on 3,750 acres for sportsmen and other outdoor enthusiasts. *(Directive D. Conserve natural areas for recreation through the establishment and development of parks and other recreation areas)*

Project Area

The project area will be focused in all ND counties north and east of the Missouri River (Figure 2). Using a targeted approach and competitive scoring process developed NRCS and DU (Appendix B), we will focus on enrolling landowners in an 8-county core focus area (dark boundary line).

Figure 2. Project area (East River) and core focus counties (dark boundary line).



This region of ND is recognized as a "continentally significant area" for migratory bird habitat conservation in the North American Wildlife Management Plan, U.S. Shorebird Conservation Plan, North American Waterbird Conservation Plan and Partners in Flight North American Landbird Conservation Plan. This region is also recognized as a critical wildlife habitat area in ND's State Wildlife Action Plan. Scoring preference will be given to producers in the counties of McLean, Sheridan, Burleigh, Kidder, Stutsman, Emmons, Logan and McIntosh, particularly with tracts of CRP that will expire by 2014-2015. A full list of competitive scoring criteria and a formal ranking process for successful enrollment is provided in Appendix B.

Delivery Strategies

Combining Innovation with Collaboration

This project is unique and innovative in that it brings together a diversity of federal (USDA NRCS & FSA), state (NDGFD), non-governmental (DU) and private (landowners) partners to achieve a common goal. This innovative partnership combines aspects of other successful programs (e.g., EQIP, WLP, Farm Bill Biologist outreach, etc.) that have worked well in North Dakota and appeal to landowners to enhance grass-based agriculture and maximize natural resource benefits. Unlike traditional Farm Bill conservation programs that depend largely on passive, opportunistic sign-ups, this project is unique in that it will actively target grasslands at high risk of conversion via direct promotion and outreach. By leveraging our collective resources and providing landowners a "menu of options" that fit well within their operations, this project will help retain critical grassland habitat, enhance grazing lands and provide increased public access. The success of our initial pilot program in 2013 has also garnered national attention from U.S. Secretary of Agriculture Tom Vilsack, NRCS Chief Jason Weller and Undersecretary Robert Bonnie. In fact, DU is in initial discussions with NRCS leadership about the possibility of expanding this special EQIP/enhanced grazing lands program to other states like South Dakota and Montana.

Communications Plan & Targeted Outreach

Communications will be targeted toward landowners with expiring CRP contracts that are managed and/or owned by EQIP eligible producers. DU will work in close partnership with USDA-NRCS and FSA to contact these landowners through earned media and direct outreach. Other communications will include newsletters, postcard mailers, social media and through other existing communication channels used by federal, state and NGO partners. We will also work with NRCS/FSA to host three (3) landowner workshops throughout the core 8-county focus area in early 2014. All applications will be ranked using a competitive scoring process developed by NRCS and DU (see Appendix B).

Expected Benefits

Extensive research has shown that the termination of CRP and other grasslands would result in significant population declines of grassland nesting birds ranging from 2% to 52% depending on the species (Neimuth et al. 2007). Reynolds et al. (2001, 2006) estimated that peak CRP enrollment in North and South Dakota added an additional 2.2 million ducks to the fall flight each year. Other research has shown that CRP provides dramatic soil retention, flood attenuation, carbon sequestration and water quality benefits (Gleason et al. 2008).

CRP and other grasslands also provide important economic benefits to our state's multi-million dollar livestock and pollinator industry. Habitat quality and quantity also drive North Dakota's $1.4 billion annual hunting, fishing and outdoor recreation economy. Gascoigne et al. (2011) projected that prairie conversion to cropland over the next 20 years across the Dakotas would result in a social welfare loss valued at over $4 billion when considering ecosystem services and a net loss of $3.4 billion when reductions in commodity production are accounted for.

This project will provide a multitude of ecological, economic and recreational benefits for North Dakota including:

1) Retention and enhancement of 20,000 acres of grasslands that are at high risk of conversion;
2) Enhanced forage and management on 20,000 acres of valuable grazing lands;
3) Critical wildlife habitat for a wide array of migratory birds, upland and big game species;
4) Increased public access to 3,750 acres enrolled in NDGF's "Working Lands Program"; and
5) Unlike traditional CRP with restrictive haying and grazing provisions, this project will transition former "set aside" lands to more "working lands" that are attractive to ND livestock producers.

Project Timeline

The following table provides a summary of our anticipated project timeline, deliverables and milestones. All funds awarded will be obligated in the first year of the project by Jan. 2015. All management activities and infrastructure developments will be completed by Jan. 2016. WLP public access payments will be distributed by NDGFP to landowners on an annual basis and payments will be completed by Jan. 2016. Management and infrastructure development contracts with enrolled landowners will generally range from 2-5 years and up to 20 years in some cases (e.g., major infrastructure developments like water wells).

Month	Jan 2014	Feb 2014	March 2014	April 2014	May 2014	June 2014	July 2014	Aug. 2014	Sept. 2014	Oct. 2014	Nov. 2014	Dec. 2014	Jan. 2015-2016
OHF Funds Awarded													
Landowner Workshops (3)													
Landowner Outreach & Promotion													
Contact Sign-ups Executed													
OHF Funds Obligated													
All WLP payments complete													
All Project Developments Complete													

Addressing the Backlog & Funding Urgency

This is a new project that won't supplant other existing funds. NRCS has generously committed $2M in funding support; however, we received over $9.5 million in funding requests during the first initial 30-day sign-up period in 2013. Only 23% (46 of 201) of eligible applications were funded last year clearly demonstrating strong landowner interest in the program resulting in a $6.5M (155 applications; 77%) backlog in unfunded projects. If awarded the full OHF funding request, the project partners will still only be able to address a portion of this backlog as hundreds of thousands of CRP acres continue to expire over the next several years.

With reduced federal funding, future uncertainty of Farm Bill programs, and hundreds of thousands of CRP acres set to expire over next 5 years, there is significant urgency to fully-fund this project at this time. As evidenced by the strong landowner demand in the initial pilot effort, additional support from the OHF will help continue the success of this program.

Management of Project – Provide a description of how the 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.

Project Management

Project organization and management will be administered through DU's Great Plains Regional office in Bismarck, ND. Eric Lindstrom (bio below) will serve as the primary project manager working in close partnership with NRCS, FSA and NDGFD. NRCS's field and state offices will execute all EQIP contacts and handle disbursement of federal funds to landowners enrolled in the program. DU will work closely with NRCS to handle all OHF payments to landowners. DU will also provide all annual progress and financial reports required by OHF.

Following OHF guidelines, DU will develop Site-Specific Agreements (SSAs) with landowners enrolled in the program. These agreements will outline the specific roles, financial contributions and management responsibilities for all partners. The SSAs will be dated and signed by both the landowner and DU.

NDGFD will manage all WLP public access agreements on approximately 3,750 acres or roughly 19% of the total acres enrolled. Working in close partnership with DU and NRCS, NDGFD's private lands biologists will promote and sign up landowners interested in the program. A separate 2-year WLP public access agreement and payments to landowners will be handled by NDGFD staff.

Eric Lindstrom manages Farm Bill programs for DU's Great Plains Region. Eric holds a B.S. degree in Wildlife and Fisheries Sciences from South Dakota State University and a M.S. degree in Waterfowl and Wetlands Ecology from Southern Illinois University-Carbondale. During his 8-year career with DU, Eric has extensive experience with direct conservation program delivery and partnership development as a private lands biologist in Texas and as a manager of conservation programs in Iowa. Eric has helped secure and administer over $17 million of public and private conservation funding for DU. He also specializes in agricultural and conservation policy and works closely with DU's seven (7) Farm Bill biologists stationed in USDA NRCS offices across ND (3), SD (2) and MT (2).

Evaluation – Describe your plan to document progress and results.

Monitoring, Evaluation & Reporting

The project partners will provide a robust monitoring and evaluation plan to ensure quality assurance. On-the-ground monitoring of practice implementation and infrastructure developments will be performed by DU Farm Bill biologists stationed in local NRCS Field Offices. These positions are located in the Napoleon, Turtle Lake and Minnewauken field office and are jointly funded by DU, NRCS and NDGFD. These Farm Bill biologists and NRCS field staff will assist producers with the development of a conservation plan and practice implementation. These personnel have established strong working relationships with local producers and are able to best assist their operational needs and address any questions they have. NRCS will also assist with annual status reviews of enrolled lands to ensure site-specific management plans and infrastructure improvements are completed as planned and meet USDA standards. NDGFD staff will also provide annual monitoring on 100% of all tracts enrolled in the Working Lands Program. Annual financial and progress reports will be provided by DU, NRCS and NDGF.

Following completion of the project, management of the project will be with the landowner and meet the terms and conditions outlined in the Site Specific Agreements. Field staff will keep the project partners informed if the project fails or does not perform as planned. DU will prepare and submit all expenditure, annual progress and financial reports following OHF guidelines.

Financial Information

ATTACHMENT: See attached detailed project budget. A budget summary is also provided below:

Project Expense	OHF Request (Over 1 year)	Applicant's Match (In-Kind)	Other Partner Match (Cash)	Totals
Enhanced grazing lands and wildlife habitat incentive payments to private landowners	$1,404,600		$2,000,000	$3,404,600
Communications & Outreach	$15,000			$15,000
Staff/Benefits/Travel/Indirects	$80,400	$135,820		$216,220
Public access payments to private landowners			$30,000	$30,000
Subtotals	$1,500,000	$135,820	$2,030,000	
TOTAL PROJECT COST =				**$3,665,820**

X I certify that a project budget will be sent to the Commission

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

The sustainability of this project will depend on two primary factors: 1) contract length, and 2) future funding incentives. Without these two key elements, one can predict that most grasslands not enrolled in a conservation program will be at high risk of conversion. Under this partnership, contract lengths will range between 2-5 years, but up to 20 years in some cases depending on management plans agreed to by individual landowners and the lifespan of the infrastructure developments. Once the EQIP and OHF contracts have expired, private landowners will assume full responsibility for future management and sustainability of the project.

Like any other large private lands conservation program, the success of this project will hinge on continued investment by the OHF and other partners. To put large landscape programs in perspective, CRP rental payments to ND landowners have averaged over $103M/year the last 5 years with a total investment of over $1 billion the last decade. In order to retain CRP acreage and working grasslands at adequate levels, it's going to take a significant investment among local, state, federal and private partners. That's why the project partners are submitting Phase I this round and anticipate other similar future funding requests to ensure the long-term viability of the program.

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

Creating a successful and sustained landscape conservation program requires significant financial commitment and partnership support. This project will require both. Partial funding for this proposal will significantly reduce the amount of acres conserved. If the OHF Advisory Board determines that this grant warrants funding, but at a partial funding level, then the project partners will have to scale back our acreage goals and outreach efforts accordingly.

Literature Cited

Gascoigne, W.R., D. Hoag, L. Koontz, B.A. Tangen, T. L. Shaffer and R.E. Gleason. 2011. Valuing ecosystem and economic services across land-use scenarios in the Prairie Pothole Region of the Dakotas, USA. Ecological Economics 70:1715-1725.

Gleason, R.A., Laubhan, M.K., and Euliss, N.H., Jr., eds., 2008, Ecosystem services derived from wetland conservation practices in the United States Prairie Pothole Region with an emphasis on the U.S. Department of Agriculture Conservation Reserve and Wetlands Reserve Programs: U.S. Geological Professional Paper 1745, 58 p.

Niemuth, N.D., F.R. Quamen, D.E. Naugle, R.E. Reynolds, M.E. Estey, and T.L. Scaffer. 2007. Benefits of the Conservation Reserve Program to Grassland Bird Populations in the Prairie Pothole Region of North Dakota and South Dakota. USDA Farm Service Agency Report OS-IA-04000000-N34 64 p.

Reynolds, R. E., T. L. Shaffer, R. W. Renner, W. E. Newton, and B. D. J. Batt. 2001. Impact of the Conservation Reserve Program on duck recruitment in the U.S. Prairie Pothole Region. Journal of Wildlife Management 65:765-780.

Reynolds, R. E., T. L. Shaffer, C. R. Loesch, and R. R. Cox, Jr. 2006. The Farm Bill and duck production in the Prairie Pothole Region: increasing the benefits. Wildlife Society Bulletin 34:963-974.

Appendix A. Special EQIP Grazing Lands and Wildlife Habitat Management Core Practices and Cost-Share Rates *(developed and updated annually by USDA-NRCS)*

Practice Code	Practice Name	Component	Unit Type	Unit Cost ($)
314	Brush Management	Mechanical, General	Ac	333.1
314	Brush Management	HU-Mechanical, General	Ac	399.72
314	Brush Management	Chemical, Uplands	Ac	17.81
314	Brush Management	HU-Chemical, Uplands	Ac	21.37
314	Brush Management	Chemical - Riparian	Ac	10.04
314	Brush Management	HU-Chemical - Riparian	Ac	12.05
315	Herbaceous Weed Control	Biological	Ac	3.4
315	Herbaceous Weed Control	HU-Biological	Ac	4.07
315	Herbaceous Weed Control	Chemical, Ground	Ac	12.81
315	Herbaceous Weed Control	HU-Chemical, Ground	Ac	15.37
315	Herbaceous Weed Control	Mechanical	Ac	10.19
315	Herbaceous Weed Control	HU-Mechanical	Ac	12.23
378	Pond	Excavated Pond	Cu Yd	1.73
378	Pond	HU-Excavated Pond	Cu Yd	2.07
378	Pond	Embankment Pond without Pipe	Cu Yd	1.8
378	Pond	HU-Embankment Pond without Pipe	Cu Yd	2.16
378	Pond	Embankment Pond with Pipe <= 6000 CY	Cu Yd	2.38
378	Pond	HU-Embankment Pond with Pipe <= 6000 CY	Cu Yd	2.85
378	Pond	Embankment Pond with Pipe > 6000 CY	Cu Yd	2.45
378	Pond	HU-Embankment Pond with Pipe > 6000 CY	Cu Yd	2.94
382	Fence	Barbed Wire, Multi-strand (4)	Ft	.94
382	Fence	HU-Barbed Wire, Multi-strand (4)	Ft	1.13
382	Fence	Barbed Wire, Multi-strand (4) with Fence Markers	Ft	1.02
382	Fence	HU-Barbed Wire, Multi-strand (4) with Fence Markers	Ft	1.23
382	Fence	Woven Wire	Ft	1.26
382	Fence	HU-Woven Wire	Ft	1.51
382	Fence	Electric, high tensil with energizer	Ft	.55
382	Fence	HU-Electric, high tensil with energizer	Ft	.66
382	Fence	Electric, high tensil with energizer and fence markers	Ft	.63
382	Fence	HU-Electric, high tensil with energizer and fence markers	Ft	.76
511	Forage Harvest Management	Improved Forage Quality	Ac	7.97
511	Forage Harvest Management	HU-Improved Forage Quality	Ac	9.57
511	Forage Harvest Management	Per-Ann Crops - Delayed Mowing	Ac	7.97
511	Forage Harvest Management	HU-Per-Ann Crops - Delayed Mowing	Ac	9.57
512	Forage and Biomass Planting	Seedbed Prep. Seed & Seeding- Introduced Perennial Grasses with legume	Ac	39.11

512	Forage and Biomass Planting	HU-Seedbed Prep. Seed & Seeding- Introduced Perennial Grasses with legume	Ac	46.94
516	Pipeline	Shallow or Above Ground Pipeline	Ft	1.77
516	Pipeline	HU-Shallow or Above Ground Pipeline	Ft	2.12
516	Pipeline	Small diameter < 2 inch (ND/SD)	Ft	2.27
516	Pipeline	HU-Small diameter < 2 inch (ND/SD)	Ft	2.73
516	Pipeline	Small Diameter, Backhoe	Ft	3.17
516	Pipeline	HU-Small Diameter, Backhoe	Ft	3.81
516	Pipeline	Rural Water Connection Equipment	Ea	2974.2
516	Pipeline	HU-Rural Water Connection Equipment	Ea	3569.04
528	Prescribed Grazing	Range, 3-6 Pastures	Ac	5.21
528	Prescribed Grazing	HU-Range, 3-6 Pastures	Ac	6.26
528	Prescribed Grazing	Range, 7 or More Pastures	Ac	7.13
528	Prescribed Grazing	HU-Range, 7 or More Pastures	Ac	8.56
533	Pumping Plant	Livestock, with Pressure Tank	HP	1754.71
533	Pumping Plant	HU-Livestock, with Pressure Tank	HP	2105.65
533	Pumping Plant	Livestock, without Pressure Tank	HP	590.87
533	Pumping Plant	HU-Livestock, without Pressure Tank	HP	709.05
533	Pumping Plant	Windmill-Powered Pump	Ea	4372.69
533	Pumping Plant	HU-Windmill-Powered Pump	Ea	5247.23
533	Pumping Plant	Solar-Powered Pump, 0.5 hp	Ea	2905.68
533	Pumping Plant	HU-Solar-Powered Pump, 0.5 hp	Ea	3486.82
533	Pumping Plant	Solar-Powered Pump, 1 hp	Ea	3927.72
533	Pumping Plant	HU-Solar-Powered Pump, 1 hp	Ea	4713.26
533	Pumping Plant	Solar-Powered Pump, 2 hp	Ea	6057.23
533	Pumping Plant	HU-Solar-Powered Pump, 2 hp	Ea	7268.68
561	Heavy Use Area Protection	Reinforced Concrete with sand or gravel foundation	Cu Yd	203.75
561	Heavy Use Area Protection	HU-Reinforced Concrete with sand or gravel foundation	Cu Yd	244.5
561	Heavy Use Area Protection	Rock/Gravel on Geotextile	Sq Yd	6.58
561	Heavy Use Area Protection	HU-Rock/Gravel on Geotextile	Sq Yd	7.89
561	Heavy Use Area Protection	Rock/Gravel	Cu Yd	14.76
561	Heavy Use Area Protection	HU-Rock/Gravel	Cu Yd	17.71
574	Spring Development	Spring, up to 50 feet Collection	Ea	2130.38
574	Spring Development	HU-Spring, up to 50 feet Collection	Ea	2556.46
574	Spring Development	Spring, > 50 feet Collection	Ea	3411.32
574	Spring Development	HU-Spring, > 50 feet Collection	Ea	4093.59
614	Watering Facility	Wildlife Guzzler	Gal	1.71
614	Watering Facility	HU-Wildlife Guzzler	Gal	2.05
614	Watering Facility	Steel Tank	Gal	.92
614	Watering Facility	HU-Steel Tank	Gal	1.1
614	Watering Facility	Rubber-Fiberglass on Earth	Gal	.87
614	Watering Facility	HU-Rubber-Fiberglass on Earth	Gal	1.05
614	Watering Facility	Rubber-Fiberglass on Concrete	Gal	1.08

614	Watering Facility	HU-Rubber-Fiberglass on Concrete	Gal	1.3
614	Watering Facility	Steel Rim-Concrete Base	Gal	.63
614	Watering Facility	HU-Steel Rim-Concrete Base	Gal	.75
614	Watering Facility	Water Fountain	Ea	1197.19
614	Watering Facility	HU-Water Fountain	Ea	1436.63
614	Watering Facility	Insulated Tank wit Cover	Gal	1.59
614	Watering Facility	HU-Insulated Tank wit Cover	Gal	1.91
614	Watering Facility	Below Ground Storage Tank	Gal	1.07
614	Watering Facility	HU-Below Ground Storage Tank	Gal	1.28
642	Water Well	Well Point	Ft	66.42
642	Water Well	HU-Well Point	Ft	79.71
642	Water Well	Bored or Dug Well	Ft	432.28
642	Water Well	HU-Bored or Dug Well	Ft	518.73
642	Water Well	Shallow Well <= 100 ft.	Ft	23.12
642	Water Well	HU-Shallow Well <= 100 ft.	Ft	27.74
642	Water Well	Well > 100 to 300 ft.	Ft	19.85
642	Water Well	HU-Well > 100 to 300 ft.	Ft	23.82
642	Water Well	Artesian Well <= 300 ft.	Ft	19
642	Water Well	HU-Artesian Well <= 300 ft.	Ft	22.8
642	Water Well	Deep Artesian, PVC Casing	Ft	7.94
642	Water Well	HU-Deep Artesian, PVC Casing	Ft	9.53
642	Water Well	Deep Well, Steel or Copper	Ft	25.8
642	Water Well	HU-Deep Well, Steel or Copper	Ft	30.96
644	Wetland Wildlife Management	Management and monitoring only, foregone income	Ac	171.08
644	Wetland Wildlife Management	HU-Management and monitoring only, foregone income	Ac	205.3
645	Upland Wildlife Habitat Management	Wildlife Structures - Ramp	Ea	36.74
645	Upland Wildlife Habitat Management	HU-Wildlife Structures - Ramp	Ea	44.09
645	Upland Wildlife Habitat Management	Wildlife Structures Fence Markers	Ft	.09
645	Upland Wildlife Habitat Management	HU-Wildlife Structures Fence Markers	Ft	.11
645	Upland Wildlife Habitat Management	Wildlife Habitat Enhancement	Ac	12.73
645	Upland Wildlife Habitat Management	HU-Wildlife Habitat Enhancement	Ac	15.28
645	Upland Wildlife Habitat Management	Forgone Income	Ac	171.08
645	Upland Wildlife Habitat Management	HU-Forgone Income	Ac	205.3
657	Wetland Restoration	Fill in dugout	Ea	2250
657	Wetland Restoration	HU-Fill in dugout	Ea	2700
657	Wetland Restoration	Depression Sediment Removal	Ac	3942.18
657	Wetland Restoration	HU-Depression Sediment Removal	Ac	4730.62
657	Wetland Restoration	Sediment Removal - Saturated Site	Ac	9729.41

657	Wetland Restoration	HU-Sediment Removal - Saturated Site	Ac	11675.29
657	Wetland Restoration	Ditchplug - Lateral Restoration	Ea	304.7
657	Wetland Restoration	HU-Ditchplug - Lateral Restoration	Ea	365.63
657	Wetland Restoration	Embankment - Fill Height <= 4 feet	Ea	579.2
657	Wetland Restoration	HU-Embankment - Fill Height <= 4 feet	Ea	695.03

Appendix B. Sample Competitive Scoring Sheet and Project Ranking Criteria developed by USDA-NRCS.

Application Ranking Summary
GHG-Special EQIP grazing lands & wildlife habitat program

Program: EQIP	**Ranking Date:**	**Application Number:**
Ranking Tool: GHG-CIG		**Applicant:**
Final Ranking Score:		**Address:**
Planner:		**Telephone:**
Farm Location:		

National Priorities Addressed

Issue Questions	Responses
If the application is for development of a Conservation Activity Plan (CAP), the agency will assign significant ranking priority and conservation benefit by answering "Yes" to the following question. Answering "Yes" to question 1a will result in the application being awarded the maximum amount of points that can be earned for the national priority category.	
1. a. Is the program application to support the development of a Conservation Activity Plan (CAP)? If answer is "Yes", do not answer any other national level questions. If answer is "No", proceed with evaluation to address the remaining questions in this section.	250 Point(s)
Clean and Abundant Water: Water Quality - Will the proposed project assist the producer to:	
2. a. Meet regulatory requirements relating to animal feeding operations, or proactively avoid the need for regulatory measures?	15 Point(s)
2. b. Reduce sediment, nutrients or pesticides from agricultural operations located within a field that adjoins a designated "impaired water body" (TMDL, 303d, etc.)?	15 Point(s)
2. c. Reduce sediment, nutrients or pesticides from agricultural operations located within a field that adjoins a "non-impaired water body"?	5 Point(s)

Clean and Abundant Water: Water Conservation - Will the proposed project assist the producer implement conservation practices which:	
3. a. Decrease aquifer overdraft?	15 Point(s)
3. b. Conserve water from irrigation system improvements and saved water will be available for other beneficial uses?	10 Point(s)
3. c. Conserve water in an area where the applicant participates in a geographically established or watershed-wide project?	5 Point(s)
Clean Air: Treatment of air quality from agricultural sources - Will the proposed project assist the producer to implement practice(s) which:	
4. a. Meet on-farm regulatory requirements relating to air quality or proactively avoid the need for regulatory measures?	15 Point(s)
4. b. Reduce on-farm generated green house gases such as CO2 (Carbon Dioxide), CH4 (Methane), and N2O (Nitrous Oxide)?	15 Point(s)
4. c. Increase on-farm carbon sequestration?	5 Point(s)
Soil Health: Will the proposed project assist the producer to implement practice(s) which:	
5. a. Reduce erosion to tolerable limits (Soil "T")?	15 Point(s)
5. b. Improve soil tilth, organic matter, structure, health, etc.?	5 Point(s)
Healthy Plant and Animal Communities Wildlife Habitat Conservation - Will the proposed project assist the producer to implement practice(s) which:	
6. a. Benefit on-farm habitat associated with threatened and endangered, at-risk, candidate, or species of concern as identified in a State wildlife plan?	15 Point(s)
6. b. Help retain wildlife and plant habitat on land exiting the Conservation Reserve Program (CRP)?	10 Point(s)
High Quality, Productive Soils, Healthy Plant and Animal Communities: Will the proposed project assist the producer implement practices which:	
7. a. Help manage or control noxious or invasive plant species on non-cropland?	10 Point(s)

7. b. Increase, or improve habitat to benefit pollinator or other targeted wildlife species?	10 Point(s)
7. c. Properly dispose of livestock carcasses?	5 Point(s)
7. d. Are identified in an Integrated Pest Management plan?	10 Point(s)
7. e. Are identified in a Nutrient Management plan?	10 Point(s)
7. f. Apply principles of adaptive nutrient management?	5 Point(s)
Energy Conservation - Will the proposed project assist the producer to implement practices which:	
8. a. Reduce energy consumption on the agricultural operation?	15 Point(s)
8. b. Increase on-farm energy efficiency with practices and improvements identified in an approved energy audit equivalent to criteria required in Ag EMP (122,124)?	10 Point(s)
8. c. Assist in implementing energy conservation measures that also reduce greenhouse gas emissions and other air pollutants?	10 Point(s)
Business Lines - Conservation Implementation Additional Ranking Considerations - Will the proposed project result in:	
9. a. Implementation of all conservation practices scheduled in the contract on the CPA-1155 within three years of date of obligation?	10 Point(s)
9. b. Improvement of existing conservation practices or conservation systems already in place at the time the application is accepted?	5 Point(s)
9. c. Implementation of practice(s) which will complete an existing conservation system or suite of practices?	5 Point(s)

State Issues Addressed

Issue Questions	Responses
1. Does the application acreage include grassland or wetlands established under an expired or soon to expire(fall of 2013) CRP contract?	150 Point(s)

2. Will the EQIP application provide financial assistance for a practice(s) to facilitate grazing distribution(378,382,516,528,574,614, and 642)?	75 Point(s)
3. Is the acreage included in the application within the high priority area? (McLean, Sheridan, Burleigh, Kidder, Stutsman, Emmons, Logan, McIntosh)	75 Point(s)
4. Does the application include Restoring(657) or Managing(644) wetlands to enhance wildlife and water quality?	50 Point(s)
Choose only one of the following questions, either 5,6,7,or 8.	
5. Does the land in the application support greater than 60 duck pairs per square mile? (red, yellow, dark green)	50 Point(s)
6. Does the land in the application support between 40-60 duck pairs per square mile? (light green)	40 Point(s)
7. Does the land in the application support between 20-39 duck pairs per square mile? (gray)	30 Point(s)
8. Does the land in the application support less than 20 duck pairs per square mile? (light blue &dark blue)	20 Point(s)

Local Issues Addressed

Issue Questions	Responses
Choose from one of the following that applies.(use the instruction sheet detailing the use of soil data explorer in toolkit)	
1. Does the application include 75% or more land with a Non-irrigated Capability Class rating of 2, 3, or 4?	250 Point(s)
2. Does the application include 50% or more land with a Non-irrigated Capability Class rating of 2, 3, or 4?	100 Point(s)
4. Does the application include 35% or more land with a Non-irrigated Capability Class rating of 2, 3, or 4?	50 Point(s)

Land Use:

Grazed Range;

Hay;
Pasture;

Resource Concerns	Practices
Air Quality: Excessive Greenhouse Gas - CH4 (methane)	Forage Harvest Management
Air Quality: Excessive Greenhouse Gas - CH4 (methane)	Prescribed Grazing
Air Quality: Excessive Greenhouse Gas - CH4 (methane)	Spring Development
Air Quality: Excessive Greenhouse Gas - CH4 (methane)	Upland Wildlife Habitat Management
Air Quality: Excessive Greenhouse Gas - CH4 (methane)	Water Well
Air Quality: Excessive Greenhouse Gas - CH4 (methane)	Watering Facility
Air Quality: Excessive Greenhouse Gas - CH4 (methane)	Wetland Restoration
Air Quality: Excessive Greenhouse Gas - CH4 (methane)	Wetland Wildlife Habitat Management
Air Quality: Excessive Greenhouse Gas - CO2 (carbon dioxide)	Brush Management
Air Quality: Excessive Greenhouse Gas - CO2 (carbon dioxide)	Fence
Air Quality: Excessive Greenhouse Gas - CO2 (carbon dioxide)	Forage and Biomass Planting
Air Quality: Excessive Greenhouse Gas - CO2 (carbon dioxide)	Forage Harvest Management
Air Quality: Excessive Greenhouse Gas - CO2 (carbon dioxide)	Heavy Use Area Protection
Air Quality: Excessive Greenhouse Gas - CO2 (carbon dioxide)	Herbaceous Weed Control
Air Quality: Excessive Greenhouse Gas - CO2 (carbon dioxide)	Livestock Pipeline
Air Quality: Excessive Greenhouse Gas - CO2 (carbon dioxide)	Obstruction Removal
Air Quality: Excessive Greenhouse Gas - CO2 (carbon dioxide)	Pond
Air Quality: Excessive Greenhouse Gas - CO2 (carbon dioxide)	Prescribed Grazing
Air Quality: Excessive Greenhouse Gas - CO2 (carbon dioxide)	Pumping Plant
Air Quality: Excessive Greenhouse Gas - CO2 (carbon dioxide)	Upland Wildlife Habitat Management
Air Quality: Excessive Greenhouse Gas - CO2 (carbon dioxide)	Water Well
Air Quality: Excessive Greenhouse Gas - CO2 (carbon dioxide)	Watering Facility
Air Quality: Excessive Greenhouse Gas - CO2 (carbon dioxide)	Wetland Restoration
Air Quality: Excessive Greenhouse Gas - CO2 (carbon dioxide)	Wetland Wildlife Habitat Management

Air Quality: Excessive Greenhouse Gas - N2O (nitrous oxide)	Forage Harvest Management
Air Quality: Excessive Greenhouse Gas - N2O (nitrous oxide)	Prescribed Grazing
Air Quality: Excessive Greenhouse Gas - N2O (nitrous oxide)	Spring Development
Air Quality: Excessive Greenhouse Gas - N2O (nitrous oxide)	Upland Wildlife Habitat Management
Air Quality: Excessive Greenhouse Gas - N2O (nitrous oxide)	Water Well
Air Quality: Excessive Greenhouse Gas - N2O (nitrous oxide)	Watering Facility
Air Quality: Excessive Greenhouse Gas - N2O (nitrous oxide)	Wetland Restoration
Air Quality: Excessive Greenhouse Gas - N2O (nitrous oxide)	Wetland Wildlife Habitat Management

Ranking Score

Efficiency:
Local Issues:
State Issues:
National Issues:
Final Ranking Score:

This ranking report is for your information. It does not in any way guarantee funding. When funding becomes available, you will be notified if your application is selected for funding. Some changes to the application may be required before a final contract is awarded.

Notes:

NRCS Representative:	**Applicant Signature Not Required on this report for Contract Development unless required by State policy:**
Signature Date:	**Signature Date:**

Budget Standard Form

Please use the table below to provide a detailed total project budget that specifically outlines all the funds you are requesting and if there are any matching funds being utilized to fund this project. Please note 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. Match can come from any source (i.e. private sources, State and Federal funding, Tribal funding, etc.) Note match funding is not required but an application will be scored higher if match funding is provided. (See Scoring Form.)

Please feel free to add columns and rows as needed. Please include narrative to fully explain the proposed budget. Note that NO INDIRECT COSTS will be funded from the Outdoor Heritage Fund.

Project Expense	OHF Request (Over 1 year)	Applicant's Match Share (Cash)	Applicant's Match Share (In-Kind)	Applicant's Match Share (Indirect)	Other Project Sponsor's Share
Enhanced grazing lands and wildlife habitat incentive payments to private landowners	$ 1,404,600	$	$	$ 129,450	$2,000,000
Communications & Outreach	$15,000	$	$	$	$
Staff/Benefits/Travel/Indirects	$80,400	$	$5,864	$506	$
Public access payments to private landowners	$	$	$	$	$30,000
Total Project Costs	$1,500,000	$	$5,864	$129,956	$2,030,000

Total Project Costs: $3,665,820

OHF Request $1,500,000
Amount of Matching Funds: $2,165,820 ($2,030,000 cash; $5,864 in-kind; $129,956 indirect)

Source(s) of Matching Funds
USDA – NRCS $2,000,000 (cash)
ND Game & Fish Dept. $30,000 (cash)
Ducks Unlimited, Inc. $135,820 (in-kind and indirect)

Additional Notes:

- $3,404,600 of the total project costs will be paid to producers for enhanced grazing and habitat management incentives on private lands.
- $1,404,600 (94%) of the total $1.5 M of OHF requested will be paid to producers for grazing and habitat management incentives. NRCS has generously agreed to provide an additional $2M in matching (cash) support.
- $15,000 (1%) of the total $1.5 M of OHF funds requested will be used for direct mailers (postcards) and postage to individual producers to promote sign-ups. This includes standard development, printing (~$0.50/each) and postage rates ($0.29/each)
- $80,400 (5%) of the total $1.5M of OHF funds requested will be used to cover a portion of DU's staff/benefit/travel costs for 3 Farm Bill Biologists and 1 Project Manager to help promote, deliver and manage the project. DU will also donate $5,864 in staff time as in-kind match.
- NDGFD will provide $30,000 (cash) to landowners for public access agreements on approx. 3,750 acres. They estimate that payments will be approximately $3-4/acre per year for 2 years.
- DU's donated staff costs and indirect costs are based on federally-approved rates. These rates are developed via an annual third-party independent audit.
- DU's current federally-approved indirect rate is 8.63% and is applied to all eligible direct costs incurred by DU to deliver and administer the project. This rate is updated annually and meets all state and federal grant reporting requirements.

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
• Equipment	Any equipment purchased must be listed separately with documentation showing actual cost.
• 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.

Approved by OHF Advisory Board: October 17, 2013
Approved by Industrial Commission: October 22, 2013