

Outdoor Heritage Fund Grant Application



The purpose of the North Dakota Outdoor Heritage Fund is to provide funding to state agencies, tribal governments, political subdivisions, and nonprofit organizations to:

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

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;

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

Directive D. Conserve natural 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:

- A. Litigation;
- B. Lobbying activities;
- C. 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;
- D. The acquisition of land or to encumber any land for a term longer than twenty years; or
- E. 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

NO CONSIDERATION:

In addition to those specific items in law that are ineligible for funding, in the absence of exceptional circumstances, the following projects will NOT receive consideration for funding:

- Projects that are already completed;
- Projects that are on-going (Phased projects would be considered);
- Staffing;
- Feasibility studies;
- Annual maintenance;
- Paving projects for roads and parking lots;
- Swimming pools;
- Non-permanent equipment (such as tractors, snowmobiles);
- Research;
- Projects where the applicant is not directly involved in the project.

Application Deadline

Applications for the second grant round cycle are due on **August 1, 2014 at 5:00 p.m. CT.** All information, including attachments, must be submitted by that date. See instructions below for submission information.

Instructions

Please download this Word document (available on the Industrial Commission/Outdoor Heritage Fund Program website at <http://www.nd.gov/ndic/outdoor-infopage.htm>) to your computer and provide the information as requested. You are not limited to the spacing provided except in those instances where there is a limit on the number of words. After completing the application, save it and attach it to an e-mail and send it to outdoorheritage@nd.gov or print it and mail it to the address noted in the next paragraph.

Attachments in support of your application may be sent by mail to North Dakota Industrial Commission, ATTN: Outdoor Heritage Fund Program, State Capitol – Fourteenth Floor, 600 East Boulevard Ave. Dept. 405, Bismarck, ND 58505 or by e-mail to outdoorheritage@nd.gov. The application and all attachments must be received or postmarked by the application deadline. You will be sent a confirmation by e-mail of receipt of your application.

You may submit your application at any time prior to the application deadline. Early submission is appreciated and encouraged to allow adequate time to review your application and ensure that all required information has been included. Incomplete applications may not be considered for funding. Any item noted with an * is required.

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.

Name of Organization * Mule Deer Foundation

Contact Person/Title * Marshall Johnson, Regional Director for ND/MT

Address * 2016 Burlington Ave

City * Billings

State * MT

Zip Code *59102

E-mail Address * marshall@muledeerl.org

Web Site Address (Optional) www.muledeer.org

Phone * 406-850-8785

Fax # (if available)

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

MAJOR Directive: (select the Directive that best describes your grant request)*

Choose only one response

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;

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;

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

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

Additional Directive: (select the directives that also apply to the grant application purpose)*

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

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

Type of organization: (select the category that describes your organization)*

O State Agency

- Political Subdivision
- Tribal Entity
- Tax-exempt, nonprofit corporation.

Project Name* Western ND Habitat Enhancement Projects

Abstract/Executive Summary. An Executive Summary of the project stating its objectives, expected results, duration, total project costs and participants.* (no more than 500 words)

Objective

The objective of the Western North Dakota Habitat Enhancement Projects is to utilize OHF funds to assist in the protecting, conserving and enhancing wildlife habitat on private and public lands in western North Dakota. Currently over 90% of the oil/gas development is occurring on private lands, therefore these are areas that are in the most need. Our strategy is to partner with North Dakota Game & Fish (NDGF) Private Lands Initiative (PLI) program, the oil/gas industry and other sportsman/conservation groups to enhance, improve or rehabilitate habitats in western North Dakota. We will work with private landowners that are enrolled in the Private Land Open To Sportsmen (P.L.O.T.S.) program as well as private landowners that are unsure about enrolling in the P.L.O.T.S. program. The initiatives provided in our habitat improvement projects may well make it worthwhile for the private landowner to enroll.

MDF will seek out private landowners that may be interested in improving habitat that will benefit wildlife while also improving the grazing opportunities on their land. There will be no cost to the landowner, all that we ask for is a minimum of a three year extension to their P.L.O.T.S. agreement, which is three more years of payments to the landowner. These additional years would bring additional access for ND sportsman and women on improved/enhanced habitat conditions. Building these relationships with private producers on the land which supports the public wildlife resource are paramount. We anticipate that the landowners will realize the mutual benefits and continue to be part of the P.L.O.T.S. program for many years beyond.

We will continue to partner with other conservation groups such as the Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation, the Wild Sheep Foundation, and the National Wild Turkey Federation as well as with the ND Petroleum Council and other oil industry businesses to help cover the costs of habitat enhancement projects.

Expected Results

Our goal in the next three years is to employ at least six habitat enhancement/restoration projects on over 2,000 acres in western ND. These projects may involve a combination of prescribed burns, native grass/shrub plantings, invasive/noxious weed control, fencing and wildlife food plots. These habitat improvement/restoration projects would mainly occur on private lands enrolled or looking to be enrolled in P.L.O.T.S. program. We will also to continue to work to develop projects with the State Land Department and US Forest Service Land on lands they manage. The results will be improved

habitat for wildlife in western ND where grassland habitats are increasingly being fragmented as well as improving grazing for western ND ranchers.

Project Duration:* 3-4 years. Projects to be completed within four years, projects may be delayed due to weather and habitat conditions. Contract extensions will not occur until project is completed.

Amount of Grant request \$ * \$480,900

Total Project Costs \$* 727,700

(Note that in-kind and indirect costs can be used for matching funds)

Western North Dakota Habitat Enhancement Projects

Habitat Projects - 2,000 acres (Prescribed burns, native grass/shrub plantings, fencing, water development and P.L.O.T.S. contract extensions)	\$ 716,800
Food Plots – 100 Acres @ avg of \$109 per acre	\$ 10,900
TOTAL	\$ 727,700

A minimum of 25% Match Funding is strongly encouraged. Amount of Matching Funds \$*

\$170,000 cash will be raised by MDF banquets/raffles and an additional \$60,000 will be solicited from specific targeted project partners.

Source(s) of Matching Funds* \$246,800

Please provide verification that these matching funds are available for your project.

Matching Funds

ND MDF Chapters fund raising - Avg for 3 yrs	\$ 140,000
MDF National Support	\$ 30,000
MDF project partners (Other conservation groups And oil/gas businesses.	\$ 60,000

Indirect Match Shares (@\$28/hr)

400 hrs of MDF personnel project development	\$ 11,200
200 hrs of NDGF PLI biologist project development /contracting	\$ 5,600
Total	\$ 246,800

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 – 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)

Mission:

To ensure the conservation of mule deer, black-tailed deer and their habitat.

Goals and Objectives:

- To *restore, improve and protect* mule deer habitat (including land and easement acquisitions) resulting in self-sustaining, healthy, free ranging and huntable deer populations.
- To *encourage and support* responsible wildlife management with government agencies, private organizations and landowners.
- To *promote* public education and scientific research related to mule deer and wildlife management.
- To *support and encourage* responsible and ethical behavior and awareness of issues among those whose actions affect mule deer.
- To *support* regulated hunting as a viable component of mule deer and black-tailed deer conservation.
- To *develop* programs that focus on recruitment and retention of youth into the shooting sports and conservation.

The Mule Deer Foundation was founded in 1988 as a 501(c)3 charitable non-profit organization and key conservation group in North America working to restore, improve and protect mule deer and black-tail deer and their habitat. The foundation has a focus on science and program efficiency, acknowledges regulated hunting as a viable management component and is committed to recruitment and retention of youth into shooting sports and wildlife conservation.

Current programs & Activities:

The Mule Deer Foundation is currently active in many programs including conservation programs working and partnering alongside state and federal wildlife agencies as well as other partners in conservation. The conservation projects vary between states and regions but all are beneficial to restoring, improving and enhancing habitat. The foundation is also active in recruitment and retention of new outdoorsmen and women through its education initiative including the M.U.L.E.Y. program.

The Mule Deer Foundation Chapters of ND have been partnering with the NDGF department for several years by cost sharing on one-third of the annual landowner access agreements. Currently, MDF helps support over 27,000 acres of P.L.O.T.S. in mule deer country. This partnership enables the NDGF P.L.O.T.S. program to leverage sportsmen’s license fees for enrolling additional acres across the west. Additionally, working with oil

industry executives thru the Sportsman and Oil Industry Forum, we learned that the oil industry is very interested in supporting habitat projects in western ND where oil/gas development is occurring. Recently we put together a pilot project on Tracy Mountain, approx. 20 miles south of Medora, where a prescribed burn will be completed in the fall of 2014. The burn will thin the dense stand of juniper which is reducing the productivity of the native grasslands, limiting the carrying capacity of wildlife and livestock alike. This project is being conducted on the privately owned Kim Shade Ranch which is enrolled in the P.L.O.T.S. program.

In this particular Tracy Mountain project our partners included ND Petroleum Council, Continental Resources, WPX Energy, EOG Resources, NDGF and Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation. This supports the initiatives of the oil industry to put money back on the ground in impacted areas and is a win for wildlife habitat and sportsman. The Tracy Mountain Prescribed Burn project budget exceeds \$75,000 to improve over 200+ acres and keep open almost 3,000 acres of prime mule deer habitat..

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. Please 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.

The purpose of this grant is two-fold, to enhance and protect wildlife habitats and increase sportsmen access to quality hunting lands.

The increasing loss and degradation of native grassland habitats in western North Dakota impacts wildlife populations and in turn threatens North Dakotas heritage of hunting and outdoor related activities. Mule deer are a sensitive species and populations have not rebounded well from the severe winters of 2008, 2009 & 2010. Many factors are contributing to mule deer not rebounding; fragmentation and loss of habitat due to development (energy, roads, commercial/residential building), loss of CRP grasslands, agricultural practices, predators, poaching, highways crossing through the middle of transitional ranges of mule deer habitat. Besides weather, the single greatest factor in the decline of mule deer is the loss, fragmentation or degradation of habitat. We cannot control the weather, however, it is possible to increase and improve habitats. Our goal is to improve and rehabilitate wildlife habitat to provide wildlife and mule deer the best opportunity to thrive and ensure sustainability.

Over the years with oil/gas industry development and agricultural practices, noxious or invasive plant species have proliferated and expanded into native plant communities. Our strategy is to work closely with private landowners, enrolled in the P.L.O.T.S working lands program, to improve habitat that will not only benefit wildlife but will improve the grazing for landowners. This strategy effectively promotes agriculture economics as well as sustaining and improving North Dakotas natural resources,. The Mule Deer Foundation will also look for partnership opportunities for habitat projects on state and federal lands in western ND.

Sportsman access is the second goal of this grant. Recreational activities are very important to the state's economy with an estimated \$1.4 billion in annual input into North Dakota's economy. Without access to areas to recreate, hunters, sportsman and recreationalists will either find somewhere else outside of North Dakota to hunt or recreate or just quit, therefore affecting the future of North Dakota's recreational industry. Additionally more access is needed to accommodate the hunting and recreational needs due to the influx of population in western ND. Our goal of six or more habitat projects on private lands is a strategy to improve access by providing landowners with an economic incentive. The habitat projects that we are going to employ will

improve grazing capabilities by improving or rehabilitating new habitat that will benefit wildlife and livestock alike. In order to qualify for this habitat improvement an extension to their current P.L.O.T.S. lease contract would be required, therefore making this a win-win-win situation. Landowner gets improved grazing capabilities due to habitat enhancement/improvement, the sportsmen gain additional access, oil/gas industry has the opportunity to give back to impacted areas and wildlife is provided with better habitats.

Management of Project – Provide a description of how you will manage and oversee the project to ensure it is carried out on schedule and in a manner that best ensures its objectives will be met.*

Include a brief background and work experience for those managing the project.

The Mule Deer Foundation will work closely with the NDGF Private Lands Initiative biologists as well as any other agencies that have a working relationship with private landowners. The Mule Deer Foundation has a Regional Director, State Chairman and many strong volunteer representatives that will assist wherever and whenever needed. The Regional Director and the volunteers will work to raise funds thru banquets and raffles as well as to solicit funds from area operators in the oil and gas industry. Additionally, MDF will use its national resources to promote the habitat projects and all partners involved.

Currently, with our pilot project on Tracy Mountain, NDGF PLI Biologists and MDF (Regional Director and State Chairperson, Ryan Krapp) communicate frequently to ensure that the project is on schedule and if there are setbacks due to weather and/or habitat conditions, work to develop new timelines and plans of action. Additionally, MDF will communicate with the landowner and any contractors involved with the project to ensure that everyone is on the same page and moving forward to a successful completion of the desired habitat impact. We anticipate most projects to be completed within 18 months as dealing with nature can be dynamic.

Evaluation – Describe your plan to document progress and results. *

How will you tell if the project is successful? 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.

Working closely with the NDGF PLI Biologists, we will implement and evaluate based on the programs and standards that the NDGF have set. MDF personnel or volunteers will personally inspect the project location to ensure that the land fits the criteria of mule deer habitat and within an area of oil/gas development.

As required by the Outdoor Heritage Fund, MDF will provide a detailed summary at the conclusion of each project. This summary will include project location, landowner, project objective and goals, costs to implement project, partners involved and final result of the project.

Financial Information

ATTACHMENT: Project Budget – Using the standard project budget format that is available on the website at <http://www.nd.gov/ndic/outdoor-infopage.htm> , please include a detailed total project budget that specifically outlines all the funds you are requesting. Note that a minimum of 25% match funding is strongly encouraged.*

The project budget should identify all matching funds, funding sources and indicate whether the matching funds are in the form of cash or in-kind services. As noted on the standard project budget format, certain values have been identified for in-kind services. Please utilize these values in identifying your matching funds. **NOTE: No indirect costs will be funded.**

Western ND Habitat Enhancement Projects

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
(1)Habitat improvements or rehabilitation	\$475,000	\$165,000	\$	\$	\$60,000	\$700,000
(2)Food Plots	\$5,900	\$5,000	\$	\$	\$	\$10,900
(3) MDF & NDGF PLI Project hours				\$16,800		\$16,800
Total Costs	\$480,900	\$170,000	\$	\$16,800	\$60,000	\$727,700

- 1) Based on our Pilot Project, Tracy Mountain Prescribed Burn, cost per acre is \$350 to complete the project. We assume the average cost per acre based on this project. Our goal is to develop six projects and/or effect up to 2,000 acres. Some projects will less per acre, some more. If funds are still available once six projects are completed and/or 2,000 acres affected, we would be able to do add additional projects and/or acres.
- 2) Based on average cost to establish food plots, the cost per acre is \$109. The plan would be to add 100 acres of food plots. These plots would vary in size and be strategically placed throughout western ND.
- 3) 400 hrs of MDF personnel project development, 200 hrs of NDGF PLI biologist project development /contracting @ \$28 per hour

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. *

Include information on the sustainability of this project after all the funding from the Outdoor Heritage Fund has been expended and whether the sustainability will be in the form of ongoing management or additional funding from a different source.

Completed habitat projects will be sustained thru shared management between the landowner, MDF and NDGF and/or agency involved. The Mule Deer Foundation will continue to seek habitat projects, raise funds and develop partnerships with the oil/gas industry in western North Dakota. Based on our expected success of the Western ND Habitat Enhancement Program and needs identified, we will apply for additional OHF as the need arises. With an OHF grant, MDF and our partners can make a positive impact to western ND habitats which will help mule deer of North Dakota to recover and remain quality, sustainable huntable populations.

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

If the request is not fully granted due to funding limitations, the Mule Deer Foundation will scale down the habitat improvement acres.

Scoring of Grants

All applications will be scored by the Outdoor Heritage Fund Advisory Board after your ten-minute oral presentation. The ranking sheet(s) 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. Applicants whose proposals have been approved will receive a contract outlining the terms and conditions of the grant. Please note the appropriate sample contract for your organization on the website at <http://www.nd.gov/ndic/outdoor-infopage.htm> that set forth the general provisions that will be included in any contract issued by the North Dakota Industrial Commission. Please indicate if you can meet all the provisions of the sample contract. If there are provisions in that contract that your organization is unable to meet, please indicate below what those provisions would be. *

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 or have trouble submitting the application, please contact Karlene Fine at 701-328-3722 or kfine@nd.gov

Revised July 3, 2014

ND Energy Forum: Sporting and Oil Industry

Western ND Wildlife Habitat Improvement Project:

Juniper Encroachment Prescribed Burn - Tracy Mountain Spring 2013

Kim Shade Ranch - Sections 9, 15 & 16, T138H, R101W (13 mi SE of Medora)

Introduction

The Mule Deer Foundation (MDF) is working with the North Dakota Game and Fish Department (NDGFD) biologists to develop a 10-year Western ND Wildlife Habitat Improvement Plan. The objective of the plan is to identify private and state lands in western ND, within primary mule deer range, that could directly benefit from habitat restoration or enhancements efforts. Habitat restoration treatments, including prescribed burns and reseeding of native grasses and forbs, would have a multitude of benefits for numerous wildlife species as well as livestock grazing operations. MDF's goal is to restore, enhance, protect and/or provide hunting access to greater than 20,000 acres of western ND wildlife habitat over the next 10 years.

Justification

According to the Western Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies, fire has historically been the most effective tool in maintaining grasslands across the United States. Today, it is still considered to be the most important tool a biologist has to manage habitat and is the strongest factor with the greatest positive influence in shaping the ecoregions where mule deer exist.

Acreage subjected to natural and controlled burns in the U.S. has declined rapidly since the first half of the 20th century. Nearly 26 million acres were burned in the 1920's, approximately 9 million acres in the 1950's and only an approximately 3.6 million acres were burned in the 1990's. Wyoming Game and Fish Department (WGFD) Biologist Steve Kilpatrick attributes the heyday populations of mule deer in the middle of the 20th century to the quantity and types of fires that burned in the decades before the 1950s. It was following these burns that the western states had the highest quantity and quality of browse. The browse was nutritious, young, palatable, and easy to digest.

A recent article in the MDF magazine also highlighted various juniper removal projects that agencies and organizations are partnering on in western states. It tells the story of a livestock producer that has seen the dramatic effects of juniper invasion on his ranch. It has reduced the carrying capacity on his rangeland, shading out nutritious shrubs and forbs important to mule deer, and consumed enough water to reduce spring flows and shrink meadows. The article also examined the effects of junipers on soil erosion. As juniper cover increases, it can actually create a barren understory. Here, the bare soil is susceptible to gully and rill erosion, negatively impacting water quality downstream.

The benefits of juniper control extend to more than just mule deer. Kevin Hurley with the WGFD wrote about prescribed burning as mitigation for energy development on bighorn sheep ranges in Wyoming. Here it was discussed how burning on the South Fork winter range should increase forage availability

and ecological carrying capacity, and positively influence distribution of wintering sheep. They also noted that bighorns made heavy use of prescribed burns in mountain shrub/grasslands in Idaho. They found that extensive wildfires around the turn of the century contributed to increases in bighorn sheep populations. Fire suppression is indirectly responsible for loss of sheep habitat via shrub and tree encroachment.

Project Area Description

The MDF and the NDGFD have identified an area approximately 13 miles southeast of Medora, ND that has great potential for a successful habitat restoration - Tracy Mountain (Figure 1). Tracy Mountain is characterized as being overrun/encroached upon by Rocky Mountain Juniper and could greatly benefit from a reduction of the density of the stand.

The majority of Tracy Mountain is privately owned by Mr. Kim Shade. Mr. Shade runs a livestock grazing operation on his approximate 2,940 privately held acres and surrounding US Forest Service (USFS) leased grazing lands. The Shade Ranch is surrounded on all sides by State of ND trust lands and USFS lands. The USFS has designated the management of these surrounding lands—Tracy Mountain, Easy Hill and Kinley Plateau—as non-motorized backcountry recreation, Special Plant and Wildlife, and Suitable for Wilderness areas, respectively (Figure 2). All of these areas are also designated as Roadless Areas by USFS but are accessible and open to public hunting.

The Shade Ranch is also currently enrolled in the NDGFD Private Land Open to Sportsmen (PLOTS) Program. The initial six-year contract allowed the hunting public walking access to these 2,940 acres of private property and connectivity to USFS and State Lands, or which three years of the contract are remaining. Currently Mr. Shade utilizes this pasture in his fall/winter livestock grazing rotation.

The Tracy Mountain Oil Field has been established for many years. Numerous oil well pads and access roads were developed in the immediate area in the early 1990s. Today, Continental Resources owns and operates these wells. Continental has indicated that they are in full support of wildlife habitat restoration efforts in the area. They are currently evaluating their operations in the area to see if they are ready to reclaim some of the currently inactive wells and access roads in the area (Figure 3).

Project Specifics

NDGF wildlife biologists have consulted on-site with Badger Creek Wildfire of Poplar, MT—a well-known, professional prescribed burn contractor—and has developed a prescribed burn plan for the north-facing slope of Tracy Mountain. The plan prescribes a spring burn of the dense stand of Rocky Mountain Juniper to occur between snow melt and understory vegetation green up (late April to early May). Three options were evaluated for this habitat enhancement plan. The option that was chosen, an area encompassing approximately 150 acres, was selected due to it having the least amount of burn prep work for the most habitat benefit, therefore the most cost effective (Figure 4).

The fire crews will work to prepare fire lines and safe ignition areas to provide a safe, effective burn of live standing, dense junipers soon after snow melt. The burn is scheduled to be conducted this spring

but is highly dependent on the weather and habitat conditions. If the burn cannot be completed this spring the preparation work will be done and burn attempted the following spring.

NDGFD has committed to conducting pre- and annual post-burn flights to evaluate mule deer, elk and bighorn sheep populations in and around the project area. These efforts will document use and help measure the realized benefits of proposed project. The NDGFD also has long-term objectives to monitor the plant community changes following burn treatments. A professional botanist/rangeland scientist will be contracted to document and measure diversity of vegetative species and productivity of the area pre- and annually for two years post-burn. An annual report will be received from contractor and be incorporated into a project progress/results report and distributed to ND Energy Forum and all project partners.

The NDEF communications committee will be asked to help coordinate representatives from MDF, the NDGFD and the NDEF to be on-site to document and take photographic record of project developments for project reporting and future publicity efforts. Signage at the habitat enhancement site is proposed to be erected displaying the project details, the benefits of burning and the project partners. These efforts will work to promote partnerships with oil industry and wildlife conservation groups to take action in restoring and enhancing wildlife habitats in ND.

Project Partners

To date, MDF has been working with the NDGFD Biologists and Mr. Kim Shade to vet the proposed project. Mr. Shade is well educated as to the benefits of burning in grasslands where trees/shrubs have invaded and is a willing cooperator. As a standard cost sharing condition to improvement of private grazing lands, NDGFD will require Mr. Shade to enter into a six-year PLOTS contract, requiring an extension of his current contract by three years.

MDF is looking to the ND Energy Forum: Sporting and Oil Industry groups for project support and partnerships. All project parties will sign a partnership agreement stating that all concerns have been disclosed, addressed and project agreed upon.

The NDGFD has an existing habitat management services contract with Badger Creek Wildfire and has provided their certificate of liability insurance. NDGFD and USFWS have a programmatic agreement in place for proposed habitat management practices and activities on public and private lands. The NDGFD also has a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) with the USFWS and the ND State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) in place covering such proposed activities herein.

Estimated Project Costs

<u>Task</u>	<u>Responsible Party</u>	<u>Cost</u>
Prep and Burn (~150 ac)	Badger Creek Wildfire	\$37,530
Vegetative Community Monitoring (3yrs)	Carlson McCain	\$10,890
Forage Reduction Payment to Landowner (1 st yr)	MDF	\$960
PLOTS contract extension (2,940 ac/ 3yrs)	NDGF PLI Program	\$17,593
Project promotion (signage)	NDEF Communications Committee	\$1,000
Project Total:		\$67,973

As the proponent of this project, MDF is committing up to \$20,000 to this project as well as in-kind matches of man hours, including the project development, project vetting, project organization and administration of project funding. Continental Resources has contributed \$3,000 in 2012-13 to an ND MDF Conservation Partnership in which will be applied to this habitat enhancement project. NDGFD as PLOTS habitat management agency has indicated they may be able to fund a portion of the vegetation monitoring program, as well providing in-kind matches for contracting the burn crew, providing documentation, developing a management plan, aerial flight big game counts and all other coordination efforts.

Therefore, an additional total **\$44,973** is requested through conservation groups and industry partnerships to make this project a success.

Contacts:

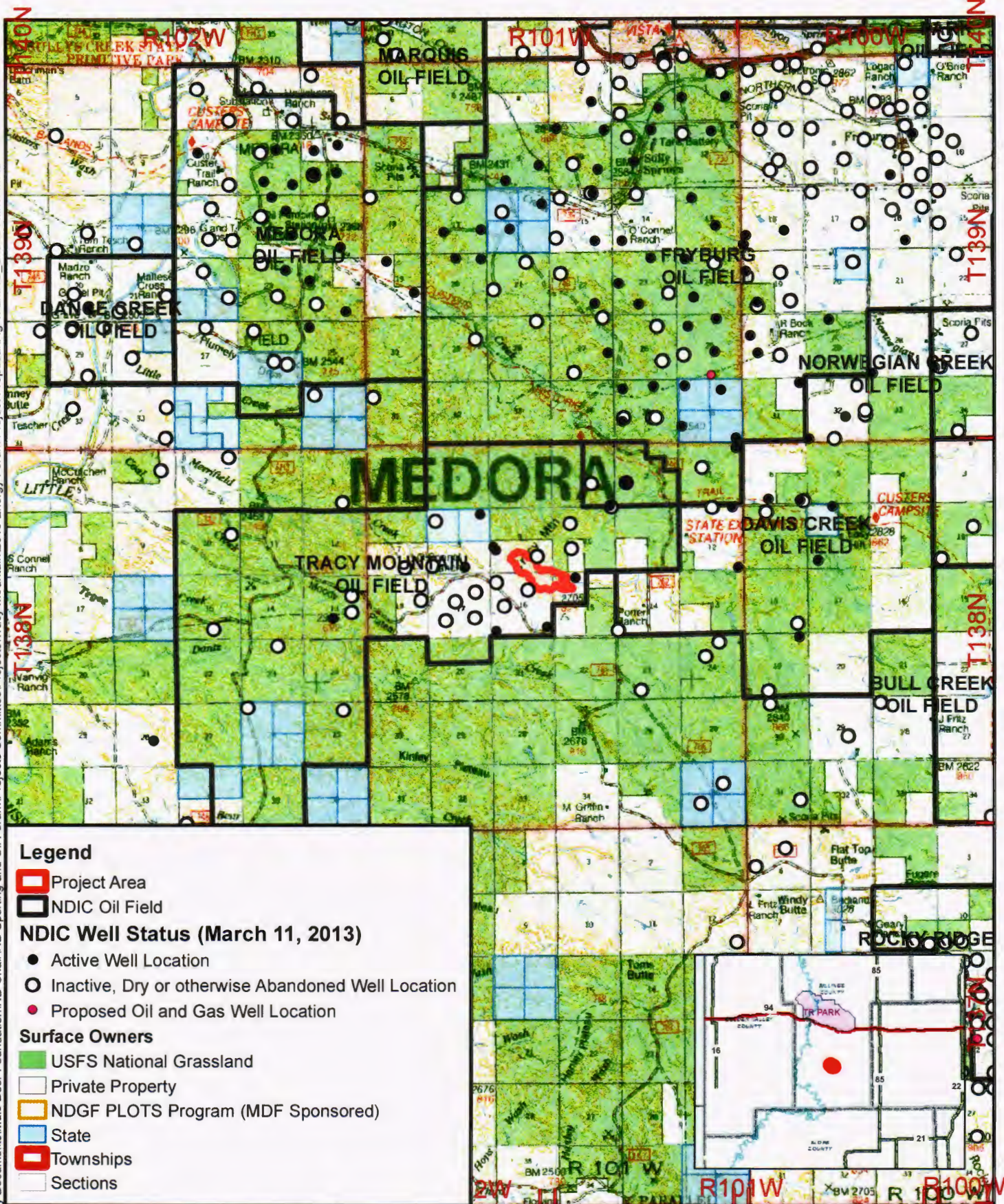
Mule Deer Foundation

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ND Game and Fish Department

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Legend

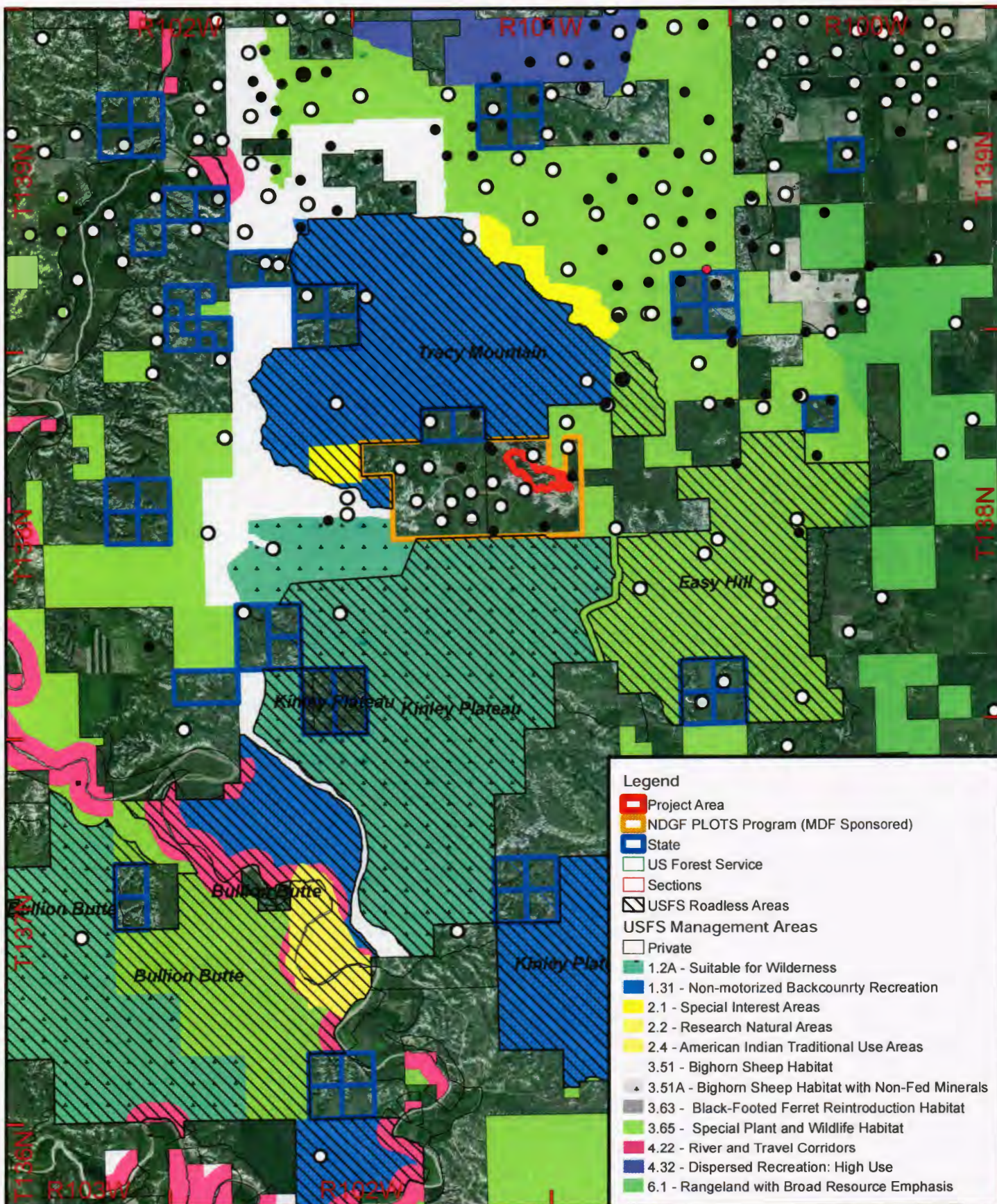
- Project Area
- NDIC Oil Field
- NDIC Well Status (March 11, 2013)**
 - Active Well Location
 - Inactive, Dry or otherwise Abandoned Well Location
 - Proposed Oil and Gas Well Location
- Surface Owners**
 - USFS National Grassland
 - Private Property
 - NDGF PLOTS Program (MDF Sponsored)
 - State
 - Townships
 - Sections

1:126,720
 1 inch = 2 miles

 Basemap: USFS Visitors Map



Figure 1
 Tracy Mountain
 Habitat Project Area
 Little Missouri Nat'l Grasslands



Legend

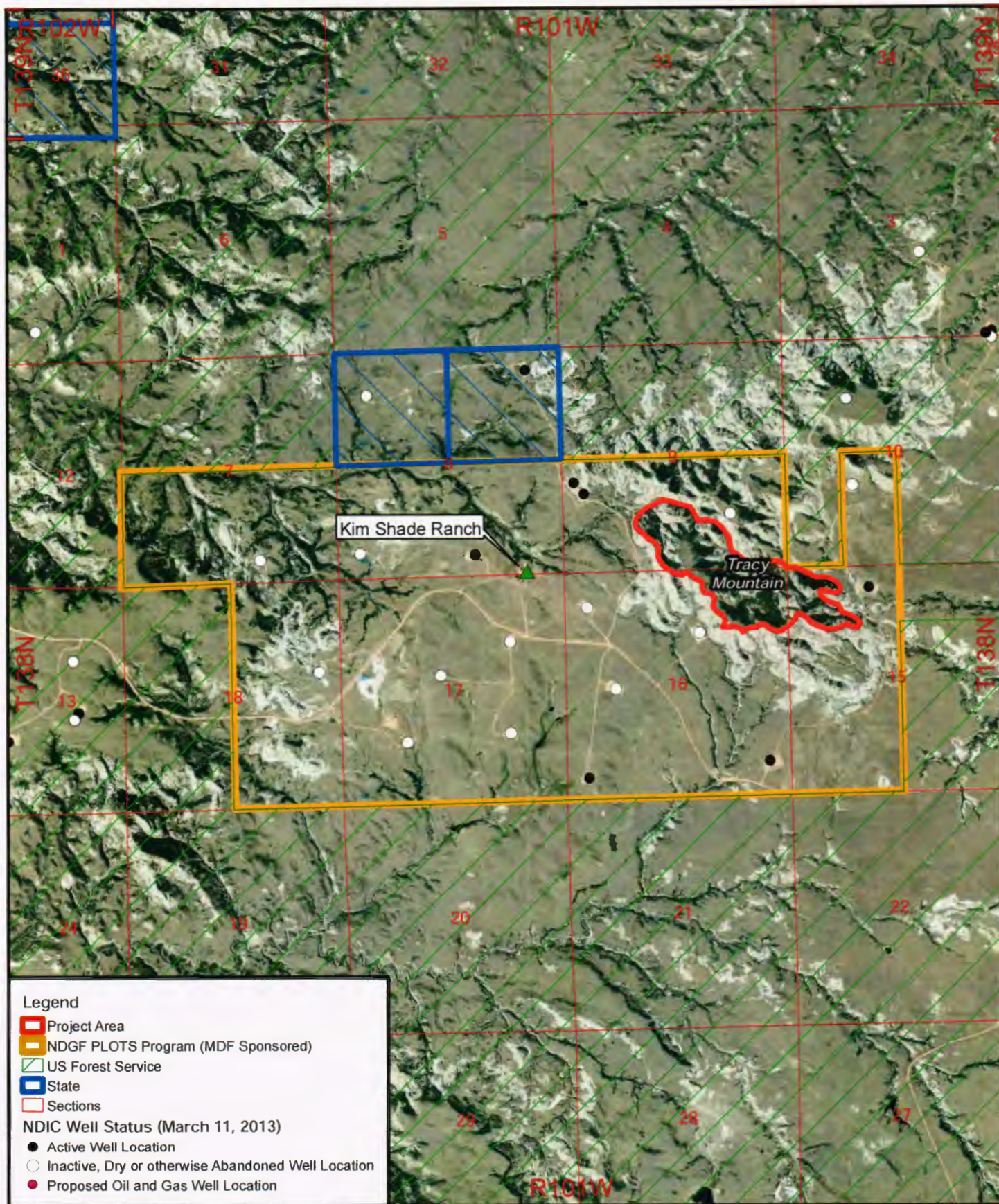
- Project Area
- NDGF PLOTS Program (MDF Sponsored)
- State
- US Forest Service
- Sections
- USFS Roadless Areas
- USFS Management Areas**
- Private
- 1.2A - Suitable for Wilderness
- 1.31 - Non-motorized Backcountry Recreation
- 2.1 - Special Interest Areas
- 2.2 - Research Natural Areas
- 2.4 - American Indian Traditional Use Areas
- 3.51 - Bighorn Sheep Habitat
- 3.51A - Bighorn Sheep Habitat with Non-Fed Minerals
- 3.63 - Black-Footed Ferret Reintroduction Habitat
- 3.65 - Special Plant and Wildlife Habitat
- 4.22 - River and Travel Corridors
- 4.32 - Dispersed Recreation: High Use
- 6.1 - Rangeland with Broad Resource Emphasis

1:126,720
 1 inch = 2 miles
 0 0.5 1 2 Miles
 Basedata: USFS



Figure 2
 Tracy Mountain
 Habitat Project Area
 US Forest Service Management

April 2013



Legend

- Project Area
- NDGF PLOTS Program (MDF Sponsored)
- US Forest Service
- State
- Sections

NDIC Well Status (March 11, 2013)

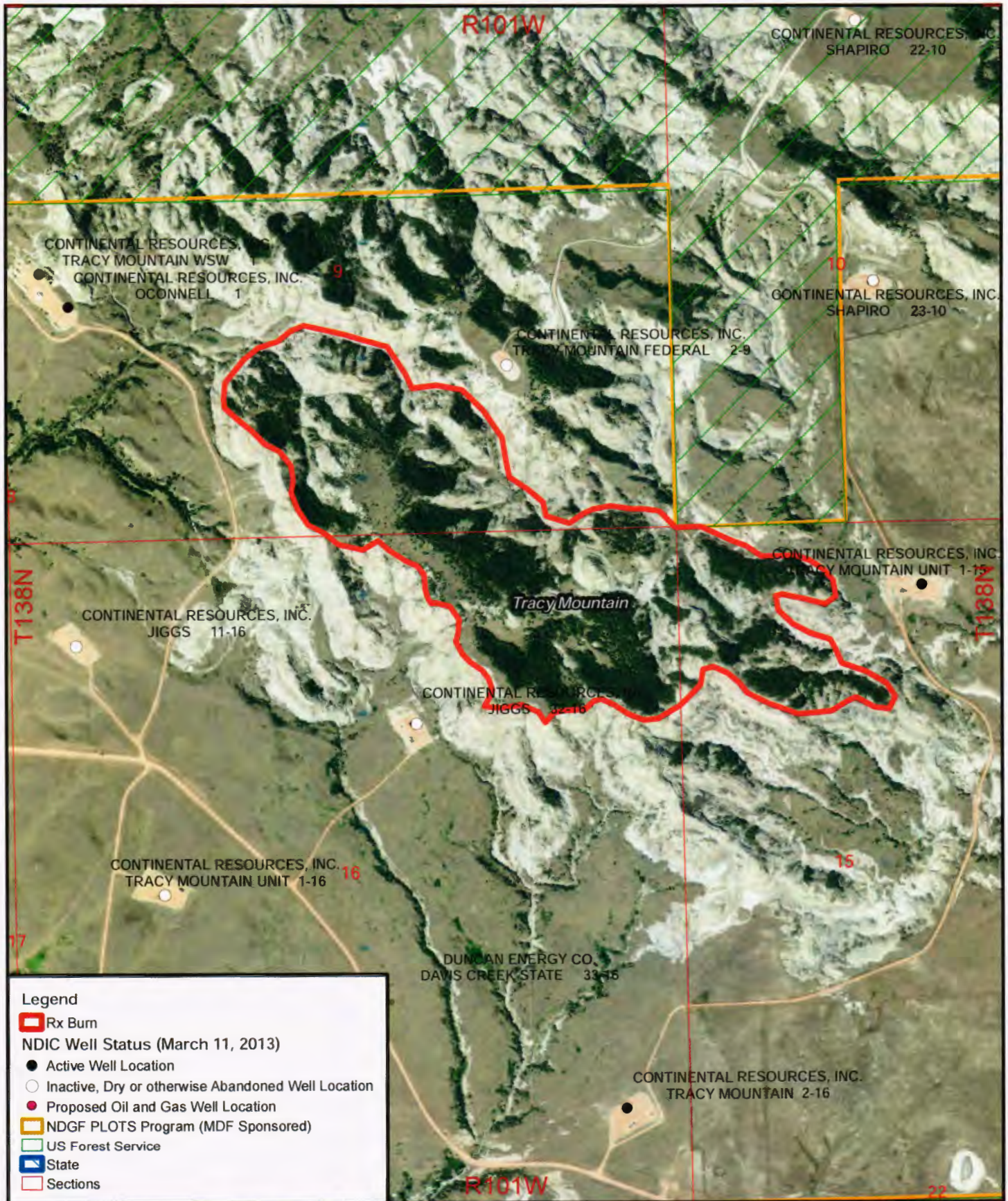
- Active Well Location
- Inactive, Dry or otherwise Abandoned Well Location
- Proposed Oil and Gas Well Location

1:36,000
 1 inch = 0.6 miles

Basemap: 2012 NAIP Orthophoto



Figure 3
 Tracy Mountain
 Habitat Improvement Project
 Kim Shade Ranch



Legend

- ▭ Rx Burn
- NDIC Well Status (March 11, 2013)**
- Active Well Location
- Inactive, Dry or otherwise Abandoned Well Location
- Proposed Oil and Gas Well Location
- ▭ NDGF PLOTS Program (MDF Sponsored)
- ▭ US Forest Service
- ▭ State
- ▭ Sections

1:12,000
 1 inch = 1,000 feet
 0 250 500 1,000 Feet
 Basemap: 2012 NAIP Orthophoto



Figure 4
 Tracy Mountain
 Prescribed Burn Project Area
 Sec 9,15 &16, T138N R101W

April 2013

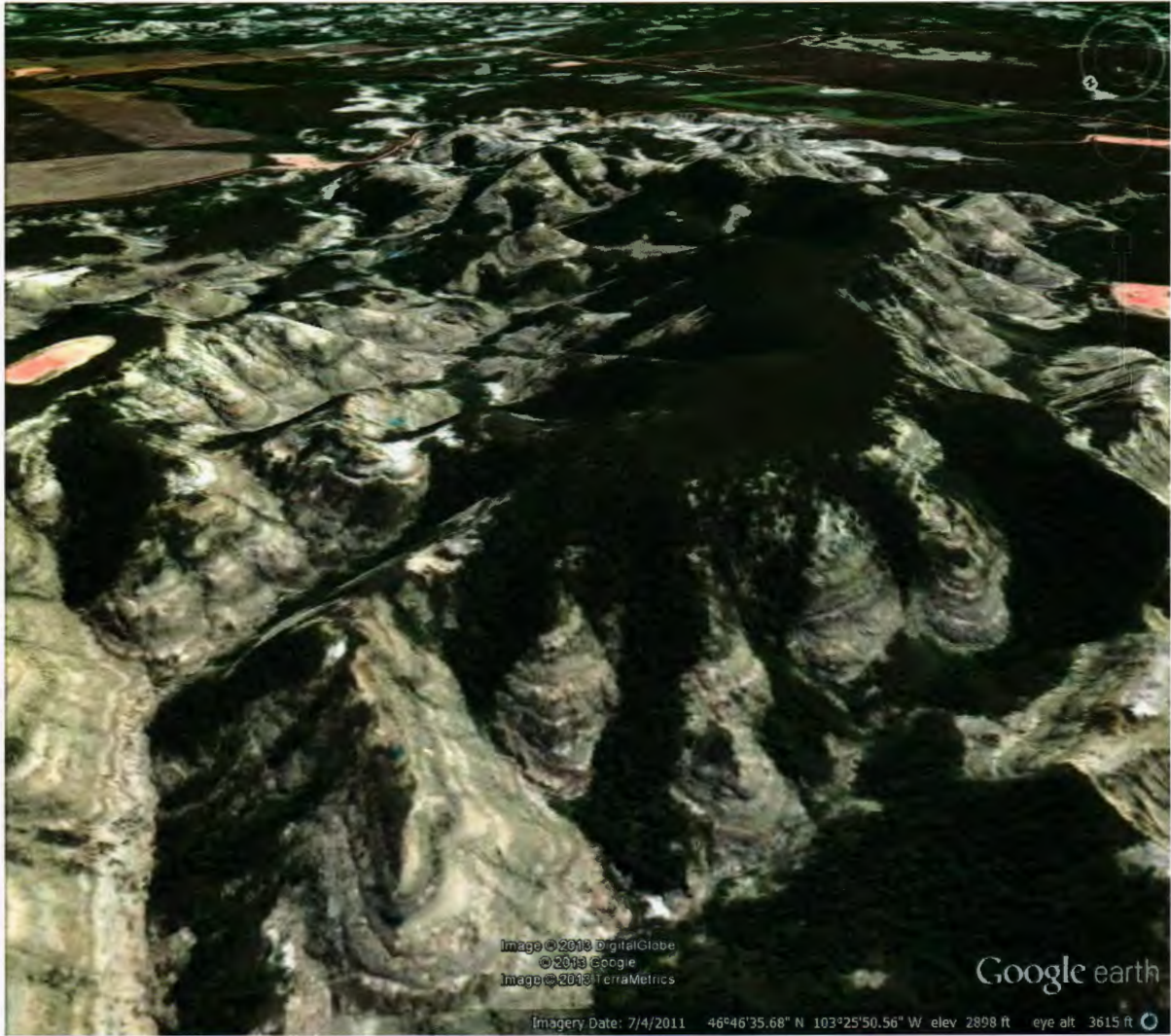


Figure 5. Topographic overview of Tracy Mountain looking southeast.

Sportsman/Industry Forum Project Ranking Sheet (for projects < \$1,000,000)

Project Name - Tracy Mountain Burn
Project Partners - MDF, NDGF-PLI, Continental Resources
County, State - Billings Co, ND

Focal species = mulies, pronghorn, bighorn, sage grouse, golden eagle, piping plover/least tern

			Use X if attribute is present	Score	Total Score	Notes
Resource Criteria						
Is Project Site in Designated Game Species Habitat. (Check all that apply)						
Is the project located in designated Focal Species Habitat? = 5 points	x	5	17	MD, BHS		
Is the project located in game species habitat? = 2 points	x	2			MD, BHS, STG	
Migration Corridor and/or provide habitat connectivity link = 2 points	x	2				
Winter Habitat = 2 points	x	2				
Breeding Habitat = 2 points	x	2				
Rearing area = 2 points	x	2				
Staging area = 2 points	x	2				
Habitat Types and Species Present						
Habitat types present on the Project Site. (Check all that apply)						
Sagebrush > 40 acres = 5 points		0	10			
Shrub-Steppe, Meadow Complex, or Native Grassland > 100 acres = 4 points	x	4		Native, fall/winter grazing area		
Wetlands/Riparian (Wetlands > 15% of total acres or Riparian > 0.25 miles) = 2 points		0				
Woody Draws (total draw length > 0.3 miles) = 4 points	x	4		Juniper over-crowding		
Contiguous tame grass > 100 acres = 2 points		0				
Large Saline Wetland > 30 acres = 4 points		0				
Proximity of affected habitat < 1 mile to other "like" habitat of at least 100 ac. = 2 points	x	2		1,000's acres adjacent		
None of the above habitat types are present = minus 10 points		0				
Federal or State Sensitive species present on the Project Site (Per State Wildlife Action Plan). (Check all that apply)						
Mammals (List all species in comment field) = 2 points	x	2	4	Mule Deer, Bighorn Sheep, Elk		
Birds (List all species in comment field) = 2 points	x	2		Sharp-tailed grouse, Mig. Birds		
Fish (List all species in comment field) = 2 points		0				
Reptiles/Amphibians (List all species in comment field) = 2 points		0				
Focal Species (Bighorn sheep, mule deer, pronghorn, sage grouse, golden eagle, piping plover/least tern) present? (Mark with x any present) (List all species in comment field) = 5 points (max)	x	5	5	Bighorn sheep, mule deer		

Project Site Attributes

Check all that apply

Within work area of Industry cooperator = 5 points	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	5	15	Continental Resources
Will project prevent development? = 10 points		0		
Project creates new habitat = 5 points		0		
Project reclaims damaged/destroyed habitat or enhance degraded habitat = 5 points	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	5		Juniper removal
Enhancement of degraded habitat > 100 acres = 5 points	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	5		150+acres

**Proximity to significant protected property (500 acres or larger)
(BLM, USFS, State DNR, State DFW or Permanent CE) (Check only one - Maximum of 8 points)**

Eliminates checkerboard ownership (multiple parcels) within public land = 8 points		0	5	
Eliminates Inholding (Surrounded by public land on 3 or 4 sides) = 8 points		0		
Borders protected land on 1-2 sides = 5 points	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	5		USFS (no motorized areas)- ND State

Habitat Protection Duration (check one; protection does not preclude access to minerals)

Habitat protected < 5 years = 0 points		0	2	
Habitat protected 5-9 years = 2 points	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	2		6 yr PLOTS agreement
Habitat protected 10-19 years = 4 points		0		
Habitat protected 20-40 years = 8 points		0		
Habitat protected in purpetuity = 16 points		0		

Public access to project protected lands? (Check all that apply)

Unlimited public access = 10 points	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	10	10	NDGF PLOTS program
Fee access to the public = minus 30 points		0		
No public access = minus 30 points		0		
Project opens access to public lands currently not accessible to the public = 10 points		0		

Access Duration (check one)

Public Access < 5 years = 2 points		0	4	
Public Access 5-9 years = 4 points	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	4		PLOTS extension (6-yr total)
Public Access 10-19 years = 8 points		0		
Public Access 20-40 years = 12 points		0		
Public Access in purpetuity = 16 points		0		

Project area size (Acres directly affected; check only one)

< 100 acres = 0 points		0	2	
100 to 250 acres = 2 points	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	2		153 acres
251 to 1,000 acres = 6 points		0		
1,001 to 5,000 acres = 10 points		0		
Greater than 5,000 acres = 15 points		0		

Total Project Score

74

NORTH DAKOTA ENERGY FORUM SPORTSMAN & OIL INDUSTRY

Project Funding Request Form

Project Number (Office Use Only)		Date Project Sent to Office:	
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Request Date:	May 10, 2013				
Project Name:	Tracy Mountain Habitat Restoration – Juniper Prescribed Burn				
Project Location:	Sections 9, 15 & 16 T138N, R101W				
State:	ND	County:	Billings	Nearest City:	Medora

Contact Name:	Marshall Johnson	Contact Name:	Ty Dressler
Agency/Organization:	Mule Deer Foundation	Agency/Organization:	ND Game and Fish
Address:		Address:	
City/State/Zip:	Billings, MT	City/State/Zip:	Dickinson, ND
Primary Phone:		Primary Phone:	
Secondary Phone:		Secondary Phone:	
Email Address:		Email Address:	

Total Cost of Project:	\$67,973	Funds Requested:	\$44,973
Proposed Start Date:	May 10, 2013	Proposed End Date:	May 30, 2013
Project Category: Check all that apply:	Y or N	Other Project Info:	Y or N # of Acres
Habitat Establishment/Restoration	Y	Impact on Public Land?	N
Research/Studies	Y	Impact on Private Land?	Y 150
Law Enforcement	N	Conservation Easement?	Y 2940
Management	Y	List agency name or organization	
Education	Y	Agency:	
Other: (Explain):		Who Monitors Easement?	NDGF
			Y or N # of Acres
Will project proceed without Funding ?	N	Is this winter range?	Y
Is this a multi-year project?	N	Is this transitional range?	Y
Can funds be used in future years?	Y	Is this summer range?	Y
Enter High, Medium, Low for following		Is this a migration corridor?	Y
Priority:		Is this a birthing area and what species?	Y
Commitment level of agency:		Provide estimate of deer herd	

List Agency/Organization responsible for administrative, planning, fiscal, management responsibility
Mule Deer Foundation
If full or partial funding received, how will project proceed? Describe scaled back approach.

**NORTH DAKOTA ENERGY FORUM
SPORTSMAN & OIL INDUSTRY**

Project Funding
Request Form

Matching Funds On Hand		Matching Funds Requested	
Agency/Organization Name	\$ Allocated	Agency/Organization Name:	\$ Requested
Mule Deer Foundation	\$20,000	NDEF: Sporting and Oil Industry Forum	\$44,973
MDF Conservation Partnership Fund (provided by Continental Resources)	\$3,000		\$
NDGFD	\$		\$
	\$		\$
	\$		\$
	\$		\$
	\$		\$
	\$		\$

PROJECT GOALS, OBJECTIVES, PURPOSE: Please be as descriptive as possible.

See attached

DESCRIPTION OF PROJECT AREA: (Describe existing vegetation, landscape: Attach supporting photos and/or maps of project area if possible)

See attached

HOW WILL FUNDS BE USED: (Describe materials needed, contract costs, seed, seed mixture shrub costs, etc). Note: Prohibit certain expenditures of some items like ATVs, night goggles, etc.)

See attached

WHO WILL COMPLETE THE WORK? (Agency staff, contractors, other)

ND Game and Fish, Badger Creek Wildfire, MDF

CAN VOLUNTEERS PROVIDE ADDITIONAL MANPOWER? (Provide description)

Limited

PROVIDE ANY ADDITIONAL COMMENTS BELOW:

**NORTH DAKOTA ENERGY FORUM
SPORTSMAN & OIL INDUSTRY**

Project Funding
Request Form

CROSS AGENCY SIGN-OFF:

If multiple federal, state, local agencies are involved, list contact info for each. The agency having oversight with this effort should have other agencies/orgs involved submit emails with letter of support, approval, etc. Use email for this activity rather than obtaining signatures.

Agency/Org Name:	Contact Name:	Contact Phone #:

FOR ADMINISTRATIVE USE ONLY: The following section to be completed by ND Energy Forum Committee Only:

Did Project Review Committee examine this project?	
List the date and location of the meeting.	
List those members of the Project Review Committee who participated or were present	
Agency/Organization Name:	Contact Name:

Provide comments indicating status, recommendation, priority, reason for approval or decline. Or provide a separate tracking spreadsheet with this information.

Oil & Gas TIDBITS

We Keep North Dakota Going Strong

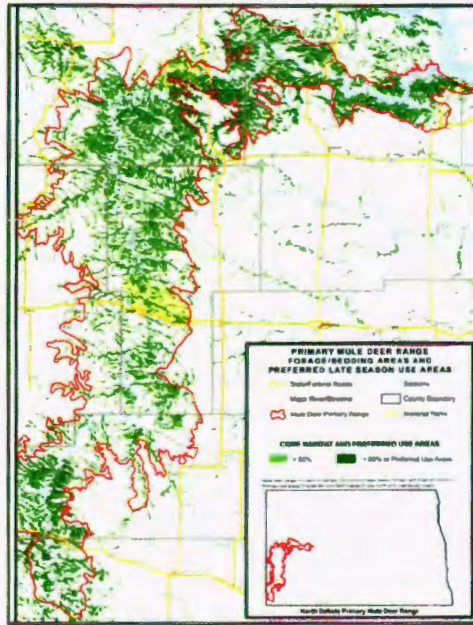


Sportsmen & oil industry team up to improve wildlife habitat

North Dakota has always been blessed with abundant natural resources, and while oil and gas have put the state in the national and international spotlight, it is North Dakota's wildlife, landscapes, and rivers – and the traditions that come with them – that are most treasured by many here. In the past, many North Dakotans were forced to leave these resources and outdoor heritages behind, however, to pursue better opportunities and livelihoods elsewhere. Today, that is changing as the oil and gas industry creates new job and career opportunities for North Dakotans, bringing many back home so they can again enjoy our state's great outdoors.

With the increase in energy development, some have expressed concerns about the impact on habitats and wildlife, especially as oil production reaches record levels month after month. Yet, the technology used today to recover oil from the Bakken Shale is inherently low-impact thanks to the technologies of horizontal drilling and hydraulic fracturing which allow for the development of more of our resources while minimizing impact to the surface of the land.

While these technologies have significantly reduced impacts, the industry understands that there continues to be some effects to habitats and wildlife through increased truck



GIS overlay maps (left) developed by the North Dakota Department of Game and Fish (NDDGF) will allow companies to identify critical habitats and use the information to develop well sites, roads, pipelines and other infrastructure with little or no habitat disturbance. Critical habitat maps are available for mule deer, bighorn sheep, sage grouse, pronghorn, golden eagles, piping plovers and least terns. Map courtesy of NDDGF.

traffic and has been committed to working with wildlife and conservation groups and government agencies to find additional solutions to protect and enhance North Dakota's great outdoors.

Game & Fish provide tools for further reducing impact

One such way is through the use of mapping tools and recommended guidelines developed by the North Dakota Department of Game and Fish (NDDGF) and the industry. Maps of select species' critical habitats developed by Game and Fish allows companies to identify habitat boundaries and determine where to place a well pad or road in order to have the least amount of impact as possible. Companies can further reduce their presence by restricting development of well pads, pipelines, power lines and other equipment or infrastructure to defined energy corridors. Several companies also reclaim land around well sites and paint equipment to help the location better blend in with its surroundings.



Well sites placed along energy corridors (shown above) help keep development and traffic confined to one area. Horizontal drilling allows companies to drill under sensitive habitat, reducing or eliminating disturbance to critical species. Photo courtesy of Vern Whitten.

What's new online?

Learn more about how the industry is helping with conservation efforts at www.northdakotaoilcan.com/solutions/conservation/.



To learn more about the North Dakota oil and gas industry, visit www.northdakotaoilcan.com



The Mule Deer Foundation, wildlife groups and oil and gas industry are partnering to remove juniper, an invasive species, from Tracy Mountain. The project will provide important rangeland for many big game species. Photo courtesy of the Mule Deer Foundation.

Ryan Krapp, the state chair for the Mule Deer Foundation and a natural resource specialist for the environmental consulting firm Carlson McCain, says the development of these maps and guidelines are a positive step.

“By providing these tools and making a developer aware of critical habitats in the lease area, they might select an alternative development plan that minimizes or avoids habitat disturbance,” said Krapp.

Teaming up for conservation

In addition to minimizing impacts to the land, the industry is also participating in the Sporting and Oil Industry Forum, a coalition of oil and gas representatives, outdoor sporting and conservation groups, and game and fish experts. The Sporting Forum was brought together by the grassroots organization, North Dakota Energy Forum last year to find

ways the group can work together to improve habitats now and in the future. Since then, the group has established a program that will pool resources for projects to enhance habitat in western North Dakota and help increase access to the outdoors.

Work on the program’s pilot project, brought forth by the Mule Deer Foundation and Game and Fish, began this spring and will include a prescribed burn of juniper at Tracy Mountain 13 miles southeast of Medora. Juniper has overrun the acreage, shading out nutritious native grasses, shrubs and forbes important to big game species. Funding for the project will also allow the rangeland, which is located on nearly 3,000 acres of privately held land, to continue to be enrolled in the NDGF Private Land Open to Sportsmen program (PLOTS). The Mule Deer Foundation, Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation, North Dakota Petroleum Council and five oil and pipeline companies have teamed up to fund the \$68,000 project.

“This project will help improve critical habitat for North Dakota’s mule deer, bighorn sheep and elk populations in North Dakota Badlands in addition to keeping this prime location open to public access,” said Krapp.

In addition, more than \$14,000 in proceeds donated by participants of the Petroleum Council’s First Annual Oil Can! Fishing Derby held in July will also go toward future projects chosen by the Sporting and Oil Industry Forum Projects Committee. Representatives from more than 31 industry companies participated in the derby to contribute to the fund. Information about the program, as well as criteria to apply are available at www.ndenergyforum.com.

North Dakota Petroleum Council
We Keep North Dakota Going Strong

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Please note: If you do not wish to receive further mailings from us, please e-mail ndpc@ndoil.org and you will be removed from our mailing list.