

# 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, with higher priority given to projects that enhance conservation practices in this state by:

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

**Directive B.** Improving, maintaining and restoring water quality, soil conditions, plant diversity, animal systems and by supporting other practices of stewardship to enhance farming and ranching;

**Directive C.** Developing, enhancing, conserving and restoring wildlife and fish habitat on private and public lands; and

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

## Exemptions

Outdoor Heritage Fund grants may not be used to finance the following:

- 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 a finding of exceptional circumstances by the Industrial Commission, the following projects will NOT receive consideration for funding:

- A completed project or project commenced before the grant application is submitted;
- A feasibility or research study;
- Maintenance costs;
- A paving project for a road or parking lot;
- A swimming pool or aquatic park;
- Personal property that is not affixed to the land;
- Playground equipment, except that grant funds may be provided for up to 25% of the cost of the equipment not exceeding \$10,000 per project and all playground equipment grants may not exceed 5% of the total grants per year (see Budget Form for how this will be calculated);
- Staffing or outside consultants except for costs for staffing or an outside consultant to design and implement an approved project based on the documented need of the applicant and the expenditures may not exceed 5% of the grant to a grantee if the grant exceeds \$250,000 and expenditures may not exceed 10% of the grant to a grantee if the grant is \$250,000 or less (see Budget Form for how this will be calculated);

- A building except for a building that is included as part of a comprehensive conservation plan for a new or expanded recreational project (see Budget Form for definition of comprehensive conservation plan and new or expanded recreational project); or
- A project in which the applicant is not directly involved in the execution and completion of the project.

## **Application Deadline**

Applications for this grant round cycle are due on **May 1, 2017 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](mailto: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](mailto: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 \* Audubon Dakota

Federal Tax ID# \* 13-1624102

Contact Person/Title \* Marshall Johnson, Executive Director

Address \* 118 N Broadway Ste. 716

City \* Fargo

State \* North Dakota

Zip Code \* 58102

E-mail Address \* mejohnson@audubon.org

Web Site Address (Optional) Dakota.audubon.org

Phone \* 701-298-3373

Fax # (if available)

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

North Dakota Natural Resources Trust (NDNRT)

Additional Supporting Agencies/Entities

North Dakota Game and Fish (NDGF)

Grand Forks Prairie Partners

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

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

Choose only one response

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

**Directive B.** Improving, maintaining and restoring water quality, soil conditions, plant diversity, animal systems and by supporting other practices of stewardship to enhance farming and ranching;

**Directive C.** Developing, enhancing, conserving and restoring wildlife and fish habitat on private and public lands; and

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

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

Choose all that apply

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

X **Directive B.** Improving, maintaining and restoring water quality, soil conditions, plant diversity, animal systems and by supporting other practices of stewardship to enhance farming and ranching;

O **Directive C.** Developing, enhancing, conserving and restoring wildlife and fish habitat on private and public lands; and

O **Directive D.** Conserving natural areas and creating other 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

O Political Subdivision

O Tribal Entity

X Tax-exempt, nonprofit corporation

**Project Name\*** Grand Forks County Prairie Management Toolbox

### **Abstract/Executive Summary.**

The Grand Forks County Prairie Management Toolbox (GFCPMT) will provide forage and habitat enhancement resources to landowners within the Grand Forks County Prairie (GFCP), a conservation planning and restoration area focused on the rare saline prairie landscape in Grand Forks County encompassing over 300,000 acres. Support emphasis will be placed on over 30,000 acres Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) acres that will be available for re-enrollment in fall 2017 within the GFCP.

Resources provided by GFCPMT include funding for native prairie restoration, invasive woody vegetation removal, and grazing system support for private landowners.

For this OHF grant application, Audubon Dakota and partners are requesting financial support for the initiation of the GFCPMT, from July 1<sup>st</sup>, 2017 to July 1<sup>st</sup> 2018. The distribution of the funding resources will be led by Audubon Dakota working with private landowners and conservation agencies in need of financial support for projects related to GFCPMT goals. The main goal of GFCPMT is to provide private and agency landowners the support programs that offer financial and/or technical assistance, and promote conservation practices on approximately 1,500 acres of grazing lands. Additional objectives of GFCPMT relate to increasing habitat biodiversity by providing financial and field resources for prairie restoration on 200 acres and delivering financial support to landowners for the removal of invasive woody vegetation, such as Russian olive.

These activities associated with GFCPMT will cost \$250,420.

**Project Duration:\* July 1<sup>st</sup>, 2017 to July 1<sup>st</sup>, 2018**

**Amount of Grant request \$ \* 121,220**

**Total Project Costs \$\* \$250,420**

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

**A minimum of 25% Match Funding is required. Amount of Matching Funds \$129,200**

Please indicate if the matching funds will be in-kind, indirect or cash.

\$41,500 cash

\$87,700 in-kind

**Source(s) of Matching Funds\***

Please provide verification that these matching funds are available for your project. Note that effective as of July 1, 2015 no State General Fund dollars can be used for a match unless funding was legislatively appropriated for that purpose.

Match funds will be in-kind and cash.

Audubon Dakota: \$77,000 (\$32,000 cash)

North Dakota Natural Resources Trust: \$12,000 (\$9,500 cash)

North Dakota Game & Fish Department \$200,000 (Non-Matching funds to be used for rental payments of expired CRP or access payments on existing CRP-the source of these funds is not from any existing North Dakota Game and Fish Department OHF grants)

GFCP Landowners: \$40,200 (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 – 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)

Audubon Dakota is the North and South Dakota state program within the National Audubon Society. Since 1905, the National Audubon Society has been focused on conserving bird habitat, promoting avian education, and engaging individuals and communities in a variety of activities and opportunities. Audubon Dakota as a state program was instituted in 1997, however Audubon’s role in the Dakotas spans back to the mid-1970s.

The mission of the National Audubon Society is to conserve and restore natural ecosystems, focusing on birds, and other wildlife, and their habitats for the benefit of humanity and the Earth's biological diversity.

Audubon seeks partnerships that advance its habitat conservation goals, including supporting through grassland habitat projects and the ranching industry. As a state office, Audubon Dakota has four full time staff members for the two-state region (North and South Dakota). Audubon Dakota's Advisory Board is comprised of five North Dakota citizens, and one South Dakota citizen. Currently, Audubon Dakota manages roughly 5,000 acres within the state. This would not be possible without the support and help of many different private land cooperators, agencies and programs, local businesses and individuals, many volunteers and local Audubon Chapters.

Audubon Dakota is also working on a habitat enhancement project on urban acres in Fargo, and the Conservation Ranching Program throughout the Dakotas. In all of our programs, the efforts and cooperation of our supporters is crucial to our success and the conservation of bird habitat in the Dakotas.

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

The first phase of the Grand Forks County Prairie Management Toolbox, if funded, will begin July 1<sup>st</sup>, 2017 and continue until July 1<sup>st</sup>, 2018. During the first year of implementation, GFCPMT will provide private landowners support programs that offer assistance for conservation focused agricultural practices. It is hoped that GFCPMT will implement grazing systems on approximately 1,500 acres of grazing lands, with emphasis on acres that are expired or expiring from CRP. This goal meets Directives B and C. Two additional objectives of GFCPMT are to provide financial support for invasive woody vegetation removal and prairie restoration on 200 acres, with an emphasis on existing CRP or lands enrolled in other conservation programs, such as Private Land Open to Sportsman (PLOTS). This meets Directives A and C.

In North Dakota alone, over 90% of native tallgrass prairie has been lost (Herman and Johnson 2008), and over 99% of the entire tallgrass prairie ecosystem range in the United States has been converted into other land covers, such as cropland (Wright and Wimberly 2013). As various threats to this landscape continue to grow, enhancing the remaining tracts of the tallgrass prairie ecosystem for grassland birds and wildlife has become a critical conservation issue. The enhancement of these prairie tracts will directly benefit landowners through increased forage production and profitability. The GFCP in northeast North Dakota, encompassing over 70,000 acres of rare saline prairie, is one of the few remaining prairie tracts left in the North American tallgrass prairie range, and is a priority conservation area for the Grand Forks County Prairie Partners (GFCPP), of which, Audubon Dakota is an active member.

In early 2017, members of the GFCPP received a Regional Conservation Partnership Program (RCPP) grant focused on supporting fencing through EQIP, environmental outreach, and a GFCP wide wildlife species inventory. To enhance this project further, Audubon Dakota and partners have created the GFCPMT that will provide private landowners not only greater financial means, but also the restoration/management resources essential for increased forage productivity and enhanced wildlife outcomes.

**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 partners hold strong relationships with private landowners within the GFCP. Phase I of the GFCPMT will focus on lands expiring from CRP in the project area. This process will require partners to identify and place priority on acres that are expiring from CRP, which is projected to reach over 30,000 acres by fall 2017 in the GFCP. Projects that can be enhanced or initiated by GFCPMT will then be planned and implemented, leading to over 13,200 acres impacted within the first year. Priority will be given to lands adjacent to fee title lands or other lands protected by conservation programs to enhance impact. Producers in this project who are interested in additional cost share or public access incentives will be directed to the Private Lands Open To Sportsmen (PLOTS) program through the North Dakota Game and Fish Department. Producers who are already enrolled in PLOTS will be provided opportunities for additional enhancements (grazing systems, woody removal) through funding from this project.

From Audubon Dakota, the staff members associated with the project will be Marshall Johnson, Sarah Hewitt, Kathryn Preston, Brian Chepulis, and Joshua Lefers. Marshall Johnson is the Executive Director of Audubon Dakota and has been doing conservation within North Dakota for the past 8 years. His background in business and his leadership skills make him a natural manager for this project. Sarah Hewitt, Audubon Dakota's conservation programs manager has been with Audubon Dakota for 1 ½ years, and has had technical training in grassland restoration and management in North Dakota, South Dakota, and Minnesota through North Dakota State University and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. Kathryn Preston has extensive prairie restoration and wildlife research experience through institutions such as the Chicago Botanic Garden, Lincoln Park Zoo, and North Dakota State University. She has been with Audubon since October 2016. Brian Chepulis and Joshua Lefers are range ecologists for Audubon Dakota whose work focuses on providing ranchers technical assistance for enhancing grassland wildlife habitat through grazing management. Brian has been a part of the Audubon team since November 2016, and Joshua began his position May 2017.

**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.

The GFCPMT project will be considered successful if, during the first year of implementation, acreage goals for each project objective are met, and landowners are approving and supportive of the services provided. For the grazing system support objective, Audubon Dakota and partners plan to impact up to 1,500 acres by collaborating with GFCP private landowners and agencies. An important aspect to grazing support is the technical assistance that project partners can provide to landowners aimed at enhancing forage productivity and sustainable land use. This feature will be evaluated through site and cattle health monitoring reports by the landowner. Audubon staff and partners will be responsible for connecting area landowners to the GFCPMT, and determining necessary project support.

By working with landowners, the GFCPMT is expected to deliver woody invasive species removal on 10,000 acres, while prairie restoration support is anticipated to impact 200 acres within the GFCP area.

## **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 required.\***

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. Effective July 1, 2015 no State General Fund dollars can be used for a match unless funding was legislatively appropriated for that purpose. 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.**

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.

GFCPMT will be a phased project, and will remain on-going as long as the interest from landowners exist. Audubon Dakota and project partners are dedicated to seeking outside funding support through additional granting parties and foundations in order to sustain GFCPMT and ensure that the overall habitat management support resources it provides can be accessible to all within the GFCP.

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

Audubon Dakota and partners are seeking funding through avenues outside of the ND Outdoor Heritage Fund for the GFCPMT project. However, if the ND Outdoor Heritage Fund is unable to fund this portion of GFCPMT then program implementation may potentially be delayed, which could lead to missed opportunities for effective conservation within the GFCP.

### **Partnership Recognition - If you are a successful recipient of Outdoor Heritage Fund dollars, how would you recognize the Outdoor Heritage Fund partnership? \* Please note it is a requirement that there be signage at the location of the project acknowledging the funding from the Outdoor Heritage Fund if appropriate for your project.**

At each participating site that utilizes GFCPMT, signage will be installed recognizing the financial support provided by OHF and other project supporters. Additionally, as the project becomes fully implemented on the GFCP landscape and collaborations with landowners begin, Audubon Dakota and partners will place an emphasis on promoting GFCPMT and project supporters through newspaper articles and local news exposure.



## **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. The Commission can set a limit on duration of an offer on each application or if there isn't a specific date indicated in the application for implementation of the project, then the applicant has until the next Outdoor Heritage Fund Advisory Board regular meeting to sign the contract and get the project underway or the commitment for funding will be terminated and the applicant may resubmit for funding. Applicants whose proposals have been approved will receive a contract outlining the terms and conditions of the grant. 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](mailto:kfine@nd.gov)

Revised: January 18, 2017

## 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 the 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.) Effective as of July 1, 2015 no State General Fund dollars can be used for a match unless funding was legislatively appropriated for that purpose. Note a minimum of 25% match funding is required. An application will be scored higher the greater the amount of match funding provided. (See Scoring Form.)

Please feel free to insert 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. Also by law several items are ineligible for funding -- see Exemptions in the Application Form. Effective June 10, 2015 the following guidelines were approved by the Industrial Commission:

### NO CONSIDERATION:

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

- A completed project or project commenced before the grant application is submitted;
- A feasibility or research study;
- Maintenance costs;
- A paving project for a road or parking lot;
- A swimming pool or aquatic park;
- Personal property that is not affixed to the land;
- Playground equipment, except that grant funds may be provided for up to 25% of the cost of the equipment not exceeding \$10,000 per project and all playground equipment grants may not exceed 5% of the total grants per year; (See Definitions/Clarifications below)
- Staffing or outside consultants except for costs for staffing or an outside consultant to design and implement an approved project based on the documented need of the applicant and the expenditures may not exceed 5% of the grant to a grantee if the grant exceeds \$250,000 and expenditures may not exceed 10% of the grant to a grantee if the grant is \$250,000 or less; (See Definitions/Clarifications below)
- A building except for a building that is included as part of a comprehensive conservation plan for a new or expanded recreational project; (See Definitions/Clarifications below)
- A project in which the applicant is not directly involved in the execution and completion of the project.

Project Expense	OHF Request	Applicant's Match Share (Cash)	Applicant's Match Share (In-Kind)	Non-Match Project Contributions	Other Project Sponsor's Share	Total Each Project Expense
Grazing Structure Support (\$53/ac – 1500 ac.)	\$47,500.00	\$32,000.00	\$15,000.00	\$	\$33,600.00 (LO)	\$128,100.00
Prairie Restoration (\$110/ac – 200 ac.)	\$22,000.00	\$	\$15,000.00	\$	\$6,600.00 (LO) \$2,500.00 (NRT)	\$46,100.00

Invasive Woody Removal (\$6.11/ac – 10,000 ac.)	\$51,720.00	\$	\$15,000.00	\$	\$9,500.00 (NRT)	\$76,220.00
<b>Total Costs</b>	<b>\$121,220.00</b>	<b>\$32,000.00</b>	<b>\$45,000.00</b>	<b>\$200,000.00</b>	<b>\$52,200.00</b>	<b>\$250,420.00</b>

Project Expense	Non-Match Project Contribution	Total Non-Match
NDGF PLOTS Rental and Access	\$200,000.00	\$200,000.00

**DRAW TEXT BOX FOR DETAILS HERE**

In-kind services used to match the request for Outdoor Heritage Fund dollars shall be valued as follows:

- Labor costs                      \$15.00 an hour
- Land costs                        Average rent costs for the county as shown in the most recent publication of the USDA, National Agricultural Statistics Services, North Dakota Field Office
- Permanent Equipment        Any equipment purchased must be listed separately with documentation showing actual cost. (For example: playground equipment)
- Equipment usage                Actual documentation
- Seed & Seedlings                Actual documentation
- Transportation                  Mileage at federal rate
- Supplies & materials            Actual documentation

More categories will be added as we better understand the types of applications that will be submitted. We will use as our basis for these standards other State and Federal programs that have established rates. For example the North Dakota Nonpoint Source Pollution Management Program has established rates. If your project includes work that has an established rate under another State Program please use those rates and note your source.

**Definitions/Clarifications:**

Building - Defined as "A structure with a roof either with walls or without walls and is attached to the ground in a permanent nature."

Comprehensive Conservation Plan - Defined as "A detailed plan that has been formally adopted by the governing board which includes goals and objectives--both short and long term, must show how this building will enhance the overall conservation goals of the project and the protection or preservation of wildlife and fish habitat or natural areas." This does not need to be a complex multi-page document. It could be included as a part of the application or be an attachment.

New and Expanded Recreational Project means that the proposed building cannot be a replacement of a current building. The proposed building must also be related to either a new or expanded recreational project--either an expansion in land or an expansion of an existing building or in the opportunities for recreation at the project site.

Playground equipment calculation - Only the actual costs of the playground equipment (a bid or invoice showing the amount of the equipment costs must be provided) - cannot include freight or installation or surface materials or removal of old equipment, etc.

Staffing/Outside Consultants Costs - If you are requesting OHF funding for staffing or for an outside consultant, you must provide information in your application on the need for OHF funding to cover these costs. For example, if you are an entity that has engineering staff you must explain

why you don't have sufficient staff to do the work or if specific expertise is needed or whatever the reason is for your entity to retain an outside consultant. If it is a request for reimbursement for staff time then a written explanation is required in the application of why OHF funding is needed to pay for the costs of that staff member(s)' time. **The budget form must reflect on a separate line item the specific amount that is being requested for staffing and/or the hiring of an outside consultant.** This separate line item will then be used to make the calculation of 5% or 10% as outlined in the law. Note that the calculation will be made on the grant less the costs for the consultant or staff.

Recommended by OHF Advisory Board: October 17, 2013  
Approved by Industrial Commission: October 22, 2013  
Revisions recommended by OHF Advisory Board: January 22, 2014  
Approved by Industrial Commission: January 29, 2014  
Revisions recommended by OHF Advisory Board: May 13, 2014  
Approved by Industrial Commission: May 27, 2014  
Revisions recommended by OHF Advisory Board: June 3, 2015  
Approved by Industrial Commission: June 10, 2015

# Grand Forks County Prairie

