

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. After completing the report, save it and attach it to an e-mail and send it to outdoorheritage@nd.gov AND print it and mail it to: North Dakota Industrial Commission, ATTN: Outdoor Heritage Fund Program, State Capitol – Fourteenth Floor, 600 East Boulevard Ave. Dept. 405, Bismarck, ND 58505. If you are unable to scan attachments, mail them with your paper copy of the report. You will be sent a confirmation by e-mail of receipt of your report and attachments.

Outdoor Heritage Fund Status and Final Report Form/Guidelines			
This report is used to show progress of grant projects funded through the Outdoor Heritage Fund. Status Reports and the Final Report must be submitted as required in Contract.			
Contract Number 002-032	Report Date January 31, 2015	Period Covered by Report (10/01/2014 to 12/31/2014)	
Project Name Conservation of Grasslands and Long-billed Curlews on Private Lands in SW North Dakota			
Project Sponsor Name American Bird Conservancy			
Responsible Official (Last, First Middle) Mandich, Cheryl		Responsible Official's Title Northern Great Plains Conservation Coordinator	
Project Sponsor Address P.O. Box 249			
City The Plains	State VA	Zip Code 20198	Telephone Number 540-253-5780
<u>Financial Update</u> Please provide the following information regarding the funding for your project based on the contract award:			
<u>Funds Spent this Reporting Period</u> (As appropriate please provide copies of receipts for purchases)			
Match Funding \$ 0			
In-kind Funding \$ 0			
OHF Funding Requested for Reimbursement \$			
Total Funding Expended for this Reporting Period \$ 0			
<u>Total Funds Spent to Date</u>			
Match Funding \$ 0			
In-kind Funding \$ 0			
OHF Funding Received and Requested for Reimbursement \$ 2,932			
Total Funding Expended to Date \$ 0			
<u>Balance of Grant Funds</u>			
Match Funding \$			
In-kind Funding \$			
OHF Funding still to be Requested \$ 26,390			
Total Funding to be Expended on this Project \$			
Do you anticipate needing to request a grant extension If yes, please explain			

/X/ Yes // No

We would like to extend the grant by two months with the final report being due June 30, 2015. The grant was fully executed on August 7, 2014 which has allowed us to develop outreach documents and accept applications. As the grant allows for native seed plantings and fencing, activities which typically are conducted in the spring of the year, we do not anticipate disbursing funds for these projects until late spring 2015.

Work Completed during Period Covered by Report:

(This information will be posted on the Outdoor Heritage Fund/Industrial Commission website)

Native seed plantings and fencing projects implemented using this grant will improve habitat for the Long-billed Curlew and other grassland birds in southwest North Dakota. We have developed an application which prioritizes projects based on the following criteria:

Size: *Priority will be given to projects of 120 acres or more.* Size is defined as contiguous acres (native grasslands, expired or soon to expire CRP, or pasture) that will be enhanced or maintained by implementing the conservation practice. The decline in grassland birds is attributed to the loss and fragmentation of habitat. Fragmentation reduces the size of habitat patches below the threshold at which curlews and many other grassland birds will use them. Habitat areas for Long-billed Curlews need to be approximately ≥ 3 times as large as their roughly 35 acre territory. So as to provide a buffer around the edge of suitable habitat, projects of 120 acres or more will be given priority. Parcels of 80-119 acres will be considered if in the vicinity of native grasslands and/or wetlands. Parcels less than 80 acres are not eligible for this particular funding opportunity.

Wetlands Reserve Program (WRP) enrollment: *Priority will be given to lands enrolled in the WRP program.* Lands enrolled in this program offer a benefit to wildlife by protecting and enhancing wetlands. By incorporating conservation practices, such as fencing to allow grazing, we can improve the vegetative community and provide added benefits to many grassland birds.

Site Type: *Priority will be given to native grasslands then Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) lands and tame grass pastures.* The priority is based on the value to grassland birds. The grass and forb diversity found in native grasslands provides habitat for a multitude of bird species and will have the highest priority. Following native grasslands will be lands enrolled in the Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) that have expired or will soon expire and then tame grass pastures as it is essential that we keep grass on the landscape. These sites can be re-seeded to native grasses and forbs or managed to provide a variety of vegetative heights that will benefit multiple species of wildlife.

Perimeter/Area Ratio: *Priority will be given to projects with a smaller ratio of perimeter to total acreage.* The ratio is determined by dividing the perimeter of the contiguous acres (ft.) by the acreage (ft²). Many grassland bird species prefer the core of habitat areas as there are typically fewer disturbances and predators. The smaller the ratio the greater the habitat value to grassland birds. For example, a square parcel of habitat would have a lower ratio than a rectangular parcel with the same acreage.

Type of Fencing: Perimeter (boundary) or interior (cross) fencing are eligible. *If cross fencing and resulting pastures are ≤ 80 acres, priority will be given to projects using temporary electric fencing.* This allows the dividing of pastures to better impact the plant community and removal when the desired effect has been obtained.

Documentation of Long-billed Curlew Presence: *Priority will be given to recipients willing to provide information on curlews observed.* If fund recipients see Long-billed Curlews, we'd appreciate the date, number of curlews observed, and county. Locations will be recorded by county not project area. With its large size and distinctive bill, the Long-billed Curlew is easy to identify. Using citizen science to determine presence of curlews aids us in determining population trends and distribution.

Sportsmen Access: *Priority will be given to projects that provide access to sportsmen. One of the Directives of the OHF is to provide access for sportsmen, and if two projects provide equal benefits to curlews, this will be the deciding factor. This does not open the property up to public access. The landowner will still need to provide the appropriate access permission.*

We have distributed the application to all west river Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) offices, provided an article for the Adams County Soil Conservation District Newsletter, and distributed the application to private lands biologists with multiple entities. We are in the process of accepting and prioritizing applications. Approved projects will be implemented in the spring of 2015.

Photos of work completed are welcome (If appropriate, please submit photos of key elements of the project completed or in progress during reporting period) Do not exceed five photos per project report.

Signature of Responsible Official

Melanie S. Mousni VP OPERATIONS 1/28/15

The project reports shall be provided to the Commission in both electronic and hard-copy formats with permission for unrestricted distribution. The electronic versions shall be in a suitable format for posting on the Outdoor Heritage Fund/Commission website.