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	Report Date	Period Covered by Report
003-040	12/31/19	(December 1, 2018 to November 30, 2019)

Project Name
North Dakota Pheasant Habitat Initiative

Project Sponsor Name
North Dakota Game and Fish Department

Responsible Official (Last, First Middle)	Responsible Official's Title
Kading, Kevin J.	Private Lands Section Leader

Project Sponsor Address
100 N. Bismarck Expressway

City	State	Zip Code	Telephone Number
Bismarck	ND	58501	701-328-6371

Financial Update

Please provide the following information regarding the funding for your project based on the contract award:

Funds Spent this Reporting Period

(As appropriate please provide copies of receipts for purchases)
Match Funding $1,799.95 Other Project Sponsor's share $141,107.00
In-kind Funding $0
OHF Funding **Requested for Reimbursement** $32,750.00
Total Funding Expended for this Reporting Period $34,549.95, with Other Project Sponsor's share $175,656.95

Total Funds Spent to Date

Match Funding $197,220.53
In-kind Funding $0
OHF Funding Received and Requested for Reimbursement $64,657.00
Total Funding Expended to Date $261,877.53

Balance of Grant Funds

Match Funding $1,002,780.00
In-kind Funding $0
OHF Funding still to be Requested $2,935,343.00
Total Funding to be Expended on this Project $4,200,000 ($3M OHF, $1.2M applicant's match. Does not include additional funding from USDA-CREP, which is approximately $24M)

Do you anticipate needing to request a grant extension If yes, please explain
/x/ Yes / / No

USDA Farm Service Agency (FSA) has had limited authority to enter into CRP contracts, due to this, the program has been closed more than it has been open, enrollment has been limited. The original grant period may need to be extended or modified to include new CRP provisions due to changes in the 2018 farm bill.

Work Completed during Period Covered by Report:
(This information will be posted on the Outdoor Heritage Fund/Industrial Commission website)

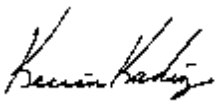
The North Dakota Pheasant Habitat Initiative is tied directly to the USDA Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP). One of the major difficulties getting the NDPHI off the ground has been the closure of all USDA Farm Service Agency CRP programs, including CREP. The Farm Bill expired on September 30, 2018 and USDA Farm Service Agency was not authorized to enter into CRP contracts. The 2018 Farm Bill passed in December 2018; USDA held a limited CRP enrollment period (Signup 52) June 3 – August 23, 2019. The Department mailed nearly 6,000 letters to producers in the project area. Department Private Lands staff fielded over 200 phone calls during this time, however, the short signup period made it difficult for producers making final decisions and many opted to not sign up. 478.8 acres of CREP were enrolled during the signup. These acres, along with other adjacent acres, totaling 738.6 acres were enrolled in the Department's PLOTS program.

Attachments:

- North Dakota CREP annual performance report.
- CREP annual assessment summary.
- Expenditure summary and matching funds documentation.

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



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.

North Dakota
Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program
CREP II Riparian Project
Annual Program Accomplishment Report

Period beginning October 1, 2018 through September 30, 2019

North Dakota Game and Fish Department
100 North Bismarck Expressway
Bismarck, North Dakota 58501-5095
701-328-6300
www.gf.nd.gov

NORTH Dakota Be Legendary.™ | Game and Fish

FSA FARM SERVICE AGENCY

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Introduction

The North Dakota Game and Fish Department (Department) began developing the CREP II Riparian Project in 2014. An agreement between U.S. Department of Agriculture Commodity Credit Corporation and the State of North Dakota was signed on January 18, 2017. The project includes portions of 16 counties in the following watersheds; Apple Creek, Beaver Creek, Boxelder Creek, Cedar River, Grand River, Knife River, Lake Sakakawea, Lower Cannonball, Lower Heart, Lower Little Missouri, Lower Yellowstone, Middle Little Missouri, North Fork Grand, Painted Woods-Square Butte, Upper Cannonball, Upper Heart, Upper Lake Oahe, and Upper Little Missouri. (Figure 1)

The project area includes federally listed threatened species, including the piping plover (Charadrius melodus), rufa red knot (Calidris canutus rufa), Northern long-eared bat (Myotis septentrionalis) and the Dakota skipper butterfly (Hesperia dacotae). The State has also identified, through the North Dakota Wildlife Action Plan, 73 additional species, which inhabit the project area that are species of conservation priority to the State, including the monarch butterfly and western meadowlark.

The project is designed to help improve water quality in the project area by establishing and maintaining buffers of permanent vegetation between the waterbody and adjacent agricultural cropland, and to provide benefits to pollinators, including honey bees, and other wildlife by establishing beneficial habitat and forage.

Enrollment Status and Nonfederal (State) Expenditures

Table 1 outlines the status of enrollment and level of participation based on completed CREP acres. The Department mailed out approximately 6,000 letters to producers in the project area in June 2019 during the reporting period. Field staff received approximately 200 responses from the letters. Fifteen CREP offers were submitted to FSA. Three offers were deemed ineligible due to previous enrollment in CRP. Five offers were withdrawn by the landowner due to the short signup period. Two offers were withdrawn by the landowner due to payments being too low. One offer was withdrawn because the landowner did not want to split up his field into small CREP parcels. Four offers were approved during the reporting period, totaling 478.47 acres.

County	Completed CREP acres	CP21	CP22	CP42
Emmons	109.3	81.2	0	28.1
Slope	688.2	344.7	0	343.5
Hettinger	0	0	0	0
Stark	0	0	0	0
Dunn	0	0	0	0
Bowman	134.6	67.7	0	66.9
Total	932.1	493.6	0	438.5

Table 1. CREP status of enrollment through September 30, 2019.

Table 2 outlines the Department's (State) expenditures for this reporting period. 478.47 acres were enrolled in the program during this reporting period. Annual assessments/monitoring of existing CREP II acres were completed in 2019. No significant amount of outreach was conducted during this reporting period due to lack of authority to enroll CRP by FSA during closure periods.

Expenditure Type	Expenditures
CREP Incentive	$27,236.00
Salaries	$15,647.28
Indirect	$8,770.82
Information/outreach	$0.00
Cost share	$4,769.00
Monitoring	$144.28
Total State Expenditures	$56,567.38

Table 2. State of North Dakota's expenditures for period October 1, 2018 through September 30, 2019.

Federal CREP II Expenditures

Expenditure Type	Expenditures
Annual Rental Payment	$30,632.00
SIP Payments	$110,475.00
PIP Payments	$0.00
Total Federal Expenditures	$141,107.00

Table 3. Federal expenditures for period October 1, 2018 through September 30, 2019.

Monitoring Activities

Water quality benefits are achieved by changing the land use from cropland to perennial vegetation. Soil loss analysis completed on the two highest acreages of class II, III and IV cropped soils within the watersheds, demonstrates a significant improvement in the reduction of the sediment load carried to the waterbodies. Soil losses are computed using a 50-foot buffers to reduce sediment amounts to trace levels. Buffers widths beyond fifty feet and up to three hundred will literally reduce sedimentation to the water bodies completely. This is monitored by tracking the number of acres of CREP established on class II, III and IV soils.

The 50-foot buffer reference is the maximum width available in the RUSLE2 soil loss program for water erosion calculations. With the extended buffer widths, the overall effectiveness to reduce sediment delivery, nitrogen and phosphorous, is estimated with the values in Table 4.

Soil Types	Sediment Delivery Reduction	Nitrogen Reduction	Phosphorous Reduction
Class II soils	1.0 ton / acre	100# / acre	10# / acre
Class III soils	2.0 ton / acre	160# / acre	16# / acre
Class IV soils	4.0 ton / acre	240#/ acre	24# / acre

Table 4. Values of sediment, nitrogen and phosphorus reductions.

Assumptions to support the reductions in Table 4:

Class II soils have 5% Organic Matter (OM)
Class III soils have 4% OM
Class IV soils have 3% OM

Soil organic matter is approximately 5% N or about 1,000# of total N for each 1% soil organic matter. (Values from Kansas State University publication)
Class II soils = 5,000# N
Class III soils = 4,000# N
Class IV soils = 3,000# N

Approximately 2% of this N is released each year from the OM. (Value from Kansas State University publication)
Class II soils = 5,000# N X 2% = 100#
Class III soils = 4,000# N X 2% = 80#
Class IV soils = 3,000# N X 2% = 60#

Soil organic matter is approximately 0.5% Phosphorous (P), approximately 2% released each year from the OM.
Class II soils = 500# P X 2% = 10#
Class III soils = 400# P X 2% = 8#
Class IV soils = 300# P X 2% = 6#

The current 932.1 acres of CREP is composed of the following soil classes:
Class II - 561.2 acres
Class III - 203.1 acres
Class IV - 54.5 acres
Class V - 0.0 acres
Class VI - 112.4 acres
Class VII -1.3 acres

Using the values from Table 4, the Department calculates maintaining these 932.1 acres of CREP will result in the following annual benefits. Table 5 summarizes these values for the reporting period.

Soil Types	Sediment Delivery Reduction	Nitrogen Reduction	Phosphorous Reduction
Class II soils (561.2 ac.)	1.0 ton / acre (561.2 tons)	100# / acre (56,120 #)	10# / acre (5,612 #)
Class III soils (203.1 ac.)	2.0 ton / acre (406.2 tons)	160# / acre (32,496 #)	16# / acre (3,249.6 #)
Class IV soils (54.5 ac.)	4.0 ton / acre (218.0 tons)	240# / acre (13,080 #)	24# / acre (1,308 #)

Table 5. Summary of sediment, nitrogen and phosphorus reductions for period October 1, 2018 through September 30, 2019.

In addition to water quality benefits, benefits for pollinators and species of concern such as the Monarch butterfly, will be attained through the installation of 438.5 acres of CP42 pollinator habitat. Development of pollinator habitat compliments the Department's State Wildlife Action Plan as well as its Monarch Butterfly and Native Pollinator Strategy. Furthermore, installing pollinator habitat help achieve the goals and strategies of the Midwest Association of Fish and Wildlife Mid-America Monarch Conservation Strategy for improving habitats in various sectors of land use, including agricultural lands.

Status of CREP Goals

This CREP contemplates the eventual enrollment of up to 20,000 acres. The primary goals of this CREP are to:

1. Enroll 20,000 acres of cropland in the Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) consisting of filter strips, riparian buffers, and pollinator habitat to improve and maintain water quality and wildlife habitat, including habitat and forage for pollinators.
2. Enroll 40,000 acres of land into the North Dakota Game and Fish Department's Private Land Open To Sportsmen (PLOTS) program.
3. Improve water quality in the project area by enrolling 1,500 acres annually reducing the amount of Nitrogen, Phosphorus and sediment entering rivers, streams and other waterbodies by 75,000 pounds of Nitrogen per year, 37,500 pounds of Phosphorus per year, and 4,750 tons of sediment per year.

Progress towards CREP goals:

- 932.1 acres of CREP have been completed toward the 20,000-acre goal. (4% of goal)
- 1544.0 acres have been enrolled into the Department's PLOTS program, providing walk-in public hunting access. (3% of goal)
- 1185.4 tons of sediment annually reduced from runoff. (25% of goal)
- 101,696.0 pounds of nitrogen annually reduced from runoff. (above goal)
- 10,169.6 pounds of phosphorus annually reduced from runoff. (27% of goal)

Recommendations for Improving the Program

The CREP partners should discuss the following improvements and changes to the program:

1. The Department recommends expanding haying or grazing opportunities on CREP practices; many landowners have expressed concerns for not being able to hay or graze periodically on CREP practices.
2. The Department recommends modifying the CREP project boundary align more closely with eligible cropland. A large portion in the western region of the project area does not contain significant acres of eligible cropland. Furthermore, many producers outside the project area have expressed interest in the CREP; partners should consider shifting the boundary in the future.
3. The Departments recommends modifying Section IV. (C) in the USDA-State of North Dakota CREP agreement; "land previously enrolled" must be clarified to allow lands that have previously been enrolled, but no longer maintain cover. Additional water quality benefits could be achieved by allowing lands that have previously been enrolled in CRP to be enrolled in CREP.

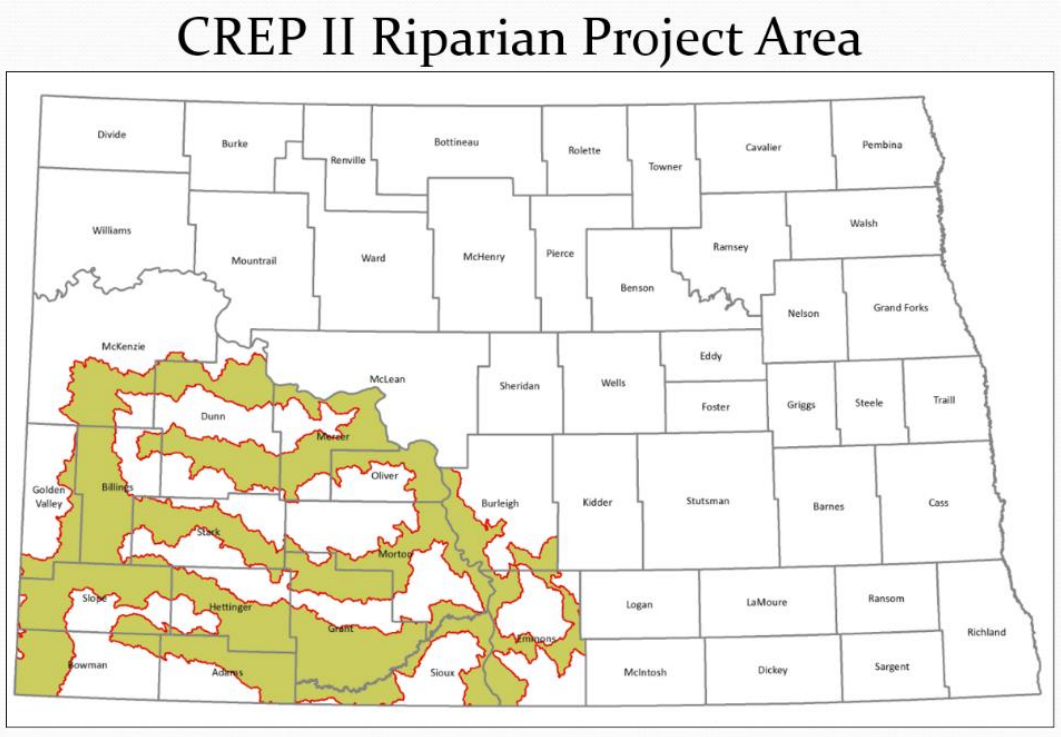

Figure 1. CREP II Riparian Project Area.