

**Contract No. 005-073**  
**“Homme Dam Watershed 319 Project”**  
 Submitted by Walsh County Three Rivers Soil Conservation District  
 Principal Investigator: Sarah Johnston  
 Directives B, C

**PARTICIPANTS**

<b>Sponsor</b>	<b>Cost Share</b>	
Landowner (cash/in-kind)	\$131,500	
EPA (cash)	\$265,000	
Walsh County Three Rivers Soil Conservation District	<u>\$ 88,700</u>	
Subtotal Cost Share		\$485,200
North Dakota Industrial Commission	<u>\$ 65,000</u>	
		<u>\$ 65,000</u>
Total Project Cost		\$ 550,200

Project Schedule – 3.5 years  
 Contract Date – 9/8/2015  
 Start Date – 4/1/2015  
 Completion Date – October 31, 2018

Project Deliverables:  
 Status Report: December 31, 2015 ✓  
 Status Report: June 30, 2016 ✓  
 Status Report: December 31, 2016 ✓  
 Status Report: June 30, 2017 ✓  
 Status Report: December 31, 2017 ✓  
 Status Report: June 30, 2018 ✓  
 Final Report: October 31, 2018 ✓

**OBJECTIVE/STATEMENT OF WORK:**

Restore water quality and beneficial uses of recreation and aquatic life to the Homme Dam Reservoir in Walsh County through implementation of best management practices such as riparian vegetation cover, prescribed grazing systems, riparian forest buffers, streambanks/shoreline stabilization. The Commission stipulated that no Outdoor Heritage Fund dollars could be used for portable windbreaks.

**STATUS:**

Contract 005-073 - Has been fully executed.

**12/29/2015** - Status report received. The status report states: There have been no BMP's implemented in this project period. We continue to work with partnering agencies such as NRCS to provide technical assistance to producers in the watershed. Follow up continues with producers who have expressed interest in best management practices in hopes of signing them up in 2016.

**6/30/2016** - Status report received. The status report states: To date we have implemented two demonstration sites, one of which is a cover crop demonstration site, and the other is vegetation restoration demonstration in a riparian area. We have not expended specifically OHF grant funds on establishing these demonstration sites, however, we hope that good demonstration of Best Management Practices will interest residents in taking action and requesting implementation, which then would require the use of OHF funding. We continue to work closely with NRCS and partnering agencies to get as much conservation accomplished in this watershed, no matter whom is paying for it or facilitating the work.

On June 13, 2016, we sampled the first algae bloom at Homme Dam for the year. Two species of harmful algae were identified and advisories are posted for visitors at the swim beach and boat dock area. Last summer revealed extensive harmful algae blooms which impaired safe recreation on the reservoir. This summer unfortunately is off to an early start. The issue of water quality impairments is gaining ground in this community and landowners are becoming more aware of how they will be a big part of the solution. This process can be a slow process, however, having funding from OHF available to landowners is an important part of restoring water quality in this watershed.

**12/28/2016** - Status Report received. The status report states: Adverse weather conditions have created many challenges for farmers in the Homme Dam watershed and throughout Walsh County this past summer and fall. Over 30 inches of rain fell between June and September, creating significant delays and at times impossible conditions for field work and harvest of cash crops. These extremely wet and cold conditions are said to have surpassed what was seen in 1993. As a result of these unfavorable circumstances, implementation of projects has been delayed until next year.

Two producers had a total of 300 acres of cover crops to plant in the watershed in September, however, they were unable to plant their cover crop due to saturated conditions. These producers will have cost share available to them again next year to plant these acres into cover crop after harvest. In addition to working with cover crops, we continue to consult with landowners to plan projects using best management practices that will improve water quality in this watershed. Everyone is hoping for drier and more favorable weather in 2017!

**6/30/2017** - Status Report received. The status report states: Work accomplished in spring of 2017 included tree and shrub plantings for two landowners in high priority areas of the Homme Dam Watershed. The first planting occurred on cropland newly acquired by a landowner with the goal of establishing habitat, reducing soil erosion, and benefitting water quality. The site is located west of Park River. The planting was designed by the Walsh Co. Three Rivers SCD and was planted in early May. The planting consisted of 945 shrubs planted in a "L" shape, and was comprised of caragana, hawthorn, juneberry, cotoneaster and highbush cranberry. Total footage planted was 3459 ft. or 0.65 miles. The cost share requested on this work: \$2,037.06.

The second planting took place in high priority grassland acres west of Edinburg, ND. The former pastureland became an opportunity for the landowner to expand habitat for white-tailed deer through the establishment of a tree and shrub planting on upland acreage and hillslope ravines. The upland is edged by a steep cut hillside over the river valley of a small tributary of the S. Branch of the Park River. The ravines historically would have been wooded, but grazing steadily for centuries may be the reason for scarcity of trees and shrub through the draws. The added trees and shrubs are expected to aid in preserving soil stability thus benefitting water quality, as well as providing a variety of food for deer and birds. Over a dozen tree and shrub species were utilized, many of which produce food for wildlife in berries or nuts, or serve as a source of pollinator forage. A total of cost share requested on this work: \$264.00

We continue to provide technical assistance to producers in the watershed, and have more projects in the planning stages for next field season.

**12/27/2017** - Status Report received. The status report states: Since our last report we have continued to work with landowners to plan projects that benefit water quality and deer habitat in the Homme Dam

watershed. For 2018 projects we have been planning tree plantings on uplands near riparian areas. These plantings will be installed this spring using OHF funds.

In addition to the plantings, there are also two proposed projects that involve stabilization of ravine gullies that lead into waterways. These projects are still in the planning phase, with engineers' plans being delivered this next month. Stabilizations are costly projects, and because of this, the future of each project depends on whether or not the landowner can provide their 40% share of the total project costs. We will know more in the next couple of months as to whether those projects are a "go". Hopefully the project timeline for implementation can match up to our OHF funding deadline otherwise you can anticipate that we will be applying for an extension in our June report.

### **6/30/2018**

Work completed: Tree planting. Landowner is J. McKee.

Planting location: T157N R 57 W S 15 NE ¼

We recently installed four rows of trees and shrubs on an upland area adjacent to a riparian forest for the purpose of expanding forested acres for deer habitat. Tree and shrub species planted include eastern red cedar, rocky mountain juniper, bur oak and caragana. Each row is approximately 260 feet in length. Seedlings were planted on June 18 (photo below). Fabric was installed on June 25.

Photos are available in the full report.

### **10/2018**

Final report received. The report states in part:

Riparian vegetation cover, prescribed grazing systems, riparian forest buffers, and streambank/shoreline stabilizations are examples of the best management practices (BMPs) that were promoted during the project. A total of 39 landowners were consulted with during the project. Of that, 18 landowners requested conservation plans and options were discussed for BMP implementation on cropland and rangeland.

More details are available in the full report.

This contract is now closed with a returned commitment of \$62,123.42.

**Updated 12/10/2018**